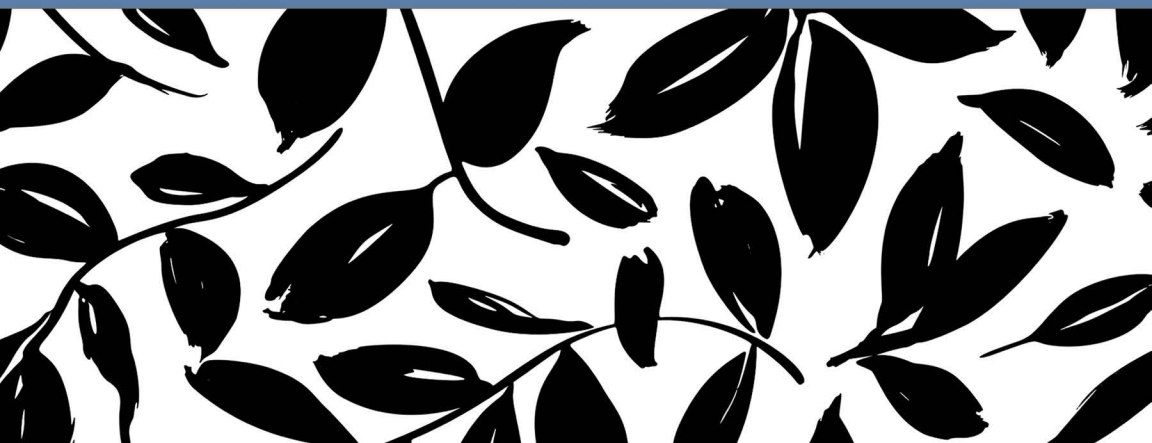# What English Language Teachers Need to Know Volume III

Designing Curriculum

MaryAnn Christison
and Denise E. Murray

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ESL & APPLIED LINGUISTICS PROFESSIONAL SERIES

WHAT ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS NEED TO KNOW VOLUME III, 2ND EDITION

Designed for pre-service and novice teachers in ELT, *What English Language Teachers Need to Know Volumes I*, *II*, and *III* are companion textbooks organized around the key question: *What do teachers need to know and be able to do in order to help their students to learn English?*

Thoroughly revised and updated, the second edition of Volume III explores the contexts for ELT curricula; explains key processes in curriculum design; and sets out approaches to curricula that are linguistic-based, content-based, learner centered, and learning centered. Organized around the three pillars of teaching—planning, instructing, and assessing—chapters in the second edition are updated to include current research and theory to meet the needs of today's teachers, and feature new or revised vignettes and activities. New chapters help teachers understand both the technological and multilingual approaches that learners need to succeed today.

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WHAT ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS NEED TO KNOW VOLUME III

Designing Curriculum

2nd Edition

MaryAnn Christison and Denise E. Murray

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PREFACE

English language teaching worldwide has become a multi-billion-dollar enterprise, one that the majority of nations in the world are embarking on to lesser or greater extents. For many countries, English is seen as a commodity through which they will become more competitive in the global marketplace. While English may have national and personal advancement potential, it is also pervasive in the global media. Youth culture in particular is influenced by English-dominant media and marketing. As a result, English is being consumed and transformed transnationally.

The settings where English is taught vary from countries where English is the official and dominant language, such as the United States or Australia, to those where it is an official language, usually as a result of past colonialism, such as India or the Philippines, to those where it is taught in schools as a subject of study, such as Japan or the Czech Republic. In the first set of countries, when English is taught to immigrants or to international students, the language is often called English-as-a-second-language (ESL) and its teaching TESL. In the second set of countries, where it is taught to citizens and increasingly to international students, it is usually referred to also as ESL. In the third set of countries, the language is often referred to as English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) and its teaching as TEFL. Because both ESL and EFL carry ideological baggage, there is much discussion in the field about more appropriate terminology and the use of alternate terms. Some prefer to use (T)ESOL—(teaching) English to speakers of other languages—since it acknowledges that the learners may have more than one previous language and can be used to include both ESL and EFL contexts. Others prefer (T)EAL—(teaching) English as an additional language—for the same reason, whereas ESL implies there is only English plus one other. Other terms in use include English as an international language (EIL) and English language teaching (ELT). Whatever the terminology used, distinctions are increasingly becoming blurred as people move around the globe and

acquire their English in a variety of different settings, being taught by teachers from a variety of different linguacultural backgrounds.

In these volumes, we use ESL and EFL because they are still the most widely used terms, while at the same time recognizing the inherent reification of English in their use. When referring to teaching, we will use ELT to avoid confusion between the field TESOL and the shortened or unofficial name for the professional association called TESOL International.

Similarly, the terminology used to define the users of English has been contested. The most commonly used terms have been native speaker (NS), in contrast to non-native speaker (NNS). Both of these terms also assume ideological positions, especially since the NS is valued as the norm and the model for language learning, not only in those countries where English is the dominant language, but also in many EFL settings. Yet, the majority of English language users and teachers do not have English as their mother tongue or dominant language. In some ESL contexts, such as the United States, immigrant children in K–12 public schools and adult learners are referred to as English language learners or English learners (ELLs) or ELs, even though all English speakers, no matter their immigration status, are technically English language learners—we are both still learning English! Leung et al. (1997) have, therefore, proposed refining what it means to know and use a language with three terms: (a) language expertise (linguistic and cultural knowledge), (b) language affiliation (identification and attachment), and (c) language inheritance (connectedness and continuity). What is important then about the learners' (or teachers') language is their linguistic repertoire in relation to each of these criteria, not whether they are a NS. Because there is no general acceptance of such terms, we shall continue to use NS and NNS, while noting that they establish a dichotomy that is neither valid nor descriptive.

Much of the literature also refers to people learning English in formal settings as students and sometimes as learners. We have chosen to use the term learner, except when it leads to infelicitous expressions such as "learners learning." Student implies passivity; learner implies agency. For us, learners are vital collaborators in the educational enterprise.

Who Is This Book For?

