

# Lecture 1: Course Design and Syllabus

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# Probing questions:

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- Have you ever designed a course for English language learners?
- What did you have to take into consideration, when you designed your course?
- What were your resources and challenges?

# What is a language course?

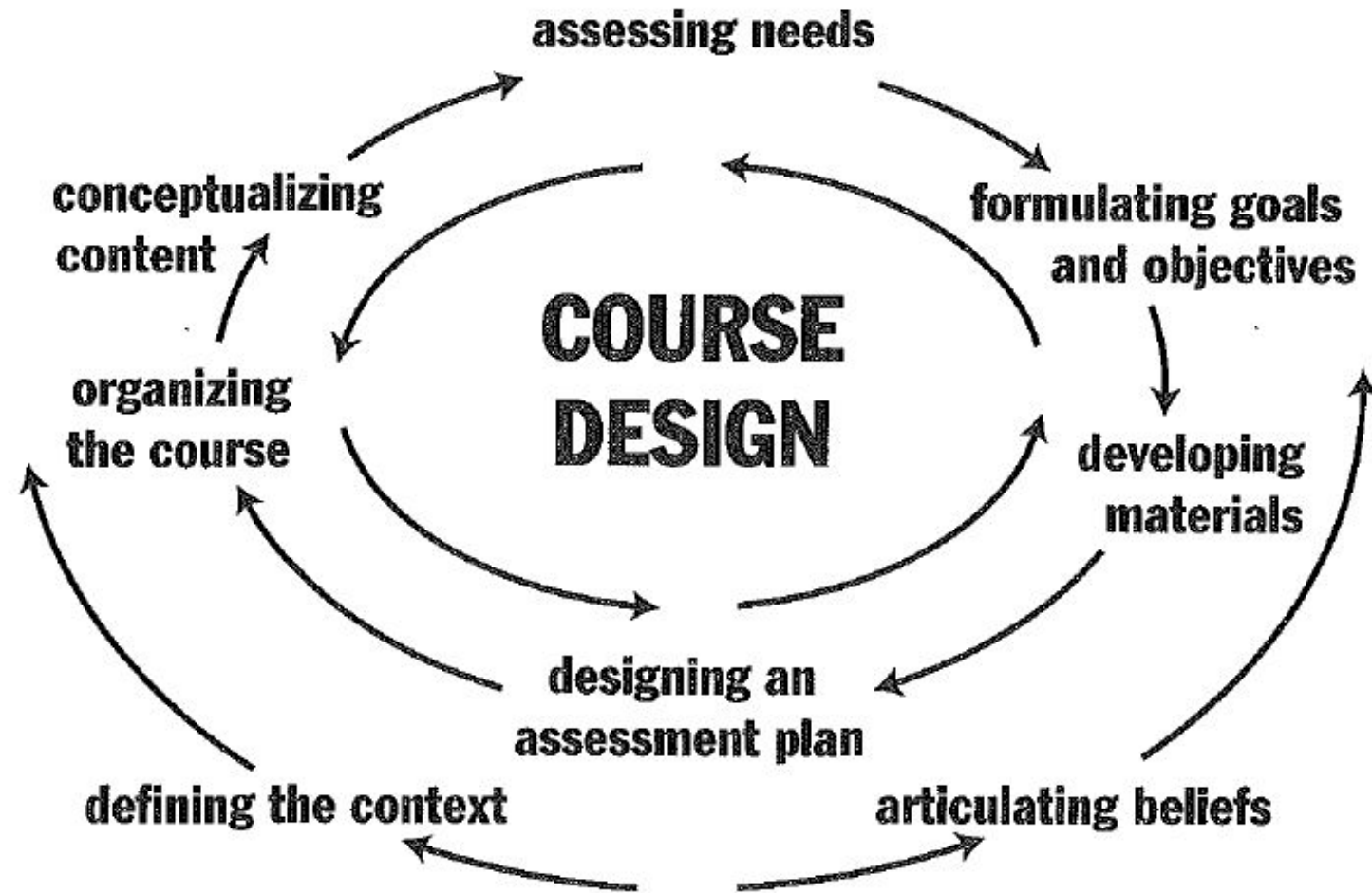
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- ✓ A course is “an integrated series of teaching-learning experiences, whose ultimate aim is to lead the learners to a particular state of knowledge”

