

## **On Course for Change: Self-Reliant Curriculum Renewal**

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### **Abstract**

Typically, large-scale curriculum renewal in countries such as Thailand is led by outside experts specifically brought in for the purpose. Unfortunately, such curriculum renewal often fails. Instead of relying on outside experts, self-reliant curriculum renewal is needed where teachers who will implement the new curriculum are themselves the change agents. This paper presents a case study of self-reliant curriculum renewal at King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi. The curriculum under consideration is the set of English courses taught as language support to students of science, engineering and technology faculties. The proposed curriculum is task-based but also incorporates self-access, projects and content-based learning. To involve the teachers in the curriculum renewal process, a series of input sessions and workshops was held; a reading programme for teacher development was organised; a task-based unit was piloted; teachers were encouraged to undertake action research projects relating to the proposed curriculum; and teacher-led sessions to generate proposals for the curriculum were held. Following this process, self-reliant curriculum renewal is feasible, but all teachers must be involved, and the process should combine staff development with curriculum renewal.

There is something I don't know  
 that I am supposed to know.  
 I don't know *what* it is I don't know  
 and yet am supposed to know,  
 and I feel I look stupid  
 if I seem both not to know it  
 and not know *what* it is I don't know.  
 Therefore I pretend I know it.  
 This is nerve-racking  
 since I don't know what I must pretend to know.  
 Therefore I pretend to know everything.  
 Laing (1970)

### Introduction

Laing's poem neatly summarises the feelings of many teachers involved in the traditional version of curriculum renewal. In this process, experts from 'core' countries (Britain, North America and Australasia) have gone to 'periphery' countries such as Thailand to give locals the benefit of their wisdom and to lead the curriculum renewal. The experts, often on short-term contracts, do not have a chance to understand the local context and culture, and the resulting curricula are often more reflective of developments in ELT and ESP in the core countries than of the local situation (Holliday, 1994). Not surprisingly, much of this curriculum innovation fails. Markee (1997) suggests that 75% of all innovations fail, while Fullan (1989, cited in MacDonald, 1991) argues that all curricular reform efforts to date have failed. Similarly, there is often a feeling that the curriculum has been imposed by outsiders (Markee, 1997), and several non-core country language educators have published accounts of the inappropriacy of core-country developments for peripheral countries (e.g. Hui, 1997; Medgyes, 1986; Prodromou, 1988). This is clearly a worrying situation that warrants examination.

Curriculum innovation is "a managed process of development whose principal products are teaching (and/or testing) materials, methodological skills, and pedagogical values that are perceived as new by potential adopters" (Markee, 1997, p. 46). It is also a complex process involving many different agents, including the teachers, the learners, administrators, and outsiders such as parents and experts (Tudor, 1996). Within a core-periphery model of curriculum renewal, these agents are divided into two

categories: change agents and receivers (White *et al.*, 1991). The change agents are usually the experts from core countries, whose wisdom is to be received by the local teachers. In this model, the role of the teachers who are responsible for implementing the innovation is a passive one. They are expected to understand the expert's ideas (though Laing's poem illustrates the counter-productive nature of this understanding for many teachers) and then faithfully follow the ideas in teaching. This distinction between change agents and teachers as receivers is one of the main reasons why innovations fail.

For successful innovation, all teachers must be involved (De Lano *et al.*, 1994; Fullan, 1991 cited in Head and Taylor, 1997). Indeed, most successful innovation is likely to result from "immanent change" (Markee, 1997, p. 48) where both the need for change and the solutions are identified by the participants themselves, rather than outside change agents. Such change gives the teachers the sense of ownership and commitment which is essential to the success of innovation (Fullan, 1987; Rudduck, 1991). But how is immanent change to be implemented?

Reid *et al.* (1987) provide an interesting comparison between traditional and teacher-based approaches to curriculum development. Traditional approaches place a heavy emphasis on behavioural objectives and the product of curriculum development, the curriculum is centrally produced, evaluation and research regarding the curriculum are designed to be objective and quantitative, and the implementers are expected to follow the finished curriculum faithfully. In a teacher-based approach, on the other hand, the process of development is given a heavier emphasis than product, the curriculum is locally developed, information is gathered through action research, and the finished curriculum is expected to be adapted by the implementers as they see fit.

