

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

EXPLORING LEARNER AND TEACHER ROLES IN CURRICULUM
DEVELOPMENT IN A PROCESS APPROACH TO A BASIC
ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE PROGRAMME FOR ADULTS

A dissertation
submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

by

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ABSTRACT

EXPLORING LEARNER AND TEACHER ROLES IN CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN A PROCESS APPROACH TO A BASIC ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE PROGRAMME FOR ADULTS

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This study explores the contribution that the learners and the teacher made to curriculum development in a process approach to English as a second language for adults. The research was carried out with a group of workers attending a basic English course in an adult education programme on the East Rand. This study covers the entire sixteen month period from 1986 to 1987, and was carried out by the teacher-as-researcher. The research methodology was a form of illuminative evaluation, using syllabus accounts. These accounts provided a record of what took place in the classroom and were organised into three main themes.

Subsequent analysis of the accounts focussed on learner and teacher roles in determining the learning experiences generated in the classroom. These findings were then re-examined in the light of the literature on process approaches. Conclusions were drawn about these roles and the implications for teacher development and learner training. Subsequently these conclusions were presented as illuminative data to reflect upon the curriculum framework underlying process approaches.

The conclusions drawn in this study challenge the assumption that learners and the teacher jointly and equally negotiate learning in a process approach. Instead they suggest that the teacher is very much in control as the overall manager of curriculum development, and that learners are secondary agents in this endeavour. The roles of both parties are also more complex and more interlinked than the literature implies. Following this, conclusions were drawn about the roles that learners and the teacher played in curriculum development in this study.

The research went on to examine the broader implications of these findings, by assessing the feasibility of a process approach for large-scale adult basic education work in South Africa. From this assessment, a new 'hybrid' approach was proposed which retains important features of a process approach while modifying it to make it more accessible and appropriate for South Africa's needs. Finally, the study identified future research directions.

DECLARATION

I declare that this research is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Philosophy in the University of Cape Town. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

Signed by candidate _____

Signature Removed

19th day of September, 1991

For my family in England and in Australia

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PREFACE

Basic second language education for adults has received very little attention in South Africa. This study is a small contribution to research in this area. It is also a rare opportunity to share the experiences and dilemmas facing a non-governmental adult literacy organisation at this point in time. The main aim of this study is to critically examine the work that I and my colleagues have been engaged in for a number of years. The process approach that we have been developing with teachers and learners has raised a number of questions, some of which are addressed in this research. Ultimately it is hoped that this study will provide direction in our work as we face the challenges that lie ahead.

This research has been a great personal achievement and I am grateful to all those people who supported me along the way. First and foremost I wish to thank the learners at Alrode CEP who inspired this research and who provided one of the most pleasurable and innovative teaching experiences of my career. I also wish to thank the CEP, especially Gail Cretchley for her willing assistance. I am, as always, eternally grateful to teachers, colleagues and learners at USWE, who have helped in so many ways to keep

me on track. I am especially grateful to Basia Ledochowski for introducing me to literacy, and for her help and guidance with this study. A special thank you is also due to Caroline Kerfoot for the hours spent proofreading this work and for very valuable discussions. I am also grateful to my supervisor Tony Saddington for his approachable, helpful manner and for gently prodding me along. Finally, my thanks to my brother Tony and to family and friends for support and encouragement which kept me going.

Abbreviations

This study makes frequent use of the following abbreviations in the text:

ABE	Adult Basic Education
ESL	English as a Second Language

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce this research and to give the background. I begin by outlining the research goals and the rationale. I then describe the research setting or context in which it took place. This includes detailing the role of the two organisations involved in this study, the location of the study, how it was set up, and finally, a profile of the research group.

Therefore this chapter is organised as follows:

1.1 The purpose of the study

1.2 The research context

1.2.1 USWE (Using Spoken & Written English)

1.2.2 CEP (Continuing Education Programme)

1.2.3 The programme

1.2.4 The research group

1.1 The Purpose of the Study

This study examines aspects of the theory and practice of a 'process' approach used in a non-formal basic English as a second language (ESL) programme for adults. There are four main aims as follows:

- (i) To determine the roles that learners and teachers adopt in curriculum development in a process approach.
- (ii) To identify the problems experienced with learner and teacher roles in curriculum development in a process approach.
- (iii) To develop a better theoretical understanding of the roles of learners and teachers in curriculum development in a process approach.
- (iv) To assess the suitability of a process approach for South Africa and to make recommendations.

This research straddles the two fields of adult education and applied linguistics and language teaching and draws its theory and practice from both. In terms of adult education, this study is located more specifically within the area of 'adult basic education (ABE), with popular education providing additional inspiration. In terms of applied linguistics, this study falls within the area of ESL learning and teaching. The theoretical location of this study is significant: both adult education and applied linguistics are relatively new fields of endeavour and

adult basic education even more so. Research which bridges these two areas is scant.

In South Africa, adult basic education has assumed a low priority and both non-formal and formal provision is grossly inadequate. (French, 1982; Wedepohl, 1984). However, in the past eighteen months or so, adult basic education has received unprecedented attention. The prospect of more large-scale provision appears imminent and relevant research which will inform the policymakers is desperately needed. (Cosatu, 1991). At the same time, the needs of learners, teachers and literacy organisations on the ground have given impetus and direction to research and development work. The need for formal recognition and accreditation for learners, teachers and ABE workers implies the formalisation and professionalisation of ABE. To realise these plans, options for the future need to be investigated so that informed decisions can be taken. To this end, extensive grounded research is needed in a number of areas, including curriculum, syllabus and methodology. The challenge is overwhelming: this research is a small contribution.

Curriculum, syllabus and methodology have received attention in recent times in the education and language teaching fields. For some, interest has shifted from a teacher-centred, objectives teaching model to a focus on the learner and a process or 'learner-centred' model.

Learner-centred education has become popular worldwide. In South Africa, learner-centred courses are offered by a range of organisations spanning the political and educational spectrum. The term 'learner-centred' is semantically broad and has invited diverse interpretations. The literature on learner-centred education is similarly characterised by vague, generalised notions and a lack of clearly articulated goals and principles. This has tended to obscure the true nature of the approach and to mask its complexities.

This swing towards the learner and learning, particularly in ESL work has eclipsed the teacher and the subject, and these have been relatively neglected. In the literature, the significance of the teacher's role in particular is scarcely acknowledged. Yet a shift in the learner's role must surely have necessitated a corresponding shift in the teacher's role. Reading between the lines, the teacher and the subject matter remain vital aspects of the approach. The need to restore the balance and to re-examine pedagogy has been acknowledged in more recent process approaches to ESL and popular education. However, the lack of documented research on these approaches is a hindrance. White notes, "the striking shortage of tangible examples of the process syllabus" (1988:95), and the fact that "there exists no evaluation of such a model in practice". (1988:100). In the absence of a critical examination of the approach in practice, descriptions in the literature tend to be vague

and even contradictory, which has led to some degree of scepticism.

"The rhetoric of description is likely to obscure the true nature of what is being described, thereby glossing over some of the real problems of implementation.". (Clarke, 1991:15).

This researcher has been implementing a needs-based, process approach in South Africa for a number of years. More recently, this has been in the context of ABE linked to development work.

"The USWE approach does not begin with a particular set of materials or a particular way of doing things. Instead, all those involved appear to contribute to the development of the programme: there is ... an ongoing formative needs analysis in process.". (Nuttall, in USWE, 1989/90).

This experience has identified particular concerns around the curriculum and learner and teacher roles. (Clifford, 1991; USWE, 1991).

Thus, the need to demystify the approach and its underlying theory appears to be important on a number of levels. This study examines a process approach in practice. As the research is classroom-based, most of this study is taken up with investigating the development of the classroom syllabus in action. The distinction between 'syllabus' and 'curriculum' is important as these terms are used differently around the world. (Nunan, 1988:14; Stern, in Brumfit, 1984:5; Allen, in Brumfit, 1984:61). In this study, I use 'syllabus' quite broadly to refer to the learning experiences that occur in the classroom. I use

'curriculum' to mean the broad framework within which the syllabus is devised and developed. This framework includes the overall purpose and ideology, the institutional and other constraints, the theories of language and second language learning, the methodological principles, etc. This study focusses on the classroom syllabus which, it is claimed, can effect curriculum change (Candlin, in Candlin & Murphy, 1987). Therefore, only in the penultimate chapter of this study do I examine learner and teacher roles in curriculum development specifically.

1.2 The Research Context

I begin by sketching the role of the two main organisations involved in setting up and managing the programme in which this study took place. I then introduce the programme itself, followed by a brief profile of the advanced group which was targeted for this study.

1.2.1 USWE (Using spoken and Written English)

USWE is a non-governmental adult basic education trust, established in 1981 in Johannesburg. USWE's aim is:

"... to help adults with little or no formal schooling acquire the skills and knowledge they need to play an active part in the process of social and political change." (USWE, 1989/90:2).

USWE was originally set up in response to demands for English literacy from domestic workers, gardeners, etc., living and working in the suburbs of Johannesburg. Over the years, USWE branched out and began to service municipal workers living in hostels. In 1986, a branch of USWE was opened in Cape Town. At the same time in Johannesburg, two CEP organisers approached USWE about employing trained teachers to teach basic English at CEP adult education centres in and around Johannesburg. USWE agreed to provide two teachers for the new Alrode centre, as a pilot project. The aim of this project was to gauge whether it was viable for a non-governmental organisation to operate in an industrial context, and whether USWE's needs-based, learner-centred or 'process' approach, including the

materials, methodology and training were appropriate. One of the teachers at this centre was this researcher who was at that time employed full-time at USWE in the capacity of teacher trainer/course writer. This teacher-researcher taught both the advanced and the intermediate English groups (the advanced English group is the focus of this study). The other English teacher who taught the beginner English group was an USWE trained teacher. The two teachers worked together at various times during the programme. I now describe the role of the CEP in the programme that was set up.

1.2.2 CEP (Continuing Education Programme)

The adult education programme in which this study took place was located in an industrial setting on the East Rand. It was part of an adult education centre set up by the CEP (Continuing Education Programme) in Johannesburg. The CEP is a non-profit education institute which, since 1986 has been controlled by a Trust. It assists companies in a particular area to set up part-time formal and non-formal educational programmes for their workers, ranging from literacy through to matriculation and technical training. The CEP's mission is:

"To provide, on a decentralised national basis, a viable system for all employees to improve the quality of their lives through relevant, adult-centred education, using any existing infrastructure and in so doing to make a contribution towards solving an aspect of South Africa's skills shortage." (CEP brochure).

CEP was started in 1973 by Clive Acton. At that time it

offered technical training to workers in the evenings. The founder members include the Urban Foundation, IPM (the Institute of Personnel Management), and the South African Institute of Supervisors. In 1978 the first CEP centre was opened on the East Rand. Since then the number of centres has increased dramatically, particularly during the period from 1984-1988. At the end of this period there were twenty-one centres in operation. CEP operates nationally and has a central office in Johannesburg.

In terms of its teaching approach, the CEP encourages local control of programmes by the companies, although it advises on courses and materials available and assists with the recruitment of trained teachers where possible. CEP does not advocate a specific approach. Instead, teachers "are encouraged to use a range of different materials ... [and] to adapt their methods and materials to the needs of their classes." (CEP, 1988:2). In addition, CEP offers in-service workshops for teachers, although this role is limited due to lack of staff and resources. The CEP saw the two English teachers employed at Alrode as trained teachers requiring little if any support. "In the case of the Alrode English literacy classes. the teachers were well qualified and experienced and were left to conduct their classes as they saw fit." (CEP, 1988:2). This was the case for much of the programme, although there were occasions when the CEP did intervene in the programme, as described in syllabus account II under 'management

interference'.

Alrode CEP centre

The Alrode CEP centre was set up in 1986, after consultation with central CEP. It was run by a management committee comprising company liaison officers representing the five participating companies. All of these companies were 'Sullivan Code' companies. A centre co-ordinator was elected from one of the companies to manage the centre on a daily basis. The Alrode CEP centre was based on the following model.

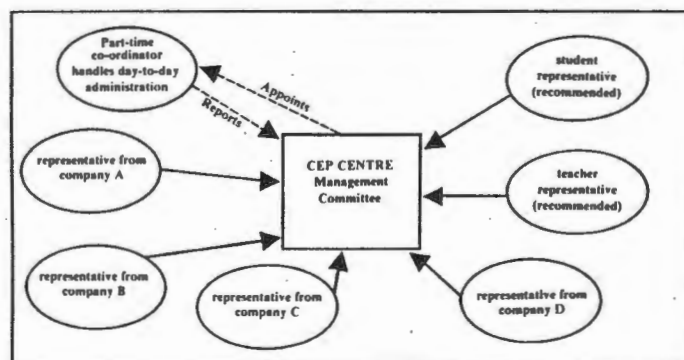


Fig. 1 : A typical CEP centre with participating companies A, B, C, D.

1.2.3 The programme

At an initial planning meeting in July 1986 held at Alrode CEP, this researcher urged the companies to 'target illiterate and semi-literate workers by recruiting workers with less than a standard six education. Although the central CEP also advised the companies to recruit learners on a voluntary basis, in practice, each company had control over the way in which they advertised and recruited learners. Therefore, some companies drew up a list of

employees with less than a matriculation qualification. Others approached workers with less than a standard six and asked if they were interested in the programme. In some companies, the classes were advertised in the various departments by the personnel and industrial relations departments. Others approached department heads about releasing certain workers for the programme. There was no union involvement at that time in publicising or recruiting learners.

The programme finally began in August 1986 and ended in November 1987. There were four groups: one mother tongue group and three English groups at three levels - beginner, intermediate and advanced. The focus of this research is the advanced English group.

1.2.4 The research group

The advanced group of eleven learners is the focus of this research. The learners were all male with ages ranging from twenty-seven to fifty-eight years. They were employed by different companies and only those who worked together knew each other beforehand. Most learners were employed as machine operators and had been working in their companies for periods ranging from 2-16 years. Previous formal schooling ranged from never having been to school (one learner), to standard 6 (one learner). The majority had a standard 2 or 3 education. In terms of home language, five learners spoke Zulu, three spoke Xhosa, two spoke Southern

Sotho and one spoke Pedi. All except one learner had moved to town from their homes and could be classified as migrant workers. This information is tabled below.

