Syllabus Design and Materials Development

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ALM	Audio-Lingual Method
BICS	Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills
CAI	Computer-Aided Instruction
CAL	Computer-Assisted Learning
CALI	Computer-Assisted Language Instruction
CALL	Computer Assisted Language Learning
CALP	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
CALT	Computer-Assisted Language Teaching (or Testing)
CASLA	Computer Applications in Second Language Acquisition
CASLR	Computer-Assisted Second Language Acquisition Research
CAT	Computer-Adaptive Teaching (or Testing)
CBE	Competency-Based Education
CBI	Content-Based Instruction
CBLT	Competency-Based Language Teaching
CBT	Computer-Based Training
CCA	Critical Cultural Awareness
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
CMC	Computer-Mediated Communication
CMI	Computer-Mediated Instruction
CNP	Communication Needs Processor
CSCL	Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
EBE	English for Business and Economics
EFL	English as Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
EOP	English for Occupational Purposes
ESL	English as a Second Language

ESP	English for Specific Purposes
ESS	English for Social Studies
EST	English for Science and Technology
GA	Genre Analysis
ICALL	Intelligent Computer Assisted Language Learning
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
MI	Multiple Intelligence
NA	Needs Analysis
NANR	North American New Rhetoric
NBLT	Networked-Based Language Teaching
PrOCALL	Project-Oriented Call
SFL	Systemic Functional Linguistics
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
TBLT	Task-Based Language Teaching
TELL	Technology-Enhanced Language Learning
TEYL	Teaching English to Young Learners
TYL	Teaching Young Learners
WELL	Web-Enhanced Language Learning
YLL	Young Language Learning
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

DEDICATION

To our parents who helped us along the path of knowledge…

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PREFACE

This book takes a theory-to-practice approach to language syllabus design and materials development. Notably, the book aims to develop knowledge of the theoretical and practical approaches to materials evaluation and development, and to develop an understanding of the appropriateness of materials for specific target groups. Each chapter focuses on the theoretical aspect that leads into the empirical consideration for both syllabus and materials development. The book covers the main issues in materials development for EFL and ESL learners at both MA and PhD level courses. It also serves as a guideline for novice teachers, practitioners, researchers, materials developers. The book aims to foster a working awareness of the methodological issues involved in syllabus design. More precisely, the contents serve to develop and implement the lesson integration for adopting, adapting, and developing language instructional units. Accordingly, various syllabus types (i.e., structural, functional/notional, situational, topical, and lexical, and task-based syllabus) are discussed in this book. The key feature of this book is to develop language instructional materials for young learners, to develop electronic language instructional material, to develop materials for cultural awareness, and to develop EAP/ESP instructional materials. In addition, this book takes different approaches in curriculum development that lead into the practical aspect of situation analysis and language curriculum development, project work as part of curriculum development, discourse-based, and genre-based curriculum development, and competency-based language curriculum development. We expect that the intended readers are able to adapt and evaluate existing course materials on the basis of their learners' proficiency levels and needs. We also expect that this book helps the intended readers to produce learning materials in terms of the educational goals, experiences they provide and engage them in critical thinking and reflective teaching skills. We hope you enjoy reading this book and find it practical when fostering language materials.

—**Hamed Barjesteh, PhD**
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Chapter 1

Adoption, Adaptation, and Development of Language Instructional Unit

CONTENTS

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Developing new materials and activities is time-consuming and difficult. It is not surprising why most teachers use published materials for their purpose. This chapter aims to shed light on how teachers in general and English as foreign language (EFL) teachers in particular approach curriculum. In so doing, a critical survey of the literature related to curriculum fidelity, adaptation, and enactment was conducted to see whether we should ever teach the authentic materials, whether we should develop our own material, or whether we need to modify the material to meet the needs of our students. These concerns, along with the criteria for selection, modification, and development of materials, will be explored.

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), changes in recent years in the fields of applied linguistics and language acquisition and in approaches to language teaching have drastically changed the view of one size fits all approach to material developments. The proficiency movement, the concept and various models of communicative competence, the advent of ESP, the proliferation of methods of language teaching, and the diversification of the population of English learners, as mentioned by O'Malley (2003), have all provided teachers with many more options to consider deciding what will be the backbone of her course. Now the choices a course designer makes are much more context-based and so involve a number of factors such as who the learners are, their goals and expectations in learning English, the teacher's own conception of the nature of language and language learning and teaching (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987; Graves, 1996).

In choosing, developing, or adapting materials a number of criteria are taken into account. Two of the most important of them are 'effectiveness' of the materials in achieving the purpose of the course and their appropriateness for the students and teachers (Graves, 1996). We usually embark on developing materials when there are no suitable materials for our purpose. It is usually very rare that teachers develop their own materials and do not use published materials.

Appropriateness of the materials usually refers to how comfortable and familiar the materials are for the students. Is the language level of the materials within learners' achievable level? (i.e., Are the materials within zone of proximal level of the learners? Are the materials interesting and relevant?). It should be mentioned that 'course book assessment is fundamentally a subjective rule-of-thumb activity, and that no neat formula, grid or system will ever provide a definite yardstick' (Sheldon, 1988, p. 245

in McDonough and Shaw, 2003, p. 61). Sometimes a text which looks to be appropriate will appear to be very difficult to implement as we introduce it to the class. One example of this situation is provided by Fujwara (1996). She describes a situation in which a text that seemed right in achieving the purpose of the course, developing listening skills and strategies, was in practice too difficult for the students and therefore a text which looked to be appropriate proved to be inappropriate in practice. Therefore, texts will be selected subjectively and their actual appropriateness will be a matter of actual practice.

1.2. THEORETICAL PRINCIPLES OF MATERIAL DESIGN

Tomlinson (1995, p. 110) discusses the four theoretical principles for planning and writing of materials:

- The need to communicate;
- The need for long term goals;
- The need for authenticity;
- The need for student-centeredness.

Tomlinson also proposed two methods for materials development. One is 'text-driven' method and the other is 'task-driven' method. Tomlinson (1995) mentioned that 'text-driven' method is ideal for developing course books and supplementary *classroom materials* and *'task-driven' method* is ideal for localizing and personalizing classroom materials, for autonomous learning. In text-driven method he refers in details to a number of procedures from 'text-collection,' 'text selection,' 'text-experience,' etc. Tomlinson (1995) believes that using such framework as a guide, one can very quickly develop principles and engaging materials either for a particular class or for a particular course. In 'task-driven' method the focus is on tasks. Tasks are activities in which learners need to use language to produce something. Prabhu (1987) defines as task as an activity that requires learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some process of thought (p. 24). Tasks may be either real-world or pedagogic ones. Tomlinson (2003, p. 109) in developing principled frameworks for material development cites a number of authors. For example, he mentions the six principles of material design identified by Nunan (1988):

- Materials should be clearly linked to the curriculum they serve;
- Materials should be authentic in terms of text and task;

- •   Materials should stimulate interaction;
- •   Materials should encourage learners to focus on formal aspects of the language;
- •   Materials should encourage learners to develop skills, and skills in learning;
- •   Materials should encourage learners to apply their developing skills to the world beyond the classroom.

1.3. CURRICULUM ADAPTATION

Snyder et al. (1992, p. 410) cite the mutual-adaptation approach is a "process whereby adjustments in a curriculum are made by curriculum developers and those who use it in the school or classroom context." This involves conversations between teachers and external developers for introducing adaptations necessary to match curriculum to local contexts. The adaptation approach does not suggest that curriculum knowledge should differ considerably from the fidelity approach, since experts still define it.

The adaptation approach has stimulated interactions between teachers, students, and curriculum. Whether is it called teacher curriculum development (Ben-Peretz, 1990), teacher instructional capacity (Cohen and Ball, 1999) or the experienced curriculum (Doyle, 1992), using this approach enfranchises teachers to shape curriculum according to their contexts. However, it is the enactment approach that handed curriculum to teachers (Snyder et al., 1992). Graves (1996) points out that teachers consider a variety of factors in developing, choosing, or adapting materials. Two of the most important are their effectiveness in achieving the purpose of the course and their appropriateness for the students and the teacher. She emphasizes that appropriateness includes student comfort and familiarity with the material, language level, interest, and relevance. Some teachers incorporate instruction in how to use unfamiliar materials as part of their course design.

Graves (1996) contends that developing new materials and activities for using them requires time and a clear sense of why they will be used, how, and by whom. Because of the lack of time, teachers are often constrained or prefer to adapt existing materials.

We adapt materials for different reasons. McDonough and Shaw (1993) citing Madsen and Bowen (1978) mention that materials are adapted in order to achieve 'congruence.' They further discuss that a good teacher is

constantly striving for congruence among several related variables: teaching materials, methodology, students, course objectives, the target language and its context, and the teacher's own personality and teaching styles. McDonough and Shaw's list of reason for adaptation reflect their concern that communicative language teaching (CLT) implies an unsystematic approach to grammar presentation, and they believe that they need to approach grammar systematically. Cunnings worth (1995) also lists a number of factors for adaptation of materials:

- The dynamic of the classroom;
- The personalities involved;
- The constraints imposed by syllabuses;
- The availability of resources;
- The expectation and motivations of the learners.

Adoption of the material is the process of choosing and selecting materials. Rarely do we adopt materials without any modification. So, the process of adaptation and adoption has blurring boundaries. As McDonough and Shaw (2003) state 'adaptation is linked to issues of administration and the whole management of education, is as far as it derives from decisions taken about material to be adopted' (p. 85). Published course books which are written by experienced and qualified people contain valuable materials for the teachers. Reason is their contents are usually carefully tested in pilot studies in actual teaching situation before publication. Therefore, teachers can select their materials from such course books with a degree of confidence. Despite these, however, Cunningsworth (1984, 1995) warns the teachers that course books 'are good servants but poor masters.' By this he means teachers should use the course books actively. That is, they should formulate objectives with the needs of the learners in mind and then seek out published material which will achieve those objectives. In other words, should not set the objectives for the teachers. He further goes on to discuss that those teachers who set their objectives in term of finishing chapter x and y of such and such course books are in fact slave of the book or what he terms 'servant of the course book rather than master' (Cunningsworth, 1984, p. 1).

There is a plethora of teaching materials in the market today. The teachers must select from among this mass of teaching materials. The question is what should be the criteria for selection of teaching materials. Apart from that rule-of-thumb criteria cited at the beginning of this assignment which included effectiveness of teaching materials and appropriateness of them for

the learners, Cunningsworth (1984, 1995) outlines a number of principles for material evaluations:

- Relate the teaching materials to [one's] aims and objectives. In other words, once we select the teaching materials, we need to keep in mind that the materials used should take the learners forward as directly as possible towards the already set and determined objectives.

- Be aware of what language is for and select teaching materials which will help equip your students to use language effectively for their purpose Nation and Macalister (2010, p. 162) listed the following items a teacher can do to adapt a course book:

  - **Add or Omit Content:** The teacher adds exercises to give extra practice to items that are frequently used in the language or which require extra time to learn. The teacher skips over confusing or unimportant parts of a lesson.

  - **Change the Sequencing of the Content:** The teacher introduces some items earlier in the course because they are needed to do added activities.

  - **Change the Format:** Instead of beginning the lesson with a dialog, the teacher puts it towards the end of the lesson and uses the other exercises in the lesson to prepare for it.

  - **Encouragement:** The teacher encourages the learners to check each other's learning of what is in the lesson.

  - **Add or Omit Assessment:** The teacher introduces weekly tests to encourage learners to do homework or to let them see their progress.

Nation and Macalister (2010, p. 163) further suggested teachers to use more than one single course book. Their reasons have been listed below:

- A single course book does not meet the diverse needs of the learners in the class.

- Drawing material from a variety of sources allows the teacher to keep each lesson as close as possible to what the learners need. The teacher must provide meaningful, authentic activities to help students construct understanding relevant to problem solving.

- Learners can have a strong say in what kind of topics and what kind of material they work with. Students are active learners.

> The educator's task is to provide students with opportunities to construct knowledge.

- Teachers have the chance to make greater use of their professional skills, such as material preparation, course planning, adaptation of activities, and multi-level teaching in one class.
- Current course books do not reflect "state of the art" knowledge in Applied Linguistics."

Islam and Mares (2003) believe that for any adoption or adaptation of materials we need to have clear adaptation objectives. Referring to McDonough and Shaw's list of objectives in order to achieve appropriateness criterion, the materials should be adopted to: personalize, individualize, localize, and modernize. Islam and Mares expands the list to include: add real choice, cater for all sensory learner styles, provide for more learner autonomy, encourage higher level cognitive skills, make the language input more accessible, and make the language input more engaging.

Adaptation of existing materials is the result of recognizing a mismatch between the teaching materials and the needs and objectives of the classroom. A list of techniques has been offered by the scholars to be used when adapting materials. These techniques are: adding; extending and expanding, deleting; subtracting and abridging, simplifying, recording, and replacing materials (McDonough and Shaw, 1993; Cunningsworth, 1995).

Classroom materials need to be adapted in a principled manner to reflect needs within particular teaching contexts, current understanding of second language (L2) acquisition and good teaching practices.

Selection of materials without the above-mentioned consideration may lead to failure. They emphasized that changes in existing programs should take place only after a careful study of the instructional plans currently in effect. The program designers should utilize whatever information can be collected and they should always be ready to make shifts and adjustments if new information becomes available. Nunan (1988a) argues that materials should be designed so that they are capable of being used in variety of ways and also at different proficiency level. He continues that the authenticity of the materials has aroused a great deal of debate. Those who take a hard line on authenticity insist that these should not be edited in any way.

1.4. CURRICULUM FIDELITY (CURRICULUM TRANSMISSION)

This approach reflects Tyler's (1949) classical model that specified objectives, content, and means of achieving and assessing pre-determined learning outcomes. Curriculum change follows a top-down strategy of materials development and diffusion (Kelly, 1999). Despite maintaining equal opportunity and standards (Gordon, 1981), a top-down curriculum is focused on organizational rather than local needs (Brady, 1995), and fails to encourage teacher development and active learning (Craig, 2006; Fishman, Marx, Best, and Tal, 2003; Knowles, 1999).

Snyder et al. (1992, p. 427) postulate that the fidelity approach confines curriculum to "a course of study, a textbook series, a guide [and] a set of teacher plans." This involves implications for curriculum-knowledge, curriculum-change, and the teacher's role. External experts define curriculum knowledge by determining what teachers should teach. Curriculum change, subsequently, starts from the center to the periphery in linear and systematic stages leaving no role for teachers apart from delivery (Snyder et al., 1992). Therefore, teachers are transmitters who follow classical humanism aimed at delivering static information, continuity between the past and present and simplistic standards of achievement (Clark, 1987; Skilbeck, 1982).

1.5. CURRICULUM ENACTMENT

The enactment approach reflects social constructivism (Wells, 1999), for involving active learning, social, and sequential construction of more complex cognitive schemas, and student interests and needs (Piaget, 1955; Richardson, 1997; Terwel, 2005). According to Snyder et al. (1992, p. 428), the enactment approach sets curriculum as a process "jointly created and jointly and individually experienced by students and teacher." External knowledge is "viewed as a resource for teachers who create curriculum as they engage in the ongoing process of teaching and learning in the classroom." Moreover, "it is they and their students who create the enacted curriculum. Teachers are creators rather than primarily receivers of curriculum knowledge." Curriculum change is neither about curriculum implementation nor adaptation. It is "a process of growth for teachers and students, a change in thinking and practice" (Snyder et al., 1992, p. 429).

1.6. CONCLUSION

Concern has been expressed those students learn better in some classrooms, whereas in other classrooms, they underachieve despite using one curriculum. It is equally concerning that some teachers continue to develop, while others do little to advance their professional skills in spite of teaching the same curriculum. Moreover, we need to understand how different curricula result from implementing a single curriculum. Teacher curriculum approaches may address these concerns because they may influence teachers, students, and curriculum alike; thereby, turning the learned curriculum into a curriculum that is substantially different from the formal curriculum. According to Dubin and Olshtain (1986), a teacher in selecting a material and deciding the adopting or adapting that material should take into account the following questions:

- By whom and where were the materials developed?
- Are the materials compatible with the syllabus?
- Do most of the materials provide alternatives for teachers and learners?
- Which language skills do the materials cover?
- How authentic are the text types included in the materials?
- How do learners and teachers who have used the materials feel about them?

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Chapter 2

Structural Syllabus, Functional/Notional Syllabus

CONTENTS

In 1970's with increased amount of second language (L2) users and a their diverse need there was a shift from structural syllabuses to more communicative based syllabuses, such as functional/notional syllabus, task-based syllabus, skill-based syllabus, and so on. According to Widdowson (1990) syllabus are as 'specification of teaching program or pedagogical agenda which defines a particular subject for a particular group. This chapter aims to describe two syllabus types: Structural and functional/notional type by focusing on their merits, demerits, content selections and major premises of each syllabus.

2.1. THE STRUCTURAL-GRAMMATICAL SYLLABUS

This syllabus consists of an inventory of grammatical, phonological, and lexical items, graded throughout the school period according to difficulty. It is assumed that the learner's role was to gain proficiency in the mastery of these linguistic elements. Traditionally, grammatical items, graded from easy to difficult, were the point of departure for designing language courses, resulting in what is commonly known as the structural or grammatical syllabus (Nunan, 2001; White, 1988). Thus, the grammatical syllabus is one which attributes the highest priority to grammatical features and views "the structure of language teaching as being principally provided by an ordered sequence of grammatical categories" (Wilkins, 1981, p. 83). Ellis (1993) defined structural syllabus as consisting of a list of grammatical items, usually arranged in the order to be taught separately. Nunan (1988) mentioned that structurally-graded syllabuses misinterpreted the nature of language. They only focus on one aspect of language, that is, formal grammar. Nunan argues that many structurally-graded course books begin with the structure. However, the important point is to think of function to which we can use the specific structure. He believes focusing on the communicative purposes for which language is used as well as linguistic structures is essential. According to Willis (1990) form-focused approaches see language as a system of patterns or structures. Learners are gradually introduced to more and more complex patterns until they have built up a picture of the whole language. The weak point here as Willis mentioned is forgetting meaning. In structural syllabus meaning was completely neglected and this problem led to more meaning-based approaches.

Richards (2001) defines structural syllabus as one that is organized around grammatical items and they have been used as basis for planning general courses, particularly for beginning levels. Nunan (1988) argues

that the assumption behind most grammatical syllabuses seems to be that language consists of a finite set of rules which can be combined in various ways to make meaning and these rules can be learned one by one. The focus is on the outcomes or the product. It is, in fact, a grammatical syllabus in which the selection and grading of the content is on the basis of the complexity and simplicity of grammatical items. In other words, it specifies structural patterns as the basic units of learning and organizes these according to such criteria as structural complexity, difficulty, regularity, utility, and frequency. The learner is expected to master each structural step and add it to his/her grammar collection. It makes ample use of highly controlled, tightly structured, and sequenced pattern practice drills. This kind of syllabus is probably still the most common in language teaching today. Yalden (1983) describes it as "traditional" on the grounds that it is the basis of the grammar translation and audio-lingual methods (ALMs). However, it also serves as a basis for more "modern" methods—Total Physical Response (Asher, 1977) and The Silent Way (Gattegno, 1972), for example. The move towards a communicative approach to language pedagogy in the 1970s and 1980s resulted in alternative syllabuses (in particular, the notional-functional syllabus (Wilkins, 1976), the task-based or procedural syllabus (Prabhu, 1987), and the process syllabus (Breen, 1984). These syllabuses continue to attract a lot of attention, but they have never totally replaced the structural syllabus.

2.1.1. Different Views in Structural Syllabuses

These two views of structural syllabuses will be referred to as *immediate mastery* and *gradual mastery.* The problems of both will now be examined.

Ultimately a structural syllabus directed at immediate mastery will only work if the order in which the grammatical items are taught corresponds to the order in which the learners can learn them. In other words, the syllabus must satisfy the criterion of learnability. Designers of structural syllabuses have always acknowledged this, and learnability has always figured as one of the criteria of selection and grading. Mackey (1965), for instance, identified five factors that contributed to learnability: similarity (i.e., between the target language and the native language), clarity, brevity, regularity, and learning load. The notion of learnability that underlies these factors is a rational rather than a psycholinguistic (or empirical) one. It reflects an external account of what ought to be learnable. A structural syllabus employs a *synthetic teaching strategy,* defined by Wilkins (1976) as "one in which the different parts of the language are taught separately and

step-by-step so that acquisition is a process of gradual accumulation of the parts until the whole of the language has been built up" (p. 2). The execution of this teaching strategy involves the course designer in making principled decisions regarding which parts of the language to teach (i.e., selection) and which order to teach them in (i.e., grading). However, as Wilkins points out, the job of synthesizing the items which have been presented in small pieces is left to the learner.

2.1.2. Criticisms Raised Against Structural Syllabus

The structural syllabus has been criticized on both sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic fronts which are discussed in subsections.

2.1.2.1. The Sociolinguistic Front

In the 1970s, language teaching scholars realized that there is more to language learning than simply mastering grammatical forms. They observed that students who had learned a second/foreign language, say English through purely grammatically-centered materials were capable of producing well-formed sentences. However, they were drastically incapable of communicating effectively in real-life settings.

As Widdowson (1979) rightly comments … the ability to compose sentences is not the only ability we need to communicate. Communication only takes place when we make use of sentences to perform a variety of different acts of an essentially social nature. Thus, we do not communicate by composing sentences, but by using sentences to make statements of different kinds, to describe, to record, to classify and so on, or to ask questions, make requests, give orders (p. 118).

It follows from the above argument that to be able to communicate naturally, Student sought to be aware of the communicative value of the grammatical elements that they study. In other words, they should know how to use a grammatical form rather simply study its usage (Widdowson, 1978). For example, a teacher who teaches present progressive by saying that it is formed by adding am/is/are to the-ing form of a verb through well-known classroom examples like I am writing on the blackboard, she is writing on the blackboard, etc., is focusing on its usage. However, if s/he concentrates on the communicative acts performed by this tense such as descriptions, commentaries, etc., as in My daughter is standing next to John. She is wearing a white dress; she is teaching them its use. Therefore, it is

argued that taking care of use is as important as, if not more important than, taking care of usage.

Quite similarly, a distinction has been drawn between two dimensions of language proficiency: cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) and basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) (Cummins, 1980). CALP refers to one's ability to communicate successfully in various social contexts. It is obvious that the main short coming of the structural syllabus from a sociolinguistic perspective is that it merely caters for CALP and takes no heed of HICS. Hence, as Wilkins (1979) genuinely contends, "The grammatical syllabus fails to provide the necessary conditions for the acquisition of communicative competence" (p. 83). That is, it does not equip students with the capacity to know how to use language appropriately and know how to use and react to various speech acts such as requests, apologies, complaints, etc. (Richards, Platt, and Platt, 1992, p. 65).

2.1.2.2. The Psycholinguistic Front

The second major criticism launched on the structural syllabus is concerned with how individuals acquire a L2 and therefore has a psycholinguistic rationale. More often than not, the structural syllabus has been implemented through the well-established PPP methodology, which advocates three stages: presentation, practice, and production (Shehadeh, 2005; Skehan, 1998; Willis, 1996). The presentation stage focuses on a new grammatical item, often contextualized, and introduces it to students. The practice stage gives students an opportunity to automatized the newly presented structure through intensive drilling and controlled practice. Finally, at the production stage, students are encouraged to produce the target structure more freely and spontaneously through communicative activities. However, recent second language acquisition (SLA) research has shown that this is not the way language learning takes shape.

Therefore, it is wrong to assume that students will learn what is taught to them in the same order in which it was taught. As Skehan (1996) observes: The belief that a precise focus on a particular form leads to learning and automatization … no longer carries much credibility in linguistics or psychology… Instead, the contemporary view of language development is that learning is constrained by internal processes. Learners do not simply acquire the language to which they are exposed, however carefully that exposure may be orchestrated by the teacher. It is not simply a matter of converting input into output. (p. 18). This linear approach to language

acquisition posits that students cannot and of course should not work on a new grammatical item unless they have completely mastered the one preceding it. For example, students should first master conditional type I before being introduced to type II. This issue is illustrated by Nunan's (2001) metaphorical example. According to Nunan, learning a new language is like constructing a wall, the building blocks of which are grammatical units functioning as bricks. The easy grammatical bricks should be placed at the bottom in order to provide a foundation for the more difficult ones. "The task for the language learners is to get the linguistic bricks in the right order: first the word bricks, and then the sentence bricks. If the bricks are not in the correct order, the wall will collapse under its own ungrammaticality" (Nunan, 2001).

Thus, contrary to this picture, learners do not learn a new language in this step-by-step fashion. Rather, they demonstrate a "U-shaped behavior" (Kellerman, 1985, p. 346). A typical example of this U-shaped behavior, experienced by most EFL/ESL teachers, occurs when learners apparently master irregular past-tense morphology (e.g., went, wrote, came) and then proceed to confuse them with regular past forms, the result of which is the production of wrong forms (e.g., goed, writed, comed). Thus, dissatisfied with the "brick laying" metaphor, most SLA researchers have abandoned it in favor of an "organic" metaphor. (Nunan, 2001; Rutherford, 1987). This metaphor views "SLA more like growing a garden than building a wall" (Nunan, 2001b, p. 192). In this garden, some linguistic flowers appear at the same time, but they do no grow at the same rate. This is exactly similar to how interlanguage develops. One might learn several items concurrently, though imperfectly, yet the rate of mastery for each item is different.

In sum, from a sociolinguistic perspective, the structural syllabus has been traditionally condemned on the grounds that it does not arm learners with the needed means for successful communication. From a psycholinguistic perspective, it has been criticized for depicting a false picture of SLA, embodying a linear, step-by-step learning fashion. To solve this problem, it was suggested that grammatical items, as the unit of syllabus design, receive minimal attention and be replaced by tasks.

The principal problem is that of *learnability,* the extent to which it is possible for learners to learn the structures they are taught. This problem has always been recognized by language teaching methodologists (see Palmer, 1917), but it has been given additional weight by research which has shown that the acquisition of specific grammatical features is constrained

developmentally. Corder (1967) suggested that learners possess a "built-in syllabus," which regulates when it is possible for them to acquire each grammatical feature. Subsequent studies of naturalistic language learning (see Hatch, 1978a; Meisel, Clahsen, and Pienemann, 1981; Wode, 1980) have given empirical support to this claim. Also, studies designed to investigate whether learners succeed in learning the structures they are taught (e.g., Ellis, 1984, 1989; Felix, 1981; Pienemann, 1984, 1989) suggest that often they are unable to internalize new structural knowledge in a manner that enables them to use it productively in communication unless they are ready to do so.

2.2. FUNCTIONAL NOTIONAL SYLLABUS

2.2.1. Theoretical Background

Brown (2007, p. 225) states that beginning with the work of council of Europe and later followed by numerous interpretations of notional syllabuses (1976), notional-functional syllabus attended to functions as organizing elements of a foreign language curriculum. Grammar, which was the primary element in the historically preceding structural syllabus, was relegated to be a secondary focus. Notions referred to both the abstract concepts such as existence, space, time, quantity, and quality and to what we call contexts or situations, such as travel, health, education, shopping, and free time. (p. 225) with the advent of communicative approach, more emphasis was put on the semantic component of language, on the notions and functions that we realize when we communicate through language. It was, in fact, a reaction away from grammar-based approaches such as audiolingualism. (McLaren and Madrid, 2004; Richards, 2001). Notional syllabus of the first proposals for a communicative syllabus, that is one that addresses communicative competence rather than linguistic competence (Richards, 2001). Syllabuses were organized not only in terms of structures, but also around the notions and functions that learners might need to use in order to communicate successfully. These syllabuses were termed notional-functional and communicative (McLaren and Madrid, 2004).

2.2.2. Function/Notion

In a notional-functional syllabus, instruction is not organized in terms of grammatical structure, as had often been done with the ALM, but instead in terms of "notions" and "functions." In this model, a "notion" is a particular

context in which people communicate. A "function" is a specific purpose for a speaker in a given context. For example, the "notion," of shopping requires numerous language "functions," such as asking about prices or features of a product and bargaining. Notional Functional Syllabus has been defined as a syllabus in which the language content is arranged according to the meanings a learner needs to express through language and the functions the learner will use the language for. A notional syllabus is contrasted with a grammatical syllabus or structural syllabus (one which consists of a sequence of graded language items) or a situational syllabus (one which consists of situations and the relevant language items. (Richards et al., 1992, p. 250).

Nunan (1998, p. 158) defines the term notion as "The concepts expressed through language. Examples: time, frequency, duration, causality." He goes on further to define the concept of function as "the communicative use to which an utterance or longer piece of language is put." Richards (2001) remarks that a functional syllabus seeks to analyze the concept of communicative competence into its different components on the assumption that mastery of individual functions will result in overall communicative ability. Richards and Rodgers (2001, p. 21) suggests that Wilkin's notional syllabuses (1976) is an attempt to spell out the implications of functional view of language for syllabus design. A notional syllabus would include not only elements of grammar and lexis but also specify the topics, notions, and concepts the learner needs to communicate about. Finnacchiaro and Brumfit (1983) explicate the relation between notions and functions, suggesting that notion and functions are tightly intertwined. *Notions* are meaning elements-which may be expressed-through nouns, pronouns, verbs, prepositions, conjunctions, adjectives, or adverbs. *Notions* may be substituted by other appropriate words, depending on the topic being discussed, the situation, and the persons involved in the speech act. On the other hand, in all languages generally *communicative* (functional) expressions can be changed for gender; tense-: aspect, emphasis, or other communicative purposes. (p. 15).

Note this example: FUNCTION: making a suggestion: "How do you feel about going to the beach?" Here the *do* may become *does* or remain do with plural nouns or pronouns and you may be substituted by *he, she, they, the boys*, etc. While the basic functions to be expressed depend solely on the purpose(s) of the speaker, the specific *notions* depend on three major factors: (a) the *functions*; (b) the *elements in the situation*; (c) and *the topic*. The *function* + the *situation* + the *topic* give rise to the specific *notions* (underlying the nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, and other

words) which complete the function (the communicative purpose) and clarify it.

2.2.3. Notional-Functional Syllabus: Definition

Richards and Schmidt (2002) believe that notional-functional syllabus is an approach to developing a communicative syllabus and widely discussed in the 1970s, a syllabus in which the language content is arranged according to the meanings a learner needs to express through language and the functions the learner will use the language for. The term notional is taken from notional grammar. A notional syllabus is contrasted with a grammatical syllabus or structural syllabus (one which consists of a sequence of graded language items) or a situational syllabus (one which consists of situations and the relevant language items). A *notional syllabus* contains:

- The meanings and concepts the learner needs in order to communicate (e.g., time, quantity, duration, location) and the language needed to express them. These concepts and meanings are called *notions.*
- The language needed to express different functions or speech acts (e.g., requesting, suggesting, promising, describing).

2.2.4. Critics

Brumfit (1981) criticizes Wilkins sharply for the use of notional syllabus, arguing that a proposal for a *notional syllabus* implies that something more important is being asserted, that a notional organization is in some sense more fundamental, more profound than other types of organization. But such appeals are insufficient to establish a claim as a major organizing principle. Without being clearer about what exactly a notion should be, it is difficult to assess the claim that learning a language is learning notions. Wilkins (1976) attempted to align the notional-functional syllabus with an analytic approach (exposure to raw language and subsequent induction of forms) as opposed to a synthetic approach (exposure to graded language and gradual accumulation of forms). However, such claims have been dismissed as dubious by some scholars. (Raine, 2010; Richards, 2001; Willis, 1990). The notional functional syllabus therefore shares the structural syllabus's perceived weakness of being a synthetic one.

Hedge (2000, p. 346) claims that structural syllabuses are amenable to planning, provide systematicity and make learners feel secure. To the extent that structural syllabuses converge with notional-functional ones, i.e., they

are both product-based, synthetic syllabuses, such praise is also applicable to the latter. She also states that "if a structural syllabus and related course units make explicit use of grammatical concepts and categories, it enables learners to use formal strategies for acquiring language, such as analyzing the tense system." (Hedge, 2000, p. 346). The critics argue:

The selection and grading of items is complex, especially at elementary levels.

- The functional grading of contents does not reflect authentic daily language either. So, there is also an element of distortion and artificiality in the language studied. It was criticized for offering predetermined objectives, planned outside the classroom, which do not take into account the student's contribution, nor their "inbuilt syllabuses" and individuality. (McLaren and Madrid, 2004).

- There are no clear criteria for selecting or grading functions.

- They represent a simplistic view of communicative competence and fail to address the processes of communication. They represent an atomistic approach to language, that is, one that assumes that language ability can be broken down into discrete components that can be taught separately.

- They often lead to a phrase-book approach to teaching that concentrates on teaching expressions and idioms used for different functions.

- Students learning from a functional course may have considerable gaps in their grammatical competence because some important grammatical structures may not be elicited by the functions that are taught in the syllabus. (Richards, 2001, pp. 156, 157).

Notional/Functional syllabuses deprive the learners of the generative potential of grammar, which is an "indispensible resource for learning." (Brumfit, 1981; Markee, 2001). According to Long and Crooks (1992), the functional-notional syllabus seemed a very sensible idea at the time; however, even Wilkins himself admitted that there are problems in defining and specifying such a syllabus-due to the enormous complexity of the task of planning the content of language syllabuses in this way. The lists which appeared in the Council of Europe syllabuses are simply random selections of functions, topics, and exponents. The main problem with such lists is the difficulty of defining functions with precision and clarity. The absence of set conditions (or contextual factors) which limit or determine interpretation of

a given function means that there is at best some ambiguity, and, at worst, a total misunderstanding over what is meant by such functions as, for example, *expressing intention*, *expressing one is/is not obliged to do something* or *expressing dissatisfaction*. Another disadvantage is that a single language function, for instance, "inviting" may be expressed in many different ways by using different exponents for different contexts; e.g., formal vs. informal contexts. For learners, this sometimes causes confusion and frustration which results from their inability to determine which exponent to use in a given situation, especially at the beginning levels. Moreover, there are also difficulties of selecting and grading function and form. Clearly, the task of deciding whether a given function (i.e., persuading), is easier or more difficult than another (i.e., approving), is not an easy task. Some have argued that the major problem with a purely functional-notional approach is that in attempt to sequence the functions in an organized manner, one leaves grammatical structures unsequenced, which is not advisable in the light of both cognitive learning psychology and research that indicates the existence of a natural order of acquisition of language structures (Power, 2007). For diminishing this disadvantage, Nunan (1998) estates, needs analysis (NA) should be taken into account so as to establish the necessary objectives. Apart from NA that has an implicit focus on the learner, this type of syllabus proposes a new list consisting of notions and functions that become the main focus in a syllabus.

2.2.5. Implication in the Classroom

A functional-notional approach begins by assessing learners' communicative needs. This may be done intuitively, based on experience, and/or by means of questionnaires or interviews. Language teaching is then organized in terms of content rather than form. In its purest form, a language program founded on functional-notional principles would consist of sequenced sets of oral and written functions, beginning with those most needed for survival and concluding at a proficiency level sufficient for the learner to communicate successfully, but not natively or near-natively, in most situations requiring the non-technical use of language.

2.2.6 Conclusion

Some of the main differences between structural and communication-oriented syllabuses can be summarized as follows (Finnochiaro and Brumfit, 1983, pp. 90–94):

- Structural Syllabus:
    - Aims to develop the student's *linguistic competence*;
    - Organized around *structural, lexical, and phonetical* items;
    - Based on the *structural paradigm*: sentences are the basic units for learning;
    - Influenced by the *behaviorist theory* of learning (stimulus, response, reinforcement);
    - Places more emphasis on *accuracy* than fluency;
    - Contents are carefully *graded*.
- Grammatical Syllabuses:
    - These syllabuses focus only on one aspect of proficiency, that is, on the grammatical component. They neglect other important factors, such as the social dimension of language and its functional value.
    - The grammatical grading of content has also been criticized on several grounds:

        It is artificial and distorts natural and authentic language;

        Grammatical items are usually graded according to difficulty but rarely follow the natural order of acquisition established by research work (e.g., Pieneman and Johnston, 1987; Dulay, Burt, and Krashen, 1982; Long, 1987).
- Functional-Notional Syllabuses:
    - The selection and grading of items is complex, especially at elementary levels;
    - The functional grading of contents does not reflect authentic daily language either. So, there is also an element of distortion and artificiality in the language studied. In general, both syllabuses are sometimes criticized for offering predetermined objectives, planned outside the classroom, which do not take into account the student's contribution, nor their "inbuilt syllabuses" and individuality.

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Chapter 3

Situational, Topical, and Lexical Syllabus

CONTENTS

This chapter aims to briefly overview syllabus design is to compare two recent proposals for criteria for grading and sequencing the units of second language (L2) classroom activity. These are proposals situational, topical, and lexical syllabi. All these proposals show continuity with and development from, similar earlier approaches. First, Ellis (1993) argues for a role for the structural syllabus, alongside a meaning-based syllabus. This grammatical approach to syllabus design has a long history in L2 pedagogy (see Mackey, 1965; Richards and Rodgers, 1986) and is clearly the basis of many currently popular English courses, such as New Horizon (Asano, Shimomura, and Makino, 1997), and language programs throughout Japan and elsewhere. Second, Willis (1990) describes a lexical approach to syllabus design, inspired largely by the work of the Birmingham corpus analysis project (see Sinclair, 1987, 1991; Sinclair and Renouf, 1988). This approach can be seen as a development of earlier work on lexical grading by Palmer (1917); Thorndike (1921); West (1953, 1960); and Willis (1990, p. vi).

3.1. UNITS AND SEQUENCE: OPTIONS AND SYLLABUS DESIGN

Syllabus design is based essentially on a decision about the 'units' of classroom activity, and the 'sequence' in which they are to be performed. There are options in the units to be adopted (Long and Crookes, 1993; Long and Robinson, 1998; Nunan, 1988; White, 1988). Units can be based on an analysis of the *language* to be learned, in terms of grammatical structures, as in Ellis (1993), or of lexical items and collocations, as in Willis (1990). Units may also be based on an analysis of the components of *skilled behavior* in the second language (L2), for example the reading micro skills described by Richards (1990); and Brown (1995), or the communicative skills forming part of Munby's (1978) communicative needs profiler, and Johnson's (1996) recent work. Units may also be holistic *performative acts*, such as serving meals on an airplane (Long, 1985, in press) or finding a journal article in a library using library technology (Robinson and Ross, 1996). They may be either generic, or based on needs analyzes of specific groups of learners.

Along with choices in the units to be adopted, there are choices in the 'sequence' in which they can be presented. A syllabus can consist of a *prospective* and fixed decision about what to teach, and in what order, as in Long (1985, 1997, in press). In this case the syllabus will be a definition of the contents of classroom activity. A sequencing decision can also be made

on-line, during classroom activity as in Breen's 'process' syllabus (Breen, 1984). In this case the initial syllabus will only guide, but not constrain the classroom activities. Finally, Candlin has proposed that a syllabus can be *retrospective*, in which case no syllabus will emerge until after the course of instruction. In this case the syllabus functions only as a record of what was done, imposing no controlling constraint on the classroom negotiation of content. None of the four proposals under review adopts retrospective sequencing, though the extent to which they differ with regard to prospective versus on-line decision making about sequencing will be discussed.

3.2. THE ROLE OF THE LEARNER IN APPROACHES TO SYLLABUS DESIGN

Another useful distinction in conceptualizing options in syllabus design was made initially by Wilkins (1976) and refers to the learner's role in assimilating the content provided during group instruction and applying it individually to real world language performance and interlanguage development (also see Long and Crookes, 1992; Nunan, 1988; White, 1988; White and Robinson, 1995). *Synthetic* syllabuses involve a focus on specific elements of the language system, often serially and in a linear sequence, such as grammatical structures, or language functions. The easiest, most learnable, most frequent, or most communicatively important (sequencing decisions can be based on each of these ultimately non-complementary criteria, and on others) are presented before their harder, later learned, less frequent, and more communicatively redundant counterparts. These syllabuses assume the learner will be able to put together, or synthesize in real world performance, the parts of the language system they have been exposed to separately.

In contrast, *analytic* syllabuses do not divide up the language to be presented in classrooms, but involve holistic use of language to perform communicative activities. The learner's role in these syllabuses is to analyze or attend to aspects of language use and structure as the communicative activities require them to, in line with: a) their developing *interlanguage systems*; b) preferred *learning style* and *aptitude profile*; and c) to the extent that they are *motivated* to develop to an accuracy level which may not be required by the communicative demands of the task. For these reasons analytic approaches to syllabus design have been argued to be more sensitive to second language acquisition (SLA) processes and learner variables than their synthetic counterparts (Long and Crookes, 1993; Long and Robinson,

1998; Nunan, 1988; White, 1988; White and Robinson, 1995). The extent to which the two proposals for syllabus design under review imply these roles for the language learner is also discussed below.

3.3. THEORY AND APPROACHES TO SYLLABUS DESIGN

How does SLA theory inform recent proposals for lexical, situational syllabus design? The rationales for each proposal are described in subsections.

