Universitas Kristen Duta Wacana
FAKULTAS KEPENDIDIKAN DAN HUMANIORA
Gedung Euodia Lantai 1
Jl. dr. Wahidin Sudirohusodo 5-25, Yogyakarta 55224, Indonesia
+62 274 563929 ext. 143 | fkhum@staff.ukdw.ac.id

SURAT TUGAS

No. 002/J.05/FKHUM/2021

Dekan Fakultas Kependidikan dan Humaniora Universitas Kristen Duta Wacana Yogyakarta, dengan ini memberi tugas kepada dosen Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Kristen Duta Wacana yang namanya tersebut pada kolom (3) Lampiran Surat Tugas ini untuk membuat Modul Mata Kuliah Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris yang tercantum pada kolom (4). Penugasan ini berlaku untuk semester Genap Tahun Akademik 2020/2021.

Demikian surat tugas ini dibuat, agar tugas dapat dilakukan dengan sebaik-baiknya dan dilaporkan kepada pemberi tugas setelah tugas tersebut dituntaskan.

Yogyakarta, 4 Februari 2021

Dekan FKHUM,

Dra. Mega Wati, M.Pd.

Tembusan disampaikan kepada Yth.:

1. Ketua Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris
2. Dosen Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris yang bersangkutan
3. Arsip

AP/sn 2021

Lampiran Surat Tugas Dekan Fakultas Kependidikan dan Humaniora
Universitas Kristen Duta Wacana
Nomor: 002/J.05/FKHUM/2021

Daftar Dosen Pembuat Modul Mata Kuliah Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris
Fakultas Kependidikan dan Humaniora
Semester Genap 2020/2021

No.	NIK	Nama Dosen (3)	Modul Mata Kuliah (4)
1.	994 E 266	Dra. Mega Wati, M.Pd.	Bahasa Inggris Teologi
			Psikologi Belajar dan Pembelajaran
2.	184 E 468	Lemmuela Alvita Kurniawati, S.Pd., M.Hum.	*Curriculum and Material Development*
			Technology for Language Learning
3.	064 E 321	Dr. Fransisca Endang L., S.Pd., M.Hum.	*Speaking for Academic Purposes*
			Teaching English for Academic Purposes
4.	164 E 421	Arida Susyetina, S.S., M.A.	*Creative Writing*
			Public Speaking
			Cross Cultural Understanding
5.	184 E 469	Adaninggar Septi Subekti, S.Pd., M.Sc.	*Intermediate Grammar*
			Academic Essay Writing
			Research Proposal Writing
			Data Analysis
6.	184 E 482	Anesti Budi Ermerawati, S.Pd., M.Hum.	*Classroom Management*
7.	034 E 310	Andreas Winardi, S.Pd., M.A.	*Comprehension of Long Talks*
			English for International Communication
			English for Business Communication
8.	174 E 444	Ignatius Tri Endarto, S.Pd., M.A.	Bahasa Inggris Terapan Sistem Informasi
			Intensive Reading (bersama Dra. Mega Wati, M.Pd.)

EVEN SEMESTER OF 2020/2021

Module of Curriculum and Material Development

Compiled by
Lemmuela Alvita Kurniawati, M.Hum.

PENDIDIKAN BAHASA INGGRIS
UNIVERSITAS KRISTEN DUTA WACANA
2021

MODULE OF CURRICULUM AND MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT

Even semester of 2020/2021

LEMMUELA ALVITA KURNIAWATI, M.HUM

This module is intended for Curriculum and Material Development course at the *Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris* in the 2nd semester of 2020/2021 academic year

PENDIDIKAN BAHASA INGGRIS
FAKULTAS KEPENDIDIKAN DAN HUMANIORA
UNIVERSITAS KRISTEN DUTA WACANA
2021

HALAMAN PENGESAHAN

MODUL AJAR MATA KULIAH *CURRICULUM AND MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT*

Identitas Modul Ajar

a.	Nama Modul Ajar	:	*Module of Curriculum and Materials Development*
b.	Jumlah Penyusun	:	1 (satu)
c.	Jumlah Halaman Modul	:	57 halaman
d.	Tahun Ajaran	:	Semester Genap 2020/2021
e.	Biaya Penyusunan Modul	:	Rp. 300.000
f.	Sumber Biaya	:	Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, UKDW
g.	Waktu/Durasi Penyusunan	:	4 Januari – 8 Februari 2021

Identitas Penyusun

a.	Nama	:	Lemmuela Alvita Kurniawati, M.Hum.
b.	NIDN/NIK	:	0503118203/184E468
c.	Jabatan/Golongan	:	Lektor 200/IIIB
d.	Program Studi	:	Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris
e.	Nomor HP	:	0821 3876 0001
f.	Alamat E-mail	:	pipitkh@staff.ukdw.ac.id
g.	Perguruan Tinggi	:	Universitas Kristen Duta Wacana

Yogyakarta, 8 Februari 2021

Mengesahkan,

Kaprodi PBI

Lemmuela Alvita Kurniawati, M.Hum.

NIDN/NIK: 0503118203/184E468

Penyusun modul

Lemmuela Alvita Kurniawati, M.Hum.

NIDN/NIK: 0503118203/184E468

Mengesahkan,

Dekan Fakultas Kependidikan dan Humaniora

Dra. Mega Wati, M.Pd.

NIDN/NIK: 518056501/994E266

DAFTAR ISI

	Halaman
Sampul Dalam	i
Halaman Pengesahan	ii
Daftar Isi	iii

Bagian Inti Modul

Chapter 1. Language Curriculum Design	1 – 13
Chapter 2. Environment Analysis	14 – 23
Chapter 3. Needs Analysis	24 – 36
Chapter 4. Goals and Objectives	37 – 44
Chapter 5. Syllabuses	45 – 49
Chapter 6. Format and Presentation	50 - 56
References	57

Chapter 1

Language Curriculum Design

An Overview

Parts of the Curriculum Design Process

Curriculum design can be seen as a kind of writing activity and as such it can usefully be studied as a process. The typical sub-processes of the writing process (gathering ideas, ordering ideas, ideas to text, reviewing, editing) can be applied to curriculum design, but it makes it easier to draw on current curriculum design theory and practice if a different set of parts is used. The curriculum design model in Figure 1.1 consists of three outside circles and a subdivided inner circle. The outer circles (principles, environment, needs) involve practical and theoretical considerations that will have a major effect in guiding the actual process of course production. There is a wide range of factors to consider when designing a course. These include the learners' present knowledge and lacks, the resources available including time, the skill of the teachers, the curriculum designer's strengths and limitations, and principles of teaching and learning. If factors such as these are not considered then the course may be unsuited to the situation and learners for which it is used, and may be ineffective and inefficient as a means of encouraging learning. In the curriculum design process these factors are considered in three sub-processes, environment analysis, needs analysis and the application of principles. The result of environment analysis is a ranked list of factors and a consideration of the effects of these factors on the design. The result of needs analysis is a realistic list of language, ideas or skill items, as a result of considering the present proficiency, future needs and wants of the learners. The application of principles involves first of all deciding on the most important principles to apply and monitoring their application through the whole design process. The result of applying principles is a course where learning is given the greatest support.

Some curriculum designers distinguish curriculum from syllabus. In the model, both the outer circles and the inner circle make up the curriculum. The inner circle represents the syllabus.

The inner circle has goals as its centre. This is meant to reflect the importance of having clear general goals for a course. The content and sequencing

part of the inner circle represents the items to learn in a course, and the order in which they occur, plus the ideas content if this is used as a vehicle for the items and not as a goal in itself. Language courses must give consideration to the language content of a course even if this is not presented in the course as a discrete item. Consideration of content makes sure that there is something useful for the learners to learn to advance their control of the language, that they are getting the best return for learning effort in terms of the usefulness of what they will meet in the course, and that they are covering all the things they need to cover for a balanced knowledge of the language.

The format and presentation part of the inner circle represents the format of the lessons or units of the course, including the techniques and types of activities that will be used to help learning. This is the part of the course that the learners are most aware of. It is important that it is guided by the best available principles of teaching and learning.

The monitoring and assessment part of the inner circle represents the need to give attention to observing learning, testing the results of learning, and providing feedback to the learners about their progress. It is often not a part of commercially designed courses. It provides information that can lead to changes at most of the other parts of the curriculum design process.

It is possible to imagine a large circle drawn completely around the whole model. This large outer circle represents evaluation. Evaluation can involve looking at every aspect of a course to judge if the course is adequate and where it needs improvement. It is generally a neglected aspect of curriculum design.

Chapters 2 to 8 of this book examine each of the parts of the curriculum design process in detail, drawing on relevant theory and research. It is possible to design courses without drawing on relevant research, theory and experience. In all but a few fortunate cases this results in common faults in curriculum design being made yet again.

The shape of the model in Figure 1.1 is designed to make it easy to remember. The three-part shape that occurs in each of the outer circles (the "Mercedes" symbol) also occurs in the large inner circle, and also occurs in the way the three outer circles connect to the inner circle.

In this first chapter of this book, we will look briefly at an overview of the parts of the curriculum design process that will be looked at in more detail in the following chapters of the book, with each of the early chapters focusing on a different part of the model.

Considering the Environment

Environment analysis involves considering the factors of the situation in which the course will be used and determining how the course should take account of them. One way of approaching environment analysis is to work from a list of questions which focus on the nature of the learners, the teachers and the teaching situation (see Chapter 2).

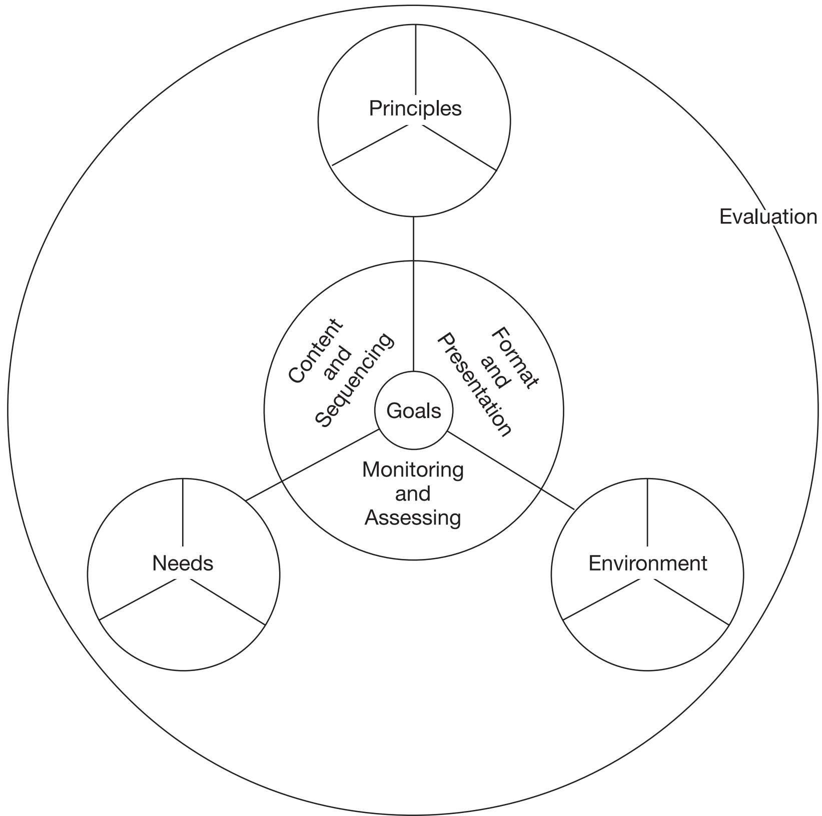


Figure 1.1 A model of the parts of the curriculum design process.

