Planning teaching and planning action research: Two sides of the same coin?

Action research should not be confused with the ongoing work teachers do in **planning their teaching**. This is concerned with practical decisions about content, curriculum, the nature of the class with the objective of improving the day to day work in the class.

Action research is a **process of enquiry** with specific methodology; it involves formulating questions about your teaching experience and observing and analysing what you do – with the aim of doing things better.

Differences between planning your teaching and doing action research

Planning teaching or planning action research?

Questions asked when planning teaching units:	Questions asked when planning action research:
- What will the unit be about? - What is the general topic? - What is the theme of the lesson(s)? - How does the topic fit into the curriculum? - What will I have to consider concerning the learners' age and language level? - Which other factors may play a role? - What is the current mood in the class? Exam stress, end-of-term, relationships between students, general levels of interest...... - What will the learning aims be? - What competences will be reached? - How will I assess learning outcomes?	- What do I want to know? - What am I interested in finding out? - Why am I interested in this? - Is the question something that can be answered through action research tools? - Does the scope of the question fit with the possiblities that I have? Is it feasible? - Which action research tools will I use? - At which point will I employ which tools? - How will I know when I have found something out? - How will analyse and interpret the findings? - How will I share my findings? - Where will this lead me?

How can I plan a possible focus for future action research as I plan my lessons?

The teacher as a professional	Action research
"a *capacity for autonomous professional development through systematic self-study*" (Lawrence Stenhouse, 1975)	Action research is the study of a social situation with a view to improving the quality of action within it. (John Elliott 1981, as quoted in Altrichter/Posch 2007)
10 features of good lesson planning Hilbert, M. (2004). Was ist guter Unterricht. *Berlin: Cornelsen Scriptor*.	**10 features of action research** Posch, Peter. Einführung in die Aktionsforschung und Posch, Peter/ Zehetmeier, Stefan (2010): Aktionsforschung in der Erziehungswissenschaft https://www.researchgate.net/publication/290123200 _Aktionsforschung_in_der_Erziehungswissenschaft (Zugriff 10.12.2018)
1. Clear structure for a lesson 2. Large proportion of actual learning time 3. Classroom climate conducive to learning 4. Clear content 5. Meaningful communication 6. Variety of methods 7. Individual support 8. Intelligent practice 9. Transparent performance expectations 10. Prepared environment	1. Research through those involved 2. Questions that evolve from practice 3. Relationship between action and reflection 4. Long-term research and development cycles 5. Confrontation of different perspectives 6. Integration of individual research in a professional community 7. Ethical rules for collaboration 8. Publication of practitioner knowledge 9. Aspect of value of pedagogical action: actions as an expression of values 10. Aims of action research: realisation and development

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Teaching and learning processes at school: Project categories (PC)	Characteristic features of action research
Maier, U. (2014). *Lehr-Lernprozesse in der Schule: Praktikum*. UTB, Bad Heilbrunn: Julius Klinkhardt.	Posch, Peter. Einführung in die Aktionsforschung und Posch, Peter/ Zehetmeier, Stefan (2010): Aktionsforschung in der Erziehungswissenschaft https://www.researchgate.net/publication/290123200_Aktionsforschung_in_der_Erziehungswissenschaft (Zugriff 10.12.2018)
PC 1 Clarify curricular and subject requirements and formulate learning aims **PC 2** Pay attention to learning pre-requisites and level of knowledge acquisition **PC 3** Design of teaching and learning processes **PC 4** Organisational aspects of teaching and learning processes **PC5** Evaluation and reflection of teaching and learning processes	1. **Starting point/Research question** Hypothesis, Bases, Context 2. **Methods:** Information and data collection 3. **Results:** Securing results 4. **Discussion of results:** Evaluation and reflection of the results 5. **Outlook:** Increase in understanding and open questions