

Curriculum Design? Why?

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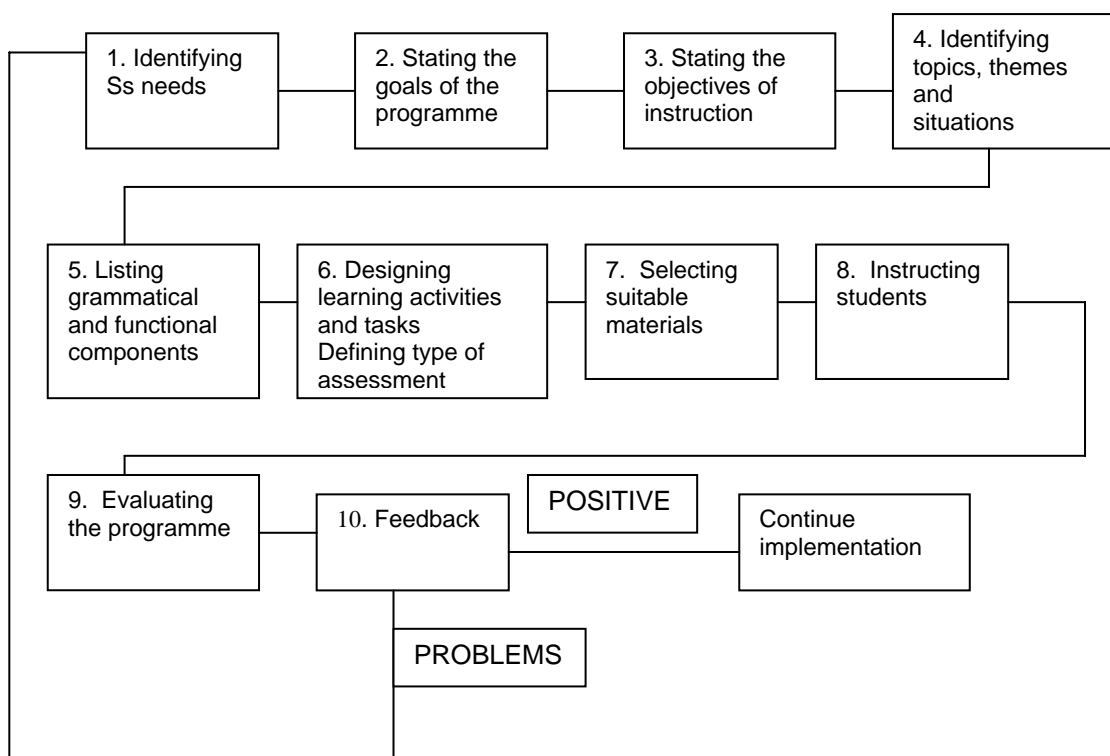
TASK 1

Read through the quote below and make notes on how you would answer the questions Richards poses. Compare notes with other colleagues in the room. What are your conclusions?

“Second and Foreign Language Teaching is one of the world’s largest educational enterprises and millions of children and adults worldwide devote large amounts of time and effort to the task of mastering a new language. Teachers too invest a great deal of their energies into planning language courses, preparing teaching materials, and teaching their classes. What educational principles are these activities based on? What values do those principles reflect? Whose interests do they serve?”

From *Curriculum development in Language Teaching* by Richards, J. C (CUP 2001)

TASK 2



The flow chart above is an adaptation of the Taba-Tyler curriculum development model.

Think of the institution you work for. Which of the different steps above are you aware are happening in the place where you work? Do you have any participation in any of them? What do the two directions signaled at the end of the process **POSITIVE** or **PROBLEMS** imply?

TASK 3

As Richards points out in the quote in TASK 1 the content of Language Teaching courses should be able to answer the questions he asks e.g. “ **What educational principles are these activities based on?**”

These will reflect your beliefs about a. The Nature of Language; b. The Nature of Learning; c. Your view of education.

- i.. Get together into groups of three or four. Make sure that you sit with people you have not met yet.
- ii.. Decide which of the two sets of principles listed below reflects **GOALS** and which one reflects **OBJECTIVES**. Be prepared to explain the reasons for your decision.

SET A

Instruction should enable learners to:

- Participate in conversation related to the pursuit of common activities with others.
- Obtain goods and services through conversation or correspondence.
- Establish and maintain relationships through exchanging information, ideas, opinions, attitudes, feelings, experiences and plans.
- Make social arrangements, solve problems, and come to conclusions together.
- Discuss topics of interest.
- Search for specific information for a given purpose, process it and use it in some way.
- Listen to or read information, process it and use it in some way.
- Give information in spoken or written form on the basis of personal experience.
- Listen to or read or view, a story, poem, play, feature, etc and respond to it in some way.

SET B

- To contribute to the intellectual, personal and vocational development of the individual.
- To develop and maintain a sense of confidence and self-worth.
- To acquire the competence to use English in real-life situations for the development and maintenance of interpersonal relationships and to take part in interpersonal encounters through the sharing of factual and attitudinal information.
- To develop communicative skills in order to acquire, record, and use information from a variety of aural and written sources.
- To develop mastery over the English language as a linguistic system and to have some knowledge of how it works at the levels of phonology, morphology and syntax.
- To increase, through a common language, the possibility of understanding, friendship and co-operation with people who speak English.
- To be able to exploit one's knowledge of English to better inform the world of one's concerns, and to be able to participate more actively and effectively in English in the international arena.
- To foster the development of critical thinking skills and the development of learning skills so that students can continue their education beyond the school setting.
- To develop the skills and attitudes to, read, and write English for creative and imaginative purposes.

(Adapted from Nunan, Tyacke, and Walton 1987: 26)

In “*Syllabus Design*” by Nunan. D (OUP 1988)

Once you have chosen the set write next to each statement which values/ principles each of them reflects:

- Education
- Learning
- Language

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TASK 4

“Evaluation is not in itself new. What is new is the incorporation of evaluation as feedback and as a formative process within language curriculum development, whereby it becomes an extension and elaboration of needs analysis, sharing with such pre-planning the use of many information gathering procedures and techniques such as questionnaires and interviews.”

From the *ELT Curriculum* by White, R (Blackwell 1988)

Look at the diagram on Evaluation from Ron White’s book on the screen. Why do you think it links all the processes of Curriculum Design to Evaluation? What do you think a Language School would gain from the process?

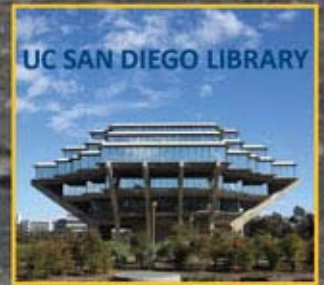
TASK 5

Look back at the notes you made during the session and the notes I wrote on the computer. Why do you think the process of CURRICULUM DESIGN can be important to a language school?

Think of a colleague (s) working with you. What would you say to them as a summary of our workshop today?

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