There is value in spending some time on these questions particularly if the answers are ranked according to something like the following instructions and criterion.

> Choose three factors which will have the strongest effect on the design of your course. Rank these three from the factor which will most determine what you should do to the one which has the least influence of the three.

To show the value of doing this, here are some of the top factors decided on by several teachers designing different courses for different learners.

1 One teacher decided that the learners' lack of interest in learning English should be the major factor influencing curriculum design. The learners were obliged to do an English course as part of their degree but

received no credit for it. This meant that the teacher's goal of making the course as interesting and motivating as possible guided the design of the course, particularly the format and presentation of lessons.

2 One teacher decided that the learners' plan to move on to academic study in university or technical institute courses should have the greatest effect on design of the English course. This had a far-reaching effect on the language items and the language skills focused on, and the type of learning activity.
3 One teacher decided that the externally designed and administered test at the end of the course should be the major factor. This meant that the course book always had to make it obvious to the learners that the work they were doing was directly related to the test.

Here is a short list of some of the other factors that teachers considered most important.

- The small amount of time available for the course
- The large size of the classes
- The wide range of proficiency in the class
- The immediate survival needs of the learners
- The lack of appropriate reading materials
- The teachers' lack of experience and training
- The learners' use of the first language in the classroom
- The need for the learners to be more autonomous

There are many examples of unsuccessful curriculum design where the background questions were not considered. Here are some examples.

1 The communicatively based course which was deserted by its Vietnamese learners because they were not getting the grammar teaching that they expected. They set up their own grammar-based course.
2 The course for Agricultural students which had a simplified version of *The Moonstone* by Wilkie Collins as its main reading text. Some of the learners produced their own translation of it which they copied and sold to other learners. They saw no value in coming to grips with its content through English.
3 The adult conversation course which began with the game "Simon Says". Half the students stopped attending after the first lesson. There is no conversation in "Simon Says".

Each important factor needs to be accompanied by one or more effects. For example, the factor "the large size of the class" could have the following effects on the curriculum design.

1 A large amount of group work.
2 Use of special large class techniques like oral reproduction, blackboard reproduction, the pyramid procedure involving the individual–pair–group–class sequence (Nation and Newton, 2009).
3 Independent work or individualised tasks.

The importance of environment analysis is that it makes sure that the course will really be suitable, practical and realistic.

Discovering Needs

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) make a useful division of learners' needs into necessities (what the learner has to know to function effectively), lacks (what the learner knows and does not know already) and wants (what the learners think they need). These are discovered by a variety of means: by testing, by questioning and interviewing, by recalling previous performance, by consulting employers, teachers and others involved, by collecting data such as textbooks and manuals that the learners will have to read and analysing them, and by investigating the situations where the learners will need to use the language. Ways of doing needs analysis can be evaluated by the same general criteria used to evaluate tests – reliability, validity and practicality.

Necessities, lacks and wants may all involve some kind of comparison or reference to lists of items which can act as the learning goals of the course. An exception to this is to base the course on what the learners request. In this case the lists are created by the learners. This is effective if the learners have very clear purposes for learning English which they are aware of. For example, a course for immigrants who have been in the country a few months could very effectively be based on a list of things that they suggest they want to be able to do in English. We will look more closely at this in the chapter on negotiated syllabuses.

Following Principles

Research on language teaching and learning should be used to guide decisions on curriculum design. There is considerable research on the nature of language and language acquisition which can guide the choice of what to teach and how to sequence it. There is also a lot of research on how to encourage learning in general and language learning in particular which can be used to guide the presentation of items to be learned. The principles derived from this research include principles on the importance of repetition and thoughtful processing of material, on the importance of taking account of individual differences and learning style, and on learner attitudes and motivation.

It is very important that curriculum design makes the connection between the research and theory of language learning and the practice of designing

lessons and courses. There is a tendency for this connection not to be made, with the result that curriculum design and therefore learners do not benefit from developments in knowledge gained from research. A striking example of this is the failure of courses to take account of the findings regarding the interference that occurs when semantically and formally related items, such as opposites, near synonyms and lexical sets, are presented together (Higa, 1963; Tinkham, 1993). In spite of the clear findings of this research, which is supported by a large body of research less firmly in the area of language learning, course books continue to present names of the parts of the body, items in the kitchen, opposites such as *hot–cold, long–short, old–new*, numbers, days of the week and articles of clothing in the same lesson. As Tinkham (1993) and Higa (1963) show, this will have the effect of making learning more difficult than it should be.

Chapter 4 of this book describes a list of 20 principles that can be used to guide curriculum design. It is not an exhaustive list and is based to some degree on the personal prejudices of the writers. Curriculum designers may wish to create their own lists (see Brown, 1993; Ellis, 2005 and Jones, 1993 for examples of other short lists; see also Richards, 2001 and Tomlinson, 2003 for discussion of the application of principles in materials development). What is important is that curriculum design is treated as a normal part of the field of applied linguistics and thus draws on available knowledge to guide it.

Goals

The curriculum design model in Figure 1.1 has goals as its centre. This is because it is essential to decide why a course is being taught and what the learners need to get from it.

Goals can be expressed in general terms and be given more detail when considering the content of the course. Here are some examples of goals that have been set for language courses.

1 The aim of communicative teaching is to encourage students to exploit all the elements of the language that they know in order to make their meanings clear. Students cannot be expected to master every aspect of the language before they are allowed to use it for communicative purposes.

(*Orbit*, Harrison and Menzies, 1986)

2 *Trio* aims to

(a) encourage students to communicate in a wide range of everyday situations.
(b) sustain interest and motivation . . .
(c) help students understand and formulate the grammatical rules of English.

(d) develop students' receptive skills beyond those of their productive skills.
(e) give students insights into daily life in Britain.
(f) develop specific skills, including skills required for examination purposes.
(g) contribute to the students' personal, social and educational development.

(*Trio*, Radley and Sharley, 1987)

3 *Passages* extends students' communicative competence by developing their ability to:

- expand the range of topics they can discuss and comprehend in English
- speak English fluently (express a wide range of ideas without unnecessary pauses or breakdowns in communication)
- speak English accurately (use an acceptable standard of pronunciation and grammar when communicating).

(*Passages*, Richards and Sandy, 1998)

4 Students continue to develop speaking and listening skills necessary for participating in classroom discussions with an introduction to oral presentation and critical listening skills.

(*College Oral Communication*, Roemer, 2006)

Having a clear statement of goals is important for determining the content of the course, for deciding on the focus in presentation, and in guiding assessment.

Content and Sequencing

The content of language courses consists of the language items, ideas, skills and strategies that meet the goals of the course. The viewpoint taken in this book is that even though the units of progression in a course might be tasks, topics or themes, it is important for the curriculum designer to keep some check on vocabulary, grammar and discourse to make sure that important items are being covered and repeated. If there is no check being made, it may happen that learners are not meeting items that are important for their later use of the language. It may also happen that items are not being met often enough to establish them.

One way to provide a systematic and well-researched basis for a course is to make use of frequency lists and other lists of language items or skills. These lists should be chosen and adapted as a result of the needs analysis in order to set the language learning content of the course. A list may be used as a way of checking or determining the content of a course, but this does not mean that the lessons have to consist of item by item teaching. A conversation course

for example could be carefully planned to cover the important high-frequency vocabulary and structures, and still consist of a series of very free task-based conversation activities (Joe, Nation and Newton, 1996). Working from lists makes sure that what should be covered is covered and is not left to chance.

Typical lists include:

1 Frequency-based vocabulary lists. These consist of lists of words with indicators of their frequency of occurrence. Perhaps the best known is Michael West's (1953) *General Service List of English Words* which contains 2,000 high-frequency word families. This is a good source for courses at the beginner and intermediate level. Other lists include *The Cambridge English Lexicon* (Hindmarsh, 1980) and the First 1,000, Second 1,000, and Third 1,000 lists produced by the English Language Institute (Nation, 1984). The COBUILD dictionary (1995) indicates the frequency levels of higher-frequency vocabulary. At a more specialised and advanced level, the academic word list (Coxhead, 2000) contains 570 word families useful for study in the upper levels of English-medium secondary schools and at university.
2 Frequency lists of verb forms and verb groups. These contain items such as simple past, present continuous, verb + *to* + stem (where the stem is dominant) *going to* + stem, and *can* + stem (ability) along with information about their frequency of occurrence, mainly in written text. The most striking feature of these lists is the very high frequency of a small number of items, such as simple past, verb + *to* + stem, and the very low frequency of most of the items studied (many of which are given unjustified prominence in many course books and grading schemes for simplified readers). These lists can be found in George 1963a, 1963b, and 1972; see also Appendix 1 of this book. The more recent Biber *et al.* (1999) grammar contains frequency information. Comparison of beginners' books of published courses with these lists shows that the course books contain a mixture of high-frequency and low-frequency items and could be considerably improved with more informed selection.
3 Lists of functions and topics. These lists are not frequency-based and as a result selection of items must be based on perceived need which is less reliable than frequency evidence. The most useful of the available lists is Van Ek and Alexander (1980).
4 Lists of subskills and strategies. These include the subskills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, and language coping and learning strategies.
5 There are lists of tasks, topics and themes that curriculum designers can refer to (Munby, 1978; Van Ek and Alexander, 1980; Prabhu, 1987), but it is better for curriculum designers to develop their own lists

taking account of the background factors of their learners and their needs.

One important aspect of using lists is that they not only check or determine the items that should be in the course, but they can be used to exclude those that should not be there, that is, those that are not in the list. The result of analyses based on lists of language items is a set of items that represent sensible and achievable language goals for the course.

Needs analysis can play a major role in determining the content of courses, particularly for language items. As well as using needs analysis to set language goals, it is useful to decide the basis for the ideas content of the course.

An important decision at this stage involves choosing the form the syllabus will take. Dubin and Olshtain (1986) describe several syllabus forms including linear, modular, cyclical and matrix. Whatever form is chosen will have a marked effect on the opportunity for repetition of items to be learned.

Finding a Format and Presenting Material

The material in a course needs to be presented to learners in a form that will help learning. This presentation will involve the use of suitable teaching techniques and procedures, and these need to be put together in lessons. Some lessons might consist of an unpredictable series of activities, while others might be based on a set format, where the same sequence of activities occurs in all or most of the lessons.

There are several advantages to having a set format for lessons. Firstly, the lessons are easier to make because each one does not have to be planned separately. It also makes the course easier to monitor, to check if all that should be included is there and that accepted principles are being followed. Finally, it makes the lessons easier to learn from because the learners can predict what will occur and are soon familiar with the learning procedures required by different parts of the lesson.

The sources of the material used as a basis for the lessons will have decisive effects on the ease of making the lessons and of the possibility of future distribution or publication of the course. A shortcut here is simply to take suitable material from other courses, adapting it as required.

There is a substantial set of principles that need to be applied at this stage (see Chapter 4). These concern not only presentation but also selection aspects, such as sequencing and the amount of time given to fluency work.

The lesson format needs to be checked against the environment analysis of the course to make sure that the major environmental factors are being considered.

Because curriculum design is not a linear process, it may be necessary to alter the content or sequencing to suit the lesson format and to reorder the

list of environmental factors. The lessons may still require adjustment as a result of consideration of other stages of the curriculum design. Perhaps the most difficult task at this stage is making sure that the learning goals of the course are met. That is, that the wanted language items are well-represented and well-presented in the course.

It can be argued that the first presentation of an item is not as important as the later repetitions of that item. This is often neglected in courses, but it is crucial to learning. It is through repeated meetings that items are enriched and established.

Monitoring and Assessing

The aims of curriculum design are to make a course that has useful goals, that achieves its goals, that satisfies its users, and that does all this in an efficient way. An important recurring part of the design process is to assess how well these aims are achieved.

