**Lesson Three: Goals and Objectives**

“The process of needs analysis can generate a tremendous amount of information that must be sorted and utilized in some way within the curriculum. One way to use this information is to apply what has been learned in the needs analysis for the formation of goals and objectives” (Brown, 1995, p. 71).

**3.1 Goals**

**3.1.1 Definitions**

Most of programmes describe their goals in terms of aims and objectives.

The term goal and aim are used interchangeably to refer to a description of the general purposes of a curriculum. In other words, the two terms are described as the general purposes for which a language programme is being taught and learned.

Brown (1995, p. 71) claimed that “programme goals are defined…as general statements concerning desirable and attainable program purposes and aims based on perceived language and situation needs”.

“Goal statements are attempts to delineate in general terms what the program hopes to accomplish within the time allotted” (Brown, 1995, p. 72).

In deriving goals from perceived needs, four points should be remembered:

* Goals are general statements of the program’s purposes.
* Goals should usually focus on what the program hopes to accomplish in the future, and particularly on what students should be able to do when they leave the program.
* Goals can serve as one basis for developing more precise and observable objectives.
* Goals should never be viewed as permanent, that is, they should never become set in cement.

(Brown, 1995, p. 71-72)

**3.1.2 Purposes of Goals**

The purposes of aim statements are:

* To provide a clear definition of the purpose of a programme
* to provide guidelines for teachers, learners, and material writers
* to help provide a focus on instruction
* to describe important and realizable changes in learning. (Richards, 2001, p.120)

**3.1.3 Ideology of the Curriculum**

According to Richards (2001, p.113), “in developing goals for educational programmes, curriculum planners draw on their understanding both of the present and long-term needs of learners and society as well as the planners’ beliefs and ideologies about schools, learners and teachers”.

**a. Academic Rationalism**

It stresses in intrinsic value of the subject matter and its role in developing the learner’s intellect, humanistic values and rationality. The content matter of different subjects is viewed as a basis for a curriculum and a mastery of content is an end in itself rather than a means to solving social problems or providing efficient means to achieve the goals of policy makers.

**b. Social and Economic Efficiency**

This education philosophy emphasizes the practical needs of learners and society and the role of an educational programme in producing learners who are economically productive.

**c. Learner-centeredness**

It groups together educational philosophies that stress the individual needs of learners, the role of individual experience and the need to develop awareness, self-reflection, critical thinking, learner strategies and other qualities and skills that are believed to be important for learners to develop.

**d. Social Reconstructionism**

This curriculum perspective emphasizes the roles schools and learners can and should play in addressing social injustice and inequality. So, schools must engage teachers and learners in an examination of important social and personal problems and seek ways to address them.

**e. Cultural Pluralism**

Schools should prepare students to participate in several different cultures and not merely the culture of the dominant social economic group.

**3.1.4 Goals Framework**

For Graves (2000, p. 83), there are four different types of goals:

1. **Knowledge goals:** they address what students will know and understand. These goals include knowledge about language and about culture and society.
2. **Awareness goals:** they address what students need to be aware of when learning a language. These include areas of self-knowledge, understanding of how language works, and understanding of others’ use of language.
3. **Skills goals:** they address what students can do with the language. This is perhaps the broadest areas, encompassing the four skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing, as well as the functions and tasks one accomplishes through language.
4. **Attitude goals:** are those that address the affective and values-based dimension of learning: students’ feelings towards themselves, towards others, and towards the target language and culture. These goals include respect, self-confidence, and valueing community.

**3.2 Objectives**

**3.2.1 Definitions, characteristics and Importance**

The term objective refers to “more specific and concrete description of purposes. It refers to a statement of specific changes a programme seeks to bring about and results from an analysis of the aim into its different components” (Richards, 2001, p. 122).

Brown (1995, p. 73) claimed that instructional objectives are “specific statements that describe the particular knowledge, behaviours, and skills that the learner will be expected to know or perform at the end of a course or program”.

“Objectives are statements about how the goals will be achieved…through objectives, a goal is broken down into learnable and teachable units. By achieving the objectives, the goal will be reached” (Graves, 2000, p. 76).

Magor (1975 as cited in Brown, 1995, p. 74) suggested three essential characteristics to objectives:

* **Performance:** what learners will be able to do
* **Conditions:** important conditions under which the performance is expected to occur
* **Criterion:** the quality or level of performance that will be considered acceptable

“A clear set of objectives…can be immensely helpful in designing an assessment plan since they provide a chart of what is to be learned and therefore a basis for what to be assessed” (Graves, 2000, p. 89).

**3.2.2 Objective Framework**

To formulate objectives, many frameworks are suggested. One of them is Saphier and Gower (1987)

* **Coverage objectives:** describe the material (textbook units, topics, curriculum items) to be covered in the course.
* **Activity objectives:** describe what the students will do with the material.
* **Involvement objectives:** describe how the students will become engaged in working with the material.
* **Mastery objectives (learning objectives):** describe what students will be able to do as a result of a given class or activity.
* **Generic thinking objectives (critical thinking objectives):** describe the meta-cognitive problem-solving skills the students will acquire.