Key Concepts in Syllabus Design and Materials Development

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By

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FOREWORD

Syllabus design and materials development are integral to the effectiveness of language education programs. Over the past few decades, numerous terms have been proposed to conceptualize different dimensions of syllabus design and materials development. The terms create spaces for teachers, researchers, and professionals to express and exchange their ideas based on common ground and with broadly agreed-upon perceptions of each dimension of syllabus design and materials development. Also, these terms provide descriptions that characterize concepts in syllabus design and materials development and can inform theorizing and conceptualization in research, professional discourse on syllabus design and materials development, and the shaping of the teacher knowledge base about the curriculum.

This book describes key terms in syllabus design and materials development based on main works in this area. One definition is given when there is a well-accepted one for a term. In contrast, other terms are approached from multiple perspectives due to the range of meanings or reconceptualization assigned to a concept across curriculum areas over time. The book is for teachers, specialists, and researchers in language education programs and curricula, including language education practitioners, student teachers, curriculum developers, syllabus designers, materials developers, and postgraduate students in TESOL and language education.

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A

Academic Word List

Academic word list (AWL), analyzing the corpus of 3-5 million words, including texts in Law, Arts, Commerce, and Science, was developed by Averil Coxhead. Coxhead (2011) used an example of the word family to explain the AWL, e.g., *benefit, beneficial, beneficiary, beneficiaries, benefited, benefiting,* and *benefits*. This corpus also includes 414 texts, textbooks, articles, book chapters, and laboratory manuals. The reading of first-year university students was aimed to be represented in this corpus (Coxhead, 2000).

Coxhead (2000) maintained that four key principles were considered when selecting the words for AWL. First, AWL words and West's (1953) General Service List of English Words (GSL) goals differed. Unlike GSL, the purpose of AWL was not general English but academic vocabulary. Frequency, range, and uniformity were the other three principles of the corpus. Frequency means that each word family should appear 100 times or more in each of the four disciplines. Range means that each word family should occur in at least 15 subject areas. Uniformity means that each word family should occur over ten times in the four disciplines. Coxhead maintains that 10 sub-lists are included in AWL; on average, 10% of the vocabulary in the written academic corpus is found in the AWL.

Accuracy

Richards (2006) defines accuracy as the correct use of language by learners, including grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. He also asserts that accuracy is often compared to fluency when the learners' speaking or writing level is a matter of concern. The main focus is on language rather than meaning, and the context of the speaking is not important. In addition, small samples of language are practiced while considering accuracy. According to Plakans et al. (2019), the strategies used to measure accuracy

focus on norm-based correctness of grammar and lexical errors. Richards (2006) also made a comparison between complexity and accuracy. He believes that, unlike complexity, which focuses on flexibility, accuracy refers to learners' attempts to take control of language. In the same vein, by comparing accuracy with complexity, Ellis (2008) believes that complexity is related to the risk-taking learners to restructure the sentences, while accuracy is the outcome of taking control of language knowledge by learners to avoid making mistakes while using language.

Analytic Approach/Syllabus

Nunan (1988a) states that language is not divided into discrete parts for learning in the analytic syllabus; instead, this approach has a holistic view. Learners are exposed to patterns extracted from the language. The main focus in the analytic approach is not on the grammatical system of the language; rather, the communication purpose is of utmost importance. The synthetic approach to syllabus design is related to separate units of language like words and grammatical structures. Nunan also believes that before designing the syllabus, one should define the purpose of language learning, and attempts should be made to meet those purposes. He also stated that the starting point for syllabus design is the function of language, not the grammatical system.

Advocates of the analytic syllabus believe that language cannot be divided into discrete parts for learning. Consequently, the language content for a course should not be prespecified. Wilkins (1976) defines analytic approaches to syllabus design in terms of the purposes for which individuals are learning the language as well as the kinds of language performance that realize those purposes. Long and Crookes (1992) emphasize that "analytic" refers to the learner's operations, not what syllabus designers do. They further add that analytic syllabuses present learners with whole L2 chunks at a time, without linguistic interference and control. The role of learners in this holistic type of syllabus is to analyze aspects of language use and structure in line with communicative activities. Examples of analytic syllabus types are procedural and process syllabuses.

