

**TOWARDS RELEVANCE IN LANGUAGE
TEACHING - AN OUTCOMES-BASED APPROACH**

by

ILSE LOMBARD

submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in the subject

DIDACTICS

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

SUPERVISOR: DR H VAN R VAN DER HORST

JUNE 1999

SUMMARY

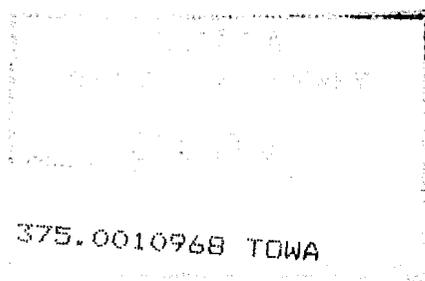
This study argues that the education which learners receive today does not adequately prepare them for real life due to the 'relevance gap'. Education in South Africa is discussed, with particular reference to the English curriculum.

The study proposes that a relevant curriculum must (a) be dynamic, (b) focus on the learner, (c) consider the context, and (d) include all the relevant role-players in its design and development. Guidelines are suggested for developing a relevant curriculum based on this assumption. The traditional and the outcomes-based approaches are discussed, with reference to the underlying principles and the elements determining curriculum structure. These are then evaluated in terms of the proposed guidelines.

A description of English language teaching in practice illustrates the traditional and the outcomes-based approaches in South Africa, and also the Australian OBE curriculum. Finally some problem areas in the implementation of an OBE approach are outlined and recommendations made.

KEY TERMS:

Curriculum Reform; Relevance in Education; Relevant Curriculum; Outcomes-based Education; Curriculum 2005; English Language Teaching and Learning; Learner-centred Curriculum; Curriculum Context; Stakeholder Participation; Assessment driven curriculum.



0001759896

SUMMARY

Chapter one of this study outlines some of the problems encountered in education today, with particular reference to the 'relevance gap'. This is taken to mean that the education which learners receive does not adequately prepare them for life, i.e. academic life, social life and their later career. The South African scenario is described briefly, with the focus on English language teaching and learning. The importance of English language skills is underlined. This chapter also includes a discussion on the writer's awareness of the problem, the research proposal, aims and method of the study plus a definition of terms.

The next chapter argues that the curriculum is at the centre of the education endeavour and indicates that a relevant curriculum is one that (a) is dynamic, (b) focuses on the learner, (c) considers the context within which and for which the learning takes place and (d) includes all the relevant role-players and stakeholders in its design and development. A set of guidelines for developing and implementing a relevant curriculum, are then suggested based on this assumption. This is followed by a description of the traditional curriculum model, as proposed by Robert Zais (1976), and the outcomes-based approach to curriculum design, development and implementation proposed by William Spady (1993). The latter formed the basis for the development of Curriculum 2005 currently being implemented in South Africa. This section serves to illustrate the differences between these two approaches with regard to the principles underlying the approaches and the elements which determine the structure of the curriculum.

In chapter four the researcher attempts to evaluate the traditional curriculum and the outcomes-based approach described in Chapter 3 on the basis of the guidelines for a relevant curriculum outlined previously, i.e. to what degree do these two models satisfy the need for:

- * a dynamic curriculum which is true to life and responsive to changes within society;
- * a focus on learner needs and aptitudes;
- * a careful consideration of the context within which and for which the learning is taking place;
and
- * the inclusion of the relevant stakeholders and role-players in its design, development and implementation.

Chapter five presents a brief discussion on traditional English language teaching in South Africa and a more detailed description of the outcomes-based approach to language teaching and learning, as reflected in the Curriculum 2005 initiative currently being phased in in South African schools, as well as in the English curriculum for Australian schools. The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate what the outcomes-based curricula for language teaching and learning comprise and how they adhere to the guidelines for a relevant curriculum proposed in chapter 2 of this study.

The last chapter provides a summary of the investigation and indicates problem areas which have been identified in the implementation of an outcomes-based approach to curriculum design and development and which need to be addressed if this approach is to succeed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I was guided in this study by Prof. Hannes van Deventer until his retirement from the University of South Africa, and by Dr van der Horst of the Department of Education at UNISA. I would like to express my appreciation for their assistance and hard work.

I wish to acknowledge those colleagues who, during my years as a teacher and later in the national Department of Education, contributed to my understanding of some of the aspects touched on in this study. These are the people who have worked and still work to bring quality education to all the children of our country. In this regard I would like to mention Dr Gustav Niebuhr, previously Chief Director in the Department of Education, who was involved in the initial developments around the National Qualifications Framework, the South African Qualifications Authority and the new curriculum. I also wish to acknowledge the dedication and commitment of other members of staff in the Department of Education, in particular Dr Ihron Rensburg, Deputy Director General: General and Further Education and Training, and all the members of his branch. The design and development of Curriculum 2005, initiated by the Department of Education, has been a bold step towards realising the ultimate goal of an equal education of value for all learners, based on the principles of equity and the redress of past imbalances.

In this endeavour I have been greatly supported by my family. My husband, Pieter, and my sons, Zirk and Jean LeRoux, have supported me throughout my career and have made it possible for me to pursue my ambitions. I thank them for affording me the opportunity of undertaking a study of this nature. I also wish to thank my parents for their words of encouragement and prayers throughout my learning and working life. My special thanks go to my brother, Dr Chris le Roux of the University of South Africa, for his assistance in both his professional and personal capacity. The interest in my progress shown by other members of my family and family-in-law is also much appreciated.

I wish to express my gratitude to God who, in His Grace has given me the opportunity to work in the interest of children, who are precious in His sight.

CONTENTS

Page

CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM FORMULATION, AIMS AND METHOD

1.1	ORIENTATION	1
1.1.1	Curriculum design and development - The current situation in South Africa	4
1.1.2	English as a 'communication tool'	6
1.1.3	English language teaching	9
1.1.4	Conclusion	11
1.2	AWARENESS OF THE PROBLEM	12
1.3	THE RESEARCH PROBLEM	14
1.4	THE AIMS OF THE STUDY	15
1.5	METHODS OF RESEARCH	15
1.5.1	A comparative perspective	16
1.5.2	A literature review	16
1.5.3	Personal experience	17
1.5.4	Case studies	18
1.5.5	Presuppositions	18
1.6	DEFINITION OF TERMS	19
1.7	SYNTHESIS	20

CHAPTER 2

THE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OF A RELEVANT CURRICULUM

2.1	INTRODUCTION	22
2.2	DEFINITION : <i>Curriculum</i>	23
2.3	CHARACTERISTICS OF A RELEVANT CURRICULUM	26
2.3.1	The focus of the curriculum	28
2.3.1.1	Learner needs	31
2.3.1.2	The learner-centred approach to curriculum design and implementation	37
2.3.2	The context of the curriculum	42

2.3.2.1	The South African context	44
2.3.2.2	The global context	47
2.3.3	The participants in the process of curriculum design, development and implementation	54
2.3.3.1	Learner participation	54
2.3.3.2	The role of the teacher	55
2.3.3.3	Stakeholders and role-players in education	59
2.4	GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A RELEVANT CURRICULUM	60
2.4.1	A relevant curriculum must be dynamic and true to reality	61
2.4.2	A relevant curriculum must focus on the needs of each learner	61
2.4.3	A relevant curriculum must reflect the context within which the learning takes place	62
2.4.4	A relevant curriculum must allow for stakeholder participation	63
2.5	SYNTHESIS	64

CHAPTER 3

CURRICULUM MODELS

3.1	INTRODUCTION	65
3.2	A PARADIGM SHIFT	66
3.3	THE TRADITIONAL CURRICULUM MODEL	71
3.3.1	Introduction	71
3.3.2	Curriculum development process	71
3.3.3	Curriculum foundations	73
3.3.4	Curriculum components	75
3.4	AN OUTCOMES-BASED APPROACH TO TEACHING AND LEARNING	77
3.4.1	Introduction	77
3.4.2	The origins of the outcomes-based approach	78
3.4.3	The concept	79
3.4.4	Definitions	80
3.4.5	Different approaches to outcomes-based education (OBE)	81

3.4.6	Principles of outcomes-based teaching and learning	82
3.4.6.1	Expanded opportunity	82
3.4.6.2	Clarity of focus	83
3.4.6.3	High expectations	84
3.4.6.4	Design down	84
3.4.6.5	Relevance	85
3.4.6.6	Integration	85
3.4.6.7	Differentiation, redress and learner support	85
3.4.6.8	Nation-building and non-discrimination	86
3.4.6.9	Critical and creative thinking	86
3.4.6.10	Flexibility	86
3.4.6.11	Progression	87
3.4.6.12	Credibility	87
3.4.6.13	Quality assurance	87
3.4.7	Aims and objectives	87
3.4.8	Elements of the curriculum	88
3.4.8.1	Critical cross-field outcomes	88
3.4.8.2	Specific outcomes	90
3.4.8.3	Curriculum design process	91
3.4.8.4	Assessment	92
3.4.8.5	Judging and recording	97
3.5	SUMMARY	97

CHAPTER 4

CURRICULUM EVALUATION

4.1	INTRODUCTION	99
4.2	IS THE CURRICULUM DYNAMIC AND TRUE TO REALITY ?	99
4.3	DOES THE CURRICULUM FOCUS ON THE NEEDS OF THE LEARNERS?	100
4.4	DOES THE CURRICULUM REFLECT THE CONTEXT WITHIN WHICH THE LEARNING TAKES PLACE ?	103

4.5	DOES THE CURRICULUM PROCESS ALLOW FOR STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION ?	105
4.6	SYNTHESIS	106

CHAPTER 5

LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

5.1	INTRODUCTION	108
5.2	THE TRADITIONAL ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE CURRICULUM	109
5.2.1	Curriculum objective	109
5.2.2	Learning content and learning activities	109
5.2.3	Evaluation	110
5.3	MOVING TO AN OUTCOMES-BASED APPROACH TO LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING	111
5.3.1	Introduction	111
5.3.2	Specific outcomes	112
5.3.3	The development of learning programmes	113
5.3.4	Assessment	113
5.3.5	Reporting on learner progress	115
5.3.6	Format of the specific outcomes, range statements, assessment criteria and performance indicators	115
5.4	ENGLISH FOR AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS	117
5.4.1	Background	117
5.4.2	English as an area of learning	120
5.4.3	The role of language	122
5.4.4	Curriculum principles	123
5.4.5	Key assumptions underlying the English profile	124
5.4.6	Elements of the statement and profile	126
5.4.7.	Assessment	127
5.4.7.1	Developmental Assessment	127
5.4.7.2	Assessment methods	131
5.4.7.3	Choice of assessment methods	132

5.4.7.4	Methods of judging and recording learner achievement	132
5.4.7.5	Estimating attainment	138
5.4.8	Reporting	140
5.4.8.1	Introduction	140
5.4.8.2	Reporting against a progress map	140
5.4.8.3	Reporting against typical progress	141
5.4.9	Monitoring standards	141
5.4.10	The role of the teacher	143
5.5	SYNTHESIS	146

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

6.1	SUMMARY	148
6.2	CONCLUSIONS	153
6.2.1	The nature of the outcomes	153
6.2.2	Resources	154
6.2.3	Teacher training	155
6.3	RECOMMENDATIONS	156
6.3.1	Learner needs	156
6.3.2	Context	158
6.3.3	Role-players	159
6.4	FURTHER RESEARCH	161
6.5	FINAL COMMENTS	162

BIBLIOGRAPHY	164
---------------------	-----

ADDITIONAL READING	170
---------------------------	-----

CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM FORMULATION, AIMS AND METHOD

What we want to see is the child in pursuit of knowledge, and not knowledge in pursuit of the child.

George Bernard Shaw (1856 - 1950)

1.1 ORIENTATION

Education and approaches to teaching and learning are currently being reconceptualised throughout the world. It is commonly acknowledged that education is suffering from a variety of problems. It would seem that some basic matters have not been addressed, making a growing number of learners feel that the education they are receiving is not relevant and not touching their lives in a meaningful manner (Nasr 1994:1).

According to Caine and Caine (in Dryden and Vos 1994:73), one function of a school should be to prepare learners for the real world. They need to be given a sense of what is expected of them, how they will be challenged, and what they are capable of doing. It is normally assumed that schooling, as we know it, meets those goals, whereas in reality it does not. On the contrary, it often fosters illusions and obscures the real challenges. It is widely recognised that much of what is currently being taught, is irrelevant. Formal schooling serves many purposes, but teaching knowledge of immediate usefulness is not one of them. What is taught is mostly irrelevant to life as it is lived and learners soon find out that what is going on around them, is not what schooling is about (Brady 1996:252).

Amongst the many criticisms aimed at education, there is widespread recognition of the fact that education is suffering from a "relevance gap" (Nasr 1994:1). Despite large amounts of money being spent on education around the world, particular problems persist and the learners are those that suffer most. Low academic standards, high drop-out rates, drug abuse, crime, a lack of discipline and motivation, are some of the problems which educationists face today. The foundation of education as an establishment is being shaken due to the fact that it is failing to fit in with the needs of society and the growth of young people, and because the young people lack

understanding of and bear a resentment towards school education, along with their scepticism of its value for their lives (Dongping 1990:8).

The South African scenario, in particular, is also riddled with many of the above-mentioned problems, which have been exacerbated by the political history of the country over the last 50 years. Under the previous government, about 17 different education authorities handled the education of the different population groups (Pienaar 1991:16). The basis of classification under each of these education authorities was population group and geographic distribution. As a result of this fragmentation, policies on issues such as education management, the curriculum, examinations and provisioning have resulted in the emergence of two distinct cultures with regard to teaching and learning.

In the majority of schools, particularly in the former 'Bantu Education' system, education was characterised by minimal levels of resource provisioning and the inculcation of unquestioning conformity which produced classroom practices and a culture of teaching and learning based on rote learning and the uncritical regurgitation of content. Autocratic management, low levels of staffing, shortages of classrooms and lack of equipment, inadequately trained teachers and principals, poor quality text books, impoverished and irrelevant syllabi and outdated assessment methods, resulted in educational practices which teachers and learners came to challenge.

The above-mentioned fragmentation of the education system into a large number of different education departments, the resulting lack of standardisation and articulation between training and education qualifications and the vast numbers of individuals who were denied access into the formal education system, represent some of the problem areas which need to be addressed in a new education dispensation.

As a result of the history of the country - imbalances, the disadvantaging of the majority of learners, the resulting impoverishment of many communities - and the role which schools played during the years of political strife, where they were seen as symbols of oppression and often vandalised, schooling appears to have broken down in many areas of the country. The Report on the Culture of Learning and Teaching in Gauteng Schools (Chrisholm and Vally 1996:1) indicated that in many schools attendance was sporadic, the principals had given up attending to the problems of the school, teachers had lost their desire to teach and there were tensions between

rival organisations and between all elements of the school community. Vandalism, gangsterism, rape and drug abuse were prevalent and the morale of all parties in the community was found to be low. This has, amongst other things, led to low pass and high dropout and repetition rates.

In stark contrast, a privileged culture of learning and teaching emerged in white schools as a result of extensive resources and exclusionary and discriminatory practices under the previous government. This sector, however, shares the disillusionment with education which Nasr (1994:1) describes, on the grounds of its being irrelevant to the lives of the learners.

Although some of the blame can be directed at certain domestic, political and socio-economic factors, educational factors have also contributed to this crisis. Education is not doing what it is supposed to and purports to be doing. Course objectives are not being met, textbooks are rigid and unconnected to real life, the curricula are stereotyped and inflexible and the methodologies used, do not consider the variety of learners who should be reached. The relevance gap, which contributes to this crisis, needs to be addressed and redressed as a matter of urgency.

The basic problem seems to be that, despite the fact that we are living in a changed and changing world and are approaching the 21st century, schools are still performing a traditional role and using outdated methodologies to convey knowledge. Nasr (1994:3) underlines the perception that the school is still being isolated from the life of the community; knowledge is still being compartmentalised; learners are not receiving proper individualised attention (with all that this implies), and learner assessment and evaluation are still a matter of mechanical routines that do not come close to ascertaining inherent talent and quality performance. Because of these basic shortcomings, learners do not see much relevance or meaningfulness in what the schools have to offer.

Where does the solution lie? The answer cannot be found in merely allocating more funds for the provision of textbooks, classrooms, equipment, teacher training, etc. To address this problem will require a completely new mindset, a paradigm shift - a move to start from scratch and to assess why we educate, whom we are educating and who should be involved in planning and implementing education.

Various approaches to effective or quality schools, such as the 'whole school approach' and 'education quality improvement programmes' are being experimented with by non-governmental organisations. All of these models are based on the assumption that, although the socio-economic and political context plays a major role in the character of schools, this alone is not what determines school effectiveness or school quality (Chrisholm and Valley 1996:3).

1.1.1 Curriculum design and development - The current situation in South Africa

The scenarios of the underprivileged and privileged sectors described previously find common ground in that in both cases children have up to now been educated to be uncritical of the world around them. Notions of quality education did not relate to the wider purposes of learning or the promotion of a learning society; not to the ability to think independently or to learn 'how to learn' and how to think, but merely to the memorisation of a particular body of knowledge or content. A similar situation existed at the time of education reform in America in the late 70s, when "for the student, knowing was largely a matter of having information, and the demonstration of the knowledge frequently involved being able to reproduce the language of the text in class discussions or on tests" (Lazerson, McLaughlin, McPherson and Bailey 1985:42).

Hofmeyer and Moulder (1988:10) identified the problem, stating that, what they termed, the 'white model', with its heavy academic bias, its Eurocentric curricula, and its emphasis on rote learning was flawed and irrelevant for the South Africa of the future. They went on to say that what was needed was a new model of education, one that would meet the aspirations of all its people and work for the country as a whole. By ignoring the real needs and learning styles of learners and instead emphasising rote learning at the expense of meaningful learning, education becomes a commodity that is easily administered, but also easily discarded. A curriculum based on the traditional subjects puts learners in passive roles, storing information rather than creating it. The only thinking skill demanded in most classes is recall. Learners are rarely required to demonstrate more complex skills such as hypothesising, generalising, classifying, synthesising or engaging in thought processes which they will need in order to survive in the real world. These mental skills, if learned at all, are apparently picked up on the street (Brady 1996:252). Stone (1989:23) labels learners in South Africa as 'regurgitants' who are merely trained to memorise facts which are then regurgitated in tests and examinations. The main objective is to retain information long enough to be tested on it. Whether the information is understood by the learner

or whether it is deemed to be interesting or useful by the learners themselves, is not seen as being the main consideration. The assumption seems to be that the National Core Syllabi, which are still being implemented in South African schools in some grades, represent the only content worth knowing. This view has come to be accepted by teachers and learners, as well as others concerned with education.

This approach to teaching and learning is being criticised world-wide. Dongping (1990:9), in relating the situation in the People's Republic of China, refers to the top priority given to intellectual education which stresses the transmission and indoctrination of book knowledge and compulsive drill and ignores the importance of linking learning with society and real life. He states that this mode of education emphasises material factors, neglecting human concerns, and so fails to meet the actual needs. The prime educational criterion in this approach is not quality learning for all, but the performance of the high attainer, the 'academic' child (Moon 1991:7).

Education courses teach that the aims and objectives determine the content to be prescribed and the methods to be used. In practice, however, this does not happen. The objectives remain on paper and the textbooks, "... actually *become* the curriculum" (Nasr 1994:41). The aims are often limited and equated to what is in the textbook. Teachers then resort to a methodology of emphasising the *emission* and *transmission* of information and knowledge, rather than delving into the processes of *transaction* and *interaction*, involving the learners in their own learning (Nasr 1994:41). Ornstein (1989:22), in discussing bias in education as one of the factors which leads to irrelevance, refers to the fact that readers, workbooks, and/or textbooks have become the basis for curriculum and classroom instruction and that they represent 70 to 95 percent of the total curriculum programme, depending on the subject.

The content or body of knowledge, which is central to the traditional curriculum, has, up to now, been determined by curriculum experts and other academics. The curriculum reflects what these individuals thought to be the essential knowledge which should be taught to prepare learners adequately for life after school within the South African context. The result was a curriculum based on the philosophical assumptions of one particular group of people and which was simply foisted on the majority whose philosophies of life and world views were often vastly different.

Due to the growing concern around the effectiveness and relevance of traditional approaches to teaching and learning, the White Paper on Education and Training (1995) proposed the introduction of an outcomes-based system as a basis for education reform. Here the emphasis is on what the learners know and can do at the end of their learning experience, instead of on the means or content which learners need to cover and memorise during a course.

An example of how the traditional curriculum has hampered learner progress as a result of its design and development, is clear when one investigates the approach to and the results of the teaching of English to learners who do not have English as a home language. The importance of being proficient in English in a national and international context, is discussed briefly.

1.1.2 English as a 'communication tool'

Among the 'tools' for coping in the real world the importance of being able to communicate one's thoughts, ideas and views, cannot be overemphasised. The importance of effective communication, as a means of relating to the 'real world' is underlined in the fact that 'the ability to communicate effectively' has been identified as one of the seven critical cross-field outcomes which should underpin all teaching and learning in South Africa in future (Lubisi, Wedekind, Parker and Gultig 1997:11).

The language diversity in South Africa is widely recognised and the fact that the country boasts eleven official languages bears witness to the value attached to each of these languages within the country.

Although only an approximate 9% of the South African population have English as a home language (Van der Merwe and Van Niekerk 1994:2), the importance of being proficient in the language is widely recognised as a means for coping in an academic, training, working and social environment.

Various reasons exist for the importance attached to being proficient in English in this country and a few are noted here:

- Although English is one of eleven official languages in South Africa, it is generally used in courts, hospitals, police stations, shops, on road signs and other general communications that organise social life. According to Richards (1991:3), English has become a general means of communication or "common language" for all the different groups within the country's borders;
- In English the various ethnic and racial groups seem to find a politically 'neutral' language as opposed to Afrikaans which, in the past, was referred to as the language of the oppressor and is linked, in the people's minds, with the system of apartheid;
- Learners who have one of the African languages as a home language, have English as a language of learning in school, either from Grade 1 onwards or after Grade 3 (Std 1), as well as at further and higher education level. This is a situation which will persist until such time as a major intervention is made with regard to the development of support materials in African languages;
- The economic, business and industrial sectors are largely English-dominated. Richards (1991:3) points out that the pressure of some 300 million largely monolingual speakers of English in the economically and politically important English-speaking countries, contributes another dimension to the status of English in the world today and creates further reasons for others to learn it;
- English is increasingly becoming the major international language of printed information. A great deal of the world's scientific, commercial, economic, and technological knowledge is written and published in English, though the writers may be Chinese, Swedes or Italians. This is because publication in English ensures the widest possible readership for new findings and ideas (Richards 1991:3). Richards (1991:4) further states that although particular justifications for the teaching of English in different countries vary widely, the factor common to all of them is that English is studied because the knowledge that it makes available, is valued. Hyde (1994:297), in commenting on the teaching of English in Morocco, states that Moroccans, along with people all over the world, are living in an age in which a global information technology revolution is taking place. Information, mostly in

English, is flooding the world through advertisements, magazines, newspapers, books, instruction manuals, satellite televisions, films and rock music, videos, radio, telephones, the post, fax and telex machines, computers and information technology in general, tourism and migration for economic and educational reasons, and business relations.

The Joint Education Trust (Mbelle 1996:3), which funds developmental projects in South Africa, reports that with regard to literacy for adult learners, the demand for English takes the lead, followed by Xhosa and Zulu. According to this report (Mbelle 1996:3) it is evident that English is still the most prestigious, valuable and practical language and is the preferred language for communication in social interaction, the corporate world, education and everyday activities.

The argument that the use of English will eventually diminish, seems to be unjustified, even though efforts are being made to develop other official languages to serve the same purposes as English. The Joint Education Trust study (Mbelle 1996:4) found that public attitudes are also indicative of the high status English holds in most communities, rural or urban, literate or not, and within the formal and informal schooling system. Studies have found that although training agencies encourage learning in the home language first to enable learners to transfer these skills, adult learners tend to ignore this. Monetary value and access to jobs seem to be the most motivating factors for adults to learn English. Hence most adult educationists recommend that training providers be sensitive to the wants and needs of learners by introducing English after 140 hours of mother tongue learning (Mbelle 1996:4).

Despite its imperial history that cannot be wished away, speakers of African languages in South Africa have adopted English for use in various contexts. It is clear that the adoption is not motivated by language loyalty or similar sentimental reasons, but by utilitarian and instrumental reasons.

Effective and relevant English language teaching and learning is, therefore, essential to enable the learners to order their living environment and solve the problems which confront them in their learning, social, political and working environment.

1.1.3 English language teaching

Despite the fact that proficiency in English is deemed important and highly desirable, studies with regard to English Second Language learners have proven that most of these learners do not reach the required level of proficiency in the language after completing the existing language courses at school. The 'required level' here does not necessarily refer to a level of proficiency which would be acceptable to first language speakers of English, but rather it is deemed to be the level of proficiency that the learner will require in order to relate effectively to the world in which he/she finds himself/herself.

This problem is well documented and some studies are included here.

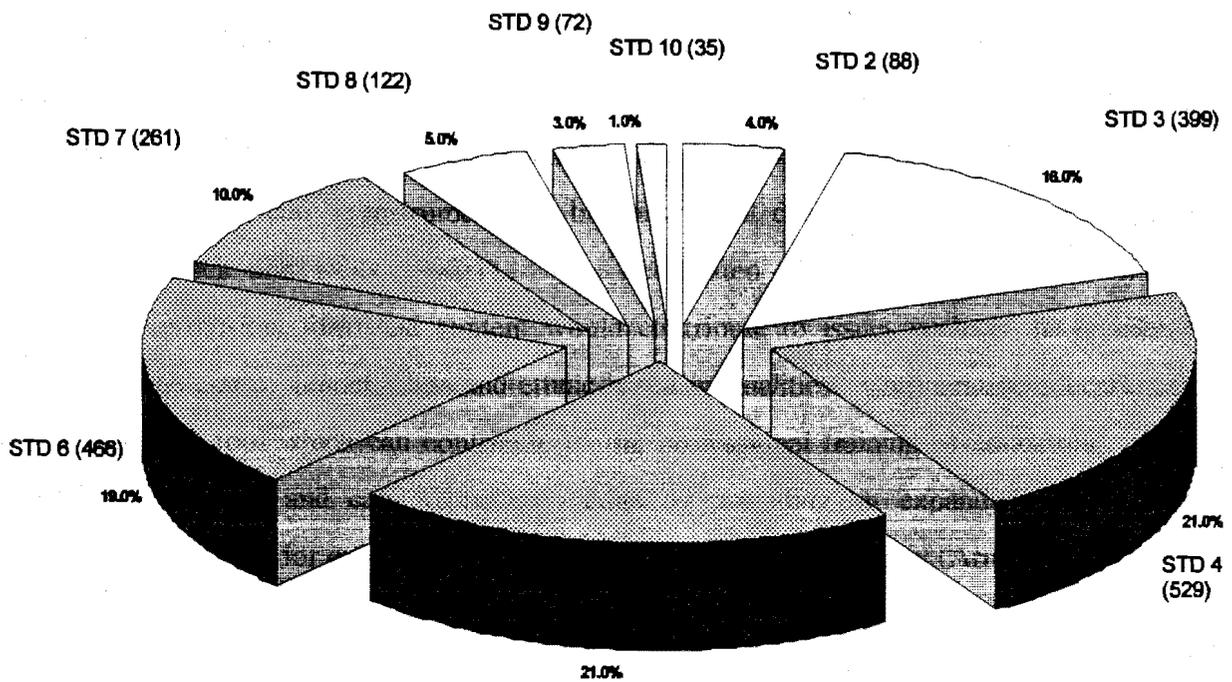
Richards (1991:1) states that problems relating to the teaching of English cover questions with regard to curriculum, methodology, and testing as well as more theoretical questions concerning the nature of second and foreign language learning.

According to research done by Hough and Horne (1994), a Johannesburg firm specialising in the assessment and improvement of functional literacy and communication skills, 15% to 20% of white collar workers with Std 10 (Grade 12) certificates are functionally illiterate in English (equivalent to Std 5, i.e. Grade 7, level and lower) and an additional 30% to 40% have poorly developed English literacy skills (equivalent to Std 6/Grade 8 and Std 7/Grade 9 levels). A measuring instrument, ELSA (English Literacy Skills Assessment), was designed and developed by the company in an attempt to quantify a respondent's English literacy skills performance, equating the performance level to that of an English Mother Tongue (EMT) user. ELSA shows up an individual's strengths and weaknesses in an English language training environment. The programme expresses an employee's literacy skills level in terms of grades. A literary skills grading of 12 means equivalent years of formal schooling, i.e. Std 10/Grade 12.

Diagram 1.1 represents the research findings over a period of four years. It also includes statistics of functional literacy skills tested since 1990. These statistics show a marked drop in the functional literacy of employees tested.

Diagram 1.1: English Literacy Skills Assessment (Hough and Horne 1994)

ELSA
ENGLISH LITERACY SKILLS ASSESSMENT



N = Applicants (ESL), scholastic level
Std 10 passed, 1990 - 1993, 20-25 years
of age. Mean = Std 5.1

Januarie 1994

YEAR	N	FUNCTIONAL LITERACY
1990	568	51%
1991	490	35%
1992	898	33%
1993	770	31%
1994	930	28%

In a newspaper report, entitled "SA pupils' literacy skills 'frightening'", (Citizen The 1997:19) it is purported that around 50 percent of the South African population is illiterate and that a large proportion of high school children leave school with a low literacy rate. The article quotes a consultant of the non-governmental organisation, Readathon, as saying that South Africa would not meet the demand of national trading and workplace technology unless the literacy problems of school children were addressed adequately.

In an article entitled "Science and Language : a new look at some old issues", Starfield (1990:84) refers to the problems encountered at university level with students who are not proficient in the use of the English language as medium of instruction, even though they have offered (and passed) English as a subject at school to gain university entrance.

This situation is reflected in the matriculation results of the former Department of Education and Training (DET), which was responsible for providing education to Black learners. According to Hartshorne (in Starfield 1990:86) even in English (Second Language Higher Grade), the medium of instruction and general tool of communication, only 36% of learners gained a pass.

In a study of the teaching-learning problems of Black supplementary health services students at the Medical University of Southern Africa (Medunsa), the problem of 'inadequate language proficiency' was deduced from the following :

- students often do not understand the prescribed literature;
- they cannot always follow their lectures;
- they interpret test and examination questions inaccurately;
- they cannot express their thoughts meaningfully;
- they do not reason abstractly (Olivier 1988:97).

Since the eighties, curriculum developers have attempted to address this problem by introducing communicative language teaching methods which imply the use of relevant texts, a move away from a structural approach to language teaching and an increasing focus on language usage. This approach has not, however, had the desired effect due to various factors such as the methods used for assessment which are mainly focused on written tests and the testing of structure (grammar) and content (in e.g. literature).

1.1.4 Conclusion

From the foregoing discussion it is clear that education in its present form, and in particular the traditional content-based curricula, do not meet the needs of the learners and of the world for which they need to be prepared. A new approach is essential which will provide opportunities for

relevant and appropriate teaching and learning practices. Hofmeyr (in McGregor and McGregor 1992:29) underlines the needs for addressing the education crisis in South Africa and refers to it as a complex, multi-dimensional crisis of legitimacy, *relevance* and provision.

This study will focus on the relevance aspect of curriculum design, development and implementation, particularly as it pertains to English language teaching, as one of the most central educational issues which need to be addressed in order to reform education and fill the 'relevance gap'.

The question which arises is: How do we arrive at a relevant curriculum which will indeed prepare learners adequately for the world in which they find themselves?

The point of departure of this study is that in order for a curriculum to comply to the principle of relevance, it has to be focused on the needs of the learner within the context of the community, society and the world as a whole. To be relevant to the learner in context, the process of curriculum design, development and implementation furthermore needs to involve the entire spectrum of individuals and groups who have a stake in education such as parents, teachers, communities and the learners themselves.

1.2 AWARENESS OF THE PROBLEM

The investigator's own school experiences initially led to the realisation that the teaching of English as a second language was inadequate with reference to what was expected of learners when they leave school. After having started schooling in a British school in the former Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia), English instruction in an Afrikaans school seemed to be extremely structured to the point where it was divorced from reality outside of school and did not contribute to proficiency in the language. Learners who were not at all capable of a simple conversation in English, however, scored high marks in tests and examinations by learning the rules of grammar and simply applying them or by learning certain sections, e.g. in literature, off by heart. Due to the nature of the evaluation system, it was possible for learners to e.g. write essays before an exam, memorise them and present them in the examination with minor adjustments or to master the content of literary works by memorising essay-type questions. It seemed cruel that the hard work of these learners and the subsequent good marks attained in tests and examinations created the

impression that they were 'good at English', where in reality they were not becoming proficient in the language at all. An enormous amount of time was spent at school studying a limited number of prescribed books and it was disillusioning to be confronted with e.g. all Shakespeare's tragedies in a single lecture on commencing one's English studies at university. At that time (1974) it was a well-known fact that approximately 60% of the Afrikaans-speaking students studying English at university failed in the first year of study.

As an English secondary school teacher it was exasperating to find that, especially with the senior learners, there was no time for improving the learners' proficiency by e.g. doing extensive informal oral work, due to the volume of work that had to be covered in preparation for the senior secondary examination. In certain instances bad teaching practice was taken to the extreme when some teachers taught the literary works through the medium of Afrikaans to ensure that learners would master the content and get good grades. The objective of the English Second Language syllabus, namely communicative competence, was not linked to the course content, activities and evaluation or the methodology used by teachers. In fact, when the researcher became aware of the curriculum process during B.Ed studies, an investigation proved that most of the teachers teaching English were not even aware of this objective, but simply stuck to the prescribed textbooks and literary works imposed upon them by the education department.

Despite the limited framework within which they have had to work, it must be said that many committed teachers have managed by dint of hard work and creativity to make curricula relevant for their learners. The communicative approach did make it possible for teachers to make use of alternative materials, developing e.g. comprehension tests and exercises around themes which focused on learner interests. These attempts were, however, the exception and teachers were not expected to move outside the prescribed curriculum and the text books which had been developed around the curriculum.

At least two factors work against teachers who aspire to enhance the learners' learning experience in the current system, namely:

- * the bulk of content which needs to be covered and which allows minimal time for developing important intellectual skills such as learning how to learn or learning to think critically; and

- * the nature and style of the national Senior Secondary examination at the end of Grade 12 (Stone 1989:24).

The importance of being proficient in English has already been discussed but this need cannot be overemphasised in these times when information (in English) is becoming more readily available every day through the electronic media.

As an official involved in the national Department of Education's new curriculum initiative, Curriculum 2005, the researcher experienced a measure of optimism based on the pragmatic approach which it proposes to teaching in all learning areas, but to language teaching in particular. The bottom line seems to be that whatever the child learns and whatever we teach, it must work in the world out there. Furthermore, this approach ensures that both the teacher and the learner are at all times aware of what the *outcome* of the learning experience must be. Because language is the basic tool needed to communicate our thoughts, ideas, interests and needs, language learning must focus on its value for the learners outside the school and in order for them to find it meaningful, they must know why they are learning and what will be expected of them at the end of their learning.

1.3 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

To address the problem of the learners' inadequate language proficiency as a result of the traditional approach to teaching and learning which has been prevalent up to now, a new approach to curriculum design and development is needed. The research problem here, is therefore as follows:

- (a) How can educationists move towards greater relevance in English language teaching; and
- (b) Will an OBE approach to language teaching meet the criteria of a relevant curriculum?

