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An investigation into the linguistic and
methodological origins and the process of curricular
dissemination of Graded Objectives and Tests in
modern language teaching, with particular reference
to Cleveland Education Authority

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A thesis submitted for the Degree of Master of Arts
in Education, University of Durham, School of Education

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Abstract

An investigation into the linguistic and methodological origins and the process of curricular dissemination of Graded Objectives and Tests in modern language teaching, with particular reference to Cleveland Education Authority

Alma Hellaoui/
Submitted for M.A., 1986

The subject of this thesis is curriculum innovation in the teaching and learning of modern languages with particular reference to Cleveland L.E.A. The innovation is mainly concerned with the initiation, development and implementation of the Graded Objectives Movement, the Defined Content Syllabus and Graded Tests Schemes. This innovation is of particular interest since it represents a process which has evolved from the grass-roots upwards, from the dissatisfaction of classroom teachers, to changes in the teaching and learning of modern languages, to the revision of examination syllabuses.

The purpose of this thesis is to describe how and why the movement developed and to examine in particular how Cleveland L.E.A. became involved in it and adopted it in its own way. Furthermore this thesis places what was a practical, pragmatic innovation in its theoretical context and assesses its relevance therein, since in the process of this kind of innovation it is sometimes easy to overlook theoretical issues.

The methods for examining the innovation in Cleveland were analysis of the documents produced in the education authority and questionnaires, interviews and discussion with Cleveland teachers. (The interviews were informal and recorded on cassette). The information collected was analysed and from it it was possible to build up a picture of what has happened during the last ten years, what is happening today and how teachers have reacted to and evaluate the effects of the innovation.

This curriculum innovation in the communicative teaching and learning of modern languages has engendered many radical changes. These have advantages which have affected various parts of the whole curriculum: these spring mainly from the emphasis on communication in modern languages since communication skills have 'rub off' effects in many subject areas. Hence now the communicative style of the teaching and learning of modern languages has its place in the comprehensive curriculum not just by right but by merit.

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Contents

Title page

Abstract

Preface and Acknowledgements

	Pages
Introduction	i-iii
<u>Chapter 1.</u> Curriculum Innovation in Modern Language Teaching	1-22
An Historical Perspective	1-3
Secondary Re-organisation	3-4
Public Examinations	4-5
The Concept of Needs Analysis	5-9
The Development of Syllabuses for schools based on the Needs Analysis Concept	10-12
The Graded Objectives Syllabuses Lothian/West Sussex/Oxfordshire and York/Other Groups.	13-18
Some effects of the Graded Objectives Schemes.	19-22
<u>Chapter 2.</u> How far are communicative syllabus and methodology appropriate to the teaching of foreign languages in secondary schools?	23-59
What is a communicative syllabus?	24-36
What is communicative methodology?	36-48
Links between communicative methodology and communicative syllabus	48-54
The problems in secondary schools related to the development of a communicative syllabus and methodology	55-59
<u>Chapter 3.</u> How did Graded Syllabuses and Texts become accepted and institutionalised as part of Education in Cleveland.	60-82
An Historical Analysis	60
Introduction	60
Conclusion	82

	Pages
<u>Chapter 4.</u> Teachers' Responses to the Cleveland Syllabus and Tests through interviews	83-161
Methodology of the Evaluation Research through Interviews.	83-91
The Interviews. Introduction	92-98
The Interview Schedule and Conduct of the Interview	99-103
Procedure for Analysis	104-105
Themes 1-8	106-148
Miscellaneous	148-157
Conclusion	158-161
 Conclusion	 162-171
Disadvantages	164-171
Advantages	171-174
Conclusion	174-175
 Bibliography	
 Appendices	

Preface

My inspiration and motivation for writing this thesis stems from my enthusiasm for and involvement in the compilation of the Cleveland Defined Content Syllabus and Graded Tests.

The development and implementation of these syllabuses and tests heralded a potentially radical change in the teaching and learning of modern languages in Cleveland schools. My passion for change in the hope for improvement in this field became excited at the prospect of finding new approaches, new ground, new techniques and new methods.

Together with other colleagues I immersed myself in thinking about and working towards revising the content and style of language teaching in Cleveland schools.

My sincere thanks I extend to all my colleagues; in particular to Chris Hole, Don Spoerry, Roger Hullcoop, Chris Graham, Anne Martinez, Sue Hyland, Roz Periatambee, Deborah Jackson in Cleveland; to Brian Page, Barry Jones, Ros Mitchell, John Clark and Judith Hamilton in other parts of Britain: and finally, of course, my thanks I extend to Michael Byram, my tutor.

Introduction

Why do we teach modern languages in school? What is the point of this course? Who will benefit from this style of teaching? Is this language relevant to the pupils' needs? Is this style of teaching appropriate? Are the pupils enjoying their lessons in modern languages? Am I enjoying my teaching?

These are some of the questions teachers were asking themselves during the early seventies in comprehensive schools. The last decade has seen innovation leading to some radical transformation in the teaching and learning of modern languages. This curriculum innovation is an example of a grass-roots initiative which has influenced the higher echelons of education - the examinations boards and the universities - and it therefore represents a crucial reversal of the innovative process in education which has usually derived from the Schools Council, from the Universities and the Examining Boards and other central bodies, then imposed upon schools, teachers and pupils.

This thesis describes the process of innovation from the grass-roots upwards with particular reference to Cleveland. Since I was involved in the development of the Cleveland Scheme from the start and felt aware of its educational importance, I

felt prompted to record in detail what seemed to me an important piece of educational history.

Chapter I sets Cleveland in an historical and national context and thus provides the background leading to the innovation and shows Cleveland in relation to some other areas of Britain.

Chapter II provides a theoretical account of communicative language syllabuses and methodology in order to position what was a practical innovation in its theoretical context and evaluate its relevance therein.

An historical account of the curriculum development process in Cleveland is provided in Chapter III. It is based on more than my own account and traces the beginning of the process and follows it through to today's situation.

From this an empirical study of the curriculum development process seen from the perspective of the classroom teacher follows in Chapter IV. It summarises the issues of principle which arise out of the study of this particular case through the interview method and then describes the interview process which I undertook to find out what effects the innovation was having on teachers in Cleveland Schools. Different areas of discussion are described and parts of the interviews have been transcribed.

Inevitably the process of innovation in education brings its own problems, underlines them and invites possible solutions. I am aware that there is no 'promised land' in the teaching and learning of modern languages but what is important is this very process; that the process be stimulating, rewarding and enjoyable to both teachers and learners alike so that all concerned may continue the process towards the goals which, to them, are tangible and appropriate.

CHAPTER I

Curriculum Innovation in Modern Language Teaching

An Historical Perspective

A brief history of Modern Languages teaching would show that when the teaching of modern languages was first introduced into schools its principal aims were to provide pupils with mental training and to develop habits of accuracy.

(Modern Languages in Comprehensive Schools: H.M.I's report, 1977; p.3). These aims were those of teaching dead languages. The grammar/translation methods were widely used to those ends. The result of this was that the pupils were taught about the language rather than its use.

Trim (1973) described the traditional approach as a 'logico-developmental' one with grammatical structure as its focal point. He describes the ever more complex structural steps through which the learner must pass as 'gradus ad Parnassum': a straight and narrow path beset with difficulties and dangers towards a distant goal. Only the elite ever reach this point, the distant goal of public examinations.

Wilkins (1976) has referred to the traditional language teaching approach as a synthetic one in which there is a gradual accumulation of the parts until the whole is achieved. No real communication takes place, however while the parts are being learnt, until the total system being aimed at is mastered.



At the turn of the century this approach was challenged; there was the advent of the Reform Method which was in fact a number of methods advocating attention to the spoken language, to the exclusive use of the language to be learnt, and to methods of learning similar to those used by children acquiring their mother tongue. Byram (1984). According to the research in the H.M.I.'s report, opus cit., p.3:

"In the hands of a brilliant teacher the Direct Method could achieve impressive results but in other hands it proved less successful and was never adopted on a wide scale."

(The Direct Method was one of the Reform Methods).

Richardson (1983) suggests that there was a Compromise Method, existing between the two wars, when Reform Methods and especially the Direct Method were modified and some of the extreme suggestions, that, for example, the mother tongue be banned from the classroom, were ignored. According to the H.M.I.'s report, opus cit., p.3., it was during the period immediately following the second world war that a compromise between the grammar/translation and the Direct Methods, known as the Oral Method, was widely practised.

Around 1960 many modern linguists were influenced by the behaviourist theory of learning a modern language, this theory had the accompaniment of a behaviourist method, the audio-visual and audio-lingual methods. These methods which relied on the tape recorder and filmstrip projector aimed at developing habits which should be formed through mimicry and memorization of the

syntactic structures of the language; these were graded into levels of difficulty which were based on those of the traditional methods. Thus, for example, although the method of teaching the grammatical structures had changed, and although there was more oral/aural content in the method, the progression in the language learning still started at grammatical notions such as case, gender, present tense through to pronouns, other tenses, etc. (Byram, 1984).

Secondary Re-organisation

During this period of revision of the teaching of modern languages involving new approaches, methods and techniques, the teachers were suddenly caught up in a major education reform; the introduction of comprehensive education for all.

In the tripartite system, the grammar school pupils studied a modern language, the secondary schools often only offered modern languages to the A band. It followed that teachers did not have experience of teaching modern languages to less-able and possibly, less-motivated pupils. In a comprehensive teaching environment teachers had to re-think their aims, objectives and their courses. H.M.I.'s Report, 1977, op.cit: p.4.

According to Harding et.al. (1980) the success on the one hand of extending the teaching of modern languages from 30% or so of the secondary school population of the early 60's to almost 90% in the mid 70's has been obscured by what appears to be a

failure to get 'much of what is worthwhile taught to the majority.' (p.2.)

Public Examinations

Most pupils found the acquisition of a modern language a disappointing experience; their failure to find learning tasks presented to them as relevant, meaningful or satisfying was only exceeded by their failure to demonstrate an acceptable performance in these tasks. Harding, et.al. (1980). The often insurmountable hurdles of the norm-referenced examinations at 'O' level and C.S.E. level deterred many pupils from even continuing their study of modern language(s) beyond the third year of their secondary school education. These hurdles were originally intended for the minority and hence succeeded in a process of elimination of the majority through failure.

The research of Harding et.al. (1980) found that only a third to a quarter of the age group continued their study of a modern language after two or three years of learning. Only 12-15% achieve grade 'C' or better at 'O' level and 10-15% more achieve a C.S.E. grade 2 and below or grades D and E at 'O' level.

Although the introduction of C.S.E. in England and Wales was intended to allow more pupils to leave school with an examination certificate, their syllabuses and examinations were perceived as 'watered-down' 'O' level courses and examinations

in both the minds of society and of most language teachers.

Some examinations boards introduced alternative examinations; Mode III examinations were expanded and titles such as "French Studies", "European Studies" were designed to cover a course which was only partially a study of language. Harding et.al. (1980) describe how, after four or five years of study the majority of pupils still learning a language continued to take examinations in which, at best, "language in use" played a minor part and, at worst, scarcely existed at all. They say that for the remaining two-thirds or more such changes have been irrelevant; they have already been deemed incapable of following an examination course. Neither do they receive any credit for their two or three years of language learning. Teachers were aware of the problems but they felt frustrated in their attempts to teach language to less-able pupils; courses, conferences and publications on teaching the less-able have always found a ready audience although pre-service and in-service training dealing with the problem was frequently lacking. (ibid. p.2). Some teachers felt unqualified to teach studies courses and realised that modern languages was failing to meet the comprehensive common course ideal.

The Concept of Needs Analysis

Another way of looking at the teaching and learning of modern languages is, instead of looking at language, to look at

the learners. What are their needs? Harding, et.al. (1980)
p.8, quote Bertrand Russell, who wrote in 1940:

"The purpose of words, though philosophers (and perhaps language teachers) seem to forget this simple fact, is to deal with matters other than words. If I go in a restaurant to order my dinner, I do not want my words to fit into a system with other words, but to bring about the presence of food."

Thus we are concerned with language for use. What do our learners want to use language for? What do language learners in secondary schools need to know?

Porcher (1980) states that learning a foreign language is a specific activity and so implies some factors are present whoever the learners concerned.

He states that it is necessary to examine the target groups of learners and their needs, i.e. we need to know the essential characteristics of the target group and what it wants to become. This second facet is more problematic, the need; it is generally defined as something lacking, that is,

"the distance between what a learner is at present and what it is desired that he should become."

(Porcher, op.cit., p.5)

The fundamental question remains. What are the foreign language-learning needs of the learners in secondary schools? Porcher, op.cit., pp.5-7, maintains that the conventional definition of a need, quoted above, is too restrictive for

language learners, for various reasons. He describes the need in this case to be one that is constructed, never ready-made, one that cannot be defined without allowing for the learner's image of his own future to be taken into account. There is always a dialectic between a present state and an intended state. This need is a need of something and this corresponds to a phenomenological reality. He claims that you learn a foreign language more easily if you have a clear conception of what you can do with the knowledge and the knowledge is more effective the greater the opportunity of regularly using the competencies it produces. Then the attitude of the learners clearly affects the process of learning. Porcher states that we cannot identify and analyse the needs of the learner without taking into consideration the relation that exists between the learner and what he is learning.

The learner-centred hypothesis is the only coherent one according to Porcher. Therefore if the foreign language teachers in secondary schools are to adopt the learner-centred hypothesis they will need to carefully consider the above elements of the language learner's needs and construct with him the language learning course and method which allows him to use his knowledge as well as having the objective of being able to communicate in the foreign language in the future. Furthermore, the consideration of developing a positive attitude must be fostered so that the learner might constantly strive to achieve short and long-

term objectives.

Utley, et.al (1983) pp.78-79, ask how much do we know and how have we come to know it, about the real needs of the learner. They ask if we have really re-thought sufficiently the practical and psychological needs of the learner. They claim that we have very little evidence of what pupils actually need to say in a foreign language and ask if it is unrealistic to suggest that teachers (and syllabus designers) are too far away from the plight of a beginner to be able to recall the agony and the excitement of his position. They ask if a super-imposition of language-learning theories fetters the imagination of teachers.

However, they state that there are different approaches to language teaching and testing in different groups throughout the country and that within certain limits it doesn't matter what you teach. Utley, et.al. op.cit., p.79. They say that directly following on from the question of needs analysis is how predictable is language and to what extent can it be defined and described? And how does definition help or hinder the production of language?

They state (p.80):

"There may well be no final solution to the questions, but the relatively primitive state of the art, or at least the gulf between theory and practice, points again to the need for further research, contrastive analysis and the pooling of ideas."

Now it could be seen that although it cannot be denied that every language is also a system, the primary objective should be to learn to use the language for the purposes of communication unless we consider the learning exclusively as a method of training (as was the case traditionally).

From this it became clear that communicative competence (for this is what the objectives turned out to be) in practical situations was a skill needed by all language learners. Harding, et.al. (1980).

The Development of Syllabuses for Schools based on the Needs
Analysis Concept

"The object in teaching a language, unless it is that of getting pupils over an important educational hurdle, is to enable the learner to behave in such a way that he can participate to some degree and for certain purposes as a member of a community other than his own."

Corder (1973), p.27.

What is 'to some degree'? And what is 'for certain purposes'?
What are the potential needs of the language learners who are pupils in secondary schools?

Burstall (1974) in Harding et.al. (1980), p.9, showed that the popular view of the successful language learner is one who can perform in the language, can deal with meanings in practical situations. As far as schoolchildren were concerned, these situations may be seen to involve paying for items bought, finding their way around a town, etc.

But this is not enough; it could be said that this is limited to 'phrase-book' learning, perhaps without the possibility of transfer to other situations. Furthermore, the number of situations in which predictable language occurs are relatively few and a traveller may often find himself in unpredictable situations. Apart from restricted, transactional language, it is difficult to predict what other language might occur in any situation. Harding, et.al. (1980), p.10. The language items

learnt may not be readily transferable unless this is made apparent by reference to situations other than the transactional situations. Then, according to Harding et.al., we are at the beginning again, choosing a topic (or situation) to illustrate an abstract system rather than because the content is important.

Harding, et.al, op.cit., p.11, write:

"The obvious need to arrive at a more abstract system which, unlike traditional grammar, is based upon communication needs, has led to the elaboration of notions and functions."

These are categories of language which are based on use of the language; functions are what we do with the language; notions are what we talk about.

The work of Wilkins (1976) was an elaboration of this for the Council of Europe Modern Language Project and Van Ek put these ideas into practical form in 'The Threshold Level', a definition of the basic language knowledge required in English for a person to live and work in an English-speaking country. He defined the class of learners for which the Threshold Level has been developed as having the following characteristics:-

1. They will be temporary visitors to a foreign country (especially tourists)
- or
2. They will have temporary contact with foreigners in their own country
3. Their contacts with foreign language speakers will,

on the whole, be of a superficial, non-professional type

4. They will primarily need only a basic command of the foreign language.

These could well be seen to incorporate the objectives which schoolchildren could have in learning a foreign language and various syllabuses were developed all over Britain incorporating these objectives in functional/notional/communicative terms. The language items learnt may not be readily transferable unless this is made apparent by reference to situations other than the transactional situations. Then, according to Harding et.al, we are at the beginning again, choosing a topic (or situation) to illustrate an abstract system rather than because the content is important.

The Graded Objectives Syllabuses

Lothian

One of the most prominent groups in the country which is tackling the problem of developing communicative syllabuses is the Lothian group led by John Clark. He has stressed the necessity of equipping pupils with structural knowledge which will enable them to cope with unpredictable language needs as well as predictable ones. Harding et.al. (1980).

Clark (1979) also describes how it is necessary to examine the learner's language as it develops through learning. He feels that language systems develop as do the communicative strategies of the learner and that various stages of the process can be described.

He says that we need to find a way of predicting the communicative needs of our learners at particular levels and a way of classifying those needs into components of language behaviour. Then follows the organization of these components into effectively sequenced teaching and learning units which are divided into stages. An effective methodology need be found together with an assessment programme. The learner's performance need be examined and decisions made about the acceptability of it; an effective evaluation programme needs to be developed, one which permits all concerned to see what improvements are to be made.

The Lothian scheme is based on the learner and on levels of actual or potential communicative needs in the foreign language. The levels are cumulative and at each level the knowledge of the previous level must be recycled. Clark (1979).

He states that each stage or level represents a point on the language learning continuum and involves mastery of a communicative competence permitting the learner to carry out a number of defined language activities and communicative functions. Clark, *op.cit.*, p.38, reminds us that:

"Success breeds success and motivation. Failure breeds failure. Teaching a foreign language as an artificial academic exercise, unrelated to communicative needs, is an elitist pursuit. We have no choice but to make school language-learning more relevant and more democratic if we wish all pupils to benefit from it."

The work of Clark is concerned with aims of school language teaching, based on the needs of the learner. He sees the aims in these terms, Clark (1978), p.5.

"..... learning how to learn a language, language awareness, responsibility for one's own learning, the widening of linguistic and cultural horizons, self-evaluation, the ability to work together towards common ends, positive attitudes through contacts with the foreign country and its people through school exchanges and visits, as well as the learning of languages for communicative purposes."

West Sussex

The West Sussex syllabus worked out under the direction of Eric Garner, County Adviser for Modern Languages, is based directly on the work of the Council of Europe and acknowledges a debt to Clark's work.

The initial impetus came from the County Working Party on Modern Languages (1977-8) which recommended:

"That we adopt in principle the development and implementation within West Sussex of a system of Graded Achievement Tests in Modern Languages."

The starting point for teachers' meetings had been the document by the H.M.I. 'Modern Languages in Comprehensive Schools'.

In these meetings problems such as the nature of much modern languages work in lower secondary classes, the lack of clearly defined objectives and the consequent lack of motivation in pupils was discussed.

Garner (1977), p.2, writes:

"There are no 'absolutes' in syllabus construction and the Graded Objectives for Achievement in Modern Language Skills Level I, represents a relatively arbitrary attempt to specify a set of language activities and related linguistic forms appropriate to young beginners learning French as their first language in school."

As in the Lothian Scheme, the G.O.A.L.S. Scheme also recognises the need for specifying short-term objectives in order to maintain motivation and success, "involving pupils in the learning process."

Oxfordshire and York

Harding, et.al, state (1980), p.14,

"It would be mistaken to assume that the teachers who have worked out the syllabuses now operating in the Graded Objectives Schemes, were all familiar with this (the work of the Council of Europe) theoretical background. The opposite is the case."

They have found that the Oxford and York schemes, the two which had the greatest effect outside their own areas, were elaborated originally without any close knowledge of Wilkins' notional/functional ideas or Van Ek's 'Threshold Level'. They were inspired, it seems, by the role-play activities and tests already used in some examinations and the "modular" approaches used by Bucky in York for several years.¹

Gardner describes how:

1. Buckby suggested that the 'modular' approaches with less-able pupils can result in enhanced motivation and meaningful communication, e.g. preparing for the "survival situation", "going to a cafe", discussing social and gastronomic particularities first in English, then drawing up lists of "orders" and working at the French phrases moving from "fixed" text utterances which required some manipulation and using phrase sheets, flash cards, guessing games, team competitions, 'paired' dialogues (produced and recorded by pupils for the rest of the class) and group role-play.

Oxfordshire

The compilers of the Oxfordshire Scheme in (1975-1978) selected language exponents which were then listed under six topic headings in Level I (travel/cafe, restaurant/shopping/accommodation/the town/personal information) and then the topics were divided into themes, tasks and functions and lists of language exponents were listed under specific notions and structures.

York

The York Scheme's Working Party (1975 onwards) decided from the beginning that such was the diversity of materials in the schools that a syllabus of the Oxfordshire type would cause problems for the teachers. Since the working party consisted of teachers whose pupils would be taking the test it was possible to agree on test content without defining the syllabus on which it was based. (These appear on the back of the certificate awarded.)

The scheme in York appears to have been successful according to Buckby's report (1981) which was written based on research conducted in York and Leeds. The pupils and parents had positive attitudes to language learning and he quotes the teachers as saying:

"The feeling was that, at present, we can and should cope with a substantial majority of children studying a foreign language to the age of 16, and hope that, as teachers' knowledge, expertise and confidence grow, this will gradually increase, possibly eventually to cover all children." (p.33)

Other Groups

Other projects which were rather different were also developed. For example, the I.L.E.A. produced the Eclair course and accompanying tests (1976). The syllabus is provided by particular course materials. The 'Tour de France' course (1982) was written by the National S1/S2 French Working Party based at Stirling University, directed by Johnstone; this course aims at the whole ability range and has diagnostic and attainment tests built into each unit.³

Some individual schools have provided syllabuses and tests for pupils of different level of ability. For example, Archbishop Michael Ramsay School, Camberwell, produced "Interpreter's Certificates".

3. According to Utley, et.al. (1983) p.50, there is informal evidence from the Scottish projects, Lothian and 'Tour de France', that suggests that parents and pupils appreciate the certificates awarded, value greatly and find meaningful the descriptions of the nature of the pupil competence which are written on the certificates.

