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DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

SPECIALITY: ENGLISH

Lectures on Syllabus Design and Textbook Evaluation

(Level: 4PEM; 4PES; 5PES)

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for languages
Eco	Economy and management stream
EGP	English for General Purposes
ESP	English for Specific / Special Purposes
FL	Foreign languages
Lit & FL	Literature / Philosophy and Foreign Languages
Lit	Literary stream
MS	Middle school
PPP	Presentation Practice Production
Sc & Tech	Scientific and technological Stream
Sc	Scientific stream
SE	Secondary education
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats

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P R E F A C E

The *Syllabus Design and Textbook Evaluation* module is intended for **senior students** (4B4 + 4B5) at Teacher Education Colleges who are preparing to get a degree in English language teaching in Algerian middle schools or secondary schools; it involves lectures and tutorials with a time span up to 3 hours per week. By studying this module over an academic year of 32 weeks, would-be teachers are meant to grasp the basic concepts of designing EFL syllabuses in the Algerian setting.

Being an active branch of applied linguistics (Richards, 1990), syllabus design provides the trainee teachers with the necessary background knowledge about the processes of designing language programs. Such knowledge is necessary if they are to understand how to address the particular needs of their learners by adapting the content of their courses, for instance.

Stages of Syllabus Design

According to Richards (1990), the standard process of course design includes the following stages: needs analysis, goal setting, syllabus design, methodology, and testing and evaluation. As for Taba (1962, as cited in Richards, 1990), curriculum processes consist of the following steps: i) diagnosis of needs, ii) formulation of objectives, iii) selection of content, iv) organization of content, v) selection of learning experiences, vi) organization of learning experiences, and vii) determination of what to evaluate and means to evaluate.

It should be noted that the lectures included in this course are conveniently arranged in accordance with the chronological order of the aforementioned stages of syllabus design.

Content of the Course

The lectures included in this introductory course to syllabus design and textbook evaluation revolves around the following themes and topics:

1. Basic definitions

2. Needs assessment

3. Environment analysis (or SWOT analysis)

4. Curriculum ideology

       Academic rationalism

       Social and economic efficiency

       Learner-centredness

       Social reconstructionism

       Cultural pluralism

5. General and specific objectives

6. Content selection and organization (syllabus design)

       The course rationale

       Describing exit levels

       Choosing course content

       Determining the scope and sequence

       Choosing a framework for the syllabus

7. Types of syllabuses

       Grammatical   syllabuses

       Lexical   syllabuses

       Functional   syllabuses

       Situational   syllabuses

       Topic-based   syllabuses

       Skill-based   syllabuses

       Task-based   syllabuses

       Competency-based syllabuses

8. ESP course design

9. Curriculum evaluation

10. Textbook evaluation

Learning Outcomes

  In completing this module, student teachers will be able to:

– understand the terminology related to course design, such as needs analysis, situational analysis, situational syllabus, curriculum ideologies, and exit level.

– differentiate between the syllabus as a list of topics and the curriculum as a document that encompasses the philosophy of English language teaching in Algeria.

– identify the different stages of planning educational programmes.

– recognise the procedures used to assess the needs of language learners.

– develop awareness of the ideology behind selecting the content to be included in syllabuses and textbooks.

– evaluate the performance of learners with reference to the six levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for languages.

– understand that selecting the subject matter to be taught in Algerian schools must be in compliance with the official regulations such as the *law of orientation on national education*[*] that was issued in 2008 by the Ministry of National Education.

– differentiate between general and specific objectives.

– perceive the differences between teaching general English and teaching English for specific purposes.

– recognise the factors that might hinder the learning process by considering the information provided by situation analysis.

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[*] Loi no. 08-04 du 23 janvier 2008 portant loi d'orientation sur l'éducation nationale.

– recognise the role of the textbook as assisting manual for teachers and learners, but not as the master.

– recognise the different types of syllabuses that were developed based on educators' beliefs about the best approach of language teaching.

– develop the skill of critical thinking so as to reflect about ELT syllabuses and textbooks.

Organization of the Sessions

The following table shows the weekly and yearly organization of the sessions.

LEVEL	SPECIALITY	LECTURE /week	TUTORIAL /week	YEARLY
4th YEAR	PEM	1h 30min	1h 30min	90h
4th YEAR	PES	1h 30min	–	45h
5th YEAR		1h 30min	–	45h

Assessment

The content of the present course is not restricted to the basic theoretical background of the subject matter; students are meant to understand both theoretical and practical issues that are relevant to the processes of designing educational programmes and textbook. Also, students are supposed to develop a sense of criticality when dealing with different theoretical concepts as there is always scope for improvement in the implementation of language programmes. As for assessment, oral presentations are especially recommended in tutorial sessions (see Appendix E). During end-of-semester exams, students should expect questions that require them to write short essays by analysing a specific issue and giving their personal opinions about it using appropriate arguments.

READING LIST

Students are recommended to consult the following list of references for more information on the different chapters composing the present handout.

Bader, F. (2017). *An Evaluation of the Algerian Middle School English Syllabuses and Textbooks* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Constantine]. http://archives.umc.edu.dz/handle/123456789/136365

Belouahem, R. (2008). *The Suitability of First-Year Secondary School Coursebook to the Algerian Teaching Environment* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Constantine]. http://archives.umc.edu.dz/handle/123456789/11423

Brown, J. D. (1995). *The Elements of Language Curriculum. A Systematic Approach to Program Development.* Heinle & Heinle Publishers.

Christison, M. A., & Murray, D. E. (2014). *What English Language Teachers Need to Know. Designing Curriculum* (Vol. 3). Routledge.

Day, J. & Krzanowski, M. (2011). *Teaching English for Specific Purposes. An Introduction.* Cambridge University Press

Ellis, R., Skehan, P., Li, S., Shintani, N. & Lambert, C. (2020). *Task-Based Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press

Graves, K. (2000). *Designing Language Courses. A Guide for Teachers*. Heinle & Heinle Publishers

Lakehal-Ayat – Benmati, K. *Is the Algerian Educational System Weakening? An Investigation of the High School Curricula and their Adequacy with the University Curricula* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Constantine]. http://archives.umc.edu.dz/handle/123456789/11424

McDonough, J., Shaw, C. & Masuhara, H. (2013). *Materials and Methods in ELT. A Teacher's Guide* (3rd ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.

Nunan, D. (1988). *Syllabus Design*. Oxford University Press.

Richards, J. C. & Rodgers, T. S. (2014). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J. C. & Schmidt, R. (2010). *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics* (4th ed.). LONGMAN.

Richards, J. C. (2006). *Communicative Language Teaching Today.* Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J. C. (2017). *Curriculum Development in Language Teaching* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Woodrow, L. (2018). *Introducing Course Design in English for Specific Purposes.* Routledge.

CHAPTER 1: BASIC DEFINITIONS

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*Some teachers taught the curriculum today. Other teachers taught students today;
and there is a big difference.*

This chapter presents some basic definitions relevant to the content of the module *Syllabus Design and Textbook Evaluation.* By the end of the chapter, students are intended to achieve the following outcomes:

− understand the terminology related to course design, such as needs analysis, situational analysis, situational syllabus, curriculum ideologies, and exit level.

− differentiate between the syllabus as a list of topics and the curriculum as a document that encompasses the philosophy of English language teaching in Algeria.

1.1. Defining Terms

This section provides definitions of basic terms related to the literature of the subject matter; basically, we consider the following terms: syllabus, curriculum, course, and program. We just note that a number of terms are used interchangeably depending on the British or American terminology.

1.1.1. Syllabus

According to the *Oxford Dictionary of Word Origins,* the word syllabus has originated from *syllabos* − a misprint of Latin *sittybas,* accusative plural of *sittyba* −from Greek *sittuba* meaning title slip or label. In early usage, a syllabus was a concise table of headings of a text (Cresswell, 2009).

A syllabus is "a description of the contents of a course of instruction and the order in which they are to be taught" (Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 576). The syllabus, by definition, is the product of a twofold process: choice of a learnable content and grading that content according to the levels and needs of learners, objectives of the course, and timescale for implementation. The components of a language syllabus include the following:

– the situations in which the foreign language will be used, including the topics which will be dealt with;

– the language activities in which the learner will engage;

– the language functions which the learner will fulfil;

– what the learner will be able to do with respect to each topic;

– the general notions which the learner will be able to handle;

– the specific (topic-related) notions which the learner will be able to handle;

– the language forms which the learner will be able to use;

– the degree of skill with which the learner will be able to perform (Nunan, 1988, p. 7).

1.1.2. Curriculum

The original sense of *curriculum* in Latin is a racing chariot or a course – something to run through; the word *curricle* is still used in that sense. Being a derivation from Latin *currere* meaning *to run*, the word curriculum has been adopted for course of study or training (Hoad, 1996). A curriculum represents the plan of teaching a particular content that covers the following elements:

– aims and goals of the course;

– a content that is divided into sequences (i.e. syllabus);

– methods of instruction;

– specification on how to assess learners' work;

– evaluation process of the curriculum (Thornbury, 2006; Richards & Schmidt, 2010).

1.1.3. Programme

This word appears in some terms, such as programme design (meaning course design) and programme evaluation (meaning curriculum evaluation). It is a broad term that describes a collection of classes or courses offered within a single institution, sometimes leading to a certificate or degree (Brown & Lee, 2015).

1.1.4. Course

It is a time-limited educational experience, usually carried out in regular meetings (or communications with an instructor) with a limited number of students. Courses are explicit in their statement of prerequisite qualifications and are designed for a stated classification of enrolled students who are pursuing specific needs and goals (Brown & Lee, 2015, p. 179).

1.2. Syllabus vs. Curriculum

By reviewing the literature, it seems that the terms curriculum, syllabus, program, and course are used interchangeably. In British and Australian usage, *syllabus* is preferable to *curriculum*; the latter, however, is typical of American usage (Christison & Murray, 2014).

According to Thornbury (2006), the curriculum represents the philosophy behind designing a language program that encompasses more than a mere list of subjects to be taught:

> The terms *curriculum* and *syllabus* are often used interchangeably, but it is useful to distinguish between them. The curriculum is concerned with beliefs, values and theory (all of which may be captured in some kind of 'mission statement'). The syllabus represents the way these beliefs, values and theories are realized in terms of a step-by-step instructional programme. The curriculum is, therefore, both larger than the syllabus, and more general. (p. 61)

1.3. Syllabus Design, Course Design and Curriculum Development

A number of terms have been used to describe the procedures of designing language programs; both words *design* and *development* are usually combined with the terms *syllabus*, *course*, *curriculum*, and *program* to refer to that particular field of applied linguistics. For instance, the term *course design* was used by Dubin & Olshtain (1986) in the title of their book *Course Design: Developing Programs and Materials for Language Learning*. Likewise, the name *Syllabus Design* was used by Nunan (1988) as the title of his book.

Another similar term to syllabus design is *curriculum development* which appeared as the title of a book by Hunkins (1980), *Curriculum Development: Program Improvement*. We find also that both terms were included in the title of a book by Posner & Rudnitsky (1978) as *Course Design: A Guide to Curriculum Development for Teachers.*

While syllabus design is mainly concerned with the selection and grading of content (Nunan, 1988), curriculum development determines "what knowledge, skills, and values students learn in schools, what experiences should be provided to bring about intended learning outcomes, and how teaching and learning in schools or educational systems can be planned, measured, and evaluated" (Richards, 2001, p. 2).

Overall, we note that the above terms are largely synonymous in their meanings. Table 1 provides concise definitions of those terms:

Curriculum development **(also curriculum design)**	The study and development of the goals, content, implementation, and evaluation of an educational system. In language teaching, curriculum development includes: → the study of the purposes for which a learner needs a language (needs analysis); → the setting of objectives, and the development of a syllabus, teaching methods and materials; → the evaluation of the effects of these procedures on the learner's language ability.
Syllabus design	A phase in curriculum development that deals with procedures for developing a syllabus.
Course design **(also program design)**	The development of a language programme or set of teaching materials. Whereas syllabus design generally refers to procedures for deciding what will be taught in a language programme, course design includes how a syllabus will be carried out. e.g. → what teaching method and materials will be needed to achieve the objectives; → how much time will be required; → how classroom activities will be sequenced and organized; → what sort of placement tests, achievement tests and other sorts of tests will be used; → how the programme will be evaluated. Course design is part of the broader process of curriculum development.

Table 1: Basic Definitions (Richards & Schmidt, 2010)

1.4. Textbook

A textbook (in American English) or a coursebook (in British English) is a manual on a specific subject that is intended as a learning guide for pupils and students.

According to Tomlinson (2011, p. xi), a coursebook is "a textbook which provides the core materials for a language-learning course. … Such a book usually includes work on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, functions and the skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking."

It contains language activities about the list of topics included in the curriculum; thus, we can consider the textbook as a reflection of the syllabus. As for the manual intended for teachers, it is known as the teacher's book.