In an attempt to move to a curriculum which will adhere to the principle of *relevance*, the following questions (subproblems) need to be answered (compare section 6.1 in chapter 6):

- What are the characteristics of a *relevant* curriculum? (chapter 2)

- How does the traditional approach to curriculum design and development compare with the more contemporary *outcomes-based curriculum model*? (chapter 3)
- To what extent do the above-mentioned models *reflect the characteristics of a relevant curriculum* discussed previously? (chapter 4)
- What does an *outcomes-based approach* to language curriculum development and implementation look like *in practice*? (chapter 5)

1.4 THE AIMS OF THE STUDY

The aims of this investigation are:

- To examine aspects of curriculum design and development which relate to the principle of relevance and to *propose a set of guidelines for a relevant curriculum* which can serve as criteria for evaluating the degree of relevance reflected in curriculum design and implementation;
- To *examine and compare* aspects of the traditional approach to curriculum design and development to those of the outcomes-based curriculum model;
- To *evaluate the traditional approach* to curriculum design and development and *the outcomes-based model* in terms of the guidelines for a relevant curriculum proposed in this study;
- To *illustrate the design and implementation of an outcomes-based curriculum* with reference to (a) the new outcomes-based curriculum for language teaching and learning which forms part of the Curriculum 2005 initiative currently being phased in in South African schools; and (b) the Australian Outcome Statements for English; and
- To provide suggestions for further study in this area.

1.5 METHODS OF RESEARCH

In order to investigate aspects of curriculum design and development which relate to the principle of relevance, an exploratory study has been carried out.

The following approaches were used:

1.5.1 A comparative perspective

In this study a comparison is drawn between the traditional content-based approach to curriculum design and implementation, as described by Robert Zais (1976), and the outcomes-based model proposed by William Spady (1993) which forms the basis for the new curriculum being introduced in South African schools.

The field of comparative education is based on a fundamental belief that education can always be improved upon and can be instrumental in bringing about change for the better in all countries (Arnove, Altbach and Kelly 1992:1). This field often seeks to discover how changes in educational provision, form and content would contribute to issues such as the eradication of poverty or the end of gender, class and ethnic-based inequalities. Comparative education is seen as an important tool which can contribute to the professional training of educators, can inform policy and practice, and can create knowledge by providing an expanded set of analytical categories and modes for examining the realities of education and society (Arnove et al. 1992:10).

By comparing the traditional approach to curriculum design and development to the new outcomes-based approach, the researcher attempts to point out the fact that the traditional approach does not comply to the guidelines for a relevant curriculum in terms of focusing on learner needs, the involvement of all the relevant interested parties in the curriculum process and its responsiveness to changes in the context in which the learning is taking place. The outcomes-based model does, however, seem to be a promising alternative which, if approached correctly, could go a long way to ensuring that the curriculum moves closer to life as it is lived.

1.5.2 A literature review

An extensive literature review was undertaken in order for the researcher to gain insight into:

- * the problem of a 'relevance gap' in education which has raised concerns in South Africa, as well as in other countries around the world;
- * the traditional approach to curriculum design and development which has formed the basis for curriculum processes in South Africa up to the present time;

- * the aspects of the outcomes-based approach which distinguishes it from the traditional approach and its potential for providing relevant education to its users; and
- * the Australian outcomes-based system, with particular reference to English language learning.

Very little has been written on the emerging South African outcomes-based approach due to the fact that it is only now being implemented and at a slower rate than was anticipated. Documents on the subject are mainly those of the national Department of Education which spell out policy around the new curriculum. These documents do not, however, provide evidence of the successes and/or failures encountered during implementation as the process is still in its infancy.

A wide range of primary and secondary resources referring to relevant developments in other countries was included for the above reason. These include books, periodicals, reports, documents and newspaper articles. By referring to literature on the various aspects covered in the investigation, it was possible to study past and current research, identify problems, areas of neglect, possible pitfalls in the adoption of a new approach and to raise questions which are pertinent to these issues.

1.5.3 Personal experience

As pointed out previously, the researcher was a teacher of English Second Language and in this way gained insight into the problems stated.

As an official in the General and Further Education and Training section of the national Department of Education, the researcher was involved in the conceptualisation of a new approach to curriculum design and development which would address some of the problems being experienced in South African schools. During this time workshops held on the subject of curriculum reform and consultation with curriculum experts in South Africa and from countries such as Australia, Scotland, Canada and New Zealand highlighted the crisis which is being experienced in education world-wide. A visit to schools in Australia which have already been implementing outcomes-based education for some time, created the awareness of a possible solution to many of the problems being experienced, specifically with regard to the relevance of education to the lives of the learners and to society as a whole.

The investigator was also involved in the conceptualisation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the developments leading to the establishment of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) in 1996, working closely with officials from the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA).

Further involvement included policy development around the piloting and implementation of the outcomes-based curriculum, Curriculum 2005, which is following a phased in implementation, from 1998 and ending in 2005 or later with an in-depth evaluation of the curriculum, culminating in national policy.

1.5.4 Case studies

Different approaches to curriculum development and design which have been implemented in other countries were studied in order to ascertain which of these would address the problems existing in the South African context. The pilot project which was undertaken in preparation for the implementation of Curriculum 2005, was also studied and problems identified. Universities, colleges within the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) system, teacher training colleges and schools were visited in Australia. The national outcomes-based curriculum developed for schools in Australia served as one of the points of departure for the development of a new outcomes-based curriculum for South Africa.

1.5.5 Presuppositions

Arguments for the implementation of a relevant curriculum are based on the following assumptions:

- the current traditional curriculum in South Africa is not relevant to the needs of the learners and to society as a whole and needs to be reformed as part of the comprehensive education reform necessitated by the current situation in the country described in par. 1.1;
- the school curriculum must be relevant, i.e. relate to the real world if it is to have meaning for the learner and promote lifelong learning, prepare the learner for future life and assist him/her in his/her current situation; and

- in order to legitimise the curriculum in the eyes of the nation as a whole, all the stakeholders and parties who have an interest in education and training, need to be involved in the process of designing and developing a curriculum for South African learners.

1.6 DEFINITION OF TERMS

For the purposes of this study, the following definitions and terms refer:

Core syllabi or core curriculum	refers to the basic framework developed for all school subjects by curriculum and subject experts and which represents policy. These core policy documents serve as a basis for the development of more detailed syllabi in the various provinces.
Education and Training	These two concepts are used in conjunction to reflect the integrated approach to education and training which has been adopted in South Africa. Education and Training are seen as the two essential elements of human resource development as envisaged in the White Paper on Education and Training (1995).
learner	refers to all members of society regardless of age, abilities, previous learning, race, culture, gender, etc. In this study the 'learner' is in most cases the child or young person within the formal schooling system.
National Qualifications Framework (NQF)	The NQF is an eight level framework for the registration of national standards and qualifications. It is aimed at reconstructing and developing the current education and training systems into a system which reflects an integrated approach aimed at addressing the learners' and the nation's needs. The framework includes three bands, namely:

General Education and Training represents the nine years of compulsory education, i.e. Grades 1-9, as well as Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) culminating in Level 1 of the NQF; *Further Education and Training* covers Levels 2-4 on the NQF and follows a multi-faceted delivery, i.e. can be offered by schools and technical colleges as well as by private colleges, companies, industry training boards, etc.; and

Higher Education and Training (NQF levels 5-8) includes education and training at tertiary level which can be offered by universities, technikons or colleges.

school

represents all learning sites where the national curriculum is offered, whether formal or informal. The term has been broadened based on the inclusion of e.g. home schools in the South African education system, and also because current realities in the country defy a rigid concept of what has traditionally been described as a school. In short, a school or a learning site is an environment where learning experiences are provided to learners and where learning takes place.

teacher

Due to the situation in South Africa where many 'teachers' do not have formal qualifications, the term 'education and training practitioner' is gaining ground. In this study the term 'teacher' includes all educators involved in supporting learners in their learning.

1.7 SYNTHESIS

Education is being reconceptualised throughout the world. At the centre of the reforms which are being proposed, is a new approach to curriculum design and implementation which, inter alia, attempts to address the 'relevance gap' which has been identified by educationists world-wide. Research into the traditional content-based curricula supports the researcher's view that these curricula do not meet the learners' needs and those of society as a whole because they do not prepare learners adequately for the real world.

Although it is imperative for learners who do not have English as a home language to be given a thorough grounding in the language during their time at school, the current curriculum is not assisting them to become proficient in the language. The second language curriculum does not realise the objective, i.e. communicative competence, as it does not relate to learner needs and is not deemed to be useful or meaningful to their lives. The assessment methods and learning content and activities do not support or reflect the types of skills, knowledge and attitudes which learners will be required to demonstrate in life outside school.

The researcher will provide guidelines for designing and implementing a relevant curriculum (chapter 2), describe the nature of the traditional and outcomes-based approaches to curriculum development (chapter 3) and evaluate these approaches based on the proposed guidelines (chapter 4). The traditional English language curriculum will be discussed briefly, followed by a more detailed outline of the OBE approaches in South Africa (Curriculum 2005, Learning Area: Language, Literacy and Communication) and Australia (Australian Outcomes Statement for English) (chapter 5). This section will serve to illustrate how the principle of relevance is adhered to in the outcomes-based approaches. Proposals for further study in this area will follow (chapter 6).

In Chapter 2 the principle of relevance is explored and an attempt is made to formulate the characteristics of a relevant curriculum. These characteristics are expanded upon, culminating in a set of guidelines for a relevant curriculum which can be used as criteria for determining the degree to which a curriculum reflects the principle of relevance.

CHAPTER 2

THE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OF A RELEVANT CURRICULUM

We find no children who don't learn when we can arouse their interest and build on their present knowledge. Our limitations are not in the educatibility of the children but in the understanding and ingenuity of the teachers.

John Dewey (from Log book of day-to-day experiences in the Dewey School in Chicago)

2.1 INTRODUCTION

As stated in Chapter 1, education is being reconceptualised throughout the world in an attempt to bring about an improved quality education system. In this ongoing search for better education and ways of schooling, curriculum is central (Moon 1991:16). It is therefore essential to consider what is meant by curriculum within the scope of this study.

Wiles and Bondi (1984:3) define a curriculum as a plan for learning consisting of two major dimensions, i.e. vision and structure. The vision relates to the conceptualisation of reality based on the assumptions held by a society about people and the world at large. These value-laden assumptions determine what society views as the purpose of education. The structure of the curriculum translates the vision into an implementable plan which includes the experiences of the learners. The development of curriculum as a specialist area within education, emerged from the need to "arrange, organise, and translate" (Wiles and Bondi 1984:5) the vision into educational programmes of study.

As a tool for preserving the past and preparing for the future, formal education, or schooling, is often a vehicle for social reconstruction (Wiles and Bondi 1984:3). The use of schooling as a mechanism for constructing a particular kind of society based on the vision of such a society, is evident in the structure of the curriculum under the previous government in South Africa. The education system as a whole, and therefore also the curriculum, inculcated the views of a separatist society, where people belonging to different racial groups were not seen as being equal and where one group, the White minority, made decisions on the kind of knowledge which all the different groups had to absorb for them to find their place within society. A new curriculum will

have the responsibility of reflecting the changes which have taken place in the country in the last few years. Bruner (1971:99) underlines the importance of education within a society stating that the pedagogical theory underlying the curriculum will be ineffective if it fails to relate to the urgencies of a society, which in our case relates to redressing the inequalities within the society and addressing the social, political and economic needs of the country.

2.2 DEFINITION : *Curriculum*

The term 'curriculum' is derived from the Latin word "currere" which means "to run". The course which was to be run came to refer to the "course of study" (Wiles and Bondi 1984:5). The traditional definition of curriculum is then a course of study or training leading to a product or education.

Up to now curriculum design has been based largely on Tyler's analytic paradigm. Tyler (in Schubert 1986:171) identified four questions which determine the parameters for curriculum study, namely:

- 1) What educational purpose should the school seek to attain?
- 2) How can learning experiences be selected which are likely to be useful?
- 3) How can learning experiences be organised for effective instruction?
- 4) How can the effectiveness of learning experiences be evaluated?

Schubert (1986:172) states that much of the curriculum research which followed these questions posed by Tyler, could be categorised within each of the key terms of the above questions, i.e. purpose, selection and organisation of learning experience and evaluation.

The pursuit of an equal right to education facilitated the rise of public education and the popularisation of elementary education and contributed to the development of higher education in the 60s and 70s (Dongping 1990:10). As schooling was extended to include the wider public and not only an elitist few, and as the needs of society and of the individual learners had to be accommodated, the definition of curriculum had to be broadened. Increasingly specialists began to distinguish between a planned programme of studies and the programme actually experienced by the learners.

The socialising function of the schooling experience was first acknowledged by Caswell and Campbell in 1935. The curriculum was then seen as including all the experiences of a learner, guided by a teacher (Wiles and Bondi 1984:7). This view was shared by other writers who believed that the experiences of learners constituted the curriculum.

After the mid-1950s, when definitions were dominated by the view that the curriculum was a plan for learning, the focus shifted in the 60s to the accountability of the schools. This view stressed the importance of achieving results at the end of the learning experience.

Proponents of contemporary approaches see the curriculum as referring to the 'what is', i.e. what has been found by teachers to be desirable and possible in view of the needs and possibilities of the learners (Nunan 1988:1). The dissemination of new knowledge through, *inter alia*, the media, has complicated the process of identifying the essential knowledge which has to be included in such a course of study. The problems which arise in this age of the information explosion relate to maintaining relevance and updating materials on a regular basis (Wiles and Bondi 1984:6).

In referring to the American college curriculum, Patricia Cross (in Vermilye 1975:54) states that there are three curricula, namely: "what we say we teach, what we teach, and what students learn". Nunan (1988:9) holds that the discrepancies at all levels of education between what people think they are doing, what they say they are doing, what they appear to others to be doing and what in fact they are doing, will continue as long as a simple equation is assumed between what is planned, what is taught and what is learned. This implies that curriculum development needs to move closer to the actual learning site if the initial objectives are to be realised.

By assuming that 'planning equals teaching equals learning', curriculum designers have in the past focused on the planned curriculum and have tended to ignore the implemented curriculum; that which actually happens in the classroom. It is only fairly recently that the balance has started to be redressed and that curriculum designers have become interested in classroom-based research. Such research is beginning to reveal to us the complexities of the curriculum in action (Nunan 1988:36).

Classroom-based research has led to curriculum reform which proposes a learner-centred approach to curriculum design and development. According to Ferris (in Vermilye 1975:11)

learner-centred reform is based on the simple notion that education should be tailored to fit the learner.

The key difference between learner-centred and traditional curriculum design, development and implementation is that in the learner-centred approach, the curriculum is a collaborative effort which involves teachers and learners, based on the view that learners are closely involved in the decision-making process regarding the aspects of the curriculum such as content and materials selection and how it is taught. The emphasis on learner questions or concerns and the open valuing of their opinions takes the learning experience to another level as learners become collaborators in their own learning experiences. These journeys into joint endeavours move the classroom experiences one step closer to the real world, to what Edwards (1994:53) terms 'authentic situations'.

In the traditional ends-means model, a fixed series of steps is followed. In Taba's model (1962) for example, planning, implementation and evaluation occur in sequential order, and most of the key decisions about aims and objectives, materials and methodology are made before there is any encounter between the teacher and the learner. Wiles and Bondi (1984:7) state that although the definitions of curriculum have changed in response to social forces and expectations, the process of curriculum development still follows the steps of analysis, design, implementation and evaluation. They go on to say that curriculum developers set goals, plan experiences, select content and assess the outcomes or results of learning programmes based on the aforementioned steps.

Research has shown, however, that where teachers are involved in the curriculum design and implementation exercise, they do not operate in this way and the reason for the mismatch between the demands of the classroom and the prescriptive planning model, is that the model is consistently not used in teachers' planning in schools (Nunan 1988:3). By involving the teacher and the learner in the curriculum design and implementation process, an ongoing interaction between the curriculum and the curriculum makers will take place. This will result in a dynamic process and a relevant and dynamic curriculum, not merely a syllabus which, experience has shown, is only taken as a point of departure, if consulted at all. Textbook bound instruction ignores the initial 'plan', including the essential objective which needs to be achieved. The 'plan' in the form of e.g. a syllabus is merely seen as an official document which bears no relevance to the day-to-day process

of teaching and learning. If, however, curriculum development is changed to become an interactive, dynamic enterprise involving teachers and learners, the curriculum will serve as a guideline for the actual teaching and learning which takes place in the classroom.

2.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF A RELEVANT CURRICULUM

The term *relevant* or *relevance* relates to that which is viewed as being meaningful, has a bearing on, or is of value to an individual or group. Heyns (1989:1) states that relevance implies that the relationship between two matters is clearly defined.

De Vries (in Steyn 1993:40) describes 'relevant education' as a dynamic education which attempts to offer each individual an equal opportunity to develop fully within the total context of a country's unique and changing needs, demands, possibilities and limitations. This development must take place within an effective education which is true to reality, in order for the learner to be able to make an independent and useful living as a fully developed adult within a particular community, in harmony with the essential needs of that society.

Educationists seem to agree that relevant education is education that meets needs, makes sense, and is generally acceptable to its users. The 'users' refer to the learners. In relevant education cognisance is taken of the real needs and problems of learners, with due regard for the demands they will have to face in adult life, for example in the work situation. Broadly speaking, then, something should happen to the learners which will be perceived as being meaningful and accountable in terms of their own needs, but equally important with regard to their life world within which they must eventually live meaningfully as adults according to their own potential and life task and in this way make a positive contribution to society (Heyns 1989:1).

Added to the above, the demand for relevant education focuses on education keeping up with technological developments, the demand for relevantly trained manpower and "making education relevant for the individual" (Van Wyk 1992:13). Education must provide the learner with the knowledge and skills needed to adapt and survive in a changed and changing world. Any curriculum which portends to be relevant will therefore have to provide an increase in social, political and economic literacy for the individual learner.

Fyfe and Figueroa (1993:26) echo these views by stating that the reason why we educate is to assist learners to “acquire the values, knowledge, skills, attitudes and behavioural patterns that a person needs to play an active and rewarding part in their society, and to interact constructively with others however different - to contribute to society’s well-being and to ‘make a living’”.

Based on the above, the following **characteristics of relevant education** emerge, namely that it should be:

- **dynamic**, i.e. it should be responsive to changes within the society for which it is designed as well as changes in learner needs;
- **focused on the needs of each individual** to enable them to deal with the demands made on them in adult life, playing an active role in society and making a living;
- **reflective of the context** of a country’s changing needs and demands, e.g. by catering for the country’s manpower needs in the light of technological developments;
- **true to reality** and in this way increase the social, political and economical literacy of learners;
- **acceptable to its users**, i.e. everyone involved in education such as teachers, policy developers, communities and learners.

These characteristics relate to all the elements of education such as education management, teacher training, school and classroom management and the design and development of the curriculum. As stated previously, this study takes the view that the curriculum is central to all these elements of education. The questions posed by Anim (1991:9) in considering the matter of relevance in education, namely: Relevant to whom?; Relevant to which point in time?; and Who determines the relevance?, are therefore brought to bear on the design and development specifically of the curriculum.

The answers to the above-mentioned questions will provide valuable guidelines for designing and developing a relevant curriculum and an attempt will be made below to provide answers to these questions by referring to:

- The focus of the curriculum;
- The context of the curriculum; and
- The participants in the process of curriculum design and development.

2.3.1 The focus of the curriculum

In order to answer the question: Relevant to whom?, we need to ascertain who represents the primary focus of the curriculum. For whom is it designed? Whose interests should it primarily serve?

Davis (1990:38) attempts to simplify the matter of designing a relevant curriculum by presenting the following metaphor which is summarised here. The metaphor which is applied to education is that of the market place. To ascertain the focus of such an endeavour, Davis asks: "Who is the customer?" If one were to explore the answer to this question, it leads to a reconceptualisation of the school as it has traditionally been known. The school clearly does not *provide* anything, neither does it *produce* anything. No raw materials enter at the one end and are moulded to become something else. Rather, as is the case in the market place, something is on offer which can be bought or refused, i.e. *learning*, as embodied by the curriculum. It follows that the *learner* is the customer who has the opportunity to learn ... or not to learn. Some of what is learnt is remembered and applied over a long period of time. Some of the curriculum bought, however, is abandoned quickly, whereas other parts of it are simply not bought at all, due often to individual reasons. The customer, i.e. the learner, might have no interest or use for what is on sale. The general public are seen in this metaphor to be the shareholders in this learning enterprise. Their premise would be the short-term and long-term interests and purposes of the endeavour. The role of the teacher is to make the curriculum available and desirable to the learners.

This might seem like an oversimplification of a very complex matter, but Davis (1990:41) does not purport it to be a 'quick fix' solution. It is merely an attempt to clarify thoughts and to move away from the education terminology to which a variety of meanings are often attached, resulting in misconceptions.

The metaphor in fact seems to be quite apt when one reflects on the following views with regard to relevance in education, centred around the nature of the curriculum.

Lazerson et al. (1985:60-61) sees the education system's obligation as providing youths with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills that will lead to their full participation in democratic life, from making a living to exercising their rights and duties as parents, individuals and citizens. This is in

line with the tenets of Outcomes-Based Education (OBE), as learning outcomes refer to knowledge, skills and attitudes which learners must be able to demonstrate at the end of their learning experience.

Boggs (1996:25) states that too much of education at every level seems to be organised for the convenience of the teachers/educators and the interests of the education/training institutions, their procedures and prestige, and too little is focused on the needs of the learners.

If the learner is at the centre of the learning and teaching process, the principle of relevance refers first and foremost to the curriculum being relevant to and having a bearing on the learner as the focus of the educational endeavour. Edwards (1994:53) points out that we make sense of the world by relating new experiences to previous understandings. This cannot be effected if learners are not central to both the concepts and ideas studied and the investigations and knowledge constructs, i.e. the active business of learning. Gorwood (1991:87) warns, however, that many of the proponents of a learner-centred approach do not adhere to it and “merely pay lip-service to an ideology they are unable to sustain because of managerial and resource problems”. Brindley (1986:36) believes that the first attempts to put the principle of learner-centredness into practice, failed since the teacher was still responsible for making decisions about what the learners needed to learn and how they would learn it. The emphasis was on meeting learners’ objective needs (i.e. their communication needs in the target language) rather than their subjective needs (learner wants, expectations, learning styles, etc.).

Nasr (1994:13) emphasises that the focal point, the centre of interest, the ultimate target of concern in education is - as it always should be - the individual student, the person, the personality, the learner. He states that this has been acknowledged by educational philosophers, administrators, librarians, teachers and staff members for a very long time now and yet an observation and examination of actual practice in schools and classrooms would indicate that this principle is not adhered to in practice.

One of the education systems which is often cited as being ‘highly successful’, is education in Japan. This system is, however, showing signs of weakness and the problem is attributed to the fact that the focus of the system is science and technology (Stone 1991:13). Japanese education is intense, highly organised and has a high priority for all its people. Children spend many hours in

school and often attend 'cram' colleges after school. The education system in this instance serves the government's ambition to be a world leader in the field of technology. The downside of the situation is that Japan has one of the highest rates of suicide amongst young children in the world. This is believed to be due to the emphasis on achievement and the high expectations which accompany the intense learning programme. The Japanese are also now realising that their education system has stifled and almost eliminated creative thinking amongst the youth (Stone 1991:13).

The view of the learner being at the centre of the educational endeavour, is in line with humanist psychology which forms the basis of the prevalent humanist approach to education and which is fundamentally concerned with the humanity, worth, and individuality of each individual. "Its central concept is the 'self' - that essence of each person which makes him or her different from all others" (Spencer 1992:46). The views of some of the major thinkers in this movement, e.g. Maslow, Rogers and Combs, have already shaped the education systems of many countries as elements of this basic philosophy are present today in most of the curricula in the Western World.

Abraham Maslow's 'hierarchy of needs gratification' has contributed to the theory of human motivation. Maslow concluded that "humans have an inner directing need to strive towards becoming competent, complete, autonomous individuals". This growth need he called self-actualisation: "What a man can be, he must be" (Maslow in Spencer 1992:47).

Carl Rogers concluded that human beings have a natural capacity and desire for learning and that this desire is fostered in learners when they are given the freedom to pursue their own interests and curiosity. Furthermore, he holds that significant learning takes place when the subject matter is perceived by learners as relevant to their needs, aspirations and goals, for example, when learners can see that information relates to their current enthusiasms or will be useful to their later careers (in Spencer 1992:48). Rogers also maintains that learning which involves the whole person, i.e. feelings and intellect, is more lasting and pervasive.

Arthur Combs points out that the closer events and knowledge are to the learners' lives, to their perceptions of self, the easier and more meaningful the learning will be and the greater its effects on learner behaviour (in Spencer 1992:50). Combs also stressed the importance of self-concept and suggested that humanistic psychology's greatest contribution had probably been the

recognition of the fact that people behave in terms of what they believe of themselves. “So a child who has a positive self-view tends to strive for success while one with a poor self-image avoids involvement” (in Spencer 1992:50). Walcott (1991:83) refers in this regard particularly to efficient language use which, associated with self worth, is an important necessity to learners. If asked, he believes that many learners would trace their lack of competence to forms of pedagogical practice and presentation that were not relevant to their needs at the time of their formal schooling.

Spencer (1992:51) summarises the observations of these humanist thinkers, stating that they lead to “... a conception of education stressing that teachers should trust students enough to permit them to make choices about their own learning. Teachers should be sensitive to the needs and viewpoints of their students, themselves and their colleagues. They should help to build students’ self-esteem and encourage them to become life-long learners by guiding them to successful, relevant and exciting learning experiences”.

Boylan (1996:59) agrees with this view when he states that, allied to the current emphasis on providing quality learning experiences for all learners, is the need for creating learning experiences which are relevant, interesting, intellectually challenging and appropriate to learners’ needs.

2.3.1.1 Learner needs

The basic assumptions for following a learner-centred approach focused first and foremost on the needs of the learners, are (Regan and Weiniger 1988:4):

- a recognition of the individuality and uniqueness of the learner;
- learners develop in their own individual way and each learner has a unique personality and way of learning;
- learners have different rates of learning; and
- learners learn from interactions with others through collaborative learning experiences.

If learner needs are central to the design and development of a relevant curriculum, these needs must be analysed in more detail for a thorough understanding of what they include. This is done

meaning to learners if it can be related to existing ideas in the learners' cognitive and affective backgrounds, or if they can be subsumed within existing mental and personal structures (Ornstein 1989:23).

According to Metcalf and Hunt (in Van Til 1974:268) what is needed is the kind of educational relevance that would help and require young people to examine their most basic assumptions about the kind of world that exists, and how they propose to change the world from what it is into something preferable. To achieve this kind of relevance these authors state that teachers will have to familiarise themselves with the thought patterns of learners - their attitudes, values, beliefs and interests. The multi-cultural nature of society in South Africa in particular, demands an in-depth look at how the needs of learners with different cultural backgrounds can be addressed.

Chitty (1997:59) believes that one of the shortcomings of the school effectiveness movement was that it ignored the issue of curriculum, with particular reference to cultural differences. Their attempt at improving education followed on the pessimism and fatalism prevalent in the education circles of the 1970s. It did not, however, address matters such as the interaction between the culture of the learners and the official culture of the school. At the centre of this issue is the matter of curriculum. The curriculum must provide a framework within which teachers can employ teaching strategies, for example, which cater for learners from different cultural groups.

Ladson-Billings (1995:159) undertook a study aimed at describing what she termed 'culturally relevant pedagogy'. This approach relates to teacher strategies which respect and utilise the reality, history and perspectives of learners as an integral part of teaching and learning. Culturally relevant pedagogy in this case is based on the following three criteria or propositions (Ladson-Billings 1995:160-162):

- Academic success - culturally relevant teaching requires that teachers demanded, reinforced and produced academic excellence in their learners. It was found that merely striving to improve the self-esteem of learners (with particular reference to African American learners from minority groups) did not provide for the learners' academic needs;
- Cultural competence - culturally relevant teaching requires that learners maintain their cultural integrity and that teachers utilise learners' culture as a vehicle for learning. Parent participation

in the learning experience was found to benefit learners greatly in affirming their cultural knowledge;

- Critical consciousness - culturally relevant teaching requires that learners develop a broader socio-political consciousness which allows them to criticise their own cultural norms and values and the institutions which produce and maintain social inequality. Learners are then able to grow into citizens with the ability to analyse their society.

The basic criterion is that culturally relevant pedagogy must provide a strategy for learners to maintain their cultural integrity, while succeeding academically, i.e. they must not be forced to alienate themselves from their own culture in order to achieve success (Ladson-Billings 1995:476).

Clearly the traditional content-based curricula which were based on the philosophical assumptions of the one group of society which happened to be in power, does not leave room for developing this 'cultural relevance'. The focus on prescribed content which predetermines a particular teaching strategy, limits the degree to which learners from different cultural groups can express themselves through their learning experiences.

Research into the learning styles of learners from different cultural backgrounds showed that there was no such thing as a cultural group style (Dunn 1997:77). Examples cited by Dunn (1997:76-77) indicate that schools with learners from diverse cultural backgrounds reversed academic failure by changing teaching strategies to compliment learners' learning styles. This proves again that learning experiences which are responsive to diverse learner needs are more successful.

Due to the fact that much of this valuable information on learner background is not evident at the onset, the selection of outcomes, content, activities and materials needs to be shaped and refined during the initial and subsequent stages of a learning arrangement rather than being completely pre-determined.

As was mentioned before, this is because the most valuable learner data can usually only be obtained in an informal way after relationships have been established between teacher and learners (Nunan 1988:5). In a study of a curriculum for nursery schools built on learner interests, it was found that the development of such a curriculum required empathy for the learner, a willingness on

the part of the teacher to spend time getting to know the learner's family and the community in which he/she lives, as well as a more flexible and creative approach to teaching (Pound 1988:32). It is these subjective needs, derivable from information on learners' wants, expectations and affective needs which are of most value in selecting content and methodology.

To assist learners in realising and communicating their subjective needs, a range of learning experiences can be provided at the onset. Learners should, however, be encouraged to reflect upon their learning experiences and articulate those they prefer and those they feel suit them as learners (Nunan 1988:6).

(ii) Where is the learner now?

The answers to this question can be obtained from an initial needs analysis and relate to such aspects as the learner's current proficiency level (in the case of language learning), age, educational background and previous learning experiences. Nunan (1988:7) refers to these as 'objective needs' i.e. those which are external to the learner. The purpose of determining these needs initially would be to 'place' learners within a group where they would benefit most by what is taught.

The starting point for developing a curriculum which caters for learner needs, would then be the collection of various types of biographical data which may include current proficiency level, age, educational background, etc. Information can also be collected on subjective needs such as learning style and preferred methodology.

The participants in this planning phase are clearly the teachers and learners who are directly involved in the course as well as curriculum planners or advisors. Learners who have little or no previous experience of learning in the target language (relating to language learning) or who do not have the skills to assist in negotiations, will not be able to assist in this planning exercise until after the course has started and they have been exposed to a variety of learning experiences and approaches. Changes in learner needs and preferences need to be monitored regularly and amendments made.

Initially data collection is used for grouping learners, but also for content selection and the selection of learning materials and experiences.

If the curriculum is to be relevant in terms of both the subjective and objective needs of the learner, it will have to reflect a sound approach to differentiation. Only then can it cater for the different needs, interests, developmental levels and learning styles of learners.

Such a curriculum will cater for individual learner needs by, *inter alia*,

- * recognising prior learning and giving the learner credit for what he/she already knows or can do;
- * acknowledging diversity with regard to culture, value systems and language proficiency;
- * creating a space which takes into consideration where learners come from and what the limitations or potential of their background might be;
- * catering for individual learning styles;
- * recognising and utilising talent and capabilities; and
- * considering learner interests.

(iii) Where is the learner going?

The learner has certain future needs which relate to the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed for the academic, work and social environment in which the learner will find himself/herself when he/she leaves school.

The view that the learner is at the centre of the educational endeavour, and therefore of the curriculum, has led to the development of the learner-centred approach to curriculum development, which is an offspring of the 'school-based curriculum movement' started in the 1960s. This movement was a reaction to the "relative inflexibility of centralised curricula and a change in educational thinking which paid more attention to the learner" (Nunan 1988:21). This approach developed mainly as a reaction against schooling which emphasised mass teaching and information storage (Gorwood 1991:89).

The learner-centred approach is discussed here briefly as described by Nunan (1988) and others and some criticisms levelled at the approach are presented.

2.3.1.2 The learner-centred approach to curriculum design and implementation

A focus on learner needs in the design, development and implementation of the curriculum, necessitates a more detailed discussion of the learner-centred approach to curriculum development. According to Clark (in Nunan 1988:15) this approach involves:

- * the creation of syllabuses in which educational, subject-specific and learner-orientated objectives (content and methodology) are reconciled;
- * the creation of resources to provide learning experiences for the learner;
- * the writing of principles and guidelines to assist teachers to tailor their classroom practices to the requirements of their learners;
- * the elaboration of an assessment scheme to monitor pupil progress;
- * the devising of strategies to evaluate the curriculum itself; and
- * the working out of strategies for teacher development, so that teachers are enabled to renew their own curriculum in the light of their own classroom reality.

Learner-centred or school-based curricula are developed partly or completely within the school itself and are seen to be more responsive to the needs and interests of the learners than the traditional centralised curricula. The criterion, in fact, for determining this practice is evidence that the learning activities, experiences and teacher-learner interactions in the classroom are continually responsive to the needs of the learners in the particular setting and at a particular time and then adapted accordingly (Regan and Weiniger 1988:3).

The purpose of a learner-centred curriculum is to make learning maximally effective - not only for the average student, but for each student (Cross in Vermilye 1975:56). Thus, a curriculum is learner-centred to the extent that it provides for individual differences in learning. According to Cross (in Vermilye 1975:56) a course which does not provide for individual differences is not maximally effective because it might bore fast learners, frustrate slow learners and result in negative learning experiences for both groups. The central focus of a learner-centred philosophy

entails differentiated curricula for different learners and the importance of collaborative curriculum design and implementation which involves the teacher and the learner.

When teachers construct classroom curricula which are sensitive to the cultural, academic and personal needs of learners, the creation of learning environments is a process shared by the teachers and the learners (Powell 1996:367). This kind of socially constructed classroom curriculum will then tend to be inherently relevant to the learners' personal, social and academic needs. This view is in line with what Powell terms 'the student-centred subjectivist world views'. The opposite view would result in a classroom curriculum which would be more sensitive to the structure of the content to be taught and would be predetermined. These bodies of prefigured knowledge or content would be less sensitive to learners' needs and their predispositions for learning.

The curriculum then is seen as much more than planning procedures and content specifications. Rather it refers to an integrated system which gives prominence to what actually happens during the teaching-learning process. It is seen as "an amalgamation of intent and reality" (Nunan 1988:180).

The design of a learner-centred curriculum impacts on all the elements of the curriculum, i.e. outcomes and goal setting, the selection of content, activities and materials, and assessment. At this point it is useful to describe briefly how these elements are approached in the design of a learner-centred curriculum.

(i) Outcomes and goal setting

The emphasis here is on determining precisely and specifically what type of learner performance is desired at the end of a learning experience. Because little attention is often paid to this important aspect, one or two extreme situations typically exist. In the one case, intended outcomes are limited to the learning of material covered in a textbook and teaching and assessment procedures are primarily concerned with the retention of textbook content. At the other extreme, overly ambitious goals are set for a course - goals so general and idealistic that they are impossible either to achieve or to assess. The reason for these two situations being so common is probably because the task of clearly defining intended outcomes appears to be very complicated and overwhelming.