We are writing this book for pre-service teachers and practicing teachers who may be new to the field of ELT or new to designing curriculum for ELT. Whether you are teaching in an English-dominant country, a country where English is one of the official languages, or a country where English is taught as

a foreign language, the information in this book is relevant to your context. We have also designed it for whatever level you may be teaching—elementary (primary) school, secondary school, college or university, or adult education. It also includes the information teachers need to teach general English, workplace English, English for academic purposes (EAP), or English for specific purposes (ESP). We realize that this is a big task, but we have used examples that represent the diversity of ELT settings. Of course, we cannot include examples from every country or grade level, but we have tried to be inclusive and ensure that whatever your current or future teaching situation, you will find the material relevant to your learners and situation. At the same time, we have been as specific as possible, rather than relying on generic characteristics of the field.

Our own experiences have covered a vast array of different age groups, contexts, and content areas—between us, we have taught in English-dominant countries, EFL contexts in every continent, young people, adults, university students, general English, English for business, English for science and technology, and EAP.

What Is This Book About?

In order to teach in these different contexts, teachers need understandings about the nature of language and language learning. With those understandings, they need to be able to facilitate student learning. This book is the third in a set of volumes titled *What English Language Teachers Need to Know*. Because student learning is the goal, we have oriented these volumes to focus on the notion of learning, asking the question: *What do teachers need to know and be able to do in order for their students to learn English?*

Volume I in this series provides the background information teachers need to know and be able to use in their classrooms. Teachers need to know (or know how to find out about) the characteristics of the context in which they work—the nature of their learners, the features of their institution, the policies and expectations of their nation/state, and the broader world with which their learners will engage. They need to know how English works and how it is learned. To become proficient in English, learners need to be able not only to create correct sentences in the classroom, but also to engage in conversations with other English speakers, and to read and write texts for different purposes. To accomplish this, teachers need to know how learning takes place both within the learner and through social interaction. Finally, teachers need to understand their role in the larger professional sphere of English language education so that they can continue to grow as teachers and expand the profession through their
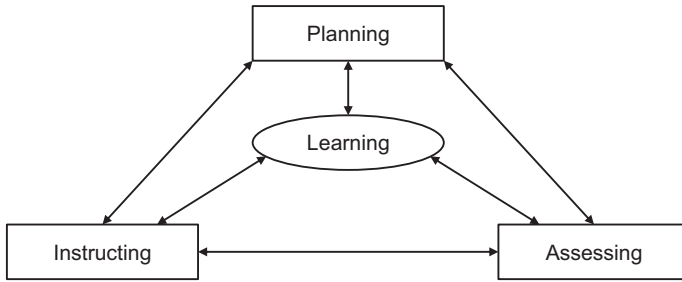
Figure 0.1 Model of the Instructional Process

own participation in its various enterprises. They also need to engage in their local communities to be informed of their needs and to inform their communities about the nature of English language learning. While we have provided separate sections on each of these important themes, the challenge of successful teaching is to know how to blend an understanding of learners, language, and language learning with knowledge of their content goals and how to achieve those goals. This is the subject of Volume II.

Volume II is organized around the three main aspects of teaching: planning, instructing, and assessing. However, this progression is not linear. The three aspects are reiterative. While planning instruction, teachers are assessing what their learners already know and what they need to know to reach their next curriculum goals. While instructing, teachers are constantly assessing whether their learners have acquired the language in focus and planning on the spot by reacting to student learning (or evidence of not learning). While assessing, teachers are constantly reviewing instructional goals to determine whether learners have achieved them and if not, why not, and how to plan for revision or next steps.

With the focus always on student learning, Figure 0.1 illustrates the dynamic, cyclical interaction of these processes.

Overview

Volume III helps pre-service teachers, practicing teachers who are new to the field of ELT, administrators, and policy makers understand and work with the theory and practice of developing ELT curricula in a variety of contexts and for a variety of language proficiency and age levels. It helps them design curricula that promote student learning. While curricula need to promote student learning, they also occur in contexts both historical and political. Curricula are inherently tied to the contexts in which they are designed and to the innovation

and management of both learning and educational institutions. Part I provides the contexts for curricula, demonstrating how different stakeholders and different views of education, of language, and of learning impact on the curriculum development process and the content of curriculum. Part II explains and illustrates the process of curriculum design for specific contexts. Parts III–VI provide examples from the different possible orientations to curricular choice—linguistic, content, learner, and learning. It is situated in current research in the field of ELT and other disciplines that inform it.

In all three volumes we include theoretical perspectives as well as directions for translating these theoretical perspectives into practice. We illustrate with examples from practice to guide the reader in the translation process. The three books together provide an iterative conversation concerning how to develop language programs that result in optimal student learning. They stem from the view that teaching is a thinking, reasoning, and sociocultural activity in which teachers make decisions based on the context of their classrooms.

The material in these three volumes is based on current research in the field and in other disciplines that can inform ELT. These include psychology, neuroscience, pedagogy, sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, and linguistics. The focus throughout the volumes is on outcomes, that is, student learning.

Each chapter includes activities for the reader—to reflect on the information based on your own experiences, to read further on a topic, or to conduct small-scale investigations into teaching and learning. We hope that you will have as much enjoyment engaging with the materials as we have had writing them.

Reference

Leung, C., Harris, R., & Rampton, B. (1997). The idealised native speaker, reified ethnicities, and classroom realities. *TESOL Quarterly*, *31*, 543–560.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Part I

CONTEXTS FOR ELT CURRICULA

Curricula are sociocultural artifacts that reflect local values and local beliefs about language and language learning; therefore, they do not necessarily transfer well to different contexts. However, many curricula have been exported, especially from the BANA (Britain, Australasia, and North America) countries, with variable results. As Edge notes for methodology, which just as easily applies to curricula:

> If what we (and particularly we who live in or draw on such centers of TESOL as the US or Britain) have to offer is essentially methodological, and if those methods are subversive and inappropriate, how exactly do we justify our activities? What sorts of future are we attempting to build with other people?
>
> (Edge, 1996, p. 17)

In Part I we explore the contexts for curricula. We begin with the nature of curricula themselves (Chapter 1), to answer the questions: What is a curriculum? And who is involved in curricular decisions? The remaining four chapters explore the landscape in which and for which curricula are designed. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the social, political, and historical contexts that influenced curricula design. Chapter 3 explores how English has spread to be the global language for commerce, education, and technology, among other endeavors and how curricula need to respond to the variety of English users. Chapter 4 focuses on how curricula for English language teaching need to respond to the multilingual context. It explores the notion that English learners are emerging multilinguals who learn English in a social context that is constantly evolving and changing. Chapter 5 explains how current trends in technology are affecting curricula and need to be considered in the curriculum development process.