3.3.1. Willis' Lexical Syllabus

Drawing on a different type of empirical evidence-large scale corpora of spoken and written language use-Willis also argues for a synthetic syllabus, where word and collocation are the units of analysis. Willis nowhere draws on SLA research to the extent Ellis does to motivate his proposal, but does conclude that SLA research findings show "input does not equal intake and that "the assumption that language can be broken down into a series of patterns which can then be presented to learners and assimilated by them in a predictable sequence" is wrong (Willis, 1990, p. iii). Arguing against "a methodology which presents learners with a series of patterns" in a presentation, practice, production sequence Willis proposes taking "meaningful exposure as a starting point" (Willis, 1990, p. iv). Exposure should be organized in three ways: a) language is graded in difficulty; b) language exemplifying the commonest patterns is selected; and c) the language syllabus is itemized to highlight important features. Exposure is thus tightly controlled. Rather than linguistically grading the content of the syllabus Willis argues for lexically grading it using corpora of language use to identify word frequency at the 700 words, the 1,500 words, and the 2,500-word levels. Words in the corpora are itemized as collocations exemplifying each word's typical patterns of use. In effect, though, lexical grading leads to linguistic grading, since as Willis notes, by identifying the commonest words, "inevitably it focuses on the commonest patterns too… The lexical syllabus not only subsumes a structural syllabus, it also indicates how the structures which make up the syllabus should be identified" (1990, p. vi). In the lexical syllabus these three corpora are the bases of exposure at three levels of learner development. Willis claims that exposure is not sequenced or controlled within these levels, and the lexical syllabus "does not dictate what will be learned and in what order," rather "it offers the learner experience of a tiny but balanced corpus from which it is possible to

make generalizations about the language as a whole" (Willis, 1990, p. vii). In other words, the learner corpus which forms the basis of exposure at each level is carefully itemized, but these items are not presented individually and serially.

So, is there, then, a lexical syllabus, apart from the super ordinate distinction between level 1, 2, and 3 corpora? Willis describes the development of the COBUILD Course (an exemplar of the lexical syllabus) as a process of first intuitively deciding on interesting topics, then developing tasks and choosing texts to complement them, and then highlighting lexical items within, e.g., the first 700-word level, as they occurred in the texts. This series of highlighted items is the syllabus, but sequenced according to no criteria that are discussed, apart from teacher intuition (see Willis, 1990, pp. 74–90). The methodology accompanying the syllabus (described in Willis, 1990; and in detail by Willis, 1996a, b) involves a *pre-task* introduction to a topic, and exposure to texts; a *task cycle* where a task is planned, drafted, and rehearsed; and a final *language focus* where learners consciously focus on forms used during the task. Course planning and content, hence the syllabus, is thus largely determined by the choices of texts and tasks-topics about which the lexical syllabus says nothing. This is, then, a language-focused synthetic syllabus, but with some control given to the learner about which forms to attend to and focus on, since the itemized corpora at each level function as a guide, rather than as a prospective plan, allowing more on-line negotiation of content than Ellis allows. Surprisingly, given Willis' invocation of SLA research findings to support his approach, no account is taken of research into learnability and learning processes (a literature Ellis draws on) in selecting the collocations presented in corpora at each level of exposure, though these inevitably contain word order combinations, as well as tense and aspectual distinctions which are developmentally scheduled.

Lewis (1993) has argued that "*language is grammaticalized lexis, not lexicalized grammar*" and has developed his lexical approach to prioritize formulaic chunks at first. One way of achieving this is by means of a notional-functional approach. This lends itself perfectly to the teaching of routines (i.e., expressions that are completely formulaic, such as *I don't know*) and prefabricated patterns (i.e., expressions that are partly formulaic but have one or more empty slots, such as *Can I have a?*), and may provide an ideal foundation for direct intervention in the early stages of language learning. Clearly, though, a complete language curriculum needs to ensure that it caters to the development of both formulaic expressions and rule-based knowledge.

3.3.2. Background

The lexical approach to L2 language teaching, discussed by Willis (1990) and popularized by Lewis (1993, 1997, 2000), has been the subject of interest in recent past as an alternative to grammar-based approaches. It puts the acquisition of words and word combinations in the central role in language learning. Following the tradition of communicative approach, lexical approach places communication of meaning at the heart of language learning. The essential idea is that fluency is based on acquisition of a large store of fixed and semi-fixed prefabricated items which are available as the foundation of any linguistic novelty or creativity. Instruction focused on fixed expression that occurs frequently in the spoken language such as "I am sorry," "I didn't mean to make your jump," "that will never happen to me" rather than original creative sentences (Lewis, 1997). The traditional view that language consists of elements of generative system of the language, which is called grammar, and the fixed non-generative words, called vocabulary has been challenged (Lewis, 1993; Nattinger and DeCarrico, 1992; Willis, 1990). It is suggested that this viewpoint is seriously misguided from the linguistic and pedagogic perspective. The idea that stimulated Pawley and Syder (1887; cited in Lewis, 1997) to delve into this issue was that although many utterances produced by nonnatives are grammatically correct utterances, they are felt unnatural by native speakers. It is believed that not all possible sentences of a language are the probable utterances of the speakers of that language and traditional grammar teaching mainly focuses on all the sentences that can exist in a language, which is derived from what Chomsky calls *linguistic competence.*

Lewis (1997, p. 258) argues acquisition appears to be based on induction from natural utterances in the learner's input that are heard, read, and understood. Within this understanding it is clear that the input should be biased heavily toward high-frequency utterances, most of which will be fully or partially institutionalized. He also asserts that language mainly consists of 4 different lexical items or the constituent chunks. Each chunk can vary on a spectrum from being fully fixed at one extreme and very free on the other. The fixed ones are the traditional concepts of words and the free forms are the grammatical structures. Lewis (1997) considers a vast number of lexical items to be located somewhere in the middle of the spectrum which have been neglected in teaching materials.

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001) lexical approach in language teaching g reflect a belief in the centrality of the lexicon to language structure,

L2 learning, and language use and in particular to multiword lexical unit or "chunks" that are learned and used in a single item. Lexical have many different labels in the literature like "holophrase," "prefabricated pattern," "gambits," "speech formulae," and "lexical stem."

3.3.3. The Principles

Lewis (1993), who coined the term Lexical approach, suggests the following:

- Lexis is the basis of language;
- Lexis is misunderstood in language teaching because of the assumption that grammar is the basis of language and that mastery of the grammatical system is a prerequisite for effective communication;
- The key principle of a lexical approach is that "Language consists of grammatical lexis, not lexicalized grammar;"
- One of the central organizing principles of any meaning-centered syllabus should be lexis.

3.3.4. Approaches

3.3.4.1. Theory of Language

Richards and Rodgers (2001, p. 132) argue that central to an approach or method in language teaching is a view of the nature of the language, and these shapes teaching goals, the type of syllabus that is adopted, and the emphasis given in classroom teaching. Whereas Chomsky's influential theory of language emphasized the capacity of the speakers to create and interpret sentences that are unique and have never been produced or heard previously, the lexical view holds that only a minority of the spoken sentences are entirely novel creations and that multiword units functioning as chunks or memorized patterns form a high proportion of the fluent stretches of speech heard in everyday conversation. The role of collocation is also important in lexically based theories of language.

3.3.4.2. Theory of Learning

One of the criticisms leveled at Lexical Approach is its lack of a detailed learning theory. Lewis (2000; cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p. 134) asserts that Lexical approach lacks a theory of learning and to rectify it he offers the following assumptions:

- Encountering new learning items on several occasions is a necessary but sufficient condition for learning to occur;
- Noticing lexical chunks or collocations is a necessary but not sufficient condition for input to become intake;
- Noticing similarities, differences, restrictions, and examples contributes to turning input to intake, although formal description of rules probably does not help;
- Acquisition is based not on the application of formal rules but on an accumulation of examples from which learners make provisional generalizations. Language production is the product of previously met examples, not formal rules;
- No linear syllabus can adequately reflect the nonlinear nature of acquisition.

The lexical items are generally divided into 4 types, each might overlap the other one in certain pedagogical considerations.

Lewis (1997b) suggests the following taxonomy of lexical items:

- *Words* (e.g., book, pen);
- *Poly words* (e.g., by the way, upside down);
- Collocations/word partnerships (e.g., community service, absolutely convinced);
- Institutionalized utterances (e.g., I'll get it; We'll see; That'll do; If I were you…; Would you like a cup of coffee?);
- Sentence frames and heads (e.g., That is not as…as you think; The fact/suggestion/problem/danger was…) and even text frames (e.g., in this chapter we explore…; Firstly…; Secondly…; Finally…).

3.3.5. Words

They are considered to be independent units which might change the meaning of the whole utterance or might function as a complete utterance, such as *Stop! Sure! Please!* Poly words consists of more than one word with a degree of idiomaticity. Such as: *By the way…, On the other hand …*

3.3.6. Collocation

Collocation refers to the restrictions on how words can be used together, for example which prepositions are used with particular verbs, or which verbs

and nouns are used together. For example, in English the verb "*perform*" is used with *operation,* but not with *discussion:*

The doctor performed the operation.

* The committee performed a discussion.

Instead, we say: *The committee held/had a discussion.*

3.3.7. Polywords

Poly words refer to nay pair or group of words which are commonly found together or in a close proximity, especially a content word and one or more function words, e.g., "by the way," "up to now," "upside down."

3.3.8. Institutionalized Utterances

They are typical of spoken languages which express mostly pragmatic rather than referential meanings. They are usually recalled together and mostly appear in conversations. They might be full sentences with pragmatic meanings. They might also include sentence heads, such as *If I were you, I'd.…* According to the supporters of Lexical Approach, the lexical boundary is after "I'd" and not where the clauses are separated.

3.3.9. Sentence Head

They are very similar to institutionalized utterances. They are chunk that occur at the beginning of the sentence and can be composed in different ways, for example, do you think you might….? Would you like …. Please/. Within the lexical approach, great importance is laid on the collocations. As Lewis (1997) maintains, "Instead of word, we consciously try to think of collocation, and to present these in expressions. Rather than trying to break things into as smaller piece, there is a conscious effort to things in larger, more holistic way."

3.4. IMPLEMENTING THE LEXICAL APPROACH: ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGE

There are some advantages using lexical approach in language teaching:

- Lewis (1997, p. 260) believes lexical Approach advocates the humanistic approaches to language teaching. Lewis (1997) asserts that the kind of input selected for the learners should be

appropriate and encourage a low-anxiety atmosphere conducive to acquisition.

- In lexical Approach less, attention is devoted to individual words or traditional grammar and more time is spent on making sure that the learners are aware of the lexical items, collocations, and institutionalized utterances.

- A lot of activities are awareness-raising and receptive ones. Teachers who are accustomed to traditional presentation of grammar and vocabulary, and using lots of productive practice are advised to changes their viewpoint and pay more attention to receptive practice.

- Lexical chunks are useful tools for teaching conversations Nattinger and De Corrico (1992, p. 114) maintain that "lexical chunks provide the learners with the expressions they are incapable of creating, simply because they are stored and retrieved as chunks, they promote motivation and fluency of the learners." As they are embedded in socially appropriate situations, they are highly memorable.

- Since most of the lexical chunks are analyzable by regular rules of syntax. So later the learners can realize how the syntactic rules function.

- Nattinger and Decorrico (1992, p. 114) remark that Lexical chunks seem to provide the raw material itself for language acquisition. Anyone who learns a language in a relatively natural environment, adults as well as children, seem to pass through a stage in which they string memorized chunks of speech to gather in certain frequent and predictable social situations. Later by analogy with many similar phrases, they break these chunks down into sentence frames that contain slots for various fillers.

- Communicative power of the learners can be enhanced if a well-balanced range of lexically derived activities are incorporated in the classroom. These activities must contain different types of lexical items.

- Lewis (2001; cited in Islam, 2003) suggests that "two skills central to the Lexical Approach are developing the students' ability to use a dictionary as a learning resource rather than reference work and most important of all helping the students to identify lexical phrases in text." (p. 54).

Harwood (2002) lists five problems of the lexical approach:

- **Problem 1:** Corpora and teaching 'real' English;
- **Problem 2:** Teaching and learning real English;
- **Problem 3:** Recycling in practice;
- **Problem 4:** Face validity for teachers and learners;
- **Problem 5:** The world of elt publishing.

3.5. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITUATIONAL APPROACH

The argument for the situational syllabus is fairly straightforward. Although languages are usually described as general systems, language is always used in a social context and cannot be fully understood without reference to that context. Our choice of linguistic forms may be restricted according to certain features of the social situation and, in any case, we need the language so that we can use it in the situations that we encounter. Therefore, rather than orientate learning to the subject and its content, we should take account of the learner and his needs. We should predict the situations in which the learner is likely to need the language and then teach the language that is necessary to perform linguistically in those situations. It will be a more efficient process because it will include only what is relevant to the learner. It will be more motivating because it is learner-rather than subject-centered. The distinction between language for learning and language for use will disappear. Units in the syllabus will have situational instead of grammatical labels.

In order to carry out the behavioral analysis that underlies the situational syllabus, we must have a set of parameters for describing the significant features of situations. These features include the physical context in which the language event occurs, the channel (spoken or written) of communication, whether the language activity is productive or receptive, the number and the character of the participants, the relationships between them and the field of activity within which the language event is taking place. Obviously, different syllabuses will result for different types of learners. The exact contents of a syllabus will be the result of a careful behavioral prediction and will consist of an inventory of language situations and a description of the linguistic content of each of these situations. Situational courses do exist. They consist of learning units with labels like 'At the post office,' 'Buying a theater ticket,' 'Asking the way' and so on. In all probability they are successful in

what they set out to do, but there are reasons for doubting whether they can be taken as a model for the general organization of language teaching. The difficulty centers on just what is meant by 'situation.' With examples like the ones above there is no great difficulty. They are situations with fairly evident, objectively describable physical characteristics. The language interactions that are taking place are closely related to the situation itself. There will be grammatical and lexical forms that have a high probability of occurrence in these kinds of language event.

However, it would be naive to think that the speaker is somehow linguistically at the mercy of the physical situation in which he finds himself. What the individual says is what he has chosen to say. It is a matter of his intentions and purposes. The fact that there are some situations in which certain intentions are regularly expressed, certain linguistic transactions regularly carried out, does not mean that this is typical of our language use. Even in the restricted physical situations that have been mentioned so far language does not have to be related to the situation. I may have gone into the post office, not to buy stamps, but to complain about the non-arrival of a parcel, to change some money so that I can make a telephone call or to ask a friend of mine who works behind the counter whether he wants to come to a football match on Saturday afternoon. Making complaints is not (or should not be!) what one typically goes to a post office for. The making of requests, the seeking of information, the expression of agreement and disagreement can take place in almost any situation. There are probably no situations where we typically express possibility, probability, certainty, doubt, or conviction and yet the need to do so is demonstrated by the frequency with which they are expressed in our speech.

One way in which this problem might be overcome is by extending the notion of situation to include uses of language like those just mentioned which are the product of internal processes and not of the influence of situational features. Once we do this, however, we move into the realms of the unpredictable. The content of an utterance is determined by the state of mind of the speaker. That in turn is the product of his life's experience. We could predict his language behavior only if we had complete knowledge of the universe. By broadening the concept of situation in this way we have rendered it virtually inoperable since we are no longer able to describe the features of a situation in objective terms. At the same time, we have lost the benefit of the insight into language that is provided by our awareness that relationships between language and situation do exist. It seems best, therefore, to retain the term situation for the sum of the

observable and independently describable features of the context in which a language event occurs. Language use is then seen as a continuum. At one end of the scale the form and content of utterances is fairly predictable from a description of the situational context. At the other end the situational context of utterance is almost wholly irrelevant and prediction would be possible only if one knew what, in practice, one cannot know-the learned and inherited characteristics of the participants. Examples of language use under the control of observable stimuli are, if anything, atypical. A situational syllabus will be valuable insofar as a learner's need is to be able to handle language situations of this sort. The limited aims of a tourist, a waiter or a telephone switchboard operator might be provided for adequately in this way. However, they would, by definition, be unprepared for anything 'out of the ordinary.' If we were to attempt to use a situational syllabus for any learner whose needs could not be identified in these situational terms, including the general language learner, we would fail to provide him with the means to handle significant language needs. Useful as a situational syllabus may be in certain circumstances, therefore, it does not offer a general solution to problems of syllabus design.

Few language teachers today are familiar with the term Situational Language Teaching, which refers to an approach to language teaching developed from the 1930s to the 1960s by British applied linguists Harold Palmer and A. S. Hornby, two of the most prominent figures in British 20th-century language teaching. In fact, they attempted to develop a more "communicative" approach to language teaching. Like many others, Palmer, and Hornby believed that a grammatical or structural syllabus was neither efficient, nor effective for language learning since this model offers language samples outside their social and cultural contexts which makes transfer of learning from the classroom to the real world quite difficult. Hornby's *Guide to Patterns and Usage in English*, first published in 1954, is based on a sequenced language syllabus together with procedures for introducing each new item by linking it to a particular classroom situation and in this way, meaning would be established. Current approaches to situational syllabus design, however, go beyond the classroom and introduce various "real-life" situations. Another active proponent of the Situational Approach in the 1960s was the Australian George Pittman. Pittman and his colleagues were responsible for developing an influential set of teaching materials based on the Situational Approach, which were widely used in Australia, New Guinea, and the Pacific territories.

3.6. SITUATIONAL SYLLABI: CHARACTERISTICS, DIFFERENCES, STRENGTHS, AND WEAKNESSES

The content of language teaching is a collection of real or imaginary situations in which language occurs or is used. A situation usually involves several participants who are engaged in some activity in a specific setting. The language occurring in the situation involves a number of functions, combined into a plausible segment of discourse. The primary purpose of a situational language teaching syllabus is to teach the language that occurs in the situations. Examples of situations include: seeing the dentist, complaining to the landlord, buying a book at the book store, meeting a new student, and so on.

3.6.1. Central Premises

According to Rabbini (2011), the principal organizing characteristic is a list of situations which reflects the way language and behavior are used every day outside the classroom. Thus, by linking structural theory to situations the learner is able to induce the meaning from a relevant context.

One advantage of the situational approach is that motivation will be heightened since it is "learner-rather than subject-centered" (Wilkins, 1976, p. 16). However, a situational syllabus will be limited for students whose needs were not encompassed by the situations in the syllabus. This dissatisfaction led Wilkins to describe notional and communicative categories which had a significant impact on syllabus design.

The main focus of a situational syllabus is on the use of language as a social medium. The linguistic premise of this syllabus is that language is always used in context; never in isolation and the choice of linguistic forms are restricted by social situations. The educational premise is that there should be a different syllabus for different learners, based on the individual needs of the learners.

With this type of syllabus, the essential component of organization is a non-linguistic category, i.e., the situation. 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, for instance; seeing the dentist, going to the cinema, and meeting a new student, as a basis for selecting and presenting language content. The content of language teaching is a collection of real or imaginary situations in which language

occurs or is used. A situation usually includes several participants who are involved in some activity in a particular setting. The language used in the situation comprises a number of functions combined into a plausible part of available discourse. The main principle of a situational language teaching syllabus is to teach the language that occurs in the situations.

In this syllabus, situational needs are important rather than grammatical units. The major organizing feature is a list of situations which reflects the way language and behavior are used every day outside the classroom. Thus, by connecting structural theory to situations the learner is able to induce the meaning from a relevant context. One advantage of the situational approach is that motivation will be heightened since it is "learner-rather than subject-centered" (Wilkins, 1976, p. 16).

3.6.2. Logic

The logic behind a situational syllabus is that if the content of language teaching is formed by a range of real or imaginary behavioral or experiential situations in which a foreign language is used, the situational syllabus provides for concrete contexts within which to learn language structures, thus making it easier for most learners to visualize, and this, in turn, helps in promoting students' motivation.

3.6.3. Syllabus Type

Since situational syllabi are organized in terms of the purposes for which people are learning the language and the kinds of language performance that are necessary to meet those purposes, situational syllabi are commonly referred to as product-oriented, analytical syllabi whereby learners are required to achieve situational language accuracy.

3.6.4. Assumption

The designer of a situational syllabus attempts to predict those situations in which the learner will find him/herself, and uses these situations (e.g., a restaurant, an airplane, a post office, etc.), as a basis for selecting and presenting language content. The underlying assumption is that language is related to the situational contexts in which it occurs.

3.6.5. Components

A situational syllabus will typically include the following elements:

- The physical context in which the language event occurs (such as finding a room, ordering a meal, buying stamps, or getting around town);
- The channel of communication. Is it spoken or written?
- The language activity. Is it productive or receptive?
- The number and the character of the participants;
- The relationships between the participants and the type of activity.

Obviously, different syllabuses will result for different types of learners. The exact contents of a syllabus will be the result of a careful behavioral prediction and will consist of an inventory of language situations and a description of the linguistic content of each of these situations.

3.6.6. Types

There are three types of situational syllabi:

- **Concrete:** Situations are acted out to specific settings using specific patterns.
- **Mythical:** Situations depend on fictional characters in a fictional place.
- **Limbo:** Specific setting of the situation is of little or no importance. What is important is the particular language involved.

3.6.7. The Effect of the Situational Approach on Language Teaching

Language teaching begins with the spoken language. Material is taught orally before it is presented in written form. Situational language teaching adopts an inductive approach to the teaching of grammar. Explanation is therefore discouraged and the learner is expected to deduce the meaning of a particular structure or vocabulary item from the situation in which it is presented. Extending structures and vocabulary to new situations takes place by generalization. The learner is expected to apply the language learned in a classroom to situations outside the classroom. Accuracy in both pronunciation and grammar is regarded as crucial, and errors are to be avoided at all costs. Automatic control of basic structures and sentence patterns is fundamental to reading and writing skills, and this is achieved

through speech work. Practice techniques employed often consist of guided repetition and substitution activities, including chorus repetition, dictation, drills, and controlled oral-based reading and writing tasks.

3.6.8. An Evaluation of Situational Syllabi

The greatest strengths of the situational syllabus are:

- Explicit attention is paid to the influence of social factors on language choice, especially to registered variation (i.e., when to be formal versus informal).
- It may motivate learners to see that what they are learning is "real-life" language that actually meets their most pressing everyday communication needs.

The shortcomings of the situational syllabus, however, are quite a few—while certain language functions will most likely occur in certain physical situational settings such as "At the Post Office" or "In a Restaurant," this does not necessarily mean that all the language forms that will be used can be predicted. One may go into a restaurant, not to order a meal, but only to ask for directions to a nearby museum. Hence, a situational syllabus will be limited for students whose needs are not encompassed by the situations in the syllabus. Simply said, language users are real people-not just robots in situations. The presence of "artificial" dialogs in many existing materials, which both illustrate recurrent grammatical patterns and present practical phrases for a situational context, often include discourse that would never be used in natural language. Thus, language as practiced in the classroom and language as spoken in the real world will often have little in common.

In general, there are no clearly defined criteria for sequencing material. In conclusion, a situational syllabus is probably most appropriate for short-term special-purpose courses as in giving prospective tourists survival skills or preparing service personnel, such as waiters or waitresses, to deal with routine requests or fire fighters to handle emergency situations. It has limited potential for the language learner interested in acquiring global language proficiency.

3.7. TOPICAL SYLLABUSES: MERITS AND DEMERITS

White (1988) explains that topics are defined by meaning, not form, and meaning is a notoriously slippery concept to work with. White (1988) refers

to Brown and Yule (1983) that explain there is a number of different ways of expressing "the topic." They mean that topics like "travel" and "shopping" can mean many things to many people and ultimately anything could be included under such content headings. He argues that topics can be limited to things which are so minutely particular that it becomes difficult to decide whether the focus is topic or vocabulary. Meanwhile, the interchangeability with which "notion" and "topic" appear to be used creates further confusion. Nunan (2004) believes that when developing curricula for general English programs, he tends to favor a topic-based/theme-based approach because it affords maximum flexibility and allows him to bring in a wide variety of content that can be tailored to learner needs.

3.8. CONCLUSION

Clearly, decisions about the units and sequence of classroom activity must accommodate what is known of learning processes, since these are what they are trying to facilitate. Of the proposals for syllabus design reviewed here, SLA research has had the strongest influence on task-based approaches. The structural, lexical, and skills syllabuses all show signs of theoretical, and research-driven development from earlier proposals, but in a number of cases SLA research findings pose problems or raise unanswered questions for them. As described above, the basis for sequencing items in the lexical syllabus is frequency, and coverage. Those lexical items occurring most frequently are presented first, in their most common sentence patterns. However, this applies only to the establishment of the corpora at the 700-words, 1,500 words, and 2,500-words level. Within each level it is not clear on what criteria items are chosen for inclusion in texts, or why tasks making use of the texts are sequenced in the way they are.

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Chapter 4

Task-Based Syllabus

CONTENTS

Widdowson (1990) defines syllabus as 'specification of teaching program or pedagogical agenda which defines a particular subject for a particular group.' White (1988) identifies two major categories for syllabuses which he calls them type A and type B. In type B syllabuses the linguistic content of the syllabus is not pre-selected in advance. This type of syllabus which is also compared with analytic syllabus of Wilkins (1976) focuses on the method rather than content where processes of learning are focused on. Task-based syllabus is categorized in *type B* syllabuses according to White. In this assignment, I will first start with a brief background while focusing on the rationale of such syllabuses, content selection and gradation of such syllabuses will be discussed later on and finally merits and demerits of task-based syllabuses are detailed.

4.1. BACKGROUND

In 1976, the British applied linguist David Wilkins suggested a basic distinction between what he called *'synthetic approaches'* to syllabus design and '*analytical' approaches*. All syllabuses, he suggested, fitted one or other of these approaches.

In 'synthetic' approaches, different parts of the language are taught separately and step by step so that acquisition is a process of gradual accumulation of parts until the whole structure of language has been built up. (Wilkins, 1976, p. 2). Synthetic syllabuses, similar to type A syllabuses in White (1988), segment the target language into discrete linguistic items for presentation one at a time: "Different parts of language are taught separately and step by step so that acquisition is a process of gradual accumulation of parts until the whole structure of language has been built up…At any one time the learner is being exposed to a deliberately limited sample of language. The language that is mastered in one unit of learning is added to that which has been acquired in the preceding units." (Wilkins, 1976, p. 2). … The actual units according to which synthetic syllabuses are organized vary. Structural, lexical, notional, and functional, and most situational and topical syllabuses are all synthetic (Long and Crookes, 1992, 1993; Long and Robinson, 1998).

Such approaches represent the 'traditional' way of organizing the syllabus, and reflect the common-sense belief that the central role of instruction is to simplify the learning challenge for the student. One way to simplify learning is to break the content down into its constituent parts, and introduce each part separately and step-by-step. A related concept that

was popular in the 1960s was that of mastery learning. Having broken the subject matter down and sequenced it from easy to difficult, each item of content was introduced to the learner in a serial fashion, and a new item was not supposed to be introduced until the current item had been thoroughly mastered (thus the label 'mastery learning').

The dominant approach to language teaching (and, indeed, most of the rest of the world), has been, and remains, a synthetic one. Teachers who have learned their own languages through a synthetic approach, and see this as the normal and logical way of learning language.

In his book *Notional Syllabuses*, however, Wilkins offered an alternative to synthetic approaches. These are known as 'analytical' approaches because the learner is presented with holistic 'chunks' of language and is required to analyze them, or break them down into their constituent parts. Prior analysis of the total language system into a set of discrete pieces of language that is a necessary precondition for the adoption of a synthetic approach is largely superfluous. … [Such approaches] are organized in terms of the purposes for which people are learning language and the kinds of language that are necessary to meet these purposes. (Wilkins, 1976, p. 13).

All syllabus proposals that do not depend on a prior analysis of the language belong to this second category. In addition to task-based syllabuses, we have project-based, content-based, thematic, and text-based syllabuses. Despite their differences, they all have one thing in common-they do not rely on prior analysis of the language into its discrete points. Task-based language teaching (TBLT), then, grew out of this alternative approach to language pedagogy. Since then, the concept of 'task' has become an important element in syllabus design, classroom teaching and learner assessment, although teachers brought up in tradition methods still struggle with the concept. It underpins several significant research agendas, and it has influenced educational policy-making in both ESL and EFL settings.

Task based syllabus is also analytic because it does not pre-select the linguistic elements of syllabus or the content, and it focuses on method-process, learning focus and learner-led, or procedural-cognitive focus, or task-based (White, 1988). Two trends of task-based syllabuses have been distinguished (Ellis, 2003): 'a priori task-based syllabus' where the content is specified before teaching begins, and 'a posterior task-based syllabus' where the content and the methodology are conflated. In such syllabus, a procedural negotiation will be taken place between the learners and the instructor as to the content, methodology, and evaluation of the teaching.

Reason why task-based instruction became popular was because pedagogues were convinced that teaching structure to the learners are not fruitful anymore because one does not know what exactly the learner learn. In form-based language teaching as Willis and Willis (2007) put, the assumption was that what was taught (input) and what was absorbed (intake) were linked. Studies show that this would not happen. For example, Corder (1967); and Selinker (1972) have argued that it is not possible to predict the learner's language development. This verifies the fact that there is not clear evidence that intake is equal to input. With this background the pedagogues were convinced that teaching structure to learners are not fruitful and hence task-based instruction became popular.

The rationale for task-based syllabuses is varied. Most important rationale is theoretical one which argues that the instruction should be compatible with the process involved in L2 acquisition. Prabhu's rationale (a pioneer in task-based teaching) is that learners should be engaged in learning and 'tasks' when they are providing 'reasonable challenge' are cognitively engaging and motivating. Long's rationale (another pioneer) is still another rationale which argue that tasks serve as a suitable unit for specifying learners' needs and therefore are suitable for designing specific purpose courses.

Feeney (2006) believes the term ''Task based language Teaching'' was a far less familiar concept in the late 1980s and is completely absent for example from texts such as Richards and Rodgers (1986) review of the current language teaching approach. In the following five years or so Willis (1996) was given to the development of the Task based teaching as an approach in its own light. Task based language Teaching (TBLT) refers to a teaching approach based on the use of communicative and interactive tasks as the central units for the planning and delivery of instruction. Such tasks are said to provide an effective basis for language learning since they:

- Involve meaningful communication and interaction;
- Negotiation;
- Enable the learners to acquire grammar as a result of engaging in authentic language use.

TBLT is an extension of the principles of communicative language teaching (CLT) and an attempt by its proponents to apply principles of second language (L2) learning to teaching. TBLT proposes the notion of "task" as a central unit of planning and teaching. Although the definition of vary in TBLT, there is a commonsensical understanding that a task is an activity or goal that is carried out using language, such as finding a solution

to a puzzle, reading a map, and giving directions, making a telephone call, writing a letter, or reading a set of instruction and assembling a toy.

4.2. TASK: DEFINITION AND TYPES

Ellis (2003, p. 16) defines task in the following way: "A task is a work plan that requires learners to process language pragmatically in order to achieve an outcome that can be evaluated in terms of whether the correct or appropriate propositional content has been conveyed. To this end, it requires them to give primary attention to meaning and to make use of their own linguistic resources, although the design of the task may predispose them to choose particular forms. A task is intended to result in language use that bears a resemblance, direct or indirect, to the way language is used in the real world. Like other language activities, a task can engage productive or receptive, and oral or written skills and also various cognitive processes."

Tasks have been defined in various ways. Nunan (2004) draws a basic distinction between *real-world or target tasks, and pedagogical tasks.*

Target tasks, as the name implies, refer to uses of language in the world beyond the classroom. Pedagogical tasks are those that occur in the classroom.

Long (1985, p. 89) frames his approach to TBLT in terms of target tasks, arguing that a task is a piece of work undertaken for oneself or for others, freely or for some reward. Thus, examples of tasks include painting a fence, dressing a child, filling out a form, buying a pair of shoes, making an airline reservation, borrowing a library book, taking a driving test, typing a letter, weighing a patient, sorting letters, talking a hotel reservation, writing a check, finding a street destination, and helping someone across a road. In other words, by 'task' is meant the 101 things people do in everyday life, at work, at play, and in between.

The first thing to notice about this definition is that it is non-technical and nonlinguistic. It describes the sorts of things that the person-in-the-street would say if asked what they were doing. (In the same way as learners, if asked why they are attending a Spanish course, are more likely to say, "So I can make hotel reservations and buy food when I'm in Mexico," than "So I can master the subjunctive.") Related to this is the notion that in contrast with most classroom language exercises; tasks have a non-linguistic outcome. Non-linguistic outcomes from Long's list above might include a painted fence, possession, however temporary, of a book, a driver's license, a room

in a hotel, etc. Another thing to notice is that some of the examples provided may not involve language use at all (it is possible to paint a fence without talking). Finally, individual tasks may be part of a larger sequence of tasks, for example, the task of weighing a patient may be a sub-component of the task 'giving a medical examination.'

When they are transformed from the real world to the classroom, tasks become pedagogical in nature. Pedagogical task is an activity or action which is carried out as the result of processing or understanding language (i.e., as a response). For example, drawing a map while listening to a tape, listening to an instruction, and performing a command may be referred to as tasks. Tasks may or may not involve the production of language. A task usually requires the teacher to specify what will be regarded as successful completion of the task. The use of a variety of different kinds of tasks in language teaching is said to make language teaching more communicative … since it provides a purpose for a classroom activity which goes beyond the practice of language for its own sake. (Richards, Platt, and Weber, 1986, p. 289).

In this definition, we can see that the authors take a pedagogical perspective. Tasks are defined in terms of what the learners will do in class rather than in the world outside the classroom. They also emphasize the importance of having a non-language outcome. The pedagogical task is also defined as any structured language learning endeavor which has a particular objective, appropriate content, a specified working procedure, and a range of outcomes for those who undertake the task. 'Task' is therefore assumed to refer to a range of work plans which have the overall purposes of facilitating language learning-from the simple and brief exercise type, to more complex and lengthy activities such as group problem-solving or simulations and decision-making. (Breen, 1987, p. 23).

This definition is very broad, implying as it does, that just about anything the learner does in the classroom qualifies as a task. It could, in fact, be used to justify any procedure at all as 'task-based,' and, as such, is not particularly helpful. More circumscribed is the following from Willis (1996; cited in Willis and Willis, 2001). A classroom undertaking "…where the target language is used by the learner for a communicative purpose (goal) in order to achieve an outcome." Here the notion of meaning is subsumed in 'outcome.' Language in a communicative task is seen as bringing about an outcome through the exchange of meanings. (p. 173).

It was mentioned that for some scholars like Long, language tasks have to be designed in a way to involve 'focus on form' at the time the learner

primary attention is on meaning. He distinguishes between 'target' tasks, or real-world tasks and 'pedagogic' tasks. In course of specific purpose, he suggests that what the syllabus designer has to do is to run a need analysis to identify the target tasks of the learners, those tasks that the specific group needs to perform. He argues that 'task' is an ideal unit for specifying what the content of specific purpose courses because they reflect what the learners need to do with language. Pedagogic tasks are designed to facilitate L2 learning processes and strategies. Pedagogic tasks are like:

- **Jigsaw Tasks:** Involving learner to combine different pieces of information to form a whole.

- **Information-Gap Tasks:** Tasks in which one student or group of students has one set of information and another student or group of students has complementary set of information. They must negotiate and find out what the other party's information is in order to complete an activity.

- **Problem Solving Task:** The learners have to arrive at a solution to a problem. There is generally only a single solution.

- **Decision Making Tasks:** students are given a problem with various solution and hence they have to make a decision, make a discussion and negotiation.

- **Opinion Exchange Tasks:** Learners engage in discussion and exchange of ideas.

Many types of L2 tasks exist, particularly in the realm of communicative instruction. Here is a listing of some key task types found in the literature: problem-solving (Nunan, 1989; Pica et al., 1993; Willis, 1996a); decision-making (Foster and Skehan, 1996; Nunan, 1989; Pica et al., 1993); opinion-gap or opinion exchange (Nunan, 1989; Pica et al., 1993); information-gap (Doughty and Pica, 1986; Nunan, 1989; Oxford, 1990; Pica et al., 1993); comprehension-based (Ikeda and Takeuchi, 2000; Scarcella and Oxford, 1992; Tierney et al., 1995); sharing personal experiences, attitudes, and feelings (Foster and Skehan, 1996; Oxford, 1990; Willis, 1996a, b); basic cognitive processes, such as comparing or matching (Nunan, 1989; Willis, 1998), listing (Willis, 1998), and ordering/sorting (Willis, 1998); language analysis (Willis, 1996a, b, 1998); narrative (Foster and Skehan, 1996); reasoning-gap (Nunan, 1989); question-and-answer (Nunan, 1989); structured and semi-structured dialogs (Nunan, 1989); and role-plays and simulations (Crookall and Oxford, 1990; Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

Pedagogic tasks are identified through needs analysis (NA). They are selected and sequenced in the syllabus and their purpose is to enable the learners to transfer them to real life tasks. (Richards, 2001, p. 162). Task bases syllabuses have not been used because of a number of controversial issues:

- The definition of tasks is sometimes so broad as to include almost anything that involves learners doing something;
- Design and selection of task is not clear. (Richards, 2001, p. 162).

In selection of task for syllabus, according to Robinson (1996), one should distinguish between two parameters of difficulty which is attributed to affect or more or less individual factors like age, physical, and emotional conditions of the learners and complexity which is concerned with the variable like time, familiarity with the subject, etc. Pedagogically, TBLT has strengthened the following principles and practices:

- A needs-based approach to content selection;
- An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language;
- The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation;
- The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on language, but also on the learning process itself;
- An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning;
- The linking of classroom language learning with language use outside the classroom.

Skehan (1998), drawing on a number of other writers, puts forward five key *characteristics of a task*:

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

Ellis (2003b) distinguished between (a) unfocused tasks (e.g., ordinary listening tasks or interactions) and (b) focused tasks, which are used to elicit a particular linguistic feature or to center on language as task content. He cited three principal designs for focused tasks: comprehension tasks,

consciousness-raising tasks, and structure-based production tasks. Elsewhere (Ellis, 2003a) presented a sequence of tasks for helping learners become more grammatical, rather than for attaining the elusive goal of mastery? The sequence includes:

- Listening task, in which students listen to a text that they process for meaning);

- "Noticing" task, in which students listen to the same text, which is now gapped, and fill in the missing words;

- Consciousness-raising task, in which students discover how the target grammar structure works by analyzing the "data" provided by the listening text;

- Checking task, in which students complete an activity to check if they have understood how the target structure works;

- Production task, in which students have the chance to try out or experiment with the target structure by producing their own sentence.

4.3. TASK VS. EXERCISE

Task will indeed have somewhat different meanings in different contexts of use. A task is a 'work plan;' that is, it takes the form of materials for researching or teaching language. A work plan typically involves the following: (i) some input (i.e., information that learners are required to process and use); and (ii) some instructions relating to what outcome the learners are supposed to achieve. As Breen (1989) has pointed out, the task-as-workplan is to be distinguished from the task-as-process (i.e., the activity that transpires when particular learners in a particular setting perform the task). As we will see, the activity predicted by the task-as-work plan may or may not accord with the activity that arises from the task-as-process. Definitions of 'task' typically relate to task-as-work plan. Widdowson (1998) is critical of such a definition of 'task,' arguing that the 'criteria do not in themselves distinguish the linguistic exercise and the communicative task' (p. 328). Widdowson argues that 'exercise' and 'task' differ with regard to the kind of meaning, goal, and outcome they are directed towards. Thus, an exercise is premised on the need to develop linguistic skills as a prerequisite for the learning of communicative abilities, while a task is based on the assumption that linguistic abilities are developed through communicative activity. Widdowson suggests that what constitutes the primary focus

of attention, the goal, the way in which the outcome is evaluated and the relationship to the real-world are all interpreted differently in accordance with this basic difference in orientation. In effect, however, Widdowson is not so much disagreeing with Skehan's definition as, with his customary elegance, refining it. Table 4.1 is an attempt to incorporate Widdowson's insight into Skehan's definition.

A possible objection to this conceptualization of 'exercise' and 'task' is that teachers and learners in a classroom context are unlikely to forget the overarching reason for any activity they engage in, namely, to learn the language. In other words, it can be claimed that the achievement of a communicative goal will always be subservient to a learning agenda. Such a claim, reasonable as it seems, needs to be subjected to empirical investigation. But irrespective of whether it is valid or not, it does not preclude the need for the kind of theoretical distinction between 'exercise' and 'task' outlined in Table 4.1 (adopted from Ellis (2000)). No matter what the actual behavior that arises when teachers and learners perform an exercise or task is, there is a need to distinguish 'exercise' and 'task' at the level of work plan. The extent to which work plans and actual behavior are matched remains an issue of obvious importance but cannot be studied unless clearly defined categories of work plan are established.

Table 1: The Differences between Exercise and Task

	Exercise	**Task**
Orienta-tion	Linguistic skills viewed as pre-requisite for learning com-municative abilities.	Linguistic skills are developed through engaging in communicative activity.
Focus	Linguistic from and semantic meaning ('focus on from').	Propositional content and pragmatic content and pragmatic communica-tive meaning ('focus on meaning').
Goal	Manifestation of code knowl-edge.	Achievement of a communicative goal.
Outcome-evaluation	Performance evaluated in terms of conformity to the code.	Performance evaluated in terms of whether the communicative goal has been achieved.
Real-world relation-ship	Internalization of linguistic skills serves as an investment for future use.	There is a direct and obvious relationship between the activity that arises from the task and natural communicative activity.