A lot of the criticism levelled at the outcomes-based approach, is around the vagueness and idealistic nature of outcomes which are often not assessable. Gronlund (in Nunan 1986:45) believes that this need not be the case and that rewards in terms of more effective teaching, learning and evaluation are great.

(ii) Selection of content, activities and materials

In a learner-centred curriculum where the focus is on assisting learners to do in class what they will need to be able to do outside, the content, activities and materials should reflect the outside world (Nunan 1988:99). The degree of authenticity of materials impacts on the choice of text sources as well as on learner activities and tasks.

Materials are selected with a view to fostering independent learning by raising the consciousness of the learners and making them more aware of the learning process. This can be achieved, for example, by including self-assessment exercises in the materials. To cater for variety in learner proficiency and preferred learning styles, materials should be designed so that they can be used in a variety of ways and at different levels of proficiency. Materials should furthermore be suggestive, rather than definitive, acting as models for teachers to develop their own variations (Nunan 1988:99) and should also reflect the sociocultural context within which they will be used.

Authenticity also relates to what is called 'learner authenticity'. This refers to the realisation and acceptance by the learner of the authenticity of a given text, task, set of materials or learning activity. Two conditions need to be fulfilled for learners to authenticate materials, namely:

- * they need to be recognised by learners as having a legitimate place in the particular classroom, e.g. in language learning; and
- * they must engage the interest of the learner by relating to his or her interests, background knowledge and experience and in this way stimulate genuine communication (Nunan 1988:102).

(iii) Assessment

In traditional curriculum models assessment has been equated to testing and is seen as an activity which is carried out at the end of the learning process, often by someone who is not connected with the course itself (Nunan 1988:7). This type of 'assessment' is generally referred to as evaluation and is a more limited exercise concerning the evaluation of learner achievement. The tendency in current curriculum documentation is to rather refer to *assessment* which has a wider scope and includes such aspects as judgements on learner progress in achieving the ultimate outcomes. In a learner-centred system, assessment generally takes the form of an informal monitoring which is carried out alongside the teaching-learning process on an ongoing basis. Furthermore, by encouraging teachers to evaluate critically their own performance, assessment becomes an integral part of both curriculum and teacher development.

A learner-centred system aims at sensitising learners to their own learning and assisting them to develop as autonomous learners by the systematic use of self-assessment (Nunan 1988:130). Learners can be involved in evaluating most of the aspects of curriculum, including their own progress, the intended outcomes of the course and the materials and learning activities it involves. In order for learners to self-assess, it is essential that they know what they should be learning and therefore the outcomes of the course should be formulated and made available to them in advance.

Criticism of the learner-centred approach centres around its implementation and perceptions of what learner-centredness means. Gorwood (1991:79-91) points to some of these misconceptions and their influence on classroom practice with regard to the implementation of the National Curriculum in the United Kingdom. According to Gorwood (1991:79-91) the problems experienced relate to the perception that

- * teaching to 'topics' is considered to be the means of satisfying individual learner interests;
- * child-centredness is equated to 'play';
- * the learner-centred approach is synonymous with non-streaming where there is no attempt at grouping learners with approximately the same abilities together;
- * discovery or experiential learning is of the extreme kind where learners are left to find things out for themselves and there is no room for instruction;
- * classroom practice focuses mainly on group work.

Based on research into classroom practice, it was found that the essential elements of the topic seldom satisfy an individual learner's interests but are more likely concerned with a teacher's perception of what concerns children. Gorwood quotes Entwistle (in Gorwood 1991:80) who observed that curricula constructed in terms of the interests of learners often merely reflect adult assumptions about what children *ought* to be interested in. Gorwood (1991:80) contends that the needs of learners can be served by introducing relevant topics but that topics on their own are not a reflection of a learner-centred approach.

Critics of the approach who refer to the 'play' aspect, ignore the experience of teachers who have come to realise the practicality of 'giving' learners the knowledge they needed as this was often more efficient and less time-consuming than following an experiential approach. Teachers following this approach in implementing the National Curriculum in the UK felt strongly that the emphasis should be on engaging the learner actively in the learning process rather than merely focusing on practical activity.

The matter of non-streaming relates to effective classroom management which is problematic in the implementation of a learner-centred approach. Gorwood (1991:87) concludes that the starting point should not be what makes learners different but rather what they have in common. Learner-centredness demands complete individualisation but is found in practice to set the teacher of a class of 30 or more pupils almost impossible management problems relating to e.g. keeping track of learner progress. It is stressed that merely arranging learners in groups and providing individualised work materials, does not constitute a learner-centred approach because it does not impact on the interaction between learner and teacher.

Although the learner is the focus of the learning process and his or her needs and interests must therefore be addressed in the curriculum and through classroom practice, teachers still have a responsibility for leading learners into areas of knowledge they would never otherwise approach (Gorwood 1991:89). The teacher and other participants in the curriculum design and implementation exercise distinguish themselves from the learners on account of their knowledge of the context within which the learning is to take place. This is not to say that because they are adults, they 'know what is best', but it stands to reason that the learner needs to be led into the knowledge of the world which the adults have already experienced. Paolo Freire (cited by

Alexander in Criticos 1989:5) points out in this regard that teachers and students are “together but not equal”.

Rossouw (in Steyn 1993:40) emphasises that “usefulness [as a focus for education and the curriculum] in the short term cannot be equated to meaningfulness and that relevance refers to appropriateness in a broader context”. This is taken to refer to the changed and changing world of the learner where the knowledge, skills and attitudes he/she needs to master and acquire must reflect the community and society as well as the broader trends which prevail globally if he/she is to be adequately prepared to enter that world after school and also make sense of it while he/she is still learning.

The focus on the learner in curriculum design and development, is offset then by the context within which the learning takes place and the relevant curriculum becomes one which addresses the needs and interests of *the learner in context*.

2.3.2 The context of the curriculum

Another aspect which relates to the relevance of the curriculum is that of context. Writers on the subject agree that education that is well directed at meeting the learning and future employment needs of specific learners may still be perceived as not sufficiently relevant if it does not make sense to the learner. For it to make sense, the learner and other participants in the learning process must understand how the selected learning content and activities fit in with previous knowledge, and how this can be of value in further studies and, most importantly, in real-life situations. It follows that when we talk about relevant education we cannot ignore the context of education (Heyns 1989:2). It is essential to know how ‘responsible adulthood’ is perceived by the different stakeholders in a society and what aspects are valued most highly in that society, so that relevant goals for the provision of education can be provided. This view is reflected in the American sociologist, Talcott Parsons’ concept of the classroom as an “agency through which individuals are trained to be motivational and technically adequate to the performance of adult roles” (in Meighan 1986:238). Parsons views schooling as an indispensable part of the whole social structure.

The overarching goal of education is the preparation of the learner for fulfilling his mandate in life. This mandate has to be realised within a particular life world and if the school should fail to

provide for the learners' needs within the relevant context, it will have failed the learner altogether (Badenhorst 1989:416). The problem of irrelevance will then have been compounded.

The needs of the learner and the context within which the learning takes place are inextricably linked. Van Til (1974:236) states that in endeavouring to make content more relevant, there is no substitute for knowing the social realities which characterise the environment of the learner.

Nasr (1994:13) states that if we are truly concerned about the total welfare and well-being of each "individual student as a learner, a worthy home member, a worthy member of society and a responsible future leader and participant in civic duties and activities, much more needs to be done by the school system. To lose sight of those factors that make up the total well-being of the student, serves only to enhance the irrelevance of any course of study and to widen the relevance gap already in existence". He emphasises that a relevant curriculum is constantly cognisant of this fact and constantly striving to tie all the personal elements and characteristics of the individual learner to the various elements of the curriculum and also the total life of the learners as experienced at home, in the school, and in the community (Nasr 1994:13).

Context relates to the learner's life world, within the community, society and the world as a whole. By serving the needs of the learner in context, the curriculum will address the needs of the community and society (including those of the country at a particular point in time) as well as those of the world at large. There is agreement that curriculum design must aim at creating a relevant or authentic learning environment by attempting to maintain the authentic context of the learning task and grounding problems within the noise and complexity that surrounds them outside the classroom, instead of most learning occurring in a vacuum whereby educators remove the noise of real life from the learning activity.

According to a study by Noah and Eckstein (1987:2) dissatisfaction with the type of skills with which learners left school was widespread amongst those in industry and business in the 80s. Although times have changed dramatically since employers shouted for more "vocationally trained" learners to come out of the school system, it still holds true that if learners' needs are to be the focus within the context in which they should be able to fulfil their adult roles, the school should encourage the development of attitudes, skills and knowledge of relevance to adult life. This includes the learners' future working environment.

With regard to language teaching in context, it is useful to start off by defining the learners' target speech community (Seedhouse 1995:61). The purpose of analysing learner needs with regard to the target speech community, is to satisfy the psychological needs of the learners. Learners perceive their learning to be relevant if what they are learning reflects the context within which this learning is to be applied, i.e. the environment in which the language will be used.

Because the context is subject to change, the curriculum must be flexible if it is to remain relevant to the learner. The relevance of the curriculum will depend not only on the extent to which it can keep up with and adapt to the expected changes nationally and internationally, but also with the technological changes and the changing and diverse learning needs of our society. Adaptability will ensure that the demand for continuous educational renewal based on scientific and appropriate research, is met.

A curriculum focused on the learner in context must reflect the particular context at a particular time, e.g. a South African curriculum must reflect the current realities in the country and the attempt at reforming education to cater for all learners. Furthermore, the curriculum must also reflect the global context within which the learning is taking place. The South African context and the global context are discussed briefly to indicate the aspects which must be included in the curriculum if it is to be relevant within a particular context.

2.3.2.1 The South African context

The learner is a citizen in a particular country at a particular point in its history. Therefore, the environment in which South African learners find themselves impacts on the design of the curriculum and the approach to learning and teaching. The planned curriculum must be relevant to the needs of the learner but cannot be separated from the needs of the nation (Stone 1990:50). Edwards (1994:53) states that schools and the school's curriculum cannot simply prepare learners for a future life; they must also be about living today. He further states that it is through dealing with the issues at hand, the areas of interest and concern which are prevalent in society and influence our lives, that we enhance our understanding and expand knowledge levels and applications.

As discussed previously, the current situation in South Africa with regard to education and training, has culminated in a pressing need for a reconceptualisation of teaching and learning.

To effect in-depth, sustained education reform, the curriculum must change to reflect that which is valued by the society and it should be designed in such a way that the society can identify with it and see its meaning for their lives. A new curriculum for South Africa must, therefore, reflect a feasible approach to education reform in order to contribute meaningfully to the building of a culture of learning and teaching by addressing aspects such as the participation of stakeholders in the process of curriculum design and development, the redress of past inequalities and a focus on equal access to education.

Based on the discussion in Chapter 1, it is evident that there is a strong political demand for equality in terms of provisioning and access to education of equal and high quality. All learners must be afforded the opportunity for learning in a manner which facilitates progression and this needs to be reflected in the approach to curriculum design and development if the curriculum is to be relevant. Lazerson et al. (1985:49) emphasises that "Unless we seek equality, we undermine the possibility of achieving the excellence that comes when all students fulfil their learning capabilities. Unless we seek excellence, our notion of equality will be barren, for it will lack a commitment to quality". Achieving equality and excellence involves providing opportunities so that each learner can do his or her best, succeed at something worthwhile, and take pride in that accomplishment.

The principles which form the basis for the development of a new education and training dispensation in South Africa, as reflected in the White Paper on Education (1995), and subsequent policy initiatives, form the basis for the development of a new curriculum for the country.

This new dispensation is reflected in the development of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The principles which underpin the framework are, therefore, also relevant to the development of a school curriculum.

These principles are:

The framework (and by implication the school curriculum) must:

- Integration:** reflect an integrated approach to education and training as part of a human resources development policy aimed at integrating theory with practice, and the academic with the vocational;
- Relevance:** be, and remain responsive to national economic, social and political development needs;
- Credibility:** have national and international value and acceptance;
- Coherence:** work within a consistent framework of principles and certification which allows learners to clearly link credits into meaningful career pathways;
- Flexibility:** allow for multiple pathways leading to the same learning ends;
- Quality:** be expressed in terms of nationally agreed outcomes and performance assessment criteria, thus facilitating both monitoring and provisioning;
- Legitimacy:** provide for the participation of all national stakeholders in the planning and co-ordination of standards and qualifications;
- Access:** provide ease of entry to appropriate levels of education and training for all prospective learners in a manner which facilitates progression;
- Progression:** ensure that the framework of qualifications permits individuals to move through the levels of the framework by accumulating appropriate combinations of credits;
- Portability:** enable learners to transfer credits from one context to another;
- Articulation:** provide for learners, on successful completion of accredited prerequisites, to move between components of the delivery system;
- Recognition of Prior learning:** through assessment, give credit to learning which has already been acquired in non-formal ways, e.g. through life/work experience;
- Guidance of Learners:** provide for the counselling of learners by specially trained individuals who meet nationally recognised standards for education, training, and development practitioners;
- Democratic Participation:** provide for the active participation of practitioners in the relevant field in the writing of unit standards and in their regular revision;

Equality of provide common learning outcomes which can be reached at the
Opportunity: different rates by learners with specialised education needs, by adults, and
 by children, both inside and outside mainstream schooling.

(Isaacs, Gunthorp, Malan, and Pahad 1996:21-22)

2.3.2.2 The global context

The reconceptualisation of education and training is not, as stated previously, unique to South Africa and new approaches have also been initiated in other countries such as America, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. These changes are due to a growing awareness of the changing contexts within which learning is taking place and for which learners need to be prepared.

Current world trends which impact on education are discussed briefly because of their influence in shaping the context within which learners will find themselves when they leave school. Education must take proper cognisance of the world trends and react positively towards these changes if the ideal of relevant education is to be realised (Kok 1991:13). The trends reflected here are already clearly recognisable in our own society. It is essential to be alerted to these as learning can be fully effective only if it enables each of us to link directly to the needs of the new age which we are entering (Dryden and Vos 1994:37). According to Kok (1991:13) the most meaningful approach would be to distinguish these trends and to prepare learners in order for them to be able to utilise and maintain the world and time in which they find themselves at present and will find themselves in the future, to their own advantage and to the best of their ability.

The trends which are evident world-wide relate to perceptions around:

- the nature of knowledge and information;
- the needs of the individual;
- the shape of work and the economy; and
- the structure of society.

(i) *The nature of knowledge and information*

We live in the **age of instant communication**. Modern modes of communication make it possible to access nearly any information which one might require almost immediately. The massive availability and flow of information regarding almost every aspect of natural and human reality and activity has made it necessary and possible to evaluate and amend everything on an ongoing basis (Kok 1991:13).

This raises the question as to what information or knowledge should still be taught. John Holt argues that as we can't know what knowledge will be needed most in the future, it is senseless to try to teach it in advance. Rather, a love of learning should be fostered which will enable learners to learn whatever needs to be learnt (in Dryden and Vos 1994: 39). The notion then of encouraging lifelong learning must be evident in the approach to teaching and learning.

The view expressed by Holt, does not, however, negate the need for basic knowledge without which it will not be possible to learn or to conceptualise new batches of information. Without a solid knowledge of the structure of a language, for example, clear communication will not be possible. The outcomes-based approach to teaching and learning is often criticised for the lack of knowledge reflected in the intended outcomes. On the surface it would seem that many of the desired outcomes are not firmly rooted in a knowledge base. This will impede the learner's ability to access or apply any other information needed to learn.

The point which needs to be underscored, however, is that in a world where information 'dates', learners have to be able to access new information, learn independently and take responsibility for their own lifelong learning. Information which is conveyed to the learner as 'knowledge' must be justified in that it provides a broad base for more learning and for applying what has been learnt. Lazerson et al. (1985:122) states that "Beyond the specifics of any particular school or course of study, the desire and ability to continue learning are the real benefits of an education of value".

Ornstein (1989:21) underlines the fact that the explosion of knowledge and the swiftness of change in society underscore the need for curricula to be relevant. He warns that if schools are to maintain their health and vitality, the curriculum cannot remain fixed in a world of change.

(ii) *The shape of work and the economy*

Robert B Reich, states in his book, *The Work of Nations - preparing ourselves for the twenty first century*, that the current transformation which we are experiencing will rearrange the politics and economics of the coming century. It is predicted that there will be no *national* products or technologies, no national corporations, no national industries. National economies will disappear and all that will remain rooted within the national borders are the people who comprise a nation. In this scenario, each nation's primary assets will be its citizens' skills (Reich in Dryden and Vos 1994:47).

The dismantling of socialism and the victory of the free market system in Eastern Europe is expected to spread to other countries of the world (Kok 1991:14). Economies in the new paradigm will move from being controlled by governments to being controlled by markets. Personal freedom, openness and exercising choices will create a new reality for people around the world, including in South Africa. This trend will necessitate changes in education relating to an understanding of the free market mechanism and the reasons for the failure of socialism; an understanding of responsibility and a new work ethic.

In a world with no economic borders, people will be expected to learn new skills, particularly in defining problems, creating new solutions and adding new values (Dryden and Vos 1994:47). It is clear that more is needed than merely confronting learners with a body of knowledge which has to be memorised and regurgitated in an examination.

The move to a **one-world economy** has already taken shape in the form of the three enlarged trading blocs, namely a more united Europe, the Americas and the Asian-Pacific Rim. Economic developments in the large industrial countries will impact on countries in the rest of the world on a much larger scale (Kok 1991:13). In short the economy of the world will increasingly function as one great whole and everyone's well-being will be influenced by it. A characteristic of this economic revolution, is the move towards smaller organisations and according to Robert Reich (in Dryden and Vos 1994:49), "the competitiveness of Americans and other rich industrial countries in the global market no longer depends on national corporations or national industries". Rather it depends on the new functions that its citizens can perform by applying entrepreneurial

skills. These skills must be taught as part of the basic general education provided in schools and other learning sites, to enable learners to take their place in this new economy.

Another trend which will impact on the education system is the move from an industrial, manufacturing, to a **service society**. Due to the developments in automated labour, the workforce as we know it will shrink and people will increasingly have to learn to conceptualise problems and solutions using basic skills such as abstraction, systems thinking, experimentation and collaboration.

Despite these emerging trends, the approach to education still resembles the declining industrial method of production: a standard assembly-line curriculum divided into subjects, taught in units, arranged by grade and controlled by standardised tests (Dryden and Vos 1994:57). Boggs (1996:24) states that technology has transformed the way we do business and the way we live and yet it does not seem to have changed the way we educate. It is clear that the approach to learning and teaching no longer reflects the world we live in. The design and implementation of the curriculum will have to cater for these demands which will be made on learners if it is to be perceived as relevant to the changes taking place in the workplace.

The lifespan of people in the developed world has increased due to the developments in the field of medicine, the focus on a healthy lifestyle and diet, etc. The average male now lives to at least 70 - this totals 600 000 hours and leaves 350 000 hours to spend on leisure, education, travel, hobbies, etc. after subtracting time for work and sleep. Education will therefore have the added task of preparing people for stimulating activities in their **leisure time**.

It is foreseen that by the turn of the century a minority of working-age people will be employed in full-time permanent employment by traditional-style companies (Dryden and Vos 1994:63). The **shape of work** will therefore change. The rest of the workers will be involved in projects groups which come together for short periods of time to complete a task; part-time and seasonal workers who will work a few days per week, e.g. in the tourist industry or at peak time in fast-food outlets; or those who work individually or as a family group, often doing something which they love, e.g. doing arts and crafts, providing services, such as tending to gardens, etc. The development of the communications networks has made it possible for these groups of people to work from home.

This change will demand education that encourages people to be their own managers, marketers and communicators.

The concept of **co-operative enterprise** underlines the need for people in organisations, companies, etc. to work together and to become involved in decision-making. Ownership is seen as a precondition for personal and educational growth within an organisation.. This approach impacts on the design and development of education within a society and emphasises the need for involving those who will be affected by the curriculum in decision making processes.

(iii) *The needs of the individual*

The industrial age gave birth to large structures which provided standardised mass-produced products. In this way education, for example, became synonymous to schools. In this scenario it is assumed that the school as an institution will provide that which is needed for the individual to enter the world. The **do-it-yourself boom** which has, *inter alia*, encouraged people to take responsibility for their own health by exercising and following a healthy diet, now also challenges learners to take responsibility for their own learning and to seek an appropriate vehicle for doing so. The school needs to encourage these tendencies by becoming more flexible and by ensuring that the education which is provided is relevant to the needs of the learner and society.

There is an ever-growing awareness of individual power and responsibility. The **emphasis is on the individual** - as a consumer, as a client, as an employee and also as a learner. People are seen as being equal but not the same. The individual learner's abilities, needs and background have to serve as the starting point from where learning has to take place. Individuals are increasingly becoming involved in their own learning and are exercising the right to choose the education best suited to them.

Consideration is also given to particular groups who, in the past have not been included in the decision-making levels of organisations, e.g. women. **Women** are increasingly entering the management echelons of major companies or holding high ranking positions in government, academic institutions, etc. and in America, for example, are creating companies at twice the rate of men. If the man was the prototype worker in the industrial era, the woman is the typical worker in

the information era. The democratic approach assumes a respect for persons, the encouragement of self-control, autonomy and entrepreneurial thinking. Women have fewer problems in adopting this style than men who have developed from an autocratic leadership tradition (Kok 1991:15).

Education will have to face the challenge by developing relevant leadership skills and providing equal access for girls. Furthermore, girls must be provided with career guidance on all possible career fields and equally boys must be guided to orientate them to meet girls and women on an equal footing; to treat them and compete with them on an equal basis (Kok 1991:15). It is believed that women provide a new perspective - in education they bring the values of love, care and compassion which will change the face of education from being merely the transfer of knowledge to an additive process of developing the affective domain.

(iv) *The structure of society.*

Despite the move towards a one-world economy, it is evident all over the world that there is a **growing cultural nationalism**, an assertion of our distinctness. Large countries such as Russia, which was formerly a united, seemingly one-faced nation, is now being split into very distinctive cultural groups who express their need for identifying with a particular cultural heritage. Kok (1991:14) refers to a longing for uniqueness which will hamper the development of the so-called 'world citizen'. In this regard the very real need for learning English and adopting it as an international language, will be balanced by the increasing importance attached to indigenous languages. Fyfe and Figueroa (1993:19) describe culture as a system of values, a conceptual system, a system of behaviour and a communication system, which have been socially constructed and are socially transmitted as part of a group's heritage and as the framework and medium of its life.

It is obvious that a growing perception of individual and group identity will impact on education and that there will be a drive towards expressing this cultural heritage in music, dance, art, language, religion and history in the sphere of education. Kok (1991:14) refers to an awakening or reappreciation of the arts which is a symptom of a new search for values.

Although it would seem that the new age implies widened horizons and greater opportunities, statistics show that there is a **growing underclass** world-wide which is often trapped in a cycle of

poverty and dependence. In 1970, Alvin Toffler predicted in his book, *Future Shock*, the 'era of the fractured family'. This growing tendency towards more divorces and the breakdown of the nuclear family, together with unemployment in many cases has resulted in a social disaster. One of the factors which contributes to poverty is teenage pregnancy which, according to Karen Pitman (in Dryden and Vos 1994:71), occurs most frequently where children do not have a vision of their learning path or see the possibility of success. In turn the children of out-of work young men and women will have a harder time breaking out of these disadvantaged circumstances. Hodgkinson (1987:6) reported some 12 years ago that in the USA families consisting of a working father, housewife mother and two or more school-age children made up only four percent of the households. He predicted then that twenty percent of girls aged five at the time of writing the article, would fall pregnant in their teens.

The task of education in this instance will be to teach self-esteem as a starting point to giving people the belief that they can succeed and that they are able to take responsibility for their own life and learning.

Indications are that a world-wide **religious revival** will be evident in the near future. Signs of such a revival are already evident in many countries of the world. This is true for all types of religion (Kok 1991:15). In Christian circles the growth which is already evident, is not associated with the mainstream denominations and established churches. Rather the less formal churches and religious groups are growing strongest. This change suggests a search for the spiritual which, *inter alia*, follows on the disillusionment with science and technology which 'cannot save man' (Kok 1991:15). The in-depth changes which we are experiencing all around us, furthermore lead to a feeling of insecurity and people then tend to reach out to what they perceive as an 'anchor'.

In this regard the new millennium also has significant meaning as subjects such as the dawning of the end times are often discussed. The New Age movement which emphasises understanding of the self, faith in man's potential and the wholeness of the universe, must be seen as part of this trend (Kok 1991:15).

The question here is whether school education has any role to play with regard to this trend. At the very least sensitivity must be developed for the variety of religious beliefs. It should also be

possible for groups who adhere to a particular religion or belief system to establish schools where learners receive instruction on aspects of what they adhere to, e.g. Islamic or Christian schools.

It is clear that education, and the curriculum in particular, will have to be responsive to the trends discussed here. A number of skills and values, as well as strategies for accessing and applying knowledge will have to be considered if the curriculum is to fulfil its function of assisting learners to cope in this 'new world'.

2.3.3 The participants in the process of curriculum design, development and implementation

Traditionally the curriculum was designed and developed by curriculum experts and educationists who made decisions on what constituted 'worthwhile knowledge'. Other stakeholders in the education process such as communities, teachers and learners have not, however, traditionally been involved in shaping and refining the curriculum.

The teacher as the implementer of the curriculum and the learner as the focus of the curriculum, are essential role-players in determining the relevance of the curriculum. These roles are discussed briefly.

2.3.3.1 Learner participation

With regard to learner participation in curriculum design and implementation, Edwards (1994:52) states that concerns of significant learner involvement and the valuing of learner questions, input and reflections are central to discussions of curricular design. This move away from the traditional approaches of a centrally developed curriculum represents a change of great significance. Because today's world requires that learners be thinkers, problem solvers, and creators, and that schools must provide ongoing opportunities for enabling learners to acquire these skills, learners need to be involved in determining their own learning experiences, and in this way begin to take responsibility for their futures (Edwards 1994:52).

The learner-centred approach, as described in par 2.3.1.2, provides for curriculum development activities occurring during the process of teaching and learning. It might seem unrealistic to

expect extensive participation in curriculum planning by learners with little experience in this area. When dealing with inexperienced learners, it will be necessary for the teacher to begin by making most of the decisions in terms of intended outcomes, methodology, content, activities and materials.

According to Brindley (in Nunan 1988:6) learners' wishes should be canvassed and taken into account, even if they conflict with the wishes of the teacher, if programmes are to be learner-centred. This is not to suggest that the teacher should give learners everything they want - evidence from teachers suggests that some sort of compromise is usually possible, but only after there has been discussion concerning what both parties believe and want.

A study undertaken by Seedhouse (1995:64) with Spanish learners enrolling for English classes, pointed out the values of a needs analysis as a basis for curriculum design because it promotes the concept of learner authenticity and also because a direct link can be drawn from needs to aims to the design of learning experiences, classroom implementation and assessment.

2.3.3.2 The role of the teacher

It is clear that in a learner-centred system, the teacher is the principal agent of curriculum development. Based on a study of the Australian Adult Migrant Education Program (Nunan 1988:151), it was found that effective curriculum development would occur only as a result of effective teacher development. Guidelines and procedures for local curriculum development were only effective if teachers had been thoroughly trained in using these. Studies have also shown that if teachers are to be responsible for developing the curriculum, they need time, the skills and the support to do so. Support may include curriculum models and guidelines. Successful curriculum development will, therefore, be dependent on an appropriate staff development programme (Nunan 1988:171).

The areas where negotiation between teacher and learner contributes to curriculum development (also called the 'negotiated curriculum') include such processes as:

- * needs analysis;

- * jointly conducted goal and objective setting exercises and the formulation of intended outcomes by teachers and learners;
- * negotiation of preferred methodology, materials and learning activities; and
- * the sharing of evaluation and self-evaluation procedures (Nunan 1988:36).

Michael Zellermayer (1997) undertook an investigation into collaborative curriculum design and implementation within the context of writing instruction. The research was aimed at understanding the notion of collaborative curriculum design and implementation in what Zellermayer (1997:187-188) calls the Deweyan sense “whereby both teachers and learners bring their experiences and understanding to an instructional situation that focuses on inquiry rather than control”. Zellermayer examined three loci of concern: teacher authority and learners’ responsibility; the significance of students’ personal knowledge; and the teacher’s regard for differences. Five recurrent themes were found in the stories related to the researcher by the teachers, i.e. Collaboration and letting go of teacher control; Collaboration as noticing and perspective-taking; Creating a safe space for authentic conversation; Connecting life in and out of school; and The role of simultaneity. These findings are summarised here as they give an insight into the implications of this approach for the teachers themselves (Zellermayer 1997:192-207).

- Collaboration and letting go of teacher control

It was found that where the teacher worked in a more symmetrical relationship with the learners, they were able to communicate with one another and with the teacher in authentic, unplanned responses. Zellermayer’s research illustrates that collective curriculum design and implementation relates to control and emancipation, and that the teacher establishes his/her authority within the dialective relationship between the two (1997:207). Control and emancipation relate to the teacher not acting as the knower who dictates to learners, but rather a situation where the teacher supports learners’ interests and facilitates their elaboration (Zellermayer 1997:208).

Control also relates to ‘space’, both moral and physical, where the teacher respects the learners’ space and ownership of their work, whilst creating a physical environment which is conducive to collaboration.

- Collaboration as noticing and perspective-taking

This aspect refers to the teacher sharing learner interests and becoming aware and open to the learners' world of knowledge. Zellermayer (1997:197) refers to a condition of awakesness and receptivity to spontaneously presented opportunities for learning from and with one's learners. The result of this teacher attitude is a sharing of the aim of upgrading the performance of both teacher and learner.

- Creating a safe space for authentic conversation

This view of collaboration refers to a process of 'shared inquiry' and the creation of a space "where teaching is a way of being that is orientated to students" (Zellermayer 1997:198). Theorists who see teaching as a moral enterprise emphasise that the teacher's most important task is to create an environment of mutual trust, care, and enjoyment, in which teachers and learners can engage in authentic conversations that support problem-solving processes (Zellermayer 1997:199). The success of initiating and maintaining conversations with learners depends on the participants' ability to overcome traditional dualisms of subject and object, and to create a space where the expertise of many is recognised, where risks can be taken and shared and where the joy of working together toward previously agreed-upon outcomes is perceived as a legitimate end in itself (Zellermayer 1997:199).

- Connecting life in and out of school

The teachers in this study found that learning and teaching are interpretative processes depending on the active participation of both teachers and learners (Zellermayer 1997:201). They are therefore "contextual and situated in the personal state of affairs at the time, and grounded in the social relationships with other participants, and are therefore unique, idiosyncratic and irreplicable" (Zellermayer 1997:201). What happens in the classroom thus reflects what is happening outside, as it is relevant to both the teacher and the learner.

- The role of simultaneity

Collaboration also refers to the “simultaneous orchestration of different activities” (Zellermayer 1997:205). Where the teacher succeeds in conferring with individual learners while the rest of the group are writing or sharing their work with their peers, the teacher takes on a facilitative role. This aspect depicts a particular view of the distribution of control and ownership in the classroom (Zellermayer 1997:206). Zellermayer views this process as a type of ‘enlightened democracy’ where rights, duties and capital are clearly aligned for both learners and teachers because learners have freedom, but are required to produce work which will be of a quality that satisfies the teacher and also the learner.

This practice is also about recognising differences in individual learning paces and interests and in learners’ individual needs for acknowledgement and response from the teacher.

Zellermayer (1997:211) concludes that the teachers involved in this study enjoyed this new kind of authority and seemed happy to be able to connect between personal experience (their own and that of the learners) and work, and to recognise and appreciate differences.

It is important to note here that collaborative curriculum design and implementation as discussed above, does not imply that the teacher and the learners are ‘equal’. The teacher remains the designer of the learning environment, both as a controlling rewarder in a production-orientated situation and a resource, and guides the learner in a facilitative capacity (Zellermayer 1997:208).

These sentiments are echoed by Paolo Freire, the Brazilian academic and champion of ‘People’s education’, who influenced the whole concept of an alternative education in South Africa. Groping with the question of the role of the teacher, he concludes that teachers and students are “together but not equal” when he states that (Alexander in Criticos 1989:5): “The experience of being under leads the student to think that if you are a dialogical teacher you definitely deny the difference between you and them. All at once, all of us are equal! But it is not possible. ... The educator continues to be different from the students, but, ... the difference between them, if the teacher is democratic, if his or her political dream is a liberating one, is that he or she cannot

permit the necessary difference between the teacher and the students to become 'antagonistic'. ... if they become antagonistic, it is because I am authoritarian".

According to Alexander (in Criticos 1989:12) teachers/educators are different from their students by virtue of their theoretical knowledge. He stresses the importance of educators realising that they have to earn the status of being 'first among equals' from learners by teaching in a democratic but professional manner.

2.3.3.3 Stakeholders and role-players in education

Teachers and learners are not, however, the only role-players in determining the relevance of the curriculum. As stated previously, the curriculum is implemented within a specific context - i.e. a specific community or society - and as such the members of this community or society have a particular insight into the type of society for which the learner must be prepared. All the relevant stakeholders, i.e. community leaders, political groupings and the education authorities, therefore need to be involved in collaborative curriculum design and implementation. Steyn (1993:43) points out that close co-operation and a partnership between school and community is of the utmost importance if the wide range of learning needs represented by the learners is to be provided.

This aspect is even more pertinent in a country such as South Africa which is made up of such a variety of cultures with different belief systems and perceptions of what constitutes the 'good life' includes and what knowledge, skills and values are valuable. No single group can have the right or the responsibility for dealing with all the aspects of education which need to be addressed (Stone 1991:13). The legitimacy and credibility of the curriculum will depend on the democratic participation of all relevant stakeholders in the development and design of the curriculum. In this regard Wiles and Bondi (1984:131) refer to an inclusion strategy which is believed to be highly beneficial and they agree that curriculum development is a co-operative endeavour involving the entire spectrum of individuals and groups who have a stake in education.

Manno (1995:724) states that the defining of outcomes should be under civilian control. Policy makers must ensure that the correct outcomes are selected and parents and other taxpayers must ensure that the policy makers remain on track. The teachers have the primary responsibility to

ensure that learners learn what is expected of them and should be afforded the freedom and flexibility to determine, together with the learners, what means will accomplish this end.

2.4 GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A RELEVANT CURRICULUM

Based on the discussion above, the principle of relevance then relates directly to the needs of the *learner in context*. The needs of the learner as a unique individual are linked to subjective, objective and future needs. The learner cannot, however, be separated from the context within which the learning process takes place and relevance therefore also pertains to the local, national and international environment within which he or she finds himself/herself.

The notion of relevance as it relates to education and the curriculum is problematic if it is to be addressed within a multi-cultural society. What is relevant or meaningful to one group might not be viewed as such by another.

In the traditional approach to curriculum development the task seemed simpler because the design of the curriculum was based on the philosophical assumptions and world view of one particular group. The challenge faced by curriculum designers in South Africa today is to create a curriculum which will give a basic framework within which each group or community can find a space for making it relevant to their particular needs and interests, while still maintaining a common set of guidelines on knowledge, skills and attitudes which will ensure that learner achievements are nationally and internationally acceptable.

Steyn (1993:43) cites the following criteria for relevant education: educational and human needs, legitimacy, adaptability, affordability, realism, efficiency and maintaining of standards. The researcher believes that a curriculum

- * focused on the different needs of the learner as discussed in this chapter;
- * set firmly within and sensitive to changes in the context within which the learning is taking place, i.e. the community and the national and global context;
- * which includes all the relevant stakeholders in its planning and implementation;
- * which is dynamic, true to reality and can respond to changing learner needs, a changing context and the changes in both these as perceived by the stakeholders in education,

will satisfy the criteria set out by Steyn.

