

The principle of organization in a general language syllabus can be structural, functional, experiential, or some combination of the three. It seems that some form of grading, either implicit or explicit, is a universal requirement in language teaching. As Krashen (1982) points out, it is possible that natural, communicative, roughly-tuned input which does not aim directly at the next stage in the learning sequence may have advantages in that it reduces the anxiety level, provides more opportunities for recycling, and focuses attention on meaning rather than form. The principle of grading is inherent in structural and functional syllabuses arranged on a taxonomic basis, but it also extends to experiential, non-analytic language teaching. Those methods which place a high value on naturalistic, real-life input usually contain a hidden curriculum which enables the teacher to maintain control over the material, although in such cases the nature of the control is relatively unobtrusive and indirect. In most circumstances, then, the choice is not between close control, and no control at all, but between 'finely tuned' (explicitly graded) and 'roughly tuned' (implicitly graded) input for the learner. It does, however, require that control over the course material should be exercised in a more subtle and flexible way than can normally be achieved by means of a traditional structural syllabus. It is important to note that this approach does not constitute a case for the abolition of grading.