Approaches to ESP

Three approaches to English for Specific Purposes (ESP) are highlighted in Hutchinson and Waters (1987). First, there is a language-centered approach in which ESP is primarily considered a language or structure issue. In this approach, materials are organized around grammatical features of the text (e.g., Munby, 1978; Trimble, 1985). Second, skills-centered approaches emphasize skills and strategies underlying language behavior (e.g., Alderson, 1984; Widdowson, 1984). Third, the learning-centered approach focuses on learners' competence and draws insights from language and skills-centered approaches. Hudson (1991) holds that this approach views programs within the overall learning process.

Approaches to Needs Analysis

A change of understanding of the concept of "needs and needs analysis" took place in the 1960s, and, since then, a plethora of terms for the classification of needs has come into being: objective and subjective needs, perceived and felt needs, target situation/goal-oriented and learning needs, and process-oriented and product-oriented needs. In effect, they reflect different factors and perspectives based on a different philosophy or educational value. Correspondingly, different approaches to needs analysis have been adopted by different scholars, which are enumerated by Jordan (1997) as follows:

1. Target-situation Analysis (TSA): Munby's practical approach deals with the learner's needs at the end of the course and target level performance.
2. Present-situation Analysis (PSA): PSA focuses on the learner's competence concerning skills and language at the current state.
3. Learning-centered Approach: The learning-centered approach is a negotiation process between individuals and society, including syllabus, materials, teaching method, etc. This approach categorizes needs into necessities, lacks, and wants.
4. Strategy Analysis (SA): SA focuses on learning methods, i.e., preferred learning styles and strategies.

5. Deficiency Analysis (DA): DA compares current proficiency with target learner proficiency and identifies deficiencies/lacks using a three-point rating scale (none/some/lots) that determines the priorities.
6. Means Analysis (MA): MA attempts to explore the local situation, including facilities, teachers, and teaching methods, to see how the language course can be implemented.

As Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) point out, the definition of the present needs analysis includes aspects of all approaches. Needs analysis in ESP embraces the following:

A. Professional information about learners: The tasks and activities that learners use English for: *target situation analysis and objective needs.*
B. Personal information about the learners: Factors contributing to individuals' learning, including previous learning experiences, cultural information, reasons for attending the course and expectations, and attitude to English: *wants, means, and subjective needs.*
C. Information about learners: What are their current skills and language use? What is the *present situation analysis*, which allows us to assess (D)?
D. The learner's lacks: the gap between (C) and (A): *lacks.*
E. Language learning information: effective ways of learning the skills and language in (D): *learning needs.*
F. Professional communication information about (A): knowledge of how the language and skills are used in the target situation: *linguistic analysis, discourse analysis, genre analysis.*
G. What is wanted from the course?
H. Information about the environment in which the course will be run: *means analysis.*

Authentic Materials

Richards (2001) asserted that authentic materials are not specially prepared for pedagogical purposes. Some believe that authentic materials are

preferred over created material because they contain authentic language and reflect real-world language uses. It is also maintained that various sources, such as TV programs, magazines, meetings, and talks, are involved in preparing authentic material (Mestari & Malabar, 2017).

Authentic materials have some advantages (Clarke, 1989; Peacock, 1997; Phillips & Shettlesworth, 1978). The advantages include the following: (1) given that authentic materials are more interesting and motivating, they have a positive effect on learners' motivation; (2) teachers can find a lot of relevant, interesting sources on the Web; (3) there is also authentic cultural information about the target culture; (4) authentic texts consist of real language, while artificial texts in created materials are aimed at illustrating some grammatical rules or vocabulary; (5) authentic materials can be more related to learners' needs, so they connect learners' classroom needs to their needs in the real world; and (6) in using authentic materials, teachers can be more creative in developing their materials, activities, and tasks that have been prepared based on their teaching styles and students' learning styles.