Based on the characteristics of relevant education proposed in par. 2.3 and the view expanded on above that a relevant curriculum must focus on the learner in context and involve all the relevant stakeholders in the design and implementation process, the following guidelines for a relevant curriculum emerge:

2.4.1 A relevant curriculum must be dynamic and true to reality

This guideline refers to the curriculum being flexible and sensitive to changes in terms of learners' needs, context and changes as perceived by the stakeholders in education.

A relevant curriculum is one that is designed and implemented within and for a changing world. This applies to the community, the country and the world as a whole within which and for which the learner is being prepared. The curriculum should, therefore, provide a framework which is responsive to the local and international context and which reflects the world trends discussed previously.

2.4.2 A relevant curriculum must focus on the needs of each learner

Learner needs include the subjective, objective and future needs discussed in par. 2.3.1.1.

Subjective needs stem from the capabilities, interests, learning styles and value systems which the learner brings to the learning environment. To cater for the variety of subjective needs, the curriculum must reflect a sound commitment to the principle of differentiation. Dutton (1997:13) emphasises that differentiation takes time, dedication, audacity and frequent practice on the part of the teacher. The principle of differentiation recognises variety in time and reality, catering for differences with regard to inherent talent and potential, but also for the particular language as well as religious groups which the learners represent.

Objective needs include aspects such as age, developmental level (or level of proficiency in the target language), cultural background, interests and home language of the learner. The curriculum

must provide learning outcomes which are suitable to the particular learners and give opportunities for a variety of teaching strategies, content and activities and assessment methods.

The future needs of the learner relate to the learners' academic, work, social and political life which they will enter after school. A relevant curriculum must include the knowledge, skills and attitudes which have a bearing on the real world outside the classroom and in this way increase the social, political and economics literacy of learners within a particular context. In so doing learners will be prepared sufficiently for their role in adult life, enabling them to play an active role in society and make a living.

2.4.3 A relevant curriculum must reflect the context within which the learning takes place

A relevant curriculum will reflect issues relating to the life of the community, the country and the world for which the learner is being prepared. It will therefore be reflective of the context of a country's changing needs and demands, e.g. by catering for the country's manpower needs in the light of technological developments.

South African learners find themselves in an education system which reflects a reform strategy within a new democracy. The emphasis is on equal access to quality education for all. These principles must be reflected in the curriculum, together with a clear vision of the variety of cultures which need to be catered for. A relevant curriculum will, therefore, reflect principles which support a reform strategy such as equality, access to quality education and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

The learner is also a citizen of a global world and the world trends discussed previously will impact on the teaching-learning process. A relevant curriculum will take cognisance of world trends and the knowledge, skills and attitudes which learners will need to cope in adult roles (Kok 1991:13).

The trends and the skills which they imply are, in summary:

<i>Trends around</i>	<i>The development of:</i>
Knowledge and information	an ability to access and apply information
	independent learning
	an attitude of lifelong learning
	an understanding of responsibility and a new work ethic
	problem solving skills.
The shape of work and the economy	entrepreneurial skills
	systems thinking capabilities
	skills for collaboration and experimentation
	decision-making skills
	leisure time activities.
The needs of the individual	the responsibility for self
	roles for previously neglected groups such as girls and women.
The structure of society	learners' cultural and religious identity and tolerance for differences
	self-esteem.

2.4.4 A relevant curriculum must allow for stakeholder participation

Participation by all who have a stake in education and training is vital if the curriculum is to be relevant to learners and to the society in which they find themselves. This aspect raises questions of process which should reflect collaboration and not be exclusive. A collaborative process will enhance the legitimacy of the curriculum and make the curriculum acceptable to its users. The users include the learners, the teachers, parents and members of the community who have a stake in education.

2.5 SYNTHESIS

This chapter has briefly touched on a definition of 'curriculum', concluding with the view that the curriculum includes all the learning experiences which have been found by teachers to be desirable and possible based on the needs and possibilities of the learners and that, in order for a curriculum to be responsive to the changing needs of the learners, it must involve teachers and learners in its design and development.

The following characteristics of a relevant curriculum are proposed, namely that it is dynamic and true to reality, focuses on the needs of the individual learners, reflects the context within which the learning is taking place and is acceptable to its users, i.e. everyone who has a stake in education.

These characteristics also relate to a relevant curriculum which will be valued and viewed as being meaningful for the lives of the individuals for whom it was intended. The characteristics are discussed in terms of the focus of the curriculum, i.e. the learner; the context within which the learning takes place and the participants who should be involved in curriculum design, development and eventually implementation.

The discussion has culminated in the formulation of four guidelines for the design and development of a relevant curriculum, namely:

- * A relevant curriculum must be dynamic and true to life;
- * A relevant curriculum must focus on the learner;
- * A relevant curriculum must reflect the context within which and for which it is designed; and
- * A relevant curriculum must involve all the stakeholders in education in its design and development.

The next chapter will present a description of the main elements of the traditional content-based curriculum, as described by Robert Zais (1976), as well as those of the outcomes-based approach proposed by William Spady (1993). Based on the guidelines above, these two approaches will then be evaluated in the following section in order to illustrate to what extent they adhere to the guidelines proposed in this chapter.

CHAPTER 3

CURRICULUM MODELS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a description of two approaches to curriculum design and development, namely

- (a) the traditional curriculum model, as proposed by Robert Zais (1976), which represents the approach to curriculum design and development prevalent in many countries around the world and which is reflected in the existing content-based curriculum in South Africa; and
- (b) the outcomes-based curriculum model as described by William Spady (1993), which is currently being initiated in some countries around the world, including in the new curriculum for South African schools, implemented as from 1998.

The design and development of a curriculum is always based on a particular model or, alternatively, an eclectic approach may be followed which incorporates more than one model. According to Bagnall, Recchai and Robinson (1980:58), curriculum specialists generally make use of models to present their theories in a clear, visible and simplistic manner. The value of such a model lies in the fact that it

- is useful for the economic organisation and explanation of a mass of data (Ornstein and Hunkins 1988:283);
- provides a basis for theory development and also forms the outcomes of theory development (Bagnall et al. 1980:57);
- serves to bridge the gap between theory and practice (Painter 1988:17);
- indicates the nature, structure and foundation of the phenomenon (Zais 1976:93); and
- enables a curriculum planner to visualise curriculum components, their relationships, and the processes of development and implementation (Zais 1976:93).

The aim of this discussion is to investigate the perception of curriculum which the model reflects; the process of curriculum development, the underlying foundations which determine the

curriculum process and the principles which form the basis, as well as the elements which are included in the curriculum.

3.2 A PARADIGM SHIFT

In attempting to create a curriculum design which will be relevant to the needs of learners and their communities, it is not viable to simply ignore curriculum theories supported previously. Rather, existing models, such as the model described by Zais (1976), are used as a starting point and for purposes of comparison. In this way continuity can be effected and a proposed paradigm shift be clarified within the context of what is known.

A paradigm is a pattern or a model. It provides a way of understanding and making sense of information about a subject. When people function within a system, they operate according to its paradigm. They honour its boundaries and obey its rules. Although a paradigm helps people to be successful within a system, it acts as a filter for data and may blind us to alternative ways of looking at the world around us (Boggs 1996:25).

One could ask why a new paradigm is needed in the education environment. Added to the various reasons which have been mentioned so far, the learner population at education institutions is becoming more diverse every year and this brings into question whether traditional instructional methods are sufficient (Boggs 1996:24). Learner needs are changing and the variety of needs are being recognised. Furthermore, funding support to educational institutions has been reduced world-wide. Employers complain that the workforce is inadequately trained and corporations are having to spend large sums of money on employee training. There is a constant call for improvement of efficiency and effectiveness and for education and training to be more accountable.

Stone (1990:49) argues that the current model of education in South Africa is inadequate and a paradigm shift is needed in our thinking. He says that the view that anything meaningful and long term can be done within the traditional paradigm prevalent in South Africa, is a myth. Stone refers to aspects of the South African context such as the future effects of AIDS which needs to be addressed through education in a fundamental way and not by merely adding more information to existing subjects.

One should bear in mind that new ideas and change are often met with great resistance. It is no easy matter for people brought up in a particular way of thinking to change their basic premise and they are often unable to make a complete mindshift. Those who do accept a new paradigm, often still find it necessary to refer back to the old paradigm (Stone 1990:49). Even so, this should not deter those who are determined to effect change which will be meaningful and relevant to all concerned with education.

History provides us with many examples of the ineffectiveness of trying to repair a paradigm which has outlived its usefulness. The revised syllabi which were introduced in South Africa after the elections in 1994, are examples of products which have failed as a result of the attempt to bring about change without moving to an entirely new paradigm. The 'failure' of these revised syllabi is illustrated by the fact that they are not acceptable to the users (teachers, learners, parents, etc.) and do not address the problem areas inherited from the previous educational dispensation.

In reaction to the widespread criticism of education, curriculum design, development and implementation has moved from an instructional to a learning paradigm. According to the instructional paradigm, educational institutions are responsible only for providing instruction, not for student learning. Under the learning paradigm, educational institutions are responsible for student learning. Learners remain responsible for their own learning, but the institution is evaluated based upon the contributions to student learning. The focus should, therefore, now be on the continuous improvement of the environment for learning (Boggs 1996:24-27).

As institutions shift from the teaching to the learning paradigm, criteria for success change - the focus is on the quality of learners and how much they have learned and progressed. Identification with the process of teaching rather than with the outcomes of student learning has resulted, inter alia, in limiting teaching methods, usually to instruction or lecturing. In the instruction paradigm teachers are lecturers, students are competitive and individualistic, teachers teach independently from one another, teachers grade, classify and sort learners. In the learning paradigm teachers are designers of learning methods and learning environments. They become managers, promoters and facilitators of student learning, working with students in teams. The teacher's job is to develop every learner's competencies and talents. This does not automatically define the lecture method as bad, but rather it is not seen to be the norm. The teacher is responsible for seeking the most effective method for the type of learning outcome which needs to be achieved.

This new paradigm also impacts on the nature, aims and organisation of teaching-learning institutions. A systems approach is adopted with regard to assessing institutions. Institutions are not evaluated for their own sake, but rather the needs and rights of the learners are at the forefront and serve as the criteria for evaluation (Moon 1991:15).

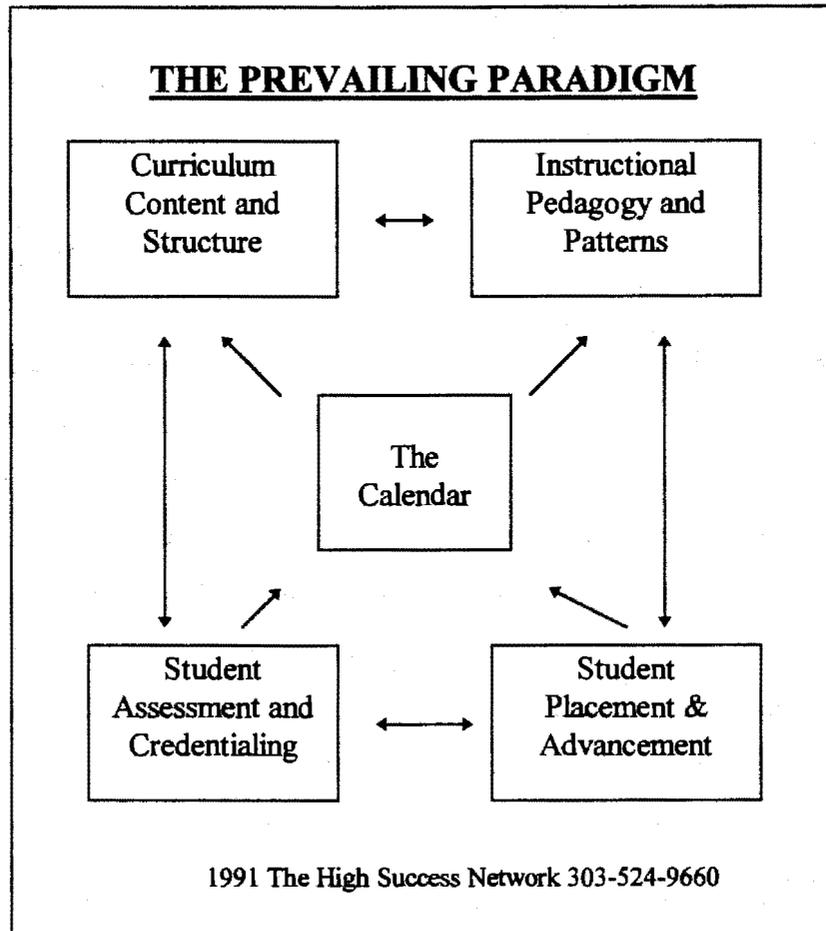
Within the current South African context, traditional models such as the Zais model, pose a problem with regard to the degree of relevance which can be incorporated in a curriculum designed in this way. In a multicultural society, the philosophical assumptions and the concurring foundations on which the curriculum is based, vary tremendously. This underlines the need for an open-ended approach to curriculum design which will accommodate the various groups within South African society and yet lead to the realisation of common, nationally agreed-upon outcomes which will be the end-result of consultation with all parties involved in the teaching and learning endeavour.

An alternative vision of education, underpinned by the values and principles of a democratic society, is currently being proposed. The aim of this new culture of learning and teaching is to “foster creative, critical, independent thinkers, with skills and competencies that are transferable, and attitudes and values that are compatible with the ongoing transformation of society” (Chrisholm and Valley 1996:i).

To promote the values of critical thinking, self-discipline, empowerment, respect for the dignity of others, and a commitment to lifelong learning, a different culture of teaching and learning needs to be born. This will require the substantial, systematic and sustainable alteration of the patterns and practices of learning and teaching in our schools. This is what is referred to as education reform, which is fundamental to social, political and economical transformation.

The new curriculum, which is aimed at bringing about the above-mentioned curriculum reform, represents an outcomes-based curriculum model. If put into practice, the changes proposed on the basis of the outcomes-based model espoused by Bill Spady and the High Success Network, would have marked a dramatic shift in the way schools do business (O’Neil 1994:6). This approach to curriculum design and development is discussed to illustrate how it differs from the traditional model.

The paradigm which has been prevalent in South Africa up to now, can be represented as follows:



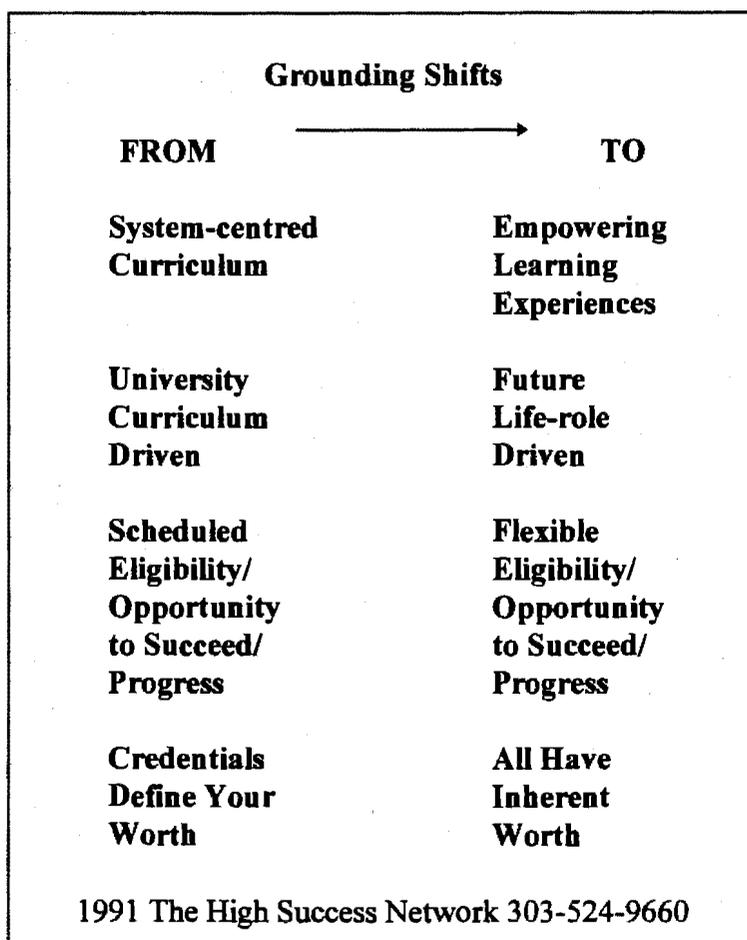
(Spady 1993:13)

The above diagram shows clearly that the curriculum is designed around the calendar and is therefore time-based. Evaluation is geared at determining to what extent the learner has mastered the learning content and is done in terms of a scoring system. The implications of this approach are that it accepts whatever comes as a result of the educational processes and little emphasis is placed on attaining results which indicate whether the purpose or goals of the teaching process have been attained. Quality is acquired somewhat arbitrarily, but is accepted because a bell-curve distribution can be applied to correct the results. Learners who are not able to attain the desired level of competence, are impeded with regard to placement and advancement.

Developments by educationists such as Bloom argued for making learning the fixed factor and time the variable. This would afford learners the opportunity to get a second chance by viewing the first test as a form of formative assessment and then giving the learner the opportunity to improve on his performance (in Spady 1993:14).

Outcomes-based education and training requires a shift from focusing on teacher input (instructional offerings or syllabuses expressed in terms of content) to focusing on learner outcomes which are the end-result of the learning process. Insisting, however, on statements of learning outcomes implies a number of other changes in emphasis. It does, therefore, represent a significant paradigm shift.

This shift can be represented diagrammatically as follows (Spady 1993:14) :



The paradigm shift to outcomes-based education and training links the major concerns of

- economic competitiveness, which will be achieved through relevance, standards, coherence and flexibility, etc.; and

- redress of past imbalances to be achieved through recognition of prior learning, accessibility and portability.

3.3 THE TRADITIONAL CURRICULUM MODEL

3.3.1 Introduction

According to Zais (1976:3) the concept 'curriculum' in the broadest sense is used by specialists in the curriculum field to

- indicate roughly a plan for the education of learners; and
- to identify a field of study.

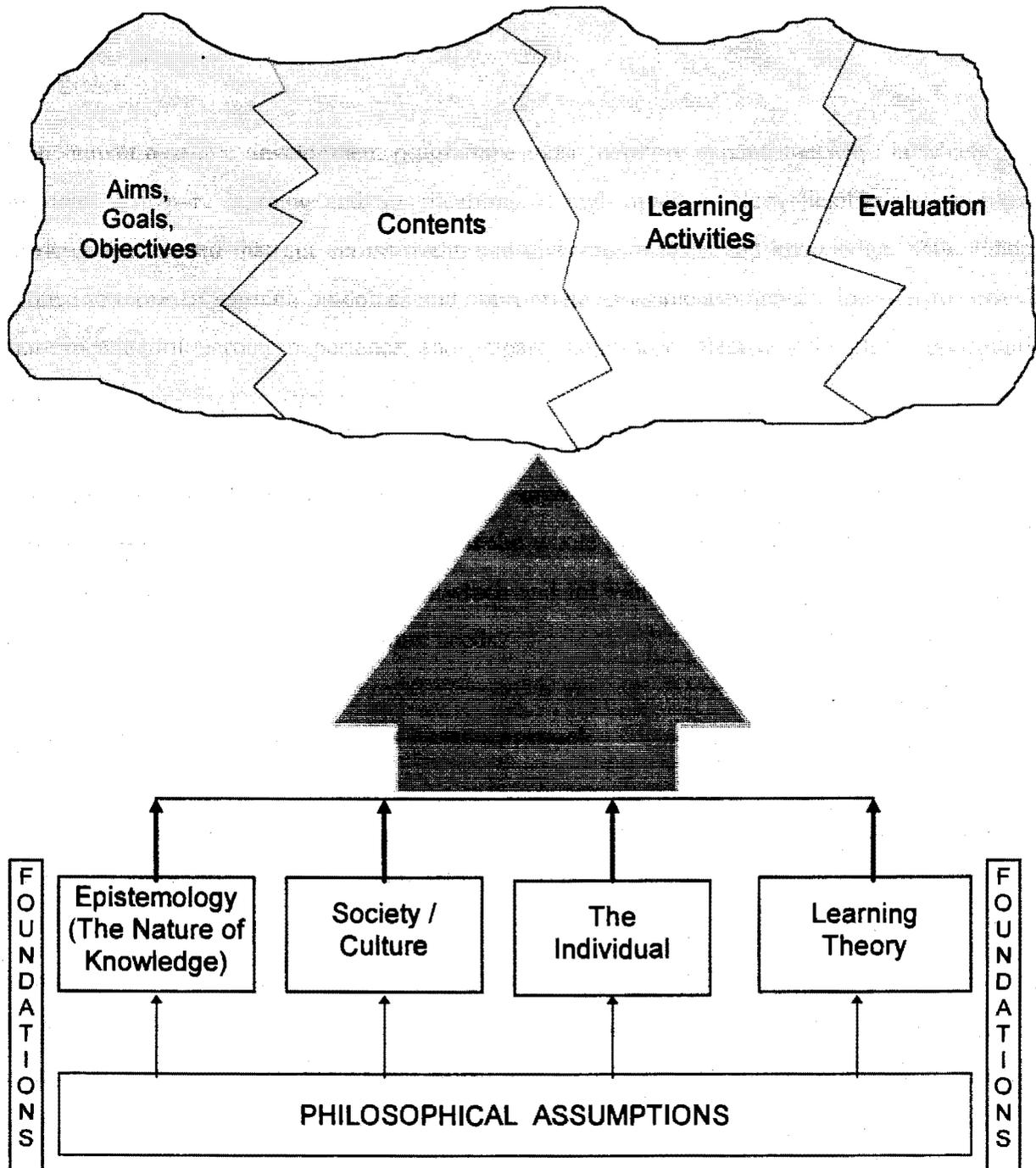
The curriculum here is seen as providing direction for classroom instruction which needs to be translated and interpreted by the teacher in terms of the experiences of the particular learners. The emphasis is on the learning content and curriculum design and development focuses on the creation of content for teaching and learning situations in the light of formulated aims in the form of courses, curricula and syllabuses.

This is also true with regard to the model of Robert Zais which has up to now served as a basis for curriculum design in South Africa and which can be recognised in many of the curricula e.g. for English Second Language which are currently still in use.

3.3.2 Curriculum development process

Zais' curriculum model (Fig. 3.1) depicts the components of the curriculum and the principal forces which influence and determine its substance and design. It is, therefore, not concerned with the design and development of the curriculum but aims at portraying the principal variables and their relationships which curriculum planners need to consider in curriculum construction. The model also illustrates the underlying relationship of these components and their relatedness to the curriculum:

FIG 3.1: An eclectic model of the curriculum and its foundations as proposed by Robert Zais (1976)



The curriculum is presented as an integrated unit with undefined boundaries consisting of four interrelated components, namely: aims, goals and objectives; learning content; learning activities and evaluation. These components are separated by jagged lines emphasising the relatedness of

each component to all of the others and to suggest that all of the sections need to fit precisely to produce a coherent picture (Zais 1976:97).

The large shaded arrowhead joining the four foundation blocks indicates the influence of the curriculum foundations on the content and organisation of the curriculum components (Zais 1976:97). The curriculum foundations relate to the philosophical assumptions held by the society within which the curriculum is designed and refer to that which society values as being “knowledge of the good” (Zais 1976:105) and which should be passed on to the next generation in order for them to lead what society perceives as the ‘good life’.

3.3.3 Curriculum foundations

The curriculum foundations are the underlying principles which determine the nature of the curriculum components. Zais states that the foundation blocks represent the soil and the climate which determine the nature of the ‘curriculum plant’ (1976:97). These foundations cannot exist in isolation of one another and are therefore joined by the double-headed arrows reflected in the figure.

Proponents of this approach to curriculum design believe that the value of an analysis of the curriculum foundations lies in the fact that it will illustrate the real situation in which the child finds himself (Mostert 1986:10; Painter 1988:45).

Based on and influenced by the philosophical assumptions, the curriculum foundations include four foundational areas namely:

- (i) **Epistemology**, which deals with the nature of knowledge and the nature of knowing. This refers to the question: “What is true?” (Zais 1976:111). The position taken regarding what is true, depends on the relevant epistemological commitment which is derived from the particular society’s most fundamental beliefs - be it other-worldly (i.e. revealed by supernatural powers) or worldly (i.e. inherent in this world) (Zais 1976:112). Schubert (1986:171) describes epistemology as the answer to the question: “What is valuable curriculum knowledge?”

- (ii) **Society and culture**, which refers to that which is typical of a distinct group of people who have things in common.

Societies perpetuate themselves by implanting values in a variety of subtle psychological ways resulting in unconscious culturally induced bias (Zais 1976:176). These values can be determined during the process of curriculum evaluation if the curriculum is examined by individuals who are aware of this phenomenon.

In this model, the curriculum content is selected from a specific culture, and the curriculum designer selects content based on whether it:

- qualifies as a culture base;
- will ensure the perpetuation of culture;
- will enhance living standards;
- will retain and regulate the community's ideals and values;
- will ensure a unified community;
- will give the learners an opportunity to express themselves, share their expression, experience self-acceptance and acceptance of others; and
- will give learners the opportunity to experience meaning (Theron 1995:29).

- (iii) The **individual** which centres around the following questions regarding human nature:

- Is man mind and/or body?
- Does man have a constant or a mutable nature?
- Is man free or is his life determined?
- Is man inherently good or evil? (Zais 1976: 201 - 216)

The curriculum planner's view of human nature will determine his approach to the design and development of a curriculum which includes the curriculum components. Based on the questions above, the curriculum planner will have to consider what a person should become as "human behaviour not only can be increasingly governed by critical knowledge, concepts, and ideas" but it should be done "to the greatest extent possible" (Zais 1976: 235).

- (iv) **Learning theory** as curriculum foundation and the nature of the learning process as perceived by the curriculum designer. Zais (1976: 244) states that a sound and effective curriculum will be dependent on "a well-founded theory of learning". Although curriculum planners do not agree on the same learning theories, Zais (1976:291) states that some of the learning principles appear to apply in all situations, while others are specific to a particular situation. Consequently, Zais proposes that an eclectic approach be followed.

3.3.4 Curriculum components

Zais distinguishes the following four curriculum components which clearly reflect the questions posed by Tyler and mentioned in Chapter 2:

- (i) **Curriculum aims, goals and objectives** all indicate a sense of purpose and refer to a desired point towards which the teaching-learning process must move. According to Schubert (1986:190), some curriculum planners believe purpose to relate to the whole educational process that guides and effectively manages curriculum development and design and many view purpose as the directive force from which the remainder of design and/or development processes emanate. The aims, goals and objectives therefore provide direction and focus for the entire educational programme (Zais 1976:297).

For the purposes of this study curriculum objectives are referred to specifically as Zais (1976:306) defines them as the "the most immediate specific outcomes of classroom instruction". They refer to the daily active curriculum and the degree to which these objectives have been achieved and can, in theory, be assessed at any time. These objectives are visible and immediate.

Examples of objectives are: (Zais 1976:306)

- The student will be able to solve correctly four out of five quadric equations.
- The student will master the principle of chemistry.

Objectives are defined in terms of what the intent of teaching is.

- (ii) **Curriculum content** is selected and arranged so that the desired curriculum aims, goals and objectives are most effectively achieved and so that the most important and desirable knowledge of the race is effectively transmitted (Zais 1976:322). Zais (1976:342) emphasises that because curriculum aims establish ultimate direction these aims operate as the final arbiters of content selection.

In general terms Trump's definition (Trump and Miller 1979:27) of "required content" is in accordance with the view expressed above, namely that content which is required in all areas of human knowledge is what everyone in the society needs to know to live 'adequately'.

Content directly addresses the question of: What shall be taught (Schubert 1986:213). Content in the context of the Zais model, is described by Schubert (1986:213) as "knowledge to be acquired" and this knowledge includes information, concepts, principles, ideas, etc.

- (iii) **Learning activities** represent the core or heart of the curriculum because they are seen to be so influential in shaping the learner's experience and thus his/her education (Zais 1976:350). Zais concurs with Taba who believes that learning experiences, and not the content as such, are the means for achieving all objectives besides those of knowledge and understanding (Taba 1962:278). The perception here is that learning content and learning activities in a functional curriculum always exist as a unity. The argument put forward is that when learners engage in studying, learning, constructing, analysing, feeling, thinking, etc. they must use some content, i.e. they must study something, learn something, think about something, etc. Conversely then, learners cannot in any way deal with content unless they are engaged in some activity (Zais 1976:353).

Learning activities prescribed in the curriculum should be specific enough to provide teachers with a sense of the curriculum planner's intent, while being sufficiently indefinite to allow for detailed development and execution in accordance with the teacher's instructional style and personality (Zais 1976:355).

- (iv) **Evaluation** in the content-based paradigm, is almost always product evaluation, centred on the learner, where the learner is seen as 'raw material' which is subjected to certain curricular and instructional treatments in order to produce a finished product that meets predetermined objectives (Zais 1976: 369-370). Although it is viewed as being narrow and inadequate, product evaluation is seen as providing important data for comprehensive curriculum evaluation.

Effective evaluation that would constitute a comprehensive representation of a learner's educational progress is seen to include, *inter alia*, measurement and other relevant data; an analysis of the learners' interests, capabilities, and achievements; and conclusions based explicitly on appropriate combinations of minimum, relative, and multiple standards (Zais 1976:377). Zais (1976:377) finds that the present system of grading fails to communicate learner evaluations reasonably clearly, and that their side effects are punitive, threatening, discouraging, and in a general sense antithetical to much of what education aims to achieve. He goes on to say that comprehensive curriculum evaluation is a very complex task as it does not only involve the assessment of a written document or examination, but should include all possible aspects of the implemented curriculum involving the learners, teachers, materials and environments (1976:378).

Because curriculum evaluation is a component of the total curriculum, its design and procedures will be significantly affected (as is the total curriculum design) by such foundational factors as philosophy, cultural analysis, conceptions of the nature of man, and other values (Zais 1976:379).

3.4 AN OUTCOMES-BASED APPROACH TO TEACHING AND LEARNING

3.4.1 Introduction

The White Paper on Education and Training (1995) gives the following rationale for the movement to an outcomes-based education and training system in South Africa:

"An integrated approach to education and training, linked to the development of a new National Qualifications Framework (NQF) based on a system of credits for learning outcomes achieved,

will encourage creative work on the design of curricula and the recognition of learning attainments wherever education and training are offered” (par 7, p. 15).

AND

“Our human resource development programme must therefore expand the ways in which people are able to acquire learning and qualifications of high quality. New, flexible and appropriate curricula are needed that cut across traditional divisions of skills and knowledge, with standards defined in terms of learning outcomes and appropriate assessment practices, in order to provide a more meaningful learning experience, and prepare them more effectively for life’s opportunities” (par 9, p 26).

The emphasis clearly is on a flexible and appropriate approach to teaching and learning. ‘Appropriateness’ refers to the relevance of the whole system, which includes the curriculum, to the learners as well as to the society in which and for which human resource development must take place in order to provide for future needs.

3.4.2 The origins of the outcomes-based approach

Outcome-based education originates from the objectives movement, competency-based education, mastery learning and criterion-referenced testing.

These roots can be traced to the earliest efforts to rationalise curriculum development. More than 40 years ago Ralph W. Tyler noted the importance of the objective for the systematic planning of educational experiences by stating that a well-written objective should identify both the behaviour to be developed in the students and the area of content or of life in which the behaviour is to be applied (Schwarz and Cavener 1994:326). This was followed by Bloom's Taxonomy and Mager's behavioural objectives.

The competency-based movement was essentially a response to the changing job market in the late 60s when people questioned whether education was adequately preparing students for life roles (King and Evans 1991:74). The idea was that competency-based education should be built around the integration of outcome goals, instructional experiences and assessment devices. This

definition, however, became more of an ideal than what in fact developed in practice. According to King and Evans (1991:74) competency-based education frequently became a testing and remediation programme focused on basic skills. In its ideal form competency-based education contained all the elements of outcome-based education, however, the lack of agreement as to what 'competency' represented, ultimately resulted in its failure.

The mastery learning movement was based on the pioneering ideas of Benjamin Bloom at the University of Chicago. According to Bloom all students could master desired outcomes if educators varied the time and instructional alternatives available to them. This idea was an extension of the work done earlier by John Carroll, a scholar at Harvard University. He proposed that schools or learning environments be organised to a point where learning became a constant and time a variable instead of all learners being afforded the same time with varying learning results at the end (Spady 1993:12). The outcomes-based movement represents the application and extension of these basic ideas.

Reports in educational journals and newspapers indicate a growing interest in this approach which represents both a comprehensive reform strategy and a curriculum model (Glatthorn 1993:357).

3.4.3 The concept

Outcomes-based education (OBE)¹ is about preparing students for life, not simply getting them ready for further studies, training or employment (Spady 1993:1). In essence it means focusing and organising a school's entire learning programme and instructional efforts around clearly defined outcomes which all learners have to be able to demonstrate when they leave school (Spady 1993:1).

In an outcomes-based approach the desired or intended outcomes are used as a basis for all curriculum processes. Curriculum developers work from these outcomes within a particular context to design programmes of learning which will help learners to achieve the outcomes.

¹ Spady refers to 'outcome-based' education, whereas the term 'outcomes-based' education is used in other parts of the world. In this study these two terms are used interchangeably.

Based on the philosophy that all children can learn, **outcome-based education** defines clearly what students are to learn, measures their progress based on actual achievement, meets their needs through various teaching strategies, and gives them enough time and help to meet their potential. In OBE, it is more important that learners understand a task and perform it to a high standard than how long it takes them to complete it. The focus is on competence as well as content (Spady 1993:2). The content involves knowledge derived from real-life problems, challenges and opportunities that learners are likely to face in life outside of school during or after their school life. "Outcome-based actually means practical reality" (Spady 1993:3).

3.4.4 Definitions

Outcomes are the observable/measurable knowledge, skills and values that learners are expected to have acquired and developed at certain stages of their schooling. They describe what learners should know, should be able to do, and should value as a result of their learning experiences (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training 1995:23)

According to Spady (1993:4) outcomes are high-quality, culminating demonstrations of significant learning which takes place in context. The use of the word 'demonstration' in this definition clearly indicates that an outcome is not a score or a grade, but the 'end product' of a clearly defined process (Spady 1993:5).

These demonstrations are qualified as being:

- (a) of a high quality, which implies that they must be thorough, effective and complete;
- (b) culminating i.e. that learners are assessed at the end point of the learning experience and refers to what learners are ultimately able to do at the end, once the learning process is over and can be synthesised and applied successfully; and
- (c) carried out within a significant or authentic context.

Outcomes then constitute the result of learning which can be observed and demonstrated at the end of the learning experience and include knowledge, skills and attitudes (also referred to as orientations). These orientations are the attitudinal and motivational elements that "constitute a performance" (Spady 1993:4).

3.4.5. Different approaches to outcomes-based education (OBE)

An outcomes-based approach can be understood and implemented in different ways. Three main streams have been identified, namely: Traditional OBE, Transitional OBE and Transformational OBE.

Traditional OBE is strictly speaking not outcomes-based, as the starting point in most cases is the existing curriculum from which outcomes are derived. This approach could rather be seen to present curriculum-based objectives. The outcomes are synonymous with traditional, content-dominated categories that do not relate to real-life demands and experiences. In traditional OBE the demonstration of competence is limited to small segments of instruction in the same way as a subject teacher or a trainer would formulate lesson objectives. Many curricula which are said to be outcomes-based, in fact fall in this group where the curriculum content has been predetermined and outcomes are formulated on the basis of the course content to be covered.

