

1.6. Format and presentation

Designing lessons

Provide a balance of learning opportunities across the four strands

1.6.1. Blocks and threads

Two ways of planning a lesson:

Block lesson → the lesson has a set format and is complete within itself, e.g., include listening and reading input, language-focused activity, and meaning-focused output

☺ once the type of block is chosen, the lesson requires very little planning

Threads → themes/ language/ activities/ skills that can be used again and again with minimal planning and small changes

Threads	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Animals vocabulary thread	Parts of cat's body	Review + cat verbs	Review + cat metaphors	Review and start fish vocabulary	Review and start fish vocabulary
Tenses thread	Regular past simple first person	Review + all persons	Review + negatives	Review + some irregulars	Review and start 'Did you ...?' questions

☺ opportunity for spaced repetition

☺ no need to keep explaining new techniques and procedures

1.6.2. Techniques and activities

Four major types:

- **Experience activities** → keep as much as possible of the knowledge needed to perform the activity within the learners' previous experience; mainly meaning-focused fluency, e.g. simplified reading
- **Shared activities** → learners achieving through group work what they could not achieve by working alone.
 - keeping all learners active,
 - allowing negotiated meaning-focused communication,
 - providing substantial quantity of language input and output.
- **Guided activities** → learners doing already partly completed tasks, e.g., substitution activity
- **Independent activities** → learners work with no assistance or preparation ; draw on their skills and make use of other resources; are in control of their own learning.

1.6.3. Preplanned teaching materials

Opponents of textbooks:

- Textbooks are for poor teachers, those without imagination.
- Textbooks embody cultural differences in attitudes.
- Textbooks fail to present appropriate and realistic language models.
- Textbooks fail to contextualize language activities.

Proponent of textbooks:

- Textbooks are the most convenient structuring tool:
 - ***The context of the classroom*** → lesson is an interaction between teacher, learners, and materials → the greatest need is to *manage* interaction effectively managed to maximize learning:
 - Learners cite *content* as their main reason ; a ‘framework’ or ‘guide’ ; e.g., doing homework, preparing for tests, etc.
 - Teachers see *managing their lessons* as their main reason: saves time, gives direction to lessons, making teaching easier, etc.
 - ***The context of the lesson*** → classes are unpredictable and threatening → social routinization: the process of making classroom interaction stereotyped => provides the structure and predictability
 - ***The wider learning context*** → lesson is one of an incremental sequence of teaching units, leading to larger objective → there is a need for a map
 - Necessity of a map:
 - *Negotiation.* → this is an essential element of any interaction ; textbooks provide something to negotiate about
 - *Accountability* → stakeholders may need to know what is being done in the classroom + claim the right to influence what is taught in the classroom
 - *Orientation* → teachers and learners need to be able to orient themselves in relation to what goes on in other classrooms → to maintain a degree of standardization across different classes
- Textbooks can be agent for (curriculum) change
 - textbook can introduce changes gradually within a structured framework
 - adjustment to change requires support and relief from other burdens
 - People need to know what the change will look like → textbook can provide a complete picture
 - people feel more confident about change if supported by others → textbook gets the support of the group behind the individual teacher
- Textbooks assist inexperienced teachers to come to terms with content
- Textbooks enjoy the potential of teacher guide as a medium of ongoing professional development

Two key positions on the role of textbooks:

- **Deficiency view** → compensate for teachers' deficiencies and ensure that the syllabus is covered using well thought out exercises → 'good' teachers always know what materials to use with a given class and can create them
- **Difference view** → see materials as carriers of decisions best made by someone other than the teacher because of differences in expertise → proponents argue these are better

1.7. Monitoring and Assessment

Self-study

1.8. Evaluation

Looks at all aspects of curriculum design to see if the course is the best possible