Table 1 : Alrode advanced group profile 1986

<u>NAME</u>	<u>AGE</u>	<u>HOME</u>	<u>HOME LANGUAGE</u>	<u>STAYS</u>	<u>SCHOOL- ING</u>	<u>JOB</u>	<u>COMP- ANY</u>
Apolis	27	Transkei	Xhosa	Thokoza Hostel	Std 1	labourer	NFD
Danniel	27	Rusten- burg	Zulu	Soweto	Std 4	machine operator	H
Elphus	28	Mahlabat- ini,Natal	Zulu	Thokoza Hostel	Std 2	machine operator	IR
Mandla	38	Transkei	Xhosa	Thokoza	Std 2	machine operator	PR
Meshack	31	Vrede OFS	Zulu	Katlehong	0	machine operator	IR
Ndodomzi	29	Transkei	Xhosa	Thokoza	Std 3	spray painter	NFD
Peter	34	Lesotho	S.Sotho	Thokoza	Std 3	machine operator	IR
Saaimon	41	E.Trans- vaal	Pedi	Katlehong Hostel	Std 6	driver	H
Thabo	34	Nigel	S.Sotho	Katlehong	Std 3	machine operator	IR
Walter	58	Natal	Zulu	Katlehong	Std 3	machine operator	H
Zacharia	41	Qwa Qwa	Zulu	Katlehong	0	machine operator	IR

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Overview

This study focusses on the teaching and learning of basic English as a second language for adults. Therefore, the theoretical framework straddles the two areas of adult education and ESL. My particular concern is with the roles that learners and teachers play in curriculum development in a process approach to basic ESL for adults.

This approach has its roots in the worldwide 'learner-centred' movement which has taken place during the past fifteen to twenty years. The term 'learner-centred' has been used to describe diverse educational and other programmes aimed at learners or clients of all ages. (Carl Rogers, Malcolm Knowles, National Curriculum Project, David Nunan). In education, this trend has entailed a re-assessment of what constitutes appropriate learning content, in the light of the needs of society and of learners. Adult educators and applied linguists have also begun to examine the contributions that learners make to the learning endeavour. These concerns have extended the notion of learner-centredness to include the idea of

learners 'learning how to learn' and being able to plan, manage and evaluate their own learning. The nature and content of the syllabus have also undergone radical rethinking in some quarters, alongside a redefinition of the roles of learners and the teacher in the classroom. Learning content has been seen to be inextricably bound up with how we learn and the learning/teaching process.

Learners influence content, processes and outcomes and in fact jointly develop the classroom syllabus. These ideas underlie recent developments around task-based process syllabuses which embody a process approach to ESL.

In tracing these developments to the present day, I draw on the work of several British applied linguists, such as Richard Allwright, Michael Breen, Christopher Candlin, Dermot Murphy and Rod Ellis; plus adult educators and applied linguists from the USA, such as Malcolm Knowles, Stephen Krashen, T. Terrell, Carl Rogers, Joan Rubin, Anita Wenden, Ira Shor, Nina Wallerstein and Elsa Auerbach; from Australia, David Nunan; from Canada, D. Brundage, and D. MacKeracher, and from South America, Paulo Freire.

The following diagram provides an overview of the four evolutionary stages in the development of a process approach for adults learning ESL. In reality these stages overlap and blend with one another. I try to capture this by tracing key ideas or threads through each stage.

Table 2 : The development of a process approach in ESL

<u>Stage 1 Learning & Communicating</u>	-learner-centred education -learner-centred ESL from the 1950's -the communicative revolution
<u>Stage 2 Natural Growth Approach</u>	-second language acquisition theories
<u>Stage 3 Pedagogy in Process</u>	-learner training -popular education
<u>Stage 4 A Process Approach</u>	-task, process, negotiated syllabuses

The four sections of this chapter describe these four stages. In 2.1, 'learning and communicating', I outline learner-centred developments in general education and how these influenced ESL work. I then describe how ESL work assumed a more 'learner-centred' focus from the late 1950's onwards. This continued into the period known as the 'communicative revolution' when the 'functional-notional' syllabus gained popularity. In 2.2, 'the natural growth approach', I consider how theories of second language acquisition fundamentally altered our understanding of second language learning and in doing so, added impetus to the development of a more process-oriented approach. In 2.3, 'pedagogy in process', I describe various aspects of learner training, and the role of popular education in basic ESL work with adults. Both learner training and popular education gave prominence to the learning/teaching process and the roles of the participants. Ultimately these ideas directly contributed to the evolution of a

process approach. Finally, in 2.4, I compare three process syllabuses which express a new paradigm in syllabus design and embody current developments in a process approach. I also describe learner and teacher roles in curriculum development in these syllabuses.

Therefore this chapter is organised as follows:

- 2.1 Learning and communicating
- 2.2 The natural growth approach
- 2.3 Pedagogy in process
- 2.4 A process approach

2.1 Learning and Communicating

Introduction

The learner-centred movement in language teaching is described generally as a shift from a 'subject, content, or knowledge-centred view, to a focus on the learner and on how language and learning skills are acquired.

"The subject-centred view sees learning a language as essentially the mastering of a body of knowledge. The learner-centred view, on the other hand, tends to view language acquisition as a process of acquiring skills rather than a body of knowledge." (Nunan 1988:21).

This learner-centred movement did not originate in a vacuum. It was, and is still influenced by research and innovations in many areas, including general education. I now sketch the influence that learner-centred education, particularly adult education had on ESL work. I then identify early indications of a move towards a more learner-centred ESL approach. Following this, I describe learner-centred ideas that arose through the 'communicative revolution' in language teaching.

2.1.1 Learner-centred education

During the past twenty years or so, areas of education have witnessed a shift in focus from learning content, the teacher and teaching; to the learning process, the student and learning. This shift received impetus from new avenues of thinking in educational psychology and philosophy. Cognitive learning theory challenged behaviourism and offered new insights into the complex process of learning.

Humanism focussed attention on the human person as a unique individual with emotional and learning needs that affect learning. Progressivism heralded a more pragmatic view of education, linking it to the economic, labour and other needs of society. These new perceptions affected the organisation of educational activities, syllabus content, and the methodology adopted. Fundamental changes ensued. In Australia, for example, school systems were decentralised and individual schools were given responsibility for devising more flexible syllabuses to suit learners' needs. (NCP, 1987). These moves recognised the importance of the learning process, the context, and the learners as crucial agents in their own learning. Such innovations inevitably influenced language educators. (Nunan 1988, 1989). However, the area of adult education has probably had the greatest impact on the development of a more learner-centred ESL approach for adults.

2.1.1.1 Adult education

In the 1960's and 1970's, significant research in the field of adult education took place, particularly in the USA and Europe. Two important contributors were Malcolm Knowles and Carl Rogers. Like developments in general education, this research was influenced by humanism, progressivism and cognitive learning theory. In contrast to Skinnerian behaviourist learning theory based on habit formation, new ideas emphasised learning as an internal, cognitive process controlled by the learner. Child and adult learning were

clearly differentiated. Adults were seen to be more self-directed and independent; they had extra learning resources in the form of accumulated experience; and they were eager to learn in order to meet real needs in their lives. (Knowles, 1970).

'Learners' needs' and 'lifelong learning' have proved to be enduring notions associated with a 'learner-centred' approach. Learners' needs usually refer to what individuals require in order to adapt and to fit in and function better socially, economically, and culturally in society. Lifelong learning includes skills to plan and to manage learning; to use appropriate learning strategies, and to access information. These are needed to cope with a rapidly changing world. (Knowles 1970, 1975).

"Self-directed learning describes a process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes." (Knowles, 1975:18).

These features of learner-centred adult education challenged traditional notions of what was important for adults to learn; how learning happened, and who did what in this process. The syllabus, the methodology and participants' roles were revised as 'learner-centredness' became the 'buzzword'. In this learner-centred syllabus, content was generated from learners' needs and included self-directed learning skills. Syllabuses were designed using a 'bottom up' approach which implied that teachers

and curriculum designers were now no longer the sole, unquestionable sources of knowledge and decision-making about the syllabus. In the classroom, the emphasis shifted towards the learning process. The teacher or the facilitator's role was to ensure that learning content was relevant, problem-based, and useful; that it valued the client's experience; that it reduced anxiety and enhanced self-image; that it fostered self-directed learning, and that it was presented in ways that promoted learning. (Brundage & MacKeracher, 1980:21-31). The teacher's role was to set up learning experiences and to help learners to interact usefully with these.

"The critical function of the teacher ... is to create a rich environment from which students can extract learning and then to guide their interaction with it so as to maximise their learning from it."
(Knowles, 1970:68).

In contrast to their earlier passive role, learners were now expected to participate actively in their own learning in partnership with the teacher. They were required to articulate their needs for inclusion in the syllabus, to share their fears and expectations about learning, and to become self-directed learners. These features of learner-centred adult education were also found in ESL work at the time.

2.1.2 Learner-centred ESL work from the 1950's

Although the field of applied linguistics and language teaching has been influenced by developments in education generally, it has also developed its own understanding of 'learner-centredness' applied to ESL work. Historical and subject-related factors have played a role in this process.

"... virtually every contemporary 'innovation' in language teaching seems to have an antecedent somewhere back in the 2,500-year history of language pedagogy". (Rutherford, 1987:30).

As early as the 1950's, language theorists had begun to look critically at behaviourism and to propose alternative cognitive theories of how language learning happens. The 'transformational' approach was evidence of this. Prior to this, linguists such as Bloomfield and Fries had propagated a structural approach based on Skinnerian-type behaviourist learning theory and a grammar-based language theory called 'structural linguistics'. (Finocchiaro & Brumfit, 1983:6). Structural linguistics emphasised the spoken language, which was defined as a system of grammatical forms and speech sounds which combined to make sentences. These discrete structural and phonological units comprised the syllabus. They were selected on the grounds of their simplicity, regularity, frequency, or contrastive difficulty (how difficult these items were in relation to the learner's mother tongue). 'Contrastive analysis' was used to identify errors or bad habits transferred from the mother tongue to the second language. These interfered with the learning of a second language and had to be

prevented or eradicated through drilling. Language learning was therefore characterised as habit formation, or the unconscious over-learning of language forms through meaningless oral repetition or pattern drills: "we present a structure, drill it, practise it in context ... then move to the next structure." (Brumfit & Johnson, 1979:1).

From the late 1950's, real impetus in the shift towards more learner-centred ESL work came from a combination of sources. This included the need to provide more relevant courses for adult learners (the situational approach was a response to this). Other pressure came from mounting dissatisfaction with behaviourism and structural linguistics, growing interest in Einstein's work on relativity, and research into child first language acquisition. The 'transformational' approach reflected these influences. I now describe the transformational approach and then the situational approach. I also assess the contribution that these two approaches have made to subsequent developments in ESL.

2.1.2.1 The transformational approach

Learner-centred developments in ESL teaching in the 1950's owe a great deal to research into how children acquire their first language. (Lenneberg, 1967; Chomsky, 1957, 1965; Crystal, 1976; Dulay & Burt, 1974). The transformational approach was based on 'cognitive code' or 'mentalist' theory of first language acquisition, and a

language theory known as 'transformational-generative grammar'. This language theory viewed language as an innate, mental phenomenon, and a universal system which relates meanings to substance. The universal notion can be traced back to the 'grammatica speculative' of the Middle Ages. (Bell, 1981:79). Although there were a number of schools of transformationalists, their descriptions of language consisted of "overtly-stated ordered rules by means of which we can manipulate symbols which, ultimately, through further rules, become sentences." (Bell, 1981:102). Unlike the structuralists, these rules and transformations were concerned with the deep structure of sentences, rather than the surface features.

Lenneberg and Chomsky's ideas on language learning were potentially revolutionary at the time: they saw it as a cognitive, mentalist process rather than the gradual accumulation of memorised entities. Or, as Smith states, learning is "nothing but the endeavour to make sense." (1978:xi).

"... successful learning comes about only when what is to be learned can be meaningfully related to something that is already known. Learning ... must take place within some kind of familiar context or framework - an extension of the familiar to the unfamiliar".
(Rutherford, 1987:16).

Chomsky believed that language learning exists as an independent mental faculty and that human beings are genetically endowed with a 'language acquisition device' (LAD). He further postulated a set of universal principles

applicable to all human languages. Such principles are never violated by language learners and constitute a 'universal grammar'. Exposed to language input, language learners use their cognitive abilities to relate meaning to the forms of the language being learnt. In other words, they attempt to make sense of the language by hypothesising, predicting, experimenting and learning from feedback. Their innate knowledge of universal grammar limits the scope of potential errors produced. In opposition to the structuralist view, mistakes are evidence of this creative mental process rather than the result of imitating parent language. Mistakes are therefore proof that the child is attempting to communicate and to formulate rules about how the language works. Thus, both child first and second language acquisition studies concluded that language learning is a cognitive developmental process; that children make rules about language in order to make sense of what they see and hear; that they go through roughly the same order in acquiring language, and that they only learn what they are ready for.

The contribution of the transformational approach

Although this theory was not intended to provide an approach to language teaching, transformational courses were devised. However, these did not have a great impact upon teaching methods at the time. The main reason was that the approach overemphasised language competence (our innate ability to make rules about a language), and ignored

social and environmental influences on how we actually use language in real-life. Thus, it has been labelled the 'garden of Eden' approach. (Hymes, in Brumfit & Johnson, 1979:4). In addition, the theory and the language of symbolic logic were too abstract for language teachers and has been likened to "a computer programme for an automaton which can bring out an endless series of grammatical but communicatively disjointed sentences". (Bell, 1981:107). As a result, structural methods such as audiolingualism, the direct method, grammar-translation and audio-visual continued to flourish. (Brumfit & Johnson, 1979:3). Until the mid 1970's, language teaching was described as following "the discrete point philosophy", whereby learners memorised discrete pre-selected items and rules one by one. (Newmark 1983:49).

In spite of these criticisms Chomsky's contribution to language teaching was seminal. (Richard-Amato, 1988:13). He renewed interest in the human intellect and in learning as a cognitive activity, thereby discrediting behaviourism and "freeing us from the paralyzing dogma of the association-imitation-reinforcement paradigm". (Bruner, in Richard-Amato, 1988:14). As Bell concludes:

'... drill, 'mim-mem', (mimicry-memorization), active, dominating teachers and passive reacting learners should not find any place here." (Bell, 1981:108).

