

## Enhancing Language Acquisition: A Case Study of TESL Lesson Plans in an International School

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### ABSTRACT

The fourth goal in Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) spells out Quality Education that demands teachers across all disciplines to teach effectively. The available literature suggests that teaching effectiveness starts from good planning, which should be evident in the documentation of lesson plans. However, when it comes to English teachers, their demanding roles that are attributed to the value-laden content, the grading of essays, the performance pressure of high-stake testing, and the requirement of culturally appropriate pedagogies (Loh & Liew, 2016) have caused the practice of writing lesson plans to be challenged, causing the effectiveness of the teaching to be jeopardised. English teachers in international schools are not exempted from facing this problem, yet little studies have been done on the teachers in this context. To achieve the purpose, this research adopts a case study design using document analysis and semi-structured interview to collect the data. The data were analysed quantitatively using a lesson plan rubric by Student Teacher Assessment Instrument (STAI) and thematic analysis, respectively. The study unveils that the teachers had a moderate level of lesson plan, suggesting a need for further support in lesson planning. The findings of this study will be helpful for English. Teachers understand the importance of writing an effective lesson plan as it has a high possibility of enhancing teaching effectiveness.

**Contribution/Originality:** This study is significant since it provides an understanding of the practice in an international school - a setting that is scarcely studied. It also helps

the management committee of a school to understand and take necessary actions to upskill their teachers on lesson planning as it is evident to result in an effective teaching.

## 1. Introduction

In teaching, teachers externalise their planning through a lesson plan. Lesson plan holds an important position in teaching, which can be seen through the definitions provided by many scholars. For instance, [Spratt, Pulverness and Williams \(2005\)](#) described lesson plan as a series of course plans that provides direction for a teacher of what to be taught using certain materials and how to teach them. This means that, without a lesson plan, a teacher will not have a clear direction, hence students' learning will be jeopardised. A more profound definition can be seen from [Mensalvas' \(2013\)](#) who described lesson plan as the 'bible' for teaching and learning process (p.3). This shows how much weight lesson plan has in the act of teaching that it is compared to the sacred book of bible. Due to the significant role of lesson plan in teaching, the practice of writing a lesson plan becomes a compulsory practice in most schools worldwide, as it serves as concrete evidence showing what the teacher plans prior to the actual teaching. When the planning is deemed 'right', then teaching is expected to be done effectively. Quoting [Alanazi \(2019\)](#), '*effective teaching is a multifaceted process which needs meticulous planning, preparation and interest*' (p. 166). This suggests that, to achieve effective teaching, a teacher needs to pay attention to their lesson plans. This, however, could be easier said than done.

[Mukundan and Khandehroo \(2010\)](#) reported that English teachers in public schools displayed a high level of burnout, depersonalizations and reduced personal accomplishments due to the overwhelming tasks. A more recent study done by [Loh and Liew \(2016\)](#) also revealed that English teachers experienced emotional burdens and tensions which are largely attributed to the value-laden content, the grading of essays, the performance pressure of high-stake testing, and the requirement of culturally appropriate pedagogies. This scenario of burnout has caused teachers' priority to be obscure that includes the priority of planning their lessons. As a result, lesson planning becomes less and less meaningful to the point that it has been neglected by some teachers.

Another challenge that the teachers face in preparing the lesson plan is that teachers felt the "curriculum void", saying that they did not receive sufficient guidance on what and how to teach ([Kauffman, 2005, p. 1](#)). New teachers, especially, did not have access to curriculum materials and in some cases, even though the materials were present, they were not helpful as they did not address the standards that the students were expected to meet. Consequently, they often scramble to gather materials and prepare the lessons for the next day, causing the teachers to feel like their lessons are ineffective and unprepared. The findings of this study therefore accentuate the needs for the teachers to be guided on how to prepare good lesson plans. However, in order to do that, it is important to investigate the level of their lesson planning skills to provide empirical background to a proper guide to lesson plan preparation among teachers.

