DOKTORI DISSZERTÁCIÓ

How Do Hungarian Teachers of English Plan?
A Qualitative Study

Szabó Éva

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Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Pedagógiai és Pszichológiai Kar

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Abstract

Teacher planning has been conceptualized in a number of ways ranging from regarding it as a set of clearly defined steps to understanding it as the job of interpreting and managing the complexity of unique teaching contexts. Research orientations towards it and the methods applied in the different investigations have varied greatly depending on the perspective from which it has been approached. This has produced a considerable body of literature and various descriptions of planning, which the present study intends to complement by investigating how teachers of English plan their teaching in Hungary.

The main aim of this study is to explore ways of planning as it is done by teachers at Hungarian schools. It adopts a qualitative research perspective, and investigates planning on the basis of the participating teachers' views and commentaries based on the assumption that all aspects of teaching gain their meaning through the teacher's interpretation of the various teaching contexts (Freeman, 1996a). The data were collected by questionnaires and in-depth interviews in order to capture the most important features of the participating teachers' planning activity. The main findings of the research support what was previously revealed about planning on a number of points, and they also throw light on some further features. For example, they show that planning is primarily guided by teachers' intention to respond to the dual needs of groups and the individual learners in the groups, and that it has its real value in the thinking process in which teachers are engaged when they plan.

The long-term benefits of the study will be to illuminate issues of planning that trainee teachers need to be sensitized to. At the end of the study, I will, therefore, make some recommendations as to how the findings can be exploited in pre-service teacher training. I will argue that studying and interpreting the teachers' insights in the methodology seminars can help to bridge the gap between the 'theoretical training' provided by the university and the 'practical training' ensured by the schools and school-based mentors.

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Introduction

Planning teaching is an integral part of all teachers' job, present in many fields of their life. As Calderhead (1984) puts it, planning includes a wide range of activities, such as

> making special materials for a lesson, taking part in school curriculum meetings, reading books to become familiar with particular subject matter, drafting out a department syllabus, keeping a record of daily work plans,

> conferring with colleagues over team-teaching arrangements, reading teachers' handbooks, selecting exercises from textbooks, or even simply thinking about what needs to be revised in tomorrow's arithmetic lesson or considering what topic might be chosen for the pupils next essay. (Calderhead, 1984, p. 71)

Because planning encompasses such a diversity of activities, it is difficult to find one particular method to investigate it. It is even more so, if one considers that a large part of planning is essentially a fairly informal, mental process (McCutcheon, 1980) in which teachers are most commonly engaged 'while having a bath, eating breakfast or driving to work in the morning' (Calderhead, 1984, p. 71). At the same time, as anything that happens in the classroom is determined by the preparation and the thinking in which teachers are engaged before teaching, it is inevitable to try to capture the nature of planning and the way it influences teaching.

The investigation that I am going to describe is basically *practice-driven*, which is illustrated by the two factors that motivated it. First of all, it was *my own personal interest* in teacher planning and its teaching in pre-service teacher training that started me off. As a teacher trainer, I have often faced the problem of how to raise trainees' awareness of the nature of planning and the type of thinking involved in it, beyond providing the 'ingredients' of a well-planned lesson. In addition, I have experienced the difficulty of making issues of planning relevant for trainees who never planned a whole course. When trying to understand what might be responsible for these problems, one of the most obvious reasons that I could identify was the lack of the opportunity to see planning as it naturally occurs in real teaching contexts within the framework of college training which has little to do with everyday school realities. Later on, I also realized that discussing recordings of teachers' accounts on how they plan their courses might be extremely helpful by bringing the contextual elements of planning into the focus of a theoretical training. As using the teachers' accounts on my methodology courses proved to be very efficient, I felt

that there was a need to do it in a more systematic way through a bigger variety of examples.

This leads on to the second factor that triggered the research. That is, I wanted *to collect 'teachers' voices' on their own planning activity* that can offer evidence of the 'the highly complex, interpretative knowledge that teachers use to do their work' (Freeman, 1996a, p. 98), more specifically that they use to plan their courses. I believe that it is the interpretative knowledge of teachers, best captured by their personal accounts and stories of teaching, which has the potential of helping trainees understand the world of teaching (Allwright, 2000) and see the place of planning in. The use of teachers' voices in pre-service teacher training can, therefore, provide opportunities for future teachers to analyse particular issues of teaching as they emerge in real teaching contexts, and to formulate their own approach towards them.

In line with the motivational factors, the study has two sets of expected outcomes. Firstly, I hope to deepen my own understanding of planning as it happens in real teaching contexts by drawing up an overall picture about it. I expect that it will be a highly complex picture with an elaborate net of interrelated elements that I intend to further refine with in-depth investigations of the particular teaching contexts. Secondly, starting out from the insights gained from the research, I hope to illuminate directions in the teaching of planning in pre-service teacher training that are worth being pursued in order to sensitize future teachers to the complexity of planning, and to encourage them to find their own ways of managing this complexity.

Starting points and research questions

From the perspective of a future teacher in order to be able to teach, one needs to plan it, and in order to be able to plan, one needs to learn how to do it. This raises the

question of how planning can be presented and explored in teacher training. According to Calderhead (1984), planning is unique to every individual and cannot be described in one model. He also notes that planning is a problem solving activity in which teachers are confronted with a number of problems in different situations. Depending on the nature of the problem, the teaching context and the personality of the teacher, problem solution will require completely different strategies, which means that it is impossible to identify one preferred or effective way of planning. If this is so, what can be done about teaching planning on pre-service teacher training courses? What aspects of planning should be highlighted and in what form should they be approached in order to draw trainees' attention to the complexity inherent in it as well as to ways of doing it by practising teachers?

Some initial answers to these questions seem to emerge from one of Calderhead's later works (1996), in which he claims that, though a highly individual activity, planning can still be captured by identifying its most important features. He notes six such features, which is illustrated by Figure 1.

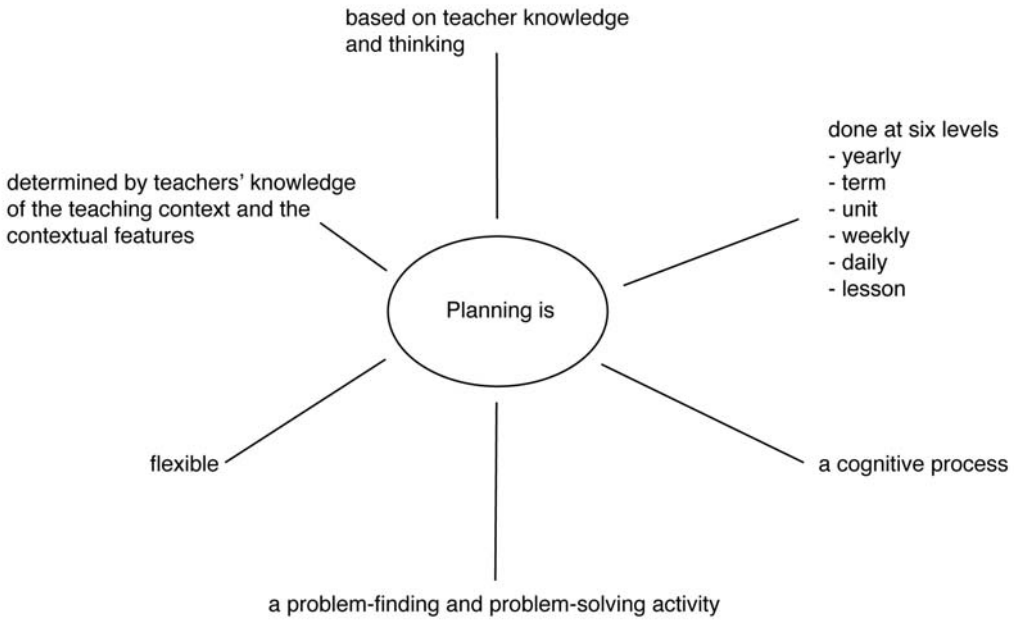

Figure 1: A picture of planning based on Caldearhead (1996)

First, teachers plan at six main levels – yearly, term, unit, weekly, daily and lesson. These levels are, however, not separate; rather, they inform each other from top to bottom in a logical sequence. For example, yearly plans determine term plans, which are further segmented into unit plans - a process that goes on until the level of lesson plans is reached. Second, planning is a largely cognitive process, in which written lesson plans are most effective when serving as short, informal 'to do' lists in order to aid the teacher's memory. Third, planning encompasses both a problem-finding and a problem-solving feature, which create its basis, and make teachers deviate from pre-established plans if the learners' needs require them to do so. Fourth, planning seems to be inevitably flexible. Plans can only work if they function as a framework and are open to modifications in the light of what is happening in the classroom. According to Calderhead (1996), too rigid planning might lead to less learning. As he observed, students learned less when teachers over-planned their lessons than they did when teachers were flexible. Calderhead also notes that flexibility

seems to be closely related to teaching experience, as experienced teachers are more flexible in the way they handle plans than novices. Fifth, planning seems to be strongly determined by teachers' knowledge of the particular teaching context and contextual factors, including group characteristics, individual learner characteristics, curriculum, teaching materials, school requirements and school life. Finally, Calderhead identifies the importance of teacher knowledge and thinking which serve as a basis for anything teachers do.

In order to find the initial directions in a large field of investigation, the present study starts out from Calderhead's (1996) categorization, which seems to best capture the essential features of planning. The study, therefore, intends to provide answers to the following questions based on Calderhead's categories:

1) At what levels do teachers plan and what is the relationship of the different levels of planning?
2) What is the relationship of mental and written lesson plans?
3) In what way does teachers' perception of problems and anticipated difficulties in a particular teaching context affect planning?
4) How flexible and how detailed are effective plans?
5) In what way does teaching experience affect planning?
6) In what way do contextual factors influence planning?
7) Apart from the features listed by Calderhead (1996), what other important features does the planning activity of the teachers involved have?

Questions 1) to 6) capture the first five most important features of planning identified by Calderhead (1996). The reason why the importance of teacher knowledge and thinking as a base in planning, listed as the sixth main feature by Calderhead, is not addressed by a separate research question is that the present research is based on the assumption that

teacher knowledge is such a basic, all-embracing factor that it affects all the other factors of planning. Its influence, therefore, is not intended to be investigated separately in the present research.

In an attempt to discuss implications of the results for pre-service teacher training, the main findings of the research will be used to determine directions that need to be given more attention in the teaching of planning.

Overview of the study

The study is divided into twelve parts – an introduction, ten chapters, and a short conclusion that contains my final remarks. In the **Introduction**, I have started out by explaining that the study is practice-driven and I have argued that my personal experience in the teaching of planning in-pre-service teacher training and my intention to collect teachers' voices on their own planning activity were the main motivating factors for me to investigate planning as it done at schools. After I presented in what way I hoped to enrich my practice with the insights from the study, I have outlined Calderhead's (1996) categorization of planning, which served as the starting point for formulating the particular questions that I will hopefully answer at the end of the study.

Chapter 1 reflects my intention to first of all introduce myself - a teacher and teacher trainer who has carried out the research - by revealing my key assumptions and beliefs that I have developed over the years about teaching and planning. This, I believe, is essential in order to throw light on the perspective from which the data are collected and interpreted. By describing my assumptions I also wanted to suggest that, like other teachers who notice something in their work that needs to be examined and conduct research to understand more about it, I cannot approach my own field with an outsider's objectivity.

In **Chapter 2** I will present the theoretical background of the study by highlighting how planning has been approached in theoretical and empirical investigations during the past forty years. As my study essentially drew on research carried out in Great Britain and in the United States, I will also outline in what way planning has been discussed and researched in Hungary.

Chapter 3 is about the methodological considerations that led me in designing the research as well as about the teachers who participated and the places where the investigations were carried out. In this chapter I will give special attention to highlighting the qualitative perspective from which planning was approached and the data were interpreted.

Once situating the study within the methodological context, the description of the different stages and the presentation of the results move in a chronological order. This is almost inevitable in a qualitative study, as the emergent design it adopts is built on the concept of ongoing data collection and interpretation; the findings are, therefore, presented at the end of the individual stages in order to show on what basis the direction of inquiry was influenced by the results. The very first step, then, in describing the stages of the research and the results at the end of each stage is **Chapter 4,** in which I will give an account of a preliminary study that provided baseline data for constructing the research tool used in the first main stage of the research, the questionnaire survey.

Chapter 5 provides a detailed picture of the questionnaire survey, and **Chapter 6** discusses the findings that map out how planning is done by the teachers involved. However, in order to narrow down the range of findings that extend over all important aspects of planning to those that are of primary importance in the research I have attempted to provide initial answers to the research questions and to identify points that need to be investigated in depth in the second main stage of the inquiry, the interview study.

Chapter 7 presents the second main stage of the research, the interview study, in detail, and **Chapter 8** spells out the understandings gained from analysing the interview data. Finally, the description of the research process concludes with **Chapter 9**, which pulls all the threads together and provides answers to the research questions. In a last step, I will compare the findings to my initial expectations which served as the frame of reference throughout the whole research and will comment on similarities and differences.

Chapter 10 is an extension of the whole study and includes some final ideas as to how pre-service teacher training can make use of the understandings emerging from the research and the material collected in it. I will suggest that for me the primary gain of the research is the recordings of the teachers' voices that best capture the 'wisdom of the practitioner' (Yinger, 1982, p. 257) and bring authentic teaching dilemmas into the methodology course, thus giving insights into how teachers handle the complexity of a variety of teaching contexts when they plan teaching.

In the last part of the study, in the **Final conclusions,** a brief summary of the main results of the research will be provided with the help of a figure (Figure 8). At the very end I will argue that the recordings of teachers' accounts on their work can be exploited for illuminating aspects of teaching other than planning, and the process of collecting teachers' voices with a direct focus on issues of teaching to be explored in pre-service teacher training should be continued.

Chapter 1

My key assumptions and beliefs about teaching and planning

Overview

This chapter is intended to throw light on the mental framework that my professional experience creates for the study. First, I will explain why the researcher's inner research agenda needs to be made explicit in practice-driven research and how this affects the objectivity and the subjectivity of the present study. After that I will uncover my most important assumptions about teaching and planning.

As a very first step in outlining the framework of the present study, I will now give an account of my assumptions about teaching that I have developed as a teacher and a teacher trainer during the past fifteen years, and my observations about planning that I have made during the same period. The reason why I start out with this is that - following from the nature of practice-driven research - the assumptions I hold will undoubtedly create a mental framework for this study, and will influence the way I approach the problem and I interpret the data. By making them explicit, I intend to make my position as a researcher clear vis-à-vis the phenomenon under investigation and to highlight the perspective from which I study planning.

1.1. Objectivity and subjectivity in qualitative inquiries: the need for a balance

The need to strike a balance between being objective and being personal in qualitative inquiries is acknowledged by Nunan (1989b) and Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000). They point out that researchers bring their own, often unconscious 'experiential and biographical baggage' (Cohen et al., p. 121) to the research situation, which might affect the way they interpret the results. This claim is especially valid in the case of practitioner research, in which the researcher's professional experience is the starting point and remains the frame of reference throughout (Szesztay, 2001). In my case, this is most

evident in the choice of the research topic, which grew out from my personal curiosity in planning and in its teaching, as well as in my choice of research methodology, which seemed to me the most appropriate for capturing the complexity of planning. Though I am aware of my responsibility as a researcher to try to remain as objective as possible during all phases of the investigation, I believe that my earlier experience in doing, observing and teaching planning as a teacher and a trainer does add to my understanding of planning. This is a natural feature of any research in which a practitioner is concerned with understanding and improving her own field that she cannot approach from the outside, 'because she is already deeply immersed in it' (Szesztay, p. 56). Therefore, in order to make the unconscious conscious and to minimize researcher bias, thus establishing the validity and reliability of the study, I will now uncover the most important assumptions I hold about teaching, in general, and about planning, in particular. The latter will also be reflected on when interpreting the findings.

The assumptions that I am going to describe in the following sections have been evolving from the impressions and the unsystematic observations that I have made during the past fifteen years. For a long time they were not consciously formulated as a set of statements; they were there intuitively. What helped me verbalize them and include them into a coherent set was becoming familiar with some of the works, which I will extensively refer to in the following account. These works have been influential in two ways. First, they triggered my thinking and shaped my approach to teaching, in general. Second, by illuminating focal points in teaching, they helped me develop an understanding of planning and an approach to investigating it.

1.2. About teaching

My key assumptions about teaching cluster around three interrelated concepts: (i) the classroom providing the context of teaching, (ii) the teacher's interpretation of the teaching context, as well as (iii) the role of teacher knowledge.

In my view, teaching is a complex process in which the '*classroom*' is a central concept, as it provides a dynamic environment, most accurately captured by Brumfit and Mitchell (1990) as a place where 'different agendas are being pursued by different participants [....] with different needs in all directions' (Brumfit & Mitchell, 1990, p. 10), and where decisions are taken quickly and spontaneously, most often based on intuition (Schön, 1987; Atkinson, 2000) according to the immediate needs of unique, unpredictable situations. What lies at the heart of teaching is managing this complexity by constantly harmonizing pre-established plans and quick actions. It follows that the classroom is crucial both from the perspective of teaching and planning, as it represents all the elements which teachers need to respond to during the act of teaching, on the one hand, as well as those which they need to foresee during the act of planning, on the other.

In order to gain an understanding of classroom processes and to plan in response to these, teachers are constantly engaged in interpreting them. I, therefore, agree with Woods (1989) and Freeman (1996a) that *teachers' interpretation of the teaching context* is central to what meanings they construct from classroom events and how they respond to them. This seems to be based on two core qualities that teachers need to possess: sensitivity and responsiveness. Though these qualities are innate to a certain extent and are present in every individual to a different degree, they can be developed by making teachers aware of their role in interpreting classroom processes, and providing opportunities for teachers to try out how sensitive and responsive their reactions are in real teaching situations.

This view of teaching is based on a complex notion of *teacher knowledge*, both explicit and intuitive (Atkinson, 2000), which is being shaped by several factors, such as prior experiences as students, values and beliefs held as teachers, and most importantly, teachers' work context, which constantly provides the opportunity to interpret classroom experience and restructure knowledge (Freeman & Johnson, 1998). Teacher knowledge, therefore, can be traced through teachers' life histories and the experience they gain from their practice, but part of it is purely intuitive and can never be articulated. What I find essential to emphasize is its all-embracing nature, and its apparent influence on everything teachers do.

The above assumptions that create a framework for the present study already project my approach to planning. I agree with Allwright and Bailey (1991), who claim that 'it is one thing to have plans, though, and quite another to bring them to life in the classroom' (p. 22). I, therefore, regard planning as an integral part of the teaching process, most probably creating a loose, but vital framework for it. If Yinger's (1987) metaphor for teaching as 'improvisational performance' is borrowed, then, I think, it is planning that provides the script for it.

1.3. About planning

As I have been teaching English as a foreign language and have been involved with pre-service teacher training as a trainer for more than a decade, I often discussed questions of planning with colleagues, mentor teachers and trainees, I helped trainee teachers plan their lessons while I supervised their teaching practice, and I taught planning on the pre-service methodology course at a teacher training college. From the numerous discussions, my occasional observations and my unsystematic investigations, I have identified some important features and factors that affect the planning activity of the teachers whom I have

had contact with. It has to be noted that some of these features partly overlap with those listed by Calderhead (1996).

First of all, I observed that teachers are mainly driven by mental plans; very little of what they plan is ever put down on paper. Lesson plans tend to be short, and are used as reminders. Longer-range plans mainly exist in teachers' mind and are rarely identical with teachers' written syllabuses that are required by the schools. This coincides with Calderhead's (1996) observation about planning being a largely cognitive process.

Second, planning seems to be rather flexible – a feature that is also mentioned by Calderhead (1996). Plans are usually used as a framework and are often modified according to the immediate needs and the unexpected events of a teaching situation, which become most evident in the learners' reactions and their feedback. This leads to my third observation, according to which teachers are guided by their knowledge of the elements of a particular teaching context, such as group and learner characteristics, teaching materials, the learners' schedule, and exams, which are listed by Calderhead, too.

The first element of the teaching context that considerably shapes the way teachers plan seems to be the group and the learners in it. As one of my colleagues put it 'teaching is mainly about understanding what a certain group needs and being able to provide opportunities for learning accordingly' (Thun, 2003, personal communication). This means that planning for non-existing groups is not possible; one needs to have substantial information about the learners in order to plan for them. Teaching materials also seem to play a key role in planning, as most teachers are guided by the syllabus of their standard coursebook. Official curricula and syllabuses, on the other hand, do not seem to influence planning. The place of the lesson on the learners' daily and weekly schedule has also appeared to affect planning. That is, I have observed that teachers plan lessons differently for the first period from 8.00 a.m. to 8.45, and for the periods from 12.00 to 14.00, or later.

As one teacher pointed out ‘the best is to have a lesson between 9.00 and 11.00, on Tuesday or Wednesday.’ The day on which the lesson falls seems to be important, as ‘learners are not very perceptive on Monday and Friday, and they start getting tired on Thursday.’

Finally, exams, such as the state language exam, seem to have a strong wash-back effect on teaching and planning at secondary schools. In contrast, achievement and progress tests seem to influence planning much less than the state language exams, though they are regularly administered by all teachers. Certain aspects of testing, such as the number of the major written tests, are planned at the yearly level, but the final decisions on when to administer the tests and what exactly to include in them seem to be taken during the school year based on teachers’ assessment of learners’ progress.

Primary school teaching, however, seems to be much less influenced by exams that do not appear to be relevant goals for primary school-aged children. Though testing is an important part of teaching, tests do not seem to seriously shape planning at primary schools, either. As children are less likely to be extrinsically motivated by long-term goals, primary school teachers seem to be more concerned with the day-to-day intrinsic motivation of their learners.

Chapter 2

Literature review

Overview

In this chapter of the dissertation, I will outline the theoretical background from which the present study grew out. I will first show planning from a historical perspective by presenting three views, in which teaching and learning to teach were conceptualized in different ways. Based on these views, I will also identify the various understandings of planning and teacher knowledge, and I will throw light on how they have influenced the approach of pre-service teacher training towards planning during the past forty years. Further on, I will summarize the most important aspects of planning identified by empirical research. Finally, as the theoretical background of my work is rooted in literature written in Great Britain and in the United States, I will devote a separate section to presenting some of the most important theoretical and empirical works published in Hungary from the 1990s to our days, which were encouraged by the increased attention towards all aspects of pedagogy as well as by the growing number of research possibilities.

2.1. What is teaching?

In order to understand what planning is and how it works, it is necessary to examine how it is embedded in the process of teaching. A quick look at the different interpretations of teaching helps to identify what role planning was assigned within the teaching process, and it also throws light on the relationship of planning to other phases of teaching. In this section I will provide an overview of how teaching was first understood as an observable set of behaviour (the behavioural view), then as a cognitive decision-making process (the cognitive view), and finally, as the job of interpreting and managing the highly complex world of classrooms (the interpretivist view). The three views are compared on the basis of what elements of teacher thinking were seen as influencing 'teacher doing', i. e.: the actual practice of teaching.

2.1.1. Teaching as doing: the behavioural view (Freeman, 1996a)

Before the 1970s teaching was approached from the perspective of behaviouristic psychology and was seen as a set of observable behaviour: the teacher's actions were interpreted as stimuli that determined the learners' production regarded as a response to the stimuli, which had to be reinforced by the teacher in order to encourage the repetition of the correct response in the future. The chain of 'stimulus-response-reinforcement' was believed to work under all circumstances; the teacher's actions were thought to be fully responsible for student learning and could, therefore, be studied and assessed through learning outcomes. According to this paradigm, failure to learn mostly resulted from the improper behaviour of the teacher, more specifically from his/her inappropriate application of a given method (Richards & Rogers, 1986; Freeman, 1996b). In this framework the teacher's thinking and mental processes were of little or no concern.

2.1.2. Teaching as thinking and doing: the cognitive view (Freeman, 1996a)

In the 1970s, a new approach to teaching began to gain ground focusing on teacher thinking and decision making, also manifesting itself in an increased interest in teachers' mental life and the reasons that explain teachers' actions. The first researcher to portray teaching in this spirit was Jackson (1968), who in his book *Life in classrooms* reported the results of one of the first studies that attempted to describe and understand the mental processes that underlie teacher behaviour. What Jackson emphasized was that teaching was a cognitive process which cannot be analyzed only through visible signs and learning outcomes. The less accessible aspects of teaching, such as teacher thinking and decision making, should also be researched in order to obtain a more accurate picture of teaching. According to Jackson, teacher thinking and decision–making can best be captured by the investigation of three basic decision types that govern teaching: *preactive* decisions

(decisions made in the planning phase before teaching), *interactive* decisions (decisions made during teaching), and *postactive* decisions (decisions made after teaching).

What was significant in Jackson's classification of the decision types was that it drew attention to the difference in the various thought processes inherent in each decision-making phase. Beyond that, it also determined the main orientations of research into teaching during the 1970s and at the beginning of the 1980s, when teaching was primarily viewed as a decision-making process 'which requires the construction of plans and rapid on-line decisions' (Leinhardt & Greeno, 1986, p. 75). Inquiry into teaching fell into two large areas: on the one hand, it focused on preactive and postactive decisions reflected by teachers' reflection, thoughts and judgement (Shavelson & Stern, 1981); on the other hand, it investigated interactive decisions by analysing classroom teaching.

2.1.3. Teaching as knowing what to do: the interpretivist view (Freeman, 1996a)

In the 1980s the decision-making paradigm started to be replaced by the awareness that teaching should not be regarded as the outcome of rational and purposeful thinking. Though acknowledging that decision-making as a conceptual framework did have several merits, namely that it focused research on teachers and recognized the importance of their cognitive world, Freeman (1996b) pointed out that teaching was too complex a process to be interpreted in terms of categories, such as preactive, interactive and postactive decisions, especially because not all thinking can be translated into decisions. Classroom teaching, for example, in which the pace of events and the teacher's interaction with the learners require immediate, context-sensitive actions, does not allow teachers to consider alternatives and choose the right decision to take (Yinger, 1982). In this climate, research into teachers' mental processes came to be seen as offering little of practical utility to teachers in the 'complex, unstable, uncertain, and conflictual worlds of practice' (Schön,

1987). The attention from decision-making and thought processes, therefore, shifted to how the actual practice of teaching is influenced by the constantly changing social contexts, such as classrooms, schools, national policies and expectations, and the contexts of teachers' life histories and professional lives (Freeman, 1996b).

Due to the realization of the need to break from the model of rational decision-making, new conceptions of teaching were developed. Features, such as 'uncertainty, uniqueness and value conflict' (Schön, 1987) came to be used to describe practical situations that teachers have to manage in their everyday work. Teachers were no longer seen as thoughtful people who constantly make rational decisions; rather, they were seen as practitioners who need to possess the skills of 'problem formulation, design, invention and flexible adaptation' (Clark & Yinger, 1987, p. 97). According to Schön, in order to cope with unexpected events and to respond to them, which is what usually happens in all professions, practitioners, including teachers, need to possess *artistry* – a skill, or a kind of knowing, which is different from standard models of professional knowledge. Artistry can be described as the art of problem framing, implementation and improvisation that help professionals find solutions in moments of surprise, when they are not necessarily able to articulate what exactly went on in their mind. By emphasizing artistry and the art of on-the-spot responses, Schön drew attention to aspects of professional practice, such as improvisation, intuition and spontaneity, all of which are beyond rational thinking. Though Schön started out from analyzing the architectural design profession, he pointed out that it was in many ways similar to teaching. His description of architectural design as a creative activity requiring a holistic skill was extended to the profession of teaching and was adopted by Clark and Yinger (1987), who claimed that teaching was a design activity. According to Clark and Yinger, teaching, like architectural design, was constantly shaped by the teacher's reflective analysis of unique teaching situations, and it was through this

analysis that the teacher came to understand different problems and invented solutions for them.

In 1987, Yinger invented the metaphor of 'improvisational performance' to describe teaching. He suggested that just like an improvisational actor enters the stage with a definition of the general situation and a set of guidelines of performing his or her own role, a teacher begins with an outline of the instructional activity, and the details are only filled in during the lesson as the teacher responds to the students. That is, the actual realization of the lessons is shaped by the unpredictability of classroom events.

The complex, dynamic and interactive nature of teaching as well as the role of the constantly changing context in which it is taking place is emphasized by Atkinson and Claxton (2000), who see teaching as based on three types of mental constructs: *intuition, reason* and *reflection*. Intuition, which is the ability to holistically interpret situations and 'to function fluently and flexibly in complex domains without being able to describe or theorize one's expertise' (Claxton, 2000, p. 50), is attached particular value in Atkinson and Claxton's view of teaching. They emphasize that intuition is highly individual, based on largely unconscious, informal experience, and it is essential for teachers in order to manage the highly complex world of classrooms.

Depending on how teaching was interpreted, planning was assigned a special place within the teaching process. In the following section I will give an overview of how planning was approached, starting from viewing it as a sequence of steps prescribed in the form of a linear model for teachers to be followed, and arriving at interpreting it as a set of loose guidelines to be filled with details during the act of teaching.

2.2. What is planning?

Attempts to describe teacher planning fell into three phases, each reflecting the main approach to teaching at the time. It has to be noted, though, that the three phases are not clear-cut, and investigations into planning carried out in one phase varied in the degree to which they were inspired by the dominant paradigm of teaching or the individual orientations of the researchers. This can best be illustrated by Yinger's example (1982), whose approach to teaching and planning provides a link between the cognitive and the interpretivist views: his research in 1982 grew out from the cognitive tradition and was motivated by his interest in teacher decision making. At the same time, it is also characterized by an early realization of the importance of the contextual elements of teaching, indicating a close relationship with the interpretivist approach.

2.2.1. The behavioural view

The first phase dates back to 1950 when Tyler's 'objective-first' or rational model of planning was proposed. It consisted of four steps to be followed:

(i) specify objectives,

(ii) select learning activities,

(iii) organize learning activities,

(iv) specify evaluation procedures.

This model was particularly attractive to the behaviourist view of teaching, which held that effective teaching, identified through positive learning outcomes, can be observed, described and prescribed. According to this view, the steps of planning, just like those of teaching, can also be prescribed, and, if followed by teachers who want to become effective, they will result in positive outcomes.

The validity of this model was later questioned by several researchers, such as Peterson, Marx and Clark (1978), Clark and Yinger (1987) and Nunan (1989a, 1992). Peterson, Marx and Clark, who were among the first scholars to examine teachers' decision making, observed that teachers spent the smallest proportion of their planning time on thinking about learning objectives as opposed to the subject matter to be taught and instructional processes. Clark and Yinger's research also supported that planning was not a linear process moving from objectives through design of activities to meet objectives. They found that it was a "cyclical process beginning with a general idea and moving through phases of successive elaboration" (p. 92). Calderhead (1984) also noted that student teachers who had to write up their lesson plans according to the requirements of the objective-first model, frequently decided on the content and organisation of their lesson first, and only worded the objectives to be achieved later. When seeking to identify the point of departure in planning, Nunan (1989a, 1992) argued that instead of the specification of objectives, it was learning tasks that seemed to be teachers' first priority in planning. Nunan found that most teachers tended to think in terms of tasks, which they regarded as basic building blocks of their courses, and their main concern was to integrate those tasks into lessons or units when planning teaching. Nevertheless, it has to be noted that the objective-first model has been an influential one which is still being followed on a number of teacher training courses.

2.2.2. The cognitive view

The second phase of inquiry, starting with Jackson (1968) and going on until the mid-1980s, was marked by an increased concern with teacher thinking and decision making and encouraged empirical research in the field. Since teaching was understood as decision-making based on the teacher's continuous reflection on teaching situations,

research into the planning stage, in which reflection and decision making were most likely to occur, received particular attention, and a considerable number of studies were made. In this phase, planning was no longer seen as a stage of teaching to be observed in order to produce a model for teachers to copy; rather, it was investigated with the purpose of revealing what thinking processes and activities teachers were engaged in when they planned.

Clark and Peterson's (1986) summary gives a comprehensive picture of this period. According to them, researchers in the 1970s and in the first half of the 80s approached teacher planning in two ways. One approach, also referred to as the cognitive approach, drew heavily on the theories and methods of cognitive psychology, and regarded planning as a set of basic psychological processes, in which a person visualizes the future, takes into account what there is to be done and creates a framework that will guide his/her future actions. Teacher planning interpreted in this tradition was mainly researched in laboratory or stimulated settings with the help of stimulated recall or think aloud, where teachers were asked to carry out a planning task outside of their regular teaching context and to teach students they had not met before, using materials they may not have chosen to use (Peterson, Marx & Clark, 1978). In certain cases, though in their own classrooms, teachers were observed while teaching experimenter-prescribed lessons (Morine-Dershimer & Vallance, 1976, cited in Clark and Peterson, 1986).

The other approach, which was in may ways the antecedent of the interpretivist approach to teaching, adopted a much broader view of planning and defined it as the things teachers do when they say they are planning. Instead of observing how teachers carry out artificially created planning tasks outside their regular working contexts, it essentially collected data with the help of participant observation and interviewing within the context of teachers' regular classes in genuine language classrooms. (Yinger, 1977, cited in Clark

& Peterson, 1986). This is not to say, however, that the two approaches were entirely different in every sense, especially because they both grew out from a preoccupation with teachers' decision-making. Rather, there was a difference in focus between the two, as the former concentrated on teachers' cognitive processes from the perspective of a psychologist, while the latter examined every aspect of planning including cognitive processes.

The place of planning within the process of teaching was also discussed by a number of scholars. As mentioned earlier in 2.1.2, Jackson (1968) regarded teacher planning as the first of the three phases of teachers' decision making, e.g.: the preactive phase. His approach was, therefore, a rather linear one. Yinger (1982), however, drew attention to the cyclical nature of planning. In his model (1982), which is illustrated by Figure 2, planning is viewed as a process consisting of three stages.

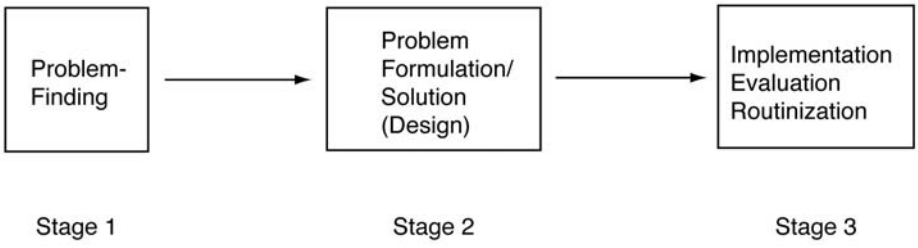

Figure 2: Stages of the planning process (Yinger, 1982, p. 246)

The first stage is a discovery cycle characterized by an initial problem conception. The second stage is problem formulation and solution. Yinger saw this stage as a design process, which engages teachers in the elaboration, investigation and adaptation of a plan. That is, this is the stage when teachers formulate their plans. The third stage involves the implementation and the evaluation of the plan. Yinger's model, therefore, represents a cycle in which each planning event might be determined by prior planning, and each

teaching event might influence future planning and teaching. The same idea emerged from Leinhardt and Greeno (1986), who found that the relationship of planning and teaching, or preactive and interactive decisions, was dynamic, one influencing the other, and the lesson was the final outcome of the implementation of the two types of decisions.

2.2.3. The interpretivist view

In the third phase of research into planning, starting from the mid-1980s, when decision-making and rational thinking were no longer regarded as creating the basic framework for teachers' actions, teacher planning received less attention and the number of empirical studies declined to some extent (Sardo-Brown, 1988, 1990, 1993, 1996; Westerman, 1991; Woods, 1996; McCutcheon & Milner, 2002; Milner, 2003). Researchers were less directly concerned with teachers' purposeful thinking processes; their attention turned to the social and contextual features of teaching and focused more on how teachers responded to the unique needs of different classrooms. In this climate planning came to be seen as providing the broad outlines of teaching, but plans were moved to the background, as spontaneity and intuition were thought to be more powerful during classroom teaching. In Schön's (1987) interpretation, a plan functioned like an outline and was elaborated in the act of performance according to the immediate needs of the situation. In his example of jazz musicians improvising, Schön emphasized the importance of listening to one another and adjusting playing accordingly, but he also claimed that improvisation happened within a schema, made up of a set of musical figures, which 'gives predictable order and coherence to a whole piece' (p. 30).

The need to respond to unique situations was reflected in Shulman's (1987) model, which viewed planning as the result of *transformation*, through which the teacher adapts a new idea to the requirements of the teaching context. Shulman interpreted teaching as an

exchange of ideas, in which both teachers and learners are expected to encounter ideas actively. From the teacher's perspective, this active encounter requires the preparation of the idea for instruction, which Shulman called transformation. Transformation was seen as taking place in five steps:

(i) preparation of the given material,

(ii) representation of the new idea in the form of new analogies,

(iii) instructional selection from teaching methods,

(iv) adaptation of the material to the characteristics of the children to be taught, and

(v) tailoring the adaptation to the specific youngsters in the classroom.

The result of the five steps was the teacher's plan.

The teacher's interpretation was given a central role in Woods' (1996) model, too. Woods proposed a circular model (Figure 3) that included three elements, each representing an active and a passive pole: (i) the teacher's *actions* (active) and the *events* (passive) in the lesson (ii) the teacher's *planning* (active) and the teacher's *expectations* (passive) and (iii) the teacher's *understanding* (passive) of the events and his *interpretation* (active) of the events.

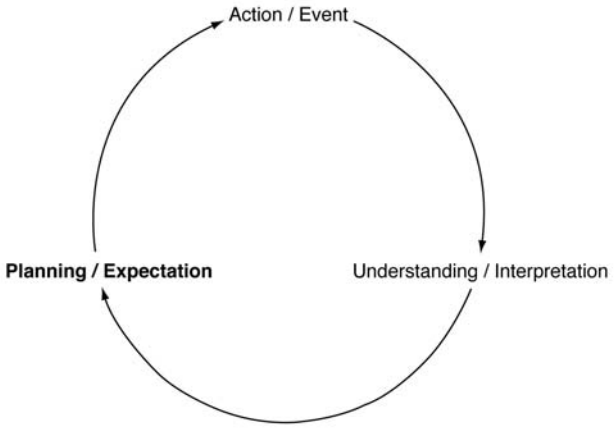

Figure 3: The three main components of Woods' model (1996, p. 82)

The three elements were supposed to continuously interact, while the distinction between the active and the passive poles of each element suggested that planning was viewed as a highly complex process by Woods.

While emphasizing the power of intuition in teaching, Atkinson and Claxton (2000) proposed a model of teaching (Figure 4), in which planning was seen as primarily based on deliberate thinking, called reason, which helped teachers analyse objectively certain problems, unexpected or unusual difficulties and identify teaching aims, methods and resources.

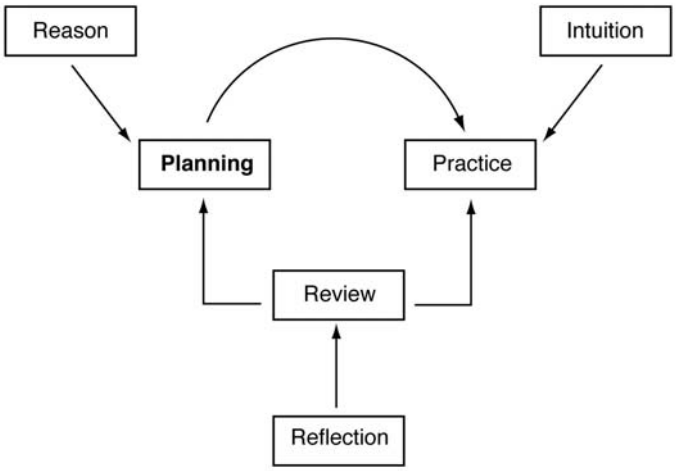

Figure 4: Thought processes in teaching (Atkinson & Claxton, 2000, p. 7)

In Atkinson and Claxton's model (2000), planning prepared teaching by providing a framework for it, but they also emphasized that teaching was most directly affected by intuition, which allowed teachers to 'read the context at a glance and to adapt the plan in the light of the changing context' (p. 6). That is, purposeful thinking which characterizes the planning stage was given less weight by Atkinson and Claxton, as fluent teaching was considered to depend a great deal on the teacher's 'ability to carry out a complex series of actions without the need for conscious thought' (p. 6). In Atkinson and Claxton's

understanding planning, along with teaching and the interpretation of the teaching experience, was part of a cycle governed by three mental processes: reason, intuition, and the reflection on the different teaching contexts as well as on the experience they provided. Planning, primarily determined by reason, was seen as affecting teaching, essentially governed by intuition, which was thought to constantly provide experience to interpret and reflect on.

2.3. Teacher knowledge

As stated in section 1.2, the current study rests on the assumption that teacher knowledge - both explicit and implicit - underlies all teacher actions. In this part, I will summarize how teacher knowledge was interpreted by the different views of teaching with special regard to those aspects that were considered to directly affect planning.

2.3.1. The behavioural view

In the behavioural view, teacher knowledge meant the ability to carry out steps of teaching in the way effective teachers do. Teaching processes were seen as behavioural models to be followed and knowledge was believed to lie in the successful copying of certain teaching activities which were assumed to result in the required learning outcome. Trainees were supposed to acquire knowledge by observing how mentors apply effective teaching techniques considered to work under all circumstances and by trying out the same techniques themselves. If learning outcomes did not prove to be what was expected, it was either the method or its inappropriate application to blame (Freeman & Richards, 1993).

2.3.2. The cognitive view

In the cognitive view, teacher knowledge was approached from a different perspective. Emphasis was not only put on what teachers do, but on what they think about what they do. Teachers' thought processes came to the centre of attention, and it was assumed that teachers' perceptions - their reasoning, beliefs, and intentions - could be articulated and that decisions – both preactive and interactive - had a rational explanation. Teacher knowledge came to be understood as the ability to reason what one is doing. According to this view, a considerable part of knowledge can be translated into words, and can be transmitted for analysis for future teachers. The increased interest in teacher planning in the period when the cognitive view was prevalent well illustrates the importance attached to teachers' thought processes which were thought to surface in the course of planning. Trainees were, therefore, taught to plan lessons, to take preactive decisions and to argue why they took them. When practising teaching, they were taught to reason why they took certain interactive decisions.

2.3.3. The interpretivist view

When teaching was no longer understood as a primarily cognitive process manifesting itself in a series of decisions, teacher knowledge came to be seen as the ability to interpret unique and complex teaching situations and respond to their needs. Researchers' interest shifted from teachers' cognitive processes to their personal experience, life history, social and cultural values. It was assumed that not everything a teacher does can be explained by conscious reasoning, and teacher knowledge was seen as having a strong intuitive element.

The role of intuition was emphasized by Schön (1987), who argued that professionals are often faced with unexpected events, when their knowing-in-action or routinized

responses fail to operate. In these moments, quick on-the-spot responses emerge in response to the unique situation, often calling for further, not routinized actions. Schön emphasized that the on-the-spot responses are governed by knowledge, which, as opposed to rational and articulated reasoning, cannot always be verbalized. Rather, it is spontaneous, often unconscious or intuitive.

Beyond having a strong element of intuition, teacher knowledge was also understood as being essentially interpretative in nature, which, according to Freeman (1996a), can best be captured by teachers' 'It depends' statements. When asked about how they do something in general, experienced teachers usually answer with 'It depends', which well illustrates the complexity of the situations in which they function and the number of circumstances that they have to take into account when they act. This also suggests that teacher knowledge was considered to be largely contextual, as it was teachers' work context that constantly provided the opportunity to interpret classroom experience and restructure knowledge (Freeman & Johnson, 1998).

The highly complex nature of knowledge in the interpretivist paradigm is most evident in the view that it is seen as being derived from multiple sources, including teachers' personal experience and their personal history (Carter, 1990; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). The emphasis on the 'personal' also gave rise to a number of terms to describe elements of teacher knowledge, such as 'practical knowledge', 'personal practical knowledge' (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990), or to describe it as the sum of personal experience and formally acquired knowledge in the phrase of 'personal philosophy' (Nunan, 1992). The richness inherent in the concept of teacher knowledge was captured by the metaphor of a 'landscape' (Connelly & Clandinin, 1995), which exemplifies the complex intellectual, personal and physical environment in which a teacher works and of which the teacher has a thorough understanding. In this metaphor, teachers' personal history was thought to constitute such an important part of the landscape that without an insight into it, teacher thinking was impossible to understand (Connelly, Clandinin & Ming Fang He, 1997).

The importance attached to teachers' personal history drew attention to *teacher beliefs*, which were found to have a powerful role in shaping the whole knowledge structure of teachers. Beliefs, which were considered to be made up from the "information, attitudes, values, theories, and assumptions about teaching and learning that teachers build up over time and bring with them to the classroom" (Richards, 1994, p. 385), were essentially subjective in nature, as they are derived from the unique experience of each teacher. Objective parts of knowledge, in contrast, were found to be based on formal instruction and learning, and could be transmitted by teaching.

The reason why teacher beliefs received distinctive attention in studies on teacher knowledge was that as opposed to knowledge that was acquired through conscious learning and was restructured from time to time by integrating new knowledge into existing knowledge structures, beliefs were found to be difficult to alter, especially if they were incorporated into the belief system at an early age (Pajares, 1992). What made them powerful was that they were observed to function as filters through which new phenomena are interpreted due to their affective, evaluative and episodic nature. As Pajares pointed out, adults would rather reevaluate facts and explanations that do not fit their belief system than change their beliefs.

As social, cultural and personal aspects of teaching were given particular attention, the importance of 'learning by doing' or professional practice started to be emphasized (Schön, 1987; Freeman, 1996a) along with the importance of learning to reflect, and to learn from others' reflection. Functioning in real contexts, interpreting unique situations, being faced with unexpected problems and inventing steps to solve them were seen as prerequisites for trainees to acquire knowledge. Nevertheless, this kind of learning by doing was different from learning by doing in the behaviourist tradition, where the application of effective techniques often meant simple copying, and trainees were not encouraged to develop the 'art of reflection-in-action' (Schön, 1987). That is, they did not reflect on how on-the-spot actions led to further on-the-spot actions. Reflection and interpretation put responsibility on both teachers and trainees, as methods were not believed to be effective in themselves, independently of the teacher who used them. Rather, as Freeman and Richards put it (1993), 'the teacher has both the freedom to act and with it the burden of needing to assess and to understand the consequences of those actions' (p. 207).

The understanding of teacher knowledge as being able to successfully function in specific situations was accompanied by an awareness that this knowledge is primarily present in practising teachers' reflection on their own experiences instead of the observations and theories of educational researchers, who work outside the every-day contexts of teaching (Freeman, 1996a). Practising teachers were considered to derive knowledge primarily from understanding their work context, including the school, the

learners, events of school life, team of colleagues and parents. Their reflections were thought to be elicited by the stories they tell about their work, which reveal through concrete settings, plots and characters what teachers know and how their knowledge develops over time (Freeman, 1996a). Storytelling was regarded as being beneficial for both teachers and trainees: by constructing a story, teachers themselves gain a deeper understanding of their experience, while trainees who listen to the story gain an insight into the complexity of teachers' every-day life, the teaching dilemmas they face, and the way they interpret all this (Sparks-Langer & Colton, 1991). Trainees' role in storytelling, however, is not a passive one, as 'what counts as a meaningful story depends on the listener who plays an active role in making sense of the story '(Elbaz, 1991, p. 5). This joint discovery of teachers and trainees makes storytelling a primarily social activity and evokes an image of community, which is thought to be particularly helpful for trainees when they learn about teaching (Elbaz, 1991).