Reference

Edge, J. (1996). Cross-cultural paradoxes in a profession of values. *TESOL Quarterly*, *30*(1), 9–30.

1

THE NATURE OF CURRICULUM DESIGN

VIGNETTE

I am working with a group of teachers and materials writers on a course for pre- or minimal-literate young refugees to Australia, ones who have some proficiency in spoken English but disrupted or limited experiences of formal schooling. The government has provided additional hours of English instruction to help them prepare for the regular adult program. We have already had several meetings and, based on research our center conducted, have decided to develop several modules on topics of interest to this clientele but also ones vital to their successful settlement in Australia: Your Future (work and study); Your Time Out (recreation); Your Money; Your Communication (including technology); Your Health and Well-being; and You and Me (interpersonal relations, cross cultural communication). The overall approach is content-based, with language determined by the content. At this particular meeting, we are working on the module on money. We begin by determining the outcomes we expect learners to be able to achieve at the end of the module, such as "Demonstrate an awareness of different forms of money (cash/virtual) and their use in various transactions (e.g., EFTPOS,[1] online banking, phone, post office, hire purchase)" and "Demonstrate an awareness of the implications of signing any contracts." We agree that the content needs to motivate and inform learners. So, we decide to include topics around paying rent, banking, food shopping, budgeting, and cell phones. This leads to four units for the module. To achieve the language and subject matter outcomes, we discuss what language learners will need—structures, lexis, functions, and text types. We

(continued)

(continued)

discuss the skills they will need—numeracy, critical literacy, and writing a note. A lot of discussion is focused on Australia being a highly literate country and that this group of learners needs to navigate literacy. The question is how to achieve this with pre- and minimally-literate learners. We discuss how to assist learners in seeing the connections between spoken and written language, how to use visuals, how to work with peers, and learning to learn. Content, outcomes, and language were mapped across each module to ensure sequencing of units within the module and across modules. Once the draft materials were developed, they were trialed with teachers in youth refugee classrooms and revised based on teacher feedback.

[Murray, research notes]

Task: Reflect

1. What do you think was the advantage of starting the curriculum design process with content, rather than language?
2. Do you think it is appropriate to include non-language content in an English course? Why? Why not?
3. How can you assist learners in seeing the connection between spoken and written language, given that English does not have a one letter/one sound correspondence?

Introduction

It [the curriculum] informs teachers, students, parents, teacher educators, assessment developers, textbook publishers, technology providers, and others about the goals of instruction. It provides direction, clarity, and focus around worthy ends, without interfering with teachers' decisions about how to teach.

(Ravitch, 2010, p. 231)

A curriculum is not a static set of documents, nor is it a list of things to be taught; it's a reiterative, dynamic process, one that is constantly being planned, implemented, and evaluated. Curricula are context-dependent, reflecting the needs of learners,

institutional values and policies, and teachers' beliefs. In addition, stakeholders can perceive the same curriculum in different ways. In this chapter, we will focus on what is meant by curriculum, on its essential scope, differing views of curriculum, and curriculum change. For example, there is the recommended curriculum, the written curriculum, the taught curriculum, and the learned curriculum, and each curriculum is different. In all contexts, there is also a hidden curriculum. (See Chapter 2 for further explanation and discussion of each of these types of curricula.)

Task: Reflect

Directions: think about your own language learning. How was the curriculum organized? Respond with "yes" or "no" to each statement. Share your reflections with a colleague.

_____1. The curriculum was organized around grammatical structures.
_____2. The curriculum was organized around texts.
_____3. The curriculum was organized around themes.
_____4. The curriculum was organized around the content I needed to study.
_____5. The curriculum was organized around competencies I was expected to master.
_____6. The curriculum was organized around tasks I was expected to carry out.
_____7. The curriculum was organized around projects I was expected to conduct.
_____8. The curriculum was organized by the class in negotiation with the teachers.
_____9. The curriculum was organized around a textbook.

Defining Curriculum

Educators often define curriculum differently. The literature often does not clearly differentiate among the terms—curriculum, syllabus, program, and course. In many British and Australian publications, syllabus seems to be the preferred term, while curriculum is used more in the United States. In English speaking countries the concept of curriculum has been considered synonymous with "a course of study" since the 16th century. In the most recent decades, the concept has expanded to include all of the experiences the school plans for learners to engage in, such that the term becomes meaningless (Montoya-Vargas,

2012). Furthermore, in many contexts a curricular framework is developed, often at a national or state level, and educators develop a more detailed implementation that is designed to fit the local context. An example of a curricular framework is the European Framework of Reference for Language (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2019), which we discuss in detail in Chapter 22.

For the purposes of this volume, *curriculum* is the name for the broadest organization of instruction, involving planning, teaching, and evaluating any plan for the teaching and learning of English. *Syllabus* refers to an instantiation of a curriculum, that is, "that part of curriculum activity concerned with the specification and ordering of course content or input" (Nunan, 1988, p. 14). *Program* encompasses all of the *courses* in a particular institution.

As an example, we follow with a description of an institution in an English-dominant country such as the United States, which prepares international students for their future university study. The institution has seven different courses of study: a TOEFL preparation course, an IELTS (academic) preparation course, three levels of general academic English preparation courses, one course for preparing students going into accountancy, and one course for preparing students going into nursing degrees. These seven courses constitute a program. The TOEFL, IELTS, accounting, and nursing-focused courses each have their own curriculum. The three levels of general academic English, however, have one overarching curriculum so that students can move from one course to the next. When a particular teacher teaches the TOEFL preparation course, she follows the curriculum, but uses her own instructional strategies. Her plan for the entire course is a syllabus.

Curriculum Approach

The overall approach to the curriculum may be determined at national or local levels and depends on policies and beliefs about language and language learning. In language education, there are four general approaches, each of which has different specific ways of organizing the curriculum:

- linguistic-based

    - structural,
    - notional/functional,
    - academic functions,
    - genre/text,
    - vocabulary, and
    - skills.