4.4. THEORETICAL ACCOUNT FOR TASK-BASED LANGUAGE USE

Ellis (2000) states there are two very different theoretical accounts of task-based language use. One account, which will be referred to as the psycholinguistic perspective, draws on a computational model of L2 acquisition (Lantolf, 1996). According to this perspective, tasks are viewed as devices that provide learners with the data they need for learning; the design of a task is seen as potentially determining the kind of language use and opportunities for learning that arise. Three different psycholinguistic models are: *Long's Interaction Hypothesis*, *Skehan's 'cognitive approach'* and *Yule's framework of communicative efficiency*. The second theoretical account of tasks is that provided by socio-cultural theory. This is premised on the claim that participants co-construct the 'activity' they engage in when performing a task, in accordance with their own socio-history and locally determined goals, and that, therefore, it is difficult to make reliable predictions regarding the kinds of language use and opportunities for learning that will arise. Socio-cultural theory emphasizes the dialogic processes (such as 'scaffolding') that arise in a task performance and how these shape language use and learning. Both theoretical approaches afford insights that are of value to task-based language pedagogy. The psycholinguistic approach provides information that is of importance for planning task-based teaching and learning. The socio-cultural approach illuminates the kinds of improvisation that teachers and learners need to engage in during task-based activity to promote communicative efficiency and L2 acquisition.

4.4.1. Approach

4.4.1.1. Theory of Language

TBLT is motivated by a theory of learning rather than a theory of language. However, Richards and Rodgers (2001) believe that several assumptions about the nature of language can be said to underlie current approaches to TBLT:

- Language is primarily a means of making meaning;
- Lexical units are central in language use and language learning;
- Conversation is the central focus of language and the keystone of language acquisition.

4.4.1.2. Theory of Learning

TBI shares the general assumptions about the nature of language learning underlying CLT. Richards and Rodgers (2001) believe that some additional learning principles play a central role in TBLT theory. They are:

- Tasks provide both the input and output processing necessary for language acquisition;
- Task activity and achievement are motivational;
- Learning difficulty can be negotiated and facilitated for particular pedagogical purposes.

4.4.2. Content Selection and Gradation

The Pioneer of such instruction was Prabhau (1987) who argued that pre-selection of linguistic items in any form has to be put aside and one has to specify the content of teaching based on holistic units of communication which he called it task. His suggestion addressed teaching 'through communication' rather than teaching 'for communication.' Hence, he suggested a type of syllabus which he called it procedural syllabus. In procedural syllabus, unlike content syllabus one is not concerned with the product of learning. Instead, the concentration is on what is to be done in the classroom and not with what is perceived to be taught or learned. Prabhau's attempt was the first attempt to task-based teaching. A somewhat different approach to task-based teaching is proposed by Long (1985); and Long and Crookes (1992). Like Prabhau, Long's proposal is also grounded on a theory of L2 acquisition (SLA). However, his proposal is different from that of Prabhau in that he views language learning as an explicit process. He believes that learning takes place when the learners attend to 'form' consciously while they are communicating-what he calls 'focus on form.' This is different from what Prabhau suggested. For Prabhu learning a language takes place as an implicit process and when learners are grappling with the effort to communicate. So, for Long, language tasks have to be designed in a way to involve 'focus on form' at the time the learner primary attention is on meaning. Long also suggests tasks for courses of specific purposes. Willis and Willis (2007) believe that such tasks include meta-communicative task, or exercise which focuses on language form. In such tasks the learners manipulate language and formulate generalization about form. This definition of task, according to Willis and Willis (2007) is an all-embracing definition which includes anything that might happen in a classroom.

4.4.3. Advantages and Critics

Task-based syllabus was a reaction on the shortcoming of form-based syllabuses which regarded that language is an inventory of forms which can be presented to the learners and practiced as a series of discrete items. This assumption further proved not to be true. Richards (2001a) point out a number of these assumptions. One of the key assumptions in task-based instruction is that methodology does not focus on product of language. The focus here is the process of language. Secondly, activities are purposeful and tasks emphasize communication and meaning. Thirdly the learners learn language by interacting communicatively and purposefully while engaged in the activities and tasks. Fourth, activities are those that learners need to achieve in real life and those that have pedagogical purpose. Fifth, activities, and tasks are sequenced according to difficulty. And finally, difficulty of task depends on a range of factors including the previous experience of the learner, the complexity of task, the language required to undertake the task, and the degree of support available.

Task-based teaching also claims that tasks are activities that drive the SLA process. Moreover, in task-based teaching, teachers do not focus on teaching grammar, rather they try to engage the learners in tasks that the learners acquire grammar as a byproduct of carrying out task. It has also been claimed that tasks are motivating for learners and engage them in meaningful communication (Richards, 2001).

Richards (2001b) also mentions that task-based syllabuses, despite the claims they make, do suffer from a number of controversial issues. First is that the definition of tasks is sometimes so broad as to include almost anything that involves learners doing something. Secondly, design, and selection of tasks is not very clear, and thirdly, excessive use of communicative tasks may encourage fluency at the expense of accuracy and hence fossilization at the early stage of development (Skehan, 1996). Ellis (2003) also lists a number of criticisms leveled against task-based syllabuses. The first one is that grammatical structures are learned through direct intervention, and studies show that 'focus on forms' would lead to learning specially in test like performance as well as spontaneous oral production. The failure of traditional syllabuses may be attributed to the methodology or the way the syllabuses are taught. Though this claim supports traditional syllabuses, it does not necessarily invalidate task-based instruction. The second criticism is that findings of meaning centered approaches (immersion programs) fail to show high levels of grammatical and sociolinguistic competence and hence

throws doubt on the overall effectiveness of such approaches. Sheen (1994) cited in Ellis (2003) argues that if immersion programs which spent so many hours of teaching could not achieve such competences, how can one trust task-based programs with much fewer hours of teaching to succeed. Ellis thinks that this would not invalidate task-based teaching, and it only point out to the limitations. Ellis also admits that Sheen is right in pointing out to the lack of clear empirical support for either the effectiveness of task-based instruction or its relative superiority.

4.4.4. Pedagogical Implications

Skehan (2002) believes that the first major influences on the use of tasks in language teaching has come from Michael Long. He has made (at least) three major contributions to task work. First, he has argued that tasks should be chosen according to learner need. By this, Long means that what teachers require learners to do (pedagogic tasks) should be linked, in ways dependent on needs analyzes, to real-world tasks that the learners ultimately aspire to completing. (Interestingly, this view of tasks has not generalized, and, apart from Long, not many others discuss it.) Second, Long initiated debates to explore why not all tasks are equally elective, and to devise research techniques for exploring which tasks are more useful, and when. Third, as a means of distinguishing task quality, Long has argued consistently for tasks which promote what he calls the negotiation of meaning, i.e., tasks which, in order to be completed, push learners to engage in checking and clarifying as they go along. He argues that when learners do this, they are signaling to their interlocutors that they are in (slight) difficulty, and so are more likely to receive feedback which 'speaks' to their current problem. In this way, tasks can be a vehicle for individualization, and tasks can enable two learners to collaborate and go beyond their individual competences. On the basis of these contributions, Long argues that tasks can be the unit for syllabuses, and that, when chosen and used appropriately, they can be an elective foil for individualized language development (see Long and Robinson, 1998 for more extensive discussion of these issues).

A second approach to investigating tasks is more embedded within actual language classrooms than research-based. One example of this is represented by the work of Jane and Dave Willis (Willis, 1996; cited in Skehan, 2002). Their emphasis is less on sequencing tasks so much, as on how tasks can best be used. They propose the following stages:

- Input/pre-task activities;

- •   Task phases;
- •   Actual task;
- •   Planning;
- •   Presentation;
- •   Post-task language focus.

The first stage is preparatory, and tries to ensure that (a) the learners' attention is mobilized, and their interest aroused in some area of meaning, (b) they are provided with some input which may help them.

The second stage, which contains three sub-stages, starts with learners doing a task, and then moves to the learners going over the task they have done. The usual pretext for so doing is that there will be some sort of presentation which should push learners to be concerned with form, since they will want to present in a manner which, other things being equal, avoids mistakes. The planning phase comes after the task, build upon the meanings which have been made salient in the course of transacting the task itself, and attempts to provide learners with relevant language that will help them to say what they wanted to say, but better.

The last phase, language focus, is the time in this methodology when the learners are finally allowed to direct their attention to form. What is interesting in this approach is that the conventional sequence of presentation (language focus), controlled language use (practice (?)), and production (doing the task), have almost been reversed. In other words, a central aspect of the methodology is that the learners themselves, because of the way they do the task, nominate the meanings they want to express, and which, for whatever reason, have been made salient. The rest of the methodology is concerned with supporting learners to express such meanings with appropriate forms. Another teaching-oriented researcher is Virginia Samuda (2001; cited in Skehan, 2002), who has explored how a teacher, running a task in class can work with students to make form-meaning connections more salient for them. So, while they are doing a meaning-focused task, the teacher can skillfully insinuate extending language which the learners can more readily attend to, and incorporate in their own speech. Like the Willis approach, the first stage is to create a 'need to mean.' Then, taking the example of modality, Samuda shows how the teacher can induce the learner to go beyond an initial stage, where modality can only be expressed through words like 'probably' and 'maybe' to a later stage, where with appropriate (and unobtrusive) prompting they can incorporate modal verbs to get across the same ideas.

A third, more cognitive approach to tasks, takes a deferent perspective which depends on three central propositions. First, it is assumed that we only have limited amounts of attention available during language use. This generally means that in order to attend to one thing, we are likely to have to forego attending to something else. Second, there are tensions between deferent aspects of language use, with a certain prominence attached to a concern for fluency, on the one hand, and for formal aspects.

4.5. CONCLUSION

A task-based syllabus supports using tasks and activities to encourage learners to utilize the language communicatively so as to achieve a purpose (Richards, 2001). It indicates that speaking a language is a skill best perfected through interaction and practice. The most important point is that tasks must be relevant to the real-world language needs of the learner. It should be a meaningful task so as to enhance learning. The content of the teaching is a series of multifaceted and focused tasks that the students want or need to perform with the aid of the language they are learning. Tasks combine language and other skills in specific contexts of language use (Mohseni Far, 2008). Tasks should not be confused with activities either. A task-based syllabus is the one which is designed to make L2 learning easier and in which tasks or activities are the unit of the syllabus. It has been argued that while doing the task the learners receive comprehensible input, and modified output, two processes which are central to SLA.

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Chapter 5

Developing Language Instructional Materials for Young Learners

CONTENTS

Some differences are immediately obvious: children are often more enthusiastic and lively as learners. They want to please the teacher rather than their peer group. They will have a go at an activity even when they do not quite understand why or how. This assignment surveys the literature for developing English language teaching (ELT) materials for young learners. To this end some main differences between young and adult learning, historical perspectives, types of syllabuses, current thinking in young language learning (YLL) and different factors contributing teaching young learners (TYL) will be take into ground on what follows.

5.1. ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN OR A SECOND LANGUAGE (L2)?

KYL may be taught in contexts where English is seen as a foreign language-that is where it has no widespread or official role in a country-or in contexts where it is given the status of a second language (L2). However, the distinctions these days are not so clear cut. For example, in countries such as Bangladesh or Sri Lanka where English is generally considered a L2, there may be great differences in the roles and 'visibility' of English. In rural areas the contact with the language outside the classroom may be so minimal that the conditions in which it is being learned are more like those of a foreign language (Rixon, 1999). On the other hand, in Scandinavian countries, where English is technically a foreign language, the access to the language through the media and the standards achieved in the school system give English perhaps a greater currency than it has in some 'L2' countries. For many children in foreign language situations Cummins's (1984) BICS-Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills-may be thought appropriate, whereas for those children (for example, primary schoolchildren in Anglophone Cameroon) whose present or future education should be through the medium of English, materials which promote CALP (cognitive academic language proficiency) are clearly needed. We surveyed materials that were in use in both types of contexts.

5.2. BACKGROUND

In the early 1980s relatively, few countries supported the teaching of English as a Foreign Language in publicly funded primary schools, but in the 21st century the situation is that most countries are either already TYL in state schools or are in the early stages of planning to do so, with private institutions

following suit. Triggers for the growth in interest were in some cases politico-economic, as in the late 1980s and early 1990s with those countries which left the orbit of the Soviet Union and in which the introduction of ELY was part of a wider educational reform, in part symbolizing an opening out towards a new internationalism.

In many other countries in this period, English became the favored language for primary school learning because it was perceived as the passport to global communication and therefore to increased personal and national prosperity. A main driving force in this regard was parental demand often fueled by the belief that 'Younger is Better' when it comes to language learning. Another source of motivation at an official level was a view that for young children learning another language has an educational value in itself, seen both in cognitive and in personal development terms-breaking down barriers and widening children's horizons. A less up-beat reason for introducing English at primary school level in some countries has been the view that the results of starting to learn it only at secondary school level have not been satisfactory. Introducing English in the primary school is in such cases seen as offering a double advantage.

The number of years available for learning the language can be extended, and, as mentioned above, younger children are seen as particularly effective language learners, 'Younger is Better.' It may be debated how far all these beliefs and perceptions are well founded (Rixon, 1999) but nonetheless they are the basis for the decisions made by authorities in many countries.

One feature that is common to many contexts is the speed at which YLL has been introduced into mainstream education by the authorities. This has often outpaced the teacher education and creation of suitable materials that ideally should prepare the ground for such an innovation. Debates have raged and different choices have been made about who in these circumstances are the most suitable teachers for YLL-language specialists who may not have worked with young children before or mainstream primary teachers who may not have worked with a foreign language before? 'Suitable materials' here, therefore often means materials that are not only child-friendly but also teacher-friendly, with the capacity to support and scaffold the early efforts of teachers who, in one way or another, are inexperienced in the field of YLL. Teachers in many contexts, especially in public primary schools, have acknowledged their need for support both in the English they are to use in class and in the methodology that is appropriate for teaching English to children. The textbook as agent of change' (Hutchinson and Torres, 1994)

has therefore been a major role for YL materials in the last 25 years. New ideas have largely been carried to the YL teaching profession by successful and influential course materials. Publishers who wish to succeed in a market in which many teachers are not yet very experienced in the field need to put major effort into supplying Teachers' Guides that are clearly written, comprehensive, and full of teaching advice, even if this often makes them several times the length of the pupils' materials.

5.3. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES IN YL TEACHING: CURRENT THINKING

Three developmental theories have had a substantial influence on discussion of what is desirable in YL teaching. They were part of the academic debate about YLL even in the 1980s and 1990s but recently seem to have found their way more fully into the rationales behind newly created materials. This is a sign, perhaps, that YLL teaching is better established and has 'come of age' in many contexts so that teachers are professionally prepared and willing to consider values which go beyond the minimally informed language teaching that may have marked their early years in YLL. The theories are:

- Piaget's sequential developmental stages, especially as re-visited and analyzed by Donaldson (1978, pp. 131–140), whereby development in cognition only occurs by understanding, adapting, and continually modifying knowledge. Donaldson's contribution, like those below, emphasizes the importance of other people as mediators in this process.
- Vygotsky's (1978) 'zone of proximal development' (ZPD) identifying a gap between what the YL have learnt from their own experience and what they could achieve with the help of others, seeming to emphasize the importance of social interaction with language being the 'tool of thought' (Brewster, 1991, p. 3; cited in Tomlinson, 2003).
- Bruner's 'scaffolding' analogy (Maybin, Mercer, and Stierer, 1992, p. 187; cited in Tomlinson, 2003).

5.4. TYPES OF SYLLABUSES

Several syllabus concerns which have been debated for older learners have not generally come in to the Young Learners' area. For example, the 'functional' (Richards and Rodgers, 1986, p. 17) approach describing language as 'a

vehicle for the expression of functional meaning' and paying great attention to appropriacy and register has only to a small extent appeared in YLL materials and there has been minimal interest in making functions of English the Major Organizing Principle of syllabuses for children's courses. This is probably because it is recognized that children do not need to negotiate such a wide range of social and register issues as older learners may.

There has been more interest in an 'interactional' approach (Richards and Rodgers, 1986, p. 17) where language is seen as 'a vehicle for the realization of interpersonal relations and for the performance of social transactions between individuals,' valuing communication for exchanging views and for social purposes.

However, particularly 'child friendly' organizing principles such as Topics have become more prominent for YL-courses than they have for older learners. It is true, however, that many ostensibly Topic-based syllabuses have skillfully interwoven structural progression within them. Structural grading is, in fact, found in many YL, course materials, both local and international, and practice varies greatly over the extent to which this is disguised among other organizing principles. Other powerful ways of building in coherent 'threads' that make a course more meaningful to children have been story-line and character. Recently, there has been some interest in Tasks as a major syllabus strand (Willis, 1996), along with various degrees of Learning to Learn.

5.5. SYLLABUS FOR YLL

Bourke (2006) believes the goals of an English language syllabus for FL young learner might be the following (adapted from the primary English syllabus for Brunei):

- to help pupils communicate effectively in English, in order to discuss personal experiences, and to meet the demands of the school curriculum;
- to facilitate the acquisition of fluency and accuracy through active participation in a range of appropriate tasks;
- to develop emergent reading and to inculcate in pupils a fondness for reading;
- to introduce language items (e.g., structures, vocabulary) within the context of appropriate topics which can be talked about, read about, and written about.

Assuming that the function of a syllabus is to generate appropriate units of work for a specific group of learners, one can see that a syllabus constructed to implement the four broad goals above would have the following characteristics:

- Communicative activities such as games, cued dialogs, role-play, information gap exercises, and various other interactive tasks;
- Communicative tasks supported by 'enabling' (i.e., language-oriented) tasks. The rationale here is that children will acquire the language as a by-product of the activities in which they are engaged;
- Gradual introduction of pupils to reading in English by means of the shared reading of Big Books, using both 'look and say' and phonic approaches;
- Topic-related units of work derived from the syllabus. The topics provide the scaffolding around which the language grows and develops. They also provide the motivation for personal and group writing tasks.

5.6. FOREIGN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION TO YOUNG AND ADULTS

According to Philip et al. (2008); and Cameron (2001), there are some differences in FL instruction to young and adults. Children are often more enthusiastic and lively as learners. They want to please the teacher rather than their peer group. They will have a go at an activity even when they do not quite understand why or how. However, they also lose interest more quickly and are less able to keep themselves motivated on tasks they and difficult. Children do not and it as easy to use language to talk about language; in other words, they do not have the same access as older learners to meta-language that teachers can use to explain about grammar or discourse. Children often seem less embarrassed than adults at talking in a new language, and their lack of inhibition seems to help them get a more native-like accent. But these are generalizations which hide the detail of different children, and of the skills involved in teaching them. We need to unpack the generalizations to and out what lies underneath as characteristic of children as language learners. We will and those important differences do arise from the linguistic, psychological, and social development of the learners, and that, as a result, we need to adjust the way we think about the language we

teach and the classroom activities we use. Although conventional language teaching terms like `grammar' and `listening' are used in connection with the young learner classroom, understanding of what these mean to the children who are learning them may need to differ from how they are understood in mainstream language teaching.

5.7. TEACHING ENGLISH TO YOUNG LEARNERS (TEYL): SOME QUALIFICATIONS

Popular tradition would have you believe that children are effortless L2 learners and far superior to adults in their eventual success. On both counts, some qualifications are in order. First, children's widespread success in acquiring L2s belies a tremendous subconscious *effort* devoted to the task. As you have discovered in other reading children exercise a good deal of both cognitive and affective effort in order to internalize both native and L2s. The difference between children and adults (that is, persons beyond the age of puberty) lies primarily in the contrast between the child's spontaneous, peripheral attention to language forms and the adult's overt, focal awareness of and attention to those forms. Therefore, the popular notion about children holds only if "effort" refers, rather narrowly, to focal attention (sometimes thought of as "conscious" attention-) to language forms.

Second, adults are not necessarily less successful in their efforts. Studies have shown that adults, in fact, can be superior in a number of aspects of acquisition. They can learn and retain a larger vocabulary. They can utilize various deductive and abstract processes to shortcut the learning of grammatical and other linguistic concepts. And, in classroom learning, their superior intellect usually helps them to learn faster than a child. So, while children's fluency and naturalness are often the envy of adults struggling with L2s, the context of classroom instruction may introduce some difficulties to children learning a L2. Third, the popular claim fails to differentiate very young children (say, 4- to 6-year-olds) from pubescent children (12 to 13) and the whole range of ages in between. There are actually many instances of 6-to 12-year-old children manifesting significant difficulty in acquiring a L2 for a multitude of reasons. Ranking high on that list of reasons are a number of complex personal, social, cultural, and political factors at play in elementary school education.

Teaching ESL to school-age children, therefore, is not merely a matter of setting them loose on a plethora of authentic language tasks in the classroom. In fact, for some TESOL professionals (Cameron, 2003), the challenge of

teaching children warrants a separate acronym: TEYL (teaching English to young learners). Teacher reference books are devoted solely to the issues, principles, and methodology surrounding the teaching of children (Linse, 2005; Pinter, 2006; cited in Brown, 2007). To successfully teach children a L2 requires specific skills and intuitions that differ from those appropriate for adult teaching.

5.8. PRACTICAL APPROACH TO TYL

5.8.1. Intellectual Development

Since children (up to the age of about 11) are still in an intellectual stage of what Piaget (1972) called "*concrete operations*," we need to remember their limitations. Rules, explanations, and other even slightly abstract talk about language must be approached with extreme caution. Children are centered on the here and now, on the functional purposes of language. They have little appreciation for our adult notions of "correctness," and they certainly cannot grasp the metalanguage we use to describe and explain linguistic concepts. Here are some rules of thumb for the classroom:

- Do not explain *grammar* using terms like "present progressive" or "relative clause."
- *Rules* stated in abstract terms ("To make a statement into a question, you add a *do* or *does")* should be avoided.
- Some grammatical concepts, especially at the upper levels of childhood, can be called to learners' attention by showing them certain *patterns* ("Notice the *ing* at the end of the word") and *examples* ("This is the way we say it when it's happening right now: 'I'm walking to the door'").
- Certain more difficult concepts or patterns require more *repetition* than adults need. For example, repeating certain patterns (without boring students) may be necessary to get the brain and the ear to cooperate. Unlike the boy who had no pencil, children must understand the meaning and relevance of repetitions.

5.8.2. Attention Span

One of the salient differences between adults and children is attention span. First, it is important to understand what attention span means. Put children in front of a TV showing a favorite cartoon and they will stay riveted for the

duration. So, you cannot make a sweeping claim that children have short attention spans! But short attention spans do come into play when children have to deal with material that to them is boring, useless, or too difficult. Since language lessons can at times be difficult for children, your job is to make them interesting, lively, and fun. How do you do that?

- Because children are focused on the *here and now,* activities should be designed to capture their immediate interest;

- A lesson needs a *variety* of activities to keep interest and attention alive;

- A teacher needs to be *animated,* lively, and enthusiastic about the subject matter. Consider the classroom a stage on which you are the lead actor; your energy will be infectious. While you may think that you are overdoing it, children need this exaggeration to keep spirits buoyed and minds alert;

- A *sense of humor* will go a long way in keeping children laughing and learning. Since children's humor is quite different from adults,' remember to put yourself in their shoes.

Children have a lot of natural *curiosity.* Make sure you tap into that curiosity whenever possible, and you will thereby help to maintain attention and focus.

5.8.3. Sensory Input

Children need to have all five senses stimulated. Your activities should strive to go well beyond the visual and auditory modes that we feel are usually sufficient for a classroom:

- Pepper your lessons with *physical* activity, such as having students act out things (role-play), play games, or do Total Physical Response activities;

- Projects and other *hands-on activities* go a long way toward helping children to internalize language. Small-group science projects, for example, are excellent ways to get them to learn words and structures and to practice meaningful language;

- *Sensory aids* help children to internalize concepts. The smell of flowers, the touch of plants and fruits, the taste of foods, liberal doses of audiovisual aids like videos, pictures, tapes, music-all are important elements in children's language teaching;

- Remember that your own *nonverbal language* is important because children will indeed attend very sensitively to your facial features, gestures, and body language.

5.8.4. Affective Factors

A common myth is that children are relatively unaffected by the inhibitions that adults find to be a block to learning. Not so! Children are often innovative in language forms but still have a great many inhibitions. They are extremely sensitive, especially to peers: What do others think of me? What will so-and-so think when I speak in English? Children are in many ways much more fragile than adults. Their egos are still being shaped, and therefore the slightest nuances of communication can be negatively interpreted. Teachers need to help them to overcome such potential barriers to learning:

- Your students to laugh *with* each other at various mistakes that they all make;
- Be patient and supportive to build self-esteem, yet at the same time be firm in your expectations of students;
- Elicit as much oral participation as possible from students, especially the quieter ones, to give them plenty of opportunities for trying things out.

5.8.5. Authentic, Meaningful Language

Children are focused on what this new language can actually be used for here and now. They are less willing to put up with language that does not hold immediate rewards for them. Your classes can ill afford to have an overload of language that is neither authentic nor meaningful:

- Children are good at sensing language that is not *authentic;* therefore, "canned" or stilted language will likely be rejected.
- Language needs to be firmly *context embedded.* Story lines, familiar situations and characters, real-life conversations, meaningful purposes in using language-these will establish a context within which language can be received and sent and thereby improve attention and retention. *Context reduced* language in abstract, isolated, unconnected sentences will be much less readily tolerated by children's minds.
- A *whole language* approach is essential. If language is broken into too many bits and pieces, students will not see the relationship to

the whole. And stress the interrelationships among the various skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), or they will not see important connections.

Richards and Schmidt (2002) cite *Whole language approach* (integrated whole language approach) is an approach to first language (L1) reading and writing instruction that has been extended to middle and secondary school levels and to the teaching of ESL and that views language as a "whole" entity. Whole language emphasizes learning to read and write naturally with a focus on real communication and is opposed to the idea of teaching the separate components of language (e.g., grammar, vocabulary, word recognition, phonics) in isolation. Principles of whole language include:

- Language is presented as a whole and not as isolated pieces. The approach is thus holistic rather than atomistic, attempts to teach language in real contexts and situations, and emphasizes the purposes for which language is used.
- Learning activities move from whole to part, rather than from part to whole. For example, students might read a whole article rather than part of it or an adapted version of it.
- All four modes of language are used, thus lessons include all four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, rather than a single skill.
- Language is learned through social interaction with others; hence students often work in pairs or groups instead of individually.

5.9. SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The appropriate skills focus for EYL teaching is seen in many contexts as speaking and listening, at least at the beginning stages of learning the language. There is, however, no universal agreement on this point, even within countries. How early literacy in English should best be approached, especially for children whose LI language is written in a non-Roman script, is an issue which many materials intended for a general international market do not address at all, but which local and 'glocal' materials cannot avoid. In Korea, for example, the single Ministry of Education sponsored textbook in use in primary schools aims to build speaking and listening for the first two years with very limited or no exposure to the written word. In other contexts, such as parts of China, the written word is included uncontroversially in YL materials from the very beginning and in locally customized 'glocal'

versions of international materials (e.g., Gogo Loves English] extra early literacy development material has been incorporated.

5.9.1. Teaching Reading Comprehension to Young Learners

The predominant methods of teaching reading in the L1 are the 'phonic' method, and the so-called 'look and say' approach. When following the first method, children are taught a strategy of transforming letters into sounds. This allows them to decode the phonic representation of a given word from its written form a sufficient number of times to memorize the graphic representation of that word. Having once acquired this skill, children are able to recognize a growing number of whole words. This means that instead of concentrating on deciphering sounds from letter symbols, they are able to focus on the meaning of words, and thus read fluently and with understanding. The phonic approach method can be used successfully with children who are five and above (Dlugosz, 2000).

The alternative 'look and say' approach places no lower limit on the age of the children it is suitable for. In fact, with this method, the younger children are, the faster they can learn. In contrast to the phonic approach, with 'look and say' the burden of responsibility for providing the child with enough experience of seeing and hearing words rests with the teacher. By the time children taught with that method are given their first books, they can go straight on to reading with understanding. A well-tested way of creating pre-reading experience for children has been developed and fully documented by Doman (1991). The method relies on showing a child card with separate words written on them ('flashcards), and reading the words out loud three times a day for five consecutive days. Every day one card is removed from the set of cards and replaced with a new one. Each time the cards are shown in a different order. When the child has learnt a sufficient number of words, he or she is presented with a book based on that vocabulary. After mastering approximately 500 words, the child no longer needs to be taught new words, and can read a wide range of texts independently.

In learning to read in a foreign language, a child has to memorize not only the shape, but also the meaning of the words. While this means that the phonetic approach is too complex for very young learners, the 'look and say' method can be strongly recommended for foreign language learners, since it helps them to associate the graphical form of a word with a given sound, and to learn the meaning of that word.

5.10. THE DEVELOPMENT OF DISCOURSE AND TEXTUAL AWARENESS

Cameron (2003, p. 109) points to the need to teach YL discourse skills as well as language items. Many EYL materials, however, operate predominantly at the sentence or single utterance level rather than at the discourse level. The use of short unanalyzed 'chunks' of language, otherwise known as formulaic utterances (Weinert, 1995) is a well-known strategy of language learners of all ages when trying to build fluency. In many KYL materials, however, language is actually presented in short chunks. It is rare to find a course in which children are helped to move from the understanding or production of single chunks to the ability to produce substantial and coherent texts of their own, either in writing or in 'long turns' in speech. With regard to comprehension skills children tend not to be taught to cope with substantial reading texts but the situation is somewhat better with regard to giving them experience of listening to extended texts. This is especially so in those materials which make use of stories-live or as audio materials-as a vehicle for some lessons. However, in many courses even today, listening is used mainly as a way of presenting new language, and the children's listening experiences are therefore limited to hearing short utterances as models for spoken imitation.

5.11. DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES FOR DIFFERENT CHILDREN AND CONTEXTS

In older materials, YL were often treated as an undifferentiated group, who it was enough to motivate and delight by whatever means the author thought most effective (e.g., characters, visuals, color, relevance, humor). However, recent developments in YL thinking have acknowledged learning differences which Gardner's (1994, pp. 41–43) theory of 'multiple intelligence' (MI) identifies as seven different abilities, talents, and mental skills used for problem solving, including intrapersonal, interpersonal, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, spatial, linguistic, and logical-mathematical. Tomlinson (1998, p. 17) extends the styles of learning by adding studial, experiential, analytical, global, dependent, and independent, further implying that a learner's preferred style might be variable depending on 'what is being learned, where it is being learned, who it is being learned with and what it is being learned for.'

A study conducted by Tomlinson reveals the following features as the most value features in YL: characteristic, based on fun and enjoyment, emphasizing listening, and speaking, promoting interaction in class, topic based, task based promoting systematic study of language, content based heavily vocabulary based and finally heavily grammar based.

5.12. KEY FACTORS FOR TYL

5.12.1. Students' Cognitive Learning Processes

In those first few days and even weeks of language learning, virtually all of the students' processing with respect to the L2 itself is in a focal, controlled mode*. Therefore, you can expect to engage in plenty of repetition of a limited number of words, phrases, and sentences. Do not become frustrated if a considerable period of time goes by with little change in these learning modes.

Even in the first few days of class, however, you can coax your students into some peripheral processing by getting them to use practiced language for genuinely meaningful purposes. For example, getting information from a classmate whom a student does not know will require using newly learned language ("What's your name?" "Where do you live?"), but with a focus on the purposes to which the language is put, not on the forms of language. The forms themselves, although still controlled (limited in capacity), nevertheless move into a peripheral mode as students become immersed in the task of seeking genuine information.

*A Quick Review: controlled processing is common in any new skill where few bits of information can be managed at once. Focal attention is giving notice to something in particular: a language form, an attempted message, a person's physical appearance; a person's emotional state, etc. Automatic processing is the simultaneous management of a multitude of pieces of information. And peripheral attention refers to things that we give only incidental notice to.

5.12.2. The Role of the Teacher

Beginning students are highly dependent on the teacher for models of language, and so a teacher-centered or teacher-fronted classroom is appropriate for some of your classroom time. Students are able to initiate few questions and comments, so it is your responsibility to "keep the ball rolling." Still, your beginning level classes need not be devoid of a modicum of student-centered work. Pair work and group work are effective techniques

for taking students' focus off you as the center of attention and for getting them into an interactive frame of mind even at the most beginning level. It follows that the degree of control of classroom time also leans strongly in the direction of the teacher at the beginning levels. In a L2 context where instruction is carried out in the target language, virtually all of your class time will be teacher-controlled. Since students have no means, in the L2 anyway, of controlling the class period, the onus is on you to plan topics, activity types, time-on-task, etc. As students gain in their proficiency, they will be able to initiate questions and comments of their own that may then occasionally shift the locus of control. In a foreign language situation, where your students speak the same native language (and you speak it as well), some negotiation might be possible in the native language, allowing for a small amount of student control.

5.12.3. Teacher Talk

Your input in the class is crucial. All ears and eyes are indeed focused on you. Your own English needs to be clearly articulated. It is appropriate to slow your speech somewhat for easier student comprehension, but do not slow it so much that it loses its naturalness. And remember, you do not need to talk any louder to beginners than to advanced students if your articulation is clear. Use simple vocabulary and structures that are at or just slightly beyond their level. Is it appropriate to use the students' native language? As noted above, in L2 situations, especially multilingual classes, your use of a student's native language is seldom an issue. In foreign language situations, however, it becomes an option. It is important not to let your classes go to excess in the use of the students' native language. The rule of thumb here is usually to restrict classroom language to English unless some distinct advantage is gained by the use of their native language, and then only for very brief stretches of time. Examples of such advantages include:

- Negotiation of disciplinary and other management factors;
- Brief descriptions of how to carry out a technique;
- Brief explanations of grammar points;
- Quick pointers on meanings of words that remain confusing after students have had a try at defining something themselves; and
- Cultural notes and comments.

5.12.4. Authenticity of Language

The language that you expose your students to should, according to principles of communicative language teaching (CLT), be authentic language; this is just as important at the beginning levels. Simple greetings and introductions, for example, are authentic and yet manageable. Make sure utterances are limited to short, simple phrases. At times such language may appear to be artificial because of all the repetition needed at this stage. Do not despair; your students will appreciate the opportunity to practice their new language.

5.12.5. Fluency and Accuracy

Fluency is a goal at this level but only within limited utterance lengths. Fluency does not have to apply only to long utterances. The "flow" of language is important to establish, from the beginning, in reasonably short segments. Attention to accuracy should center on the particular grammatical, phonological, or discourse elements that are being practiced. In teaching speaking skills, it is extremely important at this stage that you be very sensitive to students' need to practice freely and openly without fear of being corrected at every minor flaw. On the other hand, you need to correct some selected grammatical and phonological errors so that students do not fall into the trap of assuming that "no news is good news" (no correction implies perfection). Pronunciation work (on phonemes, phonemic patterns, intonation, rhythm, and stress) is very important at this stage. Neglecting phonological practice now may be at the expense of later fluency. Your job, of course, is to create the perfect balance.

5.12.6. Student Creativity

The ultimate goal of learning a language is to be able to comprehend and produce it in *unrehearsed* situations, which demand both receptive and productive creativity. But at the beginning level, students can be creative only within the confines of a highly controlled repertoire of language. Innovation will come later when students get more language under their control.

5.12.7. Techniques (Activities, Procedures, Tasks)

Short, simple techniques must be used. Some mechanical techniques are appropriate-choral repetition and other drilling, for example. A good many teacher-initiated questions dominate at this level, followed only after some

time by an increase in simple student-initiated questions. Group and pair activities are excellent techniques as long as they are structured and clearly defined with specific objectives. A variety of techniques is important because of limited language capacity.

5.12.8. Listening and Speaking Goals

Notice that the listening and speaking functions for beginners are meaningful and authentic communication tasks. They are limited more by grammar, vocabulary, and length of utterance than by communicative function. It is surprising how many language functions can be achieved with very uncomplicated language.

5.13. CONCLUSION

A number of materials have features that we feel could be studied and emulated with advantage by EYL writers. These will be summarized in list form after some wider issues that extend beyond teaching materials have been discussed immediately below:

- **The need to build bridges between what happens in primary school and secondary school English:** Cameron (2003, p. 110) urges the importance that secondary teachers 'receive information about the Young Learners who come to them from the primary sector' in order to 'build on early language learning.' It is still true today that in many countries the children's primary school achievements in English are largely ignored when they change schools, and this is reflected in those secondary school ELT materials which take learners 'back to zero.' In a very few countries such as Germany, secondary school syllabuses and materials are being revised in order to incorporate such a bridge (e.g., *Lei's Go).*

- **Big principles need to be explained and exemplified clearly to teachers:** Because of the variety of aims and contexts that can be connected with YL, it is not possible to lay down a single set of universal principles. However, writers need to work from principles and also to make those principles transparent to users. The most usual vehicle for this is the Teacher's Guide although good 'signaling' in the pupils' materials is also very helpful. We have mentioned above the good use of websites and video-based demonstration material that some publishers have already made.

- **There needs to be more teacher education linked to use and choice of EYL materials:** 'Face to face' teacher education is a natural extension of the use of the type of teacher education resources mentioned just above. When provided by a publisher, such training is often linked to the use of a course already adopted, but there is also a place for independent teacher education that equips teachers, in contexts where a choice of materials is possible, to make a principled evaluation of and selection from candidates.

- **There needs to be consideration of appropriate language models and goals:** An important issue is what type of language, including pronunciation, is appropriate for 21st-century children preparing to enter a world in which English is an international language. As Jenkins (2000) points out, more people speak English as a second or foreign language than as a L1, and intelligible communication between non-native speakers is, for many people, the priority, rather than adherence to a particular native speaker model. Materials for adults are starting to take account of this, and perhaps it is timely to think of how it might be reflected in materials for younger learners.

Within materials themselves the following issue seem to us to be important:

- Consideration needs to be given to the appropriate order of introduction of skills for children of different ages and reading skills in particular need to be developed to a more ambitious level than most materials currently promote Conventional wisdom, working on the analogy of LI skills development, recommends that oral/aural skills need to be established well before reading and writing are introduced. However, there may be differences in appropriate approaches according to the ages and language backgrounds of the children and this is an area that is in need of further research.

- Multi-media resources should be used to extend and enrich YLL methodology rather than to turn back the clock to Behaviorist practices.

- The supply of assessment material with courses needs to go beyond trivial easy-to-test aspects of the teaching content and

to develop teachers' assessment methods towards a more child-friendly approach.

- There is a need for materials which support big moral and intellectual themes and promote educational values appropriate to the age and context of the children concerned.

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Chapter 6

Developing Electronic Language Instructional Material

CONTENTS

6.1. THE DIGITAL APPROACH OF THE 21ST CENTURY

From the 20 centuries on, technology has always been with L2 teaching; however, in 21st century, with the advent of computers and the Internet, technology turned to be an integrated part of lots of TESL courses (see Table 6.1). Summary of the evolution of approaches and of technology use in the teaching of ESL adopted from Murphy's (2000).

Table 6.1. The Evolution of Approaches and of Technology Use in the Teaching of ESL

Point of com- parison	20TH CENTURY		21ST CENTURY
	«1970	1970°	
APPROACHES & METHODS	Audio-Lingual Method. Direct Method	Communicative Language Teach- ing	The Digital Ap- proach
TECHNOLOGY USE	Behavioristic CALL	Communicative CALL	Technology En- hanced Language Learning
THEORY OF LEARNING	Behaviorism	Humanistic influ- ences	Constructivism
ENVIRON- MENT	Traditional	Traditional	Online

Murphy's (2000) posits the *Digital Approach* of the 21st century depends on Technology Enhanced Language Learning. The distinction between computer assisted language learning (CALL) and technology-enhanced language learning (TELL) as Murphy notes is that "the computer simultaneously becomes less visible yet more ubiquitous. Based on *the Digital Approach*, technology use becomes an integral and necessary part of the learning process and not just something added to language courses to motivate students. Contrary to the audio-lingual method (ALM), the direct method and even communicative language teaching (CLT) provided a highly prescriptive approach to second and foreign language teaching, the Digital Approach, however, does not dictate or prescribe specific activities, techniques, or methods. Such an approach mainly relies on the use of online rather than traditional learning environments. As to the learning theories, the constructivist and socio-cognitive approaches have been the influential

trends which hastened the use of technology in second language (L2) curriculum in the 21 centuries.

6.2. DIGITAL APPROACH: THE THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING

Warschauer and Meskill (2000) elaborate on the theoretical foundation provided by these approaches for the application of technology. According to Warschauer and Meskill, technologies which are based on constructivism are those which allow learners maximum opportunity to interact within meaning-rich contexts through which they construct and acquire competence in the language. Thus, in the new perspective, as Warschauer and Meskill maintain, the internet and online interaction facilitate interaction within and across various discourse communities giving maximum opportunity for authentic social interaction. It provides not only comprehensible input but also gives students practice in the kinds of communication they will later engage outside the classroom (Wang, 2005) Numerous studies have pinpointed the advantages as well as caveats of the implications of technology into L2 curriculum; however, it seems that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. Therefore, as LeLoup and Ponterio (2006) comment, in the new millennium, the question no longer is whether technology should be integrated into the curriculum, but rather how best to do so. Since most of the technologies which are believed to have the potential to improve L2 learning are not necessarily invented for this purpose, teachers, and learners need to be given enough training in this regard.

6.3. CALL: BACKGROUND AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Regarding the realm of computer itself, Chappelle (2001) places CALL within six computer-related sub-disciplines: educational technology, computer-supported collaborative learning (CSCL), artificial intelligence, computational linguistics, corpus linguistics, and computer-assisted assessment. Beatty (2003, p. 248) believes that the difficulty of defining CALL is obvious in this selection of related terms and acronyms:

- Computer-aided instruction (CAI);
- Computer-assisted learning (CAL);
- Computer-assisted language instruction (CALI);

- •   Computer-assisted language teaching (or testing) (CALT);
- •   Computer-adaptive teaching (or testing) (CAT);
- •   Computer-based training (CBT);
- •   Computer-mediated communication (CMC);
- •   Computer-mediated instruction (CMI);
- •   Intelligent computer assisted language learning (ICALL).

