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Backward Design

This curriculum approach begins with a specification of learning outputs and to use these as the basis for developing instructional processes and input. Backward design starts with a careful statement of the desired results or outcomes: appropriate teaching activities and content are derived from the very results of learning. It is also known as *ends-means' approach*.

Backward Design approach process

- Step 1: Diagnosis of needs
- Step 2: Formulation of objectives
- Step 3: Selection of content
- Step 4: Organization of content
- Step 5: Selection of learning experiences
- Step 6: Organization of learning experiences
- Step 7: Determination of what to evaluate and of the ways of doing it

There steps in Backward Design approach by Wiggins and McTighe

- Identify desired results
- Determine acceptable evidence of learning.
- Plan learning experiences and instruction

Competency-Based Instruction within Backward Design Approach

The process consisted of:

- Needs analysis
- Identify topics for the survival curriculum (e.g. banking, health, shopping).
- Identify target tasks, design tasks.
- Identify competencies for each topic.
- Group competencies into instructional units
- Identify the language knowledge and skills needed for each instructional unit
- Choose instructional materials

Subject-centered Design

The main focus is on curriculum development (not human development) with subject specialists developing —high standards for student uniformity. The main goal and purpose is to standardize students, to make them alike with a —core curriculum.

Learner-centered Design

This approach places the learner at the center of the pedagogic process and sees education not as a matter of receiving information but of intelligent inquiry and thought.

A *learner-centered curriculum* will contain similar elements to those contained in *traditional curriculum* development, that is, planning (including needs analysis, goal and objective setting), implementation (including methodology and material development) and evaluation. However, the main difference between learner centered and traditional curriculum development is that in the former the curriculum is a collaborative effort between teachers and learners.

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Forward Design

A forward design option may be preferred in circumstances where:

- A mandated curriculum is in place
- Class size is large
- Teachers have little choice over what and how to teach
- Teachers have limited English language proficiency
- Teachers rely mainly on textbooks and commercial materials rather than teacher-designed resources

Central design approaches do not require teachers to plan detailed learning outcomes to conduct needs analysis or to follow a prescribed syllabus; hence they often give teachers a considerable degree of autonomy and control over the teacher learning process.

Method-based approaches require teachers to understand the obscure theory underlying the method as well as ways to master techniques and procedures that may initially prove difficult.

ELT Curriculum: Content Model

The central focus of the curriculum in this model is the content of what is to be learned by, or transmitted to the learner. In the *Classical Humanist* tradition, the content is a valued cultural heritage, the understanding of which contributes to the overall intellectual development of the learner

ELT Curriculum: Objectives Model

Its origins lie in the movement for scientific management of education and the work of behavioral psychologists in the first half of the twentieth century, who defined learning as a process of observable changes in behavior which could be measured.

Behavioral objectives has three essential characteristics

1. They must unambiguously describe the behavior to be performed.
2. They must describe the conditions under which the performance will be expected to occur.
3. They must state a standard of acceptable performance (the criterion).

Attraction of Objectives Model

- Clarity of goals
- Ease of evaluation
- Accountability

ELT Curriculum: Process Model

It is concerned with the development of understanding learning process, and not just the passive reception of knowledge or the acquisition of specific skill.

Content is based on principles derived from research into learning development, and the overall purpose of the educational process is to formulate the objectives related to the procedural principles.

Areas central to the concept of a communicative curriculum

- Sociolinguistics
- Humanistic approach in education
- Cognitively based view of language learning

Tyler's Model - The model is linear in nature, starting from objectives and ending with evaluation. In this model, evaluation is terminal.

Kerr's Model

Kerr divided the domains into four areas

- Objectives
- Knowledge
- Evaluation
- School learning experiences

Kerr's model objectives are divided into three groups

- Affective
- Cognitive
- Psychomotor

The model further indicates that knowledge should be

- Organized
- Integrated
- Sequenced
- Reinforced

Spiral Model by Bruner

It suggested that each child's intellectual ability develops in stages through changes in how the mind is used. Bruner's position was that young children need to learn the underlying principles of different concepts – the structure of ideas – rather than memorizing their related facts and data.

Bruner hypothesized that human cognition occurred in three relatively discreet stages

- Enactive
- Iconic
- Symbolic

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Structural syllabus

The structural syllabus is based on a theory of language that assumes that the grammatical or structural aspects of language form are the most basic or useful.

