

NEW OUTLOOK AT THE ENGLISH TEACHING  
MATERIAL FOR BEGINNERS  
(AMERICAN ENGLISH BASED LANGUAGE  
CURRICULUM)

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## PREFACE

One of the characteristics of the final turbulent years of this millennium is that the world is changing at an ever accelerating pace, said Rose and J. Nicholl (1977). This statement requires education material be reviewed all the time, including our primary concern, English teaching suff.

It is due to the above reason that this modest paper is composed for international presentation and it goes without saying that this work welcomes any constructive criticism for the sake of its betterment and perfection.

The writer

**A New Outlook At Language Curriculum**  
(Concept and perspectives for Indonesian Education)  
Odo Fadloeli

**A. The Meaning of Curriculum**

Nana Saodih, the curriculum professor of UPI Bandung states : “Curriculum is an absolute requirement for a school curriculum. As such, it means that curriculum is an inseparable part of education or instruction (1997:3).

Henry A. Giroux et. Al., however, has made a good comparison given by various experts on the matter, as given: the first definition is taken from Franklin Bobbit, saying: curriculum is a series of experiences which children and youth must have by way of obtaining .....objectives” (1978:42).

Compared to Vernon Anderson’s definition, the former’s is narrower in scope. To make it clearer, Anderson defines curriculum as the whole of interacting forces of the total environment (1956:9). In my opinion the best definition should include the four components of curriculum theory of development, implementation and evaluation. This is in contrast with the definition given by Johnson, saying that curriculum can be defined as intended learning outcomes” (1967:127-40). Beauchamp, however, is more theoretical in definition compared to the one given by Johnson, saying : “a legitimate use of the term curriculum is to refer to a curriculum system”. 91975:6). And finally Giroux et.al. concludes

the definition in more current semantics, saying : “Curriculum is : social text, the running of the course and the relationship between the knower and the known” (A. Giroux et.al. 1981:13).

Among those definitions, the concepts of curriculum are not yet complete until one heeds the idea of it given by Ronald C.Doll, saying: “The commonly accepted definition of the curriculum has changed from content of courses of the study and list of subjects and courses to all the experiences which are offered to learners under the auspices or direction of the school”. (Ronald C. Doll in Nana Saodih 1997:6). This is, in my view, the most suitable definition, besides being the most applicable one, in the context of Indonesian sphere of education.

For public knowledge, however, the meaning of curriculum which is a course of study offered in a school, college etc. (Longman, 1978:272) would suffice the concept.

## **B. The Concepts of Language**

Several concepts of language has been made based on the slightly different views of noted linguists at the writer’s hand:

1. “Language is everywhere. It permeates our thoughts, mediates our relation with others, and even creeps into our dreams.” (Langacker 1973:3). Further, the man says: “Most human knowledge and culture is stored and transmitted in language which is so ubiquitous that we take it for granted. Without it, however, society as we now know it would be impossible. (1973:3)

Let's take a look at the definition of language given by O'Grady et.al. as indicated:

“Language is many things a system of communication, a medium for thought, a vehicle for literary expression, a social institution, a matter for political controversy, a catalyst for nation building. All human beings normally speak at least one language and it is hard to image much significant social, intellectual, or artistic activity taking place in its absence. Each of us, then, has a stake in understanding something about the nature and use of language.” (1987:1).

The definition of language, according to the Dictionary of language and Linguistics reads as follows:

“Language is one of the most fundamental aspects of human behavior and the development of language into a refined instrument of expression and communication is probably man's greatest achievement.” (Hartmann and Stork 1972:VIII).

The two definitions above have similarities as follows : first, language is human, communication, a form of expression, and second language is a system of meaning or thought.

### **C. How the language curriculum should look like**

Among the multiple intelligences pioneered by Howard Gardner, the most famous psychologist and educator of Harvard University, Collin Rose and Malcolm J. Nicholl in their book, Accelerated Learning for the 21st Century have classified

language ability into the first intelligent skill whereas math, visual, spatial, intrapersonal, interpersonal etc. come next.

Of the two facets: language acquisition and language learning, the former should be a priority in calculating the analysis of language teaching and learning material. The true reason is because “children display an amazing ability to become fluent speakers of any language consistently around them.” (1973:12). Language as a rule governed behavior should not be prioritized. The capacity for acquiring language is remarkable for some reasons:

1. uniformity throughout the human race.
2. species specific (Langacker 1973)

The first reason implies that there simply are no cases of normal children who fail to acquire a native language given the chance to do so. The second reason connotes that only human being can pick up language and not other animals. Although animals communicate, there is yet to be an agreement that the instinctive behavior can be qualified as language or else this statement may violate the basic idea that language is human species. It is the so called language that distinguishes man from other creatures in this universe.