Sometimes, coursebooks are supplemented with additional activities contained in a workbook which contains "extra practice activities for learners to work on in their own time. Usually the book is designed so that learners can write in it and often there is an answer key provided in the back of the book to give feedback to the learners" (Tomlinson, 2011, p. xvii).

1.5. Evaluation

Evaluation is the process of gathering information for the sake of taking decisions about the quality of programmes and materials. Curriculum evaluation and textbook evaluation will be discussed in Chapters 9 and 10 respectively.

CHAPTER 2: NEEDS ANALYSIS

"Information on the learner's language needs will help in drawing up a profile to establish coherent objectives and take subsequent decisions on course content."

McDonough (1984, p. 29)

Assessing the needs of prospective learners is deemed the initial stage of planning a language programme; the process involves collecting quantitative and qualitative data from the stakeholders using a number of methods. The result of needs analysis is a representative list of language items, ideas or skills that will be covered in the course (Macalister & Nation, 2011).

This chapter defines the terms *need* and *needs analysis*, and identifies the different procedures undertaken in diagnosing the needs of learners. By the end of the chapter, students are intended to achieve the following outcomes:

– identify the first stage of planning educational programmes.

– recognise the procedures used to assess the needs of language learners.

2.1. Defining Needs

The term *need* underlies three concepts as suggested by Macalister & Nation (2011): necessities, wants, and lacks. Other synonyms can be used to refer to the same concept, such as desires, demands, expectations, motivations, constraints, and requirements.

Berwick (1989, p. 52) identifies the term *need* as "a gap or measurable discrepancy between a current state of affairs and a desired future state." So, a need is the gap existing between the level or situation of learners before being exposed to a given content, and what they are expected to be as a result of instruction.

The same term appears in the hierarchy of needs proposed by the American psychologist Maslow (1908-1970) that contains five levels of needs: physiological, safety and security, belongingness and love, esteem, and self-actualization.

2.2. Defining Needs Analysis

Performing an informative analysis of the needs of learners is at the heart of syllabus design for it facilitates the task of choosing a suitable content for learners.

According to Graves (2000, p. 98), "needs assessment is a systematic and ongoing process of gathering information about students' needs and preferences, interpreting the information, and then making course decisions based on the interpretation in order to meet the needs."

The process of needs assessment involves a set of decisions, actions, and reflections, that are cyclical in nature:

– Deciding what information to gather and why;

– Deciding the best way to gather it: when, how and from whom;

– Gathering the information;

– Interpreting the information;

– Acting on the information;

– Evaluating the effect and effectiveness of the action;

– (Back to #1) Deciding on further or new information to gather (Graves, 2000, p. 100).

As regards the different types of information that can be gathered about prospective learners, they include the following:

– Who are the learners?

– Learners' level of language proficiency

– Learners' level of intercultural competence

– Their interests, learning preferences, and attitudes

– Their goals and expectations

– The target contexts: situations, roles, topics, and content

– Types of communicative skills they will need and tasks they will perform

– Language modalities (speaking, reading, listening, writing) they will use in the target language (Graves, 2000).

2.3. Procedures of Needs Assessment

The task of collecting information about the needs of learners involves the participation of the following stakeholders: policy makers, ministry of education officials, teachers, students, academics, specialists, employers, parents, influential individuals and pressure groups (Richards, 2001).

As for the methods of data collection, they include the following:

– questionnaires,

– self-ratings,

– interviews,

– meetings,

– observation,

– learners' language samples,

– task analysis,

– case studies, and analysis of available information.

Figure 1 shows a number of methods that can be used during the process of needs assessment.

> Questionnaires and surveys
> Text analysis
> Language assessment
> Previous research filed
> Discussions with stakeholders
> Interviews (unstructured, semi-structured and structured)
> Target-situation observations (participant, non-participant)
> Learning-situation observations
> Learner diaries, logs and journals
> Language audits
> Expert and non-expert intuitions
> Role-plays and simulations
> Corpus analysis
> Ethnography

Figure 1: Methods of Needs Analysis (Woodrow, 2018, p. 25)

The above procedures can be categorized into quantitative methods (such as questionnaires) and qualitative methods (such as classroom observation) with each method having a number of advantages and disadvantages.

CHAPTER 3: SITUATION ANALYSIS

The best teachers are those who show you where to look,
but don't tell you what to see.

Alexandra K. Trenfor

In this chapter, we present the different factors that are taken into consideration in planning educational programmes. By the end of the chapter, students are intended to recognise the factors that might hinder the learning process by considering the information provided by situation analysis.

3.1. Defining Situation Analysis

One of the initial stages of course design is the analysis of the context, otherwise known as *situation analysis* (Richards, 2001) or *environment analysis* (Nation & Macalister, 2010). It is sometimes known as *SWOT analysis* as it is concerned with examining internal strengths and weaknesses as well as external opportunities and threats to the implementation of a language program.

According to Richards & Schmidt (2010, p. 532), situation analysis, sometimes considered as an extension to needs analysis, is defined as follows:

The identification of key factors that might positively or negatively affect the implementation of a curriculum plan and the study of the direct and indirect effects a proposed curriculum will have on the students, on other programmes, and on other people in and outside the institution. Such factors could be political, social, economic, institutional, administrative, etc.

3.2. Types of Factors

Situation or environment analysis involves collecting information about potential variables that help realize a language program. Every course is deemed effective by considering a number of key factors that can help or hinder its implementation; these factors concern human or institutional variables.

Graves (2000) enumerated five elements against which the context (setting) is defined: *people, time, physical setting, teaching resources, and nature of the course and institution.* The figure below summarizes the aspects relevant to those variables:

People	Physical setting
students	location of school: convenience, setting
how many, age, gender, culture(s),	
other language(s), purpose(s),	classroom: size, furniture
education, profession, experience,	light, noise
other stakeholders	always same classroom?
school administrators	
parents	
funders	
community	
Nature of course and institution	**Teaching Resources**
type/purpose of course	materials available
mandatory, open enrollment	required text?
relation to current/previous courses	develop own materials?
prescribed curriculum or not	equipment: cassettes,
required tests or not	video, photocopying
	clerical support
Time	
how many hours total over what span of time	
how often class meets	
for how long each time	
day of week, time of day	
where fits in schedule of students	
students' timeliness	

Figure 2: Factors to Consider in Defining the Context (Graves, 2000, p. 16)

Similarly, Brown & Lee (2015, p. 183) suggested to consider the following factors to identify the context for the implementation an educational program:

EDUCATIONAL SETTING
– Within what societal and cultural norms is the course situated?
– What is the institutional framework into which the course must be integrated?
– What are the broad instructional goals of the program?
– In general, what is the structure of the program?
– What are the physical conditions (e.g., classrooms) and resources (laboratories, computers, materials)?
– Who are the learners? Basic questions here look at the larger educational context within which a course is placed.
CLASS CHARACTERISTICS
– How would you describe the class in terms of the homogeneity of learners, the size of the class, and its relationship to others that learners are taking?
FACULTY CHARACTERISTICS
– What are the qualifications of teachers – training, experience, methodological biases?
– What are the working conditions (hours of teaching, support services) for the faculty?
– To what extent is there collaboration among teachers?
GOVERNANCE OF COURSE CONTENT
– Who determines course content?
– To what extent can teachers choose content and/or adapt content as they perceive the need to do so?
ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS
– What stipulations are in force for assessing students for placement, diagnostic, or achievement purposes?
– What grading norms are in place?
– How are courses evaluated and revised?

Table 2: Factors that Help Define the Context for an Educational Program

Richards (2001) also listed five types of key factors that can either facilitate or hinder the implementation of a language curriculum:

– **Societal factors:** to determine the impact that certain groups in society have on a language program, such as policy makers, parents, educational officials, educational organizations, employers, and associations of civil society.

– **Project factors:** to consider the different constraints that can impact the curriculum projects such as time, resources and personnel.

– **Institutional factors**: to check the school's physical resources (including classroom facilities, technological resources, and library resources), administrative support within the school, and communication between teachers and the administration.

– **Teacher factors**: Training, qualifications, teaching experience, beliefs, teaching style, skill and expertise, morale and motivation of the teaching staff.

– **Learner factors**: Background, expectations, beliefs, and preferred learning styles of learners.

As regards the process of gathering information about the above factors, it involves the same procedures employed in needs analysis:

– Consultations with parents, students, teachers, administrators, and government officials;

– Study and analysis of relevant documents, such as government reports, ministry of education guidelines, teaching materials, and curriculum documents;

– Classroom observation of teachers and students in relevant settings;

– Surveys of opinions of relevant parties;

– Review of available literature related to the subject matter (Richards, 2001).

CHAPTER 4: CURRICULUM IDEOLOGIES

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.

Nelson Mandela

In this chapter, we present the different ideological factors that impact the process of syllabus design. By the end of the chapter, students are intended to develop awareness of the ideology behind selecting the content to be included in syllabuses and textbooks.

4.1. Introduction

Education has a significant role in preparing today's learners for the challenges of the 21st century. In a globalized world which is characterized by a fierce competition in many domains, it is crucial to help today's learners become successful citizens of the world who can contribute effectively to the prosperity of their societies and humanity as a whole.

For that, designing programs that incite learners to think critically, to innovate, and to participate actively in societies requires a consideration of the intended outcomes of educational systems. For that reason, the World Declaration on Higher Education for the 21st Century recommended recasting curricula conveniently:

> New pedagogical and didactical approaches should be accessible and promoted in order to facilitate the acquisition of skills, competences and abilities for communication, creative and critical analysis, **independent thinking and team work in multicultural contexts**, where creativity also involves combining traditional or local knowledge and know-how with advanced science and technology (UNESCO, 1998, p. 7).

Besides local considerations such as abiding by the constitution and culture of the country, syllabus designers are required to refer to a number of general principles in order to select suitable content for learners.

In this regard, Richards (2001) explained the role of beliefs in the process of syllabus design as follows:

> [C]urriculum planners draw on their understanding both of the present and long-term needs of learners and of society as well as the planners' beliefs and ideologies about schools, learners, and teachers. These beliefs and values provide the philosophical underpinnings for educational programs and the justification for the kinds of aims they contain. (p. 113)

In fact, any curriculum would reflect in a way or another certain ideologies as education can be used as a means by policy makers to achieve aims and objectives that are most valued in the community; the neutrality of the curriculum is not the standard in course design. In this regard, Apple (2019, p. 1) argued that education is not a "neutral enterprise" and that educators, whether consciously or not, are involved in political acts. In some universities, students take modules about the role of politics in education such as Educational Policy and Politics and Education, Policy and Society.

4.2. Types of Curriculum Ideologies

Richards (2001) suggested five curriculum ideologies that should be taken into consideration in course design: Academic Rationalism, Social and Economic Efficiency, Learner-Centredness, Social Reconstructionism, and Cultural Pluralism.

4.2.1. Academic Rationalism

The academic aspect of the content is a decisive element for its inclusion in any curriculum. Teaching a subject matter is intended to develop the cognitive knowledge of students by inciting them to use logical reasoning – which is based on scientific facts – instead of emotions and subjective interpretations.

Academic rationalism is sometimes "used to justify the inclusion of certain foreign languages in school curricula, where they are taught not as tools for communication but as an aspect of social studies" (Richards, 2001, p. 114).

4.2.2. Social and Economic Efficiency

With the fourth revolution, competition over economic supremacy is strengthening day after day. As schools are meant to prepare the next workforce for the work place, the human capital is the real asset of nations. Individuals are not only consumers; they are supposed to be innovators to help build the economy of their countries. The idea of preparing *efficient* individuals for the future should be reflected in the type of content included in school curricula.

4.2.3. Learner-Centredness

This ideology is related to the learner-centred approach in language teaching (as contrasted with teacher-centred instruction) where learners become the focus of instruction. This is achievable by taking the following elements into consideration: their background knowledge, needs, desires, interests, learning styles and learning preferences, as well as their beliefs about classroom activities (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). Teachers, thus, become facilitators of learning rather than providers of knowledge.

4.2.4. Social Reconstructionism

Of the aims that should be included in school curricula, the potential of future generations to have a positive impact on their societies. Addressing daily life challenges, empowering the role of women in society, preserving the environment, and raising awareness of the global issues that impact our world (e.g. climate change) are some concerns that should be raised in educational settings.

Content related to this ideology may include activities about celebrating international days such as the World Environment Day, International Day of Forests, the World Water Day, Human Rights Day, International Mother Earth Day, the World Day of Social Justice, the International Day of Women and Girls in Science, and the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

Indeed, the World Declaration on Higher Education for the 21st Century issued that "higher education institutions should educate students to become well informed and deeply motivated citizens, who can think critically, analyse problems of society, look for solutions to the problems of society, apply them and accept social responsibilities" (UNESCO, 1998, p 7).