Assessing generally involves the use of tests. An important distinction in testing is between proficiency tests which measure what a learner knows of the language, and achievement tests which measure what has been learned from a particular course. Proficiency tests may be used to measure a learner's level of language knowledge before entering a course and after a course is completed and has been assessed. Achievement tests are closely related to a course and the items in the tests are based on the content of the course and the learning goals of the course. Short-term achievement tests are tests that occur at the end of each lesson or at the end of a group of lessons. They provide the teacher and learners with information about how much has been learned. They can have a strong effect on motivation, on the speed of movement through the lessons, and on adapting and supplementing the course. Well-designed courses should include short-term achievement tests in the curriculum design.

Larger achievement tests can occur at the end of a course and perhaps halfway through the course. The information gained from such tests can be useful in evaluating the course.

Other kinds of tests include placement tests (to see if the course is suitable for a prospective learner or to see where in the course the learner should begin) and diagnostic tests (to see if learners have particular gaps in their knowledge).

But testing is only one way of gaining information about the progress of learners and the effectiveness of the course. Other ways include observing and monitoring using checklists and report forms, getting learners to keep diaries and learning logs, getting learners to collect samples of their work in folders, and getting learners to talk about their learning. Curriculum design can include planned opportunity for this kind of data gathering.

Evaluating a Course

Information gained from assessment is a useful source of data about the effectiveness of a course, but it is only one of the sources of information that can contribute to the evaluation of a course. Basically, evaluation tries to answer the question "Is this a good course?". The range of meanings that can be attached to "good" determines the range of sources of information for carrying out an evaluation.

A "good" course could be one that:

1 attracts a lot of students
2 makes a lot of money
3 satisfies the learners
4 satisfies the teachers
5 satisfies the sponsors
6 helps learners gain high scores in an external test
7 results in a lot of learning
8 applies state-of-the-art knowledge about language teaching and learning
9 is held in high regard by the local or international community
10 follows accepted principles of curriculum design.

An evaluation of a course can have many purposes, the main ones being to continue or discontinue the course, or to bring about improvements in the course. Responsible curriculum design includes ongoing evaluation of the course.

Summary of the Steps

1 Examine the environment.
2 Assess needs.
3 Decide on principles.
4 Set goals, and choose and sequence content.
5 Design the lesson format.
6 Include assessment procedures.
7 Evaluate the course.

The purpose of this chapter has been to briefly describe the major parts of the curriculum design model. In the following chapters, each of the parts will be looked at in more detail. In addition, topics including evaluating course books, innovation, and designing in-service courses will be covered. Curriculum design is in essence a practical activity. Because of this the tasks which follow each chapter provide an important part of learning about curriculum design.

Tasks

Task 1 Examining a published course

Look at a published course book and see what decisions were made for each of the parts of the model in Figure 1.1. Choose one feature for each part of the curriculum design model. For example, find one example of the effects of environment analysis.

Task 2 Using the parts of the model to overview the planning of a course

Quickly decide what kind of course you wish to design. For each of the parts of the curriculum design model, write two questions you will need to answer to plan a course.

Case Studies

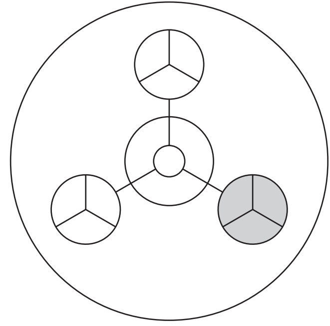
An important way to make use of this book on curriculum design is to examine case studies using the model introduced in this chapter. Choose a short case study of curriculum design (about three to six pages long). Look in the list of references at the back of this book for the items marked [20] and choose one of them, or choose a case study report in journals such as *English Teaching Forum, Guidelines, ELT Journal, System* or *English for Specific Purposes*. Analyse it to see how the parts of the curriculum design model described in Chapter 1 fit with the case study. See what is in the model and not in the case study. See what is in the case study and not covered by the model. Table 1.1 provides an example analysis based on the Nation and Crabbe (1991) article (available at I.S.P. Nation's web site).

Table 1.1 Examination of Nation and Crabbe (1991) case study

Parts of the curriculum design process	*Nation and Crabbe's procedure*
Environment analysis	The major constraints and their effects in ranked order were: 1 Limited time to invest in learning (therefore – focus on immediate needs; have very limited goals, i.e. vocabulary and only spoken use). 2 Must be useful for a wide range of people and countries (therefore – include only generally useful items).
Needs analysis	Future needs (necessities) were found by: 1 Interviewing people previously in the situation that the learners will soon be in. 2 Analysing the language section of guidebooks. 3 Personal experience. There was no need to look at present proficiency as it was assumed that the learners were beginners. Wants were not looked at.
Application of principles	The following principles were directly stated: 1 Learners should get an immediate and useful return for their learning. 2 Avoid interference. 3 Use thoughtful processing. 4 Get fluency practice.
Goals	The goal was to quickly learn a survival vocabulary.
Content and sequencing	The content included approximately 120 words and phrases classified according to topic. The learner can decide on the sequence of learning. The sections of the list are in order of usefulness. Advice is given not to learn related items together.
Format and presentation	Suggestions are provided for self-study, such as using vocabulary cards, using deep processing and practice.
Monitoring and assessment	Not dealt with.
Evaluation	The checking of the list against personal experience is one kind of evaluation.

Chapter 2

Environment Analysis



The aim of this part of the curriculum design process is to find the situational factors that will strongly affect the course.

Environment analysis (Tessmer, 1990) involves looking at the factors that will have a strong effect on decisions about the goals of the course, what to include in the course, and how to teach and assess it. These factors can arise from the learners, the teachers, and the teaching and learning situation.

Environment analysis is also called "situation analysis" (Richards, 2001) or "constraints analysis". A constraint can be positive in curriculum design. For example, a constraint could be that the teachers are all very highly trained and are able and willing to make their own class activities. This would have a major effect on curriculum design as much of the format and presentation work could be left to the teachers. In some models of curriculum design, environment analysis is included in needs analysis.

Environment analysis is an important part of curriculum design because at its most basic level it ensures that the course will be usable. For example, if the level of training of the teachers is very low and is not taken into account, it might happen that the teachers are unable to handle the activities in the course. Similarly, if the course material is too expensive or requires technology and copying facilities that are not available, the course may be unusable. There are many factors that could affect curriculum design, so as a part of the procedure of environment analysis, the curriculum designer should

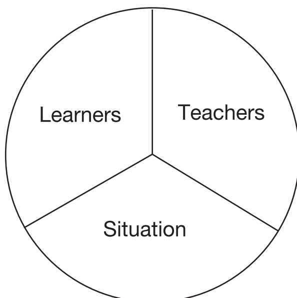


Figure 2.1 Factors in environment analysis.

decide which factors are the most important. The importance of a factor depends on:

1 whether the course will still be useful if the factor is not taken into account
2 how large and pervasive the effect of the factor is on the course.

An Example of Environment Analysis

Here is an example of an environment analysis on a course for young Japanese learners aged six to nine years old who had lived in English-speaking countries while their parents were posted there. During their time overseas they learned quite a lot of English in much the same way as native-speaking learners do. On their return to Japan, once a week for one and a half hours they attended a special class to help maintain their English. They all could speak Japanese and were attending Japanese medium schools in Japan.

The important constraints on the special second language maintenance class were as follows.

1 There was very limited class time and contact time with English.
2 There would be a drop in the learners' interest in learning English as they identified more strongly with Japan and being Japanese.
3 The learners knew that they could communicate more easily with each other in Japanese than in English.
4 There was a range of levels of English proficiency with some learners appearing to be very proficient for their age.
5 The learners had been learning English in much the same ways as native speakers acquire their first language.

These constraints could have the following effects on curriculum design.

1 Parents should be guided in giving their children some extra contact with English.
2 The activities should be fun so that the children look forward to doing them for their own sake.
3 Some of the activities should carry over to the next class so that the children look forward to continuing them.
4 The activities should be largely teacher-centred rather than group or pair work.
5 Most of the activities should be meaning-focused. Language-focused activities should mainly involve correction.

This would mean using activities like the following.

1 Listening to a serial story.
2 Reading comics and other high-interest material.
3 Listening and speaking games.
4 Writing to be "published" or read aloud.
5 Learners giving talks to the group, e.g. show and tell.
6 Reading at home and reporting to the class.
7 Diary writing to the teacher or a secret friend.
8 High-success quizzes and activities with awards.
9 Production of a newsletter where everyone gets a mention.
10 Pen pals.
11 Watching English movies and TV programmes.
12 Playing video games that use English.
13 Production of a play, etc.

The constraints faced by this course were very severe, and ignoring them would certainly mean failure for the course.

Environment Constraints

Table 2.1 lists a range of environment constraints. When designing a course, the table can be used as a checklist to help sort out the few that will be given most attention in a particular piece of curriculum design. Columns 1 and 2 list some constraints. Column 3 suggests some of the effects on curriculum design. There are numerous other possible effects. In the table the constraints have been presented as questions that curriculum designers can ask. Normally they would be framed as descriptive statements. For example, the first listed constraint could be expressed as "The learners are interested in a limited range of topics".

Table 2.1 Environment constraints and effects

General constraints	*Particular constraints*	*Effects on curriculum design*
The learners How old are they?	Are the learners interested in all kinds of topics? Can the learners do all kinds of learning activities?	Take account of learners' interests Use appropriate activities
What do they know?	Do they share a (first) language? Can their first language be used to help learning? What previous learning have they done?	Use teacher-centred activities Use some translation Use first language pre-reading activities Use reading input

Do they need English for a special purpose?	Will they use English for a wide range of purposes? Do they expect to learn certain things from the course? Do they have expectations about what the course will be like?	Set general purpose goals Include expected material Allow learners to negotiate the nature of the course
Do they have preferred ways of learning?	Are they interested in learning English? Do they have to learn English? Can they attend class regularly?	Use highly motivating activities Include relevant topics Recycle activities Use a spiral curriculum
The teachers Are they trained?	Can they prepare some of their own material? Can they handle group work, individualised learning . . .?	Provide ready-made activities Use group work activities . . .
Are they confident in their use of English?	Can they provide good models? Can they produce their own spoken or written material? Can they correct spoken or written work?	Provide taped materials Provide a complete set of course material Use activities that do not require feedback
Do they have time for preparation and marking?	Can the course include homework? Can the course include work which has to be marked?	Provide homework activities Provide answer keys
The situation Is there a suitable classroom?	Can the arrangement of the desks be changed for group work? Is the blackboard big enough and easily seen?	Use group work activities Use material that does not require the students to have a course book
Is there enough time?	Can the learners reach the goals in the available time? Is the course intensive? Can the learners give all their time to the course?	Set staged goals Provide plenty of material Set limited goals
Are there enough resources?	Can material be photocopied? Can each learner have a copy of the course book? Is there plenty of supplementary material? Are tape recorders etc available?	Provide individualised material Use teacher-focused material Match the content to available supplementary material Develop audio and video taped material
Is it worth developing the course?	Do learners meet English outside class? Will the course be run several times?	Provide contact with a large amount of English in class Put time into preparing the course

Sometimes it is necessary to consider wider aspects of the situation when carrying out an environment analysis. There may, for example, be institutional or government policies requiring the use of the target language in schools (Liu *et al.*, 2004), or there may be negative attitudes towards the target language among learners in post-colonial societies (Asmah, 1992). Dubin and Olshtain (1986) suggest a useful way of thinking about the wider environment (Figure 2.2) that can have implications for language curriculum design. For example, the language curriculum in a situation where:

- the target language is recognised as one of a country's official languages (the political and national context)
- there are relatively few native speakers (the language setting)
- there are relatively few opportunities to use the language outside the classroom (patterns of language use in society)
- majority-language speakers doubt the target language has contemporary relevance (group and individual attitudes)

will differ greatly from that in a situation where:

- the target language is recognised as one of a country's official languages
- there are relatively few native speakers
- there are many opportunities to use the target language outside the classroom
- the target language provides employment and educational opportunities.