In building up language acquisition process, Cummins was quoted by Yvonne S. Freeman & David E. Freeman as saying: “Language develops as we have increased opportunities to use it in authentic contexts for real purposes. For that reason, whole language teachers of second language students teach language

and content by starting with the experiences of their students and building on those experiences.” (1992:24)

It is due to these reasons that the process of learning English at the beginning level, the fourth grader’s class (in Indonesia it equals the second year of junior high school level) involves trial error and problem solving technique without resorting to rule explanation, like tenses.

The next pages are examples of teaching English writing skill as the writer observed at fourth grader above in an elementary school, Iowa School District in 1994. At this time the writer was a participant of Education Program sent by the Indonesian Government National Education and Culture Ministry.

A. Write a period, a question mark, or an exclamation mark at the end of each sentence.

1. Sharon is an umpire for a baseball league \_\_\_\_\_
2. The big championship game was last Saturday \_\_\_\_\_
3. The score was tied twice in the first inning \_\_\_\_\_
4. The shortstop tried to steal home plate \_\_\_\_\_
5. What did Sharon say to the runner \_\_\_\_\_
6. She said he was out \_\_\_\_\_
7. Which team won the ballgame last Saturday \_\_\_\_\_
8. Last year’s champions won the game \_\_\_\_\_
9. The Hawks won by a score of 5 to 4 \_\_\_\_\_
10. It was a super game \_\_\_\_\_
11. The players wanted to eat \_\_\_\_\_
12. They all wanted pizza \_\_\_\_\_
13. What did they have on their pizzas \_\_\_\_\_

14. The pizzas had cheese, onions, and peppers \_\_\_\_\_

B. Decide if each sentence should end with a period, a question mark, or an exclamation mark. Add the correct mark to each sentence.

1. Mr. Ramsey will build us a clubhouse
2. It will be built in the backyard
3. The clubhouse will have a door and two windows
4. What color should we paint it
5. Let's paint it green
6. The clubhouse will be lots of fun
7. I will be finished in time for our first meeting
8. Mr. Ramsey is really helpful
9. Do you know what time the meeting will be held
10. I can hardly wait

C. Decide if each sentence should end with a period, a question mark, or an exclamation mark. Add the correct mark for each sentence.

- a. Robin, did you eat your alphabet soup  
No, I'm only up to the K's
- b. Do you have a hole in your sock  
No, I don't have a hole in my sock  
Then how do you get your foot into it
- c. Why do dogs bury their bones  
Dogs don't have any pockets



D. Look carefully at the picture. Then write the letter of the response that answers each question about that picture.



1. Who or what do you see in the picture?
  - a. police officers and police cars
  - b. firefighters, fire trucks, a dog
  - c. firefighters fighting a fire
  - d. people, dogs, and cars
  
2. What is happening in the picture?
  - a. The firefighters are returning from a fire
  - b. Police officers are playing with the dog
  - c. The firefighters are going to a fire
  - d. Police officers are in a parade.
  
3. What do you think happened just before the picture was made?
  - a. The firefighters put out a fire
  - b. The dog started to bark
  - c. Someone reported a fire
  - d. The bell stopped ringing
  
4. How many trucks do you see in the picture?
  - a. one
  - b. two
  - c. three
  - d. four
  
5. How many dogs do you see in the picture?
  - a. one
  - b. two
  - c. three
  - d. four

E. Study the picture. Then write the answers to the questions about the picture.



1. Who do you see in this picture?

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2. What objects do you see?

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3. What are the people in the picture doing?

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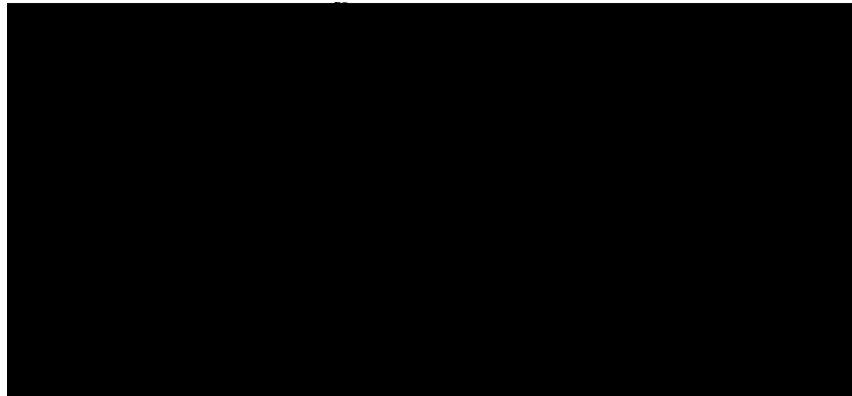
4. What do you think happened just before the picture was made?

