Title of the paper

Curriculum Development in Language Teaching: Importance and Challenges

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Curriculum Development in Language Teaching: Importance and Challenges

Abstract- Curriculum development is the process of developing, implementing, updating and evaluating language programs. The main objective of the curriculum is to ensure that students achieve integrated, coherent learning that can enhance their personal, academic and professional learning that can contribute to developing and evaluating language programs and teaching materials. In today's world, millions of people spend a large amount of time to be mastered second or foreign language learning. Even teachers also spend a lot of time to plan language courses, materials and teaching their classes. The main objective of the research is to provide some of the tools to develop and review the curriculum because its role is a sine qua non for the quality and educational programs.

Keywords-curriculum, development, needs, planning, materials.

1. **Introduction**- Curriculum development follows with the notion of syllabus design and it is one of the important aspects of curriculum development. A syllabus is the content of a course of instruction that will be taught and tested. Curriculum development follows the process of designing and developing integrated plans for learning. It deals with the following questions-

- Determining the content
- Needs of the learners
- How can learners need to be fulfilled?
- Contextual factors (importance in planning a language program?)
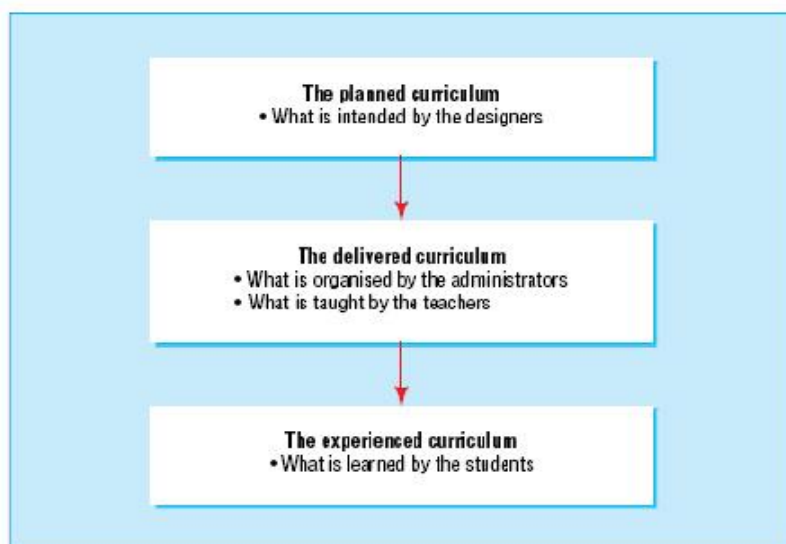- Aims and objectives in teaching and learning and how it can be developed?

Fig.1 Planned curriculum

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A curriculum is defined as planned, a purposeful, progressive and systematic process to create positive developments in the educational system. So, the curriculum is considered the

" heart" of any learning institution which means that schools or universities cannot exist without a curriculum and it is needed to update time to time. The Curriculum can be characterized in several ways –

- Curriculum as content (subject-related oriented)
- Curriculum as experience (learner's experience)
- Curriculum as intention (aims, objectives, and outcomes)
- Curriculum(cultural production)