(Hutchinson and Waters 1996: 65)

- General English course, Survival English course, English for Doctors, English for Aviation, English for Academic Purposes (EAP)

**Figure 1.1: A Framework of Course Development Processes**

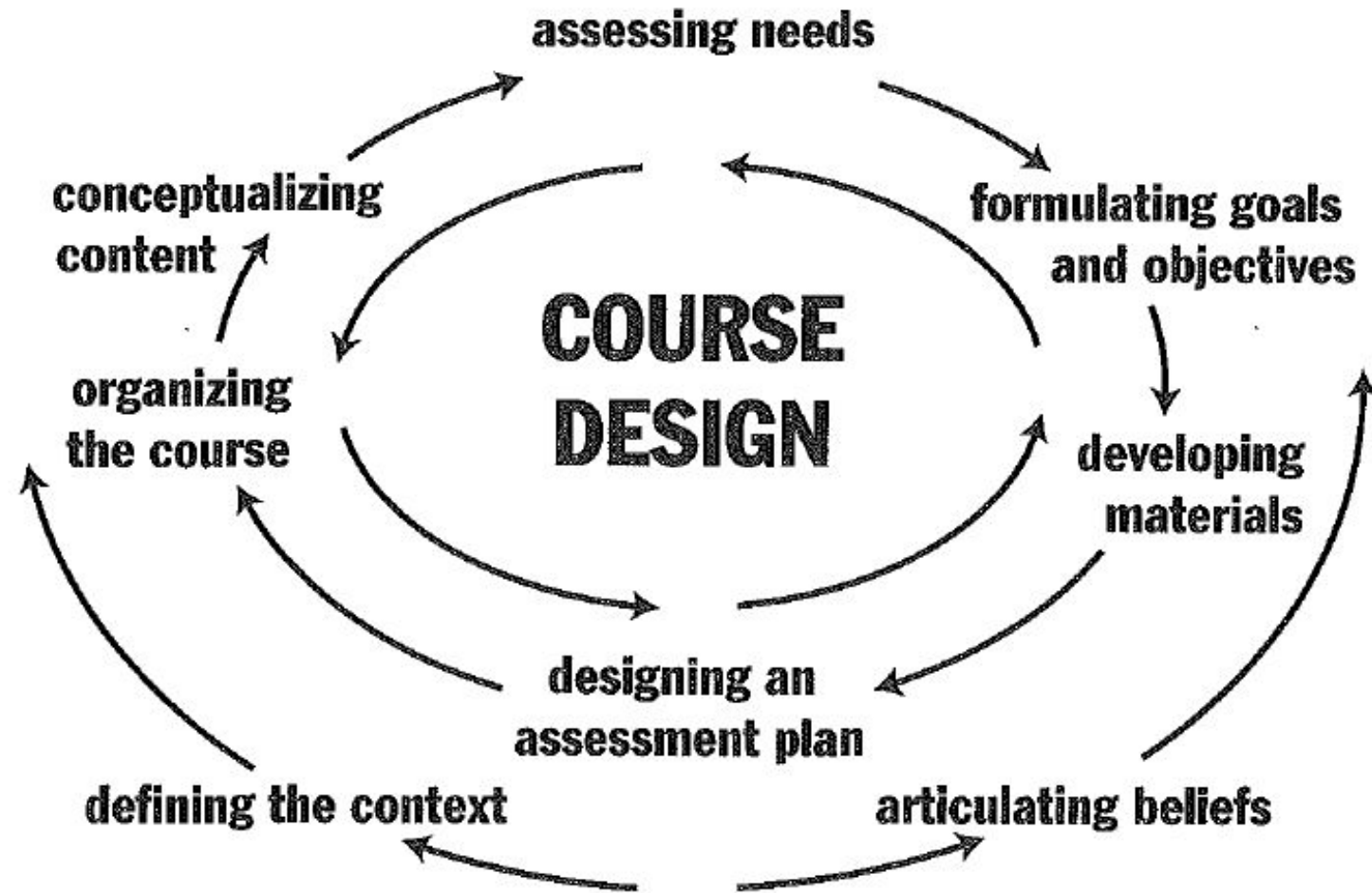


# Articulating beliefs

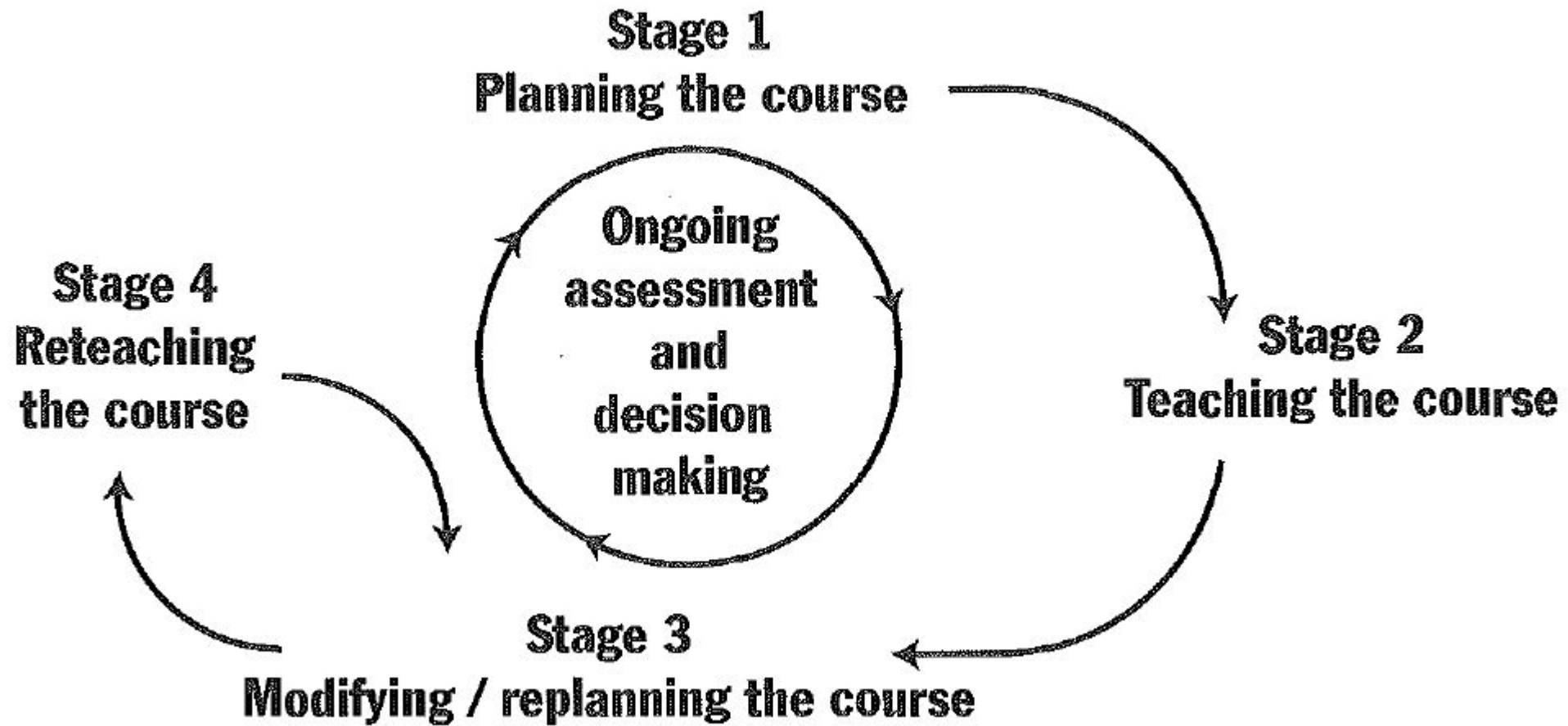
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- What is a language?
  - Rule-governed vs meaning-governed
- What does it mean to be proficient in the language?
- How can you motivate students to be better learners of the language?
  - Relating teaching to life experiences; consider SSs learning styles
- How can your teaching style affect your learners?

**Figure 1.1: A Framework of Course Development Processes**



**Figure 1.2: The Cycle of Course Development**



# Products of course design

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- A course rationale
- A list of goals and objectives
- A list of competencies achieved by the students
- A needs assessment questionnaire
- A test bank
- A syllabus



# Task for this course

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Choose a course as the basis for your work. It can be:

- a course you have taught and want to redesign
- a course you are planning to teach
- a course in which you are or have been a learner

Follow the process of course design to develop a syllabus for your course. Present your syllabus in class at the end of the semester.