Formative vs. Summative evaluation

formative evaluation → carried out during the development and implementation of a program ; Purpose: shaping or modifying aspects of the course to ensure the efficiency of the program

processes involved in formative evaluation:

internal assessment → what the program is supposed to be (e.g., objectives evaluation & content-based review),

external assessment → determine how it can most effectively produce the intended outcomes through field testing

summative evaluation → carried out at the completion of a course or program ; Purpose: making a summary or judgment on the quality of the course so that it can be compared with other courses, compared with previous summative evaluations, judged as being up to a certain criterion or not

➔ to support decisions about the continuation or modification of the program

	Formative	Summative
Purpose	Improve the course	Judge the course
Type of data	More likely to look at causes	More likely to look at results
Use of data	Used for counselling and professional development	Used to make decisions on adequacy
Presentation of findings	Presented to and discussed with individuals	Presented in a report

Long term vs. Short term evaluation

Long-term evaluation can be done in the following ways:

- Parts of the curriculum design can be negotiated between the teacher and the learners.
- The staff hold regular meetings to discuss the progress of the course.
- Learners periodically fill course evaluation forms.
- An outside evaluator is invited to evaluate aspects of the course.

Process vs. Product evaluation

Process observations of learning look at

how engaged learners are in their tasks

the quality of the interaction between learners and between the teacher and the learners

quantity and quality of the language used

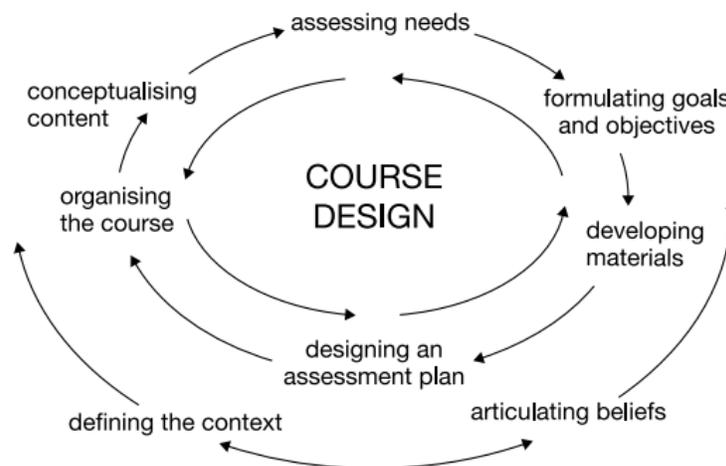
Product observations of learning look at what was learned and how much was learned

2. CURRICULUM DESIGN STRATEGIES

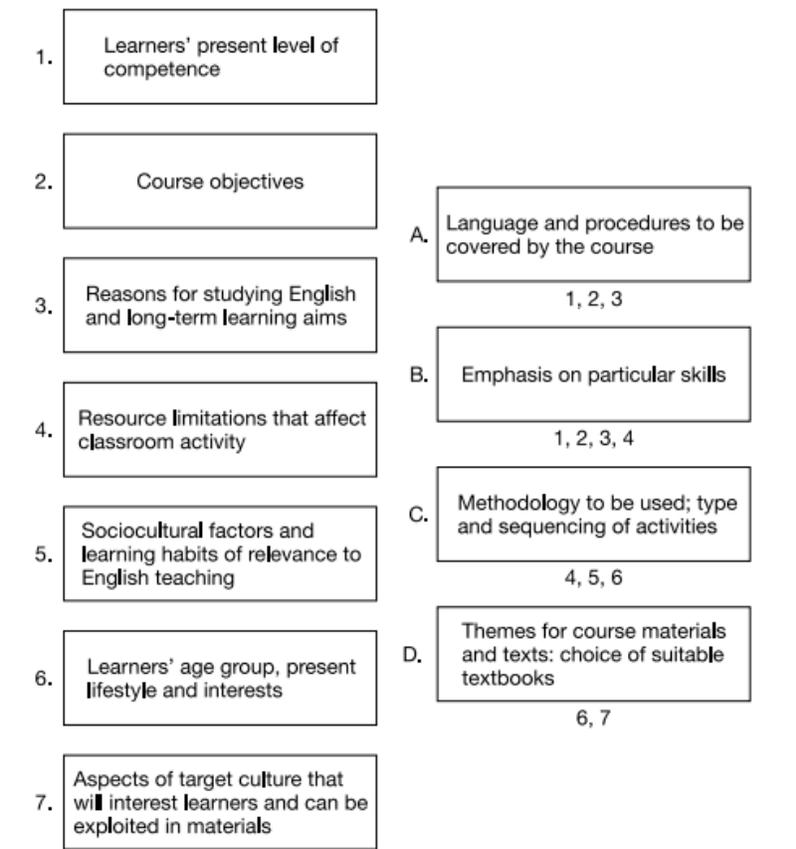
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3. OTHER APPROACHES TO CURRICULUM DESIGN