2. Literature Review- The word curriculum that originally referred to athletic events came to mean a course of study of course content or subjects studied in schools, colleges and universities (Carl, 1995:32) The concept curriculum development supports itself to various interpretations. Fraser, Loubser and Van Rooy (1993:102) view curriculum development as all the processes necessary to plan, design, implement, and evaluate a functional curriculum. This curriculum development is at issue when the effectiveness of an existing curriculum is evaluated and, as a result, it is revised and amended. However, Carl (1992:47) is of the same view and defines a curriculum as an umbrella and ongoing process in which orderliness and systematic planning figure strongly from design and evaluation. He also identified various phases but his initiation as the first phase instead of planning as identified in the above definition. Some experts say planning instead of design. He identified the following phases: curriculum design, curriculum implementation and curriculum evaluation as the distinctive phase of curriculum development. Ornstein and Hunkins (1992:16) have a similar perspective about curriculum development but added a new dimension to the view that it includes various phases. They argued that the curriculum reveals "….how the curriculum evolves or is planned … as well as what the various people, processes, and procedures are involved in constructing the curriculum." Curriculum development is a linear process or a cyclic process or a complicated model as Saylor's four-step planning model of Francis Hunkins's model(Ornstein & Hunkins 1992: 16) or Carl's model (Carl, 1995): 48). Such models can be useful to show the relationship of a curriculum to various decisions, activities, and processes.
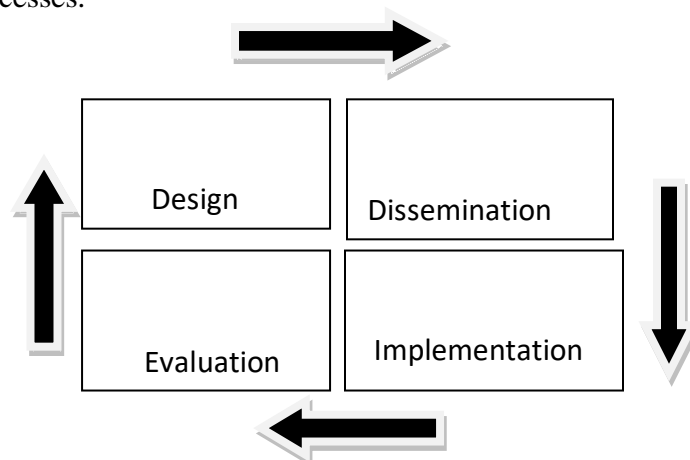

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Fig.2 Phases of curriculum development

The above diagram is useful for the study of curriculum development and it is quite clear that curriculum development is a cyclical process dominated by the interrelationship between the components of the curriculum.

3. Dimensions of the curriculum- (Input, process, output and the curriculum) The term curriculum refers to the overall plan and design for a course and how the content is transformed into a blueprint for teaching and learning. Content of a course refers to input and before teaching it is mandatory to know what topics are to teach. When topics are chosen then there is a need to arrange in sequence into teachable and learnable units. The outcome of this sequence will be the syllabus. For designing the syllabus different approaches are used and it should reflect different understandings and opinions to know the important steps to be proficient in language and skills. The syllabus should include simplicity, authenticity, usefulness, and frequency. When the input has been fixed, then plan classroom activities, teaching methods, and materials. All these steps are in process. Teaching and methodology in language teaching follow the process. The methodology is learning activities, procedures, and techniques used by the teacher inside the classroom to make teaching and learning more effective. The output is related to learning outcomes; it means the teacher has to focus on teaching and learning based on output. Today desired to learn outputs are often described in terms of objectives e.g. performance, competencies or skills. The following learning outcome is used in Majmaah University colleges to achieve more successful graduates according to the vision 2030. Question papers and classroom activities are designed based on learning outcomes.
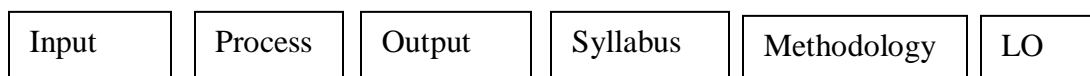
| Input | Process | Output | Syllabus | Methodology | LO |

Fig.3 Dimensions of curriculum

So, according to the dimensions curriculum provides-

- The forward design process
- The central design process
- The backward design

The forward design is based on the consequences that are related to input, process, and output. The teacher can organize a workshop or can design activities for the students' to assess their learning and understanding of special topics.

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The audio-lingual method, the audio-visual method, and the structure method have already been mentioned as an example of forwarding design.

Teaching methods, activities and techniques are included in central design evolved with learning outcomes and syllabus. Methods, principles, and procedures are more focused. It is learner-centered and learning processes are more concerned. Backward design is the process that consists of needs analysis, objectives, selection, organization and learning experience. Six levels of achievements are described with three broad divisions from low to high. Does each approach give different ideas about the setting of the curriculum, intended for the implementation of a large scale or small scale?

