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Master 1

**Syllabus Design
and Curriculum
Development**




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The background is a dark, textured surface, possibly black or very dark blue. It is adorned with several glowing, colorful elements. There are butterflies in various colors: a large orange one in the upper right, a purple one on the right, a white one in the center-right, a yellow one in the lower right, and a cyan one in the lower center. There are also flowers, including a prominent pink one on the left and a yellow one in the upper center. The overall effect is magical and vibrant, with the glowing elements standing out against the dark background.

**Good
morning
Dear
students**

BIG
JOURNEYS
BEGIN
WITH
SMALL
STEPS



What is not
started today
is never
finished
tomorrow

LECTURE SIX

SITUATION ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

The goal of needs analysis is to collect information that can be used to develop a profile of the language needs of a group of learners in order to be able to make decisions about the goals and content of a language course. However, other factors apart from learner needs are relevant to the design and implementation of successful language programs. Language programs are carried out in particular contexts or situations.

- The contexts for language programs are diverse and the particular variables in a specific situation are often the key determinants of the success of a program.
- Some language curricula are planned for state school systems where a great deal of direction and support for teaching is provided. Some proposals for curriculum change are well received by teachers. In some situations, teachers may have time available to plan their own lesson materials. Each context for a curriculum change or innovation thus contains factors that can potentially facilitate the change or hinder its successful implementation (Markee,1997).

- Clark (1987, xii) comments:

‘A language curriculum is a function of the interrelationships that hold between subject-specific concerns and other broader factors embracing socio-political and philosophical matters, educational value systems, theory and practice in curriculum design, teacher experiential wisdom and learner motivation. In order to understand the foreign language curriculum in any particular context it is therefore necessary to attempt to understand how all the various influences interrelate to give a particular shape to the planning and execution of the teaching/learning process.’

- Pratt (1980, p.117) observes:

The designer should estimate both the direct and indirect effects a proposed curriculum will have on the students, on other programs, and on other people in and outside the institution. These effects must be taken into account in the design and made clear to decision-makers when the curriculum proposal is submitted.

DEFINITION

Situation analysis is an analysis of factors in the context of a planned or present curriculum project that is made in order to assess their potential impact on the project. These factors may be political, social, economic, or institutional. Situation analysis complements information that are gathered during needs analysis. It is sometimes considered as a dimension of needs analysis, and can also be regarded as an aspect of evaluation.

GOAL OF SITUATION ANALYSIS

- The goal of situation analysis is to identify key factors that might positively or negatively affect the implementation of a curriculum plan. It involves an examination of a language programme's internal *strengths* and *weaknesses* in addition to its external *opportunities* and *threats* to the existence or successful operation.

GOAL OF SITUATION ANALYSIS (F)

- Situation analysis thus serves to help identify potential obstacles to implementing a curriculum project and factors that need to be considered when planning the parameters of a project.

FACTORS AFFECTING CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

- The factors that can have an impact on the success of a curriculum project are six. They are:
 1. Societal factors.
 2. Project factors.
 3. Institutional factors.
 4. Teacher factors.
 5. Learner factors
 6. Adoption factors.

1. SOCIETAL FACTORS

- Second or foreign language teaching is a fact of life in almost every country in the world. Yet countries differ greatly in terms of the role of foreign languages in the community, their status in the curriculum, educational traditions and experience in language teaching, and the expectations that members of the community have for language teaching and learning.

1. SOCIETAL FACTORS (F)

- The aim behind examining the impact of societal factors on language teaching is to determine the impact of groups in the community or society at large on the programme. These groups include:
 - policy makers in government
 - educational and other government officials
 - employers
 - the business community
 - politicians
 - tertiary education specialists
 - educational organizations
 - parents \ citizens
 - students

1. SOCIETAL FACTORS (F)

- In the case of projects of community or national scope, questions such as the following may be relevant:

What current language teaching policies exist and how are they viewed?

What are the underlying reasons for the project and who supports it?

What language teaching experience and traditions exist in the country?

How do members of the public view second languages and second language teaching?

