

After working through this chapter you should be able to choose and adapt a course book in a Systematic way, and justify your decisions. Curriculum design is concerned with the creation of language courses and course materials, but it is also concerned with the selection of texts and other materials for courses, and with adapting and adding to existing courses. In this chapter we look at the relationship between the teacher and existing course books. This chapter aims to help teachers clarify the roles that they, the course book and the learners play in the curriculum design process, and aims to provide teachers with a rational approach to follow when deciding to adopt or adapt a course book. The Course Book, the Learners and the Teacher There has been considerable debate on the role of course books in a language course. Prabhu (1989) suggests that because teaching must be matched to the learners' current knowledge, course books will not be effective because they are not in touch with the state of this knowledge. Allwright (1981) sees textbooks as removing learners from negotiating the curriculum design process. These points underline the importance of having a flexible approach to the use of a course book and of choosing a course book which allows for flexibility. Dividing the Parts of the Process In order to take a systematic approach to looking at the possible roles of the course book, teacher and learners in the curriculum design process, it is necessary to look at each part of the curriculum design process. Table 11.1 lists the areas to consider when deciding where the course book, learners and teacher will contribute to curriculum design. Each of these areas needs to be informed by considerations of environment, needs and principles. Column 3 needs to be filled according to who is given responsibility.