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5. What do you think will happen next?

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F. Look carefully at the picture. Write three sentences about what you think is happening.



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G. Write three more sentences about this picture.  
Tell what you think will happen next.

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H. Draw a line under the sentence that does not belong with the other sentences in this group

1. the ballgame was very exciting
2. The score was six to five
3. The department store was very busy Saturday
4. Our team was ahead
5. The other team had its best hitters coming to bat
6. it was the ninth inning

I. Improve these groups of sentences. Find one sentence in each group that belongs in the other group. Draw a line under each of those sentences.

1. I waited to cross the busy street. The lettuce, celery and carrots in the refrigerator looked delicious. I walked across the street when the cars stopped at the corner.
2. I couldn't decide what to have for lunch. I watched the stoplight. I made a tasty salad. Then I poured some apple juice.

J. Here are some sentences about the same idea. They have been grouped together. Write a sentence that tells what each group of sentences is about.

1. Nick is a good athlete. He runs fast. He is a good skater. He has a good throwing arm. Nick also likes swimming and basketball.

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2. The park was crowded on the Fourth of July.  
There were families with picnic baskets. Some children flew kites. A few people ran with their dogs through the grass.

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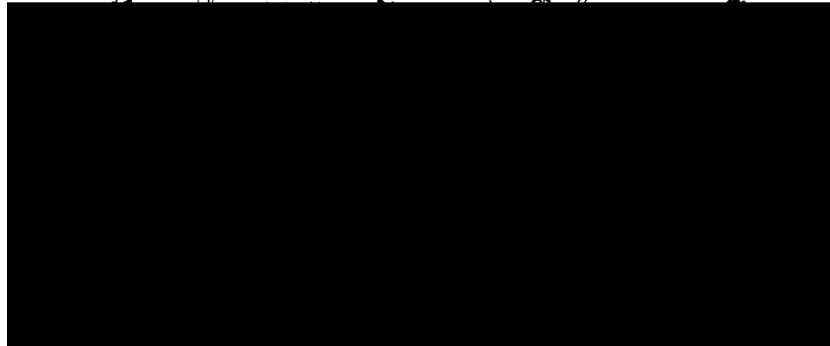
3. There are many kinds of clouds. One kind of cloud is like a blanket. These clouds are thin and cover big areas. Another kind of cloud is puffy. It floats high in the sky. Some clouds bring rain, thunder and lightning.

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4. The sand is like a little oven. It warms my toes when I walk in it. It feels cozy when I lie in it.

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K. Write three sentences about this picture. Make sure your sentences are about the same idea.

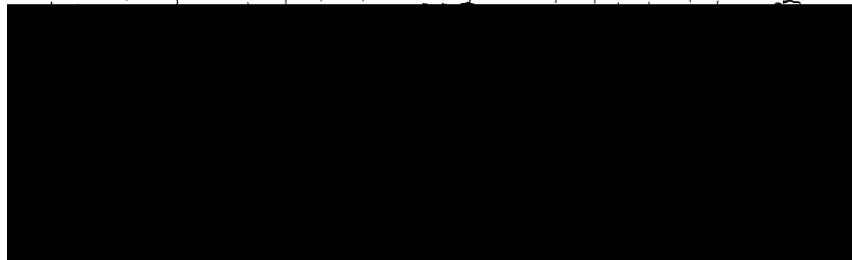


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L. Write three sentences about one idea that you have about this picture



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M. Write these sentences in paragraph form. Make sure you indent the first line of the paragraph.

1. The rain fell on the ground.
2. Then the sun shone and dried the ground.
3. Giant vines burst up out of the ground.
4. They traveled upward like huge spaceships.
5. The buds on the stalks swelled up from the heat of the sun.
6. They blossomed into beautiful flowers.

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All these sheets are just examples of the materials adopted from the English Language Syllabus, Iowa School District, IOWA, USA.