In recent years, Chomsky's ideas have inspired research into aspects of psycholinguistics, including natural growth theory and grammatical consciousness-raising (see 2.2,

2,3). Reaction to his ideas also gave impetus to the communicative movement which followed. A forerunner was the situational approach.

2.1.2.3 The situational approach and its contribution

By the 1960's, significant international developments had begun to shift adult ESL work into new directions. In language teaching the situational approach responded to some of these new developments, albeit in a limited way, by designing courses around learners' needs. The first 'Situational English' course was developed in the 1960's to meet the basic communication or 'survival' needs of immigrants to Australia. (Bell, 1981:110; Nunan, 1988:21). It has since been the basis for many 'survival' and 'foreign language' courses. The situational approach deviated from structuralism in that it stressed the importance of context and of learners' needs in language learning. It attempted to make language learning more useful, meaningful and motivating by teaching language in relation to relevant real-life situations such as 'at the post office' and 'shopping'. (Finocchiaro & Brumfit, 1983:8; Wilkins, 1976:16). The teaching dialogues and texts contained the language structures and the vocabulary that had a high probability of occurring in these situations. However, the curriculum remained centralised and inflexible, based on learners' generalised needs.

"During this time, it was possible to go into language classrooms all over the country and find a similar curriculum in place for teaching a wide range of

learners. In those days the only criteria for differentiating learners was level of proficiency." (Nunan, 1988:21).

Furthermore, the learning theory underlying the approach remained structural and behaviourist. Language content was prescribed and dialogues were learnt 'by heart' through the drilling of sentence patterns and units of grammar and phonology. This limited learners' ability to transfer learning to other situations. The sequencing of situations, structures and vocabulary was also random and unsystematic. Thus the situational approach left learners unable to deal with real-life communication which deviated from the model situations, dialogues or texts provided. (Wilkins, 1976:18).

Although the situational approach was not truly innovative, it introduced more meaningful content and coursebooks designed around situations. It also aroused interest in pragmatics. These ideas re-emerged in the 'communicative' or 'functional' revolution which followed. For these reasons, the situational approach has been labelled 'pseudo-functional'. (Bell, 1981:143).

2.1.3 The Communicative Revolution

Probably the greatest impetus in the development of a learner-centred, process approach to ESL work came in the mid 1970's, through what is known as the 'communicative' or 'functional' revolution. This refers to a movement in modern linguistics from the mid 1970's until the mid to late 1980's, when grammar-based approaches were replaced by more communicative, semantic-based approaches. This movement was partly a reaction to previous structural and transformational approaches. It was also inspired by ideas from humanism, progressivism and cognitive learning theory. During this period, the sub-disciplines of semantics, pragmatics and sociolinguistics flourished, and applied linguists such as Michael Halliday, David Wilkins and Henry Widdowson gained renown.

The communicative movement reconceptualised language not as a body of knowledge, but as a tool for communication. Communication was defined as purposeful, spontaneous, creative, unpredictable social interaction which occurs in a particular discoursal and sociocultural context. This context largely determines what and how messages are transmitted and interpreted. Communication is successful if it achieves its purpose. (Canale 1983:3).

Communication requires three kinds of knowledge: textual (how language rules work); ideational (how we express ideas, meanings, concepts); and interpersonal (how we express interpersonal behaviour). (Halliday 1973).

'Communicative competence' has become a catchphrase in language teaching circles since Hymes first coined it in the mid-sixties. (Hymes, 1971). This term captures the essence of this period in its reference to the ability or 'competence' to use knowledge about the language system for communicative purposes. Communicative competence comprises four interacting underlying systems of knowledge and skill used for communication. These are: grammatical (morphology-syntax, lexis, phonology), sociolinguistic (rules of use and appropriacy), discoursal (cohesion and coherence in texts), and strategic (verbal and non-verbal communication strategies). (Canale, 1983:5). 'Capacity' refers to the ability to use linguistic competence appropriately and creatively, "to create meanings by exploiting the potential inherent in the language for continual modification". (Widdowson, 1984:8). Communicative performance entails the three key abilities: "to be able to interpret the meanings of others, express their own meanings, and negotiate meanings between one another." (Breen, Candlin and Waters, 1979:3).

The notion that language is a tool for purposeful communication and the expression and interpretation of meaning led to a re-conceptualising of language methodology and the syllabus. A "family of (communicative) approaches" emerged. (Nunan 1989:12). These encouraged learners to use language communicatively in the classroom by working in pairs or groups; by using authentic, real-life materials

such as newspapers, timetables, maps, (rather than simplified or non-communicative materials), and by carrying out roleplays, dialogues, games and problem-solving tasks. In addition, a new semantic 'functional-notional' syllabus replaced grammar syllabuses.

2.1.3.1 The functional-notional syllabus

The functional-notional syllabus was the most significant innovation of this period. This syllabus was organised around 'language functions' and 'notions', loosely based on learners' communicative needs. Examples of functions and notions include greeting, persuading, disagreeing, and expressing time or spatial relations. The forerunner to this syllabus was the 1971 Council of Europe foreign language study dealing with language education for migrants in Europe. (Finocchiaro & Brumfit, 1983). In this study a five level continuing education programme was set up with a credit assessment scheme. These five levels (threshold, basic, general competency, advanced, and professional), were based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs. (Finocchiaro & Brumfit, 1983:27). Syllabus designers derived syllabus content from needs' analyses of learner biographies, language abilities and patterns of language use in the light of social, academic, vocational or cultural needs. (Nunan 1988:24). Situations pertinent to many people's lives were identified, followed by the relevant functions and notions and the simplest and most useful language structures and vocabulary needed to express these

appropriately. This was presented in the form of behavioural skill objectives. Functional-notional syllabuses have since been developed for courses such as ESP (English for special purposes), and 'Survival English'. (Finocchiaro & Brumfit 1983; Wilkins 1976). At the time these communicative, needs-based syllabuses were deemed more meaningful, useful, motivating and therefore more learner-centred.

2.1.3.2 The contribution of communicative approaches

Functional/communicative approaches were considered revolutionary at the time of their introduction. However, they have since been heavily criticised, particularly as regards the functional-notional syllabus and learners' needs, and methodological considerations.

The communicative revolution was inspired by sociolinguistic concerns around learning content, rather than on psycholinguistic issues around learning and teaching processes. The functional-notional syllabus was criticised for being ends-means driven and based on generalised, narrow, objective, functional needs gauged in relation to the social, vocational or employment requirements of society. (Nunan 1988:16). Teaching according to learners' needs avoids situating adult learning within a broader picture of power relations in society and so obscures the role of other interest groups such as the programme providers, the funders and the

teachers themselves. Therefore, the extent to which learners actually determine what they learn is questionable. Instead, 'needs-based courses serve to maintain the status quo by meeting learners' needs within a framework of requirements laid down by society or by particular interest groups. (Armstrong, 1982:310). The functional syllabus, though couched in semantic terms, was in fact linguistically based and comprised "an inventory of units, of items for accumulation and storage". (Widdowson, in Richard-Amato, 1988:292). Like the structural syllabus, it denied the personal, cognitive, creative use of language.

"... the selection of these functional items bore no evident relationship to any consideration of ... personal or culture-specific ideologies ... All learners ... would value identically ... in the same sequence and via the same linguistic forms. It is hard to imagine a greater travesty of language as a system for the exchange of meaning and value". (Candlin, 1984:38).

Underlying this syllabus was the assumption that 'teaching equals learning', i.e. that what learners are taught is what they actually learn. These assumptions have since been hotly disputed. Critics argue that narrowly prescriptive, non-negotiable syllabuses restrict competence and the ability to transfer learning: "syllabuses which specify ends fulfil a training function and result in restricted competence". (Widdowson, in Nunan, 1988:43).

"... needs-based courses will tend to result in formulaic phrasebook English, and will not develop in learners the ability to generate spontaneous, communicative language". (Widdowson, in Nunan, 1988:45).

On the other hand, methodologically prescriptive, communicative courses which offer teachers a ready-made 'right' way of teaching, neglect syllabus content and evaluation. These also risk falling into the behaviourist trap associated with structural and situational approaches. (Nunan, 1989:2). Finally, the communicative approach was not concerned with 'learner training'.

In spite of these limitations, the communicative revolution succeeded in dramatically shifting the goal of language teaching from one of helping learners to accumulate bits of grammar or rules, to one of developing general 'communicative competence'. Although this goal was not fully realised, ESL work witnessed a move from a subject or language-centred view, to a focus on the learner and the learning/teaching process. Applied linguists also began to investigate ways of developing the underlying skills and knowledge needed for effective real-life communication.

"The subject-centred view sees learning a language as essentially the mastering of a body of knowledge. The learner-centred view, on the other hand, tends to view language acquisition as a process of acquiring skills rather than a body of knowledge." (Nunan 1988:21).

Conclusion

In 2.1, I outlined some of the early influences, especially from adult education, on the development of a more learner-centred approach to ESL work. In the move from structural, to transformational, situational, and communicative approaches, we witnessed growing interest in the learner and in the learning process. Debate centred around the relative importance of innate and environmental factors in language learning. Chomsky's emphasis on learning as an individual, innate, cognitive process was countered by adherents of the communicative approach who preferred to place language learning in a broader context and argued that learning occurs when content is relevant and useful for the individual in society.

The communicative revolution was an important period. It introduced the idea of language as a tool for real-life communication. It also offered language teachers a more accessible, relevant and attractive approach than earlier theoretical approaches. The functional-notional semantic syllabus, based on the communicative needs of specific learning groups replaced the traditional grammar syllabus. Although these innovations signalled a more learner-centred approach, they did not radically alter the underlying theory of how people learn language. The approach also remained 'top-down'.

"The top-down approach is characterised by curriculum plans, syllabus outlines and methodological procedures ... designed by 'experts' and delivered as a package to

the classroom practitioner". (Nunan, 1989:143).
Alongside these developments in adult ESL work was a
growing interest in the psychological processes by which
people acquire a second language. I now turn to the
natural growth approach.

2.2 Natural Growth Approach

Introduction

The natural growth approach emphasised psycholinguistics and was inspired by research into child first and second language acquisition by Noam Chomsky, Pit Corder and L. Selinker, among others. The natural growth approach emerged as a non-analytic, experiential approach in which language learning is perceived to be a natural, developmental process which occurs when learners are exposed to language naturally. Some of these ideas were embodied in theories of second language acquisition (SLA) such as Krashen's controversial 'Monitor' theory, and Ellis' 'Variable Competence Model'. (Krashen, 1981, 1982, 1985; Ellis, 1984, 1986a, 1986b). I now examine SLA theories and the natural growth syllabus. I then draw conclusions about the contribution that the natural growth approach has made to the development of a more process-oriented ESL approach.

2.2.1 Second language acquisition theories

SLA theories have attempted to explain how people consciously or subconsciously acquire a second language after their first language. (Ellis, 1986a:248). These theories were largely based on child first language acquisition studies which assume that second language learners go through a systematic process of language development and hypothesis-testing similar to that of

children acquiring their mother tongue. In SLA theory, these stages are called 'interlanguage' or a process of 'grammaticization'. The language acquisition process involves the progressive elaboration of the interlanguage system of the learner through the use of language processing strategies such as overgeneralisation, simplification, and transfer from the mother tongue. Research to date has focussed on second language errors and on the order of acquisition of syntax and morphology. Findings suggest that learners follow a natural sequence in acquiring language, with some variation depending on factors such as the learner's first language, social distance (leading to fossilization or pidginization Schumann, 1976), formal instruction (Long, 1983), the ability to reflect upon language (metalinguistic knowledge), and individual differences. (Krashen 1982:69). Some theorists concluded from this research that learners should be taught grammatical items in the natural order of acquisition. (Pienemann, 1985). This has been hotly disputed by proponents of the natural growth approach who argue that language learning is not linear and cumulative, but organic: like a flowering bud.

"The spontaneous development of a grammar in the learner is organic. Everything is happening simultaneously. The growth is organic in the way that a flower develops out of a bud. You can't write a linear program for the process of flowering ... You can look at the development of negation, of question forms, or anything you like, and you find that all of these things are developing simultaneously. Any language teaching programme is forced to define itself linearly, but it is not the way learning takes place." (Corder, 1986:187).

Natural growth theorists believe that learners' internal syllabuses enable them to control their own linguistic development and acquisition of structures.

"The only linguistic control is exercised by the learners themselves who are described as following (unconsciously) patterns of natural growth."
(Yalden, in Brumfit, 1984:17).

SLA research by E. Hatch, Rod Ellis and Stephen Krashen, among others, has been particularly influential. Although Krashen's theory was based on earlier work and was not entirely new, it is the best known and has aroused considerable controversy. (Krashen, 1981, 1985). I now give a brief description of this theory, followed by Ellis' 'variable competence' model. Finally, I outline the contribution of the natural growth approach to the evolution of a process approach to ESL work.

2.2.1.1 Krashen's SLA theory

Krashen's theory is based on the idea of a 'unitary language competence', or a single underlying language construct which transfers to an infinite number of communicative situations. (Krashen & Terrell, 1983). His theory comprises five main hypotheses. Firstly, he identifies 'acquisition' and 'learning' as two independent ways of developing this underlying competence in a second language.

"Acquisition' occurs subconsciously as a result of participating in natural communication where the focus is on meaning. 'Learning' occurs as a result of conscious study of the formal properties of the language." (Ellis, 1986:314).

People 'acquire' rather than 'learn' a language.

"Language is best taught when it is being used to transmit messages, not when it is explicitly taught for conscious learning." (Krashen & Terrell, 1983:55).

Krashen's second hypothesis states that learners acquire grammar in a predictable order during natural communication. Evidence from second language morpheme and longitudinal studies support this hypothesis, although it is inconclusive. The third hypothesis states that learning can only support acquisition through the use of the 'monitor' - a self-repair device which invokes formal language rules in order to correct spoken or written inaccuracies in prepared rather than spontaneous texts.

"We should not expect our students to be concerned with the points of grammar while they are speaking in free conversation, rather, the time to use the monitor is in writing and in prepared speech." (Krashen & Terrell, 1983:57).