Some disadvantages of authentic materials are also mentioned: (1) authentic materials are not the only motivating material as created materials can also be motivating for students; (2) authentic materials are not designed for language learning and are not simplified; rather, their vocabulary and grammar are sometimes difficult and often unnecessary for learners; (3) unlike created materials, authentic materials are not designed based on a graded syllabus, and they are not very systematic; (4) preparing learning resources around authentic materials is a demanding job for teachers; and (5) it is also very time consuming to locate suitable sources for materials and develop some relevant exercises, and hence teachers mostly tend to use a mixture of created and authentic materials.

Authenticity

It has been argued that removing the text from its original context decreases its authenticity (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987); in other words, the audience changes once the authentic text is brought into the classroom. Authenticity also deals with the reader's purpose in reading the text. For example, the recommendation reports for the purchase of technical equipment are, in

their original context of use, devised to help the reader decide which of two or more items of equipment to buy. If, however, a recommendation report is imported into a language teaching classroom and students are expected to answer some comprehension questions based on it, the relation between the text and task is artificial.

B

Behavioral Objectives

According to Mager (1962), behavioral objectives should have three characteristics: (1) they should describe the behavior to be performed without any ambiguity; (2) they should describe the specific conditions under which the performance will be expected to occur; and (3) they should state a standard of acceptable performance: the criterion.

Influenced by linguistic constructs such as "communicative competence" and educational philosophies such as "competency-based instruction," several attempts have been made to plan language programs using behavioral objectives. The Council of Europe's Threshold Level specifications, i.e., guidelines for language programs aiming at functional language skills in European settings, include behavioral specifications along with other forms of specifying curriculum goals (van Ek, 1977).

Blended Learning

According to Tomlinson and Whittaker (2013), there is no consensus on the exact definition of blended learning. Blended learning, in general, is an education program that presents educational materials through online digital media and traditional classroom methods. Hence, while students still attend traditional classes with a teacher present, face-to-face classroom practices are mixed with computer-mediated activities regarding content and delivery. In higher education, as Banados (2006) explained, blended learning occurs when classroom instruction is combined with technology in a way that it can be changed in favor of more beneficial learning and assessment. Banados believes that this approach is not fixed; rather, it can be altered whenever needed to gain a better outcome. According to Neumeier (2005), the primary goal of blended learning is to find the most beneficial combination of the modern modes of learning for a better outcome.

Brainstorming Activity

Brainstorming is considered one of the important techniques of the participative approach to decision-making that can be applied in a pedagogical situation. During brainstorming, students will remember and teach other students what they know about something. Alam Khan (2013) states that no editing or ordering happens in this procedure, and the ideas are usually used as the basis for the next activity, which might be speaking or writing. He also points out that you need nothing more than a pen or pencil and sheets of paper for a brainstorming activity unless you are teaching in a high-tech classroom.

According to Unin and Bearing (2016), brainstorming is a small group activity that allows students to focus on the free flow of ideas. The purpose of the activity is to enable students to come up with as many ideas as possible in a specified period. Evaluation does not happen during the activity and will be the last stage as the task is going to be completed. In brainstorming, many ideas are usually generated, some of which are not useable but are considered important as a starting point that leads to more useful ideas. ESL teachers can use this activity to encourage students to share their ideas while discussing a topic or a question.

British National Corpus

The British National Corpus (BNC) is a 100-million-word collection collected based on samples of written and spoken language through a wide range of sources. It represents a broad cross-section of British English from the late 20th century. The extracts that form 90% of the written part of BNC include, for example, excerpts from local and national newspapers, published and unpublished letters and memoranda, as well as school and university essays. Ten percent of the spoken part of the BNC is collected through a large amount of unscripted informal conversation, which has been recorded voluntarily and by people from different age groups and regional and social classes. Working on building the corpus began in 1991 and was finished in 1994. After completing the project, no new texts were added, and only a few revisions were made before the second and third editions.