Some of these terms may be considered as being synonymous with CALL, while others focus on narrower or broader concerns. However, the list is not limited to these terms. Gruba (2004) refers to some more acronyms including TELL, web-enhanced language learning (WELL), networked-based language teaching (NBLT) (Kern and Warschaer, 2000), project-oriented CALL (PrOCALL), computer applications in second language acquisition (CASLA), and computer-assisted second language acquisition research (CASLR) each serving a different purpose and proposed by different scholars. Yet, Gruba (2004) believes that CALL is now widely regarded as the central acronym to refer to studies concerned with L2 and computer technology.

Ø   ***Theoretical Perspective:*** As Gruba (2004) maintains, trends in CALL roughly parallel those in other areas of applied linguistics. In this regard and in an attempt to provide a clearer view of the history of CALL, Warschauer (1996); and Warschauer and Healey (1998) identified three phases in the history of CALL: Behavioristic CALL, Communicative CALL, and Integrative CALL. Later, Warschauer (2000) made some alternations in his categorization and summarized the key aspects of CALL over 30 years in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2. Different Stages of CALL

Stage	1970s-1980s: Structural CALL	1980s-1990s: Communicative CALL	21st Century: Integrative CALL
Technology	Mainframe	PCs	Multimedia and Internet
English-teaching paradigm	Grammar-translation and audio-lingual	Communicate [sic] language teaching	Content-Based. ESP/EAP
View of language	Structural (a formal structural system)	Cognitive (a mentally constructed system)	Socio-cognitive (developed in social interaction)
Principal use of computers	Drill and practice	Communicative Exercises	Authentic discourse
Principal objective	Accuracy	And fluency	And agency
(Warschauer, 2000).			

6.3.1. Behavioral CALL

The first phase of CALL, implemented in the 1970s and 1980s, was based on the then-dominant behaviorist theories of learning. Programs of this phase entailed repetitive language drills and can be referred to as "drill and practice" (or, more pejoratively, as "drill and kill") (Warschauer and Healey, 1998, p. 57). In this paradigm, which was particularly popular in the United States, the computer was viewed as a tutor "that never grew tired or judgmental and allowed students to work at an individual pace" (p. 58). Warschauer (1996, p. 4) believes that the rationale behind drill and practice was not totally spurious, which explains in part the fact that CALL drills are still used today. Briefly put, that rationale is introduced as follows:

- Repeated exposure to the same material is beneficial or even essential to learning.
- A computer is ideal for carrying out repeated drills, since the machine does not get bored with presenting the same material and since it can provide immediate non-judgmental feedback.
- A computer can present such material on an individualized basis, allowing students to proceed at their own pace and freeing up class time for other activities.

6.3.2. Communicative CALL

The next stage, communicative CALL which emerged in the 1980s and was also popular during the 1990s, paralleled the advent of communicative approach to teaching which gained prominence when the behavioristic approaches to language teaching were being rejected both at the theoretical and pedagogical level, and when new personal computers were creating more opportunities for individual work. According to Warschauer (1996), one of the main advocates of this approach was Underwood (1984, p. 52), who proposed a series of "premises for 'communicative' CALL." According to Underwood (cited in Warschauer, 1996), communicative CALL:

- Focuses more on using forms rather than on the forms themselves;
- Teaches grammar implicitly rather than explicitly;
- Allows and encourages students to generate original utterances rather than just manipulate prefabricated language.

6.3.3. Integrative CALL

In this approach to CALL which seeks to both integrate various skills and at the same time integrate technology more fully into the language learning process; students learn to use a variety of technological tools (including multimedia and the Internet) "as an ongoing process of language learning and use, rather than visiting the computer lab on a once-a-week basis for isolated exercises" (Warschauer and Healey, 1998, pp. 58, 59). Moreover, in integrative CALL attempts are made to make full use of networked computers as a means to involve learners in meaningful, large-scale collaborative activities (Warschauer, 1997).

Warschauer (2005) refers to the relevance of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (Lantolf, 2000), and its major concerns to CALL. Although it is not directly mentioned in Warschauer's discussions of integrative CALL, it seems that these concerns are more applicable to the premises of this phase of CALL. According to Warschauer (2005), computer technology, as a tool, mediates, and transforms human activity and this mediation, in turn contributes to, broader social, cultural, historical, and economic trends. Moreover, Hanson-Smith (2001) refers to the traces of constructivism in the use of computers in language learning. She points out that "Constructivism involves the use of problem-solving during tasks and projects, rather than or in addition to direct instruction by the teacher. In CALL this theory implies learning by using computer tools to explore simulated worlds, to

build presentations and websites that reflect on personally engaging and significant topics, and to undertake authentic communication with other learners around the world" (pp. 107, 108).

6.4. ELECTRONIC MATERIAL

Electronic media relates materials, equipment, and processes that utilize electronic technology to pass on information, knowledge, and ideas to people living in society. For instance, radios, televisions, computers, e-mails, and projectors can be used by instructors to educate their students effectively. They are special types of instructional materials (Ezirim et al., 2010). As Chapelle (2003) mentioned creative and flexible use of technology seems to be what is needed in a profession in which the practices and issues are becoming increasingly complex. Technology is barely mentioned in a recent paper on L2 teaching in the postmodern world (Kumaravadivelu, 2001), but the issues raised are central to the need for applied linguists to have facility for technology use for the contextually appropriate technology use. The question for language teachers is what are the specific technology skills and knowledge that are needed to implement pedagogical practices in the postmodern? Technology is "both a contributor to and a result of the broader socioeconomic changes which affect the entire context and ecology of language teaching today" (Warschauer, 2000, p. 520).

An experimental study to investigate the effectiveness of the e-books produced as teaching materials in the Malay language reading and writing lessons was conducted by Abdullah (2008) found many benefits of using these electronic materials. As Malay language classrooms in Singapore are equipped with computers and LCDs, projector, e-books could be shown to the whole class to aid in the learning of language skills such as reading and reading comprehension. These teaching materials could provide an enjoyable learning experience for the pupils and at the same time, teach or reinforce their vocabulary, language structures and language skills.

6.5. COMPUTER MEDIATED COMMUNICATION: ROLES AND FEATURES

Research in the area of CMC suggests that CMI may be directly or indirectly beneficial for various aspects of L2 development. Studies of dyadic (pair) and group CMI have focused largely on quantitative and qualitative aspects of learner production, as well as learner participation patterns (Chun, 1994;

Kern, 1995; Warschauer, 1996). More recent work in the area of CMC has explored the role of corrective feedback, negotiation, and task type as well as the relationship between these elements and second language acquisition (SLA) (Smith, 2001). One area that remains under explored, however, is learner use of communication strategies, including compensatory strategies, in a CMC environment. Communication strategy use is essential to examine, as it is the means through which learners avoid and overcome communicative difficulty. This study investigates the relationship between CMC, communication strategy use, and communicative task type among intermediate-low level learners of English. It also examines the efficiency of certain specific compensatory strategies relative to lexical acquisition.

Computer-mediated communication (CMC) has been found to exhibit characteristics, which resemble spoken communication, others that are similar to written interaction, and still others that are unique to CMC discourse. CMC also removes or at least reduces other para- and non-linguistic aspects of face-to-face speech (while perhaps adding others), which may facilitate but often complicate verbal communication. In this medium a certain degree of support is stripped away concentrating the entire burden of communication on written characters. In this respect CMC may be considered "context-reduced" in nature. Recent research into synchronous CMC has suggested several major benefits for CMC as compared to face-to-face interaction. These benefits include increased participation (equity) among students, increased quantity of learner output, and increased quality of learner output. There is also growing evidence that benefits gained through classroom-based CMC may transfer over to spoken language, as well as some indication that the text-based medium may amplify students' attention to linguistic form (Warschauer, 1997). CMC has also been heralded for creating a less stressful environment for L2 practice (Chun, 1998).

6.6. ADVANTAGE OF USING ELECTRONIC MATERIAL

Synchronous CMC refers to real-time interaction (usually written), between people over either a local- or wide-area network. Messages are typed and sent, and received instantaneously. This is contrasted against asynchronous communication, where there is a significant delay between the time the message is sent and when it is received by the addressee. Email and bulletin boards are the most common examples of asynchronous communication. Both synchronous and asynchronous CMC technologies are gaining popularity

in virtually all sectors of our society, not least of all in education. On-line and distance learning courses are now offered in some form at many if not most universities. Indeed, universities regularly have exclusive agreements with companies like Blackboard, Top-Class, and Web CT, which offer both synchronous and asynchronous communication tools, to support their course-related web presence. In addition, there are a multitude of opportunities to "chat" with someone in real time via proprietary servers such as America On line's Instant Messenger and Yahoo Messenger. Fernandez (2010) listed five features of electronic materials in language learning:

- Multimedia eBooks bring the language to life by including audio and/or video. Whether you are learning verbs, listening to dialogs, or practicing your pronunciation, multimedia eBooks allow you to hear the text said by native speakers by a simple click; and you can listen to it over and over. Good eBooks also give you the translation of all the new words and phrases in each lesson, so you never need to use a dictionary.

- Multimedia electronic books come with listening and speaking drills and exercises to practice the real language. If you are learning verbs, for instance, you can practice saying and understanding the new forms; if you are learning vocabulary, you will be able to practice all the new words you have come across. A good language eBook will also include a set drill at the end to help you review everything you have learned, as a whole.

- Interactive electronic books give you the exercise and drill solutions. All you need to do is click a button. Good eBooks also let you save your personal scores, an essential feature for monitoring your learning progress.

- The best electronic books include menus and links similar to those you find on well-designed websites. They make moving from chapter to chapter flawless, and you can quickly get to any lesson, drill, or any other content. There are also plenty of external links to the author's contact page, free resources, blogs, etc.

- Good electronic books allow you to type in your notes and save them for future reference. Briefly, interactive multimedia eBooks are self-contained. They provide everything you need, so you do not have to use a dictionary, notepad, reference book or audio material. Finally, language learning eBooks cover every aspect of the language: conversation, vocabulary, grammar, numbers,

pronunciation, etc. They help you master understanding, speaking, reading, and writing faster and more efficiently than traditional methods.

6.7. DEVELOPING ELECTRONIC INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

All of the research on SLA over the past 20 years would have something to offer in the analysis and development of CALL (Chappelle, 2003). Although Pica (1997) was writing about SLA research and teaching in general, the point is equally apt for the more particular issues that arise in seeking some guidance for CALL. The common area, and the most useful for guidance concerning how CALL tasks might promote L2 learning, is the cognitive and social processes through which learners acquire a L2. Chappelle (2003, p. 57) show the relationship in the following diagram (Figure 6.1).
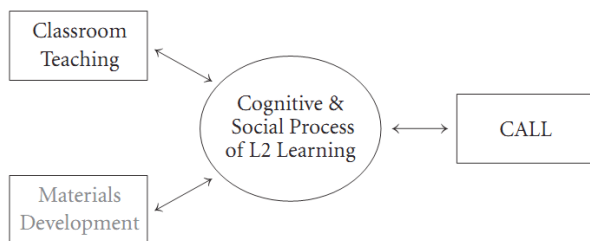
Figure 6.1. Cognitive and social process of L2 learning.

6.8. ROLE OF TASK TYPE IN ELECTRONIC MATERIALS

According to Warschauer (1996), there exists substantial research into the role of task type during face-to-face communication as well as research into the nature and role of communication strategies in student interact. There is also an emerging body of research that specifically explores computer-mediated negotiation. There is little work, however, that examines the role of communication strategies within student-student negotiated interaction sequences and none that explores such strategy use before non-understanding occurs during task-based CMC. The present study attempts to address this gap. Task type is generally accepted among SLA researchers to affect the nature of interaction among learners thus indirectly affecting language acquisition. Comparisons have been made between one-way and two-way

tasks (Gass and Varonis, 1985; cited in Warschauer, 1996), required versus optional information exchange (Doughty and Pica, 1986), convergent versus divergent tasks, and focused versus unfocused tasks (Ellis, 1994). In addition, there is substantial research examining pedagogic and real-world tasks.

Perhaps the most instructive typology to date for examining task-based student interaction is that of Pica (1997), who incorporates two recurrent features common to virtually all discussions of task in the literature. The first is that tasks are oriented toward goals. Participants are expected to arrive at an outcome accomplished through their talk. The second feature is that of activity, which suggests that participants take an active role in carrying out tasks. In their model, Pica (1997) delineate task type along the two categories above in relation to their impact on opportunities for learner comprehension of input, feedback on production, and interlanguage modification and locate the following five commonly used task types on a continuum from potentially most facilitative to least facilitative for SLA: (i) jigsaw (most facilitative for SLA); (ii) information gap; (iii) problem solving; (iv) decision-making; and (v) opinion exchange (least facilitative for SLA).

6.8.1. Electronic Instructional Material on Classroom Researches

A central concept in cognitive approaches to SLA is that learners have the opportunity to acquire features of the linguistic input that they are exposed to during the course of reading or listening for meaning. Moreover, the likelihood of learners' acquiring linguistic input increases if their attention is drawn to salient linguistic features (Schmidt, 1990). The concern for developing good CALL tasks according to Chappelle (2003) is how to design materials that can direct learners' attention to particular linguistic forms within the input. The suggestions that come from the research on instructed SLA are to mark the forms that learners should attend to in some way or to provide for repetition of the forms of interest. Research investigating marked input for vocabulary in CALL done by De Ridder (2002; cited in Chappelle, 2003) found that highlighting linguistic forms and vocabulary in a normal text is useful, but alone it appears to be insufficient for learners to acquire the forms. Additional glossing or explanation appears to be needed.

A second way of making input salient is through repetition of the target linguistic forms. Several studies of CALL have suggested that vocabulary

repeated in the input is more likely to be acquired by the learner (Fernandez, 2010), but results on repetition in CALL materials are difficult to disentangle. First, in CALL tasks, even more so than paper and tape-based tasks, the provision for repetition in the materials is not the same as the learners' choosing to access the available repetitions. One learner may click to listen to the input one time, whereas another may choose to hear four repetitions of one segment. Research investigating the effects of the repetition would. In CALL tasks, the options for prompting repetitions throughout a task need to be explored beyond the use of the repeat button in audio and video input because these devices rely on the learner to recognize the need for repetition. Some possibilities include the use of comprehension questions, and more extensive tasks based on the input material.

Input modification refers to the provision of an accessible rendition of the L2 input. In CALL materials, modification appear as hypertext or hypermedia links that help the learners to comprehend the input. This definition of modification expands the construct that has been used in research on classroom tasks, where modification can be any form of simplification, repetition, clarification, or L1 translation-anything that an interlocutor does during the course of a conversation to clarify meaning in order to continue a conversation. One form of modification that gives learners access to the meaning of some vocabulary or other textual meaning is an image or a video depiction of what is expressed in the language. Research investigating the effects of images on vocabulary retention has indicated that images and video can be effective. First language (L1) translation is among the frequent forms of modification that learners receive as help. Some research suggests that such L2 definition can improve comprehension. Input elaboration is intended to help learners gain access to the meaning of the text by adding grammatical phrases and clauses such as defining appositives, relative clauses, and restatements. Rather than removing the forms that learners should be exposed to in the input, the process of elaboration adds to the input in a way that should help to clarify meaning. This research and the theory behind it provide a useful basis for development of CALL, but the implementation in electronic learning materials is different. In a hypermedia environment, input highlighting, repetitions, modification, and elaborations do not need to be fixed on the screen, but rather the input can be highlighted, repeated, modified, or elaborated upon request. Since the help is provided dynamically in addition to the text rather than instead of it, it would seem appropriate for CALL pedagogy to reinterpret results from classroom research to investigate principles of input enhancement for CALL.

6.8.2. Relationship Between Communication Strategies and Electronic Materials

Chun (1994), in perhaps the only study to address communication strategy use during CMC from an interactionist perspective, reports a wide array of individual styles of interaction with some students' electronic discourse resembling that of traditional writing and others more closely resembling oral discussion. She found that computer mediated interaction fostered discoursal moves such as topic initiation, own, and other topic expansion, and interactional moves such as clarification requests, confirmation, and comprehension checks, and repair. CMC discourse was also found to be heavy with rhetorical devices such as the use of transitions to facilitate cohesiveness. Several studies in SLA have already examined the ability of CMC to provide learners a forum in which they can produce more language (Kern, 1995) and more diverse discourse functions (Chun, 1994) than during in-class discussions, and in which they can become the initiators of discourse instead of mere followers of teacher-directed interaction. The CMC environment has been recognized to be a great equalizer, because of its ability to result in a more evenly distributed amount of participation (e.g., measured in number of words) among interact ants than face-to-face discussions, for example (Warschauer, 1996). Such beneficial findings motivated the research focus of the present study, which investigates the interactions of 46 third-semester learners of German in two different writing environments (CMC and group journals) to determine what types of social roles learners adopted in each, and whether synchronous CMC (all learners are logged on simultaneously) might offer opportunities for developing a larger variety of interactional personae—necessary for navigating a larger repertoire of interactional contexts both on- and off-line—than pencil-and-paper group journals.

6.9. ENHANCED INPUT FOR CALL

What are the best ways for enhancing written and aural input in CALL materials? The research on enhanced input in the classroom offers some principles and observations that seem relevant despite the fact that CALL offers significant new options for input enhancement. The original written or aural text does not need to be permanently modified, but rather the learner can get access to the meaning through temporary additions to the screen or the aural input, leaving the original intact.

6.9.1. Criteria for Developing Electronic Literacy in Educational Contexts

The increasing use of electronic texts suggests to me that educators should begin considering how activities aimed at developing electronic literacy can be integrated into educational contexts (Reinking, 1994). Ideally, according to Reinking (1994), these activities should meet four criteria: First, they should relate to conventional print-based literacy in meaningful ways. For the present, printed materials still dominate written communication and should remain the prime concern of educators. Fortunately, as the examples that follow illustrate, it is not difficult to address literacy for printed and electronic texts simultaneously. A second criterion is that activities designed to promote electronic literacy should involve authentic communication and meaningful tasks for students and teachers. Again, it has been my experience that activities highlighting the unique features of electronic reading and writing tend to meet this criterion. Third, activities should engage students and teachers in higher levels of thinking about the nature of printed and electronic texts as well as about the topics of their reading and writing. Activities that combine printed and electronic texts usually allow students and teachers to compare fundamental differences in these media. Fourth, activities should engage students and teachers in ways that allow them to develop functional strategies for reading and writing electronic texts (Reinking, 1994). Electronic literacy can be fostered in ways that will also enhance children's ability to learn to read printed texts. Electronic texts can provide support that beginning readers need in order to focus on meaning and at the same time help them learn to identify words (Reinking, 1994).

6.10. PRINTED VERSUS ELECTRONIC TEXTS

According to Reinking (1994), there are four fundamental differences between printed and electronic texts: Reading is often described as an interaction between a reader and a text. However, readers, and printed texts cannot literally interact. A printed text cannot respond to a reader, nor do printed texts invite modification by a reader. To describe reading as an interaction simply reflects the fact that the outcomes of reading are the result of factors associated with the text and factors associated with the reader. What the reader comprehends during reading is the result of the visual and linguistic features of the text as they interact with the affective and cognitive characteristics of the reader. Because reading is interactive in this sense, a successful reader must be cognitively active during reading. Because readers

vary greatly in their cognitive capabilities and orientations, understanding the reader has come to be seen as basic to understanding the process of reading (Reinking, 1992; as cited in Reinking, 1994).

Electronic texts, on the other hand, can affect a literal interaction between texts and readers (Reinking, 1987; as cited in Reinking, 1994). Given the capabilities of the computer, reading electronic texts can take on the characteristics of a dialog. Electronic texts can be programed to adapt to an individual reader's needs and interests during reading, which may in turn affect the strategies readers use to read and comprehend texts. For example, in a recent study Sharon Rickman and I (Reinking and Rickman, 1990) tried to determine what would happen if an electronic text enabled readers to request a context-specific definition of difficult words in a text during reading? Electronic texts can also be presented so that they respond automatically to certain characteristics of the reader. Like a teacher who adapts instruction to individual students, a computer can be programed to monitor the activities of the reader and to adapt the text accordingly (Reinking, 1994). For example, L'Allier (1980; as cited in Reinking, 1994) created an electronic text in which the text was modified during reading based on a complex algorithm that included subjects' reading rate, their accuracy, and the time required to answer inserted questions. He found that secondary school students who were poor readers but who read the adaptive electronic texts performed as well as good readers who read printed texts that were not adapted.

The range of possibilities for creating electronic texts that interact with individual readers is limited only by the fact that the input (at least for the present) must be electronic and digital. Although keystrokes or the movements of a mouse readily fit this criterion, more intriguing possibilities are imaginable. For example, it is possible with current technology to create electronic texts that monitor physical movements such as eye fixations or physiological changes such as galvanic skin response, which may be indicators of a reader's comprehension difficulty and anxiety. Based on such input, the textual presentation could be adapted accordingly (Reinking, 1994).

6.11. HOW ELECTRONIC MATERIALS FOSTER COLLABORATIVE LEARNING?

Learner-to-learner interactive language learning tasks can improve the development of communicative competence because they allow learners to

initiate, direct, terminate, and repair interactions (Doughty and Pica, 1986; Chun, 1994; Warschauer, 1997). One form of interactive learning is group writing. It has been used to teach ESL, train teachers, and promote literacy skills in composition courses. These researchers found that during interactive learner-to-learner writing, students expressed their ideas more freely and extensively in the L2, negotiated meaning more effectively, produced more output and more discourse functions, and negotiated a more equalized power-distribution than during face-to-face interactions. In group journals learners reported having noticed and learned from their peers in a low-anxiety environment. Data also showed that learners aligned themselves in various social group constellations, which helped prepare them for a wider "array of discourse communities" by adopting a variety of participant roles.

One of the key features of enhanced in put in CALL is that it is almost always provided interactively. The discussion of enhanced input also focused on tasks based on learner-computer interactions. The discussion of CALL tasks is expanded here to include those entailing learners' communication with English speakers. Interaction is the term used in both cases, as well as to refer to many other types of interactions that learners engage in. The term "interaction" is used in a variety of ways. A useful theory of interaction in CALL needs to defined broadly what interaction consists of, what kinds of interaction are believed to be important for SLA, and why. Ellis (1994) points out that interaction is generally "used to refer to the interpersonal activity that arises during face-to-face communication. However, it can also refer to the intrapersonal activity involved in mental processing" (p. 3). In view of the need to include the variety of interactions in CALL, however, inter-personal interaction takes place not only in face-to-face conversation but also electronically over a computer network. Moreover, interaction needs to include what takes place between a person and the computer.

Ellis (1994) outlines three perspectives from which researchers have conceptualized and studied the value of interaction for language development: the inter-action hypothesis, Sociocultural theory, and depth of processing theory. The interaction hypothesis derives from the study of face-to-face conversation and the psycholinguistic benefits it affords learners by directing their attention to language, particularly during communication breakdowns (Elis, 1994). Sociocultural theory can be applied to the same types of data-face-to-face conversation-but theorizes the value of the interlocutor's help in accomplishing meaning making through language. At the same time, it suggests that the learner's internal mental voice plays a role in learning through a constant internal dialog (Jamieson and Chappelle,

1987). Depth of processing theory hypothesizes the importance of the level of cognitive processing that new input to the learner undergoes for recall and learning. The depth of processing idea is similar to that which has been advocated for teaching syntax and vocabulary.

6.12. WHAT IS HYPERMEDIA?

Hypermedia is presented as a further development of hypertext. As computers have moved from being able to present little more than upper case text to being able to present information in a variety of communication media — sound, graphics, video — so it is possible to link these media together using hypertext techniques, hence the term hypermedia. However, in the same way that a book can contain text, drawings, tables, photographs, or even pop-up models, so the distinction between hypertext and hypermedia is somewhat arbitrary (McKnight, Dillon, and Richardson, 1996).

Hypermedia materials are comprised of multiple separate information nodes. These information nodes contain various media forms such as text, sound, graphics, and movies either individually or combined. The structure of a hypermedia system enables users to access information from the nodes in a nonlinear way. Users are able to progress from one node to the next using links supplied by the system designer. The two fundamental units in a hypermedia system are the information nodes themselves and the links that connect them (Oliver and Herrington, 1995). According to Oliver and Herrington (1995), hypermedia materials are usually designed as information delivery systems. In this role they serve an instructional purpose. As purveyors of information, hypermedia systems provide many advantages over paper-based forms. They are very flexible and powerful in the way in which information is accessed and provide access to multiple media forms (Oliver and Herrington, 1995). Hypertext facilitates student centered approaches, creating a motivating and active learning environment. It supports and encourages browsing and exploration, learner behaviors that are frequently associated with higher order learning (Thuring, Mannemann, and Haake, 1995). The nature of information organization in hypermedia appears to closely mimic human memory. Information retrieval methods closely resemble human thought processes. People do not think using indexing and sorting rules but rather in terms of contextual links between information and images. Hypermedia supports and facilitates a very natural and efficient form for information retrieval (Dimitroff and Wolfram, 1995).

6.13. FACTORS INFLUENCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ELECTRONIC INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Learning is a process that is influenced by, and results from, the interaction of three areas of influence: *agent*, *activity*, and *world* (Lave and Wenger, 1991; as cited in Oliver, Herrington, and Omari, 1996) Other writers, for example, Brofenbrenner (1979; as cited in Oliver, Herrington, and Omari, 1996) provides similar descriptions for these influences such as *person*, *process*, and *context* approach (Ceci and Ruiz, 1993; as cited in Oliver, Herrington, and Omari, 1996).

In terms of the instructional design for interactive multimedia programs, we have found a framework of three mutually constitutive elements: *the learner, the implementation,* and *the interactive multimedia program* to be useful in describing the roles and responsibilities within the learning process. The three elements correspond to the role of the teacher, learner, and the materials themselves, in the instructional setting.

When this framework is applied to the design of WWW multimedia materials, key factors, and strategies for each of the elements can be identified (Figure 6.2). While the factors for learner and implementation are quite consistent with other interactive media, within the WWW materials there are a number of important and unique attributes that can be considered (Oliver, Herrington, and Omari, 1996).
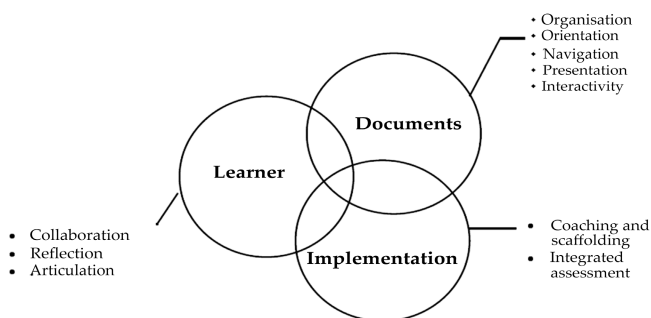
Figure 6.2. Constitutive elements of effective web-based.

6.14. THE NATURE OF THE MATERIAL TO BE LEARNED

While text-based descriptions can be used effectively to impart low level procedural knowledge, it is more difficult to use this medium for declarative

and higher knowledge levels. Knowledge that is comprised of facts, procedures, and rules of discourse is usually taught and learned in ways where an instructor plays a significant role in content delivery (Jonassen, 1994). This form of instruction is frequently used to facilitate initial knowledge acquisition in a field. But it is less effective when used as a means to present advanced knowledge where principles and concepts need to be developed (Oliver and Herrington, 1995). Contemporary educational theory suggests that higher order learning is best achieved through instructional processes that support student centered, collaborative, and generative activity. Such instruction places the learner at the center of the teaching and learning process and active in constructing a personal meaning of the content being delivered (Knuth and Cunningham, 1993; as cited in Oliver and Herrington, 1995). When higher order learning goals are sought, the forms of learning environments that are most effective are those which:

- Provide multiple representations of reality;
- Focus on knowledge construction rather than knowledge transmission;
- Present authentic tasks that foster reflective practice;
- Enable context and content dependent knowledge construction; and
- Support collaborative construction of knowledge through social negotiation rather than competition (Jonassen, 1994).

These forms of learning environment are not usually seen or associated with learning based on instructional texts although there are strategies by which they can be implemented in text (Herrington, Fox, Gillard, and Rainford, 1992; as cited in Oliver and Herrington, 1995). As an instructional medium, however, hypermedia appears to hold considerable potential to reverse this trend. It provides a means for developing instructional materials that can be used for student centered activities that students find motivating and appealing (Becker and Dwyer, 1994).

6.15. TEXT STRUCTURE

In hypermedia systems, text structure can be aided in a number of ways. Studies with both conventional and computer-based text have found that the use of cues and overviews provide significant enhancements to structure (Thuring, Mannemann, and Haake, 1995). In hypermedia, the use of indices and tables showing the structure and relationship between nodes is a useful

strategy for this. Many systems use nets to demonstrate the structure and organization of information and to aid learners in gaining a sense of global structure. In a study that examined the impact of using overviews and document structure cues, Dee-Lucas and Larkin (1995) found that they aided retention of information that was presented and generated a better breadth of recall of what had been read. Readers who browsed through an unstructured scrolling version of the text were found to have developed a more fragmented view of the structure of the information. The interactive overviews were a significant aid to learning.

6.16. READABILITY

The readability of a document is a measure of the ease with which a reader is able to comprehend what is being read. Hypermedia offers a number of ways to increase readability of the printed text (Oliver and Herrington, 1995). Higgins and Boone (1990) describe the following enhancements. At the surface level, difficult terms can be linked to nodes that provide further explanation and description: for example, clicking on a word to find its meaning. As an aid to increasing understanding of deeper meaning structures, the hypermedia system can be made to provide literal and inferential questions together with paragraph summaries: for example, interactive elements that cause the learners to reflect and consider that which has been read. While these forms of cues can also be provided in some ways with conventional materials, they can form a natural part of a hypermedia system readily available to those students who seek to employ them while providing no distraction to those who do not need them (Oliver and Herrington, 1995).

6.16.1. Fragmentation of Information

A number of studies have revealed problems emerging from learning with hypermedia caused by the fragmentation of information and learning material when it is presented as discrete elements. Fragmentation results in a lack of associative and interpretative contexts and can create a document that appears to the user as a series of discrete rather than coherent information elements (Oliver and Herrington, 1995).

There are several ways to overcome the possibility of learners perceiving fragmentation in a hypermedia system. Most links in hypermedia serve two purposes: to show a relationship exists between two nodes and to provide a path between them. Horney (1993) suggests there should be some distinction

made in these two tasks. If links could show the form of association they represent as well as providing the means to traverse, navigation through hypermedia systems would be greatly enhanced as would an associative context for linked nodes. Another strategy suggested by Thuring, Mannemann, and Haake (1995) is to show new nodes in concert with their predecessor, thus establishing a coherence and semantic relationship enabling a common mental representation by the learner. Considerations of text structure in developing the content of text-based nodes can also help to reduce the apparent fragmentation of stored information. Blohm (1982; as cited in Oliver and Herrington, 1995) found that the use of paraphrases and summaries can enhance learning. Learners using a hypertext system with this option were found to recall more information than others reading the same material without the summaries and did so in equivalent amounts of time. The summaries appeared to help to reduce the fragmentation caused by the division of the content into hypertext nodes.

6.17. TEXT DISPLAYS

While paper based instructional materials are usually confined to black text on white pages, many more variations occur in computer-based learning materials. A significant amount of research has been conducted to investigate the optimal forms for screen images. Findings suggest that optimal characteristics include proportionally spaced characters, left justified, small size serif fonts for text, sans serif headings, a dense character spacing, for example, 80 characters per line, contrasting dark text on a light background (Hooper and Hannafin, 1986; as cited in Oliver and Herrington, 1995).

6.17.1. Integrated Assessment

Measures and assessments of achievement and outcomes from instructional settings play an important part in the teaching and learning process. Frequently with computer-based learning, assessment measures bear little semblance to the environment in which the learning has taken place. Young (1993; as cited in Oliver, Herrington, and Omari, 1996) suggests that assessment can no longer be viewed as an add-on to an instructional design or simply as separate stages in a linear process of pre-test, instruction, posttest; rather assessment must become an integrated, ongoing, and seamless part of the learning environment' (p. 48). The implications of this for instructional design are that some thought should be given to designing assessment which is concerned with the process as well as the product of involvement with

the learning program. The enhanced interactive capabilities of the WWW provide the means for assessment of student learning to extend beyond conventional essays and examinations. McLellan (1993) points out that more reliable assessment can take the form of evaluation measures such as portfolios, summary statistics of learners' paths through instructional materials, diagnosis, and reflection and self-assessment. Much of this can be achieved and supported through appropriate design of WWW documents and learning materials.

6.18. CONCLUSION

Hamilton and Reddel (1999) refer to technical difficulties as one of the disadvantages of online discussion, and point out that computer mediated communication lacks the dynamism, body language, and immediacy of the feedback of face-to-face communication. They note that CMC can frustrate the participants due to the time wasted to het to a desired page on the monitor, and point out the possibility of computer breakdowns and loss of data. Harasim (1987) also deplores the absence of visual cues in CMC in comparison to face-to-face communication. It appears to Marandi (2001) that in addition to what she has been able to find in the literature, other merits and demerits can be mentioned for CALL and CMC. Some other demerits, in my opinion, are: (i) the danger of CALL's being overestimated by educators and learners, which could lead to practice without theory; (ii) the fact that using computers is more difficult and requires more skills than traditional tools such as books, cassettes, etc., which could lead to factors other than language proficiency's affecting the learner's performance (and her/his being assessed accordingly); (iii) the difficulty of monitoring culturally undesirable influences; and (iv) the unpredictability of Internet-based lessons. Some of the merits which can be mentioned are: (i) satisfying the learner's psychological need to receive a new treatment (somewhat similar to a placebo drug); (ii) encouraging learners to acquire computer literacy, which is rapidly becoming a basic element of today's education; and (iii) the fact that Internet materials are up-to-date and reflect the changes in language and culture far more rapidly than textbooks and other media. Successful language teaching and learning of the future will occur in classrooms where instruction is enhanced by electronic connections to TL culture, language, and life. Teachers must revise their thinking about and planning of language lessons to accommodate and incorporate the new capabilities that are at their disposal daily on the Internet. At the same time, students need to acquire the

skills needed to function in a society where electronic communication will be a driving force. Clearly, as mentioned by LeLoup and Ponterio (1995) a considerable investment and commitment of time, energy, and training are required on the part of school districts and teachers who would benefit from technology. The increased complexity of dealing with electronic communication in languages other than English means that FL teachers need particular training and technical support compared to their colleagues who function in English. In fact, the use of technology is more important than ever now, teachers are required to be computer literate and to conduct IT lessons in teaching all subjects including foreign languages.

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Chapter 7

Developing Materials for Cultural Awareness

CONTENTS

Perhaps one solution for such problems is to help language learners to learn the target culture within the syllabus. Raising the learners' cultural awareness in a language course, as Tomlinson and Masuhara (2004) note, can facilitate language acquisition too. Inevitably, understanding a language involves not only the knowledge of grammar, phonology, and lexis but also a certain features and characteristics of the culture. To communicate internationally involves communicating interculturally as well. In other words, language is a part of culture and culture is a part of a language. The two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture (Brown, 2007).

Also, language teaching and learning involve issues of socioculturally meaning, and as Pulverness (2003) notes, approaches which disregard the cultural dimension of language are fundamentally flawed. He continues that in circumstances where English is seen as a lingua franca, it must necessarily be inappropriate to situate the language in a particular cultural context. However, every culture has its own cultural norms for communication and these norms differ from one culture to another. The more effectively we observe the norms of other cultures, the better is our communication with people of the target culture. Consequently, to achieve success in second language acquisition (SLA), the learners need to learn the target culture, and the teachers should provide them with materials which focus on both language and sociocultural components. This would lead to viewing culture as an essential part of a syllabus.

A teacher who views culture as an integral part of a syllabus, as Craves (1996) emphasizes, might incorporate into the instructional materials the development of awareness of the role culture plays in human interaction, how to understand and interpret the cultural aspects of language, and the development of skills in behaving and responding in culturally appropriate ways in addition to knowledge of the target culture. Moreover, as Cakir (2006) notes, the teachers should be sensitive to the learner's attitudes and values so as not to cause them to lose their motivation. The purpose of this study is to survey the position of cultural awareness in language syllabus design and how effectively it can be incorporated into language instructional materials.

7.1. WHAT IS CULTURE?

Culture is also briefly defined by Brown (2007) as "a way of life. It is the context within which we exist, think, feel, and relate to others. It is the glue

that binds a group of people together." (p. 188) Culture governs our behavior in groups and helps us to know what others expect of us and what will happen if we do not live up to their expectations. In other words, culture helps us to know what our responsibility is to the group with which we are communicating. According to Graves (1996) provides a broader context for how one determines what is valued, appropriate, or even feasible and why. The fact that no society exists without a culture reflects the need for culture to be incorporated in social context within which people communicate. This is why Damen (1986; cited in Graves, 1996) calls culture the fifth dimension of language teaching. Also, Kramsch (1993) suggests that culture is not just a fifth skill or an aspect of communicative competence; it is the underlying dimension of all one knows and does.

7.2. CULTURAL AWARENESS AND CRITICAL CULTURAL AWARENESS (CCA)

According to Pulverness (2003) Cultural Awareness is the foundation of communication and it involves the ability of standing back from us and becoming aware of our cultural values, beliefs, and perceptions. Why do we do things in that way? How do we see the world? Why do we react in that particular way? Cultural awareness becomes central when we have to interact with people from other cultures. People see, interpret, and evaluate things in a different way. Becoming aware of our cultural dynamics is a difficult task because culture is not conscious to us. Since we are born, we have learned to see and do things at an unconscious level. Our experiences, our values and our cultural background led us to see and do things in a certain way. Sometimes we have to step outside of our cultural boundaries in order to realize the impact that our culture has on our behavior. It is very helpful to gather feedback from foreign colleagues on our behavior to get more clarity on our cultural traits.

The shift towards a communicative approach to EFL teaching has coincided with a developing awareness of the growing role of culture in second language acquisition (SLA). In this climate, the acquisition of a second language (L2) is actually the acquisition of a second culture. However, Cunningsworth (1984) states the case against 'the culture-specific course book and claims that a limitation of the culture-specific course book is that it will only be of relevance to students who understand the cultural background in which it is set "Indeed a strong portrayal of British life might well prove to be an impediment rather than a help to the learner" (p. 62).

Kramsch (1993), on the other hand, argues that entering into a foreign language implies a cognitive modification that has implications for the learner's identity as a social and cultural being. This suggests the need for materials which privilege the identity of the learner as an integral factor in developing the ability to function fully in socio cultural settings.

7.3. CRITICAL CULTURAL AWARENESS (CCA)

According to Pulverness (2003) critical cultural awareness (CCA) comes from the belief that language is always value-laden and that texts are never neutral. Language in the world beyond the course book is commonly used to exercise 'power and control,' to reinforce dominant ideologies, to evade responsibility, to manufacture consensus. As readers, we should always be 'suspicious' of texts and prepared to challenge or interrogate them. However, in the foreign language classroom, texts are customarily treated as unproblematic, as if their authority need never be questioned. Learners may be quite critical readers in their mother tongues, are textually infantilized by the vast majority of course materials and classroom approaches.

True understanding of the cultural dynamics of the L2 classroom can emerge only through an understanding of the individual cultural identity that teachers and learners bring with them. Such an understanding is possible only if teachers and learners develop what I call critical cultural consciousness. As Kumar (2003, p. 273) mentioned "critical cultural consciousness requires the recognition of a simple truth: there is no one culture that embodies all and only the best of human experience; and, there is no one culture that embodies all and only the worst of human experience."

7.4. CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE VS CULTURAL AWARENESS

Tomlinson and Masuhara (2004) make a distinction between cultural knowledge and cultural awareness as follows:

- **Cultural Knowledge:** It consists of information about the characteristics of our own and other people's cultures. This information is typically:
  - **External:** it is given to us by someone else.
  - **Static:** we do not modify it from experience.
  - **Articulated:** it is reduced to what words can express.

– **Stereotypical:** It refers to general norms rather than specific instances.

– **Reduced:** It has been selected from all the information available and it typically omits information about variation and exceptions.

The information is normally given to us in the form of: (a) facts; (b) statistics; (c) generalizations; and (d) examples. Cultural knowledge can be useful in helping us to understand ourselves and other people. However, it can also be misleading because it: (a) is dependent on other people's expertise, objectivity, and integrity; (b) is fixed in time (often out of date); (c) is inevitably simplified; and (d) often conceals as much as it reveals. For example, it is useful for a visiting businessman to be told that the Japanese are hardworking and serious but this generalization by itself can conceal the reality that many Japanese people like to go out and enjoy themselves after work.

• **Cultural Awareness:** According to Tomlinson and Masuhara (2004), cultural awareness consists of perceptions of our own and other people's cultures. These perceptions are:

– **Internal:** They develop in our minds.

– **Dynamic:** They are constantly being added to and changed.

– **Variable:** They are modified from experience.

– **Multi-Dimensional:** They are represented through sensory images (mental pictures), mental connections, and affective associations, as well as through the inner voice (Masuhara, 2003; Tomlinson, 2000a).

Cultural awareness involves a "gradually developing inner sense of the equality of cultures, an increased understanding of your own and other people's cultures, and a positive interest in how cultures both connect and differ. Such awareness can broaden the mind, increase tolerance and facilitate international communication." (Tomlinson, 2001, p. 5).