4.2.5. Cultural Pluralism

As future citizens of the world, learners should be prepared to interact with different cultures from all over the world. They are also meant to be open-minded and tolerant towards different cultural groups in their countries. Learning foreign languages can be used as a means in this regard as multilingualism goes hand in hand with cultural pluralism. As far as English language teaching is concerned, curriculum planners are encouraged to include elements of content from other varieties of English as the concept of a universal version of English is becoming old-fashioned.

By way of illustration, including content about universal values such as democracy, peace, justice, respect, tolerance, human rights and volunteerism is part of spreading the culture of co-existence between people of the world. Similarly, celebrating international days contributes to the promotion of global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity. For example, teachers may consider designing activities about the following observances all along the academic year:

– International Day of Human Fraternity   4 February
– International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination   31 March
– International Day of Living Together in Peace   16 May

– International Day of Democracy   15 September

– International Day of Peace   21 September

– International Day for Tolerance   16 November

– Human Rights Day   10 December

– International Human Solidarity Day   20 December

The table below provides a summary of the five curriculum ideologies in language teaching (Richards & Schmidt, 2010, pp. 152-3):

ACADEMIC RATIONALISM	The view that the curriculum should stress the intrinsic value of the subject matter and its role in developing the learner's intellect, humanistic values and rationality.
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY	The view that the curriculum should focus on the practical needs of learners and society and the role of an educational programme in producing learners who are economically productive. This is the commonest aim associated with the teaching of English.
LEARNER-CENTREDNESS	The view that the curriculum should address the individual needs of learners, the role of individual experience, and the need to develop awareness, self-reflection, critical thinking, learner strategies and other qualities and skills believed to be important for learners to develop.
SOCIAL-RECONSTRUCTIONISM	The view that schools and teaching should play a role in addressing social injustices and inequality. Education is not seen as a neutral process, and schools should engage teachers and learners in an examination of important social issues and seek ways of resolving them. This is the ideology of critical pedagogy
CULTURAL PLURALISM	The view that schools should prepare students to participate in several different cultures and not merely the culture of the dominant social and economic group

Table 3: Common Curriculum Ideologies in Language Teaching

Finally, education is a key instrument to achieve the 17 sustainable development goals which were adopted at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015 (see Table 3). These goals can inspire course designers to select content that help transform our world and achieve the prosperity of humanity by 2030.

GOALS	DESCRIPTION
1	End poverty in all its forms everywhere
2	End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
3	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
4	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
5	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
6	Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
7	Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
8	Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
9	Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
10	Reduce inequality within and among countries
11	Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
12	Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
13	Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
14	Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
15	Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
16	Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
17	Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Table 4: Sustainable Development Goals*

In this regard, the UNESCO recommends Integrating *Education for Sustainable Development* in curricula and textbooks of formal education in all stages of learning (UNESCO, 2017).

CHAPTER 5: GENERAL AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

You cannot teach a man anything, you can only help him find it within himself.

Galileo Galilei

This chapter presents the theoretical concepts related to the settling of relevant objectives of courses. By the end of the chapter, students are intended to achieve the following outcomes:

− identify the second stage of planning educational programmes.

− differentiate between general and specific objectives.

− recognise the different domains of objectives (cognitive, affective, psychomotor).

5.1. Introduction

After analysing the needs of learners along with the environment, planners reach the next stage of program development, i.e. making decisions about goals of the course. These decisions are reflections of the beliefs of the stakeholders as regards the desired outcomes of education (cf. curriculum ideologies). Usually, aims and objectives appear at the beginning of a curriculum to guide the work of teachers.

5.2. Defining Terms

In syllabus design, setting aims and objectives is based on the analysis of learners' needs. In what follows, we present definitions of basic terms.

5.2.1. Aims (General Objectives)

Aims or general objectives of a curriculum express intentions of the program by the end of instruction. They describe the changes that the course is expected to bring about regarding the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of learners. Aims are generally achievable in the long term such as the end of an academic year.

5.2.2. Goals

In Brown's words (1995, p. 71), goals are "general statements concerning desirable and attainable program purposes and aims." Goals are rather broadly based aims and purposes in an educational context, and are therefore more appropriately associated with whole programs, courses, or perhaps sizable modules within a course (Brown & Lee, 2015). It is noteworthy that both *aims* and *goals* are used interchangeably in pedagogical literature (Richards, 2001).

For example, a goal of a writing class is being able to write a short paragraph about summer holidays. Learners are supposed to achieve that goal after a series of lessons about writing and combining simple sentences, among others.

5.2.3. Specific Objectives

Specific objectives (or simply objectives) are smaller units of goals that can be achieved in the short term such as the end of a lesson. Usually, they are expressed using can-do-statements that refer to specific and measurable learning outcomes.

For example, writing a meaningful sentence according to the basic structure Subject – verb – Object is a prerequisite to writing a short paragraph. Likewise, linking simple sentences using the coordinators *and, but, so* is a prerequisite to writing compound sentences. The expression of the objective could be put as follows:

– By the end of the lesson, students will be able to use the coordinating conjunctions and, but, so to combine simple sentences.

Graves (2000, p. 75) illustrated the differences between the above terms by reference to the analogy of a journey: "the destination is the goal; the journey is the course. The objectives are the different points you pass through on the journey to the destination."

Workable objectives are usually thought of as being SMART, i.e. specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-based.

5.3. Domains of Objectives

As objectives bring about different changes in the knowledge, skills, and values of learners, they have been categorized into three taxonomies: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor.

5.3.1. Cognitive Domain

This domain of objectives concerns the processes of knowledge acquisition.

The cognitive domain was defined in 1956 by the American educationalist Bloom in his remarkable taxonomy of educational objectives which consists of six levels: **knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis**, and **evaluation** (see Appendix A). In 2001, a revised version of Bloom's taxonomy was suggested by Anderson et al. by changing the categories names from nouns to verbs as follows: **remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate,** and **create**. Figure 3 shows the differences between the two versions (Anderson et al., 2001, p. 268):
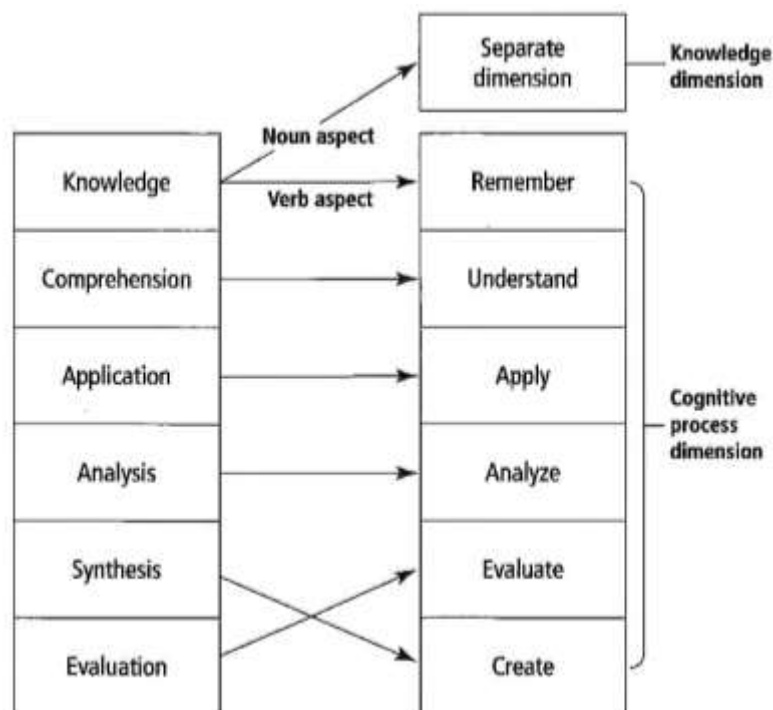

Figure 3: Summary of the Changes from the Original Framework to the Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy

5.3.2. Affective Domain

Objectives of this domain focus on impacting the emotions and attitudes of learners towards a particular subject or phenomenon and causing them to adopt new attitudes in their characters. The affective domain was developed by Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masia and published in 1964 in their book *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals. Handbook II: The Affective Domain.* It includes five levels: **receiving, responding, valuing, organization**, and **characterization by a value** (see Appendix B).

For example, teachers of history in an Algerian school are supposed to do more than presenting abstract information about the Algerian war of liberation; they are to instil the feelings of pride and appreciation of the sacrifices of Algerian men and women during the revolution, among other things. Here are other examples of desirable changes in students' emotions and attitudes:

‒ Raising students' awareness of environment protection.

‒ Valuing the role of women in societies.

‒ Praising the protection of environment by planting trees voluntarily.

5.3.3. Psychomotor Domain

This type of objectives is also known as behavioural objectives as they are related to acquiring new skills based on the changes in bodily movement. Examples from language programs include learning how to write or pronounce words of a foreign language. Those changes are usually caused by a combination of mental processes and muscular actions (neuromuscular activity).

There were different frameworks for the psychomotor domain suggested by a number of researchers; the table below provides more details.

YEAR	AUTHOR'S NAME	CATEGORIES
1970	**Dave**	Imitation Manipulation Precision Articulation Naturalization
1972	**Harrow**	Reflex movements Basic fundamental movement Perceptual Physical activities Skilled movements Non-discursive communication
1972	**Simpson**	Perception Set Guided response Mechanism Complex overt response

Table 5: Taxonomies of Educational Objectives for Skill-Based Goals (Author)

5.4. Advantages of Objectives

According to Brown (1995), there are advantages that can be derived from the use of objectives in planning lessons:

− Objectives help teachers to convert the perceived needs of the students into teaching points.

− They help teachers to clarify and organize their teaching points.

− They help teachers to think through the skills and sub-skills underlying different instructional points.

− They help teachers to decide on what they want the students to be able to do at the end of instruction.

− They help teachers to decide on the appropriate level of specificity for the teaching activities that will be used.

− Objectives help teachers by providing a blueprint for the development of tests and other evaluation instruments.

– They help teachers to adopt, develop, or adapt teaching materials that maximally match the students' needs.

– They help teachers to develop professionally by letting them focus on just what it is that they are trying to accomplish in the classroom.

– They help teachers to evaluate each learner's progress, as well as overall program effectiveness, by permitting the systematic study, modification, and improvement of their perceptions of students' needs, course objectives, tests, materials, teaching, and evaluation procedures.

– Objectives help teachers to contribute to and learn from an ongoing process of curriculum development that draws on the collective energy and strengths of all of the teachers in a program to lessen the load of each individual (p. 96).

CHAPTER 6: CONTENT SELECTION AND ORGANISATION

Tell me and I forget.
Teach me and I remember.
Involve me and I learn. (B. Franklin)

After specifying the aims and objectives of the course, this chapter presents the stage of selecting and grading relevant content for language courses. By the end of the chapter, students are intended to achieve the following outcomes:

– identify the third stage of planning educational programmes.

– understand that selecting the subject matter to be taught in Algerian schools must be in compliance with the official regulations such as the law of orientation on national education that was issued in 2008 by the Ministry of National Education.

– evaluate the performance of learners with reference to the six levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for languages.

6.1 Processes of Content Selection

The act of choosing a particular content to be included in a syllabus means, by definition, leaving out other content as including all the knowledge of a subject matter is beyond reach.

Based on the aims and objectives of the curriculum, content selection and organisation have to go under several processes (Richards, 2001):

– developing a course rationale;

– describing exit levels;

– choosing relevant content;

– sequencing course content; and

– selecting a syllabus framework (cf. Chapter 7)

6.1.1. The Course Rationale

It is a brief description of the reasons for the course and the nature of it; it seeks to answer the following questions:

− Who is this course for?

− What is the course about?

− What kind of teaching and learning will take place in the course?

By answering these questions, the course rationale describes the beliefs, values and goals that underlie the course. It also provides a statement of the course philosophy for anyone who may need such information including students, teachers and potential users (Richards, 2001, p. 145).

6.1.2. Exit Levels

Describing an exit level helps a great deal in the implementation of courses. An exit level is a brief statement that describes an expected outcome by the end of instruction. By way of illustration, the table below shows the expected exit levels of Algerian learners of English in middle schools for the academic year 2020-2021.

YEAR	STATEMENT OF THE EXIT LEVEL/PROFILE
MS1	At the end of level 1 (1st year middle school), the learner will be able to interact, interpret and produce short oral and written messages texts of descriptive type, using written, visual or oral supports, in meaningful situations of communication related to his environment and interests.
MS2	At the end of MS2, the learner will be able to interact, interpret and produce short oral and written messages / texts of descriptive, and prescriptive type, using written, visual or oral support, in meaningful situations of communication related to his environment and interests.
MS3	By the end of Key Stage 2 (end of MS3), the learner will be able to interact, interpret and produce oral and written messages/ texts of average complexity, of a descriptive, narrative, argumentative or prescriptive type, using verbal or non-verbal supports (written texts, audio and visual aids) and in meaningful situations related to his environment and interests.
MS4	By the end of the middle school cycle (end of Key Stage 3), the learner will be able to interact, interpret and produce oral and written messages/ texts of average complexity, of a descriptive, narrative, argumentative or prescriptive type, using verbal or non-verbal supports (written texts, audio and visual aids) and in meaningful situations related to his environment and interests.