As a corpus, the BNC has many features. First, it is monolingual, i.e., the corpus includes modern British words, and it has nothing to do with the languages used in Britain; however, it includes non-British English and foreign language words. Second, it is synchronic, meaning that it is based on British English of the late 20th century and is not related to the historical development that produced it. Third, it is general, which means it has examples of both written and spoken language and includes examples of different styles and varieties. The corpus is not limited to particular subject fields, genres, or registers. Fourth, it is sample-based, including samples of 45,000 words in the written sources taken from different parts of single-author texts. Shorter texts have been included, up to 45,000 words. It also includes multi-author texts; for example, magazines and newspapers are fully included.

Business English

Fanha Martins (2017) defines Business English as a language that is used in a multi-national context and enables effective and elaborate communication for non-native speakers of that language. However, Business English is not used as a communication tool; it is only used by non-native speakers of a language. It can be used between native and non-native speakers as a Lingua Franca.

According to Zhengguo et al. (2016), the training objectives of a Business English course, as a main English skill course in the senior classes of English majors or economy and trade-related majors, are to teach students Business English language knowledge as well as business-related knowledge to broaden and strengthen their Business English skills. In other words, as Zhengguo et al. argue, the teaching goals of these courses are not concerned with some knowledge of business letters and professions; rather, the focus is on teaching students how to use English to effectively communicate in business and manage potential problems that may arise in international business.

As Fanha Martins (2017) argues, when we consider Business English as a Lingua Franca, speakers are not expected to use standard English as it is a

concerning issue in traditional language instruction. They only need to achieve fruitful and effective communication based on mutual intelligibility.

C

CALL Materials

Using language learning software and Web-based resources has become very popular in language learning and teaching. CALL refers to computer-assisted language learning, and CALL materials refer to both language learning software/Web-based resources. CALL materials have two main characteristics. First, they come in various formats, allow for presentation flexibility, are interconnected and indexed, encourage the use of multiple sources, encourage collaborative efforts, and are contextualized within a certain framework. CALL materials mainly focus on developing language learning autonomy by taking into account learners' cognitive and metacognitive strategies (Ruiz-Madrid, 2006). Second, various software programs have been promoted as virtual teachers and teaching tools, but Beatty (2010) argues that CALL materials cannot be very effective in language teaching without human intervention. Therefore, ideal CALL materials are not alternative tools but complementary ones that reinforce classroom activities (Ravichandran, 2000).

Beatty (2010) highlights some challenges facing the development of CALL materials: the lack of funds, expertise, and authoring programs; the lack of a determined scope and sequence; and the lack of guidance on how to work with CALL materials, which raises the probability of facing the disorientation problem and being lost in the material.

Characteristics of ESP Courses

According to Carter (1983), the following three features are common to ESP courses:

1. Authentic materials: Dudley-Evans (1997) believes that ESP courses should be offered at intermediate and advanced levels with mollified or unmodified authentic content materials.

2. Purpose-related orientation: Gatehouse (2001) states that purpose-related orientation refers to the recreation of communicative tasks in the target setting. Carter (1983) mentions students' simulation of a conference, including preparing papers, note-taking, and reading.

3. Self-direction: ESP's whole point is to turn learners into users (Carter, 1983). For self-direction to occur, there should be an attempt to teach learners how to learn and prioritize learning strategies to access information in a new culture.

Classical Humanism

Classical humanism aims to promote intellectual capacity and mastery of controlled knowledge through unit-by-unit learning and practice (Skilbeck, 1982). The substance of what is to be learned or transferred to the learner is the primary focus of the curriculum in this model. Syllabuses based on classical humanism would be grammatically structured and accuracy-focused. According to Kelly (1989), this model ignores the individual learner's talents and challenges, as well as the complex learning process itself.