Increased cultural knowledge can give us increased credibility and expertise, and increased cultural awareness can help us to achieve cultural empathy and sensitivity. It can facilitate language acquisition, as being positive, empathetic, and inquisitive. It can also contribute to one of the optimal conditions for language acquisition: motivated exposure to language in use (Tomlinson, 2000b).

7.5. THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING CULTURAL AWARENESS IN LANGUAGE CLASSES

By the advent of CLT in the late 70s there was a shift from focus on forms and function to study of culture. People involved in language teaching have again begun to understand the intertwined relation between culture and language (Pulverness, 2003). It has been emphasized that without the study of culture, teaching L2 is inaccurate and incomplete. For L2 students, language study seems senseless if they know nothing about the people who speak the target language or the country in which the target language is spoken. Acquiring a new language means being familiar with other culture, to be able to see the world from different lenses (Genc and Bada, 2005).

Increasing cultural awareness means to see both the positive and negative aspects of cultural differences. Cultural diversity could be a source of problems, in particular when the organization needs people to think or act in a similar way. Diversity increases the level of complexity and confusion and makes agreement difficult to reach. On the other hand, cultural diversity becomes an advantage when the organization expands its solutions and its sense of identity, and begins to take different approaches to problem solving. Diversity in this case creates valuable new skills and behaviors (Quappe and Cantatore, 2005). According to Bada (2000, p. 101), "the need for cultural literacy in ELT arises mainly from the fact that most language learners, not exposed to cultural elements of the society in question, seem to encounter significant hardship in communicating meaning to native speakers." In addition, nowadays the L2 culture is presented as an interdisciplinary core in many L2 curricula designs and textbooks (Sysoyev and Donelson, 2002).

If we wish the learners to master another language, we need to help the learners become communicatively competent in that language as much as possible. Namely, successful speaking is not just to master of using grammatically correct words and forms but also knowing when to use them and under what circumstances. Communicative competence should incorporate grammatical competence, discourse competence, and sociolinguistic competence. In other words, if the goal of the language course is to enable students to reach a level of communicative competence, then all three components are necessary. The sociolinguistic component of communication refers to rules of speaking which depend on social, pragmatic, and cultural elements. Thus, which linguistic realization we choose for making an apology or a request in any language might depend on the social status of the speaker or hearer, and on age, sex, or any other social

factor. Besides, certain pragmatic situational conditions might call for the performance of a certain speech act in one culture but not in another.

The other issue that should be focused is that before learning about culture, students must be receptive to the concept of learning about cultures other than their owns. To achieve culture goals, often teacher has to play a role in breaking down cultural barriers prior to initiating teaching-learning activities. One way to begin teaching culture on a positive note is to emphasize similarities between people. However, the pedagogical implications extend beyond issues of content: if culture is seen as the expression of beliefs and values, and if language is seen as the embodiment of cultural identity, then the methodology required to teach a language needs to take account of ways in which the language expresses cultural meanings. An integrated approach to teaching language- and -culture, as well as attending to language system and cultural information, will focus additionally on culturally significant areas of language and on skills required by the learner to make sense of cultural difference. An enhanced language syllabus that takes account of cultural specificity would be concerned with aspect of language that are generally neglected, or that at best tend to remain peripheral in course materials: Connotation, idiom, the construction of style and tone, rhetorical structure, critical language awareness and translation (Pulverness, 2003). McKay (2003) contends that culture influences language teaching in two ways: linguistic and pedagogical. Linguistically, it affects the semantic, pragmatic, and discourse levels of the language. Pedagogically, it influences the choice of the language materials because cultural content of the language materials and the cultural basis of the teaching methodology are to be taken into consideration while deciding upon the language materials. For example, while some textbooks provide examples from the target culture, some others use source culture materials**.**

Cortazzi and Jin (1999) in Kumaravadivelu (2003) suggest three types of cultural information that can be used in preparing teaching materials:

- • Target culture materials that use the culture of a country where English is spoken as a first language (L1);
- • Source culture materials that draw on the learners' own culture as content; and
- • International target culture materials that use a variety of cultures in English and non-English-speaking countries around the world.

Several authors list some of *the benefits of teaching culture* as follows:

*   Studying culture gives students a reason to study the target language.

*   Although grammar books give so called genuine examples from real life, without background knowledge those real situations may be considered fictive by the learners. In addition, providing access into cultural aspect of language, learning culture would help learners relate the abstract sounds and forms of a language to real people and places (Chastain, 1988).

*   The study of culture increases learners' not only curiosity about and interest in target countries but also their motivation. For example, when some professors introduced the cultures of the L2s they taught, the learners' interests in those classes increased a lot and the classes based on culture became to be preferred more highly than traditional classes. In an age of post-modernism, in an age of tolerance towards different ideologies, religions, sub-cultures, we need to understand not only the other culture but also our own culture (Kitao, 2000).

*   Besides these benefits, studying culture gives learners a liking for the native speakers of the target language.

*   Conflicts and contrasts will provide learning. As soon as one learns another language, we will encounter differences and challenges. These drive learning, if the environment is one where language learning is seen as more than gathering information. The contrasts and reasons behind purposes, appropriacy, and different language functions are the area to which we next turn (Hall, 2003).

7.6. CULTURAL AWARENESS APPROACHES

An integrated approach to teaching language and culture will focus additionally on culturally significant areas of language and on the skills required by the learner to make sense of cultural difference (Pulverness, 2003). The principles, objectives, procedures, and materials of such approach are described by Tomlinson and Masuhara (2004) as in subsections.

7.6.1. Principles

The main learning principles of a cultural awareness approach involve the encouragement of:

- Learning from experience;
- Apprehension before comprehension, in that the learner is helped to become aware of something before trying to achieve conscious understanding of it;
- Affective and cognitive engagement with an encounter, text, or task;
- Intake responses to an encounter, text, or task in the sense of developing and articulating representations of the experience;
- Discovering clues to the interpretation of an experience by reflecting on that experience;
- Tolerance of ambiguity. That is, not worrying about not being able to interpret an experience, or not fixing an immediate and absolute interpretation. These principles, as Tomlinson and Masuhara (2004) believe, are coherent in the sense that they connect with each other and have been developed to facilitate the deep processing of experience which can lead to informed awareness, sensitivity, and empathy, and to the acquisition of language too.

7.6.2. Objectives

Tomlinson and Masuhara (2004) also state that the main objectives of a cultural awareness approach are to help the learners to: discover assumptions, values, and attitudes that underlie utterances and behaviors in other cultures:

- Discover assumptions, values, and attitudes that underlie utterances and behaviors in their own cultures;
- Notice implicit conflicts and analyze the causes;
- Identify options for conflict solutions;
- Try out options, observe the consequences, and take necessary measures;
- Resist falling back on stereotyping and ethnocentrisms;
- Develop sensitivity to cultures;
- Develop empathy with other cultures;
- Acquire cross-cultural skills.

7.7. DEVELOPING CULTURAL AWARENESS IN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

To develop cultural awareness alongside language awareness, the acknowledgement of cultural identity is not sufficient. One way of raising this kind of awareness in learners, as Pulverness (2003) suggests, is literary texts that more directly represent experiences of cultural engagement. Besides, an enhanced language syllabus that takes account of cultural specificity would be concerned with aspects of language that are often neglected in course materials: connotation, idiom, the construction of style and tone, rhetorical structure, critical language awareness and translation. In order to teach culture to foreign language teenage students who usually do not have close contact with native speakers of English and have little opportunity to discover how these speakers think, feel, and interact with others in their own peer group and to stimulate their curiosity about the target culture, Tavares, and Cavalcanti (1996) developed a set of activities. These activities arose from the fact that although the teaching of EFL has become widespread in all levels of Brazilian education, teachers still lack resource material for exploring the target culture in the classroom. The aim of these activities is to increase students' awareness and to develop their curiosity towards the target culture and their own, helping them to make comparisons among cultures. These comparisons are not meant to underestimate any of the cultures being analyzed, but to enrich students' experience and to make them aware that although some culture elements are being globalized, there is still diversity among cultures. This diversity should then be understood and respected, and never over or underestimated. This variety of cultures was grouped under predetermined cultural topics.

Tavares and Cavalcanti (1996) developed these activities by using authentic materials, their own personal experience as EFL teachers, and contributions from colleagues through ideas that were adapted to their needs and objectives. Both learners and teachers of a L2 need to understand cultural differences in order to recognize that people in the world are not all the same. Language teachers cannot avoid conveying impressions of another culture because language cannot be separated completely from the culture in which it is deeply embedded. Teacher's task is to make students aware of cultural differences, and learners should be exposed to these distinctions in FL/SL classrooms. Therefore, the reasons for familiarizing learners with the cultural components should be (a) to develop the communicative skills, (b) to understand the linguistic and behavioral patterns of both the target and the

native culture at a more conscious level, and (c) to develop both intercultural and international understanding, and (d) to facilitate the process of target language learning. Moreover, language instructional materials need to help the learners become communicatively competent, and communicative competence is believed to incorporate linguistic competence, pragmatic competence, and sociolinguistic competence.

Teachers play an important role in acting as an intercultural mediator and in compensating for the missing socio-cultural components of language course books. There are different ways in which teachers can make use of appropriate extra materials which enable them to go beyond the course book. Some of which suggested by Pulverness (2003) include: a teacher's own photographs or posters, students' own photographs and posters, extra texts, and video extracts. Listening to the utterances of native speakers, reading of original texts, or picture of native speakers engaged in natural activities will introduce cultural elements into the classroom. These materials can compensate for cultural dimensions that are totally absent from some course books. While developing cultural awareness in the EFL materials, the materials developers should keep in mind that the native language is learned along with the norms and attitudes of the social group which can be manifested through the words and expressions that are commonly used by members of the group. Therefore, learning to understand a foreign culture should help students of another language to use words and expressions more skillfully and authentically; to act naturally with persons of the other culture; and to recognize their different reactions.

Another point that needs to be addressed is that while most language learners find positive benefits in learning the target culture, some of them experience certain psychological blocks, or inhibiting effects of the second culture. Thus, in teaching foreign language teachers need to be sensitive to the students' attitudes by using techniques that promote cultural understanding. In other words, as Cakir (2006) notes, teachers have to play a key role in breaking down cultural barriers prior to initiating teaching-learning activities. Perhaps one way to effectively begin teaching culture is to emphasize similarities between people. Moreover, the topics to be used to teach the target language should be presented in the contexts accompanying the native ones. That is, while teaching a culture specific topic in the target language, L1 equivalent can also be given in order to enhance learning. To sum up, the use of culture-based tasks in language instructional materials will help learners to get familiar with the target culture, and performing these

tasks should involve the cultural values of the target language, accompanied by the native ones, designed for every level.

7.8. CONCLUSION

Taking into consideration that English is a global language, Cortazzi and Jin (1999) in Kumaravadivelu (2003) suggest three types of cultural information that can be used in preparing teaching materials:

- • Target culture materials that use the culture of a country where English is spoken as a first language;
- • Source culture materials that draw on the learners' own culture as content; and
- • International target culture materials that use a variety of cultures in English and non-English-speaking countries around the world.

This suggestion is based on the recognition that both local and global cultures, not just the culture of the target language community, should inform the preparation of materials for learning and teaching an L2. This is one sure way of ensuring social relevance in the L2 classroom. The students' awareness about the sociocultural differences between the target language and will help them to succeed in their studies and to join in a real-life language setting as well. To this end, language instructional materials must include socio cultural components, and language teachers have a vital role in providing some of the cultural components missing from the course book. They can provide their own materials to compensate for whatever they think are absent from the course book.

Another suggestion for teachers is to select topics which focus on both language and content. To do so, as Pulverness (2003, p. 435) states, "the primary objectives can be clearly to develop critical thinking about cultural issues, resisting the tendency of the materials to use content only to contextualize the presentation and practice of language items" (p. 435). However, when the primary focus of language classrooms is language learning, cultural learning is appreciated as an integral part of language education and not restricted to the cultural studies lessons. Putting into practice the presented suggestions will hopefully help teachers to succeed in combining language learning and cultural learning, so that overall purpose would be to provide units of lessons in which students are able to develop both kinds of knowledge as interrelated parts of language knowledge. Moreover, all this does not mean that target language learning will change

the learner's identity. Students should be enabled to discuss their native culture at the same time they are provided with a real-life content of the target culture. Using the target language perfectly does not require the target language users to change their values and beliefs. Their ethnic, religious, and national backgrounds will remain the same even if they will be appreciated as successful target language users.

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Chapter 8

Developing EAP/ESP Instructional Materials

CONTENTS

8.1. THE ORIGINS OF ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

Certainly, a great deal about the origins of English for specific purposes (ESP) could be written. Notably, there are three reasons common to the emergence of all ESP: the demands of a Brave New World, a revolution in linguistics, and focus on the learner (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). Hutchinson and Waters (1987) note that two key historical periods breathed life into ESP. First, the end of the Second World War brought with it an "… age of enormous and unprecedented expansion in scientific, technical, and economic activity on an international scale · for various reasons, most notably the economic power of the United States in the post-war world, the role [of international language] fell to English" (p. 6). Second, the Oil Crisis of the early 1970s resulted in Western money and knowledge flowing into the oil-rich countries. The language of this knowledge became English.

The general effect of all this development was to exert pressure on the language teaching profession to deliver the required goods. Whereas English had previously decided its own destiny, it now became subject to the wishes, needs, and demands of people other than language teachers (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p. 7). The second key reason cited as having a tremendous impact on the emergence of ESP was a revolution in linguistics. Whereas traditional linguists set out to describe the features of language, revolutionary pioneers in linguistics began to focus on the ways in which language is used in real communication. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) point out that one significant discovery was in the ways that spoken and written English vary. In other words, given the particular context in which English is used, the variant of English will change. This idea was taken one step farther. If language in different situations varies, then tailoring language instruction to meet the needs of learners in specific contexts is also possible. Hence, in the late 1960s and the early 1970s there were many attempts to describe English for science and technology (EST). Hutchinson and Waters (1987) identify Ewer and Latorre, Swales, Selinker, and Trimble as a few of the prominent descriptive EST pioneers.

The final reason Hutchinson and Waters (1987) cite as having influenced the emergence of ESP has less to do with linguistics and everything to do psychology. Rather than simply focus on the method of language delivery, more attention was given to the ways in which learners acquire language and the differences in the ways language is acquired. Learners were seen to employ different learning strategies, use different skills, enter with different

learning schemata, and be motivated by different needs and interests. Therefore, focus on the learners' needs became equally paramount as the methods employed to disseminate linguistic knowledge. Designing specific courses to better meet these individual needs was a natural extension of this thinking. To this day, the catchword in ESL circles is learner-centered or learning-centered.

8.2. ABSOLUTE AND VARIABLE CHARACTERISTICS OF ESP

Around 10 years later, theorists Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) modified Strevens' original definition of ESP to form their own. Let us begin with Strevens. He defined ESP by identifying its absolute and variable characteristics. Strevens' (1988) definition makes a distinction between four absolute and two variable characteristics:

- **Absolute Characteristics:** ESP consists of English language teaching (ELT) which is:
    - Designed to meet specified needs of the learner;
    - Related in content (i.e., in its themes and topics) to particular disciplines, occupations, and activities;
    - Centered on the language appropriate to those activities in syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics, etc., and analysis of this discourse;
    - In contrast with General English.
- **Variable Characteristics:** ESP may be, but is not necessarily:
    - Restricted as to the language skills to be learned (e.g., reading only);
    - Not taught according to any pre-ordained methodology (pp. 1, 2).

Anthony (1997) notes that there has been considerable recent debate about what ESP means despite the fact that it is an approach which has been widely used over the last three decades. Dudley-Evans (1997) offered a modified definition:

- Absolute Characteristics:
    - ESP is defined to meet specific needs of the learner;
    - ESP makes use of the underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves;

- ESP is centered on the language (grammar, lexis, register), skills, discourse, and genres appropriate to these activities.

- Variable Characteristics:
    - ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines;
    - ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of general English;
    - ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, however, be for learners at secondary school level;
    - ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students;
    - Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language system, but it can be used with beginners (1998, pp. 4, 5).

Dudley-Evans and St. John have removed the absolute characteristic that 'ESP is in contrast with General English' and added more variable characteristics. They assert that ESP is not necessarily related to a specific discipline. Furthermore, ESP is likely to be used with adult learners although it could be used with young adults in a secondary school setting. As for a broader definition of ESP, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) theorize, "ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning" (p. 19). Anthony (1997) notes that, it is not clear where ESP courses end and general English courses begin; numerous non-specialist ESL instructors use an ESP approach in that their syllabi are based on analysis of learner needs and their own personal specialist knowledge of using English for real communication.

8.3. CHARACTERISTICS OF ESP COURSES

The characteristics of ESP courses identified by Carter (1983) are discussed here. He states that there are three features common to ESP courses: a) authentic material, b) purpose-related orientation, and c) self-direction. If we revisit Dudley-Evans' (1997) claim that ESP should be offered at an intermediate or advanced level, use of authentic learning materials is entirely feasible. Closer examination of ESP materials will follow; suffice it to say at this juncture that use of authentic content materials, modified or unmodified in form, are indeed a feature of ESP, particularly in self-directed study and research tasks. For Language Preparation for Employment in the

Health Sciences, a large component of the student evaluation was based on an independent study assignment in which the learners were required to investigate and present an area of interest. The students were encouraged to conduct research using a variety of different resources, including the Internet. Purpose-related orientation refers to the simulation of communicative tasks required of the target setting. Carter (1983) cites student simulation of a conference, involving the preparation of papers, reading, note taking, and writing. At Algonquin College, English for business courses have involved students in the design and presentation of a unique business venture, including market research, pamphlets, and logo creation. The students have presented all final products to invited ESL classes during a poster presentation session. For our health science program, students attended a seminar on improving your listening skills. They practiced listening skills, such as listening with empathy, and then employed their newly acquired skills during a fieldtrip to a local community center where they were partnered up with English-speaking residents.

Finally, self-direction is characteristic of ESP courses in that the "… point of including self-direction… is that ESP is concerned with turning learners into users" (Carter, 1983, p. 134). In order for self-direction to occur, the learners must have a certain degree of freedom to decide when, what, and how they will study. Carter (1983) also adds that there must be a systematic attempt by teachers to teach the learners how to learn by teaching them about learning strategies. Is it necessary, though, to teach high-ability learners such as those enrolled in the health science program about learning strategies? I argue that it is not. Rather, what is essential for these learners is learning how to access information in a new culture.

8.4. THE MEANING OF THE WORD 'SPECIAL' IN ESP

One simple clarification will be made here: special language and specialized aim are two entirely different notions. It was Perren (1974) who noted that confusion arises over these two notions. If we revisit Mackay and Mountford's restricted repertoire, we can better understand the idea of a special language.

Mackay and Mountford (1978) state:

The only practical way in which we can understand the notion of special language is as a restricted repertoire of words and expressions selected from the whole language because that restricted repertoire covers every requirement within a well-defined context, task, or vocation (p. 4). On the

other hand, a specialized aim refers to the purpose for which learners learn a language, not the nature of the language they learn (Mackay and Mountford, 1978). Consequently, the focus of the word 'special' in ESP ought to be on the purpose for which learners learn and not on the specific jargon or registers they learn.

8.5. TYPES OF ESP

David (1983) identifies three types of ESP:

- • English as a restricted language;
- • English for academic and occupational purposes; and
- • English with specific topics.

The language used by air traffic controllers or by waiters are examples of English as a restricted language.

Mackay and Mountford (1978) clearly illustrate the difference between restricted language and language with this statement:

… The language of international air-traffic control could be regarded as 'special,' in the sense that the repertoire required by the controller is strictly limited and can be accurately determined situationally, as might be the linguistic needs of a dining-room waiter or air-hostess. However, such restricted repertoires are not languages, just as a tourist phrase book is not grammar. Knowing a restricted 'language' would not allow the speaker to communicate effectively in novel situation, or in contexts outside the vocational environment (pp. 4, 5).

The *second type of ESP* identified by Carter (1983) is English for Academic and Occupational Purposes. In the 'Tree of ELT' (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987), ESP is broken down into three branches: (a) EST; (b) English for Business and Economics (EBE); and (c) English for social studies (ESS). Each of these subject areas is further divided into two branches: English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). An example of EOP for the EST branch is 'English for Technicians' whereas an example of EAP for the EST branch is 'English for Medical Studies.'

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) do note that there is not a clear-cut distinction between EAP and EOP: "· people can work and study simultaneously; it is also likely that in many cases the language learnt for immediate use in a study environment will be used later when the student takes up, or returns to, a job" (p. 16). Perhaps this explains Carter's rationale for categorizing EAP and EOP under the same type of ESP. It appears that

Carter is implying that the end purpose of both EAP and EOP are one in the same: employment. However, despite the end purpose being identical, the means taken to achieve the end is very different indeed. I contend that EAP and EOP are different in terms of focus on Cummins' (1979) notions of cognitive academic proficiency versus basic interpersonal skills. This is examined in further detail below.

The third and final type of ESP identified by Carter (1983) is English with specific topics. Carter notes that it is only here where emphasis shifts from purpose to topic. This type of ESP is uniquely concerned with anticipated future English needs of, for example, scientists requiring English for postgraduate reading studies, attending conferences, or working in foreign institutions. However, I argue that this is not a separate type of ESP. Rather it is an integral component of ESP courses or programs which focus on situational language. This situational language has been determined based on the interpretation of results from needs analysis (NA) of authentic language used in target workplace settings.

8.6. KEY ISSUES IN ESP CURRICULUM DESIGN

8.6.1. Abilities Required for Successful Communication in Occupational Settings

Cummins (1979) theorized a dichotomy between BICS and CALP. The former refers to the language skills used in the everyday informal language used with friends, family, and co-workers. The latter refers to a language proficiency required to make sense of and use academic language. Situations in which individuals use BICS are characterized by contexts that provide relatively easy access to meaning. However, CALP use occurs in contexts that offer fewer contextual clues (Gatehouse, 2001).

The first ability required in order to successfully communicate in an occupational setting is the ability to use the particular jargon characteristic of that specific occupational context. The second is the ability to use a more generalized set of academic skills, such as conducting research and responding to memoranda. The third is the ability to use the language of everyday informal talk to communicate effectively, regardless of occupational context. Examples of this include chatting over coffee with a colleague or responding to an informal email message (Gatehouse, 2001).

The task for the ESP developer is to ensure that all three of these abilities are integrated into and integrated in the curriculum. This is a difficult task due to the incredible amount of research required. Close collaboration between content experts and the curriculum developer was not possible during the development stages of the curriculum (Gatehouse, 2001). It is believed that because ESP requires comprehensive NA and because the learning-centered curriculum is not static, it is impossible to expect that the developer be in a position to identify the perfect balance of the abilities noted above for any particular group of learners. In reality, a large part of this responsibility is that of the instructors; it is the instructors who are in the best position to identify changing learner needs and who are in the best position to ensure that all students receive a balanced diet of language. (Gatehouse, 2001).

8.7. WHAT IS EAP?

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) is generally defined quite simply as teaching English with the aim of facilitating learners' study or research in that language (Flowerdew and Peacock, 2001, p. 8; Jordan, 1997, p. 1). But while EAP encompasses different domains and practices, such definitions conceal as much as they reveal, including not only study-skills teaching but also a great deal of what might be seen as general English as well. In fact, we need to keep in mind that EAP has emerged out of the broader field of ESP, a theoretically and pedagogically eclectic parent, but one committed to tailoring instruction to specific rather than general purposes (Hyland, and Hamp-Lyons, 2002).

EAP refers to language research and instruction that focuses on the specific communicative needs and practices of particular groups in academic contexts. It means grounding instruction in an understanding of the cognitive, social, and linguistic demands of specific academic disciplines. This takes practitioners beyond preparing learners for study in English to developing new kinds of literacy: equipping students with the communicative skills to participate in particular academic and cultural contexts (Hyland, and Hamp-Lyons, 2002).

The goal of EAP according to Richards and Rodgers (2002) was to dispel the fundamental philosophy supported by the proponents of the Grammar-Translation Method, that is, the purpose of foreign language study was to read literature in the target language or to benefit from the discipline and intellectual development as a result. In this regard, EAP educators intend to address the specific needs and purposes of the learners. They propose

that students could gain advantages from the deliberate match of the subject content and language skills in the EAP course.

The emergence of EAP is facilitated by CLT and content-based instruction (CBI). Based on the principles of CLT, CBI operates on the assumption that language can be effectively taught through the medium of subject matter. (Richard and Rodgers, 2002). Hutchinson and Waters (2001) noted, syllabus of the ESP course which also covers EAP deals with careful need analysis of the student in a particular situation.

"Given that the purpose of an ESP course is to enable learners to function adequately in a target situation, that is, the situation in which the learners will use the language they are learning, then the ESP course design process should proceed by first identifying the target situation and then carrying out a rigorous analysis of the linguistic features of that situation. The identified features will form the syllabus of the ESP course. This process is usually known as need analysis." (p. 12).

EAP is usually defined as teaching English with the aim of assisting learners' study or research in that language (e.g., Flowerdew and Peacock, 2001, p. 8; Jordan, 1997, p. 1). Widdowson (1983) categorized so-called ESP courses on a continuum between narrow angle and wide-angle courses depending on the degree of specificity of the aims of the course: "By aims I mean the purposes to which learning will be put after the end of the course" (Widdowson, 1983, p. 7). Narrow angle courses essentially "provide learners with a restricted competence to enable them to cope with clearly defined tasks" (Widdowson, 1983, p. 6). In such cases, the specific instances of language required to fulfill the task become the aims of the course. On the other hand, wide angle courses are closer to general purpose English courses, which "seek to provide learners with a general capacity to enable them to cope with undefined eventualities in the future" (Widdowson, 1983, p. 6). In relating Widdowson's approach to classifying (specific purposes) courses to that proposed by Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998, p. 14), one could say that the more specific the learner's objectives, the narrower angle the course.

Widdowson (1983, p. 7) also made a distinction between what he calls competence and capacity. He defines competence as "the speaker's knowledge of the language system. [And] his [/her] knowledge also of social rules which determine the appropriate use of linguistic forms." Capacity, on the other hand, is defined as "the ability to create meanings by exploiting the potential inherent in the language for continual modification

in response to change" (Widdowson, 1983, p. 8). In relation to competence and capacity, Widdowson (1983, p. 10) proposed that syllabus objectives for wide and narrow angle courses will vary considerably. If a course is narrow angle and concerned mainly with competence, objectives will relate to the linguistic system, as well as the social rules for its appropriate use. Wide angle courses concerned with the development of capacity, on the other hand, require objectives that will lead to the development of the procedural knowledge required to exploit the competence elements (of language and its use) effectively in a constantly varying range of contexts calibrated to constantly changing communicative purposes. All of this suggests the need for a discourse-focused approach to general EAP syllabus and course design that:

- relates to cognitive genres;
- is not discipline-specific; and
- uses a top-down approach in order to develop capacity as well as competence (enabling learners to reapply discourse knowledge in varying situations and forms).

8.7.1. Processes of EAP Curriculum Development

As Bankowski (2010) points out, EAP begins with the learner and the situation, whereas General English begins with the language. EAP curriculum development is guided by learner needs leading to a research area known as 'needs analysis' (NA) or 'needs assessment.' Hence, the NA initiates and guides EAP curriculum development, involving surveying the learners to collect data on their background and goals, linguistic, and behavioral demands, and preferred learning/teaching strategies (Jasso-Aguilar, 1999). Students' needs assessment remains elemental to EAP (Dudley-Evans and St. John, 1998) and the unifying feature of any EAP course is the definition of objectives and content of each course according to learners' functional needs in the target language and how the students are expected to perform in conforming to the norms and conventions of their academic disciplines. It is highly important to consider the 'need' in relation to the unique characteristics of the educational context in which the study takes place (Bankowski et al., 2010). Students' needs in different contexts are diverse and the analysis of needs can be effective if the academic language needs are accurately defined and seek utmost specificity within the specific target use (Deutch, 2003).

8.7.2. The Growth of English for Academic Purposes (EAP)

EAP has emerged from the larger field of ESP as the academic 'home' of scholars who do not research in or teach other 'SPs,' but whose focus is wholly on academic contexts. The modern-day field of EAP addresses the teaching of English in the academy at all age and proficiency levels, and it draws on a range of interdisciplinary influences for its research methods, theories, and practices. It seeks to provide insights into the structures and meanings of academic texts, into the demands placed by academic contexts on communicative behaviors, and into the pedagogic practices by which these behaviors can be developed (Hyland and Hamp-Lyons, 2002).

8.7.3. Teacher Roles in EAP Courses

According to Dudley-Evans and St. John (2002, pp. 13–17) there are five key roles that the EAP practitioner should play: teacher, course designer and materials provider, collaborator, researcher, and evaluator. Although the roles played by the EAP practitioner may vary from one case to another, there are some common traits taking priority than other. To adjust to the new role, EAP teachers need to possess a great deal of flexibility, an interest in the disciplines or professional activities the students are involved in, the willingness to take risks (Dudley-Evans and St. John, 2002). There is no easy access for them to ready-made, straightforward answers to the teaching problems that they will encounter. Rather, they have to be open-minded, curious, and skeptical enough to distil and synthesize those options that best suit the particular circumstances (Jordan, 1997; Hutchinson and Waters, 2001). Adding to that, they need to be armed with a sound knowledge of both theoretical and practical developments in ELT in order to make good decisions to lead to success of EAP education (Hutchingson and Waters, 2001).

8.7.4. Materials Development

Do ESP textbooks really exist? This is central question Johns (1990) addresses. One of the core dilemmas he presents is that "ESP teachers find themselves in a situation where they are expected to produce a course that exactly matches the needs of a group of learners, but are expected to do so with no, or very limited, preparation time" (Johns, 1990, p. 91). In the real world, many ESL instructors/ESP developers are not provided with ample time for NA, materials research, and materials development. There are many

texts which claim to meet the needs of ESP courses. Johns (1990) comments that no one ESP text can live up to its name. He suggests that the only real solution is that a resource bank of pooled materials be made available to all ESP instructors (Johns, 1990). The only difference between this resource bank and the one that is available in every educational setting-teachers' filing cabinets-is that this one is to include cross-indexed doable, workable content-based (amongst other) resources.

According to Nazarova (1996), When taking into account information about the students, goals, and objectives, teachers need to determine which aspects of ESP learning will be included, emphasized, integrated, and used as a core of the course to address students' needs and expectations. There may be different ways of conceptualizing the content. Teachers can focus on developing "basic skills," communicative competence, intercultural competence, vocabulary awareness, etc. For example, an EAP course for Russian high school students who are going to participate in a foreign exchange program can be conceptualized around L2 culture. One of the goals of this course, for instance, is to achieve intercultural communicative competence. Students are developing language skills, but it is accomplished through the integration of the Sociocultural component into the teaching various elements of the language.

Munby's model consists of two stages: communication needs processor (CNP) and the interpretation of the profile of needs derived from the CNP in terms of micro-skills and micro-functions. The CNP is set out under eight variables that 'affect communication needs by organizing them as parameters in a dynamic relationship to each other' (p. 32). The CNP operates by looking at its 'inputs'-the foreign language participant-and information concerning the participant's identity and language. Then it requires information on the eight variables: purposive domain, setting, interaction, instrumentality, dialect, target level, communicative event, and communicative key. In the second stage of the model, the user must take the activities with their communicative keys and decide which of three alternative ways of processing is appropriate. The alternatives are:

- Specification of syllabus content by focusing on micro-skills;
- Specification by focusing on micro-functions;
- Specification by focusing on linguistic forms.

Obviously, Munby explores thoroughly every aspect relating to learner's needs. His work is probably the most detailed and complex as well as informative. He thinks of the unthinkable and proves to be very thoughtful

in the work. This analysis of Munby's approach focuses on the aspects of communication he emphasizes and the assumptions regarding the roles of language, the learner, the syllabus, the teacher that lie behind his design. He emphasizes all equal on:

- Purpose;
- Medium/mode/channel of communication;
- Sociolinguistic aspects;
- Linguistics;
- Pragmatics.

8.7.5. The Role of Genre in EAP

Some EAP theorists see genre as communicative events used by specific discourse communities. Focusing on the communicative needs of particular academic groups involves examining what these groups do with language, starting with the names members themselves give to their practices, such as *essays, dissertations, and lectures*. These are the social/rhetorical actions routinely used by community members to achieve a particular purpose, written for a particular audience, and employed in a particular context. Hounsell (1988; cited in Bazerman et al., 2009) had previously looked at problems students encountered when confronted with the unfamiliar discourses of the university. He identified academic discourse as 'a particular kind of written world, with a set of conventions, or 'code,' of its own' (p. 397).

EAP courses always involve attending to the texts learners will most need to use beyond the classroom. This necessarily implies a central role for genre in any methodology. Making texts and contexts a focus for analysis allows teachers to raise students' awareness of the interdependence of disciplinary valued genres, the resources used to create meaning in context and how powerful genres can be negotiated (Tomlinson, 1998).

8.7.6. Approaches in EAP

In contrast to methods, there has been a substantial amount of work concerning approaches in teaching EAP. This work largely falls into two categories. On the one hand are lists of principles that guide EAP teaching (Watson, 2003). For example, in discussing the whole of ESP, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) list eight principles including: language learning is an active process, language learning is an emotional experience, and language learning is not systematic. On the other hand, are global teaching and

learning practices from which principles can be drawn. The first set of global practices that seems widespread in teaching EAP involves inductive learning. There appears to be a preference for inductive learning over more teacher-centered deductive approaches, and this emphasis on induction in EAP is manifested in several ways (Watson, 2003).

The widespread use of concordancing in EAP (Jordan, 1997; Stevens, 1991), the teaching of reading focusing on text analysis (Paltridge, 2002), and approaches where students are encouraged to act as researchers investigating academic communities (Starfield, 2001) all place a particular emphasis on induction. A second prevalent approach to teaching EAP is the use of process syllabuses (Widdowson, 1990) involving task-based and project-based learning. While both are becoming more widespread in English for general purposes, much of the initial impetus for task-based and project-based learning came from EAP teaching (Hall and Kenny, 1988; cited in Watson, 2003) where they are still frequently used (Robinson, Strong, Whittle, and Nobe, 2001).

A third set of approaches includes the greater than usual emphasis on self-access learning in EAP (Jordan, 1997), the use of negotiated syllabuses (Martyn, 2000; Savage and Storer, 2001), and an emphasis on self and peer assessment and feedback (Ferris, 2001). All of this aim to promote learner autonomy. A desire to increase authenticity of EAP learning materials and tasks forms the focus of another set of global practices. This approach is perhaps best illustrated by the use of case studies in the teaching of EAP for business, law, medicine, and engineering (Dudley-Evans and St. John, 1998).

Technological changes provide the driving force behind a further set of practices. Since EAP situations are generally better resourced than other situations of ELT and because EAP course objectives may include technology-oriented goals, technology has played an important role in teaching EAP in the last few years (Watson, 2003). We have already seen that computer concordancing is relatively common in EAP, and EAP teaching may also include the use of CD-ROMs and computer-mediated communication (CMC) (Warschauer, 2002; cited in Watson, 2003). The six approaches on which teaching EAP generally places a greater emphasis than other types of English teaching therefore are (Watson, 2003):

- Focus on inductive learning;
- Using process syllabuses;
- Promoting learner autonomy;

- Using authentic materials and tasks;
- Integrating technology in teaching;
- Using team teaching.

It should be noted that these six approaches are not mutually exclusive. For example, both Aston (1997; as cited in Watson, 2003) and Watson (2001) suggest techniques where students use technology to make inductions from concordances in ways that are likely to promote learner autonomy.

8.7.7. Techniques in EAP

Techniques are more specific than approaches and are often equated with activities. As specific teaching/learning practices, techniques may be specific to a certain objective and thus lack generalizability. A few techniques such as brainstorming, however, can be applied to a wide range of objectives and situations. An example of a technique specific to EAP is asking students to create algorithms to show their understanding of the process of using contents and indexes to search for information in books (Watson, 2001).

Three features of EAP writing:

- **High Lexical Density:** A high proportion of content words in relation to grammar words such as prepositions, articles, and pronouns which makes academic writing more tightly packed with information. Halliday (1989, p. 61), for example, compared a written sentence (a) (with three-italicized-grammatical words) with a conversational version (b) (with 13 grammatical words): (a) Investment *in a* rail facility implies *a* long-term commitment. (b) *If you* invest *in a* rail facility *this* implies *that you are going to be* committed *for a* long term.
- **High Nominal Style:** Actions and events are presented as nouns rather than verbs to package complex phenomena as a single element of a clause. This freezes an event, such as 'The train leaves at 5.00 p.m.' and repackages it as an object: 'The train's 5.00 p.m. departure.' Turning processes into objects in this way expresses scientific perspectives that seek to show relationships between entities.
- **Impersonal Constructions:** Students are often advised to keep their academic prose as impersonal as possible, avoiding the use of 'I' and expressions of feeling. First-person pronouns are often replaced by passives ('the solution was heated'), dummy 'it'

subjects ('it was possible to interview the subjects by phone'), and what are called 'abstract rhetors,' where agency is attributed to things rather than people.

8.8. THE ROLE OF AUTHENTIC MATERIALS IN EAP CLASS

Authenticity, accompanied, is one of the most fundamental issues concerning the EAP instructional materials (Jordan, 1997; Dudley-Evans and St. John, 1998; Hutchinson and Waters, 2001; Richards and Rodgers, 2002). As Jordan (1997, p. 113) defines, "In the most straightforward interpretation, one can say that an authentic text will be that which is normally used in the students' specialist subject area: written by specialists for specialists. It is not written for language teaching purposes." In terms of Hutchinson and Waters (2001), authenticity is a trait of a text in a particular context. They claim, "A text can only be truly authentic, in other words, in the context for which it was originally written.

"Since in ESP any text is automatically removed from its original context, there can be no such thing as an authentic text in ESP." (Hutchinson and Waters, 2001, p. 159) In this regard, the key aspect of authenticity lies in the question: whether the activities based on the text reflect the ways in which the text would actually be used by students in their course work (Dudley-Evans and St. John 2002). To be more specific, the nature of authenticity depends on the interaction between the reader (or hearer). In a nutshell, the success of applying authentic text lies in appropriate selection and use in the proper context.

As Lee (2003) mentioned there are several different approaches based on CBI, of which EAP is a branch. Major models that have been used include theme-based language instruction, sheltered content instruction, and adjunct language instruction (Larsen-Freeman, 2001; Richards and Rodgers, 2002).

8.8.1. Theme-Based Language Instruction

According to Richard and Rodgers (2002), theme-based language instruction refers to a language course in which the syllabus is structured around themes or topics, with the topics forming the backbone of the course curriculum. The theme-based course is a departure from the traditional language course in that the EAP teachers usually generate or adapt materials from outside sources instead of adopting a fixed course textbook (Lee, 2003).

8.8.2. Sheltered Content Instruction

The second model refers to the content course taught to a segregated non-native speakers of the target language who enroll the course to develop their second language (L2) proficiency (Larsen-Freeman, 2001; Richards and Rodgers, 2002). The sheltered-language instructor is a content area specialist, such as a university professor, who is a native speaker of the target language and is required to facilitate the learning process by presenting the content in a way which is comprehensible to the students and tasks at an appropriate level of difficulty (Larsen-Freeman, 2001; Richards and Rodgers, 2002).

8.8.3. Adjunct Language Instruction

In this model, students take two linked courses—a language course and a content course—with both courses sharing the same content base and complementing each other in terms of mutually coordinated assignments. Both native and non-native speakers attend the same lecture (Brinton et al., 1989; cited in Lee, 2003).

8.9. CONCLUSION

This chapter addressed key notions about ESP and examined issues in ESP curriculum design. The content of the chapter was determined by a need identified based on my professional experience as an ESL instructor designing and delivering the content-based language program-language preparation for employment in the health sciences. These issues, where possible, have been supported by current and pertinent academic literature. It is my sincerest hope that these observations will lend insight into the challenges facing the ESL instructor acting as ESP curriculum developer.

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Chapter 9

Situation Analysis and Language Curriculum Development

CONTENTS

9.1. INTRODUCTION

The goal of needs analysis (NA) is to collect information that can be used to develop a profile of language needs of a group of learners in order to be able to make decisions about the goals and content of a language course. However, the factors apart from learners' needs are relevant to the design and implementation of successful language programs. Language programs are carried out in a particular context or situation. (Richards, 2001). There are two types of NA used by language syllabus designers. The first of these is learner analysis and the second is task analysis.

Learner analysis is based on the information about the learner. The central question of concern to the syllabus designer is: 'For what purpose or purposes is the learner learning the language?' A number of other subsidiary questions addressing the learners can also be used to collect information from the learners. Such questions may address the learner's likes or dislikes about language and language skills, the way they are presented, etc. The type of information collected can serve as the guideline for the selection of content. Besides such information may also alert the teacher of the problems he might confront during the course. For example, older learners or those who have only experienced traditional education systems, may exhibit problems with the teacher programs. Such data may indicate that the majority of the learners desire a grammatically-based syllabus with explicit instruction. If teachers are planning to follow a non-traditional approach, they may need to negotiate with the learners and modify the syllabus to take account of learner perceptions about the nature of language and language learning. These problems can be revealed through the process of NA.

NA is sometimes seen as a kind of educational technology designed to measure goals with precision and accountability (Berwick, 1989; cited in Hyland, 2006, p. 74). But this actually gives the process a misleading impartiality, suggesting that teachers can simply read off a course from an objective situation. But, as most teachers will know, needs are not always easy to determine and mean different things to different participants. Essentially, needs analyzes construct a picture of learning goals bringing to bear the teacher's values, beliefs, and philosophies of teaching and learning? It might be more accurate, then, to see needs as jointly constructed between teachers and learners.