Some Effects of the Graded Objectives Schemes

The proliferation of graded syllabuses and tests up and down the country has changed the face of much modern language teaching on a national scale. The effects of this important curriculum change have been tremendous; the increased motivation and feeling of success and satisfaction on the part of teachers, parents and pupils has been noted in various reports and studies.

Buckby (1981) reports that as a result of the evaluation carried out in Leeds and York on pupils using graded syllabuses and tests as far as the pupils are concerned:

"the introduction of graded syllabuses and tests seems to bring considerable gains and no losses."
(p.4.)

The parents replies showed a similar trend to those of their children: that experimental groups showed significantly more positive attitudes to learning French than the control pupils.

Teachers believed that:

"graded tests helped lower ability pupils to achieve higher standards and that they also benefited higher ability pupils." (p.14)

Harrison (1982) writes:

"The most remarkable and encouraging aspect of Graded Objectives in modern languages so far is that its success is based on the conviction and effort of teachers, who have taken as a starting point a practical problem of curriculum short-fall and found ways of solving it. Their

enthusiasm and commitment has resulted in successful learning for pupils and improved morale for other teachers as well as themselves." (p.51)

In the schemes, testing as well as syllabus development has been an essential aspect of the changed approach. Some groups expressed their teaching objectives in tests and subsequently produced syllabus definitions or materials. Others have concentrated first on the latter and then proceeded to create assessment models. Between the two are groups where syllabuses and tests have been developed hand in hand. According to Harding, et.al. (1980)

"testing is not seen as the ultimate justification of the learners' achievement, nor as an evil necessary to the system. It has a positive feed-back role but does not dominate the teaching/learning process." (p.32)

There is variation in different teachers' attitudes to the importance of testing but fundamentally the tests are an extension to the work done in the classroom.¹ The movement away from final tests to a model of continuous assessment is indicative of the unity of teaching and testing. It is hoped that the traditional element of fear is removed from the tests, they are designed for success rather than failure, all attempts to mystify and confuse are eliminated.

1. In Chapter 4 further analysis of these aspects of graded syllabuses and tests is included. This analysis comes from the interviews conducted with teachers of foreign languages in Cleveland.

Competition between learners is also excluded; the tests are criterion-referenced - what matters is that individual learners can carry out the tasks agreed in the syllabus. Potentially 100% of the examinees could pass the first time but tests may be re-taken by failures.

Harrison (1982) writes:

"The close link between the content of the course and the content of the test means that they become part of the same process: learning. All tests are motivating to a certain extent, but here pupils do not take tests until they are likely to pass, so that when success does come they are spurred on to try for level II." (p.25)

Certificates are awarded to mark the successful completion of a level or stage and although these are not vital to success, they have been found to be a contributory factor in providing motivation.

The skills and language learning objectives are specified on the certificates in a way which is intelligible to the average pupil or parent.

According to Utley, et.al. (1983)

"A much wider question is whether the certificate will attempt to describe also the kinds of personal and intellectual qualities considered necessary to achieve success in the specified objectives for some teachers, qualities such as perseverance, concentration, independence, ability to work alone and with others, understanding and appreciation for the foreign way

of life, may be at least as important as the manipulation of the language - even allowing for the fact that the former are not necessarily separable from the latter." (p.71)

Many graded tests schemes have developed into C.S.E. (Modes I or III) and gradually examinations at 16+ are changing for secondary school pupils. The 16+ and G.C.S.E. examinations examine the communicative skills which may have been acquired through graded test schemes. Furthermore, these examinations are criterion-referenced. Discussion of some of these new examinations and their impact follows in later chapters.

In the near future, when these examinations are in operation (from 1987 onwards) then it will be possible for the very large majority of secondary school pupils to follow a modern language course to external examination level as the schemes are devised to cater for approximately 90% of the ability range, instead of for the small proportion which traditional examinations encompassed.

CHAPTER II

How far are communicative syllabus and methodology appropriate to the teaching of foreign languages in secondary schools?

In Chapter I, I have considered the mechanics of curriculum development and the widespread national effects of the innovation so we now need to discuss how appropriate this development is in secondary schools. It is not my main concern in this study to examine whether the theoretical issues prompted, underly or validate the development but it is rather to attempt to assess the value of this development at a theoretical level.

It is a question of great importance for teachers of foreign languages in secondary schools today to consider the suitability of the communicative syllabus and methodology. Since comprehensive schools extended the possibility of teaching and learning foreign languages to the large majority of the school population it has become increasingly necessary to find suitable syllabuses and methodology for the wide range of pupils who are now able to follow a modern language course. In Chapter 1 (p.3) the statistics compiled by Harding et.al. (1980) show that all but an elite of secondary school pupils were failing in traditional G.C.E. and C.S.E. external examinations.

The debate about what sort of syllabus and methodology are relevant to the needs of secondary school pupils continues.

However since the work of the Council of Europe (Chapter 1, p.1) and the development of alternative syllabuses and tests, for example, to include 'real' situations in role-play, it has become apparent that the common type of alternative syllabus and tests have tended to be more and more communicative.

What is a communicative syllabus?

According to Yalden (1983) there are at least six different designs of communicative syllabus. These types include: Structural-Functional, Structures and Functions, Variable Focus, Functional, Fully Functional, Fully Communicative (pp.110-118).

The first type 'Structural-Functional' as designed by Wilkins (1974) seems, at first glance, the easiest solution to communicative syllabus design, according to Yalden. It has wide application: a separation of the two components of form and communicative function is maintained and thus relatively easily implemented.

The second syllabus type 'Structures and Functions', represents a structural progression in a communicative framework. There are various supporters of this type including Brumfit (1980), Valdman (1980), Johnson (1977). The former advocates the development of communicative methodology to help fluency

and accuracy while maintaining structural progression as the organizing principle of his syllabus type.

The work of Johnson leads to a conception of syllabus design, the "Variable Focus" in which shifting emphasis takes place according to level in a progression from elementary to advanced.

For the "Functional" type of syllabus, objectives are stated primarily in terms of communicative functions, not in terms of linguistic items or in terms of ideational content, although these components are often included and sometimes obscure the purpose of the syllabus design. (Yalden, op.cit.)

The "Fully Notional" syllabus, is one which is suitable for learners whose proficiency in the second language has to be specified for very particular purposes.

The "Fully Communicative" syllabus is "learner-generated" (Yalden, p.116) and one in which there would only be the most minimal input syllabus. It has arisen out of a concern with methodological problems and their solutions.

Yalden asks if it is possible to reconcile the views of the supporters of the different types of communicative syllabus. She claims that syllabuses designed for the use of real language where the classroom experience approximates to an environment of real language use should be called Communicative syllabuses. She claims that there are certain principles, or checklists for

the description of a communicative syllabus.

The principles involve a consideration of a number of extra-linguistic factors, having to do with the educational setting in which the course is to be taught, the characteristics of the learners, the circumstances in which the educational institution operates, even the society in which the language-learning and teaching process is to be carried on.

If the aim of a communicative syllabus is to enable language learners to communicate in the foreign language, then the following components ought to be included.

1. As detailed a consideration as possible of the PURPOSES for which the learners wish to acquire the target language;
2. Some idea of the SETTING in which they will want to use the language - (physical aspects need to be considered as well as the social setting);
3. The socially defined ROLE the learners will assume in the target language as well as the roles of their interlocutors;
4. The COMMUNICATIVE EVENTS in which the learners will participate; everyday situations, vocational or professional situations, academic situations, and so on.
5. The LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS involved in these events, or what the learner will need to be able to do with or through the language.
6. The NOTIONS involved, or what the learner will need to be able to talk about;

7. The skills involved in the "knitting together" of discourse; DISCOURSE and RHETORICAL skills;
8. The VARIETY or varieties of the target language that will be needed and the levels in the spoken and written language which the learners will need to reach;
9. The GRAMMATICAL CONTENT that will be needed;
10. The LEXICAL CONTENT that will be needed.

The kind of syllabus that incorporates a consideration of all ten components is increasingly referred to as "communicative", since it takes into account everything required to assure communication. The matter of which component receives most emphasis is negotiable within the constraints of any given teaching situation.

This learner-centred approach to syllabus design would involve different considerations from those traditionally taken into account for the secondary school pupil. In the latter case it was often felt that if the learners gained a good command of the grammar of the language, communication would come in good time. Therefore the last two principles have traditionally been accounted for but how far are they appropriate now and to what extent are the others relevant to the needs of language learners in secondary schools?

According to Yalden (p.91) it has been argued that it is too difficult to determine what the learners' communicative needs will be, however attempts were made to discover whether

the communicative needs of schoolchildren could be assessed. That they had specific needs which could be defined in such a way as to be useful to the design of a syllabus has been uncovered in at least one well-known instance, "The Threshold Level for Modern Language Learning in Schools" (Van Ek, 1976) and another, "Reflections on Language Needs in the School" (Porcher, 1980).

Some of the communicative skills which the school-children have in L1, are transferable to the foreign language situation, for example points 6 and 7. With regard to points 2, 3 and 4, the setting, role and communicative events in which the learner might need to communicate, would cover the areas of the schoolchildren's communicative needs in the playground and in the classroom in the immediate, and then, possibly, in the areas where the children might need to communicate in the foreign language, in trips abroad on a long or short-term basis. These elements might well be included in the syllabus design so that the relationship of the communicative syllabus to the learners short and long-term goals is recognised.

The teacher or syllabus designer may make decisions on behalf of the learner, Yalden (op.cit. 1983) concerning what interests are general enough for them all (points 5 and 6) because a needs survey through a questionnaire may not be

possible as she claims that beginners in a language would be incapable of completing such a questionnaire.

However Clark (1979) did attempt to find out what pupils thought they would like to learn in their foreign language classrooms through a questionnaire. Some of the questions (given to 1,116 pupils in Lothian Region Secondary schools from first to third years) were completely open-ended and for others a closed set of alternatives was given.

He concluded that the result of this questionnaire provided an interesting starting point for the design of a syllabus for the pupils concerned and that pupils would not be satisfied with a syllabus that did not take account of their needs here and now as teenagers as well as their potential later needs as adults.

Other ways in which the communicative needs of the learner may be predicted according to Clark (1979) are through building on our intuitions as adult members of society from which the pupils come, asking adults what their needs in foreign languages have amounted to and through conducting case-studies of the language-learning needs of particular individuals throughout their lives.

These four methods seem very comprehensive in establishing the needs of individuals in a particular society since the learners experience is at the heart of the research.

He states that there would be a danger of not achieving communicative success if syllabuses do not provide the balanced mixture of what the learners want and what they need. His discussions in the Lothian Region has led him to conclude that it is better to produce a wide-ranging composite external syllabus from which teachers may draw their own particular syllabus in accordance with their own pupils' wants and needs, and in accordance with the resources available to them.

A communicative syllabus for Clark is one which will specify what teachers and learners should aim at. It indicates what language to aim towards and therefore what language can be left out. It will go beyond the listing of discrete phrases on the one hand, the grammar and vocabulary on the other and beyond the emphasis on the listening, speaking, reading and writing skills as separate skill areas. (Learning to communicate implies learning to carry out a range of contextualised communicative tasks which may or may not involve combinations of discrete skills).

However the 'communicative' syllabuses of many areas in this country do list their lexical components under various discrete skill headings although they are not necessarily intended to be taught as discrete skills. Speaking, Listening and Reading are the most common headings and

probably the latter is most often taught separately.

Clark (1978) concurs with Yalden (1983) that we have the means of classifying the communicative potential that we wish to make available to our learners. His list of Units of Classification for a checklist syllabus reflecting communicative needs is very similar to that of Yalden (Clark, p.36).

Language Activities
Notions
Relationships between Notions
Functions
(Physical Settings)
Roles, Relationships, Attitudes
Topics
Modes of Communication - Skills and Combination
of skills
Grammatical system
Lexical system
Phonological/Graphological systems.

However Clark goes on to say that a Checklist syllabus can offer no more than checklist guidelines and that a teaching syllabus is very different in that it must organise the components of language-behaviour in Teaching/Learning Units on some principled basis; these units must then be sequenced. He goes on to say that by defining a syllabus we must beware of seeming to take away from the individual the effort that he must make to make the language he is learning work for him. Clark (p.36) quotes Brumfit (1978):

"At worst in the grammatical days, learners were left to grope their way to communication. The danger now is that they will be taught

to swim by learning to lie comfortably
on the wave analyst's photograph of the
sea!"

As well as concern for the teaching syllabus as part of the whole communicative syllabus, Clark (1980) also is concerned with the learner's syllabus. The former syllabus is an 'input' one which provides exposure to simplified but authentic language which will lead not only to mastery of the defined Language Activities and Functions, but also to the building up of strategies to cope with speech and writing that is often more or less new to learner in both receptive and productive modes. A compromise has to be reached between the richness of the "input" and the state of development of the language learner's ability (p.65).

The learner's syllabus is an 'output' syllabus, i.e. it tries to express in as explicit a way as possible the outcomes that are hoped for as a result of the teaching/learning process.

Clark (1979) reminds us that at the school level, with largely unmotivated learners, there is a need for an examination of the sort of low-level performances that nevertheless succeed in carrying out the communicative objectives set by the syllabus. He goes on to say that it is erroneous to imagine that what you 'put in' to pupils in terms of correct language will necessarily 'come out' in that form. Pupil performances

will vary enormously in quality. A level of language will have to be determined in terms of learner performance as much as in terms of the teacher's syllabus (p.29).

It seems realistic to have the concept of the learners' syllabus as part of the communicative syllabus because it involves the learner directly in the structure of the syllabus itself and the expectations of the success and failure of the learner are taken into account from the learner's point of view.

Clark maintains that there must be an element of flexibility in the syllabus, in particular for the receptive areas of the communicative syllabus since one cannot predict what a native speaker is going to say or write in any particular situation; any attempt to define this language can only be enlightened guesswork. No-one can totally predict what language any individual will want to use in speech or writing to fulfil whatever personal tasks he/she may want to carry out, so that at best "productive" syllabuses can only be suggested too. In fact defined linguistic content is really a classroom artefact.

This could be the case for arguing against having defined content syllabuses; however many areas in the country do have defined content syllabus, for example Oxford, Cleveland. In the case of the latter it was found through questioning the

teachers of foreign languages (see Chapter 4), that they prefer to have a defined content syllabus. They accept that this does not however necessarily answer the problems raised by the area of "unpredictable language" mentioned above, but they prefer to work from a structured basis of defined vocabulary and structures and trust that these areas will encompass the most important areas of language in any given situation of communication specified in the syllabus.

Brumfit (1979) maintains that many features of the communicative syllabuses were previously thought of as matters of methodology, rather than syllabus description. They related to the process of contextualization the teacher was expected to perform through classroom activity. He claims that what both the 'old' and the 'new' syllabus designers concentrate on is 'code': on what is to be taught and why it is to be taught. But he writes that although formal and informal learning environments have been discussed, little of the discussion has offered direct and helpful support to the teachers and learners in conventional school situations in which most language teaching takes place.

I cannot agree with his last argument that there is little support to the teachers and learners; with the advent of communicative syllabus much discussion has taken place nationally, in various groups, for example re. Cleveland

in Chapter 4, in Lothian to establish methods of teaching the communicative syllabus.

Brumfit goes on to say that what we need is a return to the serious discussion of methodology because he feels that there are considerable problems with a communicative syllabus which attempts to describe the interaction between language and the world; the problem here is that since the world as reflected in and influenced by language is always changing, meanings are maintained by conventions which are constantly being negotiated, it is hard to see how the kind of idealisation produced by a description of language functions etc., can help a learner operate in a situation which is constantly fluid and negotiable. He also writes that a syllabus cannot but provide and involve generalization, but we must generalize from local conditions, i.e. take into account factors such as the mother-tongue of the learners, the nature of the language teaching tradition. Yalden's communicative syllabus takes these factors into account so Brumfit would seem to agree with her definition in this respect.

It is important that the methodology should incorporate the principles involved in a communicative syllabus and that the two areas knit together towards a certain level of communicative competence.

Clark (1980) sees communicative competence as being

"our ability to assign the appropriate function and notions to stretches of language not memorised before, and the ability to make up appropriate and communicatively effective stretches of language that are to a greater or lesser extent new to us." (p.62)

What experiences lead towards communicative competence?

These experiences are what happens in the communicative methodology; this should be examined next, as separate from the communicative syllabus.

What is communicative methodology?

How do we define any method?

Morrow (1981) says -

it is the overall means of achieving the general objectives of a course.

A method will be realised as the carrying out of a set of procedures or activities, procedures or activities chosen because they relate coherently to the way it is hoped to reach the course objectives.

A method is a set of procedures - these use specific techniques.

Communicative methodology has tended to concentrate on technique, e.g. pair-work or procedures, e.g. role-play.

But what of overall method?

Although communicative methodology is linked with communicative syllabus, it doesn't follow that the adoption of the latter

will ensure the former is practised.

Morrow outlines five basic principles of communicative methodology which might help students to use language in order to communicate:-

1. Know what you're doing:

The focus of every lesson should be on learning to do something.

An operation to be performed in the foreign language.

Learner should clearly see that she/he can do something which is new - and that the 'something' is communicatively useful.

This involves mainly a psychological change.

2. The whole is more than the sum of the parts

Communication is a dynamic and developing phenomenon. Communicative method will operate with stretches of language above sentence level and operate with real language in real situations.

A synthetic procedure may be used in learning forms individually, then practising to combine them.

An analytic procedure might also be used in communicative methodology. (Analysis - not the sort to dismember dialogues so that they are reduced to a series of utterances - but to examine the content of dialogue - who, saying what, to whom.)

3. The processes are as important as the forms

The practice of form should take place in a communicative framework.

The method should replicate the processes of communication; these are:-

(a) INFORMATION GAP - This is a fundamental area which involves "bridging the gap" across the people involved.

The teacher needs to devise and set up situations where the 'information gap' might occur.

(b) CHOICE - The speaker must choose ideas as well as the linguistic forms to express them.

Stevik (1981) argues that the depth of personal involvement is important in communication.

(c) FEEDBACK - What you get out of conversation or information.

If activities do not take into account these activities, although they might have value in other terms, they cannot be communicative activities.

4. To learn it, do it

Communicative methodology is not only concerned with teaching but also with learning.

What are the effects of the teaching on the learner?

The learning becomes the learners responsibility to a large extent.

It is necessary for the teachers to create an environment conducive to enabling learners to do things, to make choices, to evaluate feedback, to bridge "information gaps."

There is a need for a structured framework including presentation, practice and production, but what is presented, practised and produced will take into account the principles of communicative methodology.

However, in secondary schools there are certain problems such as finding interesting and stimulating activities to enable pupils of different ages and abilities to practise language; there is the problem of discipline especially in certain schools with **disaffected** pupils.

Various teachers in Cleveland who were interviewed about communicative teaching (see Chapter 4) discussed the problem of discipline. They all agreed that in order to teach communicatively it is necessary to have strong discipline, to establish it early and to maintain it throughout the course. However they also claimed that once established, discipline is easier to maintain in communicative teaching than in traditional because the pupils become much more involved in their learning, much more

committed to it and hence their enjoyment increases and discipline problems decrease.

5. A mistake is not always a mistake

In communicative teaching, teachers may well need to re-assess their attitude to error. Clark (1980)

states:

"Errors can be seen as evidence of the learners' instinctive grasp of the communicative nature of language."

Here he is referring to errors in communicative activities where the task set to the learner is to get the message over, not to errors in the practice of the language code - its grammar and vocabulary - where the task set to the learner is to get the correct code, not necessarily to get the message over.

In communicative terms the learner may use language in unrehearsed areas and so may not really be making a mistake.

Traditionally teachers were concerned with errors in the language code and tended to constantly correct.

It could be said that this sort of niggling criticism could hinder fluency and spontaneity in communication.

Correction of error of form is important but it needs careful consideration with regard to both the timing and the method of correction.

There could be seen to be two processes involved; the learning of forms and the learning of how to use them. How might it be possible to teach the forms through the uses? There are problems (especially with beginners) and there is the challenge of resolving the priorities of teaching form and use and to what extent.

Savignou (1972) states:-

"The most significant findings point to the value of training in communicative skills from the very beginning of the foreign language programme."

Receptive skills may be emphasized first, productive ones later.

Clark, like Stevick is concerned with the depth of involvement of the participants. The former provides a framework for thinking about communication in the classroom which could help develop a communicative methodology.

1. Classroom socialising - (real communication)

This should be in the foreign language, deliberately avoiding the use of the mother tongue.

(Although the temptation to use the latter is great, because it may be quicker and easier, it is recommended that the foreign language be used for basic communication in order:-

- (a) to 'prove' that foreign language can be used realistically

- (b) to assert the importance of the foreign language
in the communication of day-to-day utterances
and information.
2. Communication with people and things foreign in the
classroom and in school (real communication).
 3. Exercises that arise out of pupils' interests and out
of challenges set to them.
 4. Exercises in the foreign language based in the communicative
challenges likely to be encountered.

Clark (1976) maintains that it is only when the personal
effort to make links between intention and language are made
that the links are sufficiently strongly forged to be remembered,
e.g. extracting gist
creating language for own purposes.

He writes:

"It seems to be essential not to restrict the
foreign language to imagined trips abroad or
imagined contacts in Britain, but to use the
foreign language as often as possible as an
alternative code to the mother tongue to express
personal feelings, thoughts and opinions, to
exchange both personal and general information, etc."
(p.7)

Clark distinguishes between:-

real communication
exercises in communication
language practice - this has a pedagogical purpose
not a communicative one.

The differences between these have to do with the purposes which lie behind them and the depth of pupil involvement. The language practice has been greatly emphasized in the traditional classroom.

There are various techniques which may be used to involve the learners more deeply:
e.g. Many teachers feel that the use of drama techniques are important in a communicative approach. It is not only involved with speaking and listening but also involves all paralinguistic behaviour. Visual, emotional and cultural contexts are established.

Learners should be themselves in various situations and their roles should not be far-fetched, e.g. that of a policeman. It may be possible to approach the introduction of words into a situation through the initial use of mime.

Holden (1981) believes that learners should be given practice in reading the paralinguistic features of the culture group whose language they are learning and in understanding the emotions as well as experiencing and analysing them - the emotions which colour verbal interaction, e.g. stress, shyness, etc.

In this way the classroom can be transferred into the real world.

This practice might be given, for example, through the

attention is diverted from the language to the use of it in a task or activity, it becomes a tool and is no longer the unique end. Could it be said that such activities facilitate the acquisition of the foreign language rather than its learning?

(Acquisition being characterised as largely unconscious, peripheral, effortless, 'whole-person' and deeply rooted. Learning as consciously involving effort, at the centre of the learner's field of concentration, externally to his personality.)

Since communicative methodology involves elements of acquisition, for example, the involvement of the "whole person", certain activities which are firmly in the realm of language use rather than language learning, for example, games, could well be encouraged as part of communicative methodology.