2.4. The seven most important aspects of planning identified by previous research

When describing the most important issues that emerged from research on planning, seven major categories of investigation have to be mentioned, each of which represents an issue of particular interest to research in the area of planning. These are the following:

- Levels of planning
- Reasons for planning
- The relationship of mental and written plans
- Teaching experience
- Curricula and syllabuses

- Teaching materials
- Group characteristics

Three out of the seven categories (levels of planning; reasons for planning; the relationship of mental and written plans) capture essential features of planning by articulating that it is taking place at different levels for particular reasons, and that mental plans and written plans are assigned special roles in teachers' planning activity. The remaining four categories (teaching experience; curricula and syllabuses; teaching materials; group characteristics) represent factors that influence planning either through the teacher's personality or through the context. Teaching experience is a teacher dependent factor; that is, it influences teaching from inside the teacher, and it is what teachers bring to teaching and develop over time. The other three factors, such as curricula and syllabuses, teaching materials and group characteristics are contextual and influence teaching from outside, as they are all elements of a given teaching context. They are also referred to as factors included by the organizational context (Sardo-Brown, 1990).

Research reports (McCutcheon, 1980; Shavelson & Stern, 1981; Sardo-Brown, 1988) suggest that the group of contextual factors was found to include factors of primary and of secondary importance: factors, such as group characteristics, documents and teaching materials, were found to directly affect every teaching situation and were, therefore, considered to be of primary importance, while some other contextual factors, such as marking, exams and team membership, seemed to be of secondary importance as they might not affect all teaching situations, or might less directly influence them. Some further contextual factors, such as parental expectations, school requirements, classroom and school environment, and personal factors, were also observed to have an effect on

planning, but they were given less attention by researchers than the factors of primary and secondary importance listed above.

When examining how the above mentioned factors influence planning, it should be emphasized that these factors do not act in isolation. Rather, they affect planning in a complex manner. In certain cases, they influence each other through the teacher's planning activity, when, for example, group characteristics determine what teaching materials to choose, which might trigger off modifications in the syllabus. For this reason, it seems to be practically impossible to discuss the influence of these factors one by one. At the same time, regarding them as separate categories facilitates the description of planning and helps to see the elaborate net of circumstances in which planning takes place.

In the following section, I will present research findings in the seven areas and will discuss how the findings contribute to our understanding of what planning is.

2.4.1. Levels of planning

Clark and Yinger (1979) concluded that during a school year, teachers engage in eight different types of planning: unit, weekly, daily, long range, lesson, short-range, yearly, and term planning. In their study, unit planning was mentioned by teachers as the type of planning they most often do, and it was followed by weekly and daily planning. In another study, Yinger (1982) identified five levels at which the participating teacher planned: yearly, term, unit, weekly and daily planning. Sardo-Brown (1990) also observed the same five levels. Calderhead (1996), however, found that teachers planned at six main levels: yearly, term, unit, weekly, daily and lesson level.

The different levels of planning appeared to have a dynamic relationship according to Morine-Dershimer (1977, cited in Clark & Peterson, 1986; 1979), who found that planning was a *nested process*, which means that smaller units of planning such as lesson or daily planning are nested within larger units of planning. That is, the larger units provide a framework within which the smaller units can function (Figure 5). The same was found by Calderhead (1996), who pointed out that in order to produce logical, well-structured lessons teachers coordinated the various levels by breaking down longer-range plans into shorter-range ones.

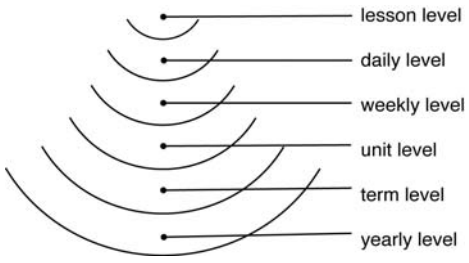

Figure 5: The nested process of planning based on Morine-Dershimer (1977, cited in Clark & Peterson, 1986; 1979)

2.4.2. Reasons for planning

Research into why teachers plan suggests that there are numerous reasons for planning. In one study, Clark and Yinger (1979) identified three main reasons: (i) teachers plan to meet their personal needs, e.g.: to reduce uncertainty and anxiety, to find a sense of direction, confidence and security, (ii) they plan to carry out instruction, e.g.: to collect and organize materials, to organize time and activity flow, and (iii) they plan to organize instruction, e.g.: to organize students, to get an activity started, to aid memory, etc.

Another obvious reason for planning, as it was also spelled out by Clark and Yinger (1987) in a later work, is adapting the curriculum to a concrete situation. Clark and Yinger pointed out that "the most obvious function of teacher planning is to transform and modify curriculum to fit the unique circumstances of each teaching situation" (p. 88).

2.4.3. Mental lesson images versus written lesson plans

Contrary to the importance often attached to written lesson plans in pre-service teacher training, researchers argue that teachers' lesson plans rarely translate into written plans. Morine-Dershimer (1977, cited in Clark & Peterson, 1986; 1979) and Calderhead (1996) found that the few details recorded on a written plan seldom reflect the teachers' entire plan. Rather, what is recorded in writing is brief notes in an informal grocery list format to remind the teachers of the "mental lesson images" that are typical lesson structures in their head on which they rely when they plan. However, there seems to be a difference in the way experienced and novice teachers use their written lesson plans. As Richards (1998) observed, novice teachers tended to follow fully elaborated plans closely, while experienced teachers either followed a brief outline and filled it out while teaching, or used the materials as a plan.

2.4.4. Teaching experience

Teaching experience was reported to be influential to such an extent that planning can be regarded as encompassing two subcategories: planning of novice and planning of experienced teachers. The difference between the two was attributed to the difference in experienced and novice teachers' development in two areas of teaching: the level of development of their schemata including mental scripts, teaching scenes and propositional structures as basic components, and their use of teaching routines. When compared, experienced teachers appeared to possess much richer schemata and used teaching routines more efficiently than novices.

The term 'schema', often referred to in cognitive psychology, was used to describe an abstract knowledge structure that summarizes information about many particular cases and serves for meaningfully interpreting information about teaching situations and students (Leinhardt & Greeno, 1986). According to Leinhardt and Greeno scripts, later referred to as lesson images by Thornbury (1999), function as well-known mental plans for common teaching activities, such as checking homework, presenting new information, providing practice or conducting class discussion. Scenes represent teachers' knowledge of people and objects in common classroom events such as whole-group instruction or small-groupwork, while propositional structures represent teachers' factual knowledge about components of the teaching-learning situation such as the students in the classroom, subject matter and teaching methods. Scripts, scenes and propositional structures are part of the repertoire of experienced teachers and do not need to be thought over on every occasion. Rather, they function as small building blocks of teachers' plans and are varied and linked according to the needs of the circumstances.

Novice teachers, however, have more difficulties in processing information in the complex and dynamic world of the classroom because of the lack of an elaborate schema

system (Carter, Sabers, Cushing, Pinnegar & Berliner, 1987; Peterson & Comeaux, 1987; Borko & Livingston, 1989; Livingston & Borko, 1989; Richards, 1998; Schemp, Tan, Manross & Fincher, 1998). As they do not have "plans-in-memory" formulated on previous occasions, novices need more time for planning each step of a lesson than experienced teachers do.

The second feature which characterizes experienced teachers' planning and seems to be part of novice teachers' repertoire to a much smaller degree is the use of routines, which are "an efficient and common mode of operation in situations where action and behavior are repetitive" (Yinger, 1979, p. 165). That is, routines are established procedures of planning and teaching which are made automatically by teachers. Routines were found to increase teacher effectiveness both during teaching and planning by simplifying the task of information processing in the classroom (Leinhardt & Greeno, 1986) and reducing the number of features of activities that the teacher needs to plan on a regular basis (Yinger, 1982). Yinger (1982) emphasized that routinization is an inevitable process as all successful activities are bound to undergo it and become the teacher's repertoire of knowledge. Experienced teachers, therefore, apply a wide range of routines while planning and teaching, which leaves them enough capacity to turn their attention to salient, and unexpected events of the classroom and deal with them. Due to the lack of experience, novices need to think over every step of the lesson when they plan, and in the classroom they need to concentrate on every piece of information instead of responding to the most important ones.

The use of rich schemata and routines in teaching was found to be responsible for the way planning, referred to as pre-active decision making, was related to the two other stages of decision making - interactive and postactive - in the case of experienced teachers and novices (Westerman, 1991). For expert teachers, the three stages of decision making were

found to be highly related, which means that the experts are flexible, can monitor what goes on during teaching and adapt their lessons accordingly. For novices, however, the three stages seemed to be more linearly related, which seems to suggest that novices usually stick closely to their lesson plans and are less likely to modify them when the situation requires them to do so.

2.4.5. Documents: curricula and syllabuses

Some comments on terminology

As the present study will look at how the different curricula and syllabuses - among other important factors – affect planning in the Hungarian educational context, translations of the relevant Hungarian documents will be provided. This creates the need to throw light on the difference in the use of the terms 'curriculum' and 'syllabus' by English and American experts, especially because the two words have not been used consistently in the relevant literature to refer to the same concepts (Nunan, 1988b).

While the word 'curriculum' is generally used to denote the document containing the overall educational objectives designed by policy makers, 'syllabus' is often interpreted as a more localized document containing specific subject-matter objectives to achieve at the classroom level (Candlin, 1984; Johnson, 1989). The tendency to use the two terms in this way is particularly true for British English (Nunan, 1988a). In American English, however, the term 'curriculum', rather than 'syllabus', is used to refer to all aspects of the planning, implementation and evaluation of curriculum, as well as to the content of particular courses. As summarized by Candlin and Rodgers (1985), what is called 'syllabus design' in British circles is known as 'curriculum design' in American English.

As to 'curriculum' and 'syllabus' used in the English translation of Hungarian documents, there is also some evidence that there is no agreement on which of the two is used in certain meanings. For example, while the word '*tanterv*' is mostly translated as 'curriculum', such as in '*National Core Curriculum*' [*Nemzeti Alaptanterv*], the word '*helyi tanterv*' is translated both as 'local curriculum' and as 'local syllabus'. In the following section, which reviews literature in English on the effect of curricula and syllabuses on planning, I will use the term which was used in the work to which I refer. In the last section of this chapter, when I present research carried out in Hungary and published in Hungarian, I will refer to certain documents using a well-established English equivalent if there is one, like in the case of '*National Core Curriculum*', and will use the term 'curriculum' for 'tanterv' and 'helyi tanterv', and 'syllabus' for 'tanmenet'.

The effect of syllabus use on planning

Curricula and syllabuses were found to affect teacher planning in a rather complex way by their constant interaction with teaching materials and the teacher's assessment of the

teaching situation. This multidirectional relationship is captured by two models – the input model (Figure 6), and the process model (Figure 7) – which differ in the way they see the place of curricula and syllabuses in teaching. Though the two models view language teaching in a somewhat simplified way, as few situations can be regarded as being purely input or process model-based, they identify the most important tendencies in teachers' curriculum and syllabus use.

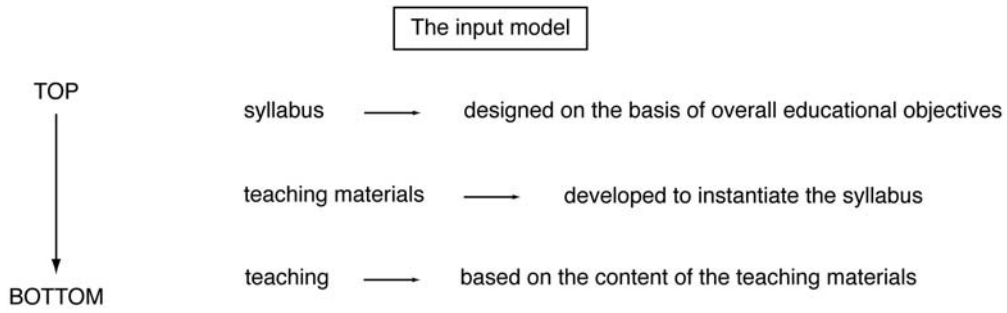

Figure 6: The input model of syllabus use based on Woods (1989)

According to the 'input model', the relationship between syllabuses, teaching materials and the act of teaching is a linear one, as the implementation of a program moves from top to bottom: 'overall educational objectives are set by a planning body, a syllabus is designed to carry out these objectives, materials are developed to instantiate the syllabus, the teaching is carried out to teach the content presented in the materials, and finally, the learners are evaluated on the degree to which they have learned this content' (Woods, 1989, p. 1). In this view, the pre-planned syllabus serves as a framework for the teacher, and teaching materials provide a link between the syllabus and the act of teaching. Planning is understood as being primarily based on teaching materials which are either designed in accordance with the objectives and content of the syllabus, or are selected from a range of materials that are considered to follow a similar route of learning as the syllabus does. This has a number of advantages and certain disadvantages.

On the one hand, syllabuses in the input model have the merit of facilitating planning by providing clear guidelines and saving time and energy to teachers that could be invested in other activities. On the other hand, they might restrict the freedom of teachers to a certain extent due to their prescriptive nature. On the whole, the input model and the role of syllabuses should be interpreted with some flexibility. That is, even if planning according to syllabus guidelines and using materials designed to fit the syllabus, teachers can creatively supplement those materials and tailor them to the needs of the particular teaching contexts (Stern, 1984). It is even more so, when teachers select their own teaching materials to meet the requirements of the syllabus, which comes somewhat closer to what is described in the process model of teaching.

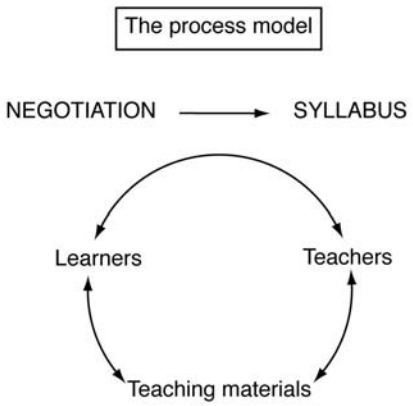

Figure 7: The process model of syllabus use based on Breen (1984, 1987)

According to the 'process model' the management of language learning is multidirectional, in which learners interact with teachers and materials to determine what and how they learn. This model regards the syllabus as open and negotiable which is the product of the agreement between the teacher and the learners. Teaching materials are not pre-planned; instead of conveying the content of the syllabus to the level of teaching, they are selected parallel with the process of negotiating the 'process syllabus' (Breen, 1984, 1987).

In places where the process model is adopted, the teacher is given more freedom to decide what to teach, and planning is based on a constant evaluation of teaching materials and the assessment of all elements of the teaching context, including learners' needs, interests, and their progress. It has to be noted that process syllabuses seem to be more common than it is assumed in the literature on curriculum design. In a study of language teachers' decision making processes, Woods (1989) found that even in cases where the input model was accepted by the system, the process model captured more accurately the way in which foreign language teaching, involving teachers, learners and materials, took place.

2.4.6. Teaching materials

Planning was found to be largely influenced by teaching materials, which are strongly intertwined with syllabuses and jointly provide a framework for teaching. Analyzing the role of teaching materials in planning, therefore, can hardly be separated from examining their relationship with syllabuses, as it is suggested by the previous section, too. Among all teaching materials, it is the coursebook that seems to have a particularly important role in shaping the course and, thus, to most directly affect planning.

When teaching is built on a standard coursebook, the coursebook often takes the role of the syllabus and constitutes the point of departure for planning (Dubin & Ohlstain, 1986). Several arguments were put forward both for and against using the coursebook in this way. Those in favour of the coursebook emphasized that using it as the basic framework has several practical benefits, for example it provides a predictable and visible structure to the lesson required by both teachers and learners (Hutchinson &

Torres, 1994), 'relieves the teacher from the pressure of having to think of original material of every class' (Harmer, 1991, p. 257), as well as reduces teachers' feeling of insecurity in moments of curriculum change, which is often a 'disruptive and threatening process' (Hutchinson & Torres, p. 322). The potential benefits of teaching materials designed by material writers as opposed to teachers are emphasized by Allwright (1981), who argued that material writers are more able to make informed decisions on teaching content, while teachers 'have the interpersonal skills to make classrooms good places to learn in' (p. 6).

Apart from their benefits, the potential negative effects of coursebooks on planning were also acknowledged by those who supported coursebook use. It was pointed out that if used without a reflective assessment and analysis of specific teaching situations, coursebooks can easily reduce planning to an uncreative activity. As O'Neill (1982) claimed, instead of using coursebooks as 'manuals which have to be followed to the letter, like playscripts' (p. 8), they should be regarded as 'proposals for action' (p. 8), which teachers can modify according to the needs of a particular teaching situation (O'Neill, 1982; Harmer, 1991; Harmer, 2001). Tailoring coursebooks to students' needs, that is 'deconstructing' and 'reconstructing' them, was seen as the art and the craft of teaching by Richards (1998).

Another potential danger of uncritical coursebook use that affects teachers' planning activity is known as 'deskilling' (Shannon, 1987). This might result in a reduction of the teacher's role to that of a technician who carries out pre-planned procedures as well as in a loss of creativity required by planning (Richards, 1993). In order to avoid the danger of deskilling, it was suggested that teachers who base teaching on coursebooks need to develop skills in evaluating and adapting ready-made materials (Nunan, 1988a; Sheldon, 1987; Richards, 1993; Ellis, 1997). Several checklists of criteria have been produced to help teachers carry out their own systematic evaluation (Williams, 1983; Breen & Candlin, 1987; Sheldon, 1988; Cunningsworth, 1995; Ellis, 1997), some encouraging predictive evaluation of coursebooks, i. e.: evaluation in order to decide what book to use in the future, and some encouraging retrospective evaluation, i. e.: evaluation in order to examine materials that have been used through the analysis of specific learning tasks.

Nevertheless, in some cases the use of coursebooks in teaching was completely rejected on the grounds that it inevitably leads to deskilling. As Swan (1992) and Thornbury and Meddings (2001) emphasized even if used with the understanding of the needs of particular teaching contexts, coursebooks and all ready–made materials might make teachers trust others' opinion and sit back instead of using their own judgements in considering what to teach and how to teach it. The necessary language input should be taken from 'real' texts written for native speakers of English, student grammar books and dictionaries, while coursebook material as well as texts specifically designed for language learning purposes should be entirely left out from teaching.

When planning is not based on the syllabus of a standard coursebook, it primarily manifests itself in teachers' own syllabus and material design activity, which is most often based on the assessment of the learners' needs and the process of negotiation with them. In that case teaching materials are not pre-planned, as the syllabus is not pre-planned, either; rather, they are selected parallel with the process of negotiating the syllabus (Breen, 1984, 1987). This, however, is not to suggest that adopting a negotiated syllabus entirely excludes the use of coursebooks. Rather, instead of considering coursebooks to provide the base of planning, teachers who implement the process model

see coursebooks as potential sources of materials that can be used quite creatively if negotiated with the learners.

2.4.7. Group characteristics

The importance of group characteristics has been widely discussed and numerous studies pointed out that teachers adapt teaching and planning to the group's characteristics. The group's character was identified by Breen (1985) as a 'distinct entity other than the sum of the individual psychological orientations of teacher and learners" (p. 144). That is, the group psyche has its distinctive features just like all the individuals in it. When planning, the teacher takes into account group characteristics as well as individual learner characteristics, and adapts plans accordingly. Group characteristics were seen as being strongly influential in how a lesson is planned and taught by Allwright and Bailey (1991), who pointed out that a lesson was always an interaction of the teacher, the learners and the materials. Freeman (1996a) also claimed that group characteristics seem to provide the starting point for planning, when he reporting that teachers' primary concern was the group of their learners when they were planning lessons.

The influence of learner and group characteristics becomes even more evident when analyzing learner-centred curricula, more precisely negotiated process syllabuses. When specifying the main features of a learner-centred curriculum, Nunan (1988a) emphasized the conscious involvement of learners in deciding on the content of the syllabus and the way it was taught. He claimed that by being assigned a collaborative role in creating the syllabus, learners were given the opportunity to consciously influence the teacher's planning activity in every respect. This idea lies at the heart of all negotiated syllabuses, or process syllabuses, where learners and teachers decide together on the content of teaching on a regular basis. The process model of syllabus use is another illustration of the influence learners and group characteristics might have on teaching materials, syllabuses and

teachers' decisions in their continuous interaction with these elements of planning and teaching.

2.4.8. Other contextual factors

McCutcheon (1980) and Sardo-Brown (1988) found that a big variety of contextual factors influence teachers' planning decisions, such as tests, marking, exams, parental expectations, school requirements, classroom and school environment and team membership. These factors may vary according to the individual teaching situations, and may even involve personal factors and teachers' family background.

2.5. Hungarian literature on planning from the 1990s

In Hungary, teacher planning and the related fields of pedagogy have come into the focus of attention since the 1990s due to the changes in political, social and economic circumstances, which have opened up a number of new directions in educational research. Parallel to this, there were fundamental changes in the field of educational policy and educational culture, such as the introduction of the *National Core Curriculum [Nemzeti Alaptanterv]* in 1995, the liberalisation of the coursebook market with special regard to foreign language coursebooks, and a general shift from central to local decision making by schools and teachers, which all had an impact on the way teachers were thinking, acting and planning. In this new climate, inquiry into teaching, in general, and into teacher thinking and planning, in particular, has become more and more active. As research carried out in the United States and Great Britain has already provided various descriptions and conceptualisations in the field of teaching, Hungarian scholars built on those understandings in their own works.

This section of Chapter 2 will summarize how planning has been approached in Hungarian educational circles during the last two decades by presenting the most important

tendencies in describing it, with special regard to the planning of teaching English as a foreign language. Though it is true that research on planning and in related fields of pedagogy has become more and more bulky in Hungary, this overview is far from giving a complete picture of all the works published in the field.

2.5.1. Various understandings of planning and teacher knowledge

According to the Hungarian Lexicon of Pedagogy [*Pedagógiai Lexikon*] published in 1997, planning [*tervezés*] is a 'creative process, in which ideas and objectives to be achieved in the future are visualized based on the individual's creativity, ability to communicate and the required knowledge base' (Gaul, 1997, p. 542). The definition contains some key words, such as 'creative', 'objectives', 'individual' and 'knowledge base', which throw light on the most important concepts inherent in planning.

As inquiries into planning are based on a particular understanding of teacher knowledge, it is essential to have a look at how teacher knowledge has been interpreted in Hungary since the 1990s. In the majority of the studies, it was referred to as being of theoretical and practical nature. Theoretical knowledge was considered to derive from formal education, while practical knowledge was thought to result from the individual experience of teachers gained as a result of life experience and experience of various teaching contexts (Falus, 2001b, 2003). Teacher knowledge has been approached from the perspective of its three content components: general pedagogical knowledge, knowledge of subject-matter, and pedagogical content knowledge (Falus, 2003). The role of teacher beliefs in creating the knowledge base of teaching was given particular attention both in general (Hunyadi, 1993; Falus, 2001a, 2001b, 2001c, 2003; Dudás, 2007), and in specific aspects of teaching, such as the relationship of teachers' beliefs about education (Lénárd &

Szivák, 2001), about learners (Golnhofer, 2001), and about planning (Kotschy, 2001) and their actual teaching. At the same time, the importance of teachers' intuition as opposed to their knowledge has also been emphasized (Falus, 2001b, 2003) with special regard to their influence on planning (Hunyadi & Nádasi, 2000).

Teacher planning in the Hungarian literature has been captured in various ways. In some works, it was discussed as part of a comprehensive overview of teaching with the intention of giving account of all the essential features of planning (Kotschy, 2003; Falus & Szivák, 2004), while in some other works, it was approached from the perspective of pre-service teacher training with a strong focus on how to teach it (Hunyadi & Nádasi, 2000; Kotschy, 2000). There have also been some examples of reporting empirical research, which was either directly concerned with planning (Kotschy, 1999), or was investigating a related field and touched upon teacher planning, too (Sántha, 2007). The majority of the works fall into the field of general pedagogy, and only few of them discuss planning in language teaching.

In most studies, teacher planning has been discussed along the same categories as in studies written in Great Britain and in the United States. That is, it was described as being done at four different levels - long-term (the school's local curriculum), yearly (year syllabus designed for each particular group), thematic or unit, and lesson level (Hunyadi & Nádasi, 2000; Kotschy, 2003). It was also pointed out that planning is affected by factors such as teaching experience (Szivák, 1999, 2003), group characteristics (Hunyadi & Nádasi), teachers' use of curricula and syllabuses and teaching materials. Issues related to the different levels of planning and their obvious relationship with curricular issues, as well as questions on the use of teaching materials were given particular attention and were addressed separately in a number of studies. Lesson planning, though perhaps less in the

focus of interest than curriculum and syllabus design or coursebook issues, was given particular attention by Holló, Kontra and Tímár (1996).

2.5.2. Inquiry into related fields of planning

Curriculum and syllabus planning

The concept of teacher planning in the Hungarian educational context was closely affected by the change brought about by the introduction of the *National Core Curriculum [Nemzeti Alaptanterv]* in 1995, and the *Frame Curricula [Kerettantervek]* in 2000. These two documents together with the renewed version of the *National Core Curriculum* published in 2003 had the function of providing the main guidelines of education, in general, and teaching the different subjects, in particular. In addition, they also formed the base of the local curricula to be designed by the teachers at the schools, and teachers' own syllabuses. The increased freedom teachers have started to enjoy since the 1980s as opposed to the restrictions of a centralized planning model followed until the 1970s, as well as the need to understand how to apply the different curricula in one's own teaching, placed teachers' planning activity in the focus of interest and resulted in a considerable body of literature.

Besides the analysis of the most important aspects of curriculum design (Ballér, 2003) and a comprehensive overview on foreign language curricula (Kurtán, 2001), a number of works born in the spirit of the curricular reform were concerned with the history

of curriculum use in Hungary, in general (Ballér, 1993, 2001), some with a focus on traditions of designing local curricula at schools, in particular (Ballér, 1993). As Ballér (1996, 2004) argued despite the tendency to centrally decide on curricular issues in the 1970s, teachers have had a certain amount of freedom since the 1980s, and have, therefore, acquired the skill to adapt the requirements of the different curricula and their own syllabus to the needs of particular teaching situations. Teachers are, therefore, seen as autonomous planners, who can use their freedom to creatively coordinate curricular requirements with the individual needs of the teaching situations as well as to design their own teaching materials in the light of the above needs. At the same time, it was widely acknowledged that the new circumstances might impose certain practical difficulties on teachers, who did not have experience in systematic curriculum design. In order to provide guidelines to writing the local curriculum, several guides were published that gave practical help in curriculum design (Káldi & Kádárné, 1996; Szebenyi, 1996).

Planning and coursebook use

Another related aspect of planning also affected by the change on the curricular scene as well as by the boom on the foreign language book market is that of the use of teaching materials and coursebooks. In the field of language teaching, the question of what material to use is even more crucial than in teaching other subjects, as books often take on the role of the syllabus and provide the framework of teaching. With the introduction of the *National Core Curriculum*, and the freedom to choose teaching materials from an always growing market, a critical evaluation of coursebooks and questions of how to adapt them to the different needs came into the focus of attention. This created the need to publish books which provide some help by offering selection and evaluation criteria to apply when

deciding which book to teach from (Némethné & Ötvösné, 1997; Zalánné & Petneki, 1997), thus facilitate planning.

2.5.3. Empirical investigations on planning

The field of empirical research carried out on planning in Hungary is relatively young, both in general pedagogy and in foreign language teaching. Meanwhile, it seems to gain more and more attention along with a growing interest in teacher thinking, in general. From all the research conducted in general pedagogy, two pieces are of special interest (Kotschy, 1999; Sántha, 2007), as they both contributed to our understanding of planning.

Kotschy's (1999) investigation intended to reveal how teachers who participated in her research were thinking about planning, and what beliefs they held about it. She found that when planning lessons, teachers were primarily concerned with content issues by seeking answers to the question of 'What will I teach?' in the first place, which was followed by considering previously taught material and deciding on the objectives of the lesson. However, when comparing teachers with various amount of experience, Kotschy concluded that concentrating on lesson content first was more common among novice teachers than among experienced ones who seemed to give more thoughts to questions of integrating the lesson into longer units of teaching.

The other investigation which made important points about planning was carried out by Sántha (2007) with a primary focus on how qualitative research methods can be exploited in researching teacher reflection, and with a secondary focus on planning. According to Sántha's observations, teachers were mainly concentrating on lesson structure and lesson content when they planned lessons, and the fact whether they recorded them in writing appeared to be personality- and teaching experience-dependent, most often determined by the individual needs of the teachers to feel secure in the lesson. When

comparing how novice and experienced teachers decided on lesson objectives, he found that novices identified attracting and keeping up attention as important aims, while experienced teachers, who interpreted them as a necessary precondition for work, did not even list them as objectives to be achieved. Rather, they aimed to develop learners' thinking and problem solution in the first place.

In the field of language teaching, few studies were directly concerned with planning, and it was mainly inquiry into other aspects of teaching that yielded findings on planning, too. One study, though, which investigated planning and curriculum design was a longitudinal one reported by Nikolov (2000), who described how she implemented a negotiated syllabus with primary school learners of English. Another example of empirical research, though not directly focusing on planning, was a baseline study (Nikolov, 1999) which was intended to gain insights into practices in Hungarian classrooms of English before the new school leaving exam was introduced. Though the study did not aim to analyse the situation from the perspective of planning, the data provided did give insights into related areas, such as coordinating teaching between the primary and secondary levels and the use of teaching materials, which affect planning too.

Summary

In this chapter, I have outlined how the different conceptualisations of teaching, such as teaching as an observable set of behaviour, as a decision-making process, and as the job of interpreting and managing unique teaching contexts, shape the understanding of planning and the practices of pre-service teacher training. I have also presented aspects of planning which emerge from empirical research and can be identified as representing the most important directions of inquiry into planning. Finally, I have showed how planning

was discussed in studies of general pedagogy and of teaching English as a foreign language in Hungary

What seems to emerge from the present review of the literature is that in the United States and in Great Britain a significant part of the relevant literature dates from the 1970s and 1980s, while the number of studies published after the 1980s seems to indicate a decline in interest. In Hungary, at the same time, it was not until the 1990s that research into teaching and teacher planning became more active. Yet, despite current interest in planning in general, and in planning the teaching of foreign languages in particular, there have been relatively few empirical research projects carried out in Hungary with the aim of describing planning, which justifies the need to inquire into the planning activity of teachers of English in Hungary.

Chapter 3

Research design

Overview

This chapter will describe the methodological design of the study by throwing light on its most important features, the methods of data collection, the research tools, the participants, the sampling strategy and the methods of data analysis. After that I will address questions of validity and reliability and will outline the most important ethical considerations adopted by the study. Finally, I will comment on the source and format of the data extracts that are used to illustrate the findings as well as on the methods of presenting the results of the study.

In order to explore the planning activity of Hungarian teachers of English, I have conducted a qualitative inquiry using a combination of research tools and methods which ensure a thorough investigation of the phenomenon from several angles. Since data collection and analysis extended over a period of 4 years starting in 2003 and ending in 2007, and included several stages of different design within the two main stages of the research, a more detailed description of the research methods for each of the separate stages is provided in the relevant sections of Chapters 4, 5 and 7 of the dissertation.

3.1. A qualitative perspective

As the current study intends to examine teacher planning from a qualitative research perspective, its approach to teacher planning, as well as its methods of data collection and analysis, reflects important features of qualitative research. First, it has an *exploratory and descriptive focus*, which means, as explained by Maykut and Morehouse (1994), that the study tries to explore and describe teacher planning relying on the research participants' words and meanings. The aim of the study is not the generalization of the results, but a deeper understanding of teacher planning from the perspectives of the teachers involved in the research.

Second, it can be characterized with an *emergent design*, and an *ongoing process of data collection and analysis*. In other words, instead of starting out from an initial hypothesis, the study has a broad focus of inquiry, as indicated by the research questions, and the first phases of data collection and analysis yield patterns that show directions for subsequent data collection and analysis – a process also referred to as inductive analysis (Patton, 1990; Cohen et. al. 2000) in which the outcomes of the study evolve from meanings derived from the data. Conducting the inquiry in this spirit was felt essential as only an emergent design is able to capture the richness of the research participants' perspective.

Third, the study has adopted a *multimethod approach* and used questionnaires and different types of interviews for data collection, which helps to gain an understanding of the research participants' words and actions from different perspectives (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994; Cohen et al., 2000). Fourth, interview data and observational data were collected by *participant observation*, which enables the researcher to see the research context through the research participants' eyes, on the one hand, and to analyze it from an outsider's position (Patton, 1990; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994; Cohen et al. 2000), on the other. That is, I entered the settings in which the research participants worked with the intention of revealing their interpretation of planning and observing how planning actually worked in the specific work contexts. Thus, participant observation required me to be present and be part of the context in which the research was carried out in order to capture all important elements of a complex situation, while it also required me to remove myself from the situation and rethink the meanings when the data were analyzed. This also throws light on the fifth qualitative feature of the present study, which is *data collection in the participants' natural settings* (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

As the participants of the study were all teachers of English at different schools, the research was carried out in the classrooms and in the schools where the teachers worked.

3.2. Methods of data collection and research tools

The study has had two main stages:

(i) *a questionnaire survey*, and

(ii) *an interview study*,

each comprising several shorter stages of data collection. The first main stage, the *questionnaire survey,* was based on a *preliminary study*, which generated initial directions for developing categories of inquiry used in the questionnaire. In the second main stage *in-depth interviews* on planning and *pre- and post-lesson interviews* following the *observation of a lesson* taught by the participating teachers were conducted (see Table 1).

Table 1 Summary of aims, methods of data collection and analysis

Stages of the research	**Aims**	**Methods of data collection**	**Methods of data analysis**
Stage 1: Preliminary study	to collect baseline data for questionnaire construction	Interviews	Qualitative methods: constant comparative method
Questionnaire survey	**to map out how teachers of English plan their teaching**	Questionnaires	Quantitative methods: statistical analysis of the questionnaires (descriptive statistics, independent samples T-test)
Stage 2: Interview study	**to gain in-depth insights into how teachers plan in the specific teaching contexts by eliciting how they see their own planning activity as well as discussing issues related to the planning of one particular lesson**	In-depth interviews; Lesson observations; Pre- and post-lesson interviews	Qualitative methods: constant comparative method; identifying points of interest in pre-service teacher training based on my experience as a trainer

3.3. Rationale for research methodology

The inquiry has started out from a preliminary study, in which interviews were conducted with teachers on how they plan teaching. The purpose of interviewing teachers was to acquire baseline data on planning which – together with the categories of inquiry identified by research in the field - show directions for constructing the questionnaire and for wording the questionnaire items.

In the first main stage of the research I examined the planning activity of a large number of teachers with the help of questionnaires. The reason why questionnaires were chosen as the research tool in this stage was that they can be used efficiently for collecting a huge amount of information in specific aspects of a certain topic (Dörnyei, 2003).

In order to gain deeper insights into teacher thinking during the act of planning as well as to enrich the understandings gained in the questionnaire survey, two sets of interviews were conducted: an in-depth interview to clarify what considerations shape the participating teachers' planning activity, and pre- and post lesson interviews following the observation of one lesson taught by the participants to identify on what basis they planned one particular lesson. The reason why interviews were found to be appropriate for the above purposes was that they have the potential of eliciting specific in-depth information (Hopkins, 1985; McNiff, 1988) as well as revealing teachers' thoughts on particular aspects of their own work (Freeman, 1998). Furthermore, the direct interaction of the researcher-interviewer and the participating teachers-interviewees was thought to provide the possibility to go back and clarify any points and to ask questions which were not foreseen (Cohen et al., 2000).

The interviews applied in the two different rounds differed in their primary data sources: the first round of interviews yielded data by eliciting the *teachers' self-report* on

their planning activity, while the second round of interviews used *lesson observations* and the *teachers' commentary* of the lesson observed as the main data sources. This also indicates a difference in focus on the general as opposed to the particular between the two kinds of interviews: the in-depth interviews intended to reveal the research participants' views about their own planning activity based on a wide range of planning situations without one particular situation in mind, while the pre- and post-lesson interviews looked into particular examples of planning with the intention of giving insight into how planning occurs in practice. This way the potential of studying the same phenomenon from different perspectives was exploited and research credibility was established. At the same time, data triangulation was not expected to reveal a one-to–one relationship between the findings of the in-depth interviews and those from the pre- and post-lesson interviews. Rather, the main aim was to enrich the understandings gained in the in-depth interviews with examples of planning in practice.

3.4. Sampling and participants

The teachers who participated in the research all teach English at primary or secondary schools. They are all committed professionals, who volunteered to participate and gave tremendous help at every point of my investigations by devoting their time and sharing their knowledge with me. However, I was aware that the research results might have been slightly different if data had been collected from teachers who were not motivated to take part. The reason why teachers who teach English at language schools or on a private basis were not involved was that the research aimed to investigate teacher planning as it occurs at schools with particular attention to the way it is determined by the elements of the specific school contexts so that the findings can be used in training teachers who will teach in similar contexts.

The first main phase of the research - the questionnaire survey – aimed to involve a large number of teachers in order to be able to draw up an overall picture of their planning activity and to reveal features of planning that represent the main planning concerns for most teachers. The second main phase of the research – the interview phase – intended to reduce the number of the participants to those who were willing to continue and were ready to teach a lesson that is observed by me. The teachers who participated in the questionnaire survey were selected from my own environment and from the environment of my colleagues by ways of convenience sampling, which 'involves choosing the nearest individuals to serve as respondents and continuing that process until the required sample size has been obtained ' (Cohen et al., 2000, p. 102). This means that the participants were not representative of the wider population of teachers of English, which was adequate for the present research as it intended to show planning through deeper insights into the practice of a group of teachers without any attempts to generalize the findings, as stated in 3.1. Meanwhile, in order to ensure the richness of the data and to obtain as many perspectives as possible, the research sought to build a varied sample by ensuring maximum variety according to two criteria. First, it aimed to have participants, whose learners together represent the whole range of age groups taught at primary and secondary schools. Second, it intended to reach maximum variety in terms of the amount of teaching experience the participating teachers had in teaching English at a primary or secondary school.

3.4.1. Variety of the age groups taught by the participants

When seeking to reach maximum variety of the age groups taught by the participants, it is important to examine what age groups are taught at primary and secondary schools. As it is well known to everyone living in Hungary, the bottom end of

the scale representing the age of learners at Hungarian schools is the age of 6, and though learning a foreign language is only compulsory from the 4th grade, when learners are 9 or 10 years old (*Nemzeti Alaptanterv*, 1995, 2003), most schools start teaching English or other foreign languages already in the 1st, 2nd or 3rd grade. The top end of the age scale at schools is the age of 19, and foreign language learning, including learning English, most often goes on until that age. Involving teachers who teach learners from the age of 6 to 19 was thought to enrich the data by offering insights into a wide range of teaching contexts, which differ in terms of the characteristics and the needs of learners of different age, as well as the requirements set at the different levels of learning - all reported to directly affect teachers' planning activity (Clark & Peterson, 1986; Clark & Yinger, 1987; McCutcheon, 1980; Sardo-Brown, 1988).

Maximum variety in terms of teachers teaching different age groups was achieved by selecting participants from different school types which together have learners from the age of 6 to 19. This, however, did not require having participants from all the nine school types where English is taught (eight-grade primary school; six-grade secondary school; five-grade secondary school; eight-grade secondary school; twelve-grade school; four-grade secondary school; four-grade vocational school; four- and six-grade secondary school; four-grade secondary and vocational school), as the Hungarian school system does not follow a model with clear-cut boundaries between the age groups in primary and secondary education. For example, an eight-grade primary school has learners from the age of 6 to 15, which partially overlaps with the age of learners studying at a six-grade secondary school (from 12 to 19), and with the age of those studying at an eight-grade secondary school (from 10 to 19). The age of admittance to a school may not be evident, either, as some schools run two secondary programmes, one for learners aged 12 to 19, the other for learners aged 14 to 19. From the perspective of the present research, all this

means that the whole range of age groups taught at schools was already ensured by having participants who together teach at all levels of primary and secondary education.

3.4.2. Variety of teaching experience

The second criterion followed in order to have a varied sample was to achieve maximum variety in terms of the amount of teaching experience the participating teachers have had in teaching English at primary or secondary schools. The reason why this was chosen as a criterion of maximum variety was that teaching experience was found to considerably shape planning strategies: beginner teachers were reported to plan according to patterns which were identified as being completely different from those followed by experienced teachers (Berliner, 1987; Sardo-Brown, 1990; Schemp, Tan, Manross & Matthew, 1998; Westerman 1991). Involving teachers with various amount of teaching experience was, therefore, essential in order to be able to capture how planning is affected by experience.

It has to be noted, too, that only experience in teaching English at a primary or secondary school counted. Experience in teaching subjects other than English, in teaching English at language schools, or on a private basis, was, therefore, excluded, though I was aware that any experience in teaching shapes planning to a certain extent. The reason why this was decided was the same as the one spelled out in 3.4. That is, the research intended to exploit its findings in pre-service teacher training, which focuses on preparing trainees for teaching English in primary and secondary school contexts. Therefore, including only experience gained in those contexts seemed to be justifiable.

3.5. Methods of data analysis

The research has applied a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods for data analysis in order to ensure that the results outline a truthful picture of the object of inquiry. The method chosen in one particular phase of the research depended on the nature of the data collected in it. Data yielded by the questionnaire survey were analysed quantitatively with SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences), using descriptive statistics for identifying frequencies of characteristic features of planning first, and the independent samples T-test for comparing the ratings according to the respondents' experience in teaching, second. Data emerging from the preliminary interviews and from the in-depth and observation-based interviews were analysed qualitatively with the help of the constant comparative method. In the in-depth and observation-based interviews this was complemented by the filtering of the findings according to their relevance to pre-service teacher training.

3.6. Validity and reliability

The trustworthiness of the study has been ensured by seeking to achieve validity and reliability within the qualitative research paradigms. The reason why special care has been taken to address them is that the validity and reliability of qualitative studies are more likely to be threatened by the subjectivity of the researcher and the respondents than those of quantitative ones (Cohen et al., 2000). More specifically, the role of the researcher having exclusive control over data collection and analysis might bring about researcher bias or the 'halo effect' (becoming highly selective in what is important in the data), while the role of the research participants being the main data sources, thus assuming a position in which they decide - often unconsciously - what will constitute the data might result in

problems of defining the situation, or reactivity (the participants' attempt to impress or influence the researcher) (Cohen et al.; Donaghue, 2003).

According to Cohen et al. (2000) a piece of qualitative research is valid if it is *credible* by the depth, richness and scope of the data, the researcher's objectivity, and the extent of triangulation. *Credibility*, which is essentially concerned with showing that the findings can accurately describe what is being studied, was established through the triangulation of different data sources, and the use of different methods. Using questionnaires, interviews and lesson observations for collecting data on teacher planning has guaranteed depth and richness because of the many perspectives they are able to capture, and ensured a firm base for interpreting the data. Illustrating the findings with quotations from the questionnaires and the interviews has supported data interpretation.

The reliability of the study has been established by showing that the researcher's interpretation of the findings is *confirmable* and is not distorted by researcher bias (halo effect). *Confirmability* - a synonym of *objectivity* in qualitative studies – has been ensured by data triangulation, the use of different research methods, and most importantly by peer debriefing, i.e.: by asking fellow researchers to check whether they see an accurate match between the words and actions of the research participants which constitute the data and the interpretations of the data.

3.7. Ethical issues

Ethical issues of qualitative research outlined by Maykut & Morehouse (1994) and Cohen et al. (2000) have been given special attention. As the research participants were viewed as collaborators who determined the understandings gained from the study, their informed consent was regarded as being essential for collecting data from them, putting the data to analysis and writing up the research later on. They were, therefore, informed about

the final aims of the study, its design and the approximate time limits within which the research results would be written up.

I also assumed that some of the research participants, whom I had not known before starting the research or who were distant acquaintances of mine, might feel vulnerable when letting me into their classrooms and showing me the everyday realities of teaching. In order to minimize the effects of reactivity, I emphasized from the beginning that the study did not focus on methodological aspects of teaching, nor did it intend to collect data in situations which were exemplary and served as models for other teachers to follow. Rather, as I pointed out on every occasion, the study sought to reveal every-day planning situations bearing all the specific practical and contextual features that each individual situation has. I also highlighted the practical goals of the study concerning its potential use in teacher training, which, I thought, might help teachers relate to it because of their own training experience, or – as in the case of school-based mentors - because of their work with trainees.

Last, confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed to all research participants. They were informed that their names would not be disclosed to anyone, and their words would be presented under a chosen first name in the dissertation.

3.8. The source and format of data extracts

The findings of the study will be illustrated with data extracts from the third part of the questionnaire and from the interviews. The main purpose of presenting data is to elaborate on the findings in the teachers' words that can best capture the depth and the richness of their insights, which I regard as the primary gain of the research. In places, however, where I have judged that the teachers' words do not add to the point being made, no extracts will be presented.

The length of the data extracts is quite varied: some extracts contain one quotation, but in some other extracts, I have decided to bring together several quotations which show variations on the same theme. It has to be noted, too, that many of the quotations could have been inserted into several subsections, as their content relates to more than one aspect of planning. This, however, follows from the nature of the phenomenon under investigation, as has been pointed out before. That is, planning is not an activity which has clear-cut elements; the main considerations and the most obvious problems inherent in it are always interrelated.

The language of the questionnaire and the interviews was Hungarian, so that the research situation should feel as a natural conversation about professional matters between colleagues and the teachers can express their thoughts with ease and precision. During data analysis, all the interviews were transcribed in Hungarian. The extracts that were chosen for illustrating the findings have been translated into English, but some samples from the original Hungarian transcripts are attached in Appendix 7. In order to make the informal language of the interviews easier to follow, the quotations that appear in the dissertation have been slightly edited, as the features of spoken discourse very often resulted in long, ungrammatical sentences with a great number of fillers, frequent repetitions of certain phrases and ideas inserted at places where they are not closely related to the point being made. However, the content of what was actually said by the teachers has not been changed in any way.

3.9. Methods used for the presentation of the results

Due to the emergent design of the study, the results of the different stages are not presented in one separate section on findings. As the individual parts of the research followed from one another, and conclusions drawn at the end of one part determined data

collection in the subsequent part, the results are discussed in different chapters of the dissertation in order to illustrate the line of thought that has been adopted.

Chapter 4, which describes the preliminary study that yielded the basic categories of inquiry for the questionnaire survey, will also include the main findings of the preliminary study in order to be able to demonstrate on what basis the questionnaire was constructed. Chapter 6 presents the findings of the questionnaire survey and provides initial answers to the research questions, which help to identify areas for the in-depth investigations of the interview study. Chapter 8 discusses the findings of the interviews, and Chapter 9 summarizes the final answers to the research questions.

Chapter 4

The preliminary study

Overview

In this chapter I will describe the preliminary study which supplied starting points for the questionnaire construction. After presenting the main aims of the preliminary study, the structure of the interviews, the participants and the method of data analysis, I will highlight the findings that outline key features of the participants' planning activity. In the last section, I will compare the features identified by the preliminary study to those reported in previous research on planning, and I will show in what way the two sets of features are similar or different.