This approach presents the following problems:

- (a) the demonstration of competence is limited to small segments of instruction;
- (b) the content and structure of the curriculum remains the same except with a clearer focus than in a traditional content-based approach;
- (c) the performance context is assumed to be the classroom or the school;
- (d) the curriculum is only loosely aligned with exit outcomes at the final exit point, and these outcomes tend to be narrow in scope; and
- (e) the approach does not challenge the time frame of schooling (Spady 1993:7).

Transitional OBE lies in the twilight zone between traditional subject-matter curriculum structures and planning processes and the Transformational OBE. This approach gives priority to higher-level competencies, such as critical thinking, effective communication, technological applications and complex problem solving, rather than to particular kinds of knowledge or information. Broad attitudinal, affective, motivational, and relational qualities or orientations are also emphasised. This approach is primarily concerned with the learners' culminating capabilities once they leave school. As such the conception of what an outcome is, differs from the transformational approach.

The **Transformational OBE** on the other hand, is a collaborative, flexible, transdisciplinary, outcome-based, open-system, empowerment-oriented approach to schooling. It aims at equipping all learners with the knowledge, competence, and orientations needed for success after they leave school or have completed their training. Hence, its guiding vision is that of a competent future citizen. Success in school e.g. is of limited benefit unless the learners are equipped to transfer that success to life in a complex, challenging, high-tech future.

Learning *based* on outcomes then starts at the end point with the *intended or desired outcome* and all curriculum processes are defined, derived, developed and organised according to the desired demonstration. This implies that curriculum developers work *backwards* from agreed desired outcomes within a particular context. These state clearly what the learner should be able to demonstrate an understanding of and/or ability to apply. Learning programmes are then designed to help the learners to achieve these outcomes.

Veterans of OBE call this the *design down* or “design back from the end” process. When we put these two words together, therefore, the term outcomes-based implies that we will design and organise everything we do directly around the intended learning demonstration we want to see at the end. Other than needing to get clarity regarding what is meant by “the end”, the concept is quite straight-forward and makes a lot of sense to most educators once they have some practical experience with it (Spady 1993:19).

3.4.6 Principles of outcomes-based teaching and learning

The following principles form the basis for curriculum design and implementation in an outcomes-based approach:

3.4.6.1 Expanded Opportunity

Curriculum development focuses first and foremost on the learners, recognising and building on their knowledge and experience and responding to their needs. Learners are to be given the support they require for successful learning. This means that the curriculum and all it includes, i.e. teaching strategies, assessment methods, etc., should

- * reflect the various ways in which and rates at which learners learn and afford learners the opportunity to 'try and try again' until they are able to demonstrate achievement at a high level;
- * take account of learner differences regarding interests and general and developmental characteristics;
- * acknowledge the influence of cultural values and lifestyles and learners' construction of knowledge;
- * motivate learners by affirming their worth and demonstrating respect for their language, culture and personal circumstances;
- * develop learners' ability to work together in groups and independently; and
- * encourage learners to develop their own learning strategies (Spady 1993:16-17; Lubisi et al. 1997:4-5).

This principle overrides the present assumption that some learners will inevitably fail to achieve the required standard and will experience school as a self-defeating experience.

The critical role of education discussed in Chapter 2 is to prepare learners for their role as citizens who will demonstrate, inter alia, a desire and ability to (Lubisi et al. 1997:3-4):

- * continue learning;
- * apply and develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes;
- * move flexibly between occupations;
- * be accountable and accept responsibility for their personal performance;
- * set themselves goals and achieve them; and
- * work co-operatively.

Learners must be prepared for this role based on the acknowledgement of the knowledge and talents which they bring to the learning site and the fact that the learning process should build on prior learning by expanding the boundaries of their knowledge and abilities (Lubisi et al. 1997:4). Furthermore, the basic assumption is that learners' capacity must be built throughout their lives, reflecting the notion of lifelong learning.

3.4.6.2 Clarity of Focus

If all teaching and learning is aimed at the achievement of the intended outcomes, these 'culminating exit outcomes of significance' need to be very clearly defined. Teachers must be able to convey to learners exactly what they are expected to be able to do at the end of the learning experience and should illustrate these to the learners, focus their instruction at the outcomes, teach to them and clearly assess them. There should therefore be no haziness with regard to the outcomes at which all efforts are directed.

This clarity of focus includes 'authentic assessment' which should directly reflect the outcome that has been determined (Spady 1993:16) and should therefore match the outcome.

3.4.6.3 High expectations

The present system underlines the view that some people are smart and can therefore learn, whereas others cannot. The bell curve system of assessment and education proves that this is the basis for teaching and learning.

In an outcomes-based approach, however, the premise is that

- *all* learners can learn and can succeed;
- success breeds success; and
- schools control the conditions of success (Spady 1993:18).

Mamary (1994:23) holds that if teachers believe that all learners can succeed, learners will be encouraged, supported and given high expectation feedback. A teaching-learning environment will be created which would be characterised by a variety of teaching strategies, mutual support and co-operation.

3.4.6.4 Design down

As mentioned before, the intended outcomes are seen as the "fundamental building blocks that have to be in place for students to complete more advanced tasks" (Spady 1993:19). This enables the teacher to develop a more complex picture of what the real demonstrations of significance will be for learners.

Added to the four principles above are the following which relate specifically to the outcomes-based education system which is being developed and implemented in South Africa:

3.4.6.5 Relevance

Curricula should reflect the current and anticipated future needs of learners within the society of which they are a part. Lubisi et al. (1997:5) states that there is increasing evidence that “economic growth in a competitive international economic system depends fundamentally on a generally well-educated population equipped with the relevant competencies and skills required in the economy at any point in time but also with the capacity to continue learning and developing new skills, and acquiring new competencies”. This implies that education should be linked to economic strategies and trends to ensure that learners are prepared to fulfil their roles in society. Other basic aspects of society such as politics should also be addressed to assist learners to form their individual opinions and to exercise their rights.

The design and delivery of learning programmes should furthermore reflect an acknowledgement of the uniqueness of each learner and the variety of cultures, languages and religious beliefs of learners. Programmes and the selected topics, teaching approaches and assessment strategies should be sensitive to these differences (Lubisi et al. 1997:5).

3.4.6.6 Integration

This principle refers firstly to removing the rigid divisions of knowledge into separate subjects. The subjects approach is currently being severely criticised because it compartmentalises reality which is artificial and does not reflect the real world (Lubisi et al. 1997:6). Integration also extends to the approach to education and training which rejects the division between academic and applied knowledge, theory and practice, knowledge and skills, head and hand (Lubisi et al. 1997:6).

3.4.6.7. Differentiation, redress and learner support

All learners should be afforded the opportunity to attain similar learning outcomes. This approach challenges educators to implement a variety of methods and approaches to cater for the variety of

learner needs. Learners are given the opportunity to progress at their own pace rather than comparing their pace with that of the majority.

3.4.6.8 Nation-building and non-discrimination

In a new political dispensation it is essential that education and training contribute to the development of a national identity and an awareness of South Africa's role and responsibility with regard to Africa and the rest of the world. Learning programmes should therefore encourage the development of:

- * a mutual respect for the variety of religious and value systems, and cultural and language traditions;
- * multi-lingualism and informed choices regarding languages of learning which would benefit learners' progress;
- * co-operation, civic responsibility and the ability to participate in all aspects of social life; and
- * an understanding of national, provincial, local and regional developmental needs. (Lubisi et al. 1997:7-8)

Against the diverse backdrop of South African society, learning programmes should advance basic human rights irrespective of gender, race, class, creed or age. Learners must be supported to develop their sense of self-worth and develop pride in their own cultural, religious and linguistic background.

3.4.6.9 Critical and creative thinking

Learners must be encouraged to participate in their own learning and the experiences which they bring to the learning site are to be valued and incorporated and adapted to be included in the learning programmes. Teachers will no longer be responsible only for imparting chunks of knowledge to a passive audience.

3.4.6.10 Flexibility

Learning programmes should adhere to a coherent framework of principles leading to recognised qualifications, but the means for reaching these ends should be determined by education and training providers on the basis of learners' needs (Lubisi et al. 1997:8).

3.4.6.11 Progression

Learners will progress on the basis of learning outcomes attained rather than having to spend a predetermined time covering course content. Prior knowledge and experience will be acknowledged and will enable learners to progress more rapidly towards attaining a particular level on the National Qualifications Framework.

3.4.6.12 Credibility

Learning programmes should have credibility both on a national and international level. The relevance of learning programmes to the South African context in particular must be balanced with international credibility to ensure competitiveness and mobility in the global workplace.

3.4.6.13 Quality assurance

The quality of education and training provided must be assured and the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) has been established for this purpose. SAQA is responsible for ensuring that the standards for education and training registered in terms of learning outcomes and their appropriate assessment criteria, guarantee delivery and provision of education and training of high quality which will promote equity for all learners.

3.4.7 Aims and objectives

Spady formulates the main purposes of outcomes-based education as being (1993:21):

- to equip all students with the knowledge and competencies, and orientations needed for future success; and
- to implement programs and conditions that maximise learning success for all students.

The following aims of an OBE approach to teaching and learning distinguish it from the traditional content-based models:

- 1) To create more flexible delivery systems so that students of different ages are learning co-operatively;
- 2) To replace averaging systems and comparative grading with the concept of culminating achievement;
- 3) To ensure that all students experience success;
- 4) To avoid a process whereby 'passing' requires a given amount of time to be spent attending a particular class;
- 5) To equip teachers to focus more on the learning capabilities of students and less on covering a given amount of curriculum;
- 6) To focus all instruction on a higher level of learning and to make accessible to all students the methods used in gifted and talented programs; and
- 7) To place less reliance on norm-referenced standardised tests as indicators of either student or teacher accomplishment (Spady 1993:21-22).

3.4.8 Elements of the curriculum

The focus of outcomes-based education and training is on what learners know and can do. The starting point for curriculum development processes will be the intended results of learning in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes rather than the predetermining of content.

The intended outcomes are explicitly stated and serve to guide the teaching and learning process.

In the South African context, two types of outcomes are distinguished, namely: critical cross-field outcomes and specific outcomes. Critical outcomes express the intended results of education and training in a broad sense, whereas the specific outcomes are context-linked and are therefore more narrowly defined. The specific outcomes serve as a basis for developing learning programmes in which learning outcomes are detailed and specified further.

3.4.8.1 Critical cross-field outcomes

Critical outcomes focus on the capacity to apply knowledge, skills and attitudes in an integrated way in learning and work situations, as well as in life generally. These outcomes are general or generic and are not restricted to a learning area, but they inform the formulation of and relate to the acquisition of specific outcomes. Critical outcomes are generated across all sectors of education and training. Examples of these outcomes include problem solving or communicating effectively. Many different terms such as essential outcomes, generic competencies, critical outcomes, core skills, key competencies and essential skills are used to describe these outcomes.

A key issue in implementing critical outcomes, is the degree to which they are transferable from one situation to another.

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) who are responsible for developing and maintaining the National Qualifications Framework in South Africa, has formulated seven 'Critical Cross-field Education and Training Outcomes' which will guide all teaching and learning. They are the following (Lubisi et al. 1997:12):

Learners will be able to demonstrate the ability to:

1. Identify and solve problems in which responses display that responsible decisions using critical and creative thinking, have been made.
2. Work effectively with others as a member of a team, group, organisation, community.
3. Organise and manage oneself and one's activities responsibly and effectively.
4. Collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information.
5. Communicate effectively using visual, mathematical and/or language skills in the modes of oral and/or written presentation.
6. Use science and technology effectively and critically, showing responsibility towards the environment and health of others.
7. Demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation.

Furthermore, the following guidelines have been laid down to ensure that learners are prepared effectively for the world they live in. In order to contribute to the full personal development of the society at large, it must be the intention underlying any programme of learning to make an individual aware of the importance of:

1. reflecting on and exploring a variety of strategies to learn more effectively;

2. participating as responsible citizens in the life of local, national and global communities;
3. being culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts;
4. exploring education and career opportunities; and
5. developing entrepreneurial opportunities.

Due to their generic nature, critical outcomes are not defined in more detail for different developmental levels. The outcomes as formulated above inform all developmental phases, bands and areas of learning.

3.4.8.2 Specific outcomes

Specific outcomes are contextually demonstrated knowledge, skills and attitudes, reflecting the generic or critical cross-field outcomes. All learning programmes include specific outcomes for the area of learning, together with the relevant assessment/performance criteria. Once the learner can demonstrate that he has achieved the specific outcomes, he is credited for these and moves on to a higher level within the education and training or schooling system. Specific outcomes are the building blocks which enable learners to achieve overall competence in a field or learning area at a given level. They are, therefore, the key to learning progression.

The acknowledgement that learners are unique and learn at their own pace, means that learners are not all expected to attain the specific outcomes in the same time, at the same place or in the same way. Learners are able to attain them through a wide range of learning experiences and in a variety of contexts.

The formulation of critical outcomes has informed the selection of knowledge areas and their organisation. The following learning areas have been identified for the general education and training phase in South Africa:

- Language, Literacy and Communication
- Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics and Mathematical Sciences
- Human and Social Sciences
- Natural Sciences
- Technology

- Arts and Culture
- Economic and Management Sciences
- Life orientation.

The fact that specific outcomes are formulated for each of these learning areas does not, however, imply that the areas will be taught separately or that learning programmes will be based on these areas as discrete entities. This could lead to the fragmented subject-based system which has been prevalent up to now, presenting learners with a compartmentalised view of the real world which will not reflect reality.

3.4.8.3 Curriculum design process

The curriculum process starts with the formulation of what Spady terms 'exit outcomes'. These are the broad outcomes which relate to the critical outcomes formulated for the South African context. These critical outcomes are used as a basis for refining outcomes in the learning areas but not with a view of isolating the learning areas into units as has been mentioned, but with a view to developing a curriculum programme.

The programme outcome that might be derived from the critical outcome: Communicate effectively using visual, mathematical and/or language skills in the modes of oral and/or written presentation, might be expanded to the ability to: Write clearly and effectively in a variety of genres, for a variety of audiences, in real communication contexts. The next step would be to formulate the course outcomes for a particular grade from the above programme outcome, e.g. Write a clear and effective letter to the editor of your local paper, taking a stand on a controversial issue, supporting your position with evidence, and refuting the arguments of the opposition. By analysing the course outcomes, developers or teachers now identify the unit outcomes that contribute to the course outcomes. In the case stated above, a unit entitled: Persuading Others, might be developed which would include the unit outcome: Effectively refute arguments of those opposing your position on a controversial issue (Glatthorn 1993:359). The last step is the identification of the lesson outcomes that would contribute to the unit outcomes, which in this example might read: Analyse the audience to determine the rebuttal strategies most likely to be effective.

This process illustrates the 'design down' approach, moving from the exit outcomes (or critical cross-field outcomes in the South African scenario) to lesson outcomes in a structured manner.

3.4.8.4 Assessment

(i) Introduction

The outcomes-based approach to curriculum design is assessment driven and therefore demands the implementation of valid and reliable assessment procedures. The paradigm shift demonstrates the need for these changes to be reflected in assessment practices. Unless assessment is properly aligned with curriculum reform and teaching practices, the desired changes in education will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to implement. Opponents of this approach believe that teachers will find it impossible to assess performance accurately and fairly (Brandt 1994:5). Pioneers in this field have, however, shown that it can be done but that it requires extensive teacher training and support (Jamentz in Brandt 1994:5).

The emphasis of assessment is on continuous diagnostic assessment of the learner's work over a period of time rather than on performance in a once-off examination or test. This approach to teaching and learning is aimed at ensuring success through intervention which will support the learner to the accomplishment of clearly stated outcomes appropriate for the particular stage of development. It follows that learners' progress is measured against criteria that indicate attainment of learning outcomes, rather than against other learners' performances. The emphasis is therefore on criterion- rather than norm-referenced assessment.

In the outcomes-based approach learners are aware from the outset of what will be required from them at the end of the learning experience. The assessment process is therefore transparent and assessors can be held accountable for fair assessment in terms of clear and explicit criteria (Lubisi et al. 1997:14).

To give life to the outcomes-based approach to teaching and learning as outlined in the previous chapter, assessment must move from the emphasis on summative assessment as a single event to developmental assessment which is a continuous, progressive and ongoing process. In this way assessment will be a tool assisting the learner and teacher in ascertaining learning progress.

(ii) Developmental Assessment

Developmental assessment is the process of monitoring a learner's progress through an area of learning so that decisions can be made about the best ways to facilitate further learning (Masters and Forster 1996:1).

The concept of developmental assessment shifts the focus in assessment from notions of 'passing' and 'failing' to the concept of ongoing growth - from an emphasis on comparing one individual with another to an emphasis on learners developing skills, knowledge and understandings (Masters and Forster 1996: 8).

In developmental assessment, learning progress is monitored in much the same way as the learner's physical growth, i.e. from time to time an estimate is made of the learner's location on a developmental continuum and changes in location indicate the measure of growth over time (Masters and Forster 1996:1).

(iii) Principles for Effective and Informative Assessment.

Masters and Forster (1996) emphasise that assessment and reporting practice can only be effective if it:

** Is relevant to the curriculum*

The assessment strategies employed by the practitioner in the classroom need to be directly linked to and reflect the learning programme outcomes. Assessment methods are chosen to faithfully reflect and provide evidence about the range of knowledge, skills and attitudes that make up an area of learning. Conclusions about learner achievement are only valid when based on evidence about the full range of outcomes (Masters and Forster 1996:20).

** Is integral to teaching and learning*

Effective and informative assessment practice involves selecting strategies that are naturally derived from well structured teaching and learning activities. These strategies should provide information concerning learner progress and achievement that helps inform ongoing teaching and

learning as well as the diagnosis of areas of strength and need. Assessment methods should be chosen and designed to provide insights into learners' knowledge and conceptual understandings which can be used in future teaching and learning (Masters and Forster 1996:21).

** Is balanced, comprehensive and varied*

Effective and informative assessment practice involves teachers using a variety of assessment strategies that provide learners with multiple opportunities, in varying contexts, to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do in relation to the learning programme outcomes.

Effective and informative reporting of learner achievement takes a number of forms including traditional reporting, learner profiles, basic skills tests, parent and learner interviews, annotations on learner work, comments in workbooks, portfolios, certificates and awards.

** Is Valid and Reliable*

Assessment strategies should accurately and appropriately assess clearly defined aspects of learner achievement. This relates to assessment being valid, accurate and reliable. Reliability is closely linked to the principle of fairness. If a strategy does not accurately assess what it is designed to assess, then its use is misleading and unfair to the learner.

Reliability can be enhanced by (Masters and Forster 1996:24):

- specifying the kinds of evidence to be collected;
- specifying criteria to be used in assessing learner work;
- training markers in the use of criteria;
- providing samples of learner work illustrating the assessment criteria;
- identifying and adjusting for differences in the standards applied by different assessors; and
- identifying and adjusting for differences in the detail of the tasks that learners attempt.

Valid assessment strategies are those that reflect the actual intention of teaching and learning activities, based on learning programme outcomes. Where values and attitudes are expressed in learning programme outcomes, these too should be assessed as part of the learner's learning.

** Is fair*

Effective and informative assessment strategies are designed to ensure equal opportunity for success regardless of learners' age, gender, physical or other disability, culture, background, language, socio-economic status or geographic location.

** Engages the learner*

Effective and informative assessment practice is learner centred. Ideally there is a co-operative interaction between teacher and learners, and among the learners themselves. The learning programme outcomes and the assessment processes to be used should be made explicit to learners. Learners should participate in the negotiation of learning tasks and actively monitor and reflect upon their achievements and progress.

** Values teacher judgement*

Good assessment practice involves teachers making judgements on the weight of assessment evidence about learner progress towards the achievement of outcomes. Teachers can be confident a learner has achieved an outcome when the learner has successfully demonstrated that outcome a number of times, and in varying contexts. The reliability of teacher judgement is enhanced when they co-operatively develop a shared understanding of what constitutes achievement of an outcome. This is developed through co-operative programming and discussing samples of learners' work and achievements within and between schools. Teacher judgement, based on well defined standards, is a valuable and rich form of learner assessment.

** Is time efficient and manageable*

Assessment methods must be convenient to implement in that they are manageable, easily incorporated into usual classroom activities and capable of providing information that justifies the time and money required. Assessment practice must be time efficient and support teaching and learning by providing constructive feedback to the teacher and learner that will guide further learning. Teachers need to plan carefully the timing, frequency and nature of their assessment strategies. Good planning ensures that assessment and reporting is manageable and maximises the usefulness of the strategies selected (for example, by addressing several outcomes in one assessment task).

** Recognises individual achievement and progress*

Effective and informative assessment practice acknowledges that learners are individuals who develop differently. All learners must be given appropriate opportunities to demonstrate achievement.

Reporting practice must be sensitive to the self-esteem and general well-being of learners, providing honest and constructive feedback. Outcomes relating to values and attitudes are an important part of learning that should be assessed and reported on. They are distinct from knowledge, understanding and skills outcomes.

** Involves a 'whole school' approach*

An effective and informative assessment and reporting policy is developed through a planned and co-ordinated whole school approach. Decisions about assessment and reporting cannot be taken independently of issues relating to curriculum, class groupings, timetabling, programming and resource allocation.

** Actively involves parents*

Schools and their communities should be responsible for jointly developing assessment and reporting practices and policies according to their local needs and expectations within the *principles* outlined here. In the same way schools should ensure full and informed participation by parents in the continuing development and review of their policy on reporting processes.

** Conveys meaningful and useful information*

Reporting of learner achievement serves a number of purposes, for a variety of audiences. Learners, parents, teachers, other schools and employers are potential audiences. Schools can use learner achievement information at a number of levels including individual, class, grade or school. This information helps identify learners for targeted intervention and can inform school improvement programmes. The form of the report must clearly serve its intended purpose and audience.

Effective and informative reporting acknowledges that learners can be demonstrating progress and achievement of outcomes across stages, not just within stages.

Good reporting practice takes into account the expectations of the community and system requirements, particularly the need for information about standards that will enable parents to know how their children are progressing.

Learner achievement and progress can be reported by comparing learners' work against a standards framework of learning programme outcomes, comparing their prior and current learning achievements to those of other learners. Reporting can involve a combination of these methods. It is important for schools and parents to explore which methods of reporting will provide the most meaningful and useful information.

3.4.8.5 Judging and recording

One of the most important aspects of developmental assessment is the keeping of written records of learner behaviour which form the basis for estimating the learners' levels of attainment on a progress map.

Records are kept on observations made by teachers in the course of their teaching (anecdotal records) or are planned and purposeful observations of learners' performances on assigned activities and work" (Masters and Forster 1996:27). Planned observations are recorded by making use of the assessment methods discussed previously.

3.5 SUMMARY

In shifting the paradigm from the traditional content-based approach to curriculum design and developments to an OBE approach, a number of aspects of teaching and learning are moving along a continuum. We are moving towards developmental learning, towards a focus on outcomes rather than input and we are moving towards collaborative learning rather than teacher directed learning. All these things are happening at a similar time; intertwining (Grundy and Bonser 1997:4).

The chart below identifies some of the significant differences between learning described in terms of outcomes and learning described in terms of objectives (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training 1995:23):

Objectives

- focus on what the teacher will do
- describe the intent of teaching
- focus on opportunities provided for learning
- involve estimating the amount that can be learned in a given period of time

Outcomes

- focus on what the learner will do
- describe the results of learning
- emphasise how learning is used, especially how it can be applied in new areas
- require flexible allocation of time

In chapter 4 the two approaches to curriculum design and implementation will be evaluated in the light of the guidelines for a relevant curriculum proposed in chapter 2.

CHAPTER 4

CURRICULUM EVALUATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of evaluating the two approaches to curriculum design and development discussed in the previous chapter, is to ascertain whether the move to an outcomes-based approach does in fact raise the level of relevance of the curriculum. Does the OBE approach in fact reflect the characteristics of a relevant curriculum which have been discussed? In this chapter the researcher will attempt to weigh the two models up against the guidelines proposed in chapter 2 to determine how they measure up. The guidelines suggested previously are:

A relevant curriculum must

- be dynamic and true to reality;
- focus on the needs of each learner;
- reflect the context within which learning takes place; and
- allow for stakeholder participation and be acceptable to its users.

4.2 IS THE CURRICULUM DYNAMIC AND TRUE TO REALITY ?

Many educationists believe that the traditional curriculum has outlived its usefulness and is not true to reality. According to Brady (1996:250) there are countless matters which learners must understand to live sensibly and successfully that the traditional school curriculum ignores.

An investigation into the traditional content-based curriculum, e.g. the Zais model, reveals a fixed structure, a 'plan' for educating learners which is designed prior to the learning taking place. The elements of the curriculum, i.e. the aims, goals and objectives, the content and activities and the evaluation methods to be used, rest firmly on the philosophical assumptions of the curriculum designers. These assumptions are fixed. They relate to their perception of what the good life is and what learners should know to lead such a life. The purpose of the curriculum, as mentioned in the relevant section is to perpetuate society - this means to maintain the status quo, not to reflect changes in society. In a multi-cultural society such as South Africa and for that matter in any

society where people hold different world views, such an approach cannot be true to life and to the reality of all who are part of that society. Also a curriculum designed in this way, will not be dynamic as the assumptions of the curriculum designers do not change with the changing world. The curriculum cannot, therefore, be sensitive to changes in the world outside.

Furthermore, to be true to reality, the curriculum must reflect life as it is lived - an integrated whole. In traditional schooling, fields of study are not combined to give a sense of the inter-relatedness of everything in the real world.

In an outcomes-based approach, the purpose of the curriculum is not to perpetuate society but to provide learners with the knowledge, skills and attitudes which they will need to fulfil their roles in the adult world. Clearly then, the curriculum will have to be designed in such a way that it can change together with the world for which learners have to be prepared. The curriculum in this instance is not a comprehensive 'plan' which learners must absorb, rather it is a framework of the skills, knowledge and attitudes which stakeholders in education have agreed-upon are important in this day and age, but it also leaves room for refinement and amendment in the learning environment. The means of achieving the outcomes are not predetermined; they can be adapted to the circumstances within which the learning takes place and to the reality of the learners involved in the learning process.

As was discussed previously, the new approach reflects an integrated approach, not only to education and training which was separated in the past, but also attempts to present the learner with a view of reality which reflects the inter-relatedness of all aspects of life.

4.3 DOES THE CURRICULUM FOCUS ON THE NEEDS OF THE LEARNERS ?

The question to ask with regard to the traditional curriculum would be: For whom was the syllabus and examination devised? A study of the content-based curricula makes it difficult to grasp who the learner was supposed to have been. Such a learner does not seem to exist and the curricula and examinations in this approach seem to be designed for mythical pupils (Stone 1989:24). Although learners learn to read and write and also learn some useful concepts and skills, anything relating to real life is either accidentally learnt, or part of the non-examinable

curriculum, or is learned outside of and despite schools (Stone 1989:24). The efficiency of the learning process is severely hampered by the constraints of the syllabus and examinations.

John Carroll, one of the founders of the outcomes-based approach, emphasises the fact that in school traditionally all children were given the same amount of time, regardless of what their specific abilities were and furthermore that learning results at every school were variable (Spady 1993:12). Some learners were expected to achieve high levels of success, whereas a low level of achievement was expected from others. The variation in level of achievement was attributed to the intelligence of the learner.

The main difference between traditional curricula and the learner-centred approach, represented by the outcomes-based approach, is that in the latter key decisions with regard to the curriculum (i.e. what will be taught, when it will be taught and how it will be assessed), is made with reference to the learner - that is, the learner is the focus as compared to the traditional curricula which centre around predetermined content. Information about the learners is at the centre of answers to the above questions (Nunan 1993:1). Other aspects which distinguish the traditional curriculum from the curriculum focused on the learner, are that in the latter we find (Nunan 1993:1):

- * an emphasis on the involvement and participation of learners in planning learning experiences;
- * a focus on the use of authentic materials to support learning experiences; and
- * the incorporation of skills on learning how to learn into the curriculum. Learners are gradually assisted in mastering the skills, knowledge and attitudes which are basic to making informed decisions about what and how they need to learn.

The approach to oral work in language teaching, for example, in the traditional curriculum, illustrates its shortcomings with regard to learner-centredness. Although learners might feel secure in a more structured environment, there is little involvement in the discussion process. Learners do not choose the topic or strategy and are not involved in assessing themselves or their peers. Learners might not see participation as meaningful. This severely limits their motivation and engagement with the task. Because the topic is imposed, defined and structured by the teacher, the critical factors of personal involvement and unpredictability are not evident (Green, Christopher and Lam 1997:136). The oral practice is therefore controlled in nature and based on role play, but it mostly ignores the experiences, values and existing knowledge that the learners

bring to the experience. The emphasis of this approach is on linguistic aspects and it therefore attaches little importance to the cognitive and interpersonal factors which form part of meaningful communication (Green et al. 1997:136).

Although enlightened teachers often agree with a learner-centred approach to learning, they plan in a teacher-centred way (Stone 1990:49). The teacher is not a facilitator of learning, providing learners with relevant learning experiences, but a mere imparter of knowledge. The curriculum is 'right answer' oriented, stressing mnemonic and rote tasks. Meaningful, relevant learning rarely takes place, with teachers predominantly talking and learners mostly responding to teachers. The workbook and text are the main sources of instruction; rarely are learners permitted to talk to each other, and rarely do they become involved in problem solving or creative activities (Ornstein 1989:23). In this regard one of the main challenges is changing the mindset of teachers, especially in Afrikaans-speaking schools where the belief still seems to be that a 'quiet' class is a 'good' class.

A needs analysis with regard to English completed by learners in Barcelona showed that video, computer and conversation were the favoured methods of working, with group work the preferred dynamic (Seedhouse 1995:60). This seems to suggest that the learners strongly disfavoured traditional learning activities and wanted to move away from teacher-fronted activities.

Ornstein (1989:23) makes the case for moving to an emphasis on *process* instead of *products*. Process here is concerned with how learners learn and how teachers teach and focuses on synthesis, wholeness, coherence and personal meaning. These are aspects considered in an outcomes-based approach to teaching and learning. The traditional emphasis on products, however, focuses on trivial content, mechanic and drill-like activities, right-answer thinking and mastery of low-level skills and content.

Boylan (1996:60), in referring to the science curriculum profiles for Australian schools, points out that part of the curriculum change implicit in this approach is a focus on what learners know and can do. With this as the starting point, teachers are able to meet the needs and interests of learners by finding out which topics in science, for example, learners find interesting. The science programme can then be constructed in a manner which brings together the topics of interest to the learner and the demands of the national curriculum. The ultimate goal would be to provide an

integrated science programme that meets the needs of all learners (particularly in Boylan's study those of both boys and girls) while acknowledging differences.

Essential elements in acknowledging learning differences and in catering for all learners in the development of a learning programme include (Boylan 1996:61):

- * relevance to everyday situations (e.g. understanding and critically evaluating television programmes or newspaper and magazine articles, making enquiries, etc.);
- * related careers;
- * teacher expertise in the selection of appropriate breadth of content;
- * the variety of teaching strategies to be used;
- * the modes of assessment to be used that accurately reflect the learning outcomes; and
- * the reporting on the above.

Criticism levelled at the outcomes-based approach centres around the perception that individualised progress and self-pacing may not lead to optimal learning (Glatthorn 1993:356). Research seems to indicate that such an individualised approach presents problems in the school scenario and might minimise the use of co-operative learning. The outcomes-based approach does, however, propose a wide variety of learning and teaching strategies which includes co-operative learning.

4.4 DOES THE CURRICULUM REFLECT THE CONTEXT WITHIN WHICH THE LEARNING TAKES PLACE ?

As mentioned previously, one of the reasons why schooling as we know it has been seen to be irrelevant to learners, is the fact that bodies of knowledge are organised into rigid subjects or fields of study, e.g. language, history and biology. In the real world, i.e. the context within which and for which the learning takes place, however, everything is related. Learners learn a little of this subject and a little of that, but never how it fits together (Brady 1996:250).

Many teachers have been frustrated by this problem and have deliberately attempted to connect subjects. The 'language-across-the-curriculum' initiatives are examples of teachers' attempts to reflect the real world in the classroom and to get learners to understand that language is universal

and that language learning relates to all spheres of life and thus to all subjects taught at school. Experience has shown, however, that initiatives like these were mostly superficial and were not embraced by all teachers and therefore did not succeed. Due to the traditional approach of teaching subjects in isolation, traditional education is not only irrelevant to much of present human experience but it actively creates problems because it displays reality to learners in isolated bits and pieces, denying the essential 'oneness of things' (Brady 1996:254).

The outcomes-based approach as described by Spady represents an extreme version of curriculum integration. Research generally supports the effectiveness of curriculum integration and this approach will likely be more appealing to children. Critics warn, however, that many of these integrated units only represent badly designed collections of activities and do not contain enough in-depth knowledge to support the acquisition of problem-solving skills (Glatthorn 1993:360).

The main shortcoming of traditional grammar materials such as text books, can also be ascribed to a lack of context (Petrovitz 1997:202). Many materials have purported to promote aspects of language teaching by using words such as 'communication', 'use' and 'context' and encouraging a more discourse-oriented approach. Mostly these materials have repeated many past errors with regard to grammar, for example. Petrovitz (1997:206) calls for the use of contextualised materials and other strategies for teaching grammar to their greatest advantage.

Traditional content prescribed for learners in the South African context does not reflect the 'target speech community' for which learners need to be prepared. According to Seedhouse (1995:61) learners do not engage in course materials which have no obvious relation to the speech community where their participation will be required. Examples of these include the literary works prescribed for English Second language learners, e.g. dramas by Shakespeare and poems by poets such as Wordsworth. Although these works represent examples of quality literature, they reflect the British target community and hold no direct relevance for South African learners. The main aim of the approach suggested by Seedhouse (1995:62) is to facilitate the learners' integration into their target speech community. This aim needs to be clear and acceptable to the learners at the onset of the learning experience.

Exit outcomes formulated by, for example, the Arlington Heights (Illinois) school district in America are derived from an analysis of the skills and knowledge that learners will need to lead

successful lives in the year 2000 (Glatthorn 1993:358). Examples are problem-solving skills and skills in using technology as a tool for learning. In the outcomes-based approach this is seen to be the only legitimate basis for developing curriculum.

4.5 DOES THE CURRICULUM ALLOW FOR STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION ?

Previously the influence of particular groups who had a stake in education was severely limited and in a new dispensation their roles need to be clearly defined and their importance emphasised (Stone 1990:51). Active participation by role-players such as organised business and the employer sector will be one way of ensuring that useful training and education takes place (Stone 1990:51). The business of education is the concern of everyone (Stone 1991:10).

Clark (in Nunan 1989:23) points out that education is about people and the ultimate aim is to harness and forge together the diverse strengths, energies and personalities of those involved. This is only possible where a democratic framework of shared responsibility between all the interested parties, i.e. teachers, learners, researchers, curriculum experts and programme managers and administrators exists, rather than a simple hierarchical structure. The sort of accountability that seems to work best in curriculum renewal is not managerial, but rather one of mutual responsibility (Nunan 1989:23).