2. PROJECT FACTORS

- Curriculum projects are produced by a team of people. Members of the team may be specialists who are hired specifically for the purpose, they may be classroom teachers who are seconded to the project for a fixed period of time, or the project may be carried out by teachers and other staff of a teaching institution as part of their regular duties.

2. PROJECT FACTORS (F)

- There should be sufficient members in the team to do the job and they should represent a balance of skills and expertise.
- The following project factors need to be considered:

2. PROJECT FACTORS (F)

- Who constitutes the project group and how are they selected?
- What are the management and other responsibilities of the team?
- How are goals and procedures determined?
- Who reviews the progress of the project and the performance of its members?
- What experience do members of the team have?
- How do members of the team regard each other?
- What resources do they have available and what budget to acquire needed resources?
- What is the time frame of the project? Is it realistic, or is more or less time needed?

3. INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS (F)

- A language teaching programme is delivered in an institution (university, school or language institute). Each institution create its own “culture”, that is, setting where people interact and where particular patterns emerge for communication, decision making, role relations, and conduct.
- They differ in their level of professionalism.

3. INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS (F)

- A teaching institution is a collection of teachers, groups, and departments, sometimes functioning in union and sometimes with different components functioning independently.
- In addition to the human side of the institution, the physical aspects need to be considered . What kinds of resources are available for teachers? Is there a good teachers' reference room? What access do teachers have to the photocopier? Who chooses textbooks and materials?

3. INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS (F)

- Institutional factors thus relate to the following kinds of questions:

What leadership is available within the school to support change and to help teachers cope with change?

What are the school's physical resources, including classroom facilities, media and other technological resources, and library resources?

What is the role of textbooks and other instructional materials?

What problems do teachers face and what is being done about them?

What kind of reputation does the institution have for delivering successful language programs?

4. TEACHERS FACTORS

- Teachers are a key factor in the successful implementation of curriculum changes. Exceptional teachers can often compensate for the poor quality resources and materials they have to work from. But inadequately trained teachers may not be able to make effective use of teaching materials no matter how well they are designed. In any institution, teachers may vary according to the following dimensions:

4. TEACHERS FACTORS (F)

- language proficiency
- teaching experience
- skill and expertise
- training and qualifications
- morale and motivation
- teaching style
- beliefs and principles

4. TEACHERS FACTORS (F)

- In planning a language program it is therefore important to know the kinds of teachers the program will depend on and the kinds of teachers needed to ensure that the program achieves its goals.

4. TEACHERS FACTORS (F)

- Among the teacher factors that need to be considered in situation analysis are the following:

What kinds of teachers currently teach in the target schools or institutions?

How proficient are they in English?

What kinds of beliefs do the teachers typically hold concerning key issues in teaching?

What are the typical teaching methods teachers use and believe in?

To what extent are teachers open to change?

5. LEARNERS FACTORS

- Learners are the key participants in curriculum development projects and it is essential to collect as much information as possible about them before the project begins. (backgrounds, expectations, beliefs, preferred learning styles...etc)

5. LEARNERS FACTORS (F)

- Among relevant learner factors therefore are the following:

What are the learners' past language learning experiences?

How motivated are the learners to learn English?

What are their expectations for the program?

Do the learners' views on language teaching reflect any culturally specific factors?

Are they a homogeneous or a heterogeneous group?

What type of learning approach do they favor (e.g., teacher-led, student-focused, or small-group work)?

What type of content do they prefer?

6. ADOPTION FACTORS

- Any attempt to introduce a new curriculum, syllabus, or set of materials must take into account the relative ease or difficulty of introducing change into the system. Curriculum changes are of many different kinds. They may affect teachers' pedagogical values and beliefs, their understanding of the nature of language or second language learning, or their classroom practices and use of teaching materials.

6. ADOPTION FACTORS (F)

- The following questions therefore need to be asked of any proposed curriculum innovation:

What advantages does the curriculum change offer?

Is the innovation perceived to be more advantageous than current practices?

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

Is the innovation very complicated and difficult to understand?

Has it been used and tested out in some schools before all schools are expected to use it?

Have the features and benefits of the innovation been clearly communicated to teachers and institutions?

CONCLUSION

The next step in curriculum planning involves using the information collected during needs analysis and situation analysis as the basis for developing program goals and objectives.

END