Following a teacher-based approach encourages several factors which can lead to success in curriculum innovation. First, the curriculum is likely to be appropriate for the local context, since it is specifically designed for that context rather than imposed on it (Kennedy and Kennedy, 1996). Second, the focus on the process of change in addition to the product can help the successful implementation of the curriculum (Fullan, 1987). Third, high levels of teacher involvement encourage teachers to reflect on their own beliefs and attitudes (Carless, 1998; Kennedy and Kennedy, 1996) and increase the sense of ownership. A further advantage of teacher-based

approaches is that learners can also be involved in the curriculum renewal process, an important point since innovation can fail if learners reject it (e.g. Shamim, 1996). There are obviously a multitude of other factors which can influence the probability of an innovation succeeding - Markee (1997) includes observability, adaptability, trialability, feasibility and compatibility - but the factors encouraged by teacher-based approaches are crucial.

Most case studies of curriculum change (see for example the papers in Brumfit, 1983 and Jordan, 1983, and the more enlightened perspective taken in the papers in Kenny and Savage, 1997) have looked at core-periphery models of innovation and have been written by outside experts. Case studies of teacher-based approaches to curriculum renewal written by insiders are needed to shed light on the process of immanent or self-reliant curriculum renewal. This paper is such a case study set in an English for Science and Technology (EST) context at a Thai university. Case studies of immanent curriculum renewal are particularly relevant to ESP situations like this, because of the greater need for context-specific curricula in ESP situations.

At this point, I had better explain my own position, since I am unlikely to be mistaken for a Thai. I am an outsider in that I am originally from a core country, and I make no claims to fully understand Thai culture. However, I have been living in Thailand for nearly ten years and working at the university which is the focus of this study for the last seven years, longer than many of the Thai staff. I can therefore claim to have a good understanding of the institution and its requirements. Also from my experience in teaching here and from students' feedback, I have a fair idea of the classroom culture and how students learn effectively and prefer to learn. I am therefore in a position somewhere between an outsider and an insider, culturally outside but institutionally inside, and, most importantly, this case study is written from the perspective of one of the participants who has implemented the previous curriculum and will implement the new curriculum.

### **Context**

King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi is a technological university where most students are engineering or science undergraduates. The University is well-respected and attracts high-quality students, though not the cream. It has recently become semi-autonomous by opting out of full government control and thus has a reasonable degree of academic independence regarding its programmes.

The Faculty of Liberal Arts includes the Department of Language which is responsible for providing EST support courses for students of other faculties. Within the same faculty, there is also a Department of Applied Linguistics which runs its own Masters programmes but whose staff also teach Department of Language courses. These two departments cooperate closely since they have only recently become separate entities.

Concerning the players within the Faculty, in the period covered in this case study there have been two Deans. The first was a senior member of the University and had the power to push proposals through the various levels of administrative bureaucracy. The second, although without so much power within the University, is highly respected for her commitment to practise what she preaches and her willingness to participate actively in anything which she asks junior staff to undertake. Both are very sympathetic towards the need for a new curriculum and have given it their full support.

The staff in the Department of Language are mostly young, enthusiastic and dedicated almost to excess. The atmosphere is one of hard work and a desire to do one's best. Although dedicated teachers, the Language staff rarely, if ever, conduct any research and lack confidence in their ability to make telling contributions outside the classroom. In contrast, staff in the Department of Applied Linguistics are more senior and more confident in their research and leadership abilities. Together, these two groups are the participants who will be responsible for the curriculum renewal and who will be most affected by it.

The Faculty has two main facilities to aid the curriculum renewal process. Firstly, there is a large, well-developed Self-Access Learning Centre which was already integrated into the previous curriculum. Secondly, there is a reasonably well-stocked library which could provide input into ideas for curriculum renewal.

For most undergraduate students, the previous English curriculum consisted of three sixty-hour courses taken in their first two years of study. The first of these was based around *Interface* (Hutchinson and Waters, 1984), a classic EST text organised around discourse functions such as describing a process and giving instructions. For their second and third courses, students were given a choice from a set of skill-specific courses such as Reading for EST and Communicative Writing. All of these courses underwent frequent

modifications but the underlying frameworks had remained unchanged for over ten years.

