

# **Principles of Selecting Curriculum Content**

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# Curriculum

The term curriculum is viewed in two different ways: the micro and the macro. The micro curriculum refers to subjects while the macro curriculum refers to curricular programs.

# Seven Principles of Selecting Curriculum Content

- **1. Self-sufficiency :**

To help learners attain maximum self-sufficiency in the most economical manner is the main guiding principle of subject matter or content selection (Scheffler, 1970) as cited by Bilbao et al., (2008). Although the economy of learning implies less teaching effort and less use of educational resources, students gain more results. They can cope up with the learning outcomes effectively.

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This criterion means that students should be given a chance to experiment, observe, and do field study. This system allows them to learn independently.

With this principle in mind, I suggest that for a high school curriculum or preparatory year, there should be a one-day independent learning activity each week. However, this should be carefully planned by the teacher. When the students return, they should present outputs from the activity.

## **2. Significance**

The subject matter or content is significant if it is selected and organized for the development of learning activities, skills, processes, and attitude. It also develops the three domains of learning namely the cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills and considers the cultural aspects of the learners. Particularly, if your students come from different cultural backgrounds and races, the subject matter must be culture-sensitive. In short, select content or subject matter that can achieve the overall aim of the curriculum.

### **3. Validity**

- Validity refers to the authenticity of the subject matter or content you selected. Make sure that the topics are not obsolete.
- For example, do not include typewriting as a skill to be learned by college students. It should be about the computer or Information Technology (IT).

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- Thus, there is a need to check regularly the subject matter or contents of the curriculum, and replace it if necessary. Do not wait for another 5 years to change it.
- Modern curriculum experts are after current trends, relevance and authenticity of the curriculum; otherwise, the school or the country becomes obsolete.

## 4. Interest

This criterion is true to the learner-centered curriculum. Students learn best if the subject matter is meaningful to them. It becomes meaningful if they are interested in it. However, if the curriculum is subject-centered, teachers have no choice but to finish the pacing schedule religiously and only teach what is in the book. This approach explains why many fail in the subject.

# 5. Utility

- Another criterion is the usefulness of the content or subject matter. Students think that a subject matter or some subjects are not important to them. They view it useless. As a result, they do not study.
- Here are the questions that students often ask: Will I need the subject in my job? Will it give meaning to my life? Will it develop my potentials? Will I have a passing mark if I learn it?
- Students only value the subject matter or content if it is useful to them.

## 6. Learnability

- The subject matter or content must be within the schema of the learners. It should be within their experiences. Teachers should apply theories in the psychology of learning to know how subjects are presented, sequenced, and organized to maximize the learning capacity of the students.

## 7. Feasibility

- Feasibility means full implementation of the subject matter. It should consider the real situation of the school, the government, and the society, in general. Students must learn within the allowable time and the use of resources available. Do not give them a topic that is impossible to finish.
- For example, you have only one week left to finish the unit but then, the activities may take a month for the students to complete. Thus, this requirement is not feasible.

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- Do not offer a computer subject if there is no even electricity in the area, or there are no computers at all.
- Further, feasibility means that there should be teachers who are experts in that area. For example, do not offer English for Business Communication if there is no teacher to handle it.

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- Also, there is a need to consider the nature of the learners. The organization and design of the subject matter or content must be appropriate to the nature of students.
- So, it would be better if students in a subject-centred curriculum (with pacing schedule that must be religiously implemented every week) shall be grouped homogeneously; otherwise, many will flunk in that subject.

# Conclusion

- In conclusion, teachers in elementary and high school are not directly involved in the selection of subject-matter because there are already lesson plans made by the Department of Education. All they have to do is to follow it. However, they can also customize the lessons if their department heads or principals allows them.

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- As regards macro curriculum, the Commission on Higher Education sets guidelines and policies on what subjects to offer as minimum requirements for the course. Then, the Curriculum Development Committee will take charge of the selection, organization and implementation of the curriculum with the approval of the Academic Council.

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- The Curriculum Development Committee headed by the Director of Curriculum Development sees to it that the selection of the subject-matter and the subjects for a curricular program be examined and scrutinized using the 7 criteria mentioned above.
- But, this is not the end of the process yet! The selection of the subject matter or content of the micro and macro curriculum is only one of the considerations in designing the curriculum.

**THANK YOU**