Where the traditional curriculum was predetermined and the teacher and learner equally uninvolved with its design and development, the outcomes-based curriculum allows for the refinement of the learning experience to be planned in the learning environment. Reports on the curriculum development process by school districts in the USA using the OBE approach, indicate significant teacher involvement in the initial curriculum process (Glatthorn 1993:362). Teachers participate in reviewing the exit outcomes, contribute to the process of allocating outcomes to programmes, collaborate in identifying programme outcomes and actively participate in developing learning units. This evidence indicates that teachers who have come to terms with the new approach generally support it.

The involvement of teachers, parents, learners and stakeholders in the community, enhances the legitimacy of the curriculum, making it acceptable to all its users, which are not just limited to the teachers and learners. Involvement suggests ownership and taking responsibility for the learning

which takes place within the community. This approach will result in the development and implementation of an evolving curriculum, which is future-oriented and a community working towards the establishment of a total learning community which will include teachers, learners, parents, business, education authorities and the larger community. In this way the curriculum will move closer to the life world of the learners.

4.6 SYNTHESIS

Stone (1989:23) poses the following questions in relation to the traditional content-based curriculum still in use in South Africa:

- * In what ways does the National Core Curriculum and the way in which it is examined take account of learner differences by, e.g. allowing for a variety of teaching styles or encouraging a wide range of approaches to a subject on the part of the learner?
- * Can a teacher focus mainly on the principles of a subject rather than on the factual content?
- * Are concepts and ideas and the application of information critically and analytically considered to be a primary concern?
- * Is the process of learning and understanding considered to be more important than merely memorising factual detail?

Stone adds his voice to the large number of people involved in education who believe that the answers to each of the above questions are a resounding 'no'. The traditional curriculum does not, therefore, adhere to the guidelines for a relevant curriculum proposed in this study.

The OBE approach to curriculum attempts to create a curriculum which is grounded firmly in real life - taking into consideration the need for constant change in order to remain relevant within the context of a changing world. The needs of the learner are central to planning and implementing the curriculum. The diversity which the learner brings to the learning environment is recognised and valued. The principles which direct this approach reflect the particular context within South Africa, but also relate to the wider context within which the learner has to cope after leaving school. Unlike the traditional curriculum where content was predetermined and prescribed by curriculum experts, the OBE approach is a co-operative venture which includes all those who have a stake in education.

The conclusion is that outcomes-based education, if handled responsibly, can result in a curriculum which will be relevant to the world of the learners, during and after their learning experiences.

CHAPTER 5

LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will provide a brief discussion on

- the traditional English Second Language curriculum which has been followed in South African schools up to this time and is currently being phased out;
- the new outcomes-based approach to language teaching and learning which has been developed and is currently being phased in; and
- the Australian outcomes-based approach to English language teaching and learning.

The purpose of this discussion is to illustrate how the traditional approach differs from the outcomes-based approaches and how the latter cater for the principle of relevance as discussed in chapter 2.

The outcomes-based curriculum taught in Australian schools is supported by an English curriculum for learners who do not have English as a home language. These learners offer both the second language curriculum and the English language curriculum until such time as they have become sufficiently proficient in English to do without the supporting lessons.

At first glance it may not seem relevant to compare the South African and the Australian systems, as South Africa boasts a uniquely multi-lingual society and Australia a more homogeneous one. The vast number of foreign learners within Australian schools, however, belie the perception that this is a homogeneous group of people with one main home language. These 'foreign' learners are supported in their learning and the aim is to assimilate them into the English-speaking majority of learners. As discussed in chapter 1, the need for being proficient in English as a citizen of South Africa, necessitates the same measures to be taken and it is the duty of those who plan and implement the curriculum to provide learners with the best possible opportunity for learning the language well.

5.2 THE TRADITIONAL ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE CURRICULUM

5.2.1 Curriculum objective

The objective of the English Second Language curriculum is 'communicative competence'. According to Hymes (in Richards 1991:145) communicative competence as a curriculum objective, is based on a sociolinguistic perspective of language study. Hymes concludes that in addition to our knowledge of rules of grammar, knowing a language entails being able to use it for social and communicative interaction, that is, "knowing when it is appropriate to particular speech events, which forms of address are to be used, to whom and in which situations, and how such speech acts as greetings, invitations and compliments are to be given, interpreted and responded to" (Wolfson in Richards 1991:145).

Richards (1991:88) concludes that communicative competence includes knowledge of different strategies or communicative styles according to the situation, the task, and the roles of the participants. It refers to "knowledge both of rules of grammar, vocabulary, and semantics, and rules of speaking - the patterns of sociolinguistic behaviour of the speech community" (Hymes in Richards 1991:145).

5.2.2 Learning content and learning activities

In the traditional approach to curriculum design, curriculum planners need to plan learning content and activities which will realise the objective of 'communicative competence'. They must endeavour to answer the question: What is it that should be taught and learnt if a learner with a home language other than English is to be communicatively competent in English? (Munby 1989:1).

Traditionally the required content was outlined by the curriculum makers and a framework was designed within which teachers had to operate. This framework was called a core syllabus and formed the basis for the syllabi prescribed in the various provinces in the country.

Required content in all areas of human knowledge is, according to Trump and Miller (1979:27), what everyone in the society needs to know "to live adequately". This view clearly indicates that

the curriculum content and activities will reflect that which the curriculum planners deem to be necessary for 'living adequately'. Their views form the basis for planning the curriculum and as has been outlined in chapter 1, the multi-faceted society within which education takes place is not reflected in such an approach. It is here where the 'relevance gap' starts - at the disjuncture between what the planners believe to be necessary learning and the variety of learners for whom the learning is intended and also the differences in context within which the learning will take place.

5.2.3 Evaluation

As has been stated previously, a speaker's communicative competence comprises both contextual and linguistic competencies. Cooper states that as existing testing frameworks concentrate on linguistic competence only, they do not assess a person's communicative ability (Munby 1989:17). Knowledge of the target language may not be sufficient for effective communication to take place in that language, and the ability to predict communicative competence depends upon the test content being based upon the specific communication requirements of the particular category of learner. Second language speakers may also find themselves in various social situations which require more than one variety of the language. They will need to select appropriately from what is referred to as a 'linguistic repertoire'. The tests which are conducted will have to reflect this linguistic differentiation.

Jakobovits (in Munby 1989:19) points out that performance in language testing and the ability to make use of the language for communicative purposes, are not necessarily related, indicating that the former is not a good measure of the latter.

The evaluation methods, mainly written tests and examinations, have been found to be very unsatisfactory as a means of assessing the communicative competence of a learner as they do not reflect an ongoing assessment of the progress that the learner is making in becoming proficient in the language in everyday situations.

5.3 MOVING TO AN OUTCOMES-BASED APPROACH TO LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

5.3.1 Introduction

As mentioned in paragraph 3.4.8.2, eight areas of learning have been identified in the outcomes-based curriculum developed for South African schools, of which the one entitled: Language, Literacy and Communication, is relevant to this study. This area of learning is not specific to English teaching and learning only, but relates to all language teaching and learning at all levels.

Language, literacy and communication are seen to be intrinsic to human development and central to lifelong learning. The rationale for including this area of learning in the curriculum, is based on the view that language (this includes Sign language and any other alternative methods of communication) and language learning empower people to (Department of Education 1997:LLC-2):

- make meaning;
- negotiate meaning and understanding;
- access education;
- access information and literacies;
- think and express their thoughts and emotions logically, critically and creatively;
- respond with empathy to the thoughts and emotions of others;
- interact and participate socially, politically, economically, culturally and spiritually;
- understand the relationship between language and power, and influence relationships through this understanding;
- develop and reflect critically on values and attitudes;
- communicate in different contexts by using a range of registers and language varieties; and
- use standard forms of language where appropriate.

This rationale echoes the first guideline for a relevant curriculum suggested in chapter 2, namely that the learner is at the centre of the teaching/learning endeavour. The needs of the learner are addressed within this rationale in that the learning of a language serves to assist the learner to cope in all aspects of life, establishing relationships, engaging with others, integrating new knowledge

into existing knowledge and obtaining and conveying ideas and information (Department of Education 1997:LLC-6).

The advancement of multi-lingualism is a key feature of this learning area and is based on the South African Constitution, which advocates a policy of multi-lingualism and the Language in Education Policy which subscribes to the additive multi-lingualism model. Multi-lingualism is seen as a major resource which affords learners the opportunity to develop and value (Department of Education 1997:LLC-2):

- their home language, cultures and literacies;
- other languages, cultures and literacies in this multi-cultural country and in international contexts; and
- a shared understanding of a common South African culture.

The above principle clearly reflects an adherence to the guideline for a relevant curriculum suggested in chapter 2, namely that a relevant curriculum takes cognisance of the context within which the learning takes place and for which the learner needs to be prepared. In this case, the South African, as well as the international context, is taken into consideration.

5.3.2 Specific outcomes

The function of the outcomes in this area of learning is to emphasise a certain feature of language activity (Department of Education 1997:LLC-6). The particular feature will then be exemplified in the context of an integrated set of language activities. The outcome and its related assessment criteria and range statements therefore, form a unit and cannot be viewed in isolation. Furthermore, certain outcomes could be selected and clustered to serve as the main focus of a learning programme depending on the needs of a specific group of learners. Once again it is clear that this approach allows for flexibility with regard to differences in learner needs and capabilities.

The specific outcomes for this learning area are (Department of Education 1997:LLC-3):

- 1 Learners make and negotiate meaning and understanding.
- 2 Learners show critical awareness of language usage.
- 3 Learners respond to the aesthetic, affective, cultural and social values in texts.

- 4 Learners access, process and use information from a variety of sources and situations.
- 5 Learners understand, know and apply language structures and conventions in context.
- 6 Learners use language for learning.
- 7 Learners use appropriate communication strategies for specific purposes and situations.

These outcomes are achieved through the integrated use of listening, observing, speaking, signing, reading and writing skills.

5.3.3 The development of learning programmes

The following elements are incorporated into the development of a learning programme (Department of Education 1997:LLC-7):

- A Specific Outcomes
- B Assessment Criteria related to Specific Outcomes
- C Range Statements
- D Listening, Observing, Speaking, Signing, Reading and Writing Skills underpinning all outcomes
- E Performance indicators

By incorporating E into a learning programme, differentiation can be achieved, based on the needs of the learners. So, for example, although all the specific outcomes will be achieved by all learners, the nature of the achievement in main language learning programmes will differ from that in additional language learning programmes. If and when necessary, learners with special needs could then be afforded the opportunity to demonstrate achievement of outcomes through appropriate alternative skills or methods of communication.

5.3.4 Assessment

In line with this new approach to teaching and learning, a new system of learner assessment should support the learning programmes. Such a system must provide facilitators with continuous and constructive information about learner performance and progress in relation to the assessment criteria for each specific outcome and in this way must assist facilitators in drawing up learning programmes which provide for learner needs.

The assessment system which underpins this approach to teaching and learning, is based on the principles that assessment should contribute to (Department of Education 1997:LLC-8):

- A Improving the quality of education and training
- B Improving the *relevance* of education and training
- C Developing national standardisation throughout education and training
- D Various components of assessment being identified on a continuum with particular skills being assessed in the workplace and competences such as underpinning knowledge and understanding
- E The basic assessment principles (criteria) are:
 - 1 Validity
 - 2 Reliability
 - 3 Flexibility
 - 4 Fairness
 - 5 A holistic approach to assessment
- F The process of assessment based on outcomes, unit standards and moderation
- G Planning the assessment system at all levels; transfer of assessment results from one level to another; from one province to another; from one school to another
- H Procedures such as
 - 1 Literature studies/research
 - 2 Time-table implications
 - 3 Preparing for assessment
 - 4 Participation of and informing stakeholders
- I Carrying out the assessment
- J Selecting assessment procedures

Different strategies for assessment can be applied, depending on the learner's needs, the type of skill, knowledge or attitude which needs to be assessed and the purpose of the assessment. Possible examples are: criterion-referencing, continuous assessment, formative and summative assessment, subjective or objective assessment, self assessment or assessment by others. Assessment is carried out by gathering evidence as indicated by the performance indicators in relation to the assessment criteria and this data is then analysed and evaluated.

5.3.5 Reporting on learner progress

As this new system needs to inform parents and learners on how they are progressing with regard to the achievement of outcomes, a comprehensive recording mechanism needs to be devised. A form should be developed which should be anecdotal and diagnostic in nature, indicating the learner's progress towards the eventual achievement of the outcomes.

5.3.6 Format of the specific outcomes, range statements, assessment criteria and performance indicators

The format of these different aspects of the specific outcomes are included in the Department of Education's policy document (1997) and serve as a guideline to learning programme developers and teachers. An example of one of the outcomes for the Learning Area: Language, Literacy and Communication, in the Senior Phase of schooling, along with the relevant performance indicators and range statements, is given below (Department of Education 1997:LLC:23-25):

SO3 Learners respond to the aesthetic, affective, cultural and social values in texts
--

The aim of this outcome is to develop a learner's appreciation, use and creation of text as an artistic expression of thoughts, feelings, attitudes and values through exposure to a wide range of genres. The development of learners' listening, reading and viewing skills to recognise and use literary devices enriches the quality of their own language use and lives.

RANGE STATEMENT

At this level, learners engage with a wide range of texts in a variety of contexts. The emphasis in terms of content is on:

- the expression of stylistic devices (e.g. extended metaphor) in all kinds of texts.
- the study of literary, visual, sign, auditory and multi-media texts.

The emphasis in terms of process is on the enriching effect of texts in relation to:

- knowledge (e.g. related to history, social conditions, human experiences, human rights)
- aesthetics (e.g. appreciation of the artistic elements)
- relationships (e.g. social sensibility, power relations)
- emotions (e.g. sympathy, empathy, identification, rejection).

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	LEVELS OF COMPLEXITY
---	-----------------------------

All outcomes can be achieved by attending to the descriptions in column 1 below, but enrichment steps are recommended wherever possible.

For this outcome the levels of complexity and variety will be obtained by using a wide range of texts which could include anything from mini-texts and advertisements to novels and full-length films.

1. Responses to the artistic effects of texts are demonstrated

PI

Responses to the artistic and aesthetic effects of texts will be demonstrated when learners are able to identify and talk about a wide range of written, visual and auditory genres.

2. Literary effects of texts are identified, analysed and described

PI

The ability to identify, analyse and describe the literary effects of texts will be evident when:

- learners are able to discover and describe the characteristics of certain genres
- learners are able to compare examples to discover varieties within a genre
- learners uncover important aspects of style and move towards the ability to discern and describe more subtle features

3. Opinions on texts are given and justified

PI

This will be evident when learners are able to examine for example those aspects of text which extend awareness (e.g. of relationships, cause and effect)

4. Opinions are reviewed in relation to the opinions of others

PI

This will be evident when learners listen to others and meaning is negotiated

5. Texts are critically evaluated

- Strong focus on a few genres (e.g. song/poetry, film, short stories, folklore, plays, novels - of acceptable literary merit)

- Focus is increasingly on main features-structure, aspects of style, literal/figurative, elegance of expression

- Learners develop vocabulary to support impressions:

- ⇒ setting
- ⇒ contrasts
- ⇒ ethos
- ⇒ metaphors
- ⇒ mood
- ⇒ milieu
- ⇒ ellipses
- ⇒ tone, etc.

- Develop sympathy, empathy, awareness of relevant history, social conditions, human rights and experiences

- Negative emotions and how they are dealt with

- Group work: "what do you think?"
- Listening skills developed

<p>PI This will be evident when all dimensions of text and language, including the opinions of others, are taken into account</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group report • Consensus • Collaborative project • Series of projects
--	--

SO - Specific Outcome
PI - Performance Indicator

5.4 ENGLISH FOR AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS

5.4.1 Background

In 1989 a major national education initiative was launched in Australia to produce statements and profiles in eight broad areas of learning, namely:

The arts	English
Health and physical education	Languages other than English
Mathematics	Science
Studies of society and environment	Technology

This initiative, undertaken at the direction of the Australian Education Council (AEC), is believed to represent the most significant collaborative development project in the history of Australian education (Australian Education Council. A statement on English for Australian schools. 1994:iii).

The development of the statements and profiles was based on the *Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in Australia* which were ratified by the Australian Education Council at the Hobart Conference in 1989. These national goals are: (Australian Education Council. A statement on English for Australian schools. Appendix 2, 1994:46-7)

1. To provide an excellent education for all young people, being one which develops their talents and capacities to full potential, and is relevant to the social, cultural and economic needs of the nation.
2. To enable all students to achieve high standards of learning and to develop self-confidence, optimism, high self-esteem, respect for others, and achievement of personal excellence.

3. To promote equality of educational opportunities, and to provide for groups with special learning requirements.
4. To respond to the current and emerging economic and social needs of the nation, and to provide those skills which will allow students maximum flexibility and adaptability in their future employment and other aspects of life.
5. To provide a foundation for further education and training, in terms of knowledge, skills, respect for learning and positive attitudes for life-long education.
6. To develop in students:
 - * skills of English literacy, including skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing
 - * skills of numeracy, and other mathematical skills
 - * skills of analysis and problem-solving
 - * skills of information-processing and computing
 - * an understanding of the role of science and technology in society, together with scientific and technological skills
 - * a knowledge and appreciation of Australia's historic and geographic context
 - * a knowledge of languages other than English
 - * an appreciation and understanding of, and confidence to participate in, the creative arts
 - * an understanding of and concern for balanced development of the global environment and
 - * a capacity to exercise judgement in matters of morality, ethics and social justice.
7. To develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and values which will enable students to participate as active and informed citizens in the democratic Australian society within an international context.
8. To provide students with an understanding of and respect for the Australian cultural heritage including the particular cultural background of Aboriginal and ethnic groups, and for other cultures.

9. To provide for the physical development and personal health and fitness of students, and for the creative use of leisure time.
10. To provide appropriate career education and knowledge of the world of work, including an understanding of the nature and place of work in the Australian society.

The goals above are generic and inform all the identified areas of learning. They therefore serve the same purpose as the critical cross-field outcomes and the accompanying guidelines which have been developed for teaching and learning in the South African scenario (refer to par. 3.4.8.1). So, for example, the critical outcome : Communicate effectively using visual, mathematical and/or language skills in the modes of oral and/or written presentation (critical cross-field outcome no. 5), is reflected in such goals as : To develop in students : skills of English literacy, numeracy, information processing and computing and a knowledge of languages other than English (included in goal no. 6).

The Australian statements provide a framework for curriculum development in each area of learning - defining the area, outlining its essential elements, showing what is distinctive about it and describing a sequence for developing knowledge and skills.

The real substance of the framework lies in the profiles which describe outcomes covering eight levels for each learning area (Forster 1995:39). The outcomes are intended to encompass the compulsory years of schooling (i.e. years 1 - 10), starting from year one. The purpose of the profiles is (a) to help teaching and learning and (b) to provide a framework for reporting learner achievement. They include pointers and samplers of learners' work, to assist teachers in determining whether a child has achieved an outcome (Forster 1995:39). To facilitate teachers' use of the profiles for reporting purposes, the profiles adopt the language modes (i.e. speaking and listening, reading and viewing, and writing) as their organising principle.

The profiles and statements are linked as the profiles show the typical progression in achieving learning outcomes, while the statements are a framework of what might be taught to achieve these outcomes.

The English statement “seeks to promote a more consistent approach to the development of English curricula throughout Australia and to achieve a better co-ordinated and integrated system of literacy provision for all children” (Department of Employment, Education and Training 1991, *Australia’s Language, The Australian Language and Literacy Policy*, AGPS, Canberra, p. iv). This statement takes into account the full range of learners in Australian schools. In the case of learners of English who do not have English as a home language, this statement is used with the national English Second Language Scales - a programme which supports the learners’ mastery of the language.

The English statement serves as a resource for curriculum developers. It is designed for education systems to use in the context of their own policies and guidelines. Furthermore the statement can be used for designing courses which prepare or develop teachers of English. The statement is a firm basis for developing a shared understanding between parents and teachers about learner achievement of the goals and outcomes of the learning area.

This approach recognises and incorporates the parents’ experience as the learners’ first and primary educators. This co-operative process acknowledges the importance of parents in the development of positive student attitudes and values and emphasises the ability of parents to help students aspire to and achieve the best possible learning outcomes. In this way parents participate meaningfully in their children’s educational experience and play an important role in their learning experience.

5.4.2 English as an area of learning

English is defined as that area of the curriculum ‘where students study and use English language and literature (including literature translated into English)’ (Australian Education Council. A statement on English for Australian schools. 1994:3). The English curriculum encompasses such focus areas as Language Arts, English, English Language as well as a significant part of English as a second language (ESL).

The English curriculum aims to develop the following (Australian Education Council. A statement on English for Australian schools. 1994:3):

1. The ability to speak, listen, read, view and write with purpose, effect and confidence in a wide range of contexts.
2. A knowledge of the ways in which language varies according to context, purpose, audience and content, and the ability to apply knowledge.
3. A sound grasp of the linguistic structures and features of standard Australian English and the capacity to apply these, especially in writing.
4. A broader knowledge of a range of literature, including Australian literature, and a capacity to relate this literature to aspects of contemporary society and personal experience.
5. The capacity to discuss and analyse texts and language critically and with appreciation.
6. A knowledge of the ways in which textual interpretation and understanding may vary according to cultural, social and personal differences, and the capacity to develop reasoned arguments about interpretation and meaning.

The learning areas identified in the South African OBE system include a similar learning area to that described above, i.e. Language, Literacy and Communication (refer to par. 3.4.8.2). English language teaching and learning forms an integral part of this learning area. The aims set out above are furthermore reflected in the specific outcomes for the learning area : Language, Literacy and Communication (refer to par. 5.3.2). So, for example, the aim of developing the capacity to discuss and analyse texts and language critically and with appreciation (no. 5 above), is similar to the example of the specific outcome cited in par. 5.3.6, namely: Learners respond to the aesthetic, affective, cultural and social values in texts.

Throughout the Australian school curriculum there is recognition of the diverse sociocultural-cultural and language backgrounds of the learners. The emphasis is on recognising this diversity and the important role of language in the learners' educational achievements. The principle of multi-lingualism (refer to par. 5.3.1), which is a key feature of language learning in South Africa, echoes this recognition of learners' diverse language backgrounds and the importance of developing and valuing the language skills which learners bring to the learning environment. This approach is in line with the notion of a curriculum which is relevant, because it recognises and caters for learner differences.

5.4.3 The role of language

The statement emphasises the strong link between language and thought and states that as learners' conceptual range increases, so will their capacity to communicate effectively (Australian Education Council. A statement on English for Australian schools. 1994:4). Literacy is defined as the ability to read and use written information and to write appropriately in a range of contexts and involves the integration of speaking, listening and critical thinking with reading and writing (Australian Education Council. A statement on English for Australian schools. 1994:3). Literacy furthermore includes the cultural knowledge which enables a speaker, writer, reader or viewer to recognise and use language appropriate to different social situations. Literacy here also involves viewing.

Different types of literacy are recognised depending on the context to which they relate, e.g. report writing in the workplace as opposed to essay writing in school. Learners must be exposed to a wide variety of contexts within which they may be expected to demonstrate their literacy when they leave school. Teachers across the different areas of learning are responsible for developing the learners' literacy within the variety of contexts. It is clear that the context within which the learner will find him- or herself and for which they are being prepared is seen to be significant and the curriculum attempts to reflect the different contexts which are relevant to the learner or will be in future.

In the context of Curriculum 2005, the term *literacy* has also expanded to include several kinds of literacies. This reference to 'literacies' stresses the issue of access to the world and to knowledge through the development of multiple capacities within all learners to make sense of their worlds through whatever means they have, and not only through books and texts (Department of Education 1997:LLC-5). Examples of kinds of literacies would include:

- Cultural literacy: Cultural, social and ideological values that shape learners' reading of texts;
- Critical literacy: The ability to respond critically to the intentions, contents and possible effects of messages and texts on the reader;
- Visual literacy: The interpretation of images, signs, pictures and non-verbal (body) language, etc.;
- Media literacy: The reading of e.g. television and film as cultural messages;
- Numerical literacy: The ability to use and interpret numbers; and

Computer literacy: The ability to use and access information from computers (Department of Education 1997:LLC-5).

Standard Australian English is the national variety of English taught in Australian schools and is distinguished from other varieties of English by pronunciation and vocabulary. Teachers are responsible for teaching the forms and usages generally accepted in Australian English but the development of proficiency in the use of the variety is seen as an extension of, and an addition to, the learners' home language which might be of another variety.

5.4.4 Curriculum principles

The following principles can be deduced from the approach to English learning and teaching put forward in the Statement on English and form the basis of English language teaching:

- * The English curriculum builds upon the learners' language learning outside of school and recognises the experience and knowledge that the learner brings to the classroom. Effective teaching is based on what children already know and can do when they come to school. The knowledge and competence of learners, whatever their cultural backgrounds, is acknowledged, used and extended;
- * Language is best learnt in use and with the help of an effective teacher;
- * The curriculum seeks to provide equally for all students and aims at redressing inequalities relating to girls, students of Aboriginal, Torres Strait Island and non-English-speaking backgrounds, geographically isolated, students living in poverty and those with physical and intellectual disabilities (Australian Education Council. A statement on English for Australian schools. 1994:5).

These principles underline the curriculum's commitment to the learner in that it recognises learner diversity and aims at providing learners with equal opportunities for development and learning. The focus of the curriculum is clearly the learner and also reflects the different contexts within which the learners find themselves.

5.4.5 Key assumptions underlying the English profile

The following key assumptions underlie the English profile. It is assumed that: (Australian Education Council. 1994:3-4)

1. As students move through the years of schooling, their teachers ensure that the English curriculum provides them with learning tasks and activities involving the content described in the national statement on English. In particular, this includes at all levels:
 - * a broad and balanced range of texts as described in the national statement;
 - * a range of purposes and text types for using the English language. As students progress through the levels of achievement, this range should expand from the familiar to the unfamiliar, and from the simple to the complex;
 - * a range of audiences for using the English language. As students progress through the levels of achievement, this range should expand from familiar people to include more distant, formal, unknown and larger audiences.
2. The sociocultural and situational context in which English is used will always influence a student's performance of a particular learning task or activity. Teachers, therefore, need to make judgements about students' achievement over time and across a range of tasks and activities involving differing purposes, audiences and types of text.
3. Teachers make professional judgements about what is culturally appropriate and familiar content for the students in their classes.
4. Teachers provide students with guidance and support in their learning activities and tasks, and make judgements about students' levels of achievement as part of normal teaching and learning activities.
5. For instructional purposes, English teaching and learning programmes will usually integrate students' use of speaking, listening, reading, viewing and writing and give attention to each aspect of English described in the profile's sub-strands.

6. Students' experiences with using English and other languages beyond school are essential considerations for teachers when constructing teaching and learning programmes and in order to gain insight into students' abilities. The profile, however, focuses on outcomes and experiences typically available to all students within the classroom and school. Access to texts for study in English, particularly visual texts on film, television and video, will be provided to students in the classroom.
7. Teachers adopt sound pedagogical principles in their teaching. These principles are applicable to all areas of learning and are not, therefore, described separately for English.

Sound pedagogy includes particular attention to the following:

- a) Developing in students
 - * positive attitudes towards their learning of English
 - * confidence in themselves as users of English
 - * the ability to reflect on and evaluate their progress in learning and using English
 - * a sense of enjoyment and challenge in learning tasks.
 - b) Constructing teaching and learning programmes that recognise the learning needs of individual students and groups of students in order to make the learning outcomes described in the profile as achievable as possible by all students. This is particularly important for students recognised as having been disadvantaged by the Australian education system - girls, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island students, students poverty, students with disabilities, students from non-English-speaking backgrounds, and students in isolated situations.
8. Some words and phrases in the profile need to be interpreted to include students with disabilities or impairments.

The rationale for the Learning Area: Language, Literacy and Communication (refer to par. 5.3.1), reflects most of the assumptions outlined above. So, for example, it is stated that learners should be empowered through language learning, 'to communicate in different contexts by using a range of registers and language varieties'. This approach is echoed in the key assumption above that the socio-cultural and situational context in which English is used, will always influence a learner's performance of a task or activity and that teachers should therefore provide a wide range of tasks

and activities involving different purposes, audiences and types of texts. in this way learners will be able to understand and make meaning in a particular situation and respond appropriately.

It is clear that both the Australian and South African curricula focus on the learner; learner differences are acknowledged; the learner's contribution to the learning experience is recognised and valued; and assessment is ongoing, taking into account the socio-cultural and situational context within which the language is used. Also a broad range of texts are to be covered which will (a) provide a comprehensive frame of reference for learners for developing their language skills and (b) reflect the context within which the learning is taking place.

5.4.6 Elements of the statement and profile

The Statement includes the two strands of the English curriculum, namely : Texts and Language.

The Text strand indicates the range of texts that learners should study, write or make. The texts which are defined broadly as 'any communication, written, spoken or visual, involving language' must reflect:

- * Balance of content, complexity and intended audience;
- * The interest and values of both men and women;
- * The diversity of the Australian population; and
- * A range of forms and styles.

The range of texts should increase in conceptual, linguistic and cognitive complexity as the learners move through the bands of schooling (Australian Education Council. A Statement on English for Australian schools. 1994:6).

The Language strand sets out

- * what students should know about the structure and features of written, spoken and visual language and the ways in which the use of English varies according to situation and social or cultural context; and
- * the strategies learners need in order to understand and use language (Australian Education Council. A statement on English for Australian schools. 1994:10).

The two strands are described in terms of each of the four bands mentioned previously. In addition the bands each include a set of broad outcomes which should be achieved by the learner during or by the end of the band.

5.4.7 Assessment

The outcomes-based approach to teaching and learning is assessment driven. This aspect is discussed in greater detail here to illustrate how dramatically it differs from the traditional approach to evaluation.

In the OBE approach, assessment is an ongoing process which must provide facilitators (teachers) with constructive information on a continuous basis, as well as information about how learners are developing. In this way facilitators will be able to draw up learning programmes suited to the needs of each learner (refer to par. 5.3.4). It thus takes the form of developmental assessment, where assessment provides information on learner progress and areas where the learner might need additional support. The methods used for assessment must allow both the 'process' and the 'product' of learning to be assessed (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training 1995:21). This marks a move away from the traditional curriculum where evaluation was concerned mainly with assessing the product of the learning experience. An additional benefit of ongoing assessment conducted in this manner, is that when learners leave school, the records indicating learner progress should give a more accurate and comprehensive profile of the learner's educational level than the traditional single examination result (Pahad 1997:11).

This element of the curriculum was researched in great detail by Geoff Masters and Margaret Forster (1996), researchers at the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), in an attempt to support teachers in implementing the new outcomes-based curricula. A brief discussion of this approach to assessment is included here.

5.4.7.1 Developmental assessment

This is done by using **progress maps** which describe the nature of development or progress made in an area of learning. The progress maps provide a frame of reference for monitoring learner development and include a description of skills, understandings and knowledge in the sequence in

which they typically develop. They therefore represent a picture of what it means to improve in an area of learning and form the first step in implementing developmental assessment.

The order of learning outcomes on a progress map reflect what can be seen as a natural or inevitable developmental order, e.g. all children develop an understanding that spoken language can be represented using marks on paper before they understand the meanings of particular written words.

The intention in developmental assessment is to obtain an estimate of a learner's current location on the progress map as a guide to the kinds of learning experiences likely to be most useful at that stage in the learner's learning and as a basis for monitoring growth over a period of time. Diagram 5.1 represents an example of a progress map in language teaching.

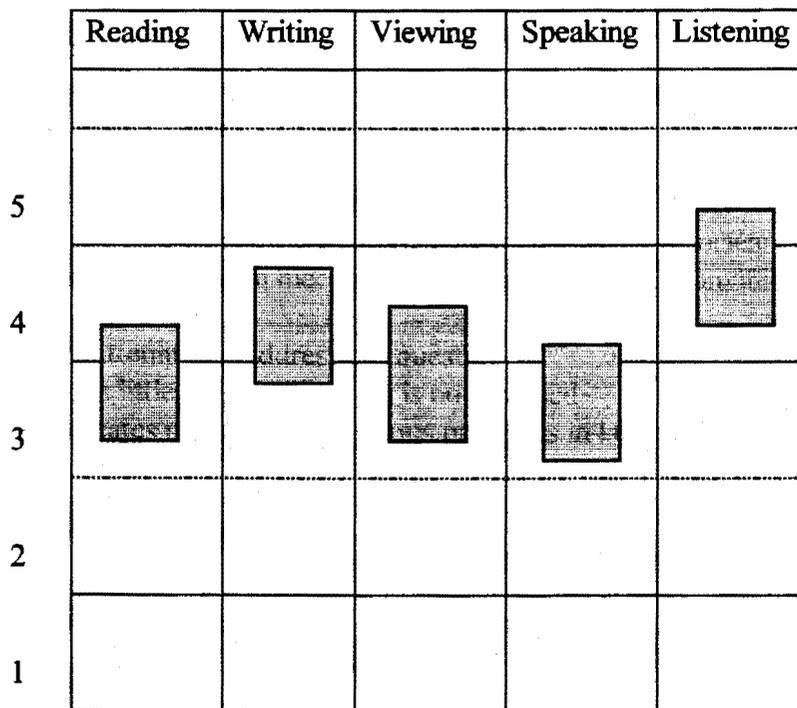


Diagram 5.1: Display of one student's estimated levels of achievement on five language proficiency progress maps (Masters and Forster 1996:3)

This feature of developmental assessment distinguishes it from other forms of assessment which do not monitor progress against described continua (Masters and Forster 1996:3). If the purpose of an assessment activity is to establish whether or not the learner has satisfactorily completed a set

of assigned tasks, if the purpose is only to rank learners so that some can be admitted to an educational course or to be offered a scholarship, or if the result of an assessment is an interpreted score or grade, then that does not constitute developmental assessment.

The second step in implementing developmental assessment is **collecting evidence**. The aim of collecting evidence is to estimate the learner's location on a progress map.

Records of observations provide the evidence needed to estimate learners' levels of attainment on a map (Masters and Forster 1996:3). The larger the number of relevant observations, the more dependable the conclusions regarding the learner's current level of attainment will be a requirement of these observations is that they be *relevant* with regard to

- the evidence about the area of learning to be assessed; and
- the learning outcomes identified on a progress map.

Unless observations are relevant, conclusions based on those observations will not be valid (Masters and Forster 1996:3).

Examples of evidence required for specific observations could include, e.g.

- skills in e.g. writing a report or collecting and analysing information may be best assessed in the context of an assigned project;
- the ability to write for a range of audiences and purposes could be assessed by observing a collection of learners' writings collected over time in the form of a portfolio;
- the ability to speak a second language or to co-operate with others as a member of a team may best be assessed by observing learner performances;
- skills in making items of food, wood or textiles may be assessed by observing the products of learners' work; and
- the learner's mastery of a body of knowledge and to apply procedures may be most efficiently assessed through written exercises or tests.

Developmental assessment uses all these and other methods of observation. Each method can be used informally as part of the teaching and learning process in class or where high levels of

reliability and comparability are important as a basis for developing more structured assessment tasks and activities.

The contexts within which learners are observed should, wherever possible, be meaningful to learners and interesting in their own right and should provide for learners to be creative in solving problems. This will underline the principle of relevance to the context within which the learning is taking place. The methods of assessment used by the teacher should also take into account the individual needs and abilities of all learners, e.g. culture, gender and home language.

An important aspect of collecting evidence is the systematic recording of observations and judgements by the teachers. This can take many forms.

Day-to-day observations must be recorded as they provide valuable information which can be included in the learner's record sheet at the end of a term or year. Apart from these observations made by the teacher, information of learner progress is obtained through assignments such as writing tasks, projects, presentations, portfolio entries, classroom exercises and tests.