Given the length of time in which no serious overhaul of the courses had been undertaken, it is no surprise that the curriculum came under pressure for change. Part of the pressure came from practical factors which can frequently stimulate change, namely increasing student numbers and a changing student profile (Oates and Watson, 1996). The student intake was gradually becoming more proficient in English on entry, but was also more heterogeneous with a greater gap between the strongest and weakest students. In addition, there was a general feeling of dissatisfaction with the curriculum from both the teachers and students. The teachers felt that the material was dry, lacked variety, was not particularly relevant to the students and was unattractive. Consequently, they worked hard in supplementing and rewriting materials. The students complained that there was little real language input and that the content was boring and old-fashioned. Prompted by these grumblings, the administration called a meeting of teachers to discuss a new curriculum, and it is at this point that the process of curriculum renewal focused on in this case study starts.

### **Description**

From the meeting in September 1997 mentioned above, it was agreed that a new curriculum should be implemented for the year 2000. A tentative curricular framework was proposed which was further honed in a series of meetings among senior staff, mainly from the Department of Applied Linguistics. This framework is shown in Figure 1 below.

From Figure 1, certain key characteristics which distinguish the proposed curriculum from the previous curriculum can be noted. Firstly, students are placed into three groups to allow for the heterogeneity of student intake. Secondly, courses based on discourse functions and skills have been replaced by process-oriented courses organised around tasks, projects and adjunct content-based learning. (For a description and rationale of task-based courses, see Long and Crookes, 1992; Skehan, 1998; Williams and Burden, 1997; Willis, 1996. For projects, see Fried-Booth, 1986; Haines, 1989; Legutke and Thomas, 1991; Stoller, 1997. For adjunct content-based learning, see Brinton *et al.*, 1989; Iancu, 1997; Snow, 1991.) Thirdly, courses based purely on self-access learning were planned. Finally, the number of credits devoted to English within this framework is considerably higher than within the previous framework.

