APPROACHES IN CURRICULUM DESIGN: LECTURERS' PERSPECTIVES

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ABSTRACT

Curriculum is the subjects comprising a course of study in a school or college. Or to simplify, curriculum is a guideline of theoretical study which is applied practically. It must be correct if curriculum is the design of how the teaching-learning will be conducted that is usually made by lecturers. However, there must be some different opinions from one lecture with another lecturer dealing with what approach is suitable. This study aims to know which approach is better in designing curriculum for language learners in Higher Education and the importance of lecturer's role in designing it. By using qualitative method, the writer collected the data by giving questionnaire to some lecturers that were involved as curriculum designers.

Keywords: approaches in curriculumdesign, lecturers' perspective, languagelearners in highereducation, lecturer's role.

1. Introduction

"Curriculum is an academic plan that consist of eight elements; they are purpose, content, sequence, learners, instructional processes, instructional materials, evaluation that enrich learning. (Stark and Lattuca,2009). From the statement above, it is quite clear that curriculum has an important point in teaching and learning process. Here, curriculum stands as the key of teaching and learning process which means that curriculum and its design will give direct impact in the content, process, and also output. In designing it, content, process and also output of every curriculum has to be clear, and suitable with the need of the learners. Designers need to pay attention to the learners and also society that keep changing from time to time, and it changes their needs, for learning, for sure.

There are three approaches that is stated from Richard (2013) in designing curriculum for language learners; They are forward, process, and backward. Each of those approaches has its own characteristic, such as starting point, output or result, and etc. That becomes the reason why we cannot choose one approach and judge another before we take a look on the learners as the target.

Lecturer as a facilitator that leads teaching and learning process has a big role in designing curriculum. It is clearly explained on *Undang-UndangNomor 12 Tahun 2012 Pasal 35 Ayat 2*on curriculum that states*KurikulumPendidikanTinggidikembangkanolehsetiapperguruantinggideng anmengacupadaStandarNasionalPendidikanTinggiuntuksetiap program studi yang mencakuppengembangankecerdasanintelektual, akhlakmulia, danketerampilan*. It deals with lecturers who have big role in designing curriculum for their own students in higher education, since they are people who face them almost everyday and know what exactly becomes their needs, wants, lacks.

This study aims to know which approach that fits better in designing language curriculum in higher education according to lecturers' perspective and lecturers' role in designing it. The writer conducted the study in Tidar University (Untidar) in Magelang.

2. Material and Methods
   2.1. Review of related Literature

   Approach
   Anthony (1965) defines approach as correlative assumption when assumption and beliefs of language and language learning are specified. Approach actually deals with the beliefs of someone into some theories.

   Curriculum
   Word "curriculum" comes from latin word "currere" which means run or run away. It means that curriculum is way that make the course run well to reach the goal.
   Stark and Lattuca (2009) state that curriculum is an academic plan that consists of eight elements; They are purpose, content, sequence, learners, instructional processes, instructional materials, evaluation that enrich learning.

   Curriculum development is well-structured and systematic planning methods, start form designing until evaluating which underlie the making of syllabus, lesson plan, and another. (Carl, 1995)
   Moreover, Tyler's (2013) defines curriculum development as deductive rational-linear approach which believes that curriculum needs to focus on addressing the goal, developing students experience which help students to achieve the goal, organizing students experience and evaluation of the goal.

   Approaches in designing curriculum
   Richards (2010)mentions that there are 3 approaches in designing curriculum in higher education that come from different perspective. They are forward, center, and backward. In making those three curriculums, there are three different starting points also, starting with input for backward, process for center, and output for backward. Every starting point reflects different assumptions about the meaning and goal of teaching and learning.
   a. Forward
      Forward deals with input. It means that we need to think about its linguistic first, which means the content. Content here means that lecturers need to think logically to assume what content of the language that will be taught before teaching and learning process. All of the contents that are selected need to be arranged well,including the sequence in teaching them into teachable and learnable unit. The result of this approach is syllabus.
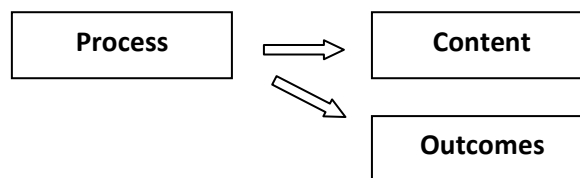
$$\boxed{\text{Content}} \longrightarrow \boxed{\text{Process}} \longrightarrow \boxed{\text{Outcomes}}$$
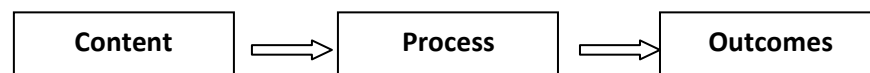
Tsui (2005) mentions that there are some issues of forward design:
i. What linguistic forms do we want to teach?
ii. How do we represent these items in the form of tasks or activities?
iii. How do we get learners to use the target items to complete the tasks or activities, either individually or in pairs/groups?
iv. Are there any gaps between the target language structures/functions and those produced by the students?