4.1. Aims

After reviewing the relevant literature and identifying the main the categories of investigation which were used in previous studies on planning, a preliminary study comprising six interviews with teachers of English was made in winter 2003/2004. The purpose of the preliminary interviews was to prepare the process of questionnaire construction by collecting baseline data on planning from teachers who have day-to-day experience in how planning occurs in Hungarian school contexts in order to be able to identify what counts as relevant to Hungarian teachers. The teachers' accounts elicited by the interviews served as starting points to develop meaningful categories to be addressed by the questionnaire items.

The reason why the present study has chosen to start out from identifying what represents the most important issues of planning to Hungarian teachers of English instead of accepting those revealed by previous research in the field was that most research on planning was carried out in British or American educational contexts, which distinctly differ from the Hungarian one, as noted in the review of the relevant literature of the present dissertation. The emphasis, therefore, was put on eliciting data from teachers

whose teaching environment is similar to the ones in which the questionnaire survey will be conducted.

4.2. Procedure

The preliminary interviews fell between what was described as semi-structured and unstructured by Wallace (1998). As they intended to elicit information from teachers within the broad boundaries of the topic of planning in order to have 'richness, depth, authenticity, honesty about their experience' (Cohen, et al., 2000, p. 270), no detailed set of questions were used. However, certain issues, which were felt important to mention, were specified in advance, and a loose framework of four broad open-ended interview questions was developed in order to give some orientation to the interview participants as to which directions they can start out. The questions of the interview guide were the following:

(1) How do you plan your teaching? What comes to your mind when you hear the phrase 'planning teaching'?

(2) How do you put together the material that you use in teaching?

(3) How do you use the curriculum or the syllabus?

(4) How do the different group characteristics affect your planning?

Question 1, which had quite a broad focus, aimed to elicit anything that the interview participants associated with planning. Questions 2, 3 and 4 were intended to investigate how teaching materials, curricula, syllabuses and group characteristics, reported to be the most influential contextual factors in previous studies, affected planning. However, the interviews did not strictly follow the interview guide, as the participants

often mentioned the topics before being asked the question. For instance, Question 4 was never asked directly, as all the participants emphasized the role of group characteristics and their effect on planning well before addressing it with a specific question. Additional questions were also asked when the clarification of certain details was felt necessary in order to explore the topic more in depth.

4.3. Participants

In the preliminary study six teachers were interviewed who were selected from my environment by ways of convenience sampling following the principle of maximum variety in terms of teaching experience ranging from five to forty years and the age range of their learners from 6 to 19. The participating teachers - all women - were teaching at six different schools, out of which five are in Budapest and one in Baja, a town 155km south of Budapest. Table 2 shows how much teaching experience each participant had, the type of school they were teaching at, and the location of the school.

Table 2 Description of the preliminary interview participants

Participants	Teaching experience	School
Eszter	21 years	six- and four-grade secondary school in Baja
Judit	40 years	six- and four-grade secondary school in Budapest
Ági	15 years	six- and four-grade secondary school in Budapest
Éva	5 years	eight-grade primary school in Budapest
Tímea	12 years	six-grade secondary school in Budapest
Márta	5 years	six-grade secondary school in Budapest

4.4. Results of data analysis

In the analysis of the preliminary interviews, the four stages of the constant comparative method described by Maykut and Morehouse (1994) were followed. First, 103

units of meaning were identified in the participants' account based on the 'look/feel alike' criteria (Maykut and Morehouse, p. 136), and the emerging units were simultaneously compared to other units. Second, the 103 units of meaning were grouped into 24 categories and were given a category name (List 1). Some categories contained a larger number of units of meanings than others, and certain units of meanings could be classified as belonging to several categories. It also meant that units of meaning of the latter type served as links between categories. The reason why some very small categories were also included among the others was that they were considered to be essential elements of planning by the participants. The list of the categories was to be used in designing the questionnaire, in which each of the 24 categories was intended to be addressed by at least one questionnaire item.

In a third step, the 24 categories were placed on a map and the relationships between the interrelated categories were identified. Finally, with the help of the map, the 24 categories were classified into ten large groups in order to create units which later served as units of analysis in the questionnaire survey. The ten groups emerging from the findings of the preliminary interviews (List 2) were then compared to aspects of planning identified by previous studies in the field, and similarities and differences between the two lists were pointed out.

List 1 The 24 categories derived from the103 units of meaning:

(i) different levels of planning (long-term, yearly, unit, weekly, lesson)
(ii) the relationship between the different levels of planning (priority of long-term planning over lesson planning; one level can compensate for another one)
(iii) written plans and mental planning
(iv) the time and duration of planning the lesson
(v) organizing time within a lesson
(vi) class management and interactions
(vii) homework
(viii) the place of the lesson on learners' daily schedule
(ix) the place of the lesson on learners' weekly schedule

(x) the teacher's need to feel good
(xi) the teacher's need to feel confident
(xii) motivation
(xiii) character of the group and the individual learners
(xiv) feedback from learners
(xv) problems with the group
(xvi) ideas from colleagues
(xvii) planning together with colleagues
(xviii) coursebook use
(xix) use of the teacher's book
(xx) use of supplementary materials
(xxi) spontaneous reaction to events
(xxii) exams and marking
(xxiii) curricula and syllabuses
(xxiv) teaching experience

List 2 The final list of the ten large groups containing the 24 categories derived from the preliminary interviews

(1) Levels of planning
- different levels of planning
- relationship between different levels of planning

(2) Aspects of lesson planning
- the time and duration of planning a lesson
- organizing time within a lesson
- homework
- class management and interactions
- spontaneous reaction to events
- the place of the lesson on learners' daily schedule
- the place of the lesson on learners' weekly schedule
- motivation

(3) Written plans and mental planning

(4) The teacher's affective needs
- the teacher's need to feel good
- the teacher's need to feel confident

(5) Teaching experience

(6) Group characteristics
- character of the group

- problems with the group
- feedback from the group

(7) Documents: curricula and syllabuses

(8) Teaching materials

- use of the coursebook
- use of the teacher's book
- use of supplementary material

(9) Exams and marking

(10) Team membership

- ideas from colleagues
- planning together with colleagues

A closer look at the list of the 24 smaller categories and the ten larger groups immediately shows that four smaller categories were chosen to be separate groups by themselves without being grouped into a larger unit with other categories (*Written plans and mental planning; Curricula and syllabuses; Exams and marking; Teaching experience*) while each of the remaining twenty smaller categories was assigned to a larger group together with some other categories. The reason why the four categories came to be handled as separate groups was that they seemed to represent a distinct subfield within the field of planning by themselves and were, therefore, less directly linked to other categories than the ones which were found to be closely related to other categories.

4.5. Similarities and differences between the findings of the preliminary interviews and previous studies

There are several similarities and a number of differences between the findings of the present study and previous studies concerning the most important aspects of planning. As Table 3 illustrates, six groups out of the ten identified by the preliminary interviews correspond to six of the seven most important aspects revealed by previous studies (*Levels of planning; Mental lesson images versus written lesson plans; Teaching experience;*

Group characteristics; Documents: curricula and syllabuses; Teaching materials). This seems to suggest that the most important issues of planning are the same in all teaching contexts.

However, the preliminary interviews revealed four important aspects of planning that had not been discussed among the most important issues in studies on planning before (*Aspects of lesson planning; The teacher's affective needs; Exams, tests and marking; Team membership*). In the present study, therefore, four new groups were set up from categories that were found to cluster around a common aspect of planning not identical with any of the aspects mentioned in the relevant literature.

The group *Aspects of lesson planning* was created as a separate group because the participating teachers referred to it as the most commonly practised form of planning giving distinctive attention to a number of points included in it. Though other levels of planning were also discussed, the teachers always returned to questions of lesson planning, and looked considerably more in-depth into its aspects than into any other levels of planning.

The reason why *The teacher's affective needs* came to be included as a separate group was that the importance of feeling confident and secure was strongly emphasized by all participating teachers, as illustrated by Extracts 1 and 2.

Extract 1, The teacher's need to feel confident

I plan all my lessons for the week. Not because I can't teach without a short plan, but I feel really bad without it. I am almost certain that the students wouldn't notice if I didn't think the lessons over before teaching them, but I still need to see clearly what we'll do and how it is connected to what we did before.(Judit)

Extract 2, The teacher's need to feel good and enjoy the lesson

We all need to feel good about what we are doing - they, the children and me, too. I can only enjoy teaching, and I think this is related to planning, too, if I can try out new things with them from time to time. (Ági)

The group *Exams, tests and marking* emerged as a distinct issue within the field of planning, as exams, such as the state language exam, tests, and the need to give marks at certain points of the term were reported to affect the participating teachers' planning activity.

The fourth group *Team membership,* not listed among the most important aspects of planning in previous studies, was created in order to include all the categories related to the influence of working in a team on planning. As one of the teachers emphasized discussing ideas with colleagues and visiting each other's lessons were beneficial for her own planning, as she gained a number of useful insights which helped to plan her own lessons later on.

Extract 3, Ideas from colleagues

We observed a lesson taught by a mentor and discussed it later. She planned the lesson the way it should be done. Though we have all been in the profession for a while, and we are not new to it in any sense, it still drew my attention to a number of important issues in planning that I may not have considered otherwise. (Éva)

Extract 4, Planning together with colleagues

On the pre-service course, we sometimes planned lessons in twos or threes, which raised a couple of issues that would not have emerged if I had planned alone. As if we had better ideas together than everyone alone! Even after doing it I had the feeling that the lesson was much better planned than any other time. I definitely enjoyed the experience of planning in a team, but I also know that it does not work in every-day situations for a number of practical reasons. (Éva)

Table 3 The most important aspects of planning identified by the preliminary interviews and by previous studies

The ten most important aspects of planning identified by the preliminary interviews	**The seven most important aspects of planning identified in previous studies**
Levels of planning	Levels of planning

Aspects of lesson planning	
Mental lesson images versus written lesson plans	Mental lesson images versus written lesson plans
The teacher's affective needs	
Teaching experience	Teaching experience
Group characteristics	Group characteristics
Documents: curricula and syllabuses	Documents: curricula and syllabuses
Teaching materials	Teaching materials
Exams, tests and marking	
Team membership	
	Reasons for planning

As it has been pointed out earlier, identifying the most important aspects of planning was essential in order to obtain categories that the questionnaire items will address. The following chapter will describe how the questionnaire made use of the findings of the preliminary interviews and in what way the items were developed.

Chapter 5

Stage 1 of the research: Drawing a picture of planning

Overview

In this chapter I will present in what way I investigated the planning activity of a large number of teachers in the first main stage of the research. The data in this stage were yielded by a questionnaire survey, which had been constructed on the basis of a preliminary study described in the previous chapter. In the following sections I will explain how the questionnaire made use of the findings of the preliminary study, and I will provide a detailed description of the aims of the questionnaire, its separate parts, the results of its validation and the methods of data analysis.

5.1. Aims of the questionnaire survey

In spring 2004, I conducted a questionnaire survey with primary and secondary school teachers of English from Budapest, and from two towns, Vác, a town of 35 000 inhabitants, 20 km north of Budapest, or from Baja, a town of 39 000 inhabitans, 155 km south of Budapest. The questionnaire survey intended to throw light on the various activities and thought processes that teachers are engaged in when they plan. Apart from seeking answers to the research questions, the analysis of the data from the questionnaire survey largely determined the subsequent phase of the research in that it identified areas for focused inquiry in the interviews.

5.2. Description of the questionnaire

When designing the first draft of the questionnaire, I followed the most important steps of questionnaire construction suggested by Dörnyei (2003), such as deciding on its general features in terms of its length, format and main parts, writing effective questionnaire items as well as appropriate instructions and examples, and piloting the questionnaire. It was only after the validation of the first draft that the final questionnaire to be used in the research was created.

The final questionnaire (see Appendix 1 and 2) has three parts. The first part elicited background information about the questionnaire respondents, while the second and third parts yielded the data that were analysed and interpreted in order to gain an understanding of planning.

5.2.1. Part 1: Background information on participants

The first part of the questionnaire includes eight questions, the purpose of which was to elicit background information about the respondents. By answering the questions, respondents were asked to provide the following information about themselves:

Question 1: the type of school where the respondent teaches
Question 2: the number of lessons the respondent teaches a week at the school
Question 3: the description of the groups the respondent teaches at the school (their age, the number of English lessons they have a week, the title of the coursebook they use)
Question 4: teaching experience in general
Question 5: experience the respondent has had in teaching English
Question 6: experience the respondent has had in teaching English at a primary or a secondary school
Question 7: teaching qualification other than English the respondent holds
Question 8: the type of degree the respondents holds

Answers to the eight questions were divided into two groups, one including data of primary importance from the perspective of planning, the other containing information judged to less directly influence planning. Information grouped in this way was intended to be used for two different purposes in the research. The first group came to include data elicited by Questions 1 and 6 on the type of school at which the participating teachers teach, thus revealing what age groups they teach, and the experience they had in teaching

English at a primary or secondary school, both of which were thought to directly affect planning strategies and were used as criteria of maximum variety when selecting participants for the research.

However, contrary to my original plan, information elicited by the second group of questions (Questions 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8) was not used in the interpretation of the research results. Though I was originally going to consider the influence of the degree the participating teachers held (Question 8), their qualification in teaching subjects other than English (Question 7), the experience they had in teaching in general (Question 4), and in teaching English in any form in particular (Question 5), the number of lessons they teach a week (Question 2), the grades they teach and the coursebook they use with each grade (Question 3), the ongoing data analysis and the emerging findings showed that the data elicited by the second group of questions do not advance the research towards its aims, since they do not add to a deeper understanding of how planning occurs.

5.2.2. Part 2: Focus on different features of planning – fifty-nine statements on planning

The second part constitutes the main body of the questionnaire, in which respondents were asked to rate fifty-nine statements on their planning strategies on a four-point Likert scale. By circling a number from '1' to '4', respondents could indicate to what extent they felt the statement was characteristic of them. The reason why statements were chosen as questionnaire items was that the amount of time required to respond to a large number of issues could be made shorter by including closed-ended items (Wallace, 1998).

As it was pointed out in 4.1, it was the findings of the preliminary interviews that served as the starting point for developing categories of inquiry to be addressed by the statements of the questionnaire. When designing the statements, the following principles were followed:

- Each of the 24 categories of planning identified by the preliminary interviews was addressed by at least one item. Respectively, each statement fell into one of the 24 categories. As each category identified by the preliminary interviews belongs to one of the ten larger groups representing the most important aspects of planning, each statement fell into one of the ten large groups.
- In order to make the sequence of statements natural and easy to follow, statements that represent the same aspect of planning were arranged in smaller clusters within the questionnaire with a linking item between the clusters, where possible. Linking clusters of items was possible because the ten groups representing the most important aspects of planning are related, and certain items can be regarded as belonging to more than one group. These items can, therefore, serve for linking clusters representing different aspects of planning.
- Statements with an opposite meaning were not inserted one after the other so that the respondents should not be puzzled by having to answer them in a row.

The four-point Likert scale used for rating the statements was designed in such a way that '1' stood for 'not at all characteristic of me', while '4' meant 'absolutely characteristic of me'. It was felt that the four options of the scale gave sufficient variety to choose from and were easier to handle than five or six options. The advantage of having an even number of response options was that, instead of opting for the middle number, as it could have happened in many cases, respondents had to decide which end of the scale – the 'absolutely characteristic' or the 'not at all characteristic' - was closer to their choice.

5.2.3. Part 3: Individual ideas on planning

The third part of the questionnaire elicited the teachers' thoughts on planning by asking them to answer an open-ended question. The function of this part was to collect

ideas that were triggered off by the questionnaire items in order to identify whether they deepen the understandings gained from the teachers' responses in the second part or raise any new issues that were not addressed by the questionnaire items. However, though it was hoped that most respondents would share their thoughts on planning, it was also to be expected that after completing six pages of the questionnaire, not all respondents would respond to the third part.

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5.3. Validating the questionnaire

The first draft of the questionnaire was piloted and validated by a linguist and a teacher trainer, both of whom have had substantial experience in working with questionnaires in linguistic and cultural studies. Next, it was given for validation to a secondary school teacher who could be a potential research participant. As all the three validators were Hungarian, validation was carried out in Hungarian.

The purpose of the validation was to increase the reliability, validity and practicality of the questionnaire by achieving simplicity, intelligibility and clarity, as suggested by Converse and Presser (1986). Its most important functions were to check the clarity of questionnaire items, instructions and layout, to eliminate ambiguities in wording, to check the time taken to complete the questionnaire, to identify redundant questions and misunderstood items, as well as to gain feedback on the type of questions (closed or open) and the rating scale.

The method used for validating the questionnaire was first eliciting the validators' comments on important aspects of the questionnaire, then using think-aloud as a research method relying on guidelines suggested by Ericsson and Simon (1993) and Olson, Duffy and Mack (1984). All the validating sessions were recorded in the form of notes.

The validation revealed that the length of the questionnaire was acceptable. On the other hand, it threw light on a number of problems concerning the usability of the scale, and the simplicity, intelligibility and clarity of the items, which were solved by modifying the contents and the layout of the questionnaire. In addition, it drew attention to the need to add statements that address aspects of planning judged important by the validators, but not being targeted by any focused items. Finally, the validation pointed to the need to justify the order of the statements in the questionnaire and to arrange them in such a way that they ensure a smooth flow of thoughts, which makes it easier and quicker to respond to them. In the next sections I will describe on what basis new questionnaire items were created and in what order the items were arranged.

5.3.1 Statements added to the questionnaire

It was concluded by the validation that some important issues that are closely related to planning were not addressed by any of the questionnaire items on the first draft. These were the issues of improvising and implementing on-the-spot ideas, modifying plans, and planning to enhance self-confidence. The reason why they were missing from the questionnaire was that they were not revealed by the preliminary study as issues of interest to the teachers involved.

As the validators pointed out the ability to improvise and the awareness of reinterpreting and modifying plans according to the immediate needs of the situation are essential parts of all teachers' repertoire and need to be included in the questionnaire in the form of statements. The teachers' feeling of confidence was, however, addressed by statements, but the validators felt that the question whether teachers feel uncertain if they do not plan should be investigated directly by a separate statement.

5.3.2. Final order of the statements

The order of the statements in the first draft had to be modified so that it should feel natural to the respondents when they read it. Table 4 lists the ten most important aspects of planning and the questionnaire items addressing each of the aspects.

Table 4 The ten most important aspects of planning and the number of the questionnaire items that address them

Aspects of planning	**Questionnaire items representing the particular aspect of planning**
1. *Levels of planning*	No. 1, 7, 8, 9, 10, 46
2. *Aspects of lesson planning*	No. 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 31, 32, 37, 38, 42, 44, 45, 48
3. *Written plans and mental planning*	No. 15, 16
4. *The teacher's affective needs*	No. 14, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24
5. *Teaching experience*	No. 43
6. *Group characteristics*	No. 47, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53
7. *Documents: curricula and syllabuses*	No. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
8. *Teaching materials*	No. 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39, 40, 41
9. *Exams and marking*	No. 57, 58, 59
10. *Team membership*	No. 54, 55, 56

5.4. Methods of data analysis

5.4.1. Part 1 of the questionnaire

Data yielded by Question 1 (the type of school the participating teachers teach at) and Question 6 (the experience the participating teachers have in teaching English at a primary or secondary school) were collected in order to describe the participating population in terms of the factors that primarily influence planning. In the second main stage of the research, the same data were used for selecting participants for the interviews in order to ensure that the interview participants also represent maximum variety according to the type of school where they teach and the experience they have in teaching English at a primary or secondary school.

5.4.2. Part 2 of the questionnaire

The data of Part 2 were analyzed in the following two steps with quantitative statistical methods:

(i) The ratings given to the different statements were analysed by calculating frequencies based on the number of valid responses (N), the mean, the standard deviation (s. d.), the most frequently obtained score (mode), the minimum (min.) and the maximum (max.) value given to each questionnaire item, which helped to identify the specific features of each important aspect of planning.

(ii) The influence of one important factor of planning – teaching experience – was further examined quantitatively by applying the independent samples T-test for comparing the ratings of novice and those of experienced teachers to all the fifty-nine questionnaire items in order to see whether the difference in teaching experience results in significantly different answers in the two groups. This complemented the first step of the analysis by giving a deeper insight into how teaching experience affects planning.

5.4.3. Part 3 of the questionnaire

Points of interest in Part 3 of the questionnaire were identified according to the following two criteria:

(i) they were mentioned by at least five teachers, thus seem to reflect common concerns, or

(ii) though only spelled out by one or two teachers, they capture individual thoughts and illuminate points that are appropriate for engaging teachers in reflection about planning, and might be used in pre-service teacher training in the teaching of planning.

In the next step, the findings of the analysis were studied in order to identify

- whether they deepened the understandings gained from the analysis of Part 2 of the questionnaire, or
- whether they added any new points to what had already been revealed that would require some follow-up investigation.

After giving a detailed description of how data were elicited and analysed in the questionnaire survey, I will discuss the results of analysing the questionnaire data in the next chapter.

Chapter 6

Findings of the questionnaire survey

Overview

This chapter presents the findings of the questionnaire survey. First of all, I will discuss the results of analysing teachers' answers to the fifty-nine statements in Part 2 of the questionnaire. After that, I will show in what way teachers' thoughts on planning elicited by Part 3 of the questionnaire supported what emerged from the analysis of Part 2. Next, I will summarize the results of the questionnaire survey by providing initial answers to the research questions in order to narrow down the range of the findings to those that are directly related to the focus of the research. Finally, based on the results of the analysis, I will identify what areas of planning need to be given attention in the interview study.

In April and May 2004, 103 questionnaires were handed out to teachers of English at primary and secondary schools in Budapest, Vác, and Baja. Out of the 103 questionnaires 86 were returned. As in two questionnaires no background data were supplied about the respondent, 84 were found to be complete and were analysed.

The analysis of the questionnaire survey, which was the first main stage of the research, helped to gain insights into how the participating teachers plan their teaching. Their responses to the fifty-nine statements in Part 2 of the questionnaire provided meaningful data and helped to identify the most important issues within the framework of the ten most important aspects of planning used as the categories of analysis. However, the analysis showed that Part 3 of the questionnaire, which was meant to elicit the participating teachers' comments on planning, proved to yield much less meaningful data than it had been expected, which might throw some doubt on the usability of the findings in the interpretation. In order not to jump to conclusions that cannot be supported, it is, therefore, essential to approach the analysis of Part 3 with an awareness of the potential limitations caused by the quantity of the data elicited. Nevertheless, the findings revealed by the analysis of the teachers' comments in Part 3 mostly support what was found by the

analysis of Part 2 of the questionnaire, but neither do they seem to further deepen the understanding of planning, nor do they provide new directions of inquiry for the interview study in the second main stage of the research.

The analysis of the questionnaire survey ends with a summary in which the findings are filtered according to their relevance to the main focus of the research, and those directly related to it are used for providing initial answers to the research questions. This, however, is not to suggest that the questionnaire survey elicited sufficient data to answer the research questions and to draw conclusions. Rather, it is seen as the first completed phase of the research, which makes important points and outlines directions for further inquiry.

In what follows, the results that were revealed by the analysis of the questionnaire survey will be presented in three big sections. Firstly, I will outline the most important issues that emerged from the participating teachers' responses to the statements in Part 2 of the questionnaire. Secondly, I will present the results of analysing the teachers' comments on planning made in Part 3 of the questionnaire. Finally, I will summarize the findings of the questionnaire survey by attempting to give early answers to the research questions and will identify points that need to be further clarified in the next stage of the inquiry.

6.1. The most important features of the respondents' planning activity – Analysis of Part 2 of the questionnaire

The data of Part 2 of the questionnaire were analysed by means of descriptive statistics. In the following discussion, the number of valid responses (N), the mean, the standard deviation (s. d.), the most frequently obtained score (mode), the minimum (min.) and the maximum (max.) value given to each questionnaire item will be presented and commented on in order to illustrate on what basis the findings were identified.

As the responding teachers were asked to rate the statements on a four point Likert scale, the means fell between '1' and '4'. Values of standard deviation fell between 0.4 and 1.2 in all cases. If standard deviation was between 0.4 and 0.6, it was regarded as being low and the scores were seen as giving homogenous data. If standard deviation was over 0.8, the scores were found to give a rather heterogeneous data. If standard deviation was between 0.6 and 0.8, the scores were interpreted as being varied to a certain extent.

Before presenting the results, one final comment needs to be made concerning the range of the insights in the different categories and the length of the separate sections that describe them. That is, the number of the questionnaire items on one particular aspect of planning and the number of the resulting findings within that group were considerably varied: some aspects were represented by more than 10 questionnaire items (e.g.: *Aspects of lesson planning; Teaching materials*), while some other aspects were addressed by much fewer ones (e.g.: *Mental lesson images versus written plans; Teaching experience*), depending on how much information on that particular aspect I intended to elicit with the help of the questionnaire, and how much I thought would be more easily revealed by the in-depth investigation of the interviews. This resulted in a bigger number of issues to be discussed within the larger groups and fewer findings to be presented within the smaller ones.

6.1.1. Levels of planning

As revealed by the preliminary interviews, teachers of English planned their teaching at five levels (long-term, yearly, unit, weekly and lesson), out of which four levels were addressed by the questionnaire items included in the group *Levels of planning* (lesson planning, which appeared to be the most frequently practiced form of planning was handled separately as one of the ten most important aspects of planning, and will be

discussed in 6.1.2). The analysis of the means indicates that the responding teachers are engaged in the four levels of planning in the following order of frequency: long-term, yearly, unit and weekly planning. The time of starting to teach new material does not seem to be planned; it is probably handled flexibly without taking initial decisions on it.

Long-term planning, or as it is worded in the questionnaire 'the awareness of what learners should achieve by the end of their studies', emerged as the most commonly practised form of planning, which is indicated by its highest mean in the group (3.66). Its mode (4), the minimum value obtained by it (3), and the resulting low value of standard deviation (0.47) suggest a homogenous set of ratings, which all point to an apparent agreement among teachers on the importance of setting long-term goals. It has to be pointed out, however, that one needs to be careful when assessing what role teachers' awareness of learners' long-term goals plays in practice, as it is not known in what way 'bearing in mind what the students should achieve by the end of their studies' influences shorter-range planning. In other words, what seems to be certain from the ratings obtained by Statement 7 on long-term planning is that the majority of the responding teachers do consider learners' long-term goals, but no data are available on how this affects their planning activity.

If one attempts to find out more about it, two possible hypotheses should be considered. In the first case, if the awareness of long-term goals really determines planning at the subsequent levels, such as yearly and unit planning, then planning might be a nested process as found by Morine-Dershimer (1977, cited in Clark & Peterson, 1986; 1979), in which the larger units provide a framework, or a 'nest' within which the smaller units can function. In another case, however, though long-term planning is there in the form of understanding learners' long-term goals, long-term plans may not serve as major guidelines. In that case, the different levels of planning may not be coordinated, and

teachers' shorter-range plans might not reflect teachers' awareness of achieving long-terms plans. The clarification of these questions is even more difficult, as the data are collected from the teachers themselves, who may not consciously analyse how the different levels of their planning activity are coordinated, if coordinated at all.

Nevertheless, an initial answer to the above dilemma emerges from the analysis of ratings obtained by Statement 46, which investigated whether achieving long-term objectives is more important to teachers than planning individual lessons. Though the number of valid answers (77 out of 84) shows that several teachers skipped this statement, the mean (3.10), and the mode (3) meaning 'mostly characteristic' indicate a priority given to long-term planning. If this is the case, it might suggest that lessons are planned in the interest of achieving long-term goals, which seems to support that long-term objectives and long-term planning in general serve as a framework for shorter-range plans.

When examining the relationship of the different levels of planning, it has to be emphasized that their relationship is much more complex than it might seem from the above discussion, and it can only be investigated with a somewhat simplified view of planning in mind. Moreover, comparing plans made at the various levels might raise certain difficulties as they largely differ in the extent to which they are detailed and involve practical decisions concerning tasks and management issues. Therefore, I was aware that the comparison of long-term planning, which most often involves the identification of long-term objectives, and lesson planning, which is concerned with specific day-to-day issues of teaching, reflects a simplification of the two types of planning activities..

The last finding of the analysis in this group shows that the time of starting to teach new material is not planned in advance. Though teachers might have a rough idea about it, as it is indicated by the importance attached to unit planning, they probably handle the timing of teaching new material rather flexibly.

Table 5 Questionnaire items on *Levels of planning* and the relevant statistical values

Questionnaire items	**N**	**Mean**	**S. d.**	**Mode**	**Min.**	**Max.**
1. I think over what I am going to teach during the year at the beginning of the school year.	84	3.30	0.71	3	1	4
7. I bear in mind what the students should achieve by the end of their studies.	83	3.66	0.47	4	3	4
8. Before starting to teach a new unit of the coursebook, I think over how I will teach it.	84	3.29	0.70	3	1	4
9. I plan what I will teach the following week before I start the week.	84	2.92	0.81	3	1	4
10. I start teaching new material at a preplanned point in time even if the group has not entirely acquired what they have been taught before the planned new material.	84	1.42	0.56	1	1	3
46. I find it more important to achieve long-term objectives than to plan individual lessons.	77	3.10	0.77	3	1	4

6.1.2. Aspects of lesson planning

The first finding of the analysis within this group is that the participating teachers do give special attention to planning their lessons, and they most often do so on a day that is close to the day when the lesson is taught. In other words, the participating teachers do not think out their lessons in the few spare moments they have in the breaks between the lessons without being initially engaged in focused reflection on what needs to be done, nor do they teach their lessons by closely following all activities of the coursebook. This supports the findings of the preliminary interviews on the importance attached to planning lessons. The analysis of *Aspects of lesson* planning had two further important findings, which complement each other and outline a pattern for lesson planning that the participating teachers have adopted.

First, modifying previously thought-out plans and adapting them to the events of the lesson as well as implementing ideas that occur to teachers during teaching as a reaction to the events of the lesson seem to be among teachers' most important concerns, which suggests a considerable amount of sensitivity and responsiveness to the teaching situation. The statement on modifying lesson plans (Statement 45) has the highest mean (3.55) and the lowest standard deviation (0.52) in the group, and the two statements on improvisation (Statements 37 and 38) have quite high means (3.10 and 2.94). However, the ratings obtained by Statements 37 and 38 give a less homogenous set, which indicates that the participating teachers' views on whether or not to implement on-the–spot ideas are quite varied

The other important finding is that the main elements of teachers' lesson plans seem to be the *content of the lesson* including homework to be set as well as related *organisational issues*, such as the forms of learners' interaction, both of which are chosen with the attempt to plan lessons that the learners enjoy. The two findings suggest that lesson plans mostly serve as flexible outlines to be implemented with sufficient space left for reacting to the needs and the problems that arise as the lesson unfolds.

This approach to lesson planning seems to be further confirmed by the findings related to planning timing. The participating teachers neither specify the exact time intended to be spent on one particular activity in their plans, nor do they leave the question of timing entirely open to be decided on in the lesson. This suggests that teachers might have an initial estimate as to how much time to devote to one particular activity, but the final decision is taken in the act of teaching and is adjusted to the learners' needs. The last finding of the analysis is that neither the day of the week nor the period of the day for which the lesson falls seems to seriously affect the way the teachers involved plan their lessons. Though the analysis did not raise any specific questions, the interview study,

which will give priority to issues of planning lessons, will undoubtedly lend itself to testing the findings in practice.

Table 6 Questionnaire items on *Aspects of lesson planning* and the relevant statistical values

Questionnaire items	**N**	**Mean**	**S. d.**	**Mode**	**Min.**	**Max.**
11. I plan my lessons in the hours preceding the lesson.	84	1.96	0.94	1	1	4
12. I plan my lessons on the day, or on one of the days preceding the lesson.	83	3.3	0.77	4	1	4
13. I only have time to plan my lessons during the few minutes before the lesson.	84	1.35	0.55	1	1	3
17. I plan how many minutes I will spend exactly on every task.	84	2.32	0.82	2	1	4
18. I plan in what form the learners will work on the different tasks (individually, in pairs, in small groups).	84	3.36	0.59	3	2	4
19. I plan what homework I will give.	84	3.27	0.66	3	1	4
31. I strongly consider the place of the lesson within the learners' daily schedule when I plan it.	83	2.1	0.81	2	1	4
32. I plan different activities for the beginning of the week and for Friday.	83	2.25	0.9	3	1	4
37. If, in the lesson, I have a good idea as to what to do next, I use that idea even if it has not been planned.	83	3.1	0.86	4	1	4
38. I like improvising in the lesson.	84	2.94	0.82	3	1	4
42. I decide in the lesson as to how much time should be given to the group for carrying out a certain activity.	82	2.45	0.73	3	1	4
44. The events of the lesson have an effect on how much we do and how we do it.	84	3.21	0.64	3	1	4
45. If I can see that the lesson does not proceed as I planned, I modify my original plan.	83	3.55	0.52	4	2	4

48. I find it very important to plan lessons that the group can enjoy.	82	3.24	0.59	3	2	4

6.1.3. Mental lesson images versus written plans

The analysis of the two statements in this group shows that the majority of the participating teachers write short lesson plans, and not detailed ones. This is illustrated in Table 7 by the mean of Statement 15 (2.88), which is very close to '3' meaning 'mostly characteristic', and that of Statement 16 (1.72), which is close to '2' meaning 'very little characteristic'. The mode obtained by Statement 15 (3) is also higher than that of Statement 16 (2).

Table 7 Questionnaire items on *Mental lesson images versus written plans* and the relevant statistical values

Questionnaire items	**N**	**Mean**	**S. d.**	**Mode**	**Min.**	**Max.**
15. I write a short lesson plan for each lesson.	84	2.88	0.98	3	1	4
16. I write a detailed lesson plan for each lesson.	84	1.72	0.68	2	1	4

6.1.4. The teacher's affective needs

The analysis revealed that planning has a role in fulfilling teachers' affective needs, as having a clear idea as to what one is going to do in the lesson greatly contributes to teachers feeling good and confident. This confirmed previous research findings (Clark & Yinger, 1979), according to which one of the main reasons for which teachers planned was to feel secure during classroom teaching. Another important finding of the analysis is that the way the plan is implemented - whether it is followed strictly or modified - seems to preoccupy teachers much less. This suggests that it is primarily thinking before teaching to

clarify aims and ideas, which teachers need in order to feel confident. Meanwhile, though having plans in hands enhances teachers' confidence, the opposite does not seem to be true according to the analysis. That is, teachers do not necessarily feel uncertain without a plan. This, at first sight, seems to contradict the finding on the relationship of planning and feeling confident, but it immediately suggests that teachers have a way of compensating for the lack of plans. If one considers that improvising and modifying plans during classroom teaching are among the most important strategies teachers adopt, as revealed by the analysis of *Aspects of lesson planning* (6.1.2), then it might partly explain how the lack of planning is overcome.

The six statements on *The teacher's affective needs* can be divided into two groups, one including statements that are intended to reveal what value thinking process involved in planning is attached to from the perspective of teachers' affective needs (Statements 14, 20 and 21), the other including the ones that investigate the relationship of the implementation of the plan and teachers' feelings (Statements 22, 23 and 24). If the statistical values in the two groups are compared, it can be seen that the thinking process has a bigger value for teachers than realizing the plans in practice.

As it is shown by Table 8, Statements 20 and 21 on how teachers' feelings are affected by their thinking over the lesson and seeing clearly what they want to do have the two highest means in the group (3.61 and 3.57), which indicates a strong relationship between planning and fulfilling affective needs. This is also supported by the mode of the two statements (4) and their low standard deviation, suggesting an agreement among the participating teachers' in this respect. Statement 14 on whether teachers feel uncertain without planning has a lower mean (2.72). What has to be noted, though, is its very high value of standard deviation (1.03), showing a varied set of opinions: though the majority of

the teachers feel uncertain without a plan, the number of those who are not discouraged by it is also relatively high.

As far as the implementation of the plan is concerned, the mean of Statement 22 (2.96) suggests that in most cases teachers are happy if their lessons develop as planned, but those of Statement 23 (2.67) and Statement 24 (2.3) throw light on the fact that not being able to implement plans as they were intended to does not raise a problem for most teachers. The most frequently obtained value of Statement 24 (2) also supports that falling behind with what was planned does not make teachers feel bad at all.

Table 8 Questionnaire items on *The teacher's affective needs* and the relevant statistical values

Questionnaire items	**N**	**Mean**	**S. d.**	**Mode**	**Min.**	**Max.**
14. It makes me feel uncertain if I do not think over what I will do in the lesson.	84	2.72	1.03	3	1	4
20. If I can clearly see what I will do, I feel better in the lesson.	84	3.61	0.57	4	2	4
21. If I think over what I will do in the lesson, it makes me feel more confident.	84	3.57	0.64	4	1	4
22. I do not feel good unless I can finish with everything that I planned for the lesson.	84	2.96	0.79	3	1	4
23. I do not feel good unless the lesson progresses as it was planned.	82	2.67	0.86	3	1	4
24. I feel bad if I cannot keep to the planned timing and we fall behind with what was planned.	83	2.3	0.77	2	1	4

6.1.5. Teaching experience

The role of teaching experience was investigated in two ways. First, the ratings obtained by the one questionnaire item addressing the influence of experience in teaching

(Statement 43) were analysed by descriptive statistics. Then, all the ratings given to the 59 questionnaire items by novice teachers and those given to them by experienced teachers were compared with the help of the independent samples T-test in order to gain a better understanding of how teaching experience affects the different aspects of planning represented by the questionnaire items.

6.1.5.1. The influence of teaching experience as teachers see it

The analysis of the ratings obtained by the only questionnaire item addressing the influence of teaching experience on planning threw light on the fact that experienced teachers do not spend less time on planning than they did when they were beginners. This is illustrated by the mean (2.34) and the most frequently given score (2) listed in Table 9. In other words, experienced teachers, just like novice teachers, devote a considerable amount of time to planning. However, it might easily be the case that their planning differs in a number of ways from that of novice teachers, as suggested by previous studies (Leinhardt & Greeno, 1986; Berliner, 1987; Borko & Livingston, 1989; Westerman, 1991), though the descriptive statistical analysis of the data did not reveal anything about it.

Table 9 The questionnaire item on *Teaching experience* and the relevant statistical values

Questionnaire items	**N**	**Mean**	**S. d.**	**Mode**	**Min.**	**Max.**
43. The more experienced I am, the less time I spend on planning teaching.	83	2.34	0.84	2	1	4

6.1.5.2. The influence of teaching experience as the statistical comparison of novice and experienced teachers shows it

The T-test used in the statistical analysis of the teachers' responses found that the difference between the ratings given by the 26 novice and the 58 experienced teachers was

significant in the case of six questionnaire items, which are listed in Table 10. Though the difference between the ratings of the two groups is not very important, as it does not exceed 0.45 in any of the six cases, the findings of the independent samples T-test outline certain tendencies in the way novice and experienced teachers differ.

In the description of the results of the independent samples T-test, the mean of the ratings given by novices and by experienced teachers to a particular questionnaire item, the difference between the two means, the 'T' value and the value of 2-tailed significance (p) will be reported. The difference in the ratings of the two groups was found to be significant if the 'p' value was under 0.05. In the forthcoming discussion, however, the actual figures will only be referred to at those points where they are thought to make the understanding of the interpretation easier.

The findings of the independent samples T-test support those revealed by earlier studies, according to which

- experienced teachers have a more comprehensive view of the teaching process than novices, which enables them to concentrate on larger units of teaching than the lesson (Westerman, 1991),
- they are more flexible and are willing to adapt their plans to the circumstances due to their quick and more efficient information processing when they interpret classroom situations (Carter et al., 1987; Richards, 1998; Schemp et al., 1998; Westerman, 1991),
- they tailor their lessons to group characteristics to a larger degree (Berliner, 1987; Westerman, 1991), and
- they are more able to respond to learner cues (Westerman, 1991).

The six statements concerned belong to the group of *Levels of planning* (Statements 8 and 9), to *Aspects of lesson planning* (Statements 31, 42 and 45), and to *Group*

characteristics (Statement 51), though the latter statement is very closely related to lesson planning issues, too. The fact that the two statements on the different levels of planning – one addressing unit planning (Statement 8), the other addressing weekly planning (Statement 9) – received higher ratings from experienced teachers than from novices might suggest that experienced teachers are more likely to think in terms of larger units of teaching than the lesson due to their more comprehensive view of the whole teaching process. Novices, at the same time, might be more preoccupied with planning the lessons and may have less concern for longer-range plans.

The ratings obtained by the three statements on lesson planning (Statements 31, 42 and 45) seem to indicate more flexibility and sensitivity to the needs of the teaching situation on the part of experienced teachers, as they report to adapt timing to the groups' needs to a larger degree and express a readiness to modify already existing plans when needed. Though the place of the lesson within the learners' daily schedule (Statement 31) was rated quite low by both novices and experienced teachers, it seems to be slightly more considered by experienced teachers, thus indicating more attention to the circumstances on their part in this respect, too.

Finally, learners' interest appears to affect experienced teachers' planning more than that of novices, as revealed by the means obtained by Statement 51. This might be explained by the richer schemata system that experienced teachers possess, which makes information processing in the classroom quicker, thus leaving more capacity for adapting lessons to learner needs and responding to student cues.

Table 10 Questionnaire items that obtained significantly different ratings from novice and experienced teachers

Questionnaire items	**Mean of novice teacher**	**Mean of experi-enced**	**Mean diffe-rence**	**T**	**p**

	s	teachers			
8. Before starting to teach a new unit of the coursebook, I think over how I will teach it.	3.00	3.43	-0.43	-2.67	0.00
9. I plan what I will teach the following week before I start the week.	2.61	3.06	-0.45	-2.41	0.01
31. I strongly consider the place of the lesson within the learners' daily schedule when I plan it.	1.84	2.22	-0.38	-2.02	0.04
42. I decide in the lesson as to how much time should be given to the group for carrying out a certain activity.	2.16	2.57	-0.41	-2.43	0.01
45. If I can see that the lesson does not proceed as I planned, I modify my original plan.	3.38	3.63	-0.24	-2.02	0.04
51. I build on the learners' interest when I plan teaching.	2.88	3.22	-0.33	-2.27	0.02

6.1.6. Group characteristics

The analysis of this group supports the primary importance of group characteristics revealed by several studies. The group's progress and its character seem to be important indicators as to what to alter compared to what was planned, what activities to plan for the lesson, and when to start teaching mew material. Learners' interest and their indirect feedback on teaching also appear to be influential factors of the participating teachers' planning. Direct feedback, however, does not seem to be commonly elicited; therefore, it does not have an important effect on planning.

Table 11 Questionnaire items on *Group characteristics* and the relevant statistical values

Questionnaire items	N	Mean	S. d.	Mode	Min.	Max.
47. If I can see that the group does not progress as they should, I think over what to change.	84	3.73	0.46	4	2	4
49. It is the group's character that determines what activities I plan for them.	84	3.46	0.61	4	1	4
50. I start teaching new material when the group has already acquired a certain knowledge of the preceding material.	83	3.19	0.59	3	2	4
51. I build on the learners' interest when I plan teaching.	84	3.11	0.64	3	2	4
52. I ask the learners for feedback (oral, written, in the form of a diary) on my teaching.	83	2.34	0.91	2	1	4
53. I build on the learners' indirect feedback when I plan teaching.	84	3.1	0.62	3	1	4

6.1.7. Documents: curricula and syllabuses

The analysis revealed that the participating teachers do not plan according to curriculum or syllabus guidelines. Though several of them design their own year syllabus, they do not seem to closely follow it. Out of the three major curricula, which are the local curriculum, the *Frame Curriculum* and the *National Core Curriculum*, the most frequently consulted one is the local curriculum, which is followed by the *Frame Curriculum*, and it is the *National Core Curriculum*, which was found to be the least influential.

When interpreting these findings, it should be pointed out that school requirements might strongly determine in what ways curricula and syllabuses are exploited for planning purposes. Some schools require teachers to design year syllabuses for each group they teach, and these syllabuses then have to be handed in to the team of language teachers. When designing the year syllabus, teachers might also be required to consult the local curriculum, or in certain cases, the *Frame Curriculum* and the *National Curriculum*. This

shows that the extent to which teachers rely on the three major curricula as well as on their own year syllabus might often be influenced by the school where they teach, and, perhaps, not so much by their own preferences.

A closer look at the statistical values listed in Table 12 supports these results. The high values of standard deviation indicate that the participating teachers differ a great deal in their curriculum and syllabus use, in general. The highest mean in the group is obtained by Statement 5 (3.00), which investigates whether teachers design their own year-syllabuses, while the lowest mean was obtained by Statement 6 (2.43), which looks into the question whether teachers follow their own syllabuses during the school-year. This seems to suggest that though a written syllabus is often designed by teachers at the beginning of the school-year, their real shorter-range planning is based on guidelines other than the written year syllabus.

The question of what weight written year plans have in teachers' yearly planning is further challenged by the relatively high mean (3.0), the most commonly given rating (4), and the exceptionally high standard deviation of Statement 5 (1.24), which suggest that it is quite common to write a year syllabus among the participants, but since the ratings are very much varied, the number of those who do not write a year syllabus is relatively high, too. This might point to two different approaches in terms of yearly planning. One is that those teachers who do not design year syllabuses do not plan the year at all. This, however, does not seem to be very likely, as it would contradict the finding on the importance attached to yearly planning by the participants, discussed in 6.1.1. It is, therefore, more realistic to assume that teachers do plan the year, but their real plans are not recorded in the form of written year syllabuses.

Table 12 Questionnaire items on *Documents: curricula and syllabuses* and the relevant statistical values

Questionnaire items	N	Mean	S. d.	Mode	Min.	Max.
2. When I plan the year, I plan in accordance with the guidelines of the *National Core Curriculum*.	83	2.46	0.97	2	1	4
3. When I plan the year, I plan in accordance with the guidelines of the F*rame Curriculum.*	83	2.54	0.99	3	1	4
4. When I plan the year, I plan in accordance with the local curriculum.	81	2.85	1.03	4	1	4
5. I write a year-syllabus at the beginning of the school year.	82	3.0	1.24	4	1	4
6. I follow my year-syllabus during the school year.	81	2.43	0.92	3	1	4

6.1.8. Teaching materials

The analysis reveals that teaching materials are primarily selected from a coursebook which seems to provide the base for planning. This, however, does not mean that the coursebook is the only source of teaching materials, not even when teachers teach a high number of hours a week. The analysis also shows that teachers supplement the coursebook with extra material and vary the order of the coursebook activities according to their own plans. The understanding that no coursebook can be used without initially thinking over how to teach from it also seems to support the value teachers attach to the thinking side of planning discussed in 6.1.4.

Affective factors might also play a role in the selection of teaching materials. If the coursebook is the exclusive source of materials and is not supplemented, teachers might find their work somewhat boring, which provides one more reason for enriching teaching with supplementary materials. Finally, the decision on what supplementary material to use

seems be taken either on one of the days before the lesson, or on the day of the lesson, but almost never during the minutes right before the lesson.