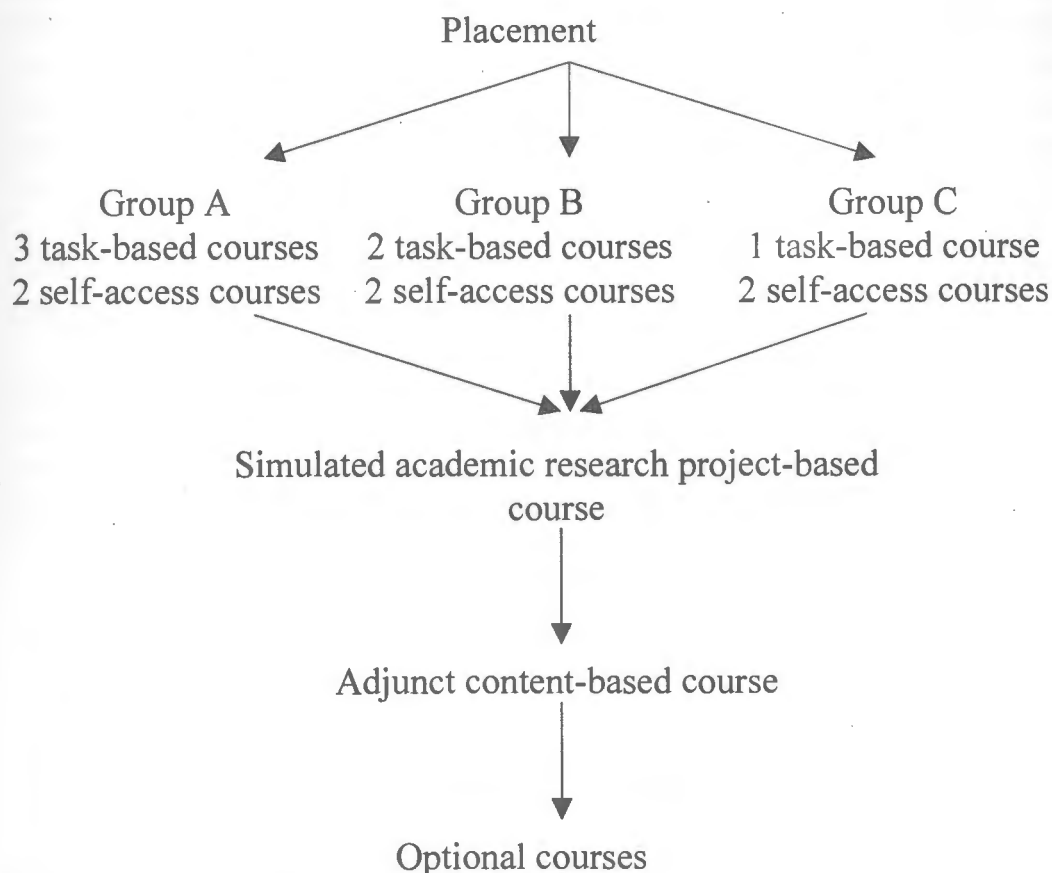


Figure 1 Initial tentative curriculum framework

These characteristics helped to suggest priority areas in which action was needed to implement the proposed curriculum. For example, research into the validity of using students' university entrance examination scores for placement was required to see if the extra workload of conducting in-house placement tests could be avoided; and the feasibility of database systems for recording students' self-access work (see e.g. Barnett and Jordan, 1991; Kenning, 1996) needed to be investigated. In addition, recognition by other faculties of the need for more credits to be devoted to English was needed.

Although initially other faculties agreed to the proposed curriculum, in November 1998 the University decided that the number of credits taken by all students needed to be reduced and thus the proposed curriculum was unfeasible. A new watered-down curriculum retaining the same characteristics was therefore proposed and is shown in Figure 2.

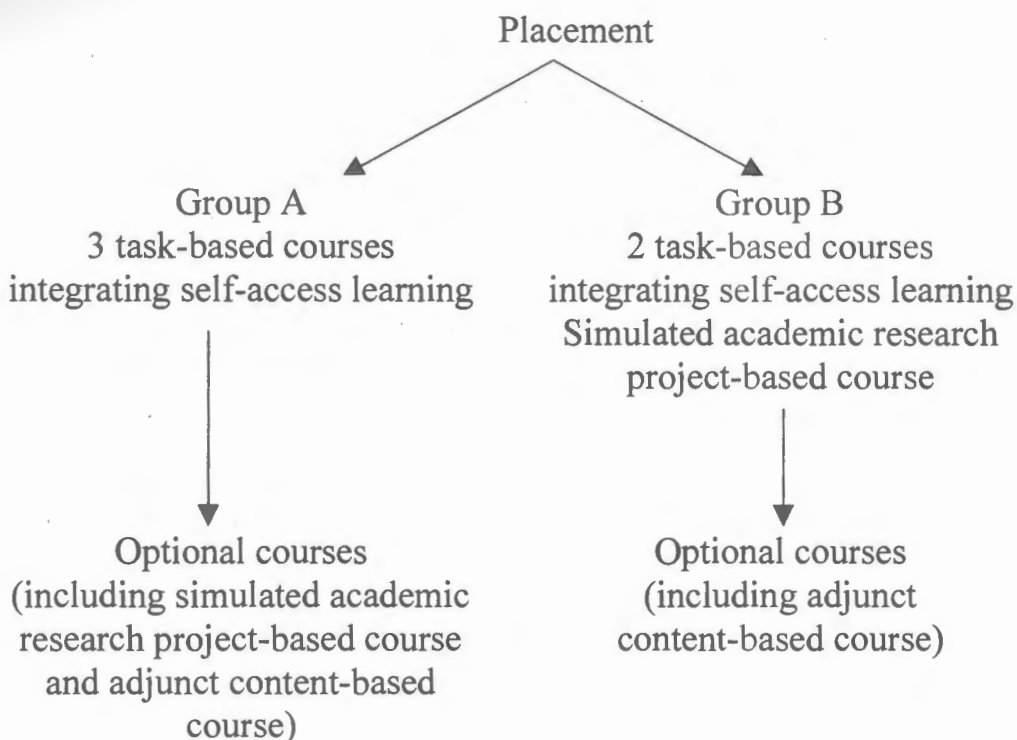


Figure 2 Present proposed curriculum framework

As the proposed curriculum framework shown in Figure 2 retains the same characteristics as the initial proposed framework, the priority areas to investigate remained the same. However, in all meetings it had been becoming increasingly clear that another aspect of curriculum renewal needed to be considered. The main ideas for the curriculum frameworks shown above originated with staff from the Department of Applied Linguistics. Although these staff members teach courses within the Department of Language curriculum, the main implementers would be the Department of Language staff. Given that involving the implementers in curriculum renewal is vital, as discussed in the Introduction, getting the Department of Language staff involved in the process of renewing the curriculum had to be given the highest priority, and the rest of this case study will focus on this point.