- the instructional material role,
- Level of training
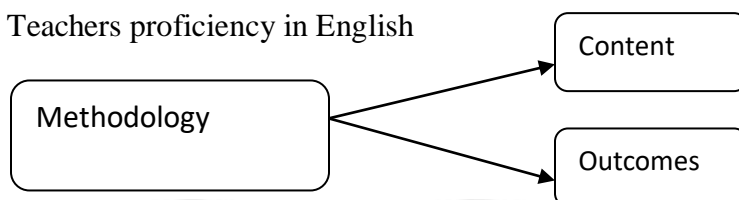- Role of teachers and learners
- Teachers proficiency in English

Fig.4 Implementing a central design

Teachers are completely depending on textbooks and other materials with little choice about teaching. Central design requires proper training investment and generally, teachers are depending on published course-book materials as the basis for teaching. Apart from the published material teacher can search on Google for some more ideas and can provide a link to the students also. This approach does not require teachers to plan learning outcomes or to follow a syllabus that is prescribed for them. A high level of professional knowledge, as well as language proficiency, is a prerequisite. Backward design is preferred in a situation where a high degree of accountability needs to be built into the curriculum design.
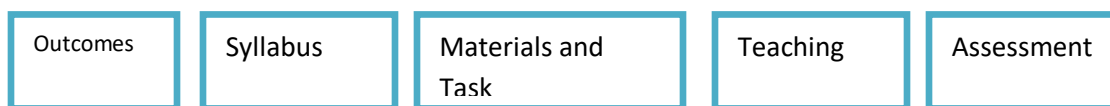

Fig.5 Backward Design

5. Needs Analysis-Needs analysis is a procedure to collect **i**nformation about learners' needs. It was introduced through the ESP movement into language teaching. The term needs are sometimes referred to as want, desires, expectations, motivation. (Brindley 1984). Porcher(1997) offers a different perspective: the need is not a thing that exists and might be encountered ready-made on the street. It is a thing that is constructed, the center of conceptual networks and the product of several epistemological choices."Auerbach (1995: p.9) has pointed out that English Language Teaching has often been viewed as a "neutral

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transfer of skills, knowledge, or competencies" and that such an approach is based on the needs of institutions, rather than language learners.

6. The Curriculum development process- The curriculum development process organizes systematically each component about the classroom and target students' what, who and how it will be taught. It is a process of designing, developing, implementing the plan, evaluating the outcome of the learning experience. The fundamental purpose of curriculum development is to ensure that students receive integrated, coherent learning experiences that can contribute to their personal, academic, professional learning development. Staff and students are at the heart of the curriculum. The following are some essential considerations for curriculum development.

6.1.1 Issue/ need (what)

6.1.2 Needs of the learners (who)

6.1.3 Intended outcomes/objectives (what the learner will be able to learn)

6.1.4 Importance of Content

6.1.5 How it can be achieved (methods)

6.1.6 What works? Evaluation, Strategies for methods, Content, and Outcomes.

Curriculum development model shows how these components relate to each other and the other curriculum development process.

6.2 Essential steps needing emphasis

- Need assessment
- Involving youth
- Recruiting and training volunteer facilitators
- Evaluating and reporting on the impact of the curriculum

7. Curriculum Planning- It involves the different types of instructional strategies that are focused on students' achievement and learning outcomes. It's the educator's responsibility that curriculum planning should meet the students' educational needs. The planning phase includes some steps-

- To provide knowledge of the content
- To encourage the learning and acquiring knowledge
- Select a suitable strategy and goals
- To design coherent instructors
- Assessment of students' learning

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7.1 Implementation-

- Product curriculum
- Testing and revising
- Recruitment and training for the facilitator

7.2 Evaluation and Reporting

Implement curriculum- answer the following questions-

- Why is this curriculum needed?
- For whom it is being developed? (target audience)
- What are we trying to teach or change? (outcomes and content)
- How will we do it? (educational methods)

7.3 Evaluation- Evaluation is a specific step in the curriculum development model. During curriculum development, two types of evaluation are used, Formative and Summative. Formative evaluations are used during the needs assessment, product development, and testing steps. To measure and report on the outcomes of the curriculum summative evaluations are used. The final element in an evaluation strategy is "delivering the pay off (getting the results into the hands of people who can use them.

Sample of Curriculum development (Vision and Mission 2030)Education in Majmaah University, College of Sciences and Humanities, Howtat Sudair)Dept. of English

7.4 Vision and Mission-

- Globally educated, competitive based community
- Provide education to all
- Increase the effectiveness of Scientific research
- Vocation education
- Providing pre-primary education with update syllabus and trained teachers

New plan is introduced with updated courses as vision 2030 requirements.