The fourth hypothesis states that 'comprehensible input' must be available for natural acquisition to occur. This input is provided by real-life objects (e.g. bus tickets, menus, calendars), and 'teacher talk' (similar to 'motherese' or 'caretaker' talk which is characterised by prompts, repetition, simplification etc.). For input to become 'intake', learners must focus on the message rather than on the form, and be motivated to communicate. Therefore input has to be familiar, interesting, rich, plentiful, purposeful, and at 'i + 1' (meaning 'input plus 1', or just beyond the learner's current level). This is similar to Vygotsky's concept of the 'zone of proximal

development'. (Richard-Amato, 1988:42). The fifth hypothesis concerns the 'affective filter'. Krashen argued that for input to become intake and acquisition to occur, the learner needs a positive learning attitude.

Krashen's theory stressed the 'experiential base for learning and is embodied in the 'natural approach' in which the 'here-and-now' of the classroom is paramount.

Methodology, classroom input and interaction are the main teaching focii in developing "a methodology of co-operative classroom interaction". (Allen, 1984:65). The goal is to encourage natural language acquisition using an eclectic methodology.

"It is not unusual to see the natural approach teacher trudging across campus with sacks filled with fruits to talk about and eat, dishes with which to set table for an imaginary dinner ... and additional paraphernalia to demonstrate the notions involved."
(Richard-Amato, 1988:84).

In this natural approach learners move through three learning stages: comprehension, early speech production and speech emergence. They communicate in the target language and speech errors are only corrected if they interfere with meaning. Comprehensible input is supplied by talking about things that interest learners. Therefore, instead of an externally imposed, sequenced grammatical syllabus, a natural syllabus is 'experiential and non-analytic, comprising linguistically-rich, varied communicative activities and topics loosely based on learners' needs and interests. The following is an extract from such a

syllabus:

"Preliminary Unit: Learning to Understand

Topics

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Names of students | 5. Clothing |
| 2. Descriptions of people | 6. Colours |
| 3. Family members | 7. Objects in the classroom |
| 4. Numbers | 8. Parts of the body |

Situations

1. Greetings
2. Classroom commands"

Richard-Amato, 1988:85).

Fig. 2 : Extract from a 'natural approach' syllabus

Similar approaches have been adopted in 'Immersion' programmes in North America in which English is used as the medium of instruction for a variety of content areas.

2.2.1.2 Variable competence model

The 'variable competence' model proposed by Ellis is partly a response to 'criticisms of Krashen's learning/acquisition, monitor and comprehensible input hypotheses. Critics argue that learned knowledge can become acquired; that conscious language learning can affect the rate and success of SLA; that formal language input can help learners to hypothesise about the language and deal with errors, and that interaction and negotiation in the classroom rather than merely providing comprehensible input, aids acquisition. The classroom can also be a safer and more conducive context for acquisition than a natural environment. In addition, immersion programmes result in a greater tendency towards 'fossilization' of language forms at particular interlanguage stages which result in a 'pidgin' English.

This is attributed to the emphasis on fluency and the lack of attention to structure.

In his alternative 'variable competence model' Ellis tried to account for learner language variability (the fact that learners possess a single knowledge store containing variable interlanguage rules). (Ellis, 1986a:266-270). He suggested that learner language varies according to whether learners use automatic or analysed rules, and whether discourse is planned (as in a prepared speech), or unplanned (as in a spontaneous speech). Ellis also identified the amount and quality of classroom interaction as a determiner of SLA, alongside motivation and personality. He concluded that negotiation of meaning in natural discourse is the key to SLA.

"Rapid development along the 'natural' route occurs when the learner has the chance to negotiate meaning in unplanned discourse". (Ellis, 1984:186).

2.2.1.3 The contribution of the natural growth approach

The natural growth approach was a radical departure from earlier approaches in terms of its psycholinguistic basis, its conceptualisation and mode of organising the syllabus, and the roles designated to teachers and learners in developing the syllabus. The syllabus is experiential and learners control their acquisition of structures through their internal syllabuses and processes of language acquisition. (Allen 1984:65; Yalden, in Brumfit, 1984:17). Needs analyses and syllabus inventories are no

longer necessary as, "we cannot specify the order of what is to be taught and certainly not the order of what is to be learned." (Breen, 1984:32). This shifted the emphasis in the classroom to learning processes rather than content, to meaning and fluency rather than grammar and accuracy, and to a flexible methodology which maximises learner participation.

However, a major flaw in the natural growth approach was its assumption that children and adults acquire language in a similar way and are at the same level of cognitive development.

"... older second language learners are able to handle more complex ideas, are able to have more control over the input they receive, and are able to learn and apply rules which may aid in facilitating the acquisition process." (Richard-Amato, 1988:22).

These criticisms led to renewed interest in the role of formal or conscious language instruction alongside natural acquisition in the classroom. (Long, 1983; Rutherford, 1987). This was taken up by advocates of learner training, and later on, by task-based learning theorists (see 2.3, 2.4). It was further noted that the success of the natural approach depends on dedicated, competent teachers who can spend time selecting resources and preparing lessons, ensuring that learners are motivated, and providing comprehensible input and opportunities for negotiating meaning.

"... any classroom setting has the potential for this kind of (natural) discourse. In the final analysis, it is the style of teaching that counts, in particular,

whether it is teacher- or learner-centred."
(Ellis, 1986a:151).

The teacher is a key player in this situation, although this fact is not always acknowledged. In reality, the teacher is expected to understand the main principles underlying the approach and to construct an experiential programme for learners. This is far more demanding than using a neatly packaged course.

Conclusion

The natural growth approach stresses the experiential base for learning. It de-emphasises the pre-planned, itemised content syllabus and instead promotes a means-focussed syllabus and classroom processes which foster second language acquisition. The approach also highlights the contribution that learners make to the 'organic' process of SLA, through their control of internal syllabuses and acquisition processes. In addition, the teacher is expected to handle these complex classroom processes and to provide the necessary comprehensible input. Therefore, this suggests that the more learner-centred the approach, the more complex and demanding the teacher's role becomes.

Criticisms of the natural growth approach have indicated new directions in the search for a more effective approach to adult ESL work. Learner contributions to the whole learning effort, and the role of the teacher have subsequently received attention.

2.3 Pedagogy in Process

Introduction

More recent developments in a learner-centred, process approach to ESL have further emphasised natural growth ideas, including the centrality of the learning/teaching process, the process-oriented syllabus, and the key roles that learners and teachers play in syllabus development. The phrase "pedagogy in process" or "pedagogy in action" illustrates this concern with the syllabus as process and with the teacher's role. (Candlin & Murphy, 1987:1). This focus was also inspired by research into learner training, as well as by popular education and Paulo Freire's ideas.

2.3.1 Learner Training

A good learner is one who "knows how to learn". (Holec, 1987:147). I use the umbrella term 'learner training', to refer to the teacher's role in training learners as learners generally, and more specifically as second language learners. This training entails fostering learning 'strategies' and awareness, and positive learning attitudes. These ideas build on earlier work around adult lifelong, self-directed learning which dates back to the nineteenth century. (Wenden, in Wenden & Rubin, 1987:159). More recently, advocates of self-directed learning have stated that:

"... to teach a language is not to teach a body of knowledge but to teach how to learn, or to teach learners how to become better managers of their own

learning.". (Rutherford, 1987:104).

These ideas are in line with learner-centred developments in education generally.

"... there has been a steadily growing interest in considering the task from the learner's point of view and in changing the focus of classrooms from a teacher-centred one to a learner-centred one. In particular, there is growing interest in defining how learners can take charge of their own learning". (Rubin, in Wenden & Rubin, 1987:15).

The general term 'strategies' refers to specific techniques or behaviours adopted by learners in order to learn more effectively. More recent language research has focussed on the learner's internal 'black box' and the processing and other strategies used to cope with learning and using a language. This research has revealed that learners employ conscious strategies to improve their ability to store, to retrieve and to use information, and therefore to learn more effectively. These strategies include metacognitive strategies (planning, managing and evaluating learning), communication strategies (paraphrasing, translating, gesturing), and cognitive strategies (inferencing, memorising, self-monitoring). These strategies have the potential to empower learners to be flexible, creative, self-sufficient and independent, to focus their learning, to manipulate strategies to suit tasks and purposes, and to promote confidence and group learning.

I now briefly examine research into metacognitive training and language learning strategies and awareness-raising.

I conclude with a summary of the contribution that learner

training has made to 'pedagogy in process'.

2.3.1.1 Metacognitive training

Metacognitive training is about training in general learning or management of learning skills. Allwright's research into classroom interaction examined the ways in which learners and the teacher interact with one another and jointly construct discourse. This research revealed that classroom management is a shared responsibility and a "co-production" involving all the participants. (Allwright, 1984:159). Management of learning is inherent in classroom pedagogy as lessons provide opportunities for learners to communicate and also to learn how to manage their own learning.

"... classroom lessons are 'socially-constructed events', no matter how strongly any one participant may dominate, nor how compliantly other participants may react ... making a contribution to the management of classroom interaction does not require overt physical action ... and ... does not depend on speaking."
(Allwright, 1984:159).

Classroom interaction is characterised by compliance, directiveness, negotiation, or navigation (diverting lessons). Most learners either comply with the teacher's direction or react and navigate because negotiating is too risky. (Allwright 1984:163). The skills of managing aspects of turn, topic, task, tone and code in the classroom are also crucial as they affect the learning climate, learner confidence and risktaking, the learning opportunities generated, and the kind of guidance

provided. Learners who articulate their needs and who navigate, negotiate, demand certain tasks, guidance and practice, are better able to control learning input and eventual learning 'intake'. (Breen 1984:165). Such learners are 'high input generators' as opposed to 'low input generators' (less able learners who avoid interaction). (Seliger, 1977).

Allwright concluded that classroom interaction not only serves to manage learning but also provides learning input.

"... everything that happens in the target language (all the learners' utterances as well as the teacher's instructions ...) constitutes 'input' to the learning process - potential 'intake'." (Allwright, 1984:165).

These findings implied a new role for the teacher in encouraging classroom interaction both as a means of managing learning and as a means of learning the language and developing the language syllabus.

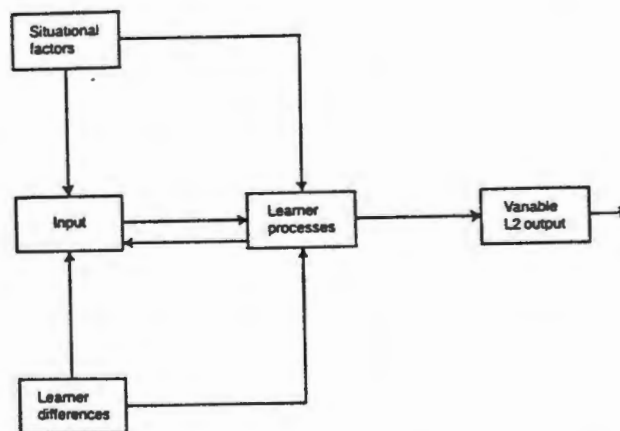
Other metacognitive strategies which assist learners with planning, managing and evaluating learning include setting and prioritising goals, reflecting upon learning, and formative evaluation. Learner training in metacognitive strategies encourages their effective use. (Wenden & Rubin, 1987).

2.3.1.2 Language learning strategies and awareness-raising

Language learning strategies are defined as, "behaviours learners actually engage in to learn and regulate the

learning of a second language". (Wenden and Rubin, 1987:6). They are about 'procedural' knowledge' as opposed to 'declarative knowledge'. (Faerch & Kasper, 1983).

Procedural knowledge relates to strategies and procedures used by learners to process second language data for acquisition and use. (Ellis, 1986a:164). (Allwright, 1983; Ellis, 1986a:143). The following diagram shows how these 'learner processes' are pivotal to SLA theory.



(Richard-Amato, 1988:328).

Fig. 3 : A framework for examining the components of SLA

Classroom-based SLA research has identified strategies that learners use both to act upon input and to obtain input. These include social or social affective strategies, communication strategies and cognitive or learning strategies. (Wenden & Rubin, 1987:23). Social and communication strategies are necessary for learning, but do not directly contribute to language learning. (Wenden & Rubin, 1987:27). Social strategies enable learners to practise what they have learnt and to gain exposure to the

target language. Examples include joining a group and acting as if you understand what is going on, relying on friends when experiencing communication problems, listening to television or the radio, going to movies, and asking questions. (Wenden & Rubin, 1987:27; Ellis, 1986a:164). Communication strategies help learners to communicate better when faced with a problem or misunderstanding. They also allow learners to practise communicating and to test out hypotheses about the language. Examples include using gestures or mime, using formulaic language, avoiding words or phrases that feel uncomfortable, using a synonym, giving feedback to maintain a conversation, clarifying by repeating or questioning, and simplifying or paraphrasing. (Wenden & Rubin, 1987:26-27).

Cognition "consists of those processes or strategies through which an individual obtains knowledge or conceptual understanding", while cognitive strategies are "the steps or operations used in learning or problem-solving that require direct analysis, transformation, or synthesis of learning materials." (Rubin, in Wenden & Rubin, 1987:23). Rubin identifies six main cognitive strategies: clarification or verification strategies to check understanding of the new language; guessing or inferencing strategies to derive explicit hypotheses about the language or to infer meaning (e.g. guessing the meaning of a text by using world knowledge, pictures or diagrams in the text, or their knowledge of the second language); deductive

reasoning strategies for problem-solving and organising language into a system; practice strategies to focus on accuracy through repetition, imitation and experimentation; memorization strategies to organise, store and retrieve information using mnemonics, advance organisers, key words, etc; and finally, monitoring strategies for learners:

"... to check, either before or after articulation, for the frequent slips of the tongue, grammatical errors, social infelicities and other deviations from intention that characterize normal speech."

(Morrison & Low, 1983, in Ellis 1986:228).