### The Language Syllabus (Beginning Level)

#### Extra practice Worksheets

Target Skill	Unit/ lesson	Objective	Worksheets (Practice Masters)
1. Sentence Recognition	1/1	Identify a sentence as a group of words expressing a complete thought.	1 <sup>a</sup> , 1b, 1c
2. Subject and Predicate	1/2	Identify a complete subject. Identify a complete predicate	2 <sup>a</sup> ,2b,2c
3. Four Kinds of Sentences	1/3,4,5	Identify a statement, question, command, exclamation	3 <sup>a</sup> , 3b, 3c
4. Visual Literacy	1/6	Recognize that a picture tells a story	4 <sup>a</sup> , 4b, 4c
5. Paragraph Definition	1/10	Identify a paragraph as a group of sentences centering around the same idea	5 <sup>a</sup> , 5b, 5c
6. Paragraph Form	1/10	Recognize that paragraphs are indented and are written in a connected form	6 <sup>a</sup> , 6b, 6c
7. Noun Recognition	2/3,4,5,6	Apply appropriate spelling rules to change singular nouns to plural	8 <sup>a</sup> ,8b,8c
8. Noun Plurals	2/7, 8,9	Apply appropriate spelling rules to change singular nouns to plural	9 <sup>a</sup> , 9b, 9c
9. Proper Nouns	2/7, 8,9	Capitalize names of particular persons, pets, places, organizations, days, months, and holidays.	9 <sup>a</sup> , 9b, 9c
10. Sentence Fragment	2/13	Identify a sentence fragment as a group of words that is missing either a subject or predicate.	10 <sup>a</sup> ,10b, 10c



11. Paragraph Content Main Idea	2/14	Identify the main idea that unifies a paragraph	11 <sup>a</sup> ,11b, 11c
12. Action Verb	3/1	Identify the main idea that unifies a paragraph	12 <sup>a</sup> ,12b, 12c
13. Subject-verb Agreement	3/3	Choose verb forms to agree with singular and plural subjects.	13 <sup>a</sup> ,13b, 13c
14. Present and Past Verbs	3/4, 5	Identify and use present and past tense of regular verbs. Spell past forms of regular verbs.	15 <sup>a</sup> ,15b, 15c
15. Future Verbs	3/7	Identify and use future tense of verbs.	15 <sup>a</sup> ,15b, 15c
16. Signal Words	3/10	Use signal words to show order	16 <sup>a</sup> ,16c, 16c
17. Paragraph Content Main Idea	3/12	Relate all sentences in a paragraph to the main idea of the paragraph	17 <sup>a</sup> ,17b, 17c
18. Pronoun Recognition	4/1	Identify pronouns as words that take the place of nouns.	18 <sup>a</sup> ,18b,18c
19. Subject and object Pronoun	4/2, 3	Use correct forms of personal pronouns in the subject and object positions	19 <sup>a</sup> ,19b,19c
20. Possessive Pronouns	4/5	Use singular and plural possessive pronouns correctly	20 <sup>a</sup> ,20b,20c
21. Commas in Dates and Addresses	4/6	Use commas to separate the city from the state and the month from the year	21 <sup>a</sup> ,21b,21c
22. Commas in Sentences	4/7, 8	Use commas to set off introductory words and items in a series	22 <sup>a</sup> ,22b,22c
23. Filling Out Forms	4/9	Fill out forms correctly within the limitation of the spaces provided	23 <sup>a</sup> ,23b,23c
24. Homophones	4/11	Use homophones correctly according to their meanings	24 <sup>a</sup> ,24b,24c
25. Run-on Sentences	4/12	Separate run-on sentences with end punctuation	25 <sup>a</sup> ,25b,25c
26. Paragraph Content	4/13	Identify the topic	26 <sup>a</sup> ,26b,26c

Topic Sentence		sentence in a paragraph.	
27. Form for a Friendly Letter	4/14	Identify the parts of a friendly letter	27 <sup>a</sup> ,27b,27c
28. Combining Subjects and Predicates	5/3, 4	Combine subjects and/or predicates to produce more effective sentences	28 <sup>a</sup> , 28b,28c

29. Combining Sentences	5/5	Combine sentences to produce a more efficient sentence	29 <sup>a</sup> ,29b,29c
30. Using Quotation Marks	5/6	Use quotation marks to indicate the speaker's exact words	30 <sup>a</sup> ,30b,30c
31. Parts of a Story	5/10,11,Comp Rev/Eval	Identify the beginning, middle and end of a story. Write a story ending.	31 <sup>a</sup> ,31b, 31c
32. Abbreviations	6/3, 4	Write abbreviations for months, days, titles, initials	32 <sup>a</sup> , 32b,32c
33. Possessive Nouns	6/5, 6	Use possessive nouns correctly, both singular and plural.	33 <sup>a</sup> ,33b,33c
34. lead Sentence	6/10	Write a lead sentence for a news story that tells who, what, when, where	34 <sup>a</sup> ,34b,34c
35. Helping Verbs	7/2, 5	Identify has and have as verbs.	35 <sup>a</sup> ,35b,35c
36. Irregular Verbs	7/3, 4	Use correct forms of irregular verbs.	36 <sup>a</sup> ,36b,35c
37. Parts of a Library	7/10	Identify the parts of a library.	37 <sup>a</sup> ,37b,37c
38. Contractions	7/9	Write contractions correctly	38 <sup>a</sup> ,38b,38c
39. Synonyms	7/12	Choose synonyms	39 <sup>a</sup> ,39b,39c
40. Rambling Sentences	7/13	Separate sentences connected by too many and's.	40 <sup>a</sup> , 40b,40c