Kraschen (1981) maintains that the two systems of acquisition and learning are inter-related and that it is necessary to continue acquisition and learning in teaching in such a way as to ensure that more learned language finds its way into the acquired system by providing more effective classroom language. The fundamental problem here is whether it is possible to teach forms through uses or whether although inter-related, language learning and language acquisition have to be treated separately in teaching a foreign language. A

further problem remains of what exactly is "effective classroom language" for pupils in the secondary foreign language learning classroom.

In the learning of the mother tongue the further hypothesis is that sub-conscious learning appears to be more important than conscious learning when the listeners are concerned more with messages than form but is this comparable to the learning of a foreign language within the system of secondary schools?

It is necessary for further research into the relationship of language acquisition and language learning to attempt to analyse which elements of the former are applicable and how they are applicable to the study of foreign languages in the secondary school environment.

Formal learning creates the following problems:

1. Limits speed and spontaneity
2. Repetition and memorization have often been the sole techniques.

Is there any universal method that can be termed "communicative"?

Littlewood (1978) provides a framework for looking at methodology and identifies three fields currently being explored in an attempt to find a "communicative approach."

1. Retain Old Techniques

Although the grammar/translation method has been rejected as being useful for active use in situations, the method

may be adapted to emphasize function as well as form, e.g. through the dialogues and drills used.

The audio-visual method has been under attack because of its heavy reliance on behavioural procedures and because teaching programmes have often acted as if conscious learning was the only route to the mastery of the foreign language through:-

- learning rules
- practising the application of rules
- production of utterances.

However, the audio-visual method may still be used to present material, prepare situations as long as the teacher then moves away from the presentation and the practice to the using of the language stage. In the latter stage would the real communication occur.

2. New Teaching Techniques

To provide practice more like communicative activity in the outside world but with specially produced and graded material.

<u>Chief Techniques</u>	<u>Principles</u>
(a) Communicative tasks/games	"information gap"
(b) Situations/role-play	reasons for bridging the gap

Alexander believes that improvisation and transfer should invite learners to cope with real-life situations. (1979)

3. Communication as a Primary Technique

Littlewood describes this as when language is not being taught through communication but communication through language.

The principle involved here is that what goes on in the classroom should be real and not simulated, e.g. the Canadian immersion programme.

Links between communicative methodology and communicative syllabus

Communicative methodology and communicative syllabus are closely inter-related although one can exist without the other in theoretical terms. However a mere list of speech acts cannot be said to constitute a syllabus which is communicative because communication goes beyond the level of the speech acts to the managing of a sentence. (Candlin, 1976). In so doing, Candlin claims that the individual is communicating by the realization of the interpersonal, ideational and textual functions of language.

Kress (1976) as cited in Yalden, calls these functions the 'macro-functions,' which are the components in the internal organization of adult language.

1. The interpersonal function

To establish, maintain and specify relations between members of societies.

2. The ideational function

To transmit information between members of societies.

3. The textual function

To provide texture, the organization of discourse as relevant to the situation.

The very nature of communication through language involves these three macro-functions and therefore the nature of communicative language-teaching methodology must also include them. (However one problem with communicative ideology in these terms is that it conceives language to be concerned with information transfer only and therefore to be an interpersonal, social event. Yet language has other roles than this, for example, it can be used to categorise experience or as rehearsal of experience, for example, in children, it has the function of defining cultures through the different languages and sometimes it is used in thought processes).

How far communicative teaching may enable learners to use language in these different ways is a question of further investigation; how do people come to think in another language, to use it in a manner in which a bi-lingual person would?

Brumfit (1979) believes that methodology should not be discussed in terms of 'useful teaching tips' but in a discussion of the role of the teacher.

In a communicative methodology the role of the teacher is a changed one. From the traditional role of 'source of all knowledge' the role must be that of either a 'monitor' or 'peer', an instigator of situations. Yalden maintains that the role must be complimentary and not an alternative to the traditional role.

Piepho (1981) quotes Valette (1971):

"An all important component in student success is the teacher's mental set. If one teacher expects all of his students to master the French sound system, they usually do, whereas another teacher is convinced that most students will never get it, his students usually do not. Recent research by Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) confirms the self-fulfilling nature of teacher expectancies." (p.46)

Piepho goes on to comment that exercises are not effective merely because of the didactic organizational or legitimacy of their content. What is equally - perhaps more - important is the relationship they engender between teacher and learner. Patience, encouragement, praise and gradual helping of every learner are the essential conditions for teaching success.

One of the teachers' main aims must be teaching the learner how to learn.

Evaluation of 'error'

The teacher's attitude to error must change. What has traditionally constituted error and therefore immediate correction

has been linguistic error. Errors of this sort in the context of real communication may be less serious if they are considered from the stance:

"do these errors hinder communication of the message?"

Obviously there is a case for the correction of errors but the emphasis on accuracy would come in the practice stage of the communicative methodology not in the 'real communication' stage.

Errors in language should be expected in a communicative methodology, and perhaps there might be some errors in communication. Corder (1981) claims that errors should be allowed because as the learner goes through natural and necessary stages in language learning, as in learning the mother tongue, an 'inter-language' develops which at any given point will be a complete system in itself.

The assumptions on which our methodology are based are mainly taken from the theories of learning mother-tongue languages, or second-languages. But how far can these theories be applied to foreign language learning? Is the way learners learn their mother-tongue transferable to their learning of a foreign language?

There is little evidence or observation of the use of communicative methodology in foreign language learning in

secondary schools. Parts of what constitutes communicative methodology has been observed, especially with adults learning English.

How far is a communicative methodology appropriate in secondary schools?

Piepho (1981) writes that certain research and experimentation indicate that the most stable and most highly correlated prerequisite for the variable of language performance is that of the attitude of the learner to the subject, the country and the people who speak the language being learned, and the language itself. Positive attitudes also depend on the variables of:

content - relevance, accessability
and teaching style - co-operative, involving learning and planning.

This is based on research in some Wetzlar comprehensive schools (Gesamtschulen) and research in the United States (Freudenstein 1976).

Piepho also discusses the important aspects of the learners attitude or 'willingness' to learn, their 'motivation' to communicate.

He claims that it is an important psychological question to determine the appropriate point for teacher-guided lessons. There is little research evidence to help evaluate this question.

But Piepho states that what seems intuitively reasonable is that such practice is likely to be most effective when it is followed by communicative or interpretive tasks which make clear to learners the need for an integration of cognitive and linguistic skills.

Piepho defines various exercises based on a psychological approach to language learning which differs from the language-teaching based on the behaviourist language theory.

He claims that psychological research suggests a distinction between:

instrumental and
integrative exercise types.

Instrumental exercises require learners to react to signs and symbols in language; to individual sentences and linguistic items, from a formal, code point of view. Integrative exercises are those which - within the exercise itself - involve the learner in an actual communicative event, whether this is letter-writing, reacting to some happening or to some topic.

Motivation cannot always be precisely determined in a language teaching context. Rivers (1964) points to the fact that motivation and performance are not independent of learner-type, e.g.

the 'concept learner' - concerned with overall structure,

the 'item collector' - collects vocabulary and structures,
the 'searcher after rules'
the 'performer' who will take every opportunity to speak
and try out his communicative ability.

It is assumed that the motivation is in the learner and may be developed through various exercises, through involvement and interest in the lesson and in what is being taught as well as through a consideration of the type of learner who is learning.

However in secondary schools it is sometimes very difficult to motivate pupils to learn a foreign language. There are problems, physical and psychological, in the context of the teaching and learning environment in secondary schools which hinder the development of a communicative methodology.

Despite the psychological research, the development of exercise typology for communicative practice and despite the theories expounded on communicative language teaching and learning; despite the validity and interest of these theories, there still remain serious problems in secondary schools which will hinder their implementation.

This is not to say that the introduction and development of a communicative syllabus and methodology are not worthwhile in secondary schools, but it is necessary to consider some of the problems inherent in the secondary schools which make the attempt more difficult.

The problems in secondary schools related to the development of a communicative syllabus and methodology

It would be relatively easy to develop a communicative syllabus based on the needs and interests of secondary school pupils; an existing syllabus could be adapted and the teacher as syllabus-designer could consider the ten components as listed by Yalden.

It would seem more difficult to write a syllabus based on some of the ideas expressed by Clark because in his ideas there appears to be a total shift of emphasis which would demand fundamental re-thinking not only of syllabus but also the method involved in the syllabus. Many teachers would be discouraged from attempting to meet this challenge.

Perhaps teachers would not be too discouraged if they had the time to give long and serious consideration to the principles involved. However the factor 'time' is very important for teachers and although they might be prepared to modify some of their present thinking and methodology it would be very difficult for them to 'revolutionize' their teaching. It would be possible to go along with some of the ideas suggested by Clark, e.g. the use of and the development of the information and interest syllabuses.

The communicative syllabus would lose its value if it

were not taught communicatively, and yet it would be possible to teach it and yet not use a communicative methodology.

One of the main concerns of Piepho is that of the attitude of the learner to the language, the country and the people who speak the language, in the motivation of the learner.

However if we consider the other variables mentioned by Piepho, those of content and teaching style perhaps if these were relevant and interesting then gradually a positive attitude could be developed in the pupils.

The changed role of the teacher would also involve and bring certain problems. If the teacher is to assume the role of 'peer' or 'monitor' then this will require a change of attitude on the part of the learners as well as the teacher. They will need to develop much more self-discipline than they have at present in order for the lessons to be successful. The established rules and attitudes in secondary schools provide learners with certain expectations. They expect to be disciplined and taught, rather than develop their own self-discipline and 'help themselves' to their learning.

That is not to say that these attitudes could not be changed, they could with time and patience and a gradual transition.

If the teachers monitor the learning and accept certain

errors, emphasize the nature and importance of communication, then perhaps the pupils would gradually accept the new situation, and learn to function within it.

If the atmosphere in the classroom were as authentic as possible, if the teacher used the foreign language as frequently as possible, if not all the time, then the pupils themselves might go some of the way to using the foreign language for their basic communication in that classroom.

The assumptions of the communicative methodology based on the learning of the mother tongue are only partially transferable to the foreign language learning of secondary school pupils. It must be remembered that these pupils can already communicate in their mother-tongue and therefore the temptation to do so is enormous. The need and motivation to communicate when learning a mother-tongue or a second-language are very different from those when learning a foreign language.

Finally there is the ultimate constraint of irrelevant examinations. The syllabuses of most of the end of secondary school examinations have not been communicative syllabuses in nature. Both C.S.E. and G.C.E. examination boards have considered the nature and implications of communicative syllabuses but only few have gone so far as to develop them and incorporate them into their schemes.

Now with the arrival of the 16+ and G.C.S.E., the out-dated schemes of G.S.E. and G.C.E. will be superseded by new syllabuses with a much more evident communicative approach.

The communicative syllabus and methodology are appropriate to the teaching of foreign languages in secondary schools and provided that the problems are known then compromises may be made by teachers, learners, examination boards, and all concerned. Since the communicative syllabus and methodology do not reject but expand the existing syllabuses and methodology then they could be very appropriate when the change of emphasis is attempted and prove quite successful. It must be said that certain exercise-types are rejected, e.g. fly-on-the-wall listening, picture-essay writing, if they do not have a communicative purpose but these techniques might be incorporated, in part, provided that the content created be communicative. e.g. a series of pictures may be provided as clues to help a learner write a letter to a pen-friend describing what he/she did one day.

Certain research "Modern Languages at Sixteen Plus" Moys, Harding et al. (1980), concerning existing external, end of secondary school examinations, describes some of the problems and difficulties in existing examinations. Perhaps the introduction of communicative syllabuses and their

adoption by examination boards might overcome some of the problems. The methodology based on communicative syllabuses might enable the learner to become more involved with his/her language learning and hopefully more motivated. If the communicative events relate to the interests and everyday situations of the learners and the communicative syllabus and methodology incorporate these interests then surely the learners will feel more personally involved in their study of a foreign language.

In an ideal world, this improved motivation could be developed and built upon, the external examinations would change their syllabuses and encompass the demands of communicative syllabuses and hence the whole field of language learning would become a much more meaningful, purposeful and successful experience.

Introduction to Chapter III

In the previous chapters I have described curriculum innovation in modern languages in terms of the national development, general theory and mechanics. In this chapter I would like to discuss how the history and development of Cleveland emerged and some of the effects and changes that resulted.

The reason why I attempted to record this area of local educational history is because it was my privilege to be involved with it from the start and therefore in a position which enabled me to observe this continuous and dynamic process within which the practical and theoretical issues were linked and limited.

The events concerning Cleveland are listed chronologically and comments have been made where appropriate to broaden the descriptions or to explain or account for the effects or results of the events on Cleveland's situation.

A CASE STUDY OF CURRICULUM INNOVATION

How did Graded Syllabuses and Graded Tests become accepted and institutionalised
as part of Education in Cleveland?

AN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

Dates	Events	Comments
1975-6	H.M. Inspectorate surveyed 83 schools and produced a discussion document concerned with the teaching of Modern Languages:	An analysis of some of the problems from "the top"
1977	<p><u>"Modern Languages in Comprehensive Schools"</u></p> <p>The document stated that there is a need:-</p> <p>(a) for communication skills (Introd. p.3.)</p> <p>(b) for differentiated objectives for pupils of differing abilities (amongst other recommendations)</p> <p>and recommended that:</p> <p>"Precise linguistic objectives should be determined for pupils (pp. 47,48) following longer and shorter courses. These should be realistic, taking account of the pupils' aptitudes and needs" (p.49)</p>	A formal recognition of some of the problems in the teaching of Modern Languages in comprehensive schools.
Nov.1977 and Jan.1978	H.M.I./L.E.A. Seminars were held in Cleveland. Two H.M.I.s and Advisers/Head Teachers/Heads of Modern Languages Departments in Cleveland attended.	Problems were discussed at a lower level - first level below the H.M.I. en route to the school curriculum/classroom.

62

Dates	Events	Comments
(cont.)	<u>(Appendix 1)</u> A Report of the H.M.I./L.E.A. Seminars in Cleveland.	Discrimination of ideas of the H.M.I. findings - expansion of the discussion in formal terms.
pp.14 & 15.	<u>Group Session 2. Aims and Objectives Reconsidered</u> (a) Need for short-term goals	New ideas are now being discussed and some practical steps being considered to implement improvement.
p.24	<u>Plenary Sessions. Recommendations</u> Re. Graded Examinations Curriculum Guidelines Intensive Courses	
Mar.1978	<p><u>Beamish: A Residential/Intensive Course for Cleveland Teachers:-</u></p> <p>Cleveland L.E.A.'s Modern Languages Advisers planned a course for Heads of Departments and teachers. (approximately 20).</p> <p>During this course part of the discussion centred on the compilation of defined syllabuses and tests together with certificates of achievement.</p> <p>(So far it has been impossible for me to obtain a course programme/outline/minutes)</p> <p>Considerable consideration was given to objectives for the less-able pupils.</p> <p>The teachers on the courses defined the topic areas of the Defined Content syllabus and started to write some of the language content of the French syllabus. They also wrote materials to exploit these topics designed for pupils of lower ability.</p>	<p>This course was funded by the L.E.A. from the "in-service training" purse. These funds are available for any in-service training - they did not become specifically available for this course on this subject.</p> <p>Now that teachers realised that their concern for pupils of lower-ability was shared by the H.M.I.'s & the L.E.A., they became enthusiastic about attempting to resolve some of the problems.</p>

Dates	Events	Comments
March- Sept. 1978	<p>After the course two working parties met regularly after school to write the syllabus for Level I and Level II.</p> <p>There was liaison between the groups to compare work/discuss ideas and problems. (See Appendix 2).</p> <p>It was decided that Level I would cover almost the same topic areas as Level II but that the latter level would include language of greater difficulty/complexity.</p>	<p>After Beamish they were prepared to give up their own time to write a set of syllabus/tests/materials to help cope with the problem of providing language in a way which would be relevant and acceptable to pupils who were unsuccessful with traditional courses/tests/materials.</p>
Sept.1978	<p>The Level I syllabus was provided in twelve pilot schools. These schools were to teach the syllabus in readiness for the Level I test then being compiled.</p> <p>At this time - also -</p>	<p>VOLUNTARY WORK done in the teachers' own time.</p>
April.1978	<p>C.A.F.L.T. (Cleveland Association of F.L. teachers) invited Michael Bucky (York) to come to talk about the Graded Tests being in York.</p> <p>(York developed a series of Graded Tests in Pilot schools, but were less concerned at this point with a Defined Content Syllabus). (See Appendix 3).</p>	<p>Apart from the influence of the H.M.I. reports, influence was also coming from:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. York - Graded Tests 2. Oxfordshire - "New Objectives in Mod.Langs. Teaching." 3. Council of Europe's work - 'Un Niveau Seuil'
Oct.1978	<p>C.A.F.L.T. invited Keith Gordon from Oxfordshire to talk about the Oxfordshire publication of Defined Content Syllabuses.</p>	<p>The York scheme had started because of the dissatisfaction of teachers with:-</p>

Dates	Events	Comments
(cont.)	<p data-bbox="358 278 1057 299"><u>"New Objectives in Modern Language Teaching"</u></p> <p data-bbox="358 326 1458 382">Copies of this booklet were sold during the meeting and much interest was shown in this work.</p> <p data-bbox="358 423 1410 480">The lay-out of this type of syllabus was similar to the style used for the Cleveland Defined Syllabuses.</p> <p data-bbox="358 500 1410 562">The topic areas were divided into the, 'speaking', 'listening' and 'reading' areas of language.</p>	<p data-bbox="1589 278 1843 299">(a) examinations</p> <p data-bbox="1589 326 2155 416">(b) objectives being insufficiently differentiated for able/less-able pupils -</p> <p data-bbox="1589 442 2155 642">as well as an awareness of positive changes taking place in Oxfordshire and the ideas coming from the reports of the Council of Europe - these influenced York, Oxfordshire. (See Appendix 4).</p>
May, 1979	<p data-bbox="358 697 1410 719">Level I tests were available to the 12 pilot schools (Appendix 5).</p> <p data-bbox="358 745 1428 767">Successful candidates were awarded a Level I Certificate (App.5.a.)</p>	<p data-bbox="1589 697 2155 850">Frequent after-school meetings were necessary and teachers devoted much time and energy to the discussion and production of graded syllabuses and tests.</p>
Sept.1979	<p data-bbox="358 809 1349 866">Level I syllabuses were available to all schools and many more schools in Cleveland began to use these syllabuses.</p> <p data-bbox="358 892 1362 949">Level II syllabuses were available to the twelve pilot schools. (See Appendix 5)</p> <p data-bbox="358 969 1378 1089">It had been decided that these levels of achievement could be developed to a C.S.E. level. The suitable style of C.S.E. would be a Mode III and so that it could be available country-wide, a Mode III Group Scheme seemed most appropriate.</p> <p data-bbox="358 1115 1362 1202">The teachers interested in Levels I and II were those most concerned to do a Mode III Group Scheme examination and a group of them set about writing a</p>	<p data-bbox="1589 892 2155 1045">These tests were written by the teachers then sent to the Adviser for Modern Languages who sent them out to the schools which requested them.</p> <p data-bbox="1589 1065 2155 1151">New tests were written each year so the teachers' working parties continued to meet.</p>
From Sept.1979	<p data-bbox="358 1228 1443 1317">Level III syllabus which covered similar topic areas to those done in levels I & II, but at a more complex level - linguistically. (See Appendix 5).</p>	<p data-bbox="1589 1199 2070 1285">Usually the groups split into smaller groups, to write tests for different skills.</p>

Dates	Events	Comments
May 1980	Level II tests available in pilot schools (See Appendix 5).	
Sept.1980	Level II syllabuses and tests were available in all schools.	
	<u>GERMAN SYLLABUSES AND TESTS</u>	
Sept.1980	A group of teachers of German formed a working party to write: Level I syllabuses and tests.	In most Cleveland comprehensives German is the second foreign language taught - it is often introduced in the second or third year usually the latter.
Jan.1981	The level I syllabus which was similar to the French was sent to ten pilot schools.	
June, 1981	Level I tests which had been compiled between January and June were sent to pilot schools.	A need was felt for the graded syllabuses and tests in German and several interested teachers together with the Adviser for Modern Languages with expertise in German, Mr. D. Spoerry, examined the style of the syllabuses and tests for French and started and continued to work on the German.
Sept.1981	Level I syllabuses and tests were available to all schools.	
Sept.1981	The same group set about writing Level II syllabus for pilot schools.	
	(I could find copies of these syllabuses and tests if necessary)	
1980	<p data-bbox="380 979 1384 1001"><u>Cleveland Curriculum Initiative</u> GOATHLAND Residential Course.</p> <p data-bbox="380 1027 1421 1081">Cleveland's Advisers met to discuss the curriculum in Cleveland's schools.</p> <p data-bbox="380 1108 1384 1191">In anticipation of a D.E.S. Circular they decided to make recommendations on the curriculum, present practice in schools, etc.</p> <p data-bbox="380 1217 1275 1271">It was decided to set up a working party to decide how a Cleveland Curriculum Review might work. (Appendix 6).</p>	<p data-bbox="1611 1027 2142 1081">Reaction to possible developments from "the top" (D.E.S.)</p> <p data-bbox="1611 1137 2011 1198">Input from L.E.A. funding and organization.</p>

Dates

Events

Comments

1980

A curriculum study-group for Modern Languages was formed - Advisers, Head Teachers, Heads of Modern Languages Departments, and teachers.

This group considered the Graded Tests in relation to Short Term Goals. (see Appendix 6) (pp.21 to 27)

This study group met after school when teachers once again felt the need and were motivated in critically examining the curriculum and making recommendations to implement improvements

Formal initially, then involved parties - gave of their own time.

6-8th
June
1980

G.O.M.L. Conference in Birmingham organised by C.I.L.T. (Appendix 7)

A. Hellaoui was asked to represent Cleveland in this conference.

It was very enlightening to discuss the G.O.M.L. schemes being developed by other areas in the country.

Talks were given by representatives from London I.L.E.A. (tests based on Eclair materials), Lothian, Oxfordshire.

Discussion and workshops were part of the weekend's course and interesting ideas evolved, e.g. on the value of different types of listening materials/tests.

Informal discussions were very important in that they allowed some detailed exploration into the background behind the schemes and the implementation of the syllabuses and tests.

This contact was extremely important as it became apparent to Cleveland's representative that there was some theoretical background missing from the Cleveland Scheme.

L.E.A. Offered financial support to its representative.

C.I.L.T. financed the G.O.M.L. course and this was a further investment from the top level to help the development of the G.O.M.L. area of the curriculum.

The course was attended by representatives of universities, Leicester, York, Leeds, and Colleges of Education, the Advisory service as well as Heads of Department and classroom teachers.

Connections were established with representatives from other areas of the country.