- content-based

  - the integration of language and content, and
  - topic and situational.

- learner centered

  - negotiated,
  - humanistic, and
  - task-based.

- learning centered

  - outcome-based,
  - competency-based, and
  - standards-based.

Each of these approaches is dealt with in separate chapters, but here, we need to introduce the possible choices because the approach taken influences the content of the curriculum.

Curriculum Content

No matter what approach is taken, in language instruction all aspects of language in use need to be included in instruction and assessment. We say "language in use" because language varies with context, with what is being talked about, with whom it is being used, and who the speaker is. As Fishman (1965) eloquently noted, "who speaks what language to whom and when?" English language in use consists of the following components:

- English sound system;
- English word system;
- English sentence structure;
- speech acts;
- English discourse structure, both written and spoken;
- varieties of English, by place and person; and
- cultural contexts.

(see Murray & Christison, 2019 for details)

Therefore, whatever approach is taken, the curriculum must consider where and how to include all these aspects of the language, which is referred to as scope and sequence.

Scope and Sequence

A curriculum needs to include both a scope and sequence for the content to be taught. *Scope* refers to the type and amount of content to be taught, while *sequence* refers to the order in which the content will be taught. Thus, for example, the scope for an IELTS preparation course would be the language needed for the test, along with sample tests and test-taking strategies. The course would need to teach:

- listening

  - conversation between two people in an everyday context,
  - monologue in an everyday context,
  - conversation between up to four people set in an educational or training context, and
  - monologue on an academic subject.

- academic reading

  - authentic, academic texts written for non-specialists.

- academic writing

  - description, summary, or explanation of graphs, tables, charts, or diagrams;
  - description of an event or of an object;
  - description and explanation of data;
  - description of stages in a process; and
  - written response to a point of view, argument, or problem.

- speaking

  - introducing oneself,
  - talking about a given topic, and
  - two-way discussion.

- how performance is measured in each section of the test
- test-taking strategies

  - types of multiple-choice questions (e.g., true/false, matching),
  - specific IELTS instruction (e.g., number of words in writing tasks),
  - taking notes during listening test,
  - completing the answer booklets, and
  - preparing for the actual test day (e.g., resting the night before).

- English structure at the word, sentence, and discourse level.

Note that in this example, the scope includes the English sound, word, sentence, and discourse systems. It also includes specific cultural contexts, both academic and general. Because IELTS includes speakers with different varieties of English in the listening task, language variation also needs to be included in the scope of the curriculum.

The sequence for the course would be the order in which these items were presented, practiced, and reviewed. So, for example, the teacher would probably choose to teach the language of description (both syntactic structures, such as *be* and *have* verbs, and discourse structure) before having learners attempt to describe a graph or diagram.

However, in language teaching, sequencing is incredibly complex. It is difficult because, unlike some other subject areas such as arithmetic, there is no pre-defined linear progression and much depends on what learners achieve along the way. Also, the sequencing depends largely on which approach to curriculum design is taken. For example, if an institution chooses a structure-based approach, then the curriculum will begin with what is generally considered the easiest structures to acquire. If a competency-based approach is used, then the sequencing will start with competencies on which others build, for example, teaching *greetings* before teaching *conducting a short telephone conversation*. If a content-based approach is chosen, then what language is taught in what sequence depends on what learners need to know to be able to work with the particular content.

Task: Explore

Find a curriculum document in current use in your context. Which approach is used? Are scope and sequence described so that teachers know what is expected? How is the curriculum evaluated for effectiveness?

The Role of Textbooks and Materials

Because curriculum, in our view, includes planning, teaching, and evaluation, it necessarily involves consideration of materials that facilitate instruction (see Chapter 7 for a fuller discussion of the interaction among program, courses, lessons, and curriculum). In many contexts, a textbook is the default curriculum. As Ravitch (2010) notes for K–12 education in the United States,

> To have no curriculum is to leave decisions about what matters to the ubiquitous textbooks, which function as our de facto national curricu-

lum. To have no curriculum on which assessment may be based is to tighten the grip of test-based accountability, testing only generic skills, not knowledge or comprehension.

(p. 237)

In U.S. K–12 education, textbook publishers design textbooks that meet the goals of the largest states because this approach brings in the largest profit. However, publisher also don't want to align the textbooks too closely to specific states, so the textbooks can also be used in other states. In general, "[t]he textbooks avoid controversy—which would hurt sales—and maintain a studied air of neutrality, thus ensuring the triumph of dullness" (p. 234), leaving learners either with an impoverished educational experience or having their teachers forced to supplement the textbook extensively. While Ravitch was expressly referring to U.S. K–12 education, the same indictment can be made regarding textbooks across many different contexts. In some institutions, new teachers are handed a textbook and left to their own devices. For inexperienced teachers or ones new to the particular context, the textbook can become a crutch.

In the context of the vignette, the curriculum and the textbook and materials were closely aligned because we were commissioned to develop both. Because one of the goals was to motivate learners, each unit begins with a DVD of a scenario related to the topic. Prior to watching the DVD, learners look at one shot from the DVD and have to predict what they think the DVD will be about. The actors in the scenarios are young and of different ethnicities, like the learners for whom it was designed. In the first unit of the module on money, two young men are sharing an apartment and having difficulty meeting the rent payments. They meet on the street and one young man discovers that his roommate has just bought very expensive running shoes because they were on sale. In the next scene, he offers his ATM card and PIN number to his roommate when he's reminded that the rent is due. However, there isn't enough money in the account because he paid for the running shoes. Next, they meet another friend who is not happy living with his brother, and so they invite him to share their apartment (and help defray rental costs). He agrees. The textbook provides follow up comprehension tasks, such as sequencing pictures of events, answering comprehension questions, advice on not giving ATM cards and PINs to friends, and so on. The mapping of the language outcomes for this unit is provided in Table 1.1.