Understanding the Constraints

In order to understand a constraint fully, it is usually necessary to examine the nature of the constraint in the environment you are working in, and to examine previous research on the constraint. For example, let us look briefly at the constraint of class size. If this constraint is considered to be important for the particular course being designed, it is useful to know exactly how large the classes are. Do they contain 40 students or 140 students? Is it possible to change class sizes?

There has been considerable research on and examination of teaching large classes. This research has looked at the relative merits of group work and teacher-centred activities, the effect of class size on learning, and individualisation. There have been many articles and books on activities and techniques for large classes (Coleman, 1989; Hess, 2001), and on the principles of group work. Good curriculum design must take account of research and theory so that it provides the best possible conditions for learning that the state of the art allows.

Some of the major constraints investigated by research and analysis include the time available, cultural background, the effect of the first language on

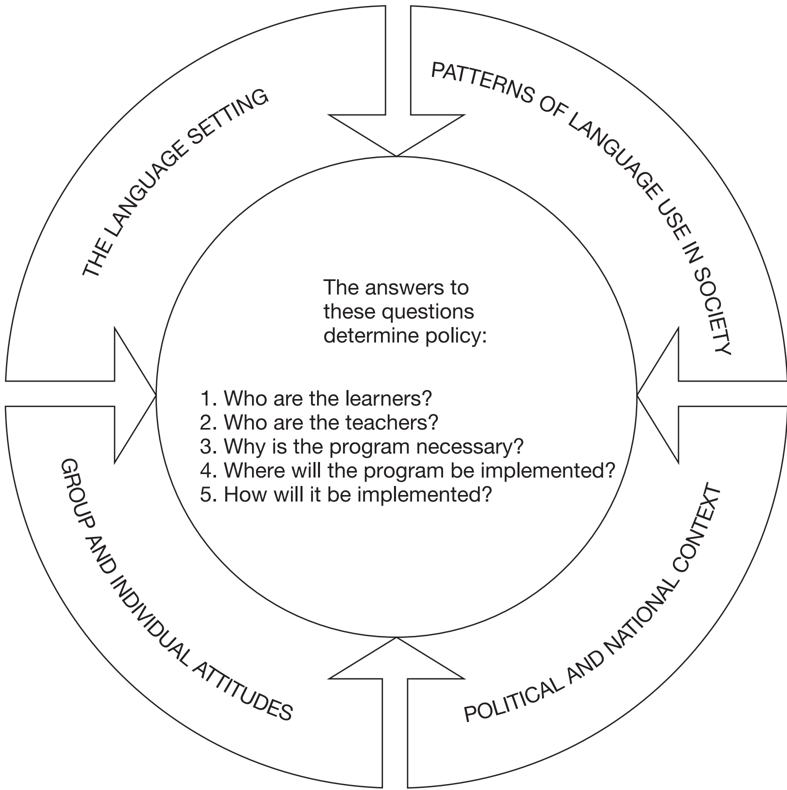


Figure 2.2 Dubin and Olshtain's (1986) model of sources of information for language program policy.

language learning and special purposes. The following section looks at time as an example of an important constraint in the environment, and provides information that would be useful in helping to plan the length of a course. This investigation of the time constraint provides a model of the application of the steps in environment analysis that can be applied to other constraints.

The Constraint of Time

In many courses the time constraint is very important. The time may be severely limited, or the desired goals might not fit into the time available. The steps followed include (1) examining the local environment, (2) looking at previous research, and (3) considering the effect of the constraint on the design of the course.

Local information from the environment

Useful information to gather about the constraint is how much class time is available, how much time out of class could be given to learning, and what the goals of the course are.

Research information

Useful research information would reveal what could be achieved within certain time periods. Pimsleur (1980), for example, presents estimates of the time taken to reach various levels of proficiency for learners of particular languages. The estimates are based on the idea that some languages are more difficult than others for native speakers of English to begin to learn. To reach an elementary level of proficiency in French or Indonesian for example would take approximately 240 hours of study, according to Pimsleur. To reach the same level for a more difficult language such as Hebrew or Japanese would take approximately 360 hours. These estimates derive from the considerable experience of teachers at the Foreign Service Institute of the Department of State in the United States. For further research on the time constraint see Collier (1987, 1989, 1995).

The effect of the time constraint on the design of the course

An environmental constraint can be approached in two ways – working within the constraint, and overcoming the constraint. To work within the constraint the curriculum designer could limit the goals of the course to fit the available time. This is what is suggested in the Pimsleur data. Another way of limiting would be to try to cover most of the language items and skills but at a rather superficial level, relying on later experience to make up for the quick coverage. Alternatively, very intensive study procedures could be used.

To overcome the constraint the curriculum designer might try to provide self-study options for work to be done outside of class time or if possible the time available for the course could be increased.

Steps in Environment Analysis

The steps in environment analysis can be as follows.

1 Brainstorm and then systematically consider the range of environment factors that will affect the course. Table 2.1 can be used as a starting point.
2 Choose the most important factors (no more than five) and rank them, putting the most important first.

3 Decide what information you need to fully take account of the factor. The information can come from investigation of the environment and from research and theory.
4 Consider the effects of each factor on the design of the course.
5 Go through steps 1, 2, 3, and 4 again.

Environment analysis involves looking at the local and wider situation to make sure that the course will fit and will meet local requirements. There is considerable research data on many of the important environment factors, including class size, motivation, learners of mixed proficiency and special purpose goals. Good environment analysis draws on both analysis of the environment and application of previous research and theory. In some models of curriculum design, environment analysis is included in needs analysis. Needs analysis is the subject of the next chapter.

Tasks

Task 1 The range of constraints

Brainstorm to create a list of constraints that may significantly affect the design of courses.

Task 2 Examining your teaching environment

1 List five important constraints facing you in your teaching situation. Use Table 2.1 at the beginning of this chapter to help you. Rank your constraints according to the strength of the effect that they will have on your course.

____
____
____
____
____

2 Very briefly describe the most important constraint or strength and say why it is important.

____
____
____
____

3 What do you know or need to know about the constraint or strength? You may wish to know about the present situation and previous research.

____
____

____

____

4 How can you take account of the constraint or strength in your syllabus? (What parts of the syllabus will it most affect?)
 1 ____
 2 ____
 3 ____
 4 ____

5 Which of the solutions listed above do you most favour? Why?

____

____

Task 3 Comparing teaching environments

Discuss the second/foreign language teaching environments in two or more different countries. To what extent can the differences be explained in terms of Dubin and Olshtain's depiction of the situation (Figure 2.2)?

Case Studies

1 Look at the constraints listed in the Nation and Crabbe article. What other constraints are described in other parts of the article? What constraint had the strongest effect on their course?
2 Look at the SRA reading boxes. The SRA reading boxes were designed for native speakers of English. Each box consists of around seven levels with each level being distinguished by a different colour. Within each level there are 20 cards each containing a reading text with exercises. Each card of the same colour has a different text of roughly equal length and difficulty to others with the same colour. The levels gradually increase in terms of text length and text difficulty.

Each learner chooses a card of the appropriate level, reads it and does the exercises, gets the answer key from the box, uses it to mark their answers to the exercises, and then records their score on a graph. When the learner has gained a high score on three consecutive cards at a level, the learner can then move to the next level up.

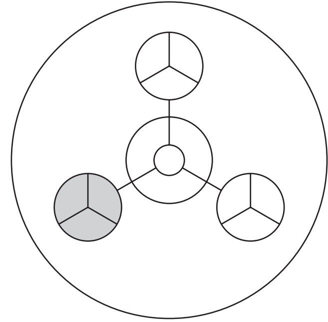
What constraints do you think led to their design? List the constraints and relate each constraint to an aspect of the design. The first one in Table 2.2 has been done for you.

Table 2.2

Constraints	*Aspects of design*
1 Wide range of reading proficiency in a class	There are ten levels in one SRA box. Learners read at their own level and speed.
2. . .	Once the learners know how to use the reading box, the teacher does not have a lot of work to do.
3. . .	The learners mark their own work.
4. . .	The learners record their score on a graph.
5. . .	There are a lot of cards and a lot of levels in each reading box.
6. . .	There is a lot of reading material in one box. Many classes can use the same box.
7. . .	The teacher does not have to do much.
	Each card takes a short time to read and answer.
	There is a wide variety of interesting texts.

Chapter 3

Needs Analysis



The aim of this part of the curriculum design process is to discover what needs to be learned and what the learners want to learn.

Needs analysis is directed mainly at the goals and content of a course. It examines what the learners know already and what they need to know. Needs analysis makes sure that the course will contain relevant and useful things to learn. Good needs analysis involves asking the right questions and finding the answers in the most effective way.

The Various Focuses of Needs Analysis

The aim of this section of the chapter is to look at the range of information that can be gathered in needs analysis.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) divide needs into *target needs* (i.e. what the learner needs to do in the target situation) and *learning needs* (i.e. what the learner needs to do in order to learn). The analysis of target needs can look at:

1 **Necessities** What is necessary in the learners' use of language? For example, do the learners have to write answers to exam questions?

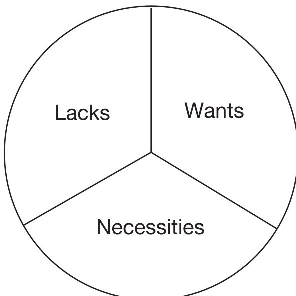


Figure 3.1 Three types of needs.

2	**Lacks**	What do the learners lack? For example, are there aspects of writing that were not practised in their previous learning (L1, L2)?
3	**Wants**	What do the learners wish to learn?

Another way to look at needs is to make a major division between present knowledge and required knowledge, and objective needs and subjective needs. Very roughly, *Lacks* fit into *present knowledge, Necessities* fit into *required knowledge*, and *Wants* fit into *subjective needs* (see Table 3.1).

Information about objective needs can be gathered by questionnaires, personal interviews, data collection (for example, gathering exam papers or text books and analysing them), observation (for example, following a learner through a typical day), informal consultation with teachers and learners, and tests. Subjective needs are discovered through learner self-assessment using lists and scales, and questionnaires and interviews.

The outcomes of needs analysis must be useful for curriculum design. It is not worth gathering needs analysis information if no application can be found for it. It is therefore useful to do a pilot study first to check for this.

Table 3.2 covers many of the questions that are usually raised in an analysis of target needs (Munby, 1978; Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). They have been organised under four learning goals because needs analysis must lead to decisions about what will be learned during a course. The questions do not always match neatly with the goals and types of information. For example, a question like "Where will the language be used?" can result in information that affects language goals, content goals, skill goals and discourse or text goals. Table 3.2 can be used to make sure that a needs analysis is gaining information on a suitable range of learning goals.

Ongoing needs analysis during the course can make use of the pyramid procedure (Jordan, 1990). That is, the learners can be given a series of items that may describe their wants. They choose and rank these individually and then in pairs or fours, and finally as a group. When they report their ranking to the teacher, they also note the points that they individually ranked highly but could not gain group support for. This will help the teacher in planning a class program as well as arranging individualised or small group work. The items to rank can take this form:

Table 3.1 Types of needs

	Present knowledge	*Required knowledge*
Objective needs		
Subjective needs		

Table 3.2 Questions for focusing on needs

Goals	*Questions*	*Types of information in the answers*
Language	What will the course be used for? How proficient does the user have to be? What communicative activities will the learner take part in? Where will the language be used?	sounds vocabulary grammatical structures functions set phrases and set sentences tasks
Ideas	What content matter will the learner be working with?	topics themes texts
Skills	How will the learner use the language? Under what conditions will the language be used? Who will the learners use the language with?	listening speaking reading writing degree of accuracy degree of fluency
Text	What will the language be used to do? What language uses is the learner already familiar with?	genres and discourse types sociolinguistic skills

I would like more group work activities.
I would like more written feedback on assignments.
. . .