Table 6: Exit Levels of Middle School Learners

Table 7 shows the expected exit levels of Algerian learners of English in secondary schools for the academic year 2020-2021.

YEAR	STREAM	STATEMENT OF THE EXIT LEVEL/PROFILE
SE1	Lit	At the end of SE1, the learner will be able to produce oral/written messages / texts of descriptive, narrative, argumentative, expository and prescriptive types of about 120 words using written or oral support.
	Sc & Tech	At the end of SE1, the learner will be able to produce oral/written messages / texts of descriptive, narrative, argumentative, expository and prescriptive types of about 120 words using written or oral support.
SE2	Lit	At the end of SE2, the learner will be able to produce oral/written messages/texts of descriptive, narrative, argumentative, expository and prescriptive types of about 15 lines, using written or oral support.
	FL	At the end of SE2, the learner will be able to produce oral/written messages/texts of descriptive, narrative, argumentative, expository and prescriptive types of about 150 words, using written or oral support.
	Sc	At the end of SE2, the learner will be able to produce oral/written messages/texts of descriptive, narrative, argumentative, expository and prescriptive types of about 150 words, using written or oral support.
	Eco	At the end of SE2, the learner will be able to produce oral/written messages/texts of descriptive, narrative, argumentative, expository and prescriptive types of about 150 words, using written or oral support.
SE3	Lit & FL	At the end of SE3, the learner must produce written messages/texts of descriptive, narrative, argumentative, expository and prescriptive types of about 20 lines, using written or oral support.
	Common streams	At the end of SE3, the learner must produce written messages/texts of descriptive, narrative, argumentative, expository and prescriptive types of about 20 lines, using written or oral support.

Table 7: Exit Levels of Secondary School Learners

We note that the above statements of exit levels are similar and that there is no clear distinction between the expected outcomes from students studying in literary or scientific streams.

We suggest aligning the outcomes of ELT in Algeria to the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* which scales the learners' achievements in foreign languages in six levels as shown in Figure 4.

The different expected outcomes of each level are presented in the table below:

Proficient User	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express himself/ herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent User	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic User	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where s/he lives, people s/he knows and things s/he has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

Table 8: Common Reference Levels: Global Scale (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 24)

					Proficiency
				Advanced	
			Upper Inter		
		Intermediate			
	Pre-inter				
Elementary					
Beginners					
A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2

Figure 4: Stages of Language Learning as Scaled to the CEFR (North et al. 2010, p. 7)

The CEFR has been published in more than 35 languages such as Spanish, French, English, German, and Arabic.

6.1.3. Choosing Course Content

Content selection is a central issue in course design. Courses have to be developed to address a specific set of needs and to cover a given set of objectives. Deciding about the course content does reflect the planners' assumptions about the nature of language, language use, and language learning.

Also, course designers should consider the most essential elements or units of language, and how these can be organized as an efficient basis for language learning (Richards, 2001).

According to Richards & Schmidt (2010), language syllabuses may be based on different criteria such as:

– grammatical items and vocabulary;

– the language needed for different types of situations;

– the meanings and communicative functions which the learner needs to express in the target language;

– the skills underlying different language behaviour; or

– the text types learners need to master. (p. 576)

6.1.4. Determining the Scope and Sequence

This refers to the distribution of content throughout the course. Scope is concerned with the range of coverage of items in the course, that is, it considers answering the following questions:

– What range of content will be covered?

– To what extent should each topic be studied?

As for content sequence, it may be based on the following criteria: simple to complex, chronology, need, prerequisite learning, whole to part or part to whole, or spiral sequencing (Richards, 2001).

– **Simple-to-complex** learning indicates that content is optimally organized in a sequence proceeding from simple components to complex components, highlighting interrelationships among components. Optimal learning results when individuals are presented with easy (often concrete) content and then with more difficult (often abstract) content.

– **Prerequisite** learning is similar to **part-to-whole** learning. It works on the assumption that bits of information must be grasped before other bits can be comprehended.

– **Whole-to-part** learning receives support from cognitive psychologists. They have urged that the curriculum be arranged so that the content or experience is first presented in an overview that provides students with a general idea of the information or situation.

– **Chronological** learning refers to content whose sequence reflects the times of real-world occurrences. History, political science, and world events frequently are organized chronologically (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2018).

6.1.5. Choosing a Framework for the Syllabus

This refers to selecting a particular syllabus type to address the needs of learners. Designers have a number of options; a syllabus could be structural, situational, topical, task-based, etc. In his review of types of syllabuses, Richards (2001, pp. 153-164) referred to nine types:

grammatical, lexical, functional, situational, topical, competency-based, skills (syllabus), task-based, and text-based. Types of syllabuses will be discussed in the next chapter.

6.2. Influencing Factors

In choosing a particular syllabus framework for a course, planners are influenced by the following factors:

– **Knowledge and beliefs about the subject matter**: A syllabus reflects ideas and beliefs about the nature of speaking, reading, writing, or listening.

– **Research and theory**: Research on language use and learning as well as applied linguistics theory sometimes leads to proposals in favour of particular syllabus types.

– **Common practice**: The language teaching profession has built up considerable practical experience in developing language programs and this often serves as the basis for different syllabus types.

– **National or international trends** of language teaching: These refer to the approaches and methods of language teaching such as communicative language teaching (Richards, 2001).

CHAPTER 7: TYPES OF SYLLABUSES

If a child is not learning the way you are teaching,
then you must teach in the way s/he learns.

Rita Dunn

A successive step to the selection and grading of content is organizing the syllabus around a specific component of language, such as grammar or vocabulary. As the selection of a framework for the syllabus echoes the assumptions of designers about the most appropriate content and teaching methods relevant to the learners, it seems useful to review the different methods of language teaching before describing the different types of syllabuses.

In this chapter, we first present the different approaches to language teaching then the different frameworks or types of syllabuses. By the end of the chapter, students are intended to achieve the following outcomes:

– recognise the different types of syllabuses that were developed based on educators' beliefs about the best approach of language teaching.

– develop the skill of critical thinking so as to reflect about ELT syllabuses and textbooks.

7.1. Language Teaching Methods

The term *method* refers to the principles and practices of language teaching that reflect the views on how language is best taught and learned. Richards & Rodgers (2014, p. 363) explained that "approaches and methods reflect different assumptions about *what* is learned, *how* it is learned, and what the *outcomes* of learning are."

The different ways of teaching language have resulted from the different standpoints about the nature of language, the theory behind second language acquisition, goals and objectives of teaching, the type of syllabus, the role of teachers, learners, and instructional materials as well as the activities, techniques, and procedures to use (Richards & Schmidt, 2010).

In the last 200 years or so, a number of language teaching methods emerged reflecting the assumptions of educators about language teaching:

– Grammar Translation Method	19th century
– Direct Method	1890–1930
– Reading Method	1920–1950
– Structural Method	1930–1960
– Audiolingual Method	1950–1970
– Situational Method	1950–1970
– Communicative Language Teaching	1970s–
– Competency-Based Language Teaching	1970s–
– Task-Based Language Teaching	1980s–
– Content-Based Instruction	1990s–

The above list is not exhaustive as there were many educators who created and used different methods that worked with many learners all over the world. In 2017, Thornbury published a book that included a review of as many as 30 language teaching methods. For more information about methods of language teaching, readers are advised to refer to the following books: *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching* by Richards and Rodgers (2014) and the *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics* by Richards and Schmidt (2010).

7.2. Syllabus Types

In what follows, we present a brief account of a number of syllabus types.

7.2.1. Grammatical (Structural) Syllabuses

One of the early assumptions about designing language programs was the fact that vocabulary and grammar are the basic units of language (Richards, 2001). Accordingly,

grammatical content has been used as the main building block of the syllabus with the goal of drilling grammatical structures to achieve competence in language.

Since a syllabus is about selection of content and then arranging (sequencing) that content according to the learners' level, we ask the question: Is it feasible to select a number of grammatical structures and grade them according to the learners' levels? The answer is definitely yes. Usually, deciding about the order of grammatical structures is decided by frequency, difficulty, usefulness, or a combination of these.

In spite of criticism, grammar-based courses are still popular all over the world for the following reasons:

– Traditionally, many language teachers base their courses around grammar.

– Learners expect grammar lessons to be included in the syllabus, and their absence might confuse them and makes the content less appealing.

– As part of communicative competence, grammar deserves a place in language courses.

– Students need grammatical knowledge to pass exams.

> Although the grammar syllabus still dominates the way that many people think about language learning … syllabus designers have become increasingly aware of the need to focus on vocabulary and the way that words cluster and chunk together, and on the purpose of these chunks within an act of communication. (Harmer, 2015, p. 49)

7.2.2. Lexical Syllabuses

This syllabus is centred around teaching lexical items which are arranged in frequency-based vocabulary lists. The rationale behind such syllabus reflects the importance of vocabulary in language learning; it is argued that "the 700 most frequent words of English account for around 70% of all English text" (Willis, 1990, as cited in Richards, 2001, p. 154). Similarly, it is asserted that "87% of words in English texts are among the 2,000 most frequent words in the language" (Nation, 1990, as cited in Alderson, 2007, pp. 384-5).

Such pieces of statistics clearly demonstrate the utility of teaching vocabulary and of designing lexical syllabuses.

Examples of word lists include the General Service List of English Words which contains 2,000 high-frequency word families. Such list is considered a good source for courses at the beginner and intermediate levels. Another example is the Academic Word List containing 570 word families (apart from the 2000 most frequent words) which is used to design courses in English for Academic Purposes.

A recent word list is the Oxford 3000 list that contains 3,000 of the most basic and familiar English words that are essential for the majority of EFL learners; the list also includes basic phrases, but not proper names and numbers. The words of the list have been carefully selected by a group of language experts based on three criteria: frequency, usage range, and familiarity.

7.2.3. Functional Syllabuses

This syllabus is organized around communicative functions or speech acts together with the language items needed for them, such as requesting, apologising, complaining, suggesting, agreeing/disagreeing, etc. Functions are described by Nunan (1988) as "the communicative purposes for which we use language" (p. 35).

Functional syllabuses provided the first serious alternative to grammatical syllabuses as a basis for general-purpose course design. They were first introduced in the 1970s as part of the communicative language teaching movement. "They were one of the first proposals for a communicative syllabus, that is, one that addresses communicative competence rather than linguistic competence" (Richards, 2001, p. 155).

7.2.4. Situational Syllabuses

A situational syllabus is organised around the language needed for different situations such as, at the airport, at a hotel, at the doctor's, in a restaurant, at the post office, in a bank, at the cinema, in a travel agency, etc.

A *situation* is a setting in which particular communicative acts typically occur. A situational syllabus identifies the situations in which the learner will use the language as well as the typical communicative acts and language used in that setting (Richards, 2001, p. 156).

Situational syllabuses have the advantage of presenting language in context and teaching language of immediate practical use. They have been familiar in language teaching textbooks for years, especially with tourists.

7.2.5. Topic-based Syllabuses (Content-based Syllabuses)

A content-based syllabus or a topical syllabus is derived from the content-based instruction method in language teaching. A topic-based curriculum has three characteristics:

− It is based on a subject-matter core;

− It uses authentic language and texts, and

− It is appropriate to the needs of specific groups of learners.

> The fundamental organization of the curriculum is derived from the subject matter, rather than from forms, functions, situations, or skills. Communicative competence is acquired during the process of learning about specific topics such as math, science, art, social studies, culture, business, history, political systems, international affairs, or economics. (Stryker & Leaver, 1997, p. 6)

Although quite motivating to learners, there are some issues that arise with topical syllabuses. The selection of relevant topics that correspond to the level and interests of learners is not an easy task; the same thing applies to grading those topics.

Also, there are concerns about the balance between content and grammar in the syllabus, the ability of teachers to understand topics pertaining to different fields of knowledge, and the basis for assessment being learning the content or learning the language (Richards, 2001).

7.2.6. Skill-based Syllabuses

The skills syllabus is organised around the macro-skills (receptive and productive skills) as well as the underlying micro-skills of language. The idea of approaching a language through skills is based on the belief that learning a complex activity, such as writing a paragraph, involves the mastery of a number of individual skills or micro-skills that together make up the activity.

7.2.7. Task-based Syllabuses (Procedural Syllabuses)

This type takes its name from the *Task-Based Language Teaching* approach which is a manifestation of Communicative Language Approach. This syllabus is built around tasks or activities to be performed by the learners with no pre-determined grammatical structures to be learnt. A task is defined by Branden (2006, p. 4) as "an activity in which a person engages in order to attain an objective, and which necessitates the use of language." As opposed to the typical PPP lesson planning, instruction starts by doing interactive tasks and based on their performance, students are taught the missing grammatical information.