The goal of NA is to collect information that can be used to develop a profile of the language needs of a group of learners in order to be able to make decisions about the goals and content of a language course. However,

other factors apart from learner needs are relevant to the design and implementation of successful language programs. Language programs are carried out in particular context or situations. In an attempt to answer the question "who should drive the course?" Tomlinson (2003) maintains that in addition to the needs and wants of the learners, teacher needs and language policies of a government must be taken into consideration. Long (2005b) argues that there is more than one way to conduct a NA, however, just as there is more than one way to teach a language. Long (2005c) also finds it hard to distinguish between language needs and language audits because the latter include some activities typical of NA. However, whereas a NA usually provides detailed information about the needs of individuals, and occasionally of much larger social groups, a language audit takes institutions or organizations as the unit of analysis and is usually conducted through a quantified general survey. An audit produces a target situation analysis in the form of the language skills required by an organization.

9.2. SITUATION ANALYSIS

The goal of situation analysis is to identify key factors that might be positively or negatively affect the implementation of a curriculum plan. This is sometimes known as a SWOT analysis because it involves an examination of "a language program's internal *strengths* and *weaknesses* in addition to external *opportunities* and *threats* to the existence or successful operation of the language program" (Klinghammer, 1997; cited in Richards, 2001, p. 106).

Situation analysis thus serves to help identify potential obstacles to implementing a curriculum project and factors that need to be considered when planning the parameters of a project. The next step in curriculum planning involves using the information collected during NA and situation analysis as the basis for developing program goals and objectives. Situation analysis or environmental analysis 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 (Nation and Macalister, 2010). Situation analysis is also called '*Constraint Analysis.*' A constraint can be positive in curriculum design.

Situation or 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 materials are too expensive or requires technology and copying facilities that are not available, the course may be unusable. Clark (1987; cited in Richards, 2001, p. 90) comments: A language curriculum is a function of the interrelationships that hold between subject-specific concerns and other broader factors embracing socio-political and philosophical matters, educational value systems, theory, and practice in curriculum design, teacher experiential wisdom and learner motivation. In order to understand the foreign language curriculum in any particular context it is therefore necessary to attempt to understand bow all the various influences interrelate to give a particular shape to the planning and execution of the teaching/learning process.

The contexts for language programs are diverse and the particular variables that come into play in a specific situation are often the key determinants of me success of a program. Each context for a curriculum changes or innovation thus contains factors that can potentially facilitate the change or hinder its successful implementation (MarRee, 1997; cited in Richards, 2001, p. 90). It is important, therefore, to identify what these factors are and what their potential effects might be when planning a curriculum change (Bean, 1993; cited in Richards, 2001, p. 90). Pratt (1980; cited in Richards, 2001, p. 90) observes: The designer should estimate both the direct and indirect effects a proposed curriculum will have on the students, on other programs, and on other people in and outside the institution. These effects must be taken into account in the design and made clear to decision-makers when the curriculum proposal is submitted.

This is the focus of situation analysis. *Situation analysis* is an analysis of factors in the context of a planned or present curriculum project that is made in order to assess their potential impact on the project. These factors may be political, social, economic, or institutional. Situation analysis complements the information garnered during NA. It is sometimes considered as a dimension of NA, and can also regarded as an aspect of evaluation (Richards, 2001).

Situation analysis is also called "environment analysis" or "constraints analysis" (Nation and Macalister, 2010, p. 14). 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 NA.

Richards (2001) argues that at least six factors can have an impact on the success of a curriculum project: societal factors, project factors, institutional factors, teacher factors, learner factors, and adoption factors. Analysis and appraisal of the potential impact of these factors at the initial stages of a curriculum project can help determine the kinds of difficulties that might be encountered in implementing a curriculum change. Nation and Macalister (2010) list a range of environment constraints and claim it can be used as a checklist when one decides to design a course. The constraints have been presented as questions that curriculum designers can ask. Some of the major constraints investigated by research and analysis include the time available, cultural backgrounds, the effect of the first language (L1) on language learning and special purposes.

Procedures used in situation analysis are similar to those involved in NA, namely:

- Consultation with representatives of as many relevant groups as possible, such as parents, students, teachers, administrators, and government officials;
- Study and analysis of relevant documents, such as course appraisal documents, government reports, ministry of education guidelines and policy papers, teaching materials, curriculum documents;
- Observation of teachers and students in relevant learning settings;
- Surveys of opinions of relevant parties;
- Review of available literature related to the issue.

9.2.1. Steps in Situation/Environment Analysis

Nation and Macalister (2010, pp. 20, 21) suggest that the steps in environment analysis can be as follows:

- Brainstorm and then systematically consider the range of environment factors that will affect the course;
- Choose the most important factors (no more than five) and rank them, putting the most important first;
- 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;
- Consider the effects of each factor on the design of the course.

9.3. SOCIETAL FACTORS

Second or foreign language teaching is a fact of life in almost every country in the world. Yet countries differ greatly in terms of the role of foreign languages in the community, their status in the curriculum, educational traditions and experience in language teaching, and the expectations that members of the community have for language teaching and learning (Richards, 2001, p. 93).

In examining the impact of societal factors on language teaching, the aim is to determine the impact of groups in the community or society at large on the program. These groups include:

- Policy makers in government;
- Educational and other government officials;
- Employers;
- The business community;
- Politicians;
- Tertiary education specialists;
- Educational organizations;
- Parents;
- Citizens;
- Students.

In the case of projects of community or national scope, questions such as the following may be relevant:

- What current language teaching policies exist and how are they viewed?
- What are the underlying reasons for the project and who supports it?
- What impact will it have on different sectors of society?
- What language teaching experience and traditions exist in the country?
- How do members of the public view second languages (L2s) and L2 teaching?
- What are the views of relevant professionals such as academics and teacher trainers?
- What do professional organizations such as teachers' unions think of the project?

- What are the views of parents and students?
- What are the views of employers and the business community?
- What community resources are available to support the innovations, such as radio, television, and the media?

9.4. PROJECT FACTORS

Projects are completed under different constraints of time, resources, and personnel, and each of these variables can have a significant impact on a project. There should be sufficient members in the project team to do the job and they should represent a balance of skills and expertise. Some projects are generously resourced while others operate on a shoestring budget. The time frame for a project needs to be carefully planned. If a curriculum development team takes on too ambitious a task for the time available, the quality of their efforts may be compromised. The working dynamics of the team are also essential to the smooth progress of the project. If the team members are highly committed to the project and have a common vision, it is likely to encounter fewer difficulties than one where the project team experiences internal feuds and power struggles (Richards, 2001, p. 95).

According to Richards (2001, p. 95), the following project factors need to be considered:

- Who constitutes the project group and how are they selected?
- What are the management and other responsibilities of the team?
- How are goals and procedures determined?
- Who reviews the progress of the project and 'the performance of its members?
- What experience do members of the team have?
- How do members of the team regard each other?
- What resources do they have available and what budget to acquire needed resources?
- What is the time frame of the project? Is it realistic, or is more or less time needed?

9.5. INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS

A teaching institution is a collection of teachers, groups, and departments, sometimes functioning in unison, sometimes with different components

functioning independently, or sometimes with components in a confrontational relationship. Within an institution there may be a Strong and positive climate to support innovation, one where there is effective and positive leadership and where change is received positively. On the other hand, there may be a climate where teachers distrust one another and the administration and have no firm commitment to the school (Richards, 2001, p. 97).

Institutions also have their own way of doing things. In some institutions, textbooks are the core of the curriculum and all teachers must use the prescribed texts. In other institutions, teachers work from course guidelines and supplement them as they see fit. Institutions also differ greatly in their levels of professionalism. In some institutions, there is a strong sense of professional commitment and a culture of quality that influences every aspect of the institution's operations. In others, the driving force of the school may be monetary (Richards, 2001, p. 97). In addition to the human side of the institution, the physical aspects need to be considered. What kinds of resources are available for teachers? Is there a good teachers' reference room? What access do teachers have to the photocopier? Who chooses textbooks and materials? Institutional factors thus relate to the following kinds of questions (Richards, 2001, p. 98):

- What leadership is available within the school to support change and to help teachers cope with change?
- What are the school's physical resources, including classroom facilities, media, and other technological resources, and library resources?
- What is the role of textbooks and other instructional materials?
- What is staff morale like among English teachers?
- What problems do teachers face and what is being done about them?
- What administrative support is available within the school and what is communication like between teachers and the administration?
- What kind of reputation does the institution have for delivering successful language programs?
- How committed is the institution to attaining excellence?

9.6. TEACHER FACTORS

Teachers are a key factor in the successful implementation of curriculum changes. Exceptional teachers can often compensate for the poor-quality resources and materials they have to work from. But inadequately trained teachers may not be able to make effective use of teaching materials no matter how well they are designed. In any institution, teachers may vary according to the following dimensions (Richards, 2001, p. 99):

- Language proficiency;
- Teaching experience;
- Skill and expertise;
- Training and qualifications;
- Morale and motivation;
- Teaching style;
- Beliefs and principles;

In planning a language program, it is therefore important to know the kinds of teachers the program will depend on and the kinds of teachers needed to ensure that the program achieves its goals. Within schools, teachers also have many different kinds of responsibilities. Some teachers have mentoring or leadership roles within their schools and assist in orienting new teachers to the school or leading groups of teachers in materials development and other activities. Other teachers have time for little more than teaching. They may have very heavy teaching loads or teach in several different institutions in order to make ends meet. Some teachers may welcome the chance to try out a Dew syllabus or materials. Others may resent it because they see it as disrupting their routine and not offering them any financial or other kind of advantage (Richards, 2001, p. 99).

Among the teacher factors that need to be considered in situation analysis are the following (Richards, 2001, p. 100):

- What kinds of teachers currently teach in the target schools or institutions? What is their typical background training, experience, and motivation?
- How proficient are they in English?
- What kinds of beliefs do the teachers typically hold concerning key issues in teaching?
- What teaching loads do teachers have and what resources do they make use of?

- What are the typical teaching methods teachers use and believe in?
- To what extent are teachers open to change?
- What opportunities do they have for retraining through in-service or other kinds of opportunities?
- What benefits are the proposed new syllabus, curriculum, or materials likely to offer teachers?

9.7. LEARNER FACTORS

Learners are the key participants in curriculum development projects and it is essential to collect as much information as possible about them before the project begins. In addition to learners' language needs, the focus is on other relevant factors such as the learners' backgrounds, expectations, beliefs, and preferred learning styles. Nunan (1989; cited in Richards, 2001, p. 101) comments: the effectiveness of a language program will be dictated as much by the attitudes and expectations of the learners as by the specifications of the official curriculum… Learners have their own agendas in the language lessons they attend. These agendas, as much as the teacher's objective, determine what learners take from any given teaching/learning encounter.

Among relevant learner factors therefore are the following (Richards, 2001, pp. 101, 102; McKillip, 1998):

- What are the learners' past language learning experiences?
- How motivated are the learners to learn English?
- What are their expectations for the program?
- Do the learners' views on language teaching reflect any culturally specific factors?
- Are they a homogeneous or a heterogeneous group?
- What type of learning approach do they favor (e.g., teacher-led, student-focused, or small-group work)?
- What type of content do they prefer?
- What expectations do they have for the roles of teachers, learners, and instructional materials?
- How much time can they be expected to put into the program?
- What learning resources will they typically have access to?

9.8. ADOPTION FACTORS

Any attempt to introduce a new curriculum, syllabus, or set of materials must take into account the relative ease or difficulty of introducing change into the system. Curriculum changes are of many different kinds. They may affect teachers' pedagogical values and beliefs, their understanding of the nature of language or L2 learning, or their classroom practices and use of teaching materials. Some changes may be readily accepted while others might be resisted. The following questions therefore need to be asked or any proposed curriculum innovation:

- What advantages does the curriculum change offer? Is the innovation perceived to be more advantageous than current practices?

- How compatible is it? Is the use of the innovation consistent with the existing beliefs, attitudes, organization, and practices within a classroom or school?

- Is the innovation very complicated and difficult to understand?

- Has it been used and tested out in some schools before all schools are expected to use it?

- Have the features and benefits of the innovation been clearly communicated to teachers and institutions?

- How clear and practical is it? Are the expectations of the innovation stated in ways which clearly show how it can be used in the classroom? (Morris, 1994; cited in (Richards, 2001, p. 103; Brown, 1995).

Although curriculum planners might provide many compelling reasons for adopting a communicative teaching methodology, teachers might feel that it makes testing more difficult compared with a more traditional grammar-based approach. Hence it is perceived as offering few relative advantages for teachers. A language teaching approach that requires teachers to adopt new roles in the classroom, such as needs analyst, resource person, and language tutor, might not be compatible with learners' expectations for the role of teachers. The complexity and clarity of a curriculum change might also be crucial in its successful adoption (Richards, 2001, p. 104).

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Chapter 10

Project Work as Part of Curriculum Development

CONTENTS

10.1. INTRODUCTION

Project work is not a new methodology. Its benefits have been widely recognized for many years in the teaching of subjects like science, geography, and history. Some teachers have also been doing project work in their language lessons for a long time, but for others it is a new way of working. The aim of this assignment is to provide a simple introduction to project work. This attempt explains what project work is, what benefits it brings, and how to introduce it into the classroom. It also deals with the main worries that teachers have about using project work in their classrooms.

Project-based learning has deep roots in education. It was first discussed as an educational approach to K-12 education in an article entitled "The Project Method" by Kilpatrick (1918), who believed that using literacy in meaningful contexts provided a means for building background knowledge and for achieving personal growth. Unlike those who later advocated models of collaborative learning, Kilpatrick was less interested in the group aspects of learning than in the cognitive development that resulted from project work. He suggested that projects be interdisciplinary math, science, social studies to provide learners with a rich array of concepts and ideas. He intended those topics come from students' interests, maintaining that group projects, proposed, planned, executed, and evaluated by students, would help learners develop an understanding of their lives while preparing to work within a democracy. Although Kilpatrick imagined that projects should be driven by learner questions, in practice, many teachers assign topics (Schubert, 1986; cited in Wrigley, 2008), a practice that runs counter to the spirit of student-generated projects that he had in mind. Project methods were used by advocates of a larger progressive movement in education that stressed the need for child-centered education. John Dewey (Dewey, 1899; cited in Wrigley, 2008), who thought that schools should reflect society, was a leader of this movement, which flourished from the late 19th to the mid-20th century. Progressivists believed that children learn best through experiences in which they have an interest, and through activities that allow for individual differences. Teachers were advised to observe learners and their interests so they could tie what students wanted to know to what the classroom provided. Practical inquiry-everyday problem solving- and meaning seeking as part of social interaction played a role in child-centered, progressive education, as well.

Project-based learning also reflects a Vygotskian perspective. Vygotsky, a Russian cognitive psychologist, theorizes that learning occurs through

social interaction that encourages individuals to deal with the kind cognitive challenges that are just slightly above their current levels of ability (Wertsch, 1985; cited in Wrigley, 2008). He posits that concepts develop and understanding happens when individuals enter into discussion and meaningful interaction with more capable peers or teachers. These individuals can model problem solving, assist in finding solutions, monitor progress, and evaluate success (Tharpe and Gallimore, 1988; cited in Wrigley, 2008). Although Vygotsky himself did not discuss in detail how his theories on language and thought should translate into teaching, others have suggested that joint problem solving, with opportunities to shape and reshape knowledge through talk, promotes the cognitive development that Vygotsky saw as crucial (Driscoll, based learning has a great deal in common with participatory education and a Freirean philosophy of teaching adults. The key tenets of this approach hold that learning occurs when the content of the curriculum is drawn from the social context of the learners, and literacy (the word) is used to make sense of the circumstances of one's life (the world). Freirean educators stress the need to empower disenfranchised learners to fight the status quo and help create a more fair and equitable society through a process of critical reflection and collective action. Freirean-inspired projects differ from other learner-centered approaches inasmuch as they stress the socio-political aspects of the issues being addressed rather than focusing on the personal or cultural dimensions of literacy without reference to the broader social contexts in which literacy occurs (Auerbach, 1993; Wrigley, 1993).

10.2. WHAT IS A PROJECT?

According to Hutchinson (2001), the best way to answer this question is to show some examples of projects. The following pieces of project work were done by students aged 11–15 in Slovakia and Hungary.

Here is an example of a very straightforward and popular project: My Favorite Animal. The students choose an animal and write about it. They illustrate the project with pictures (photographs, postcards, etc.). Projects allow students to use their imagination and the information they contain does not always have to be factual. In this example of a project which required students to introduce themselves and their favorite things, the students pretend they are a horse. One of the great benefits of project work is its adaptability. Here are two examples of the same project task. These two projects on The World were done by students at different levels. The first

project is a poem using the simple present tense only. The second project, however, has been done by intermediate level students, who have been able to use a range of different structures.

10.3. WHAT IS PROJECT-BASED INSTRUCTION?

(In teaching) an activity which centers around the completion of a task, and which usually requires an extended amount of independent work either by an individual student or by a group of students. Much of this work takes place outside the classroom. Project work often involves three stages:

- **Classroom Planning:** The students and teacher discuss the content and scope of the project, and their needs.

- **Carrying Out the Project:** The students move out of the classroom to complete their planned tasks (e.g., conducting interviews, collecting information).

- **Reviewing and Monitoring:** This includes discussions and feedback sessions by the teacher and participants, both during and after the project.

In language teaching, project work is thought to be an activity which promotes co-operative learning, reflects the principles of *student-centered* teaching, and promotes language learning through using the language for authentic communicative purposes.

Project-based learning is an instructional approach that contextualizes learning by presenting learners with problems to solve or products to develop. For example, learners may research adult education resources in their community and create a handbook to share with other language learners in their program, or they might interview local employers and then create a bar graph mapping the employers' responses to questions about qualities they look for in employees. This digest provides a rationale for using project-based learning with adult English language learners, describes the process, and gives examples of how the staff of adult English as a second language (ESL) program has used project-based learning with their adult learners at varying levels of English proficiency.

According to Donna and Carol (1998), Project-based instruction is a student-centered, multi-modality, active learning approach to education. Through this approach, students are encouraged to generate projects and work collaboratively as team members to complete a series of tasks resulting in a finished product. Project-based instruction is an excellent vehicle

for teaching the SCANS skills because they can be taught in contextual situations. Skills and academics are not isolated from one another—instead they act as reinforcement to one another. This combined approach can also help students become familiar with how they learn and how that awareness benefits them in a work setting.

10.4. PROJECT-BASED INSTRUCTION: MERITS

Donna and Carol (1998) remark that an important advantage of project-based instruction is that the process can help students who learn differently. They are afforded many more opportunities and avenues to demonstrate knowledge and develop skills. The time required for each project will vary but must be of sufficient duration to allow for completion of the project and its sub-tasks including instructional interventions on needed basic skills, personal qualities (such as presenting oneself positively) and evaluation strategies.

The SCANS skills combine the two fundamental areas of workplace competencies and basic skills which can be incorporated into any adult curriculum. The SCANS skills project-based approach can be used on a limited or periodic basis to enhance a traditional curriculum or used as a more intensive approach so that the primary focus of the class is to achieve proficiency in the SCANS skills themselves.

Including SCANS skills in project-based instruction helps adult students prepare for jobs. Considering the new demands for public assistance clients to enter the workforce, for job-readiness skills in WIA-promoted one-stop centers and in other workforce initiatives, SCANS-related instruction becomes more critical. Our response as adult educators to these new priorities is to help learners become self-directed, lifelong learners who will be successfully employed and able to advance in their chosen fields.

10.5. RATIONAL FOR PROJECT-BASED INSTRUCTION

Project-based learning functions as a bridge between using English in class and using English in real life situations outside of class (Fried-Booth, 1997; cited in Donna and Carol, 1998). It does this by placing learners in situations that require authentic use of language in order to communicate (e.g., being part of a team or interviewing others). When learners work in pairs or in teams, they find they need skills to plan, organize, negotiate,

make their points, and arrive at a consensus about issues such as what tasks to perform, who will be responsible for each task, and how information will be researched and presented.

These skills have been identified by learners as important for living successful lives (Stein, 1995; cited in Donna and Carol, 1998) and by employers as necessary in a high-performance workplace (U.S. Department of Labor, 1991). Because of the collaborative nature of project work, development of these skills occurs even among learners at low levels of language proficiency. Within the group work integral to projects, individuals' strengths, and preferred ways of learning (e.g., by reading, writing, listening, or speaking) strengthen the work of the team as a whole (Tanaka, 1993)**.**

10.6. THREE TYPES OF PROJECT WORK

Looking at the practice of project work in engineering education at Aalborg University, there are at least three ways in which problem orientation is integrated into project work. For all types of projects, a problem has to be analyzed and solved by means of different kinds of methods. So, the phases of the project are common to all described project types, as preparation, problem analysis, demarcation, problem-solving, conclusion, and reporting. However, what determines the choice of the problem and the methods used in the project is very different. Is the problem to set the frame and determine the choice of methods, or is it the methods-or more correctly the subjects- that set the frame and determine the choice of problem? The project types are defined by the preparation phase, because this phase will uncover whether it is a self-directed learning process or it is a teacher-controlled process.

The first type, Kolmos (1996) have called the 'assignment project,' characterized by a considerable planning and control by the teachers/ supervisors. In an assignment-based project the 'problem and the subject' as well as the methods are chosen beforehand.

<p align="center">***Problem*** ⟷ ***subject***</p>

The educational objectives are very easily controlled and they are very often formulated as traditional subject-objectives. Being a supervisor in this process is easy in that the supervisor knows exactly what is going to be explored in the project and will direct the students' choices in the planned direction. Metaphorically, you may think of a football game where you know where the football ground and the ball are as well as the basic rules, so you can just go and play and you know the rules of the game. An example

of a student project could be that in the firm X they have a machine emitting too much noise. The task given is to measure the noise level, calculate the necessary attenuation and find a silencer. The other type of project Kolmos (1996) have called the 'subject project' which is characterized by the subjects chosen beforehand. The students have a free choice 'either of problem within the subject' or the problem will be given and the students have a 'free choice among a number of described methods.'

Problem ⟶ *subject*

Problem ⟵ *subject*

Again, the educational objectives are formulated mostly as traditional subject-objectives. Being a supervisor in this process may be a bit more uncertain, because the students are allowed to make some choices on their own. However, the scientific field is described well and hardly any surprises occur. Again, metaphorically you may think of the football game. Now you know where to find the football ground and you know the basic rules, but before starting the game you must find the ball. An example of a student project where the subject is chosen could be a description of the scientific objectives as using a digital signal processor and creating a filter. An example of a student project where the problem is chosen beforehand could be that in the firm X there is too much noise emitted in the production hall caused by an old machine. The project is about replacing this machine to find a solution.

The 'problem project' is, contrary to the two former types of problem orientation, based on problems as the starting point (Kolmos, 1996). This means that the problem will determine the choice of disciplines and methods which correspond to the original idea of a problem-oriented learning process where the students have to start with a problem and analyze it, find fundamental solutions to the problem, choose the right solution and outline strategies for implementation.

10.7. THE IDEAS OF PROJECT WORK

Separating problem orientation and problem-based learning from the concept of project work leads to an understanding of 'project work as a way of organizing the learning process.' Project work is a special way of organizing learning characterized by an active discussion and writing process in a group-based course. Project work stresses both the process and the product in the form of a project report. The reason for this organization

of learning is based on the idea of teaching and learning as an active process of cognition, searching, and acquiring knowledge instead of the traditional form of education where the students are only regarded as persons acquiring knowledge. Project work usually also requires more human resources, as analysis and solution of problems are more intensive, than the human resources required for solving a posed task. So, teamwork is an integrated part of the concept of project work. Furthermore, it is characterized by being structured in a number of phases, for example, start, problem analysis, delimitation, problem solution, reporting, and implementation. There will always be a final result, which partly rounds off the project work process from a cognitive point of view, and partly from a presentation point of view one or another type of presentation will appear in the form of a written report.

Characterizing project work still involves 'a type of problem-or objective' because no project work can be practiced without having a clearly described objective for what is going to be analyzed or solved. This type of problem may cover a wide range of problem conceptions, from practical, theoretical, and social problems to purely technical problems Kolmos (1996). However, the characteristic of problem-based learning is the role of the learner who chooses the problem and/or methods to be used. These ideas of project work led to development of abilities to:

- Formulate objectives, aims, and goals;
- Start and end a project;
- Analyze and specify problems or objectives;
- Analyze and specify criteria for solution;
- Write reports;
- Collaborate, organize, and plan the working process;
- Handle projects;
- Manage oneself.

10.8. COOPERATIVE VERSUS COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

As Richards and Rodgers (2001, p. 192) indicate that CL is part of a more general instructional approach also known as collaborative learning. John (1991; cited in Yang et al., 2005) points out that the dictionary definitions of "collaboration," derived from its Latin root, focus on the *process* of working

together; the root word for "cooperation" stresses the *product* of such work. Oxford (1997, p. 443) indicates that CL is more structured, more prescriptive to teachers about classroom techniques, more directive to students about how to work together in groups than collaborative learning. Cooperative learning, according to Olsen and Kagan (1992; cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p. 192), is "group learning activity" in which learning Occurs through exchange of information between learners in groups. It is argued that in this type of learning, learners are responsible for their own learning and are "motivated to increase the learning of others" Thus, "cooperative learning refers to a set of highly structured, psychologically, and sociologically based techniques" that contribute to the process of learning and achieving a learning goal (Oxford, 1997).

Cooperative and collaborative learning in some cases is used interchangeably. But they are not the same. Cooperative learning is a part of collaborative learning. Nelson (2007) defined collaborative learning as "an umbrella term for the variety of approaches and models in education that involved the shared intellectual efforts by students working in small groups to accomplish a goal or complete a task." She also defined cooperative learning as "instructional method in which students work together in small, heterogeneous groups to complete a problem, project or other instructional goal, while teachers act as guides or facilitators. This method works to reinforce the learning of oneself as well as the learning of group members." Panitz (1996) introduced a basic definition of the terms collaborative and cooperative learning. Collaboration is a philosophy of interaction and personal lifestyle where individuals are responsible for their actions, including learning and respect the abilities and contributions of their peers; Cooperation is a structure of interaction designed to facilitate the accomplishment of a specific end product or goal through people working together in groups.

Collaborative learning (peer, interdependent learning is a particular type of configuration in which students work together towards a common learning goal, and has been reported to yield many benefit for the students. These include the exposition of thinking process, increasing respect for different ways of thinking, motivation, and social support and the development of transferable skills. Collaborative learning can promote responsibility for one's own learning without having to surrender power to the experts.

Johnson and Johnson (2008, p. 11) named five basic elements of cooperative learning:

- **Positive Interdependence:** This exists when individuals perceive that they can reach their goals if and only if the other individuals with whom they are cooperatively linked, also reach their goals. They therefore, promote each other's efforts to achieve the goals.

- **Individual Accountability:** Since the ultimate purpose of the group's cooperation is to empower the individual members, students must be made aware of their progress as a group and as an individual member regardless of their ability individuals must do their fair share of the work and not have others to carry them through the course. They must be accountable to the group for the work that they do. As Broadly and Nagel (2004, p. 35) mentioned "failing oneself is bad, but failing others as well as oneself is worse."

- **Cooperative Base Groups:** These are long-term, heterogeneous cooperative learning groups with stable membership. (Johnson, 2001; cited in Naughton, 2006). They help students to develop the kind of familiarity necessary for group cooperation. Cooperation entails concern, assistance, support, sharing, engagement, and encouragement. Base group members show their concern by monitoring each other attendance, punctuality, attitude, and progress.

- **Promotive Interaction:** This is another crucial aspect of the cooperative process. Promotive interaction occurs as individuals encourage and facilitate each other's efforts to accomplish the group's goal. In this way, the understanding trust, and respect necessary for balanced and successful cooperation can be derived.

- **The Development of Social Skills:** This is the fourth building block of cooperative efforts to happen. According to Townsend and Batas (2007) group members must be taught these social skills needed for high quality cooperation and be motivated to use them (Table 10.1).

Table 10.1. Cooperative and Collaborative Learning

Cooperative Learning	Collaborative Learning
Cooperative learning is a successful teaching strategy in which small teams, each with students of different levels of ability, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject. Each member of a team is responsible not only for learning what is taught but also for helping teammates learn, thus creating an atmosphere of achievement. (Gaith and Yaghi, 1998; Dusthimer, 1998)	"Collaborative learning is based on the idea that learning is a naturally social act in which the participants talk among themselves (Braines et al., 2008). It is through the talk that learning occurs."
Each person is responsible for a portion of the work	Participants work together to solve a problem
Many times, the teacher already knows the problem and solution students will be working towards	Many times, teacher does not have a pre-set notion of the problem or solution that students will be researching

10.9. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROJECTS

According to Hutchinson (2001), the following are the common characteristic of the project work:

- **Hard Work:** Each project is the result of a lot of hard work. The authors of the projects have found information about their topic, collected, or drawn pictures, written down their ideas, and then put all the parts together to form a coherent presentation. Project work is not a soft option.

- **Creative:** The projects are very creative in terms of both content and language. Each project is a unique piece of communication, created by the project writers themselves.

- **Personal:** This element of creativity makes project work a very personal experience. The students are writing about aspects of their own lives, and so they invest a lot of themselves in their project.

- **Adaptable:** Project work is a highly adaptable methodology. It can be used at every level from absolute beginner to advance and with all ages. As the examples show, there is a wide range

of possible project activities, and the range of possible topics is limitless. Here are a few more possible topics and tasks (Figure 10.1).
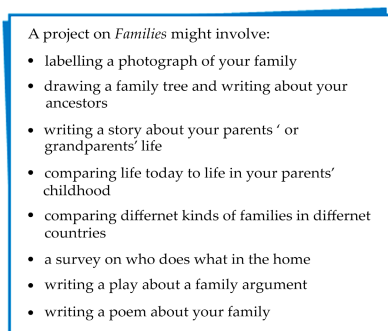
A project on *Families* might involve:

- labelling a photograph of your family
- drawing a family tree and writing about your ancestors
- writing a story about your parents' or grandparents' life
- comparing life today to life in your parents' childhood
- comparing differnet kinds of families in differnet countries
- a survey on who does what in the home
- writing a play about a family argument
- writing a poem about your family

Figure 10.1. Possible project activities.

These are just a few examples of possible topics and activities for project work. Which activities are actually done will, of course, depend on many factors including the age, level, and interests of the learners, the resources available, and the constraints of time and space. But hopefully the examples given here indicate the potential It is not always easy to introduce a new methodology, so we need to be sure that the effort is worthwhile. What benefits does project work bring to the language class? This teacher from Spain expresses it very well: range of things that you can do.

So, let us now return to the original question: What is a project? In fact, the key to understanding project work lies not in the question What? but rather in the question Who? Who makes the decisions? A project is an extended piece of work on a particular topic where the content and the presentation are determined principally by the learners. The teacher or the textbook provides the topic, but as the examples in this section show, the project writers themselves decide what they write and how they present it. This *learner-centered* characteristic of project work is vital, as we shall see when we turn now to consider the merits of project work. Project work captures better than any other activity the two principal elements of a communicative approach. These are: (a) concern for motivation, that is, how the learners relate to the task; (b) a concern for relevance, that is, how the learners relate to the language. We could add to these a third element; (c) a concern for educational values, that is, how the language curriculum relates to the general educational development of the learner. Let us look at these in a bit more detail.

10.9.1. Motivation

If I could give only one piece of advice to teachers it would be this: Get your learners to enjoy learning English. Positive motivation is the key to successful language learning, and project work is particularly useful as a means of generating this. If you talk to teachers who do project work in their classes, you will find that this is the feature that is always mentioned: the students really enjoy it. But why is project work so motivating?

10.9.2. Personal

The first and most important reason has already been mentioned on page Project work is very personal. There is nothing simulated about a project.

The students are writing about their own lives: their house, their family, their town, their dreams and fantasies, their own research into topics that interest them. What could be more motivating, particularly to the young learner? And because it is such a personal experience, the meaning and the presentation of the project are important to the learners. They will thus put a lot of effort into getting it right.

10.9.3. Learning Through Doing

Secondly, project work is a very active medium. It is a kind of structured playing. Students are not just receiving and producing words, they are:

• Collecting information;
• Drawing pictures, maps, diagrams;
• Cutting out pictures;
• Arranging texts and visuals;
• Coloring;
• Carrying out interviews and surveys;
• Possibly making recordings, too;
• Project work is learning through doing.

10.9.4. Relevance

In looking at the question of motivation, I have been most concerned with how students feel about the process of learning, that is, the kinds of activities they do in the language class. An equally important and related question is how the learners feel about what they are learning, the language. A foreign language can often seem a remote and unreal thing. This inevitably has a

negative effect on motivation, because the students do not see the language as relevant to their own lives. If learners are going to become real language users, they must learn that English is not only used for talking about things British or American, but can be used to talk about their own world. Project work helps to bridge this relevance gap.

10.9.5. Integration of Language with Other Skills

Firstly, project work helps to integrate the foreign language into the network of the learner's own communicative competence. As this diagram shows, project work creates connections between the foreign language and the learner's own world. It encourages the use of a wide range of communicative skills, enables learners to exploit other spheres of knowledge, and provides opportunities for them to write about the things that are important in their own lives (Figure 10.2).
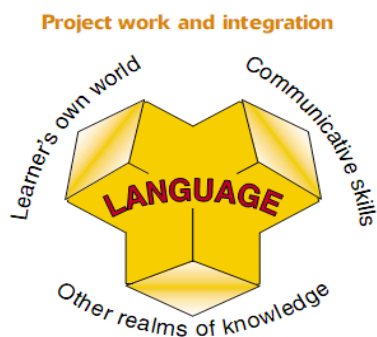
Figure 10.2. Project work and integration.

10.9.6. Real Needs of Language Learners

Secondly, project work helps to make the language more relevant to learners' actual needs. When students from Athens or Barcelona or Milan use English to communicate with other English speakers, what will they want to talk about? Will it be London, New York, Janet, and John's family, Mr. Smith's house? Surely not! They will want, and be expected, to talk about aspects of their own lives-their house, their family, their town, and so on. Project work thus enables students to rehearse the language and factual knowledge that will be of most value to them as language users.

10.9.7. Language and Culture

This last point raises a very important issue in language teaching: the relationship between language and culture. It is widely recognized that one of the most important benefits of learning a foreign language is the opportunity to learn about other cultures. However, it is important, particularly with an international language such as English, that this is not a one-way flow. The purpose of learning a foreign language is to make communication between two cultures possible. English, as an international language, should not be just for talking about the ways of the English-speaking world. It should also be a means of telling the world about your own culture. Project work helps to create this approach.

10.9.8. Educational Values

There is a growing awareness among language teachers that the process and content of the language class should contribute towards the general educational development of the learner. Project work is very much in tune with modern views about the purpose and nature of education.

10.9.9. Independent Investigation

Firstly, there is the question of educational values. Most modern school curricula require all subjects to encourage initiative, independence, imagination, self-discipline, co-operation, and the development of useful research skills. Project work is a way of turning such general aims into practical classroom activity.

10.9.10. Cross-Curricular Studies

Secondly, cross-curricular approaches are encouraged. For language teaching this means that students should have the opportunity to use the knowledge they gain in other subjects in the English class. Project work clearly encourages this.

10.10. PROJECT WORK: MAIN WORRIES OF THE TEACHERS

10.10.1. Noise

Teachers are often afraid that the project classroom will be noisier than the traditional classroom and that this will disturb other classes in the school.

But project work does not have to be noisy. Students should be spending a lot of the time working quietly on their projects: reading, drawing, writing, and cutting and pasting. In these tasks, students will be working on their own or in groups, but this is not an excuse to make a lot of noise. Project work is not inherently any noisier than any other activity. Obviously, there will be a certain amount of noise. Students will often need to discuss things and they may be moving around to get a pair of scissors or to consult a reference book. And some activities do require a lot of talking. If students are doing a survey in their class, for example, there will be a lot of moving around and talking. However, this kind of noise is a natural part of any productive activity.

Indeed, it is useful to realize that the traditional classroom has quite a lot of noise in it, too. There is usually at least one person talking (and teachers generally talk rather loudly!) and there may be a tape recorder playing, possibly with the whole class doing a drill. There is no reason why cutting out a picture and sticking it in a project book should be any noisier than 30 or 40 students repeating a choral drill.

The problem is not really a problem of noise, it is a concern about control. Project work is a different way of working and one that requires a different form of control. In project work students are working independently. They must, therefore, take on some of the responsibility for managing their learning environment. Part of this responsibility is learning what kind of, and what level of, noise is acceptable. When you introduce project work you also need to encourage and guide the learners towards working quietly and sensibly. Remember that they will enjoy project work and will not want to stop doing it because it is causing too much noise. So, it should not be too difficult to get your students to behave sensibly.

10.10.2. Time

Project work is time-consuming. It takes much longer to prepare, make, and present a project than it does to do more traditional activities. When you are already struggling to get through the syllabus or finish the textbook, you will probably feel that you do not have time to devote to project work, however good an activity it may be. There are two responses to this situation. The first is a practical response and the second more of a philosophical point.

10.10.3. Outside the Class

Firstly, not all project work needs to be done in class time. Obviously, if the project is a group task, most of it must be done in class, but a lot of projects are individual tasks. Projects about My Family, My House, etc., can be done at home. You will be surprised how much of their own time students will gladly devote to doing projects.

10.10.4. Rich Learning Experiences

Secondly, when choosing to do project work you are making a choice in favor of the quality of the learning experience over the quantity. It is unfortunate that language teaching has tended to put most emphasis on quantity, i.e., as much practice as possible of each language item. And yet there is little evidence that quantity is really the crucial factor. What really matters in learning is the quality of the learning experience. Project work provides rich learning experiences: rich in color, movement, interaction, and, most of all, involvement. The positive motivation that projects generate affects the students' attitude to all the other aspects of the language program. Learning grammar and vocabulary will appear more relevant because the students know they will need these things for their project work. Think back to your own learning, or for that matter to your life in general. It is the rich experiences that you remember. Looked at in this way, project work is actually a very cost-effective use of time. There is no substitute for quality.

10.10.5. Use of L1 (The Mother Tongue)

But surely the students will spend all their time speaking their mother tongue? This is true to a large extent. It is unlikely that most students will speak English while they are working on their project. However, rather than seeing this as a problem, we should consider its merits.

10.10.6. Natural Working Environment

Firstly, it is a natural way of working. It is a mistake to think of L1 and L2 (the language being learnt) as two completely separate domains. Learners in fact operate in both domains, constantly switching from one to the other, so it is perfectly natural for them to use L1 while working on an L2 product. As long as the final product is in English it does not matter if the work is done in L1.

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Chapter 11

Discourse-Based and Genre-Based Curriculum Development

CONTENTS

11.1. INTRODUCTION

When Ferdinand De Saussure's students published his round of lectures on the nature of language and linguistic knowledge, most probably no one could ever imagine how detailed language study could get in the years to come. His famous lectures on the nature of language and linguistic knowledge resulted in an upsurge of interest in language schools in Europe and the USA. Several schools of linguistics ensued the most important of which are Bloomfieldian Structuralism, Chomskyan Generativism, and Hallidayan Functionalism. The products of these schools turned up in several separate but related domains of language study including Sociolinguistics, Psycholinguistics, Discourse Analysis, Applied Linguistics, English for specific purposes (ESP), and so on. With the development of international communication (i.e., intercommunication) through the advent of the Internet, these schools of linguistics have come into the focus of the attention of fields other than linguistics itself. An ever-increasing number of fields started to use the theoretical and practical products of linguistic research. One area of linguistic research which had an immediate effect on the nature of international communication was genre analysis (GA). GA had to do with identifying the totality of the accepted linguistic conventions, practice, style, and restrictions in any given communicative event; it focused on the schematic structure of discourse in any given community of professionals or otherwise. This chapter provides a brief overview of GA, discusses the notions of Genre Constellations, Genre hierarchies, Genre chains, Genre Sets, Genre Networks, and Subgenres, and elaborates on the relationship of GA to international communication.

11.2. BACKGROUND

Nowadays international communication takes on many forms ranging from paper-and-pen written communication to e-communication. Business letters, academic lectures, control-tower spoken discourse, interviews through Skype, e-conferences, and so on are only a few examples. Needless to say, one point is quite clear: to be effective, any instance of communication should adopt a form which is known to and commonly practiced by parties on both sides of the communication line. Therefore, it is necessary to have a method for describing the appropriate structure of any instance of communication. This is the job of GA. Although GA has its origins in the ancient Greek rhetoric studies, a more recent scientific perspective on GA

was provided by ESP. The emergence of ESP in the second half of the 20th century drew educators' attention to teaching writing for specific purposes. Corpus linguistics and discourse analysis joined in the quest and shared their insights with ESP to develop a comprehensive picture of the nature of ESP writing. English for Academic Purposes (EAP) followed and attention was directed to another important area of written performance-writing for academic purposes. The results of these research studies turned up in the emergence of Register Analysis, GA, and Move Analysis.