Table 13 Questionnaire items on *Teaching materials* and the relevant statistical values

Questionnaire items	**N**	**Mean**	**S. d.**	**Mode**	**Min.**	**Max.**
25. We only use the coursebook in the lessons.	83	1.49	0.73	1	1	3
26. The coursebook that I use does not require prior thinking about what to teach and how to teach it.	79	1.53	0.67	1	1	4
27. When teaching a unit from the coursebook, I follow the order of the activities.	83	2.32	0.81	2	1	4
28. I do not supplement good coursebooks with extra teaching materials.	84	1.63	0.72	1	1	3
29. If I teach too many hours a week, I only use the coursebook.	84	1.48	0.71	1	1	3
30. I follow what the teacher's book says when I plan my lessons.	84	2.03	0.78	2	1	4
33. I supplement the coursebook with different materials.	84	3.66	0.54	4	2	4
34. I decide what supplementary material to use in the lesson in the hours preceding the lesson.	83	1.71	0.7	2	1	4
35. I plan what supplementary material to use in the lesson on the day or on one of the days preceding the lesson.	83	3.31	0.66	3	2	4
36. I decide what supplementary material to use in the lesson during the few minutes right before the lesson.	84	1.23	0.45	1	1	3
39. At least half of the material that I use in teaching comes from books or sources other than the coursebook.	84	2.29	0.86	2	1	4
40. When teaching a unit from the coursebook, I vary the order of the activities according to my own plan.	81	3.04	0.75	3	1	4
41. I feel bored if I only use the coursebook.	83	3.04	0.89	3	1	4

6.1.9. Exams, tests and marking

According to the analysis, issues of testing, such as the number of major tests to be administered, and the expected date of those tests, are not planned. Though the number of major tests seems to be considered at the beginning of the school year, the final decision is not taken at that point in most cases. The approximate time of administering the tests seems to be even less planned. The least often planned aspect of testing seems to be assessing learners' oral performance.

What seems to follow from all this is that questions of written testing are left open at the beginning of the school year, and decisions on the number and the dates of major tests are taken during the year. As Table 14 shows, the mean of Statement 57 (2.36) on planning the number of major tests, and that of Statement 58 (2.14) on planning the time of administering them are quite close to '2' meaning 'very little characteristic', the most frequently obtained rating by both statements is '1' meaning 'not at all characteristic', and the standard deviations are high in both cases. This indicates that the ratings are very much spread out away from the means with a considerable number of ratings at both ends of the scale, which throws light on a wide range of approaches to testing issues among the participating teachers. Though the great majority seems not to incorporate testing into their yearly planning, there are a number of teachers who regard written testing as an issue to be planned.

Oral testing, on the other hand, is not seen as matter of lesson planning by most responding teachers. This is illustrated by the mean of Statement 59 (2.07), and its mode (2), both meaning 'very little characteristic'. Though its standard deviation is quite high (0.85), it is definitely lower than that of Statements 57 and 58, which suggests somewhat less variation in the participating teachers' approach to oral testing.

The fact that oral testing does not represent an important planning issue for most responding teachers might be explained in two ways. One explanation might be that the participating teachers do not test their learners' oral performance at all, and they only mark their learners' written works. The other explanation might be that teachers assess their learners' oral performance continuously without using a formal testing procedure; therefore, they do not see the need to plan it. In this case, the assessment of learners' oral performance is probably based on the teacher's observation and judgement, and is incorporated into the final mark together with marks given for written works.

Table 14 Questionnaire items on *Exams, tests and marking* and the relevant statistical values

Questionnaire items	**N**	**Mean**	**S. d.**	**Mode**	**Min.**	**Max.**
57. At the beginning of the school year I decide on the number of the major tests my groups will write during that year.	84	2.36	1.16	1	1	4
58. At the beginning of the school year I decide on the approximate time of the major tests.	83	2.14	1.04	1	1	4
59. I decide which learner's oral performance I will assess in the lesson when I plan the lesson.	83	2.07	0.85	2	1	4

6.1.10. Team membership

The analysis revealed that team membership influences the participating teachers' planning, especially using colleagues' ideas, as indicated by the highest mean of Statement 54 in the group (3.32) and its lowest standard deviation (0.64), both listed in Table 15. Planning together with colleagues and observing each other during teaching appear to affect the participating teachers' planning much less. What is not known, however, is whether the statements on the two latter aspects of team membership obtained lower

ratings than the statement on using colleagues' ideas, because planning together with colleagues and observing each other's classes are considered to be less influential factors of planning in general, or because they are not part of teachers' work, and their effect is not sufficiently known to teachers.

Table 15 Questionnaire items on *Team membership* and the relevant statistical values

Questionnaire items	**N**	**Mean**	**S. d.**	**Mode**	**Min.**	**Max.**
54. I use my colleagues' ideas in teaching.	84	3.32	0.64	3	1	4
55. I like planning together with my colleagues.	83	2.59	0.97	2	1	4
56. Observing my colleagues' lessons help me plan my own lessons.	81	2.55	0.92	2	1	4

6.2. Teachers' insights on planning – Results of the analysis of Part 3 of the questionnaire

The third part of the questionnaire, in which teachers were asked to share their thoughts on planning in response to an open-ended question (*'Please, write here any of the ideas that occurred to you about planning while completing the questionnaire, and feel free to add anything else on the topic'*), did not prove to provide useful data in spite of having been validated before being administered. This is illustrated by the low number of teachers who completed it, on the one hand, and by the fact that many of the comments they made were too short and simple to deepen the understanding of any of the issues raised by the research, on the other. This might be explained by the length of the questionnaire: after responding to six pages of questionnaire items, the participants were not motivated to specify their ideas on planning. However, it is not surprising at all, especially if one considers that researching an issue with questionnaires has the general

limitation of eliciting insufficient or superficial answers Dörnyei (2003). The reason why this was not revealed by the validation might have been that the validators, whom I knew in person, were particularly concerned about helping me design a research instrument. Being aware of the importance of having feedback on every part of the questionnaire, they probably invested more time and attention into completing it than it could be expected from the research participants.

Out of the 84 teachers who completed the questionnaire, 26 filled in this section. As it has been stated at the beginning of this chapter, the analysis revealed that the majority of the ideas spelled out by the 26 teachers mostly supported the findings of Part 2 of the questionnaire without deepening their understanding and identifying new directions of inquiry. However, it needs to be emphasized again that the findings of the analysis of Part 3 need to be interpreted rather carefully, since due to the superficiality of many of the ideas spelled out and the overall lack of meaningful remarks, the findings do not lend themselves to drawing conclusions. The following sections are, therefore, intended to give insights into the most commonly addressed issues without suggesting that they accurately capture what planning essentially means for teachers.

Nevertheless, the points identified as supporting previously revealed ones address the following eight issues:

(i) The complexity of planning

(ii) Problems of comparing and evaluating different levels of planning

(iii) The importance of motivating learners when planning lessons

(iv) The relationship of planning and teachers' feelings of confidence

(v) The role of teaching experience

(vi) The role of group characteristics and individual learner characteristics

(vii) Problems around year syllabuses

(viii) The role of teaching materials

6.2.1. The complexity of planning

Several comments made in Part 3 illustrate the highly complex nature of planning through emphasizing points, such as it is a design profession, it is a never ending activity, and it includes cognitive processes as well as a wide range of practical activities.

Extract 5, Planning as a design profession

This is the best part of my job, the part that I enjoy the most. It's a creative design profession.

Extract 6, Planning as a never ending activity

Planning is like a barrel that has no bottom. You never reach the point where you feel this is the end. I used to think that I would spend less time on it when I am more experienced, but now I know that this is a never-ending activity.

Extract 7, Planning as a thinking process

I do not think that planning can be traced in time and space. To me, planning is rather a cognitive process as its most important element is thinking. You can do it anywhere at any time, when you travel home from work, for example, and not necessarily at your desk, at home. It may not even include writing; it is usually recorded in my head.

Extract 8, Planning as a process involving a wide range of activities

Planning consists of various activities ranging from thinking everything over to preparing flash cards for the lesson.

One teacher drew attention to the fact that due to the complexity inherent in it, planning cannot be investigated with the help of a questionnaire.

Extract 9, The difficulty of researching planning

I do not think that you can gain or give information on planning through a questionnaire. It's far too complex for it.

6.2.2. Problems of comparing different levels of planning

The idea of how difficult it is to compare long-term and lesson planning as a reaction to Statement 46 in Part 2 of the questionnaire, emerged from several comments. This supported that long-term and lesson planning involve completely different types of activities, and for this reason no priority order can be established between the two, as also discussed in 6.1.1.

Extract 10, The interrelatedness of long-term and lesson planning

Both long-term and lesson planning are equally important for me. I plan lessons so that I can reach long-term goals.

6.2.3. The importance of motivating learners when planning lessons

The issue of motivating learners through planning lessons that they can enjoy, discussed in 6.1.2, emerged from several comments.

Extract 11, Motivating learners in the lesson as one of teachers' main concerns

The main point in lesson planning is to do activities that the children enjoy. This is the only way to make them want to learn English. *I always keep in mind the importance of motivating the children. This requires me to constantly think about what material to bring to the lessons.*

6.2.4. The relationship of planning and teachers' feelings of confidence

The idea that planning contributes to teachers feeling confident, discussed in 6.1.4, was expressed by several respondents.

Extract 12, The effect of planning on feelings of confidence

When I plan my lessons, I act confidently in the classroom. *I may not follow my plan, but without a plan, I am completely lost.*

6.2.5. The role of teaching experience

Several comments addressed the issue of teaching experience, also discussed in 6.1.5, by pointing to its role in enhancing teachers' ability to modify plans and improvise activities when needed, as well as in making them able to interpret and to respond to student cues.

Extract 13, The role of teaching experience in teacher learning

I think it is teaching experience as well as ideas from colleagues and in-service trainings that taught me the most. Pre-service training did not carry too much weight; novice teachers might be more strongly influenced by it, but experienced teachers, like myself, do not even remember it.

Extract 14, The role of teaching experience in becoming able to flexibly modify plans

Years of teaching made me able to improvise or leave out something from my plan that I do not find important in that particular lesson.

I used to insist more on my plans, but it did not always work out well. Now, it is human factors that count, and I am more relaxed.

I have felt much more relaxed since I realized that it is not me who should provide everything that learners have to learn. In general, I do not think that any teacher should take on the responsibility of teaching and planning everything that should be learnt. I did not know this when I started teaching.

Extract 15, The role of teaching experience in coordinating levels of planning

It seems to be quite obvious that coordinating different levels of planning requires the experience of many years of teaching. I can already do it because I feel how to do it without putting my finger on the exact reasons.

6.2.6. The role of group characteristics and individual learner characteristics

Most comments made in Part 3 of the questionnaire emphasized the importance of planning for the particular group, once again supporting previous research findings (Allwright & Bailey, 1991; Freeman, 1996a) as well as the results of the analysis of Part 2

of the questionnaire (6.1.6). According to the comments, it is the specific character of the group and the learners with their needs, purposes, interests and motivation that affect planning the most, including choosing the appropriate coursebook for them.

Extract 16, Attention to the group's needs in planning

When I plan, I always think of the group that I am going to teach, and I try to do everything to respond to their needs.

We should never teach the book or the syllabus, we should always teach the children in the group.

Extract 17, Attention to the individual learners' needs in planning

I have to think everything over more thoroughly when I teach a big group, or when I know that there are major differences in the knowledge of the different learners. When the group is small, or when the learners are at about the same level, planning does not require that much attention.

Extract 18, The role of group characteristics in teachers' choice of the coursebook

I normally start using a coursebook with a group, and after I found out the special characteristics and needs of the group, I might decide to use another book or teach from different books and materials at the same time. It always depends on the group.

6.2.7. Problems around year syllabuses

Several comments address the issue of designing year syllabuses, also discussed in 6.1.7, by pointing out that teachers very often engage in syllabus design only because the school where they teach requires them to do so.

Extract 19, The role of school requirements in teachers' syllabus design activity

I have to write a year syllabus for all my groups at the beginning of the school year. Then I put it in my drawer and it is there until the end of the school year. I never consult it.

Some comments emphasize that even if teachers plan their year syllabus, they may not be able to rely on them in teaching.

Extract 20, The difficulty of teaching according to a year syllabus

It seems to me quite impossible to follow a year plan as you never know at the beginning of the school year how things will happen. I usually fall behind with what I plan, and I always take over material for the following school year.

6.2.8. The role of teaching materials

When referring to the role teaching materials play in planning, several comments suggest that one of teachers' main concerns when they plan the individual lessons is how to use the coursebook material in teaching. They also confirm the finding that coursebooks provide the framework for planning the year and the individual lessons. The comments also spell out that supplementary materials are intended to make teaching varied, and to make up for the shortcomings of the coursebook, when, for example, it is not challenging for a particular group, or it does not have sufficient material for preparing learners for exams.

Extract 21, Planning the teaching of coursebook material as the first step in planning

When I plan, I first look at what to use and what to leave out from the unit of the coursebook. I usually leave out something because I don't like it, or I sometimes know that the students will not like it.

Extract 22, The role of the coursebook in providing a syllabus for the school year

I write a year syllabus, which is completely based on the syllabus of the coursebook.

I never write year syllabuses. I know I will basically teach the coursebook, and I regard its syllabus as the one to follow.

Extract 23, The role of supplementary materials in making teaching varied

The more supplementary materials I use, the more colourful the lesson is.

Extract 24, The role of supplementary materials in providing challenging tasks

I have to use a certain coursebook, which, I think, is really a weak one. It does not give enough material for the children. That's why I always try to keep up their motivation by bringing in plenty of handouts and other supplementary materials.

Extract 25, The role of supplementary materials in providing practice materials for exam preparation

I often plan to use special, exam-oriented material that you cannot find in coursebooks. Otherwise, we will not achieve the most important goals.

6.3. Summary of the findings of the questionnaire survey

Before attempting to summarize the findings by providing initial answers to the research questions, three important comments need to be made. First, as it has been mentioned in 3.1., the questionnaire survey had an exploratory and descriptive focus, and the findings were based on the participating teachers' report on their own planning. Though this had the merit of understanding planning from the perspectives of the teachers involved, it has to be pointed out that a certain degree of subjectivity might be involved in teachers' judgement on what they do when they plan.

Second, as it has been spelled out in 3.3., the teachers who supplied the data participated in the research on a voluntary basis; they were all genuinely interested in taking part and learning from the experience. They, therefore, do not represent the larger population of teachers in English in any sense; consequently, the findings of the survey cannot be generalized, as was stated among the main aims of the research.

Finally, it needs to be emphasized that the questionnaire survey did not aim to examine all the important aspects of planning in depth, and a number of aspects were intended to be more thoroughly investigated in the interview study. As a result, the initial answers to the research questions differ in the extent to which they are detailed: some appear to be more concise, while some other might require more follow-up inquiry. For the same reason, the survey did not yield data that could provide sufficient ground for answering research questions 3 (*In what way does teachers' perception of problems and anticipated difficulties in a particular teaching context affect planning?)* and 4 (*How*

flexible and how detailed are effective plans?); these questions were left to be investigated empirically with the help of interviews and lesson observations in the subsequent phases of the research.

6.3.1. Initial answers to the research questions

Research question 1) *At what levels do teachers plan and what is the relationship of the different levels of planning?*

The teachers involved are engaged in five levels of planning in the following order of frequency: long-term/lesson, yearly, unit and weekly planning. The survey did not attempt to find out whether it is long-term or lesson planning that comes first in the order, as the two types of planning include completely different activities on the part of the teacher. At the same time, it did reveal that long-term and lesson planning were the two most commonly practised forms of planning.

The relationship of the different levels of planning remained to be clarified in later phases of the research, as the data collected in the questionnaire survey did not shed light on whether plans made at the different levels influence each other, and if yes in what way.

Research question 2) *What is the relationship of mental and written lesson plans?*

The survey revealed findings about written and mental lesson plans. According to these, written lesson plans tend to be short and seem to be based on more elaborate mental plans providing a flexible framework to the lesson, which allow teachers to follow alternative routes, implement 'on-the-spot' ideas and adapt timing to the events of the lesson. As some of the teachers claimed to write detailed written plans, questions of what exactly makes them write detailed plans as opposed to short ones, what different

information detailed and short plans include, and what purpose they serve need to be further investigated. Beyond that, in order to have a deeper understanding of what elements mental plans have, more data need to be collected on teachers' most important considerations and principles that guide their lesson planning activity.

Research question 5) *In what way does teaching experience affect planning?*

The findings of the survey in this field seem to indicate that experienced teachers do not spend less time on planning than teachers with little experience. However, similarly to the findings of previous studies, the results of the present survey suggest that there is qualitative difference in the way experienced and novice teachers approach planning. This can be attributed to experienced teachers' more elaborate schemata system, their resulting quick information processing in the classroom, as well as their holistic view of the learning and teaching process. This was also confirmed by the present survey, in which experienced teachers were found to be more likely to prepare longer-range plans, such as unit and weekly plans, than novices. They also proved to be more flexible in adapting plans to the needs of the circumstances, and seemed to be more willing to respond to learners' needs. Though the questionnaire yielded sufficient data to demonstrate that experienced and novice teachers' ways of planning differ to a certain extent, the understandings of how teaching experience affects planning can be further enriched by asking teachers about how they see the way they teach and plan compared to how they taught and planned when they were beginner teachers.

Research question 6) *In what way do contextual factors influence planning?*

Contextual factors, such as group characteristics, teaching materials, the different curricula and syllabuses, exams, tests, marking, and team membership influence planning

in various measures. Among all the factors listed above, group characteristics seem to be the most powerful one. Teachers do seem to rely on their judgement of the group's character, its progress, its interest and the indirect feedback the group gives on teaching, when they plan teaching. Because of the primary importance attached to group characteristics, plans are seen as a flexible framework, which should be open to modifications according to the group's needs. Direct feedback is not commonly elicited from the learners; consequently, it does not affect planning.

Teaching materials also seem to have a guiding role in planning. The standard coursebook that most courses use as the primary source of materials seems to serve as a framework of planning, though its use is subordinated to teachers' judgement of how to adapt it to the different teaching situations, and how to supplement it with other materials. However, more needs to be revealed about ways of using the coursebook as well as about planning without adopting a coursebook-based syllabus.

Curricula and syllabuses seem to be much less influential factors of planning than the ones mentioned above. According to the findings of the survey, the teachers involved do not plan according to curriculum and syllabus guidelines, though many of them design their own year-syllabus that few of the seem to follow during the school year. This raises the question of what plan teachers follow during the school year and whether their year plan is put down on paper.

Exams, tests and marking do not seem to be planned at the yearly level. At the beginning of the school year, teachers seem to have a rough idea as to how many major tests to administer, but the decision on when to administer them is taken at levels of planning below the yearly one. Oral testing, on the other hand, does not seem to be planned, at all.

The last contextual factor to be investigated was team membership. One of its aspects, which is using colleagues' ideas, seems to influence the planning activity of the teachers involved. Two other aspects of team membership – planning together with colleagues and observing colleagues' lessons - do not seem to affect their planning. What is not known, however, is what motivated the teachers involved in attaching little importance to these two aspects: whether it is the lack of experience in this type of activities, or the experience which showed that planning together with other teachers and observing their lessons did not have an effect on their planning activity.

Research question 7) *Apart from the features listed by Calderhead (1996), what other important features does the planning activity of the teachers involved have?*

One feature not listed by Calderhead (1996), which was found to strongly determine the participating teachers' planning activity was the effect of affective factors. In other words, the teachers involved reported to feel more confident during classroom teaching if they thought over their lessons and longer units of teaching. They, therefore, planned so that they can act confidently. Though affective factors are not emphasized among the most important features of planning by Calderhead, the value attached to the thinking process involved in planning confirms that planning is a largely cognitive process (Calderhead, 1996).

Another important feature closely related to the previous one and also revealed by the analysis is that once a plan is created, the way it is implemented seems to much less affect teachers' feelings. This again illustrates the importance of thinking compared to teaching according to plan, and shows that planning is inevitably flexible.

6.3.2. Findings that were not anticipated

As a last step of the analysis, I compared the findings of the questionnaire survey to my initial observations about planning described in 1.2, and some obvious mismatch between what I had assumed and what I found during the survey was revealed.

First of all, I observed that the place of the lesson on the learners' daily and weekly schedule largely affected the way teachers planned their lessons. However, the findings of the questionnaire survey do not support this; rather, they state that these are not influential factors of planning. At this point of the analysis, I cannot find any explanations for this.

The other finding, contrary to my expectations, was that specific aspects of testing, such as the exact number and time of written tests as well as issues of oral testing do not seem to be planned. The mismatch between what I had anticipated and what I found might be explained by the fact that no issues of testing including the ones that are investigated by the questionnaire are seen as matters to be decided on in advance by most participants. This, however, does not mean that teachers do not have plans with regard to test. Rather, teachers have loose plans as to how many tests to administer and when to administer them, and the final decisions on testing might be adjusted to the course of school year.

6.3.3. Points to be investigated in depth in the interview study

The following points have emerged from the above summary as the ones that need to be given focused attention in the interview study in order to complete the initial answers to the research questions with in-depth insights:

- the relationship of the different levels of planning in order to see if learners' long-term goals influence teachers' shorter-range planning
- the function and the content of detailed and short lesson plans
- the most commonly applied principles that guide teachers when they plans lessons

- the effect of teaching experience on planning as it is seen by the teachers in order to gain insights into how teachers themselves perceive it
- the different ways of using coursebooks for planning
- the different year plans teachers design as well as the form and the content of those plans

In the following two chapters, I will continue the description of the research process by describing the interview study and presenting its findings that complemented and refined the picture of planning outlined by the questionnaire survey.

Chapter 7

Stage 2 of the research: Deeper insights into how teachers plan in the particular teaching contexts – An interview study

Overview

In this chapter I will describe how the second main stage of the research attempted to continue the investigation by conducting an in-depth inquiry into the planning activity of the teachers involved. This will be followed by the presentation of the main data sources, the participants, and the in-depth interviews used for eliciting teachers' thoughts on their planning activity. Finally, I will show what role the lesson observations and the pre- and post-lesson interviews played in the research, and I will explain on what basis the interview data were analysed.

Between November 2004 and December 2005, in the second main stage of the research, fourteen teachers were interviewed about their planning activity in order to deepen the understandings gained in the questionnaire survey. The interviews were, therefore, intended to illustrate through deeper insights into the individual teaching contexts of a small number of teachers what the questionnaire survey had revealed about the planning activity of a large number of teachers without inquiring into particular teaching contexts. The interview study used two kinds of interviews which derived their data from three sources:

(i) *an in-depth interview on planning* deriving data from

- teachers' self-reports on their planning activity

(ii) *an interview following the observation of one lesson taught by each participant* deriving data from

- lesson observations documented by observation notes, and
- teachers' commentary on planning one particular lesson

7.1. Selecting participants for the interview study

Out of the 84 questionnaires analyzed 26 were found to be complete by having all the three parts filled in and including an address where the respondent could be contacted. Though questionnaires that did not have a completed Part 3 were also analyzed in the questionnaire survey, the teachers who had filled them in were not selected for the interview study as the teachers' thoughts on planning included by Part 3 were also intended to be addressed by one specific question in each interview. As three teachers out of the twenty-six could not be involved for practical reasons, twenty-three teachers were contacted in autumn 2004 and in 2005, and fourteen teachers agreed to be interviewed and observed during teaching.

The interview participants – thirteen women and one man - are teachers in Budapest, with the only exception of the one man, who was then teaching in Vác. Anna, Ádám, Anita, Dóra and Zsófi are novice teachers and have not more than five years of experience in teaching English at a primary or secondary school, while Edit, Lívia, Sára, Zsuzsa, Klári, Szilvi, Bori, Juli and Ágota are experienced teachers. Facts about their professional background, such as the type of school where they teach and the amount of experience they have had in teaching English at a primary or secondary school, used in the present research as criteria of maximum variety are described in Table 16. Though involving mentor teachers in the research was not among its aims, it still has to be noted that five of the 14 participants – Sára, Klári, Szilvi, Bori and Juli - work as school-based mentors and supervise trainee teachers' teaching practice on a regular basis.

Table 16 The description of the interview participants according to the age of their learners and their teaching experience

	Eight-grade primary school (English is taught to learners aged 8-15)	**Eight-grade seconda-ry school** (English is taught to learners aged 10-19)	**Six-grade secondary school** (English is taught to learners aged 12-19)	**Four-grade secondary school** (English is taught to learners aged 14-19)	**Twelve-grade school** (English is taught to learners aged 8-19)	**Total**
Novice teachers	Ádám, Dóra	-	Anita	Anna, Zsófi	-	**5**
Experienced teachers	Sára, Klári, Bori	Ágota	Lívia, Zsuzsa Szilvi	Edit	Juli	**9**
Total	**5**	**1**	**4**	**3**	**1**	

7.2. In-depth interviews about planning

7.2.1. Aims

Conducting in-depth interviews with teachers about their planning practices had four major aims. First, the interviews were intended to gain insights into the most important considerations that guide the participating teachers' planning activity by discussing their teaching contexts. Second, they had the purpose of clarifying issues that were not investigated in-depth in the questionnaire survey and require some follow-up inquiry. Third, they aimed to elicit whether any influential factors of planning not included in the questionnaire would emerge, which should be further examined. Finally, the interviews were meant to provide focused data on issues related to *Mental lesson images versus written lesson plans,* which were less thoroughly investigated by the questionnaire survey, in order to be able to provide answers to research questions 2 (*What is the relationship of mental plans and written plans?*) and 4 (*How flexible and how detailed are effective plans?*).

7.2.2. The interview setting

Twelve out of the fourteen interviews were conducted in the participants' natural settings, that is, at the school where they teach. Two teachers, however, preferred to be interviewed in my office as they felt more comfortable in a 'peaceful and quiet environment'.

The twelve interviews conducted at the schools bear some of the features of lively school life. While some were recorded in rooms with only the interviewee and me present, some other interviews were made under less favourable conditions, where we were either rushed or interrupted by events of school life. In those interviews, the conversation was less smooth: it was sometimes stopped and then started again, which obviously made some parts shorter and did not allow us to go into sufficient depth at certain points.

7.2.3. Interview questions

The interviews were intended to fall between semi-structured and unstructured interviews, and were based on a set of open questions worded in advance. This seemed to be appropriate for making teachers speak freely about their planning, on the one hand, and giving directions to their thoughts, on the other. The interview schedule was, however, meant to be quite flexible: sufficient place and time was left for additional questions, and the direction of the discussions as well as the order of the questions was to be determined by the responses.

The interview questions had a rather broad scope and served as conversation starters. Though they primarily focused on issues of lesson planning, this being the most common form of planning and the most appropriate for triggering off teachers' immediate thoughts, the unstructured nature of the interviews seemed to be suitable for revealing rich data which go beyond the boundaries of planning lessons and include information about all

the important aspects of planning. I expected, therefore, that issues of coordinating levels of planning and syllabus design, identified by the questionnaire survey for further inquiry, would inevitably emerge without wording particular questions on those issues in advance.

The interview schedule had been sent to the participating teachers before the interviews were conducted so that they should not feel embarrassed by being asked unexpected questions, and by, perhaps, not knowing what to answer. At the same time, it was emphasized that the interviews were not intended to record answers planned in advance; rather, their purpose was to collect practising teachers' ideas on their every-day planning activity no matter how unorganized and randomly collected those ideas are.

The fourteen in-depth interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed. After conducting the first six interviews, the data collected were revised, and certain modifications in the interview schedule were made, based on what aspects of planning needed to be given more focused attention. Revising the data before finishing the interview phase of the research as well as modifying the research tool used in the subsequent interviews was allowed by the emergent design of the study and its inductive approach to data collection and analysis (Patton, 1990; Cohen et al., 2000).

Interview schedule 1

Interview schedule 1 consisted of seven questions on planning. Six questions out of the seven were identical in all the interviews, while the seventh question was specific to each interview participant, and was designed in order to clarify what the interview participants felt important to share about planning in their response to the open-ended question in Part 3 of the questionnaire.

Table 17 Questions on Interview schedule 1

Question	**Purpose**
1. What are the most important issues you consider when you plan a lesson?	• to list all the main considerations that guide teachers' thinking when they plan lessons
2. Do you plan in one particular place, at one particular time?	• to identify whether planning is an activity that can be linked to one particular place and time, or whether it includes various activities and thinking processes that cannot be linked to one particular place and time
3. What does your plan look like on paper?	• to elicit whether teachers rely on mental plans which are aided by a few details recorded in writing to be used as a reminder, or they use detailed notes, which might indicate the lack of a mental plan and a more thorough lesson planning resulting from the lack of already internalized plans or parts of plans • to elicit whether plans for longer periods than the lesson are recorded in writing • to elicit in what form teachers' year plan is recorded
4. If someone asked you if you hold any principles that guide your planning activity, what would you say? For example: A teacher said that she finds it very important to provide opportunities for every learner to speak in the lesson. It can be during frontal work, in group-, or pairwork. Another teacher said that a 45-minute-lesson is very short, which means that teachers have to exploit every minute in the lesson to good effect.	• to elicit whether planning is guided by principles that translate into dominant patterns in teachers' plans
5. Have you got one particular method that you have found very useful and you believe in it? For example: memorizing dialogues, groupwork, translation, etc.?	• to elicit whether planning is guided by principles that translate into dominant patterns in teachers' plans

6. How would you describe the way you plan your lessons? Do you plan everything in detail, or rather, do you have a rough plan, or an initial idea that you develop in the lesson without planning the smaller details? If you plan certain steps in detail, what are those? If you leave the elaboration of certain steps for the lesson and only have a loose outline with the major points, then what are those?	• to identify what areas of teaching and what classroom activities require teachers to prepare thorough plans in which all the small details are worked out in advance, and what areas of teaching and what classroom activities make teachers prepare loose plans in which not every detail is foreseen, but will rather be determined by what happens in the classroom

Interview schedule 2

Evaluating the data yielded by the first couple of interviews resulted in a second, revised version of the first interview schedule based on what aspects of planning needed to be given more focused attention. In the modified schedule, five questions from the first interview schedule were kept; two questions that did not seem to elicit answers that enrich the data were thrown away, and five new questions on aspects of planning not emphasized sufficiently in the first six interviews were added, which are listed in Table 18.

The main problem I identified when evaluating the data was that a direct focus on lesson planning gave less attention to aspects of *Levels of planning* and *Teaching experience.* Though additional questions that address these two aspects were often raised, this was not done systematically, which was acknowledged as a weakness of the data collected with the help of interview schedule 1. In a next step, a new set of questions was designed on the basis of the following assumptions:

- Questions which do not yield meaningful answers should not be asked.
- More attention should be given to practical constraints of planning, to levels of planning other than lesson planning and their relationship, and to the role of teaching experience.
- More focused questions should investigate the influence of teaching materials, curricula and syllabuses.

Based on these assumptions Questions 5 and 7 on interview schedule 1 were judged to be redundant. Question 5 did not appear to yield meaningful data, as it basically repeated what had been already asked by Question 4 in a different form. Teachers' answers to the two

questions were, therefore, quite similar. The other question left out was Question 7, which aimed to deepen the understanding of teachers' individual comments made in Part 3 of the questionnaire. The review of the data showed that teachers' answers to Question 7 had not

added any new points to the data that could show directions for further inquiry, nor did they illuminate any unique considerations which were not raised by teachers' answers to the other interview questions.

The first consideration that led me to formulating additional questions was to give more focused attention to practical aspects of planning present in each individual situation. As a result, I decided to start the interviews with a question which reveals what teachers regard as the requirements of a well-planned lesson (Question 1). By doing so, I intended to widen the circle of the most important lesson planning considerations and to elicit the ones that are unique to the individual teaching contexts. A second consideration was to widen the scope of the investigation by formulating one particular question on levels of planning other than lesson planning (Question 9), though issues concerning the different levels of planning emerged without being targeted by specific questions. One more separate question was designed to ask about the role of teaching experience, which was not sufficiently discussed in the first six interviews (Question 10). It was also assumed that the influence of teaching materials as well as curricula and syllabuses should be addressed by focused questions (Questions 6 and 7), though their influence was raised in almost all the interviews when teachers answered other questions on interview schedule 1.

Table 18 New questions on interview schedule 2

Question	**Purpose**
1. When do you think a lesson is well planned?	• to widen the range of the considerations and principles that guide lesson planning
6. To what extent do you build your lessons on the coursebook?	• to highlight the role of the coursebook in planning by a focused question
7. How do the different curricula and your syllabus help you?	• to highlight the role of curricula and syllabuses in planning by a focused question

9. How does your lesson planning activity relate to other levels of planning? In other words, before planning your lessons, do you plan the week, or do you plan one unit of teaching? Do you plan the whole year at the beginning of the school year?	• to throw light on the relationship between the different levels of planning
10. Have you always planned teaching the way you do it now?	• to highlight the role of teaching experience in planning

7.2.4. Validating the interview schedules

Both interview schedules were piloted and validated with the help of two teachers who could be potential respondents in order to see how much time the interviews take, to check whether the questions are understandable or need further clarification, and finally, whether they elicit meaningful answers for analysis. Meanwhile, conducting the first six interviews based on interview schedule 1 could also be interpreted as a form of validation, as the conclusions drawn from this suggested certain changes to be made, which resulted in Interview schedule 2.

One of the most important observations made during the validation was that the interviews evolved rather independently of the interview schedule. That is, points were raised and were elaborated on without being targeted by focused questions. The spontaneous flow of the conversations required me to vary the order of the questions or to leave some of them out if the answers had already been provided. This suggested that instead of using the interview schedules as protocols, I should see them as options to be followed if the conversations do not go into sufficient depth or leave important aspects of planning unattended.

7.3. Interviews based on lesson observations

7.3.1. Aims

Conducting interviews before and after observing one lesson taught by each participant had three major aims. The first aim was to collect empirical data on what principles guide teachers when they plan lessons in practice by discussing issues

related to the planning of one particular lesson in a short pre-lesson and a longer post-lesson interview. In other words, I observed lessons so that I can ask meaningful questions about the way they were planned. A second aim was to throw light on the relationship between teachers' mental and written plans by looking into ways teachers write and use plans. Finally, the observation-based interviews intended to triangulate the findings of the in-depth interviews by investigating planning from a different perspective.

7.3.2. Pre-lesson interviews

The aims of the pre-lesson discussions were to prepare the ground for the observation by discussing three questions which informed me about what is going to happen in that lesson (*Question 1: What did you plan for today?*), what problems teachers anticipate (*Question 2: What problems do you expect to occur?*), and what additional points they find important to consider before teaching (*Question 3: Is there anything else that you find important to think over before the lesson?*). The discussions took place in the 15-minute-breaks before the lessons to be observed.

7.3.3. Lesson observations

The main aim of observing lessons taught by the participating teachers was to document what went on in the classrooms, which – together with the information gained from the pre-lesson discussion about the plan – provided the starting point for the post-lesson interviews. The method used was 'real-time' observation, in which the 'researcher as a human instrument' (Allwright, 1987) records the events of the lesson instead of audio- or video-recording equipments ('borrowed-time' observation). The main reason why I preferred real-time observation over borrowed-time one was that,

as pointed out by Allwright (1987), humans seem to be able to direct their attention in several directions, are sensitive to human relationships and reactions, and are able to perceive the overall course of the lesson as well as minor events at the same time. In addition, they are less intrusive and might possibly modify normal classroom behaviour less than cameras.

The approach adopted in the observations was process-oriented (Allwright & Bailey, 1991; Nunan, 1991) and descriptive (Brumfit & Mitchell, 1990) in which emphasis was put on 'watching' and 'describing'. However, as Brumfit and Mitchell (1990) warned a description that included everything that happened in a classroom would be incomprehensible, some observational criteria set by the main aims of the interview study were used in order to determine what was relevant information in the lessons. My attention was, therefore, focused on the different steps of the lesson, the relationship of the plan to its actual implementation, problems that emerged in the lesson, and the way teachers reacted to them. The method of documentation was taking detailed notes of all the issues in focus and preserving the teachers' lesson plans (see Appendix 5).

7.3.4. Ensuring validity and reliability in lesson observations

Due to using lesson observations as a data source, the present study adopted some of the most important methodological considerations of classroom research in order minimize threats to validity and reliability. I was aware that the main threats to the trustworthiness of the study might be the participants' anxiety and their reactivity (Allwright & Bailey, 1991). These result from lesson observations being the most 'invasive' form of research for teachers, which is caused by disturbing the regular functioning of classrooms and the people involved, on the one hand, and the

historically widespread use of observation for evaluation (Malderez, 2003), on the other. I was also aware that teachers' feelings of being 'invaded' might be even stronger because of some experience in having been observed by researchers, whose research agenda might have little to do with teachers' everyday practical concerns (Nunan, 1990). A third potential problem that I anticipated followed from the 'one observer only' situation when there is no way to measure inter-observer reliability. This might pose the increased threat of observer subjectivity, when the researcher's often subconscious 'interior observation schedule' (Nunan, 1989b, p. 89), made up of prior beliefs and expectations, might also distort the objective interpretation of classroom reality.

The methodological concern to rule out threats to reliability together with the attempt to establish the credibility of the research by obtaining multiple perspectives on what happened in the classroom was ensured by combining lesson observations and post-lesson interviews, as suggested by Nunan (1989b). The tension that my 'invasion' might have triggered off in the participants was definitely eased by collecting data by means of participant observation. As I knew some of the participants – the five mentor teachers – and the schools they were teaching at quite well due to regularly visiting their classrooms with my groups as part of the methodology course as well as observing lessons taught by trainee teachers under their supervision, my presence was not unusual in their classrooms. However, six other teachers whom I had known before the observation took place and three other teachers whom I had not known were not used to having me in their classrooms. This made my job of carrying out participant observation somewhat more difficult. Meanwhile, discussing issues of planning and teaching in a relaxed atmosphere before observing their lessons seemed to help to establish a friendly relationship and a sense

of collaboration (Allwright, 1999) reported to be the key to success in researching classrooms. In addition, as I have pointed out earlier, I emphasized the practical aspects of the research - the use of the findings in pre-service teacher training - to all participants so that they find more relevance in taking part.

7.3.5. Post-lesson interviews

In order to gain insights into how the teachers involved see their lesson and how they evaluate the particular problems that emerged, each lesson and issues related to its planning were discussed after the observation had taken place. These discussions were thought to have the potential to illuminate a number of interesting aspects of planning that are otherwise not accessible to the observer in any reliable way.

The main topics of the discussions followed from the focus of the observation, such as the different steps of the lesson, the relationship of the plan to its actual implementation, problems that emerged in the lesson, and the way teachers reacted to them. The three questions asked (Table 19) created quite a loose framework and were often complemented with additional questions motivated by the events of the lesson. This way, the discussions engaged the teachers in reflections which often went beyond the scope of that particular lesson, and touched upon more general aspects of planning. The last issue to be discussed without wording a question about it in advance was the teachers' written plans prepared for the lesson in order to gain a more accurate picture on the relationship of written and mental plans. When having a closer look at what the plan looked like on paper, teachers were asked to comment on why they write plans, what information they think needs to be included in the written

plan, and for what purpose they use their written plans. The plan was preserved for documenting the observation.

Table 19 Questions in the post-lesson interviews

Question	**Purpose**
1. How would you evaluate the lesson? Did everything go as planned, did it go more or less as planned, or was the lesson very much different from what you planned?	• to highlight the relationship of the plan and its implementation • to reflect on whether teachers' initial considerations that guided their plans influenced the lesson as it had been expected • to identify problems and unexpected events of the lesson
2. What would you do in a different way if you taught the same lesson again?	• to reevaluate the plan in light of all the events that emerged during the lesson • to identify issues that would need to be given special attention if the lesson was planned again
3. Could you draw the profile of the group?	• to elicit important group characteristics and characteristics of individual learners in order to have a more accurate picture of the context

7.4. Methods of data analysis

Data from the two types of interviews with a different primary focus were analysed together, which has two reasons. First, both interview types yielded specific data as opposed to the questionnaire that elicited more general data. Though the perspective from which planning was approached was different in the two kinds of interviews - in the in-depth interviews data emerged from teachers' reports on how they plan in general, while in the post-lesson interviews data were derived from the teachers' commentary on the planning of one particular lesson – both perspectives provided insights that added to a deeper understanding of planning and helped to answer the main research questions.

The second reason that justifies the need to analyse data and to present the findings from the two types of interviews together is that the two perspectives from which planning was investigated – the general and the particular - could not be kept clearly separate, and the interviews were not always restricted to the targeted focus. In the in-depth interviews on planning, teachers often raised issues that were related to the planning of particular lessons the day before, or on a day in the recent past, while in the post-lesson interviews they often widened the scope of the conversation by discussing general questions of planning, and not just the planning of one lesson. This way, all interviews included references to issues of planning in general and to issues raised in connection with the planning of particular lessons, though the primary focus – general or particular - always remained evident and was emphasized more.

The most important points that emerged from the analysis were identified in two ways. They were either

(i) revealed by the constant comparative method (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) as representing salient aspects of planning,

or

(ii) though only spelled out by one or two participants, they were found to draw attention to individual approaches to planning, which I thought - on the basis of my experience as a teacher trainer - would be appropriate for awareness raising in teacher training.

As applying these two criteria seemed to be the most appropriate for filtering what will later be relevant in teacher training, the interview data were not analyzed within the framework of the ten most important aspects of planning, as was done in the questionnaire survey.

CHAPTER 8

Results of analysing data from the interview study

Overview

In this chapter of the dissertation, I will present the findings from the two interviews - the in-depth interviews on planning, and the interviews conducted after the lesson observations – arranged in six groups each with a specific focus.

The main findings of the interview study cluster around six main points each of which represents a salient aspect of planning:

1. *Basic characteristics and fundamental concerns in planning*

This group of findings has come to include features that the teachers interviewed identified as the ones that best capture what planning represents for them, such as

- planning is individual and personality-dependent,
- its main value lies in the thinking process that it involves, and
- it is primarily guided by the attention to group and individual learner characteristics.

2. *Planning as a nested process*

Findings in this group throw light on the complex structure of planning and the way it is influenced by curriculum and coursebook use. The main points that have emerged are:

- the relationship of the different levels as nests
- flexibility as the key to coordinating the 'nests';

- resources of planning the ‘nests’: coursebooks, written year syllabuses, and teachers’ written and mental plans;
- the structure of the ‘nests’ and ways of using written and mental plans in them.

3. *The main issues and the guiding principles of planning lessons*

Findings in this group give insights into the content of teachers’ mental plans such as

- lesson content and organisational issues,

and the most important principles that guide them such as

- making the most of the lesson
- motivating learners in the lesson, and
- adjusting plans to events of the school year and learners’ yearly, weekly and daily schedule.

4. Teaching experience

Findings in this group essentially reveal in what way teaching experience has been found to affect

- teachers’ schema system,
- their overview of the teaching process,
- their ability to flexibly deviate from plans and improvise, and
- their ability to manage time.

5. The teacher’s affective needs

Findings in this group shed light on the role of planning in enhancing teachers' self-confidence and self-motivation.

6. Drawing on past experience

This group includes points that illustrate in what way teachers draw on their experience – positive and negative – that they gained as learners of a foreign language.

8.1. Basic characteristics and fundamental concerns in planning

8.1.1. Planning: individual and personality-dependent

One of the most important findings that the interviews have revealed is that planning is a highly individual activity which has a number of personality-dependent features. Like in all fields of life, teachers greatly vary in the extent to which they plan their actions, take decisions, consider alternatives, and reflect on the outcomes of their actions. This is reflected by the wide range of approaches that they have adopted towards planning as well as by the individual differences observed in all aspects of planning. Some of the teachers, like Juli and Edit, are entirely aware of the similarities between the way they live and the way they plan teaching.

Extract 26, 'I teach and plan the way I do everything else'

I need to see my week, not only the teaching part, but everything else. And it's true for the holidays, too, otherwise I am a bit lost. Knowing what I will do everyday is reassuring. (Juli)

I think over everything I will do in a day the night before. This is how I function in all fields of life, and it has been always like this since I was a student. It must be genetic, because my daughter is the same. (Edit)

Despite the fact that the planning activity of the teachers involved has been found to differ in a number of ways, several common points have emerged, which will be presented in the following sections.

8.1.2. The value of the process of planning versus achieving what is planned

The interviews threw light on an interesting duality that characterizes teachers' thinking in connection with planning, which was also identified by the questionnaire survey. On the one hand, for many of the interview participants, the most important benefit of planning is that it engages teachers in reflection on their objectives and their teaching, in general. As Juli claimed, 'it is thinking that is the most important in it'. On the other hand, this is accompanied by the awareness that thinking about our aims and planning what to do in order to achieve those aims is much more important than achieving them.

Extract 27, The value of the thinking process

It doesn't matter if I do not teach everything I wanted to during the school year. It is more important to know what I wanted to teach and why. (Juli)

I always plan what I want to achieve by the end of the year, but I know that these plans are usually not realized for a number of reasons. This group (the seventh-graders), for example, are not as fast as I expected, and we are making progress very slowly. (Szilvi)

I think a lot about the school year before it starts, and I look for plenty of new materials. And I know at the same time that I may not be able to use the majority of those materials during the year. But I don't mind, it's good to plan, I gain energy and it gives me stimulus for the whole year. (Zsuzsa)

You plan the year, but you also know that plans can only be followed to a certain extent; you always have to be prepared to modify them depending on the circumstances. (Sára)

8.1.3. The group and the learners as the starting point in planning

Assessing the groups' needs as well as the individual needs of the learners and responding to them emerged as the most common starting point for planning. This was made evident by the following three issues that many of the teachers involved raised:

- responding simultaneously to group and individual learner characteristics,
- facilitating group formation and development,
- catering for individual learner needs by organizing pair and small group activities

8.1.3.1. Responding to two sets of needs: the group and the individual learner needs

As the participating teachers have pointed out it is essential to be aware that groups have a dual personality: on the one hand, a group is a separate entity with its own characteristic traits, and it is also a formation of individual learners who may differ in their abilities, knowledge of the world, knowledge of English, interests and goals for which they learn English. Planning, therefore, should cater for the group's needs as well as for the needs of the individual learners.

Extract 28, Responding to the group's needs

Planning should always be targeted at a particular group. [...] I don't have any particular methods that can be applied everywhere. The best method in teaching is to know the group and to plan everything for their needs. (Lívia)

During the first couple of weeks when you don't know the group, planning is mainly about trying to figure out what works with them. Once you know them, planning and teaching becomes much easier and more efficient. (Klári)

Extract 29, Responding to individual learner needs

One of my most important aims when I plan my lessons is to provide challenge for every child according to their own abilities. (Klári)

Everyone is important. I would rather throw my plan away than not let a child say what he wants to say. The most important is to know what the children need, they are more important than achieving certain objectives. (Sára)

The emphasis is put on different issues with each group. But the most important is that every learner should be involved, and no one should be left behind the others. (Dóra)

8.1.3.2. Facilitating group formation and development

The participating teachers have been found to be guided by the effort to facilitate group development and they planned lessons that were intended to foster group cohesiveness by promoting whole-group interaction and creating a common group history, as well as by establishing a positive relationship between the group and the teacher.