There are different types of tasks; they could be classroom tasks that can be used to create context for communication, or real world tasks such as getting information about a forthcoming movie projection. As regards assessment, it is done on completing the task rather than the language used to do the task. Table 8 summarizes the features of task-based language teaching.

Key characteristics	Teacher role	Learner role	Common classroom activities
– Use of tasks as core units of planning and instruction – Use of real-world outcomes – Focus on lexis and speaking, and integration of skills	– Creates authentic, meaning-focused tasks – Provides interactional support – Encourages focus on form	– Collaborator – Risk-taker – Language user	– Information gap, jigsaw, problem solving and other collaborative tasks – Communication activities

Table 9: Features of Task-based Language Teaching (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 393)

Candlin (1987, as cited in Nunan, 1988, pp. 45-6) listed some criteria for including good tasks in the syllabus; a good task is supposed to:

– promote attention to meaning, purpose, negotiation;

– encourage attention to relevant data;

– draw objectives from the communicative needs of learners;

– allow for flexible approaches to the task, offering different modes of participation;

– allow for different solutions depending on the skills and strategies drawn on by learners;

– involve learner contributions, attitudes, and affects;

– be challenging but not threatening, to promote risk-taking;

– require input from all learners in terms of knowledge, skills, participation;

– define a problem to be worked through by learners, centred on the learners but guided by the teacher;

– involve language use in the solving of the task;

– allow for co-evaluation by the learner and teacher of the task and of its performance;

– develop the learners' capacities to estimate consequences and repercussions of the task in question;

– provide opportunities for meta-communication and metacognition (i.e. provide opportunities for learners to talk about communication and about learning);

– provide opportunities for language practice;

– promote learner-training for problem-sensing and problem-solving;

– promote sharing of information and expertise;

– provide monitoring and feedback, of the learner and the task;

– heighten learners' consciousness of the process and encourage reflection;

– promote a critical awareness about data and the processes of language learning;

– ensure cost-effectiveness and a high return on investment.

7.2.8. Competency-based Syllabuses

This syllabus takes its name from the competency-based instruction (CBI) which is an approach to language teaching that focuses on the outcomes of teaching. Schenk (1978, as cited in Richards, 2013, p. 24) describes the characteristics of CBI as follows:

Competency-based education 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.

As the word *competency* indicates, instruction considers the skills students need to use English in the real world; those skills or competencies become the building blocks of the syllabus. By way of illustration, the Common European Framework of Reference for languages is built around specifications of competencies at different levels of language proficiency.

Competencies refer to observable behaviors that are necessary for the 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 (Richards, 2001, p. 129).

Students are supposed to learn to do something useful with the language they learn. In addition to knowledge of the language, they are to be equipped with the skills and experiences necessary for being global citizens of the future.

In this regard, the *Cambridge Life Competencies Framework* encompasses the following six areas of competency that are to be integrated into English language programmes:

– Creative Thinking;

– Critical Thinking;

– Learning to Learn;[*]

– Communication;

– Collaboration;

– Social Responsibilities (Table 10).

The above competencies are meant to prepare students to deal with the challenges of the future; acquiring the language must be accompanied with acquiring the 21st century skills.

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[*] cf. Labed, N. (2007). *Learning to Learn and Learning to Think: Investigating Compensation System 2nd-Years' Learning Capacities at the University of Constantine* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Constantine]. http://archives.umc.edu.dz/handle/123456789/11403

COMPETENCY	KEY AREAS
Creative Thinking	– Participating in creative activities – Creating new content from own ideas or other resources – Using newly-created content to solve problems and make decisions
Critical Thinking	– Understanding and analysing links between ideas – Evaluating ideas, arguments and options – Synthesising ideas and information
Learning to Learn	– Practical skills for participating in learning – Taking control of own learning – Reflecting on and evaluating own learning success
Communication	– Using appropriate language and register for context – Managing conversations – Participating with appropriate confidence and clarity
Collaboration	– Taking personal responsibility for own contribution to a group task – Listening respectfully and responding constructively to others' contributions – Managing the sharing of tasks in a project – Working towards a resolution related to a task
Social Responsibilities	– Understanding personal and social responsibilities as part of a group and in society – including citizenship – Taking active roles including leadership – Understanding and describing own and others' cultures – Understanding and discussing global issues

Table 10: Cambridge Life Competencies Framework[*]

7.3. What is the Best Syllabus?

This question is easy and difficult to answer at the same time. In an article entitled *There is no Best Method – Why?* Prabhu referred to the context (setting, environment) as a significant factor about the best language teaching method. Success language teaching and/or learning depends largely on the people involved in the process as each method is effective with specific learners in specific cultural context; there is no shoe that fits all sizes.

We can think of an eclectic approach if we assemble working parts from different methods. Prabhu (1990, pp. 174-5) explained, "perhaps the best method varies from one teacher to another, but only in the sense that it is best for each teacher to operate with his/her

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own sense of plausibility at any given time." We consider that the same thing applies to answering the question about the best syllabus.

Ur (1991, p. 178) referred to a mixed or a multi-strand syllabus that combines a number of language components to maximally serve the needs of both teachers and learners: "modern syllabuses are combining different aspects in order to be maximally comprehensive and helpful to teachers and learners; in these you may find specification of topics, tasks, functions and notions, as well as grammar and vocabulary." Likewise, Richards (2001, p. 164) suggested an *integrated* syllabus that incorporates a number of language strands: "In most courses there will generally be a number of different syllabus strands, such as grammar linked to skills and texts, tasks linked to topics and functions, or skills linked to topics and texts." In brief, the local environment decides which is the best method or syllabus for learners.

CHAPTER 8: ESP COURSE DESIGN

ESP contrasts with general English which is sometimes called TENOR,
or teaching English for no obvious reason!

In the previous chapter, we presented a review of a number of syllabus types which are organized around different units of language. These types of syllabuses are usually intended for the teaching of English for general purposes such as preparing for general examinations or using the language in daily life situations. However, not all learners have exactly the same goals of learning the language. Some learners need to use the language as part of fulfilling the tasks of their jobs or as part of studying at higher education institutions in English-speaking countries. So, the demand for specific content by students and professionals incited course developers to think of designing a syllabus which is tailored to their specific needs.

By the end of the chapter, students are intended to achieve the following outcomes:

− identify the different stages of designing ESP courses.

− perceive the differences between teaching general English and teaching English for specific purposes.

8.1. Defining English for Specific Purposes

English for Specific (Special) Purposes, as defined by Blackie (1979, p. 266), refers to the "programmes designed for groups of learners who are homogeneous with respect to aims, and whose specific learning objectives have been quantified and stated in communicative terms." As for Richards & Schmidt (2010, p. 198), ESP describes "the role of English in a language course or programme of instruction in which the content and aims of the course are fixed by the specific needs of a particular group of learners." These needs might be occupational or academic. Examples of ESP courses include English for science, English for computer users, English for nursing, and English for Medicine in higher education studies.

It is noteworthy that ESP is not neither an approach, nor a method or a technique in language teaching; "the only feature common to all types of ESP courses is the selection of the content and teaching approach according to the perceived needs of the learners" (Barnard & Zemach, 2014, p. 306). So, needs assessment generally plays a significant role in ESP rather than in EGP.

English for Specific Purposes contrasts with General English, which is aimed at a very wide range of learners. The table below presents the main differences between EGP and ESP.

EGP	ESP
Any age learners	Adult learners
Learners have a wide range of goals	Learners have a common goal
Learners have a range of motivation	Learners have high external motivation
Are long term	Are short term
May not bear in mind student needs	Based on needs analysis
Have no specific focus	Have an academic, professional or workplace focus
Have general content	Have specific content
May include limited exposure to target communicative events	Are based on specific target communication
Learners may be at all levels, including absolute beginners	Learners usually have a basic command of English
A full range of lexis is included	Focus on specific lexis
Usually incorporates the full grammatical system. This may be the central organisational strand in the syllabus	May have a limited focus on grammar
All four skills are taught with equal focus	A limited range of skills taught – for example, writing and speaking
Methodology tends to be similar across courses adopting current thinking in English-language teaching in the region	ESP courses may be taught with methodologies relevant to the content field

Table 11: Typical Characteristics of ESP and EGP Courses (Woodrow, 2018, p. 6)

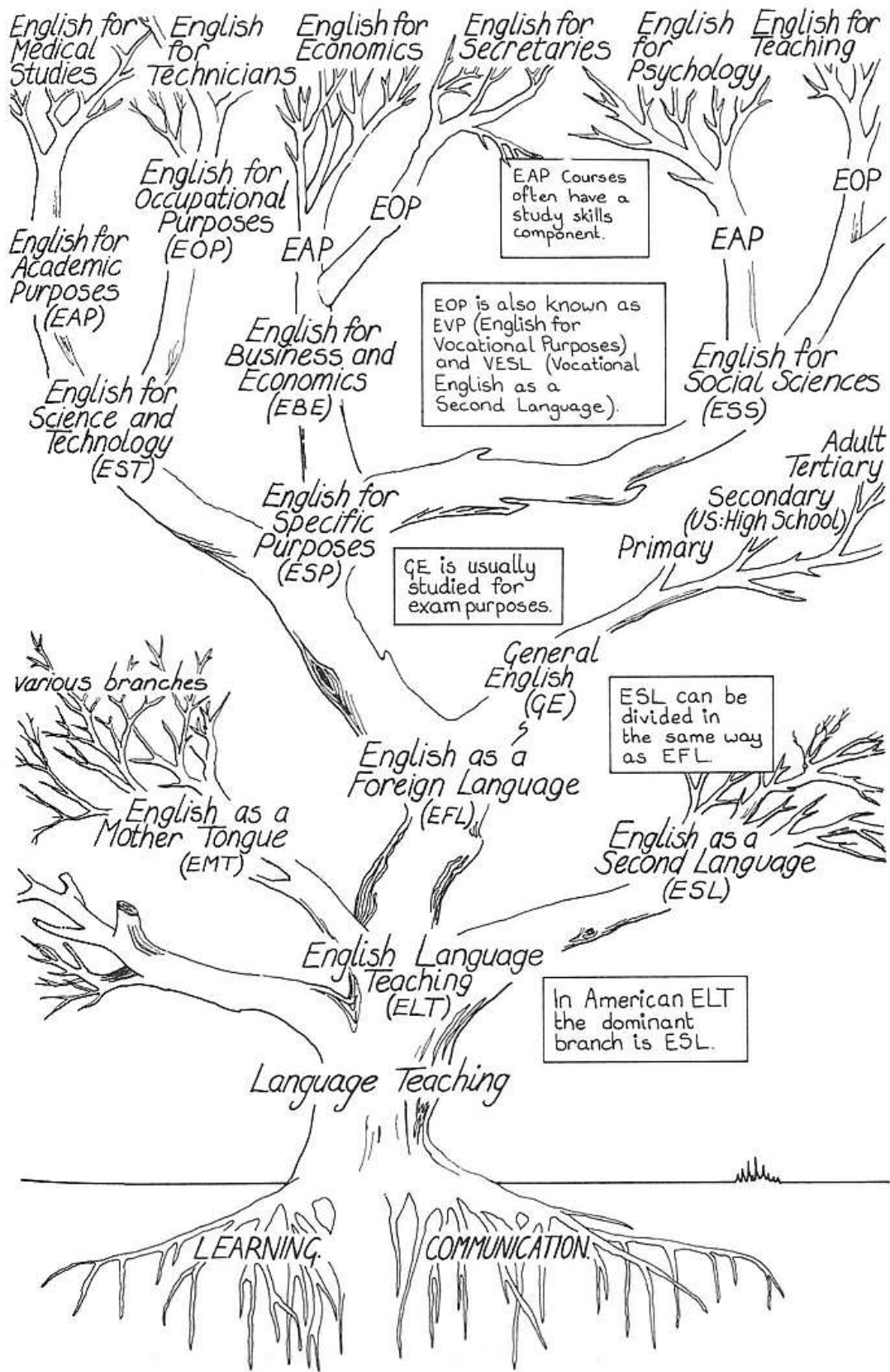Figure 5 shows the main branches of general English and English for specific purposes being part of the tree of ELT.

Figure 5: The Tree of ELT (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p. 17)

Overall, ESP courses are intended mainly for two categories of users for communication purposes in the workplace: university students and working professionals. At university, students receive pre-experience courses as a training for their future job (e.g. English for Medicine). This branch of ESP is sometimes called ESAP – **English for Specific Academic Purposes.** ESP courses can also be created for **working professionals**. In such case, the course will also cater to the specific needs of the organisation or employer(s) in general. Here, ESP teachers would take advantage of the situations and texts that the professional learners actually need English for in the workplace by finding / developing relevant materials (Day & Krzanowski, 2011).

