

English Language Teaching Curriculum and Material Production: Comprehensive Questions

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Abstract

Materials development is both a theoretical and practical endeavor. It studies the principles and procedures of designing, implementing, and evaluating language teaching materials as a field. As a project, it entails the creation, evaluation, and adaptation of language teaching materials for use in classrooms by teachers and by materials writers for sale or distribution. Ideally, these two aspects of materials development are interactive in the sense that theoretical studies inform and are informed by classroom materials development and use (e.g. Tomlinson 1998c).

'Materials' include anything that can be used to aid language learning. They can be linguistic, visual, auditory, or kinesthetic, and they can be presented in print, live performance or display, cassette, CD-ROM, DVD, or over the internet. They can be instructional in the sense that they inform learners about the language, experiential in the sense that they provide exposure to the language in use, elicitive in the sense that they stimulate language use, or exploratory in the sense that they seek discoveries about language use.

1. Dalam studinya tentang implementasi kurikulum, Snyder, dkk. (1992) mengidentifikasi tiga perspektif berbeda yakni Fidelity Perspective, Mutual Adaptation Perspective, dan Curriculum Enactment Perspective. Jelaskan perbedaan ketiga perspektif di atas!

Answer:

- Fidelity Perspective means dealing with curriculum implementation. According to Fullan and Pomfrets (in Collin J Marsh, 2009), 'fidelity' is a kind of perspective in curriculum implementation beside 'process perspectives.' Fidelity perspective assume that the planned curriculum must be highly structured and the teacher must be instructed with explicitly instruction. In fidelity model, curriculum change occurs when new behaviors and organizational patterns are taken up; the task of educational reform is to find efficient ways to do the curriculum. Fidelity perspective looks at the degree to which something has been implemented as planned; the match between design and outcome; and the irrespective of how curriculum has been implemented. In short, fidelity prespective highlights the instruction, but the weakness of this perspective is that the curriculum developers ignored the teacher prior experience and teacher's background.
- Mutual Adaptation Perspective is concerned with how a curriculum is adapting during the implementation process by both curriculum developers and teachers. Mutual adaptation perspective tends to see curriculum knowledge as one facet of a larger; complex social system that cannot be taken for granted. According to Skillbeck (1976), mutual adaptation perspective views the curriculum as a dynamic one which

flows by covering the school system other influences, such as environment. As a result, mutual adaptation perspective covers such factors that influence any innovation either within or without the school.

- Curriculum Enactment Perspective is concerned with how curriculum is shaped through the evolving constructs of teacher and students. In enactment perspective, curriculum concerns with classroom experiences and how participants create them, the effect of externally created materials, policies, and characteristics of experiences, including the effect of the experiences to the participants. Consequently, curriculum enactment perspective underlines that the core of curriculum are from the facts of classroom evolving the relationship between teacher, learner, and subject matter.

2. Olshtain (1989) mengemukakan lima tipe kurikulum/silabus yakni Content-Based, Product-Based, Process-Based, Learner-Based, dan Context-Based. Apa fokus utama dari masing-masing tipe tersebut? Jika ditinjau dari kurikulum yang pernah atau sedang berlaku di Indonesia, kurikulum apa saja yang sesuai dengan masing-masing tipe kurikulum/silabus tersebut?

Answer:

- ✚ Content-based curriculum/syllabus focuses on learning language through learning something. The primary purpose of instruction is to teach some content or information using the language that the students are also learning. In this type of curriculum, the students are simultaneously language students of whatever content is being taught. An example of content-based language teaching is a science class taught in the language the students need or want to learn.
- ✚ Product-based curriculum/syllabus emphasizes on behavioral objectives. The primary purpose of this curriculum is to bring about significant changes in the students' pattern of behavior. It becomes important to recognize that any statements of objectives of the school should be statements of changes to take place in the students. This type of curriculum is suitable used for vocational school. The stages of product-based curriculum involve (1) diagnosis of need; (2) formulation of objectives; (3) selection of content; (4) organization of content; (5) selection of learning experiences; (6) organization of learning experiences; and (7) determination of what to evaluate and of the ways and means of doing it.
- ✚ Process-based curriculum/syllabus emphasis on the process of learner. This sense curriculum is not a physical thing, but rather the interaction of teachers, students, and knowledges. In this type, curriculum is what actually happens in the classroom and what people do to prepare and evaluate. In short, this curriculum focuses on the learning process in the classroom.
- ✚ Learner-based curriculum/syllabus emphasis on individual development; the curriculum organization emerges from the needs, interest, and purposes of students. In this type, curriculum is usually not preplanned, but evolves teacher and students interaction in relation of learning tasks. Learner-based curriculum developers have purposeful intentions to learner oriented and can be modified upon interaction with students. Therefore, the role for teacher here is just to develop the ability to ascertain the students' interest and motivation.
- ✚ Context-based curriculum/syllabus refers to the use of facts and fictitious examples in teaching environments in order to learn through the actual, practical