Kathleen Graves (2000):



George Murdoch (1989):



4. DOING CURRICULUM DESIGN

Two main factors

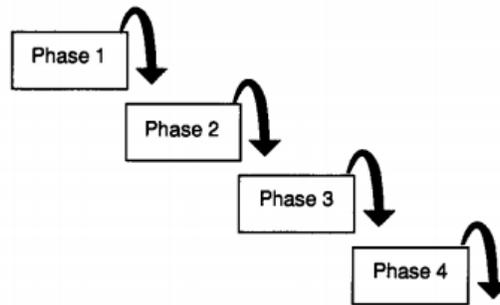
- What is already available?
- How will we move through the process of curriculum design (model)?

4.1. A Waterfall Model (Maher & Ingram, 1989)

It is sequential

One stage is done thoroughly, and then the next stage, and so on → the output of one stage becomes the input of the next.

All components are considered “required” ↔ none are given “optional” status



Applied in the design of the commercial course book, or in a well-funded curriculum design project

Note: No component has a good-enough-for-now indicator

4.2. Focused Opportunistic Approach

Format and presentation part is done first: material is prepared to teach → with each re-teaching of the course, one part of the curriculum design process is done thoroughly

This do-what-you-can-when-you-can approach carried out when time-pressured

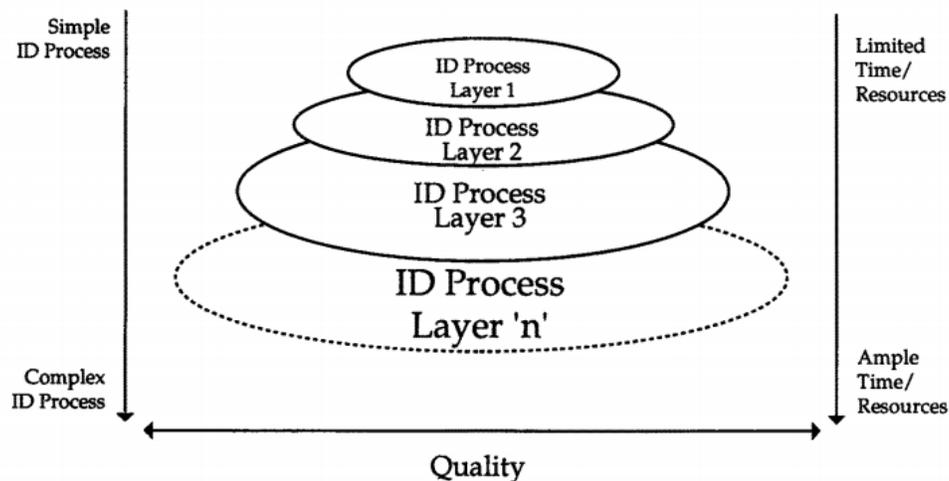
Criticized from the point of view of efficiency

Attractive for a concentrated focus with possible high-quality improvements

4.3. Layers of Necessity Model

A choice between various layers:

each layer is complete in itself and includes the major parts of the curriculum design
each layer differs in the detail and thoroughness



Note: Once the level of necessity has been chosen, all the steps should be done with roughly the same degree of thoroughness