8.2. ESP Appearance

Being relatively a recent branch of English language teaching, ESP originated in the 1960s with the spread of technology and commerce. With English becoming gradually a lingua franca in business affairs, ESP appeared as a response to two factors: introducing the concept of needs analysis in language teaching (after being used in market research) and the emergence of communicative approach with Munby's (1978) *Communicative Syllabus Design* (Richards, 2001; Barnard & Zemach, 2014; Woodrow, 2018).

8.3. Designing ESP Courses

As it is the case with other types of syllabuses, designing an ESP course includes a number of stages (see the figure below):

→ analysing the needs of learners;

→ setting the learning objectives of the course (based on the analysis of learners' needs);

→ selecting and grading a specific content in accordance with the course objectives;

→ choice of methods and development of materials;

→ assessment of learners' performance;

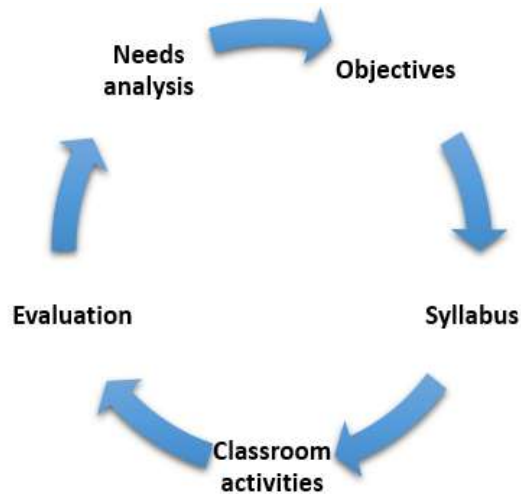→ evaluation (which leads to revision or renewal of the course).

Figure 6: ESP Course Design Cycle (Woodrow, 2018, p. 59)

Analysing the needs of ESP learners involves the process of collecting quantitative and qualitative data from the stakeholders.

> Needs analysis is the first step in the course-design cycle in ESP and refers to the systematic analysis of what learners need in order to operate in the target communicative situation. This is contrasted with the learner's current communicative ability. The ESP course is usually based on the gap between these two. A present-situation analysis may be conducted to discover the learners' immediate needs. These are likely to differ from target needs. (Woodrow, 2018, p. 40)

Needs analysis in ESP is defined as "the systematic collection and analysis of all information necessary for defining and validating a defensible curriculum" (Brown, 2016, as cited in Woodrow, 2018, p. 40). The figure below shows the steps of needs assessment in ESP courses.
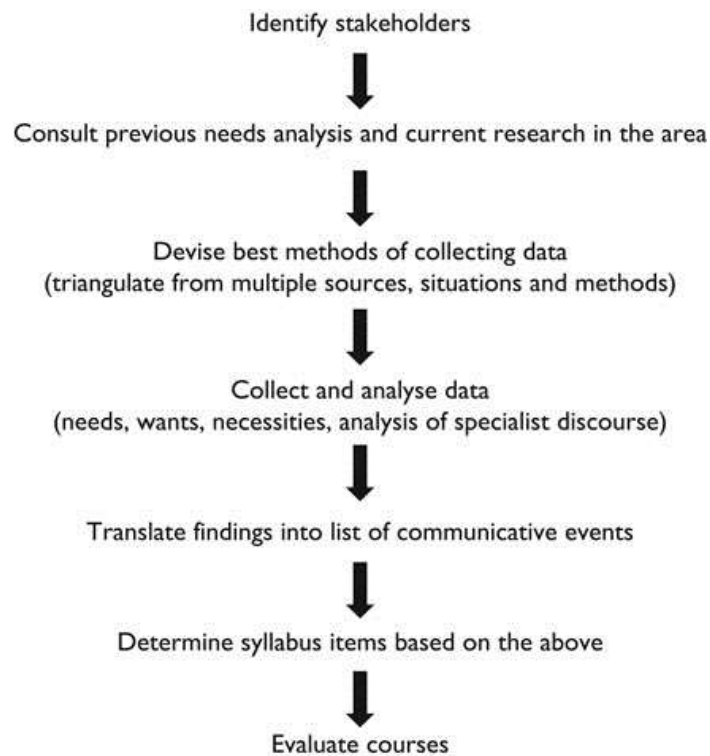
Figure 7: Steps in Needs Analysis in ESP Course Design (Woodrow, 2018, p. 29)

Day & Krzanowski (2011) suggested the following questions to be considered by teachers in order to define the needs of ESP learners:

− Is the teacher expected to deliver a ready-made ESP course or can s/he adapt or modify an existing course?

− Who are the learners? Are they university students or a group of employees (professionals) of a particular company?

− Are they paying for the course themselves or are they being sponsored by their employer(s)? If sponsored, needs analysis is to include the expectations of both the learners and their employer(s).

− Will the learners be consulted in the process of the syllabus design (through syllabus negotiation) or will they assign this task to the teacher hoping that s/he gets it right for them?

− Are ESP learners homogenous in their skills or are they a mixed ability group?

− Does the client (or the organisation) have funds for the design of new materials to supplement what cannot be readily found in published coursebooks?

– Which aspects of their professional register do they use in the workplace?

– Where and how to deliver the ESP course? Will the learners have enough time for self-study or homework after the classes?

– What are the learning styles and preferences of learners (e.g. visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, tactile, ICT-oriented)?

– To what extent is the teacher familiar with the specific subject matter? (pp. 9-10)

Information about learners' needs can be collected (from stakeholders) using quantitative methods, such as questionnaires, language audits and language tests, and / or qualitative methods, such as interviews, observations and discourse analysis.

8.4. Materials

Materials are a key component in language programs. They serve as the language input learners receive in the language classroom, and provide specified details about content. They are commonly called 'content' in curriculum design and development (Nunan, 1988).

According to Tomlinson (2011, p. 2), materials development "refers to anything which is done by writers, teachers or learners to provide sources of language input, to exploit those sources in ways which maximise the likelihood of intake and to stimulate purposeful output."

Materials are influenced by the developer's beliefs and conceptions about teaching and learning. The process of development takes six main factors into consideration:

– learners;

– The curriculum and the context;

– resources and facilities;

– Personal confidence and competence;

– copyright compliance; and

– time (Howard & Major, 2005).

Here is a recommended sequence for preparing materials for specific purposes (as suggested by Barnard & Zemach, 2014, p. 316):

1. Determine the needs and preferences of the students and institution/corporation through questionnaires and/or interviews.

2. Decide what sort of language contexts the course will focus on (e.g., lectures, business meetings).

3. Decide on the categories for presenting the language in the course (e.g., grammar, function, lexis, situation, topic, communicative skill).

5. Decide what language skills and sub-skills the course will focus on (e.g., listening, speaking, reading, writing), taking into account learners' and company's objectives.

6. Design the syllabus; will it be cumulative, or will each unit/lesson be independent?

7. Decide the types of activities that will be used in the course (e.g., individual, pair, group, whole class).

8. Decide on the page layout of worksheets; prepare templates.

9. Prepare the materials.

10. Pilot the materials; collect and collate feedback through questionnaires and interviews.

11. Revise the materials.

12. Use the materials.

13. Get feedback from students, teachers and sponsors during and after the course through questionnaires, interviews, classroom observations by peer teachers and managers, videotaping of lessons, etc.

As for the assessment of learners in an ESP course, and because the aims are subjective and learner-led, the assessment in many ways is related to their performance in the workplace.

CHAPTER 9: CURRICULUM EVALUATION

The heart of the systematic approach to language curriculum design is evaluation.

Brown (1995, p. 217)

Chapter 9 presents the different theoretical aspects relevant to syllabus evaluation and innovation. By the end of the chapter, students are intended to achieve the following outcomes:

− identify the ultimate stage of planning educational programmes.

− recognise and use the different checklists for textbook evaluation.

− develop the skill of critical thinking so as to reflect about ELT syllabuses and textbooks.

9.1. Introduction

Evaluation is the process of collecting the necessary information for the purpose of taking decisions. In this sense, curriculum evaluation is the process of gathering information about the language programs and the individuals related to their implementation for the purpose of taking decisions about any probable improvements in the syllabuses, their objectives, materials, and methods of measuring learners' outcomes.

Taking place by the end of the course, curriculum evaluation would enable syllabus designers a better understanding of issues that might hinder the learning / teaching process.

9.2. Defining Terms

In this section, we present basic definitions of the following terms: evaluation, assessment, and testing.

9.2.1. Evaluation

According to *the Cambridge Guide to Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages*, evaluation is "a process of collecting, analysing and interpreting information about teaching and learning in order to make informed decisions that enhance student achievement and the success of educational programmes." (Genesse, 2001, p. 144)

Evaluation is related to decisions about the quality of the programme itself and decisions about individuals in the programmes. The evaluation of programmes may involve the study of curriculum, objectives, materials, and tests or grading systems. The evaluation of individuals involves decisions about entrance to programmes, placement, progress, and achievement. In evaluating both programmes and individuals, tests and other measures are frequently used. (Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 206)

9.2.2. Assessment and Testing

Both terms are considered synonymous to the concept of evaluation. Still, *assessment* is mainly concerned with the performance of learners, while evaluation is much larger in scope and aims. As for *testing,* it is only one component in the evaluation process (Rea-Dickins & Germaine, 1992). According to Richards and Schmidt (2010), "the term testing is often associated with large-scale standardized tests, whereas the term assessment is used in a much wider sense to mean a variety of approaches in testing and assessment." (p. 36)

9.3. Curriculum Evaluation

Curriculum evaluation has become of increasing interest to educators and curriculum planners Since the 1960s (Richards, 2001). Richards and Schmidt (2010, p. 466) defines programme evaluation as "the determination of how successful an educational programme or curriculum is in achieving its goals." As for Kelly (2004), "curriculum evaluation is … the process by which we attempt to gauge the value and effectiveness of any particular piece of educational activity." (p. 137)

9.3.1. Goals of Curriculum Evaluation

As suggested by Glatthorn et al. (2019), the primary objectives of curriculum evaluation are related to achieve the following:

1. Determine the outcomes of a program.

2. Help in deciding whether to accept or reject a program.

3. Ascertain the need for the revision of the course content.

4. Help in future development of the curriculum material for continuous improvement.

5. Improve methods of teaching and instructional techniques. (p. 500)

9.3.2. Aspects of Evaluation

Evaluating a language program requires collecting relevant information about a number of aspects such as content of the course, materials and resources, learning environment, aims and objectives, tests, time, teaching methods, and any potential problems or difficulties in program implementation. The table below summarizes the different aspects of course evaluation as suggested by Richards (2001):

CURRICULUM DESIGN	to provide insights about the quality of program planning and organization
THE SYLLABUS AND PROGRAM CONTENT	for example, how relevant and engaging it was, how easy or difficult, how successful tests and assessment procedures were
CLASSROOM PROCESSES	to provide insights about the extent to which a program is being implemented appropriately
MATERIALS OF INSTRUCTION	to provide insights about whether specific materials are aiding student learning
THE TEACHERS	for example, how they conducted their teaching, what their perceptions were of the program, what they taught
TEACHER TRAINING	to assess whether training teachers have received is adequate
THE STUDENTS	for example, what they learned from the program, their perceptions of it, and how they participated in it
MONITORING OF PUPIL PROGRESS	to conduct formative (in-progress) evaluations of student learning
LEARNER MOTIVATION	to provide insights about the effectiveness of teachers in aiding students to achieve goals and objectives of the school
THE INSTITUTION	for example, what administrative support was provided, what resources were used, what communication networks were employed
LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	to provide insights about the extent to which students are provided with a responsive environment in terms of their educational needs
STAFF DEVELOPMENT	to provide insights about the extent to which the school system provides the staff opportunities to increase their effectiveness
DECISION MAKING	to provide insights about how well the school staff – principals, teachers, and others – make decisions that result in learner benefits

Table 12: Aspects of Evaluation (Richards, 2001, pp. 286-7)

9.3.3. Participants in Curriculum Evaluation

In evaluating language programs, different stakeholders can provide information to help take decisions about the course. *Insiders* are individuals who are directly involved in implementing the program such as students and faculty members; *outsiders* are those who provide support but not necessarily involved in the course such as inspectors and administrative staff. Parents and employers can also be included in evaluation as their opinions help decide about content of the program.