These records can simply indicate whether the learner has attained a set outcome or can represent a more detailed analysis of the learner's level of understanding of certain work. Teachers can also record ratings of learners' work by judging certain aspects ('analytic' rating) or by rating it overall or holistically. Developmental assessment supports methods of reporting which are more informative than raw test scores or scores that show only where individuals stand in relation to other students (Masters and Forster 1996:8). A variety of graphical and descriptive reporting methods have been proposed for use in developmental assessment.

The third step in developmental assessment is to use the collected evidence to draw **conclusions** about the learner's current location on a progress map. This estimate of learner progress must reflect:

- validity;
- reliability; and
- objectivity.

Whether observations are valid will depend on whether they provide evidence about the full range of outcomes in a particular learning area. Also, evidence must be an adequate and fair reflection of the learner's abilities and not be dependent on factors such as the learner's proficiency in the language of instruction or on characteristics of the learner such as cultural background or gender. Reliable estimates can be obtained by ensuring that a comprehensive amount of information is assessed.

The objectivity of an estimate refers to the extent to which it is unaffected by the choice of tasks or the choice of assessors (Masters and Forster 1996:6). Objective estimates require procedures for identifying and taking account of factors such as differences in the level of difficulty of tasks set for learners and the harshness of assessors.

5.4.7.2 Assessment Methods

A variety of assessment methods can be used to estimate learning progress to be indicated on a progress map. These include (Masters and Forster 1996:25):

- Portfolios - collections of learner work collected over a period of time. These may represent day-to-day work; collections of work for assessment but documenting the processes used to develop items in the portfolio; or selections of learners' best work for eventual summative assessment.
- Performances - learner performances assessed as they occur or are videotaped for assessment. Examples include oral presentations, dance, gymnastics, and instrumental music;
- Projects - undertaken over a period of time and often involving the collection and analysis of data and the preparation of a written report. Posters are sometimes used by learners to report the findings and conclusions of their investigations;
- Products - items made by learners. Examples include pieces of artwork (drawings, paintings, sculptures), items of food, articles made of wood, metal, plastic and ceramics. In each case the product of a learner's work is available at the completion of the process for assessment;
- Paper and pen assessments - usually completed in a limit period of time under specified conditions. Questions on paper and pen tests can take many forms, but the most common are short answer, essays and multiple-choice questions.

The assessment method should be selected bearing in mind that:

- particular outcomes require particular methods;
- a complete picture of learner achievement in an area of learning depends on useful information about a broad range of learning outcomes (Masters and Forster 1996:19). This necessitates an assessment programme which addresses all the outcomes in a learning area and provides comprehensive feedback to teaching and learning;
- the choice of one method over another conveys to learners what is valued. If written tests, based on a knowledge of content, are used primarily for assessing e.g. English Literature, learners will focus their efforts in this direction and might not attain some of the other outcomes set for this section of the learning area. In this way the choice of assessment methods distort the learning experience and impede the attainment of all the outcomes.

5.4.7.3 Choice of Assessment Methods

Ideally, the methods used for collecting evidence in a learning area, should be designed to (Masters and Forster 1996:20):

- reflect curriculum priorities;
- provide feedback that informs and guides instruction;
- be fair to all learners;
- provide results that are reliable and comparable across learners; and
- be administratively convenient and inexpensive.

In practice, however, more practical considerations such as the following influence the choice of assessment methods:

- useful feedback to teaching and learning;
- practical convenience; and
- time and materials available.

5.4.7.4 Methods of judging and recording learner achievement

The following methods can be used for judging and recording evidence to ascertain the learners' achievement levels:

Anecdotal records made on a day-to-day basis enable the teacher to make judgements about the “stages that individuals have reached in their learning, for identifying special strengths and weaknesses and for evaluating the progress that students make over time” (Masters and Forster 1996:27). These observations do not, however, provide evidence about the learner’s progress across the full range of outcomes in an area of learning. The usefulness of these classroom observations for estimating and monitoring levels of attainment in a learning area, can be enhanced by (Masters and Forster 1996:27):

- ensuring that relevant observations are made for all students in a class;
- ensuring that observations are made in relation to the range of important learning outcomes; and
- keeping a written record of these observations.

Judgements of learner work can also include the **use of rating scales**. The aim is to judge the quality of a piece of work against specified criteria. Rating can be

- analytical - teachers assess the learners’ work on each of a number of specified criteria using e.g. rating categories (high, medium, low, not shown); or
- holistic - a single set of rating categories is developed and used to make an overall judgement of the quality of a piece of work (Refer to Diagram 5.2). The holistic scale describes increasing levels of performance on a limited number of criteria - in this example: the response to the function of imagery in the poem, organisation and focus of the learners’ written responses, and grammar, punctuation and mechanics.

Partial credit scoring is used for recording the steps learners successfully complete in solving a problem or in demonstrating their partially correct understandings and strategies. This method recognises and records varying levels of partial success instead of simply labelling a learner’s attempt as ‘wrong’.

Dichotomous records refer to a method where only two categories are used for recording observations, e.g. right/wrong, acceptable/ not acceptable.

Poetry

Exercise

The poet uses a great deal of imagery (mental pictures) in the poem. For example, he states that there are a great number of golden daffodils fluttering and dancing, and he compares them to stars in the Milky Way. How do these mental pictures add to your understanding or enjoyment of the poem? Write a paragraph explaining your answer.

Scoring Rubric

Note: At Levels 3 and 4 errors in mechanics and grammar (e.g. fragments, misspellings, flawed punctuation, and incorrect capitalisation) should not impede understanding.

Assign points to student responses that most closely match the characteristics listed.

- 4**
 - provides a direct, accurate response to the function of imagery
 - shows good organisation and a clear focus
 - includes few, if any, errors in grammar, usage, or mechanics
- 3**
 - exhibits a fairly clear and logical response to the question
 - contains minor organisational flaws or a somewhat unclear focus
 - may include some errors in grammar, usage, or mechanics
- 2**
 - attempts to address the question
 - includes confusing organisation and a focus which is unclear
 - contains problems in mechanics that interfere with communication
- 1**
 - barely attempts to address the question
 - includes little organisation and is not focused
 - complicates message with serious problems in language and mechanics
- 0**
 - indicates that the student has failed to attempt the question
- N/S (non-scorable)**
 - indicates that the response is illegible or unreadable

Riverside Curriculum Assessment System

Diagram 5.2: Scale for making holistic ratings of students' written responses to a poetry task.
(Masters and Forster 1996:30)

This method can be used

- for a system where teachers and learners negotiate work to be done and it is signed off once completed; or
- in pen and paper tests where the answer to each question is judged as being correct or incorrect (Refer to Diagram 5.3).

Judgements of outcomes achieved implies that the teachers list the relevant outcomes in a learning area and then make a judgement as to whether the learner has achieved these outcomes. In order to make a sound judgement the teacher must know how much evidence is required and in what range of contexts they need to be demonstrated to prove achievement.

Leon Deleuil and Cliff Malcolm suggest that four aspects need to be considered in order for the teacher to make an on-balance judgement, namely (in Masters and Forster 1996:33):

- Has the learner covered the content implicit in the outcomes?
- Can the learner apply the knowledge and skills accurately in different contexts?
- Were the tasks fair and challenging in terms of the learner's background, language or any special circumstances?
- Is the standard of the learner's work consistent with the profile level to which the outcomes belong?

The outcomes which the teacher marks as having been achieved, provide the basis for judging the learner's locations on the progress map that the outcomes define.

Finally, observations and judgements of learners' performance can be recorded by allocating **learners' responses** to one of several "pre-defined categories of response to a task" (Masters and Forster 1996:35).

Different techniques can be used, e.g. those developed by Marton (Masters and Forster 1996:35). Learners are presented with an open-ended task, question or problem which has been designed to provide information about their understandings of an aspect of a learning area. Learners are then interviewed and encouraged to 'think aloud'. The interview is taped for analysis later.

Passage (excerpt)

There was once a bear who lived in a cave in the mountains. He was a mountain bear. He ate fruit and berries and did no hard to anybody, but he had one bad habit. He would hug people. He only hugged them because he liked them but they did not know that. His furry arms were so strong that he hugged much too tightly. Some of the people he hugged were never the same again. They were quite flat when he let them go, and lop-sided.

Re-telling (excerpt)

Once there was a bear who really like hugging people. When he hugged them he did it very _____ because his furry arms were _____. He hugged them because he _____.

1
2
3

Score key

	<u>Acceptable</u>	<u>Unacceptable</u>
Item 1	tightly hard strong long and strong	well much bad
Item 2	big and strong strong tough big strong and furry	so strong that he killed them hard long outstretched tight furry
Item 3	liked them loved people liked hugging people liked hugging loved it had a habit of doing it had a habit	loved to be hugged was kind loved

Diagram 5.3: The TORCH Tests of Reading Comprehension require teachers to read and judge the acceptability of students' answers to each question. The key provides examples of acceptable and unacceptable answers. (Masters and Forster 1996:34)

It was found that different learners usually display different ways of thinking about problems. These “qualitatively different understandings are organised into a set of ‘categories’ representing increasingly sophisticated levels of understanding” (Masters and Forster 1996:37 example).

(i) Errors in judging and recording learner achievement

It has been well documented that errors do occur when teachers attempt to make and record their observations of learner achievement. Some of these errors are mentioned briefly (Masters and Forster 1996:36-38):

- Pre-judging occurs when teachers develop expectations of what their learners are capable of and this leads to judgements based on perceptions of learner ability rather than the actual performance of the learner.
- Confusing achievement with effort - teachers often feel that the effort on the part of the learner should be rewarded and this leads to a higher and unrealistic judgement of learner performance. Conversely a learner who is not performing as he should, is sometimes assessed very low in order to shock him into putting in more effort. Using assessment to send messages to learners undermines the validity and reliability of the assessment.
- Different standards are applied for different learners as a result of teacher perception regarding the learner’s ability. This leads to inaccurate judgements.
- Cultural stereotyping, where teachers tend to assign higher performance assessments to learners of their own race, has been well documented. “In an analysis of 74 studies of race effects on performance evaluations, Kraiger and Ford reported a consistent tendency for white assessors to rate white rates higher than black ratees, and black raters to rate black ratees higher than whites” (Masters and Forster 1996:36). The possibility of cultural bias due to stereotyping needs to be borne in mind and dealt with to ensure valid assessments.
- Gender stereotyping can lead to the same bias as mentioned above. Teachers should be aware of gender differences and how this impacts on assessment methods and learner performance.

- The 'halo' effect arises when "a teacher's assessment of one aspect of a student's performance is influenced by their assessment of other aspects of the student's performance" (Masters and Forster 1996:37). An example would be the tendency to rate a learner's essay high on content because of the quality of language and structure.
- The 'proximity' error refers to the tendency by teachers to assess similarly on outcomes which are closely related. A tendency which has been reported found that assessors gave similar ratings for outcomes which appeared in close proximity on an assessment form.
- The 'central tendency' error relates to a "reluctance on the part of some assessors to assign very low or very high ratings" (Masters and Forster 1996:38). Caution on the part of assessors leads to judgements which describe most learners as being 'average'.
- 'Severity/laxity' errors occur when some assessors consistently give high assessments while others give low assessments. Teachers need to be provided with exemplars on which to base judgements in order to prevent this error from occurring.

5.4.7.5 Estimating attainment

The central purpose in developmental assessment is to estimate learners' levels of attainment in an area of learning, conceptualised as locations along a developmental continuum or 'progress map' (Masters and Forster 1996:40). As mentioned previously, this activity necessitates judging and recording observations of the learners' work. In this way the learners' progress will be charted over a period of time.

The developmental continuum included as Diagram 5.4 represents a map for monitoring learners' developing competence in spelling. The continuum consists of five broad levels of spelling development and on the left side one learner's estimated levels of attainment on four occasions is indicated. The estimates are dated to show progress made over time.

As discussed previously a learner's level of attainment can be estimated from four kinds of observations and judgements, namely:

<i>Gina C Apr 1999</i>	5	<p><i>Independent Spelling</i> In this phase writers have become aware of the many patters and rules that are characteristic of the English spelling system. When spelling a new word they use a multi-strategy approach. They have the ability to recognise when a word doesn't look right and to think of alternative spellings. Spellers in this phase will have accumulated a large bank of known words that they can automatically recall. Independent spellers continue to use personal constructions when spelling unfamiliar words in draft writing. Independent spellers realise the importance of proof reading.</p>
<i>Gina C May 1998</i>	4	<p><i>Transitional Spelling</i> In this phase writers are moving away from a heavy reliance on the phonetic strategy towards the use of visual and meaning-based strategies. They may still have difficulty in recognising if a word "looks right" but should be able to proof their known bank of words. This is a critical phase in the development of spelling. It often takes writers a long time to move through it.</p>
<i>Gina C June 1997</i>	3	<p><i>Phonetic Spelling</i> In this phase writers are able to provide an almost perfect match between letters and sounds. Letters are chosen on the basis of sound often without regard for conventional letter patterns. Spelling attempts are meaningful and becoming more like standard spelling. There is often evidence of self-constructed rules that may not conform to adult rules. Writers copy, recall and construct words according to their current understandings. They use recall for an increasing number of words.</p>
<i>Gina C Apr 1996</i>	2	<p><i>Semi-Phonetic Spelling</i> In this phase children show developing understanding of sound-symbol relationships. The spelling attempts show some evidence of sound-symbol correspondence. They may represent a whole word with one, two or three letters. In this, as in all phases of development, children will be copying, recalling and inventing words. Children at this phase are able to copy letter by letter.</p>
	1	<p><i>Preliminary Spelling</i> In this phase children become aware that print carries a message. They experiment with writing-like symbols as they try to represent written language. Their writing is not readable by others as understandings of sound-symbol relationships have yet to develop. Children are fascinated by print and are constantly trying to explore the relationships between written and spoken words and between letters and sounds through emulating adults in role play of reading and writing.</p>

Diagram 5.4: Estimates of attainment in spelling - Gina C, April 1996 to April 1999 (First Steps Developmental Continuum) (Masters and Forster 1996:41)

- holistic ratings;
- analytic ratings;
- outcomes achieved; and
- scored responses.

5.4.8 Reporting

5.4.8.1 Introduction

Assessments made and records kept by teachers are primarily for teaching purposes. They are tools assisting teachers to understand the learners' level of development (diagnostic assessment) and to make decisions about the ongoing development of the learner.

More formal assessments of learner progress serve as a means of informing parents and learners regarding progress made. This enables parents to become involved in their children's learning. Hanna (1995:7) highlights another benefit of efficient reporting on learner progress, particularly in a federal state like Australia where education systems, and therefore the results which are reported, may vary dramatically. A common outcomes framework would make it possible to monitor the performance of a group of learners. With a thorough electronic recording system, the school as a whole can analyse the progress, for example, of boys and girls in particular areas, non-English-speaking learners or learners with particular disabilities. This kind of analysis can help to allot resources and evaluate special programmes. This exercise could be expanded and common outcomes could be the framework for public reporting at a national level.

5.4.8.2 Reporting against a progress map

Assessment and reporting procedures based on the principles underlying developmental assessment are likely to (Masters and Forster 1996:54):

- be built around the concept of a progress map (or developmental continuum);
- provide estimates of learners' levels of achievement on this map;
- draw on a wide range of evidence about learners' achievements;

- interpret levels of achievement descriptively in terms of the kinds of knowledge, skills and understandings typical of learners at each level;
- display achievements graphically, indicating individuals' or groups' estimated locations on the continuum; and
- interpret achievements of other learners of the same age or grade.

In the example included here as Diagram 5.5 four stages of a developmental continuum in Reading are used as a basis of the report to parents of First Grade learners. The stages are accompanied by descriptions of the reading behaviour typical of learners at each stage. Teachers highlight the reading behaviours displayed by each learner and then mark the learner's estimated location on the continuum at the top of the report. By writing the date alongside each estimated location on the map, teachers are able to provide a general picture of the learner's pattern of reading growth.

Parents are provided with a letter which explains that the developmental continuum is used to emphasise the ongoing nature of learning.

5.4.8.3 Reporting against typical progress

The aim of mapping the achievements of a number of learners on a progress map, is to show parents how their child is achieving in relation to other learners of the same age or grade.

In order to ensure the validity of this report, it is necessary to collect data on the performances of a wider group of learners - this provides a representative sample of learners at a particular age or grade within a specific education system.

5.4.9 Monitoring standards

A progress map can, furthermore, provide a framework against which the performances of particular groups of students can be plotted and compared, and changes in levels of achievement can be monitored over time (Masters and Forster 1996:65).

STANLEY ELEMENTARY, FIRST GRADE PROGRESS REPORT

Name _____

Reading Stage PRECONVENTIONAL	Reading Stage EMERGENT	Reading Stage BEGINNING	Reading Stage DEVELOPING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginning concepts about print; book holding, turns pages correctly, shows start and end of book. • Recognises own name and familiar names. • Recognises familiar words in context (McDonalds, EXIT) • Knows some letter names. • Focuses on pictures. • Responds to literature (smiles, claps listens intently). • Chooses books and has favourites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notices environmental print. • Begins to focus on print but uses illustrations to tell story. • Knows most letters and some sounds. • Able to memorise pattern in familiar books. • Demonstrate awareness of titles • Can match voice to words one-to-one. • Predicts a word left out in a familiar sentence. • Participates in choral reading songs and poems. • Recognises rhyme. • Can retell material read by adult. • Longer attention span when listening to books. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sees self as reader. • Relies on print more than illustrations for meaning. • Uses illustrations, sentence structure and context to read. • Recognises familiar high frequency words in isolation. • Reads books with predictable patterns with initial prompting. • Selects own books to read. • Some awareness of author and illustrator. • Begins to use confirmation strategy. • Responds to literature through drama, art, discussion. • Can retell main ideas of text. • Can attend to book for increasing amount of time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reads simple and/or predictable text. • Begins to use reading strategies for decoding. • Understands use of punctuation when reading aloud. • Begins to correct miscues of text that don't make sense. • Chooses to read a variety of books and other texts. • Able and willing to write about book. • Can retell the plot, characters, and events in simple stories. • Concentrates on reading for longer period of time.
<p>Ages 4-6 Grade K Date _____</p>	<p>Ages 5-7 Grades K, 1 Classroom Teacher _____</p>	<p>Ages 5-8 Grades K, 1,2 Specialist Teacher _____</p>	<p>Ages 6-9 Grades 1,2,3 Parent / Guardian _____</p>

Diagram 5.5: This first grade Reading report allows parents to monitor student progress along a reading continuum. (Masters and Forster 1996:57)

Progress maps have been used e.g. by the US National Assessment of Educational Progress which has monitored the reading achievements of nationally representative samples of learners for more than 20 years (Masters and Forster 1996 :65). Positions along the continuum are indicated by numbers from 0 to 500. The reading behaviours typically displayed at five levels along the continuum have been described and illustrated. The five levels are: Rudimentary (150), Basic (200), Intermediate (250), Adept (300) and Advanced (300).

The result is a graph which indicates trends in the reading achievements of four groups of learners, namely: white 9-year-olds, black 9-year-olds, white 17-year-olds and black 17-year-olds over the period 1971 to 1988. The graph shows that, throughout this period the average reading level of white 9-year-olds was above the Basic level of reading achievement and below the Intermediate level. The average reading levels of white 17-year-olds remained around the Adept level of achievement.

The average reading levels of black 9-year-olds, however, increased from near the Rudimentary level to near Basic, and that of the 17-year-olds increased from Intermediate to Adept.

By plotting and comparing learner achievement in terms of a progress map, educational standards can be monitored over time.

5.4.10 The role of the teacher

The role of the teacher in the OBE approach has evolved in contrast to his or her role in the traditional approach to teaching and learning. Whereas previously the teacher was seen to be an 'impartor of knowledge' and was responsible for evaluating mainly how much of this knowledge the learner had managed to retain, the teacher now becomes a facilitator of learning. The teacher creates an environment where learning experiences are modelled to suite the particular learners. The teacher also continuously assesses learner progress. The basis of this learning experience is that the teacher and the learners know exactly what the desired outcome(s) must be, as well as the performance criteria by which their progress will be judged, and they work together to attain these outcomes (Lubisi, Wedekind, Parker and Gultig 1997:75). In this scenario emphasis is placed on learners integrating new ideas into their own experience in a creative and constructive way, instead of merely receiving ideas (Bax 1997:235).

A research study, commissioned by the Education Department of Western Australia, was undertaken as part of the Student Outcome Statements trial in Western Australia. Some seventy five teachers participated in this study of the feasibility of outcomes-based education on a voluntary basis. The investigators, Grundy and Bonser (1997:11-12), identified a trialing process which was developmental in nature and which had the potential:

- * to enable teachers to systematically develop and review their own teaching performance in relation to the learning outcomes of their students;
- * to assist teachers to take control of their own professional growth in the context of their particular school.

The findings make it clear that teachers in the study thought that what they were engaged in would promote the advancement of professional knowledge and skill and hence provide an improved educational opportunity for their students. This view was based on comments by teachers such as (Grundy and Bonser 1997:3): "We liked the idea of having an overall framework of what outcomes learners need to meet and being able to address those outcomes in whatever way fitted best for the students in our school". This clearly indicates that the needs of the learner are central in the teaching and learning process.

Three aspects of teachers' work appeared to be significant, namely (Grundy and Bonser 1997:4):

- * the opportunity to become familiar;
- * the opportunity to experiment; and
- * the opportunity for collegial understanding.

Firstly interview data indicated that an extensive period of familiarisation is required when teachers begin working with Student Outcome Statements (SOS). Time was needed for active engagement with the SOS documents in order to develop an understanding and confidence in dealing with the documents.

Trial schools in Western Australia reported a general under-estimation of the time needed for familiarisation. It was found that familiarity with the new approach was best developed collaboratively, rather than in isolation - this encouraged the development of a common understanding amongst teachers.

Secondly teachers had to be given the opportunity to experiment - only then will they realise fully that this new approach challenges (a) their programmes and teaching strategies and (b) teachers to reassess the learning environment and learning processes.

Grundy and Bonser (1997:5) quote one of the teachers as saying that to effectively implement outcome statements, teaching practice has to change. It was also foreseen that the change would prove painful as it would effect the designing of tasks for the kids, the way in which teachers recorded learner progress and the way in which they assess and report. This approach was also regarded as “allowing teachers to concentrate upon learning rather than teaching” (Grundy and Bonser 1997:6). This reflects a radical rethinking of teaching and learning as opposed to a mere modification of existing approaches. Teachers focused on creating an environment and providing learning opportunities in which autonomous learning was fostered, instead of merely imparting knowledge.

The nature of experimentation resulting from the introduction of the outcomes-based approach has resulted in the building of a learning community - teachers have become active learners themselves. In the schools involved in the research there was evidence of a commitment to communal and collaborative learning with teachers taking responsibility for their own learning. This precipitated the spirit of learners following their example. To support this development it was important to introduce induction support programmes for teachers entering the system.

The following were found to be implications for teachers’ work (Grundy and Bonser 1997:8):

- Increased demands upon teachers - heavy demands upon time, energy and commitment;
- Increased professionalism - a professional culture is encouraged through sharing and risk-taking and support in their engagement with the new approach;
- Teacher judgement and common understandings - this approach challenges and enhances professional judgement-making. The complex issue of teacher judgement is grounded in a solid understanding of the meaning of the outcome statements. It was found (1997:9) that more frequent judgement making enhanced the role of systematic observation and the need to develop open-ended performance tasks;

- Resourcing needs - it was found that goodwill and commitment were not sufficient to ensure the desired outcomes. Resources are needed. Two categories of resources were needed, namely: texts - suitable activities, exemplars, support materials - and time - meeting time, training time. Meeting these resource requirements would obviously have budgetary implications;
- School restructuring - this involves the accountability and management systems of the school or educational institution as a whole (1997:10-11).

Most of the findings above were also recorded in the evaluation and monitoring of the trial of Curriculum 2005 undertaken in all the provinces in South Africa in November 1997 (Department of Education 1997).

Teachers agreed that learners became more communicative and active and that there was increased co-operation among teachers themselves. 86.9% of the teachers agreed that this approach allowed for and encouraged both teacher and learner to think creatively and 83.3% believed that it also allowed for finding ways of solving problems within their own groups (Department of Education 1997:4).

5.5 SYNTHESIS

The traditional content-based approach to language teaching in South Africa, and the teaching of English second language in particular, is in desperate need of change. The objective of the South African syllabi for English Second Language, namely communicative competence, is not being realised. Some of the reasons for this are:

- the disjuncture between the above-mentioned objective and the other elements of the curriculum, i.e. the content, activities and methods of evaluation;
- the fact that the content and activities are predetermined and do not take into consideration the differences in learners' cultural and linguistic backgrounds;
- the content, activities and evaluation methods do not relate to real life situations and learners fail to see their relevance to their everyday lives and that which will be expected of them when they leave school;

- the curriculum has traditionally been determined by curriculum experts who do not represent the interests of all those who have a stake in education such as parents, teachers, learners, organised business, etc.; and
- the content and activities do not reflect the context within which the learning takes place, locally, nationally or globally.

The outcomes-based approach to language teaching and learning, however, is an attempt to provide an effective language learning environment for all learners, whether they have English as a home language or not. This is the focus of Curriculum 2005. The outcomes which learners eventually have to attain, are the same for all learners and they are assisted and supported to develop their English language knowledge, skills and attitudes within a context which they are able to recognise as being meaningful and relevant to their lives. Differences in cultural and linguistic backgrounds are recognised and utilised as a starting point for further learning.

OBE
Syllabus
2005

The needs of the learners are central to the teaching/learning endeavour; the context within which the learning takes place and in which the learner will find him/herself when they leave school, is incorporated into the learning programmes; and a process of ongoing consultation with all the parties who have a stake in education (i.e. learners, teachers, parents, the community, role-players from the world of work, etc.) is initiated which ensures that the context within which the learning takes place is valid and authentic.

UN

This new approach to teaching and learning has impacted dramatically on teachers and on how they view and do their work. They have themselves entered upon a path of lifelong learning and have had to review and improve their own teaching practice. Research into how teachers coped with this change in Australian schools (Grundy and Bonser 1997), has shown that teachers who managed to come to grips with the approach, appreciated the professional freedom of being able to utilise whichever resources were necessary to assist their particular learners in attaining the outcomes.

The implementation of the new outcomes-based approach which is being phased in in South African schools, poses new challenges and problem areas. Chapter 6 will indicate some of these which will have to be dealt with in order to ensure the success of this initiative.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

6.1 SUMMARY

This study focuses on the fact that, although we are living in a changed and changing world, schools are still performing a traditional role and are using outdated methodologies to convey knowledge. This has led to a world-wide recognition of a 'relevance gap' where education is seen as not being meaningful to learners and is not preparing learners adequately for the adult roles which they will have to fulfil when they leave school (Compare par. 1.1).

In the South African context the problem of relevant education has been compounded by the political situation which has resulted in a fragmented education system, inequality with regard to provisioning and access to quality education and a breakdown of the culture of teaching and learning. Central to the problem of providing education which is relevant to the needs of learners and of society as a whole, is the matter of curriculum design, development and implementation. As is the case in many countries around the world, the traditional content-based curriculum which has been implemented in South African up to now, puts learners in passive roles, regurgitating information in a mindless and uncritical manner (Compare par. 1.1.1).

The emphasis in this study is on the teaching and learning of English to learners who do not have English as a home language. In paragraph 1.1.2 the importance of being proficient in English in the South African context, is set out. Proficiency in the language is seen as being a basic prerequisite for enabling learners to cope in real life situations.

A completely new mindset, a paradigm shift, will have to be effected in order to provide an education which is relevant. The answer to the problem does not lie with merely increasing education resources. Central to this paradigm shift, is a new approach to curriculum design, development and implementation.

English language teaching, based on the existing content-driven syllabi, does not assist the learner in realising the curriculum objective of 'communicative competence' (Compare par. 1.1.3). It is clear that

the traditional content-based curricula do not prepare learners for life as it is lived and an alternative, effective approach to teaching and learning needs to be conceptualised. The new outcomes-based approach to teaching and learning, which has been introduced in South African schools as from 1998, is an attempt at addressing the problems which exist in education.

The researcher became aware of the inadequacies regarding English teaching to non-native speakers of the language at an early age and later, as a teacher of English Second Language, the problem was even more evident (Compare par. 1.2).

In the search for a curriculum which will adhere to the principle of relevance, the following questions were posed in this study, namely (par. 1.3):

- * What are the characteristics of a *relevant* curriculum?
- * How does the traditional approach to curriculum design and development compare with the more contemporary *outcomes-based curriculum model*?
- * To what extent do the above-mentioned models *reflect the characteristics* of a relevant curriculum discussed previously?
- * What does an *outcomes-based approach* to English language curriculum development and implementation look like *in practice*?

An exploratory study was carried out to compare the traditional content-based approach to curriculum design and development, as represented by Zais' curriculum model (1976) (refer to par. 3.3), and the outcomes-based approach to teaching and learning espoused by William Spady (1993) (refer to par. 3.4). An extensive literature review was undertaken to gain insight into the problem and to provide possible answers to the questions posed above. The researcher also drew on personal experience and case studies to expand on the problem and to come to possible conclusions.

The aims of the study, derived from the questions posed previously, were dealt with in the subsequent chapters as follows:

AIM 1:

To examine aspects of curriculum design and development which relate to the principle of relevance and to *propose a set of guidelines for a relevant curriculum* which can serve as criteria for evaluating the degree of relevance reflected in curriculum design and implementation.

Chapter 2 explores different views of what the curriculum consists of and concludes that it should serve as a guideline for the teaching and learning which takes place in the classroom by involving teachers and learners in its development and implementation. This is followed by a discussion on the characteristics of relevant education (refer to par. 2.3), and it is found that to be relevant, education should be:

- * **dynamic**, i.e. it should be responsive to changes within the society for which it is designed as well as changes in learner needs;
- * **focused on the needs of each individual** to enable them to deal with the demands made on them in adult life, playing an active role in society and making a living;
- * **reflective of the context** of a country's changing needs and demands, e.g. by catering for the country's human resource needs in the light of technological developments;
- * **true to reality** and in this way increase the social, political and economical literacy of learners; and
- * **acceptable to its users**, i.e. everyone involved in education such as teachers, parents and guardians, policy developers, communities and the learners themselves.

In order to arrive at a set of guidelines for a relevant curriculum, the following aspects of the curriculum, were investigated, namely:

- * The focus of the curriculum (Compare par. 2.3.1);
- * The context of the curriculum (Compare par. 2.3.2); and
- * The participants in the process of curriculum design and development (Compare par. 2.3.3).

The guidelines for a relevant curriculum proposed on the basis of this discussion, relate directly to the needs of the learner in the context within which the learning is taking place. To ensure that teaching and learning is well grounded within the particular community and society which it serves, the curriculum development process should provide for comprehensive stakeholder participation. A relevant curriculum must therefore (Compare par. 2.4):

- * be dynamic and true to life;
- * focus on the learner;
- * reflect the context within which and for which it is designed; and
- * involve all the stakeholders in education in its design and development.

AIM 2:

To *examine and compare* aspects of the traditional approach to curriculum design and development to those of the outcomes-based curriculum model.

Chapter 3 offers a description of the main elements of two approaches to curriculum design and development, namely:

- (a) the traditional curriculum model, as proposed by Robert Zais (1976), which represents the approach to curriculum design and development prevalent in many countries around the world and which is reflected in the existing content-based curriculum in South Africa (refer to par. 3.3); and
- (b) the outcomes-based curriculum model as described by William Spady (1993), which is currently being initiated in some countries around the world, including in the new curriculum for South African schools, i.e. Curriculum 2005, implemented as from 1998 (refer to par. 3.4).

The move away from the traditional content-based curriculum to an outcomes-based approach, represents a significant paradigm shift; moving from an instructional to a learning paradigm (Compare par. 3.2).

AIM 3:

To *evaluate the traditional approach* to curriculum design and development and *the outcomes-based model* in terms of the guidelines for a relevant curriculum proposed in this study.

The purpose of evaluating the two approaches mentioned above, is to ascertain whether the outcomes-based approach does indeed provide the potential for developing a curriculum which will reflect the guidelines for a relevant curriculum proposed in chapter 2.

In chapter 4, the researcher concludes that the OBE approach to curriculum attempts to create a curriculum which is grounded firmly in real life. It reflects a commitment to the need for constant change in order to remain relevant within the context of a changing world. The needs of the learner are central to planning and implementing the curriculum. The diversity which the learner brings to the learning environment is recognised and valued. The principles which direct this approach reflect the particular context within South Africa, but also relate to the global context within which the learner will find himself or herself in the adult world. Unlike the traditional curriculum, where content was predetermined and prescribed by curriculum experts, the OBE approach is a co-operative venture which includes all those who have a stake in education.

AIM 4:

To illustrate the design and implementation of an outcomes-based curriculum with reference to (a) the new outcomes-based curriculum for language teaching and learning which forms part of the Curriculum 2005 initiative currently being phased in in South African schools; and (b) the Australian Outcome Statements for English.

Chapter 5 provides a brief discussion on the traditional syllabi for English Second Language which are still in use in South Africa (Compare par. 5.2); a more detailed description of the main elements of the new outcomes-based learning area, entitled Language, Literacy and Communication, which is currently being phased in in South African schools (Compare par. 5.3); as well as the statements and profiles on English for Australian schools, which represents an outcomes-based approach to teaching and learning (Compare par. 5.4). Throughout this discussion, the researcher attempts to indicate how the outcomes-based approach reflects the guidelines for a relevant curriculum proposed previously. An important aspect of the implementation of this approach, is the role of the teacher (refer to par. 5.4.10). The section which deals with the teacher, includes the results of a study carried out to gauge teachers' reaction to this paradigm shift. The implications for teachers' work as noted by Grundy and Bonser (1997:8), might also apply to teachers in South Africa and should be taken into account during the implementation of Curriculum 2005.

AIM 5:

To provide suggestions for further study in this area.

Suggestions for further study will be dealt with in paragraph 6.4.

6.2 CONCLUSIONS

The basic premise of this study is that the curriculum which has traditionally been in use, is no longer sufficient to prepare learners for the world which they must enter. Today's learners must reach higher standards which involves combining an extensive body of knowledge, facts and specifics with the ability to think critically, understand complex relationships and solve complex problems (Manno 1995:723).

This study attempts to illustrate that the outcomes-based approach to teaching and learning has the potential to provide a basis for relevant teaching and learning, as it reflects the guidelines for a relevant curriculum proposed in par. 2.4. Criticism against OBE, however, is widespread and even in the light of the advantages of this approach as outlined in this study, cognisance must be taken of the problems associated with it. These critical areas need to be addressed to prevent problems which may occur during implementation.

Although Spady reports widespread adaptation of the OBE model, with several schools reporting success, only a few systematic research efforts have studied the implementation and effects of the OBE model as a comprehensive reform strategy (Glatthorn 1993:354-363). As an approach to sound change, the outcomes-based system relies on a complex change process that makes extensive demands on resources. It is very time-consuming and has not been systematically and rigorously evaluated. Glatthorn (1993:357) concludes that the model seems to be generally useful for education reform as long as those involved in its design and implementation are aware of the pitfalls. Some of the aspects which need to be highlighted, are discussed here briefly.

6.2.1 The nature of the outcomes

In America a war has been raging on the topic of outcomes-based education. The primary reason for what Manno (1995:721) terms "the OBE backlash" is that the outcomes defining what all learners should know and can do, are often focused on behaviours and beliefs that are vaguely worded and associated largely with the affective domain. Many of these outcomes do not relate to academic content but focus on behavioural and social outcomes such as attitudes, dispositions and sentiments. Examples of such outcomes are:

- * each learner shall gain knowledge and have exposure to different cultures and lifestyles; and
- * learners will demonstrate the knowledge, skills and attitudes essential to developing physical and emotional well-being.