b. Central
Process deals with how the class is conducted or what methodology that is needed by lecturer to conduct the class. Methodology is defined as type of learning activities, procedure, and technique which are implemented by lecturer to teach in class. Throughout the twentieth century, lecturers need to insert some technology in making teaching strategies. Lecturer need to pay attention to creative, interactive, and communicative environment in choosing what methodology that will be implemented.

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┌─────────────┐              ┌─────────────┐
│   Process   │    ⟹        │   Content   │
└─────────────┘     ⟶        └─────────────┘
                              ┌─────────────┐
                              │  Outcomes   │
                              └─────────────┘
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Some issues related to central design, such as:
i. What opportunities are afforded for learners to participate in meaning making?
ii. What kind of shared understanding needs to be established among the learners?
iii. What kind of participation framework is being set up and what are the role configurations for the group and for the individual learner over time?
iv. What opportunities have been created by learners in the process of participation?

c. Backward
Backward approach is started with output. Output refers to learning outcomes, that is, what learner will get or will be able to do after they had the class. It can be a target that needs to be achieved by every student in class without exception. This might be a standardized test such as TOEFL, or as simple as students are able to do something. For example, if lecturer conducts a class which has output "students are able to make speech text and practice it in front of the class", lecturer needs to do something in conducting the class to make sure that every student is able to make speech text and practice it in front of audience.
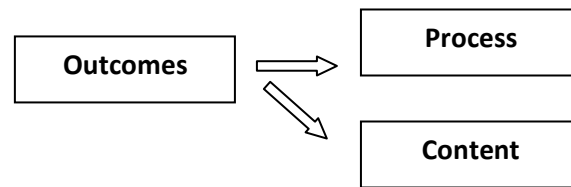
Backward Design through objectives:

i. Related to word content, process, and outcomes, people who use backward design believes that outcome become a criteria ofwhat material that will be selected, content is the outline of it, and process is strategy and instructional procedures that are developed.

ii. The steps related to backward design objectives are identify desired result, determine acceptable evidence of learning, and plan learning experience.

Lecturers' role

Jadhav (2013) explains in her journal that lecturer has important role in designing curriculum in higher education. Lecturers are people who meet students everyday in class. Because they meet everyday lecturer can know how is their condition, their needs, wants, and what exactly they accept as well as what kindof teaching method and strategy that must be understood well by them. This strategy and method that they need for designing lesson plan and syllabus must be considered as one important thing in designing curriculum, dealing with what curriculum approach that they need to increase their knowledge and achievement in class, but still make them comfortablein their study.

Olagteru-Olagbegi (2016) from *Simon Fraser University* suggests that lecturers need to constantly search for new method and strategy in teaching learningin conducting the class. Appropriate curriculum is needed to make them able to design such enjoyable class condition which gain their interest. They need to facilitate students well in class and design what curriculum that really can bring students' significant learning experience, instead of just sharing what problem that will be faced by students, but without giving any solution and preparation for them in facing it. In conclusion, lecturers' has important role in designing curriculum for "their own students" in higher education.

Previous Studies

A study from Van Lier (2000) concluded that a classroom cannot start from input, which make lecturers are thinking about what to teach first, either output of the class which only make them focus on what to achieve. Everything is about process, about how to provide environment that make students' feel that they have powerful opportunities to do many powerful actions to make the material unforgettable. Therefore, something is needed to make students feel that are in heterogenous group with many differences, which encourage them to share what they know one to another and to the lecturer (Van Lier, 2008).

Based on those two studies, the writer questioned that what approach is actually needed to be used in making curriculum in higher education, and how important are lecturers' role in making that curriculum.