This will be looked at more closely in the chapter on negotiated syllabuses. With a negotiated syllabus, learners negotiate with each other and with the teacher to determine the content and other aspects of the course.

The findings of needs analysis need to be balanced against constraints found in environment analysis, particularly the limitation of time.

Discovering Needs

Table 3.3 suggests a range of methods for discovering needs. It is organised around necessities, lacks and wants. Proficiency in column 2 relates to present knowledge and situations of use and involves the study of situations and tasks that learners will need to engage in using knowledge gained from the course. Self-report can take a variety of forms. It may involve written responses to a structured set of questions (as in the MAFIA example in Task 2 of this chapter) or to a sentence completion task. It may involve diary writing or some other form of extended written report. It may involve group activities such as voting, ranking, brainstorming, or problem solving. In its most organised form it may be a part of a negotiated syllabus.

Observation and analysis may involve process and product. Observation of skilled and unskilled writers performing target tasks may reveal important areas that need attention during a course. Analysis of the written products of target tasks such as university assignments or exams can reveal the type of language needed to perform the tasks well.

Table 3.3 can be used to check that a wide enough range of information-gathering methods is being used. Another set of methods of data collection can be found in Long (2005a).

Needs Analysis Tools

Table 3.3 briefly suggests a range of tools for using in needs analysis. Let us look at possible tools in more detail by taking the case of an English for academic purposes course which is preparing learners of English for university study. We will look at necessities, lacks and wants in that order.

Necessities

The first thing to look at in necessities is the demands of the target tasks. That is, what will learners have to do when they do university study? Among the things they will have to do is listen to lectures, take part in

Table 3.3 Methods and examples of needs analysis

Type of need	*Focus*	*Method*	*Example*
Necessities	Proficiency	Self-report Proficiency testing	Level of vocabulary knowledge (Nation and Beglar, 2007) Level of fluency e.g. reading speed
	Situations of use	Self-report Observation and analysis Review of previous research Corpus analysis	Analysis of texts (Nation, 2006) Analysis of exams and assignments (Friederichs and Pierson, 1981; Horowitz, 1986) Analysis of tasks (Brown *et al.*, 1984) MICASE (http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/micase/)
Lacks	Proficiency	Self-report Testing	Vocabulary tests
	Situations of use	Self-report Observation and analysis	Examiners' reports Analysis of tasks (Ellis, 1986)
Wants	Wishes	Self-report	
	Use	Observation	Records of choices of activities Teachers' observation

tutorials, write assignments and tasks, and sit exams. If we take assignments as one example of the things they have to do, we could analyse the kind of language needed to do an assignment as a way of working out what the learners would need to know. We could do this by doing a vocabulary analysis of good assignments, using a program like the Frequency programme or the Range program. Is it necessary to have a large vocabulary to write a good assignment, or can an assignment be well written in a limited vocabulary? We can also look at past assignment topics to see the kinds of discourse that learners would have to handle. Are the assignments mainly descriptions, analyses, comparisons, persuasive pieces of writing or instructions? We could interview university staff who are involved in setting and marking such assignments to see what they expect in a good assignment. Perhaps they are not concerned with the grammatical accuracy of the writing but are more concerned that the writer writes like a geographer or an economist or a political scientist. Another source of information about this would be to look in course outlines and other departmental information to see if there are any guidelines on writing assignments. If we have access to assignments from successful students in previous years, these could be a useful source of information. We could also look at the timeframe involved in writing an assignment. Do the learners have time to prepare notes, a rough draft, and a further draft? If they know the assignment topics well before the assignment is due, then the English for academic purposes course could focus more strongly on the process of assignment writing.

Presumably, this is not the first time that this English for academic purposes course has been taught. Can we see any evidence that the course has helped the assignment writing of learners who studied it in previous years? What kind of improvement did the course make? Did learners who studied on the course do well in their later study? If there were positive effects then this part of the course needs to be kept largely as it is.

Many of these suggestions are applicable for the design of an EAP course within a particular context. When more generic courses are being designed, or when information is not available locally, we could also look at publicly available corpora, especially specialised corpora, for language needs analysis purposes. These may become an increasingly valuable tool as more and more corpora become available and search engines become more powerful and more user-friendly.

Lacks

An important part of needs analysis involves looking at where learners are at present. How good are the learners at writing assignments now? One way to investigate this is to look at an assignment or two that the learners have just written. The assignment can be analysed from an information perspective, from a grammar perspective and from the discourse perspective. Another

way to look at an assignment is to look at the parts of the writing process and to see what degree of skill in each part is reflected in the assignment (see Nation (2009) for such an analysis). Yet another way is to look at the learners in the process of writing an assignment. The quality of an assignment often depends on the conditions under which it was written. Observing students writing can give some insight into these conditions and the learners' control over parts of the writing process. There is however always the danger of the observer paradox where the observation changes the nature of the task.

Another source of information about lacks could come from the university lecturer who marks such assignments. What do they see as the strengths and weaknesses of the assignment that the learner has written? This information could be gathered using a think-aloud protocol as the examiner marks the assignment, or it could be gathered by getting the examiner to reflect on the assignment they have just marked.

The learners themselves are also a very useful source of information about lacks. How does the learner interpret the assignment task? One way of gathering information about this is to question the learner about the assignment task using a carefully prepared set of interview questions. Another way is to get the learner to talk about the assignment task encouraging them to say what they think they have to do to answer the assignment.

The ways of investigating lacks which have been described above focus on an assignment task. However, learners' general proficiency contributes to the way they handle any language task. To gather data about the learners' general proficiency, we can interview them, get them to sit tests such as vocabulary tests, grammar tests, writing tests and comprehension tests, or we can get them to do self-assessment using a specially prepared checklist. Learners' scores on standardised proficiency tests like the TOEFL test or the IELTS test can be a very useful source of information particularly when they provide information about separate aspects of language proficiency such as writing or speaking.

Wants

Learners have their own views about what they think is useful for them. At the very least, information about this is useful in working out whether the learners' views and the needs analyst's views are the same or not. If they are not the same, then the curriculum designer may need to rethink the results of the needs analysis or persuade the learners that there is a more useful view of what they need. We can gather such information through an interview or a questionnaire. Questionnaires are notoriously difficult to design well. However a well-designed questionnaire can be a very useful source of information which can be reused for later courses. We could ask the learners what they think will improve their assignment writing and what they want to be able to do regarding assignment writing by the end of the English for academic purposes course.

The main point behind looking at this example is to show that there is a wide range of tools that can be used to analyse needs. They include text analysis, talking with students both past and present, surveying the environment, looking at pieces of work, talking with teachers, employers and assessors, and using personal experience and commonsense. Because needs analysis is basically a kind of research it is important to get the research questions right as soon as possible and use these to guide the choice of methods of data gathering.

Good needs analysis thus covers a range of needs using a range of data-getting tools. Needs are not always clear and are always changing so it is important that needs are looked at from a variety of perspectives at a variety of times. The perspectives can vary according to the type of need (lack, necessities, wants; or present knowledge, required knowledge, objective and subjective needs), the source of information (present learners, past learners, teachers, present tasks and materials, future tasks and materials, future colleagues or future assessors or teachers), the data-gathering tools (text and discourse analysis, frequency counts, interviews, questionnaires, observation, negotiation and discussion, reflection on experience), and the type of information (learning goals, preferred styles of learning, learners' commitment to learning).

The times of needs analysis can include needs analysis before a course begins, needs analysis in the initial stages of a course, and ongoing needs analysis during the running of the course. If a course is to be repeated with different learners, then needs analysis at the end of a course is useful.

Evaluating Needs Analysis

Needs analysis is a kind of assessment and thus can be evaluated by considering its reliability, validity and practicality.

Reliable needs analysis involves using well-thought-out, standardised tools that are applied systematically. Rather than just observing people performing tasks that learners will have to do after the course, it is better to systematise the observation by using a checklist, or by recording and apply standardised analysis procedures. The more pieces of observation and the more people who are studied, the more reliable the results.

Valid needs analysis involves looking at what is relevant and important. Consideration of the type of need that is being looked at and the type of information that is being gathered is important. Before needs analysis begins it may be necessary to do a ranking activity to decide what type of need should get priority in the needs analysis investigation. The worst decision would be to let practicality dominate by deciding to investigate what is easiest to investigate!

Practical needs analysis is not expensive, does not occupy too much of the learners' and teacher's time, provides clear, easy-to-understand results and

can easily be incorporated into the curriculum design process. There will always be a tension between reliable and valid needs analysis and practical needs analysis. A compromise is necessary but validity should always be given priority.

Issues in Needs Analysis

There are several issues in needs analysis that have been the focus of continuing debate. Three are briefly discussed here.

1 **Common core and specialised language** What are the content selection stages that a special purposes language course should follow? From a vocabulary point of view (Nation and Hwang, 1995; Sutarsyah *et al.*, 1994) there is evidence to support the idea that learners should first focus on a common core of 2,000 words, then focus on general academic vocabulary common to a wide range of disciplines (Coxhead, 2000) if their goal is academic reading and writing, and then focus on the specialised vocabulary of their particular disciplines (Chung and Nation, 2004).

Study of vocabulary occurrence shows that this sequence of goals is sensible and generally gives the best return for learning effort. If goals are very focused, it is possible to shorten each step a little, focusing on around 1,600 word families of the common core and about 650 general academic words (Sutarsyah, 1993). It is likely that there is a similar progression for grammatical items, perhaps of two stages with stage 1 consisting of high-frequency widely used grammatical items, and stage 2 focusing on those particular to the text types of the discipline (Biber, 1990). This kind of progression should not be rigidly kept to. It is possible to focus on the content of the discipline using common core vocabulary and a few general academic and technical items. Most of the very-high-frequency content words in a particular discipline are from the common core and general academic vocabulary, for example *price, cost, demand, curve, supply, quantity* in Economics (Sutarsyah *et al.*, 1994).

Table 3.4 Vocabulary stages

Specialised/Technical (approximately 1,000 word families)	Stage 3
General academic (570 word families)	Stage 2
Common core (2,000 word families)	Stage 1

2 **Narrow focus – wide focus** Detailed systems of needs analysis have been set up to determine precisely what language a particular language learner with clear needs should learn (Munby, 1978). The arguments in favour of a narrow focus include the faster meeting of needs, the reduction of the quantity of learning needed, and the motivation that comes from getting an immediate return from being able to apply learning. Hyland (2002) finds support for a narrow focus in social constructionist theory, arguing for the importance of successful communication within a specific discourse community. Such a focus, however, runs the risk of teaching "parole" and not "langue" (De Saussure, 1983), that is, of not teaching the language system so that learners can be flexible and creative in their language use. If language learners have more than very short-term goals for language learning, it is important that their language learning not only satisfies immediate needs but also provides the basis for the development of control of the wider language system.

3 **Critical needs analysis** Benesch (1996) points out with some striking examples that needs analysis is affected by the ideology of those in control of the analysis. That is, the questions they ask, the areas they investigate, and the conclusions they draw are inevitably influenced by their attitudes to change and the status quo. For this reason, it is worth considering a wide range of possible viewpoints when deciding on the focus of needs analysis, and seeking others' views on where change could be made.