Rationales for the formal syllabus

1. It is well established and it is informed by a long tradition of linguistic analysis.
2. It presents learners with a subject matter which is systematic and rule-governed
3. Because the linguistic system is analyzable in certain ways, these analytical categories or schemas can be incorporated in a plan for teaching the system

Merits of Structural Syllabus

- Its content is relatively easy to describe
- Structural syllabi are naturally valuable and culture-free
- Structural knowledge is the most measurable component of the communicative competence

Weaknesses associated with structural syllabi

- **Usability, applicability of structural knowledge:** Structural knowledge may be teachable but there is almost no evidence that it affects behavior in language use.
- **Learning a language vs. learning facts of a language:** It can mislead learners into thinking they are learning a language when, in fact, they are learning facts or information about a language
- **Sequencing or grading problems:** A strictly structural syllabus prevents students from producing structures they have not been taught

Situational Syllabus

The underlying premise is that language is related to the situational contexts in which it occurs. The designer of a situational syllabus tries to predict those situations in which the learner will find him/herself, and applies these situations as a basis for selecting and presenting language content

Types of situational syllabus

- Limbo Situation: the information of the specific setting is of little importance
- Concrete Situation: The information is about the specific and concrete setting
- Mythical Situation: The information depends on fictional story line

Merits

- Taps students' knowledge of the world
- Serves the purpose of bridging cultural gap
- Manageable to take situational syllabus as a foundation

Functional/Notional Syllabus

A functional-notional syllabus is based on learning to recognize and express the communicative functions of language and the concepts and ideas it expresses

Merits

- Learners may be motivated by the opportunity to use language
- It considers the needs of the learners

Skill-based Syllabus

Skill-based syllabi group linguistic competencies (pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and discourse) together into generalized types of behavior, such as listening to spoken language for the main idea, writing well-formed paragraphs, giving effective oral presentations, and so on. The primary purpose of skill-based instruction is to learn the specific language skill.

Content Based Syllabus

The teaching of content or information in the language being learned with little or no direct or explicit effort to teach the language itself separately from the content being taught

Task-Based Syllabus

The primary theory of learning underlying task-based instruction is Krashen's *acquisition theory*. Acquisition theory argues that the ability to use a language is through exposure to the language and participation in using it.

Definition of a Task

Skehan (2003) defines task as an activity in which:

- Meaning is primary
- Learners are not given other peoples' meaning to repeat
- There is some sort of relationship to comparable real world activities
- Task completion has some sort of priority
- The assessment of the task is in terms of outcome

Lexical and Cultural Syllabus

The basic concept on which this syllabus rests is that students must be able to understand and use lexical phrases such as chunks, prefabricated patterns and collocations

Criteria for the selection of lexical items

- Authenticity
- Coverage
- Frequency
- Teachability
- Similarity

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Negotiated Syllabus involves the teacher and the learners working together to make decisions at many levels of the curriculum design process. Negotiated syllabus is also called process syllabus.

Situations where a negotiated syllabus is almost unavoidable:

- Where time is short
- Where there is no course book
- Where there is a very diverse group of students
- Where initial needs analysis is not possible
- Where the teacher and students have different backgrounds

Requirements for a Negotiated Syllabus

- Negotiation procedure - How will the negotiation be carried out?
- Course planning: participation - Who will work with whom?
- Course planning: procedure - What kinds of activity will be worked on?

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Material designers are interested in two things

- The activities that are likely to promote effective performance and learning in language classroom
- The activities might be constrained or elaborated, and organized in terms of a plausible course

Course unit actually denotes to the learning tasks included in a particular language syllabus.

Traditional unit structure:

- Presentation
- Controlled exploitation
- Free exploitation
- Synthesis

Sequences of Activities in Course Units

There are various approaches to sequence the activities:

1. **Writing-last solution** - a unit normally ends with the writing task for the students. The emphasis of this approach is primarily on acquiring the grammatical items.
2. **Storyline solution** - creates a harmony throughout the unit while sequencing the activities in storyline situation

Material design

It includes:

- Adaptation
- Creation of learning and teaching exercises
- A task
- An activity
- A lesson
- A unit or a module composed of several units

How material actually demonstrates learner's needs

Six areas that are examined under this notion are:

- General or subject knowledge
- View of what knowledge is and how it is acquired
- View of what is involved in language learning
- Role relations
- Cognitive abilities
- Values and attitudes presented in the material

Input - refers to the exposure of the language given to the students in the classroom through various sources, either written or spoken.

Uptake - refers to posing question to the students in order to assess what they have learned and internalized through the activities taking place in the classroom.

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Hidden Curriculum

Jackson refers a hidden curriculum to learning outcomes apart from those intended in the manifest curriculum.

Hedge defines the hidden curriculum as the learning which goes on in covert ways beneath the surface of what the teacher sets out to teach.

Hidden Curriculum in Terms of Teachers and Learners

Teachers convey socially-approved knowledge unconsciously while he/she is teaching what is required by the *official curriculum*. Here, socially-approved knowledge could indicate social-moral habits, attitudes, informal school rules and beliefs. For example, we often find that teachers teach obedience, conscientiousness, regularity, punctuality, gender identity, and even political awareness.