The initial reaction from the Department of Language staff (hereafter, Language teachers) towards the proposed curriculum was worry. On the practical side, they were worried about workload and class size; and they were also worried about their own ability to implement the curriculum. For

example, regarding content-based teaching, they believed that they would have to understand all of the technical content presented in the subject area course at a higher level than that of the students. Before fully involving the Language teachers in giving input into the new curriculum, then, it was felt important to introduce the ideas, theories and beliefs underlying the proposed curriculum. This was done in three ways.

Firstly, a series of input sessions was held. The Faculty regularly organises special lectures for staff development given both by outside speakers and by Faculty staff. For 1998, it was decided that the topics of these lectures should be relevant to the new curriculum. In addition, in the breaks between semesters, intensive programmes of workshops were organised, run mainly by Department of Applied Linguistics staff. Topics covered in the lectures and workshops include methods of self-assessment, task-based learning, self-access organisation, and assessing cognitive and affective skills. The Language teachers' contributions especially in the workshops highlighted certain areas of uncertainty requiring research before being implemented into the proposed curriculum. For example, the workshops on learner training included the idea of using learner contracts or study plans (see Dickinson, 1987; Wenden, 1991) to help students organise their learning. However, teachers' experience with learner contracts suggested that they could be impractical, since students had great difficulty constructing appropriate contracts given the high levels of learning awareness required to do so. If learner contracts were to be included in the new curriculum then, research was needed to find ways to make them practicable and feasible. Other areas identified as problematic included assessing affective factors in learning, using imposed, negotiated and free criteria for self-assessment, ways of conducting process evaluation (see Legutke and Thomas, 1991), and using non-discrete tasks with very weak students. As well as providing input for Language teachers, the workshops and lectures clearly showed the potential value of the Language teachers' input into the curriculum.

A second source of input for Language teachers was reading. To this end, seven books (Genesee and Upshur, 1996; Legutke and Thomas, 1991; Lewis, 1993, 1997; van Lier, 1996; Williams and Burden, 1997; Willis, 1996) were chosen on the basis of their relevance to the proposed curriculum and the likelihood that they would stimulate reflection on beliefs and attitudes. The Language teachers, in pairs or groups of three, selected one of the books to read, and twice-weekly meetings were held throughout the first semester of 1998 where the Language teachers presented what they had read for

discussion with the other Department of Language staff. It should be stressed that the purpose of reading was not to copy the ideas set down in the books, but to promote and stimulate reflection and discussion.

The third input was the piloting of a task-based unit (see Watson Todd, 1999 for details). This aimed to increase the observability of the new curriculum - one of Markee's (1997) attributes that promote the adoption of innovation. A six-hour unit treating task and content as a unity (see van Lier, 1996) was taught with some of the Language teachers observing and a video recording made. The video was later shown to all Language teachers with those who had observed giving further explanations, and a discussion followed. This enabled task-based teaching to move from the realm of theory in the workshops and reading into tangible practice, and also allowed the Language teachers to air their views and criticisms.

The Language teachers, then, underwent a fairly intensive programme of input. To fully involve them in the curriculum renewal process and to instill the sense of ownership and commitment necessary for successful implementation of the curriculum, however, it was also essential that they should be responsible for ideas in the new curriculum. To date this has been done in two ways.

The first main influence of the Language teachers on the proposed curriculum was in broad areas of the curriculum plan which were still unclear. The teachers were given a choice of four areas for which to generate proposals as follows. Firstly, how should courses be assessed and to what extent should continuous assessment be used? Secondly, how could self-access learning be most effectively integrated into courses and what improvements needed to be made to the Self-Access Centre to do this? Thirdly, how could students be most effectively oriented towards the programme in the first couple of weeks of the first semester? And fourthly, what form should the project-based course take and what content should be used? These areas would be crucial in the proposed curriculum, were broad enough to avoid becoming bogged down in nitty-gritty details, and were familiar enough to the Language teachers that they could generate valuable ideas. The ideas generated were indeed valuable and the Language teachers' experience provided many insights into what was possible and what was most likely to work effectively.