The present study, therefore, intends to fill in the mentioned gaps by exploring the phenomena in one specific setting - an international school. This study aims to investigate the level of lesson planning skills and teaching effectiveness of the English teachers in one international school, using the school's five-level KPI, namely Unsatisfactory, Satisfactory, Good, Very Good and Excellent to interpret the score. The research objective of this study is thus to investigate the level of lesson planning skills of the English teachers in an international school setting.

## 2. Literature Review

This study is interested in investigating the level of lesson planning skills amongst the English teachers in an international school. Lesson plan is a term that is not new to teachers. In fact, [Coppola et al. \(2004\)](#) establishes that lesson plan is the main foundation of educational structure, and the core of education. This literature is to look into definitions of lesson plan, criteria of a good lesson plan, teachers' attitude towards lesson plan, and lesson plan for English subjects, to establish a ground on why the lesson plan is of the researcher's interest in the present study.

In the realm of education, historical perspectives on lesson planning have evolved over time. [Bossing's \(1961\)](#) definition characterizes a lesson plan as a "statement of achievement" that emerges from the activities undertaken during teaching, highlighting the traditional emphasis on knowledge as the ultimate goal of the teaching process. [Binning and Binning \(1982\)](#) extend this concept by framing lesson planning as a comprehensive process encompassing the determination of learning objectives, the selection and sequencing of subject matter, as well as the methods and procedures employed. [Mensalvas \(2013\)](#) goes further by likening the lesson plan to a 'bible' and a 'blueprint' for teaching and learning, stressing its sacred and indispensable nature, with a warning that teaching without one could potentially undermine the learning process. Despite variations in these definitions, a common thread emerges – the lesson plan serves as an instructor's guide to effectively deliver a lesson and attain specific learning objectives. This study adopts [Milkova's \(2012\)](#) definition, equating a lesson plan to a road map, emphasizing not only what students need to learn but also how this will be accomplished during class time.

An effective lesson plan is advised to consider the criteria outlined in an instrument called Student Teacher Assessment Instrument (STAI), developed by the Mississippi Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (MACTE), which is illustrated in [Table 1](#).

Table 1: Criteria of a lesson plan

Criteria
1. Specifies or selects learner objectives for lessons.
2. Specifies or selects teaching procedures for lessons.
3. Specifies or selects content materials and media for lessons
4. Specifies or selects materials and procedures for assessing learner progress.
5. Uses information about students to plan and organise instruction to accommodate differences in developmental and individual needs.
6. Uses knowledge of students' needs, interests, and experiences.
7. Plans lessons that integrate knowledge from several subject areas.
8. Incorporates multiculturalism and diversity in lessons

The varied set of criteria defining an effective lesson plan has resulted in different formats of lesson plans being documented. The decision on which format to use is most commonly dependent on the institution they are bonded with. Similarly, teachers' attitude towards lesson plans varies. [Neisari and Heidari \(2014\)](#), [Hannon \(2000\)](#) and [Amininik \(2000\)](#) found that the teachers have positive attitude towards lesson plan. An interesting general finding of the research is that more experienced teachers tend to not usually use lesson planning or need to preview the lesson prior to entering the class ([Moradan & Pourasadollah, 2014](#)). On the contrary, novice teachers tend to rely heavily on the lesson plan as they admit that it gives them a strong sense of confidence in class. Hence, it can be

concluded that teachers' attitude towards lesson plan is assorted, and there is no single association of why some teachers are more positive or negative towards the idea of lesson plan. Therefore, this present study attempts to find out what is sufficient to write for a lesson plan without sacrificing pedagogical effectiveness, hoping that institutions could practise the ideal way of documenting lesson plans. Because this study specifically studies English teachers, the next point of discussion looks at lesson plans for English teachers.