2.1. Methodology

2.2.1. Research Method

The writer used qualitative method in this study. Ndae (2013) explained that qualitative method deals with the use of word to elaborate the result of the study. Moreover, it has more benefit for writer in analyzing the data that wereobtained.

2.2.2. Subject of the Study /Participants

The participants of the study is five English lecturers for undergraduate program of English Department in UntidarMagelang. They are chosen because they have experience in designing curriculum for language learners, especially in Untidar. Furthermore, the writer wants to know what they exactly think if they are asked about what approach that is better to design curriculum for their students in Untidar, since they meet they students almost everyday and the subject who will implement it.

2.2.3. Instrument of Data Collection

The instrument that is used is open-ended questionnaire with four statements. Participants are asked to give check on one of their choice of each statement, among Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, or Strongly Agree. Then, participants also give explanation about their reason why they choose that arguments.

2.2.4. Technique of Collecting the Data

The writer collected the data by the questionnaire that was given to the participants (lecturers) directly by meeting, not via online.

The questionnaire was given to some lecturers that had experience in making curriculum in Untidar, then researcher explained the questionnaire slowly to them while they are filling the questionnaire. By giving this questionnaire, the writer also got some suggestions from the participants.

2.2.5. Technique of Analyzing the Data

In analyzing data, the writer used the theory of Miles and Huberman (1994), because she used qualitative method. It means that the analysis must answer the questions directly. Based on Miles and Huberman (1994), data analysis is follow up point after data collection, that means in collecting the data in doing research, researcher obviously analyzed the data. It will be impossible if the writer just collected the data without analyzingthem. There are three steps of analyzing data:

a. Data Reducing

After the data were collected, they need to be reduced. Reducing the data collection means summarizing, choosing and focusing on important points, and relate them to the theme and pattern of the

study. By reducing the data, it will make the data clearer and more understandable, that can help either researcher to do the next step of analyzing data or reader to understand it.

In this case, the writer sorted the questionnaire based on participants' answers, dealing with their argument agree, disagree, strongly agree, or strongly disagree.

b. Data Display

The purpose of displaying data is to help us understanding what is happening, then do something further analysis as follow up to the previous one. For the researcher, it would be easier to understand what is happening on data after they were reduced and displayed or presented, the researcher could do the next plan of research based on researcher experience.

In this study, the writer displayedthe data in form of table. The questionnaire table was displayed after filling in the data from participants, related to their arguments. Later, they will be discussed well with their explanation also.

c. Drawing Conclusion

The last step of analyzing data is drawing conclusion. The researcher needed to draw conclusion as the answer of the research. Usually in concluding it, researcher needsto take some consultations to other people that master it more, lecturer for example.

In this study, the writer concluded the result after analyzing the data, comparing to theory and previous study, then consulting some people that master it more.

3. Result and Discussion

Table 1

Research data

No	Statement	SD	D	A	SA	Explanation
1	Make (Input, Process, Output)* as the starting point is a better way in designing curriculum for language learner in higher education.	0 0%	0 0%	2 40%	3 60%	
2	Designing curriculum based on (Input, Process, Output)* brings some problems for lecturers and students.	1 20%	0 0%	1 20%	3 60%	
3	Curriculum design for language learner in Higher Education has its characteristic.	0 0%	0 0%	2 40%	3 60%	
4	Lecturers have important role in designing curriculum for students in higher education	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	5 100%	

a. Approaches in Curriculum Design

Based on questionnaire statement in Table 1, no 1 and 2 refer to approaches in curriculumdesign for language learners and problem that perhaps are faced in designing it based on lecturers' perspectives.

The result is noparticipants are on agree side, 40% agree and 60% strongly agree. In addition, the point of this statement is on the choice input, process, and output. Based on the result, 60% chose strongly agree and 20% agreed to concern on output. They chose output as the "starting pont" in designing curriculum, but they agreed that all those three things are important. Output or outcome is the one that will give direct impact to students. People will know how the students are developed in school, how the students get in class if the output is quite clear. For example, the output of a language curriculum is students become creative, innovative, and productive, so that they can survive in ASEAN Economic Community. After getting the output, designer will think of the content dealing with what to be taught to students, and the process that deals with how to teach that contentto them.