# Characteristics of a syllabus

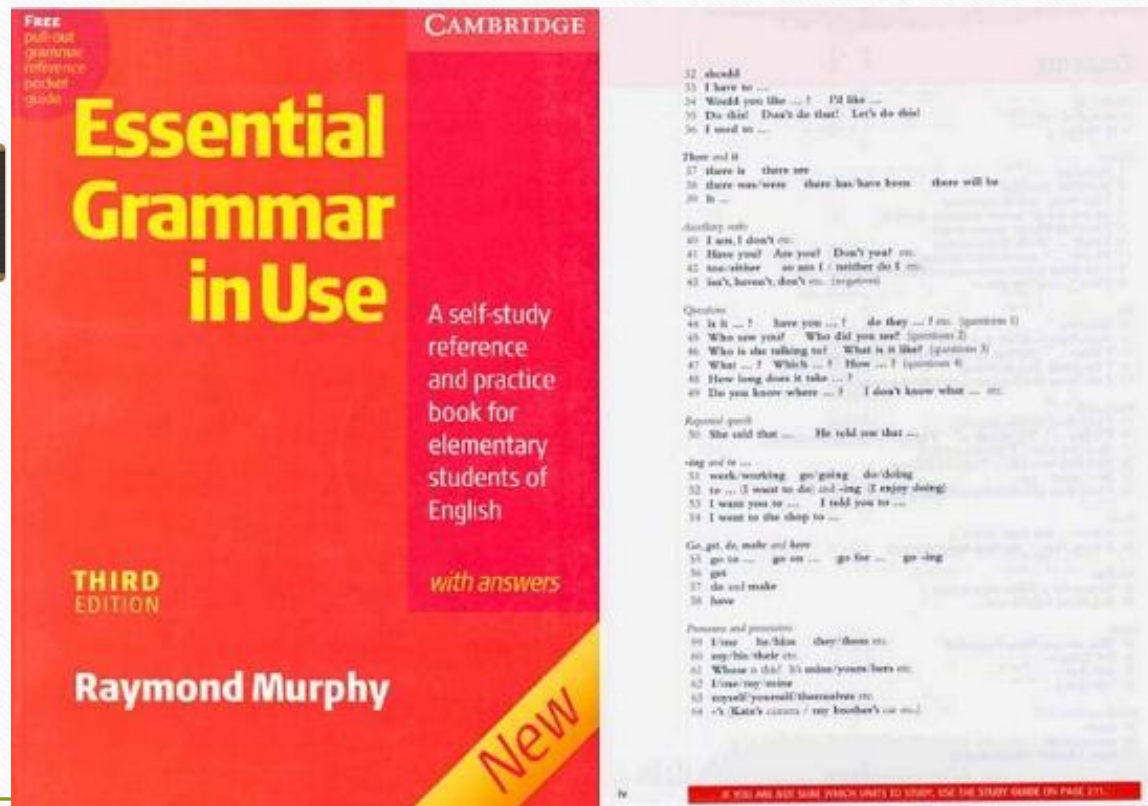
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- Describes the major elements that will be used in a language course and provides the basis for its instructional focus and content
- Consists of a **comprehensive list** of items to be taught in the course - content items (words, structures, topics) and process items (tasks, methods)
- Includes explicit objectives, time schedules, methodology or approach, recommended reading materials etc...

# Types of syllabus

Grammatical	Situational
Lexical	Topic-based
Grammatical-Lexical	Skills-based
Functional	Task-based
Integrated-Skills syllabus	

# Grammatical syllabus



- Organized around grammatical items
- Grammar-translation method
- Advantages/disadvantages?

# Lexical syllabus



Identifies target vocabulary to be taught according to levels:

- Elementary level: 1.000 words
- Intermediate level: an additional 2,000 words
- Upper Intermediate level: an additional 2,000 words
- Advanced level: an additional 2,000+ words

# Functional syllabus

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- Main assumption: mastery of individual functions results in overall communicative ability
- Things that learners can do with the language:
  - Suggesting, promising, apologizing, greeting, inviting, requesting, complaining, suggesting, agreeing etc.