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Task - an activity which required learners to arrive at an outcome from the given information through the process of thought.

Evaluation Cycle for Language Tasks

It is important that teachers use task-based language teaching techniques and divide them into different phases in their own teaching context. *Breen* has listed task into three different phases:

- Task as a *work plan* allows the teachers to make some ground work to know some of the preconceptions and past learning experiences of the students. It gives an opportunity to see what students want in the classroom.
- Task in *process* creates the relationship between teacher and student during the processing of task.
- Task *outcomes* help analyze what has already been learnt.

The Role of Teacher

- To what extent was the task appropriate to learning objectives?
- To what extent was the content helpful?
- To what extent the chosen procedure proved to be appropriate?
- What was familiar?
- What is discovered?

Seeing the Wood and the Trees

According to *Stern*, we do see trees, but we do not distinguish between trees and wood. The problem is that we look at classroom discourse but we overlook the significance of broader issues that take place outside of the classroom.

Independent levels of this Theoretical framework

1. Theoretical concepts - How groups of students make society and perceive language learning?
2. Policy directives - It emphasizes on looking at categories of content.
3. Classroom behavior - It revolves around two parameters: teacher talk and student talk

Categories of Classroom Implementation

1. Teaching strategies - There is need to adjust teaching strategy according to the students' desire.
2. Timing strategies - It is under the direct control of the teacher
3. Social or interpersonal strategies

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Purposes of Progress tests

- Providing motivation for the students to study
- Providing a standard level for the class
- Highlighting gaps in your teaching – or the course materials

Outer circles of the curriculum design model

1. Environment
2. Needs
3. Principles

Types of Monitoring and Assessment

- Placement assessment - used to decide what level of the course a learner should enter, what class the learner should join
- Observation of learning
- Short-term achievement assessment
- Diagnostic assessment
- Achievement assessment
- Proficiency assessment

Tests which focus on language use include:

- Interviews
- Role plays

- Listening tests with message-focused questions
- Reading passages with message-focused questions

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Observation of Learning

This monitoring does not assess the learners but is directed towards the tasks that they do. The purpose of the monitoring is to see if it is necessary to make changes to the learning activities.

Short-term Achievement Assessment

It looks at the product of activities or a small set of activities. The purpose of this assessment is to see if the learners are making progress on a daily or weekly basis.

Performance Objective is a statement consisting of five parts

- The subject
- The performance
- The conditions
- The measure
- The criterion

Diagnostic assessment is used to find the gaps and weaknesses in learners' knowledge so that something can be done about them. More positively, it is used to find what learners know well so that time is not wasted on teaching that

Achievement assessment measures both the achievement of learners during a course and the effectiveness of the course. Depending on the length of the course, there may be a final achievement test at the end, and perhaps one or two tests part of the way through a course.

Characteristics

- Criterion referenced
- Based on material taught in the course
- Learners usually know what kinds of questions will be asked

Proficiency Assessment - A test of language proficiency draws items for the test not from the course that the learners are studying, but from the language itself independent of any course. The reason for this is that the purpose of a proficiency test is to show how much the learners know of the language or a particular part of the language i.e. TOEFL IELTS.

Three criteria in relation to tests

Reliability - A reliable test gives results that are not greatly upset by conditions that the test is not intended to measure. After allowing for the practice effect, if the same person sat the test twice, they should get near enough to the same result.

A test is more reliable if:

- It is always given under the same conditions.
- It is consistently marked.
- It has a large number of points of assessment.
- Its questions and instructions are clear and unambiguous

Validity - A valid test measures what it is supposed to measure. A valid achievement test measures what has been learned on the course

Practicality - It is examined by looking at:

- The cost involved in administering and scoring the test
- The time taken to administer and sit the test
- The time taken to mark the test
- The number of people needed to administer and mark the test

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Evaluation requires looking at both the results of the course, and the planning and running of the course. Carrying out an evaluation is like carrying out research.

Major purposes for language program evaluation

1. **Program accountability** - refers to the extent to which those involved in a program are answerable for the quality of their work.
2. **Program development** - designed to improve the quality of a program as it is being implemented.

Kiely and Rea-Dickens (2006) make a useful three-way scope distinction:

1. Large-scale evaluations
2. Teacher-led evaluations
3. Management-led evaluations

Formative evaluation has the purpose of forming or shaping the course to improve it.

Summative evaluation has the purpose of making a summary or judgement on the quality or adequacy of the course so that it can be compared with other courses.