Awareness-raising around language is promoted through the notion of 'grammatical consciousness-raising'.

grammatical consciousness-raising

Grammatical consciousness-raising (CR) dates back to the Middle Ages, although it regained popularity this century through the work of Chomsky and Rutherford, among others. CR is defined as a pedagogic tool which encourages learners to discover for themselves how the grammar of a language works through, "the illumination of the learner's path from the known to the unknown." (Rutherford, 1987:21). Proponents of CR challenge the idea that second language acquisition occurs naturally if learners are merely exposed to comprehensible input and are motivated to communicate. They claim that grammar and meaning are closely interrelated and that conscious learning has an important role to play in aiding acquisition. CR assumes that language is a network of interdependent systems and that learners bring to the learning situation an innate

knowledge of 'universal grammar' and a grammar of their first language, together with processes and strategies for language learning. A further assumption is that language learning is a cognitive, organic process which entails moving from the familiar to the unfamiliar through a continual process of hypothesising, testing and revising. This learning process is constrained by three factors: the general organising principles common to all languages, the selective focussing influences of the mother tongue and the target language, and the exploratory processes of learners' cognition - of both a general and an individualistic nature. Thus the growth of grammar is closely linked to cognitive processes and the learning activities of learners.

The implications for learner training are significant. Through using CR, the teacher encourages learners to hypothesise, to make judgements and to discriminate as they explore the relationship between language structure and meaning. As a result, learners increase their grammatical accuracy. (Allwright, 1984; Ellis, 1986; Nunan, 1989). An example is when learners ask themselves these kinds of questions about how language is used in a text:

"What is it that one does with this bit of grammar? What has to be done in order to have this block of information in position X? Why does one say or write it this way rather than that way?"
(Rutherford 1987:104).

Ultimately CR fosters the principled and organic growth of grammatical capacity in learners, which in turn promotes

second language acquisition.

critical reflection

Learner training also includes developing critical awareness about language and learning, through 'critical reflection'. (Brookfield 1985; Mezirow 1985).

"... together with the training in the use of strategies, the fostering of learner autonomy will require that learners become critically reflective of the conceptual context of their learning. They must be led to clarify, refine and expand their views of what language means and of what language learning entails. They should also understand the purpose for which they need to learn a second language."

(Wenden, in Wenden & Rubin, 1987:12).

This critical examination of the learning context, purpose, etc., and learners' prejudices and assumptions about learning leads to the recreation of new values and beliefs. (Brookfield, in Wenden & Rubin, 1987:11; Holec, 1980).

Through critical reflection learners gain confidence in their ability to learn, and assume more responsibility. This is deemed essential for other kinds of training to succeed.

"Facility in the use of self-instructional techniques and strategies must be accompanied by an internal change of consciousness. Otherwise, attempts at strategy training will meet resistance and may be doomed to failure." (Wenden, in Wenden & Rubin, 1987:12).

2.3.1.3 The contribution of learner training

Research around 'the learner qua learner' has revealed more about how learners acquire 'procedural knowledge'. (Holec, 1987:156). Proponents of learner training advocate 'informed training' as opposed to 'blind training'.

(Wenden, in Wenden & Rubin, 1987:160). Informed training includes cognitive and metacognitive training and awareness; including strategies to manage classroom interaction. These kinds of training serve the language acquisition process and should form part of the curriculum. (Dickinson 1987).

Research around learner training has had a profound effect on ESL work with adults. It has revealed hitherto hidden processes and has advocated the conscious teaching of strategies alongside critical reflection on learning. The end goal of learner training is for learners to become 'producers' or creators of syllabuses rather than 'consumers'. Therefore, lessons should become "a series of methodological proposals" as learners learn to plan, develop, implement and evaluate their own syllabus. (Holec, 1987:152). In the process, teachers should become resource people who "give advice, provide explanations, help find suitable materials, suggest procedures, pass on information coming from other learners". (Holec, 1987:153).

Allwright's ideas also challenged perceptions of the language syllabus and the belief that "planning equals teaching equals learning". (Nunan, 1988:36). Instead he argued that the real syllabus is the implemented syllabus or the 'syllabus in action' in the classroom which is determined by interaction. (Allwright, 1983, 1984; Breen,

1984:50). These ideas have a direct influence on more recent innovations around task-based process syllabuses.

The trend towards a process approach with adult learners was also seen in the popular education movement from as early as the 1960's.

2.3.2 Popular education

Popular education can be traced back to Paulo Freire's literacy work with poor, marginalised, oppressed communities in countries such as Brazil and Guinea Bissau. (Freire, 1972a,b 1978, 1985, 1987). Paulo Freire developed a problem-posing approach for first language literacy work with adults. Freire's work and the growth of mass-based popular movements in South America inspired the worldwide 'popular education movement' in the 1970's. At the same time popular education ideas have begun to influence ESL work with adults.

Like Freire, adherents of popular education opt to serve the interests of the urban and rural poor and oppressed and are concerned with education which liberates rather than domesticates. Such education is a process and not a body of knowledge which is banked or deposited by the teacher in learners' minds. "Education is both a process of renewal and a process for maintaining the status quo". (Marshall, 1990, background document no 2:3). Popular education promotes social change through linking organised educational activities to popular action and movements working for socio/economic and structural changes in society. It is "education for critical consciousness". (Arnold et al, 1985:16).

"Popular education is both a theory and a practice of social action that is geared toward development of the capacity for organization, communication and critical reflection on processes and social relationships by the most deprived sectors of the population."

(Marshall, 1990, background document No 2:4).

The main characteristics of popular education include:

- * everyone teaches; everyone learns
- * it starts with the concrete experience of the learner
- * it is a highly participatory collective effort
- * is an ongoing process (not limited to a workshop)
- * it leads to action for change
- * it stresses the creation of new knowledge
- * it causes us to reflect on what we've done to improve what we are going to do.
- * it strengthens the ability of people to organise themselves
- * it links local experiences to historical and global processes.
- * and it's fun!

(Adapted from Arnold et al, 1985:16).

Learners come with experience and have the potential to shape their own lives through dialogue and critical thinking, leading to action and empowerment. (Wallerstein & Auerbach, Teacher Guide, 1987:15). A literacy popular educator describes popular education thus:

"It's ... a question of people becoming conscious of their power in a particular moment of history ... Popular education is not separate from a historical process. It has to be linked with the history, economy and culture of a particular society." (Domingos Chigarire, in Marshall, 1990, User's Guide:1).

2.3.2.1 Popular education and ESL

Problem-posing recognises that language is never neutral.

"Any time that language is taught, a particular view of the world and of the person is also taught - through the content, the process, and the methods used, the relationships and feelings fostered."
(Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Culture:3).

At the same time, popular education's appeal is "for building an alternative education approach in Third World countries that is more consistent with justice and freedom." (Marshall, 1990, Background document No 2:4).

Thus, language and the world are inextricably linked. These ideas have had an impact, albeit limited, on ESL teaching, particularly on the work of Barndt et al, Candlin, Richard-Amato, Shor, Wallerstein, Wallerstein & Auerbach, and the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship & Culture. In the United States, a basic ESL course for immigrants has been devised around a problem-posing methodology. (Wallerstein, 1983a,b; Wallerstein & Auerbach, 1987). In this course, learning content is servant to the problem-posing process which comprises three stages: listening, dialogue and action. At the listening stage, key concerns or contradictions in people's lives are identified and then presented to the group in a concrete form, as a 'code'. Codes come from the teacher or learners and can be verbal (e.g. a roleplay, tape or poem), or non-verbal (e.g. a drawing, photograph or text).

"A Freire approach to dialogue assumes students equally determine classroom interaction. As adults, they bring their concerns and personal agendas to class. These ... determine what's important to discuss."
(Wallerstein 1983a:15).

Codes are not just visual aids, they are intended to generate debate and to trigger critical thinking. Initially, the teacher controls what happens and decides how to structure learning; how to present and explore themes; what materials to use and what language to focus on. Gradually, as learners learn the methodology, they assume more control.

"In the beginning, teachers should meet student expectations by providing structure and asking questions. As students become comfortable with sharing

experiences through codes, the classroom environment will change." (Wallerstein 1987 Teacher Guide:6).

✓ Ongoing syllabus development happens through joint interaction during problem-posing.

"Curriculum (syllabus) is not a product (developed before the start of the program), but a process, which is constantly created through participant interaction." (Wallerstein & Auerbach, 1987, Preface vii)

Throughout the course, themes continue to be generated from ✓ issues affecting learners' lives which the teacher exploits through dialogue. In this way, learners help to determine what is important to tackle in the programme. (Wallerstein 1983a:15). reflecting on sensitive issues such as ✓ cultural conflicts with learning English, is considered crucial. (Wallerstein, 1987:viii).

"These emotions or 'hidden voices' that students bring with them are essential for education to uncover, as they have the power to block learning." (Wallerstein & Auerbach, 1987, Teacher Guide:2).

The problem-posing process also ✓ determines what learning takes place in terms of language skills development, as the language syllabus flows from praxis. During dialogue, the group's language needs emerge as the teacher observes, listens, diagnoses and assesses learners' spoken and written English.

"The curriculum and language learning is in constant evolution as teachers fashion lessons by listening to their students' responses." (Wallerstein 1983b:134).

During dialogue, learners also critically examine ✓ historical, economic, political, cultural and social contexts in order to identify the root causes of oppression and to "evaluate the forces that exert control on their

lives". (Wallerstein 1983a:16).

"Critical thinking begins when people make the connections between their individual lives and social conditions. It ends one step beyond perception - towards the action people take to regain control over social structures detrimental to their lives." (Wallerstein 1983a:16).

Dialogue leads to action and a cycle of 'action-reflection-action', known as 'conscientization'. Classroom action, including planning and evaluating learning is seen to be part of this process. (Wallerstein & Auerbach, 1987).

"As students exercise control within the classroom by choosing which issues are crucial, they will gain confidence to use English and to make changes in their lives outside of school." (Wallerstein 1983a:15).

Action for change is a group process of empowerment which makes use of the language skills that learners have acquired. Wallerstein warns of 'possible dangers:

"Because students often view the teacher in a high status position, we, as teachers, must be more careful not to impose values and agendas for change. Even though we have judgments, problem-posing truly calls for a collaborative effort in which strategies emerge from the group." (Wallerstein 1987:vi).

Examples of action in an ESL group include interviews, writing to newspapers, organising petitions, and setting up self-help projects. (Wallerstein 1983a; Wallerstein & Auerbach, 1987). This integration of problem-posing with language skills development and critical reflection aims to help learners to learn how to tackle problems in their lives collectively. (Wallerstein & Auerbach 1987:59).

2.3.2.2 The contribution of popular education

Popular education has had a small but significant impact on ESL work with adults. Its main contribution has been to stress the importance of dialogue and the learning/teaching process, and to de-emphasise the syllabus as content. Learning happens through the problem-posing process which generates the themes, codes and language content. Popular education has also re-defined the roles of learners and the teacher as joint planners, managers and evaluators of learning and agents of change.

However, popular education has tended to neglect theories of language and literacy in its overwhelming concern with exploring ideas and looking critically at society. In the meantime, popular education principles are creeping into the work of applied linguists and language teachers. Issues around language and ideology have been raised as well as concern for linking language and basic education with real change in people's lives.

Conclusion

In 2.3, I described research into aspects of learner training and the integration of popular education with ESL work with adults. I also assessed the influence of these two areas on the move towards a more process-oriented approach to language work.

Advocates of learner training stress individual learning needs. Popular education places the learners, their experience, concerns and needs within their community at the centre of the problem-posing process. Both learner training and popular education encourage formative evaluation to determine syllabus content. Learner training emphasises learner independence and sees this as a process in which the teacher acts as a facilitator or resource person. Problem-posing, however, relies on the teacher's input and skills while learners adapt to the demands made upon them.

Ideas around learner training have been pursued in task-based learning. Freire's ideas have also been a source of inspiration for advocates of task-based learning and a process approach. (Candlin, 1984, 1987a,b; Breen, 1984, 1987). In the next section, I examine a process approach and the roles that learners and the teacher adopt in curriculum development in this approach.

2.4 A Process Approach

Introduction

In the 1980's, cognitive theories, the communicative revolution, natural growth ideas, learner training and popular education all contributed to a move towards pedagogy in action in ESL and a process approach. (Breen, 1984, 1987a,b; Brumfit, 1984; Candlin, 1984; Candlin & Murphy, 1987; Long, 1985; Nunan, 1988,1989; Prabhu, 1983, 1987;). This approach was also inspired by general educational psychology and work on cognitive development by Dewey, Piaget and Bruner. (Bruner, 1960; Dewey, 1910, 1916; Piaget, 1967; White, 1988). Process, negotiable, task-based syllabuses emerged which herald a new paradigm in syllabus design. (Breen 1987b). They include the task syllabus (Candlin), the process syllabus (Breen), and the negotiated syllabus (Nunan).

I begin by examining the key features of a process approach. I then describe tasks, which form the nitty-gritty of the syllabus. Following this I compare the task, process and negotiated syllabuses. I then summarise the roles of learners and teachers in syllabus and curriculum development in a process approach, with illustrations from these three syllabuses.

2.4.1 Features of a process approach

Key features of a process approach relate to the nature of the approach, syllabus design, the main goals and learner contributions. Firstly, a process approach is about the process of learning rather than the product. Candlin contrasts a 'banking' approach (Freire, 1972a, 1978), with a process approach. The former stresses the accumulation of knowledge and maintaining the status quo, while the latter promotes understanding, critical skills and challenging the worldview, in line with progressivist philosophy.

"(It) encourages learners to explore ways of knowing, to interpret knowledge and to engage in dialogue with it and with themselves. A negotiation ... both of knowledge and of the procedures for engaging that knowledge." (Candlin 1984:30).

These ideas accord with views on language learning, which is seen to be an open-ended, organic, creative process rather than a lockstep process.

"Language use cannot be predicted in advance and the prepackaging of language, implicit in an objectives model, is similarly rejected in a process curriculum." (White, 1988:35).

In a process approach, content and process are integrated and classroom procedures and methodology are stressed.

"... the content of any experience is necessarily bound up with the process of the experience itself ... to 'know' content is to explore its values, and it is this exploration of values which implies a methodology where content cannot reasonably be seen to exist independently of its interpretation." (Candlin 1984:33).

It follows therefore, that the design of a process syllabus

prioritises the route taken rather than the end goal. This open-ended syllabus avoids defining end goals in advance and instead defines general principles and the overall direction. It is characterised as 'bottom-up' in that it focusses on what happens in the classroom, i.e. on the learning/teaching process. It is therefore closer to what teachers and learners actually do as they superimpose their own learning plans and ways of working on a preplanned syllabus.

