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For Susan, who constantly encouraged me during the time that I was writing this book; and to past and present teaching assistants who have participated in the CATI project.

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Preface

This book is about the management of curricular innovation in second and foreign language education. Part I (Chapters 1–3) lays out theoretical issues in managing curricular innovation. Part II (Chapters 4–6) discusses a case study in curricular innovation – an account that exemplifies and expands on the theoretical base developed in Part I. Part III (Chapter 7) offers some general conclusions about the issues and problems that must be resolved in any effort to implement change in language education.

Chapter 1 lays out the fundamental assumptions that underpin this book, explains who the book is for, and outlines some important caveats about introducing a “diffusion-of-innovations” perspective into the language teaching literature. Chapter 2 reviews some well-known examples of innovations in second and foreign language teaching. The purpose of this chapter is to present inductively the concepts and issues that are defined and further developed in subsequent chapters. Although all these innovations were developed in very different contexts of implementation, their acceptance or rejection by potential adopters can nevertheless be analyzed in terms of a finite set of theoretical principles that govern the diffusion of all innovations.

This approach – looking first at examples of innovations – violates the normal academic practice of defining one’s terms first and then exemplifying technical concepts with practical examples. However, as Cooper (1989: 2) suggests, “evaluating a definition without prior examples is a bit like trying to imagine how new clothes will look on you when you first see them on the shelf.” The defining examples of innovations I discuss in Chapter 2 include the British Council’s international aid activities in underdeveloped countries, the Modern Languages Project’s development of notional-functional syllabuses, the Lancaster School’s work on process syllabuses, Krashen and Terrell’s work on the Natural Approach, Prabhu’s work on the communicational or procedural syllabus (also known as the Bangalore Project), and recent developments in task-based language teaching.

Chapter 3 develops a general theoretical framework in which core concepts are defined and the main issues in the innovation literature are formally laid out. These issues include (1) the social roles that stakeholders in the adoption process play, (2) the stages of decision making

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that potential adopters go through as they decide whether to adopt or reject an innovation, (3) the sociocultural context of innovation, (4) the time-bound nature of change, (5) the psychological and other factors that impinge on potential adopters' decisions to adopt or reject an innovation, and (6) the insights that language teaching professionals can gain from understanding different approaches to change.

The framework developed in Chapter 3 provides the theoretical underpinnings for a case study in *curricular and teacher innovation* (CATI; pronounced like "Katie"), presented deductively in Part II. This project, which is located in an ESL program at a U.S. university, has been operating since 1988. The host ESL program has been used as a laboratory for curricular and teacher innovation, in which succeeding generations of teachers develop materials, methodologies, and pedagogical attitudes that they perceive to be new. In so doing, teachers develop themselves as language teaching professionals and simultaneously contribute to the development of the ESL curriculum.

The purpose of Part II is to ground our understanding of how the theories of educational change outlined in Part I may be interpreted and applied to solving real-world problems in real-world situations. Chapter 4 examines the problems involved in designing and implementing the CATI project. Chapter 5 sets out the kinds of support structures that were developed in order to implement the project. Chapter 6 discusses the evaluative feedback used to maintain the CATI project.

Part III returns to the general theoretical perspective on innovation first explored in Part I. Chapter 7 proposes nine guiding principles that language teaching professionals may draw on in order to manage curricular innovation in any educational context.

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Numa Markee