This took place in the 1960s and early 1970s, and was related in particular with the work of Stevens, Ewer, and Swales on register analysis (Ewer and Latorre, 1969; Halliday, McIntosh, and Stevens, 1964; Swales, 1971). As Ewer and Latorre noticed, the goal of register analysis was the identification of grammatical and lexical features of different scientific registers; the principle behind this approach was that language needed in one scientific was composed of a specific register which was different from the language of other fields of science as well as the language spoken by lay people. Teaching materials then took the identified linguistic features as their syllabus. The main goal behind register analyzes of the Ewer-Latorre type was that of making ESP courses more relevant to learners' needs (Ewer and Hughes-Davies, 1971). High priority was given to language forms that students would meet in their studies and, in turn, low priority to forms they would not meet.

Register analysis, as the first stage of ESP development, focused on language at sentence level; in its second development phase-which is known as the discourse phase-ESP gradually became closely involved with discourse or rhetorical analysis, and the focus was shifted to the level beyond sentence (Allen and Widdowson, 1974). ESP, in this phase, held that the difficulties which students face are related to their unfamiliarity with English use rather than from knowledge of the linguistic system of English. Attention was, therefore, shifted to understanding how sentences were combined in discourse to produce meaning-that is, to organizational patterns in text. The assumption in this ESP phase was that the rhetorical patterns of text organization differed significantly between specialist areas of use; for example, the rhetorical structure of science texts was regarded as different from that of commercial texts (Widdowson, 1987).

This was followed by a third phase-TLU Situation Analysis-that aimed to develop procedures for enabling learners to function adequately in a target situation. The open assumption of this phase, according to Chambers

(1980), was that, to afford good results, ESP course design should be careful about two important points:

- •   Identifying the target situation; and
- •   Carrying out a rigorous analysis of the linguistic features of that situation.

An alternative name for this phase was needs analysis (NA). The result of all these research studies was the development of interest in the analysis of academic genres. GA assumed that language was used differently within different cultures, and that second/foreign language learners' success in communicating with native speakers of other languages was, approximately at least, a function of their mastery of the target language genre structures (Crossly, 2007).

Textbooks appeared that drew on a genre approach to the teaching of the target language skills (e.g., Swales, and Feak,). Genres were broken down into sub genres, subgenres into moves, and moves into steps. So teaching was based on these, and foreign/second language (L2) learners were expected to masters move structures of each sub-genre. Moves were defined as units of text that relate both to speakers'/writers' purpose and to the' content that they wish to communicate (Crossley, 2007).

11.3. WHAT IS GENRE?

In 1990, Swales, the accepted leader in genre and move analysis in the field of ESP, defined a genre as a class of communicative events commonly used by the members of a given community who share some set of communicative purposes. Based on Swales' definition, there are particular rules for communication, and these rules are settled based on communicative purpose. For example, the rules for writing social letters are different from rules which are essential for writing novels or theses. Bloor and Bloor (1993) defined genre as a specific product of a social practice which can be described and taught because of its formal characteristics. Roseberry (1993) defined genre as a property of a text which defines it as a sequence of moves or segments where each move accomplishes some part of the overall communicative purpose of the text. In 1990, Swales (and in Martin, 1984) argued that all genres had essential rules, and that these rules control a set of communicative purposes in specific social situations (cited in Kay and Dudley-Evans, 1998). For Miller (1984), genre was a kind of social action which took place in a specific discourse community. Along the same lines, Hyland (1996) believed that the genre approach has an important effect on

teaching writing. Hyon (1996) suggested a way by means of which genre can be understood as a concept and its scope can be defined. According to Hyon *(Ibid),* the development of genre owed much to three research schools: North American New Rhetoric (NANR) studies: Researchers were interested in the social and ideological significance of genres. The concentration on form was less than the focus on the social context. Most participants in these research studies were Native English Students at university. Australian systemic functional linguistics (SFL): Researchers investigated the broad genres of teaching and learning. In SFL, social context and function were as important as text and form. Most subjects for these studies were adult immigrants. ESP: Researchers were interested in theoretical and pedagogical aspects of language which made genres. Both written and spoken discourses were important for ESP researchers. Learners who had been chosen for genre studies were non-native students of English in university settings.

Bruce (2008) classified genre in two groups: (a) social genre, and (b) cognitive genre. In social genre, texts were classified according their social purposes, but in cognitive genre, the criterion for the classification of texts was the internal organization of writing. Personal letters, novels, and academic articles were examples of social genre. Sequence of events and argue points of view were kinds of rhetorical purposes which were related to cognitive genres.

The differences between social genre and cognitive genre were made clearer in Bruce's own statements: Social genre *refers to* socially recognized constructs according to which whole texts are classified in terms of their overall social purpose. Purpose here is taken to mean the intention to consciously communicate a body of knowledge related to a certain context to a certain target audience. Cognitive genre *refers to* the overall cognitive orientation and internal organization of a segment of writing that realizes a single, more general rhetorical purpose to represent one type of information within discourse. Examples of types of general rhetorical purpose relating to cognitive genres are: to recount sequenced events, to explain a process, to argue a point of view, each of which will employ a different cognitive genre.

According Hyland (1999) genre studies had two significant motivations: (a) finding the relationship between language and the context where language was used, and (b) helping students to produce authentic text by introducing to them the accepted moves in writing. In other words, the second purpose was improving literacy education in societies. As such, genre refers to the totality of the accepted linguistic conventions, practice, style, and restrictions in a

given communicative event [i.e., the schematic structure of the discourse in a given community of professionals or otherwise). Therefore, any discussion of genre requires attention to several technical terms. These include genre constellations, genre sets, genre chains, genre networks, genre systems, and subgenres. Each term will be briefly described in the following sections.

Genre refers to abstract, socially recognized ways of using language. It is based on the assumptions that the features of a similar group of texts depend on the social context of their creation and use, and that those features can be described in a way that relates a text to others like it and to the choices and constraints acting on text producers (Kress, 1989, p. 10; as cited in Hyland, 2003). Language is seen as embedded in social realities, since it is through recurrent use of conventionalized forms that individuals develop relationships, establish communities, and get things done. Genre theorists, therefore, locate participant relationships at the heart of language use and assume that every successful text will display the writer's awareness of its context and the readers who form part of that context. Genres, then, are "the effects of the action of individual social agents acting both within the bounds of their history and the constraints of particular contexts, and with a knowledge of existing generic types" (Kress, 1989, p. 10; as cited in Hyland, 2003).

It is customary to identify three broads, overlapping schools of genre theory (Hyon, 1996; Johns, 2002). *The New Rhetoric approach,* influenced by post structuralism, rhetoric, and first language (L1) composition, studies genre "as the motivated, functional relationship between text type and rhetorical situation" (Coe, 2002, p. 195; as cited in Hyland, 2003). The focus here is mainly on the rhetorical contexts in which genres are employed rather than detailed analyzes of text elements (Freedman and Medway, 1994; as cited in Hyland, 2003). *The ESP approach* is more linguistic in orientation and sees genre as a class of structured communicative events employed by specific discourse communities whose members share broad social purposes (Swales, 1990, pp. 45–47). These purposes are the rationale of a genre and help to shape the ways it is structured and the choices of content and style it makes available (Johns, 1997; as cited in Hyland, 2003). A third orientation is based on Holliday's (1994) SFL. Known in the US as the "*Sydney School"* (Hyon, 1996; Johns, 2002), this model of genre stresses the purposeful, interactive, and sequential character of different genres and the ways language is systematically linked to context through patterns of lexico-grammatical and rhetorical features (Christie and Martin, 1997).

11.4. THE ESP PERSPECTIVE

ESP GA is based largely on Swales' (1981, 1990) studies of the discourse structure and linguistic features of scientific research articles. This work has had a strong influence in the area of ESP and especially in the teaching of graduate writing to ESL students (Jordan, 1997; Paltridge, 2007; Swales, 2001). Genres and part-genres that have been examined in this perspective, according to Paltridge (2007), include the introduction and results sections of research articles, the introduction and discussion sections of theses and dissertations, research article abstracts, job application and sales promotion letters, grant proposals, legislative documents, the graduate seminar, academic lectures, and lecture and poster session discussions at conferences. In this ESP perspective on GA, discourse structures are most often described as series of moves, analyzed in terms of rhetorical purpose, content, and form. Many ESP genre studies have also examined linguistic aspects of genres as well (Paltridge, 2007).

Paltridge (2007) goes on to say that the ESP perspective on genre has been influenced by work in the new rhetoric and, in particular, Miller's (1984) notion of genre as social action. In this view, a genre is defined not in terms of "the substance or the form of discourse but on the action, it is used to accomplish" (Miller, p. 151). Miller's view, that the types of genres that members of a discourse community "have names for in everyday language" (p. 155) tells us something important about discourse, is also reflected in ESP genre studies: that is, the view that the names used for genres by those who are most familiar with them provide important information for the identification and description of genres (Swales, 1990). Swales (1990) argues that ESP (and new rhetoric) genre analysts argue that genres are not static but rather change and evolve in response to changes in particular communicative needs. They also discuss the notion of prototypicality: that is, the way in which properties such as communicative purpose, form, structure, and audience expectations operate to identify the extent to which a text is prototypical as an example of a particular genre (Swales, 1990). Hyon (1996) provides an overview of the history of ESP genre studies. As Hyon explains, many ESP genre studies have been particularly form-focused due, in part, to their connection with the teaching of English to nonnative speakers and its inevitable attention to surface-level patterns of grammar and vocabulary. Hyon also suggests that this focus on form may derive from the fact that most leading ESP teachers and researchers have a background in formal language study, rather than literary or rhetorical theory.

Paltridge (2007) argues that this situation, however, has begun to change as ESP genre studies have been influenced by genre theories in other areas such as rhetoric and the sociology of science. Swales' (1990) book, GA. English in Academic and Research Settings, thus considers sociocontextual aspects of genres as well as their historical nature, at the same time discussing the more formal features of genres. In his (1990) book, Swales argued that the most important aspect of a genre was communicative purpose, the key factor that leads us to decide whether a text is an instance of a particular genre or not. He has since, however, revised this view, saying that it is now clear that genres may have multiple purposes, and these may be different for each of the participants involved. Communicative purpose, then, cannot always be taken at face value and be used, by itself, to quickly and incontrovertibly decide which genre category a text belongs to (Askehave and Swales, 2001; as cited in Paltridge, 2007).

Kress (1989, 1994; as cited in Paltridge, 2007) suggests that genres, rather than being determined by social (or communicative) purpose, "are in fact formed out of the dynamics of social interactions involving participants in particular social relations" (Scott and Groom, 1999, p. 24; as cited in Paltridge, 2007). The concept of genre draws for its model of description on the theory of language known as SFL (Halliday, 1994). SFL considers language primarily as a resource for making meaning rather than as a set of rules. The systemic component of systemic functional grammar derives from the fact that the grammar describes language as being made up of systems of choices. The functional dimension of systemic functional grammar aims to describe what language is doing in a particular context. Labels given to language features in systemic functional analyzes are, thus, described in terms of what they are doing in functional, rather than grammatical, terms (Paltridge, 2007).

Martin's (1984, p. 25; as cited in Paltridge, 2007) definition of genre as "a staged, goal-oriented, purposeful activity in which speakers engage as members of our culture" has been extremely influential in the work of the Sydney school. This definition draws on the view "that contexts both of situation and of culture [are] important if we are to fully interpret the meaning of a text" (p. 25). For Martin, as for the majority of systemic functional genre analysts, the notion of genre corresponds to the context of culture and is responsible for the schematic or the rhetorical structure of a text. The register (Halliday, 1989b; as cited in Paltridge, 2007) of a genre corresponds to the context of situation (Halliday, 1989a; as cited in Paltridge, 2007) and is responsible for the language features of a text. Genres are, thus,

described as being culture specific and as having particular purposes, stages, and linguistic features associated with them, the meanings of which need to be interpreted in relation to the cultural and social contexts in which they occur (Paltridge, 2007).

A number of different ways of describing genres have emerged in systemic genre analyzes. The most influential of these are the descriptions presented by Martin and Rothery (1986; as cited in Paltridge, 2007) and Martin (1989; as cited in Paltridge, 2007) in which the analysis of the schematic structure of texts involves the identification of the organizational stages of a text and the typical linguistic features that accompany them. Examples of types of texts that have been examined from this perspective include narratives, anecdotes, recounts, reports, procedures, descriptions, explanations, and expositions (Paltridge, 2007).

11.5. HISTORICAL VIEW OF GENRE ANALYSIS (GA)

Hyland (2003) identified three broads, overlapping schools of genre theory:

- The New Rhetoric approach, influenced by post-structuralism, rhetoric, and first language composition, studies genre as the motivated, functional relationship between text type and rhetorical situation. The focus here is mainly on the rhetorical contexts in which genres are employed rather than detailed analyzes of text elements.

- The ESP approach is more linguistic in orientation and sees genre as a class of structured communicative events employed by specific discourse communities whose members share broad social purposes (Swales, 1991, pp. 45–47). These purposes are the rationale of a genre and help to shape the ways it is structured and the choices of content and style it makes available.

- A third orientation is based on Halliday's (1994) SFL. Known in the US as the "Sydney School" this model of genre stresses the purposeful, interactive, and sequential character of different genres and the ways language is systematically linked to context through patterns of lexico-grammatical and rhetorical features.

11.5.1. Definitions of Genre

Genre has been defined in different ways in the field of applied linguistics. The most influential definitions are from three different traditions of genre

studies. The first definition is from the tradition of new rhetoric genre studies. Miller (1984/1994) argues for genre as rhetorical action based on recurrent situations and for an open principle of genre classification based on rhetorical practice, rather than a closed one based solely on structure, substance, or aim. Genre studies in the new rhetoric focus less on features of the text and more on relations between text and context often by employing ethnographic research or case study methods. The second definition of genre is proposed by Martin from the perspective of SFL. Martin (1984, p. 25) describes genre as "a staged, goal-orientated, and purposeful social activity that people engage in as members of their culture." The third is from ESP proposed by Swales. Swales (1990) proposes genre as a class of communicative events with some shared set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by members of the professional or academic community in which the genre occurs, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This definition is extremely influential in ESP work on GA. SFL and ESP traditions of genre studies put much emphasis on identifying structural elements in texts and make statements about the patterning of these elements.

As mentioned earlier, Swales (1990) identified a genre as "a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes" (p. 58). Commenting on Swales' definition, Kim (2005) argues that "His definition offers the basic idea that there are certain conventions or rules which are generally associated with a writer's purpose. For example, personal letters tell us about [their writers'] private stories, film reviews analyze movies for potential viewers, and police reports describe what happened. Most genres use conventions related to communicative purposes; a personal letter starts with a cordial question in a friendly mood because its purpose is to maintain good relationships with friends, and an argument essay emphasizes its thesis since it aims at making an argument.

Looking at spoken genres, Martin (1984; as cited in Kay and Dudley-Evans, 1998), defined a genre as a staged, goal-oriented, purposeful activity in which speakers engage as members of their culture (p. 235). Martin (1984; as cited in Kay and Dudley-Evans, 1998) presented these circumstances as examples of genres: buying fruits, telling a story, writing a diary, applying for a job interview, writing an invitation letter, and so on (p. 309). Each spoken genre has a specific goal that people should achieve through several steps. Thus, the specific social goals become main focuses when genre was discussed. It also implies that before writing, the context of a situation should

be considered and analyzed in order to anticipate what linguistic features are required.

Swales (1990); and Martin (1984); as cited in Kay and Dudley-Evans (1998), shared an essential viewpoint that all genres control a set of communicative purposes within certain social situations and that each genre has its own structural quality according to those communicative purposes (p. 309). Therefore, the communicative purposes and the structural features should be identified when genres are used in writing classes.

Kim (2005) goes on to say that "the structural features that genres are made up of include both standards of organization, organization structure, and linguistic features. Standards of organizational structure refer to how the text is sequenced." For instance, Hammond (1992) described the common organizational structure in a formal letter whose purpose is to file a complaint and suggest a proper action to solve the problem as follows: "sender's address, receiver's address, greeting, identification of complaint, justification of complaint, demand action, sign-off, and sender's name" (p. 240). Backman (1990, p. 150) also quotes two further definitions of "genre" provided by Hymes and Coulthard. Hymes (1972) uses the term "genre" to refer to a component of speech that has identifiable formal characteristics that are traditionally recognized, for example, the categories of poem, myth, tale, proverbs, riddle, curse, prayer, oration, lecture, commercial, formal letter and editorial. According to Coulthard (1985), "A genre is one type of stylistic structure for organizing sentences and utterances into larger units such as greetings, farewells, and prayers" (p. 163). Martin (1989) also describes "genre" as a staged, goal, oriented, purposeful activity in which speakers engage as members of our culture. Moreover, Holmes (1997, p. 332) defines "genre" as "A class of texts characterized by a specific communicative function that tends to produce distinctive structural patterns. Pare and Sinart (1994, p. 147) also define "genre" as "A distinctive profile of regularities across four dimensions: a set of texts, the composing process involved in creating these texts, the reading practices used to interpret them, and the social roles performed by writers and readers." These approaches to the analysis of genres have much in common, with considerable overlap, even though they deal with different issues and sometimes have different theoretical concerns. Bhatia (2004, p. 23) summarized some of the common ground of genre studies as follows:

Genres are recognizable communicative events, characterized by a set of communicative purposes identified and mutually understood by members of the professional or academic community in which they regularly occur.

- Genres are highly structured and conventionalized constructs, with constraints on allowable contributions not only in terms of the intentions one would like to give expression to and the shape they often take, but also in terms of the Lexico-grammatical resources one can employ to give discoursal values to such formal features.
- Established members of a particular professional community will have a much greater knowledge and understanding of the use and exploitation of genres than those who are apprentices, new members, or outsiders.
- Although genres are viewed as conventionalized constructs, expert members of the disciplinary and professional communities often exploit generic resources to express not only 'private' but also organizational intentions within the constructs of 'socially recognized communicative purposes.'
- Genres are reflections of disciplinary and organizational cultures, and in that sense, they focus on social actions embedded within disciplinary, professional, and other institutional practices.
- All disciplinary and professional genres have integrity of their own, which is often identified with reference to a combination of textual, discursive, and contextual factors.

Based on the understanding of the three traditions of genre theory, Bhatia (2004) put forward a comprehensive definition of genre:

"Genre essentially refers to language use in a conventionalized communicative setting in order to give expression to a specific set of communicative goals of a disciplinary or social institution, which give rise to stable structural forms by imposing constraints on the use of lexico-grammatical as well as discoursal resources." (p. 23). Finally, talking about the distinction between genres and text-types, Park (2010) asserts that "The way we distinguish between genres and text types is using internal and external criteria: genre is defined based on the external (conventional) criteria (e.g., audience, purpose, etc.), and text types on the internal criteria (e.g., linguistic characteristics).

11.5.2. Genre-Based Instruction

Basically, GBI is teaching language based on results of GA (Osman, 2004). GA is the study of how language is used within a particular setting (Swales, 1990) and is concerned with the form of language use in relation to meaning

(Bhatia, 1993). GA is a tool to examine the structural organization of texts by identifying the moves and strategies, and to understand how these moves are organized in order to achieve the communicative purpose of the text. GA also examines the text patterning or textualization in genres to show statistical evidence of a particular linguistic feature in a specific genre and the specific features of the genre that the evidence textualizes. Finally, GA examines the lexico-grammatical features of genres to identify the linguistic features chosen by expert users of the genre to realize the communicative purpose, and to explain these choices in terms of social and psychological contexts (Henry and Roseberry, 1998). Other considerations in GA include the communicative purpose of the target genre, the roles of the writer and the audience, and the context in which the genre is used. The results from analyzing a genre serve as the instructional materials in GBI (Osman, 2004).

The notion of genre and its application in language teaching and learning has received more attention in the last decade (Hyland, 2002). Based on the model by Cope and Kalantzis (1993; as cited in Osman, 2004), there are four stages in GBI including modeling, guiding, practicing, and finally independently writing the genre. Due to its nature, the approach in GBI has been confused with its more popular counterparts, i.e., the product approach which involves imitating, copying, transforming models provided by the teacher and emphasizing the error free final product (Nunan, 1999), and the process approach which focuses on the process of producing a piece of writing from the prewriting stage to the revising state to the final writing regardless of the time it takes (Nunan, 1999). GBI is actually an integration of the product approach and the process approach resulting in a process-genre approach (Badger and White, 2000). In using this approach, the students in a writing class recognize that, writing involves knowledge about language (as in the product and genre approaches), knowledge of the context in which writing happens and especially the purpose for the writing (as in genre approaches), and skills in using language (as in process approaches), writing development happens by drawing out the learners' potential (as in process approaches) and by providing input to which the learners respond (Badger and White, 2000).

Genres inform the organizational structure for the skills and activities in teaching ESP and therefore deserve a clear and perhaps even critical understanding on the part of the teacher (Mavor and Trayner, 2001; as cited in Osman, 2004). For teachers to be effective ESP practitioners, particularly in universities offering interdisciplinary academic programs they need to be well-versed in the requirements of the disciplines and to understand the

discursive practices of the professions at the receiving end of the academic programs (Osman, 2004). As stressed by Faigley and Hansen (1985; as cited in Osman, 2004), the teachers need to explore why these disciplines include certain subjects, how these subjects are taught and what types of texts are used in these disciplines. To understand the discursive practices of the disciplines or the profession is first of all to acquire knowledge of the code (Bhatia, 1997; as cited in Osman, 2004). This knowledge requires the teacher to know the repertoire of genres used in a profession and the occasions when they are used. Assuming that a person who has linguistic competence is able to naturally acquire knowledge of the code is totally wrong as research has shown that there are fundamental differences in the use of lexico-grammatical, semantic-pragmatic, and discoursal resources between everyday language and specialist language (p 136). Secondly, one needs to acquire generic competence or at least some genre knowledge in the profession in order to participate in a specialist communicative event. Generic knowledge includes understanding the communicative purpose(s) of genres and the communicative goal-oriented purposes associated with the specific use of these genres (p 137). Knowledge in the discursive practices of the profession and knowledge in the generic structure of target genres will be a powerful pedagogic tool for teachers and will definitely benefit students. In this respect, teachers play an important role in acquiring genre knowledge and then imparting that knowledge to the students (Bhatia, 1997; as cited in Osman, 2004).

Language teachers teaching students majoring in any discipline should be familiar with the genres the students are required to produce in their academic programs (Scollon et al., 1999; as cited in Osman, 2004). GBI prepares students for real world writing which will consequently create interest in the ESP classroom and provide students with the confidence to handle specialist genres (Mansfield, 1993).

11.5.3. Characteristics of Genre Analysis (GA)

We can, then, summarize Swales' explanation of a genre as communicative events which have some shared set of communicative purposes that determine the genre type or category, all of which constitute a number of constraints influencing the schematic structure of content, style, and form, accepted by, and admitted to, a discourse community. This characterization is open to many interpretations one of which is that a given genre can change its type or category whenever there is a change in one of its characteristics. This point of view is adopted by other scholars (Dudley-Evans, 1994) whenever

there is a bias of importance of one of the characteristics in disfavor of others. Nunan (1993; cited in Swales, 1991), for example, focuses on the importance of language functions to determine the genre type:

"The term has been adopted by functional linguists to refer to different types of communicative events. They argue that language exists to fulfill certain functions and that these functions will determine the overall shape or generic structure of the discourse. This structure emerges as people communicate with one another-that is, it will have certain predictable stages. Different types of communicative events result in different types of discourse, and each of these will have its own distinctive characteristic; each discourse type will share certain characteristics which will set it apart from other discourse types." (Nunan 1993, pp. 48, 49).

Dudley-Evans (1994), on the other hand, focuses on the importance of rhetorical needs to determine the needs of a communicative purpose rather than the type of genre: '(…) a genre is a means of achieving a communicative goal that has evolved in response to particular rhetorical needs and that a genre will change and evolve in response to changes in those needs. The emphasis is thus on the means by which a text realizes its communicative purpose rather than on establishing a system for the classification of genre.' (Dudley-Evans, 1994, p. 219). He further adds (p. 220) that much of GA studies focused "on the analysis of the various moves that writers use to write a text or develop their argument." In fact, this should not be limited to a study of 'moves' but to usage, lexical frequency, etc.

We can say first, that GA provides a comprehensive framework for discourse analysis as it focuses on all the heterogeneous factors affecting the discourse type, means, and communicative achievement. We can also add that GA, as defined and explained by Swales through the five major characteristics, establishes a perfect entity and identity of each discourse (spoken or written) as to determine its authentic production and reception. This authentic discourse identity, when compared to other qualities of other discourse types, provides the language teacher/learner with the various aspects, of an authentic language teaching/learning material, which will serve as key components of materials selection and implementation.

11.5.4. Typical Genre Uses in Language Classes

Story-telling and newspaper English can be considered as typical genres. If we consider the principles of a genre as determined by Swales (1991) stories and folk literature stand as a genre type on their own right. Schiffrin

(1987) provides a careful GA of story-telling and the outcome of her study determined the structure of the narrative and the argument (Schiffrin, 1987, p. 17). She distinguishes four discourse moves which figure prominently in conversational story-telling and considers them as permanent moves story-tellers use in their stories:

- Initiating the story;
- Reporting events within the story;
- Conveying the point of the story; and
- Accomplishing an action through the story.

Newspapers reports and research articles are both wide and limited contexts of communication which do have specific genre moves and rhetorical markers Bowles (1995) underline the importance of newspaper articles as authentic materials to be used in teaching English as a foreign language. They point out the generic specificity of newspaper discourse organization and discourse markers that the English mass media adopt as a model of communication in reporting past events. Narrating various past events is not only a matter of chronological order but of information structure, discourse functions and rhetorical devices. The generic peculiarity of Newspaper English, as Land (1983; cited in Swales, 1991) point out below, can be a specific language problem for the foreign language learner:

"The student who has passed his exams with top marks finds that he is quite unable to understand the newspapers which he knows English people read every day. He realizes that he lacks something. The deficiency is not entirely his fault. The difficulty lies in the fact that British newspapers have a style all of their own; or -rather-each paper has its own individual style forming part of a general journalistic pattern which we may loosely classify as "Newspaper English."" (Land, 1983, p. 2).

11.5.5. Approaches to Genre

There are three broad, over lopping schools of genre theory (Hyon, 1996; Johns, 2002):

- **The New Rhetoric Approach:** Post-structuralism is the main focus in this approach.
- The main concerns is on the rhetorical contexts in which genres are employed rather than detailed analyzes of text elements.
- **The ESP Approach:** It is more linguistic in orientation and sees genre as a class of structured communicative events employed

by specific discourse communities whose members share broad social purposes (Swales, 1990, pp. 45–47). These purposes are the rationale of a genre and help to shape the ways it is structured and the choices of content and style it makes available (Johns, 1997).

- **Systematic Functional Linguistics:** This approach is based on Halliday's (1994) Systematic Functional Linguistics, known in the US as the "Sydney school." This model of genre stresses the purposeful, interactive, and sequential character of different genres and the ways language is systematically linked to context through patterns of lexico-grammatical and rhetorical features (Christin and Martin, 1997).

11.5.6. Applications of Genres

The impact of genre in educational contexts is evident primarily in three major areas (Hyon, 1996; Johns, 2000): ESP, New Rhetoric Studies and SFL. The overall concern of ESP is to assist students to gain access to the English language demands they encounter in their studies or professions, i.e., to assist them in recognizing and learning the patterns of language required in various academic and professional contexts (Swales, 1990; Bhatia, 1993). Kay and Dudley-Evans (1998, p. 310) present the applications of genre as follows: "the concept of genre provides a way of looking at what students have to do linguistically, what kind of discourse they have to be able to understand and produce in speech and writing. It also makes us understand why a discourse is the way it is, through a consideration of its social context and its purpose. Genre would thus seem to be a potentially very powerful pedagogic tool."

The focus of New Rhetoric lies in more detailed analyzes of the social and cultural contexts in which genres occur, with an emphasis on social purposes, or actions, that these genres fulfill (Miller, 1984). He further says "a rhetorically sound definition of genre must be centered not on the substance or the form of discourse but on the action, it is used to accomplish" (p. 157). According to Halliday and Hasan (1976); and Halliday (1978), SFL incorporates a number of features that are central to systemic function linguistic theory. Such features include: a functional perspective in the study of language; a focus on the interrelationship between language texts and the context in which those texts occur; analytic tools deriving from the descriptions of discourse and language resources of English; and a focus on

the interrelationship between spoken and written modes of English. These features provide the means of studying the organization, development, and cohesion of spoken and written texts used by people in a variety of contexts.

To put in a nutshell, a genre-based approach enables students to enter a particular discourse community, allows them to understand the world around them and participate in it.

11.5.7. Benefits of Using a Genre-Based Syllabus

In summary, Bax (2006) mentioned three main factors which led to the belief that the new syllabus could be enhanced by a genre-based approach:

- **Towards Greater Coherence:** The apparently random, unstructured approach to text selection in the current syllabus, and the desire for more coherence;
- **Support for Teaching Methodology:** Particularly in the area of skills teaching: The view that a more systematic approach to text selection and sequencing, with reference to genre, might help in the wider attempt to make the skills teaching program more systematic;
- **Support for Testing and Assessment:** The view that a more systematic approach to text selection and sequencing would assist in the development of valid and reliable tests and examinations, and in the preparation of students for those examinations, taking the lead from the appeal to genre already used in the writing exams.

He also listed the following advantages for a genre-based approach:

- It ensures that students are exposed to the appropriate kinds of texts for their needs;
- It ensures that they are exposed to an appropriate variety of texts;
- It allows teachers to teach what is common in genres, rather than just teaching individual texts one by one;
- It encourages students to see texts not as individual items but as members of families with recurring characteristics;
- It equips students with tools for decoding unseen texts of the same genre as they have studied in class;
- It allows test designers to choose genres which students are familiar with." (Bax, 2002b, p. 6).

11.6. DISCOURSE BASED LANGUAGE CURRICULUM

Discourse is a term which has been used in different disciplines; sociology, linguistics, philosophy, social psychology, and many other fields. Due to its use in different disciplines, different interpretations of the term have been implied; however, such a frequency of the use of the term 'discourse' has caused the concept appears to be vague. To elucidate the term, there are scholars (e.g., Johnson, 2002; Grimshow, 2003; Paltridge, 2006), who differentiates 'discourses' from 'discourse.' Grimshow (2003) identifies two general perspectives regarding the concept of the discourse and hold that the first perspective considers ""*a*" discourse as something like an ideological "bundle," a subculture, or even an arena of special interaction" (p. 27). Thus, there are "discourses" of feminism, environmentalism, struggle against oppression, individualism, sexism, and Marxism. Grimshow states that such a view of discourse implies "that these 'discourses' require some sort of self-consciousness and reciprocal awareness among participants in them" (p. 27) and Paltridge (2006) considers different ways of talking and understanding.

This second perspective sees discourse as spoken or written text in a language, used in the accomplishment of social purposes of users (speakers, hearers, writers, readers). According to such a definition, both a single word shouted in warning and a lengthy written legal brief are examples of discourse. Based on such a view, if language is a uniquely human attribute, discourse is the language *in use* that allows human social life. Essentially all humans *use* discourse (Grimshow, 2003). Brown and Yule (1983) argue that such a notion is common to all concepts of discourse is linguistics.

11.6.1. Definitions

The emerging discourse studies of the 1960s brought important new ideas to the study of language and communication (Van Dijk, 1981). However, many of its first contributions were rather structuralist and formal. Attempts were done to incorporate a formal account of context as part of a pragmatic component (Van Dijk, 2008). Early genre studies generally followed a formal paradigm, and seldom used more contextual approaches.

These first discourse analyzes made one step forward in the direction of an account of context, but mostly limited such a context to the verbal context for units of language or language use. Many studies of "context," both in linguistics as well as in other more formal approaches, still limit this notion to the "verbal context" of previous words, sentences, propositions, utterances or turns of conversation. (Van Dijk, 2008) until the end of the

1970s and the early 1980s discourse structures were more systematically studied in their social, historical, and cultural contexts.

The first attempt to study language through discourse analysis was by Harris (1952; cited in Hacene, 2007) who pointed out that the focus of language studies should shift from single sentences to the distribution of the linguistic elements in a text and the link of this characteristic feature to the social context of the text. This was, of course, the starting point, as social contexts may vary from ordinary socializing conversations to specialized technical texts. The trend had a great impact on the study of text structure and the analysis of specialized texts to determine the linguistic forms and structures most frequently used.

There has always been a confusing definition of the term to mean sometimes oral or written language with various parameters involved in the analysis. At beginning the term, 'discourse' was used to include only oral language while text linguistics used to be concerned with the analysis of written language. The scope of the term has changed to include both oral and written language as a communicative event together with the context and situation in which language is used, the purpose for which it is used, the rhetorical aspects, and intention of the language users. Fowler (2003) defined discourses as "systematically-organized sets of statements which give expression to the meanings and values of an institution…. A discourse provides a set of possible statements about a given area, and organizes and gives structure to the manner in which a particular topic, object, process is to be talked about" (p. 1).

Nunan (1993) mentioned that discourse can only be interpreted in context, drawing a close relationship between the regularities, linguistic features, their meaning, and the purposes for which they are used. Consequently, we can say that any stretch of language cannot be considered as discourse unless it is meaningful and that its meaning is only determined by the context in which it is used. The influential elements of context have to be specified as well. Schiffrin (1987, pp. 3–6; cited in Van Dijik, 2008) takes four assumptions to be central to current discourse analysis which concern context and communication. They are:

- Language always occurs in context;
- Language is context sensitive;
- Language is always communicative;
- Language is designed for communication.

Cook (1989, p. 156) says that "discourse represents stretches of language perceived to be meaningful, unified, and purposive," and Crystal (1992, p. 25) adds that it is "a continuous stretch of language larger than a sentence, often constituting a coherent unit, such as a sermon, argument, joke or narrative." These brief definitions share the fact that language as discourse is considered as meaningful unit which has a purpose but do not explain what makes it meaningful or purposive.

11.6.2. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Van Dijk, (2008) mentioned a more critical and sociopolitical approach to language use, discourse, and power was initiated at the end of the 1970s by a team of researchers, led by Roger Fowler, advocating the study of "*critical linguistics*." During the 1980s and 1990s this "critical" approach soon grew out to an international movement of critical discourse analysis (CDA), under the initial influence of European scholars such as Fairclough, and Van Dijk. Despite this extensive study of the social and political dimensions of discourse, however, CDA did not develop its own theory of context and of context-discourse relations. Indeed, many of its studies presupposed various forms of social determinism, according to which discourse is directly controlled by social forces.

11.6.3. Advantages of Using Discourse

Elturki (2010) mentioned the following things as advantages of using discourse in language classes:

- Get familiar with essay organization;
- Learn grammatical rules in context;
- Explore how punctuations are employed in a text;
- Explore different writing styles;
- Improve learners' oral communicative competence, e.g., mastering oral discourse management of prosody: rhythm, stress, and intonation (Celce-Murcia and Olshtain, 2000);
- Explore naturally-occurring social interaction in L2.

Knowledge of discourse will lead to a better understanding of information in written texts. It is argued that knowledge of text structure is a prerequisite to conscious control of reading, writing, and learning strategies (Rafik-Galea, 2005). Teachers need to instruct students to use text structure to enhance learning of a language across the four skills. Teachers

can easily teach student's clause-relation patterns found in texts in order to show text relations and rhetorical functions (Kress, 2003). This chapter has highlighted how teachers can structure their lessons by designing discourse-based materials that take into consideration the understanding of knowledge of text structure and the linguistic features within each different text type/ genre (Rafik-Galea, 2005).

It is essential for language teachers to be exposed and trained to a discourse/genre approach in designing materials because a grasp of the different types of text structures can enhance language learning besides enhancing learning in general. Finally, other educational implications of discourse-based materials are that once students learn to identify the discourse of different text types, learning, and understanding the language becomes easier. If a teacher wants to adopt a discourse point of view in teaching a language, he must make an effort to model some of his premises about language, and this will necessarily have an influence on the design of the syllabus and on the methodology employed, teachers should shift from focusing on surface structure to deeper level of language such as pragmatics and socio-cognitive aspects of language.

Discourse analysis involves the study of text structure. Such studies play a very important role in designing discourse-based materials. Knowledge of discourse/genre can be developed through the use of a variety of discourse/ genre frameworks to help students develop a sense of knowledge of text structure (Rafik-Galea, 2005). Knowledge of text structure pattern is critical for learning to read, learning to write, and spoken communication and in listening for specific information. It is a prerequisite for language competency across the four skills and across disciplines. Awareness of discourse/genre knowledge provides an understanding of the structure found in a variety of text types.

11.7. CONCLUSION

Providing L2 students with more effective access to the dominant genres of foreign culture does nothing to change the power structures that support them, or to challenge the social inequalities which are maintained through exclusion from them (Benesch, 2001 as cited in Hyland, 2002). A salient criticism of the 'genre model' according to Flowerdew (2002) is that its emphasis on the direct transmission of text types does not necessarily lead on to a critical reappraisal of that disciplinary corpus, its field, or its related institutions, but rather may lend itself to an uncritical reproduction of discipline. In fact, as

Hyland (2003) mentioned learning about genres does not preclude critical analysis but provides a necessary basis for critical engagement with cultural and textual practices. Hasan (1996 as cited in Bax, 2006) also mentioned genre approaches seem to offer the most effective means for learners to both access and critique cultural and linguistic resources. By providing learners with an explicit rhetorical understanding of texts and a metalanguage by which to analyze them, genre teachers can assist students to see texts as artifacts that can be explicitly questioned, compared, and deconstructed, thereby revealing their underlying assumptions and ideologies.

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Chapter 12

Competency-Based Language Curriculum Development

CONTENTS

12.1. INTRODUCTION

As national attention has been focused on the "literacy crisis" in the last decade, there have been increased demands for teacher accountability, for measurable assessment of student progress, and for skills-based curricula which prepare students for specified life tasks. In response to these demands, competency-based systems have been widely implemented in teacher education and in elementary, high school, and adult education programs. An alternative to the use of objectives in program planning is to describe learning outcomes in terms of competencies, an approach associated with competency-based language teaching (CBLT). According to Richards (2001) competency-based education (CBE) is an educational movement that focuses on the outcomes or output of learning in the development of language program. Traditionally, in language teaching, planners have focused in large extent on the content or process of teaching. Critics of this approach argues that this concern with the content or process focuses on the means of learning rather than its end. CBE shifts the focus to the end of learning rather than the means. As a general educational and training approach, CBLT seeks to improve accountability in teaching through linking instruction to measurable outcomes and performance standards (Grognet and Crandell, 1982).

CBLT, an application of the principle of CBE, first emerged in the United States in the 1970s and was widely adopted in vocationally oriented education as the bases for the design of work related as survival-oriented language teaching programs for adults. CBLT had come to be accepted as the "state of the art approach to adult ESL by national policy makers and leaders in curriculum development as well" (Auerbach, 1986, p. 411).

The characteristics of CBE are described by Schenck (1978; cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2001):

CBE has much in common with such approaches to learning as performance-based instruction, mastery learning and individualized instruction. It is outcome-based and is adaptive to the changing needs of students, teachers, and the community… Competencies differ from other student goals and objectives in that they describe the student's ability to apply basic and other skills in situations that are commonly encountered in everyday life. Thus, CBE is based on a set of outcomes that are derived from an analysis of tasks typically required of students in life role situations.

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001) CBLT is based on functional and interactional perspective on the nature of language. It seeks to teach

in relation to the social context in which it is used It also shares with the behaviorist view of learning the notion that language form can be inferred from language function, that is, certain life encounters call for certain kinds of language. It also seeks to develop functional communicative skills in learners thus shares some features of CLT. According to Marcellino (2005), in a traditional educational system, the unit of progression is time and it is teacher-centered. In a CBT system, the unit of progression is mastery of specific knowledge and skills and is learner- or participant-centered. He believes that two key terms used in competency-based training are:

- **Skill:** A task or group of tasks performed to a specific level of competency or proficiency which often use motor functions and typically require the manipulation of instruments and equipment.

- **Competency:** A skill performed to a specific standard under specific Competencies to be achieved are carefully identified, verified, and made public in advance.

While there is much variety in its implementation, certain common descriptors recur in almost every discussion of CBAE. According to Auerbach (1986), eight key features have been extracted to serve as a framework for the implementation of CBE program in ESL:

- **A Focus on Successful Functioning in Society:** The goal is to enable students to become autonomous individuals capable of coping with the demands of the world.

- **A Focus on Life Skills:** Rather than teaching language in isolation, CBAE/ESL teaches language as a function of communication about concrete tasks. Students are taught just those language forms/skills required by the situations in which they will function. These forms are determined by "empirical assessment of language required" (Findley and Nathan, 1980, p. 224).

- **Task-or Performance-Centered Orientation:** What counts is what students can do as a result of instruction. The emphasis is on overt behaviors rather than on knowledge or the ability to talk about language and skills.

- **Modularized Instruction:** "Language learning is broken down into manageable and immediately meaningful chunks." Objectives are broken into narrowly focused sub-objectives so that both teachers and students can get a clear sense of progress.

- **Outcomes which are made Explicit a Priori:** Outcomes are public knowledge, known, and agreed upon by both learner and

teacher. They are specified in terms of behavioral objectives so that students know exactly what behaviors are expected of them.

- **Continuous and Ongoing Assessment:** Students are pretested to determine what skills they lack and post-tested after instruction in that skill. If they do not achieve the desired level of mastery, they continue to work on the objective and are retested. Program evaluation is based on test results and, as such, is considered objectively quantifiable.

- **Demonstrated Mastery of Performance Objectives:** Rather than the traditional paper-and-pencil tests, assessment is based on the ability to demonstrate prespecified behaviors.