Dates	Events	Comments
(cont.)	As a result of this visit, A. Hellaoui began to collect documents from the Council of Europe, etc., which pertained to functional/notional/situational and communicative syllabuses. (e.g. Appendices 4, 8)	Informal discussion with other teachers about the theoretical background aroused interest.
9th July 1980	<u>Cleveland Defined Content Syllabuses and Graded Tests Working Parties</u> <u>Day Conference</u>	This day was very useful as it allowed teachers to reflect upon existing syllabuses and possible ways of improving them in the light of knowledge of syllabuses from other areas and in the light of our own experience in Cleveland.
A group of Modern Languages teachers spent the day together discussing different aspects of the G.O.M.L. (See Appendix 9)	Much interest and concern was stimulated amongst teachers and this day's work was reflected later in 1980 in the second Beamish Course.	
23rd June 24th June 1980	As a result of the meeting at the Birmingham Conference and the discussions with the Lothian area, A. Hellaoui was invited to spend the day with the Lothian Group including J. Clark and J. Hamilton to discuss their G.O.M. L. scheme.	<u>Working Group Sessions</u> <u>Task A</u> This area was particularly concerned with review of and the development of syllabuses.
22nd-26th September 1980	<u>Practical Aspects of Modern Language Teaching</u> <u>Beamish (2) Intensive Course for Modern Language Teachers</u> Another course at Beamish was organised to allow teachers to give careful consideration to certain aspects of Cleveland's G.O.M.L. Scheme and other aspects of the teaching of modern languages. The course provided a further stimulus for those involved in the G.O.M.L. scheme and also allowed wider discussion of the problems and practical difficulties of implementing the defined content syllabuses. (See Appendix 10)	L.E.A. funded (as previous Beamish course) The provision from the L.E.A. enabled teachers to participate in and organize this course. Although the programme was a very intensive one some teachers also managed to fit in extra work(!) to write items for listening tests based on the Cleveland scheme.

Dates	Events	Comments
Sept/Oct. 1980	As a result of the dissatisfaction with Cleveland's existing syllabuses it was decided to form a small working party,	This work was very useful as it provided an opportunity to scrutinise the syllabuses and to have intensive and detailed discussions.
July 1981	<p data-bbox="428 358 766 511">R. Hullcrop (Adviser) A. Martinez C. Hole A. Hellaoui A French assistant</p> <p data-bbox="362 532 1054 562">which would review the existing syllabuses.</p> <p data-bbox="362 598 1443 656">This group met very regularly (approximately fortnightly) to review and revise the three levels.</p> <p data-bbox="362 678 1443 802">It was realised that there was much irrelevant material (vocabulary and some structures) and that it would possibly be more appropriate to divide the three levels into four and to re-distribute the content, rejecting some items and adding others.</p> <p data-bbox="362 824 1362 911">By 1981 summer term the Adviser realised that this major task of re-printing even after this review might merit an even more fundamental review and further research.</p> <p data-bbox="362 933 639 962">(See Appendix 11)</p>	These meetings took place after school and the members of the working party gave of their own time such was their concern to see improvement.
18th Oct. 1980	<p data-bbox="362 998 1410 1057"><u>Meeting of the Co-ordinating Committee for Graded Tests in Modern Languages: York G.O.M.L.</u></p> <p data-bbox="362 1078 1410 1108">Aim: To discuss possible elements in C.S.E. Mode III examination.</p> <p data-bbox="362 1129 1443 1188">The influence of the G.O.M.L. schemes was such that the examination boards were now taking this G.O.M.L. work into account.</p> <p data-bbox="362 1209 1378 1304">The talks concerned with the development of the 16+ examination meant that serious concern needed to be given to the content form, etc. of new examinations. (See Appendix 12)</p>	<p data-bbox="1596 1027 2131 1122">The G.O.M.L. Curriculum innovation now began to have serious and considerable effects.</p> <p data-bbox="1596 1144 2179 1394">Once the examination boards realised the need for their examinations to reflect the type of syllabus being followed it became apparent that the "grass roots" of G.O.M.L. schemes was beginning to influence the examinations at the other end of the scale.</p>

89

Dates

Events

Comments

Sept.1980-
May 1982

Cleveland's C.S.E. Mode III Group Scheme

It had been decided that a group scheme would be the most appropriate way to organize the development of the C.S.E. Mode III examination based on Cleveland's Defined Content Syllabus.

From the type of testing connected with Levels I and II of the scheme it was not difficult to continue this trend into a Level III stage.

Originally it was felt that an area of background study would be relevant to the testing but this was later dropped since it became difficult to decide which areas of background knowledge to test.

The Form 31,A. for submission to the N.R.E.B. describing the form of the examination was amended.
(See Appendix 13)

Some concern was expressed about the written element so the Cleveland Adviser went to the N.R.E.B. for discussions. It was agreed in principle that there need be no written element.

In 1980-82's Group Scheme 12 schools (out of 54) were involved.
By 1984 22 schools (out of 51) were involved.

Experience was gained between the first Mode III C.S.E. of 1982 and that of 1984.

It was realised that it was necessary to have as many coordination meetings as possible and these were mainly concerned with the co-ordinating of the marks scheme for oral examinations and the written tests.

This was a new venture for modern languages in Cleveland. Various schools already had their own Mode III examination in modern languages and one school had another school 'joined' to its Mode III so this meant a 'mini-group' scheme.

But the idea of a large group scheme had not previously been envisaged.

A co-ordinating teacher, C. Hole, agreed to co-ordinate on behalf of all the schools with the moderator, G. Dobson, appointed by the N.R.E.B.
(Appendix 13)

But the support group was concerned that the exam. might be limited to a maximum grade of 2 or 3 without the written element so it was decided that the written element accounting for 15% would be kept.

A great deal of valuable in-service training was gained from these regular meetings and the group gradually became much more efficient in its work.

Dates	Events	Comments
(Cont.)	<p>The content of the tests, the methods of marking were adapted and it was generally felt that improvements to the scheme were being made.</p> <p>The oral test shows the gradual improvement in the method of marking the 'General Conversation'. (See Appendix 13 for examples of tests in the four skills).</p>	<p>Very frequent meetings were necessary, weekly and fortnightly and teachers gave much time. (See Appendix 13)</p>
June 1982	<p><u>University of Durham</u> <u>Communicative Language Teaching - Revolution or Re-fit?</u> (Appendix 14)</p> <p>This course was attended by a group of teachers from Cleveland. Those modern languages teachers who attended were able to discuss the problems and necessary changes to Cleveland's scheme.</p> <p>They were also able to spend some time together discussing materials and course books and they were able to match the syllabus to parts of courses and work on lesson-plans together.</p>	<p>This proved valuable and enabled teachers to work once again on the practical aspects of the teaching of the defined content syllabus.</p>
Apr.- July 1982	<p>Discussions were held when Cleveland's Advisers persuaded the L.E.A. that it would be necessary to fund the Secondment of a Cleveland Teacher for a term in order to revise/re-write Cleveland's Defined Content Syllabuses and Tests.</p> <p>At first it was hoped that the secondment would be funded by the L.E.A.'s system of "pooled secondment". The Chief Adviser and the Modern Languages Advisers found that this would not be possible since the secondment would be of benefit specifically to Cleveland.</p> <p>Then the "Research and Intelligence" Department of the L.E.A. was approached for a grant and they agreed to fund the secondment in these terms:-</p> <p>(a) the seconded teacher would have the equivalent salary of Scale III (Burnham)</p>	<p>With reference to page 11: The Modern Languages Advisers found it necessary to submit a case to the Chief Adviser for a term's secondment for the further work. This was agreed by 1982.</p>

Dates	Events	Comments
(Cont.)	<p>(Even if the seconded teacher was not already on this scale).</p> <p>(b) funds would be provided to pay a teacher on a term's supply basis to teach the classes of the seconded teacher.</p> <p>(c) funds for the publication of the new syllabuses.</p> <p>These were provided by both the Research and Intelligence Department as well as by the "Curriculum Support Fund."</p> <p>A description of the secondment was issued to applicants (See Appendix 15).</p>	<p>The secondment would allow the seconded teacher to consider all the problems which had been discussed over the years since the original syllabuses had been produced, and then to re-design them in an improved way.</p>
May 1982	<p>Interviews were held - there were four applicants.</p> <p>Discussion during the interviews was based on the limitations, problems and deficiencies in the existing syllabuses, their style and content and how it would be possible to improve, re-design and re-write them.</p> <p>The theoretical aspects of functional/notional syllabuses were discussed and testing was also an important aspect of the discussion.</p> <p>A. Hellaoui was appointed by the two advisers for modern languages - they had conducted the interviews.</p>	<p>Interesting responses were received on the completed questionnaires.</p>
Sept.1982	<p>One of the first approaches to the work of the secondment was an attempt to analyse the ideas, problems of the schools in Cleveland using the existing syllabuses and tests.</p> <p>A questionnaire was devised and sent to all schools. (See Appendix 16).</p>	<p>There were differences of opinion concerning certain questions and these were later discussed in meetings with teachers.</p>

Dates	Events	Comments
(Cont.)	<p>The existing syllabuses were examined and their points of revision noted. What appeared to be lacking was some basis, scenarios around which the defined lexis could be written.</p> <p>During discussion with the Adviser and some other teachers, it was decided that the following scenarios be used:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Level I - A day-trip to France. 2. Level II - A visit to France with your school. 3. Level III - A visit to France with your family. 4. Level IV - A visit alone to stay with your pen-friend. 	<p>As a result of these findings A. Hellaoui decided to devise a draft syllabus and then to show the draft to as many teachers as possible for comment.</p>
Sept.1982	<p>Five teachers agreed to help, another teacher joined the group at a later stage, and this working party met every week between Sept. 1982 and July 1983, to re-write the content.</p> <p>A. Hellaoui prepared most of the meetings during this time and discussed her work with the group, using it as a "sounding-board" for her ideas.</p>	<p>The motivation of the working party and the commitment of the teachers involved was impressive.</p> <p>Ideas were discussed, differences of opinions expressed and gradually consensus decisions were taken on the content/style/presentation.</p>
Sept.1982	<p><u>German Working Party</u></p> <p>A. Hellaoui met with the German teachers who had decided to revise their existing Levels I, II and III and to write a Level IV. She described the direction of the French syllabuses and the principles underlying them and the teachers decided to work along similar lines.</p>	<p>Most of the background research was done by A. Hellaoui and presented to the working party for discussion.</p>

Dates	Events	Comments
Oct.1982	<p data-bbox="384 288 956 310"><u>Teachers' Seminars</u> (Appendix 17)</p> <p data-bbox="384 336 1458 426">A series of meetings were arranged with teachers in different areas of Cleveland in order for the revision to be discussed widely, involving as many teachers as possible.</p> <p data-bbox="384 448 1410 540">These meetings were well-attended, many schools were represented and A. Hellaoui presented part of a draft syllabus for discussion. (Appendix 17)</p>	<p data-bbox="1618 288 2133 474">It was then decided which parts to retain and how to present the theoretical background to what was felt/hoped to be a functional/notional/communicative syllabus.</p>
Oct.1982 Nov.1982	<p data-bbox="384 594 1362 685">Meetings with individual departments were arranged so that A. Hellaoui could discuss the revision of the syllabuses with teachers unable to attend the meetings.</p>	
Sept.1982 Dec.1982	<p data-bbox="384 739 1393 860">Regular meetings were held with the advisers. A. Hellaoui/R. Hullcoop/D. Spoerry met every week or fortnight to discuss the direction of and the problems involved in different aspects of the research.</p> <p data-bbox="384 882 1458 1006">Occasionally R. Hullcoop attended the meetings of the working party to become involved in the discussions, especially the discussion pertaining to the theoretical background, the principles of the syllabuses and tests.</p>	<p data-bbox="1618 882 2105 972">The working party for French decided to write all the syllabuses for Levels I-IV.</p> <p data-bbox="1618 994 2105 1086">The old syllabus I-III were adapted, changed, the topic areas re-distributed.</p>
Sept.1982 July 1983	<p data-bbox="384 1059 1378 1151">A. Hellaoui distributed the work of the writing of the working party to individual members who each wrote a topic and brought it back to the meetings for discussion, change, improvement.</p>	<p data-bbox="1618 1108 2105 1163">The recently published courses were consulted for content.</p>

Dates

Events

Comments

Sept.1982
Dec.1982

A. Hellaoui attended the meetings of the German working parties to compare their work with that of the work being done by the French working party and to discuss new ideas/approaches.

The German revision groups were three:-

1. To revise Level I
2. To revise Level II
3. To revise Level III and write Level IV.

Sept.1982
Dec.1982

Visits were made to the following groups to discuss the revision of the Cleveland Defined Content syllabuses and tests:-

A. Hellaoui felt the importance of describing the content of such a scheme - up to the Mode III C.S.E. to a group of business representatives in the area.

16th Nov.
1982.

1) The Chamber of Commerce.

Time was allocated during a regular meeting for A. Hellaoui to describe the Cleveland Scheme.

They were very interested.

Articles from 'The Observer' and 'The Teacher' used (See App.18)

19th Oct.
1982

2) The Hospital Education System

A visit to North Tees Hospital to speak to three teachers.

During the discussion it emerged that only a limited amount of tuition was done in French but that a basic, topic based syllabus would be useful to the teachers who had some knowledge of the language.

A. Hellaoui visited a group of teachers in hospitals to explain the possibility of using the topic-based scheme with simple materials to pupils in hospital for long/short term.

The ideas were received with interest by the teachers who recognised the possible value of teaching through topics which could be entities within themselves:

Dates	Events	Comments
21st Oct. 1982	<p>3) <u>School for the Maladjusted</u></p> <p>A visit to Bishopsmill School, Norton; discussion with some staff and one member of staff who was keen on using the scheme.</p> <p>(Discussions with the sector of Cleveland L.E.A. 'Special Education'. The Advisor for Special Education provided the contacts.)</p>	<p>A teacher of music with interest in Modern Languages was interested in the defined content topic-based approach.</p> <p>Short-term goals were felt to be appropriate in this school.</p>
Sept.1982 Dec.1982	<p>4) <u>The Schools Council</u></p> <p>Contact was made and a visit arranged for a member of the Schools Council to come to Cleveland to discuss 'Pupil Profiles', (see Appendix 19).</p>	<p>A. Hellaoui talked with John Storey about the Schools Councils work in this field.</p> <p>The discussion was about how 'pupil profiles' could be adapted to a particular syllabus in terms of recording the progress through the skills in particular topic areas.</p>
	<p>5) <u>Department of Modern Languages - Leeds University</u></p> <p>A. Hellaoui visited Brian Page, Chairman of G.O.M.L. to discuss her work and the direction of Cleveland's Defined Content Syllabus and Tests.</p>	<p>The discussions were interesting. B. Page felt the work interesting and suggested various areas might be given further consideration.</p>
1st/2nd Nov.1982	<p>6) <u>Lothian Education Authority</u></p> <p>A. Hellaoui went to spend two days in Edinburgh to participate in their intensive in-service training scheme for their teachers of French and German involved in the G.O.M.L. scheme. (See Appendix 20).</p>	<p>These two days were extremely useful providing many ideas for discussion in Cleveland.</p> <p>One particularly important aspect was concerned with the use of foreign language in the classroom.</p>

Dates	Events	Comments
Dec.1982	<p><u>Intensive Course - Minsteracres</u></p> <p>Another of Cleveland County L.E.A. courses during which the progress of the Defined Content Syllabus was discussed amongst other topics. (See Appendix 21).</p> <p><u>"The Teaching of Modern Languages in Cleveland Schools" 11-18</u></p>	<p>The course was not specifically on the G.O.M.L. aspects of the curriculum but much of the discussion was pertinent to such areas of the curriculum.</p> <p>The functional/notional/communicative syllabus was widely discussed.</p>
Jan.-July 1983	<p>The working parties for both French and German continued to meet regularly to revise and re-write the syllabuses at all levels.</p>	<p>There was a tremendous investment of time and energy on the part of the teachers - who readily involved themselves in the necessary work.</p>
July 1983	<p>The French Syllabuses were ready for printing.</p>	
Sept.1983	<p>The revised French syllabuses were sent to all schools concerned in the L.E.A. (All Comprehensives and Vith form colleges.)</p>	
Oct.1983	<p><u>Intensive Course - Stanhope, Co. Durham</u></p> <p>During this course the working party who had worked on the French syllabuses wrote the Level I revised tests in the three skill areas. (Appendix 22).</p> <p>"Defined Syllabuses and Graded Tests in Modern Languages - a course"</p>	<p>A very busy course designed to give teachers time to exploit, to work in groups, on aspects of the revised syllabuses and tests they felt necessary.</p>

Dates	Events	Comments
Oct.1983	<p>The German group worked on materials for Level I syllabus and devised practical games, etc.</p> <p>Another group worked on materials for one topic of Level III and one topic for Level IV revised syllabus.</p>	
2nd/3rd Feb.1984	<p><u>Intensive Two Days Test Writing</u></p> <p>The Working Party for French met to write the Level II tests in the three skill areas.</p>	<p>After the course at Stanhope it was agreed that the most efficient way to write tests was intensively.</p> <p>The working party succeeded in compiling the Level II tests within the two days.</p>
Summer Term 1984	<p>The revised Level I and Level II tests available to schools.</p> <p>It was decided that the Level III tests would be written by the teachers involved in the C.S.E. Mode III group scheme and that those Level III tests would be used for the mock C.S.E. examination, Nov-Jan.1984/5.</p>	
Autumn Term 1984/5	<p>A questionnaire was sent to schools to determine the reaction of the teachers to the new revised tests. The working party met to discuss the results of this research and the tests were modified in light of the reactions of the teachers. The tests were thus improved.</p>	<p>This was a most useful exercise the suggestions were considered by the working party and modifications were made and greatly schools.</p>

Dates	Events	Comments
Jan.1983	<p><u>Developments at the N.R.E.B.</u></p> <p>The N.R.E.B. invited teachers and an Adviser of Modern Languages to form a "Panel Syllabus Revision Sub-Committee", G.O.M.L.</p> <p>During the meeting it was noted that the N.R.E.B. was concerned about the decline in numbers of candidates entered for the C.S.E. Mode I. (see Appendix 23, p.1)</p> <p>It was decided that an examination could be created which would be compatible with G.O.M.L. objectives (See Appendix 23 pgs. 4 & 5)</p>	<p>There was now much more demand for a G.O.M.L. type C.S.E. examination.</p> <p>With the development of Mode III G.O.M.L. scheme in Cumbria, Northumberland and Cleveland, the N.R.E.B. began to recognise that much work was being duplicated by teachers throughout these areas.</p>
June 1983	<p>By now after the meeting in March it was agreed that different members of the working party write a given topic area of a defined content syllabus (See Appendix 23).</p> <p>The format of the syllabus was discussed and the content and weightings of the examination. (See Appendix 23, p.4).</p>	<p>As the board had been involved with discussions with 'O' level groups with a view to creating a 16+ examination, the N.R.E.B. realised that it needed to re-consider its position vis a vis Mode I and Mode III schemes.</p>
16th-18th Sept.1983	<p><u>G.O.M.L. Syllabus Revision - Sub-group</u> <u>Weekend Intensive Syllabus Writing Session in Higham Hall, Cumbria</u></p> <p>Three members of the working party:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">E. Alison (Cumbria) C. Pollard) Cleveland A. Hellaoui)</p> <p>worked intensively during a weekend to write a defined content syllabus based on those of Cumbria, Northumberland and Cleveland.</p> <p>A draft version of this work was submitted to the N.R.E.B. for discussion at the next meeting.</p>	<p>I think that this is a new venture for the N.R.E.B. to respond in such a direct way to developments from the 'grass roots' to institutionalise changes, radical changes into their mode I schemes.</p>

Dates	Events	Comments
10th Nov. 1983	Further suggestions were approved and work on the type of oral examinations was discussed. (See Appendix 23).	
12th Dec. 1983	(See Appendix 23). By now the working party had completed the syllabus and had prepared the scheme of assessment to be submitted to the N.R.E.B.'s Standing Advisory Sub-Committee. (Appendix 24).	
Jan.-March 1984	The working party met to discuss details of the syllabus before its submission to the - <u>'Modern Languages Panel' of the N.R.E.B.</u> This panel accepted the 'syllabus package' with minor alterations. The next step was:-	I have only included certain topics because the introductory pages are the same as those in the Cleveland Scheme (See Appendix 24). so are the appendices for - structures - vocabulary
10th May 1984	<u>The Standing Advisory Committee</u> This group consists of some Panel Members but mostly the hierarchy of the N.R.E.B. who are not modern language specialists. They have the power to decide whether the Mode I Alternative be accepted for the first examination in 1986. When this Alternative Mode I is accepted it is envisaged that the Cleveland Mode III group scheme will no longer be necessary and Cleveland schools will use the Alternative Mode I since it will meet the requirements of the Cleveland Scheme.	The N.R.E.B. had no alternative examination at Mode I or II so that if this proposed Alternative Mode I were rejected then it would be difficult to envisage what could be done When this scheme is accepted, the N.R.E.B. will need to consider examiners, co-ordinators/ moderators. This could be more complex than for the existing Mode I.

Dates	Events	Comments
June 1984	<p>The Standing Advisory Committee of the N.R.E.B. decided that the Mode I Alternative be accepted.</p> <p>A chief examiner, A. Hellaoui and an assistant chief examiner were appointed to prepare the examination for 1986.</p>	<p>The two examiners decided to constantly work together to compose the examination, sharing everything except the status! The N.R.E.B. could not accept Joint Chief Examiners!</p>
Sept. '84- Feb. '85	<p>This Mode I Alternative Exam was offered to schools in the N.R.E.B. Examinations Region. (Appendix 25, 1986 Examination).</p> <p>In Cleveland many schools decided that they would not opt to do the Alternative Mode I examination for two reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Alternative Mode I was not significantly different from the Cleveland schools Group Scheme Mode III (See Appendix 26) and in view of this together with 2) the fact that both schemes would soon be superceded by the new G.C.S.E. (it was originally envisaged for 1987), it did not seem worthwhile to change the system twice over. 	<p>The examination was compiled from authentic materials and situations keeping close to the vocabulary and areas described in the syllabus.</p>
1985-86	<p>The Mode I and the Alternative Mode I, N.R.E.B. as well as the Cleveland Group Scheme Mode III were in operation at C.S.E. level in Cleveland Schools.</p>	
1987	<p>Both schemes will once more be in operation. It is envisaged that this will be the last year for C.S.E. exams before the introduction of the G.C.S.E.</p>	

Dates	Events	Comments
Summer Term 1985/86	<p>The Cleveland Graded Tests for levels I and II were produced for all Cleveland Schools. (Appendix 27)</p> <p>The test items were very similar to those in 1984's first year of the revised scheme.</p> <p>These items were taken from their bank which was compiled in 1984 during the Intensive Test Writing with the plan of enabling the tests to be used over and over again; the tests being different by virtue of combining the test items in different ways each year.</p> <p>Many schools continue to use the tests with enthusiasm and the demand for the tests is constantly increasing.</p>	<p>The new tests were compiled by R. Hullcoop and A. Hellaoui using the items from the bank.</p> <p>The bank was organised by writing the test items on cards.</p> <p>Each area of the syllabus was exploited and three questions were compiled for each small section of the syllabus wherever possible for the reading and listening items.</p> <p>Then in 1984 'A' cards were used. in 1985 'B' cards were used. in 1986 'C' cards were used.</p> <p>In 1987 it is envisaged that mixtures of A, B and C cards will be used and different combinations in successive years.</p> <p>The oral examination remains the same each year but different candidates will automatically choose different dialogues from the three out of five for levels I and II.</p>

Conclusion

It is in fact through researching and writing this chapter that the links between the practical developments and the theoretical issues became more apparent to me. What at the time seemed a rather ad hoc development through progression towards improvement, especially in the early stages was actually linked with certain theoretical concerns and was happening in parallel with developments in many other areas of the country. As we went along discussing ideas, again during the early stages, we (the teachers) were not sure that we were going along the "right lines", or, in fact, if there were any "right lines". This study has made it clearer especially in the links it makes between theory and practice, Cleveland and elsewhere.