7.5 Objectives- Efficient graduates to complete global needs internationally

A new update plan is more useful to complete the vision and mission with new learning outcomes i.e. **1. Knowledge 2. Skills 3. Competence.**

Relationship between Program Mission and Goals and the Mission and Goals of the Institution/College.
The program's mission and goals are fully compatible with the mission and goals of the College and the Institution.
Graduate Attributes:

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- Independent/Confident
- Committed
- Curious/inquisitive
- Creative/innovative
- Motivated
- Expert in interpersonal skills/teamwork
- Technologically sound
- Value ethical behavior
- Connect across boundaries

Program Learning Outcomes	
Knowledge :	
K1	Outline the main tenets, principles, methods, and strategies in the fields of English Language and Literature, Linguistics and Translation.
K2	Describe the relationship between linguistic theories and the recent trends in English Language, Literature and Translation.
Skills	
S1	Apply the principles and methods of evaluation from different resources in the domains of English language, Linguistics, Literary Criticism and Translation.
S2	Use critical thinking skills, problem-solving techniques, and strategies in all the fields outlined in (S1).
Competence	
C1	Act responsibly and judiciously in both professional career and personal interrelationship making use of knowledge and experience gained from the program.
C2	Show the ability to undertake team and inter-team work and take initiatives to study relevant cases (dependent and interdependent skills).

Program learning Outcomes Mapping Matrix

Align the program learning outcomes with program courses, according to the following desired levels of performance (**I = Introduced   P = Practiced M = Mastered**)

Course code & No.		Program Learning Outcomes												
		Knowledge					Skills				Competence			
		K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	S1	S2	S3	S4	C1	C2	C3	C4
ICENG 001		I	I	I	I		I	P	I	P	I	P	I	I

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Course code & No.	Program Learning Outcomes												
	Knowledge					Skills				Competence			
	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	S1	S2	S3	S4	C1	C2	C3	C4
ENGL 111	I	P	I	I		P	P	I	P	P	P	P	I
ENGL 112	I	P	I	I		P	P	I	P	P	P	P	I
ENGL 425	I	P	P	M	P	P	P	M	M	P	M	P	M
ENGL 426	I	P	P	M	P	P	P	M	M	P	M	P	M
ENGL 427	I	P	P	M	P	P	P	M	M	P	M	P	M
ENGL 428	I	P	P	M	P	P	P	M	M	P	M	P	M

As vision 2030 Majmaah University aims to produce Graduates of Bachelor degree that can have –

- Lifelong learning
- Providing opportunities to develop specific skills (teamwork, problem-solving, critical thinking)
- Support experiential and authentic learning (work-integrated learning)
- Graduate qualities can, therefore, be related to both accountability and to employ outcomes.

To meet the objectives internationally, new courses are added in the graduate program as a Research project, Numerical skills, collaborative writing.

Conclusion- Curriculum is a very important part of any learning institution. It decides the nature of its graduates. There is a need to update it time by time. Curriculum development is not only about the school or university, but it also has a broad scope. It is about the development of society and plays a vital role in improving the economy of a country. If universities have innovative curriculum programs that in demand in the local and global markets, a high number of enrollees would mean income on the part of the universities. It can also be used in finding research and development endeavors, putting school facilities, libraries, and laboratories.

Meeting the needs of the students' is a complex task for the teachers as well as for the universities. Students' achievement and knowledge depend on factors such as how well the teachers keep them engaged and the relationship also matters. The assessment of students' achievement or understanding what students' knowledge and can do, is fundamental to effective

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teaching and learning. In summary, students', teachers and management can use the following information to improve the quality of learning-

- Collect information about the students' what they know and can do.
- Analyze the students' achievement accurately.
- Review the teaching program and curriculum
- To inform governance and management.

In conclusion, the curriculum contains content, process, and output for any language teaching program. Curriculum approaches can differ about the relationship of the content of elements, how they are prioritized, the role of the syllabi, materials and the role of the teachers and learners play a vital role in the process of curriculum development and enactment.

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