- **Individualized, Student-Centered Instruction:** In content, level, and pace, objectives are defined in terms of individual needs; prior learning and achievement are taken into account in developing curricula. Instruction is not time based; students' progress at their own rates and concentrate on just those areas in which they lack competence.

12.2. THE NATURE OF COMPETENCIES

Since there has been so much variation in interpretation and implementation, a survey of leading CBAE educators was conducted to arrive at some consensus about what CBAE means. From this work emerged the following definition: "Competency-based adult education is a performance-based process leading to demonstrated mastery of basic life skills necessary for the individual to function proficiently in society" (Parker and Taylor, 1980, pp. 12, 13 as cited in Auerbach, 1986). This definition has been adapted to ESL as follows: "A competency-based curriculum is a performance-based outline of language tasks that lead to a demonstrated mastery of the language associated with specific skills that are necessary for individuals to function proficiently in the society in which they live" (Grognet and Crandall, 1982, p. 3).

This characterization of CBAE/ESL reflects the dual influence of developments in second language acquisition (SLA) theory and in adult basic education. From the former comes the notion that meaning-based communicative language instruction is more effective than grammar-based, form-oriented teaching; the stress is on what learners can *do* with language rather than on what they *know* about. CBAE/ESL reflects the shift from viewing language learning as an end in itself to viewing it as a means

for learners to achieve their own individual goals. As such, it is strongly influenced by the Council of Europe's Threshold Level Syllabus (van Ek, 1976; cited in Richards, 2007). In addition, CBAE/ESL draws heavily on the humanistic, learner-centered approach exemplified by the work of Curran (1976); Moskowitz (1978); and Stevick (1980; as cited in Richards, 2007).

Richards (2001) defines competency as observable behaviors that are necessary for successful completion of real-world activities. These activities may be related to any domain of life, though they have typically been linked to the field of work and to social survival in a new environment. They are a description of the essential skills, knowledge, and attitudes required for effective performance of particular tasks and activities. It states that 'the competency is a statement which describes the integrated demonstration of a cluster of related knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are observable and measurable, necessary to perform a job independently at a prescribed proficiency level' (Joshua, 2001). This definition is a complete system comprising of several broad skills and sub-skills (like the practical skills, cognitive skills, and social skills and/or attitudes required in performing a given job/task). This definition means: (i) that the competency is an overt and measurable performance in terms of quantity, quality, time, cost or a combination of any of these, for which 'action' or 'performance' oriented verbs are to be used in writing competency statements; (ii) a cluster of broad skills consisting of cognitive (intellectual) skills, practical skills, and social skills/attitudes, skillfully weaved together into an integrated whole; (iii) the skill also involves higher order cognitive skills of Bloom's Taxonomy (Bloom, 1956; cited in Tollefson, 1986) required to analyze, interpret, design, evaluate, create, plan, troubleshoot, diagnose, etc., as well as lower level practical skills of Dave's taxonomy (Dave, 1966) such as cut, join, machine, measure, solder, paint, etc.; (iv) a 'job' is an activity, which has a definite beginning and ending point, that can be performed over a short period of time, independent of other work and which results in a product, service or decision; and (v) 'perform' a job at a specified proficiency, means performing a given job successfully every time he/she is asked to do. In other words, tending towards more 'reality' and 'validity.' The 'proficiency level' here is the 'threshold level' (Auerbach, 1986), i.e., at the entry level to the industry after four years of study in the schools/colleges of engineering (Figure 12.1).
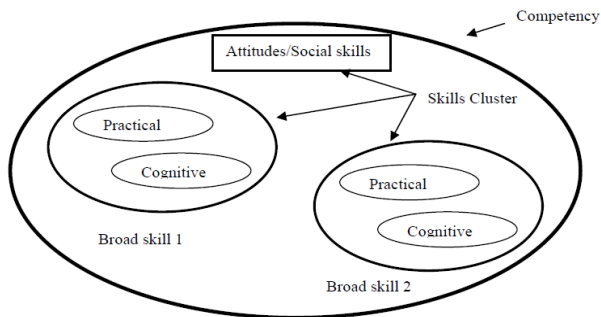
Figure 1
Concept of Competency

Figure 12.1. The concept of competency.

12.3. CBT: ADVANTAGES

Allwright (2005) remarks CBLT is an educational movement that has been introduced in several places of the world, since people need to face the demands of it. It provides learners with the essential tools to interact successfully in society, enhancing them to use their knowledge to solve different real-life situations. Furthermore, CBLT involves teachers' great knowledge of student's context, interests, and needs and the development of different standards that enrich and lead the teaching-learning process, so that learners know exactly what they need to learn to be communicatively competent. One of the primary advantages of CBT is that the focus is on the success of each participant. Watson (1990) states that the competency-based approach "appears especially useful in training situations where trainees have to attain a small number of specific and job-related competencies" (page 18). Benefits of CBT identified by Norton (1987) include:

Participants will achieve competencies required in the performance of their jobs.

- Participants build confidence as they succeed in mastering specific competencies.
- Participants receive a transcript or list of the competencies they have achieved.
- Training time is used more efficiently and effectively as the trainer is a facilitator of learning as opposed to a provider of information.

- More training time is devoted to working with participants individually or in small groups as opposed to presenting lectures.

More training time is devoted to evaluating each participant's ability to perform essential job skills.

12.4. HOW DO COMPETENCY STANDARDS RELATE TO CURRICULUM DESIGN?

The transposition process of occupational descriptions usually included in a competency standard in order to design a training curriculum is one of the areas that should be developed and until very recently they have little methodological references. Competency standards are obviously fundamental in the drawing up of training curricula. However, the process of curriculum design based on competency standards is by no means a lineal or automatic process. Among other things, the curriculum design of a particular program does not need to "provide everything;" it should try to identify what is essential to develop the required competencies. Some questions give great support to the curriculum design (Vargas, 2002): What competencies need to be developed? What knowledge should be applied? What skills should the person master? What attitudes should the person show?

A curriculum is usually- and we should say: necessarily-structured in modules. Competency-based training is mainly possible by means of modular organization of curricula. The first attempts to link **competency units** and **training modules** actually took place in curriculum design. In general, this is the first attempt of transposition that seems to be useful to develop, although experience shows that a competency unit may produce one or many modules. In any case, like in the competencies analysis, the term competency unit implies a meaningful labor result. In curriculum design, the module should make sense on its own and have the ability to be structured in association with others when building up a particular curriculum trail. The term *module* aims at flexibility by means of the ability to combine one element with another, and at the same time maintain the independence by which it may exist on its own (Irigoin, 2002; cited in Vargas, 2002).

In general, all the components of a competency standard contribute with valuable information for the curriculum design. Although it is not possible to think of a direct link between competency units and modules or between competency elements and learning objectives, it is feasible, through a sensible analysis, to achieve training curricula taking into account the conditions of competency standards. An aspect which requires special

attention is that referred to the shaping up of attitudes and personal abilities such as the initiative, the willingness for cooperation, the creation of a positive working atmosphere, creativeness, and problem-solving. These attitudes are usually created more by means of the educational strategies used than with the contents themselves. Remember the concept of hidden curriculum; it is very unlikely that the initiative ability is developed if no questions are asked, no problems are raised and if team work and the search for alternatives to different situations are not promoted throughout the training process (Vargas, 2002).

The key issues underlying the creation of personal competencies are: pleasant and educational atmospheres, qualified, and motivated teachers, problem-solving-based learning, the use of several pedagogical means and training techniques (Vargas, 2002).

12.5. CRITICISM OF THE USE OF COMPETENCIES

CBLT has not remained uncriticized. One of the criticisms leveled against the use competencies is on definition of competencies.

Tollfeson (1986); cited in Richards (2001) argues that no valid procedures are available to develop competency specifications. Although lists of competencies can be generated intuitively for many areas and activities, there is no way of knowing which ones are essential. Typically, competencies are described based on intuition and experience, a process similar to the one used to develop statements of objectives. In addition, focusing on observable behaviors can lead to trivialization of the nature of an activity. Therefore, competencies related to effective performance on a job will tend to include such things as 'reading directions or following orders on a job,' but not 'to change or question the nature of a job.'

He maintained another criticism against competency specification addresses hidden values of competency. CBLT is based on a social and economic efficiency model of curriculum design that seeks to enable learners to participate effectively in society. Consequently, as Tollefson and others have pointed out, the competencies selected as a basis for instruction typically represent value judgments about what such participation involves. The most recent realization of competency perspective in the United States is seen in the 'standard' movement which has dominated educational discussions since 1990 (Richards, 2001).

12.6. COMPONENTS OF COMPETENCY-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING (CBLT)

A competency-based program has three major components: competency identification, criteria level, and assessment (Stoffle and Pryor, 1980). Instruction is also a significant component, but is normally implemented after the three major components. Instruction evolves readily from them and is designed to facilitate the development of the required skills or behaviors (Findley and Nathan, 1980). Many educational programs are concerned with instruction based on the achievement of identified goals or objectives. What distinguishes the competency-based approach is the manner in which it is developed. A competency-based program is conceived and planned based on the skills the exit-level student should possess. Competencies are identified with reference to specific roles stated in terms of what the student should know and be able to do. Once a set of competency statements is agreed upon, sub-competency statements are formulated. Next comes the development of performance objectives, statements which indicate what a student must be able to do in order to demonstrate the abilities called for in the competency and sub-competency statements (Findley and Nathan, 1980). Criteria levels must be a part of each objective as a standard against which to compare performance. The criteria level must be as objective as measurement techniques permit.

Assessment procedures, the third major component of a competency program, are developed after the competencies and criteria levels have been established (Stoffle and Pryor, 1980). Assessment of the student's performance on a specific competency is best accomplished in a manner which measures performance under actual conditions. This approach is very expensive and usually not feasible. Most students are assessed using multiple-choice tests, simulations, games, etc., to measure their performance on the instructional objectives. In competency-based programs, assessment is criterion-referenced rather than norm-referenced. (Criterion-referenced assessment measures the degree of attainment according to some defined standard, while norm-referenced assessment measures the relative behavior of two or more individuals from some defined population). Since CBE is goal-or outcome-oriented, assessment procedures are needed which allow for the demonstration of knowledge, skills, awareness of values, and the integration and application of these components. The emphasis is on measuring the student's ability to acquire and apply knowledge as much as on measuring the depth and breadth of knowledge acquired. Ideally, the

assessment of the competencies acquired is made without regard for time, place, or sequence. In this context assessment is largely a diagnostic and learning experience (Stoffle and Pryor, 1980).

In competency-based programs, instruction is offered through a variety of methods. It may be offered through courses, internships or a variety of self-paced modules and learning packages (Stoffle and Pryor, 1980). Regardless of the format, the emphasis is on designing learning experiences that will lead students to the achievement of competencies. No credit is given for exposure to classroom experience; only achievement or performance is given credit (Stoffle and Pryor, 1980).

12.7. IMPLICATIONS FOR USING CBT

In a 1990 study of three operating competency-based programs, Anthony Watson identified a number of implications for organizations considering implementing a CBT system:

- Organizations must be committed to providing adequate resources and training materials;
- Audiovisual materials need to be directly related to the written materials;
- Training activities need to match the objectives;
- Continuous participant interaction and feedback must take place;
- Trainers must be trained to conduct competency-based training courses;
- Individuals attending training must be prepared for CBT as this approach is likely to be very different from their past educational and training experiences.

The language of competence is often misunderstood. This is, according to CeVe, because of its association with vocational training and skill rather than understanding. There is some truth in this. The notion of competence described above is a pale and demeaning shadow of the Greek notion of aretè or that of virtus in ancient Rome. Brezinka (1988, p. 76) describes this as a relatively permanent quality of personality which is valued by the community to which we belong. In this sense it is not simply a skill but is a virtue; a general sense of excellence and goodness. It involves being up to those tasks that life presents us. In much current usage this notion has been whittled down to the ability to undertake specific tasks; it has been largely stripped of its social, moral, and intellectual qualities. Perhaps the

best way of approaching this is to make a distinction between competence (and competences) and competency (and competencies). This is something that Hyland has done usefully with regard to the development of NVQs in the United Kingdom. He argues that there is a tendency to conflate the terms. Competence and competences are broad capacities (which a close relation to the sort of virtues that Brezinka was concerned with). In contrast competency (plural competencies) is narrower, more atomistic concept used to label particular abilities or episodes. In the case of the former we might talk of a competent informal educator; in the latter a competent piece of driving. In this way the first, capacity, sense of the term refers to the evaluation of persons; whereas the second, dispositional, sense refers to activities.

In the current discourse competence as a fully human attribute, has been reduced to competencies-series of discrete activities that people possess the necessary skills, knowledge, and understanding to engage in effectively. The implication here is that behavior can be objectively and mechanistically measured. This is a highly questionable assumption-there always has to be some uncertainty about what is being measured. We only have to reflect on questions of success in our work. It is often very difficult to judge what the impact of particular experiences has been. Sometimes it is years after the event that we come to appreciate something of what has happened. Yet there is something more. In order to measure, things have to be broken down into smaller and smaller units. The result is often long lists of trivial skills as is frequently encountered in BTEC programs and NVQ competency assessments. This can lead to a focus on the parts rather than the whole; on the trivial, rather than the significant. It can lead to an approach to education and assessment which resembles a shopping list. When all the items are ticked, the person has passed the course or has learnt something. The role of overall judgment is sidelined.

In this there is also an orientation to possessing and owning attributes (a having mode) rather than a concern with being.

While the having persons rely on what they have, the being persons rely on the fact that they are alive and that something new will be born if only they have the courage to let go and respond. They become fully alive in the conversation because they do not stifle themselves by anxious concern with what they have. Their own aliveness is infectious and often helps the other person to transcend his or her egocentricity. Thus, the conversation ceases to be an exchange of commodities (information, knowledge, and status) and becomes a dialog in which it does not matter anymore who is right.

(Fromm, 1979). The problem here is that in the act of deconstruction can come destruction. This is not to argue against analysis; rather it is to say that we must attend very careful to our frame of mind or disposition when undertaking it. The move from competence as a human virtue to a discrete thing that we possess is fundamental. In essence, it involves adopting a way of viewing the world that undermines the very qualities that many of us would argue make for laboratory education.

12.8. THE STANDARD MOVEMENT

Standards are descriptions of the targets students should be able to reach in different domains of curriculum content, and throughout the 1990 there was a drive to specify standards for subject matter across the curriculum. These standards or benchmarks are stated in the forms of competencies. In Australia for example McKay (1999; cited in Richards, 2001) reports: Literacy benchmarks at Year 3, 5, and 7 are currently under development centrally in consultation with States/Territories, literacy experts and professional associations. The benchmarks are to be short statements and to be 'expressed in plain, accessible English, clearly understandable by a community audience'…. They are to be accompanies by professional elaborations 'to assist teachers and other educational professionals to assess and report student progress against the benchmarks' (p. 52).

Second and foreign language teaching in the United States has also embraced the standard movement. 'It quickly became apparent to ESL educators in the United States at that time (1991) that the students we serve were not being included in the standard-setting movement that was sweeping the country (Short, 1997, p. 1; cited in Richards, 2001).'

The TESOL organization undertook to develop school standards for ESL for grades K-12. These are described in terms of competencies: 'The standards…. Specify the language competencies ESOL students in elementary and secondary schools need to become fully proficient in English, to have unrestricted access to grade-appropriate instruction in challenging academic subjects, and ultimately to lead rich and productive lives' (TESOL, 1997, p. 3). Duff (2005, p. 51) sated that the standards document provides a set of three goals related to students' use of English for general communication, for communication connected to their academic content areas, and for pragmatically or socio-linguistically appropriate language use, both oral and written.

Three standards have been proposed:

- **Standard I:** The use of English in social interaction generally.
- **Standard II:** The specific kind of communication and information involved in various tasks.
- **Standard III:** Relevant learning strategies.

The goals and standards reflect the need for students to develop what Cummins refers to as BICS and CALPS. In 1980's Cummins introduced the terms BICS: Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills; and CALP: Cognitive and Academic Language Proficiency. Cummins' focus has been on the language development of children, rather than that of adolescents and adults. Cummins (1980) draws our attention to the kind of language proficiency which is needed for children's school work, and suggests that children's language development in this aspect may not be so easy as expected and may take a long time. Contextual background of Cummins' theorization of language proficiency was the perceived need for theory building on the language development of minority language children in Canada for appropriate assessments of their language proficiency. An initial motive for his two-fold model was a discrepancy often reported by teachers of minority-language children, not only in Canada but also in some other countries, between a child's well developing oral fluency in L2 and his or her poor academic performance or achievements at school (Cummins, 1980; cited in Cummins, 2003). BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills) refers to the aspect of language proficiency which is required for everyday face-to-face communication between persons, whereas CALP (cognitive academic language proficiency) expresses the aspect of language proficiency which is required to meet academic demand in a school context.

BICS is considered "social language" and describes the language skills needed for basic kinds of social situations. These skills usually develop in about two years. CALP describes the skills needed in formal academic situations. CALP is extremely important to success in school. It usually takes 7–10 years for students to reach academic language proficiency commensurate with their monolingual peers. Proficiency in BICS does not ensure academic success. Specific content area vocabulary and concepts must be explicitly taught in order to ensure ESL student academic success. In addition, ESL students' background knowledge must be expanded and developed throughout the curriculum to aid in comprehension (Cummins, 2003).

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Chapter 13

Constructivism and Language Teaching Development

CONTENTS

13.1. INTRODUCTION

Constructivist learning has emerged as a prominent approach to teaching during this past decade. The work of Dewey, Montessori, Piaget, Bruner, and Vygotsky among others provides historical precedents for constructivist learning theory. Constructivism represents a paradigm shift from education based on behaviorism to education based on cognitive theory. Fosnot (1996) has provided a recent summary of these theories and describes constructivist teaching practice. Behaviorist epistemology focuses on intelligence, domains of objectives, levels of knowledge, and reinforcement. Constructivist epistemology assumes that learners construct their own knowledge on the basis of interaction with their environment. Four epistemological assumptions are at the heart of what we refer to as "constructivist learning:"

- Knowledge is physically constructed by learners who are involved in active learning.

- Knowledge is symbolically constructed by learners who are making their own representations of action.

- Knowledge is socially constructed by learners who convey their meaning making to others.

- Knowledge is theoretically constructed by learners who try to explain things they do not completely understand.

With these common assumptions, teacher planning according to the Tyler or Hunter models is no longer adequate. Research indicates that few classroom teachers plan using these models anyway (Morine-Dershimer, 1979; Zahorik, 1975) and usually because of administrative pressure if they do (McCutcheon, 1982) However, few approaches are available for working with prospective teachers or new teachers to organize for learning. Simon (1995); and Steffe and Ambrosio (1995) describe their processes of planning for constructivist learning and constructivist teaching respectively, but these methods are complex and represent the thinking of experienced teachers.

We are proposing a new approach for planning using a "Constructivist Learning Design" that honors the common assumptions of constructivism and focuses on the development of situations as a way of thinking about the constructive activities of the learner rather than the demonstrative behavior of the teacher. Most conventional teacher planning models are based on verbal explanations or visual demonstrations of a procedure or skill by the teacher which are then combined with practice of this method or skill by the student. Much of this approach seems consistent with the description of

classroom activities reported in a major research study titled *A place called school* conducted 10 years ago by Goodlad (1984). He found that most of the time, most of the teachers talk to the kids. Students explained that physical education, fine arts, or industrial arts were their most interesting classes because they actually got to do something. They were active participants in learning rather than passive recipients of information. This is the primary message of constructivism; students who are engaged in active learning are making their own meaning and constructing their own knowledge in the process.

One among such philosophies and theories that have emerged as a practical one is *Constructivism*. As a philosophy, constructivism suggests that, while there is a real world out there, there is no meaning inherent in it which is not 100% true. Meanings are given through interaction with people and cultures. It is also an approach to teaching and learning based on the premise that cognition (learning) is the result of "mental construction." In other words, students learn by fitting new information together with what they already know. Constructivists believe that learning is affected by the context in which an idea is taught as well as by students' beliefs and attitudes.

Constructivism refers to, "the philosophical belief that people construct their own understanding of reality" (Oxford, 1997). Rather than assimilate a body of knowledge about one's world and environment, constructivists believe we 'construct' meaning based upon our interactions with our surroundings. These interactions provide the evidence and the opportunities for experimentation with the world and thus, construct our realities. In its most radical form, constructivists believe that there is no reality save for what we create with our own minds. Thus, there is some paradox in proposing a definition of constructivism in that its central tenet is that there is no external truth or knowledge outside of a knower's experience. Indeed, von Glasersfeld (1989; cited in Oxford, 1997), a radical constructivist, writes, "To claim that one's theory of knowing is *true*, in the traditional sense of an experienced-independent world, would be perjury for a *radical* constructivist."

It is suggested by von Glasersfeld that constructivism can only be understood through considering both ontology and epistemology. Ontology refers to issues concerning the nature of being and seeks to answer the questions: What is being? What is the nature of reality? Is there a reality? (Oxford, 1997) Idealism, a branch of ontology, views reality as something that can only exist in ideas or ideals. The Idealists' assertion is that no claims

about external realities can be made because they are observer-dependent and not absolute. Plato, an idealist, stated that perfect, unchanging, universal ideas compose reality but that the visible, external world of objects is just a shadow of these ideas (Oxford, 1997). This contrasts with the realist notion that the true or real nature of things in the world is knowable in and of itself and independent of the knower. Epistemology, the second philosophical root of constructivism, pertains to the origin, foundation, limits, and validity of knowledge. Central questions of epistemology include: "What is knowledge?" "Where does knowledge come from?," "How much does the knower contribute to the knowing process?" Epistemology deals with the transmission of knowledge (Oxford, 1997).

13.2. CONSTRUCTIVIST LEARNING DESIGN

The "Constructive Learning Design" we are using now has been through a variety of revisions in the past seven years and now emphasizes these six important elements: *Situation, Groupings, Bridge, Questions, Exhibit*, and *Reflections.* These elements are designed to provoke teacher planning and reflection about the process of student learning. Teachers develop the *situation* for students to explain, select a process for *groupings* of materials and students, build a *bridge* between what students already know and what they want them to learn, anticipate *questions* to ask and answer without giving away an explanation, encourage students to *exhibit* a record of their thinking by sharing it with others, and solicit students' *reflections* about their learning. We now longer refer to objectives, outcomes, or results since we expect that teachers have that determined by the district curriculum or the textbook they are using in their classroom and need to think more about accomplishing it than about writing it again.

This brief overview above indicates how each of these six elements integrate and work as a whole, but all need further explanation:

- **Situation:** What situation are you going to arrange for students to explain? Give this situation a title and describe a process of solving problems, answering questions, creating metaphors, making decisions, drawing conclusions, or setting goals. This situation should include what you expect the students to do and how students will make their own meaning.

- **Groupings:** There are two categories of groupings:
    - How are you going to make groupings of students; as a whole class, individuals, in collaborative thinking teams of

two, three, four, five, six or more, and what process will you use to group them; counting off, choosing a color or piece of fruit, or similar clothing? This depends upon the situation you design and the materials you have available to you.

– How are you going to arrange groupings of materials that students will use to explain the situation by physical modeling, graphically representing, numerically describing, or individually writing about their collective experience. How many sets of materials you have will often determine the numbers of student groups you will form?

• **Bridge:** This is an initial activity intended to determine students' prior knowledge and to build a "bridge" between what they already know and what they might learn by explaining the situation. This might involve such things as giving them a simple problem to solve, having a whole class discussion, playing a game, or making lists. Sometimes this is best done before students are in groups and sometimes after they are grouped. You need to think about what is appropriate.

• **Questions:** These could take place during each element of the Learning Design. What guiding questions will you use to introduce the situation, to arrange the groupings, to set up the bridge, to keep active learning going, to prompt exhibits, and to encourage reflections? You also need to anticipate questions from students and frame other questions to encourage them to explain their thinking and to support them in continuing to think for themselves.

• **Exhibit:** This involves having students make an exhibit for others of whatever record they made to record their thinking as they were explaining the situation. This could include writing a description on cards and giving a verbal presentation, making a graph, chart, or other visual representation, acting out or role playing their impressions, constructing a physical representation with models, and making a video tape, photographs, or audio tape for display.

• **Reflections:** These are the students' reflections of what they thought about while explaining the situation and then saw the exhibits from others. They would include what students remember

from their thought process about feelings in their spirit, images in their imagination, and languages in their internal dialog. What attitudes, skills, and concepts will students take out the door? What did students learn today that they won't forget tomorrow? What did they know before; what did they want to know; and what did they learn?

13.3. CLASSIFICATIONS OF CONSTRUCTIVISM

13.3.1. Cognitive Constructivism

Cognitive constructivism represents one end, or extreme, of the constructivist continuum and is typically associated with information processing and its reliance on the component processes of cognition. Cognitive constructivism emphasizes only the first two tenets: that knowledge acquisition is an adaptive process and results from active cognizing by the individual learner. These particular epistemological emphases lead to defining principles that maintain the external nature of knowledge and the belief that an independent reality exists and is knowable to the individual (Moshman, 1982; cited in Harris and Graham, 1994). Knowledge then, from the cognitive constructivist position, is the result of the accurate internalization and (re)construction of external reality. The results of this internalization process are cognitive processes and structures that accurately correspond to processes and structures that exist in the real world. This claim, that reality is knowable to the individual, differentiates cognitive constructivism from both social and radical constructivism.

13.3.2. Radical Constructivism

Radical constructivism represents the opposite end of the constructivist continuum from cognitive constructivism. Radical constructivism fully embraces the first three epistemological tenets, that is, that knowledge acquisition is an adaptive process that results from active cognizing by the individual learner, rendering an experientially based mind, not a mind that reflects some external reality. In addition, there is a current movement within radical constructivism to more fully accept the fourth epistemological tenet, thus, recognizing social interactions as a source of knowledge. These particular epistemological emphases lead to defining principles that maintain the internal nature of knowledge and the idea that, while an external reality may exist, it is unknowable to the individual (von Glasersfeld, 1998,

1996; cited in Doolittle and Camp, 1999). Reality is unknowable since our experience with external forms is mediated by our senses, and our senses are not adept at rendering an accurate representation of these external forms (e.g., objects, social interactions). Therefore, while knowledge is constructed from experience, that which is constructed is not, in any discernible way, an accurate representation of the external world or reality (von Glasersfeld, 1998, 1995; cited in Doolittle and Camp, 1999).

13.3.3. Social Constructivism

Social constructivism lies somewhere between the transmission of knowable reality of the cognitive constructivists, and the construction of a personal and coherent reality of the radical constructivists. Social constructivism, unlike cognitive and radical constructivism, emphasizes all four of the previously mentioned epistemological tenets. These particular epistemological emphases lead to defining principles that maintain the social nature of knowledge, and the belief that knowledge is the result of social interaction and language usage, and, thus, is a shared, rather than an individual, experience (Prawatt and Floden, 1994; cited in Doolittle and Camp, 1999). In addition, this social interaction always occurs within a socio-cultural context, resulting in knowledge that is bound to a specific time and place (Vygotsky, 1978). This position is exemplified by Bakhtin (1984; cited in Doolittle and Camp, 1999), "truth is not to be found inside the head of an individual person, it is born between people collectively searching for truth, in the process of their dialogic interaction." Truth, in this case, is neither the objective reality of the cognitive constructivists nor the experiential reality of the radical constructivist, but rather is a socially constructed and agreed upon truth resulting from "co-participation in cultural practices" (Cobb and Yackel, 1996; cited in Doolittle and Camp, 1999). Thus, the focus of social constructivism, and this example, is on shared social experience and social negotiation of meaning. Furthermore, Moshman (1982; cited in Harris and Graham, 1994) classifies social constructivism as *endogenous, exogenous, and dialectical* constructivism as given in further sections.

13.3.4. Endogenous Constructivism

Endogenous constructivism is exemplified by Piagetian theory and emphasizes internal construction or holistic knowledge structures, or the construction of new knowledge from old (Moshman, 1982; cited in Harris and Graham, 1994). The organism is the locus of activity in the construction

of' new knowledge rather than the environment. The environment may induce disequilibrium or provide opportunities for cognitive structures to function, but it is seen as producing little or no informational input relevant to the new structures to be constructed (Moshman, 1982; cited in Harris and Graham, 1994). Thus, the child does not learn in the sense of abstracting information from the environment, but rather constructs new knowledge or new structures through metacognitive reflection on, or intercoordination of, current structures.

Endogenous constructivists advocate strongly for child-determined exploration and guided discovery rather than direct teaching (Pressley et al., 1992; cited in Harris and Graham, 1994). The teacher's role is to provide a rich and stimulating environment that leads children to ask interesting and exciting questions; teaching becomes a process of engaging children in meaningful, interesting, and productive activities (Gallagher and Reid, 1981; Reid, 1993; cited in Harris and Graham, 1994). Choice, active problem solving, anticipation, and testing of predictions are preferred to explicit instruction (Gallagher and Reid, 1981; cited in Harris and Graham, 1994).

13.3.5. Exogenous Constructivism

Exogenous constructivism, according to Moshman (1982; cited in Harris and Graham, 1994), is reflected in such cognitive conceptions of learning a contemporary social learning theory and information-processing theories-approaches that are far more constructivist than their behaviorist predecessors. Such theories have expanded toward endogenous constructivism as they have integrated contextualism- or the view of the child as an active learner involved in reciprocal interaction with the environment on which the child also has an influence-into their perspective. As Moshman explained, "Though the abstraction of knowledge from the environment is assumed to involve an active organism, empirical (environmental, exogenous, external) guidance of this constructive activity (by physical reality, presented information, social models, etc.), remains the principal factor in directing the course of learning" (p. 373). The root metaphor of exogenous constructivism is mechanism; the mechanism of construction is empirical abstraction; and the major emphasis is on learning (Moshman, 1982; cited in Harris and Graham, 1994).

Teaching is emphasized more by exogenous constructivists than it is by endogenous constructivists; instructions can involve extensive modeling, discussion, and explanation (Pressley et al., 1992; cited in Harris and Graham, 1994). Internalization of new learning is not seen as the mere copying of

externally presented input, but rather as involving adaptation of external input while coming to understand it in terms of what one already knows.

13.3.6. Dialectical Constructivism

Dialectical constructivism exists both separately from and within the tension between endogenous and exogenous constructivism. As Moshman (1982; cited in Harris and Graham, 1994) noted, much dialectical theorizing is quite explicit in its desire to encompass both the endogenous and exogenous perspectives. Dialectical constructivists see neither exogenous learning nor endogenous development as predominant. Vygotsky is frequently used to exemplify this viewpoint. The source of knowledge is seen as lying-in continuing interactions between the child and environment; a complex and dynamic reciprocity between the developing individual and a simultaneously changing world is posited (Moshman, 1982; Rogoff, 1990; cited in Harris and Graham, 1994). Thus, development is partially the result of interactions at biological, psychological, sociological, and physical levels. The root metaphor of dialectical constructivism is contextualism; the mechanism of construction is dialectical synthesis; and the major emphasis is on dynamic interactionism (Moshman, 1982; cited in Harris and Graham, 1994).

Examples of instruction consistent with dialectical constructivism are scaffold instruction (including approaches such as reciprocal teaching and some forms of strategies instruction), teacher-guided or prompted discovery, or instruction arranged so that students' misconceptions or partially formed conceptions encounter actual principles or alternative perceptions (Harris and Pressley, 1991; Pressley et al., 1992; cited in Harris and Graham, 1994).

13.4. CONSTRUCTIVIST PEDAGOGY

Cognitive constructivists emphasize accurate mental constructions of reality. Radical constructivists emphasize the construction of a coherent experiential reality. Social constructivists emphasize the construction of an agreed-upon, socially constructed reality. Is there room for common pedagogy? Constructivist pedagogy, the link between theory and practice, suffers from the breadth of its theoretical underpinnings. The general theoretical and practical constructivist consensus, however, across all three types of constructivism, indicates that eight factors are essential in constructivist pedagogy (Brooks and Brooks, 1993; Larochelle, Bednarz, and Garrison, 1998; Steffe and Gale, 1995; cited in Doolittle and Camp, 1999). These essential factors of constructivist pedagogy are:

Learning should take place in authentic and real-world environments.

- Learning should involve social negotiation and mediation.
- Content and skills should be made relevant to the learner.
- Content and skills should be understood within the framework of the learner's prior knowledge.
- Students should be assessed formatively, serving to inform future learning experiences.
- Students should be encouraged to become self-regulatory, self-mediated, and self-aware.
- Teachers serve primarily as guides and facilitators of learning, not instructors.
- Teachers should provide for and encourage multiple perspectives and representations of content.

13.5. ASSESSMENT

Assessment becomes an integral part of every step in this learning design. Teachers design the situation based on their assessment of students' learning approaches, interests, and needs. Teachers design a process for groupings based on their assessment of materials of available and desired mixture of students. Teachers design a simple assessment of what students already know as a bridge to what they want students to learn. Teachers design questions to assess student understanding of the concepts, skills, or attitudes they are trying to learn. Teachers arrange an exhibit for students to record what they thought and submit it to others for assessment. Teachers arrange for reflections about what students' have learned and their internal process of representations as a context for self-assessment of individual learning.

13.6. CHARACTERISTICS OF A CONSTRUCTIVIST CLASSROOM

13.6.1. A Constructivist Classroom Is Student-Centered

A constructivist student-centered approach places more focus on students learning than on teachers teaching. A traditional perspective focuses more on teaching. From a constructivist view, knowing occurs by a process of construction by the knower.

13.6.2. Constructivism Uses a Process Approach

What is essentially involved in constructivist strategies and activities is a process approach to learning. Applebee (1993) remarks that "rather than emphasizing characteristics of the final products, process-oriented instruction focuses on the language and problem-solving strategies that students need to learn in order to generate those products" (p. 5). And as students interact with their teacher and with each other as part of either whole class activities, small group activities, or individual activities, they practice using language in a variety of contexts developing and honing many different skills as they do so (Gray, 1997).

In a process approach, Langer and Applebee (1987) explain, a context is created within which students are able to explore new ideas and experiences. Within this context, a teacher's role in providing information decreases and is replaced by a "strengthened role in eliciting and supporting students' own thinking" (p. 77) and meaning-making abilities. Constructivist teaching is an exceptionally interesting and exciting way to teach because students are involved in learning activities they appear to enjoy, and much more student-teacher contact is possible. It extends one's impact as a teacher (Gray, 1997).

13.6.3. Constructivist Teaching Involves Negotiation

Negotiation is an important aspect of a constructivist classroom. It unites teachers and students in a common purpose. Negotiating the curriculum means deliberately planning to invite students to contribute, and to modify, the educational program, so that they will have a real investment both in the learning journey and the outcomes. Negotiation also means making explicit, and then confronting, the constraints of the learning context and the non-negotiable requirements that apply. A constructivist teacher offers his or her student's options and choices in their work. Rejecting the common practice of telling students what to do, he or she engages their trust and invites them to participate in a constructivist process that allows them to be involved in decisions about their learning. Students may also participate in the design of their assignments, although the parameters for these may be established by their teacher. Finally, students may have some involvement in the way their assignments are evaluated (Gray, 1997).

13.6.4. The Teacher in a Constructivist Classroom Is a Researcher

A crucially important aspect of a teacher's job is watching, listening, and asking questions of students in order to learn about them and about how they learn so that teachers may be more helpful to students. This kind of watching and listening may contribute to a teacher's ability to use what the classroom experience provides to help him or her create contextualized and meaningful lessons for small groups and individuals. The ability to observe and listen to one's students and their experiences in the classroom contributes to his or her ability to use a constructivist approach. Paradoxically, a constructivist approach contributes to one's ability to observe and listen in the classroom. Thus, the process is circular (Gray, 1997).

13.6.5. Students and Teachers Are Interactive in a Constructivist Classroom

Another quality of a constructivist class is its interactive nature. Authentic student-student and student-teacher dialog is very important in a constructivist classroom. Constructivist activities in the classroom that focus on speaking and listening promote not only constructivist thought but also important connections between teacher and students (Gray, 1997).

13.6.6. Organization and Management of a Constructivist Classroom Are Democratic

The organization and management of a class contribute appreciably to the creation of a classroom environment that promotes constructivist learning. A democratic classroom environment emphasizes shared responsibility and decision-making. It is generally accepted that practices which typify democratic classrooms include acknowledgement of the importance of human experience in learning; accommodation of small groups, individuals, and, occasionally, the whole class in instruction; creation of an environment that supports the active involvement of students in collaborative and empowering activities such as the exchange of ideas and opinions, and responsibility for making decisions about learning and for generating flexible rules; and teacher focus on students' learning rather than on teacher performance (Lester and Onore, 1990; McNeil, 1986; Dewey, 1916; Dewey and Bentley, 1949; cited in Gray, 1997). Indeed, since student empowerment and autonomy are major goals in constructivist teaching, changing the power structure in the classroom is a desired course of action.

13.7. APPLICATIONS AND PROBLEMS WITH CONSTRUCTIVISM

What the various interpretations of constructivism have in common is the proposition that the child is an active participant in constructing reality and not just a passive recorder of it. Though many different models have been created and put to test, none have been satisfactorily implemented. The failure of the constructivist reform movement is yet another in the long list of ill-fated educational reform movements (Gibboney, 1994; cited in Elkind, 2004). The lack of success in implementing this widely accepted educational epistemology into the schools can be attributed to what might be called failures of readiness. Consider three types of readiness: *teacher readiness*, *curricular readiness*, and *societal readiness*. For a reform movement to succeed, all three forms of readiness must be in alignment (Elkind, 2004).

Teacher readiness requires teachers who are child development specialists with curricular and instructional expertise. Before any serious, effective reform in education can be introduced, we must first reinvent teacher training. At the very least, teachers should be trained as child development specialists. But teachers need much more. Particularly today, with the technological revolution in our schools, teacher training should be a graduate program. Even with that, teaching will not become a true profession unless and until we have a true science of education (Elkind, 1999; cited in Elkind, 2004).

A constructivist approach to education presupposes a thorough understanding of the curriculum to be taught. Only when we successfully match children's ability levels with the demands of the task can we expect them to reconstruct the knowledge we would like them to acquire. In addition to knowing the logical substructure of the task, we also need research regarding the timing of the introduction of various subject matters. Another type of curriculum information has to do with the sequence of topics within any particular course of study. In sum, curriculum readiness requires courses of study that have been researched as to what, when, and how the subject matter should be taught (Elkind, 2004).

Societal readiness requires a nation that is willing-indeed eager-to accept educational change. If the majority of teachers are not ready to adopt a constructivist pedagogy, neither are educational policy makers and the larger society. To be successfully implemented, any reform pedagogy must reflect a broad and energized social consensus (Elkind, 2004). The planning approach we are proposing is based on actively engaging students

in situations that involve collaboratively considering their own explanations for phenomena, resolutions to problems, or formulation of questions. Students are asked to actively construct their own knowledge by making meaning out of the situation by themselves with support and guidance from the teacher. Teachers organize the situation and then provide encouragement and questions to groups of students who are trying to construct and to display their own explanations. For example, composition teachers might ask students to construct the simplest sentences and compare structures, literature teachers might ask students to explain the motives of a character, social studies teachers might ask students to assume the roles of two adversaries in a meeting, science teachers might demonstrate a phenomenon and ask students to explain what was observed, math teachers might ask students to find examples of sloping lines in the world around them and then introduce grids to determine equations, language teachers might engage students in conversational immersion without resorting to English translations, art teachers might ask students to transform clay with their hands without looking at it, music teachers might ask students to identify rhythms in a piece of music using their own annotations. The constructivist approach can be adapted to any subject area or curriculum by involving students as active participants in making meaning instead of passive recipients of information given to them by the teacher. This approach can be incorporated into 45- or 50-minute class periods to teach a particular concept, skill, or attitude.

When referring to student learning we deliberately use the phrase "concepts, skills, and attitudes" to convey different dimensions of knowledge. The accepted educational language described by current NCATE accreditation standards is "knowledge, skills, and attitudes." This implies that skills and attitudes are something different than knowledge or that knowledge is merely a collection of facts or information. Perhaps some of the confusion derives from Bloom's (1956) taxonomy of objectives starting with knowledge and proceeding through comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Again, this language is accepted as a standard in the education curriculum. Bloom later classified objectives in the affective domain and the psychomotor domain as well as in the cognitive domain. This left us with the legacy of knowledge as separate from what we can do with it or how we feel about it. We would argue that what Bloom has labeled knowledge is really information and that the other levels are different ways that learners construct knowledge for themselves and may not be discreet and hierarchical as Bloom suggests. However, these classifications can serve as an important guideline for moving beyond recitation of information

as the goal of education. We contend that an understanding of education should begin with epistemology rather than relegating it to the province of philosophy as an academic pursuit. Constructivist learning implies an initial concern with what knowledge is and how knowledge is actively constructed by the learner. Advocates of constructivism agree that acquiring knowledge or knowing is an active process of constructing understanding rather than the passive receipt of information.

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INDEX

Syllabus Design and Materials Development

This book takes a theory to practice approach on language syllabus design, materials evaluation and development, and to develop understanding of appropriateness of materials for specific target groups. The book aims to foster a working awareness of the methodological issues involve is syllabus design. The contents serve to develop and implement the lesson integrating for adopting, adapting, and developing language instructional units. The key feature of this book is to develop language instructional materials for young learners, electronic language instructional material, materials for cultural awareness, and EAP/ESP instructional materials. The book takes different approaches in curriculum development that lead into the practical aspect of situation analysis and language curriculum development, project work, discourse-based, genre-based, and competency-based language curriculum development.

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