Researchers agree that English is a contested subject domain in which it is subject to constant policy changes (Enow & Goodwyn, 2018). Therefore, teaching English requires deeper insights into the lesson planning, even by the most experienced teachers so that its evolving demands are met (Enow & Goodwyn, 2018; Gibbons, 2017). Rahmawati, Saefullah and Sumarta (2021) studied the pre-serviced EFL teachers in Indonesia. They found that designing and implementing lesson plans are perceived as a decision-making, non-negotiable and challenging process among EFL teachers. Among the biggest challenges reported by the teachers is the difficulty in managing lesson timing due to the unpredictable movement during the teaching process as a result of having to attend to various questions from the students. The findings of this study are in harmony with previous findings by Alanazi (2019) and Ansyari (2018) who also reported the challenges and obstacles faced by the EFL teachers in designing the lesson plans. At the same time, due to the complexities of the English subject, it is admitted that planning the lesson becomes more challenging as it mostly involves 'tacit', non-observable and non-tangible dimensions (Enow & Goodwyn, 2018). Due to that fact, they proposed a model of planning reflecting different stages in expertise development: 1) external reflective planning, 2) visible practical planning, and 3) internal reflective planning; corresponding to the milestone stages, namely Novice, Competent and Expert. The 'invisibility' of planning in the context of English subjects is also further supported by the findings by Emiliasari (2019) who concluded from her study that evaluation and assessment of attitude became the problem in preparing a lesson plan, as this element is mostly 'invisible'. In short, while it is understandable that making the planning visible on the lesson plans is important, the tacit components in English make some elements difficult to be externalised.

Despite much literature presented on lesson planning among English teachers, Enow and Goodwyn (2018) claimed that there is still little research about how English teachers describe their planning processes. The researcher agrees to their claim, emphasising that it is especially scarce among English teachers in an international school setting. Moreover, most of the research done on lesson planning agree that an effective lesson plan leads to effective teaching (Cuñado & Abocejo, 2019; Emiliasari, 2019).

### 3. Methodology

The research utilises a qualitative approach, specifically using a case study design. Therefore, the results obtained are not to be generalised, yet it is intended to give a more in-depth understanding of the practice in the chosen setting. Case study is defined as 'scholarly inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used' (Yin, 1994, p.33). Education industry in Malaysia is dominated by the national schools, little attention is given to the international schools, hence the researcher intends to understand the practice in this context through a case study design where it is contextually driven Yin (1994). The population of this study was primary English teachers in an international school in Setia Alam, which makes up a total of six teachers (n=6). Generally, English is a crucial subject

in international school settings due to the fact that English is not just a subject in a classroom, but it becomes the language of instruction across all subjects and a means of interaction outside the classroom. Hence, it is important for the English teachers to teach effectively. This case study employed purposive sampling technique, particularly homogeneous sampling, focusing only on two primary English teachers in one international school. The criteria for the population include both being the primary English teachers, having equivalent education qualification, and having received some amount of training on lesson plan and effective teaching through professional development programs.

There are two instruments for the data collection. The first instrument was a rubric adopted and adapted from Student Teacher Assessment Instrument (STAI) (MACTE, n.d.). There are 5 lesson plans for each participant (n2 = 10 lesson plans). The second was a semi-structured interview, conducted separately on/to each participant.

#### 4. Result

The findings of the research are presented in relation to the methods of data collection. The first is the Document Analysis Findings. There were five lesson plans from each participant that were assessed and then rated by the two raters (the researcher and an inter-rater) using the lesson plan rubric from STAI (MACTE, n.d.). This quantitative document analysis has revealed the final score achieved which was based on the average score obtained from the two raters. The scores were then interpreted based on the five-level school's KPI (Excellent= 90%- 100%, Very Good= 80%-89%, Good= 70%-79%, Satisfactory= 60%-69%, Unsatisfactory= less than 60%). Table 2 presents the scores obtained by the participants on their level of lesson planning skills.

Table 2: Level of Lesson Plan of the English Teachers

		Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lesson 5
Teacher A	Score	64%	64%	71%	75%	56%
	Level	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good	Good	Unsatisfactory
Teacher B	Score	71%	74%	74%	78%	72%
	Level	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good

Based on Table 2, the teachers scored between 56% and 78%, ranging between Unsatisfactory and Good level. The highest score was recorded by Teacher B in Lesson 4 with a score of 78%, which was at a good level. On the other hand, the lowest score was obtained by Teacher A in Lesson 5, with the score of 56%, which falls under the Unsatisfactory level. Teacher B showed a steady achievement across all lesson plans in that week. Meanwhile, Teacher A's scores were rather inconsistent, with the level of unsatisfactory, satisfactory and good within the one week of evaluation. None of the teachers exceeded the Good level during the study.