Curriculum in Practice

How the curriculum is resourced, implemented, and learned can be quite different from the intention of the curriculum developers. These differences result

Table 1.1 Mapping Language Outcomes for a Teaching Unit on Money

Text Types	Functions	Structures	Lexis
Calendar ATM screen, ATM printout, EFTPOS receipt Bank statement Surveys Tips on security—from a bank website	Talking about frequency of activities Expressing necessity, obligation, lack of obligation	Frequency—every month/two weeks/week Monthly, weekly, fortnightly Regular and irregular verbs—past tense Past tense time markers used for sequencing: one day, then, after that Present simple: I pay, we pay Modals: I have to . . . pay the rent, clean my room. I don't have to . . . How old do you have to be to . . . drive, vote, drink in a hotel, go to college, etc.	Banking language: debit, credit, balance, transaction, cash withdrawal, account number, fee, EFTPOS machine, ATM, receipt, other bank ATM, statement Chores and responsibilities for sharing a house: pay bills, clean my room, cook, buy food, do my washing, pay rent

from decisions made by different stakeholders, such as teaching institutions, teachers, and learners. Consequently, different curriculum scholars have posited various ways of thinking about the curriculum enterprise. To illustrate, we discuss a traditional model and one resulting from research in Hong Kong. We also address the issue of the way curricula transmit culture in covert ways, referred to as the *hidden curriculum*.

Models of Curriculum Development

Tyler (1949), considered the father of curriculum development in the 20th century, stated that four fundamental questions should guide all curriculum development, whatever the subject matter:

1. What educational purposes should the school seek to attain? (Defining appropriate learning objectives.)
2. What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes? (Introducing useful learning experiences.)

3. How can these educational experiences be effectively organized? (Organizing experiences to maximize their effect.)
4. How can we determine whether these purposes have been attained? (Evaluating the process and revising the areas that were not effective.)

These four questions, referred to in the literature as the Tyler Rationale, comprised the titles of four of the five chapters in his book. While Tyler's model has been a dominant force for curriculum design, it has been roundly criticized for implying discrete stages. However, he did note that any of these four questions can be the entry point for the design process. He also recognized that learners do not necessarily learn what teachers teach. "It is what he (sic) does that he learns, not what the teacher does" (Tyler, 1949, p. 63) that results in learning. A further criticism was that his claim that the process was value-free was invalid (Kliebard, 1971). Indeed, in our view his model overlooked how curriculum is interpreted and influenced by different stakeholders during the entire design and implementation process. Because stakeholders in ELT often have different views of language and language learning, it is essential for educators to understand the impact these different curricular interpretations have on learners. For example, an interpretation that rejects multilingualism and equity fails to provide an environment that fosters learning among minority communities (See Chapter 4).

A model that seeks to recognize the social, historical, political, and personal forces that affect curriculum is that of Glatthorn et al. (2006). They suggest six types of curricula: *the recommended curriculum*, *the written curriculum*, *the supported curriculum*, *the taught curriculum*, *the tested curriculum*, and *the learned curriculum* (see Chapter 2 for a full discussion of this model). Underlying all these types of curricula is the vision society has for its future and the role the curriculum plays in achieving that vision (Masters, 2020). Although Masters was referring specifically to school curriculum for compulsory school years, his perspective is equally relevant for English language teaching across different sectors (see Chapter 5).

In English language teaching, Adamson et al. (2000) developed a model based on their research into curriculum change in Hong Kong. They identified four types of curricula that arose during the process of curriculum design and implementation: the intended curriculum, the resourced curriculum, the implemented curriculum, and the experienced curriculum. Table 1.2 below shows who was involved and what the process and product were for each curriculum.

These decision-making steps are presented in a linear fashion, as are most of the models of the curriculum design process (see Chapter 6 for a discussion of the cycle of curriculum design). In practice, these different curricula interact.

Table 1.2 Processes and Products for Types of Curricula

	Intended Curriculum	*Resourced Curriculum*	*Implemented Curriculum*	*Experienced Curriculum*
Process	policy making	learning resources design	teachers' lesson planning	pupils' learning
Product	policy documents	learning resources	teaching aids	learning acts

As teachers put the curriculum into practice, they may add resources and suggest changes to the policy documents. As policy makers and others see what learning takes place (or does not), they may revise or add to learning resources or provide professional development for teachers so that they better understand the intent of the curriculum. However, what the Adamson et al. model does provide is four interpretations of the curriculum. The learning resources may not completely match the intended curriculum; the teaching acts may not implement the intended curriculum; teachers may not use the resources provided; and learners may not learn what teachers teach (as indicated by Tyler in his quote earlier). As we explain later regarding curriculum reform in Japan, the experienced curriculum (i.e., learners' English competency demonstrated through learnings acts) did not match the intended policy made by the ministry (i.e., fluency in communication). Although different terms to describe these different interpretations of curriculum are used by different scholars, all agree that multiple meanings can underpin definitions of a curriculum.

The Hidden Curriculum

Another aspect of a curriculum that is seldom discussed in models is the hidden curriculum (see also Chapter 2 for additional information on the hidden curriculum). Curricula are embedded in the sociocultural setting in which they are used. Consequently, they reflect the sociocultural and political beliefs of that setting. For example, Benesch (2001) criticized English for specific purposes (ESP) for being pragmatic, for focusing on the needs of content courses because of the "efforts of governments and private companies to promote English worldwide for political and commercial purposes" (p. 24). These purposes are hidden from the learners, whose own purposes and sociocultural backgrounds are not considered relevant to instruction. She calls for a critical perspective in ESP, in which pedagogy is based on consultation with learners and issues of race, gender, culture, and power are discussed in relation to the learners' own lives. Similarly, Auerbach and Burgess (1985) pointed out that the life skills content

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for adult immigrants contains a hidden curriculum that trains refugees/immigrants to be obedient workers, accepting of their low social status.

Topics chosen for study indicate to learners what society values and considers important or unimportant. In many courses, these values may not be as overt as they are in courses in citizenship or culture. For example, an ESL/EFL textbook that includes topics about London, but showing only white, upper- or middle-class activities and places to visit, conveys to students that oppression of Britain's multicultural inhabitants, working class, and alternative young people is acceptable. How learners are expected to behave in schools reflects social norms—how they address teachers, how they ask (or don't ask) questions, how they are permitted to dress, or whether they have a loyalty oath. In general education in the United States, there has been much research showing how teachers, despite their stated intentions to treat all children equally, call on boys more than girls and call on students like them more than those from different ethnic or social backgrounds (see, for example, Spindler, 1982). Such teacher behaviors convey social status norms to the children. Therefore, it is incumbent upon curriculum developers to consider what sociocultural values are implied in the curriculum.