Commercial Materials

Peacock (1997) defines non-authentic materials as materials produced only for language learning purposes. Peacock maintains that exercises in coursebooks and supplementary materials are examples of non-authentic materials. Richards (1993) contends that there are some practical factors based on which teachers prefer to use commercial over teacher-made materials: saving time and being affordable, having higher quality compared with school-produced materials, using a variety of teaching resources, and being systematically developed by experts. However, Richards argues that there are some disadvantages to using commercial materials. First, they are usually intended for a broad audience and consequently only focus on the general needs of students, so they are not suitable resources for the specific needs of individuals. Second, because they are written for a large audience, the content of all textbooks is the same due to a homogenizing process. Students are culturally heterogeneous and from geographically diverse places, and consequently, there is no authenticity or relevance in commercial

materials. The last one is about textbook reification, which is described as unjustifiably ascribing all qualities of excellence, authority, and validity to published textbooks.

Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)

According to Weir (2005), The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) is used to describe language proficiency. It works through a group of scales that have been ordered ascendingly from A1 (the lowest level) to C2 (the highest level) in terms of outcomes. These descriptor scales are supplemented by providing useful information on language learning, teaching, and assessment views.

Based on Little's (2006) view, the CEFR is a descriptive scheme to analyze L2 learners' needs, specify their learning goals, guide the material developers about the L2 learning materials and activity types, and provide orientations for the evaluation of L2 learning outcomes. Little lists four clarifications about the CEFR: (1) the scales of the CEFR are multidimensional; (2) levels and scales describe the learning outcomes of L2 learners; (3) levels and scales cannot be considered an alternative system of grading and describe a succession of language learning outcomes that can be achieved in years; and (4) the behavioral dimension of the highest levels implies L2 learners' maturity, general educational achievement, and professional experience.

Communicative Exercise

The inclusion of communicative and/or meaningful tasks, as opposed to mechanical exercises frequent in audiolingualism, is one of the key themes in communicative syllabus design. As defined by Richards and Schmidt (2002), a mechanical drill is one where there is complete control over the student's response and where comprehension is not required to produce a correct response. In contrast, a meaningful drill is one in which there is still control over the response, but understanding is required so that the student produces a correct response. As a variation of the meaningful drill, a communicative drill is one in which the type of response is controlled and

pre-specified. Still, students are free to provide their own content or information.

There have been different moves from drill to strategy, from artificiality to authenticity, from repetition to creation, and from usage to use. To distinguish communicative exercises from other kinds of exercise, Johnson (1982) lists the following five principles:

1. The information transfer principle: This refers to activities in which students are required to transfer meaning from one form to another (e.g., the use of information in application letters to fill application forms).
2. The information gap principle: In communication between two or more people, there can be a situation where only some know the information, and there is a condition of unexpectedness, genuine information flow, and success in the completion of a task or an activity (e.g., teacher's questions without knowledge of the nature of student's response).
3. The jigsaw principle: As a type of information gap activity, it encompasses the activities in which groups of learners have different information that is needed to put together as a solution to a task (e.g., the processing of separate but related parts of a reading text and the following combination of different members' information to construct the whole through class discussion or group interaction).
4. The task dependency principle: This means that students are expected to carry out a variety of different tasks by utilizing the information given in the course of an exercise (e.g., drawing maps based on oral instructions).
5. The correction for content principle: As a specimen of use rather than usage, the communicative correction of the productive skills should assess whether the information content has been correct. The principle argues that the communicative efficacy of students' language productions should be judged at some stage, and at some other stages, their grammatical accuracy should be checked.