##### 4.1. Perception of the Lesson Plan

The first theme extracted from the interview is the participants' perception of lesson plans. The findings are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Perception of the Lesson Plan

Perception of the lesson plan			
Lesson importance	plan's	Teaching experience	Topics familiarity
<i>Lesson plan is essential to teaching (P1, L15)</i>		<i>For new teachers, definitely...</i>	<i>If I'm new to that particular topic, then not doing a lesson plan would be challenging for me. If I'm familiar with the topic,...then not having a lesson plan, I can just deliver a good lesson anyway. (P1, 37-41)</i>
<i>...basically it's a plan (P1, L33)</i>		<i>...For teachers who are probably like 10 to 20 years down the road,... they are already familiar with it. (P1, L30-32)</i>	<i>...there are some days...this (lesson plan) is wasting my time. (P1, L50-51)</i>
<i>...it's where you plan your lesson...(P2, L18)</i>		<i>Without a lesson plan, ...I can still teach effectively...(P1, L19)</i>	
<i>When I have...well-thought of lesson plan, ...the whole lesson would be more interesting. (P1, L34-36)</i>			
<i>...if you're doing details, ...helpful for the teachers to do daily instead. (P1, L129)</i>			
<i>...it really really helps me...the lesson plan that I'm doing right now. (P2, L109-110)</i>			

The interview reveals that the teachers generally exhibit similar perceptions to lesson plans. The participants acknowledged the importance of the lesson plan by explicitly saying "Lesson plan is essential to teaching", "...it really really helps me...". They also had indirectly implied the importance of lesson plan through responses like "When I have...well-thought of lesson plan, ...the whole lesson would be more interesting.", showing the difference she feels in her lesson with and without the lesson plan. Both participants also perceived that the importance of lesson plans depletes as the teachers become more experienced. The third sub theme identified in their perceptions is topic familiarity. In general, the participants believed that they become less dependent on lesson plans when they are more familiar with the topic compared to when the topic is novel to them.

#### 4.2. Time Spent on Lesson Plan

The second theme elicited from the response is the time spent on the lesson plan. The findings can be seen in [Table 4](#).

Table 4: Time Spent on Lesson Plan

Time spent on lesson plan	
Shorter time	Longer time
<i>One lesson...one day...20 minutes...(P1, L65)</i>	<i>For a new topic...half a day or something. (P1, L69)</i>
<i>...one class...probably around half an hour, or one hour, 45 minutes...(P2, L65)</i>	<i>If I'm being realistic with the studying and everything, ...might take the whole day for me. (P1, L71-72)</i>
	<i>...it takes usually takes one day...(P2, L56)</i>

The participants' responses are categorised into two categories, one being shorter time and the other being longer time. For shorter time, the participants reported that for a one-day lesson, they spent around 20 minutes to 1 hour. On the other hand, there are, on some occasions, that the participants had to spend longer time, up to one whole day to finish the lesson plan due to other factors like topic familiarity, availability of resources and so on.

### 4.3. Important Elements of a Lesson Plan

The third theme is labelled as 'Important Elements of a Lesson Plan' whereby the participants were asked on which elements in the lesson plan they find most important. Table 5 demonstrates the findings.