The implemented classroom syllabus: the 'syllabus in action' is jointly created by the participants and takes into account:

"... the hidden agendas of the learners, the moment-by-moment realities of the learning process and the decisions made by teachers on the spur of the moment as they monitor and react to unfolding classroom events." (Nunan, 1988:138).

The main goals of a process approach revolve around learner training for lifelong learning and second language acquisition. Learner training encourages learners to explore and to create knowledge and to develop skills, strategies and ways of thinking which will assist them to carry on learning for the rest of their lives. A process approach also encourages both natural language acquisition and conscious language learning which aids acquisition. A final aspect of the approach concerns the importance placed upon learners' contributions. Learner contributions during the implementation of the approach include their needs and interests which determine general themes, as well as

learner interaction and cognitive and metacognitive processes. These contributions affect choices about learning and the way in which it happens.

Task-work incorporates these features of a process approach.

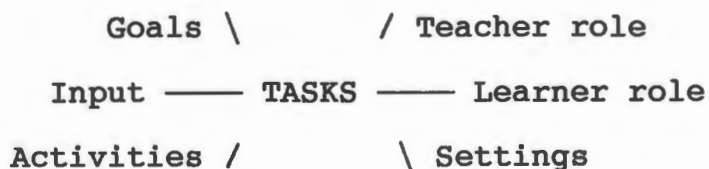
2.4.2 Tasks

Tasks are the nitty-gritty of the syllabus and "embody a curriculum in miniature". (Candlin & Murphy, 1987:2).

Tasks are also "the means to the development of classroom syllabuses". (Candlin, 1987:5). A task is a basic learning unit of a larger communicative event or activity.

"(A task is) a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focussed on meaning rather than form." Nunan (1989:10).

Tasks are analysed in terms of their goals, input, activities, teacher and learner roles and settings.



(Nunan, 1989:11).

Fig. 4 : Analysis of tasks

Monitoring, outcomes and feedback can also be seen as part of task analysis. (Nunan, 1989:47). Tasks are diagnostic and engender an interactive, flexible methodology which

fosters independent learning and caters for mixed ability groups. (Breen & Candlin, in Richard-Amato, 1988:296). Task-based learning also exploits the potential of the classroom for both natural language acquisition and conscious learning. Natural language acquisition occurs as learners engage in meaningful negotiation and problem-solving.

"The central process we are concerned with is language learning, and tasks present this in the form of a problem-solving negotiation between the knowledge that the learner holds and new knowledge. This activity is conducted through language in use, which may itself be seen as a negotiation of meaning". (Candlin & Murphy, 1987:1).

Other tasks consciously focus on grammar, language skills and awareness, cognitive and metacognitive skills. Task types have been identified along various continuums: from skill-getting to skill-using; from real-world (e.g. letter-writing, form filling) to pedagogic (cloze, dictation); from accuracy to fluency-focussed, and according to their interaction mode. (Breen, 1987b; Coleman, in Candlin & Murphy, 1987). Pedagogic tasks serve real-world tasks by developing sub-skills. (Nunan, 1989; Prabhu 1987). Learner training tasks include grammatical consciousness-raising and critical reflection. (Candlin, 1987; Rubin & Wenden, 1987; Rutherford, 1987).

2.4.3 Task, process and negotiated syllabuses

Task, process and negotiated syllabuses are all process-oriented and task-based. However, they have varying emphases. The following table identifies some of

the distinguishing features of these three syllabuses in terms of syllabus design and learner and teacher roles in syllabus development.

Table 3 : Comparing task, process and negotiated syllabuses

	SYLLABUS DESIGN/DEVELOPMENT	LEARNER/TEACHER ROLES IN SYLLABUS DEVELOPMENT
TASK SYLLABUS	Planning at the level of syllabus and curriculum using syllabus plans and accounts Prepared sequenced tasks Formative evaluation	Learners and teachers ask questions about the syllabus from the start to determine objectives and routes
PROCESS SYLLABUS	A 'syllabus of method' with a cyclical plan of joint decision-making around tasks/procedures at 4 levels Tasks categorised but unsequenced in 'banks' Formative evaluation	Explicit joint creation of syllabus through a decision-making cycle Learners and teacher select, sequence and subdivide tasks as problems arise during the lessons
NEGOTIATED SYLLABUS	A combined product/process syllabus Formal and informal needs analysis and goal setting Prepared task materials Formative evaluation interacts with other elements to shape programme	Teacher takes initiative until learners are confident and can negotiate, evaluate & self-assess Teacher is the main agent in syllabus development

the task syllabus

Candlin's task syllabus distinguishes two levels of planning: the 'strategic' level of curriculum guidelines and the 'tactical' level of syllabus plans and accounts (see 3.3.3 Fig.7). Curriculum guidelines refer to the overall curriculum strategy including theoretical statements about learning, language, targets and methods of evaluating, teacher/learner role relationships, banks of

activities and tasks, methodology, etc. The tactical level refers to the way in which strategic principles are exploited and realised through prospective syllabus plans, and later on, retrospective syllabus accounts. Syllabus development occurs as syllabus plans recording "the what, the how and the why" are jointly agreed upon, carried out and evaluated by participants. (Candlin & Murphy, 1987:5). Teachers and learners are encouraged "to ask questions from the outset about syllabus objectives, content, methodology and experiences, and their evaluation" so as to jointly determine learning objectives and routes. (Candlin 1984:34). Retrospective syllabus accounts record what actually happened and how plans were reinterpreted in the classroom.

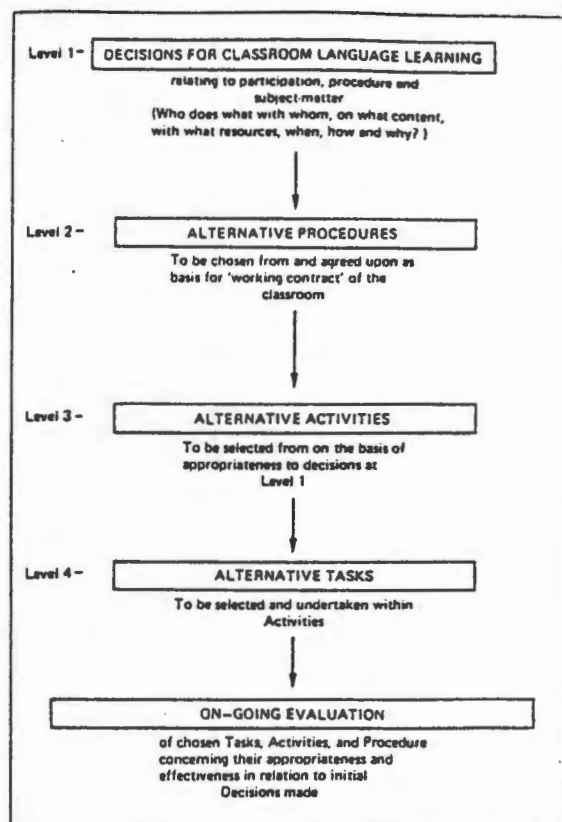
the process syllabus

The process syllabus was inspired by the work of Stenhouse. (1975). It goes further than a task-based syllabus in advocating the explicit negotiation of the syllabus from the start with learners. (Breen 1984, 1987b; Long 1985).

This syllabus is a plan or a framework:

"... for the gradual creation of the real syllabus of the classroom, jointly and explicitly undertaken by teacher and learners. Such a plan would be about designing a syllabus." (Breen, 1984:52).

The syllabus framework is cyclical, and consists of questions and decisions about learning at four levels as shown in the following diagram.



(Breen, in Brumfit, 1984:57).

Fig. 5 : The process syllabus

Level 1 entails decisions about participation, procedure and subject matter. Level two provides a range of alternative procedures which lead to a 'working contract'. At levels 3 and 4, learners and the teacher jointly select activities and tasks from resource banks. These decisions are largely 'intuitive', based on task usefulness and generalisability in the light of learners' continually assessed needs. (Breen, 1987a; Nunan, 1989). Learners and the teacher also decide how to tackle tasks and how to sequence and subdivide them. (Breen 1984:55-58).

"The sequencing of tasks in relation to emerging learner problems or difficulties cannot be worked out in advance. Sequencing here depends on the identification of learning problems as they arise ... and the identification of learning problems which address the problem areas." (Breen, 1987:164).

This syllabus framework provides a starting point for involving participants "in a cycle of decision-making through which their own preferred ways of working, their own ongoing content syllabus, and their choices of appropriate activities and tasks are realised". (Breen, 1987b:167). As in the task syllabus, formative evaluation is the key to ongoing joint decision-making and syllabus development. In these ways, learners assist with making decisions about what to learn and how throughout the programme.

the negotiated syllabus

The negotiated syllabus is a synthesis of product and process syllabuses. It comprises needs analysis, goal and objective setting, materials development, learning tasks and activities, learning mode and environment, and evaluation. (Nunan, 1988:19). These elements are flexible and constantly interacting to shape the programme.

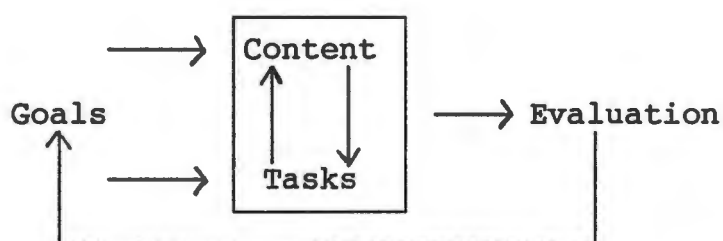
"Objectives may be modified, altered or added to during the teaching-learning process. Decisions about what goes on in the classroom will be influenced ... by pre-specified objectives, materials, and activities, ... needs, constraints ... and by the evaluation feedback which emerges during the course itself."
(Nunan, 1985:2-3).

This syllabus is based on real-life goals which give it structure and purpose. Goals are also motivating for learners and make assessment easier. (Nunan, 1988:45). Needs are gauged through formal and informal needs analyses

of both learners' objective and subjective needs.

"... needs analysis is a set of procedures for specifying the parameters of a course of study. Such parameters include the criteria and rationale for grouping learners, the selection and sequencing of course content, methodology, and course length. In a learner-centred system, course designers will engage in extensive consultation with learners themselves in deriving parameters." (Nunan 1988:45).

Needs analysis helps to establish goals, to group learners and to select task-work which learners carry out and then evaluate. Further content is then selected. (Nunan, 1988:6). Content and tasks are developed in tandem, while evaluation ensures a feedback loop for ongoing syllabus development, as shown here:



(Nunan 1989:16).

Fig. 6 : The negotiated syllabus

In the early stages learners do not express their needs clearly and the teacher has to take the initiative. However, encouraging self-assessment, evaluation, negotiation and critical reflection helps learners to become more self-directed, critical learners.

"Such learner-centred evaluation will assist in the development of a critical self-consciousness by learners of their own roles as active agents within the learning process." (Nunan 1988:134-135).

Thus, the negotiated syllabus uses information by and from learners to continually plan, implement and evaluate the programme. (Nunan, 1989:19).

2.4.4 Learner and teacher roles in syllabus and curriculum development

These three task-based syllabuses foster "a negotiable pedagogy" (Candlin & Murphy 1987:1-2), in which learners and the teacher are jointly responsible for developing the syllabus, including selecting and even designing tasks. (Breen 1987b:167). This interdependency is captured in the terms used in the literature such as: 'co-participants', 'co-investigators', 'co-researchers' and 'teacher-learners'. The roles of learners and the teacher appear complementary and the learning process is often described as 'two-way', 'co-operative', 'negotiated' and 'collaborative'. (Candlin, 1984:35). However, learners and the teacher contribute in different ways to syllabus development.

Learners directly influence the syllabus in three main ways. Firstly, they provide information about themselves to set the syllabus in motion, using task materials based on their experiences, needs, etc. Thus learners act as important learning resources. Secondly, learners develop the syllabus through the continual creation of 'tasks-in-process'. Learners transform tasks-as-workplans into tasks-in-process by consciously or unconsciously reinterpreting and imposing their preferred ways of working on tasks: "a pre-designed ... task-as-workplan - will be changed the moment the learner acts upon it". (Breen, in

Candlin & Murphy, 1987:24). Learners reinterpret purposes, content and procedures for working on tasks and impose their own psychological processes, learning strategies, and style or approach, as well as personal concept of the language learning process. (Breen, 1987a:33). Finally, learners influence syllabus development through everyday classroom decision-making which is built into the syllabus. Metacognitive task-work also equips learners with the skills and awareness needed for joint syllabus development.

Learners appear to make a significant contribution to syllabus development, while the teacher's role remains that of a facilitator of "the process of communication between the learners, their tasks and the data to which the various tasks are directed". (Candlin & Edelhoff, 1982:9).

In terms of broader curriculum development, learners and the teacher play a role through ongoing formative evaluation. For instance, Breen's process syllabus is created through joint planning, decision-making and evaluation at four levels. The outcome of this ongoing cyclical process can influence future curriculum and syllabus design. Similarly in the negotiated syllabus, needs analysis and joint formative evaluation engender a cyclical process of syllabus development which can inform future curriculum work. The relationship between syllabus

and curriculum is more clearly articulated in Breen's task syllabus. He describes how syllabus plans emerge from the everyday classroom decisions taken jointly by the teacher and learners concerning what is covered, how, with whom, when and why. (Candlin & Murphy 1987:5). The dynamic process of syllabus transformation is captured in retrospective syllabus accounts which record what actually took place. These accounts eventually provide evaluative data to challenge curriculum guidelines through a dialectic process. The conflict or tension between the accounts and the guidelines forces a reappraisal of the appropriateness and usefulness of guidelines, and can lead to innovation.

"... the model is productive rather than merely reflective, in that it is through such questioning that new knowledge can be created and brought to bear in turn upon the entire syllabus process."
(Candlin 1984:34).

Thus, in these syllabuses, learners and the teacher are considered jointly responsible for the 'the syllabus in action', and therefore for effecting curriculum change.

Conclusion

In 2.4, we examined a process approach as exemplified by task-based, process syllabuses. These represent a new paradigm in syllabus design. They offer a new framework for learning which emphasises the learning/teaching process and the contributions that learners in particular make to syllabus and curriculum development. These syllabuses offer alternatives to individualised, self-directed programmes.