Extract 30, Promoting whole-group interaction

You can't always plan for separate groups within the bigger group. On the one hand, this is plenty of work; on the other hand – and this is perhaps more important – sometimes they need to work as one class, no matter how different the individual learners are. This fosters their feeling of being a group and ensures variety, which enhances motivation. (Zsuzsa)

Extract 31, A common group history

I put emphasis on listening to and helping each other. The children need to have a common group history, they need to be reminded of their common activities and knowledge of each other. Once this is established, I can already build on it when I plan the activities for the lessons, and they seem to be much quicker in understanding everything, when we can link it to examples that I take from events that they have lived together. (Dóra)

Extract 32, Establishing a positive relationship

First of all, I love them and they know it. Learning comes second. (Edit)

Having a positive relationship with my learners is essential for me. I have to love them, otherwise I can't teach them. (Ágota)

I write a birthday card when someone in the group has his/her birthday, and I give it to him/her during the lesson. I plan the lesson in such a way in that case. This is not very important from the perspective of learning; it's because I love them. (Anna)

The benefits of working with groups in which learners can cooperate well are contrasted with the difficulties caused by reorganising old groups and forming new

ones, in which teachers have to start building the identity of a new group and integrating learners again. This is supported by Juli's and Anita's comments.

Extract 33, The difficulties of working with newly formed groups

At our school the groups change all the time. Learners who pass the state exam drop out and the old groups are often merged. This means that I often need to start building a new group, which takes time, but you can't work efficiently with 15 learners, unless they have become a cohesive group. (Juli)

There are four new learners in this group, and they haven't fully integrated yet. This makes my work more difficult, planning included. (Anita)

8.1.3.3. Catering for individual learner needs by organizing pair and small group activities

Catering for the individual needs of learners, especially when the differences within a group are significant, might raise a number of difficulties for teachers. The solution to ensure equal opportunities to every learner to learn according to their needs seems to be splitting the group into smaller, 'homogenous' groups or pairs, in which learners, who are at the same level or have the same goals, can work on tasks that correspond to their level. However, assigning learners to mixed-ability groups or pairs, thus providing opportunities to cooperate while carrying out a task together, might have beneficial effects, too, as learners can help each other and learn from one another.

Extract 34, The advantages of organizing 'homogeneous' and 'heterogeneous' groups

... you have to be aware that there are different periods even within the life of the same group, and you have to be prepared to organize everything according to the needs of that period. When starting to learn a foreign language, the groups are more homogenous in terms of their knowledge, though even there you can already observe different levels of ability and motivation. Teachers in those groups are not required to plan according to such

a wide range of individual differences and everyone in the group can work on the same task. When I teach more advanced groups, where everyone is motivated in a different way, I regard the group as being made up of smaller groups with different needs, and have to plan different tasks for each. (Zsuzsa)

Sometimes I let them work with whoever they want to. In that case, stronger learners usually pair up with other strong learners, and it means that weaker learners will work with weaker ones. It's all right for certain activities, but it is not OK with all activities. So sometimes I put children who are at about the same level in the same group, but sometimes I vary the composition of the groups. (Klári)

I like groupwork because one of the learners will write the words. In each group, they usually choose someone who is very good at spelling. But it's good even for those who have difficulties with spelling as they will see the correct forms written down. This way they help one another with English. (Dóra)

8.2. Planning as a nested process

In this section the complex structure of planning will be outlined by

- highlighting the meaning of the word '*nest*' in the context of planning,
- drawing attention to flexibility as a key quality required to coordinate the 'nests',
- specifying the various resources used in planning the 'nests', and
- presenting the nests themselves.

8.2.1. The relationship of the different levels in the nest structure

In the present research, the planning activity of the teachers involved has been found to be a nested process with five different levels (long-term, yearly, unit, weekly and lesson). *The five levels are coordinated in such a way that the planning of shorter units is based on longer-range plans, which, in turn, serve as a framework, or a 'nest' within which the smaller units can function* (Morine-Dershimer, 1977, cited in Clark & Peterson, 1986; 1979). In other words, the teachers involved, especially the more experienced ones, base lesson planning on their understanding of the place of the

individual lessons within the larger context of the school year. This seems to suggest that planning at the different levels is harmonized, and plans made at the lesson level are adjusted to plans at higher levels.

Extract 35, Harmonizing plans

You have to have an idea about what the learners should know by the end. [...] ...but you can't prepare for an exam for six years, you need to see what you do in the short term so that you get there. (*Zsuzsa*)

... you need to be able to think in-terms of longer periods, but you have to know what you want to achieve in that particular year, or with your daily work. [...] ...and you need to have short-range plans, like plans for two months, or so, in order to know what concrete material you want to use and for what reason so that you can achieve longer-range goals. (Szilvi)

When analysing planning from the perspective of its different levels, it has to be emphasized again that regarding it as being made up of separate levels is a somewhat arbitrary simplification of an activity as complex as the planning of teaching, as it has been emphasized by the participating teachers, too. Meanwhile, applying these categories in an investigation is like simplifying complexity in order to capture the essential features of the activity, such as how the different goals are formulated, in what way they are related to one another and what thinking processes underlie them.

Extract 36, The complexity of planning

You can't separate clear-cut levels of planning. They are all linked, and the smaller units like the lessons should be planned with a view of the larger units, like the school year and the six secondary school years. That's why planning is a continuous activity, it's always there, you can't put is aside.' (Lívia)

8.2.2. Flexibility as the key to coordinating the 'nests'

The nested nature of planning and the coordination of the different levels seem to require teachers to *handle plans flexibly and to modify them or deviate from them when needed.* As it was also revealed, plans can only function if they are flexible and provide loose guidelines; otherwise they will provide a rigid framework which does not allow for modifications.

Extract 37, Flexibility: guidelines to follow and the freedom to modify

I need to think over the whole year, it gives me a feeling of security. But it has to be a loose and flexible plan, and it mustn't be restrictive in any sense. (Ágota)

I prepare a loose outline as to what I want to do during the next two weeks, but I leave plenty of space between the different ideas so that I can insert ideas that come later. (Lívia)

Extract 38, Flexibility: readiness to deviate from plans

You always need to be prepared to deviate from your plan. There are a hundred and one things that might occur, and the lesson takes an unexpected turn. For example, if we learn about planets and a little boy brings something interesting about the topic that he wants to show the others, I will not say 'No', of course, and he'll do it. And I will perhaps ask the children to think of questions that they can later ask the boy. When the presentation is over, we check their answers, and it might take up the whole lesson. Or, there are days when the children are very tired, and you can see they really are, and you throw away everything planned for that day, and decide to play a game. (Sára)

At the beginning of this year I prepared some really interesting material for my 11th- grade group. And in September and October, some of the learners - quite a lot, in fact - who were not going to take the language exam this year, decided to take it. This changed everything, and now I can see that they really want to study, so I have decided to concentrate more on the exam and to keep my materials for next year. It does not mean that the material I put together is too easy or does not teach them enough, it only means that without preparing for the exam we would have followed a different route, which would have been useful too, but in a different way. This is just an example that proves that it's better not to write year plans as you never know for sure what to anticipate. The other thing I have to consider is that there are still 4-5 children in the group, who are not interested in learning English, and will not take the exam this year. If we had studied from the material that I had collected for this year, they would have benefited from it, though obviously not in the same way as the better learners. Now, I had to find something else for them, too, as they would not have been able to do the tasks I had planned without the stronger learners. (Zsuzsa)

The teachers involved have also pointed out that in order to plan and teach flexibly, it is essential to gain experience in teaching, which will be discussed in 8.4.

8.2.3. Various resources of planning the 'nests': coursebooks, syllabuses and teachers' written and mental plans

As argued in 2.4.5 and 2.4.6. teachers usually take ideas from a number of resources when they plan teaching, such as curricula, syllabuses and coursebooks. The final product of planning - the plan itself – might or might not be recorded in writing depending on the individual needs of the teacher: some teachers prepare and use written plans at various levels of planning, while some other teachers prefer to rely on their mental plans.

According to the analysis of the interviews, the teachers involved in the present research differ a great deal in how they exploit the various resources at the different levels of planning and in the extent to which they use written or mental plans. On the other hand, all of them seem to agree that *none of the official curricula - the National Core Curriculum and the Frame Curriculum – influences them in how they plan teaching at any of the levels*. Though the local curriculum has emerged as being slightly more influential – at least some of the teachers mentioned that they were familiar with it – its effects on planning seem to be quite weak, too. What serves as the main guideline for many of the teachers is either the *syllabus of the coursebook* that they use with a particular group, or their own *'independent' syllabus* which, instead of drawing on a coursebook, is invented by the teacher and is built on materials from a variety of sources. While some of the teachers who plan according to coursebook syllabus guidelines might record their plans in writing, and use *written plans* at the different levels of planning during the school year, some other teachers who also build their plans on a coursebook syllabus, and those who have an

'independent' syllabus might create and store their plans mentally and teach according to *mental plans*.

8.2.4. The structure of the 'nests'

In this section I will present findings concerning the structure of planning as a nested process by describing on what basis teachers prepare plans at the different levels and which of the key resources – coursebooks, written syllabuses, or teachers' written and mental plans - are exploited in planning. In cases where the relationship of written plans and mental planning has been found to be of particular interest, I will devote a separate section to discussing it.

8.2.4.1. Long-term planning

In the nest structure, the largest nest is represented by long-term planning. It has emerged from the interviews as *a primarily goal-setting activity,* in which teachers build up an awareness of what learners need to achieve by the end of their studies at the school in order to pass certain exams. Long-term plans are not written down in any form, which suggests that long-term planning is a *mental activity*.

8.2.4.2. Yearly planning

The level of long-term planning is followed by that of yearly planning, which seems to be *concerned both with goal-setting and with practical activities*, such as designing teaching materials as well as collecting plenty of supplementary materials. Teachers can be divided into two groups depending on whether the framework of their year plan is provided by the

(i) *syllabus of their coursebook* (referred to as *coursebook users* in the following sections), or

(ii) by their own *'independent' syllabus* which is not based on any coursebook (referred to as *independent planners* in the following sections).

(i) *Coursebook users*: Teachers, like Szilvi, Bori, Anna, Ádám, Edit, Juli, Sára, Anita, Ágota, and Lívia, who teaches from a coursebook in some of her groups, use the syllabus of their coursebook as the main guideline for planning the year. They have pointed out that coursebooks as the primary resources in planning have a number of advantages, for example, they ensure a comprehensive knowledge in all areas of the language, give plenty of useful and imaginative teaching ideas, and provide practice material in most areas. Coursebooks, therefore, give tremendous help to teachers by saving time and energy that can be spent on teaching and on supplementing the book. However, several of the participating teachers have emphasized that coursebooks need to be approached critically and need to be adapted to the needs of a particular group. As it has also been also pointed out, choosing the right coursebook is already part of planning.

Extract 39, A critical use of coursebooks

There is no coursebook that comes up to everyone's expectations. Some books are less communicative, some put less emphasis on reading than they should. If I discover the weaknesses, I try to make up for them. Because the book is not only my choice. There are several grades; if my colleagues accept my choice in a particular grade, I need to accept their choice in other grades. (Juli)

I am already familiar with the whole book, as I have developed ways of using each task. This way the book is maximally prepared for 'consumption', and every time I teach a unit, I select the bits I need and decide on what to leave out. I also find that the teacher's book is very useful. It gives me almost 'ready-made' lesson plans that I can use very well. But the main reason why I think that this is a good book is that it puts emphasis on revising vocabulary and grammar, it 'recycles' what learners have already learnt. (Edit)

Extract 40, Choosing and evaluating coursebooks: the first steps of planning

Choosing a coursebook which gives you the core teaching material is already planning, and deciding on what to use from that book in the particular lesson is a very important part of lesson planning. (Juli)

(ii) *Independent planners*: Teachers, like Dóra and Zsuzsa, whose planning activity is not based on any syllabus designed by coursebook writers or syllabus designers, are usually engaged in a continuous assessment of their learners' needs and in selecting teaching materials from a wide variety of sources. Independent planners have identified two reasons why they believe that following the structure of one coursebook does not fit their aims. First, coursebooks impose a rigid structure on teaching, which cannot respond flexibly to the special needs and likes of particular groups. Coursebooks, as they say, can be one of the many sources of materials, and the syllabus of a course should be negotiated with the learners who can choose what they want to learn.

Extract 41, Negotiating the syllabus

I have an approximate plan for the year. At the beginning of the year I decide what vocabulary and grammar to teach. [...] *I roughly know how many topics we can cover, and I have several topics to choose from. And if the children are particularly interested in something, we will learn it. I also know that I can link the different topics in many ways. So I let the children choose them. For example, if we learn about family relations, and they start asking me about how to say words in connection with the house where a family lives, then we continue with the topic of the house. But if they want to speak about what their family members do or where they work, then we start learning about professions and places in a city. So far every year was different, because the children got 'hooked on' something else. And I do my best to teach what they want to learn. I always try to adjust the topics to their questions. (Dóra)*

The second reason identified for planning independently of coursebook guidelines lies in the difficulties of teaching advanced learners whose linguistic needs and interests cannot be catered for with any coursebook.

Extract 42, Teaching advanced learners

One of my colleagues has a group in which everyone has already passed the intermediate

language exam. She can't use a coursebook with them, as they are too advanced, and there are no books for their level with interesting and up-to-date material. So she has her own syllabus for that group which is not based on any of the coursebooks. (Ágota)

Written year plans and mental year planning

The participating teachers have been found to belong to the following three groups depending on whether they design a written year syllabus or store year plans mentally:

(i) *coursebook users*, i. e.: teachers who plan the school year based on the syllabus of their coursebook, *who do design and write a year syllabus*.

(ii) *coursebook users who do not design and write a year syllabus*. They set the main aims to achieve by the end of the school year without taking final decisions on the teaching content.

(iii) *independent planners, who do not write a year syllabus.* They have loose mental year plans based on a pool of teaching materials, but the final teaching content is not specified in their mental plans.

Coursebook users who design their own year syllabus identified a number of advantages of why designing a syllabus and using it during the school year is helpful for them. They have also pointed out that the structure of their written year plan usually follows the logic of a particular coursebook, and summarizes the most important points to be taught in terms of vocabulary, grammar, skills development, topics, and situations in a list form. In addition, it also includes ideas for extra activities, materials to supplement the coursebook, or anything important that teachers would like to pay special attention to. The approximate number of lessons or weeks to be spent on one unit of teaching is also indicated.

Extract 43, Planning with the help of a written year syllabus

It's good to be able to check myself. I know when I have to make things go somewhat quicker, and when I can stop a little and spend more time with supplementary materials. (Bori)

It's always there on my desk, and I often have a look, though I know by heart where I should be. And I always keep to it; even if I am behind compared to what I have planned, I am never behind more than 4 to 5 lessons. (Klári)

I like to see in writing what I will do during the school year. At our school, I am not obliged to do it, I write it for myself. It makes me think over a number of points, mainly my aims, the material to be covered etc. But I don't panic, if I can' keep to it. The most important is that I know what I wanted to teach and why, but I also know that there is always a reason behind deviating from plans. (Juli)

Coursebook users who have a mental year plan have emphasized that year syllabuses are difficult, if not impossible, to design, as the events of the school year and the learners' needs cannot be fully foreseen. Their planning and their decisions of how to use the coursebook are, therefore, based on their judgement of what is required in a particular teaching situation. This cannot be written down in advance, and only a loose mental plan can be flexible enough to cater for the needs of the learners.

Extract 44, Mental year planning by a coursebook user

I hand in a year syllabus every year. But the one I really use is much more detailed. [...] It's in my head. I don't think you can write it down at the beginning of the school year, as it emerges as the year unfolds. What I clearly know at the beginning of the year is what I want to achieve. Everything else comes later.(Szilvi)

Teachers whose planning is independent of coursebook syllabuses do not write year plans, either. At the same time, what seems to serve as a form of plan is a pool of teaching materials that is used as a menu during the school year.

Extract 45, Mental year planning by independent planners

Planning the school year would be a waste of time. I always remember my main aims and I don't need to write a year syllabus. I never put down my syllabus, nor do I prepare written unit or weekly plans. All this is in my head, this way I can always change anything in it,

and I haven't worked in vain. (Dóra)

Even if you design a year plan, you usually realize after the second week of the school year that things are not going as you thought they would for a number of reasons. So why put energy in planning the year? [...] What I do at the beginning of each school year is thinking about what to use and how to use it with my groups. This way I have plenty of materials for the year, from which I only pick some, but it's worth doing. (Zsuzsa)

8.2.4.3. Unit planning

The next level of planning is that of unit planning. Though unit plans are often based on coursebook units, just like year plans have been found to be often based on coursebook syllabuses, a unit of teaching has been interpreted in three different ways out of which a coursebook unit is one interpretation. A unit of planning is, therefore, considered to be

(i) *a time period*, such as a two-month or a two-week period, or

(ii) *a unit of the coursebook*, or

(iii) *a unit of teaching materials* organized by a specific principle (a topic or a grammatical structure)

Teachers in the first group interpret a unit of teaching as (i) a *time period*: Szilvi prepares plans for two-month periods, and Lívia plans two-week periods, which are usually 8 to 10 lessons to teach. Though they teach from coursebooks, planning for a certain period of time is more helpful for them than dividing the school year into units based on the structure of a coursebook.

Extract 46, Unit planning: planning for a certain period of time

I usually plan the first lesson of a two-week period in detail, but the rest of the lessons in that unit is left open. I will see how I will progress once I have taught the first lesson. I rarely plan from one lesson to the other. I always put down after the lesson where we stopped so that I do not forget it, and also note down any new ideas that come right after teaching the lesson, but I essentially work from my unit plan. It gives me plenty of ideas as to what to do next, but I never stick to doing everything I planned and always leave myself sufficient freedom to decide on the time frame. You know, I never know in advance how much time something will take, perhaps I plan 30 minutes for practising grammar and the children finish with it in 15 minutes. That's why it's best to see two weeks as a whole; I

have flexible lesson plans and I can always take additional ideas from my unit plan. (Lívia)

Teachers in the second group, like Bori, Edit, Anna, Sára and Juli, regard (ii) *a unit of their coursebook* as a basic unit of planning. Some of them, like, Bori, Edit, and Anna closely follow the syllabus of the book, and plan the teaching of coursebook units between planning the year and the lessons. Some other teachers, like Sára and Juli, who also consider the coursebook units to supply the framework for planning, seem to be more independent of the logic of the book and the order of the materials it contains. They sometimes deviate from the structure of the book, and they thoroughly supplement it, especially when they think that it is not appropriate for the group's needs.

Extract 47, Unit planning: planning the teaching of a unit in the coursebook

I know I need approximately 20 lessons for one unit. However, this is never the same in every group. Though I follow the order of the units, mainly because the order of teaching grammatical structures cannot be varied, I bring plenty of supplementary materials depending on what topics the children are interested in. [...] This means that sometimes we spend more than 25 lessons on one unit. (Juli)

Teachers in the third group, like Zsuzsa and Dóra, interpret a unit of teaching as (iii) *a unit of teaching materials* collected from different sources and arranged around a topic and the grammatical structures to be taught through the topic. The organizing principle for a unit of teaching in this understanding, therefore, is neither a time period, nor a coursebook unit, but the teacher's judgement of what topics might be interesting and relevant for a particular group and how the chosen topics could be exploited for teaching grammar, vocabulary, and skills development. This is based on the teacher's assessment of the teaching situation and her continuous search for teaching materials.

When asked if they ever write unit plans or store them mentally, most teachers said that they prefer to have mental unit plans, and only put down some ideas for teaching activities, page numbers, and titles of books with interesting teaching ideas so that they do not forget them. This suggests that unit planning is essentially *a mental activity.*

However, a loose written unit plan has been reported to be prepared by Lívia, who plans two-week units, and by Zsuzsa, who selects her teaching materials from a variety of sources and even designs her own materials. She also explained that her written unit plan is a collection of ideas from which she picks the ones that seem to be the best in a particular moment.

8.2.4.4. Weekly planning

Weekly planning, the fourth form of planning, has emerged as the least frequently done one. It seems to be practised by busy teachers, like Anna and Juli, who have more time to think about their lessons at the weekend than during the week. What they note down is some key words, names of activities, ideas for supplementary and extra practice activities in order to aid memory during the week. Weekly planning, therefore, seems to be a *mental activity* that is *aided by written notes*.

Extract 48, Weekly planning: planning by busy teachers

I have plenty of lessons to teach a week. I always try to prepare a short outline for each at the weekend when I have a bit more time, but I spend almost two hours every day on planning them. I look for materials, practice activities, prepare cards and all kinds of aids; it takes a long time. (Anna)

I have to prepare for such a wide range of needs because of the different exams that I can't devote enough time to it during the week. I have to bring different activities for different children, so it takes plenty of time to put together the material for one lesson.(Juli)

8.2.4.5. Lesson planning

The last level of planning is that of lesson planning. Teachers can again be grouped as *coursebook users* and *independent planners,* but there are considerable differences among coursebook users in how they use the book for planning purposes. Some of them closely follow the coursebook when they plan and teach lessons, while some other coursebook users give more attention to adapting coursebook material to the particular requirements of a teaching situation, and often use the book as a 'menu' to choose from according to perceived needs.

Written lesson plans and mental lesson planning

The participating teachers were found to be quite similar in how they write and use lesson plans. Their lesson planning seems to be essentially a mental activity, which is most often aided by a short written plan, used as a reminder. On the other hand, they have identified some particular reasons, such as teaching grammar and organizing complex activities, why they need to note down a more detailed plan for the lesson.

According to the analysis, the participating teachers *plan lessons mentally relying on their 'plans-in-memory',* which have developed with their schema system and enable teachers to use them without recording every detail in writing. At the same time, they are *aided by short written reminders in the form of 'to-do' lists*, which contain 3 to 5 key words, such as the names of the activities, page numbers, and sometimes forms or interactions (see Appendix 5).

When asked if they ever use the same written plan with two different groups, they all said that it is almost impossible. First of all, it serves as a reminder. Second, as a plan is always made for one specific group, it cannot be used with any other groups.

Extract 49, Written lesson plans: used only once

You can't use the same plan again. It is only valid for that particular group in that particular moment. I don't think I ever start two lessons in the same way, so there is no point in keeping those plans. (Lívia)

Writing *detailed lesson plans*, on the other hand, was reported to be helpful by all the participants *when presenting a new grammatical structure and illustrating it with examples*. Its main purpose is to help teachers fluently explain grammar without thinking too much about example structures in the lesson, and to avoid using quickly thought-out examples that might not be appropriate and might confuse the learners. It has also been commonly pointed out that recording minor steps of the lesson in writing is quite important when *planning for multi-level and mixed-ability groups, or doing a complex activity* that requires teachers to divide the group into smaller groups and to monitor different groups carrying out different tasks in the same lesson.

Extract 50, Detailed lesson plans: aids in organising complex activities

When organizing the group is a complicated task, I need to note down all steps of organization, who works with whom, how I choose the pairs. Otherwise, I get completely lost, and the whole activity fails. (Juli)

Sometimes I plan for five different groups in the same lesson. Even there at certain points the whole class works together. This might get so complicated that I have to plan it very much in detail and write all steps down so that I don't get confused. (Zsuzsa)

8.3. The main issues and the guiding principles of planning lessons

The findings of the analysis have revealed that teachers first of all consider issues of lesson content and organisation, and the main principles that guide them are rooted in their understanding that the lesson is the primary source of learning for most learners, which should be exploited in such a way that everyone involved could

maximally benefit from it. All the other principles follow from this one and are related in some way, as the learning potential of a lesson can only be exploited if learners of all abilities and interests are involved, which is only possible if everyone in a group is motivated to take part, and if plans take into account the circumstances, such as the rhythm of the school life and learners' individual schedule.

As it is suggested by the findings, teachers' first of all focus on

- planning lesson content and classroom organisation,
- making the most of the lesson,
- motivating learners in the lesson, and
- adjusting plans to the rhythm of school life when they plan lessons.

The teachers involved have also pointed out that their main concerns are related to problems that are most likely to occur in the lesson. When identifying what aspects of a lesson they give special attention to, most of them pointed to typical problem areas and defined their guiding principles in response to them. That is, what is most likely to raise problems was identified as being an important matter to consider when planning lessons. The participating teachers were, therefore, primarily preoccupied with problems that are related to planning lesson content that develops learners' knowledge in areas where they have linguistic difficulties, exploiting the full potential of the lesson, motivating learners and involving everyone, and responding to individual differences. This suggests that their lesson planning is largely guided by the intention to try and eliminate the potential problems by foreseeing ways of handling them, which supports Calderhead's claim that planning is essentially of problem finding and of problem solving nature (1996).

8.3.1. Planning lesson content and organisation

According to the findings teachers seem to focus on content and organisational issues when planning lessons. In other words, the first questions that they ask themselves are 'What will I teach?' and 'How will I organize the group?'. Due to the all-embracing nature of group characteristics, lesson content – especially supplementary activities - seems to be mostly planned with a view of the particular group characteristics, with special attention to the difficulties that the group or the individual learners are likely to encounter. This suggests that it is difficult to identify one common set of considerations with regard to lesson content, as they vary from group to group according to the particular needs. Yet, the participating teachers have showed little variety in what they considered essential to think about when they plan a lesson, and a common pattern of a lesson has also emerged in the form of a list of the most important 'ingredients'. That is, the majority of the teachers involved prefer to start the lesson with a warmer, or with some revision, possibly in a relaxed atmosphere with the help of some games. Some of them like to finish the lesson with a cooler, but definitely on a positive note. Practising vocabulary in various forms and developing speaking skills have appeared to be the most important purposes of a lesson. Providing opportunities for pair and group interactions has received particular attention among all the organisational issues.

Extract 51, Promoting cooperation

I always try to pay attention to break with the old routine of frontal work, when learners sit in rows and listen to the teacher. I believe that foreign language teaching in Hungary has the merit of making the learners familiar with how to work in pairs and in small groups. As far as I can see, they mostly do frontal work in other lessons. And they seem to like to work together, so I make a conscious effort of planning as much pair and small groupwork as possible. (Edit)

One of my main concerns is to organize activities in which learners can cooperate with each other in pair or in small groupwork. They have so little chance to do it in other lessons, that's why I always include something in my plan in which they can practise it, no matter what the lesson is focusing on. I think it is not only in teaching language learning strategies that it is importan; it is very important in communication in general. We all

know that it is not a priority in the Hungarian educational system. (Juli)

8.3.2. Making the most of the lesson

Lessons are considered to be the primary source of learning by many of the teachers. Though home study is thought to be important, the teachers still emphasized that most of the learning takes place in the lesson; teachers, therefore, should be fully aware of the need to exploit the full potential of a lesson as a learning opportunity.

Extract 52, Exploiting the lesson as the primary learning opportunity

I think that every minute of the lesson should be planned in such a way that all learners could maximally benefit from it. [...]... my job is to provide this opportunity for them instead of expecting them to do plenty of work on their own outside the lessons. (Zsuzsa)

I believe that children should [...] do most of their learning in the lesson. Instead of giving them plenty of homework, I try to provide them practice in various forms here in the lesson. If the lesson is planned in such a way that the children can benefit from all the opportunities for learning without writing long and tiring homework after school, it's a well planned lesson. I know that this takes a long time, and, in a way, is a lot more work for the teacher, but for me this is the way to do it. (Sára)

8.3.3. Motivating learners

Attracting and keeping up all learners' attention as well as involving everyone in the activities emerged as being particularly important for teachers in their every-day lesson planning activity and as having a key role in maximally exploiting the learning potential of lessons. According to the teachers involved, learner motivation can be enhanced by planning with an awareness of what learners are interested in, by engaging them in activities that would be natural for them to do in their mother tongue, as well as by aiming to provide a wide range of tasks and humour.

Extract 53, Problems with attracting and keeping up attention

Today's children are very difficult to motivate; it's a hard task to attract and keep up their attention. I can only manage if I try to think as today's teenagers do. I know that teaching is only efficient if it is interesting. [...]That's why I try hard; this is something I have to cope with no matter how difficult it might be. (Lívia)

Extract 54, The need to involve everyone

No one should be bored, that's very important. I have to motivate them, if I don't want anyone to do nothing. But that might be very difficult sometimes, because there are always some children who prefer to sit back, and I just can't make them fully participate in the activities. (Ágota)

Extract 55, Motivating through interesting tasks

Whenever I went to visit language schools abroad, I could always see how relaxed language teaching in those countries is. We, in Hungary, try to make the most of our time; we always want to make progress. For us every minute is precious time and we do not want to waste it. I also teach in this spirit, but to me this is only possible if I can keep up my learners' attention with motivating activities. They can only benefit from the lesson, if they are interested in the topic. My children are also teenagers, so I know from home what might be interesting for this age-group. (Lívia)

I try to create situations in which the children do something that interests them, which they could do in a biology or a geography lesson, or they draw or stick something, but in order to cope with the task they have to use English instead of Hungarian. (Sára)

Extract 56, The need for variety

You can't put your finger on what exactly should be foreseen when planning lessons. First of all, you are guided by different considerations with each group. To me the secret is to have a bit of everything, to provide a wide range of tasks and a variety of teaching materials so that the learners never become bored. Boredom is the most awful thing in a lesson that I can imagine. (Anna)

Extract 57, The use of humour

There are parts of a lesson that cannot be made interesting in any way. This is very often so when we practise grammar. In order to cheer the children up and help them remember how to use a particular structure, I try to give them humorous examples. Last time - though it's an example from the computer science lesson, but it well illustrates how important humour is – I was teaching how to rename a file. So I said that this file is called szörcs hörcsög röcsöge, now let's name it Brigi or Flóra, who are two girls in the class. They all laughed, and they still remember how to do it.(Ádám)

I try to illustrate grammatical structures with stories. Last time, we learnt the conditional. You know, <if> and <will>. I drew two families on the board, who hate each other. One is called If, the other is called Will family. They really hate each other as one stole the other's

flowers, then the other stole the first family's pig. Hatred between them is so strong that they can't be in the same clause. And they (the learners) laugh a lot, but the main thing is that they remember, and they can easily be reminded of how to use if and will by referring to the story. But this is not simply me telling a story and they listening. I try to involve them when I say that one stole the other's flowers. And what do you think the other family did in response? And they have to come up with all sorts of ideas. You can imagine the amount of blood they said was flowing. But I said: No, it was only the pig. And we all had a great time, and most importantly, managed to learn how to use conditional sentences. (Anna)

8.3.4. Adjusting plans to the rhythm of school life

The participating teachers emphasized the importance to be sensitive to the special circumstances when planning lessons, more specifically to the period of the school year in which the lesson falls, especially around holidays, like Christmas, or Easter, the events of school life, or the place of the lesson on the learners' daily and weekly schedule. Quite interestingly, the questionnaire survey revealed the opposite about the effect of the learners' daily and weekly schedule. The obvious contradiction between the findings of the two stages of the research in this respect seems to suggest that data elicited on the same phenomenon in two different ways may not match. This throws light on the limitations of collecting data from one source only, and underlines the importance of using several sources of data. Meanwhile, this also raises the problem of reliability in questionnaire surveys and draws attention to the need to be extremely careful when interpreting questionnaire data. In the present survey, as in all questionnaire surveys, data are supplied exclusively by the respondents about their own activity, and it cannot be taken for granted that they are aware of all their actions. This might bring about the danger of quite unconsciously stating something that may not be true. The reason why the findings of the interview study seem to be more credible is that planning was investigated from multiple perspectives in it, i.e.: by in-depth interviews and observation based interviews, which ensured data triangulation and increased research credibility.

Extract 58, Considering the place of the lesson on learners' schedule

I plan different lessons for Friday, especially if the lesson starts after 11 o'clock, when the children are already thinking about the weekend. Monday is difficult, too, Wednesday is quite all right, except for the 6th and 7th period. So I always bring a warmer on Monday and Friday – I don't usually plan warmers for the other days - and we also play more. (Ágota)

I bring them more games for this lesson (Friday, 5th period) than for any other lessons during the week, and this is the slot when we sometimes watch films. (Anita)

You do different things before Christmas. You can't forget that the children are already in a Christmas mood in December, and it's fun. (Zsuzsa)

8.4. Teaching experience

The findings of the interviews have shown that teaching experience affects the participating teachers' planning activity in the same way as it was revealed by previous research and by the questionnaire survey. First of all, the interviews have confirmed that experienced teachers do engage in planning their teaching, and attribute considerable importance to thinking before teaching. Meanwhile, their planning activity differs in a number of ways from that of beginner teachers. In this section I will discuss the characteristic features of

- experienced teachers' elaborate schema system.

I will also demonstrate in what way it enables them

- to have a comprehensive overview of the teaching process as opposed to novices who are more likely to understand teaching as a sequence of separate lessons.

The findings also suggest that a well-developed schema system enables teachers

- to freely deviate from their plans, and
- to 'feel' how time issues should be managed.

Extract 59, Differences between novice and experienced teacher planning

Planning is not dependent on age and experience. To me, it is more personality dependent.

No matter how experienced I am, I still do it all the time. [...] Regardless of how much experience I have, I like to think over what I will teach. This is important for me so that I feel confident. But it's true that when I started teaching, I spent a lot more time on planning, looking for materials, thinking about what to do. This process has definitely become much shorter, and I can quickly prepare for 8 lessons a day, while the maximum was 3 when I was a beginner teacher. (Juli)

I do plan, though I am already quite experienced. But I'm much quicker now, have a huge material file, and most importantly, I am much better as to how to build up a lesson, how to link the activities. When I started teaching, it took a long time to plan all this. (Klári)

8.4.1. Schema system

The fact that novice teachers need more time for planning each step of a lesson is explained by the lack of an elaborate schema system, identified by Leinhardt and Greeno (1986), which includes 'plans-in-memory' for common teaching activities, knowledge of common classroom events, such as class- or groupwork, and knowledge about components of the teaching situation, such as subject matter and teaching methods. The analysis of the interviews found that most participants – both beginner and experienced teachers - had numerous 'plans-in-memory' for teaching grammar, building vocabulary, and developing the four skills. At the same time, novice teachers' 'plans-in-memory' were usually shorter and included separate activities, while those of experienced teachers extended over whole lessons, or longer units of a lesson with links between the activities. This explains that novices are more likely to write detailed lesson plans, while experienced teachers do not need to record all details in writing, as they possess the small building blocks ready to be applied and to be freely connected.

Extract 60, Planning all details versus planning the outlines

When I started teaching, I did not only plan every single step, but even wrote a detailed plan. At the very beginning, I worded my instructions and questions in advance and included them in the plan. I didn't give myself any freedom, which I would not do now, but I think I needed this stage, too, to develop a framework on which I can build now. This took

about four years. (Bori)

I don't think it's worth writing a detailed plan, especially because I know very well what I want to do, and I have plenty of material at hand. So I only put down 3 or 4 points, and even in that case I know that I might do something else in the lesson, because, for example, in the very last minute I have managed to correct the tests that they wrote last time. So I decide to do tomorrow what I have planned for today, and discuss the test with the children knowing that it is important for them and they will benefit from it. (Zsuzsa)

Another important point that has emerged is that novice teachers' schemas representing their knowledge of teaching materials and class management are less developed than that of the experienced teachers involved in the research.

Extract 61, Novice planning: building up a material file

I spend plenty of time on looking for material. At least one and a half hour a day, or often two hours. (Anna)

The above findings, according to which teachers rely on 'plans-in-memory' very early when they still need to devote a considerable amount of time to planning organisational issues and building up a material file, seem to suggest that the schema system starts developing more quickly in the field of mental plans for common teaching activities than for class management issues or factual knowledge of teaching materials. This has its beneficial effects on novice teachers' teaching, as the early use of mentally stored activities simplifies their task and leaves them enough capacity to turn their attention to interpreting unexpected classroom events and take on-the-spot decisions.

8.4.2. Having an overview of the teaching process

Due to their elaborate schema system, experienced teachers have an understanding of how the teaching process as a whole is built up, and how the planning of smaller blocks of teaching is guided by a common framework of long-term goals. Experienced teachers, therefore, proceed from formulating long-term

plans to planning separate lessons. Novices, however, are more likely to primarily focus on questions of lesson planning, and find it more difficult to monitor the whole of the teaching process and adapt lessons accordingly.

Extract 62, Experienced teachers: viewing teaching as a process

When I started teaching, I concentrated on planning lessons. At the college I learnt that a well thought-out structure and the timing of a lesson are very important, and the biggest challenge for me was to plan interesting and varied lessons. And there was a point when I started realizing that though I put plenty of time and effort into planning lessons, I somehow do not see how the next lesson will be linked to all this. [...] I also realized after a while that I didn't give the children enough opportunities for practise, perhaps because I didn't have good materials. It was a bad feeling. And this was when I turned my attention to planning longer units of teaching, in which the lessons are put into a larger context which has its own goals. (Ágota)

I could only concentrate on the 45 minutes, and that's it. I was only concerned with the technical side of it all. Now I have an overview of the whole teaching process, I can see what I want and I know how to achieve it. In other words, I am less concerned with techniques, and care more about the content. (Szilvi)

The fact that experienced teachers understand more how to operate between the various levels and can more efficiently relate plans to one another has been further supported by their presenting their lesson plans in the pre-lesson interview. On the basis of their answers to my question (*What did you plan for today?*), the participating teachers can be divided into three groups depending on how much emphasis they put on situating the lesson within the wider context of teaching as opposed to giving a detailed description of the activities to be taught.

Teachers in the first group – all experienced teachers (Zsuzsa, Szilvi, Sára, Lívia, Klári, and Juli) – introduced their plan by briefly outlining the most important features of the particular teaching context that I was going to observe, including the goals of the lesson, the special circumstances (Christmas approaching) as well as some background information on the group. They only specified the separate steps of the lesson when I asked them to do so.

Extract 63, Introducing the lesson 1: outlining the context

In the sixth grade, one of the main objectives is to learn the simple past and to practise it. This group seems to have quite a lot of difficulties with it, so it's a kind of a struggle, and that's why I have stopped everything else, and we are concentrating exclusively on practising the simple past. I could even say we do plenty of drills because that's what the children in this group need. (Sára)

This is quite a special occasion because we are a week before Christmas. Yesterday we started playing, and we will continue it today, but I would like to develop their vocabulary, too, while playing. [...] The purpose is to do all this in a positive atmosphere and to give them rewards. They do deserve it, as they have all passed the state exam. From now on, my task is to motivate them, to help them prepare for the advanced exam in the rest of the 11th grade and in the 12th grade..... (Lívia)

Teachers in the second group – two experienced teachers (Bori and Edit) and four novice teachers (Anna, Ádám, Anita and Dóra) – gave a brief description of the context in which the lesson takes place, then presented the separate steps in detail.

Extract 64, Introducing the lesson 2: making reference to the context and listing the activities

We are learning from New Success at First Certificate and we are at Unit 17. Next Wednesday, the children will write a test on the material of this unit. So this is going to be the revision of modal verbs, I hope they remember it. [...] First they will fill in a gapped text. The next thing to do will be... (Anita)

Teachers in the third group – one experienced teacher (Ágota) and one novice (Zsófi) – gave a detailed account of what constitutes their lesson plan without discussing the place of the lesson within the larger context of teaching, though they referred to the relationship of the lesson to the previous one.

Extract 65, Introducing the lesson 3: making reference to the previous lesson and listing the activities

This is their first lesson on Monday. They will definitely be sleepy so I need to wake them up. Last time we practised the conditional, and today we will start with a song which has several conditional structures. Then we will work from the book.....(Zsófi)

8.4.3. The ability to flexibly modify plans

The elaborate schema system and the resulting ability to first plan longer units of teaching, then plan the individual lessons enable experienced teachers to flexibly modify plans when needed.

Extract 66, Experienced planning: flexibility and responsiveness

When I was a beginner teacher I tried to imagine all possible reactions of the children and I wanted to plan in such a way as to have an alternative for each reaction. Now I know that the whole thing is totally unpredictable, and my task is to be prepared to respond to the children's reaction in the best possible way in the lesson. Of course, I can predict to some extent how they will react, because I know them, but there might always be something that I can't foresee. That's quite natural, and that's why I don't think that it's worth making detailed plans in which you try to anticipate everything possible. In the beginning I insisted on teaching according to my plan, and I felt disappointed when it did not work. Now I am able to modify my plans whenever I see that it's important so that the children benefit from the lesson. (Lívia)

I can very well imagine myself going into a classroom and not knowing what I will teach there, though it doesn't occur to me in my own groups, only when I substitute another teacher. I will surely be able to come up with something on the spot without feeling embarrassed, and the children will not notice that I did not plan it in advance. I don't think I could have done it when I was a beginner. Now I am more courageous, I know I can improvise any time I need to. (Zsuzsa)

Now I don't get embarrassed if I don't have my plan, though I still think that you need to think about what you want to do. When I was a beginner teacher, my mentor drew my attention to always preparing extra activities for the end of the lesson so that I don't panic if I finish my plan too quickly. At that time I did it consciously, now I do it when I have to without preparing for it. (Klári)

Now I'm more relaxed. I know I can cope and the learners will benefit even if I didn't plan for some reason. (Bori)

8.4.4. The ability to manage time

The flexibility that characterizes experienced teachers as opposed to novices is also evident in the way they handle issues of timing.

Extract 67, Experienced planning: the ability to manage time

I already know what learners need to achieve in the seventh-grade so that they can pass the

state exam in the tenth grade. Though you can learn a lot from colleagues and on different courses, understanding how time can be managed is something that you need to try out if you want to do it well. (Lívia)

I have been teaching for more than 15 years, and now I already feel where I am. I always know if I have to speed up, or I am at the right point in time. And I don't need a watch to know it, it is more like a feeling. [...]... and you might often run into problems that you did not anticipate. In that case, you need to adjust your plan to it, including timing. Or, you come to the end of your plan much quicker than you thought you would. In those cases, I throw in one of the many extra–activities I am already familiar with. The main point is to balance your timing on the long run, which I can do now, after many years of teaching. (Klári)

I always give some thoughts to timing, but I don't like to plan in terms of minutes. I need to have some freedom, as even with groups whom I know well, there might always be unexpected events, or they are simply slower than other times. If in one lesson we run out of time, I can always catch up in the long run. (Bori)

However, like in all aspects of planning, there are examples that are exceptions to the most commonly observed practices. This is in line with Berliner's claim that 'experience does not teach everyone equally well' (1987, p. 77). In his study on differences between experienced and novice teachers' thinking, Berliner noted that novice teachers might also show very sophisticated patterns of thinking, while experienced teachers might not always act in ways they are expected to by the researchers. This is not surprising, though, if one considers that teaching is in many ways affected by teachers' talent and intuition, which enables beginner teachers to teach in an almost professional-like way without having spent years with teaching. In the present study, Anita's example in Extract 68 shows that though she has been teaching for less than five years, she plans timing quite flexibly and adapts it to the learners' needs.

Extract 68, An exception to the most commonly observed tendencies

I have already got some skill in managing time, so I do not need to decide on time limits in advance. In addition, I do not think that planning timing more precisely would improve my planning in any way, as you can't expect the children to work according to your planned timing. (Anita)

8.5. The teachers' affective needs

The analysis has thrown light on two important reasons why teachers plan: they plan to feel secure during teaching and to motivate themselves by planning.

Acting confidently and feeling secure are considered to be important by teachers as they might easily affect learners' reactions, which might fundamentally shape how the lesson proceeds. Teachers' feelings have, therefore, a decisive role in the whole of the teaching-learning process, as learners essentially respond to what they perceive as the emotional message of the teacher.

Extract 69, Planning to feel secure and confident

I like to see longer units of teaching. In fact, unit planning makes me feel confident; I know where I am going. (Ágota)

If I plan my week, I feel safe and relaxed. If I can't plan it for some reason, I feel very uncertain, and the children will notice it. (Edit)

I only feel secure if I know what I want to do. It has always been like this, it hasn't changed with age. If I can't see where I want to go, I feel frustrated and so do the children. (Juli)

If I don't plan, I'm not confident enough and I'm not in control. The children will always see it, and the whole lesson falls apart. (Ádám)

Another affective reason why teachers plan is that planning engages them in activities that they enjoy, thus they find a sense of self-motivation in planning and teaching. This again seems to strongly affect learners, as teachers who are bored with what they do will never be able to motivate learners. In other words, teachers need to be motivated, too, so that they can motivate learners and manage the learning process effectively. Teacher motivation can be derived from various sources, such as the pleasure of searching for new teaching materials, or teaching from an interesting and challenging coursebook.

Extract 70, The need to take pleasure in searching for teaching materials

I very much enjoy looking for new material. And I need it, to me it's some kind of a refreshment or regeneration. The problem is that I don't always have the time for it. (Ágota)

Extract 71, The need to be motivated by the coursebook

I can't teach a book more than five times. In fact I get to know it when I first teach it. For the second time I feel how to teach it better. I can make the most of it when I teach it for the third time[...] After that, it's all right for one or two more years, but it already starts becoming boring for me. And if I am bored, how could I make it interesting? (Juli)

8.6. Drawing on past experience as a learner

In three cases out of the fourteen, teachers were found to act consciously according to certain patterns which they reported to adopt from their own language learning past. Their past experience has a beneficial influence on the way they teach and plan, though it affects their actions in different ways. Ádám's case illustrates the positive influence of past experience, as it motivates him to teach his learners certain strategies that he found efficient as a language learner.

Extract 72, Recalling useful learning strategies and encouraging learners to adopt them

They pronounced the word really well, perhaps they had *heard it before. I keep telling them to listen to English language programmes, or watch films in English. It doesn't matter if they don't understand it, the main thing is to get used to hearing the structures. I did the same when I was learning English, and it helped me a lot. Sometimes it took me several years to realize what something I had heard in a film meant, but it was worth doing it. (Ádám)*

Lívia's example shows that she often starts out from remembering the difficulties she had faced as a learner, when she plans the teaching of a particular grammatical structure.

Extract 73, Recalling one's experience as a learner in order to identify learners' difficulties

When I teach grammar, I always try to recall what was difficult for me when I was learning English. If I anticipate certain difficulties, I know how to be very clear, and I can plan the teaching of a structure in such a way that they understand it quickly. (Lívia)

In the third case, however, past language learning experience influences Edit negatively by making her reject frontal teaching that she did not find useful as a learner.

Extract 74, Recalling negative experience as a learner

I find that groupwork and pairwork are efficient for practising a number of things. I grew up in an educational system where the only form of interaction was frontal. At the time it was considered to be the best method, and this is what we, teachers, bring from our past: children sitting in rows and twos, the teacher in front, and the teacher asks a question and one of the children answers. All other forms of interaction, not very common at the time, were first introduced in Hungarian schools by teachers of foreign languages. I know that the children are still taught frontally in most lessons, so I try to make an effort to do as many tasks in pairs or in small groupwork as possible, even if the coursebook doesn't indicate that it could be done. It's better than lecturing, at least I prefer it. (Edit)

The findings of the interview study have refined the picture of planning that emerged from the questionnaire survey by giving deeper insights into the most salient features of the participating teachers' planning activity and have thrown light on a number of issues that are worth including in pre-service teacher training. In the following chapter of the dissertation I will add up the results of the questionnaire survey and the interview study and will provide a summary based on the answers to the research questions.

Chapter 9

Summary of the research findings and answers to the research questions

Overview

In this chapter, I will conclude the research process by providing answers to the research questions, and commenting on the findings from the perspective of what I have anticipated.