Table 5: Important Elements of a Lesson Plan

Important elements of a lesson plan		
Lesson objective	Teaching Procedures	Assessment
<i>...lesson objective is important (P1, L90)</i>	<i>...introduction, body and ending, (P1, L93)</i>	<i>...and then homework (P1, L94)</i>
<i>...objective (P2, L95)</i>	<i>...the activities...individual or group...(P2, L94-96)</i>	<i>...more and less abled students...how you evaluate them. (P2, L96)</i>
<i>...whether they can achieve their learning objective (P2, L103)</i>		

Their responses varied, but they are grouped into the main elements of a lesson plan which are learning objectives, teaching procedures and assessment. Words like 'introduction, body and ending' as well as 'activities' are categorised as teaching procedures, even though they are not explicitly indicated in their response. Both participants also perceived 'homework' and 'how to evaluate' them as important parts to be included in a lesson plan, which the researcher categorised as 'assessment'.

## 5. Discussion

Based on the school's five levels of performance in KPI metric (unsatisfactory, satisfactory, good, very good, excellent), the highest level achieved by the participants for their lesson plan level was good, showing that it is at a moderate level (Table 1). The levels of lesson plan of the two participants are discussed based on these three subtopics: inadequate skills in writing a lesson plan, the complexity of the English subject and teacher's attitude towards lesson plans.

### 5.1. Inadequate Skills in Writing a Lesson Plan

One of the pertinent reasons that could contribute to the low level of lesson planning skills among these English teachers is due to the lack of skills in writing a good lesson plan. Even though planning sounds like a basic thing for everyone, the skills of writing a good lesson plan should not be undermined since it informs a lot about the teacher's understanding of the content, approach, strategies and other aspects of teaching. As reported in Sudirman's (2017) in his action research, the teachers in the study were struggling to write an effective lesson plan; however, they showed an increased competence after continuous guidance. His study shows that it is common for teachers around the world to find writing a lesson plan challenging. To add, the participants in this study do not have a degree in

Education, causing them to receive little exposure to these skills. This has been clearly expressed by Teacher B in the following excerpt:

Excerpt 1:

*"...I don't have a teaching background...this is my first job (P2, L48)"*  
(Interview, Teacher B)

Even for someone with the education background, the skills of writing a lesson plan needs continuous revision due to pedagogical change. Additionally, [Que and Lewier's \(2020\)](#) found that, despite the implementation of a new curriculum for several years, English teachers still demonstrate a need to improve in designing and implementing lesson plans. This shows that lesson planning skills need to always be revised since teaching is progressive and teachers need to respond to the change in syllabus, materials, resources, approaches and mode of teaching. In this case, teachers without the education background especially, might not be fully responsive to the changes due to their lack of exposure, causing their level of lesson planning skills to be only at a moderate level. [Que and Lewier's \(2020\)](#) therefore suggested that, in order for the English teachers to write effective lesson plans, they should have 'a clear understanding about the relationship between basic competencies, indicators, and learning activities' (p. 66). This criterion is reflected in the rubric from items (a) Specifies or selects learner objectives for lessons and (b.i). Specifies or selects teaching procedures for lessons. in which most teachers scored a high mark for these two items, ranging from 3 to 4. However, the participants appeared to score low marks for item (g) Plans a lesson that integrates knowledge from several subject areas, causing their overall score to be rather low. As seen in findings, both participants scored only 1 or 2 for item (g) in all their lesson plans, showing the absence of multidisciplinary approach in their planning. Unfortunately, past studies strongly suggest that the integration of multi-disciplines allows students to make connections between several subjects, giving them a more unified sense of content, which eventually enhances their problem solving and critical analysis skills ([Adeyemi, 2010](#); [Sarkim, Panuluh & Julie, 2018](#)). The findings from the present study, is in harmony with [Que and Lewier's \(2020\)](#) findings that reveals that designing learning activities that promote students' critical thinking is still a challenge for the English teachers. Similarly, in the present study, the teacher showed a struggle to foster the students' critical thinking in their lessons due to the inability to incorporate a multidisciplinary approach. Therefore, one of the reasons that resulted in the participants' low level of lesson planning skills is the inability to incorporate the multidisciplinary approach, which is reckoned to be one way of enhancing students' critical thinking skills - a fundamental skill for their survival in the 21st century.