During my term's secondment and subsequently I was more cognizant of some of the theoretical issues involved and gradually more and more teachers became informed of them through various meetings, articles and discussions.

In the next Chapter I set out to talk in greater detail with teachers through interviews, about many various aspects of the innovation. Their memories and comments also helped me to compile this chapter as well as the following one.

CHAPTER IV

Teachers Responses to the Cleveland Syllabus and Tests through Interviews

The Methodology of the Evaluation Research through Interviews

Considerable disagreement exists over the appropriateness of various methods and methodological stances for conducting evaluation research. One debate of growing intensity centres on the distinction between quantitative and qualitative methods. (Reichardt & Cook, 1979).

By quantitative methods researchers have come to mean the techniques of randomised experiments, quasi-experiments, paper and pencil 'objective' tests, multivariate statistical analyses, sample surveys and the like. Dissatisfaction has gradually grown with the limitations of traditional quantitative designs which incorporate the systems-analysis approach emphasizing the measurement of variables that are scaled or quantified easily and that generate what is seen to be reliable data. It has been found, however, that in the field of educational research this approach has been inappropriate to the phenomena under investigation and has produced data of questionable validity and the results have failed to satisfy those involved in programmes and evaluations. (Le Compte & Goetz, 1984).

The phrases 'quantitative methods' and 'qualitative methods'

mean far more than specific data-collection techniques. They are more appropriately conceptualised as paradigms. A paradigm, as defined by Kuhn (1962) is a set of interrelated assumptions about the social world which provides a philosophical and conceptual framework for organised study of that world. Paradigms not only allow a discipline to 'make sense of different kinds of phenomena' but provide a framework in which these phenomena can be identified as existing in the first place.

At the heart of the distinction between quantitative and qualitative paradigms lies the classic argument in philosophy between the schools of realism and idealism, and their subsequent reformulations. The birth of science in the 15th century and the 16th century was made possible by an essentially static conception of the world that dominated the thinking of men of ideas; however turmoil and rapid social change in the institutions of society during the 18th century and the 19th century caused scholars to question the logic and method of science as it applied to understanding human beings. They began to see that the social world is not given but is created by the individuals who live in it. Furthermore the social world is not fixed or static but shifting, changing, dynamic. Because of the assumptions that the quantitative makes about social life and the approach it takes toward comprehending social life it has been unable to provide the context within which to 'make sense', 'understand'

and therefore arrive at the meaning of the interactions and processes it examines. With a characterization of social life devoid of subjective meaning man is seen more as a reactor than a creator of his world. (Filstead, 1979).

Filstead goes on to say that by way of contrast the qualitative approach involves an awareness of existing theoretical frameworks or explanation themes for the phenomenon under study, but it allows the "theory" to emerge from the data itself. With this grounding of the theory in data, the method attempts to examine what explanation schemes are used by the subjects under study to make sense of the social reality they encounter; what theories, concepts and categories are suggested by the data itself. The insistence upon this closeness to the everyday worlds of the participants and to comprehending their actions 'in situ' gives a strong underpinning to the explanations which the research develops.

Filstead claims that in developing the "explanations" of the phenomenon, the qualitative researcher tends to make use of "sensitizing concepts" (i.e. concepts which capture the meaning of events and use descriptions of these events to clarify the multiple facets of the concept, Blumer, 1969).

The subject(s) under study, while initially guided by the research question, undergoes changes based on what data are being collected and eventually can provide additional information to

answer emerging questions which are generated by the research process. This is what happened during the interviews conducted in this research. The data gathering techniques typically used for these purposes are participant observation, in-depth interviewing, and structured and unstructured interviewing.

These are the techniques used in sociology and anthropology and they have direct bearing and relevance on the conduct of the research conducted in this paper. The type of technique used specifically is the semi-structured interview, a technique adopting method from both the structured and unstructured interview procedure.

According to Le Compte and Goetz (1984, p.37), during the past decade the subfield of anthropology and education which has increased among education research papers is educational ethnography. Because of dissatisfaction with the limitations of the quantitative designs the application of ethnographic research strategies has increased. In fact literature encouraging the use of ethnography in educational evaluation has become abundant.

Ethnographies are analytic descriptions of intact cultural scenes and groups (Spradley & McCurdy, 1972, in Le Compte and Goetz, op.cit.) which delineate the shared beliefs, practices, artifacts, folk knowledge and behaviours of some group of people.

The investigatory strategies that are used are conducive to

cultural reconstruction. They represent the world view of the participants being investigated, they are empirical and naturalistic involving an acquisition of first hand, sensory accounts of phenomena as they occur in real world settings. (The interviews conducted are based on these strategies of ethnological methodology). The third component of ethnographic research is that it is holistic - involving the researcher constructing descriptions of total phenomena within their various contexts and generating from these descriptions major variables affecting human behaviour and belief toward the phenomena. Finally ethnography is multimodal involving a variety of research technologies.

These wider components were not involved in the limited research conducted in this paper - the scope of the questions was limited to the modern language teaching and learning part of the professional life of the participants interviewed.

Ethnography (according to Wolcott, 1984) has provided a new, convenient, and comprehensive label for referring to the people, processes and products associated with the recently awakened interest in on-site, descriptive studies.

Three kinds of data provided by ethnographic research strategies are useful in assessing the impact of an intervention programme or curricular innovation:

(1) Baseline data -

social, psychological, cultural, demographic and physical features of the context should be identified as well as the institutional framework and its relationships with other institutions.

(2) Process data -

information determining what happened in the course of a curricular programme or innovation. The way the programme or intervention and the evaluation were handled by participants provides data for assessing the impact and success of an intervention.

(3) Values data -

information about the values of the participants, the programme administrators and the policymakers.

The characteristics of ethnographic research outlined here have contributed to the approach and analysis of the investigation in this paper. Because ethnography uses multiple data collection strategies, it has provided flexibility for a variety of situations including interviews, observation, etc. In their work on ethnographic research techniques, Pelto and Pelto (1978) distinguish two categories of research tools. One group consists of methods for collecting data that involve interaction between research and participant and that produce, as a result, reactions from the participant that may affect the data collected. One of the four strategies of this method involves, "Key Informant Interviewing."

Key informants are individuals who possess special knowledge

or status or communicative skills and who are willing to share that knowledge and skill with the researcher (Zelditch, 1962). They may be atypical individuals and should be chosen with care so as to ensure that representativeness among a group of key informants is achieved.

In this paper the 'key informants' chosen were the teachers of French and German in Cleveland schools. As to their willingness to share their knowledge - they were all willing and even keen to do so. It was attempted to interview a representative group of teachers using categorization according to the length of time they had been involved in using the Cleveland Graded Syllabus and Tests. This aspect of categorization will be discussed at a later stage.

Finally on the subject of 'Key Informant Interviewing' as described by Le Compte & Goetz (1984), the key informants, often being reflective individuals, may contribute insights to process variables not evident to the investigator; also they may sensitize the researcher to value dilemmas and implications.

According to Knapp (1979) the basic elements of ethnographic research include an initially exploratory and open-ended approach to the research problem. Although the interviews conducted in this research were semi-structured, the 'open-ended' aspect certainly remained the style of many of the questions asked.

Another aspect of ethnographic research which is relevant

to the research conducted is according to Knapp - ethnographic research is an ideographic approach to the study of social phenomena; it thus strives to capture the complexities of the single case within that case the ethnography describes "general" patterns. In the key informant interviewing the proportion of teachers interviewed in relation to the sum total of modern languages teachers in Cleveland must to some extent, seem like little more than the 'single case' and yet it is felt and envisaged that this 'single case' does represent the majority of views, divergent, though they be, of teachers of modern languages in Cleveland. Patterns extracted from the testimony of 'key informants' are 'generalised' by and 'inductive' logic to all those sharing the same culture and participating in the same kind of activities. (Knapp, 1979).

The 'Triangulation' Theory

Denzin in Shipman has argued that the social world studied by sociologists consists of definitions, attitudes and personal values and that each social researcher will concentrate on different aspects of this confused reality. Thus Denzin supports triangulation - the use of multiple approaches to the study of the same object.

Triangulation of methods is common. In the research, conducted in schools by Hargreaves or Lacy for example, as well

as observation, pupils and teachers were interviewed, questionnaires and school records examined. Shipman argues that where one method only is used there is a one dimensional snapshot of a very wide and deep social scene.

Unfortunately this multi-dimensional approach of triangulation of methods was not possible within the scope of the research conducted here. In the interviews of the teachers a discussion of the teaching methods used ^{and} ~~the~~ methods ~~evaluating~~ of ~~success~~, was included as well as comments or problems, limitations, etc., of the Cleveland scheme. (See interview questions, pp.99-100).

Triangulation can also be applied to the data itself. It can be collected from different samples, at different times, in different places. Denzin has also argued that more than one observer should be used so that different authors in the research can cross-check their observations. It was not possible to include triangulation of data or cross-checking of information in this research since the evidence here is based on single interviews conducted by one interviewer. However, I feel that with ~~the~~ of the type of information concerned different researches would not have found great differences in the information collected.

The Interviews - Introduction

The research conducted in Cleveland, through interviews with modern languages teachers, was ^{with} concerned [^] their reactions to the introduction and development of the Cleveland Graded Syllabuses and Tests. The interviewees are all teachers in 11-16 or 11-18 Comprehensive schools in Cleveland. The interview technique was deemed the most appropriate method of research, its main advantages being:-

- (a) its flexibility - the interviewer was able to examine the reactions to some pre-determined questions as well as develop certain other aspects related to these questions and allow the interviewee scope to discuss any particular other aspects s/he felt to be important and relevant. (The semi-structured interview). (cf. p.6)
- (b) It was hoped that through this structure that the interviewees would be able to express honest opinions based on their experiences. (cf. p.7)
- (c) (Although a broader survey by means of a questionnaire had been conducted, its scope was limited - although it had the advantage of finding out some information from a larger number of teachers, it had the disadvantage of not being able to explore their reactions in any depth.) The interview, on the other hand, involved fewer teachers but the research was a much deeper exploration of teachers' attitudes and reactions. (a more ethnographical approach).

However there are certain disadvantages (cf. p.5) to be recognised in conducting research through the interview method.

Some have already been mentioned, e.g. the extent to which the participants are typical and others are:-

1) The possibility of too much diversion

from the questions being asked - this did prove to be a slight problem on occasion, but only in terms of the length of the interview.

2) The limitation of numbers of interviewees.

(There is a limit to the amount of fairly detailed data-gathering which can be conducted in a given period of time cf. p.6)

3) The problem of verbal reports:

Macoby and Macoby (1954) caution:

"When people are being interviewed directly concerning behaviour about which there is a strong expectation of social approval or disapproval, and in which there is considerable ego-involvement, they tend to err in the direction of idealising their behaviour.

This may have happened to some extent in some cases; perhaps some of the interviewees felt obliged to 'paint a glossy picture' of themselves as teachers and their behaviour.

4) "Modelling effects" -

This may have proven to be a source of bias.

Perhaps the interviewer did unconsciously project certain views, attitudes and opinions on those interviewed. Crowne and Marlowe (1964) and Rosenberg (1965) state that there is evidence to suggest that whenever an investigator (interviewer,

etc.,) confronts the object of his/her research interest these individuals' responses and behaviour will be affected by what is considered appropriate in that kind of situation.

Nevertheless, it was hoped that since the interviewer did not attempt to 'know' any answers or 'favour' any particular stance this problem of modelling would be reduced; but it must be admitted that the interviewees would have certain assumptions about the interviewers opinions, attitudes, ideas.

The position of the interviewer as one of Cleveland's modern language teachers was obviously influential - in the way that the interviewees responded to questions. The interviewees assumed certain "shared" knowledge and some taken-for-granted stances were involved. Furthermore the researcher's involvement in the development and implementation of the graded syllabuses and tests influenced the way the interviewees responded; the researcher was involved in the study in question as both a researcher and an involved participant. (cf. p.4)

Qualitative data collection was the main objective - it was hoped that the in-depth interviews would bring interesting information to light. (cf. p.3). The researcher tried to be understanding of the interviewees responses and opinions. The

'qualitative paradigm' was the operative one since the interviewees were seen as 'creators' of their teaching situations and their reaction to the scheme, their changing attitudes, techniques, aspirations, methods were all encompassed in the research data collection questions.

The interviewees were asked to explain their everyday worlds of school and teaching from a subjective point of view, except for some areas where it was attempted to collect information with a certain statistical analysis, for example, the numbers of pupils who opt for French/German in the fourth and fifth years before and after the introduction of the graded tests scheme. The phenomenological strategies involved the participation and sharing of information which happened through the conduct of the interview with questions which guided as well as gave the opportunity for interviewees to volunteer additional information.

The ethnographic research techniques of using baseline, process and values data were also a fundamental consideration in that these areas had to be taken into account in both the formulation of questions and content of the interview as well as in the initial choice of the prospective interviewees.

Hypothesis Testing

As a first step it was decided to formulate an hypothesis as a means of deciding who 'key informants' were in order to examine the Cleveland Scheme* and the teachers were to be involved from this consideration:-

"The teachers who have been most involved in the Cleveland Scheme from its inception, and who have been involved in its development as innovators, or teachers who have recently become involved but who have an 'open' approach and a positive attitude to the scheme, are more likely to find the scheme successful and useful."

Sample Population:

It was therefore necessary to identify teachers who could be interviewed from the category "time/duration of involvement". The category was divided into three sub-categories of teachers:

- (a) the 'core' group, i.e. teachers and including Heads of Department who have been involved in the Cleveland scheme since its inception.
- (b) the 'middle' group, i.e. teachers and H.O.D.'s who joined the scheme about five years ago.
- (c) the 'recent' group, i.e. teachers and H.O.D.'s who recently joined the scheme, within the last two years.

*Cleveland Scheme: The Cleveland Defined Content Syllabus and Graded Tests.

The help of Cleveland's Adviser for Modern Languages was sought to identify teachers for each category.

It was hoped that a representative group of teachers and H.O.D's might be chosen which would reflect the views of many of the teachers involved in the scheme. It was decided to interview both classroom teachers and H.O.D's to find out if H.O.D's policy influenced departmental policy and to what extent classroom teachers influenced the work of the Cleveland scheme carried out in their department; whether the source of innovation was H.O.D. motivated or classroom teacher initiated.

The parameters of length of time of involvement in the Cleveland scheme and Heads of Department/classroom teachers on Scales 1 or 2 (Burnham) were two which are of special interest. With regard to the other parameters of the hypothesis, the 'open-minded' and 'positive approach' there were not strictly considered in a choice of potential interviewees. One teacher from the 'middle' group, Mrs. M., was known to be 'traditional' in her style and not a supporter of the scheme; some of the others were felt to be likely to be in favour; others had opinions which were not clearly known in advance.

The other aspects of geographical location did not influence the choice of teachers for interview, nor did their 'approachability'. The interviewer did feel most confident about asking teachers to be involved when the teachers concerned were already known.

Timing

The interviews were conducted during the second half of the Autumn term of 1984 and the very start of the Spring term of 1985.

The length of the interviews varied but most took approximately half an hour.

Interviewees

In some cases the H.O.D. and members of that Department were interviewed (separately) and sometimes the H.O.D. spoke on behalf of other members of the department who were not interviewed.

Here is a list of the interviewees which shows certain information mentioned in chart form:

	<u>School</u>	<u>Position in Department</u>
<u>Core</u>	Sheraton School, Stockton	H.O.D.
	Sheraton School, Stockton	Scale II
	St. David's, Middlesbrough	Scale II
	Eaglescliffe Compreh., Eaglescliffe	Scale II
	Norton School, Norton	Scale I
	Northfield School, Billingham	Scale I
<u>Middle</u>	Warsett School, Brotton (E. Cleveland)	H.O.D.
	Warsett School, " "	Scale II
	Brackenhoe School, Middlesbrough	H.O.D.
	Henry Smith School, Hartlepool	H.O.D.
	Keldholme School, Middlesbrough	Scale II
<u>Recent</u>	Nunthorpe School, Middlesbrough	H.O.D.
	Manor School, Hartlepool	H.O.D.
	Northfield, Billingham	H.O.D.
	Brierton School, Hartlepool	Scale I
	Northfield School	Scale I
	(but talked of experiences in M'bro)	Scale I

There is no particular significance in terms of the status of the teacher in having a H.O.D., a scale II or scale I teacher in any particular category.

The Interview Schedule and Conduct of the Interview

The basic questions asked in the Interview to all Interviewees

1. For how long have you been involved in the Cleveland Defined Content Syllabus and Graded Tests Scheme?
2. Can you remember how you were first introduced to the Scheme?
(Was it the H.O.D's suggestion?
The suggestion of another colleague/member of department?
Was it information from the Advisory Service?)
3. Describe your initial involvement.
4. What has been your subsequent involvement?
 - (a) as a member of a working party
- as a syllabus or test writer?
 - (b) as a member of the 'pilot study' schools?
 - (c) as a Mode III support group teacher?
 - (d) as a classroom teacher only?
5. Have you enjoyed your teaching more since using the scheme?
Can you explain ?
6. (a) What has been the effect of the scheme on pupils?
(b) Has the effect been different according to the age and ability of the pupils?

TESTS

7. Have the graded tests brought pupils to external examinations who would not otherwise have been entered for such exams.?
8. Have the graded tests affected the way you assess your pupils generally?
9. CERTIFICATION - What has been the pupils' reactions?

(Interview Schedule continued)

10. MATERIALS

Do you find enough material to cover the content of the Cleveland Scheme?

(Do you have to spend much time preparing material?)

11. METHOD

Has the teaching of the work involved in the scheme affected the way you teach?

(Consider the four skills - are they differently emphasised?
Do you do more pair-work or group work?)

GENERAL

12. Does the use of the scheme make you and your pupils more aware of the validity of foreign language learning and the work done in the classroom?

13. Have your aims changed since using the Cleveland scheme?

(with reference to the language learning process, or the defined content syllabus and tests?)

14. Has the change in the Cleveland scheme altered your appreciation of it?

(Are the new syllabuses and tests an improvement on the old ones?)

15. Has the use of the scheme influenced the way you think modern languages should go in the future?

16. Have you any further comments?

As can be seen from the questions apart from the collection of some specific data on the extent and duration of the teachers' involvement in the Cleveland Scheme (process data) the interview questions cover specific areas in general terms. Some questions include features of baseline data covering aspects of the social and institutional features and others cover values data eliciting teachers' general understanding and appreciation of various aspects of the Cleveland scheme and the implications of adapting it for teachers, pupils, schools, examinations systems. Teachers were encouraged to refer to their own practical experience as much as possible, to express doubts and criticisms and to talk about problems and constraints.

The interview schedule was meant to serve as a guide for the interviewer, rather than be administered in a rigidly structured manner. Thus, for example, the order in which the topics were discussed was to some extent responsive to the concerns of the interviewees who raised particular issues ahead of the related question being asked of them by the interviewer. In such cases the interviewer completed the discussion 'out of sequence' before returning to the schedule which then served as a checklist to ensure no major topic had been omitted.

An attempt was also made to have the main question introducing each topic as open as possible. The interviewer tried to embark on each new issue using such an open question; narrow follow-up or prompting questions (based on a list of items printed below



certain main questions) were used only after the interviewee had an opportunity to respond to the initial 'open' question. The point of this procedure was to get some indication of teachers' main concerns regarding certain issues.

The "unstructured response mode" (Bruce Tuckman, 1972, p.200) was chosen as it was felt that the interviewees would find it easier to talk than write, and, in consequence, more information would be generated. There was opportunity to probe and to follow leads in order to obtain more information from the interviewees.

This flexibility was felt to be important so that areas other than those specified in the question might be explored and perhaps new insights into different areas be gained.

The teachers were interviewed individually with interviews generally lasting between thirty and forty minutes. In most cases it was possible to cover all the issues intended. With the teacher's permission the majority of the interviews were audio-recorded on cassette tape, one was taped on reel-to-reel and four were not recorded. (This was partly because these interviews were conducted in the homes of the interviewees and the tape-recorder was felt to be an intrusion). Some interviews were conducted during school hours, most were conducted after school either in school, at the home of the interviewer or the interviewee. The interviews were not transcribed in full, the relevant parts in

answer to the main questions were analysed and comments made voluntarily by the interviewees which seemed to be of relevance and interest were also noted.

The Adviser for Modern Languages in Cleveland was also interviewed basically using the same schedule as that used in the other interviews. He was seen as a 'key informant' since he had been involved in the scheme since its inception and had a certain oversight of the general picture of the scheme's development in Cleveland as well as knowledge of the scheme's progress in individual schools.

Procedure for Analysis

The analysis of the interview material has been based on the recordings and notes taken during the interviews. From the original fifteen questions asked during the interviews, a set of eight basic themes was derived. These themes comprise information compiled from responses to questions which were closely related.

The themes are as follows:-

1. The teachers' introduction to and involvement in the scheme.
2. The enjoyment factor for both teachers and pupils.
3. The tests and certification
 - (a) tests and assessment
 - (b) tests and external examinations
 - (c) certification
4. The what and how of the scheme
 - (a) materials
 - (b) method
5. The changing role of the teachers.
6. The validity of the language learning process of the scheme.
7. Future Developments.
8. Other areas of general concern:
 - (a) Difficulties encountered, e.g. class size, etc.
 - (b) Teacher support/group work
 - (c) Constraints of external examinations
 - (d) Need for strong discipline
 - (e) Miscellaneous

In order to facilitate the analysis a chart was compiled which showed, briefly, the answer of each teacher to each question. From this the themes were composed and all teacher comments judged to relate to each theme were categorized. On the basis of this a narrative section has been written for each theme which has been developed from the recordings and notes made during the interviews. The narrative is an account of the type of comments made together with some quantitative indications regarding the representativeness of the different comment types.

These sections, illustrated with a limited selection of direct quotations taken from the actual transcripts, form the main part of the chapter.

This survey is necessarily limited in scope; it examines the responses and reactions of only a limited number of teachers of modern languages in Cleveland. It is also limited because it is based on a single interview without follow-up or reconsideration. The focus of the questions was mainly based on the concerns of the interviewer, and so a full picture of the concerns of the teachers was not necessarily drawn. However, the general question "What other comments do you have?" was intended to help draw together any further concerns the teacher might wish to relate. The method of interviewing which involved an "issue by issue" analysis was a rich source of ideas for further investigation, e.g. teaching styles, pupil-teacher rapport, the changing nature of problems, e.g. discipline. Many of the teachers' responses and reactions were very similar and their concerns had much in common with one another.