Communicative Processes

In line with the goals of communicative language instruction, it is stressed that teaching methodology should be framed by both language (or usage) knowledge and the processes involved in its use. Therefore, communication science and skills psychology can contribute considerably to the development of communicative methodology, provided that they focus on the processes relevant to the teaching and testing of speaking. Johnson (1982) discusses three processes in interlocutors' communication that might be discovered by analyzing interactional sequences:

1. Scanning the interactant's utterance(s) to extract pragmatic information differs from semantic information and refers to listeners' readiness to search for certain pieces of information they want to receive.
2. Assessing the interactants' utterance(s) in terms of their aims is a kind of evaluation whereby some indication of the current outcome is compared against some internal target criterion to identify any mismatch or discrepancy.
3. Formulating the next utterances based on the evaluation of the interactants' utterances and selection from many interrelated options embodied in the meaning potential.

The quick implementation of scanning, evaluation, and formulation, called fluency, needs practice. To do this, these processes can be practiced in task-oriented teaching; there should be an act of conveying information (information gap or doubt), and the process of selection in real-time from various sets of options should be permitted.

Communicative Syllabus Design

Despite being used as an approach and methodology, the term "communicative" can refer to syllabuses, particularly notional-functional syllabuses, that list conceptual use categories, are based on a threshold-level type of inventory, and follow a needs analysis procedure. Johnson (1982) describes three stages that precede classroom work:

1. The needs survey: This includes communication requirements, personal needs and motivations, and relevant characteristics of learners, as well as those of their partners for learning. Expressed in general terms, the identification of language needs consists primarily of compiling information both on the individuals or groups of individuals who are to learn a language and on the use that they are expected to make of it when they have learned it. The advantage of this initial step for the course designer is the provision of a framework for the selection of language content according to the goals of particular learners and the creation of tailor-made programs instead of a ready-made syllabus that does not discriminate between differing objectives. There is a lot of controversy over establishing a close link between learners and curricula. Whereas in content-based approaches, learning objectives are defined in terms of quantitative subsets of the total communicative competence of a native language user, in learner-centered instructional systems, the selection of objectives is based on particular communicative needs of groups or individual learners.

2. Purpose clarification: There are differences in the purpose clarification of language programs due to the differing perceptions of what a language-learning program's objectives should be, how they should be communicated, and the technique that should be used. In other words, depending on the scope of views on communicative competence, minimalist and maximalist implementations of the communicative approach can be adopted and realized in a given situation with different objectives (i.e., a different balance of skills, modes, content, and so on) and teaching activities (whether formal, functional, or experiential, like English for occupational or educational purposes).

3. The choice of a syllabus type: There is a lot of flexibility in syllabus construction due to varying degrees of emphasis on demands. It can range from modifying existing structural syllabuses to a completely learner-centered approach or from a modified synthetic type to a complete analytic type, depending on whether there is a willingness to include all three categories of meaning (ideational, modal, and communicative). In this strongest approach to syllabus design

(notional), the specialized course has a high surrender value, meaning that whatever is learned can be used at once. In contrast, the delay customary in a general course means that learners have to wait until they have absorbed a considerable amount of structure (usage) before using the language for effective communication.

Communicative Syllabus Types

As described by Johnson (1982)**,** the choice among different realizations of this type of syllabus depends on many factors, including learners' objectives and the demands of the situation. The following sketch includes the main features of each type:

Type 1: Structural-Functional: the maintenance of the separation between the two components of form and communicative function; relative ease of implementation, a thorough treatment of linguistic forms before the introduction of language functions; and an ideal syllabus for the general remedial course beyond the beginner's level.

Type 2: Structures and Functions: a structural progression in a communicative framework; notional, functional, and situational specifications as a spiral around a grammatical core; focus on both accuracy and fluency; the inclusion of all components of meaning from the start; specific theme, language practice, and functional orientation as parts of a unit; and functional, notional, or structural focus in units.

Type 3: Variable Focus: shifting emphasis from structural exercises and activities at the elementary level to communicative functions, situations, and subject matters at the advanced level; and a three-level variable focus on communicative competence in the ESL syllabus: structural (focus on formal features, structural control, materials simplified structurally, mainly structural practice), functional (focus on discourse features, discourse control, materials simplified functionally, mainly discourse practice), and instrumental (focus on the use of language, situational or topical control, authentic language, free practice).