When the participants were asked on the important elements of a lesson plan, they addressed the three key elements of a lesson plan which are: learning objectives, teaching procedures, and assessment. Bounded by Sociocultural theory, the theoretical framework of this study establishes that to design a good lesson plan, teachers should follow the Gagne's 9 events and some kind of formative assessment should be reflected in the lesson. All these elements are part of the criteria in the rubric used by the raters in evaluating the participants' lesson plan. Hence, when the participants mentioned learning objectives, teaching procedures, and assessment, these elements align with the framework that the study proposes, showing that the participants were aware of the criteria that make up a good lesson plan. However, they might have deficiencies in making those criteria evident in their planning. This also aligns with the findings in [Sari and Wahyudin \(2019\)](#) whereby some inadequacies were found in writing some indicators in the lesson plan including



writing time allocation, giving motivation in pre-activity, formulating learning objectives, using operational verbs and selecting learning material for students. Even though the teachers agreed that these elements are vital, the skills of making them evident in their lesson plans are still lacking. Due to the various challenges of writing a lesson plan, different teachers developed different attitudes towards lesson plans. The next section presents the teachers' attitude towards lesson plans.

## 5.2. The Complexity of English Subject

Due to the complexities of the English subject, it is admitted that planning the lesson mostly involves non-observable, non-tangible dimensions (Goodwyn, 2011). This is supported by Emiliasari (2019) who concluded from her study that evaluation and assessment of attitude became the problem in preparing a lesson plan, as this element is mostly 'invisible'. Hence, based on these explanations, the moderate level of lesson planning skills portrayed by the participants can be attributed to the complexity of the English subject, whereby many elements were hard to observe, causing a difficulty for the rater to give a score. This is evident from the raters' remarks in the rubrics, commenting 'hardly observable' when rating certain items (i.e. item h - incorporates multiculturalism and diversity in classrooms) (see Appendix I2). This implies that there is a need for the teachers to be equipped with the right skills to write a lesson plan, so that the criteria can be appropriately addressed.

Besides that, the researcher agrees that English is a contested subject due to the constant policy changes. Therefore, planning a lesson for English is always a challenge, even by the most experienced teachers, because they need to make sure that its evolving demands are met (Goodwyn, 2011; Gibbons, 2017). Despite having thorough planning, there will always be other factors influencing the success of the lesson and otherwise. This study confirms that teaching is not a predictable situation. As teachers, it is important to have some preparation, even though there is no guarantee that what we will experience will turn out to be exactly as we planned. Even though in general, planning precedes the implementation, yet some teachers acquire lesson planning skills later in their teaching career. Most importantly, teachers should understand the importance of the document and use that for their own benefit, rather than seeing it as an extra burden.

Thus, based on the findings and evidence from the past studies, the researcher believes, the lesson plan is an important document for teachers, especially beginner teachers, if they put the students first. It is by planning a lesson properly can a teacher visualise how will he or she conduct the lesson effectively, making use of the best resources, using the right teaching strategies, within the time allocated. Plus, past studies have drawn strong relationship between a well-designed lesson plan and an effective teaching (Rusznayak & Walton, 2011; Que & Lewier, 2020). If the teacher does not plan at all, it is not surprising to find that the lesson effectiveness might also be at a worrying level. Nonetheless, the researcher does not imply that the lesson plan should consist of every little detail to the extent that it takes up several pages; a concise one would do, consisting of elements suggested in Table 1. Hence, due to the challenges, it is only common that teachers' attitude towards lesson plans vary. This will therefore be discussed in the following section.

### 5.3. Teachers' Attitude towards Lesson Plans

Based on the participants' responses from the interview, their attitude towards the lesson plan was divided into two main categories: positive and negative. Generally, both participants had a positive attitude towards the lesson plan. This can be seen from the excerpts below:

Excerpt 2:

*"Lesson plan is essential to teaching. Generally, I would agree.. yeah definitely I would agree with that."* (P1, L15-16)

*"When I have Lesson plan well thought of Lesson plan then, somehow I can see that the activity I plan in the whole lesson would be more interesting I can put in thought into looking for videos but if I'm new to that particular topic, then not doing a Lesson plan would be challenging for me."* (P1,L34-38) (Interview, Teacher A)