The second way in which the Language teachers became responsible for ideas in the proposed curriculum is the most important and will probably have the longest-lasting effects. The Language teachers were encouraged and supported to conduct action research projects whose findings would be important for the proposed curriculum. Action research is "a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social and educational practices, as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out" (Kemmis and Henry, 1989, p. 2). The principal characteristics of action research, then, are that it is participant research and aims at professional development. The first purpose served by the action research projects therefore was to promote staff development and to improve teachers' understanding of certain aspects of the proposed curriculum. A second purpose was to help the Language teachers raise their professional status by getting published. Some authors (e.g. Nunan, 1993) argue that dissemination is a vital stage in action research. As the University was placing a greater emphasis on research and planning to assess teachers on their publications, the Language teachers were worried about their lack of research, and disseminating the results of their action research projects promised both to raise their confidence in their ability to conduct research and give them some recognition for their work. The third purpose of the action research projects, and the one most directly concerned with curriculum renewal, was to shed light on some of the more problematic aspects of the proposed curriculum within the specific context within which it would be implemented.

As mentioned above, several problematic points were identified from the workshops. All staff were asked to choose points in which they were interested and which fitted with the courses they were teaching. Support for action research was provided through 'how to' lectures and workshops and through consultations with more experienced staff members where appropriate. Ongoing projects include implementing a 'weak' version of portfolio assessment on a research writing course, comparing different ways of assessing attitudes in learning, investigating the reliability and validity of self-assessment using imposed and negotiated criteria, using group consultations to generate a negotiated syllabus, introducing Internet use (including search strategies), and using mutable study plans for guiding learning. These projects, at the time of writing, are still ongoing, but initial results suggest that they will provide valuable input into the proposed curriculum.

The five methods described above, three to help the Language teachers understand the proposed curriculum and two for them to generate ideas, aimed to involve the Language teachers in the process of curriculum renewal. At the time of writing, this has been fairly successful, particularly for the action research projects. The Language teachers have started to feel that they are experts in their area of action research and other more senior staff consult them about these areas. This has resulted in a growing sense of ownership and commitment to the proposed curriculum.

The description of the process of curriculum renewal here is a description of work in progress. At present, the responsibility for input and ideas for curriculum renewal is evenly balanced between Department of Applied Linguistics and Department of Language staff. As the renewal process progresses, however, it is anticipated that the Language teachers will take on more and more of the responsibility. For example, although Department of Applied Linguistics staff initially suggested the use of tasks as a basis for organising preliminary courses, the nature of the tasks to be used is still to be decided. The Language teachers' experience will probably be the most important factor in choosing what tasks to use, and therefore they should be primarily responsible for selecting tasks. Similarly, materials design and large-scale piloting will be the responsibility of the Language teachers. The process of curriculum renewal, therefore, can be seen as a shifting of responsibility from senior staff to the main implementers.

### **Distinguishing Features**

The features which distinguish the proposed curriculum from other curricula can be divided into product and process features. Concerning the proposed curriculum as product, the emphasis placed on self-access learning and the progression from tasks through projects to content-based learning are definitely innovative in a Thai context, and would probably be considered innovative in most contexts. Nevertheless, in this case study I am concentrating on curriculum as process, so let us consider the distinguishing features of the process of curriculum renewal.

One clear distinguishing feature is that the curriculum renewal has been self-reliant in that all the ideas and input have been in-house. While this is not unusual for core countries, periphery countries like Thailand still usually rely on outside experts to lead the curriculum renewal process. I would like to suggest three reasons for why self-reliant curriculum renewal has been possible in this situation.

Firstly, the Faculty has an existing pool of expertise in the staff of Applied Linguistics who could provide the necessary initial impetus for curriculum development. This avoided the need to call in an outside expert to start the ball rolling, but is not enough to ensure a successful continuation of the curriculum process. This required involving the Language teachers in curriculum renewal.