41. Paragraph Content Giving Reasons	7/14	Write a persuasive paragraph consisting of a series of reasons to support a thesis.	41 <sup>a</sup> ,41b,41c
42. Adjective	8/1,2	Identify an adjective as a word that describes a noun	42 <sup>a</sup> ,42b,42c
43. Kinds of Adjectives	8/4, 5	Identify articles and adjectives of number	43 <sup>a</sup> ,43b,43c
44. Good and Well	8/8	Use good and well correctly.	44 <sup>a</sup> ,44b,44c
45. No and not	8/9	Use no and not correctly	45 <sup>a</sup> ,45b,45c
46. Paragraph Content Description	8/14	Write a paragraph of description	46 <sup>a</sup> ,46b,46c

Adopted From Teacher's Resource Book. Iowa School District IOWA, USA

#### **D. Conclusions**

Curriculum theories should be heeded carefully before language materials and syllabuses are composed for teaching students.

There are many curriculum theories proposed by curriculum experts but the one which is simple to understand, in my opinion, is the one given by Ronald C. Doll as quoted by Nana Saodih as saying: “The commonly accepted definition of the curriculum has changed from content of courses of the study and list of subjects and courses to all the experiences which are offered to learners under the auspices or direction of the school.”

In view of language materials, our syllabus today had better be shaped by the assumption that language is acquired and not learned because language is human species and species specific. It means that material writing should be based on the assumptions that learning English should not be dependent on grammatical theories and concepts. Instead our practice should be more dominant and the learning process must emphasize *learning by doing* or strengthening habits.

The real steps of learning English writing, for example, is clearly given by teachers of English in the fourth grader classroom which seemed to be relevant for the TOEFL best stimulation thereby becoming prototype for learning language as a direct way of building up language skills.

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## CURRICULUM VITAE

Odo was born on 4<sup>th</sup> August 1954 in a village close to PTPG (UPI) campus called Negla Pojok, Ledeng - Bandung. Being a villager sufficed it to say that he was just a simple kid who was dreaming of becoming a college student of IKIP.

Now he was aware that he could not go to school downtown due to the lack of school fee and pocket money. So, he pleasantly obeyed his father's advise to attend nearby schools while assisting his father's chores at home.

His first education started by attending SD Cidadap III Bandung in 1961 and completed it in 1966. Then he entered SMP XII in 1967 and got it through in 1969.

Next he continued to study at SMA Laboratory School of IKIP Bandung in 1970 and finished it in 1972.

In 1973 he saw that his dream nearly came true because he was accepted as a freshman at the English Major FKSS IKIP Bandung. He beat his B.A. in 1977 and he was appointed an assistant at the department while pursuing his drs (undergraduate) degree.

In 1979 he completed his drs and one of the examiners Prof. Dr. Fuad A. Hamied enthusiastically adde **Fadloeli** to his short name Odo. He humbly did not protest to his innovation on his full name : **Odo Fadloeli**.

In 1981 he got a golden chance to study in Kansas University, USA and he learned his M.A. in 1983.

In 1999 he decided himself to pursue his doctorate degree at UPI Bandung and he finally got his last degree in 2005.

Upon his achievement to be an English teacher at UPI Bandung and STBA YAPARI-ABA Bandung, his thanks are there of due to : Prof. Ilyas Purakusumah, Prof. Jusuf Amir Feisal and Drs. Mundari Muhada, Dipl. TEFL, Drs. Udaya Karnadijaya (the late) and Drs. Agus Hudari, M.A. (the late) for their endless supervision and invaluable criticism during his study and career.

His global thanks are also due to his phonetics and phonology supervisors and professors, Kenneth Miner and Erasmus of Kansas University who have major role in his interest in linguistics in 1982 beside education.

May God Bless them always.

Bandung, 6<sup>th</sup> August 2007

The writer