# Situational syllabus

- Organized around the language needed for different situations
- Advantages/disadvantages?



A word cloud on a blue background containing various situational terms. The words are arranged in a roughly rectangular shape, with some words being larger and more prominent than others. The words include: restaurant, bar, café, home, doctors, telephone, store, bank, office, city, bus, cinema, counter, airport, immigration, hotel, airplane, street, and post.

# Topical or content-based syllabus

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- Organized around themes, topics, or other units of content.
- With a topical syllabus, content rather than grammar, functions, or situations is the starting point in syllabus design.
- An example:
  - Television
  - Modern architecture
  - Advertising
  - Ecology
  - Alternative energy



# Skills-based syllabus

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- Organized around the different underlying abilities that are involved in using a language for purposes such as reading, writing, listening, or speaking

## WRITING CRITICALLY

### Introduction

Writing critically

Arguing and discussing

### Providing reasons and explanations

#### Arguing a point of view

Generalisations

Cautious language

### Evaluating a point of view

Advantages and disadvantages

### Comparing and contrasting

### Providing support

Supporting with examples

Providing evidence to support your claims

### Drawing conclusions

Recommendations

*Summary*

*References*

# Task-based syllabus

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- Organized around tasks that students will complete in the target language
- A task is an activity or goal that is carried out using language such as finding a solution to a puzzle, reading a map and giving directions, or reading a set of instructions and assembling a toy (Skehan 1996, 20)
- Tasks can be pedagogical (information-gap tasks, matching etc.) and real-life (decision-making, opinion exchange, problem solving etc.)

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<b>Integrated-Skills syllabus</b>	

## VOCABULARY

- 1** What do you do?: *I'm a student, I work in a shop*  
**The alphabet**  
**Possession:** *my, your, etc.*
- 5** **Countries and nationalities:** *Germany, German, etc.*  
**Punctuation**  
**Pronunciation:** Word stress 2
- 9** **Everyday life:** *wake up, have lunch, etc.*  
**Adverbs of frequency:** *always, usually, etc.*
- 13** **Free-time activities:** *go jogging, read magazines, play*
- 17** **Family members:** *grandparents, niece, etc.*  
**Pronunciation:** schwa /ə/

## GRAMMAR

- 2** **Classroom language:** *a book, a desk, etc.*  
**Plurals:** regular and irregular  
*this / that*
- 6** **to be:** statements, questions, and short answers
- 10** **Present simple:** statements  
**English in the world:** Student jobs

## SKILLS

- 3** **Listen and speak:** Using numbers and asking about location  
**Ordinal numbers:** *first, second, third, etc.*  
**Pronunciation:** Word stress 1
- 7** **Listen and speak:** Giving personal information  
**wh- questions with to be**  
**English in the world:** Titles: *Mr, Ms, Mrs, Miss*
- 11** **Read and write:** People's everyday life  
**and, but, because**  
**Pronunciation:** /ɪ/ or /i:/
- 15** **Listen and speak:** Talking about likes and dislikes  
**like + -ing**  
**Pronunciation:** /b/ and /əʊ/
- 19** **Read and write:** Describing your family  
**Object pronouns**  
**English in the world:** Families
- 23** **Listen and write:** Describing your town  
**English in the world:** Street signs

## ENGLISH FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

- 4** **Story:** That's Life! Episode 1 *Hi. How are you?*  
**Saying hello and goodbye:** *Good morning, See you, etc.*  
**Possessive 's**
- 8** **Talking about days and times:** *It's Monday, It's three o'clock, etc.*  
**Prepositions of time 1:** *on, at*
- 12** **Story:** That's Life! Episode 2 *Is Sarah here?*  
**Responding**
- 16** **Ordering food and drink**  
**Would you like ... ?**  
**English in the world:** Foreign words in English
- 20** **Story:** That's Life! Episode 3 *He's a nice guy*  
**Suggestions**
- 24** **Giving directions:** *Turn right, It's on the left, etc.*

# Personalizing the syllabus?

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- Do you think it is important to personalize your syllabus?

# Task

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- Study the following syllabi, mark the components which they have in common
- Develop a syllabus template which you will use for describing your course