9.4. Models of Curriculum Evaluation

There exists a number of models that serve the process of curriculum evaluation. Here is a list of the six models included in Glatthorn's (2019) handbook – *Curriculum Leadership: Strategies for Development and Implementation:*

– Tyler's Objectives-Centered Model;   (1950)

– Stufflebeam's Context, Input, Process, Product (CIPP) Model;   (1971)

– Scriven's Goal-Free Model;   (1972)

– Stake's Responsive Model;   (1975)

– Eisner's Connoisseurship Model; and   (1979)

– Bradley's Effectiveness Model.   (1985)

For instance, there are 10 key indicators in Bradley's Model that can be used to assess the quality of an existing curriculum; they include the following markers:

1. Vertical curriculum continuity

2. Horizontal curriculum continuity

3. Instruction based on curriculum

4. Curriculum priority

5. Broad involvement

6. Long-range planning

7. Decision-making clarity

8. Positive human relations

9. Theory-into-practice approach

10. Planned change

9.5. Curriculum Innovation

Once the evaluation of a language program is over, syllabus designers may think of adapting, changing, or even renovating an existing curriculum. Such revision would lead to the initial stage of developing courses to check whether the program is still responsive to the learners' needs or not (Figure 8).
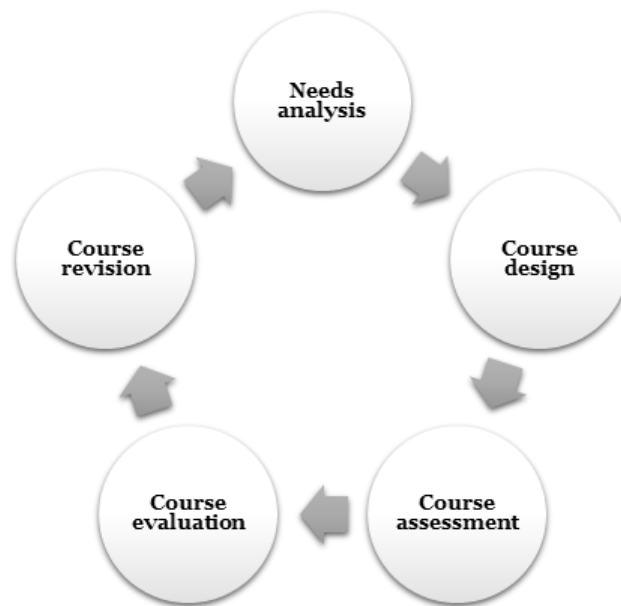

Figure 8: Course Design and Assessment Cycle (Woodrow, 2018, p. 94)

The following questions need to be asked in case of any proposed curriculum innovation:

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

– Is the innovation very complicated and difficult to understand?

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

− 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, as cited in Richards, 2001, p. 103)

CHAPTER 10: TEXTBOOK EVALUATION

Textbooks are one of the most important educational inputs:
texts reflect basic ideas about a national culture, and ... are often a
flashpoint of cultural struggle and controversy

UNESCO Guidebook on Textbook Research & Textbook Revision

Evaluating or revising textbooks refers to the process of gathering information about their content and usage for the sake of deciding about their utility in a language programme. This chapter presents issues relevant to textbook use and evaluation. By the end of the chapter, students are intended to achieve the following outcomes:

− identify the role of the textbook as assisting manual for teachers and learners, but not as the master.

− recognise and use the different checklists for textbook evaluation.

− develop the skill of critical thinking so as to reflect about ELT syllabuses and textbooks.

10.1. Defining Textbook Evaluation

According to Tomlinson (2003, p. 15), "materials evaluation is a procedure that involves measuring the value (or potential value) of a set of learning materials." Such evaluation involves making decisions regarding the impact of materials on the individuals who use them; it tries to measure some or all of the following aspects:

− the appeal of the materials to the learners;

− the credibility of the materials to learners, teachers and administrators;

− the validity of the materials;

− the reliability of the materials;

− the ability of the materials to interest the learners and the teachers;

− the ability of the materials to motivate the learners;

− the value of the materials in terms of short-term learning (e.g. for performance on tests and examinations);

− the value of the materials in terms of long-term learning (of both language and of communication skills);

− the learners' perceptions of the value of the materials;

− the teachers' perceptions of the value of the materials;

− the assistance given to the teachers in terms of preparation, delivery and assessment;

− the flexibility of the materials (e.g. the extent to which it is easy for a teacher to adapt the materials to suit a particular context);

− the contribution made by the materials to teacher development;

− the match with administrative requirements.

10.2. Roles of Textbooks

According to Rudy (2003, p. 37), "the coursebook has become an almost universal element of ELT, playing as it does a vital and positive part in the everyday job of teaching and learning of English." Coursebooks have multiple roles in ELT and can serve as:

− a resource for material presentation (spoken and written);

− a source of activities for learner practice and communicative interaction;

− a reference source for learners on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, etc.

− a source of stimulation and ideas for classroom language activities;

− a syllabus (where they reflect learning objectives which have already been determined);

− a resource for self-directed learning or self-access work;

− a support for less experienced teachers who have yet to gain in confidence (Cunningsworth, 1995, p. 7).

10.3. Advantages and Disadvantages of Textbooks

Textbooks, like other materials, have a number of characteristics depending on how they are used and the context for their use. Graves (2000, p. 174) listed the following advantages:

– Textbooks provide a syllabus for the course because the authors have made decisions about what will be learned and in what order.

– They provide security for the students because they have a kind of road map of the course: they know what to expect, they know what is expected of them.

– They provide a set of visuals, activities, readings, etc., and so saves the teacher time in finding or developing such materials.

– They provide teachers with a basis for assessing students' learning. Some texts include tests or evaluation tools.

– They may include supporting materials (e.g. teacher's guide, CDs, worksheets, video).

– They provide consistency within a program across a given level, if all teachers use the same textbook. If textbooks follow a sequence, as within a series, it provides consistency between levels.

Graves (2000) also suggested a number of potential limitations when using a textbook:

– The content or examples may not be relevant or appropriate to a particular group of learners.

– The content may not be at the right level.

– There may be too much focus on one or more aspects of language and not enough focus on others, or it may not include everything teachers want to include.

– There may not be the right mix of activities (too much of X, too little of Y.)

– The sequence is lockstep.

– The activities, readings, visuals, etc. may be boring.

– The material may go out of date.

– The timetable for completing the textbook or parts of it may be unrealistic.

Likewise, Richards (2001, pp. 254-6) suggested similar advantages and disadvantages of textbooks.

10.4. Issues in Textbook Evaluation

Coursebooks are not meant to replace teachers; they are not ideal in all situations, either. Learners differ in their use of textbooks and what seems to work in a given context can be completely inappropriate in other contexts. Publishers tend to advertise for the huge success of their textbooks only to realise that such success is motivated by commercial purposes. Would-be teachers are not supposed to rely heavily on textbooks; still, a complete rejection of all the textbooks seems a bit of an exaggeration (as it is the case with DOGME approach to English language teaching).

A decisive element in the suitability of a textbook is when fulfilling the needs of learners. We need to gather enough information about the setting of using a coursebook before deciding on its suitability for learners. So, before the evaluation of a textbook can take place, Richards (2001) suggested the need for investigating information relevant to the role of the textbook as well as the roles of teachers and learners in the program:

→ **The role of the textbook in the program.** Here are some issues to be considered:

– Is there a well-developed curriculum that describes the objectives syllabus and content of the program or will this be determined by the textbook?

– Will the book or textbook series provide the core of the program, or is it one of several different books that will be used?

– Will it be used with small classes or large ones?

– Will learners be expected to buy a workbook as well or should the textbook provide all the practice students need?

→ **The teachers in the program.** Here are some issues to be considered:

– How experienced are the teachers in the program and what is their level of training?

– Are they native speakers of English?

– If not, how well do they speak English?

– Do teachers tend to follow the textbook closely or do they use the book simply as a resource?

– Do teachers play a part in selecting the books they teach from?

– Are teachers free to adapt and supplement the book?

→ **The learners in the program.** Here are some issues to be considered:

– Is each student required to buy a book?

– What do learners typically expect in a textbook?

– Will they use the book in class and at home?

– How will they use the book in class?

– Is it the primary source of classroom activities?

– How much are they prepared to pay for a book?

10.5. Guidelines for Evaluating Textbooks

Cunningsworth (1995) proposed the following criteria for evaluating coursebooks:

1. They should correspond to learners' needs. They should match the aims and objectives of the language learning program.

2. They should reflect the uses (present or future) that learners will make of the language. Textbooks should be chosen that will help equip students to use language effectively for their own purposes.

3. They should take account of students' needs as learners and should facilitate their learning processes, without dogmatically imposing a rigid 'method.'

4. They should have a clear role as a support for learning. Like teachers, they mediate between the target language and the learner.

10.6. Examples of Checklists for Evaluating Textbooks

The literature on textbook evaluation has offered a number of checklists. However, Sheldon (1988, p. 245) argued that "coursebook assessment is fundamentally a subjective, rule of-thumb activity, and that no neat formula, grid, or system will ever provide a definitive yardstick."

In his checklist for evaluating textbooks, Sheldon (1988) suggested 17 different factors as follows (see Appendix C):

Rationale

Availability

User Definition

Layout / Graphics

Accessibility

Linkage

Selection / Grading

Physical Characteristics

Appropriacy

Authenticity

Sufficiency

Cultural Bias

Educational Validity

Stimulus / Practice / Revision

Flexibility

Guidance

Overall Value for Money

Cunningsworth (1995) also suggested a checklist for textbook evaluation and selection; it revolves around asking a number of questions relevant to the following aspects (see Appendix D):

Aims and approaches

Design and organization

Language content

Skills

Topic

Methodology

Teachers' books

Practical considerations

As for Brown & Lee (2015, p. 233), they suggested a framework for textbook evaluation which is composed of the following twenty criteria:

→ **Program and Course**

1. Does the textbook support the goals of the curriculum and program?

2. Is the textbook part of a series, and if so, is it at the appropriate level of your students?

3. Are a sufficient number of the course objectives addressed by the textbook?

4. Is the textbook gauged for learners at the appropriate age, ability, purpose, and background?

5. Is the textbook attractive and motivating in its design and layout?

6. Is the textbook sensitive to the cultural background(s) of the students?

→ **Approach**

7. Are the roles of teacher and learners in concert with current knowledge about second language acquisition?

8. Do the sequencing, difficulty levels, pacing, and variety represented in the textbook reflect current knowledge about second language acquisition?

9. Does the approach challenge learners to use and develop their own strategies and to work toward autonomy?

→ **Skills**

10. Does the textbook account for a variety of learners' preferences and styles as they develop various skills?

11. Is the 'mix' of skills presented in the textbook appropriate for the course?

12. Does the textbook provide learners with adequate guidance as they are acquiring these skills?

→ **Techniques and Supplementary Materials**

13. Do the techniques in the textbook promote learners' language development?

14. Is there a balance between controlled and open-ended techniques?

15. Do the techniques reinforce what students have already learned and represent a progression from simple to more complex?

16. Are the techniques varied in format so that they will continually motivate and challenge learners?

17. Does the textbook include supplementary photocopy-ready handouts, workbook, work sheets, assessments, audio or video disc, and/or web-based exercises?

18. Is there an accompanying teacher's guide?

→ **Practical Issues**

19. Is the textbook available and cost-effective?

20. Can the book be obtained in a timely manner? Is it available as an e-book?

We note that the last question in the above framework is about the provision of the textbook as an e-book which is particularly relevant to 21st century language education.[*]

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[*] For a constructive review of other models of checklists, readers are advised to consult the doctoral dissertation of Bader (2017, pp. 119-143).

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APPENDIX A: Outline of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives

in the Cognitive Domain

1.00 KNOWLEDGE

    1.10 Knowledge of specifics

        1.11 Knowledge of terminology

        1.12 Knowledge of specific facts

    1.20 Knowledge of ways and means of dealing with specifics

        1.21 Knowledge of conventions

        1.22 Knowledge of trends and sequences

        1.23 Knowledge of classifications and categories

        1.24 Knowledge of criteria

        1.25 Knowledge of methodology

    1.30 Knowledge of universals and abstractions in a field

        1.31 Knowledge of principles and generalizations

        1.32 Knowledge of theories and structures

2.00 COMPREHENSION

    2.10 Translation

    2.20 Interpretation

    2.30 Extrapolation

3.00 APPLICATION

4.00 ANALYSIS

    4.10 Analysis of elements

    4.20 Analysis of relationships

    4.30 Analysis of organizational principles

5.00 SYNTHESIS

    5.10 Production of unique communication

    5.20 Production of a plan, or proposed set of operations

    5.30 Derivation of a set of abstract relations

6.00 EVALUATION

    6.10 Judgments in germs of internal evidence

    6.20 Judgments in terms of external criteria

© **Source**: Bloom et al. (1956, pp. 201-7)

APPENDIX B: Outline of the Affective Domain Taxonomy

1.00 RECEIVING

    1.10 Awareness

    1.20 Willingness to receive

    1.30 Controlled or selected attention

2.00 RESPONDING

    2.10 Acquiescence in responding

    2.20 Willingness to respond

    2.30 Satisfaction in response

3.00 VALUING

    3.10 Acceptance of a value

    3.20 Preference for a value

    3.30 Commitment

4.00 ORGANIZATION

    4.10 Conceptualization of a value

    4.20 Organization of a value system

5.00 CHARACTERIZATION BY A VALUE OR VALUE COMPLEX

    5.10 Generalized set

    5.20 Characterization

© **Source**: Brown (1995, p. 84)

APPENDIX C: Textbook Evaluation Checklist

Rationale
- Why was the book written in the first place, and what gaps is it intended to fill?
- Are you given information about the Needs Analysis or classroom piloting that were undertaken?
- Are the objectives spelt out?