In the forthcoming summary, the findings will be first presented by giving answers to the research questions. Since the main questions were formulated on the basis of essential features of planning identified by Calderhead (1996), the answers to them are meant to give focused, in-depth insights into how those features can be applied to the planning activity of the teachers involved. After answering the research questions, I will attempt to situate the findings within the framework of my experience in planning, and I will identify similarities and differences between what I anticipated and what I have revealed in the investigation. At points where there is a mismatch between my expectations and the results of the research, I will try to find possible explanations.

When interpreting the findings, it has to be emphasized again that the teachers participated in the research on a voluntary basis, and were naturally interested in the results. It was also evident to me that most of them found the 'experience' rather challenging, and – as some of them spelled out – they benefited from reflecting on questions that are related to their own practice of teaching and planning. This suggests that they do not represent the 'average' teacher of English in any sense, which dose not raise a problem as the research is not intended to generalize the findings. Therefore, anything that is stated in the summary of the research results is only valid for the teachers who were involved in it. Meanwhile, I believe that even the insights

of a small group of teachers who are ready to share their experience and thoughts with others have the immense value of illuminating ways of planning in various teaching contexts that others can reflect on and learn from.

When assessing the final results, one might be tempted to think that the overall picture is 'too positive' and reflects the planning activity of a group of teachers who are exceptionally sensitive to the different teaching contexts, possess the ability to interpret them in all their complexity and can efficiently manage them. This, in many ways, is true, as most of the participating teachers are genuinely curious to know more about teaching, which might give them a stimulus to constantly improve their practices. Though I did not intend to collect data from teachers who can be models for teacher trainees, nor did I want to restrict the investigation to eliciting only 'very clever' insights, the fact that the teachers involved are committed professionals is beneficial from the perspective of using the research material in pre-service teacher-training, as positive examples and good practices can always be efficiently exploited.

9.1. Answers to the research questions

1) **At what levels do teachers plan and what is the relationship of the different levels of planning?**

As it has been revealed by the two stages of data collection, *the teachers involved are engaged in five levels of planning: long-term* and *lesson planning* which are the two most frequently practised forms of planning by the participants, *yearly planning* which is mentioned as the next most common form, *unit planning* which is done by almost as many teachers as yearly planning, and *weekly planning* which emerged as the least common form of planning.

If one examines the different levels by proceeding from planning for the longest unit of teaching (long-term planning) to planning for the shortest unit of teaching (lesson planning), it is quite obvious that they *involve completely different activities*. Long-term planning is essentially a goal-setting activity, in which teachers take account of learners' long-term goals. The yearly level is also concerned with setting specific goals, but it involves some practical activities, such as searching for and developing teaching materials. The three levels below – levels of unit, weekly and lesson planning – all include both goal-setting and practical elements, though these are quite different at each of the three levels. The most practical level of planning is that of the lesson at which teachers are engaged in a wide range of everyday activities from preparing materials, cutting up cards, making photocopies to planning how to arrange the furniture in the room.

The fact that the five levels of planning comprise activities of different nature seems to indicate that *teachers need to draw on different skills and knowledge at each level.* For example, setting long-term goals requires an overall understanding of the learning process and the knowledge of organizing and managing it in such a way that learners achieve their aims by the end of the course, while planning the individual lessons seems to require an ability to select and design teaching materials in response to the learners' needs. The difference between the various levels in terms of the specific thinking and practical activities they involve suggests, as was also pointed out by many of the teachers, that interpreting planning as an activity that is done at clearly separate levels is a rather arbitrary simplification of a highly elaborate activity with a complex net of interrelated elements.

Having adopted a simplified view of planning in order to capture some of its essential features, the research has also revealed that *planning is a nested process* in

which one level ‘nests’ the next one by providing guidelines for it. This was most evident in the participating teachers’ awareness of achieving long-term goals, which, in turn, guides planning at the subsequent levels, thus creating a ‘nest’ for them. If we proceed in a reverse order and approach planning from the other end, it can be seen that plans at the lesson level are subordinated to plans at the next - the unit - level. This is proved by several teachers’ commentary on one particular lesson, in which they introduced the lesson by first situating it within the wider context of the unit. The fact that the various levels of planning create a complex structure of nests is further supported by teachers continuously relating their plans to plans at other levels when spelling out how changes in plans at one level affect plans at another one.

Teachers’ understanding of how goals are related seems to be accompanied by an awareness of what specific aspects of teaching need to be planned at the various levels and how the levels need to be coordinated. In order to efficiently harmonize plans in the nest structure, teachers need to constantly *interpret their teaching contexts and to flexibly modify plans* if there is an indication that it is needed. It follows that plans need to be loose enough to be modified. Findings about planning timing, according to which teachers only plan broad outlines, also seem to suggest that plans are made with sufficient space left for modifications and on-the-spot decisions.

A final important point concerning the issue of coordinating the various levels of planning has to do with the role of teaching experience in it. That is, *experienced teachers are better at coordinating plans than beginners* as they have a comprehensive overview of the teaching process and can more easily move forward and backward within it due to their more elaborate schema system.

2) What is the relationship of mental and written lesson plans?

The findings of the study support what was revealed earlier about the relationship of mental and written plans by showing that *teachers primarily draw on their 'plans-in-memory' when they plan lessons*. That is, they are guided by their mental plans which include sequences of teaching activities that teachers can fluently perform in the lesson without consulting written plans. Mental plans are applied by both beginner and experienced teachers, though beginner teachers' mental plans are more likely to store separate activities than chains of activities or information about how to organize them. Experienced teachers, on the other hand, seem to retain longer sequences of activities including the linking elements between them as well as information about classroom organizational issues. This seems to suggest that *mental plans develop very early, but the different elements build into it at different times in a predictable order*: *separate activities first, activity chains and organizational knowledge later*.

A more precise description of mental lesson plans has emerged from the teachers' account on what they concentrate on when they plan lessons. Apart from identifying *lesson content and organization as the basic elements of mental lesson plans*, the teachers also threw light on some of the main *principles* that guide them, such as *making the most of the lesson, motivating learners and adjusting plans to the rhythm and events of school life as well as to learners' daily and weekly schedule.*

Written lesson plans that accompany mental lesson plans are usually short in the form of 'to-do' lists and are used to remind teachers of the elements of their mental plans by including a couple of key words, such as names of tasks, page numbers, and special materials (see Appendix 5). This seems to send the message that lesson planning is a complex mental activity with a number of invisible elements that

may not be traced in any way unless teachers articulate them, and written plans are the rather compact surface appearances of the elaborate mental processes. Combining complex mental plans with short 'to-do' written plans was seen to be helpful by the participants, as it leaves sufficient freedom for them to respond to the unpredictable events of the lesson. As many of the teachers pointed out, if written plans are detailed and specify too many minor details, teachers might feel restricted by the plan, and are less able to watch out for learner cues and to modify the plan according to the learners' needs.

However, detailed written plans also have their place in lessons. According to the findings *teachers use detailed written plans when they present grammatical structures and illustrate them with examples*, which is more convenient for them to prepare in advance than to improvise in the lesson risking that the example is not appropriate for raising learners' awareness of the meaning and the use of a particular structure. The other reason why *teachers rely on detailed written lesson plans is that written plans help efficiently organize and explain complex activities* that require a thorough preparation from teachers, e. g.: activities in which learners work on different tasks are much quicker to organize with the help of written reminders.

3) **In what way does teachers' perception of potential problems and anticipated difficulties in a particular teaching context affect planning?**

According to the findings of the research, planning is considerably affected by teachers' perception of anticipated difficulties in the lesson. When identifying what they consider most when they plan their lessons, the teachers usually approached the issue by first identifying the difficulties that might arise in a particular group and specified what needs to be given special attention in order to prevent them from

arising, or to solve them once they are there. According to the participants their most commonly experienced problems are related to planning lesson content that best suits the group's needs, especially in areas where they have linguistic difficulties, catering for the individual learner needs, motivating the learners and involving everyone. This suggests that *lesson planning is based to a large degree* on teachers' interpretation of the teaching context, more specifically *on their perception of anticipated difficulties and potential problems, and is guided by their intention to respond to those problems.* If, however, this is true for lesson planning, this must be true for all other levels of planning, since they are in a dynamic relationship, and decisions made at one level will inevitably influence decisions at all other levels.

4) How flexible and how detailed are effective plans?

According to the findings of the research, *effective plans are bound to be flexible, so that they can be adjusted to the perceived needs of different teaching situations which have a strong element of unpredictability.* As the participants pointed pout, flexible plans provide a solid framework for planning by defining clear goals and major stages to complete, on the one hand, but are not intended to foresee everything in detail, and leave enough space for teachers to deviate from initial decisions, on the other. This seems to indicate that *flexible planning seems to be inevitably built on the teacher's sensitivity and responsiveness to the unpredictable and to the unexpected.* Since the different levels of planning are interrelated in such a way that they inform one another, *plans at all levels need to be flexible so that they accommodate the changes that are brought about by changes at other levels.*

The extent to which plans at the various levels are detailed is closely related to the nature of plans made at the different levels. When planning is a goal setting

activity, as it is at the long-term level, plans only include the specific goals and loose outlines of the route towards them. Quite obviously, lesson plans will always be more detailed than long-term or year plans as they include guidelines and specific activities for the shortest unit of teaching, the lesson.

5) In what way does teaching experience affect planning?

The research findings support that teaching experience has a strong influence on the way the teachers involved plan their teaching. It has also been revealed that both experienced and novice teachers attach considerable importance to planning, though the way experienced teachers approach it differs qualitatively from how novices do it due to *differences in their schema system*.

The first difference between novice and experienced teachers can be traced in the way they plan lesson content and organization. *While novices tend to spend a considerable amount of time on searching for teaching materials and working out steps of a lesson, experienced teachers are much quicker and do not need to record their plans in writing, as they are aided by their well-developed mental plans* (see answer to Research Question 2). This also throws light on a difference in focus between novices and experienced teachers: *novices are more likely to interpret teaching as a linear process* that is made up of the separate lessons*, while experienced teachers have a comprehensive understanding of the teaching process,* which enables them to situate smaller units of planning within larger units of planning. This explains that novices are more concerned with lesson planning without relating their lesson plans to longer-range plans, while experienced teachers are able to move freely between the various levels of planning as well as to efficiently coordinate plans.

Teaching experience, therefore, enables teachers to manage the whole of the teaching process, and as some of them spelled out, *to 'feel' time*, i.e.: to speed up or slow down the tempo according to learners' short-term needs, and to adjust the overall tempo to learners' long-term needs.

A further finding revealed by the analysis of the questionnaire is that experienced teachers significantly differ from novices in how they respond to group and individual characteristics when they plan. According to the analysis of the questionnaire, experienced teachers are more likely to tailor their plans to group and individual learner characteristics and are more responsive to learner cues during classroom teaching than novices. This, however, has not been confirmed by the analysis of the interviews, which raises the question of which stage of the research has yielded more reliable data. A possible answer emerges from Cohen et al. (2000), who warn that the reliability of questionnaire data might be threatened by the respondents being the only data sources, which sheds light on the limitations of drawing conclusions from the findings of a questionnaire survey only. Another fact that should be taken into account is that interpreting peoples' actions solely by examining what they reveal about their own actions might be questionable, because we often act without being aware of how exactly we act. Therefore, questionnaire data seem to be appropriate for eliciting what people *think* they do instead of revealing what they really do.

To apply the above claims to the present research, the findings of the interview study seem to be more convincing, as investigating planning from two different perspectives - by making teachers freely speak about their planning activity and discussing issues of planning with them after observing them teaching – ensured data triangulation and helped to draw a more truthful picture of the teachers' planning

activity. Finally, to return to the original issue of comparing novice and experienced teachers *in how they respond to group and learner characteristics, it seems that in the present research there is no significant difference between the two groups of teachers*, as it is suggested by the more reliable findings of the interviews.

6) In what way do contextual factors influence planning?

The different factors that are included by the teaching context, such as group and learner characteristics, teaching materials, curricula and syllabuses, exams, tests, marking and team membership affect planning in different ways.

Group and individual learner characteristics

The first and one of the most important findings of the research is that *attention to group and individual learner characteristics is considered to be the most determining factor of planning* by the participating teachers. All other aspects of teaching seem to be subordinated to it, and both long- and short-term aims are formulated in response to the specific needs of the group and the learners in it. This suggests that in order to plan efficiently teachers need to be sensitive to the *duality inherent in every group: it is composed of individual learners with different needs, on the one hand, and it is a formation of learners which has a distinct 'psyche [...] other than the sum of the individual psychological orientations of [...] learners'* (Breen, 1985, p. 144), on the other. Teachers, therefore, need to manage this by simultaneously responding to the two sets of needs. However, as many of the teachers have identified it, in order to plan successfully for the duality inherent in all groups of

learners, *special emphasis should be put on fostering group cohesion and finding ways of handling individual differences between learners.*

Teaching materials

Teaching materials – coursebooks and supplementary materials - seem to influence planning to a considerable degree. *Coursebooks might either take on the role of the syllabus, or might serve as one of the many potential material sources.* According to the role the coursebook plays in their planning activity, teachers were found to belong to two groups:

- *coursebook users*, who plan teaching by following the syllabus of the coursebook and regarding its content as a framework. They can further be divided into (i) those who primarily draw on coursebook material and occasionally supplement it, and (ii) those who adopt the syllabus of the coursebook and adapt it to a particular teaching situation. These teachers are rather selective in what materials they take from the book and extensively supplement it with materials from other sources.
- *independent planners*, to whom the coursebook is one of the many sources of teaching materials. They plan teaching according to their own syllabus which is completely independent of any coursebook; it is not planned in advance, and is formed parallel with teachers' continuous activity of material development.

It follows that the term '*supplementary material*' is only valid when applied in situations where there is a standard coursebook. That is, independent planners do not supplement coursebooks; rather, they use a range of materials from a variety of sources without considering any of them supplementary. When asked why they supplement their coursebook with extra materials, coursebook users identified a

couple of reasons, such as enriching teaching with materials that are derived from different sources, motivating learners by using materials that are not taken from their' standard coursebook, finding pleasure in designing new materials, and finally, providing specific practice materials for exams at points where coursebook materials are not sufficiently focused.

Documents: curricula and syllabuses

According to the findings of the research, *curricula and syllabuses do not seem to influence the way the participating teachers plan. Their role in providing the main guidelines and objectives for teaching seems to be entirely taken over by coursebook syllabuses, or teachers' mental syllabuses*. Though according to the results of the questionnaire survey, out of the three major curricula it is the local curriculum that is the most influential, followed by the *Frame Curriculum* as the second most influential, and the *National Curriculum*, as the least influential, the interview study has revealed that teachers plan according to guidelines other than those laid down in the above curricula.

The *only written syllabus* that seems to be used by some teachers *is their own syllabus that they design on the basis of coursebook syllabus guidelines*, and in which they specify the content and order of the teaching materials in terms of the categories adopted by the coursebook syllabus (e.g.: topic, grammar, vocabulary, skills development). These syllabuses, which are loose plans written in the form of a list, are then used as reminders to monitor teaching during the school year, most importantly to check if teaching keeps to the planned timing. *Teachers who do not write a syllabus for their own use are guided by their mental syllabus*, which might be based on a coursebook, or might draw on materials other than those of one standard

book. In the latter case, the syllabus is not designed at the beginning of the school year; rather, it evolves parallel with teaching and with the teacher's activity of selecting materials for the specific group.

Exams, tests and marking

As it was revealed by the research, *exams*, more specifically the state language exam and the new school leaving exam, which was introduced somewhat later than the interviews had been conducted, *set the main goals to achieve in the long run, thus constitute secondary school teachers' long-term plans.* Primary school teachers involved in the research seem to be less concerned with exams and long-term plans, and concentrate more on year, unit and lesson plans. This might be explained by the fact that exams are too distant in time to represent a realistic aim for primary schools pupils. Primary school teachers, therefore, seem to be guided by the awareness of motivating their learners in the short run, most importantly in the lesson.

In addition to representing long-term goals, *exams also influence secondary school teachers in their unit and lesson planning, which seems to be supported by the fact that they pay particular attention to supplementing the core materials with special exam-oriented practice materials*. As practice for the exam seems to constitute a separate part of a lesson without being related to its coursebook-based parts, teachers often regard the lesson as including a 'regular' and an 'exam component'. In one case, however, the teacher planned her week in such a way that she used one lesson for exam preparation, which gave a special rhythm to her weekly planning activity.

Tests have not emerged as influential factors of planning. Though the number of major achievement tests seems to be considered at the beginning of the school year,

decisions on when to administer them are left open and seem to be adjusted to learners' progress. Another important finding in this field is that oral testing is not planned at all. The fact whether learners' oral performance is tested at all, and on what basis teachers assess it is not known from the data.

Similarly to testing, *marking does not represent an important planning decision*. Though tests and marks are inevitably related to planning, since they indicate the end of a stage in the learning process, very few of the participating teachers raised the topic of marking when identifying important planning decisions. This seems to suggest that even if they are a natural part of teaching, testing and marking do not seem to guide teachers when they plan.

Team membership

The last contextual feature - team membership - has been found to be slightly influential. According to the findings, *it is mainly using colleagues' teaching ideas, which affects planning.* However, planning together with colleagues and observing colleagues' lessons do not seem to influence the way teachers plan. It seems to be quite likely, though, that the participating teachers only exploit the benefits of team membership by exchanging teaching ideas, and rarely do they plan together or observe their colleagues lessons, which might explain the insignificant effect the above two aspects of team membership have on the participants' planning activity.

7) Apart from the features listed by Calderhead (1996), what other important features does the planning activity of the teachers involved have?

Apart from the features identified by Calderhead, four more features emerged from the analysis. The first important one is that planning is *individual and personality dependent*, which cannot be described by one model, since it is always affected by the teacher's personality traits. This suggests that one of the keys to effective planning for teachers is to find the way that best suits their own personality.

The second important feature is that *the main value of planning lies in the process of planning, more specifically in the thinking process it involves,* which seems to far outweigh the importance of achieving what is laid down in plans. This confirms that planning is a largely *cognitive process*, which starts out from goal-setting for the various levels, but its real aim is engaging teachers in reflection through which they interpret their teaching context and come to an understanding of what needs to be done and why.

A third important feature demonstrates that *teachers draw on their prior experience – both positive and negative - as language learners when they plan teaching*. This might result in either adopting or rejecting certain strategies because of past experience. It needs to be noted that while some teachers were fully aware of the effect their past experience has on their planning, some other teachers mentioned it incidentally without noticing that they are guided by it.

A final feature captures the effect of teachers' affective needs on planning. That is, *teachers plan teaching because they find a sense of self-motivation in the activities involved in it, and also because planning helps them act confidently in the lesson.* It was interesting to observe that though planning enhances teachers' self-

confidence, teaching without planning does not make them feel insecure. This seeming contradiction can be explained by the fact that teachers possess certain skills that help them out when they do not plan lesson, such as the skill of improvising, which draws on teachers' 'plans-in-memory'.

9.2. The findings of the research and my experience in planning

As I have spelled out at the beginning of the dissertation, I have long been involved with doing, observing and teaching planning. Although I did not aim to find what I expected, and I was keen to explore facets of planning that I had not known before, I was aware of the influence of my professional experience. It is to this end that I have started out in Chapter 1 with throwing light on the assumptions that I hold about teaching and planning, and argued that they remain the frame of reference throughout the whole investigation and anything I find will inevitably be filtered through them.

Having interpreted the findings, I have concluded that the essential features of planning revealed by the research overlap with what I assumed about it. The words that I consider to most accurately capture essential features of classrooms that planning needs to respond to, such as *uniqueness* and *unpredictability* were emphasized by the participating teachers, too. My assumption that teaching is primarily based on *the teacher's continuous interpretation of the teaching context* seems to be valid for planning too, which is supported by the numerous examples of teachers referring to the need to continuously assess all elements of a teaching context and respond to them in their plans. My understanding of planning as *creating a loose and flexible framework for teaching* that is primarily shaped by the learners' needs

and is constantly adjusted to the various circumstances of the specific teaching contexts has also been also confirmed.

A closer look at the answers to the research questions shows that what I have found about mental and written plans, the efficiency of flexible plans, the importance of teachers' knowledge of the particular teaching context, the weight of group characteristics, the role of teaching materials, the coursebook providing the syllabus, and finally, the effect of the state language exam on planning at secondary schools are all supported by the results of the research. However, my expectations concerning the place of the lesson on the learners' daily and weekly schedule have not been met by the findings the of questionnaire survey. That is, contrary to what I anticipated, the analysis of questionnaire survey shows that teachers do not consider whether a lesson falls on the first, second or last period of the day when they plan their lessons. Similarly, they do not plan differently for the first, the second, or the last day of the week. When assessing the results of the questionnaire survey, I could not find any possible explanations for this mismatch.

Meanwhile, the interview study has revealed that the place of the lesson on the learners' daily and weekly schedule, as well as the period of the school year in which the lesson falls, is definitely taken into account by teachers when they plan lessons, which does support my initial expectations. The reason why I give more credit to the findings of the interview study lies in the increased reliability of investigating planning from two different angles – first by conducting in-depth interviews that elicited teachers' thoughts on planning, and second by post-lesson interviews that were based on the lesson observations (see answer to Research Question 5).

Chapter 10

Implications for teacher training

Overview

This chapter is intended to suggest ways in which the findings of the research might be exploited in teacher training. First, I will argue that the use of recordings might have a role in rethinking the teaching of planning in order to put more emphasis on the contextual elements of teaching on methodology courses. Next, I will briefly refer to an existing tension between the theoretical and the practical training of future teachers that I observed during my work, and will show in what way the use of the recordings can help to ease the tension and enrich the methodology training. After that, I will make some recommendations as to what directions could be given more attention in the teaching of planning. Finally, I will describe an example of how I used an interview extract in my methodology course.

The analysis of the questionnaire survey and the interviews has revealed that planning is a highly elaborate activity involving a number of different levels and influenced by a variety of interrelated factors in a complex manner. The understandings gained from the research and the recordings of the interviews might enrich the teaching of planning by bringing in the practical element into the theoretical courses and by adding new information to what is already being taught about planning through the teachers' words and insights. This, I believe, might be an important step in bridging the gap between the 'theoretical' profile of the methodology courses at teacher training institutions and the practice-oriented training at schools.

10.1. The tension between methodology training at teacher training institutions and school-based training

The reason why the main long-term purpose of the research is to apply the findings in pre-service teacher training is to bridge a gap between the methodology

training that is provided by teacher training institutions and 'field' training that is going on at the schools by bringing in teachers' voices into the methodology seminars. The tension between the two types of training has been a subject of debate since the 1980s in Hungary. As Kotschy (2007) pointed out the most important problems result from the fact that trainees are not introduced into real teaching situations and are given too few opportunities to try out theoretical knowledge in practice.

My own experience that I acquired as a teacher trainer at the Teacher Training College of Eötvös Loránd University suggests the same. The training that I was involved with had three main components: a one-term lecture and a four-term methodology course taught by trainers at the college as well as a two-term school-based training supervised by mentor teachers at schools (An outline of the curriculum is attached in Appendix 6). While the methodology course had a more 'theoretical' profile and was essentially concerned with introducing trainees to central issues in TEFL as well as presenting useful teaching techniques and a model of how to plan lessons without looking at how these are applied in practice by 'real' teachers who teach 'real' students at 'real' schools, the school-based training was a more practical one and included classroom visits and post- lesson discussions in the first term, and teaching practice in the second one. Though doing the school-based training inevitably helped trainees gain some experience in practical aspects of teaching and provided opportunities to see how theoretical knowledge can be put to practice, we all felt – trainers and trainees alike – that the whole training would be more efficient if its two components were brought closer to each other by making the methodology course more practice-oriented and by incorporating the contextual elements of teaching into it through the discussion and analysis of 'real' teaching events and dilemmas.

10.2. The role of the teachers' insights

The recordings of the teachers' insights might be used for easing the tension between college and school-based training in a variety of ways. First of all, they might have a crucial role in giving a more 'practical' profile to the methodology course by bringing in examples of teachers reflecting on planning from a wide range of teaching contexts. Second, by showing teachers interpreting their own planning activity, the recordings are able to capture the 'wisdom of the practitioner' (Yinger, 1982) that otherwise can only be traced among practitioners, at schools. In addition, exploring teachers' ways of thinking about their own work has the potential of raising trainees' attention and enhancing their motivation, as the examples often come in the form of mini stories. Moreover, the fact that the teachers give account of planning in the Hungarian educational context makes it easy for trainees to relate to the examples due to their familiarity with Hungarian schools.

Finally, the use of the recordings in the methodology course might complement school-based training by giving focused attention to one particular issue of planning, which school visits and lesson observations cannot ensure in the same way. When visiting classrooms, trainees' attention is directed at numerous factors at the same time due to the richness of stimuli a real classroom offers, even though observations usually have one specific focus. Because of this, school visits and lesson observations are particularly suitable for providing a global understanding of how to interpret and manage the complexity of classrooms. The methodology course, on the other hand, can take advantage of the facts that the teachers' accounts can be listened to under peaceful circumstances, points of interest can be highlighted and replayed, and the issues in focus can be analysed in depth. In other words, by taking out the

teachers' voices from their natural environment - the school and the classrooms - and studying them under favourable, almost 'laboratory conditions', the methodology course has the potential of capturing one single aspect of planning in isolation from other aspects, thus providing a thorough, in-depth understanding of how it operates.

In sum, the teachers' voices can enrich the teaching of planning by

- providing examples of teachers interpreting their own teaching contexts, thus throwing light on the 'wisdom of the practitioner' (Yinger, 1982);
- raising trainees' attention and enhancing their motivation;
- presenting examples that trainees can relate to due to their familiarity with Hungarian schools;
- complementing school visits by paying focused and prolonged attention to one particular issue of planning.

10.3. Recommendations

In this section I will make some recommendations as to how the findings could be put to practical use in pre-service teacher training. These recommendations, however, are not presented in the form of activities that are ready to be used. Rather, they highlight directions that cross one another at many points, as it will be indicated by the numerous overlaps of the practical tasks presented under the separate findings. Their main purpose is to suggest ways of approaching planning that have practical relevance and to start trainees off with training that helps them successfully survive in the world of schools.

It is important to point out that very few of the suggestions presented below are completely new to teacher trainers, since these suggestions have already been articulated in fields of training other than the teaching of planning. This again supports that teaching cannot be segmented into separate areas, and a claim that is related to one area can be a valid one in another area, too. However, I believe that by bringing the main issues together, I might be able to provide a tool to facilitate the teaching of planning through the teachers' insights.

In what follows I will list the main features of planning that have been revealed by the research and are summarized in Chapter 9, and will present them in the form of statements. I will also indicate in brackets after each statement which of the Research Questions (RQs) elicited the answer that has helped to identify that particular feature of planning. Each feature will then be commented on, and I will explain in what way the methodology training can sensitize trainees to them. In places, where the features can be exploited with the help of the teachers' insights, I will refer to examples of interview extracts attached in Appendix 7 that can be used to illustrate the features. Since the interviews conducted in the present research are only available for my own environment, this is to encourage teachers to make their own recordings.

Planning is individual and personality dependent (see answer to RQ 7)

In order to sensitize trainees to the fact that *planning is an individual and personality dependent activity*, it is important to emphasize from the beginning of the training that planning cannot be performed and taught according to one prescribed model. This can be illustrated with interview extracts on teachers' most important planning considerations (Appendix 7; 1/a), with extracts on their use of mental and

written lesson plans (Appendix 7; 10/a, b, c), as well as with the written lesson plans themselves, all of which reflect a wide variety of individual approaches among the teachers involved in the research. *It is, therefore, essential to emphasize 'variety' as a key notion of planning.* The main aim of doing so is *to encourage trainees to find the way of planning that best suits their personality*, which is only possible if they do plenty of planning, try out several planning strategies – make detailed plans with all the minor steps carefully worked out, or prepare the main outlines of a lesson and foresee alternative routes from one activity to another - and most importantly, reflect on their experience and the understandings that they gain this way.

The main value of planning lies in the thinking process it involves (see answer to RQ 7)

The *value of the process of planning* as opposed to achieving the targeted goals can also be explored with the help of interview extracts in which teachers explain in what way they benefit from the thinking process (Appendix 7; 2). Trainees should also be *encouraged to do plenty of mental planning and illustrate the thinking process invested in it* by articulating on what basis they plan, what issues they consider and what they expect to achieve with their plans, on the one hand, as well as *to evaluate their plans* and to identify how they worked and what adjustments need to be made, on the other.

Planning is primarily guided by teachers' intention to respond to the dual requirements of group and individual learner characteristics (see answer to RQ 6)

Drawing trainees' attention to the importance of *group and individual learner characteristics* can be done by analysing extracts from the in-depth interviews in which teachers very often refer to responding group and learner characteristics as their primary concern (Appendix 7; 3/a, b, c). This has the potential of *raising trainees' awareness of key features of planning, such as sensitivity and responsiveness*. Another way of sensitizing trainees to the importance of group and learner characteristics is *providing opportunities for observing a particular group of learners in various lessons*. This might give deeper insights into how the group as a formation of learners functions, and in what way the individual learners are different. After the lesson observations, trainees can try planning lessons for the group they are already familiar with, and analyze their plans on the methodology course with special attention to the way group characteristics have motivated it.

An important point that has emerged from the teachers' words is that responding to group characteristics as well as to individual learner characteristics might involve some tension as it requires teachers to simultaneously cater for two different sets of needs: the group's needs and the individual learners' needs. In order to strike a balance between the two, the participating teachers applied two strategies. First, they made a conscious effort to help the group develop and build a group identity, since it is easier to identify the specific needs of cohesive groups with a clearly defined 'personality' and respond to them. This was most evident in a number of activities in their plans which were meant to facilitate group development. From the perspective of teaching planning, this throws light on the importance of raising trainees' awareness of *how to apply principles of group dynamics as well as encouraging them to integrate group development activities into their plans.*

Second, in an attempt to respond to the individual needs of the learners and to the differences between them, some of the teachers were observed to extensively use pair and small group activities and to consciously exploit the potentials of varying the composition of pairs and groups, thus allowing every learner to work on tasks that correspond to their level. This suggests that trainees should be sensitized to the *importance of creating opportunities for learners to interact in different forms as well as to the benefits of organizing 'homogeneous' and 'heterogeneous' groups.* That is, when highlighting the strengths of the two groupings, it should be emphasized that a 'homogenous' group, in which differences between learners are not significant, ensures practice to everyone at their level, since each group works on a different task depending on the abilities and the interests of the learners in the group. A 'heterogeneous' group, on the other hand, where learner differences are significant, gives a chance for the stronger learners to help the weaker ones, thus fosters their sense of cooperating to achieve a common goal and facilitates group development.

Finally, in order to illuminate the advantages of varying the different forms of learner interaction and using cooperative activities, *it would also be important to look into guidelines of organizing them.* Since most trainees have gained some experience in working in pairs and small groups as learners of a foreign language, the issue could be approached by eliciting their past experience, reflecting on it, and clarifying what needs to be given attention when planning pair and small group activities.

Planning is affected by teachers' prior experience as learners (see answer to RQ 7)

According to the findings of the interviews, teachers draw on their experience as learners when they plan teaching, which can be illustrated with several examples

from the recordings (Appendix 7; 4). It is important to raise trainees' awareness that drawing on past experience might have beneficial effects when good practises are taken over from former teachers, or when learning strategies that in the past proved to be efficient for teachers are now suggested to learners. It should also be pointed out that in some cases, teachers are quite aware of the effect of past experience on their actions. In some other cases, however, they might adopt or reject certain teaching strategies without being aware that they are influenced by their experience. Past experience that is not articulated is often transformed into beliefs, which might serve as filters and block the way for new information to be integrated. From the perspective of planning, this might lead to teachers preferring or avoiding certain activities when they plan, without being aware of the role their past experience has in it. In order to eliminate the potential negative effects this might have, special attention should be paid to *raising trainees' awareness of what exactly they transfer from their past as language learners to their actions as teachers.* This might be done by collecting and analyzing a couple of statements that teachers make about different aspects of teaching, which encapsulate their basic assumptions and beliefs. Discussing them gives trainees an opportunity to articulate their own assumptions and to identify which of those are rooted in their experience as learners of a foreign language. After that, trainees can turn their attention to reflecting on how their planning activity is guided by them, and sort out the beneficial as well as the negative effects their language learning experience has on their approach to planning.

Planning enhances teachers' self-confidence and self-motivation (see answer to RQ 7)

When sensitizing trainees to the effect of teachers' affective needs on planning, it might be interesting to point out that, as the recordings suggest, that

planning engages teachers in activities that give them a sense of pleasure and helps them act confidently in the classroom (Appendix 7; 5). The latter, in fact, is closely related to the value teachers attach to the thinking process involved in planning, as acting confidently during teaching seems to be dependent on thinking over the lesson and knowing what to do and why. Discussing the role of affective needs, therefore, can be linked to highlighting the real value of planning, and can be illustrated with a number of interview extracts in which teachers reflect on the importance of 'knowing what to do and why'.

Another issue inherent in planning in order to fulfil affective needs is the issue of compensational strategies that teachers apply when they do not plan teaching. As it has been revealed by the research, teachers rely on their 'plans-in-memory' in teaching. When teaching without planning, they seem to make even more use of their 'plans-in-memory'. In order to raise trainees' awareness of how to compensate for the lack of planning, they could be encouraged to develop their own 'plans-in-memory' (see the next recommendation in detail).

Planning is fundamentally affected by teachers' experience in teaching (see answer to RQ 5)

Teaching experience influences planning in a complex way. The interviews have also recorded a number of accounts in which teachers reflect on how experience in teaching changed their ways of planning (Appendix 7; 6). However, in pre-service teacher training it may not be important to emphasize all the understandings that are gained from studying the effect of teaching experience on planning. When making the suggestions below, I will highlight two findings that might be of immediate relevance to pre-service teachers and can help them come closer to 'experienced teaching'.

First of all, a finding that might be of interest is that experienced teachers have an overview of the teaching process, which helps them to make short-range plans within the framework of long-term ones, while novices concentrate more on lesson planning, and regard the teaching process as a linear formation of individual lessons. In order to develop trainees' ability to view the process of teaching as a whole, *they need to be encouraged to plan for units of teaching longer than the lesson and try out those plans*. This would give them the opportunity to see on what assumptions longer-range plans are prepared, and in what way they need to be modified in the act of teaching.

A second finding that might be efficiently exploited is that experienced teachers posses more developed mental lesson plans and write simpler lesson plans than novices. The process of learning to rely on mental plans rather than on detailed written plans might be facilitated *by providing opportunities for trainees to teach the same lesson twice to two different groups*. When teaching it first, trainees might be more likely to use a detailed written plan, but for the second time the detailed plan can be replaced with a short 'to-do' list containing some call words. This might help to memorize activity chains and perform them fluently for the second time, thus developing one's 'plans-in-memory'. The experience can be reflected on, and trainees can compare teaching with and without detailed lesson plans with special emphasis on how confidently they acted and how they communicated with the group. One of the understandings that might be gained from this is that *when using 'plans-in-memory' instead of insisting on written plans, one might be more open to all the events of the lesson, can more readily interpret the reactions of the group and can more efficiently respond to them,* which has been revealed as an important feature of experienced teachers' planning in previous studies.

Planning has a problem-solving element (see answer to RQ 3)

When raising trainees' awareness of the problem-solving nature of planning, *it is crucial to draw their attention to the importance of constantly interpreting the teaching contexts.* This can be accompanied by using some extracts from the pre-lesson interviews in which teachers refer to problems with a particular group, and then identify their main aims as a response to those problems (Appendix 7; 7). Further on, in order to provide practice in interpreting teaching contexts, trainees need to be given the opportunity to get to know a particular group, to regularly observe them, to analyse the observations and identify problems that are likely to occur in the lesson. A deeper knowledge of one particular group might facilitate the process of learning how to interpret their reactions and how to respond to them when planning. This leads back to what has been spelled out in the discussion on the primary importance of group and individual learner characteristics in planning and suggests *that sensitizing trainees to the problem solving nature of planning as well as to the effect of group and learner characteristics should be done with an emphasis on sensitivity and responsiveness.*

Planning is a nested process which has five levels (see answer to RQ 1)

Raising trainees' awareness of the fact that planning is a nested process in which the nests represent the different levels of planning can be based on the interview extracts that include teachers' accounts on what plans they make at the various levels (Appendix 7; 8/ a, b, c). The interview extracts provide a wide range of examples of what teachers consider at the various levels, what type of plans they write and what they specify in the different plans. When discussing these issues, *the*

emphasis should be put on '*variety*', since the findings suggest that teachers differ a great deal in how they operate the 'nest' structure.

Efficient planning aims to produce flexible plans (see answer to RQs 1, 4 and 5)

When raising trainees' awareness of flexibility as a key quality required by planning, it is important to point out that though it is a personality trait, and people largely vary in the extent to which they can flexibly modify their plans, it can still be developed. The first step in it could be to illustrate with the teachers' words from the interviews that plans cannot foresee everything and can be affected by unexpected events at any time (Appendix 7; 9). It is also suggested by the teachers' words that the ability to flexibly approach issues of planning comes with experience, and is based on the understanding of how to coordinate the different levels of planning. From the perspective of training, this means that in order to develop the ability to plan flexibly, it might be enough for trainees to study experienced teachers' ways of looking at the teaching process as a whole in which the levels are constantly coordinated. *Trainees, therefore, need to be given the opportunity to gain practice in unit planning and in making long-range plans*, as it has been mentioned earlier.

Planning is guided by specific mental and written lesson plans (see answer to RQ 2)

The issue of mental and written lesson plans can be approached by *first raising trainees' awareness of what constitutes teachers' mental plans and what principles guide those plans.* This can be done with the help of the recordings, which include several examples of teachers talking about mental and written plans, as well as the main principles that guide their mental planning activity (Appendix 7; 10/a, b, c, d).

The relationship of mental and written plans can also be illustrated by *comparing some extracts from the pre-lesson interviews in which teachers introduce the lesson that they are going to teach to the accompanying written plan of the same lesson.* The difference between the two can be highlighted by drawing trainees' attention to the complexity of mental plans and to the simplicity of written lesson plans. At the same time, it would also be important *to throw light on the function of detailed written plans in presenting grammar and organizing complex activities*, which can also be supported with the relevant interview extracts.

The framework of planning is supplied by a coursebook syllabus or by teachers' mental syllabus (see answer to RQ 6)

The issue of what constitutes the framework of planning should be approached with an *emphasis on* '*variety*' and can be illustrated with a number of interview extracts that give evidence of *the various ways in which teachers exploit their coursebook for planning purposes or create their own mental syllabus* (Appendix 7; 11/a, b). The discussion of the interview extracts can be further complemented by sorting out what advantages and disadvantages coursebook syllabus-based plans might have as opposed to those that are independent of any coursebook, in what way written year syllabuses can facilitate or hinder teaching, and what are the benefits and the difficulties of negotiating the syllabus.

10.4. An 'experiment' of using an interview extract

In this section I am going to illustrate how the interview extracts can be exploited in the teaching of planning with my own example of using one extract with two groups of students. I believe that by showing the thought processes the interview

extract elicited from the students, I might be able to highlight the role of the recordings in facilitating thinking and debate. In addition, the fact that the same extract generated completely different ideas from students in the two groups might throw light on the variety of the options inherent in its use. However, at the time when the 'experiment' took place, I was mainly concerned with collecting first impressions about the use of the recordings and identifying ways of exploiting them in teaching methodology, without considering it part of the research process and documenting it for research use. I will, therefore, describe it on the basis of my memories without systematically supporting it with data.

10.4.1. The setting and the participants

I used the interview extract with two groups of students on two different occasions in autumn 2006. The students were fourth-year college students of English, who were in the third term of their methodology training, and in the seventh term at the college (see the outline of TEFL curriculum in Appendix 6). When I started to teach them, most of them had not yet done their teaching practice, but some of them were about to start it.

10.4.2. My plan

The two methodology classes that I am going to describe aimed to explore the topic of lesson planning, and were partly based on the following extract in which a teacher speaks about a key principle that guides her when she plans lessons:

One of my main concerns is to organize activities in which learners can cooperate with each other in pair or in small groupwork. They have so little chance to do it in other lessons, that's why I always include something in my plan in which they can practise it, no matter what the lesson is focusing on. I think it is not only in teaching

language learning strategies that it is important; it is very important in communication in general. We all know that it is not a priority in the Hungarian educational system. (Juli)

My main aims were to test whether the interview extract could be efficiently used in the teaching of lesson planning and to identify ways in which it could be used. On the basis of my earlier experience, I expected that the extract would be appropriate for its intended purpose but I was less certain about the group's reaction and the exact procedure of exploiting it.

My specific aims were to illuminate an important issue that teachers consider when they plan lessons, i. e.: providing opportunities for learner cooperation, to elicit students' thoughts on the importance of this issue, and to discuss whether they find it relevant and important. First, I was going to play the interview extract, and then to brainstorm ideas and discuss them. As I was really curious to see how the students respond to the teachers' words, I deliberately did not want to interfere with the course of the discussion too much, though I initially had a group of questions to guide students towards some important points. These were the following:

- **What is the point being made and what problems does it raise?**
- What experience have you got in it?
- Why is providing opportunities for learners to cooperate considered important in certain lessons, and why is it neglected in others?
- What are the advantages of cooperative activities?
- What might go wrong with cooperative activities?
- **What needs to be done in order to exploit the benefits offered by cooperative activities?**

- **Do you consider it important to include cooperative activities in your lesson plans?**

The three questions printed in bold are the ones that I considered essential to discuss in depth. The first question seemed to be appropriate for providing the starting point by making students clarify the issue as well as the problems that might be related to it. The last two questions were to conclude the discussion and to elicit some final ideas on when and how to incorporate cooperative activities into lesson plans. The rest of the questions, however, were definitely not intended to be answered in the above order. Rather, by starting out from the first question, I hoped to proceed through a number of points, leaving the decision as to which issues to explore in depth to the group, and to arrive at a conclusion.

10.4.3. The students' reactions

The teacher's insight on the importance of incorporating cooperative activities into the lesson elicited a number of valuable ideas from the students. The discussion, which took between 5 and 15 minutes in the two groups, started out from the first question on my agenda and arrived at the point that I was hoping to reach in both groups, though each took a different direction right after the beginning. Since the interview extract proved to be very efficient for triggering thoughts and keeping the students with the topic, I did not have to encourage the students to take part, nor did I have to interfere to suggest points to consider. It was perfectly enough if I occasionally asked a question that helped to look at the issue from a different point of view.

Table 20 will summarize the most important points that were raised in order to illustrate the thinking that was elicited. It is important to point out, however, that I can more clearly remember how the discussion unfolded in Group 1 than in Group 2. This might be explained by the fact that the students in Group 1 were generally more active and responded more easily to all issues than students in Group 2. The other reason might be that the first time I used a recording was in Group 1, and as I was really happy with the students' reactions, I have more memories of that seminar. It should also be mentioned that due to the natural features of a 'live' discussion, the points listed were not made in a disciplined order: students often attended to points that were made much earlier and left the issue in the focus of the discussion unattended; they contradicted each other, elaborated on points that they agreed with, talked about their personal experience, or even made irrelevant points. Yet, both discussions had a clear line of thought that the summary below attempts to highlight.

Table 20 Summary of the main ideas elicited by the teacher's words

Group 1	**Group 2**
according to students' experience cooperative activities are only present in the teaching of foreign languages	foreign language teachers and coursebooks love pair activities and do not like class discussion
↓	↓
cooperative activities cannot be used in lessons other than foreign languages	class discussions are good since participation is not obligatory, you only say something if you want to
↓	↓
cooperative activities could be used efficiently in teaching literature, history and even maths	in a class discussion people really mean what they say; in pairwork they don't
↓	↓
many of the learners would be more active with writing homework and doing	in pairwork you often have to ask questions in English to which you already

home assignments if it were not set as individual work ↓ pair activities are very common in teaching English, but learners usually do not like them ↓ learners feel bad when they have to talk to a friend in English in a pair activity ↓ pair activities are only interesting if the activity makes you forget that you are working in pairs	have the answer in Hungarian

As Table 20 shows students in Group 1 spent more time on discussing the points that were raised and looked into more related aspects of cooperation than students in Group 2. However, in the end, both groups arrived at formulating the question of what makes learners uninterested in pair activities, which ultimately raises the question of what should be done in order to make them interested in taking part. I was quite happy with this ending, as it seemed to provide starting points for sorting out problems with group and pairwork, clarifying the meaning of the terms 'cooperation', 'collaboration', and 'groupwork' (Ur, 1996) and identifying ways of exploiting the different forms of cooperation to good effect..

10.4.4. Ideas for a follow-up activity

Though the focus of the next seminar shifted from the issue of planning cooperative activities to another issue, I think that exploring the topic of cooperation could be (i) concluded by identifying guidelines of organizing cooperative activities in the classroom and preparing a poster with the guidelines. Further on, it could be (ii)

complemented with a *practical planning task*, in which students first plan a lesson and then a whole unit of teaching based on a coursebook unit. The aim of the planning task would be to provide an opportunity for students to try out how the understandings gained about cooperation can facilitate planning at the lesson and the unit level. Therefore, when carrying out the planning task, students should be encouraged

- to articulate the specific considerations that make them incorporate cooperative, pair and small group activities;
- to compare what weight they give to the issue of cooperation when planning a lesson and when planning a whole unit.

In a next step, students can share their plans and compare their arguments. This could be followed by a discussion that is intended to elicit whether their thinking during planning was influenced by what they identified as guidelines of organizing cooperative, pair and small group activities.

10.4.5. Evaluation of the 'experiment'

Though I did not take feedback at the end of the two methodology classes, my overall impression was that the students were motivated to become involved and they seemed to enjoy it. One of them pointed out that it would be interesting to listen to other teachers' views on the same issue, which suggested that they appreciated the activity and were genuinely interested. The thinking elicited by the interview extract seemed to capture the main dilemmas inherent in cooperation. The final conclusion I could draw from the 'experiment' was that it was worth doing, and the recordings could be efficiently used in the teaching of planning – and perhaps even in exploring other areas of teaching.

Final conclusions

The present study has started out from the assumption that planning is a complex, problem solving activity that embraces a variety of specific thought processes and a wide range of practical activities. When trying to investigate it, one might face the problem of not knowing where to start, as it is an activity that does not have well-defined outlines and clear-cut elements. Yet, teachers and teacher educators need to gain an understanding of how it operates, as plans create a vital framework for teaching, thus have a decisive role in what happens in classrooms. Inspired by this, the research described in this dissertation has intended to shed light on what exactly teachers think and do when they plan teaching and aimed to illuminate directions for trainees to follow when they first experience the complexity of teaching and start making plans to cope with it. As I have pointed out earlier, the study was first of all motivated by my personal interest in planning and my intention to find ways of improving the teaching of planning in my own professional environment; thereby, the main findings have their primary relevance in the particular pre-service teacher training programme which I am involved with. At the same time, I believe that bringing the main features of planning together might illuminate a number of important issues to trainers at other teacher training institutions.

To finish the study, I will summarize the main findings of the research with the help of Figure 8. In my understanding this picture of planning is founded on three key concepts - *the teacher's interpretation of the teaching context, the teacher's sensitivity and responsiveness* - which are not visualized in Figure 8. Rather, they should be imagined as providing a solid, but invisible base for everything that happens in the field of planning, as it has been stated among my main assumptions in

Chapter 1 and has also been confirmed at various points in the interpretation of the findings.