Excerpt 3:

*"...having and preparing a lesson plan is a vital thing for me..."* (P2, L20-23)

*"I put everything into my lesson plan so I know what I want to teach the students and what are the important topics or aspects that they need to know, right, because if I don't put everything then I might miss out something..."* (P2,L33-36) (Interview, Teacher B)

Both participants agreed that a lesson plan is important through the choice of words like 'essential', 'vital', 'important' and claim that having a lesson plan helps to teach more effectively. For Teacher B, she perceived herself as incapable of carrying out a good lesson, while Teacher A thought she could still carry out a good lesson, without a lesson plan, given that the topic is something that she is familiar with. This shows that there still needs to be some kind of familiarity which might come from her previous planning of the same topics. Teacher A also acknowledged that teachers who are more experienced might not be that dependent on lesson plans, hence see it as less important than those of novel teachers. This has been addressed by the previous study by [Moradan and Poursadollah \(2014\)](#) who found that the more experienced teachers tend to have a negative attitude towards lesson planning, as they believe that they do not use it and they do not have to preview it before entering the class. Similarly, in the present study, Teacher A did agree that there are times where she felt that writing a lesson plan is a waste of time, especially when she is already familiar with the topic.

Excerpt 4

*"...There are some days like...this is wasting my time."* (P1, L5-51)  
(Interview, Teacher A)

Even though both participants in this study are still regarded as novice teachers based on their number of years teaching, topic familiarity can be associated with some amount of experience, which gives them confidence in carrying the lesson without having a lesson plan. Hence, when there is such a scenario, it is understandable why some teachers might hold a rather sceptical view towards the lesson plan. All in all, the researcher supposes that the moderate level of lesson planning skills displayed by the participants in this study

can be attributed to/by the lack of skills in writing a lesson plan, the complexity of English subject and the attitude towards lesson plans. Even though the literature suggests that effective lesson planning results in effective teaching, the findings from this study show that despite having a moderate level of lesson planning skills, teaching effectiveness of the participants is at a high level. The following subsection discusses teaching effectiveness among English teachers.

## **6. Implications and recommendations**

The implication from this study is that it provides information on the level of lesson planning skills of the English teachers in the international school and will help the school management to understand the needs of the teachers in their professional development. More training and guidance on lesson planning skills should be provided so that the teachers are equipped with better skills when designing their lesson plan which eventually contributes to their teaching effectiveness. As a result, students' learning outcomes can also be improved. This could also call for more research to be done on the teachers in the context since the findings cannot be generalised to the bigger population. As for the recommendations for Future Research is to acknowledge that lesson plan is an important component in teaching. However, it is acknowledged that different schools have different formats of writing a lesson plan. Therefore, the researcher suggests that future research might want to explore this phenomenon using multi-site case study design. A multi-site case study allows a focussed exploration of a phenomenon through different sites (Mills, Durepos & Wiebe, 2009). By using a few settings, a comparison can be made to see different ways lesson plan is written and whether it gives an impact to its effectiveness.

## **7. Conclusion**

In conclusion, using a case study design, this study investigates the levels of lesson planning skills among English teachers in an international school. The study reveals that the teachers had a moderate level of lesson planning skills, which suggests that further support is needed to upgrade their lesson planning skills. This study is significant since it provides an understanding of the practice in an international school - a setting that is scarcely studied. It also helps the management committee of a school to understand and take necessary actions to upskill their teachers on lesson planning as it is evident to result in an effective teaching. Other than that, English teachers would also benefit from this study by understanding what are required to be an effective teacher and how lesson plan should not be taken lightly. Finally, this study is hoped to help the policy makers reconsider the workload given to the teacher, so that their time can be fully utilized for planning a good lesson.

## **Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate**

The researchers used the research ethics provided by UiTM. All procedures performed in this study involving human participants were conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional research committee. Informed consent was obtained from all participants.

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## Conflict of Interest

The authors reported no conflicts of interest for this work and declare that there is no potential conflict of interest with respect to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

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