Curriculum Change

Curricula are, as we have already said, dynamic. Built into the curriculum process model that we describe in Chapter 6 is constant renewal, based on feedback from curriculum assessment. As well as this renewal process and the various interpretations of the intended curriculum, over time any of the stakeholders may choose or be required to change the curriculum. Changes in the environment can lead to the need to design a new curriculum or revise a current one. The student body may change. For example, in an immigrant or refugee program, the home countries of the learners change depending on government policy and on changing trouble spots around the world. For example, the war in Syria led to an increase in displaced refugees seeking asylum in Europe and the English dominant countries. Government regulations may change. For example, because of a lack of local medical professionals, English dominant countries have for several decades encouraged the immigration of such professionals and, in particular, international students into their nursing programs. Over time, nursing faculty have realized that the English needed to achieve the score on IELTS or TOEFL for entry to the program does not prepare these nursing students for the technical language nor the colloquial language used by peers, which they need to be successful. Consequently, many intensive English programs (IEP) design new curricula for courses these learners can take while pursuing their degrees.

Recently, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the world has become aware of another environmental change, namely, the need to change the delivery system from face-to-face to online or hybrid delivery. Online learning requires a different curriculum, with different approaches to content, activities, and resources, as we will discuss further in Chapter 5.

Often change is initiated and implemented from above for social, political, or economic reasons. For example, many governments have begun English language programs for young learners in the belief that learning a language early will lead to improved language proficiency, which is needed for global economic competitions in the 21st century. However, if the change is top-down, without collaboration with or buy-in from all stakeholders, change rarely is diffused throughout the educational enterprise (Adamson & Davison, 2008; Goh & Yin, 2008). If all aspects of English language instruction are not aligned with the reform, then it is rarely adopted. For example, Japan became concerned that, despite six years or more of English language instruction in secondary school, students were unable to interact in English with other English users. Japan's curriculum focus was on grammar, rather than on the ability to use the language to communicate, and teachers often taught English through the medium of Japanese. Consequently, over the past three decades, the Japanese Ministry of Education (MEXT) instituted curriculum reforms that required teachers to focus on communication (Mondejar et al., 2011). However, the high stakes tests were not changed. They still focused on grammar and the written word; there was no speaking component. Consequently, teachers either did not implement the changes (Underwood, 2012) or, if they did, parents enrolled their children in private after-school tutoring so that their children would pass the tests, tests that determined whether students would be able to enter university. Furthermore, students did not meet the targets for students passing the Eiken (Test in Practical English Proficiency) Grade 3 by the last year of junior high school (Torikai, 2018). Of course, Japan is not alone in trying to implement a top-down curriculum change and finding it unsuccessful. In Hong Kong, Adamson and Davison (2008), and in Singapore, Goh and Yin (2008) found unexpected outcomes in the implementation of top-down K–12 reforms. In both contexts, reforms were reformulated by teachers and others.

Conclusion

Because curricula reflect the beliefs and values of language and language learning in the local community, they are usually best developed as close to the local community as possible. Unfortunately, in the field of ESL/EFL, very often curricula and/or textbooks are adopted from elsewhere, usually from an

English-dominant country. It is not surprising, therefore, that they find minimal acceptance from teachers or learners. Curriculum development is a complex enterprise, which, to be successfully adopted, needs to involve all stakeholders in the process, a point we expand on in Chapter 6.

Task: Expand

Re-read the earlier example about teaching money skills to refugees. Adapt this example to your own context. Using Table 1.1, choose what text types would be relevant for your learners. Then, map the language outcomes that result from teaching and learning these particular text types. Share your findings with a colleague.

Questions for Discussion

1. Explain how you would best use textbooks in your context.
2. What non-language beliefs are reflected in the curricula with which you are most familiar? Is it appropriate that these values be imparted to learners? Why? Why not? To what extent are the views of Benesch and Auerbach and Burgess applicable to your teaching context? Why?
3. If you were to teach in an unfamiliar context, how might you uncover the hidden curriculum in the school where you teach?
4. What approaches could the Japanese Ministry of Education have adopted in order to ensure that teachers would be willing and able to implement a communicative curriculum?
5. Go to the IELTS website and check whether the scope and sequence presented there map onto the specifications of the IELTS test (academic). In what ways could the scope and sequence be different?

Note

1. EFTPOS: Electronic funds transfer at point of sale.

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SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND HISTORICAL CONTEXTS

VIGNETTE

I have been working with a group of in-service teachers on a U.S. federal grant for two years. Each week I am in the schools observing classes and helping teachers implement a model of instruction that integrates content and language. I have been "invited" by one of the teachers on the grant to visit her eighth-grade language arts class. I say that I am "invited" (and not simply invited in the usual sense) because one of the requirements of participation for the middle school teachers (Grades 6–9) who are involved in the grant is to collaborate with the university professors who are working on the grant and "invite" them to their classrooms for observations and informal discussion on a regular basis. The discussions that follow the observations are related to the implementation of the model. The collaboration is meant to help both the university professors and the classroom teachers learn more about how to help English learners achieve academic success.

For this observation, the focus was on the part of the model related to establishing a purpose. In the class observations, we were using a rubric in which teacher indicators for purpose had been identified. I wanted to see the teacher identify content concepts and content and language objectives and clearly communicate them to her learners. In the discussion with me after the observation, she was also supposed to tell me how the content being taught related to the State Core Curriculum for Language Arts.[1]

(continued)

(continued)

There were many good things about the lesson I observed, such as the fact that the content concepts were clearly identified for the learners and the objectives were posted. So, all in all, I was pleased with what I observed in terms of how the teacher communicated the purpose of the lesson to the students and was using the model for content and language integration. During the discussion, I asked the teacher to talk to me about how the lesson addressed the mandated State Core Curriculum for Language Arts in terms of the specific standards and objectives. After some moments, she finally admitted that it didn't fit the required core curriculum directly. However, she said that she really liked the lesson, had taught the lesson several times previously, and believed that her students liked it. I ask her if she would look at the core again and try to determine where her lesson might fit and what standard and objectives it supported.