Theme 1

The teachers' introduction to and involvement in the Cleveland Scheme

At the beginning of each interview each teacher was asked for how long he/she had been involved in the scheme, how he/she had been introduced to it and what his/her involvement had been.

(a) How long involved

Initially while planning the procedure for interviewing it was necessary to identify "key informants". One way of doing this was to formulate an hypothesis which, it was felt might be useful in identifying these informants. As stated earlier, one of the premises of the hypothesis was the length of time the teachers had been involved in the scheme so that a 'core' group, a 'middle' group and a 'recent' group of teachers was identified for interview. Thus the teachers interviewed were divided roughly into three groups, those involved since the inception of the scheme in Cleveland in 1978, those who joined about two years later in 1980/1 and those who joined relatively recently from about 1982/4.

(b) How introduced

Group 1. The 'core' group

From the 'core' group most of the teachers were those who had participated in the Cleveland Residential In-Service Training Course (organised by the L.E.A.) in Beamish, in March 1978. This

was organised by the two Advisers for Modern Languages in Cleveland. This was the course from which the original group whose discussion centred on the compilation of defined content syllabuses and certificates of achievement, was formed. (See Chapter 2. "A Case-Study of Curriculum Innovation", page 61).

There was further development when the course group was joined by other teachers in Cleveland, after the course, when a working party was established to set about working on the compilation of Cleveland's Defined Content Syllabus. This working party consisted of members of what are called in this paper, the 'core' group.

These teachers were introduced through invitation from the L.E.A's Advisory Service to participate in the in-service training course and through subsequent invitations from the Advisers to participate in the working parties established after the course. (The original working party split into two, one worked on the compilation of a 'level I' syllabus, whilst the other worked on 'level II'.)

Two other factors influenced the development of the ideas of this group of 'core' teachers:-

- (i) a C.A.F.L.T. meeting of April 1978 (the Cleveland Association of Foreign Language Teachers).
In this meeting Michael Buckley came from York to talk about the development of the Graded Tests in York.
- (ii) Another C.A.F.L.T. meeting in October 1978 in which Keith Gordon came from Oxfordshire to talk about the work there on Graded Objectives.

(For further information on these two meetings, see Chapter 2. 'A Case Study of Curriculum Innovation', page 63).

The interviews showed that on this question of how were they first introduced to the scheme, the neat tracing of origins in documentation does not always reflect how people perceive origins. Many interviewees had difficulty in remembering how they had been introduced and were quite vague in their answers.

(c) Involvement

After their involvement at Beamish and during their participation as members of a working party many of these 'core' teachers found that another influential factor in their involvement with Graded Syllabuses and Tests was the introduction and use of the 'ECLAIR' course devised by I.L.E.A. The teachers were able to 'pilot' the course, to use it successfully while working towards the Cleveland Graded Tests since much of the content of the 'Eclair' course matched the content of the Cleveland Graded (Defined Content) Syllabus. Supplementary materials were devised and used by individual teachers. The teachers felt that this course influenced their thinking and their approach to teaching to a large extent as they believed that this course offered a more realistic approach to the study of French for those pupils who were unable to cope with traditional course work in languages. One teacher talking of low ability groups said:

"I used to hate the lessons, (the teacher) was fobbing off pupils with work, e.g. comprehensions they couldn't do. They used to hate it, I used to hate it. But now with role-plays, reading comprehensions they can do, it's fantastic, because they can cope with it they enjoy it."

This group spoke with enthusiasm of the impact of the early stages of the scheme and their involvement in it; they were committed to the new developments and proud to be part of them because they could see the value and enjoyment coming from their new approach and their new work. Some felt confused and had difficulty in remembering (perhaps it is impossible to say) whether their new found enthusiasm came from the work on the Cleveland scheme and its developments or the use of the 'Eclair' course. The combination of factors, however, completely changed their teaching, their thinking.

Most of these teachers continued their involvement in the scheme until the present time and from the early developmental work on Level I, some have worked through the Level II to the Level III Mode III Group Scheme for the C.S.E. examination. Of the seven teachers identified in this 'core' group, five are involved in the Mode III Group Scheme and they still attend regular meetings in Cleveland. Their involvement continues as they continue to write test items in preparation for the C.S.E. Mode III examination each year.

Some of the members of this group have been involved in the writing of materials as well as tests. They have been closely engaged in working with colleagues over a considerable period of time.

Group 2. The 'Middle' Group

(a) How long involved, and

(b) How introduced

This group has been involved since 1979 to 1980 and the teachers were all introduced to the scheme either through the Advisory Service or through other colleagues in their departments. The influence of C.A.F.L.T.'s meetings was recognised as a factor of finding out about the scheme.

(c) Involvement

All members of this group were involved in writing materials and tests for the different levels of the Cleveland scheme. They attended working party meetings and became involved with colleagues from other schools. One teacher mentioned her initial apprehension at the prospect of writing tests but she quickly gained confidence when she worked with other colleagues on past papers. This perhaps draws attention to the benefits of teachers working together in collaboration on a given project.

"I was very apprehensive when I started but, having all the past papers to look at I could see the sorts of things that were required The first year I was very, very apprehensive about it but I found it was the kind of thing that once you actually sat down with past papers and with the syllabus and you knew the objectives, what you were getting at and the kind of kids it was geared towards, then it became relatively easy and it became rather mechanical....."

One member of the group talked about a member of her department who had been involved from this stage but who did not attend working party meetings. However this teacher was very enthusiastic about the scheme and she worked successfully on her own with the scheme in her school over some years.

Group 3. The 'recent' group

- (a) How long involved, and
- (b) How introduced

This group consists of teachers who have been involved since 1982 and they were introduced to the scheme either through the Advisory Service, or through colleagues including Heads of Department.

Two of the teachers from this group were recently qualified and both said that they felt that they ought to have been given more information during their training courses to enable them to cope with this approach to their teaching.

- (c) Involvement

The involvement of the teachers from this group, on the whole, has been as a classroom teacher and only one out of six attended the working party meetings organised by the main groups. The rest attended departmental meetings within their schools and discussed the scheme with colleagues in their own departments.

This group seems to have been less dependent on colleagues outside their own departments than teachers from the other groups. These teachers appear to have devised their own plans in their schools for working with the Cleveland scheme.

This fact could be because the colleagues who worked with members from this recent group had already had contact with other colleagues from whom they had acquired ideas, discussed developments and so on.

Furthermore the proliferation of published materials and ideas on how to work with the graded tests and objectives schemes must have influenced the development and use of such schemes. Many of the earlier problems had been solved to some extent by 1982, e.g. lack of materials, resources, experimentation in teaching such schemes.

Theme 2

The Enjoyment Factor

The two aspects of this theme concern the enjoyment of the work involved on the part of both pupils and teachers. The division of the interviewees into 'core', 'middle' and 'recent' groups was not of any real significance with regard to this theme.

The large majority of teachers admitted to greater enjoyment while teaching the course work leading towards graded tests.

When asked "Have you enjoyed your work more since using the Defined Content Syllabus and Tests", one teacher said:-

"First of all I suppose I didn't understand it, I couldn't understand how it was going to work teaching very little grammar, but as I've taught it, I've become more and more enthusiastic. In fact there is not a great deal of formal grammar needed for this course and now I've gone from being sceptical about it to understanding it and it is really good. Yes, I have enjoyed it, I've enjoyed it very much."

This quotation indicates how the initial reaction was determined by previous ideas about what language learning involved and the need to come to terms with a new, revised approach, for example, to the teaching of grammar.

Another teacher replied:-

"Yes, a lot of the pressure was eased and it was a much more meaningful course (meaning 'Eclair' leading to the graded tests, A.H.). In some ways it was much harder ... in an absolute sense I have enjoyed it more as there are more clearly defined goals."

The large majority of the teachers interviewed admitted that they enjoyed most aspects of teaching towards the graded syllabuses and tests; however some did mention the drawbacks which involved the extra teacher time needed for preparation of materials and lessons, how the initial stages were quite difficult due to teacher apprehension and inexperience. Now these teachers feel quite content with their work.

Only one teacher admitted to not enjoying her work and talked of one of the members in her department who also does not enjoy her work with the scheme:

"One person in the department is not enjoying it because it is not "her thing" ... she feels more comfortable teaching in a more traditional way with a text-book ... she's not convinced of this (reference to the scheme), neither am I ... convinced that this is a better way of motivating children of lower ability ... I'm half-converted, she's not converted."

However this teacher did talk about another member of her department who had enjoyed teaching the Cleveland scheme and who was very convinced of its benefits and very enthusiastic about her work. But she did say, of her own enjoyment:-

"I haven't enjoyed teaching more (through using the scheme) but there again I have to qualify it because if a lesson has gone well, you think, oh yes, that's great, the kids have enjoyed it, but if, as today, you caught me on a bad day, I was trying to talk, they weren't prepared to listen ... one teacher would have said an unqualified 'yes' (about enjoyment), I would give you a qualified, a very qualified yes."

The teachers found it very difficult to disassociate their own enjoyment from that of their pupils.

With regard to the latter a great many factors were mentioned with regard to how the scheme affected them. The effects on the pupils were varied, however nearly all involved positive enjoyment factors:-

"There are far less discipline, far less motivational problems with the target group and there is a bigger take up in options ... well not numerically but now there's a different kind of kid. Before they were pushed into doing certain things ... there were lots of unwilling kids in the fourth and fifth year ... now we get children who would be classed as having learning difficulties who have done Level I, Level II and who now are making genuine option choices to continue because they want to get through Levels III and IV ... they want to collect certificates."

Another teacher said of the enjoyment of the scheme:

"It gave them (the pupils) a new direction, an incentive to do something, they could see it had value in it."

Other teachers mentioned the fact that they felt that their pupils had gained in confidence (probably due to the success they felt) and how they were prepared to "join in" classroom activities.

The factor of motivation; the aspects of increased and improved motivation on the part of the pupils was mentioned by many teachers interviewed. Teachers said how much more 'involved' their pupils were, how they had "switched on":

"Pupils now enjoy their work much more than before."

"Pupils find enjoyment in oral work."

One teacher mentioned how pupils are much more able to express themselves in their fourth and fifth years, that they have more confidence in their oral skills. The pupils enjoy the oral work, the role-play and it seemed that the course towards the graded tests was the right one for them.

Another teacher described how the work of the graded syllabuses and tests provided "a lift" for second year pupils.

One teacher said that he felt that the "narrowed down goals", the immediate aim helped the pupils enjoy their work. He felt that the pupils enjoy the work through the progression of the lesson as the teacher introduces the work and the pupils give it back. He talked of the pupils' involvement in the lesson:

"When you introduced a new whatever it is, a new structure or whatever, they have to give it back to you."

This involvement of the pupils, this real participation in the lessons, motivates and encourages the pupils and their enjoyment develops.

Theme 3

The Tests and Certification

This theme covers the responses to questions:

7. Have the graded tests brought pupils to external examinations who would otherwise not have been entered for such exams?
8. Have the graded tests affected the way in which you assess your pupils generally?
9. Certification - what have been the pupils' reactions?

All the teachers interviewed, except two, said that the scheme had brought more pupils to the possibility of doing an external examination. Some of the teachers quoted considerable numbers of pupils being entered for the C.S.E. who would not otherwise have taken an external examination in a foreign language. One teacher mentioned that in her school the option 'French' has now been extended from 'top band' pupils to 'middle' and 'bottom' bands so that instead of having only one group of pupils from the option, there are now four groups. Another teacher mentioned that in her school previously only five groups out of eight had been allowed to opt for French in the 4th and 5th years but now all pupils may opt. The result of this is that every year approximately thirty extra pupils do an external exam who would not have done so without the Cleveland scheme.

Other teachers were pleased to describe how the option system in their schools had thus been extended. Furthermore

they felt that genuine options choices were made; that those pupils who now opted for French really wanted to continue their study of a foreign language. Some teachers noted that other constraints now affect the option system in that new subjects such as Computer Studies . . . produce competition in "option columns" and although perhaps more pupils would like to continue their study of French they find themselves with difficult choices. The teachers felt that they are . . . able to actively encourage pupils to opt for French, now that they know that success is within their grasp, and, that they do not need to discourage pupils from following a course of French because of obstacles such as C.S.E. Mode I which would be inappropriate and unsuitable for many pupils. One teacher said that there is now more incentive to studying towards an exam where they will be able to cope following the course and doing the examination. She described how the pupils reaction to the course differed with the Cleveland Mode III group scheme.

"People who would have been discouraged originally from taking a Mode I who would find grammar very difficult are managing this course all right. They probably won't do brilliantly but they are coping . . . and they don't seem to be saying 'That's really hard' . . . that's what I found in my first year when I had pupils doing Mode I they kept telling me how difficult it was, and now, as long as they learn their vocabulary they can do something."

One of the two teachers who said that there wasn't a great take up of pupils doing the external exam Mode III Group Scheme

one said that this was due to staffing constraints within the school and the other said that this was because she did not run the Mode III Group Scheme as she already has her own Mode III Scheme with a limited language content and is happy with this particular scheme.

8. Method of Assessment

With regard to this the teachers said that they felt that the scheme had not fundamentally changed the way they assessed their pupils apart from making them more aware of the need for more listening and oral testing and less testing of the written skill. One teacher said the other tests they do, such as school exams., have now been adapted to match those of the graded tests scheme. This is interesting showing that perhaps teachers individually or in groups had been gradually refining their ideas and objectives and that the arrival of the scheme encouraged them enabling them to refine 'their' approach even further.

10. Certification

Many teachers mentioned the positive aspects of certification; how the certificates are valued by the pupils, how they provide motivation especially for pupils in the middle and lower ability groups. Some teachers mentioned that the pupils were really proud of their certificates and that even 'top' group pupils enjoyed 'having something to show' for their efforts. One teacher said

that she felt the 'ceremony of the presentation' of the certificates is important, now the pupils are being told publicly of their success.

However one teacher said (of the certificates):

"One or two children like it, they're proud of getting the certificate, of going up on the stage. So yes, for them the certificate is good but not necessarily for everybody. I mean there are quite a lot of children who turn round and say, 'Do I have to go onto the stage to get it?' because they're not that sort of child ... there's the ethos of not being a swot ... of not doing well in subjects ... (....) One or two (of the bottom set) like to think they've got something the top set hasn't got ... where they value the certificates."

Another teacher said that she didn't think that the certificates provided a motivating factor, she felt that the pupils enjoyed the work for itself and that the certificate was a bonus at the end of the course. She started by describing the success of the member of her department who was enthusiastic about the scheme.

"Up to last year there was quite a heavy success rate and the kids enjoyed getting the certificates"

then she went on to say about the pupils of another colleague:

"Last year, actually, it was interesting, nobody got through and they couldn't have cared less."

But this had happened after some unsuccessful teaching so the pupils seemed to have been ^{at} a low point of motivation and interest.

Another teacher who felt enthusiastic about the certificates

described the situation in her school:

"They like having the certificates, they like working towards them, particularly the remedial ones who in other subjects don't seem to have any aims at all to work towards.

Having a certificate every year or every year and a half is a great motivation to them. They know they're going to achieve something, for some it's the only time they actually go up on to the stage and accept a certificate."

Question: "Do all pupils receive a certificate?"

"Eventually, yes. By the end of the third year they've all got Level I."

Hence the large majority of teachers and pupils are very much in favour of having the certificates. It was thought by some teachers that perhaps they might be seen as "certificates of failure" by the more able pupils who might not follow the scheme, but in fact this did not seem to be the case.

The certificates seem to be valued by the pupils and they have a "rub off" effect, as one teacher said. Other people are interested in also achieving a certificate. She said that the description on the back of the certificates which quite clearly describes the functions which the pupils are capable of performing also makes them seem worthwhile.

Theme 4

The What and How of the Scheme

(a) Materials

(b) Method

(a) Materials

With regard to materials, many teachers referred to the lack of materials to work from to cover the content of the Cleveland Defined Content Syllabus. However most teachers said that although materials were lacking in the early days of the syllabus there has been a gradual increase of suitable materials on the market. In fact one teacher mentioned the abundance of materials available now.

In the early stages the 'Eclair' course was followed by many teachers in Cleveland and the materials, for example, flashcards, slides, tapes and booklets which form part of the course were used, and continue to be used extensively.

One teacher described the materials he used:

"In the first three years (.....) the main course is 'Eclair'. We do Eclair, then we say 'Right, we've got the Level II exam in June.' We stop the 'Eclair', we've usually, by that time, got to the end of that particular year's units of 'Eclair' then we'll go to the syllabus and start to 'top up.'

How do you do your "topping up"?

"Flashcards mainly and a lot, I do a lot of work on the board, not chalk and talk, they've (the pupils) all got speech cards or role-play cards, that sort of thing."

Another teacher described the drawbacks of the Eclair course and others as she saw them:

"The problem is actually matching up with the various course books and though it's very nice to say you will 'pick and choose' when you're following a syllabus, in practice, it's very difficult to do it. (.....) At some points unless you can find an alternative source you've simply got to say - 'let's work out this little dialogue, this is what you'd say.' There are a lot of things around, there are lots of little booklets I tend to 'dip into' such as 'This way for France' (.....) the problem there is not having enough copies. You've got to base something on it and work it out from there or else try and do some group work and have one group working around one book.

It's very difficult to know where to find all of it (the content of the syllabus, A.H.) sometimes you haven't always the time to sit down, you might as well follow a course book."

She favoured the use of one particular course as did some other teachers. However in spite of having various suitable courses at the moment many teachers said that there was still a lack of authentic materials and that there was still a need to write supplementary worksheets.

One teacher described the situation vis-à-vis materials to use to follow the Cleveland scheme in German and said that the pupils tire of doing worksheets and that they become disenchanted with these materials. There is a lack of materials for German .

To encourage the development of supplementary materials for the course 'Tricolore' which many teachers of French are using, a 'Cleveland Materials Workshop' was established and a 'Cleveland

Swop Shop Co-operative' was started so as to enable teachers to be ready to exchange ideas and materials. These two initiatives have helped alleviate some of the problems of individual teacher preparation time.

Many teachers continued to bemoan certain areas where materials are still in short supply.

One teacher described an interesting development in her department:-

"(.....) the problem at the beginning was looking for materials but we've now compiled boxes per topic that we get our materials from, from various books (.....) and now we're compiling booklets for every child to have per topic and (.....) we use "Tricolore" more and more with some of the tapes we use all sorts of different resources. In some topics there's a lack of resources but in others, things like the 'café' and the 'restaurant' we've got loads of material but say, on the topic in Level IV 'Going to a French person's house', that topic has less material - we've got to provide that ourselves more."

Question: "Do you work together as a Department in the production of materials?"

"Yes, I suppose we do. I've allocated certain topics that we have to deal with and bring together (.....) I'm in charge of telling people what to do on that score."

Does that involve you with a lot of extra work?

"Yes I suppose it does but in the long run it's a lot better because you're not having to 'fish around' in the Longman's courses and in all the different books at the beginning of every lesson (.....) We've got these topic books now so when for example, now with the fourth year we're doing the topic "In the Hotel" we've got our booklet prepared with about twenty pages on the hotel. The Guisborough Course (a course

organised by the Advisers L.E.A. (a Materials Workshop for three days for teachers to work together intensively to compile materials, A.H.) helped us a lot with that, you know, giving us ideas as to what should go in the booklets and so on. I found that very helpful."

The need for more relevant material directly related to the Cleveland syllabus has brought teachers together, to work together in departments to supplement course material and has brought teachers across the County to 'swop' and exchange materials through the Cleveland Materials Co-operative. (This is organised by the Adviser for Modern Languages).

Hence the deficiencies have had positive effects and productive 'spin-offs.'

(b) Method

All the teachers interviewed admitted to changes in their teaching method; to some extent these changes were brought about by the changed courses they use to accompany the teaching of the Cleveland syllabus and also by the skills and requirements demanded by the syllabus itself.

Changes have occurred in all four skills emphasised in modern language teaching:

(a) In oral work -

the teachers now do much more role-play, more pair and group work, particularly the former.

Use of realia and flashcards to prompt and encourage more oral work.

(One teacher mentioned the problem of concentration for some pupils to do much oral work.)

(b) Listening -

Much more listening comprehension is now involved in the teaching method; the type of listening comprehension is different to that done traditionally; it now mostly involves listening to dialogues, announcements, etc. There is now much more use made of the tape-recorded and tapes.

(c) Reading -

The reading has changed from the comprehension of passages of French to the understanding of signs, notices, etc.

(d) Writing -

Much less emphasis is now placed on this skill. The change in approach to marking means that the emphasis is much less on grammatical accuracy and is now on communicative expression.

One teacher mentioned that the method is now involved with teaching pupils "what they need to know" and another said that the method involves a more "functional use" of language.

A different teacher said that she felt that all the methodology has been affected because instead of being a grammar-based methodology that methodology now involves teaching pupils to communicate.

One teacher described some more detailed aspects of the methodology he uses:-

"(.....) Drawing things and labelling them, this introduce a lot of new vocabulary, flashcards, drawings, some sort of copy of the flashcards the French sentence underneath....."

Then this teacher mentioned another benefit of this method:

"There's another sort of benefit in that it quite naturally makes it easier to introduce culture. If you're following a formal course we find it's a case of, if you get round to it, then it's something artificial that you're just bringing in, with this sort of thing it's natural they used it because it's part of that they learn - they're learning how to buy railway tickets so you tell them about railways, about the system, and it's all part of the same thing.....

in a more formal course the 'background' (study) often goes by the board."

A colleague of this teacher described another member of their department:

"Well Linda, I know, went pottering off this afternoon (.....) she was doing cafés and restaurants, she had filmstrips so she obviously had some pictures of genuine cafés and restaurants (.....)"

and the first colleague added,

"Yes, as a matter of fact I think she took some of the Eclair slides."

The other replied,

"This is it, material is coming from all over, it's the sort of marrying it all together, isn't it? I make them learn vocabulary by role-plays, as well, (.....) I find then you get 'Est-ce qu'il y a ?' 'Est-ce que je peux?' and these expressions then become fairly established....."

The other colleagues added:

"I find with my bottom groups that's the only way they have a chance of learning it because they either cannot or will not learn things so the only hope you've got is of getting them saying it as often as possible."

"Spelling, of course is a thing of the past....."

When the question of group and pair-work was discussed
said:

"I've always had a feeling, it may not be right
that for group work to be satisfactory you need
a little bit more variety in the ability I think
you need someone who is good, or reasonably good
in a group, otherwise, with two it doesn't
matter....."

Another aspect of the method which was described was the
aspect of the pupils' involvement. Several teachers described
their pupils' involvement and active participation in lessons.
The teachers said how the pupils are now more ready to "take
the initiative" and prepare themselves for pair-work, testing
each other, doing role-plays, etc.