The distinctions on evaluation process

- Formative/Summative
- Short term/Long term
- Process/Product
- Cognitive/Affective/Resource factors

Assumptions behind an evaluation

- This course is worth improving
- The people running and teaching the course are capable of improving it
- The people involved in the course have the freedom and flexibility to make changes
- The improvements will make it a better course

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Illuminative Evaluation – refers to evaluation that seeks to find out how different aspects of the program work or are being implemented. It seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the processes of teaching and learning that occur in the program.

Summative Evaluation - seeks to make decisions about the worth or value of different aspects of the curriculum. It is concerned with determining the effectiveness of a program, its efficiency, and to some extent with its acceptability

Issues in Program Evaluation

- Need for both inside and outside commitment and involvement
- Associated commitment to a deeper professional understanding of the processes of educational change

- Systematic documentation for evaluation purposes
- Willingness to embrace both qualitative and quantitative methodology

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Evaluation - a systematic gathering of information for the purpose of making decisions. It is a systematic determination of a subject's merit, worth and significance that is ensured by setting certain criteria.

Advantages

- Helps to look at the worth of the program
- Helps in accessing the effectiveness and efficacy of a language program
- It is like an internal audit

Most evaluations involve a written report, or in some cases two written reports – one for the person or group commissioning the evaluation, and one for wider circulation. The written report will usually be accompanied by an oral report. This oral report has two purposes:

- To make sure the written report is clearly understood.
- To say things that could not be put tactfully in writing

Approaches for language program evaluation

- Product oriented: This approach focuses on the goals and objectives of a curriculum
- Process oriented: It deals with the LCD change, innovation and improvement in implementing the curriculum
- Static characteristic: It deals with looking at the perspective of external agency
- Decision facilitation: It is a cyclic process that continuously gathers information about needs, environment and situation analysis

Dimensions of a language program evaluation

1. Formative vs summative
 - Formative assessments seek to determine how students are progressing through a certain learning goal
 - Summative assessments assess a student's mastery of a topic after instruction
2. Process vs product
 - Product deals with the goals of the course achieved
 - Process deals with how the goals are achieved
3. Quantitative vs qualitative
 - Quantitative deals with the collection of descriptive data with the help of some questionnaires
 - Qualitative evaluation deals with the general observation

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Aspects to any major curriculum change

- The change that occurs in the curriculum
- The change that needs to occur in the minds of the various people affected by the curriculum

Steps in Introducing Change

1. Make sure that the change is really needed
2. Plan the type of change
3. Use a wide range of change strategies
4. Be prepared for the change to take a long time

Variety of Change Strategies

Three major approaches to change:

- 1) Power–coercive, where change is achieved through authority
- 2) Rational–empirical, where change is achieved through explaining, justifying
- 3) Normative–re-educative, where change is achieved through discussion

Innovation involves the management of the following stages:

- Defining aims
- Defining end results
- Gathering information
- Defining what has to be done
- Action
- Reviewing

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In-service courses - involve teacher development after initial teacher training and after the teachers have had some teaching experience. In-service courses may be *long-term* courses leading to Diplomas, Masters or Doctoral degrees. They may be *short term*, lasting only a few hours or a day or two.

Goals of an Effective Workshop for Teachers

1. Understanding and remembering new ideas
2. Experiencing and evaluating exercises
3. Producing material or exercises,
4. Planning units of work,
5. Problem solving

Four changes during Workshop for Teachers

1. Changing the type of activity
2. Changing group size
3. Changing the focus of attention
4. Changing the medium

Procedures and Activities for Reaching the Goals

1. **Experiential practices** involve actual teaching, either real or simulated
2. **Awareness-raising practices** involve conscious understanding of principles, techniques and issues

Awareness-raising practices involve choosing from each of three ranges of options:

1. The input data that participants can work on
2. The tasks or operations that the participants perform on the data
3. The workshop procedures that are used to get the participants performing the tasks

The input data (the content) of the understanding component of a workshop can come in several forms:

- Talks and lectures
- Set reading
- Discussions

Effects on the participants a year after the workshop

- **No uptake** – most of the information was not remembered.
- **Confusion** – information incompletely and inadequately remembered.
- **Mislabeled** – a term introduced during the workshop was used to incorrectly label their usual practice
- **Assimilation** – techniques were incorporated into the participants' teaching without really understanding the rationale for them
- **Adaptation and rejection** – suggestions were tried but rejected because the suggestions did not solve the problems the participants

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Challenges to Internet-Based Lessons

- Limitations on interactivity and bandwidth
- Hyper-linked structure and presentation of information on the Internet may easily cause students to get lost
- No control over the quality and accuracy of the contents of the information
- Little theoretical and empirical research actually exists that demonstrates how to make use of Internet-based materials

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