Needs analysis makes sure that a course will be relevant and satisfying to the learners. This is such a basic requirement that it is worth giving careful thought to needs analysis procedures. To neglect them is to run the risk of producing a course that does not meet the needs of its users.

Summary of the Steps

1 Discover learner needs by considering lacks, wants and necessities or some other framework.
2 Decide what course content and presentation features will meet these needs.

Needs analysis makes sure the course meets the learners' needs. Environment analysis looks at the way the course needs to fit the situation in which it occurs. Looking at principles makes sure that the course fits with what we know about teaching and learning. That is the subject of the next chapter.

Tasks

Task 1 Needs analysis for a writing course

You have been asked to design a writing course for learners of English who intend to go on to university study in English. As a part of the fact-finding stage you have decided to carry out a needs analysis (Table 3.5).

(a) Decide what kind of information you are looking for and classify it into necessities, lacks or wants.
(b) Decide where you will look to find the information.
(c) List three ways that you will use to gather the information for the writing course (questionnaires etc.).
(d) For each of these three ways prepare some sample items or describe the procedure you will use.

You have now done your needs analysis and have decided how to gather the information you need.

1 List your findings here.

____
____
____
____

2 List three important principles about how you think writing should be learned.

____
____
____

3 Write the general goal for your course.

____
____
____

Table 3.5

Type of information	*Source of the information*	*How the information will be gathered*

4 Choose three types of activities that you will use in your course.

____
____
____

5 Take one of these activities and show how it will fit into your course.

____
____
____
____
____

6 Look critically at your needs analysis to make sure that it is not limited by your own perspectives or a set institutional viewpoint.

Task 2 Evaluating a needs analysis scheme

You recently came across the following scheme (Table 3.6) which is designed to help learners do needs analysis on themselves to guide their own learning. You want to find out if this is a good scheme or not. Note that this is a needs analysis tool that the learners answer themselves. Check the MAFIA focuses and questions against the needs analysis subdivisions of lacks, wants and necessities.

Supporting the learner in self-instruction

1 What questions do you need to ask yourself to evaluate the questions asked in the MAFIA scheme?
2 What do you think of the process of needs analysis used in the MAFIA scheme?

Task 3 Discovering needs

You have been given the job of designing a reading course for ten-year-old primary learners of English. They can read in their own language which uses a similar (but more regular) writing system.

1 List two needs analysis questions you wish to answer.

____
____

2 List the three most important ways that you will use to do a needs analysis.

a ______________________________
b ______________________________
c ______________________________

Table 3.6

Motivation	What is your attitude towards the community whose language you want to learn? How much does it matter if you don't succeed? Do you need to learn the language to be able to achieve certain specific tasks or do you want to learn enough to be accepted as a member of the foreign community?
Aims	What do you want to be able to do in the language? Do you want to communicate in the written or the spoken language? or both? Will it be enough if you just understand the language (at least in the first instance)? For you, is it sufficient to learn just enough language for communication to occur?
Functions	What use will you be making of the language? What kind of situations will you have to perform in? (telephone? lectures? seminars? shops? etc.) What functions of language will you primarily need? (explaining, persuading, seeking information, contradicting etc.) What will your relationship be with the people you will be dealing with? (friends, inferiors, superiors, etc.)
Information	What kind of linguistic information do you need to meet your needs? Which are the most important: technical vocabulary? the precise meaning of intonation? correct pronunciation? a set of ready-made sentences to get by with?
Activities	What do you need to do to learn what you want? How much time can you devote to it? What are your learning habits? Do you like working on your own? Is the Language Lab suitable? Do you need help? (Dictionary, radio, newspapers, grammars, contact with native speakers, etc.) Do you know native speakers who would agree to talk with you in their own language? Do you make full use of other possibilities, e.g., the radio? sub-titled film? etc.

3 Choose one of these ways and give two examples of the procedure, items or questions that you would use.

____
____
____
____

4 Choose one of the ways you listed to do a needs analysis and justify your choice of this method.

____
____
____
____

Case Studies

1. Case studies of needs analysis can be evaluated by looking at (1) the range of types of information gathered in the needs analysis (for example, were objective and subjective needs examined?), (2) the reliability, validity and practicality of the needs analysis procedures, and (3) the quality of the application of the findings of the needs analysis to the other parts of the curriculum design process (that is, were the results of the needs analysis used effectively?). Look at a case study of needs analysis and using the three aspects just mentioned evaluate the quality of the needs analysis. Here are some sample case studies: Bawcom (1995), Bello (1994), Sharkey (1994).

2. **Necessities: examples of needs analysis for a writing course**

   (a) Friederichs and Pierson (1981) collected 507 distinct question patterns from Science exam papers and classified them into 27 categories such as *Discuss, Explain, Describe, List, Show by what manner/means*. This was used to guide the making of writing exercises for EFL university students.

   (b) Horowitz (1986) gathered actual writing assignment handouts and essay examinations given to students in their classes. The 54 tasks gathered were classified into 7 categories:

      1. summary of reaction to reading [9 items]
      2. annotated bibliography [1 item]
      3. report on a special participatory experience [9 items]
      4. connection of theory and data [10 items]
      5. case study [5 samples]
      6. synthesis of multiple sources [15 items]
      7. research project [5 items].

      The information was used to create procedures, strategies and tasks to help ESL students with academic writing.

   (c) Shaw (1991) and Parkhurst (1990) examined the writing processes of science writers through the use of interviews and questionnaires.

Chapter 4 Goals and Objectives

Stating curriculum outcomes

Aims

In curriculum discussions, the terms *goal* and *aim* are used interchangeably to refer to a description of the general purposes of a curriculum and *objec-tive* to refer to a more specific and concrete description of purposes. We will use the terms *aim* and *objective* here. An aim refers to a statement of a gen-eral change that a program seeks to bring about in learners. The purposes of aim statements are:

- to provide a clear definition of t.'le purposes of a program
- to provide guidelines for teachers, learners, and materials writers
- to help provide a focus for instruction
- to describe important and realizable changes in learning

Aims statements reflect the ideology of the curriculum and show how the curriculum will seek to realize it. The following statements describe the aims of teaching English at the primary level in Singapore:

Our pupils learn English in order to:

communicate effectively, in both speech and writing, in everyday situa-tions to meet the demands of society
acquire good reading habits to understand, enjoy, and appreciate a wide range of texts, including the literature of other cultures
develop the ability to express themselves imaginatively and creatively

- acquire thinking skills to make critical and rational judgments
- negotiate their own learning goals and evaluate their own progress
- acquire information and study skills to learn the other subjects taught in English
- cope effectively and efficiently with change, extended learning tasks, and examinations
- acquire knowledge for self-development and for fulfilling personal needs and aspirations
- develop positive attitudes toward constructive ideas and values that are transmitted in oral and/or written forms using the English language
- develop a sensitivity to, and an appreciation of, other varieties of English and the culture they reflect

These statements reflect several of the philosophies discussed in the preceding section. The following are examples of aim statements from different kinds of language programs.

A business English course

- to develop basic communication skills for use in business contexts
- to learn how to participate in casual conversation with other employees in a workplace
- to learn how to write effective business letters

A course for hotel employees

- to develop the communication skills needed to answer telephone calls in a hotel
- to deal with guest inquiries and complaints
- to explain and clarify charges on a guest's bill

Aim statements are generally derived from information gathered during a needs analysis. For example, the following areas of difficulty were some of those identified for non-English-background students studying in English-medium universities:

- understanding lectures
- participating in seminars
- taking notes during lectures
- reading at adequate speed to be able to complete reading assignments
- presenting ideas and information in an organized way in a written assignment

In developing course aims and objectives from this information, each area of difficulty will have to be examined and researched in order to understand

what is involved in understanding lectures, participating in seminars, and so on. What knowledge and skills does each activity imply? Normally the overall aims of a short course can be described in two or three aim statements; however, in a course spanning a longer time period, such as the primary school course referred to earlier, a greater number of aim statements will be needed.

In developing aim statements, it is important to describe more than simply the activities that students will take part in. The following, for example, are not aims:

Students will learn about business-letter writing in English.
Students will study listening skills.
Students will practice composition skills in English.
Students will learn English for tourism.

For these to become aims, they need to focus on the changes in the learners that will result. For example:

Students will learn how to write effective business letters for use in the hotel and tourism industries.
Students will learn how to listen effectively in conversational interactions and how to develop better listening strategies.
Students will learn how to communicate information and ideas creatively and effectively through writing.
Students will be able to communicate in English at a basic level for purposes of tourism.

Objectives

Aims are very general statements of the goals of a program. They can be interpreted in many different ways. For example, consider the following aim statement:

Students will learn how to write effective business letters for use in the hotel and tourism industries.

Although this provides a clear description of the focus of a program, it does not describe the kinds of business letters students will learn or clarify what is meant by effective business letters. In order to give a more precise focus to program goals, aims are often accompanied by statements of more specific purposes. These are known as *objectives.* (They are also sometimes referred to as *instructional objectives* or *teaching objectives.*) An objective refers to a statement of specific changes a program seeks to bring about and

results from an analysis of the aim into its different components. Objectives generally have the following characteristics:

- They describe what the aim seeks to achieve in terms of smaller units of learning.
- They provide a basis for the organization of teaching activities.
- They describe learning in terms of observable behavior or performance.

The advantages of describing the aims of a course in terms of objectives are:

- They facilitate planning: once objectives have been agreed on, course planning, materials preparation, textbook selection, and related processes can begin.
- They provide measurable outcomes and thus provide accountability: given a set of objectives, the success or failure of a program to teach the objectives can be measured.
- They are prescriptive: they describe how planning should proceed and do away with subjective interpretations and personal opinions.

In relation to the activity of "understanding lectures" referred to above, for example, aims and objectives such as the following can be described (Brown 1995):

Aim

- *Students will learn how to understand lectures given in English.*

Objectives

- *Students will be able to follow an argument, theme, or thesis of a lecture.*
- *Students will learn how to recognize the following aspects of a lecture:*
  cause-and-effect relationships
  comparisons and contrasts
  premises used in persuasive arguments
  supporting details used in persuasive arguments

Statements of objectives have the following characteristics:

Objectives describe a learning outcome. In writing objectives, expressions like *will study, will learn about, will prepare students for* are avoided because they do not describe the result of learning but rather what students will do during a course. Objectives can be described with phrases like *will have, will learn how to, will be able to.* (For exceptions, see the next section, "Nonlanguage outcomes and process objectives" on page 133.)

Objectives should be consistent with the curriculum aim. Only objectives that clearly serve to realize an aim should be included. For example, the ob-

jective below is unrelated to the curriculum aim *Students will learn how to write effective business letters for use in the hotel and tourism industries.*

Objective
The student can understand and respond to simple questions over the telephone.

Because the aim relates to writing business letters, an objective in the domain of telephone skills is not consistent with this aim. Either the aim statement should be revised to allow for this objective or the objective should not be included.

Objectives should be precise. Objectives that are vague and ambiguous are not useful. This is seen in the following objective for a conversation course:

Students will know how to use useful conversation expressions.

A more precise objective would be:

Students will use conversation expressions for greeting people, opening and closing conversations.

Objectives should be feasible. Objectives should describe outcomes that are attainable in the time available during a course. The following objective is probably not attainable in a 60-hour English course:

Students will be able to follow conversations spoken by native speakers.

The following is a more feasible objective:

Students will be able to get the gist of short conversations in simple English on topics related to daily life and leisure.

The following objectives (adapted from Pratt 1980) from a short course on English for travel and tourism designed to prepare students for travel in English-speaking countries illustrate the relationship between aims and objectives:

Course aim
To prepare students to communicate in English at a basic level for purposes of travel and tourism.