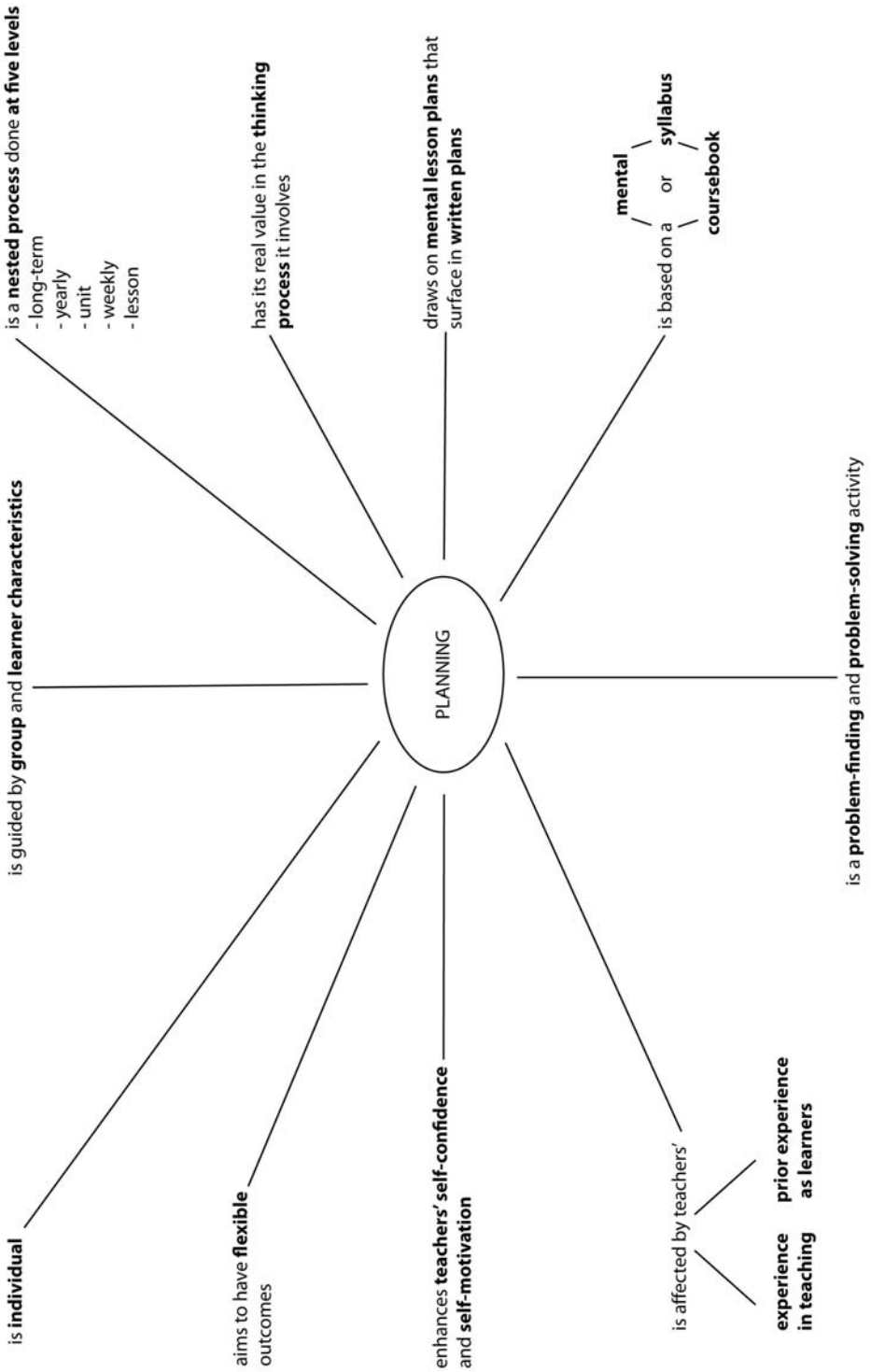

Figure 8: A picture of planning

As Figure 8 shows, some of my observations about planning overlap with some of the features identified by Calderhead (1996), for example, that planning is flexible, or rather, it aims to have *flexible outcomes.* That is, it is the outcome of planning, the plan itself, that needs to be flexible so that it can be modified according to the needs of a particular situation. The other feature mentioned by Calderhead and confirmed by the present research, too, is that planning is a *problem-finding and problem-solving activity*.

However, there are a number of differences between Calderhead's (1996) picture and mine. First of all, I have not included that planning is based on teacher knowledge and thinking, as I assume that these concepts essentially manifest themselves in the teacher's interpretation of the teaching context, thus underlie anything that teachers do, as explained earlier. The findings that planning *has its real value in the thinking process it involves*, it *draws on mental plans that surface in written plans*, and that it *is based on a mental or a course book syllabus* all emphasize the cognitive nature of planning identified by Calderhead, and they also include reference to the visible outcomes of cognitive processes, such as written plans, and the materials that cognitive processes draw on and respond to in the act of planning, such as course books. A further difference, though a minor one, is that while Calderhead observed six levels of planning, I have revealed that *plans are made at five levels,* which are related in such a way that longer-range plans provide *nests* for shorter-range ones. Further on, what I have found essential to include as a separate element of the picture is the overall importance of *group and learner characteristics* that appear under the heading of 'contextual features' in Calderhead's description. My investigations have also revealed features that seem to capture some core qualities of

planning, for example, that it is an *individual* and *personality dependent* activity, it is affected by teachers' *experience in teaching and their prior experience as learners*, and it enhances teachers' *self-confidence and self-motivation*.

Final remarks

The most important gain for me as a practising professional was coming to appreciate the value of discussing issues of planning with teachers, which has given insights into various 'worlds of teaching' and showed a different teacher personality confronted with different dilemmas in each world. I believe that this should be continued on a regular basis by extending the focus of the discussions to areas of teaching other than planning. If planning is of problem finding and problem solving nature, as claimed by Calderhead (1996) and revealed by the present research, teaching which is built on plans is of the same nature. In that case, teacher trainers should constantly be engaged in searching for examples of real problems and solutions to them, which can only be supplied by teachers. Though at the moment recordings of this type could be available for use only in a small circle among colleagues at the same institution, with the spread of digital technology it will soon become much easier for teacher trainers to share their materials across institutions.

In sum, in order to enrich the teaching of methodology with the teachers' insights, thus continuing the process of approaching the teaching of methodology at teacher training institutions and the practical training at schools, it would be essential to collect more 'teachers' voices' with a direct focus on the topics that the methodology seminars aim to explore. It would be equally important to work out specific activities that are built on the recordings and raise trainee teachers' awareness of the main dilemmas inherent in teaching. When used together, the teachers' voices and the awareness raising activities would be able to trigger off reflection on

particular issues of teaching by giving insights into various ways of approaching them, and could start preparing trainee teachers for the job of managing complex teaching environments by bringing a ‘piece of school’ into the methodology classroom.

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Appendices

Kedves Kolléga!

A kérdőíven, amelyet a kezében tart, PhD-disszertációmhoz gyűjtök anyagot nyelvtanárok tervezési szokásairól. Kutatásom középpontjában nem kizárólag az óratervezés vagy az órára készülés, valamint nem is a tanmenetírás áll, hanem azok a gondolkodási folyamatok, melyek a tanítást megelőzik és formálják. Ezek a folyamatok természetesen magukban foglalhatják mind az óratervezést, mind a tanmenet- ill. tantervírást is.

A kérdőív három részből áll. Az első részben háttérinformációt gyűjtök a kérdőívet kitöltő tanárról. A második részben állításokat fog olvasni, s megkérem, hogy egy skálán jelölje meg, hogy az adott állítás mennyiben jellemző az Ön tervezési szokásaira. A harmadik részben arra kérem, hogy röviden foglalja össze megjegyzéseit.

A kérdőív adatait név nélkül fogom kezelni, de ha ősszel tud 10-15 percet szakítani arra, hogy szóban válaszoljon néhány további kérdésemre, akkor kérem, hogy az utolsó oldalon adja meg nevét és telefonszámát/e-mail címét.

Köszönöm, hogy válaszaival segíti kutatómunkámat!

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ELSŐ RÉSZ

1. Milyen típusú iskolában tanít? Kérem húzza alá a megfelelőt!

8 osztályos általános iskola; 6 osztályos gimnázium; 8 osztályos gimnázium; 12 osztályos általános iskola és gimnázium; szakközépiskola; egyéb:.....
.....

2. Összesen heti hány órát tanít a fenti iskolában? ..... Ebből angolóra: .....óra

3. Az Ön által angol nyelvre tanított egyes csoportok hányadik évfolyamon, heti hány órában tanulják a nyelvet?

1. csoport:.....évfolyamon, heti .....órában tanul.
   Használ-e ennél a csoportnál egy állandó tankönyvet? igen – nem
   Ha használ, melyik tankönyvet? .....
2. csoport:.....évfolyamon, heti .....órában tanul.
   Használ-e ennél a csoportnál egy állandó tankönyvet? igen – nem
   Ha használ, melyik tankönyvet? .....

3. csoport:.....évfolyamon, heti .....órában tanul.
Használ-e ennél a csoportnál egy állandó tankönyvet? igen – nem
Ha használ, melyik tankönyvet? .....
4. csoport:.....évfolyamon, heti .....órában tanul.
Használ-e ennél a csoportnál egy állandó tankönyvet? igen – nem
Ha használ, melyik tankönyvet? .....

5. csoport:.....évfolyamon, heti .....órában tanul.
Használ-e ennél a csoportnál egy állandó tankönyvet? igen – nem
Ha használ, melyik tankönyvet? .....
6. csoport:.....évfolyamon, heti .....órában tanul.
Használ-e ennél a csoportnál egy állandó tankönyvet? igen – nem
Ha használ, melyik tankönyvet? .....

4. Összesen hány év tanítási gyakorlattal rendelkezik? .....

5. Mióta tanítja az angol nyelvet bárhol, bármilyen formában? .....

6. Hány év angoltanítási gyakorlattal rendelkezik általános vagy középiskolában (nem nyelviskolában, nem magánúton)? Kérem húzza alá a megfelelőt!

kevesebb, mint 1 év 1-5 év 6-10 év 11-15 év 16-20 év több, mint 20 év

7. Az angoltanári végzettségén kívül még milyen tanári végzettsége van?
..... szak; ..... szak; ..... szak

8. Angolból milyen diplomája van? Kérem húzza alá a megfelelőt! Ha többféle végzettsége is van, akkor több választ is húzzon alá!

angol nyelv és irodalom tanár – egyetemi nappali képzés elvégzése után
angol nyelv és irodalom tanár – egyetemi kiegészítő képzés elvégzése után
angol nyelvtanár – főiskolai nappali képzés elvégzése után
angol nyelvtanár - főiskolai esti képzés vagy levelező képzés elvégzése után
egyéb: .....

MÁSODIK RÉSZ

Ebben a részben állításokat fog olvasni. Minden állítás mellet talál egy 1-től 4-ig terjedő skálát. Attól függően, hogy mennyire érzi a saját tervezésére jellemzőnek az állítást, karikázza be a megfelelő számot. A számok jelentése:

1 : egyáltalán nem jellemző rám
2 : kevéssé jellemző rám, az esetek többségében nem jellemző
3 : többnyire jellemző rám
4 : teljes mértékben jellemző rám

Például:

0. Minden egyes órámra több mint egy órát készülök.

1 2 3 4

Ha Ön ritkán készül egy óránál hosszabb ideig az órájára, tehát ez az állítás kevéssé jellemző Önre, akkor karikázza be a 2-es számot.

1 : egyáltalán nem jellemző rám
2 : kevéssé jellemző rám, az esetek többségében nem jellemző
3 : többnyire jellemző rám
4 : teljes mértékben jellemző rám

Kérem, hogy a válaszadásnál ne arra gondoljon, hogy mit tartana ideálisnak, hanem arra, hogy a napi munkája során mit tud megvalósítani!

1. Év elején átgondolom, hogy abban az évben mit fogok tanítani.
1 2 3 4

2. A tanév megtervezésekor figyelembe veszem, hogy mit ír elő a Nemzeti Alaptanterv.
1 2 3 4

3. A tanév megtervezésekor figyelembe veszem, hogy mit ír elő a kerettanterv.
1 2 3 4

4. A tanév megtervezésekor figyelembe veszem, hogy mit ír elő a helyi tanterv.
1 2 3 4

5. Az év elején éves tanmenetet írok.
1 2 3 4

6. A tanév során az éves tanmenetet követem.
1 2 3 4

7. Szem előtt tartom, hogy a tanulóknak hová kell eljutniuk tanulmányaik végére.
1 2 3 4

8. Mikor egy új fejezetet kezdünk a tankönyvben, átgondolom, hogy a fejezetet milyen módon fogom megtanítani.
1 2 3 4

9. A hét megkezdése előtt átgondolom, hogy a héten mit fogok tanítani.
1 2 3 4

10. Előre megtervezett időpontban kezdek új anyagot tanítani, még akkor is, ha a csoport nem egészen biztos az előző anyagban.
1 2 3 4

11. Az angolórát megelőző órákban készülök az órámra.
1 2 3 4

12. Az angolórát megelőző napon vagy napokban készülök az órámra.
1 2 3 4

13. Csak arra van időm, hogy az angol órát megelőző néhány percben készüljek az órámra.
1 2 3 4

14. Bizonytalanná tesz, ha nem gondolom át, hogy mit fogok tanítani az órán.

1 2 3 4

15. Az egyes órákra rövid óravázlatot írok.

1 2 3 4

1 : egyáltalán nem jellemző rám
2 : kevéssé jellemző rám, az esetek többségében nem jellemző
3 : többnyire jellemző rám
4 : teljes mértékben jellemző rám

Kérem, hogy a válaszadásnál ne arra gondoljon, hogy mit tartana ideálisnak, hanem arra, hogy a napi munkája során mit tud megvalósítani!

16. Az egyes órákra részletes óratervet írok.
1 2 3 4

17. Előre megtervezem, hogy melyik feladatra pontosan hány percet szánok.
1 2 3 4

18. Előre megtervezem, hogy milyen munkaformák (egyéni munka, pármunka, kiscsoportos munka) lesznek az órán.
1 2 3 4

19. Előre megtervezem, hogy mit adok fel házifeladatnak.
1 2 3 4

20. Ha pontosan látom, hogy mit fogok csinálni, jobban érzem magam az órán.
1 2 3 4

21. Az óra átgondolása növeli a magabiztosságomat.
1 2 3 4

22. Akkor érzem jól magam, ha sikerül mindent elvégezni, amit az adott órára terveztem.
1 2 3 4

23. Akkor érzem jól magam, ha az eredeti tervem szerint haladunk az órán.
1 2 3 4

24. Zavar, ha órán kicsúszom az időből.
1 2 3 4

25. Az órákon kizárólag a tankönyvet használjuk.
1 2 3 4

26. Olyan tankönyvet használok, amelynél nem szükséges előre átgondolni, hogy mit hogyan tanítok meg.
1 2 3 4

27. A tankönyv egy adott fejezetén belül a feladatok sorrendjét követem.
1 2 3 4

28. Egy jó tankönyvhöz nem viszek be kiegészítő anyagot.
1 2 3 4

29. Ha magas a heti óraszámom, akkor csak a tankönyvet használom.

1 2 3 4

30. A tankönyvhöz tartozó tanári kézikönyvet követem, amikor megtervezem az órákat.

1 2 3 4

1 : egyáltalán nem jellemző rám
2 : kevéssé jellemző rám, az esetek többségében nem jellemző
3 : többnyire jellemző rám
4 : teljes mértékben jellemző rám

Kérem, hogy a válaszadásnál ne arra gondoljon, hogy mit tartana ideálisnak, hanem arra, hogy a napi munkája során mit tud megvalósítani!

31. Aszerint tervezek, hogy a nap hányadik órájára esik az angol.
1 2 3 4

32. Másképp tervezek a hét elejére, és másképp tervezek péntekre.
1 2 3 4

33. A tankönyv mellett kiegészítő anyagokat is használok.
1 2 3 4

34. Az angolóra előtti órákban gondolom át, hogy milyen kiegészítő anyagot viszek be az órára.
1 2 3 4

35. Az angolóra előtti napon vagy napokban gondolom át, hogy milyen kiegészítő anyagot viszek be az órára.
1 2 3 4

36. Közvetlenül az angolóra előtti percekben határozom el, hogy milyen kiegészítő anyagot használok az órán.
1 2 3 4

37. Ha az órán eszembe jut egy jó feladat, amelyre előzőleg nem gondoltam, akkor azt megcsináljuk.
1 2 3 4

38. Szívesen rögtönzök az órán.
1 2 3 4

39. Az általam használt tananyag és feladatok legalább fele nem a tankönyvből származik.
1 2 3 4

40. A tankönyv egy adott fejezetén belül a feladatok sorrendjét saját belátásom szerint variálom.
1 2 3 4

41. Unom, ha csak a tankönyvet tanítom.
1 2 3 4

42. Az órán döntöm el, hogy a csoportnak mennyi idő szükséges egy feladat elvégzésére.
1 2 3 4

43. Minél gyakorlottabb vagyok, annál kevesebb időt szánok a tervezésre.

1 2 3 4

44. Az óra eseményei befolyásolnak abban, hogy mit és hogyan végzünk el.

1 2 3 4

45. Ha látom, hogy az óra nem az elképzelésem szerint halad, akkor módosítok az eredeti tervemen.

1 2 3 4

1 : egyáltalán nem jellemző rám
2 : kevéssé jellemző rám, az esetek többségében nem jellemző
3 : többnyire jellemző rám
4 : teljes mértékben jellemző rám

Kérem, hogy a válaszadásnál ne arra gondoljon, hogy mit tartana ideálisnak, hanem arra, hogy a napi munkája során mit tud megvalósítani!

46. Számomra fontosabb, hogy hosszú távon hová juttatom el a csoportot, mint az egyes órák megtervezése.

1 2 3 4

47. Ha érzem, hogy valami nem megy jól a csoporttal, akkor átgondolom, hogy mit változtassak.

1 2 3 4

48. Nagyon fontos szempontom az óra megtervezésénél, hogy a csoport élvezze az órát.

1 2 3 4

49. Az adott csoporttól függ, hogy milyen feladatokat tervezek nekik.

1 2 3 4

50. Akkor kezdek új anyagot tanítani, ha a csoport már biztosan tudja az előző anyagot.

1 2 3 4

51. A tervezésnél figyelembe veszem a tanulók érdeklődését.

1 2 3 4

52. A tanulóktól visszajelzéseket kérek (szóbeli vélemény, írásbeli vélemény, napló) , hogy milyennek találják az órákat.

1 2 3 4

53. A tervezésnél figyelembe veszem a tanulók indirekt visszajelzéseit.

1 2 3 4

54. Kollégáim ötleteit is használom a tanításban.

1 2 3 4

55. Szívesen tervezek együtt a kollégáimmal.

1 2 3 4

56. A kollégák óráinak látogatása segít abban, hogy jobban tudjam megtervezni az óráimat.

1 2 3 4

57. Az év elején átgondolom, hogy hány nagydolgozatot fog írni a csoport.

1 2 3 4

58. Év elején megtervezem a nagydolgozatok körülbelüli időpontját.

1 2 3 4

59. Mikor az órát megtervezem, átgondolom, hogy kinek a szóbeli teljesítményét fogom értékelni.

1 2 3 4

HARMADIK RÉSZ

Kérem, írja le, hogy az állítások kapcsán mi jutott eszébe a tervezésről ill. milyen egyéni gondolatai vannak a témával kapcsolatban!

Ha vállalkozik egy rövid beszélgetésre, akkor kérem, itt adja meg az adatait!

Név:
Telefonszám/e-mail:

Köszönöm szépen!

Dear Colleague!

The purpose of the questionnaire that you are holding in your hands is to collect data for my PhD dissertation about how teachers of English plan their teaching. The focus of my research is not restricted to lesson planning or the writing of local curricula and yearly syllabuses, rather, it concentrates on teachers' thought processes that precede and form their teaching. These thought processes, however, might include the planning of individual lessons as well as the writing of different curricula and syllabuses.

The questionnaire has three parts. The first part aims to elicit background information about the respondent. In the second part of the questionnaire you will read statements, and I will ask you to indicate on a scale how much you think the given statement is characteristic of the way you plan teaching. In the third part you will be asked to briefly summarize your ideas on planning.

All the respondents of the questionnaire will be guaranteed anonymity, and all the information will be treated with confidentiality. Meanwhile, if you can devote 10 to 15 minutes from your time to take part in an interview on planning next autumn, I will ask you to give your name and phone number/e-mail address on the last page of the questionnaire.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Szabó Éva
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PART ONE

1. Please, underline the type of school you teach at.

eight-grade primary school; six-grade secondary school; eight-grade secondary school; twelve-grade school; four-grade secondary school; four-grade vocational school; any other:……..

2. How many lessons a week do you teach at the above school? …….....
Number of your English lessons a week at the same school: ……..lessons

3. In which grade do you teach English, and how many English lessons do the particular groups have a week?

The pupils in group 1 are in the ..... grade; they have …… English lessons a week.
Do you use a coursebook with this group? yes – no
If you use a coursebook, which one do you use?.....
The pupils in group 2 are in the ..... grade; they have …… English lessons a week.
Do you use a coursebook with this group? yes – no
If you use a coursebook, which one do you use?.....

The pupils in group 3 are in the ..... grade; they have …… English lessons a week.
Do you use a coursebook with this group? yes – no
If you use a coursebook, which one do you use?.....
The pupils in group 4 are in the ..... grade; they have …… English lessons a week.
Do you use a coursebook with this group? yes – no
If you use a coursebook, which one do you use?.....
The pupils in group 5 are in the ..... grade; they have …… English lessons a week.
Do you use a coursebook with this group? yes – no
If you use a coursebook, which one do you use?.....
The pupils in group 6 are in the ..... grade; they have …… English lessons a week.
Do you use a coursebook with this group? yes – no
If you use a coursebook, which one do you use?.....

4. How many years of teaching experience have you had so far?.....

5. How long have you been teaching English anywhere, in any form (private students and language schools also included)?.....

6. How long have you been teaching English at a primary or secondary school (private students and language schools not included)? Please, underline the right number:

less than a year 1 to 5 years 6 to 10 years 11 to 15 years
16 to 20 years more than 20 years

7. What teaching qualification other than English have you got?
I have a qualification in teaching ……..,
in teaching ……., and
in teaching ……..

8. Which of the following degrees do you hold? Please, underline the right answer. If you hold more than one degree, you can underline more answers.
a, teacher of English language and literature – degree obtained at a university day course
b, teacher of English language and literature – degree obtained at a university supplementary degree course/post - college degree course
c, teacher of English language – degree obtained at a teacher training college day course
d, teacher of English language – degree obtained at a teacher training college supplementary degree course
e, any other: ……..

PART TWO

In this part of the questionnaire you will read statements. Next to each statement you will find a four-point scale. You will be asked to circle the number that you feel best describes how much the given statement is characteristic of your planning. The four numbers stand for the following meanings:

1 : it is **not characteristic** of me **at all**
2 : it is **very little characteristic** of me
3 : it is **mostly characteristic** of me
4 : it is **absolutely characteristic** of me

For example:

0. I prepare for every lesson I teach for more than an hour.

1 2 3 4

If you rarely prepare for your lessons for more than an hour, then this statement is very little characteristic of you. Therefore, you will circle 2.

When circling the numbers, you will be asked not to consider what you would do in an ideal case, but what you can actually do in your every-day life.

1. I think over what I am going to teach during the year at the beginning of the school year.
1 2 3 4

2. When I plan the year, I plan in accordance with the guidelines of the National Core Curriculum.
1 2 3 4

3. When I plan the year, I plan in accordance with the guidelines of the frame curriculum.
1 2 3 4

4. When I plan the year, I plan in accordance with the local curriculum.
1 2 3 4

5. I write a year-syllabus at the beginning of the school year.
1 2 3 4

6. I follow my year-syllabus during the school year.
1 2 3 4

7. I bear in mind what the students should achieve by the end of their studies.
1 2 3 4

8. Before starting to teach a new unit of the coursebook, I think over how I will teach it.
1 2 3 4

9. I plan what I will teach the following week before I start the week.
1 2 3 4

10. I start teaching new material at a preplanned point in time even if the group has not entirely acquired what they have been taught before the planned new material.
1 2 3 4

11. I plan my lessons in the hours preceding the lesson.

1 2 3 4

12. I plan my lessons on the day, or on one of the days preceding the lesson.

1 2 3 4

13. I only have time to plan my lessons during the few minutes before the lesson.

1 2 3 4

14. It makes me feel uncertain if I do not think over what I will do in the lesson.

1 2 3 4

1 : it is **not characteristic** of me **at all**
2 : it is **very little characteristic** of me
3 : it is **mostly characteristic** of me
4 : it is **absolutely characteristic** of me

When circling the numbers, you will be asked not to consider what you would do in an ideal case, but what you can actually do in your every-day life.

15. I write a short lesson plan for each lesson.

1 2 3 4

16. I write a detailed lesson plan for each lesson.

1 2 3 4

17. I plan how many minutes I will spend exactly on every task.

1 2 3 4

18. I plan in what form the learners will work on the different tasks (individually, in pairs, in small groups).

1 2 3 4

19. I plan what homework I will give.

1 2 3 4

20. If I can clearly see what I will do, I feel better in the lesson.

1 2 3 4

21. If I think over what I will do in the lesson, it makes me feel more confident.

1 2 3 4

22. I do not feel good unless I can finish with everything that I planned for the lesson.

1 2 3 4

23. I do not feel good unless the lesson progresses as it was planned.

1 2 3 4

24. I feel bad if I cannot keep to the planned timing and we fall behind with what was planned.

1 2 3 4

25. We only use the coursebook in the lessons.

1 2 3 4

26. The coursebook that I use does not require prior thinking about what to teach and how to teach it.

1 2 3 4

27. When teaching a unit from the coursebook, I follow the order of the activities.

1 2 3 4

28. I do not supplement good coursebooks with extra teaching materials.

1 2 3 4

29. If I teach too many hours a week, I only use the coursebook.

1 2 3 4

30. I follow what the teacher's book says when I plan my lessons.

1 2 3 4

1 : it is **not characteristic** of me **at all**
2 : it is **very little characteristic** of me
3 : it is **mostly characteristic** of me
4 : it is **absolutely characteristic** of me

When circling the numbers, you will be asked not to consider what you would do in an ideal case, but what you can actually do in your every-day life.

31. I strongly consider the place of the lesson within the learners' daily schedule when I plan it.

1 2 3 4

32. I plan different activities for the beginning of the week and for Friday.

1 2 3 4

33. I supplement the coursebook with different materials.

1 2 3 4

34. I decide what supplementary material to use in the lesson in the hours preceding the lesson.

1 2 3 4

35. I plan what supplementary material to use in the lesson on the day or on one of the days preceding the lesson.

1 2 3 4

36. I decide what supplementary material to use in the lesson during the few minutes right before the lesson.

1 2 3 4

37. If, in the lesson, I have a good idea as to what to do next, I use that idea even if it has not been planned.

1 2 3 4

38. I like improvising in the lesson.

1 2 3 4

39. At least half of the materials I use in teaching come from books or sources other than the coursebook.

1 2 3 4

40. When teaching a unit from the coursebook, I vary the order of the activities according to my own plan.

1 2 3 4

41. I feel bored if I only use the coursebook.

1 2 3 4

42. I decide in the lesson as to how much time should be given to the group for carrying out a certain activity.

1 2 3 4

43. The more experienced I am, the less time I spend on planning teaching.

1 2 3 4

44. The events of the lesson have an effect on how much we do and how we do it.

1 2 3 4

1 : it is **not characteristic** of me **at all**
2 : it is **very little characteristic** of me
3 : it is **mostly characteristic** of me
4 : it is **absolutely characteristic** of me

When circling the numbers, you will be asked not to consider what you would do in an ideal case, but what you can actually do in your every-day life.

45. If I can see that the lesson does not proceed as I planned, I modify my original plan.

1 2 3 4

46. I find it more important to achieve long-term objectives than to plan individual lessons.

1 2 3 4

47. If I can see that the group does not progress as they should, I think over what to change.

1 2 3 4

48. I find it very important to plan lessons that the group can enjoy.

1 2 3 4

49. It is the group's character that determines what activities I plan for them.

1 2 3 4

50. I start teaching new material when the group has already acquired a certain knowledge of the preceding material.

1 2 3 4

51. I build on the learners' interest when I plan teaching.

1 2 3 4

52. I ask the learners for feedback (oral, written, in the form of a diary) on my teaching.

1 2 3 4

53. I build on the learners' indirect feedback when I plan teaching.

1 2 3 4

54. I use my colleagues' ideas in teaching.

1 2 3 4

55. I like planning together with my colleagues.

1 2 3 4

56. Observing my colleagues' lessons help me plan my own lessons.

1 2 3 4

57. At the beginning of the school year I decide on the number of the major tests my groups will write during that year.

1 2 3 4

58. At the beginning of the school year I decide on the approximate time of the major tests.

1 2 3 4

59. I decide which learner's oral performance I will assess in the lesson when I plan.

1 2 3 4

PART THREE

Please, write here any of the ideas that occurred to you about planning while completing the questionnaire, and feel free to add anything else on the topic!

Interview schedule 1

1. Melyek azok a dolgok, amelyekre leginkább koncentrálsz, mikor megtervezel egy órát?

2. Konkrét helyen, konkrét időben tervezel?

3. Milyen típusú tervet írsz le?

4. Ha valaki megkérdezné, hogy milyen alapelveket követsz egy óra megtervezése kapcsán, mit mondanál?
Pl.: Egy tanár erre a kérdésre azt felelte, hogy számára az nagyon fontos, hogy egy átlagos órán minden diák szólaljon meg – a csoport előtt vagy kiscsoportos beszélgetésben/pármunkában – legalább egyszer. Egy másik tanár azt felelte, hogy egy 45 perces óra nagyon rövid, ezért figyelni kell arra, hogy minden percét maximálisan kihasználják, egy perc se menjen el feleslegesen.

5. Van-e olyan tanítási módszer, ami nálad nagyon bevált, ill. hatékonynak bizonyult, ezért hiszel benne?
Pl.: dialógusok memorizálása, kiscsoportos munka, fordítás

6. Te magad hogyan jellemeznéd általában az órára készülésedet, óratervezésedet? Nagyon részletesen megtervezel mindent, vagy nagy vonalakban vázolod fel, hogy mit fogtok csinálni? Ha bizonyos dolgokat részletesen tervezel meg, akkor melyek azok? Ha bizonyos dolgokat nagy vonalakban tervezel meg, melyek azok?

Interview schedule 2

1. Szerinted mikor van egy óra jól megtervezve?

2. Melyek azok a dolgok, amelyekre leginkább koncentrálsz, mikor megtervezel egy órát?

3. Konkrét helyen, konkrét időben tervezel?

4. Milyen típusú tervet írsz le?

5. Ha valaki megkérdezné, hogy milyen alapelveket követsz egy óra megtervezése kapcsán, mit mondanál?
Pl.: Egy tanár erre a kérdésre azt felelte, hogy számára az nagyon fontos, hogy egy átlagos órán minden diák szólaljon meg – a csoport előtt vagy kiscsoportos beszélgetésben/pármunkában – legalább egyszer. Egy másik tanár azt felelte, hogy egy 45 perces óra nagyon rövid, ezért figyelni kell arra, hogy minden percét maximálisan kihasználják, egy perc se menjen el feleslegesen.

6. Mennyiben építed a tankönyvre az óráidat?

7. Mennyiben segítenek a tantervek és a tanmenet?

8. Te magad hogyan jellemeznéd általában az órára készülésedet, óratervezésedet? Nagyon részletesen megtervezel mindent, vagy nagy vonalakban vázolod fel, hogy mit fogtok csinálni? Ha bizonyos dolgokat részletesen tervezel meg, akkor melyek azok? Ha bizonyos dolgokat nagy vonalakban tervezel meg, melyek azok?

9. Hogyan kapcsolódik az óratervezésed másfajta tervezésekhez? Más szóval, mielőtt megtervezed az óráidat, megtervezed-e a hetet, vagy inkább anyagrészt tervezel meg? Megtervezed-e év elején, hogy mit hogy fogsz tanítani a tanév során?

10. Mindig így terveztél-e? (Csak tapasztalt tanároktól)

Kérdések óra előtt

1. Mit terveztél, mi lesz a keret?

2. Milyen problémák, nehézségek várhatók?

3. A tervezett feladatokon kívül van-e valami, amit fontosnak gondolsz szem előtt tartani az órán?

Kérdések óra után

1. Hogyan jellemeznéd az órát? Úgy történtek a dolgok, ahogy eltervezted őket, többé-kevésbé úgy történtek, ahogy tervezted őket, vagy másképp alakultak a dolgok, mint ahogy tervezted őket?

2. Mit csinálnál másképp?

3. Jellemeznéd a csoportot?

COURSE COMPONENTS

1. Lectures
2. Seminars
3. School practice (classroom observations and teaching practice)

1. Lecture Theories of language learning and teaching (term 5)

Aims of the course

- to introduce future EFL teachers to the theoretical foundations of language learning and teaching;
- to give them an overview of current issues in second language acquisition;
- to establish a link between students` earlier studies in developmental & educational psychology and issues in language pedagogy.

Lecture topics

1. Key concepts and issues in SLA
2. Schools of thought in SLA research
3. Theories of human learning
4. Theories of first language acquisition
5. Age, intelligence and language learning
6. Learner language
7. Differences between individual learners
8. Learning styles and strategies
9. Sociocultural factors and the learning context
10. Theories of second language acquisition
11. From theory to practice: language teaching methods
12. Popular ideas about language learning

2. Seminars

Methodology 1 (term 5)

Aims of the course: to develop trainees` professional competence by

- investigating the ways in which students are disposed to learn and the purposes for which they are learning;
- identifying their own assumptions about learning and teaching.

Seminar topics

1. The learning and teaching process
2. Teacher roles and teaching styles
3. Class management 1.
4. Class management 2.

5. The use of Hungarian in the English lesson
6. Language learning groups. Patterns of classroom interaction
7. Guided lesson observation (1)
8. Learners` errors, teacher`s feedback
9. Guided lesson observation (2)
10. The good language learner. Language learners` motivation
11. Learning styles and strategies. Learner training.
12. Language teaching methods 1.
13. Language teaching methods 2.

Methodology 2 (term 6)

Aims of the course

- to make students familiar with current coursebooks;
- to make students aware of what a language student should learn.
- to introduce students to peer teaching

Seminar topics

1. Communicative competence. Fluency, accuracy, appropriacy.
2. Coursebooks
3. Lesson types
4. Teaching pronunciation
5. Teaching grammar
6. Teaching language functions
7. Teaching vocabulary
8. Skills development: speaking
9. Skills development: listening
10. Skills development: writing
11. Skills development: reading
12. Integrating culture into language teaching
13. Task-based lessons

Methodology 3 (term 7)

Aims of the course

- to give students practical training in teaching techniques and ideas;
- to help students build up a materials file;
- to develop students` teaching skills and confidence by making them demonstrate a particular teaching technique in the peer teaching sessions.

Seminar topics

1. What makes a good English lesson?
2. Supplementary materials. Resource books for teachers.
3. Planning lessons and longer teaching units
4. Icebreakers and warmers
5. Language teaching games
6. Activities for young children
7. Working with texts and dialogues

8. Techniques for language practice
9. Using songs
10. Exploiting visual materials. Techniques to use the video
11. Multimedia in ELT

Methodology 4 (term 8)

Aims of the course

- to make students familiar with the attainment targets of the Hungarian National Core Curriculum in English;
- to give students practice in syllabus design;
- to give students training in language testing.

Seminar topics

1. Curriculum and syllabus. The process of curriculum design.
2. The Hungarian National Core Curriculum.
3. Frame curricula
4. Local curricula
5. Assessing learners
6. Approaches to testing. Terminology
7. Written tests
8. Oral tests
9. Testing techniques
10. Designing achievement/progress tests
11. Language exams

3. School practice

Classroom observations (term 6)

Aims of the course

- to provide students experience of the teaching process through regular class observation (2 lessons every other week)

Course contents

- each group of students is placed under the supervision of a mentor, who is a practising school teacher. Students observe one of the mentors' lessons every second week and discuss it with him/her afterwards.

Teaching practice (term 7 or 8)

Aims of the course

- to give students real classroom experience
- to develop students` teaching skills
- to make students work in teams

- to develop students` peer observation and evaluation skills

Course contents

- 2-3 students and a mentor work as a team in planning teaching units. Each student is required to teach 15 lessons during the semester and regularly observe their peers` lessons. Students` lessons are observed by the mentor regularly and a methodology teacher occasionally. Each class observation is followed by a feedback session with active participation of each team member

1. Planning is individual and personality dependent

a) The main considerations in planning lessons

Mi mindenre gondolsz, mikor általában megtervezel egy órát?

Legelőször természetesen arra, hogy mi a tananyag, mik a közelebbi céljaim, tehát az órán megvalósítandó céljaim, hogyan tudom ezt beépíteni az egész tanulási folyamatba hosszabb távon, milyen készségeket szeretnék fejleszteni az órán, milyen munkaformákat szeretnék alkalmazni, mennyire és milyen típusú feladatokkal fogom őket motiválni. Nagyon nagy hangsúlyt szoktam arra helyezni, hogy hogyan kötöm össze a feladatokat, hogy ne egy légüres térben mozogjanak. Nagyon át szoktam gondolni, hogy milyen feladatokat adok fel otthonra, és természetesen a gyerekek képességeire gondolok leginkább, amikor megtervezek egy órát. Ezenkívül még, hogy hová fogok állni, hogyan tartok velük kontaktust. Minél magasabb az osztálylétszám vagy a csoportlétszám, annál jobban meg kell, hogy osszam a figyelmemet, főleg abban az osztályban, akiket most láttál. Ők tizenhatan vannak, és ez elég sok, mert van olyan osztály, ahol csak nyolcan vannak. És még arra is, hogy hogyan tudom az eltérő képességeik szerint fejleszteni a gyerekeket, mert gyakran szoktam differenciáltan adni feladatokat. Fontos még, hogy, milyen segédeszközöket fogok beépíteni az órába, például kazettákat, képeket, kártyákat, milyen utasításokat mondjak, és az időbeosztásra is, természetesen. (Klári)

Mi mindenre gondolsz, amikor megtervezel egy órát?

Hát, először is az egyik legfontosabb a megtanítandó anyag mennyisége. [...]De nagyon fontos először is, hogy a csoportnak hányadik órában van órája, és milyen nap. Mondjuk kedden második órában sokkal több tényanyagot lehet tervezni, mint egy péntek ötödik órában. Erre mindenképpen gondolok, és ez rendesen tényleg szem előtt is van, amikor tervezem a számítógép előtt az órát, hogy na most ez így lesz, úgy lesz. Ennyi elég lesz. Ez lesz a sorrend. Innentől meg jöhet a játék. Ha pedig egy normál időpont van, nem ötödik óra, nem nyári szünet előtt két nappal, akkor nyugodtan lehet egy kicsit több tényanyagot. De azért a végén mindenképpen legyen egy kis lazítás. [...] Előfordult, hogy olyanra is gondoltam, hogy volt egy anyag, tudom, hogy mit adtam fel házi feladatnak, és tudtam, hogy az egyik lány azt vállalta, hogy kitalál egy bizonyos titkosírást, amelynek van köze az angol nyelvhez. És akkor én ezt beletervezem a következő órába, hogy Wagner Flóra öt percig ezt a titkosírást fogja feladni többieknek feladványnak. És én rá terveztem az órát, és beteg lett. Hiányzott. Na, akkor valami mással kell pótolni. Tehát amikor az órában egy elég komoly feladat van valaki másra felépítve, akkor az elég nagy vérveszteség, ha az illető nem jön el. Akkor annyi, hogy azt áttettük a csütörtöki órára, hétfőn meg csináltunk a csütörtökiből valamit. De azt is meg lehetne csinálni, hogy nem megyünk előre, mert tartalék feladatokból mindig van nálam, azokkal ki lehet tölteni.

Tehát akkor ezek szerint egy dolog, amire általában gondolsz, hogy mindig legyen tartalék

feladat.

Igen. És az egyik az, hogy úgy tervezem meg az órát, hogy inkább többet tervezzek, és akkor általában úgy is szoktam jelölni az óravázlatomban, hogy zárójel, ha erre nem jut idő, akkor legközelebb. Vagy odaírom, hogy tartalék feladat, ha úgy nem is célom beletenni. Csak abban az esetben, ha kifogynék a szuszból, akkor ott van a tartalék feladat, ami akár 5-10 percet is elvesz. [...] De olyan ne fordulhasson elő, hogy ott állok feladat nélkül. Mert az nem megoldás, hogy jó, lapozzunk egyet a könyvben és kezdjük csinálni. Annál rosszabbat nem tudok elképzelni. (Ádám)

b) The effect of personality traits

Alapjában véve az egész életem erről szól, hogy úgy csinálok mindent, mint mikor megtervezem a dolgaimat az órákra. Egyéb területen is így működök. Akár egy családi bevásárlás, vagy bármi, mindig nagyon belegondolok. Annyira kevés az idő, és az ember sok mindent akar csinálni, betartani az összes ígéretet és időpontot, hogy muszáj nagyon szigorú rendet tartani mindenhol. De én szeretem, hogy ilyen sok minden van. [...] Már mikor iskolába jártam, akkor is millió dologgal foglalkoztam, amit most végül tanárként is teszek. Faliújság szerkesztéstől kezdve versenyekre jártam, színjátszás, ünnepségek, versmondás. Tehát az, hogy csak jártam suliba, és tanultam, az volt az alap, arra jött az összes többi. Végül is tanárként is valami hasonlót csinálok. Megtartom az óráimat, de azon kívül pályázat és faliújság itt kint és sok minden egyéb. Tehát nekem így kerek ez az egész. (Edit)

Én szeretem átgondolni az egész hetet, az egész évet. De szerintem ez személyiségfüggő is. Egy kicsit úgy tudatosabban csinálom a dolgokat. Van, aki nem. De mondom, ez személyiségfüggő nagyrészt.

Tehát te úgy érzed, hogy neked szükséged van arra, hogy tudatosabban átgondold.

Igen, egy csomó mindent, különben nem tudna az ember ennyi mindent csinálni, mert szétfolyik. Tehát ahhoz, hogy végig tudja csinálni azt, amit akar, ahhoz valóban nagyon át kell gondolni. Nekem mindig sok dolgom volt.

Sokfelé koncentrálsz, több helyen tanítasz.

Hát meg a gyerekek, a család, akkor közben tanulás, én 2001-ben fejeztem be a közgázt, és most lehet, hogy elkezdek egy másikat. És az ember, hogy meg is újuljon, arra is jusson idő, mindenre, ahhoz az életét tervezni kell, és valószínű, hogy én ezért az órákat is nagyon tervezem. (Juli)

2. The main value of planning lies in the thinking process it involves

Szerintem a tervezéskor a gondolkodás a legfontosabb. Azzal telik el a legtöbb idő, amikor az ember kitalálja, hogy most ezt hogy lehetne megcsinálni úgy hogy egy 12 éves gyerek megértse, és elsajátítsa, vagy mondjuk egy 17 éves. Tehát ez az, ami sokáig tart, tehát míg átgondolja az ember. Utána már amit leírok, tulajdonképpen csak a lépések. Tehát itt a tervezésnél a szellemi munka a legtöbb, amíg az embernek összeáll az egész, és utána, ha már összeállt, akkor leírja, és akkor már könnyen megy. Nekem az vesz el sok időt. Még főzés közben is ez van. [...] ...én fontosnak tartom mindig, hogy tudjam, hogy én ebbe a csoportba, vagy ebbe az osztályba miért megyek be. Az nem annyira fontos, ha nem azt tanítom, de nekem fontos kigondolni és tudni. Én nem vagyok annyira intuitív, tehát nekem fontos ez a tudatosság. (Juli)

Én például augusztusban, amikor lehetőségem van rá, mindig végig szoktam gondolni, hogy a következő évben mit akarok tanítani. Ez persze nem valósul meg száz százalékig. És tulajdonképpen tudom is, hogy az anyag nagy részét nem is fogom tudni használni. De én készülök. Szövegeket keresek, könyveket nézek át, olyat is, amiket a diákokkal fénymásolva fel lehet dolgozni, meg olyat is, ami nekem ad segítséget ahhoz, hogy a munka flottabbul menjen. Az is előfordulhat, hogy én ebből semmit nem valósítok meg konkrétan a tanév folyamán, mert úgy jön ki. [...] De nem baj. Azt hiszem, hogy ha az augusztusi tervezésből vagy felkészülésből tulajdonképpen semmi nem valósul meg, akkor is számomra ad egy olyan lendületet rögtön szeptember elején, hogy én magam is sokkal jobban el tudom kezdeni. Valahol ez majd felhasználódik. (Zsuzsa)

3. Planning is primarily guided by teachers' intention to respond to the dual requirements of group characteristics and individual learner characteristic

a) Responding to the group's and the individual learners' needs: a duality

...nem gondolom, hogy nekem most lóhalálában és futólépésben kellene az egész évet beosztanom, mert hogy ezt meg azt még meg kell csinálni. Többre tartom azt, hogy a gyerekeknek mire van igényük, mennyi időt kell bizonyos dolgokra szánni, mint azt, hogy én azt terveztem el az év elején, hogy mit tudom én a 6 *unitot* befejezem, és akkor annak ott kell, hogy vége legyen, ahol. Igyekszem tartani, hogy az egész évben ennyi és ennyi feladatot el kell végezni, de azon belül megpróbálom ezt úgy elosztani, hogy azért a fennálló körülmények határozzák meg abszolút. Én úgy gondolom, hogy a gyerekek fontosabbak, mint az anyag, mert mindig abból kell kiindulni, hogy ő velük azt az anyagot hogy lehet átvenni. Ezt a legjobban szerintem, amikor van két párhuzamos osztály, akkor lehet látni, hogy az egyikkel száguldozni lehet, a másikkal meg még mindig nem tartok sehol. Az egyiket az nagyon érdekelte, a másik meg se rezdült bizonyos téma hallatán.

Tehát akkor ott kiderült, hogy az nem jól tervezett. Már kétfélét lehet tervezni a következő órára. (Sára)

Törölt: ¶

Mi mindenre gondolsz, amikor megtervezel egy órát?

Nagyon konkrétan magára a csoportra, tehát minden óratervezés annak a csoportnak kell, hogy szóljon, amelyikkel éppen dolgozom, a színvonalra, a nyelvi szintjükre, az érdeklődési körükre ez az egyik legfontosabb. Tehát mindenképpen érdekes órát akarok tartani, tudom, hogy a nyelvtanulás nem mindig érdekes, de amennyire lehet, próbáljuk érdekessé tenni. Középiskolás korosztálynál ez egyszerűen fontos, a mai gyerekeknél a figyelemlekötés és a motiváció az egyik legnehezebb feladat. Ha én ténylegesen eredményt akarok elérni, akkor az ő fejükkel kell gondolkodnom. Az első az, hogy megpróbálok egy kicsit tinédzser fejjel gondolkodni azon, hogy bizonyos anyagrészt, ahol éppen tartok, hogyan tudom a lehető leghatékonyabban és legérdekesebben megtanítani. A kettő náluk biztos, hogy összefügg. Az, hogy érdekesen tanítani, körülbelül annyit jelent, hogy akkor hajlandók a témával foglalkozni. Tehát nálam mindenképpen az, hogy hogyan motiválhatom őket a lehető legjobban, mert az egyértelműen a hatékonyságot növeli. [...]