[Christison, research notes]

Task: Reflect

1. How does the teacher in the vignette view the state required curriculum in relationship to her own planning? How might her views be different from the administrators' in the district[2] in which she works?
2. Do you think her views about required curricula are typical or atypical of teachers? Do you think teacher views differ according to context?
3. In what other contexts are teachers asked to plan for and deliver instruction based on a required curriculum?

Introduction

The pendulum of curriculum design for English language teaching is constantly shifting with change being motivated by historical, social, and political stimuli. Many shifts are the result of changing political ideologies as diverse groups of teachers and other stakeholders call for different positions relative to solving problems and addressing curricular issues that have ranged from very traditional perspectives that place grammar teaching at the forefront of the curriculum to more progressive positions that focus on determining and meeting learners'

needs. Changes in curriculum design are also motivated by the changing views of scholars within the field as a result of new knowledge that is generated by research. In addition, educators have also come to understand the extent to which curricular changes are influenced by and are manifestations of social forces, such as the unprecedented global health crisis that the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic brought. In a short period of time, it changed educational curricula and how students were being educated on a global scale. On March 13, 2020, the OECD estimated that there were 421 million children in 39 countries affected by school closures and moving to home schooling and online learning (WE Forum, 2020). By July 13, 2020, the number had grown to over 1 billion in 143 countries (UNESCO, 2020). Developing an awareness of the extent to which curricular changes can be influenced by and are manifestations of social forces is crucial for curriculum developers so that they can build flexibility into the curriculum.

As was introduced in the vignette, K–12 public school teachers in the United States are expected to follow a required curriculum for content and grade level, but a required curriculum does not specifically dictate to teachers how they are to deliver its content. Because there is an expectation that they must teach to the core standards, the assumption made is that teachers do so. In the earlier vignette, we see that even though there is a required curriculum for language arts in the core standards and even though the teacher knew that she was expected to follow the standards, she did not.

For the teacher in the vignette, the core curriculum was not the primary force that drove her teaching or her decision-making process. There are always social forces and educational trends at work that influence how teachers will implement existing curricula. Both language teaching and curriculum development can best be understood if they are viewed in relationship to societal and contextual factors that influence decision-making. Curriculum must also be viewed against a historical backdrop of societal change both in terms of the field of English language teaching and the specific contexts, such as public schools, private language schools, government sponsored programs, intensive English programs (IEPs), or higher education.

Curricula are created to meet specific expectations; nevertheless, what ends up being taught in a classroom is the result of many different social and political forces, such as government initiatives and the influence of professional associations, publishers, researchers, parents, administrators, and even teachers' preferences. In this chapter, we focus on social, historical, and political factors that can influence the creation and implementation of a curriculum. The purpose of this chapter is to help you recognize that curriculum

is not a static concept; it changes in response to social, historical, and political forces.

Social, Political, and Historical Influences

Goodlad (1979) was perhaps the first to write about the social, historical, and political forces at work in curriculum development. He suggested that there were different types of curricula that result from these influences and offered some key distinctions among them. For example, he stated that in most educational units, there is an *ideological curriculum*—a curriculum created by scholars and/or teachers. The ideological curriculum is based on the ideologies of the curriculum designers, and it is intended to reflect the ideal blending of theory and practice as supported by research studies on teaching. The ideological curriculum is quite different from a *sanctioned curriculum*, a curriculum that has been officially approved by local leaders or administrators and may be subject to the political and social views expressed by these stakeholders.

Glatthorn et al. (2006) agree with Goodlad (1979) relative to the usefulness of thinking about different types of curricula that arise in response to social, political, and historical factors; however, they suggest a taxonomy that is different from Goodlad's and one that they believe to be more useful for English language teaching because the terms they use are directly related to issues that curriculum developers face (see also Adamson et al., 2000). Although curricula may be derived from a set of fundamental concepts, skills, and beliefs, in reality, they can be manifested in quite different ways. The types of curricula that we will discuss further in this chapter are adapted from Glatthorn et al. (2006) and include the following: *the recommended curriculum*, *the written curriculum*, *the supported curriculum*, *the taught curriculum*, *the tested curriculum*, and *the learned curriculum*. In this chapter, each of these curriculum types will be introduced and discussed in terms of purpose and function.

The Recommended Curriculum

A *recommended curriculum* stresses the content and skills that should be emphasized, and as such, is representative of what an ideal curriculum might be if the curriculum focused on educational factors related to teaching and learning. Therefore, it is often recommended by schools, local and national educational agencies, and by highly regarded professionals. It is general in nature and is most frequently presented as a list of goals, requirements, or policy recommendations. It also outlines the content and sequence for fields of study, such

as biology, math, or language arts. In the vignette that introduces this chapter, the state's core curriculum for language arts is an example of a recommended curriculum.

Recommended curricula are shaped by several key factors. Societal trends have a strong influence on policy makers who, in turn, have the capacity to influence policies that affect curricula. Advancements in digital technologies can also play a role as schools strive to help both teachers and learners in attaining technological literacy (Dugger & Nichols, 2003; Hasse, 2017). In the United States professional associations, such as Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) International, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), the American Association of Intensive English Programs (AAIEP), the Consortium of English Accreditation (CEA), and Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS), play a role in shaping and influencing recommended curricula. Other countries also have a variety of professional movements that influence the content of a recommended curriculum, for example, the European Common Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), which is used to describe language ability in foreign language learners on a six-point scale, is one such example. Professionals who translate research into recommendations in their writing and published works also play a significant part in a recommended curriculum.

A recommended curriculum serves a useful function. It can establish boundaries and endpoints for curriculum planning and promote equity and excellence in learning, including equal access to resources for all learners (Glatthorn et al., 2006), and it can help both teachers and programs develop effective instructional programs. In these ways, it is similar to the intended curriculum (Adamson et al., 2000) presented in Chapter 1.

The Written Curriculum

A *written curriculum* is more specific than a recommended curriculum. It is similar to the resourced curriculum (Adamson et al., 2000) presented in Chapter 1. The purpose of a written curriculum is to "ensure that educational goals of a system are being accomplished" (Glatthorn, et al., 2006, p. 8). In order to ensure educational goals, a written curriculum must provide more detail than a recommended curriculum. In some contexts, a written curriculum is referred to as a curriculum guide because curriculum developers include not only the general goals and objectives of the recommended curriculum but also the specific learning activities that should be used to guide learners in the achievement of the

objectives. A written curriculum can also include a list of the materials to be used with the specific learning activities.