"Task-based learning ... offers potentially more effective ways of developing and harnessing the aspirations of learner-centred approaches than proposals for individualisation and self-access learning of 10 years ago. It is more unitary in approach and proposes a stronger infrastructure". (Candlin & Murphy, 1987:3-4).

The use of tasks is pivotal in all three syllabuses, as these expose learners' needs, encourage learner participation, and improve communication and learning skills. We also note the joint roles assigned to learners and the teacher in planning, managing, evaluating and generally developing these syllabuses.

Chapter 2 - Summary and Conclusions

In the theoretical background to this research, I have traced very broadly, the evolution of a process approach to ESL for adults over three decades and through four stages.

I began by looking at the influence from general education and adult education on the development of a more learner-centred approach. This was followed by a description of the transformational, situational and communicative approaches. The move towards more learner-centred ESL work was characterised by a concern for teaching according to learners' real-life communicative needs, and encouraging learner participation and communication in the classroom. Then evolved the natural growth approach based on theories of second language acquisition. This approach renewed interest in how second language acquisition happens. This led to the devising of experiential syllabuses and approaches in which learners are encouraged to acquire language naturally. Further classroom-based research examined the cognitive processes and strategies that learners use to learn, and recommended the inclusion of learner training in programmes. Popular education also influenced ESL work and underscored the importance of the learning process, both for learning and for generating the syllabus. Finally, various task-based syllabuses have attempted to pull together these ideas and to place them within a new paradigm. These syllabuses

adopt a process approach which integrates content and process. Second language acquisition and learner training are the main goals which are achieved through the use of tasks and a negotiable pedagogy which relies on learner contributions.

Through these four stages we have witnessed a general pendulum swing from a teacher/subject focus, to a learner/learning focus. The learner/learning focus recognises the many contributions that learners make to learning. This includes their experiences and needs, interaction, negotiation, evaluation and decision-making skills, language and cognitive processing abilities, and ultimately tasks-in-process.

"Learner-centred approaches are characterised by the involvement of the learner, and the utilisation of information about the learner in all aspects of the curriculum (syllabus) process." (Nunan, 1989:144).

CHAPTER 3

THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter describes the research method adopted in this study. The study straddles two areas: ABE and ESL learning and teaching. The research method employed is the use of syllabus accounts to document and examine aspects of a process approach to ESL teaching. Although this method appears to be specific to language teaching, it is similar in many respects to other research methods which fall within the illuminative evaluation tradition of educational research as well as the more scientific research tradition.

I begin by defining what is meant by research, and sketching two dominant research paradigms. I then describe three evaluation methods: process evaluation, case study and action research and locate them within the illuminative evaluation and the scientific tradition. Following this I examine some key issues in the trend towards classroom-based language research. I then indicate how process evaluation, case study and action research relate to the method used in this study, which is the use of syllabus accounts with a process approach. Finally, I outline how this method worked in practice.

This chapter is organised as follows:

3.1 What is research?

3.2 Evaluation methods

3.3 Language research

3.4 The research in practice

3.1 What Is Research?

The main purpose of research is to enable us to come to grips with our environment. It is "the systematic, controlled, empirical and critical investigation of hypothetical propositions about the presumed relations among natural phenomenon". (Kerlinger, in Cohen & Manion, 1980:14). Research contributes to our state of knowledge, and occurs through understanding or interpreting data. (Stenhouse, in McCormick, 1982). The two dominant research paradigms which have emerged are the positivistic, scientific paradigm, and the anthropological, interpretive, subjective paradigm.

The traditional positivistic or scientific research paradigm, sometimes known as the 'agricultural-botany' paradigm, is based on the natural sciences. (Parlett, in McCormick, 1982:186). It stresses experimentation using large samples, control groups, measurement and quantification. For these reasons, it has claimed to be objective and value-free. In more recent years the applicability of this research paradigm to the social sciences has been challenged and the anthropological research paradigm has emerged. The anthropological paradigm attempts to search for the whole truth and to discover theory rather than to test it. It emphasises qualitative, naturalistic, discovery methods which engage

the researcher as a subjective participant in the social situation being researched. It is argued that only in this way can unique data pertaining to this situation be uncovered and explored. Ethnography is a branch of anthropology which studies social groups and communities by living with these groups and recording events and data around social structures and behaviours. This information is then interpreted in conjunction with data from other sources, in order to understand more about the group's culture. (Roberts & Akinsanya, (eds), 1976).

These two research paradigms are not discrete, and approaches often overlap. However, they are a useful guide for identifying the research principles underlying methods used for both educational and language research. Many of the debates and developments characterising educational and language research have been similar. For instance, both have witnessed increasing interest in research methods falling within the anthropological paradigm. At times, language research has followed trends set by educational research. For instance, the move towards 'process' language approaches was clearly influenced by the work of general educationalists such as Stenhouse. (Breen, 1984, 1987b; Candlin, 1984; Candlin & Murphy, 1987).

I now turn to evaluation methods which have been applied to both educational and language research.

3.2 Evaluation Methods

In the past, evaluation methods have tended to focus on education or language as a product to be tested rather than a process to be understood. Such methods have emphasised quantitative, data and scientific, objective methods. More recently, evaluation has taken on a broader meaning and is acknowledged to be a political process. (House, 1973). Illuminative evaluation has emerged as a tradition which aims to illuminate a problem or an issue in context.

"Illuminative evaluation is not a standard methodological package, but a general research strategy. It aims to be both adaptable and eclectic. The choice of research tactics follows not from research doctrine, but from decisions in each case as to the best available techniques: the problem defines the methods used, not vice versa."
(Parlett & Hamilton, 1983:16-17).

Illuminative evaluation is characterised as naturalistic, context-bound, 'applied enquiry'. The exact focus of the study is not known in advance but emerges through the method. Illuminative evaluation is closely linked to the methodology of social anthropology and provides a model of accountability which is process rather than product-oriented. It has been used extensively for curriculum development. (Simons, in McCormick, 1982).

"Evaluation ... attempts to explain the relationship between the curriculum (the content methods bundle) or a (relatively) controlled variable and the uncontrollable variables in the individual settings in which the curriculum is implemented. Evaluation, in short, is not product testing". (Stenhouse, 1977:113).

Illuminative evaluation uses research methods acceptable to the people involved who will also implement the results.

The five stages in illuminative evaluation are as follows:

- 1 Setting up the evaluation
- 2 Open-ended exploration to get to know the context
- 3 Focussed enquiry and sifting through the research notes in order to identify problem areas
- 4 Interpretation, ordering and explanation of the data through a process of 'progressive focussing'
- 5 Reporting the study in an appropriate, sensitive style

(Adapted from Parlett, in McCormick, 1982:189).

Progressive focussing "permits unique and unpredicted

phenomena to be given new weight ... reduces the problem of data overload, and prevents the accumulation of a mass of unanalysed material." (Parlett, in McCormick, 1982:189).

Subjectivity is acknowledged as important for this kind of research. However, it can also distort findings unless steps are taken to avoid this.

"A tightly controlled, systematic approach to data analysis is needed if progressively more adequate hypothetical accounts of the situation are to be achieved. Subjective accounts, imaginative, insightful reporting may well 'strike chords' with those who are readily able to identify with the events described and interpreted; but where audience impact ... displaces thoroughgoing checks on validity and reliability, the accounts may be more convincing than accurate." (Parsons, in McCormick, 1982:200).

One way of dealing with this is to make the evaluator's position explicit. In addition, a third party can be used to verify and to check subjective observations and judgements. This is known as 'triangulation'.

"There are difficulties in relying solely on ... any one person's judgement, but in an evaluation utilizing a range of different methods and different people as sources, crosschecks on the accuracy of information can be established, and the validity of judgements assessed." (Simons, in McCormick, 1982:124).

Process evaluation, case study and action research are specific evaluation methods which have a bearing on the

method employed in this study.

3.2.1 Process evaluation

Process evaluation is usually descriptive, analytic, detailed, small-scale research which records events in progress, and the perspectives of the participants. This enables us to capture the complexity and the dynamics of educational experience and to examine underlying assumptions. (Simons, in McCormick, 1982:123).

"An observer collecting data in one particular situation is in a position to appraise a practice or proposition in that setting, observing effects in context. In trying to describe and account for what happened, he will give equally careful attention to uncontrolled conditions, to personal characteristics and to events that occurred during treatment and measurement." (Cronbach, in McCormick, 1982:124).

Common techniques used include observing, listening, noting critical incidents, questioning, tape recording interactions and dialogue. Other evidence is provided by photographs, writings, pictures and written reports. Process evaluation should be flexible and insightful so as to lead to change. When used with teachers in schools, it has been found to promote teacher self-development and motivation. However, in formal contexts, it can be threatening if it is linked to public accountability.

3.2.2 Case study

Case study method is based on a 'whole' approach and has been described as the "eclectic, portrayal evaluation model". (Lawton, in McCormick, 1982:171). A case study is

a product comprising descriptive data which is 'strong in reality' and easy for the reader to identify with. It has included process studies of a programme in action. However, case study data is difficult to organise, and accounts given by different participants in the situation may differ. Nevertheless, case studies can be interpreted in different ways, generalisations drawn, and action taken when appropriate. (Jenkins & Kemmis, in McCormick, 1982). "Case studies are 'a step to action'. They begin in the world of action and contribute to it." (Adelman, Jenkins & Kemmis, quoted in Lawton, in McCormick, 1982:181).

3.2.3 Action research

Action research is a problem-solving method which aims to improve practice in a specific context. Like process evaluation and case study, action research is also context-specific, although it is broadly classified within the scientific paradigm. It is described as "a small-scale intervention in the functioning of the real world and a close examination of the effects of such intervention." (Cohen & Manion, 1980:174). Action research involves observing, diagnosing and describing a specific problem, and then effecting change immediately during the course of events. The four steps are as follows:

- "Step 1: Develop a plan of action to improve what is already happening.
- Step 2: Act to implement the plan.
- Step 3: Observe and document the effects of action in the contexts in which it occurs.
- Step 4: Reflect on (evaluate) these effects as a basis for further planning, subsequent action and so on

through a succession of cycles."

(Nunan, 1988:148).

Hypotheses are developed and then tested during the therapeutic stage through a conscious change experiment involving modifications. Evaluation and modification continue as findings are applied immediately. Although the knowledge gained from this research is applicable to that situation, it may or may not be generalisable. Action research has been used in projects ranging from national curriculum development, to in-service training of language teachers and the testing of innovative teaching approaches. (Lomax, 1989; Schools council, 1973). It has even been used to improve communication between academics and practitioners. (Cohen & Manion, 1980:176-177). A major advantage is that it is empirically-based and can involve teachers and other key players as change agents.

I now investigate developments and issues within language research, including the relationship between theory and practice; the development of classroom-based research, and finally, curriculum development in a process approach.

3.3 Language Research

Language research is research which investigates language per se and the learning and teaching of language. Second language research is research directed at describing and understanding how a second language is acquired and fostered. Second language research is a relatively young area. Although research has taken off in a number of different directions, it has been somewhat disparate due to the lack of a common theoretical basis. As a result, the task of achieving a tried and tested integrated theory of second language learning/acquisition remains a challenge. (Ellis, 1986b:301). The main goal of language research is to improve practice through either theoretical or applied research. (Krashen, in Long & Richards, 1987:33). Researchers generally favour one or other of these, while many see them as inextricably linked.

3.3.1 Theoretical research

Theory is about speculative thought as opposed to fact or practice. It is a set of interrelated hypotheses usually supported by empirical evidence which seeks to account for phenomena by forming generalisations. It cannot claim to be 'the truth' as it is always open to being disproven. Theoretical research is research around speculative theories or explanations of phenomenon. It aims to build theory by supporting or countering a theory or hypothesis.

Krashen claims that theorising is crucial for improving practice, and has formulated his own theory of second language acquisition. (Krashen, 1981) Although to date much theorising has taken place around language learning and teaching, a great deal more is needed. (Ellis, 1986b; Lightbown, 1984). Two kinds of theory-building research are 'theory-then-research', and 'research-then-theory' (akin to 'empirical' or 'applied' research). (Long, 1983).

The main argument for using the theory-then-research approach is that theory informs and guides the practical part of the research. The five basic steps in this approach are as follows:

- i develop the theory
- ii derive a testable prediction from the theory
- iii conduct research to test the prediction
- iv modify (or abandon) the theory if the prediction is disconfirmed
- v Test a new prediction if the first prediction is confirmed

The main argument for using the research-then-theory approach is that it provides a sound empirical basis for theorising through hypothesis-generation. The four main steps in this approach are as follows:

- i select a phenomenon for investigation (formulate a research question)

- ii measure its characteristics
- iii collect data and look for systematic patterns
- iv formalise significant patterns as rules describing natural events

Critics of this approach state that the claims derived are necessarily limited and often unrelated.

"The 'research-then-theory' approach need never lead to a comprehensive theory - it can produce a 'bits-and-pieces' view of SLA, a series of insights into what motivates behaviour." (Ellis, 1986b:304).

However, the two main advantages of this approach are that the researcher is "less likely to be 'wrong' at any time and can provide valuable insights into selected aspects of the whole process being investigated." (Ellis, 1986b:304). The approach also enables us to look in detail at specific aspects of theory and provides a basis for theory-building.

3.3.2 Applied research

Applied language research is research around practice. The main aim is to improve practice rather than to develop theory. The task at hand is simply to determine what works and what does not work in practice in the language classroom. Therefore applied research may or may not have a stated theoretical basis, although the results can affect theory. Interest in such research grew in part from the frustration felt by teachers at the inadequacy of methodologies and materials presented to them by theoreticians.

Teachers "... assumed that those in the university knew best, and methodologies based on theory were widely used. The problem, however, was that these methodologies did not work very well."
(Krashen, in Long & Richards, 1987:34).

Researchers, on the other hand, blamed the teachers and their lack of theoretical understanding for the failure of behaviourist methods such as audiolingualism. As a result of the researcher's inability to deliver the goods, teachers began to look to classroom practice for guidance. This focus on the classroom has led to more descriptive research which records what actually happens in the classroom and "reveals data that cannot be obtained in any other way". (Nunan, 1988:138). The classroom, therefore, has become "the crucible" (Gaies, quoted in Allwright, 1983:202); and the 'teacher-as-researcher' has become a popular notion.