The heavy involvement of the future implementers in the curriculum renewal process is the second reason for the feasibility of self-reliant renewal. The goals of involving the implementers are to help them become change agents themselves instead of merely passive receivers of others' innovations and to make the whole curriculum renewal process teacher-based. To achieve these goals, initially, ways of helping Language teachers understand principles behind the proposed curriculum were emphasised, but later the implementers provided input into the curriculum design. Helping implementers understand proposed curricula is an orthodox procedure in curriculum design, but the implementers' input and especially the action research projects are distinguishing features in themselves. Although other curriculum innovation projects such as that described by Markee (1997) have included action research, generally this has been done to help teachers understand curriculum programme directors' objectives rather than to provide key input into proposed curricula. Both of these reasons for using action research in the curriculum renewal process increase the observability, adaptability and trialability of any proposals, but using action research as input into the curriculum also gives the implementers greater power, ownership and commitment regarding the proposed curriculum, ensures that the proposals are suitable for the local context, and allows feedback from students to be taken into account in the curriculum design. All of these factors potentially make for successful curriculum innovation.

The third factor promoting self-reliant curriculum renewal is again a distinguishing feature. Throughout the curriculum renewal process there has been a much heavier emphasis placed on process than on product. Traditional approaches to curriculum design in ESP have followed linear models starting from needs analysis and statement of objectives (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). In the case study described here, however, the curriculum process has been non-linear. Rather than starting from linguistic objectives, general preferred learning modes such as task-based and self-access learning were identified giving the whole curriculum renewal process

a process-oriented starting point. Although a proposed curricular framework based on these learning modes was drawn up, throughout the curriculum renewal the focus has been on how to get the implementers involved rather than on what the finished product should look like. The curricular frameworks and course descriptions that have been produced were produced more at the behest of the University administration than as a blueprint to be followed through. One general guiding principle behind the curriculum renewal, then, could perhaps be stated as "Look after the process, and the product will look after itself". By concentrating on the process, the model of curriculum design does not reflect the logically sequenced progression between stages, such as needs analysis and statement of objectives, traditionally described in the literature, but becomes a "messy cocktail" (Buchanan and Boddy, 1992, p. 59) of stages interacting with each other. If we describe the curriculum renewal in terms of the process of getting implementers involved, a neater picture emerges as shown in Figure 3.