Although written curricula are intended to help teachers implement the recommended curriculum, they are often subject to criticism. To understand the nature of the criticism, it is useful to look at the three functions of a written curriculum: (a) mediating, (b) controlling, and (c) standardizing. By looking carefully at these three functions we are able to gain insight into teachers' views and preferences. Written curricula are often used to "mediate between the ideals of the recommended curriculum and the realities of the classroom" (p. 9). What the educational experts, administrators, and local stakeholders think should be taught might be quite different from what the teachers think should be taught. Written curricula are meant to mediate "between the expectations of administrators and the preferences of teachers" (p. 9), thereby, helping the two very disparate groups reach general consensus.

Another function of a written curriculum is controlling. Written curriculum may come about because administrators wish to control *what* and *how* the curriculum is being taught. For example, if the teaching staff is comprised of novice teachers or if there is a great deal of turnover in teaching staff, administrators in English language teaching programs may exercise more control over the written curriculum than if the teaching staff were stable and experienced. It is also important to recognize that teachers and administrators may respond very differently to the controlling function of written curricula. Administrators use a written curriculum to ensure the curriculum is being taught and view oversight of the written curriculum as an important management responsibility, especially in terms of assuring quality and student achievement (Marzano et al., 2005). On the other hand, if the learning activities that are specified in the written curriculum do not reflect the most current knowledge about language teaching and learning (i.e., best practices), they may not be well received by the teachers. In addition, the learning activities specified in the written curriculum may not reflect what has traditionally been done, and could be rejected on that basis.

A third function of a written curriculum is standardizing. Although it is an important function of a written curriculum, it is a function that is difficult to implement for two reasons. First, as humans we are all unique, and as such, we each see the world from our own individual perspectives; consequently, even in local contexts, there will be an uneven quality to the delivery of written curricula because of the individual approaches that teachers will take. Second, not all written curricula or curricular guides are equal. The guides that are best received and implemented by teachers are those in which clear relationships have been established among stated goals, instructional objectives, and learning

activities and those that are aligned with teachers' beliefs about language and language learning (see Chapter 6 in this volume).

The Supported Curriculum

The *supported curriculum* is the curriculum as reflected in and shaped by the resources that are allocated to support delivery of the curriculum. It is also similar to the idea of the resourced curriculum (Adamson et al., 2000) discussed in Chapter 1. In a supported curriculum resources are hierarchically situated as presented in Figure 2.1. Curricula are influenced by the time that is allocated at the level of the school, as well as the time that a teacher allocates in the classroom. In addition, curricula are influenced by personnel decisions, which determine how many students are in a class. For example, Zahorik et al. (2002) found that fourth graders were more engaged in learning and with the concepts they were learning when they were in smaller classes. How learning episodes are spaced (e.g., four hours a week over 12 weeks or eight hours a week over six weeks) and how much time teachers ultimately have to work with students are also factors that affect what gets supported in a curriculum. In addition, a curriculum is influenced by the access that teachers and learners have to textbooks and other learning materials.

The Taught Curriculum

We have seen that there is a difference in the recommended curriculum and the written curriculum. Now we will focus on the differences between the taught curriculum and the recommended and written curricula. The taught curriculum is similar to the implemented curriculum (Adamson et al., 2000) presented in Chapter 1. The difference between a taught curriculum and the written and recommended curricula was highlighted in the vignette that introduced this chapter. The teacher in this vignette readily admitted that factors

the time allocated to a subject at the school
↓
the time allocated by the classroom teacher
↓
personnel allocations determined by administrators
↓
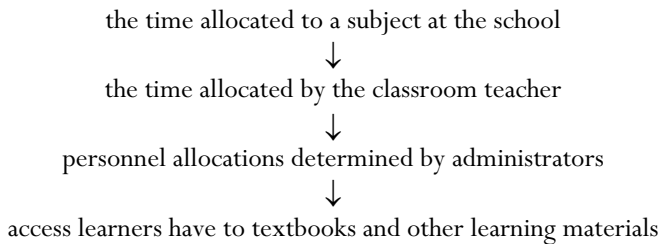access learners have to textbooks and other learning materials

Figure 2.1 Pattern of Curricular Influence

other than the concepts delineated in the recommended curriculum (i.e., the standards and objectives) led her to select the content for her own lesson. She gave preference to teaching concepts that she had taught before and selecting concepts that she knew her students enjoyed but was unsure about whether they were part of the core. While differences are to be expected among teachers in terms of the concepts they choose to teach and how the concepts are taught, the extreme situation where each teacher develops his or her own curriculum is to be avoided. As the example in the vignette shows, without systematic monitoring, the taught curriculum, in effect, becomes the written curriculum because it represents the curriculum that outsiders see if they observe teachers in the classrooms. Outsiders assume that the concepts presented in the classroom and the instruction they see represent the recommended and written curricula.

Questions that both teachers and administrators must ask in any context are the following: Is there a relationship between the written and taught curricula? "How does the taught curriculum, regardless of its fit with the written curriculum, become established" (Glatthorn et al., 2006, p. 14)? Answering these questions is a complex process and administrators and teachers in language teaching programs must decide how to monitor the taught curriculum and determine its relationship to the written curriculum over time and across individual teachers.

The Tested Curriculum

The portion of the curriculum that is assessed by teachers in the classrooms or at the program or district levels represents yet another view of curriculum. There are a number of important factors to consider in thinking about a tested curriculum. When teachers create their own tests, there is a possibility that the tests may not correspond to what has actually been taught in the classroom as teachers may not be skilled in the design and development of language tests. Curriculum-referenced tests have the potential to drive instruction. From this point of view, the overall effectiveness of tests is determined by how the tests are constructed in relationship to the written curriculum. In other words, if a curriculum-referenced test has been created to measure understanding of the main concepts covered in the written curriculum and those main concepts have been the focus of instruction, then it is likely that the test will have a positive effect on both teaching and learning. If the curriculum-referenced test covers incidental concepts that are not covered in the written curriculum, the effect on teaching and learning will not be positive. Research suggests that there is not always a good fit between the content that is covered in classrooms and the