Type 4: Functional: the functional unit of the organization; the movement from the objectives to the functions needed and then from the

functions to the selection and grading of grammatical materials; mostly in occupational or vocational ESL; phrase-book language; and language-like behavior.

Type 5: Fully Notional: threshold level as an example; simultaneous attention to socio-cultural, semantic, linguistic, and psycho-pedagogical components.

Type 6: Fully Communicative: the learner-generated view of the syllabus; the most minimal input syllabus; communication as the primary objective; little teacher involvement; strong preoccupation with methodology; teacher preparation and learner autonomy rather than the input syllabus; negotiated syllabus; and language for communication rather than communication via language).

Type 7: Procedural: an entire task-based syllabus, organization of classroom activities in terms of tasks and the procedures needed to accomplish them, meaning-based syllabus, negotiation of meaning, and communicative accomplishment of tasks as driving forces in the SLA process.

Competency-Based Education (CBE)

According to behaviorist learning theory (Morcke et al., 2013), CBE is an important competence in applied linguistics that originated from outcome-based education in the 1950s. CBE is viewed as an alteration in the learner's behaviors, followed by teaching. In this approach, learners are regarded as passive, outside members who do not care about innate capacity. According to Carroll (1989), trainers are required to be prepared before each class, and they are the sole criterion for evaluation. According to Carroll, the length of the course varies with each learner and can be ascribed to susceptibility and teaching techniques in which the outcome and what learners are expected to achieve are the most important factors in CBE.

Complex Systems and Curriculum

Larsen-Freeman and Cameron (2008) argue that complex systems in language classrooms are interrelated, dynamic, co-adaptive, and bound by the same general principles. They can be described with the same set of tools as other complex systems: agents and elements, the relation among elements, trajectories, self-organization, emergence, stability and variability, and attractor states.

Therefore, in the national curriculum for foreign languages, one of the elements in the "lesson system" might itself be seen as a complex system and as the emergent outcome of a curriculum-producing system. In a complexity theory approach, an analytic syllabus, such as a process syllabus, which emphasizes helping students develop their communication capacity rather than accumulating items, would be preferred. The teacher's role as a learning manager is to nudge the students' developing system into a trajectory through state space that is consonant with the student's goals and the goals of instruction.

Like the strands on a Web that are not fixed in a predetermined order but are the product of both the Web builder's constructive activity and the supportive context in which it is built, the syllabus is unique, emerging from interactions and the teacher's and learner's decisions. A standard synthetic syllabus could be used as a checklist rather than as a prescribed sequence.

Comprehensible Input

Developed by Krashen (1982), comprehensible input is one of the five hypotheses: the input hypothesis, the acquisition-learning hypothesis, the affective filter hypothesis, the monitor hypothesis, and the natural order hypothesis. Language acquisition is only possible through comprehensible input, which includes input one step farther from the learners' current stage of knowledge, "i+1" (While *i* stand*s* for the current knowledge of a learner, *1* refers to the next level (Krashen,1982). These two factors are crucial for comprehending the new material or input, which is not necessarily related to development.

Consciousness Raising (CR) Tasks

Central to consciousness-raising is providing learners with some tasks and activities within which they can draw their own rules. It is an approach based on declarative knowledge. The attention is focused on an isolated linguistic feature and expanding explicit knowledge in which the rules and principles are presented through explicit explanation (Richards & Renandya, 2002). According to Willis and Willis (2007), the term C-R refers to noticing particular features and then making conclusions and drawing attention to particular data. Ellis (1993) argued that, in CR tasks, the concern is to involve learners in making hypotheses about the data and to encourage hypothesis testing. Throughout the given data, learners work out the rules for production.

Content Analysis

Content analysis is one of the research methods for analyzing documents and data. This analysis could be done quantitatively by statistical methods or by analyzing the meaning. It could be used in a variety of texts, videos, pictures, etc. The systematic analysis of the data, including reading and observation of texts or artifacts, enables researchers to form codes to reach a meaningful interpretation of information (Hodder, 1994).