The OBE approach in this case could preclude real result-oriented accountability, which is the primary aim of this approach.

The fundamental problem with the outcomes proposed by Spady in the American scenario are believed to lie in the proposer's conception of the role of education (Manno 1995:722). The 'progressivist' viewpoint which lies at the basis of the outcomes-based approach is described by Kristol (in Manno 1995:722) as aiming at the development of creative potential of the whole person, which must not be discouraged by such elements as grading, tracking, strict discipline, a dress code or intellectual discrimination of any kind. Intellectual excellence may be acknowledged but not rewarded. The emphasis is on creating good citizens in a democracy who display social co-operation.

The problem which critics of this approach have with this view is that learners cannot graduate from school if they do not demonstrate certain values and attitudes prescribed by the State. This seems to limit the options and freedom of choice of parents as to the values they wish their children to learn. In the South African scenario, which by its nature is one of great cultural and ethnic diversity, this would indeed create resentment and conflict. The only option remaining would be to broaden the prescribed outcomes to reflect the broadest public consensus on what should be learnt. This would limit the affective outcomes and force an emphasis on cognitive outcomes - academic knowledge, skills and understandings that all learners should be able to demonstrate in order to live, work and compete successfully in the adult world.

6.2.2 Resources

There is a general acknowledgement that the implementation of an outcomes-based system will be more costly than the systems currently in use. Teachers will have to be retrained and supported on an ongoing basis during implementation, curricula will need revision, resource materials will have to be developed and a new system will have to replace the examination and qualification system which is in place. Where OBE has been implemented two categories of resources were identified which

teachers found were needed, namely: texts - suitable activities, exemplars, support materials - and time - meeting time, training time; and meeting these resource requirements would obviously have budgetary implications (Grundy and Bonser 1997:8-9).

Aspects of the outcomes-based approach such as performance assessment, requires extensive training and support, and unfortunately schools almost never have the resources they need. This means that tough decisions have to be made by educators and policy makers as to whether to attempt change even though conditions are far from ideal (Brandt 1994:5). In the South African scenario, problems inherited from the past would almost lead one to say that surely it cannot be worse for the majority of learners than it has been up to now. The challenge however is not merely to change the system, but to change it for the better and to provide quality education for *all* learners.

6.2.3 Teacher training

In the OBE approach, the role of the teacher in the teaching/learning process is expanded - the teacher does not merely impart knowledge and then test to see whether learners have memorised the information correctly, as was done broadly in the past (refer to par. 5.4.10). The teacher becomes a facilitator of learning. This is a pivotal aspect of the whole new paradigm and teachers are therefore viewed as being one of the most valuable resources in this kind of system. They must then be equipped and supported through ongoing quality training to move to the new approach with confidence and an adequate sense of the new role which they must fulfil. They need, amongst others, to be trained in creating resource material which will be effective in assisting learners to achieve the outcomes.

As mentioned in paragraph 5.3.10, a feasibility study of the OBE approach in Western Australia found three aspects of teachers' work to be significant, namely:

- * the opportunity to become familiar;
- * the opportunity to experiment; and
- * the opportunity for collegial understanding (Grundy and Bonser 1997:4).

Teachers clearly needed time to familiarise themselves with the outcomes and to engage with the learner outcomes documents in order to develop an understanding and confidence in implementing this approach. Working collaboratively encouraged the development of a common understanding

amongst teachers. Teachers needed to experiment to realise what the challenges of this new approach would be. Teachers came to understand that their teaching practices would have to change with regard to designing learning activities and recording, assessing and reporting learner progress.

To do this effectively, teachers have to see themselves as learners and need to be assisted through induction support programmes. Moving to the new approach, also implied increased demands upon teachers' time, energy and commitment. These findings were also reflected in the evaluation and monitoring of the trial of Curriculum 2005 which was undertaken in all the provinces in November 1997 (Department of Education 1997).

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, a number of recommendations are proposed here. These will be discussed in terms of certain aspects of the guidelines for a relevant curriculum proposed in chapter 2. Although the outcomes-based approach (described in chapter 3), which serves as a basis for the outcomes-based curricula designed for South African and Australian schools (refer to chapter 5), clearly reflects the guidelines for relevance, much has to be done to ensure that the teachers and others involved in education give life to this approach and adhere to the said guidelines in practice. The danger lies in the possibility that the new curricula can be executed in such a way that we once again find ourselves in the traditional mould, where the curricula or the outcomes become narrow and prescriptive and where teachers simply transfer information to passive learners. The potential for providing relevant curricula can be lost in an inadequate implementation of the outcomes-based approach.

6.3.1 Learner needs

The outcomes-based curriculum is designed for *all* learners. This means that it recognises that learning programmes must reflect the abilities, needs, interests and learning styles of learners of both genders and all racial, linguistic and ethno-cultural groups. The outcomes included in the learning areas of Curriculum 2005 therefore, allow for the inclusion of diverse content and the use of a wide range of teaching approaches.

In par. 2.3.1.1. learner needs are discussed in terms of the subjective, objective and future needs of learners. Subjective needs are discussed which relate to learners' wants, expectations and affective needs based on e.g. their culture, belief and value systems, previous learning experiences, inherent capabilities and learning and thinking styles. These needs are well catered for in the outcomes-based approach and are reflected in the principles of this approach such as those which refer to relevance, differentiation, flexibility and progression (refer to par. 3.4.6). It is emphasised that teaching strategies, assessment methods and all aspects relating to the teaching/learning experience should provide for these learner differences.

The challenge for the teaching profession is described by Grundy and Bonser (1997:3) as being the challenge of addressing a curriculum change directed towards improving the quality of education for *all* learners. In the study of teachers who were teaching to the Australia Student Outcome Statements mentioned previously, it was found that a number of teachers were beginning to experiment with learner-centred learning as a way of adapting their teaching strategies and the learning environment to the needs of the learners. Teaching to the Student Outcome Statements was regarded by the teachers as catering for a diverse range of learning styles. One teacher commented that the combination of being aware of individual styles and structuring lessons to take account of the various learning styles within the classroom, all seemed to fit really well with the developmental nature of the Australian student outcomes and the notion of what you want the learners to be able to do. This was also underlined by the learners, who viewed this approach as leaving room for them to invest in their own learning (Grundy and Bonser 1997:7).

The problem lies, however, in the teacher's knowledge and experience in catering for learner differences. Traditionally, the same information was imparted to all learners, regardless of their background, culture or capabilities. They were provided with the same content and learning activities and evaluated by the same methods. The teacher will need a greater measure of training and support to be able to identify differences and to be in a position to address these through appropriate teaching strategies and assessment methods.

A firm system of teacher training and support will be needed if teachers are expected to, for example, practice diagnostic assessment and make value judgements on whether learners are progressing adequately. This ongoing training and support is a necessary extension of the basic training on the aspects of outcomes-based teaching and learning which teachers will have to be

provided with. Resource centres will have to be developed where teachers can find answers to the problems of identifying learner differences and providing for them in the classroom. Co-operation between teachers from the same and from different schools can be most valuable for exchanging ideas and solving problems in this regard. The initiative of creating such co-operative forums should, however, not be left to the teachers themselves, as financial constraints could hamper the practical implementation of such a scheme. Provincial and regional education authorities should ensure that teachers are provided with this platform for discussing mutual problems and for assisting one another.

Furthermore, in a democratic society where diversity is recognised and valued, we need great diversity in the nature of schools and in the ways professional educators seek to produce results, with families free to choose those schools that best meet their needs (Manno 1995:724). Schools which adhere to and espouse a particular religion, Muslim or Christian schools for example, should have a place in the education system. There should, however, be a cross-pollination between these and the secular state-run schools to encourage mutual understanding and tolerance and counter the separateness of the past.

6.3.2 Context

In chapter 2 the context within which the teaching and learning takes place and also the context for which the learner is being prepared, are discussed (refer to par. 2.3.2). The guideline for relevance here refers to the curriculum reflecting the local, national and international context within which the curriculum is implemented.

The principles of the outcomes-based approach also reflect this guideline and the relevant principles are mentioned here as they are linked to certain recommendations.

It was pointed out in par. 2.3.2 that, just as in reality knowledge has little meaning without reference to the contexts from which it is derived, so learning has little relevance if it occurs in isolation from the contexts in which it is to be applied (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training 1995:10). Integrated learning programmes and activities, based on the principle of integration, help learners to recognise connections and relationships between ideas, people and things in the real world.

If learners can see the links among different learning areas, they will be able to use the knowledge, skills and attitudes in one field to learn in another and in so doing, be able to relate their learning experiences to real-life situations. Learners need to develop the ability to apply existing knowledge in new situations in order to function effectively in an environment of continuous change.

It is, therefore, vital that learning programmes be based on the connections between the different areas of learning and continually focus the learners' attention on them. Designers of learning programmes must continually assess whether their programmes will indeed assist learners to become resourceful and be able to deal with the challenges of a changing world. The danger lies in the potential for designing programmes which once again separate learning areas and which echo the traditional subject-based approach. This would be defeating the purpose of the curriculum which is to be relevant to life as it is lived.

Credibility (see par. 3.4.6.12) refers to the national and international acceptance of the learning programmes and the eventual qualifications which learners will achieve. National acceptance is only possible if all who have a stake in education are included in the design, development and implementation of the curriculum and the qualifications which it leads to. These stakeholders must recognise that the curriculum and the subsequent qualifications relate to the needs of the learners and of the particular society.

It may be a cliché to say that we live in a global village but, in a world where people are environmentally, economically, politically and socially interdependent, it is crucial that learners are equipped to fulfil their roles in this broadest context. To ensure that the teaching and learning, and the qualifications which are awarded, are recognised as being valid and relevant in a global context, South African education authorities and other role-players will have to continue to seek international collaboration and in this way ensure that the world recognises the achievements of our learners.

6.3.3 Role-players

As stated in par. 2.3.3.3 education is a complex undertaking and requires the participation of teachers and learners, but also of others who have a stake in the endeavour. These different

parties include parents or guardians, professionals within the system as well as the wider community, including those in business.

The participation of parents, in particular, is seen to be crucial to learners' motivation and success (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training 1995:12). It is, therefore, vital that there be effective communication and mutual understanding between them and those involved in their children's learning. In South Africa, parental involvement has differed in different sectors - in the schools previously referred to as Model C schools, parents were called upon to involve themselves with the financial running of the school - raising funds and taking responsibility for aspects such as maintenance of the school grounds, etc. This involvement was key in the parents recognising that they were part of the learning environment of their child and it gave them the confidence and the intimate knowledge of the workings of the school, which they required to judge whether their child was making progress or to identify problem areas and successes. This was not, however, the case in most other schools where parents were not encouraged to involve themselves in affairs of the school. This matter needs to be addressed and all parents must be encouraged to show their interest in their children's progress by e.g. demonstrating an interest in school activities, monitoring school projects and assisting the children and discussing their children's work with teachers.

Schools can encourage parents and guardians to become involved in meaningful ways, for example, schools can

- * provide all parents and guardians with opportunities to become informed about the new curriculum;
- * provide information on available services and on learner progress;
- * clarify outcomes and standards;
- * provide convenient times and places for parents and guardians to meet with school staff; and
- * provide appropriate outreach programmes for all parents or guardians (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training 1995:13).

To ensure that the community within which learning takes place, is also involved, schools must communicate regularly with those who are in a position to make a contribution to learning programmes and learning experiences. Special skills within the community should be utilised and

organisations such as cultural agencies (e.g. museums and art galleries), business and labour organisations, social service agencies, and organisations operated by diverse racial and ethno-cultural groups could be approached to make their resources available to schools.

6.4 FURTHER RESEARCH

As was mentioned previously, very few extensive studies are available on the implementation of the outcomes-based approach to curriculum. It is vital that, where such systems are being introduced, thorough and ongoing studies should be undertaken to find out, *inter alia*, to what extent the new paradigm is fulfilling its potential for providing relevant education to all learners.

Studies of this nature will have to focus, among others, on the following aspects and give answers to some of the questions posed below:

- * **Teacher training and support:** Which strategies have been most successful in assisting teachers to make the transitions to the new paradigm? How have training strategies catered for diversity amongst teachers with regard to cultural and ethnic background, previous training and experience, etc.?
- * **Development of integrated learning programmes:** How will learning programmes be designed to ensure transferability, i.e. how do they provide for the possibility that a learner might move from one school to another without being disadvantaged?
- * **Development of resource materials:** How can ways be found to pool resources in order to make them more widely available, especially to schools where funding is sparse?
- * **Nature and assessability of the outcomes:** How attainable are the outcomes, especially those which relate to values and attitudes?
- * **School management:** How does OBE impact on management issues such as time-tabling, staffing, class sizes, etc.?

- * **Reaction to the new approach:** How do parents, the local community and national and international role-players rate the new curriculum? How do learners rate the curriculum and how do they feel it affects their learning?
- * **Involvement of parents and the community:** Which strategies have been successful in ensuring maximum involvement and participation of the community and of parents or guardians?

6.5 FINAL COMMENTS

According to this study, the outcomes-based approach to curriculum design, development and implementation has the potential for providing relevant teaching/learning experiences for *all* learners, thereby filling the 'relevance gap' which has been identified in education world-wide.

The crux of the matter, however, lies in the implementation of this approach in schools and other learning sites. It is an approach which necessitates massive initiatives concerning aspects such as the retraining and support of teachers and the development of suitable resource materials. Moreover, it implies the re-organisation and restructuring of certain aspects of school management which involve the accountability and management systems of the school or educational institution as a whole.

To ensure that this new approach does indeed create a new teaching/learning ethos which benefits all our learners, a system of accountability that has real consequences for success or failure in reaching this goal, has to be devised. A clear and thorough strategy for quality assurance will be needed to gauge whether the learning/teaching is of a high quality, whether it prepares the learners adequately for their roles in adult life and is also seen by the learners to be relevant to their lives. For this purpose, the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) has been established. This body will have the enormous responsibility of ensuring that the standards for education and training, registered in terms of learning outcomes and their appropriate assessment criteria, do indeed guarantee the delivery and provision of high quality education and training which will promote equity for all learners.

Learners must be assisted to see their learning as relevant by making connections between school work and their own experiences, pursuits and goals. Since there will be times when the relevance of a learning activity might not be readily apparent to some learners, teachers will need to point out connections wherever appropriate, between what is being learned and its application and usefulness in daily life. The ultimate goal is to promote a lifelong love of learning. This can only be brought about if learners are assisted to develop their learning skills. The awareness of such learning skills will result in confidence in their own ability to learn effectively. Guidance of this nature will open learners' eyes to the fact that learning contributes to the quality of their lives.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ANIM, N.O. 1991. *Relevant Education - The African Context*. EASA: Pretoria.
- ARNOVE, R.F; ALTBACH, P.G. and KELLY, G.P. 1992. *Emergent Issues in Education - Comparative Perspectives*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION COUNCIL. 1994. *English - a curriculum profile for Australian schools*. Carlton, Australia: Curriculum Corporation.
- AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION COUNCIL. 1994. *A Statement on English for Australian Schools*. Carlton, Australia: Curriculum Corporation.
- BADENHORST, D.C. Enkele gedagtes oor die relevansie van die onderwys in die RSA. *SA Journal of Education*, vol. 9, no. 3, 1989, p. 413-416.
- BAGNALL, R.D; RECCHAI, M.A. and ROBINSON, Y. 1980. *The Basis of the Curriculum : Theory and Development*. New York: CurrDelCo Ltd.
- BAX, S. Roles for a teacher educator in context-sensitive teacher education. *ELT Journal*, vol. 51, no. 3, July 1997, p. 232-241.
- BOGGS, G.R. The Learning Paradigm. *Community College Journal*, vol. 66, no. 3, 1996, p. 24-27.
- BOYLAN, C. Quality teaching, relevant content: Catering for all. *Australian Science Teachers Journal*, vol. 42, no. 1, March 1996, p. 59-62.
- BRADY, M. Education for Life as It is Lived. *The Educational Forum*, vol. 60, no. 3, Spring 1996, p. 249-255.
- BRANDT, R. Is Outcomes-Based Education Dead? *Educational Leadership*, vol. 51, no. 6, March 1994, p. 5.
- BRINDLEY, G. Some current issues in second language teaching. *Prospect*, vol. 1, no. 3, 1986, p. 11-44.
- BRUNER, J.S. 1971. *The Relevance of Education*. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd.
- CHITTY, C. The school effectiveness movement: origins, shortcomings and future possibilities. *The Curriculum Journal*, vol. 8, no. 1, Spring 1997, p. 45-62.
- CHRISHOLM, L. and VALLY, S. 1996. *Culture of Learning and Teaching in Gauteng Schools*. Report of the Committee on The Culture of Learning and Teaching, commissioned by the Ministry of Education, Gauteng.
- CITIZEN THE. SA pupils' literacy skills 'frightening'. Friday, 15 August 1997, p. 19.

- CRITICOS, C. 1989. *Experiential Learning in Formal and Non-formal Education*. Durban: Media Resource Centre.
- DAVIS, O.L. Who is the Curriculum Customer? *Curriculum*, vol. 11, no. 1, Spring 1990, p. 38-41.
- DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION. 1997. *Policy Document - Senior Phase (grades 7 to 9)*. Pretoria: Department of Education.
- DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION. 1997. *National Evaluation and Monitoring of the Trial of Curriculum 2005 and OBE in Provincial Pilot Schools in South Africa*. Pretoria: Department of Education.
- DONGPING, Y. Set Up an Educational Program That Is Democratic, Centres Around Man, and Is Alive. *Chinese Education: A Journal of Translations*, vol. 23, no. 2, 1990, p. 8-14.
- DRYDEN, G. and VOS, J. 1994. *The Learning Revolution*. Surrey: Unwin Brothers Limited.
- DUNN, R. The Goals and Track Record of Multicultural Education. *Educational Leadership*, vol. 54, no. 7, April 1997, p. 74-77.
- DUTTON, N. Getting started: differentiation. *Language Learning Journal*, no. 15, March 1997, p. 10-13.
- EDWARDS, B. Constructivist Education and Middle Level Curriculum. *Curriculum Perspectives*, vol. 14, no. 3, 1994, p. 52-55.
- FORSTER, K. Primary education in an age of outcomes. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, vol. 27, no. 2, 1995, p. 35-48.
- FYFE, A. and FIGUEROA, P. 1993. *Education for Cultural Diversity - The Challenge for a New Era*. Cornwall, Great Britain: T.J. Press (Padstow) Ltd.
- GLATTHORN, A.A. Outcomes-based Education: Reform and the Curriculum Process. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, vol. 8, no. 4, Summer 1993, p. 354-363.
- GORWOOD, B. The End of Child-centredness? *Aspects of Education*, vol. 45, 1991, p. 79-91.
- GREEN, C.F; CHRISTOPHER, E.R. and LAM, J. Developing discussion skills in the ESL classroom. *ELT Journal*, vol. 51, no. 2, April 1997, p. 135-143.
- GRUNDY, S. and BONSER, S. Choosing to Change : Teachers Working with Student Outcome Statements. *Curriculum Perspectives*, vol. 17, no. 1, 1997, p. 1-12.
- HANNAN, B. Why Teach to Outcomes? *IARTV, Occasional Paper*, no. 40, May 1995.
- HEYNS, A. M. Relevante Onderwys. *Fokus 2000*, vol. 17, August 1989, p. 1-3.
- HODGKINSON, H.L. Today's Curriculum - How appropriate will it be in the year 2000? *NASSP Bulletin*, vol. 71, April 1987, p. 2-7.

- HOFMEYER, J. and MOULDER, J. Towards Scenarios for South African Education : Try to Find the Rules of the Game. *South African Journal for Higher Education*, vol. 2, no. 1, 1988, p. 9-13.
- HOUGH and HORNE. 1994. *ELSA - Intermediary*. Garden View: Hough and Horne.
- HYDE, M. The teaching of English in Morocco : the place of culture. *ELT Journal*, vol. 48, no. 4, 1994, p. 295-305.
- ISAAC, S; GUNTHORP, J; MALAN, B. AND PAHAD, M. 1996. *Lifelong Learning through a National Qualifications Framework*. Pretoria: Department of Education.
- KING, J.A. and EVANS, K.M. Can we achieve Outcomes-based Education? *Educational Leadership*, vol. 49, no. 2, 1991, p. 73-75.
- KOK, J.C. Relevante Onderwys vir Hierdie Dekade. *Nou-blad*, vol. 22, no. 1, 1991, p. 13-16.
- LADSON-BILLINGS, G. But That's Just Good Teaching! The case for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. *Theory Into Practice*, vol. 34, no. 3, Summer 1995, p. 159-165.
- LADSON-BILLINGS, G. Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal*, vol. 32, no. 3, Fall 1995, p. 465-491.
- LAZERSON, M; McLAUGHLIN, J.B; McPHERSON, B. and BAILEY, S.K. 1985. *An Education of Value: The purposes and practices of schools*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- LUBISI, C; WEDEKIND, V; PARKER, B. and GULTIG, J. 1997. *Understanding Outcomes-based Education*. Braamfontein: South African Institute for Distance Education.
- LUBISI, C; WEDEKIND, V; PARKER, B. and GULTIG, J. 1997. *Understanding Outcomes-based Education - Learning Guide*. Braamfontein: South African Institute for Distance Education.
- MAMARY, A. 14 Principles of Outcomes-based Education. *Principal*, vol. 73, January 1994, p. 19-23.
- MANNO, B.V. The New School Wars - Battles over Outcomes-based Education. *Phi Delta Kappan*, vol. 76, no. 9, May 1995, p.720-726.
- MASTERS, G and FORSTER, M. 1996. *Developmental Assessment*. Melbourne : The Australian Council for Educational Research Ltd.
- MBELLE Z. JET funded ABET Projects. *JET Bulletin*, no. 4, September 1996, p. 1-4.
- McGREGOR, R. and McGREGOR, A. 1992. *McGregor's Educational Alternatives*. Ndabeni, Cape, South Africa: The Rustica Press.
- MEIGHAN, R. 1986. *A sociology of educating*. London: Cassell Educational.

- MOON, B. A Child's Curriculum for the 1990s. *The Curriculum Journal*, vol. 2, no. 1, 1991, p. 5-17.
- MOSTERT, J.M. (RED.) 1986. *Riglyne vir Kurrikulumontwikkeling*. Pretoria: Raad vir Geesteswetenskaplike Navorsing.
- MUNBY, J. 1989. *Communicative Syllabus Design - A sociolinguistic model for defining the content of purpose-specific language programmes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- NASR, R.T. 1994. *Whole Education - A new Direction to fill the Relevance Gap*. New York/London: University Press of America.
- NOAH, H.J. and ECKSTEIN, M.A. 1987. *International study of business/industry involvement with education*. Institute of Philosophy and politics of education.: Teachers College Columbia University.
- NUNAN, D. 1986. *Learner-centred Curriculum Innovation: A Case Study*. *RELC Journal*, vol. 17, no. 1, June 1986, p. 40-70.
- NUNAN, D. 1988. *The Learner-Centred Curriculum*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- NUNAN, D. *Toward a Collaborative Approach to Curriculum Development: A Case Study*. *TESOL Quarterly*, vol. 23, no. 1, March 1989, p. 9-25.
- NUNAN, D. *From Learning-Centredness to Learner-Centredness*. *Applied Language Learning*, vol. 4, no. 1-2, 1993, p. 1-18.
- OLIVIER, M. *Teaching-learning problems in the training of black supplementary health services students*. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, vol. 2, no. 1, 1988, p. 93-101.
- O'NEIL, J. *Aiming for New Outcomes: The Promise and The Reality*. *Educational Leadership*, vol. 51, no. 6, March 1994, p. 6-10.
- ONTARIO MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING. 1995. *The Common Curriculum: Policies and Outcomes: grades 1-9*. Toronto, Ontario: Ministry of Education, Ontario.
- ORNSTEIN, A.C. *The Irrelevant Curriculum*. *The Education Digest*, vol. 54, no. 1, January 1989, p. 21-23.
- ORNSTEIN A.C. and HUNKINS, F.P. 1988. *Curriculum: foundations, principles and issues*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall.
- PAHAD, M. 1997. *Assessment and the National Qualifications Framework. A Guide for Teachers*. Sandton: Heinemann Higher and Further Education (Pty) Ltd.
- PAINTER, R.E. 1988. 'n *Evaluering van die vakkurrikulum vir Gesondheidsopvoeding vanuit 'n kurrikulumteoretiese perspektief*. Ongepubliseerde M.Ed-verhandeling. Pretoria: Universiteit van Suid-Afrika.

- PETROVITZ, W. The Role of Context in the Presentation of Grammar. *ELT Journal*, vol. 51, no. 3, 1997, p. 201-207.
- PIENAAR, A.J. Teacher Training in the RSA. *Nou-blad*, vol. 22, no. 1, 1991, p. 16-18.
- POUND, L. A Curriculum built on Children's Interests. *Education*, vol. 16, no. 3, October 1988, p. 27-33.
- POWELL, R.R. Epistemological Antecedents to Culturally Relevant and Constructivist Classroom Curricula: A longitudinal study of teachers' contrasting world views. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, vol. 12, no. 4, 1996, p. 365-384.
- REGAN, E.M. and WEINIGER, O. Toward Defining and Defending Child-Centred Curriculum and Practice. *International Journal of Early Childhood*, vol. 20, no. 2, 1988, p. 1-10.
- RICHARDS, J.C. 1991. *The Context of Language Teaching*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.
- SCHUBERT, W.H. 1986. *Curriculum : Perspective, Paradigm, and Possibility*. New York: Macmillan.
- SCHWARZ, G. and CAVENER, L. Outcomes-based Education and Curriculum Change: Advocacy, Practice and Critique. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, vol. 9, no. 4, 1994, p. 326-338.
- SEEDHOUSE, P. Needs analysis and the General English classroom. *ELT Journal*, vol. 49, no. 1, 1995, p. 59-65.
- SPADY, W. 1993. *Outcomes-based Education*. Belconnen: Australian Curriculum Studies Association.
- SPENCER, J.D. 1992. *Humanism in Education. Perceptions and Dilemmas*. Armidale, NSW: Dept. of Administrative, Higher and Adult Education Studies : University of New England.
- STARFIELD, S. Science and Language : a new look at some old issues. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, vol. 4, no. 2, 1990, p.84-89.
- STEYN, J.C. Evaluering van heersende en 'relevante' kurrikulumparadigmas in die lig van 'n nuwe onderwysbedeling vir Suid-Afrika. *Suid-Afrikaanse Tydskrif vir Opvoedkunde*, vol. 13, no. 1, Februarie 1993, p. 39-44.
- STONE, B.J. Relevant Education - Part Two: What's worth knowing? *Gazankulu Education Journal*, vol. 3, no. 3, November 1989, p. 23-28.
- STONE, B.J. Relevant Education - Part Three: The Unbearable Flightiness of Becoming. *Gazankulu Journal*, vol. 4, no. 2, 1990, p. 48-52.

- STONE, B.J. Relevant Education - Part Four: Relevant to Whom? *Gazankulu Education Journal*, vol. 5, no. 1, 1991, p. 10-13.
- TABA, H. 1962. *Curriculum development; theory and practice*. Under the general editorship of Willard B. Spalding. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World.
- THERON, M.J. 1995. 'n Ondersoek na die Doeltreffendheid en Relevansie van die Kurrikulum vir Spesiale Onderwys. D.Ed-verhandeling. Pretoria: Universiteit van Suid-Afrika.
- TRUMP, J.L. and MILLER, D.F. 1979. *Secondary School Curriculum Improvement*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc.
- VAN DER MERWE I.J. and VAN NIEKERK, L.O. 1994. *Language in South Africa - Distribution and Change*. Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch.
- VAN TIL, W. 1974. *Curriculum: Quest for Relevance*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- VAN WYK, A.L. Onderwysvraagstukke in 'n Toekomstige Suid-Afrika. *Die Unie*, vol. 89, no. 1, 1992, p.13-18.
- VERMILJE, D W. 1975. *Learner-centred Reform*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- WALCOTT, W. Competence and Conversation. *Language Learning Journal*, no. 4, 1991, p. 79-83.
- WHITE PAPER ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING. 1995. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- WILES, J. and BONDI, J.C. 1984. *Curriculum Development - A Guide to Practice*. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company.
- ZAIS, R.S. 1976. *Curriculum Principles and Foundations*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers.
- ZELLERMAYER, M. When We Talk About Collaborative Curriculum-making, What Are We Talking About? *Curriculum Inquiry*, vol. 27, no. 2, 1997, p. 187-214.

ADDITIONAL READING

- ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR UNIVERSITIES AND TECHNIKONS. 1992. Academic support and bridging programmes at universities and technikons in South Africa. NATED 01-318 (92/11)
- BEARD, P.N.G. and MORROW, W.E. 1981. Problems of Pedagogics: Pedagogics and the study of education in South Africa. Durban: Butterworths.
- BLYTH, C. A Constructivist Approach to Grammar: Teaching Teachers to Teach Aspect. The Modern Language Journal, vol. 81, no. 1, 1997, p. 50-66.
- BUFFINGTON, M.; CURD, B. AND LUNT, O. Organizing for Results in High School English. Educational Leadership, vol. 46, no. 2, 1988, p. 9-10.
- CAREY, J. and DABOR, M. Management Education: an approach to improved English language teaching. ELT Journal, vol. 49, no. 1, January 1995, p. 37-43.
- CRAIG, A.P. Excellence in and through Education. South African Journal of Higher Education, vol. 2, no. 1, 1988, p. 3-8.
- DE CORTE, E. 1976. Didactische Evaluatie van het Onderwijs. Leuven (België): Universitaire Pers.
- DE LANGE, J.P. 1981. Report of the Work Committee: Curriculum Development. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.
- FLETCHER, J.F. and STREN, R.E. Language skills and adaptation: A study of foreign students in a Canadian University. Curriculum Inquiry, vol. 19, no. 3, 1989, p. 293-308.
- FORSTER, M. and MASTERS, G. 1996. Performances. Melbourne : The Australian Council for Educational Research Ltd.
- FORSTER, M. and MASTERS, G. 1996. Portfolios. Melbourne : The Australian Council for Educational Research Ltd.
- GUNTER, C.F.G. 1990. Aspects of Educational Theory (With special reference to schools). Stellenbosch: University Publishers and Bookseller (Pty) Limited.
- HALL, R. The Dynamics of Coping with Curriculum Change. Curriculum Perspectives, vol. 17, no. 1, 1997, p. 31-44.
- HARTSHORNE, K. 1992. Crisis and Challenge - Black Education 1910-1990. Cape Town:Oxford University Press.
- HOLLINGSWORTH, S. Leaving Normal. Curriculum Inquiry, vol. 27, no. 2, 1997, p. 247-254.
- HUEBNER, D. The search for religious metaphors in the language of education. Phenomenology and Pedagogy, vol. 2, no. 2, 1984, p. 112-123.

- JANSEN, C.P. 1984. 'n Model vir 'n kurrikulumsentrum in die RSA. D.ED-proefskrif. Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria.
- JANSE VAN RENSBURG, M.J. 1987. 'n Evaluering van die Wiskunde-kurrikulum van vakleerlinge. D.Ed.-skripsie. Johannesburg: Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit.
- KAPLAN, M.E. 1993. An investigation into education and training systems, structures and planning in a number of African countries (Botswana, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Namibia, Nigeria, Zambia and Zimbabwe). Pretoria: Department of Education and Culture, Administration: House of Assembly.
- KROUSE, M.A. 1986. Opvoedkundig Verantwoorde Kurrikulumteorie. Ongepubliseerde D.Ed-proefskrif. Johannesburg: Randse Afrikaans Universiteit.
- KRÜGER, R.A. 1980. Beginsels en Kriteria vir Kurrikulumontwerp. Pretoria: HAUM uitgewery.
- MACKRORY, P. Continuous Assessment. The Association of Professional Teachers, June 1996.
- MARZANO, R.J; PICKERING, D. and McTIGHE, J. 1993. Assessing Student Outcomes: Performance Assessment Using the Dimensions of Learning Model. Alexandria, USA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- McCARTHY, M.M. Challenges to the Public School Curriculum: New Targets and Strategies. Phi Delta Kappan, vol. 75, no. 1, 1993, p. 58-60
- MÜLLER, K. 1980. Studies in Second Language Acquisition. Indiana: University Publications/Printing.
- OXFORD, R.L. Where Are We Regarding Language Learning Motivation? The Modern Language Journal, vol. 78, no. 4, 1994, p. 512-523.
- PEACOCK, M. The effect of authentic materials on the motivation of EFL learners. ELT Journal, vol. 51, no. 2, April 1997, p. 144-156.
- PIAGET, J. 1977. The development of thought. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- PLATT, E and BROOKS, F.B. The "Acquisition-Rich Environment" Revisited. The Modern Language Journal, vol. 78, no. 4, 1994, p. 497-511.
- POWELL, R.R. Epistemological Antecedents to Culturally Relevant and Constructivist Classroom Curricula: A Longitudinal Study of Teachers' Contrasting World Views. Teaching and Teacher Education, vol. 12, no. 4, 1996, p. 365-384.
- POYNTING, S. Flies and Elephants: The Common Sense of Relevance. Curriculum Perspectives, vol. 6, no. 2, 1986, p. 17-22.
- PRETORIUS, J.W.M. 'n Geïntegreerde Gemeenskapsgebaseerde Strategie vir die Voorsiening van Relevante Onderwys. Pedagogiek Joernaal, vol. 12, no. 1, 1991, p. 57-69.

- ROUSSEAU, A.H; LOMBARD, S. and KAMPER, G.D. 1989. Die eise wat die werksituasie aan skoolverlaters stel ten opsigte van Afrikaanse en Engelse Taalvaardighede. Pretoria: Raad vir Geesteswetenskaplike Navorsing.
- SHERRIFFS, A.C. and CLARK, K.B. 1970. How relevant is education in America today? Washington: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research.
- SIMPSON, M. Developing differentiation practices: meeting the needs of pupils and teachers. The Curriculum Journal, vol. 8, no. 1, Spring 1997, p. 85-104.
- STENHOUSE, L. 1986. An Introduction to Curriculum Research and Development. Guilford and King's Lynn, Great Britain: Biddles Ltd. (Heinemann).
- STEVICK, E.W. 1990. Humanism in Language Teaching. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- VAN DER STOEP, F. and LOUW, W.J. 1976. Inleiding tot die Didaktiese Pedagogiek. Pretoria: Academica.
- VAN DER WALT, C. Teacher training: a challenge for language departments. South African Journal of Higher Education, vol. 6, no. 1, 1992, p. 117-123.
- VAN PRAAG, J.P. 1982. Foundations of Humanism. Buffalo, New York: Prometheus Books.
- VAN ZYL, C. 1993. Southern African Conference on Relevant Education. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.
- VAN ZYL, P. 1975. Opvoedkunde deel II : 'n Handleiding vir studente. Johannesburg: De Jong.
- VREY, J.D. 1992. The self-actualising educand. Pretoria: University of South Africa.
- WATSON, K. and WILSON, R.. 1985. Contemporary Issues in Comparative Education. Sydney: Croom Helm.
- WILLIS, G. The Corpus and the Incorporeal of Curriculum. Curriculum Inquiry, vol. 19, no. 1, 1989, p. 71-96.
- WILSON, B.G. 1996. Constructivist Learning Environments - Case Studies in Instructional Design. New Jersey: Educational Technology Publications, Inc.