Then the point is, how to choose an output to our learners? One of the participants explained:

"We need to do need analysis in order our curriculum and our graduates can be used by stakeholder." (L1)

"Curriculum is a fundamental based development." (L2)

According to her explanation above, we need to do need analysis to students to know their needs, wants, and also lacks before stating what that will become the output of the curriculum. By doing so, the output of the curriculum will be fit with their needs and what society needs nowadays.

Still in number one, 20% of the participants is on agree side, but chose input as starting point. The reason why *L4* chose it is the content is more important. L4 thinks that neither output can be attainednor process can run well if the content it not suitable with students needs.

In statement number 2, "Designing curriculum is based on (Input, Process, Output)* brings some problems" deals with the problem that is faced by lecturer in designing curriculum. The responses of the participants are 20% strongly disagreed that output as starting point usually brings problems, and 80% are on agree side that making process as the starting point can bring some problems. All in all, theywere on thesame side that did not think if making curriculum starting from output will bring many problems.

"The curriculum will not be balanced if we start to design it from process." (L4)

L4 thinks that if designing curriculum starts from process we perhaps ignore the goal of the curriculum. Process is a development of how to deliver content and achieve goal, so process is actually not really suitable for curriculum language learner and will give some problems such as unbalance.

b. Characteristic of Language Curriculum

In accordance with the statement number 3, all of the participants were on agree side and they think there are some characteristic that curriculum designers need to concern.

"Each curriculum has their own specialties that make it different one to another. Different learner, different characteristic." (L3)
"Each institution has their own characteristic that makes the curriculum special." (L5)
"Curriculum in EFL has some differences from other subjects." (L1)
Above is some explanations that were given from some participants of the study. In fact, curriculum for EFL learners has some differences one another, such as teaching methods, the way they develop the skills, language diagnostic assessment, etc.

c. Lecturers' Role
    Statement number 4 deals with the role of lecturer in designing curriculum, all of the participants (100%) agreed that lecturers have important role in designing curriculum.
"Lecturers are important since they will implement the curriculum." (L1)
"Lecturers' role is important, since theywill apply the curriculum so they need to know how to apply it in correct way." (L4)
"Lecturers' role is important since they will apply the curriculum by themselves." (L5)
From explanation for L1, 4 and 5, they stated that lecturers have important point since they will apply that curriculum itself to their learners, so that they need to understand the curriculum well. The content, activity, and output must be understood by them.
"Lecturers know what learners needs." (L2)
"Lecturer is key point in designing curriculum for learners, many things depend on them." (L3)
In L2 and L3 explanation, lecturers' role becomes important because they know students' need. How lecturers can know students need analysis can be done by observation. They are people who meet students almost everyday in class, they must understandthe condition of the class, the teaching strategy that is suitable for them, etc. What they do everyday can represent an observation of students. By Doing so, slowly they will understand their lacks, wants, and needs. Furthermore, from that need analysis lecturers will deliver the observation to curriculum designers, so that they can design suitable curriculum based on that analysis. The role of lecturers does not stop here. As the facilitators who teach students directly in class, lecturers need to know how to implement the curriculum in correct way for their students. How to do it is by making suitable lesson plan with activities that can be done by them and increase their skills. Thatis the lecturer's role in designing curriculum.

4. **Conclusion**
    Curriculum is fundamental basis that needs to be developed, so that in designing it, people need to concern about many aspects related to them. The aspects are analysis, society or environment, etc. In making curriculum they need to think on such aspects. Moreover, according to the curriculum standard of Kemenristekdikti, curriculum is a prgram that is arranged to achieve a goal, so that goal becomes important point in curriculum.
    For curriculum designers especially language curriculum, there are three approaches. They are forward, center, and backward. Forward approach is an approach that concernS to content at first, center concern to process, and

backward concern to output at first. No matter what approach is used, it must have advantages and disadvantages.

In this point, the role of lecturer is needed. The reason why they are needed is to choose which one of those approaches that is suitable in making curriculum for their learners. Then, how to choose it? Lecturers who have already done some "natural" observations of their learners through their meetings almost everyday can analyze their observation, then deliver students need, lacks and wants to curriculum designer, who are also lecturers. Thus, designers need to relate the curriculum to society and some conditions.

This study proved that according to lecturers' perspectives in Tidar University, backwars approach stands as the suitable approach that has less problem in the process of making and also implementing. It also proved that lecturers have important role as well,since they are the ones who make, and apply the curriculum.

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