**2. Types of Syllabuses**

**Introduction**

There are many types of syllabuses among which are the following ones that are mostly known in different ELT contexts around the world.

**2.1 The Grammar Syllabus**

Wilkins (date removed) comes out with the view that as language learning is very often identified with acquiring mastery of its grammatical system, it is not surprising that most courses have a grammatical (or ‘structural’) pedagogic organization. The grammatical notions within this organization are most often taught according to their simplicity and complexity. Nunan (date and page removed) mentions that grammatical complexity is not to automatically be taken for the equivalent of learning difficulty. In other words, what is grammatically complex will not naturally be that which is difficult to learn, and that which is grammatically simple will not naturally be that which is easy to learn. Nunan states that the most rigid grammatical syllabuses were known to introduce one item at a time and asked for the mastery of that item before shifting on to the following one. Mc. Donough states that ‘the transition from lesson to lesson is intended to enable material in one lesson to prepare the ground for the next; and conversely for material in the next to appear to grow out of the previous one (Cited in Nunan,……………).

**2.2 Assumptions behind Grammatical Syllabuses**

The beliefs behind grammatical syllabuses appear to be that language consists of a finite number of rules that can be combined in different ways to make meaning. It is also assumed that these rules can be learned one by one, in an additive way, every element being grasped on its own before being added to the learner’s pre-existing amount of knowledge. Ruthford(………………) calls this the 'accumulated entities' view of language learning.

Another assumption is linked to language transfer. It is commonly believed that once learners have grasped the formal aspects of a given piece of language, they will automatically be capable of using it in real situations outside the classroom.

Charles Fries, one of the supporters of both structuralism and behaviorism, stated that:

The most efficient materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner. […]These results must be organized into a satisfactory system for teaching and implemented with adequate specific practice materials through which the learner may master the sound system, the structure, and the most useful lexical materials of the foreign language (………………..).

The British linguist, Keith Johnson (1982:8), believes that ‘if the students are to become proficient in language learning they must master the mechanisms by which the language works. They must learn the language system.’ And this view came to be sustained by what became a theory of language learning that supported the structural syllabus, behaviorism, which was a dominant school in American psychology in the early 20th century.

**2.3 Critiques to Grammatical syllabuses**

During the 1970s, the use of structural syllabuses noticed a lot of criticism. According to Nunan (1988) one of the difficulties in designing grammatical syllabuses is that while designing grammatical chains in which distinct grammatical items are linked, these links might be rather fragile. In addition to that, it is not easy to separate and present one discrete item at a time, mainly if one needs to provide the learners with a contextual learning situation. Furthermore, recent research has proven that learning does not happen in that simple additive way. Thus, structurally- graded syllabuses misrepresented the nature of that complex phenomenon, language. They did so in tending to focus on only one aspect of the language, that is, formal grammar.

Crombie (…………..) considers it an over simplification to say that a structural syllabus can be described, in general terms, ‘as an inventory of labelled items and units to which learners are to be progressively introduced, the units being labelled and grouped largely in terms of their formal properties and ordered and graded according to a number of linguistic and pedagogic criteria’. He carries on explaining that ‘structural syllabuses are often cyclic: the same construction may be introduced several times at different places in the syllabuses, each time associated with the realization of a specific, structure-related meaning’.