Availability
- Is it easy to obtain sample copies and support material for inspection?
- Can you contact the publisher's representatives in case you want further information about the content, approach, or pedagogical detail of the book?

User definition
- Is there a clear specification of the target age range, culture, assumed background, probable learning preferences, and educational expectations?
- Are entry/exit language levels precisely defined?
- In the case of an ESP textbook, what degree of specialist knowledge is assumed?

Layout/graphics
- Is there an optimum density and mix of text and graphical material on each page?
- Are the artwork and typefaces functional? colourful? appealing?

Accessibility
- Is the material clearly organized?
- Can the student find his or her location in the material at any point, i.e. is it possible to have a clear view of the «progress» made, and how much still needs to be covered?
- Are there indexes, vocabulary lists, section headings, and other methods of signposting the content that allow the student to use the material easily?
- Is the learner (as opposed to the teacher) given clear advice about how the book and its contents could be most effectively exploited?

Linkage
- Do the units and exercises connect in terms of theme, situation, topic, pattern of skill development, or grammatical/lexical 'progression'?
- Is the nature of such connection made obvious, for example by placing input texts and supporting exercises in close proximity?
- Does the textbook cohere both internally and externally (e.g. with other books in a series)?

Selection/grading
- Does the introduction, practice, and recycling of new linguistic items seem to be shallow / steep enough for your students?
- Is there a discernible system at work in the selection and grading of these items?
- Is the linguistic inventory presented appropriate for jour purposes, bearing in mind the LI background(s) of your learners?

Physical characteristics
- Is there space to write in the book?
- Is the book robust? too large? too heavy?
- Is the spine labelled?
- Is it a book that could be used more than once?

Appropriacy
- Is the material substantial enough or interesting enough to hold the attention of learners?
- Is it pitched at the right level of maturity and language, and at the right conceptual level?
- Is it topical?

Authenticity
- Is the content obviously realistic, being taken from L1 material not initially intended for ELT purposes?

- Do the tasks exploit language in a communicative or 'real-world' way?
- If not, are the texts unacceptably simplified or artificial?

Sufficiency
- Is the book complete enough to stand on its own, or must the teacher produce a lot of ancillary bridging material to make it workable?
- Can you teach the course using only the student's book?

Cultural bias
- Are different and appropriate religious and social environments catered for, both in terms of the topics/situations presented and of those left out?
- Are students' expectations in regard to content, methodology, and format successfully accommodated?
- If not, would the book be able to wean students away from their preconceived notions?
- Is the author's sense of humour or philosophy obvious or appropriate?
- Does the coursebook enshrine stereotyped, inaccurate, condescending or offensive images of gender, race, social class, or nationality?
- Are accurate or 'sanitized' views of the USA or Britain presented; are uncomfortable social realities (e.g. unemployment, poverty, family breakdowns, racism) left out?

Educational validity
- Does the textbook take account of, and seem to be in tune with, broader educational concerns?

Stimulus / practice / revision
- Is the course material interactive, and are there sufficient opportunities for the learner to use his or her English so that effective consolidation takes place?
- Is the material likely to be retained/remembered by learners?
- Is allowance made for revision, testing, and on-going evaluation/marking of exercises and activities? Are ready-made achievement tests provided for the coursebook, or is test development left for the hard-pressed teacher? Are 'self-checks' provided?

Flexibility
- Can the book accommodate the practical constraints with which you must deal, or are assumptions made about such things as the availability of audio-visual equipment, pictorial material, class size, and classroom geography; does the material make too many demands on teachers' preparation time and students' homework time?
- Can the material be exploited or modified as required by local circumstances, or is it too rigid in format, structure, and approach?
- Is there a full range of supplementary aids available?

Guidance
- Are the teacher's notes useful and explicit?
- Has there been an inordinate delay between the publication of the student's and teacher's books?
- Is there advice about how to supplement the coursebook, or to present the lessons in different ways?
- Is there enough/too much 'hand-holding'?
- Are tape scripts, answer keys, vocabulary lists, structural/functional inventories, and lesson summaries provided in the Teacher's Book?
- Is allowance made for the perspectives, expectations, and preferences of non-native teachers of English?

Overall value for money
- Quite simply, is the coursebook cost-effective, easy to use, and successful in your teaching situation, in terms of time, labour, and money?
- To what extent has it realized its stated objectives?

© **Source**: Sheldon (1988, pp. 243–5)

APPENDIX D: Checklist for Textbook Evaluation and Selection

Aims and approaches
- Do the aims of the coursebook correspond closely with the aims of the teaching programme and with the needs of the learners?
- Is the coursebook suited to the learning/teaching situation?
- How comprehensive is the coursebook? Does it cover most or all of what is needed? Is it a good resource for students and teachers?
- Is the coursebook flexible? Does it allow different teaching and learning styles?

Design and organization
- What components make up the total course package (e.g. students' books, teachers' books, workbooks, cassettes, etc)?
- How is the content organized (e.g. according to structures, functions, topics, skills, etc)?
- Is the organization right for learners and teachers?
- How is the content sequenced (e.g. on the basis of complexity, learnability, usefulness, …)?
- Is the grading and progression suitable for the learners? Does it allow them to complete the work needed to meet any external syllabus requirements?
- Is there adequate recycling and revision?
- Are there reference sections for grammar, …? Is some of the material suitable for individual study?
- Is it easy to find your way around the coursebook? is the layout clear?

Language content
- Does the coursebook cover the main grammar items appropriate to each level, taking learners' needs into account?
- Is material for vocabulary teaching adequate in terms of quantity and range of vocabulary, emphasis placed on vocabulary development, strategies for individual learning?
- Does the coursebook include material for pronunciation work? If so what is covered: individual sounds, word stress, sentence stress, intonation?
- Does the coursebook deal with the structuring and conventions of language use above sentence level, e.g. how to take part in conversations, how to structure a piece of extended writing, how to identify the main points in a reading passage?
- Are style and appropriacy dealt with? If so, is language style matched to social situation?

Skills
- Are all four skills adequately covered, bearing in mind your course aims and syllabus requirements?
- Is there material for integrated skills work?
- Are reading passages and associated activities suitable for your students' levels, interests, etc? Is there sufficient reading material?
- Is listening material well recorded, as authentic as possible, accompanied by background information, questions and activities which help comprehension?
- Is material for spoken English (dialogues, role-plays, etc) well designed to equip learners for real-life interactions?
- Are writing activities suitable in terms of amount of guidance/control, degree of accuracy, organization of longer pieces of writing (e.g. paragraphing) and use of appropriate styles?

Topic
- Is there sufficient material of genuine interest to learners?
- Is there enough variety and range of topic?
- Will the topics help expand students' awareness and enrich their experience?
- Are the topics sophisticated enough in content, yet within the learners' language level?
- Will your students be able to relate to the social and cultural contexts presented in the coursebook?
- Are women portrayed and represented equally with men?
- Are other groups represented, with reference to ethnic origin, occupation, disability, etc?

Methodology
- What approach/approaches to language learning are taken by the coursebook? Is this appropriate to the learning/teaching situation?
- What level of active learner involvement can be expected? Does this match your students' learning styles and expectations?
- What techniques are used for presenting/practising new language items? Are they suitable for your learners?
- How are the different skills taught?
- How are communicative abilities developed?
- Does the material include any advice/help to students on study skills and learning strategies?
- Are students expected to take a degree of responsibility for their own learning (e.g. by setting their own individual learning targets)?

Teachers' books
- Is there adequate guidance for the teachers who will be using the coursebook and its supporting materials?
- Are the teachers' books comprehensive and supportive?
- Do they adequately cover teaching techniques, language items such as grammar rules and culture-specific information?
- Do the writers set out and justify the basic premises and principles underlying the material?
- Are keys to exercises given?

Practical considerations
- What does the whole package cost? Does this represent good value for money?
- Are the books strong and long-lasting? Are they attractive in appearance?
- Are they easy to obtain? Can further supplies be obtained at short notice?
- Do any parts of the package require particular equipment, such as a language laboratory, listening centre or video player? If so, do you have the equipment available for use and is it reliable?

Source: Cunningsworth (1995, pp. 3-4)

APPENDIX E: SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR TUTORIALS (4PEM)

– Law of orientation on national education

– Maslow pyramid of needs

– Vygotsky's zone of proximal development

– Teachers' beliefs

– Learners' beliefs

– S.M.A.R.T. objectives

– Aims & objectives of English language teaching in selected countries

– BLOOM'S taxonomy

– Reviewing the statements of exit levels in Algerian curricula of English

– The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

– Proficiency Guidelines of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

– World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages

– Programme for International Students Assessment (PISA)

– EF English Proficiency Index Report

– Finland's educational system (overview)

– Approaches to language teaching (overview)

– Assessing the vocabulary of textbooks in use

– Learner-centred approach; Teacher-centred instruction

– Task-based language teaching

– Competency-based language teaching

– 21st century skills

– Characteristics of the 21st century teachers & learners

– Book review: Why Do I Need a Teacher When I've got Google?

APPENDIX F: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

– Define the following terms in your own words:

curriculum; textbook; SWOT analysis; ESP

– Explain how course design reflects the choices and beliefs of different people (i.e. the stakeholders).

– Explain how the ESP movement led to implementing needs analysis in language teaching.

– Briefly explain the different stages of designing a language program.

– Explain the issues that are associated with topical syllabuses.

– How do you perceive the importance of cultural pluralism in designing language programs?

– Imagine that you have been asked to visit a secondary school and to conduct an evaluation of its English language programs. List some of the questions you would want to ask the school students and staff.

– Of the following vocabulary items, which are the most appropriate to A1 learners? Justify your answer.

achieve; amazing; brave; desertification; family; January; manipulation; morning; therefore; you; advertisement; entertaining; courageous; family; manipulation; therefore; window

– Recently, you underwent a two-week practical training in one of the middle schools. Discuss some of the factors that affected your job as a trainee teacher (whether positively or negatively).

– Suggest two different procedures that could be used to collect information about the language needs of hotel receptionists. What are the limitations of each procedure?

– What do the following abbreviations stand for?

CEFR, S.M.A.R.T. objectives, SWOT analysis, ZPD

– Discuss the following quotes:

"As a teacher, you have the flexibility to modify aims / objectives of the course."

"ESP learners are often highly motivated. Their purpose for learning English is very specific and goal-driven."

"The exit levels of 21st-century learners are the same as those of the 20th-century learners."

"The role of curriculum designers is to translate policy-makers' expectations and intentions into sound educational goals."

"The selection of one type of syllabus or another depends largely on the way we perceive the nature of language and the way it should be taught and learnt." Discuss and exemplify."

"The ultimate goal of education is to encourage and help students to become secure, open, tolerant, proactive and competent individuals and citizens with the values, attitudes, knowledge and skills to address various individual and collective challenges."

"We must ensure that every student in our country graduates from high school prepared for both post-secondary education and a successful career. In brief, education is about preparing the next workforce for the workplace."

– How do you perceive the importance of the module of SYLLABUS DESIGN AND TEXTBOOK EVALUATION in your future career?

APPENDIX G: SAMPLE EXAMS

FIRST EXAMINATION IN SYLLABUS DESIGN

1. Fill in the gaps with the appropriate term: [5 pts]

	A syllabus in which the language content is arranged in terms of speech acts together with the language items needed for them.
	A term that refers to the four language skills
	Activities which are designed to help achieve particular learning goals
	Descriptions of the essential skills, knowledge and behaviours required for the effective performance of a real world task or activity
	Individual processes and abilities which are used in carrying out a complex activity

2. Imagine that you have been asked to visit a secondary school and to conduct an evaluation of its English language programs. List some of the questions you would want to ask the school students and staff. (4 pts)

3. Explain the issues that are associated with topical syllabuses. [4 pts]

4. "The selection of one type of syllabus or another depends largely on the way we perceive the nature of language and the way it should be taught and learnt." Discuss and exemplify. [5 pts]

HANDWRITING & LAYOUT [2 pts]

SECOND EXAMINATION IN SYLLABUS DESIGN

1. Briefly explain the different stages of designing an ESP course. [6 pts]

2. Explain the following statement: [6 pts]

"ESP learners are often highly motivated. Their purpose for learning English is very specific and goal-driven."

3. In a well-structured paragraph, answer the following question:

How do you perceive the importance of the module of SYLLABUS DESIGN in your future career? [6 pts]

HANDWRITING & LAYOUT [2 pts]