Course objectives
1. The student will have a reading vocabulary of 300 common words and abbreviations.

2. The student will have a listening vocabulary of 300 common words plus numbers up to 100.
3. The student can understand simple written notices, signs, and menus.
4. The student can understand simple questions, statements, greetings, and directions.
5. The student can get the gist of simple conversations in spoken English.
6. The student can pick out unfamiliar phrases from conversations and repeat them for clarification.
7. The student can use in speech 200 common words plus numbers up to 100 for time, quantity, and price.
8. The student can use about 50 useful survival phrases, questions, requests, greetings, statements, and responses.
9. The student can hold a bilingual conversation, speaking English slowly and clearly in simple words.
10. The student can use and understand appropriate gestures.
11. The student will have the confidence to initiate conversations in English, be unafraid of making mistakes, and attempt utterances outside his or her competence.
12. The student will be willing to learn from a native speaker's correction of his or her errors.
13. The student will have a "success experience" of making himself or herself understood in, and understand, a foreign language.

Frankel (1983, 124) gives the example of aims and objectives for a course in foundation reading skills for first-year university students in a Thai university:

Aim
To read authentic, nonspecialist, nonfiction texts in English with comprehension and at a reasonable speed.

Objectives
1. To use linguistic information in the text as clues to meaning, including:
   - deducing the meaning and use of unfamiliar lexical items through an understanding of word formation and context clues
   - decoding complex phrases and sentences including premodification, postmodification, complex embedding, and clause relations in compound and complex sentences
   - recognizing and interpreting formal cohesive devices for linking different parts of a text
   - recognizing and interpreting discourse markers

2. To understand the communicative value of a text, including:
   - its overall rhetorical purpose (e.g., giving instructions, reporting an event)
   - its rhetorical structure, including ways of initiating, developing, and terminating a discourse
3. To read for information, including:
   - identifying the topic (theme)
   - identifying the main ideas, stated and implied
   - distinguishing between the topic and the main idea
   - reading for detail
   - distinguishing important from unimportant details
   - skimming to obtain the gist or a general impression of the semantic content
   - scanning to locate specifically required information
4. To read interpretatively including:
   - extracting information not explicitly stated by making inferences
   - distinguishing fact from opinion
   - interpreting the writer's intention, attitude, and bias
   - making critical judgments

Examples of objectives for the teaching of listening comprehension from the Singapore Primary Syllabus referred to earlier are:

At the end of the course, pupils should be able to demonstrate listening competence in the following ways:

- recognize and distinguish the basic sounds and phonological features of the English language
- understand and carry out instructions (simple to complex) given orally
- answer questions of differing levels based on what is heard
- recognize a range of spoken and written text types/speech situations and respond appropriately when required
- recognize discourse features in extended spoken texts in order to follow effectively what is spoken (e.g., words/expressions signaling, introduction, conclusion, exemplification, digression)
- observe conversation etiquette as a listener in group discussion
- listen critically for a specific purpose and respond appropriately

The difficulty of drawing up statements of objectives should not be underestimated. In developing language objectives one is doing more than creating a wish list off the top of one's head (though in the real world this is what

often happens). Sound objectives in language teaching are based on an understanding of the nature of the subject matter being taught (e.g., listening, speaking, reading, writing), an awareness of attainable levels of learning for basic, intermediate, or advanced-level learners, and the ability to be able to describe course aims in terms of logical and well-structured units of organization. Objectives are therefore normally produced by a group of teachers or planners who write sample objectives based on their knowledge and experience and revise and refine them over time. In developing objectives, it is necessary to make use of a variety of sources, such as diagnostic information concerning students' learning difficulties, descriptions of skilled performance in different language domains, information about different language levels as is found in the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines* (see Chapter 6), as well as characterizations of the skills involved in different domains of language use (see Appendix 2). Objectives cannot therefore be regarded as fixed. As instruction proceeds, some may have to be revised, some dropped because they are unrealistic, and others added to address gaps.

Chapter 5

Syllabuses

Table 1.4 Syllabuses

SYLLABUSES	WAYS OF ORGANIZING COURSES AND MATERIALS
Structural	Grammatical and phonological structures are the organizing principles—sequenced from easy to difficult or frequent to less frequent
Situational	Situations (such as at the bank, at the supermarket, at a restaurant, and so forth) form the organizing principle—sequenced by the likelihood students will encounter them (structural sequence may be in background)
Topical	Topics or themes (such as health, food, clothing, and so forth) form the organizing principle—sequenced by the likelihood that students will encounter them (structural sequence may be in background)
Functional	Functions (such as identifying, reporting, correcting, describing, and so forth) are the organizing principle—sequenced by some sense of chronology or usefulness of each function (structural and situational sequences may be in background)
Notional	Conceptual categories called notions (such as duration, quantity, location, and so forth) are the basis of organization—sequenced by some sense of chronology or usefulness of each notion (structural and situational sequences may be in background)
Skills	Skills (such as listening for gist, listening for main ideas, listening for inferences, scanning a reading passage for specific information, and so forth) serve as the basis for organization sequenced by some sense of chronology or usefulness for each skill (structural and situational sequences may be in background)
Task	Task or activity-based categories (such as drawing maps, following directions, following instructions, and so forth) serve as the basis for organization—sequenced by some sense of chronology or usefulness of notions (structural and situational sequences may be in background)

Situational Syllabuses

According to McKay, situational syllabuses are based on the idea that language is found in different contexts, or situations. Consequently, the organization in a situational syllabus will be based on common situations like the following: ei n party, at the beach, in a tourist shop, at the airport, at a theater, in a taxi, at a hotel, in a restaurant, and the like. The selection of situations is usually based on some feeling for the likelihood that the students will encounter such situations. The sequencing usually moves from situation to situation based, perhaps, on chronology or based on the relative likelihood that students will encounter the situations in question. For instance, based on a mixture of chronology and likelihood, the situations listed above would probably make more sense in the following sequence: *at the airport,* fD fi /uzz, aJ e *hotel in a restaurant, at the beach, in a tourist shop, at a theater,* and *at a party.*

A selection of main headings from the table of contents of Brixton and Neu- man (1982) reveals an overall organizational structure that is basically situational:

Introductions Getting acquainted
At the housing office
Deciding to live together
Let's have coffee
Looking for an apartment

Topical Syllabuses

A number of language texts are organized on the basis of what might be called *tropical syllabuses.* McKay does not discuss this category, but I will. Topical syllabuses are similar to situational syllabuses. However, they are organized by topics or themes, rather than situations. Typically, the topics are selected by the textbook author on the basis of his or her sense of the importance of the topics or themes to the lives of the students for whom the text is designed. For reasons unclear to me, such syllabuses often include such happy topics as *divorce, single parents, abortion, crime, terrorizes, nuclear disasters,* and so on. The topics are often sequenced on the basis of their perceived importance or on the basis of the relative difficulty of the reading passages involved.
Some of the main headings from the table of contents of Smith and Mare (1990) will illustrate a topical syllabus:

Unit I Trends in Living

1 A Cultural Difference: Being on Time
2 Working Hard or Hardly Working
3 Changing Lifestyles and New Eating Habits Unit II Issues in Society
4 Loneliness
5 Can Stress Make You Sick?
6 Care of the Elderly

Functional Syllabuses

McKay also identified a category of syllabuses that she called "notional syllabuses," which focus on "semantic uses." I will call such syllabuses *functional syllabuses* because this label more correctly designates the principle around which such materials are typically organized: semantic uses, or meaning packets, called functions (after van Ek & Alexander 1980). For instance, an English course in an adult school in Utrecht, Holland, might be designed to teach general—purpose social English, and be organized around language functions like *seeking information, interrupting, changing a topic, saying good-bye, giving information,* introducing *someone, greeting people,* and the like.

Authors select functions on the basis of their perceived usefulness to the students and then sequence them on the basis of some idea of chronology, frequency, or hierarchy of usefulness of the functions. For instance, a more logical sequence for the functions listed above might be *greeting people, introducing someone, seeking information,* **g/rf/fg** ft/orwa/iou, *interrupting,* changing *topics, and saying good-bye.*

A few of the headings from the table of contents of Jones and Baeyer (1983) will exemplify a typical functional syllabus:

1. Talking about yourself, starting a conversation, making a date
2. Asking for information: question techniques, answering techniques, getting more information
Getting people to do th3ıgs: requesting, attracting attention, agreeing and refusing
4. Tallying about past events: remembering, describing experiences, imagining *What if ...*
Conversation techniques,5hesitating, preventing interruptions and interrupting politely, bringing people together

Notional Syllabuses

A related class of syllabuses, not mentioned by McKay, that could best be labeled *notional syllabuses* is organized around abstract conceptual categories called general notions (again, after van Ek & Alexander 1980). General notions include concepts like *distance, duration, quantify, quality, location, Size,* and so on. This type of materials organization is related to functional organization and on occasion serves as a general set of categories within which functions form subcategories. The author selects general notions based on their perceived utility, and then sequences them according to chronology, frequency, or the utility of the notions involved.

A sample of the unit headings from the table of contents of Hall & Bowyer (1980) suggests what a notional syllabus looks like:

Unit 1	Properties and Shapes
Unit 2	Location Structure
Unit 3	Measurement 1 [of solid figures] Process 1 Function and Ability
Unit 4 Unit S Unit 6	Actions in Sequence

Note that using the phrase *notional syllabuses N* this way breaks with the common perception that notional syllabuses, functional syllabuses, and notional-functional syllabuses are all the same things. The phrases *notional syllabuses* and *functional syllabuses* are being used separately here to represent two distinct, though related, types of syllabuses: one organized around general notion and the other organized around language functions.

Skills-Based Syllabuses

A number of different *skills-based syllabuses* have also emerged over the years. An author who uses a skills-based syllabus organizes materials around the language or academic skills that he or she thinks the students will most need in order to use and continue to learn the language. For instance, a reading course might include such skills as *skimming a reading for the general idea, scanning a reading for specific information, using prefixes, suffixes, and roots, finding main ideas,* and the like. The selection of skills is based on the' author's perception of their usefulness, while their sequencing is usually based on some sense of the chronology, frequency, or relative usefulness of the skills.
Some of the main headings from the table of contents of Barr, Clegg, and Wallace (1983) will provide an example of a skills-based syllabus:

Scanning Key Words

Topic Sentences Reference Words Connectors

Task-Based Syllabuses

Recently, *task-based syllabuses* have begun to appear. Authors who favor task-based syllabuses organize materials around different types of tasks that the students might be required to perform in the language. Such tasks might include *reading job ads,* ending *appointments, writing a resume,*

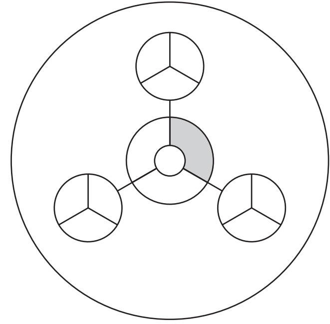
being interviewed, solving a problem, and so on.

A sample of the main headings from the table of contents of jolly (1984) provides an example of a task-based syllabus:

1. Writing notes and memos
2. Writing personal letters
3. Writing telegrams
4. personal ads, and instructions
5. Writing descriptions
6. Reporting experiences
7. Writing to companies and officials

Chapter 6

Format and Presentation



The aim of this part of the curriculum design process is to choose the teaching and learning techniques and design the lesson plans.

Format and Other Parts of the Curriculum Design Process

It is at the format and presentation part of the curriculum design process that the data gathered from needs and environment analysis, and the principles chosen to maximise learning come together in activities that involve the learners. Most of the decisions made regarding constraints, needs, principles, content and sequencing will only be indirectly observable through the format and presentation of the lessons. But these decisions must come through into the lesson format or the work done on these aspects of curriculum design has been wasted, and the course might not suit the environment or learners for which it is intended, and might not apply what is known about teaching and learning.