experience with a subject, rather than just theoretical parts. This curriculum guides students to focus their attention on, and attempt to resolve problems around them both individual and social in nature. In this type of curriculum, students are usually placed in group activities and the materials are usually based on thematic.

Based on the curriculum implemented in Indonesia, CBSA in 1994 basically uses content-based curriculum/syllabus; KBK in 2006 uses product-based curriculum/syllabus; KTSP in 2009 uses and K13 in 2013 uses context-based curriculum/syllabus.

3. Dalam mendisain kurikulum/silabus terdapat dua jenis pendekatan yakni “Top-Down Approach” dan “Bottom-Up Approach”. Jelaskan bagaimana penerapan kedua pendekatan tersebut!

Answer:

The most important thing that must be considered in designing curriculum is approach. Approach itself is preconceptions, assumptions, and theoretical underpinnings for what happens in the classroom. There are two basic curriculum, namely construction curriculum and development curriculum. Construction curriculum refers to Top-Down approach, while development curriculum refers to Bottom-Up approach. Top down approach can be explained as a set of hierarchically ordered processes that are centrally initiated, controlled, and performed by the selected expert committees as decision maker. A decision is made by the supreme authority in the educational system. As result, top-down approach is a command with some instruction from the highest level to be implemented by the lower level.

Meanwhile, bottom-up approach can be explained as a process in which some or all the members of a school community plan, implement, and/or evaluate aspects of the curriculum offering of the school. The procedure of bottom-up approach is starting from the problems appeared from teachers in teaching and learning process, then the teacher evaluates the students’ achievements and makes research about the problem. Through the research, teacher makes hypothesis about the curriculum, then open discussion, such as Focus Group Discussion (FGD), by presenting the all stakeholders of curriculum which will be developed. Finally, the result of FGD’ curriculum will be recommended to the decision maker of education. Consequently, bottom-up approach is a proposal with some development and/or review of previous curriculum from the lower level into the highest level as decision maker.

4. Setidaknya ada empat komponen pokok yang harus dimiliki oleh sebuah kurikulum, yakni Tujuan, Materi, Proses Pembelajaran, dan Evaluasi. Jelaskan mengapa keempat komponen tersebut penting!

Answer:

Four important aspects of curriculum:

- (1) Goal. It is defined as general statements concerning desirable and attainable program purposes and aims based on perceived language and situation needs. In deriving goals from perceived needs, goals are general statements of the program’s purposes; goals focus on what the program hopes to accomplish in the future and what the students should be able to do when they leave the program; goals can serve as one basis for developing more precise and

observable objectives; and goals should never be viewed as permanent, but goes dynamically (Brown, 1995: 71—72).

- (2) Material. It is defined as any systematic description of the techniques and exercises to be used in classroom teaching. It is related to the knowledge that the students will achieve. There are three strategies where materials come from, namely adopting material, developing material, and adapting materials (Brown, 1995: 139)
- (3) Learning Activity. It is defined as those activities offered to learners in the teaching-learning situation which are designed to enable them to acquire the designated content and thereby achieve the stated objectives and more broadly the curriculum's intent. It also incorporates all teaching or instructional strategies planned by teachers as well as those methods by which students may learn by themselves within the context of the classroom or learning environment (Print, 1993: 164—165).
- (4) Evaluation. It is defined as the systematic collection and analysis of all relevant information necessary to promote the improvement of a curriculum and assess its effectiveness within the context of the particular institutions involved (Brown, 1995: 218). Evaluation also concerns with making judgements, evaluation requires that judgements be based on appropriate and relevant data. Evaluation in schools is essentially concerned with two major approaches, namely product and process evaluations. Product evaluation is an evaluation of student performance in a specific learning context, while process evaluation examines the experiences and activities involved in the learning situation (Print (1993: 187).

From the four aspects of curriculum, they are related and completed each other. Thus, the existence of goal, material, learning activities, and evaluation are very important in stating curriculum in an institution or school. The four aspects should be stated clearly before implementing the curriculum.

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