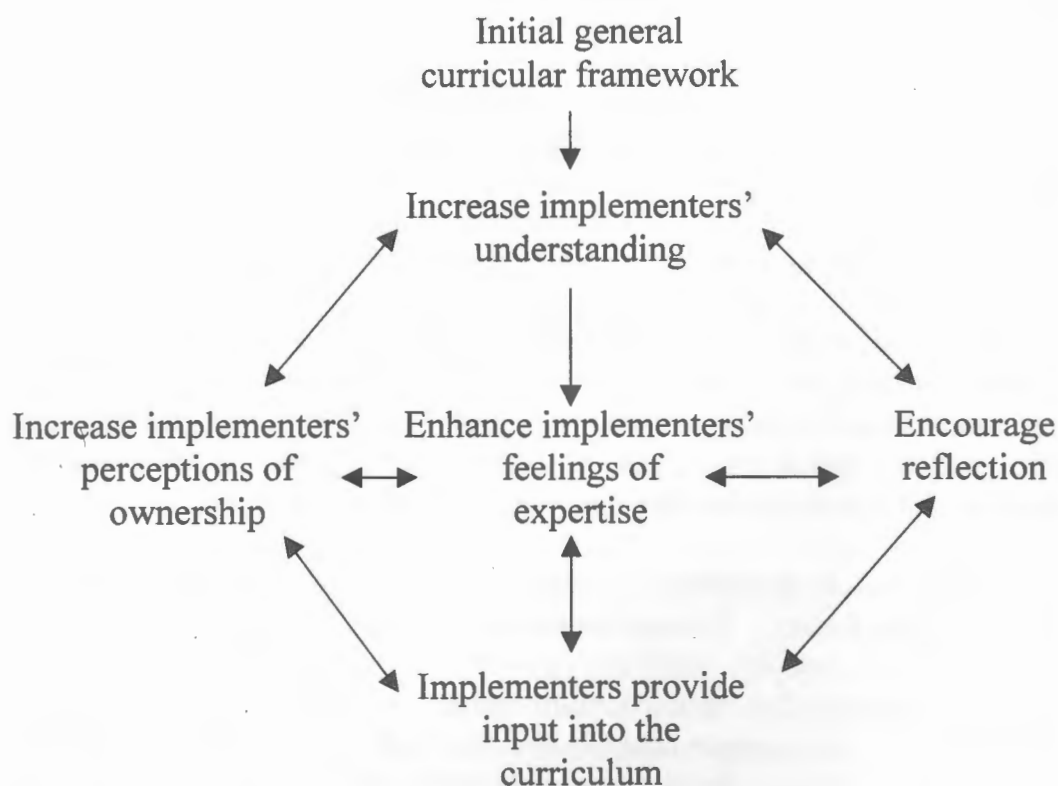


Figure 3 The curriculum renewal process focusing on involving implementers

By stimulating understanding, feelings of expertise, sense of ownership and reflection, the implementers of the curriculum become readier to give valuable input into the curriculum renewal process, promoting self-reliant curriculum renewal.

### **Practical Ideas**

The case study described here should not be viewed as a model of curriculum design to follow. It is context-specific and the practical techniques for involving implementers may not be applicable in other situations. Nevertheless, some broad guidelines for involving implementers in curriculum renewal can be made.

The overriding principle guiding curriculum renewal is that the future implementers of the curriculum must be involved as early and as deeply as possible. Without such involvement, they will have little sense of ownership of the curriculum and the renewal process will not be teacher-based, increasing the likelihood of the innovation failing. The crucial question therefore is how to involve the implementers, and Figure 3 provides guidelines to answer this question.

The first point is that the implementers must understand any proposals for change. In this case study, this understanding was created through lectures and workshops, through a reading programme, and through observed piloting, all of which were linked to free and open discussion. Other options are also possible. For example, supervised experience, such as supervised materials writing, may help implementers gain insights, and action research projects can be used to enhance understanding. However it is achieved, implementers' understanding is a crucial prerequisite for successful curriculum renewal.

Once understanding has been gained, implementers' sense of expertise and ownership can be enhanced. Initially, expertise can be encouraged in one particular area, as was done through the action research projects. The expertise should also be recognised by providing situations where implementers can show their expertise. In this case study, this is achieved by summarising a reading for others to learn from, by senior staff consulting implementers about their area of expertise, and in the future by publishing the results of the action research projects.

A sense of ownership is most likely to be instilled when implementers provide input into the curriculum. Input given for the sake of giving input, however, could adversely affect the curriculum as product. Instead, informed input is needed, and for this implementers must understand the overall curricular framework and have expertise in their area of input. The action research projects in this case study provided the main way of gaining expertise and of giving informed input (Wallace (1998) is a very useful and clear guide on how to conduct action research), but a series of workshops is a possible alternative. For the input to lead to a sense of ownership of the curriculum, the change agents initially responsible for the curricular framework must be prepared to become receivers of the implementers' input, as in turn the implementers take on responsibility and become change agents themselves. In other words, the initial change agents, in this case study the Department of Applied Linguistics staff, must be willing to relinquish control over the curriculum renewal process as the implementers become ready to take on this control.

The final guideline for curriculum renewal concerns the need to emphasise staff development throughout the curriculum renewal process. Most texts on curriculum design focus exclusively on how to write objectives syllabi and materials and ignore staff development, but curriculum development without concurrent staff development is likely to fail. Throughout the case study, all staff have been stimulated to reflect on their beliefs, attitudes and practices through open and critical discussion at all stages, through the selection of books to read, and through the action research projects. Other methods of stimulating reflection include journal writing (e.g. Jarvis, 1992), teacher narratives (e.g. Sparks-Langer and Colton, 1993), teacher portfolios (e.g. Bastidas, 1996), and observation (e.g. Swan, 1993), and these may be more appropriate in other situations. Whichever approach is used, reflection for staff development should be given the highest possible priority in curriculum renewal.

### **Conclusion**

It should be stressed that the case study presented here is work in progress, and the jury is still out on how successful the curriculum renewal described will be. Nevertheless, I believe that the general principles of involving implementers in the curriculum renewal process, taking a teacher-based approach, focusing on process rather than product, and emphasising staff development increase the likelihood of successful innovation. They also enable curriculum renewal to be self-reliant, and should allow the teachers

involved to rewrite Laing's poem presented at the beginning of this case study. Instead of not knowing and pretending to know, teachers are confidently able to say:

There is something I am supposed to know  
and I *do* know it.

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