Only one teacher said that she did not do group work though
she did say more oral work was now done in lessons:

To the precise question: "How has the teaching of this
affected the way that you teach?
(lower ability children because she said that she
wouldn't teach the Cleveland scheme to higher
ability children)

"I suppose it's made me concentrate much more on oral
work. We do far less written work than we did
before I have always done a lot of oral work.
This is just different oral work. What I find I
still need to do is "me" and "them" rather than
"them" and "them" if you see what I mean
I don't do group work because I find that's not
my "thing", so it hasn't altered my teaching to
that extent ... it's still "them" and "me"."

This particular teacher was the only one whose method had not changed through the use of the Cleveland scheme. Other teachers mentioned other details such as the more common use of "realia" in their classrooms, the use of "mobiles", the greater use of drawing (usually of flashcards). Here it becomes apparent that the visual, tangible aspects of work are coming to the forefront of classroom teaching aids.

In summary the most fundamental, common changes brought about in the methodology through the use of the Cleveland scheme are in:

- (i) the altered balance of the teaching and use of the four skills in the classroom
- (ii) the development of group work, especially pair work.
- (iii) the topic-based method of teaching language involving a variety of activities during the lesson.
- (iv) finally and perhaps, most importantly a change in the underlying scheme of language teaching and learning - the language being used and taught as a tool of communication which is now seen as its most important feature in modern language teaching through schemes such as the Cleveland scheme.

(I would add that another aspect of the changed method which has happened but perhaps which teachers forget to mention is the increased use of games in the classroom. These feature in many of the course books the teachers used and will be important in their methodological implications).

Theme 5

The Changing Aims of the Teachers and the Teacher Pupil-role

One of the main considerations and aims of several teachers was in the area of numbers of pupils studying a foreign language; they aspired to always attracting pupils to continued study. One of these aims was along the lines of the comprehensive ideal of allowing everyone to follow a foreign language course for a certain time. This aim was not being realised in the language teaching course pre-graded syllabuses and tests in Comprehensive schools, however, since the introduction of such schemes, teachers have felt justified in teaching courses and motivating pupils to the extent that they have wanted to continue their study of a foreign language.

One teacher said:

"Now I find pupils are more interested in French because they can take it, they can take a Mode III and have a grade 4 or 3 (.....) to them it's an external examination (.....) now pupils who wouldn't otherwise have done an exam can do it."

Another teacher said that a fundamental change had occurred in his aims; that from his aim being to satisfy the Head Master by getting pupils through examinations, his aim was now to teach pupils the skill of being able to speak French.

Linked with this idea of communication another teacher said

that she previously saw language learning and teaching as a process of acquiring vocabulary and grammar and involving exercises such as translation and comprehension, but now she sees the process of language learning as learning communication skills including gist comprehension, etc., with much less accent on areas such as (grammatical) accuracy.

One teacher who was trained quite recently said that what her present aims are now bear no relation to those she had during her training, and that her present work does not resemble that for which she was trained - now her aim is to teach communication especially the skill of speaking.

Other teachers also mentioned the shift away from examination objectives to areas involving teaching pupils how to use the language, how to encourage pupils to be involved and motivated.

Two teachers said that their basic aims had not changed but the emphasis of the different aims had done so. For example, one of the teachers said that his aim had always been to stimulate an interest in both the foreign language and the country and that that was still an aim but that his present overall aim was to teach communication skills. The other teacher said that she had the same aims as she had always had but that now she had different ways of achieving them. Her aim was to give as much of a taste of the foreign language as possible and to tell pupils of 'what goes on' in ^{an} foreign country within the limitations of the pupils ability.

On a simple and happy note, one teacher said that her aim was now to involve pupils in learning French and this was being achieved.

Another teacher discussed his aims:

"My aims have always been, since I was in this school (.....) to try and get a wide range (of pupils) doing a language for a reasonable amount of time, which I succeeded at (.....) I think my aim was that in the first place (for) all ability levels, not necessarily as part of the core curriculum, I don't think, I don't really believe it has to be (.....) for three years, yes, not beyond at least they shouldn't have to do the same language for five years."

Another teacher said that she was now aware of having an explicit aim of

"the need to involve the pupils more in speaking traditional syllabuses were aimed at the pupil who would go on to do 'O' level."

She went on to say,

"I've broadened my aims in the fact that you're hoping to encourage more pupils to continue with French to enjoy it and to choose (it in their option subjects)."

The pupil-teacher role

Various aspects of the teacher pupil role were discussed - concerning the change in role of the teacher when teaching schemes such as the Cleveland scheme. Various teachers described it as being much less formal, more flexible, less directive, more involvement of pupils in an active way. The emphasis can

thus be changed away from the teacher to the pupils who are given greater responsibility for their learning and are involved in assessing themselves as part of the learning process.

One teacher mentioned the liberation he felt of no longer having to get pupils through examinations as the main part of his work:

"I'm having a happier time now than previously. It's definitely a liberation from the grind of having to get kids through a traditional G.C.E. or C.S.E. Mode I type exam."

Another mentioned that the fluency in the foreign language is important; she also mentioned:

"(This course) has made me more aware of what the rôle is that I play with them, in fact you've got to put them into the rôle of the questioner at times."

Most of the teachers interviewed seemed much happier with this rôle which now meant that both the pupils and teacher were very much involved in the learning process, when they all knew the objectives and what they needed to do to achieve them.

As the pupils know what they need they are much more able to help themselves:

".... the children will go and study certain things they don't know; they will take topics rather than take chapters (.....) so they are clever enough now to say, 'right, let's find out about this topic - food and drink', and then go through it themselves.... the thing is that the reference books are in the

classroom and they can help themselves if they've been absent, for example, find what they've missed out. They don't need the teacher to come and say 'Well, you've missed those lessons' then have to explain whatever."

She went on to say that thus you (the teacher)

"have more time to yourself to go around different groups, so you have a chance to teach individual kiddies or little groups of children, and the children themselves can go and find their own information, so they expect to take more part, take an active part in their learning rather than going to the teacher and saying 'What do we do with this work?'. "

Again the involvement of the pupils became apparent in the teachers' answers. Pupils' ability to help themselves to knowledge and to be motivated so that the teacher was not always in a position of directing and controlling the language learning activities was developing; at all times^A the class and teacher were working together.

Theme 6

The Validity of the Language Learning Process the Scheme

All the teachers interviewed except two, said that they thought that the pupils were aware, as were they themselves, of the validity of learning a foreign language, when following a scheme such as the Cleveland scheme.

There were many interesting and varied responses to the question of the validity of the language learning process.

One teacher said:

(The pupils see the validity) "inasmuch as they make it real, so if they want (to say) something for example, they're not going to learn my father is a postman when their father is not. (.....) so it makes sense to them because they are doing something which is more real in the actual world (.....) the language they need to know, they learn it."

This teacher went on to illustrate how the pupils are aware of when and how to use the language through schemes such as the school-exchange:

"Our school has an exchange link with a school in Toulouse when the French come across the pupils are all keen to go and talk if only to say "Je m' appelle Estelle". They also like to go and talk to the assistant they all want to go and see her. A lot of them, because of the links with Toulouse, have to write to penfriends so they'll come and say, 'What do I say now?' so again it shows that they treat the language as real because they have to use certain words

when they write to their penfriends. Or, they'll come and say, 'I've just received this letter, could you just tell me what this bit means?' so they use the language properly. Before it (the language) wasn't something they could talk about, whereas this, the graded tests, is something they can talk about."

This teacher was very enthusiastic on this point and went on to describe how in the daily classroom activity her pupils use the language for real communication, hence its validity as a channel of communication is brought home to them.

"One girl, when she wants to go to the toilet, will bring a little note; on it will be written, 'Je voudrais aller aux toilettes, s.v.p.' I'll have to say 'oui' or 'non' and she'll bring the note and say, 'D'accord, o.k.?' and I'll say, 'O.K. Jackie.' And she's thrilled just to have got a little bit right. She's found out that if she wants to go (to the toilet) and I'm busy, if she comes prepared with her note, all I have to do is be shown the note (.....). They use the language as it's needed which is what it's about."

Other teachers agreed that the pupils see the validity of the process and that thus they are more ready to accept it and hence derive more enjoyment from it. This then improves the motivation and success.

When another teacher was asked,

"Do your pupils now see the value of language learning?"

He replied,

"Yes, they do, I think they do.....
It's something I've noticed over the years
that I've been teaching, I don't know if

it's society that's changing or the advent of the test but it's very rare now that you get the question, 'Why do I have to do French?' or 'My dad says French is a waste of time.' You used to constantly get that but now you don't, it's fairly rare so I think more kids have, especially since you're doing the D.C.S. (Defined Content Syllabus) before you start any major unit you have to give quite a lot of background, explain to the children in English the circumstances..... so it definitely has improved the motivation."

He talked about the positive effects the school's day-trips to France had had on the pupils:

"We have had quite a lot of day-trips, so in nearly every class you get from say the second year onwards you get at least two or three kids who have been on the trip and so you can constantly say, 'Well, can't you remember Jimmy, it was like this last time you went to France' so you can make it immediately real to the ones who have been. Then to those who haven't been you can say, 'Well there will be a trip next year and this is what you'll actually be in, a French café saying these words."

Other teachers supported the ideas that pupils who had visited France readily saw the language learning as valid and valuable as did those pupils who write letters to penfriends. The pupils realise that the language is something, a tool which they would need if they were to go to France.

Teachers said that when pupils were able to use language in realistic situations then they saw it as useful, valuable. They understand the purpose of the task and then don't ask 'Why' because they are enjoying themselves.

"Pupils saw the point"
"Recognised the situations"
"Pupils see the language as useful"
"Pupils are switched on"
"It's obvious (to them) that language is what they would need to know in France."

One of the teachers who was less sure that the pupils appreciated the validity of the language learning process said:

"I don't think they do (see the validity, A.H.) when they're just sitting in a classroom. They can see that it's practical but on the other hand pupils of that ability (meaning lower-ability, A.H.) don't see themselves as going to France very often anyway so that whatever you do they don't see any great use for. But on the other hand those who do go to France on a school trip or a school holiday do find that there are things they can do once they get there. And so, I think it can have a value and a motivating effect in that way once the kids have made up their minds they'll go (to France, A.H.)"

The other teacher who was not convinced that her pupils saw the validity said that her pupils had not got "caught up" in the notion of going abroad. She said of her pupils:

"As far as they're concerned there isn't a world outside 'West View' (their housing estate, A.H.) anyway. They are very insular and they know perfectly well that there is no chance that they're going to go abroad, and for them, it's not a preparation for a trip abroad, it's still a lesson, and there's no way you can alter that.....(Even) those kids who have been to France come back and say 'What are we learning this for 'they' (the French, A.H.) all speak English anyway'."

It had been hoped that the personalised character of the syllabus with the scenarios designed to involve the pupil would help the pupils see the foreign language as an alternative, valid and valuable channel of communication. Not many of the teachers really explored this angle.

Theme 7

Future Developments

When questioned on the prospects of the future of graded syllabuses and tests in terms of

"Is this the right direction for modern language teaching?"

all the teachers except one felt sure that this was the right direction.

One teacher said:

"I think it's the only way to go. It's got to be based on communicative language."

He justified his statement by describing language learning in the past, aware of the drawbacks of past courses and examinations:

"What I find interesting is we seemed to stumble across this; Oxford were the first people I was aware of and it (the impetus for change) seemed to come from the bottom end of the ability range, the need to stimulate less-able pupils because we had moved into the comprehensive education system. Formerly we'd only been teaching the better kids in grammar schools, pupils in secondary modern were hardly getting a change to do language, a foreign language, and we were faced with a problem (in comprehensive schools) - we couldn't really handle such unreasonable courses. (.....) so we came to this for the wrong reasons, we started with those who couldn't do it and found, to our surprise, that the brighter kids, were also saying, in many cases: 'That's what we should have been doing all these years'.

There's one thing we've got to look at.....

an 'O' level from twenty years ago (in a modern language) may as well have been an 'O' level in a dead language whereas today that's no longer the case because it's quite different, it's using the language."

Another teacher talked of the future in these terms:

"I should think that there must be some point or other where someone is going to say well 'there must be some limitation to the course' and the limitation must be that there is no specific grammar taught. In the later stages repetitive structures are built in e.g. j'ai acheté, j'ai regardé, but the grammar is not taught explicitly. I think it's terminal, in that it's designed to provide basic grounding (the scheme) in spoken French. I can't see that it's going to serve anybody who wants to do French say for 'A' level."

Another teacher also mentioned her concern for 'A' level pupils. She said she found it difficult to imagine how pupils would cope in sixth forms and after with this sort of grounding. One of them mentioned that he felt that it was now necessary and appropriate for sixth forms to change their schemes. This area of concern was quite widespread amongst the teachers.*

Some teachers said that they felt that in the future communicative skills, especially oral fluency must be emphasized, that the pupils must be taught how to use language (the foreign language).

Two teachers suggested that there should be always a more formal course in parallel with this sort of scheme though other teachers felt all pupils should be following this sort of scheme

*The new 'A' level schemes will now follow on more naturally from the G.C.S.E. schemes which follow on naturally from the graded syllabus and tests schemes.

because with the new examinations such as '16+' and the 'G.C.S.E.' this type of teaching would be appropriate preparation.

One teacher described the future within the ethos of comprehensive education:

"In the perfect set-up, we see this (the scheme) as providing an answer to the argument, 'Why should you have languages as a core subject?' and we would try to argue this with Heads that under the present set-up with the different syllabuses that we can follow and the Graded tests movement we could, in fact, justify languages, a language, as a 'core' subject, in that we have now the syllabuses and the material to carry this through."

She said that in the future,

"..... with the cut-backs, you've got to justify what you're doing much more, I mean, obviously the whole area of language teaching has been slanted over to the authentic type of course, using authentic materials and giving them realistic situations, realistic goals; all the examining boards seem to be working this way. I think that we're going to have to move over much more to it and away from the old traditional prose and translation work that exams. are at the moment (.....) The only reservation I have is that we've moved a long way from what we originally started out to do. We started out originally to provide authentic goals that were easily attainable for our bottom third perhaps, or bottom half of the year group and I think we've moved away from that somewhat so that what we're doing now is somehow more centred to the 'middle', with the new developments in the Mode 1, Alternative Syllabus (N.R.E.B.). We're moving further up the intelligence range, and, I think we've got to be careful not to lose sight of the work we started with as something that our very poor children could do, and I think that there's a

lot more in the new syllabus than there was so therefore you've putting a lot more demands on them and, I think we've got to do a lot more 'building up' of the whole idea, the value of the lower level certificates so that they (the less-able) can see that they might not get on to Level IV but they'll get as far as Level II and that this is something. I think that this fits in with a lot of thinking 'at the top' a lot of these new ideas that are coming out of the D.E.S. on graded performance certificates. There's a paper that's been published recently on the new assessment objectives where they're looking at Graded Levels in Assessment across the whole curriculum. They are, of course, quoting the work that has already been done in modern languages."

In this way through these potential developments in the whole curriculum this teacher was able to see the place of modern languages using this sort of Graded Achievement Scheme. She said the new D.E.S. Assessment procedures are linked with 'profiles', the new report ideas, where you look for the 'strong points' the positive achievement of pupils.

Apart from the concerns of teachers for pupils who wish to continue with traditional 'A' level courses, the only teacher with other reservations was one who said about future developments, about the Scheme being along the 'right' lines:

"Well, I'm not very sure about that. I think that with the coming of the '16+' and all that then you're going to have to, I think we're going to be obliged to do it (this sort of course). Whether it's a good thing or not I'm not convinced about. I don't think it is because I think the more able children are much happier with a traditional course where they know what they're doing and I think they're more satisfied by that sort of course. And also I think that more able children like tests and like to think that they're 'getting to grips' with things like that."

With regard to the less able pupils, this teacher said:

"I don't know with the experience in this school with the exception of Jean (a teacher who had coped well with, and enjoyed the Cleveland scheme) and even Jean used to get depressed at times, I don't think that it really motivates the kids any more than the old one. I certainly think it's harder, I find it more difficult to prepare, it's harder work and whether it's worth it or not, I don't honestly know."

This teacher however had been satisfied with the situation in her school where she had organised a relatively successful course for the less able, therefore she was less concerned about the need for a suitable course for those pupils with the recent schemes.

Theme 8

General Comments

(a) Difficulties of Class Size

One of the obvious difficulties of teaching the syllabuses involved with the Cleveland scheme, is that of class size. In order to be able to do adequate oral practice allowing the teacher to help and encourage the pupils, small class sizes are necessary.

With the extension of methods involving pair-work and group work, the pupils are able to spend time practising the oral skills, however, it is still necessary for the teacher to give as much individual attention time as possible.

(b) Another aspect of this problem is that of discipline. Various teachers stressed the need for teachers to have firm control over their pupils. It can be difficult for pupils to appreciate the balance between a communicative approach and a controlled learning situation. They often think that the one contradicts the other rather than supports the other.

One teacher said:-

"This is one of the essential things about this, that you have got to be able to control the kids (.....) with the amount of oral work (.....) that's one of the hardest things

I think there is about this course and this is where if everybody tried it you'd be in trouble, a school would be in trouble, a department would be in trouble."

This teacher agreed on the need for 'strong' teachers, the need for a teacher to have discipline to start with.

She said:

"You're dealing with kids who are quite often totally unmotivated anyway and who are badly behaved."

Another teacher said,

"I could well see that you could have a certain amount (of disciplinary problems) so I think it's a bit difficult putting new teachers on it (the teaching of the Scheme) and yet you tend sometimes to do that don't you, because you think they might make a mess of something else. You could, in fact, lose a teacher as a result (.....) if the discipline got too bad."

When another teacher was asked about the way her pupils behave within the context of greater freedom since they have to do more oral work, she said:

"I think you've got to establish the discipline within the class first before you can give them the freedom to move around and it can occasionally lead to what, if the Head was to cross the door, he might think a riot, because it does, unfortunately give the "problem-child" the opportunity to be more of a problem than he would normally be, (.....) it can sometimes create difficulty on an awkward Friday afternoon, you've got to try and balance what you're doing with them (so that) they don't go too wild. You've got to structure it carefully or it can be more of a problem."

(c) The constraints of external examinations

Some teachers expressed concern at the prospect of their pupils going on to do further work in languages, in sixth form colleges, for example. One teacher said,

"This (the Cleveland scheme) probably for the majority of kids (is the right way to go) but at the moment I don't see the follow up for people who want to carry on the subject.

Another teacher said,

"I'm thinking ahead, I can't imagine how you can get children to be in a position to discuss violence, ordinary society or anything like that at sixth form with this (.....) or carry on beyond this."

The first teacher said,

"I think that there should always be a more formal course running alongside for pupils who are that way inclined, who want to carry on their studies."

They mentioned that the numbers of their pupils going on to do sixth form work were in the minority and stressed how they would teach their more-able pupils in skills such as essays, because even if they get through the external examination at the end of their comprehensive education the external examination at the end of their further education, would, in the opinion of these teachers seem daunting.

(d) Teacher support/group work

The teachers who had been involved in working on the Cleveland scheme with other teachers certainly found this very

useful; it had helped teachers write syllabuses and tests together, to discuss lessons and prepare the Cleveland Group Scheme Mode III C.S.E. examination for the N.R.E.B.

The materials workshop had provided teachers with three days in which to work together preparing relevant materials to cover areas of the syllabus which are not adequately covered in existing coursebooks.

In terms of the modern languages departments in schools, work on the scheme has brought teachers together to work as a department in the preparation of course work, materials and tests.

One teacher saw these aspects as being a distinct advantage and mentioned how helpful it had always been to have had an Adviser in Modern Languages who was so committed to the development of the Scheme. He led many working parties, went around the schools, helping and encouraging teachers with suggestions and advice. This teacher also said:

"The amount of commitment (on the part of Cleveland teachers) has been phenomenal in terms of after-school hours. I don't think you'd get it in any other subject area I do think it's been worthwhile. I think it falls on a few people. I also think that without the Adviser none of it would have happened (.....) without him it would never have been done, I don't think, and without yourself (meaning me!)."

Talking of her own longstanding involvement, she said,

"..... being involved with it has therefore encouraged us, as a school, to do it."

Another teacher, whose department had not become involved in the Cleveland working parties, described how, in her department, the teachers of modern languages were all working together to produce detailed lesson plans, schemes of which were based on the Cleveland scheme, materials, worksheets, etc. She felt this activity not only to be very productive but also stimulating for the department itself - the involvement and co-operation of the staff all working towards a common aim had proven very exciting and perhaps increased their commitment to the scheme - it had certainly increased their commitment to and involvement in their work.

(e) Miscellaneous

(i) Social spin-offs

One teacher described some basic social and cultural skills which the pupils learnt as a result of following the scheme. In response to the question:-

"Do you find that you are helping the kids, as people, in being communicators; do you find that that has social effects?"

He replied,

"You hope that that will take place. Obviously since they're doing oral work, there's more emphasis on the listening skill which, you hope will become part of their lives. So that they realise that if you start to learn something, you've got to listen in the first instance, so I imagine that there's a shift in emphasis there."

And also by virtue of the fact that you are doing role-play, the kids, from a social angle are learning to interact better with each other, and to be patient. Some of them are very keen to take place (part) you have to train them. If they're patient they'll all get a turn.

Another social aspect would be because you're teaching them French, real language, you're obviously teaching them certain concepts they may have forgotten about or (for example), a simple thing is 'please' and 'thank-you', 'tu' and 'vous' is a relationship. Within the old system, you simply explained the 'tu' 'vous' relationship in grammatical terms. But now they use it. If they're talking to me as the waiter in a cafe, I'm a 'vous' but if they're talking to one of their friends, an imaginary person they've met abroad, then they use 'tu'. So you hope that you're giving them some sort of a little awareness of social relationships."

As well as this aspect, when asked,

"Do you find that through this (scheme) you can engender a positive attitude towards the French"

He replied:

"There's less 'anti-French' feeling which goes back to the awareness of France and motivation..... You sometimes get 'anti-French' feeling when you show them colour slides and they see obviously posh restaurants and they see people sitting down they start saying things like, 'The French are snobs', and this kind of thing. There's still the French food, when you're explaining for example, 'la charcuterie', but there's not the aggressive thing, not like there used to be. Because they used to associate French people with the boredom of what you were doing with them.

I feel that this area of interview is very encouraging.

Various teachers mentioned the more positive attitudes their

pupils now have towards the French and France. Perhaps because of their greater enjoyment of the subject, their increased motivation and interest, these positive effects have had 'rub-off' value on their general cultural approach and understanding. The social skills, background knowledge and communication may all hopefully be taught through the language itself.

(ii) The Grammar

Some teachers expressed concern in this area because of the change in the nature of the grammar learnt and absorbed in schemes, such as the Cleveland scheme.

One teacher said:-

"I should think that at some point or other, somebody is going to say, 'Well, there must be some limitation to this' and I suppose the limitation is that there is very little explicit grammar I know in the later stages of the course you try to build in repetitive structures such as 'j'ai acheté', 'j'ai rencontré', 'j'ai regardé', hoping that the pattern will go in, but it's never explicitly done on the board, for example, but I think that it's terminal in that it's designed to provide a basic grounding in spoken French. I can't see that it's going to serve anybody here who wants to study French at 'A' level or University."