[...] *Van-e olyan módszer, ami nálad nagyon bevált?*

Olyan módszer nincs, biztos nincs, ami kizárólagos. Egyszerűen nincs olyan. Van akinél jó a dialógus-memorizálás, van olyan csoport, amelyik ha csak ilyet ejtek ki a számon, hogy ezt meg kéne tanulni, akkor már elkezdenek viszketni. Nem. Azt hiszem, egyetlen dolog válik be, ismerni kell az adott csoportot. Amennyiben egy csoport egységesen kezelhető, lényegében az adott tevékenységet mindig arra szabni. Én kizárólagos és aranymódszert nem tudnék mondani, az viszont nagyon bevált, hogy a csoportra szabom a tevékenységet, sőt igazából a csoporton belül is tudni szép lassan, hogy kinek nem adható ez, és ki az, aki imád előadni. Amikor már elég jó szinten vannak nyelvből, elég gyakori az, hogy kiselőadást tarthatnak, van aki ezt imádja. Van akinél tudom, hogy önmagában már az a gondolat, hogy neki ki kell állni a többiek elé, frusztrálná. Akkor nyílván nem erőltetem. Ezt még egy csoporton belül is nehéz összehangolni, igazából, ami nekem nagyon fontos az egész folyamatban, pont az, hogy azt találjam meg, hogy egy csoportot hogy lehet jól és hatékonyan tanítani, és ehhez melyik módszert alkalmazzam náluk. Nem a módszer kizárólagos, hanem a csoporton belül kell ezt megtalálni. Bevallom őszintén, amikor több angol csoportom volt, észrevettem, hogy majdnem mindegyiket egészen másképp tanítom. Nem lehet azt, hogy ó milyen jól bevált, ezt a kis párbeszédet majd átvisszük ide, mert lehet, hogy a másik csoporthoz nem illik. Aztán lehet, hogy van olyan, amit ugyanúgy lehet tanítani. Akkor veszi ezt észre az ember, ha ugyanazt a könyvet tanítja egymás után vagy párhuzamosan két osztálynak. És kiderül, hogy én észreveszem, hogy egész másképp kezdem tanítani itt, mint ott ugyanazt a tankönyvet ugyanazokkal a szövegekkel, mert a gyerekek mások. És nekem bevallom ez sokkal fontosabb, mint az aranymódszer. Ez teljesen nyílván való, hogy nincs aranymódszer.(Lívia)

b) Facilitating group development

... az óra elején ugye voltak kérdések. Azért tettem be, hogy ismerjük egymást. És ezt én nagyon sokszor más órán is fontosnak tartom, hogy ismerjük más családját, tehát kinek van fehér Mercije, és akkor tudják, hogy a Zsófiéknak. Ugyan ez egy lerobbant tragacs, amit már 25-ször betolt az osztály, mert mindig lerobban, de ezek élmények. Tehát ezért szeretem az ilyeneket. Egyedül az maradt ki, hogy melyik a lengyel kislányunk. (Dóra)

Óratervezés-szintileg tudom, hogy mindenkinek mikor van a születésnapja, vagy névnapja. Tavaly szülinapokat ünnepeltünk, idén névnapokat. Ez azt jelenti, hogy szerzek egy kártyát, ilyen *free card*-ot, amilyet a moziban lehet szerezni, és azt aláíratom mindenkivel. És van, amikor azzal kezdjük az órát, hogy azt odaadom. Már a szünetben előbb bemegyek, és aláíratom. És amikor becsengetnek, azzal kezdjük, hogy *Happy Birthday*. Tehát nem mindig házi, meg ismétlés, meg nem tudom, hanem ezzel. Meg van, amikor csak úgy tudom odaadni, hogy feladok egy feladatot, na, hogy sikerült megoldani, és az egészet vele olvastatom fel, a szülinapossal. Meg a következőt is, meg na még azt is, na, még azt is. És az elején volt ez jó, amikor váratlan volt. Hát ha ilyen szépen megoldottad, hát most jutalomként, boldog szülinapot! Ami azért is jobb szerintem óra közepén, mert ez a lazításelem. Na, akkor pihentetőleg valami mást csináltunk. Ez még van. De ez abszolút nem ilyen tanítási módszer. Csak úgy, hogy szeretem őket. (Anna)

c) Catering for individual learner needs by organizing pair and small group activities

...ez a saját osztályom, tizenhatan vannak, két éve tanulnak angolul heti három órában. Úgy gondolom, ez kevés, ahhoz, hogy igazán komoly munkát végezhessünk, tehát én elégedetlen vagyok az óraszámmal, ez egy állandó probléma nálunk, de hát ők nem angoltagozatosok, csak az angoltagozatosoknak tanítunk 4-5 órában. Van négy nagyon jó képességű gyerek a csoportban, akik sokat foglalkoznak otthon is az angollal, olvasnak már angol könyveket, ezeket az egyszerűbb kivonatokat, sokat néznek idegennyelvű adásokat, gyakran kérnek engem is arra, hogy segítsek, külön feladatokat adjak nekik. Akkor van egy olyan 4-5 gyerek, aki tisztességesen iparkodik, mindig dolgozik órán is, de nincs meg bennük az a plusz. Tehát sokat nem tesznek hozzá, csak próbálnak az órai elvárásoknak megfelelni. És van 2-3 nagyon-nagyon gyenge tanuló a csoportban, egyrészt képességbeli problémáik vannak, mondtam neked, tudod, diszlexiás, diszgráfiás problémák, illetve van köztük olyan is, aki sajnos minden tantárgyból tanulási nehézségekkel küzd, és ezért hiába jár ezer különkorrepetálásra, meg fogadtak magántanárt is mellé, már olyan tetemes hátrányt halmozott fel az évek alatt, hogy sajnos egyre nehezebben tudja utolérni a többieket. Tehát motivációs problémák vannak, kudarcok érték, és emiatt gyakran érzem úgy, hogy mintha egy kicsit már fel is adta volna. Tehát ő, nem én, vagy nem a kollégáim, már ő saját magát belehelyezte egy skatulyába, ahonnan nagyon nehéz kirángatni. És nagyon fiatal ahhoz, hogy ezt mondjam, mert még csak 11-12 évesek, de már úgy érzem, hogy elkönyvelte, hogy ő csak ennyire képes, és nagyon nehéz kirángatni ebből, hogy többet tudjak belőle kihozni. Főleg ott a szélén a

Bence ilyen a csoportból, illetve a szőke, hosszú hajú Alexandra nevezetű kislány, akik, ők ketten azok, akik úgy érzem, hogy valahol lélekben már feladták. Tehát nagyon nagy az én felelősségem, hogy sokkal jobban motiváljam, meg segítsem a munkájukat. [...]... mindig jelölöm, hogy kiknek kell együtt dolgozni, nekik is ez egy segítség, azért nagyjából tudják, hogy egy bizonyos feladatnál kivel kell együtt dolgozni. Mert van, amikor ugye megengedem, hogy akivel szeretne, de akkor általában a jó a jót választja, ez bizonyos feladattípusoknál jól jön, de olyankor a nagyon gyengék is összekerülnek. Ez így minden feladattípusnál nem lenne olyan jó. Úgyhogy van úgy, hogy tudásszint szerint szerveződnek a csoportok, és van úgy, hogy akkor azt variálom a feladat fajtájától függően. (Klári)

A csapatmunkát azért szeretem, mert egy ember fogja írni pl. a szavakat. Általában aki a legjobb helyesíró, azt szokták kiválasztani, de legalább, aki gyengébben írja, az előtt ott lesz most megint helyesen a szó. Ők egymást is segítik a tanulásban. (Dóra)

4. Planning is affected by teachers' prior experience as learners

... én mondtam mindig, hogy azzal tudják a legjobban fejleszteni a *hallás alapján*-t is, meg a kiejtést is, hogy angol nyelvű adásokat hallgassanak. Nem érdekes, hogy nem értik, csak szokják a szerkezeteket. Nekem ez annak idején rengeteget segített. Volt úgy, hogy tíz évvel később értettem meg egy videó kazettáról egy szöveget, akár egy autósportost is, vagy bármilyet. Annyit tud segíteni. Nekem utána hihetetlen előnyömre vált. (Ádám)

Én a kiscsoportos munkát szerettem és szeretném még nagyobb mértékben megvalósítani. Nem mindig sikerül. Én magam úgy nőttem fel, hogy frontális oktatáson kívül másban nem nagyon volt részem. Most nem mondom, hogy ennek ellenére nem elég jól sikerült végigjárni az iskolát, de akkor az volt. Akkor azt tudták, az volt egy bevált módszer. [...] Ezt a sémát hozzuk mi is magunkkal, amit meséltem. Ülnek a gyerekek kettesével, vagy egymás háta mögött sorban, szemben áll a tanár, és akkor valamit mond, néha diktál, néha ír a táblára, akkor azt le kell másolni. Tehát én magamat is nevelem, és odafigyelek, hogy gyakorlatilag abból a feladatból is hogy lehetne ilyen kiscsoportos foglalkozást vagy pármunkát létrehozni, amit esetleg maga a tankönyv nem annak kínál. [...] ...ezért igyekszem eltolni a hangsúlyt a pármunka és a kiscsoportos felé azzal szemben, hogy én előadom magam. Én ebben hiszek. (Edit)

5. Planning enhances teachers' self-confidence and self-motivation

...én nem szeretek úgy bemenni, hogy nem tudom, hogy mit csinálok. Tapasztalat ide, vagy tapasztalat oda, én akkor érzem magam jól és biztonságban, ha tudom, hogy mit fogok csinálni. Ezért én egy füzetbe leírom a lépéseket, de ez egy későbbi kérdésben szerepel. Na most persze tökéletesen vagy részletesen az ember nem tervez meg minden órát, de ha nincs meg, hogy mit szeretnék elérni, akkor szerintem nem is sikerülhet. Akkor frusztált leszek én, frusztrált lesz a gyerek vagy a hallgató, és akkor az együttműködés, az akadozni fog, tehát én fontosnak tartom mindig, hogy tudjam, hogy én ebbe a csoportba, vagy ebbe az osztályba miért megyek be. (Juli)

Miért van szükség pluszfeladatokra?

Hát több dolog miatt is. Egyrészt mert gyakran úgy érzem, hogy nem árt a tankönyvet kiegészíteni, mert nem biztos, hogy elég feladatot ad egy témához. Például ez a New York-i szöveg elég hosszú, és nem is túl könnyű, ezért sokféleképpen fel kell dolgozni. Másrészt én magam élvezem, ha kicsit variálhatok, ha nem úgy tanítok meg egy részt, mint tavaly. Tehát a cél a színesítés a gyerekek kedvéért is, meg az én kedvemért is. (Ágota)

6. Planning is fundamentally affected by teachers' experience in teaching

Mindig így terveztél-e mint mostanában? Amit most meséltél, az mindig így volt?

Nem volt ez mindig így. Az ember, amikor kezdő tanár, kevesebb a tapasztalata, új iskolába kerül, akkor biztos, hogy sokkal görcsösebb, és akkor nem biztos, hogy több időt tölt el a tervezéssel, valószínűleg jobban ragaszkodik a formaságokhoz, ezalatt azt értem, hogy az előre meghatározott programhoz, a tankönyvhöz, ahhoz, hogy sok mindent leírjon. A sok minden lehet, hogy csak egy oldal, de akkor is, hogy minden apró pont meg legyen tervezve. Én azt hiszem, hogy ha az embernek már van elég tapasztalata, és ugyanakkor még nem annyira fáradt, hogy elfelejtse a dolgokat a megtervezéstől az órára való bemenésig, akkor azért már tudja azt, hogy nem érdemes mindent leírni, egyrészt azért, mert pontosan tudom, hogy mit akarok csinálni, akár leírtam, akár nem, a másik meg azért, mert módosulhat. Akár ha bemegyek az órára, akkor is módosulhat. Tehát felírok most 3-4 vázlatpontot, meg megvannak az előre elkészített anyagok, és lehet, hogy bemegyek az órára, és nem az előre elkészített anyagot fogom elővenni, hanem hírtelen úgy döntök, hogy azt holnap, és ma valami mást kell csinálni, mert közben utolsó pillanatban kijavítottam a dolgozatokat, és mégis jobb lenne azokat a fogalmazásokat megbeszélni. És akkor elmegy vele az óra, de úgy látom, hogy érdemes, abból húznak hasznot.

Tehát bizonyos értelemben bátrabban eltérsz.

Sokkal bátrabban tervezek. Most már azt is simán el tudom képzelni, amit 10 vagy 20 évvel ezelőtt semmiképpen sem, és elő is fordul, főleg ha helyettesíteni kell, másik csoportba úgy megyek be, hogy fogalmam sincs róla, hogy mit fogok csinálni. Így nem szoktam bemenni a saját csoportjaimba, de el tudom képzelni, hogy semmi nem történik akkor, ha így megyek be, és akkor is tudok úgy órát tartani, hogy 45 percig hasznot húznak belőle, és ez vissza is jön, mert épp most mondta valaki egy másik csoportban, hogy ja ez a tanárnő jön be helyettesíteni, akkor ez egy munkamániás, akkor 45 percig dolgozni fogunk. (Zsuzsa)

Mindig így terveztél-e nagyjából, vagy érzel-e egy nagy különbséget aközött, ahogy most átgondolod a dolgokat, meg most csinálod, és mondjuk ahogy 10-15 évvel ezelőtt?

Hát szerintem biztos másképp tervezek most, bár technikailag ugyanúgy, talán tartalmilag másként. Most már azért jobban átlátom, hogy mi történik, és sokkal reálisabban tudok tervezni. Meg talán másra is gondolok tervezés közben. Nem úgy vagyok, mint a jelöltek, akiket már említettem, mert akkor lehet, hogy csak arra tudtam koncentrálni, hogy meglegyen az a 45 perc és akkor kész, vége.

És most meg mire koncentrálsz?

Most jobban átlátom, hogy mit akarok, és hogy azt hogyan lehet elérni. Tehát nem annyira technikai részletekkel tudok foglalkozni, hanem inkább tartalmi dolgokkal. (Szilvi)

7. Planning has a problem-solving element

Mit terveztél mára?

A hatodik osztályban most a múlt idő megtanítása illetve annak a gyakorlása a feladatunk, meglehetősen komoly nehézséggel küzdünk, küszködünk, ezért úgy gondolom, hogy már egyéb okok miatt is meg kellett egy kicsi állnom az esedékes tananyaggal, tehát ami éppen most van, és kifejezetten koncentrálok a múlt idő begyakorlására. Még tán azt is mondhatnám, hogy drillezésére, mert úgy érzem, hogy a gyerekeknek erre van szükségük, tehát nem úgy gondolom, hogy ez a célravezető, tehát ez lesz az egész órának a lényege. Erre fogunk koncentrálni. [...]A problémák és nehézségek gondolom abból adódnak, hogy magának a múlt időnek a használatában nagyon sokféle probléma merül fel érdekes módon. Ezekkel már régen nem találkoztam így, egész konkrétan olyan problémák vannak, hogy van, akinek az a megrögzött elképzelése, hogy ezt úgy kell megalkotni, hogy *I did go*. Vannak olyanok, akik nem találják meg a rendhagyó igéknek a múltidejét, vannak olyanok, akik egész egyszerűen a mondat összeállításánál éreznek problémákat, és nem tudnak mit kezdeni vele. Tehát különböző jellegű problémák vannak, de minden

esetre azt gondolom, hogy a minél több gyakorlással, illetve ezzel a kis lépésekkel való előrehaladással talán át lehet őket ezeken segíteni. [...] Ők nem az a fajta társaság, akik lelkesednek a, … hogy is mondjam..., az intellektuális örömök nem igazán tartoznak az örömeik közé. Nagyon sok olyan osztály van, aki a feladatért nagyon szívesen bármit mindig megcsinál, és élvezi az angol használatát. Ők nem annyira, és szeretik, hogy ha könnyedén átlátható feladataik vannak, tehát hogyha nagyon gyorsan, könnyedén jutnak el a sikerhez. Úgy hogy azt hiszem, hogy náluk ez a fő szempont, sokaknál, inkább tán így mondanám. Vannak persze az osztályban nagyon ügyes gyerekek is, náluk nyilván más a helyezet. (Sára)

.... mindig szem előtt kell tartanom, hogy felébresszem őket. Sok olyan gyerek jár hozzánk, akik este sokáig nézik a TV-t, otthon nem mondják nekik, hogy ne, ezért itt első órában alszanak. Emiatt túl sokat nem várhatok el tőlük, de mindig olyan dolgokat próbálok csinálni, amitől felébrednek, és még tanulnak is belőle. De nem mindig sikerül. (Bori)

Törölt: ¶

8. Planning is a nested process which has five level

a) Planning the year

...elgondolod, hogy az év végére hova akarsz elérni?

Azt nyilván átgondolom, hogy év végére hova akarok elérni, de ezek a tervek ritkán valósulnak meg. [...] Például mi az, amit hetedikben el szeretnék érni, azt mindenképpen átgondolom. Tehát amikor megvan a csoport, akkor felmérem, hogy hol is tartunk, mert ezt nehéz felmérni, és hosszú ideig tart, még most sincs teljes képem, így lassan 4 hónap után, hogy pontosan hol vagyunk, de van azért elképzelésem róla. Tehát azt képzelem el, hogy most ezzel a csoporttal év végére hova akarunk eljutni körülbelül. És akkor utána próbálok ehhez választani egy tankönyvet, és akkor nyilván a tankönyvön belül is átgondolom, mert azt ugye kötelező, mert meg kell írni a tantervet... tanmenetet, hogy mi legyen. [...]...de miután egy év az nagyon hosszú idő, és számos tényező van, ami befolyásolja a munkánkat, nyilvánvaló, hogy a tanmenethez nem lehet ragaszkodni. (Szilvi)

Az évet persze nagyjából elképzelem az év elején, mint már ezt is mondtam. De csak nagyjából.

Miért fontos, hogy elképzeld?

Hogy én magam tudjak mihez viszonyítani. Kell a keret, biztonságot ad, csak ne legyen korlátozó. (Ágota)

b) Planning a unit

...először egy éves időszakban gondolkozom, az globálisabb, év elején, hogy na mi az, amit mindenképp jó lenne ebben az évben elérni, de utána inkább olyan kéthavi ... azokban mindenképp szoktam. Persze, én amúgy ilyen vagyok, hogy szeretem, hogy szeretek mindent kigondolni, és akkor tudom, hogy merre haladok... és órán is, tehát én mindig írok vázlatot. (Szilvi)

Nyilván az ember év elején végig gondolja az egész évet, aztán általában olyan 1-2 hétben kezdek el gondolkodni, és mondom itt megint a csoport nyelvi szintje az, ami nagyon meghatározó ilyenkor. [...]Hangsúlyozom, nagyon ritka az olyan, amikor egyik óráról a másikra tervezek, inkább egy hétre, két hétre előre. Azon belül van egy laza óravázlat, vagy óraterv sorozat, és azt egészítem ki aztán a konkrét órákra. Attól is függően, hogy hogy haladunk. Ez is nagyon fontos dolog, lehet, hogy én úgy ítélem meg hogy ez megcsinálható három órában, lehet hogy abból több lesz. Az is lehet, hogy én azt mondom, a dolog hosszú időt vesz igénybe, a gyerekek pedig jól veszik a dolgot. Tehát nagyon-nagyon sok függ attól, hogy közben azért tervezek nagy időre, hogy közben, ha nem egészen úgy alakul a helyzet, ahogy gondoltam, akkor módosíthassak. Ezt különben még a konkrét óravázlatokon belül is így szeretem csinálni. Tehát én úgy gondolom, hogy ez 20 perc, aztán lehet, hogy kiderül, hogy ez 40 lesz, akkor mi lesz, vagy fordítva. Tehát én ezt úgy ítélem, hogy negyed óra lesz, a gyerekek 5 perc alatt kész vannak, mindig legyen olyan tartaléka az órának, amitől a 45 perc maximálisan kihasználható.
Azt végül is nekem kell kitalálni, hogy az adott csoportnak vajon mi a legmegfelelőbb, hogyha mégis útközben úgy érzem, hogy ez így nem megy, akkor még mindig módosíthatok ebben a kéthetes, háromhetes tervben. Az is lehet, hogy nem kell 2 hetet szánnom, akkor legyen ez meg, hát ez óraszámfüggő is. Általában én 8-10 órában gondolkodom előre. [...] Tehát van egy két hetes tervem, amit lazán általában egy nagyobb papírra leírok, amikor a konkrét órára kerül a sor, akkor az első órát, azt nagyon részletesen megtervezem. Tehát van előre tervezett 10 órám, így szünet után beindultunk, és az elsőt, azt részletesen megtervezem, hogy ezt és ezt szeretnénk csinálni. Amikor vége van ennek az órának, akkor látom, hogy mire mentem, és hogyan áll az én egész tervemhez, a kéthetes tervemhez képest most a helyzet. Akkor már úgy tervezem meg a második órát ennek ismeretében, hogy mi, amit esetleg előre kell hoznom, mi az, amit már túlléptünk, tulajdonképpen már kicsit a második óra anyagából átléptünk, amit és úgy gondoltam, hogy oda tehetnénk. Tulajdonképpen mindig az adott helyzet szerint módosítom a tervemet. Van egy hosszú távú tervem, azon belül pedig mindig a szerint módosítok, hogy adott óra, ami már lement, az mit hozott. Abba persze beleépítve a számonkérés formáit is. Maradjuk a konkrét példánál, a *reported speech*, kiderül, hogy nagyon nyögvenyelősen megy a kérdésszerkesztés. Hát akkor kezdjük szépen. Még az is lehet, hogy vissza kell térnünk önmagában a kérdésszerkesztésre, vagy arra, hogy mi az, hogy egyenes szórend. Akkor hozzuk elő a példát. Gyorsan előszedek valahonnan egy feladatot, a következő órán már ezzel indítunk. Vagy úgy találom, hogy nem árt beiktatni egy írásbeli gyakorló feladatot, mert valahogy ez nem igazán tetszik nekem, akkor ezt belerakom a tervbe. Mindenképpen arra szoktam figyelni, hogy a hosszú távú tervemet, mindig utána órára bontsam, de az adott órát az előző nap tervezem meg. (Lívia)

c) Planning the week

Otthon a hálószobámban tervezek, és általában a hétvégén. Akkor van rá időm. Tehát egy héttel előre tervezek. De csak nagy vonalakban. Ezen az órán ez lesz, másikon az. Állítások, kérdések, aztán felszólítások. Napról napra pedig, hogy pontosan mit fogok csinálni. Igen, mindig otthon, mindig könyvvel a kezemben. A buszon inkább alszok. Itt bent a szünetben erre nincs idő, annyi mindennel fordulnak hozzám, vagy fénymásolnom kell. Óra előtt arra van időm, hogy átnézzem, hogy melyik osztályba megyek, hol tartunk. (Anna)

És hát én vasárnap délután neki szoktam ülni szép csendesen, és akkor átnézem, hogy ezen a héten vajon meddig fogunk eljutni. És ha valami olyan van, akkor én elkészítem előre, ha kell hozzá szedni valami feladatokat, akkor azt azért összeszedem hétvégén. Amikor leírom, akkor szeretem, ha csend van, akkor nem foglalkozom mással, tehát az hétvégén van [...], ha csak egyedül vagyok, nincs más dolog, vagy reggel, amikor friss vagyok. Az ember reggel friss. [...] ...de ha az egyik óra megvolt, akkor az embernek már indul a feje, hogy na most akkor mi lesz tovább, meg én szeretem hétvégén az egész hetemet megtervezni. [...] De én azért minden órára rászánom azt az időt, amikor leülök, és akkor ami a fejemben van, leírom, és akkor átgondolom Tehát azt nem lehet a konyhából bemenni tanítani. Hát lehet, persze, hogy lehet, de ott más dolgok vannak. (Juli)

9. Efficient planning aims to produce flexible plans

...mindig közbe jött valami, amitől az egy kicsit fölborult. Nyílván a negyediknél sokkal jobban felborul és lehet, hogy a hatodik egyszerűen úgy olyan formában már megtarthatatlan. Elég csak arra gondolni, hogy hiányzik a kolléganőm, helyettesítenem kell, ami azt jelenti, hogy nálunk ugye csoportbontás van, összevonjuk a két csoportot. Már nem úgy működik a dolog, mert már 30 gyerek van, vagy 28 együtt, az a csoport nem azt vette, azok nem tartanak ott, az óra elején 5 perc arra megy el, hogy ki hova ül, ez csak egy apróság volt. Más amikor én tartom az órát, mint pl. a mai órán egy olyan felmerülő probléma, ami mondjuk kétszer annyi időt visz el, mint amennyit én rászántam, ott már egy feladat lemarad, már nem úgy jön ki az óra vége, újból kell vennem a másik óra elején, tehát már megint felborult az a rend. Vagy kiderült, hogy nem mindenki érti, akkor azt gondolom, hogy tudod mit, kezdjük előröl az egészet, akkor nézzük csak hogy hogyan lehet logikusan felépíteni ezt a nyelvtani szerkezetet, akkor témától független, téma félre, akkor emeljük ki a témából azt, hogy beszéljük azt meg. Vagy beszélgetünk, mondjuk, a bolygókról, és hoz egy gyerek egy anyagot, nem lehet neki azt mondani, hogy ne haragudj, nagyon izgalmas, de most nekünk nem ez következik a tanmenetünkben. Nem lehet azt mondani, azt mondom, hogy gyere, mond el, és a többiek, figyeljetek, és írjatok kérdéseket. Elhangzik a beszámoló, nyílván akkor a kérdéseket, amiket feladtam,

feladatot, azt számon kell kérni. Lehet, hogy egy egész óra elmegy vele. Vagy azt mondják, hogy olyan fáradtak vagyunk, tessék már minket békén hagyni, játszunk már egy kicsit. Vannak helyzetek, esetek, napok, amikor az ember tudja, hogy ez tényleg igaz, meg esetleg látszik rajtuk, azt mondom, jó, játszunk, témát vesszük elő, de tényleg csak játszunk. De azt nem tudom megcsinálni, amit elterveztem. Én ezer ilyet tudok mondani, amitől mindig felborul valami. (Sára)

Év elején mindig megtervezem, hogy mit tanítok, milyen szókincs, milyen nyelvtan. A szókincs sorrendje változik. Tehát az attól függ. Osztálytól, mindentől függ, környezettől. Nem ragaszkodom hozzá. Tehát annyira nem, én inkább ilyen rugalmas vagyok.[...] Például, amikor legelőször írtuk a család témakört, akkor ilyen, hogy féltestvér meg a keresztanya, meg ilyesmi, meg hogy meghalt, ilyen szó még akkor nem is került elő. Csak amikor mondtam, hogy na, akkor mindenki beszéljen a családjáról, akkor kezdtek. Akkor visszatértünk. Már a múltkor kérdezték, hogy hogy van a vőlegény? Úgyhogy engem nem zavar, hogy meddig tolódik ki egy témakörnek a használata. A testrészeket is lehetne szétcincálni, hogy a belső szerv ez, emez-amaz. Érdekli is őket, de azért muszáj beiktatni egy stoppot, mert elég nekik ennyi egyelőre. Úgyhogy nem szoktam előre lezárni, hogy mennyit tervezek. Amennyi és ameddig. Folyamatosan elől vannak a szavak, folyamatosan használjuk, nem zárjuk le soha. Úgyhogy ezért lehet húzni bármeddig. (Dóra)

10. Planning is guided by specific mental and written lesson plans

a) Mental plans

...Néha lelkiismeret-furdalásom van, mert én nem írok óravázlatot. Egy matek óránál sem írok le feladatokat. Meg így angol órán sem. Beszéltük, hogy megtervezem, de nem írom le. Én úgy érzem, hogy ennek ellenére nagyon megy a szekér, a gyerekek velem együtt mennek. Tehát emiatt azt gondolom, hogy nem bánom, hogy nem írom le. Mások szeretik, ha biztosan le van írva, én nem szoktam. Megtervezem a fejemben, és nekem az úgy elég.

Van-e olyan, amit a fejedben részletesebben dolgozol ki, jobban elgondolkodsz rajta, több időt töltesz vele? Apróbb részletekig szereted látni, hogy mi lesz? És van-e olyan, amit csak úgy elgondolsz nagyjából, és egy perces gondolkodás után úgy érzed, hogy ez majd megy úgy, ahogy megy?

Van. A bonyolultabb, hosszabb feladatokat szoktam inkább úgy, hogy átgondolom. Mondjuk egy ilyen igaz-hamis állításost is, gondolkodok azért előre. De a bonyolultabbakat átgondolom, ahol látom, hogy a gyereknek is sokkal nehezebb, többet kell gondolkodni. Ott azért kell átgondolnom, hogy miben tudok még segíteni, mivel tudom még a gyereket rávezetni, hogy ne ijedjen meg a feladattól. Aztán az ilyen rutin, tehát egy-két rutinfeladatnál már nem gondolkodok annyit. Meg ami a gyerekeknek

ismerős, annál már nem kell annyit. Ha annyit mondok, hogy bingó, már tudják, hogy mi az. Úgyhogy ott már nem kell annyit. Már könnyebben megy. (Dóra)

Mitől van olyan érzésed, hogy nyugodt vagyok afelől amit csináltam?

[...] Attól, ha van egy jó szerkezete az órának, kezdete, közepe és vége, tehát egyfajta lekerekítettsége, [...] ha menet közben tudok úgy kihagyni dolgokat vagy áttenni egy másik órára, hogy attól még az egészet le tudjam kerekíteni és a következő órának alapot tudjak adni. Ezek azok a bizonyos kis alternatívák amik nem mennek tudatosan végbe a fejemben, mindenestre ott van néhány feladat és szöveg a fejemben, amelyek ebben a játékban a segítségemre vannak. (Zsófi)

b) 'Principles' that guide mental planning

... fontos dolog, hogy mivel a gyerekek más órákon nem igen tanulnak kooperatív tanulási módszereket, tehát, hogy mindenképpen legyen olyan csoportfeladat vagy pármunka, hogy kelljen kooperálni a másikkal. Úgyhogy biztos, hogy minden órán van olyan, amikor kooperálni kell a másikkal. Ez fontos. Teljesen mindegy, hogy milyen az óra, akkor is van olyan. Én ezt nagyon fontosnak tartom más szempontból, nem pusztán nyelvtanulási stratégia szempontjából, hanem egyáltalán ez kommunikációs szempontból fontos. Tudjuk, hogy a magyar oktatásban ez nem nagyon van meg. (Juli)

...Mindig arra törekszem, hogy maximálisan kihasználjuk az időt. Ez persze kérdés, hogy kívülről hogy látszik, mint látszik. Maximális kihasználtság nekem azt jelenti, hogy egy-egy feladat lehetőleg jó összefogott legyen, összetett legyen, megmozgasson mindenféle dolgokat a gyerekekben. Ha lehet, úgy maradjon meg, hogy sokféleképpen, de ugyanazt vettük át, ha a gyerek haza megy, akkor mindenképpen legyen benne egy olyan, hogy egy bizonyos dologban jártasabb vagyok, vagy többet tudok, mint amikor beültem. [...] Én abban hiszek, lévén, hogy kisgyerekek, minél kisebbek, nyílván nem lehet ezt egy nagyobb, magasabb életkorú csoportra vonatkoztatni, hogy iszonyú sokat gyakoroltatni bizonyos dolgokat, mindent az órán. A megerőltető és elvont, hosszú és sok házi feladat helyett ugyanezt itt csinálni meg a legkülönbözőbb verzióban, formákban, játékosan vagy nem játékosan, komolyan, vagy kevésbé komolyabb formában a gyerekekkel az órán. Tehát én abban hiszek, hogy a gyerekekkel itt az órán megtanultatni azt, amit meg kell tanultatni, és begyakoroltatni azt, amit be kell gyakoroltatni. Tény, és tudom is, hogy ez egy hosszabb dolog, több időt vesz igénybe, de azt gondolom, hogy ez így jó. (Sára)

Fontos még az is nekem, hogy legalább kéthetente legyen egy dal, amit meghallgatunk, ezt ők kérik, amikor lazítás legyen. Mi fontos még? Az is fontos, hogy legyen mindig valamilyen lazításelem az órában. Egy kis labda. Nem mindig, ez túlzás. De hatodik órában tuti. A hatodik órában van egy kis labdázás, ez biztos. Csak a szavakat gyakoroljuk vele, vagy felállnak, mégsem ülnek. Tehát más közeg legyen, minthogy ülünk és dolgozunk. Felállítom őket, labdázunk, mondjuk a szavakat. Gyűjtsünk szavakat egy témával kapcsolatban, pl. a labdával. (Anna)

...olyan dolgokkal foglalkozzunk az órán, ami tulajdonképpen csak egy idegen nyelven hangzik el, de bármikor egy teljesen normális, vagy hétköznapi, vagy érdekes téma, ami nem egy nyelvoktatás céljából kiragadott dolog, hanem egy olyan feladat legyen, amit akár egy biológia órán, földrajz órán lehessen hallani. Olyan feladatokat csináljunk, amit bármely más órán meg lehetne csinálni, egyetlen különbséggel, hogy itt angolul hangzik el. Ezt nagyon fontosnak tartom, és erre próbálok koncentrálni. [...] ... mert ez egy borzasztó jó érzés, hogy úgy érzik, hogy egy normális, jó témáról tudok beszélgetni, méghozzá angolul. [...] ...formákról tanultunk, igazából nem egy nagy dolog, de valamelyest mégis eléggé összetett a dolog. Lehet figyelni és rajzolni mások véleményét ezzel kapcsolatban, lehet ufókat készíteni, és közben lehet egy csomó mindent angolul elmondani a színektől, a mennyiségtől a testrészeken át a formákig, és gyerekekben ez egy borzasztó jó érzés, hogy végül is a feladat összetett volt. A feladat nem volt rossz, élveztük, valamit létrehoztunk, és közben angolul csináltuk meg. (Sára)

c) Short written plans

... a terv tulajdonképpen egy vázlat, ami tényleg nagyon sokszor, akár egy ilyen *post-it* címke felragasztása, vagy ilyen kis cetlikkel szoktam járni, ami a zsebemben van, és a gyerekek is tudják, hogy oda felírok mindent, hogy most mit adtam fel házinak, és miben egyeztünk meg, mikorra kérem azt a fogalmazás-beadást, vagy levélbeadást, vagy bármit. Inkább ilyen gyakorlati teendő. Sokszor egy cím van, három alcím, és két kis gondolatjel, akkor arra, ha ránézek, eszembe jut mindaz, amit vele kapcsolatban végiggondoltam. Tehát ez inkább a memóriámnak kapaszkodó, hogy elmondjam. (Edit)

...mindenképpen van egy kis papírom, egy A/5-ös nagyság, egy írólap. Annyi akkor már elég. Persze a másik az, hogy általában úgy fejezem be az előző tanítási napot, hogy akkor ezek a dolgok már készen vannak az asztalomon. Tehát kijövök az óráról, holnapra ide mindenképpen akarok egy írásbeli feladatot, hogyha van kéznél lefénymásolom, hozzátűzöm az óratervemhez, még ha lehet, akkor a feladatokat még sorrendben is. Vagy pontosan azt, hogy tankönyv 26. oldal 4. feladattal kezdünk, mert hogy ezzel akarom. Általában azért mindig van egy-két ilyen bemelegítő feladat, vagy egy-két informális kérdés. Ezeket mindenképpen leírom magamnak, tehát hogy ez lesz az óra szigorú sorrendje. Ha ettől eltérek, az azért van, mert valami nem működik. Ez szerintem a mai

napig fontos, és minden órára fontos, különben az egész kiszámíthatatlanná válik, amit különben a gyerekek borzasztóan utálnak. Azt, hogy a tanár megkérdezi, hogy mivel is foglalkoztunk a múlt órán, ennél nagyobb tanári hibát keveset tudok elképzelni. Ezt nem. Ez a tanári tekintély egyik forrása, hogy azt mondom, hogy ha jól emlékszem, azzal fejeztük be a múltkor, hogy..., és akkor idézem az utolsó mondatát az órának. Angolból mondjuk ez nehéz, de pl. történelemből megint valami alapfokú dolog. Én tudjam, hogy hol tartok, és nem a gyerektől kérdezem meg, hogy hol tartok. Ezért kell a tervezés. Amikor én kijövök az óráról, mindig van 2 perce az embernek, hogy legalább rögzítse gyorsan, ha kezd feledékeny lenni, hogy itt hagytam abba. (Lívia)

d) Detailed written plans

...írtam, hogy kreatívnak gondolom magam, de néha annyira kreatívak az ötleteim, hogy viszonylag nehezen megvalósíthatóak. Tehát, hogy sokféle, sokrétű odafigyelést igényel a gyerekektől, és akkor azt viszont pontosan meg kell tervezni. Tehát például van egy-egy olyan feladat, aminél végig kell gondolnom, hogy az egyik kispapírt mikor adom oda, a másikat mikor adom oda, ki kihez mikor szól, hogy ezt el is tudjam mondani a gyerekeknek. Mert meg van a fejemben, de már többször volt, hogy ha csak így nagyvonalakban terveztem, akkor az nem annyira jött össze, tehát teljesen kaotikussá vált úgy a feladat. Tehát ezért, ha egy kicsit furfangos feladatot találok ki, azt igen is meg kell terveznem részletesen, és le is kell írnom magamnak. (Anita)

...ha úgy érzem, hogy vannak olyan pontok, ahol jobban kell figyelni, akkor ott a feladatot részletesebben is leírom. Ilyenkor a másik oldalra szépen átnyilazok, és akkor leírom. Például egy prezentációnál. Ott fontos, hogy mik lesznek a példamondatok, pláne kisebbeknél, mi lesz az, ami a füzetbe kerül, mikor fog a füzetbe kerülni, hogy fogok én kérdezni, hogy fog ő kérdezni. Tehát annál fontos, és akkor utána, hogy mi kerül a füzetbe. Vagy ha például egy bonyolultabb csoportfeladatot adok, akkor is, hogy ez a csoport ezt fogja, a másik azt, a harmadik azt, megszámozom a gyerekeket, ki fog kivel cserélni, hogy megy, meg ezt le is rajzolom, meg ezt részletesebben. (Juli)

11. The framework of planning is supplied by a coursebook syllabus or by teachers' mental syllabus

a) Coursebook syllabus

Hát én mindenre a tankönyvet használom. Egyszerűen, hogy a nyelvoktatás ilyen iskolai illetve szervezett keretek között van, nem lehet nem tankönyvet használni. A szülő úgy

tudja ellenőrizni a gyereket, és a gyerek is saját magát, és nekem is egyszerűbb. Tehát én a tankönyvre építek. És akkor persze, tankönyve válogatja, olyan, hogy nekem is megfelel, a gyereknek is megfelel, mindennek megfelel, olyan nincs. Van olyan tankönyv, ami kevésbé kommunikatív, akkor segítek rajta, van olyan tankönyv, amiben csak összefüggő *reading* van, akkor segítek rajta. Mert a tankönyv, az nem csak az én választásom, hanem a munkaközösség választása. Tehát több tankönyv van, és akkor ott meg kell egyezni, ha mondjuk egy évfolyamnál elfogadják az én preferenciámat, akkor el kell fogadnom a másiknál az övékét. [...] ...én mindig szeretek haladni a tankönyvvel, merthogy az követhető mindenkinek, és mivel nyelviskolákban is ott van a tematikus tanterv, ott is azt várják, hogy úgy haladjon az ember. Az iskolákban pedig, mivel tantárgyi keretekbe illeszkedik a nyelv is, ott is úgy kell haladni. Tehát én nagyon ritkán szoktam változtatni. Van úgy, mikor nagyon úgy érzem, hogy valami nem stimmel, tehát előre kellene hozni egy következőt, és akkor ezt hátravinni, mert ez nem zavarja a másikat. De azért egy tankönyvszerző, ha megír egy tankönyvet, akkor átgondolja, és azok egymásra épülnek. Most nem is emlékszem vissza, hogy mikor volt az, amikor ilyet csináltam, tudom, hogy egyszer-kétszer előfordult, hogy változtattam, de nagyon ritkán ebből a tizenakárhány tankönyvcsaládból, amit tanítottam. (Juli)

Említetted hogy témákat vesztek, hogy természet vagy történelem. Ezeket te találod ki, vagy tankönyv szerint választod?

Megpróbálok mindig úgy menni, hogy egy tankönyvünk van. Természetes, hogy minden osztályban van egy könyv. Ha most van egy könyv, akkor az a legkevesebb, hogy az ember a könyv szerint halad. Vagyis, hogy minden könyv úgy épül fel, hogy különböző *unitok*ra, egységekre. A különböző egységeken azért a legtöbb egységnek van egy nagy általános címe vagy témája, tematikája, vagy legalábbis azt kell mondanom, hogy olyan könyveket választok, ahol ez így van. Merthogy akkor vagyok én jó helyzetben, általában a könyvet tekintem alapnak, abból indulok ki, az nekem ad egy témát, és én abba a témába a könyvön kívül onnan veszek, és azt teszek bele, amit akarok, de bent maradok a témakörben. Tehát, hogy azon belül hogy dolgozom még azt fel, teljesen rajtam múlik, hogy mit találok ki, vagy innen-onnan egy kicsi anyagot gyűjtök, de maradok a témánál, mert azért a könyv nem egy eldobandó, elvetendő dolog, de nem csak az van. Elég sok mindent használok, ami nem könyv, vagy nem a könyv alapján, de a témához ragaszkodom, de hát nagyon sokfelé lehet elmenni egy témában. (Sára)

b) Mental syllabus

Mert a könyvet nem mindig használjuk, erről az előbb már beszéltem, ugye, amikor én más anyagokból tanítottam az előző években, akkor a tankönyvet nem használjuk. [...] Nyilván a tanulásnak a legelején akkor használja az ember a tankönyvet, akkor épít a tankönyvre. Azután mikor már egy kicsit szabadabb, valamennyit tudnak, és érdekesebb anyagokat is be lehet hozni, akkor szerintem kevésbé. Most a 12-ben kb. december óta azért építünk a tankönyvre, mert mint mondtam, ez a nyelvvizsga és az érettségire való felkészülés, ott már valószínű nem lesz időnk arra, hogy izgalmasabb irodalom meg film...

ilyesmikkel hosszabban foglalkozzunk. [...] ...a nyelvtan esetében szoktam a könyvre építeni, de főleg inkább gyakorlókönyvre. Igyekszem, hogy mindenkinek meg legyen ugyanaz a gyakorlókönyv. Egyébként viszont azt hiszem, hogy az éves tervezésnél a tankönyv, az csak egy része a tervezésnek. Ha van egy tankönyvük, azt nem tartom elég motiválónak. Azt hiszem, hogy a világ legjobb könyve esetén sem biztos minden. Tehát elképzelhetetlen számomra, hogy egy könyv vagy könyvsorozat minden csoportnak, minden diáknak megfelelő legyen. Ezért minden alkalommal igyekszem más és más, ha tetszik, irodalmi anyagokat, de nem az irodalom miatt, hanem ilyen könnyített olvasmányokat, vagy érdekesebb cikkeket, olyan dolgokat, amelyek jobban érdeklik a diákokat, és azt igyekszem úgy megválogatni, hogy abból is tudjunk dolgozni. Az az igazság, hogy azt sem tartom viszont jónak, hogy minden alaklommal, vagy legalább is 2-3 óra után más és más fénymásolt anyagokat megkapnak a diákok, vagy adunk a diákok kezébe. Velem is előfordult ilyen, de ezt sem tartom jónak. A legjobbnak azt tartom, ha egy tankönyvet könnyített olvasmányokkal lehet... és filmmel tudok variálni. Ez nem azt jelenti, hogy minden órán más van, hanem 2-3-4 hétig veszünk valamit, utána lehet, hogy visszatérünk a tankönyvhöz. Utána elhatározzuk, hogy egy filmet dolgozunk fel, és akkor 2-3 héten keresztül azon a filmen dolgozunk. (Zsuzsa)

A mi osztályunk a *Chatterbox 1*-ből tanul. És majd most be fog jönni a második rész, de abból csak a feléig, vagy csak az első pár *unit*ot nézzük. Én nagyon nem szeretem ezt a könyvet. Nem az ő szintjük. Azt gondolom, hogy szókincsileg sokkal több elvárható tőlük, nyelvtanilag is, nincs is sok nyelvtani gyakorló feladatsor, nagyon kevés, ill. nekem a felépítése sem tetszik. Tehát a színeket a 12. *unit*ban tanítja, a számokat 1-től 12-ig megtanítja, de csak később, az már, azt hiszem, csak a harmadik könyv. Tehát annyira távol van, hogy én nem érzem, hogy ez annyira nehéz lenne. Az országokat is, azt is a könyv a negyedik vagy a harmadik kötetben tanítja. Szerintem sokkal hamarabb is lehet. Élvezik azt, hogy Japánból származom, és innen. Ezzel játszottunk nagyon sokat. Szoktunk olyat is csinálni, hogy én mondom, ki hogy néz ki, nagyon torz figurákat, hogy öt keze van, négy lába, és ők rajzolnak. És akkor szoktunk, hogy kínai, vietnami, vagy pedig néger. Tehát ilyesmiket is szoktunk. Nekem ez se tetszik, hogy ez is későn van. Akkor a testrészek később szerepelnek, pedig az is nagyon jó. Ez a 'head and shoulders', ezzel is olyan jó. Tehát ezt is nagyon élvezik. Nem nagyon építek a könyvre. Tehát ugrálok a témakörben. [...] Hál' Istennek, a mi iskolánk olyan, hogy hagynak dolgozni, az a lényeg nálunk, hogy év végére, meg félévre, meg háromnegyedévre meglegyen az a tudás a gyerekekben. Onnantól kezdve mindenki úgy dolgozik, ahogy akar. [...] Ahhoz túl lusta vagyok, hogy tanmenetet írjak. Van a *Chatterbox*-hoz egy tanmenet, az egy kész tanmenet. Mivel kell tanmenetet írni, ezért azt fénymásoljuk. [...] Már többször elhatároztam, hogy írok saját magamnak egy tanmenetet nyáron, csak aztán mindig változtatok én magam is. Tehát most is változtattam sorrendet közben.

Minek alapján döntöd el, hogy milyen sorrendben haladtok?

Érdeklődés, vagy hogy jön be, vagy a gyerekek hogyan kérdeznek bele. Mit kérdeznek, mi érdekli éppen őket. Van, amikor van egy kép, és rögtön ők mondják, hogy ez egy család. És akkor, ha már itt vagyunk, ők nekivágtak, akkor mondom, kezdjünk bele. Tehát rugalmasan. Az a lényeg nekem, hogy megtanulják. (Dóra)

If you think that you will have time for a short interview on the topic, please give your name and phone number/e-mail address.

Name:
Phone number/e-mail:

Thank you very much!