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) Syllabus

According to Tomlinson (2008), EYL (English for young learners) is fast becoming a main instrument in the 21st century, within which a key aspect is CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning). The CLIL approach is a fundamental property of the content-based syllabus, leading to a proliferation of interest in Europe and other countries. In the history of EYL, some researchers have highlighted a variety of CLIL projects in applied linguistics. The CLIL approach has heightened the need for syllabi and instructors' ability in curriculum design and for the development of research skills in children. In this approach, the key factor is subject learning and the core curriculum through English. Tomlinson (1998) contends that since subject learning is the primary concern, motivation is high in CLIL.

Content-Based Instruction

Content-based instruction (CBI) is based on extending the learning process beyond the context of the classroom by empowering the students to become independent learners and continue learning by themselves. Being a truly holistic and global approach, CBI can provide refreshing and liberating experiences in language classes for both teachers and students by replacing boring activities with numerous alternatives and variations. Content-based instruction advocates content-based courses as a means of language development. Despite the primary focus on the message rather than the language and the possibility for the general language items to be neglected, the idea behind CBI is very effective in improving knowledge and language proficiency (Nation & Macalister, 2010).

CBI, the focus of instruction, refers to the learning of disciplinary information (Kasper, 2000). The target language is mainly used as a vehicle through which subject matter is learned. It is not considered as the main objective of the study. Wesche (1993) contends that in CBI, the content-driven curriculum is responsible for selecting and sequencing language elements determined by content rather than language. Proponents of CBI draw on various theories in SLA, including information processing and Anderson's (1983) adaptive control of thought theory. In short, the key features of CBI are:

1. Content is the organizing unit of course design.
2. Skills are integrated.
3. Langrage is approached holistically.
4. Extensive use is made of authentic texts.

Content Specification

In the discussion of syllabus design, content specification is viewed as one of the stages that follows other steps of needs analysis and formulation of objectives in a logical consequence. For most parts, the content of the language syllabus is extracted from inventories or lists, including frequency lists, inventories of functions, or lists of specific topics. Content can also be determined through a number of checklists focused on communicative

functions, discourse skills, and study skills. For example, Candlin (1984) holds that content is drawn upon from "some content bank" based on some specified objectives, which, in turn, emerge from the needs assessment of learners. Similarly, Breen (1984) states that based on a general view or definition of the target language and/or its use, we can select more specific objectives or "needs" relevant to the subject matter. From the objectives, elements of the subject matter are focused upon, e.g., particular structures, a range of communicative events, or sets of functions.

A useful analysis to determine content has been suggested by Brumfit (1984). According to him, there are three types of such analyses. The first is that of the linguist, such as the formal analysis of phonology, syntax, morphology, or certain types of semantic categories. The second type is the interactional analysis of various kinds, including situational and functional categories, which consequently leads to discourse rhetoric analyses. The third type of analysis refers to examining what is talked about or written about. Each of these analyses presumes different ways of learning a language. For instance, the first presumes inductive or deductive learning; the second presumes that discourse is learned to interact and communicate; and the third presumes the necessity of interesting and motivating content.

Shaw (1975) considers two main factors in selecting the content: (a) the extent to which we can teach or can be learned by the intended learners, and (b) the decision about the inclusion of the items. He suggests a criterion for selection based on the "relative usefulness" or "relative difficulty" of the content matter. He contends that how much should be included and how difficult the content matter should be can be easily determined by the learners' initial level and the course length. Purposes and types would determine the usefulness of the content. Based on this criterion, Shaw proposed the following general procedure for the selection of content:

1. Determining the previous knowledge of learners
2. Deciding the amount of the content in general terms
3. Listing items in the rough order of specific frequency
4. Checking that both functional and national categories are present
5. Checking the coverage of grammatical items