There is a C.S.E. Alternative Mode I, where a target is largely based on this syllabus.

On the teaching of grammar and does he teach it, he replied:

"Sometimes, you can see that if you did this on the board in the old traditional grammatical thing, then it would be a short-cut, for example:

'Je voudrais de la pâte'

and sometimes they say 'à la gare', 'au château' and in ten minutes you can explain 'a + le = au' etc., and that solves a lot of problems as long as it doesn't create any problems or get them worried.

I usually treat this as a triviality, some of you might find it interesting, it doesn't matter if you get it wrong, the main thing is you say,

'Je voudrais' and name what you want."

Another teacher talked about her concern for grammatical concepts and 'language awareness' in terms of knowing exactly how the language is used and manipulated. She said:

"The other thing I wish it (the scheme) did in a sense, but then I'm not sure how it could, is language awareness. I don't think it copes with making kids aware of what they're saying and what language is (.....) they don't always know what they're saying.

I think to them (the pupils) it's all vocabulary, the whole thing (the syllabus) is vocabulary. They don't differentiate which is how we teach it, whether we oughtn't to or not, I don't know we certainly achieve our aims I'm not sure we could (include more language awareness through the scheme, A.H.) not with the syllabus as it is structured because that's what it is - a list of vocabulary despite the fact that we wrote a structural appendix at the back, but that's for our benefit and we realise that these things are different (structures and vocabulary, A.H). Even with 'O' level kids, getting them aware of what they're doing with tenses etc., and these kids who are doing it (the Cleveland scheme) tend to breathe a sigh of relief that they don't have to struggle with tenses (.....) so I don't think that's one of

the things we can overcome, but that's one of the problems, the stumbling blocks (.....) I think there's some transfer (of knowledge) but they've no real idea when they're talking in the past or present tense, it's a non-starter, they don't understand the difference."

Perhaps these comments describe the problem of the conceptualization of grammatical structures such as 'tenses', the problem appears more acute lower down the ability range. However, pupils of all abilities are able to conceptualise and use tenses in their mother tongue so why is it that these notions of use of tense cannot be transferred to a foreign language? It could be argued that teachers of foreign languages have not yet found appropriate methods of teaching structures and their uses in such a way as to make the concepts clear to pupils, especially those of lower ability.

Another teacher mentioned his concern that "phrasal learning" might well take place when using the Cleveland scheme. However awareness of this problem could play a part in possibly avoiding its intrusion in the learning process.

(iii) Course book/tests

One teacher said that one disadvantage of the scheme, in her opinion was that it did not follow a course-book. Recently in her school they had 'opted out' of the Cleveland tests and followed the course 'Action' ^{by} Michael Buckby and did the connected tests. However her school still participated in the Cleveland

Alternative Mode III Group Scheme.

Another teacher said that he did not teach towards the Cleveland tests; he taught the course book in use in his school 'Eclair' I.L.E.A., and realised that this course covers approximately 80-90% of the content of the syllabus for the level tests I and II so he just incidentally taught the work not covered in the course without rigidly "topping-up" from the Cleveland syllabus.

(iv) Increase of pupils in option systems in 4th/5th yr.

The first teacher who described the use of 'Action' in her school mentioned that in her school the other departments thought of French as an elitist subject because there only used to be one C.S.E. Mode I examinations group. But now that so many children are involved in the graded tests and now that four groups are involved in the C.S.E. examinations in fourth and fifth years the image of French and modern languages in the school has completely changed.

It is interesting that not only have such schemes changed the teaching and learning of a foreign language for pupils and teachers concerned but also for the whole area of foreign language teaching in departments, in schools, and in the examinations system.

(v) The place of modern languages in the curriculum of the 4th/5th years

Previously, before the advent of graded syllabuses and tests when it was realised that the continued study of a foreign language was untenable in fourth and fifth years for low ability pupils, courses such as European Studies, French Studies, etc., had blossomed. This had given modern language teachers a field to teach in which they felt unqualified and they felt as if they were "opting out"; they felt guilty and were not sure what they had to do. At that time the teaching of language was difficult with all but the more able pupils and the teachers felt frustrated by the lack of appropriate objectives and did not know what to do.

With the development of graded syllabuses and tests, many of the "studies" schemes have been "phased out" and the teachers have gradually felt that they are now involved in teaching "something for which they were qualified" as one teacher said.

This teacher also confirmed the previous teacher's remarks on how now that language teaching took place with pupils of all ability, language teachers were no longer seen as elitist.

(vi) Old Scheme/New Scheme

Various teachers approved enthusiastically the revised syllabuses and tests in Cleveland, especially those teachers

who had been involved in the original scheme. One teacher said, of the new scheme:

"It's definitely an improvement (.....), much better, much more coherent, it's more manageable, with the stages being more evenly balanced, they do sort of hang together and make sense."

When she spoke of the rest of her department's appreciation she said:

"X's praise is overwhelming for it, (the department) would be all full of praise, they are very happy working with it and with the materials, and they all enjoy teaching it, they think having the syllabus there as it stands is marvellous."

Another teacher who had been involved in the scheme from the start also confirmed this saying that he and his department were very happy and pleased with the revised Cleveland syllabuses and tests.

(vii) Communication

Several teachers mentioned the fact that they feel that the pupils have learnt and developed various communication skills. One teacher said that communication seems easier now, that the pupils are able to use and say what they know.

One teacher, from a different school said,

"Now the emphasis is on communication, gist comprehension and communication, the things you'd actually have to do when you're there (in France/Germany). The stress on accuracy has gone, it's great. It's so nice when someone

will 'have a go' even when they don't get it right and I think you're expecting degree level standard from 'O' level kids often."

In answer to the question:

"Do you find you can get kids to communicate who might not otherwise have communicated?"

"Yes. Once they realise they can have a go, and it doesn't matter if it's not quite right, then they're quite willing, but that takes a bit of getting to, but they get past that stage (of worrying) and that's where you get work done, they don't know about accent, I never worry about it, but certainly the communication is there with them (.....) (the fourth and fifth years) (.....) they love it, they'll say anything, they'll try and say something and furthermore, one thing I've always stressed and it's come through to the kids, 'If you don't know the word, say something else. If you don't know 'yesterday evening' tell me it's Monday and say 'Sunday night!'. they get round it, and that's what it's all about. You train them to it and it's useful to them.

These attitudes and approaches are exactly those involved in communication and in communicative language teaching and learning so gradually the objectives of communication are being reached.

"I think that were they in France, it would pay off. One or two of them have said that they have actually met French people in this country (.....) and they'll 'have a go' and when we take them on day-trips, the first year are always ready to 'have a go'."

She agreed that with first year pupils it's rather different because they are always so much more ready to communicate anyway

but it's reassuring to find that once pupils have been trained in communication skills in the foreign language, that even at fourth and fifth year levels they are ready to 'have a go' to use the language they know, to manipulate it to explore and develop it in their attempt to communicate to others.

Conclusion

Chapter 4 proved very significant in enabling me to discover a great deal of what is happening in the field of modern languages in Cleveland schools. Ideally I would have liked to observe the teaching and learning modern languages in action but this did not prove practical. It would however have provided me with a different type of overview of the situation.

Here I would like to draw some conclusions from some of the themes discussed in the interviews. What I perceive from the first theme regarding how teachers became involved and their level of involvement is that the 'training' of the teachers came from other teachers. The amount of help, encouragement and advice shared between the teachers is quite remarkable. A real arrangement of informal as well as formal 'in-service training' evolved. The length of time of involvement did not seem to affect the degree or enthusiasm of commitment of the teachers.

The theme of enjoyment is very important. As well as increased enjoyment for both teachers and pupils there were spin-offs such as increased confidence and motivation for both pupils and teachers, more work was readily and meaningfully done.

With regard to tests and certification, the Cleveland scheme has been influential in enabling the Comprehensive ideal to be attained in secondary schools, i.e. the provision of courses and curriculum to all abilities. The majority of pupils are able to take the tests and obtain the certificates, and, because the process is seen to be enjoyable, more and more pupils are inclined to continue their studies of modern languages.

Discussion and work on materials and methods have given teachers the opportunity to work closely together. The type of work done and its presentation and objectives have had to change and teachers seem very satisfied with the change which has made great improvements.

The fact of changing the aims of the teachers of modern languages to communicative ends seems to have liberated them from the shackles of traditional objectives - pleasing headteachers, constantly trying to meet examination requirements which were often over-demanding. This has also had the positive effect of changing the rôle of the teacher and pupil to the extent of enabling them to work much more successfully together.

The discussion of the validity of the language learning process was encouraging since most teachers found that the areas covered in the syllabus could be made to seem real and possible, especially, for example, the day-trip to France.

However, little description was given to how the modern language studied could frequently be used with validity as an alternative to the mother tongue in the classroom. This would clearly be a way of making modern language learning an alternative mode of communication.

Various teachers felt concern with regard to the future prospects of the more complex areas of language, for example with regard to grammar. But by now they will hopefully be aware of changes in syllabuses and examinations at further levels of language study, in the 'A' levels and F.L.A.W. (Foreign Languages at Work) Schemes. Other teachers were concerned that the communicative approach may move away from its initial concern with basic skills to more sophisticated and complicated types of language which would once again threaten the chances of success of the less-able pupils. However, the general feeling was still that there was no 'turning back' and that the future could only conceivably be along the lines of the development of communicative skills.

Some teachers discussed other aspects of the scheme which were not basically covered in the questions of the interview and some of these showed further advantages and disadvantages of the scheme in Cleveland.

Many of the problems such as those concerned with class-size and the administration of the tests, especially the oral

tests are problems of administration and finance within the educational system as it exists. These will be discussed further in the conclusion of the thesis.

The overall feeling as a result of collecting information through the interviews is that of a successful scheme. The increased enjoyment and numbers of pupils continuing to study modern languages are evidence of this. In fact, before conducting the interviews I had not anticipated such positive response and I was heartened to find how far the innovation had succeeded in overcoming much of the earlier dissatisfaction felt amongst the teachers and learners.

Conclusion

The introduction, development and use of the graded syllabuses and tests represent an important innovation in the teaching and learning of modern languages both nationally and locally. In previous chapters various aspects of the innovation have been examined and it may now be appropriate to ask:

"Is this innovation superficial or fundamental in the teaching and learning of modern languages?"

I would venture to suggest that the innovation is of fundamental importance for various reasons. Firstly, from an historical point of view, various innovations have come and gone over the years, but the G.O.M.L. innovation seems to be here to stay for quite some time. It has been developing over the past fifteen years approximately and it now has a future in that the recently produced examinations, the '16+' and the G.C.S.E. acknowledge the trends of the G.O.M.L. tests and take into account the type of work studied in the graded syllabuses.

Secondly, these examinations have actually developed from the G.O.M.L. initiatives, from the grass-roots, from the teachers whose need for change in the teaching and learning of modern languages in the seventies forced them into looking for new ways forward. The communicative approach seemed the best way forward

and the skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing were developed. The G.O.M.L. tests as well as the new examinations, put great emphasis on these skills and recognise the need for change in the language content, vocabulary dialogues, etc., compared with traditional areas of language study.

Furthermore changes in examinations at 'A' level are also taking place and these changes too acknowledge the relevance and importance of communicative skills. For example the London Examinations Board now has 20% of the marks for oral skills and the language involved in other areas of the examination are more natural and more modern.

Another change at this level is the introduction of courses such as F.L.A.W. (Foreign Languages at Work) which are directly linked and are developments of the G.O.M.L. schemes. For example in Newcastle the F.L.A.W. scheme is in reality a further level of Graded Test intended for pupils aged 16+ who wish to continue their study of a modern language without following a conventional 'A' level course.

The third reason why I feel that this innovation is fundamental is because of the acceptance and development of the trend on a national scale. In most areas of Britain the style and content of the teaching and learning of modern languages have changed to a more communicative approach. The graded tests phenomenon is in evidence nationally in many secondary schools.

The style of the innovation itself provides the fourth reason why this innovation may well continue to develop. According to Halpin (1966) curriculum innovation, which comes from working-parties which have the 'open'-style of leadership where the working party members are each able to contribute to and participate in the discussion, is more likely to be generated, introduced and developed. In Cleveland as in other areas this was the style used to develop and implement the innovation. With the participation of teachers, advisers and professors the schemes have evolved.

However although the innovation has many important effects and is of great importance it must be admitted that it has certain disadvantages as well as many advantages.

Disadvantages

Firstly it could be argued that concentration on short-term performance goals squeezes out aspects of language which are not measured by performance tests such as understanding of the foreign country, its history, geography, institutions and the values of its way of life. (Hawkins, 1981, p.172). Hawkins claims that this understanding is more than mere factual knowledge and he is concerned that this understanding may not be developed through teaching which concentrates on areas of language measurable by performance tests. Another aspect of language work which is not measured in these tests is the way language

works and how it contrasts with English. Hawkins says that these are important aspects of education in modern languages which aims to be more than instruction in performance skills. It could be argued, however, that some aspects of modern language study including real understanding are very difficult to measure and perhaps one could ask are they actually taught or do they evolve and develop through certain styles of teaching? Creative understanding transcends the functional level of understanding language. This creative understanding might start through helping the learner feel positive about the country, the people and the language through being successful in the early stages of the language learning process. Another stage might develop as the learner begins to feel empathy towards and comprehension of the people concerned and then this creative understanding might culminate in helping the learner relate more directly to the users of the language and incorporate an affinity which extends to people who communicate in the language. They might even learn to use the language as an alternative method of communication.

An example of this final stage may well be the stages aspired to in the total immersion language schools in Canada. If Hawkins is right that these aspects are squeezed out or reduced by concentration on short-term performance goals then perhaps there are ways of encouraging the real understanding in parallel

with developing the skills necessary for success in short-term language learning goals. In fact one could ask if it is even reasonable to teach language without inclusion of knowledge of aspects of the culture and civilisation which the language represents. Perhaps it is partially through a feeling of success in language learning that the learners may gradually develop the type of understanding to which Hawkins refers, and, success in terms of short-term performance goals is within the grasp of many learners.

However it is recognised that it is difficult to measure understanding. In fact the N.E.A. statement for the G.C.S.E. in Modern Language states clearly that only the first (the actual language learning) objective of its seven objectives (which include understanding) will be measured by examination. The other objectives will hopefully be attained although not examined.

In Cleveland although it might be acknowledged that understanding as defined by Hawkins has not been specifically analysed with regard to its development, there is no evidence to suggest that some level of understanding in Hawkin's terms has not been grasped. It may be recalled that one of the teachers interviewed in Cleveland commented on this issue of understanding; he mentioned how he felt that his pupils, through doing the Cleveland G.O.M.L. Scheme (or the Eclair

Course) seemed to be less anti-French and anti-France; they seemed to consider the French less snobbish, less distant and less different.

A second disadvantage is the problem of having large classes of pupils for what has now become a practical subject rather than a theoretical one. Modern languages has changed its nature while changing from traditional to communicative styles of teaching. In schools other practical subjects have the advantage of having a lower pupil/teacher ratio, this would now be appropriate for modern languages. One of the problems of having large classes is, of course, that the whole range of ability might not be fully exploited and it might be argued that the less able hold back the more able pupils.

However Harrison (1982) argues that the G.O.M.L. scheme is suitable for all levels of ability and states that it

"lays as good a foundation for future study of a more academic kind as that provided by a traditional approach, indeed a better one because more motivating." (p.50)

Another feature of the G.O.M.L. tests was that pupils would take the tests individually, when ready yet the fact that this does not often happen proves to be a decided disadvantage. In fact this is one of the criticisms of the graded tests system levelled by Hawkins who states that thus one of the main advantages claimed for the graded tests is lost.

The D.E.S. report by the H.M.I's on Leeds 1984 states that:

"entry for the appropriate test at the appropriate moment has important implications for the length of courses if the less able pupils are to reach a level that has significant surrender value and practical application." (p.11)

The difficulty of arranging for individual tests or even group tests for certain pupils at the "appropriate moment" is that of administration. Schools do not cater for such situations, for example especially with regard to oral tests which always carry a high proportion of marks. Oral tests are usually individual tests and teachers require special times and arrangements to conduct them. Teachers with large classes and full time-tables find it very hard to conduct individual tests. The fact that greater flexibility is required in schools is also mentioned in the D.E.S. report on Leeds 1984 concerning the fact that this flexibility is necessary if pupils are to be continuously encouraged and motivated.

"If this motivation can be sustained, with greater expectation leading to better performance combined with more flexible administration of the tests in schools, it may be possible to increase the percentage of pupils who continue their modern language into the fourth and fifth years of secondary education." (p.11)

In Cleveland as elsewhere the practical constraints within schools makes testing difficult at times. Some schools allow teachers to be 'off time-table' to enable them to have time to

do the tests but in others there are problems of fitting in the tests in lessons, lunch-times, etc. It can only be hoped that eventually schools will value fully and appreciate how important these aspects of testing are in modern languages operating G.O.M.L. schemes.

Thirdly there is the problem that the tests themselves, once produced (and the working parties disbanded) might become static and discourage initiative (Slater 1980 in Hawkins 1981). This problem could perhaps be resolved by constantly attempting to improve the tests in the light of comments, criticisms, etc.

In Cleveland a questionnaire was sent to schools for their comments and criticisms after doing the first set of the revised tests and this constant search for feed-back could perhaps avoid the tests becoming static.

The tests themselves pose a problem in that they are criterion-referenced and this proves an area of confusion and uncertainty according to Harrison, 1982. He feels that the implications of this method of evaluation needs further thinking.

However the introduction of criterion-referencing for all subjects in the G.C.S.E. should gradually reduce the lack of familiarity and its attendant problems.

Fourthly, Hawkins claims that a further disadvantage could lie in the fact that teachers of other subjects are demanding

similar graded objectives to those in modern languages. This may lead to a proliferation of tests leaving pupils too little time for learning which is stimulated by curiosity rather than by a wish to collect badges. However apart from certain developments in mathematics very little seems to be happening in other subjects at present so this possible disadvantage is still not actual. The situation is the same both nationally and locally.

Nevertheless there are certain other problems which are actual! The fifth disadvantage of the communicative schemes is the extent to which the success of the schemes depend on able, emotionally strong, highly-motivated and committed teachers who have great reserves of energy. Or is this an advantage? One could argue that the scheme would then discourage certain types of people from becoming teachers by virtue of their personality.

The methods and tasks of communicative schemes are demanding and challenging and constantly being updated. The teacher him or herself needs constantly to try, search and hope to improve, looking for new approaches, new techniques, new materials, realia, songs, etc.

Some of the teachers interviewed in Cleveland mentioned the initial drawbacks of the scheme with regard to the amount of time they had to devote to preparation of materials, methods,

etc. Part of this was due to the fact that the Cleveland scheme does not rely on any particular text-book and so teachers need to adapt the text-books they use and work out some of their own material, classroom aids, etc. However the demands of time in preparation on the one hand may well be compensated by the fact that less time is spent in marking work, a significant feature of traditional teaching methods.

Advantages

In spite of the various disadvantages involved in the innovation it must be noted that there are many advantages; in fact these by far outweigh the disadvantages from the point of view of 'education' in its widest sense.

The fact that more pupils are now able to continue their study of modern languages because there are suitable courses, objectives, tests and examinations which provide enthusiasm and motivation verifies this fact.

Hawkins admits that the graded objectives and tests movement must be seen as a "promising approach to reducing and defining the learning load, while motivating the learner, especially the young and less-able learner." (p.172).

The D.E.S. Report by H.M.I's of May 1984 evaluated the classroom practice in schools in N.W. England using the graded tests of defined objectives schemes and found that:

"In schools with receptive teachers the influence of G.O.M.L. seems to have been positive and beneficial. In some others teachers have yet to recognise the fundamental shift in teaching approach towards an emphasis on developing skills of comprehension and oral manipulation of language for which the graded tests provide a set of largely relevant and practical goals."

Here again the basis of success or failure of the G.O.M.L. innovation is seen to be in the hands of the teachers and the evident approval of the H.M.I's of the content, style and approach of the innovation is reassuring.

The H.M.I. Report in the Leeds Metropolitan District related to G.O.M.L. courses, finds that the rapid growth of the graded test movement since the mid 1970's means that in the United Kingdom there are now more than 80 schemes operating at present and that it is possible that there are over 350,000 pupils mainly within the age range of 10-14, "a small but significant minority of the total number of pupils in secondary schools" involved in graded test work (H.M.I., 1984:1).

The report states that there is "good work going on" (p.10) and that the

"enthusiasm of some teachers, their readiness to give time to preparing test materials ... are entirely praiseworthy."

With regard to the pupils,

"The motivating effect of the tests on many pupils, the interest they showed in their work and their pleasure in receiving certificates are a foundation on which such can be built."

(H.M.I. 1984:10).

These results were also found amongst Cleveland teachers and in Cleveland schools. Another similarity in Leeds and Cleveland is the fact that the scheme encourages more pupils to continue their study of a modern language in the fourth and fifth years as well as encouraging motivation for the least able pupils in the third year. Through the discussion in the interviews as described in Chapter IV many other 'spin-off' advantages were discovered. For example, one which I find very important is the fact that pupils before were sometimes 'anti-French' because of their experience of learning the language, but now it seems that the enthusiasm and understanding of the language has helped the pupils to be more 'pro-French' and empathetic towards them.

The fact that the pupils now see their learning as valid and useful as well as enjoyable is a great advantage; the fact that the methods of teaching have changed to include greater co-operation amongst learners through group and pair-work, the fact that teachers have been able to change their roles vis-à-vis the pupils as well as vis-à-vis each other as working colleagues sharing ideas and skills is of great significance.

Harrison feels that the most remarkable and encouraging aspect of G.O.M.L. so far is its success based on the conviction and effort of teachers who have taken on a problem of curriculum

shortfall and found ways of solving it:

"Their enthusiasm and commitment has resulted in successful learning for pupils and improved morale for other teachers as well as themselves." (1982:51)

Conclusion

Although the advantages of this innovation clearly outweigh the disadvantages and although the scheme carries modern languages towards a brighter future after the disenchantment of the 70's this does not, of course, mean that all the problems have been solved; indeed will they ever be? The purpose of this thesis has been to examine current practice in the teaching and learning of modern languages in general in Britain, and, in particular in Cleveland and to discuss some of the problems and issues, difficulties and successes therein. There is still a great need for further and constant in-service training, a need for further research into methodology and materials as well as for further refinements in examinations.

Progress to date is considerable and even though the mood is optimistic about future prospects the progress needs to be maintained and the impetus sustained.

The innovation has thrown light on various problems, underlined them and invited possible solutions. The constant

search for solutions must continue and the effort of finding them must be interesting, stimulating and rewarding. The rewards of teaching and learning modern languages must be readily available to both pupils and teachers so that the place of modern languages in the comprehensive curriculum be there not just by right but by merit.

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