Guidelines for Deciding on a Format

Format and presentation must take account of the environment in which the course will be used, the needs of the learners, and principles of teaching and learning. Table 6.1 lists some of the factors to consider.

A problem facing the curriculum designer is how to communicate the reasons why each lesson is like it is. If both teachers and learners are aware of the goals of each activity, why they are useful goals, how the activity should be best presented to achieve the goal, what kind of learning involvement is needed, and the signs of successful involvement, then learning is more likely to be successful. There is plenty of evidence to show that teachers and learners do not share the same view of parts of a lesson (Block, 1994), and that the learners sometimes do activities in ways that defeat the purpose of the activity (Hosenfield, 1976). Information about the lesson can occur in several different places in a course. Probably the most useful place is in the headings and instructions for each activity in a lesson.

If the lessons always follow the same format, then the introduction to the course book can include some explanation of the goals and how they are best

Table 6.1 Format guidelines based on environment and needs

ENVIRONMENT	*Learners*	The layout of the content should attract the learners. The learners should have the skills to do the activities. The activities should take account of whether the learners share the same first language. The activities should be suitable for a range of levels of proficiency in a class. The activities should suit the size of the class. The activities should fit the learning styles of the learners.
	Teachers	The activities should be able to be presented and managed by the teacher [e.g. the teacher should be able to organise group work].
	Situation	The course book should be easy to carry. The material in the course or the course book should not be too expensive. The amount of material in a lesson should suit the length of a class. The activities should suit the physical features of the classroom [e.g. move desks for group work; sound proof for oral work].
NEEDS	*Lacks*	The learners should be able to successfully complete the activities.
	Wants	The activities should take account of what the learners expect to do in a language learning course.
	Necessities	The kinds of activities should be useful to the learners in their future use or future learning of the language [e.g. knowing how to rank; knowing how to negotiate].
PRINCIPLES	1 **Motivation:** As much as possible, the learners should be interested and excited about learning the language and they should come to value this learning. 2 **Four strands:** A course should include a roughly even balance of meaning-focused input, language-focused learning, meaning-focused output and fluency activities. 3 **Comprehensible input:** There should be substantial quantities of interesting comprehensible receptive activity in both listening and reading. 4 **Fluency:** A language course should provide activities aimed at increasing the fluency with which learners can use the language they already know, both receptively and productively. 5 **Output:** The learners should be pushed to produce the language in both speaking and writing over a range of discourse types.	

(*Continued overleaf*)

Table 6.1 Continued

	6 **Deliberate learning:** The course should include language-focused learning on the sound system, spelling, vocabulary, grammar and discourse areas.
	7 **Time on task:** As much time as possible should be spent using and focusing on the second language.
	8 **Depth of processing:** Learners should process the items to be learned as deeply and as thoughtfully as possible.
	9 **Integrative motivation:** A course should be presented so that the learners have the most favourable attitudes to the language, to users of the language, to the teacher's skill in teaching the language, and to their chance of success in learning the language.
	10 **Learning style:** There should be opportunity for learners to work with the learning material in ways that most suit their individual learning style.

reached. In some course books, for example *The Cambridge English Course* (Swan and Walter, 1985), a detailed table of contents ("a map of the book") indicates the various new points of focus. Many courses have a special teacher's book, which then gives the teacher the responsibility for informing the learners of the goals and how to learn.

The four strands

As we have seen in Chapter 4 on principles, it is important that a language course provides a balanced range of opportunities for learning. One way of trying to check this balance of opportunities is to see a course as consisting of four strands which are each given a roughly equal amount of time (Nation, 2007). These four strands are meaning-focused input, meaning-focused output, language-focused learning and fluency development.

Meaning-focused input

Meaning-focused input involves having the opportunity to learn from listening and speaking. Krashen (1981) would call it learning from comprehensible input. The conditions which are needed for such learning are a low density of unknown items in the language input, a focus on the meaning of the message, and a large quantity of input. In language courses, the most important way of providing a large amount of comprehensible input is to have an extensive reading programme. This involves the learners in reading books which have been specially written for learners of English in a controlled vocabulary. There are many series of such books and there are hundreds

of such books. They are an excellent resource for meaning-focused input. For learners at elementary and intermediate levels an extensive reading programme is an essential part of any general English course. There also needs to be the listening equivalent of such a course. Many graded reading books now are accompanied by a CD. Learners can listen while they read, or read first and listen later. Where the listening is not accompanied by visual clues, it is more difficult to learn from listening than from reading. Repeated listening is thus a very useful activity, and Elley (1989) found that he had to provide three listening opportunities for the same story to be able to measure reasonable learning from listening input. Another major source of meaning-focused input in a course comes from interacting with others. One person's output can be another person's input. An advantage of interactive listening is that the listener can negotiate the meaning of the input with the speaker. That is, they can ask the meaning of words or constructions and they can ask for a repetition of poorly heard material. They can also control the speed of the input by asking the speaker to speak more slowly. A course can usefully include material which trains the learners in such negotiation. This training can include learning the phrases which are needed to seek information about input, and which can control the speed and repetition of the input.

It is important that a course should apply the "time on task" principle. That is, if reading is a goal of the course, there should be plenty of reading activity. If listening is a goal of a course, there should be plenty of listening activity. A problem with some reading courses is that they provide a lot of activities for the learners but not large quantities of reading.

Meaning-focused output

Meaning-focused output involves learning through speaking and writing. Learning by input alone is not sufficient because the knowledge needed to comprehend input does not include all the knowledge which is needed to produce output. A well-balanced language course spends about one quarter of the course time on meaning-focused speaking and writing.

Meaning-focused speaking should involve the learners in conversation and also in monologue. The conversation can have a largely social focus and can also be used for conveying important information. That is, there should be practice in both interactional and transactional language use (Brown, 1978). The conditions for meaning-focused output are similar to those for meaning-focused input. There should be a focus on the message (that is getting the listener or the reader to understand), the task should be demanding but not too demanding, and there should be plenty of opportunity for such activity.

If a language course has the goal of developing skill in writing, then there needs to be regular meaning-focused writing. This can involve writing

letters to other students or to the teacher, keeping a diary, writing essays and assignments, writing brief notes to get things done, writing stories and poems, writing descriptions, writing instructions, and persuasive writing.

If the language course has the goal of developing skill in speaking, then there needs to be regular meaning-focused speaking. This can involve information gap activities, short talks, conversation while doing a task, problem-solving discussions and role plays.

Language-focused learning

Language-focused learning involves a deliberate focus on language features such as pronunciation, spelling, word parts, vocabulary, collocations, grammatical constructions and discourse features. Language-focused learning is an efficient way of quickly learning language features. It is an important part of any language course and about one quarter of the course time should be spent on such learning. In most courses too much time is spent on such learning, and this means that there is less opportunity for learning through the other three strands of the course. The answer is not to completely remove language-focused learning from the course, but to make sure that there is an appropriate amount of it.

Language-focused learning can have two major effects. It can result in deliberate conscious knowledge of language items. This explicit knowledge can be helpful in making learners aware of language features which they will meet in input. This awareness can help learning from input. Language-focused learning can also result in subconscious implicit knowledge of language items. This is the kind of knowledge which is needed for normal language use. Deliberate learning of vocabulary items can result in both kinds of knowledge (Elgort, 2007). For most grammatical features however deliberate learning is likely only to contribute to conscious knowledge. Such conscious knowledge can be useful when learners have time to check their production as in writing, but it is also useful as a stepping stone to implicit knowledge when the items are later met in meaning-focused input or fluency-development activities.

Here are some of the activities which could occur in the language-focused learning strand of course – intensive reading, pronunciation practice, guided writing, spelling practice, blank-filling activities, sentence completion or sentence combining activities, getting feedback on written work, correction during speaking activities, learning vocabulary from word cards, memorising collocations, dictation and the explicit study of discourse features.

There is a large variety of language-focused learning activities and many of them are effective in keeping the learners busy but do not make the best use of time for language learning. We will look critically at some of these activities later in this chapter.

Language-focused learning is a very important part of the language course, and there is now plenty of research to show that it can make very effective contributions to language learning.

Fluency development

The fourth strand of a course is a fluency development strand. Fluency involves making the best use of what is already known. Thus, the fluency development strand of a course does not involve the learning of new language features, but involves becoming fluent with features that the learners have already met before. The conditions for the fluency development strand are: (1) easy, familiar material, (2) a focus on communicating messages, (3) some pressure to perform at a faster speed, and (4) plenty of opportunities for fluency practice.

There needs to be fluency practice in each of the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Listening fluency practice can involve listening to stories, taking part in interactive activities, and listening to lectures on familiar material. Speaking fluency activities can involve repeated speaking where learners deliver the same talk several times to different listeners, speaking on very familiar topics, reading familiar material aloud, and speaking about what has already been spoken or written about before. Reading fluency activities should involve a speed reading course within a controlled vocabulary. Such courses can bring about substantial fluency improvement with just a few minutes practice two or three times a week for most learners (Chung and Nation, 2006). Such courses need to be within a controlled vocabulary because they should not contain vocabulary which is unfamiliar to the learners. It is very difficult to develop fluency when working with material which contains unknown language features. Other reading fluency activities include repeated reading where the learners read the same text several times, and extensive reading involving very easy graded readers. Writing fluency activities involve the learners in writing about things where they bring a lot of previous knowledge. A very useful activity in this strand is ten-minute writing. In this activity, two or three times a week, the teacher gets the learners to write under timed conditions, that is for exactly ten minutes. The teacher does not mark any of the errors in the writing but comments on the content of the writing perhaps suggesting what the learners should write more about next time. The learners record the number of words per minute they have written on a graph. Their goal is to increase the number of words per minute written. Other writing fluency activities include linked skills activities. Linked skills activities are very effective for fluency development in all of the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. A linked skills activity involves learners working on the same material while moving through a series of changes, for example, from listening to the material, to talking about it, and then to writing about it. Usually we would expect to see three skills

linked together, such as reading, then writing, and then speaking. The last activity in a series of linked skills is usually a fluency activity, because by this time the learners are very familiar with the material and can work with it at a faster speed.

Table 6.2 summarises and expands on the conditions and activities for each of the four strands. A reasonably straightforward way to evaluate if a course is well balanced or not is to keep a list of activities done over a period of time recording how much time was spent on each activity. The activities should then be classified into each of the four strands and the amount of time added up for each strand. The amount of time for each of the four strands should be roughly equal.

Table 6.2 Activities and conditions for the four strands

Strand	*Conditions*	*Activities*
Meaning-focused input	A focus on the message Only a small amount of unfamiliar language features A large quantity of input	Listening to stories Extensive reading Listening while reading Communicative activities
Meaning-focused output	A focus on the message Only a small amount of unfamiliar language features A large quantity of output	Short talks Communicative activities Writing stories and assignments Letter writing
Language-focused learning	A deliberate focus on language features	Pronunciation practice Spelling practice Learning vocabulary from word cards Intensive reading Grammar study Substitution tables and drills Dictation Feedback and correction
Fluency development	Focus on the message No unfamiliar language features Pressure to go faster A large quantity of practice	Listening to stories Linked skills activities Easy extensive reading Repeated reading Speed reading Ten-minute writing

REFERENCES

Graves, K. (2000). *Designing language courses: A guide for teachers*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.

Nation, I.S.P & Macalister J. (2010). *Language curriculum design*. New York: Routledge.

Richards, Jack C. (2001). *Curriculum development in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tomlinson, B. & Hitomi Masubara. (2004). *Developing language course materials*. Singapore: SEAMO Regional Language Center.