The teacher as an investigator has been a feature of educational research since the 1970's when it became apparent that teachers were more likely to adopt a tried and tested innovation than an untested idea which was thrust upon them. (Stenhouse, 1975). The teacher-as-researcher tries to achieve a balance between theory and practice and is not only concerned with what works in the classroom but more importantly, with understanding why something works. This has been described as the 'professional' evaluation model because it emphasises

'research-based teaching' and teacher self-evaluation. (Lawton, in McCormick, 1982). In language research, it has been recognised that teachers are well placed to do essential classroom-based research around for instance, classroom interaction and learning strategies. This has been called 'classroom process approach'. (Gaies, 1983). To date, teachers have made a significant contribution towards both improving practice and building theory as, "theoretical and applied research are now reaching similar conclusions ... consistent with what teachers are coming up with on their own". (Krashen, in Long & Richards, 1987:35).

3.3.3 Process approaches

The emphasis on classroom-based research which combines theoretical and applied research is in line with the development of more 'learner-centred', process approaches to language teaching and 'bottom up' approaches to curriculum development. (Nunan, 1989:144).

"Our goal for the future should thus be to restore some balance, to allow all three sources, theory, applied research, and teachers' ideas, to contribute to practice and to enrich each other."
(Krashen, in Long & Richards, 1987:35).

Process approaches have an action research orientation. (Breen, 1984, 1987a, 1987b; Candlin, 1984; Candlin & Murphy, 1987; Nunan, 1987, 1988). The syllabus is seen as: "the documentation and systematisation of classroom practice". (Nunan, 1989:144). The emphasis is on the

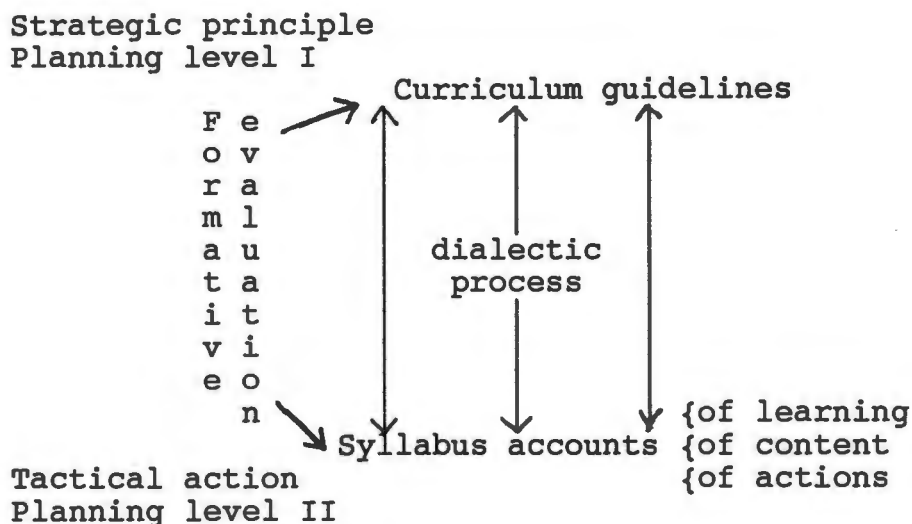
implemented syllabus as opposed to the planned or assessed syllabus which assumes that what happens in the classroom is largely unpredictable. Therefore, classroom processes, including learner and teacher roles are deemed significant in determining what actually transpires and ultimately in effecting curriculum change.

"... the classroom itself could more overtly provide the teacher - and the learners - with actual data on language learning and learner syllabuses, and with alternative classroom syllabuses, all of which could better inform subsequent syllabus design."
(Breen, in Brumfit, 1984:56).

The aim of recording a process syllabus in action is to discover "what language teachers actually do and think as they plan, implement and evaluate their language programmes". (Nunan, 1988:vi). This knowledge can help us to understand better how the syllabus is jointly created by learners and the teacher who "interact in the classroom to collectively produce the learning opportunities that arise there". (Allwright, 1983:196).

syllabus accounts

Candlin's task-based syllabus is the research model used in this study. Tasks constitute the basic unit of this syllabus and are recorded in retrospective syllabus accounts through a process of formative evaluation. This enables us to capture the interactive, organic nature of learning as both content and process. This syllabus model has two levels: the strategic level of curriculum guidelines, and the tactical level of syllabus accounts.



(Adapted from Candlin & Murphy, 1987:6).

Fig. 7 : Candlin's task syllabus

Curriculum guidelines refer to the overall programme strategy. They include statements about learning in general and the learning of a second language, the theoretical foundations and assumptions, learning purpose and experience, targets and ways of evaluating, role relationships of teachers and learners, task banks and suggested procedures for using these. Curriculum guidelines are interpreted and implemented at the tactical level of everyday decision-making. As the teacher and learners plan what to tackle and how, they draw up joint syllabus plans. This level of planning looks at:

"... what is to be done, what questions suggest themselves, what processes are most conducive to exploring the given problem, what additional information is needed, which particular actions are worthwhile." (Candlin, 1987:5).

Syllabus accounts are retrospective records of classroom action in a specific language teaching programme. They

describe what happened and the outcomes, as they answer the questions what? how? who? when? and why?. In this way, they record three kinds of syllabuses: the learning syllabus, the content syllabus, and the action syllabus.

"We may expect from such accounts information on agreed learning goals, the content chosen for work and the manner of such work, what information and resources were needed and drawn upon, how the work was evaluated and what modes of documentation selected. In sum an account of 'what went on'." (Candlin, 1987:6).

This information can be recorded in a variety of forms, including videos, tape-recorded discussions, teacher notes, learners' writings and diaries, learning plans and accounts, wall newspapers, performance profiles, results of classroom experiments, etc. (Candlin 1984:36).

Evaluation is "bound up with the process of developing the syllabus itself". (Candlin, 1984:36). The dialectical relationship between syllabus accounts and curriculum guidelines is a crucial aspect of this evaluation process. It requires clear lines of communication between those responsible for planning curriculum guidelines and those who plan at the tactical level.

"... we have ... a dialectic process between the level of guidelines and the level of syllabuses, by means of which the accounts of classroom work can effect curriculum change. These ethnographic and ethnomethodological accounts not only evaluate classroom action, they also provide the data for evaluating the viability of the curriculum guidelines themselves. They are formative at both levels." (Candlin 1987:6).

Accounts offer 'illuminative evaluation' on the operation of the programme, including "the influences and constraints

upon it, the advantages and disadvantages for its participants and the effect it has on them and their learning." (Candlin, 1984:36). Accounts can also pinpoint specific problem areas.

"They offer us windows upon the operation of the curriculum guidelines in the classroom and as such not only provide statements about learning and teaching but also about the difficulties inherent in implementing the guidelines themselves". (Candlin, 1984:36).

The tension between classroom action and curriculum guidelines can engender curriculum renewal, as it "can drive curricula forward, maintaining their relevance to the society of the classroom and that of the world outside." (Candlin, 1984:36).

A limitation of this research process concerns the generalisability of the findings. Given the reality that every classroom is different and every syllabus and lesson is a unique, complex, and largely unpredictable social experience, it is not clear to what extent curriculum change can be effected on a bigger scale. A further criticism concerns the question of subjectivity or bias.

"... the illumination of issues by insightfully rigorous subjective research is just the best we can do and ... we should not persist in the illusion that classroom language learning research could ever be usefully objective." (Allwright, 1983:201).

However, in classroom-based research, subjectivity can be a positive factor if we agree that "it is precisely the subjective element that is most worthy of investigation". (Allwright, 1983:200). Thus, self-evaluation, especially

in classroom action research, can make a valuable contribution to curriculum development. (Nunan, 1988:147). This view is supported by ethnographers who:

"... recognise the bias inherent in one person's reporting events, but ... feel that it is as safe or safer to trust one's own insights as it is to trust another's alleged objectivity."
(Mike Long, quoted by Allen, in Brumfit, 1984:72).

3.4 The Research In Practice

The aim of this study was to shed light on learner and teacher roles in curriculum development and to explore some of the issues raised. For this classroom-based, descriptive, evaluative research I chose a 'research-then-theory' approach, using retrospective syllabus accounts. This method falls within the illuminative evaluation tradition and is similar in many ways to process evaluation, case study and action research. All of these methods are context-specific, and concerned with what happens in the classroom rather than with the broader context. They also allow us to generalise from the knowledge gained. The use of syllabus accounts, for instance, claim to effect curriculum change through a dialectical process at the level of curriculum guidelines. Action research has similarities with the use of syllabus accounts as both aim to improve practice through addressing real classroom situations and unexpected problems that arise during the teaching/learning process. However, with syllabus accounts, the issues can be further clarified

through analysis and interpretation in the light of broader curriculum guidelines. Action research, on the other hand, is concerned with solving more immediate problems which arise, although conclusions can be drawn at a later stage.

I began this study by recording what happened in the classroom as I taught a group during a sixteen month basic English programme. Following this, I identified themes and teased out pertinent issues from the data, which I later examined in the light of my theoretical framework (or curriculum guidelines). Finally, I drew conclusions about the process approach, and made recommendations about a new approach, as well as areas of further research. Through this research process I hoped to clarify the theoretical basis upon which my practice was based, and to add to our general understanding of learner and teacher roles in curriculum development in a process approach.

3.4.1 Research data gathering methods

The syllabus account provided an organised, condensed record of what happened during the one hundred and seventeen lessons comprising the programme. It included information from a number of sources so as to avoid the problem of narrow, subjective accounts, analyses and interpretations. The main source of information came from detailed lesson plans and evaluations, with examples of learner language, learner comments, and my personal

perceptions, insights and self-evaluations at the time. Additional sources included learning materials, learners' writings, correspondence, worksheets, tape recorded discussions, formal and informal meetings and telephone conversations with learners, the other English teacher, the programme administrators and the new teacher who took over the group in 1988, observations by trainee teachers, and finally, discussions with my colleagues.

The initial recording of data was carried out without any attempt to categorise it. The syllabus accounts were compiled by sifting through the information in order to examine critically some problematic aspects of the process approach. While engaged in this, the main programme themes gradually began to emerge through 'progressive focussing'. These themes were noted in the accounts, and smaller topics or task-work were omitted. Critical incidents which highlighted particular problems were also included. Therefore, the accounts were necessarily selective. Although I tried as far as possible to distinguish the main themes from each other, in reality there was a good deal of overlap. Nevertheless, organising task descriptions into themes gave a general sense of how the programme unfolded. At the same time, this indicated how concepts and language skills developed over time, and how teacher and learner roles and relationships altered as the programme unfolded.

3.4.2 Analysing and interpreting the data

My analysis, interpretation and drawing of conclusions about the syllabus accounts was aided throughout by informal discussions with colleagues, teachers and learners. Firstly, analysing the data entailed identifying the most crucial and problematic areas. Through reading and comparing the theme accounts, patterns began to emerge of the main areas of friction, tension or confusion in the programme which were worthy of further examination and hypothesising. At this point the research focus became much clearer and learner and teacher roles in curriculum development emerged as the area of key concern.

In my interpretation of the data, I focussed on particular aspects of learner and teacher roles in curriculum development. I discussed these informally with colleagues before putting forward possible explanations. Workshops around some of these issues also helped me to clarify my thoughts and to begin to visualise and to formulate a new approach. These additional informal research processes helped the researcher to gain a balanced picture and to avoid distortion which the unique perspective of the teacher-as-researcher risks doing. The new approach which emerged was therefore validated by a variety of other informal research processes.

3.4.3 My role as teacher-researcher

My role in this research process was as the teacher-researcher or the reflective practitioner. Because this study took place in a non-formal context, strict formal accountability was absent and I was able to reflect on what was happening in the classroom and to address tensions and contradictions without feeling threatened. This also enabled me to evaluate data critically with the ultimate goal of improving practice and building theory. My location within the classroom also enabled me to describe and to attempt to explain what happened from an inside perspective. The main advantage was that I had a more comprehensive 'insider' view of the situation. I was also able to get to know the group and to build an open, trusting relationship over a period of time, which allowed me to gather qualitative and often sensitive data. This might not have been so easy for an outside researcher who might risk increased learner anxiety. In addition, I also had a good deal of relevant theoretical and practical experience which provided me with analytical tools and interpretive skills to apply in this situation. Thus, on the whole, my role as teacher-researcher placed me in an ideal situation to uncover information and to make explicit hidden assumptions which were unique to that situation and which could only really be ascertained by someone playing this dual role.

However, the main disadvantage of my role in this research revolved around the fact that I came to the teaching situation with personal experiences and conscious or unconscious beliefs, ideologies and theories which pre-determined to a large extent how I behaved, what I chose to see, and how I explained and interpreted information. This raises once again the question of subjectivity in this study, especially as the emphasis was mainly on the teacher's perceptions rather than learners'. As indicated earlier, attempts were made to gain as many alternative insights and interpretations as possible from both learners and other people. However, given that classrooms are 'socially-constructed' situations and lessons social events, subjectivity on the part of the teacher-researcher must be viewed as an integral part of the research process. Furthermore, this can and should be exploited for the benefits it can bring to deepening our understanding of the issues under scrutiny.

3.4.4 Problems experienced with the research in practice

There were several problems experienced by the researcher in using syllabus accounts as the research method for this study. Firstly, existing descriptions of this process are often vague and contradictory. (Clarke, 1991). In addition, no-one yet appears to have published a fully documented account of a process approach. Although Prabhu's 'procedural' approach focusses on process (Prabhu,

1987), it is deemed a non-negotiable product approach rather than a negotiated process approach. (Greenwood, 1987:16). In South Africa, although an attempt has been made to do this, the extremely short period of implementation (six two-hour sessions), was problematic for an approach which is in essence a process rather than an end product. (Stein, & Janks, 1991). With no concrete examples to aid in clarifying the research process, even these comments on the problems experienced must remain speculative until such time as more evidence of the research in practice is made available.

Given the dearth of explicit literature around the documenting of a process approach, I was forced to make decisions about the research process while I was actively engaged in it. This included deciding how the accounts should look; how long they should be, and what they should contain. These decisions proved very difficult and at times led to uncertainty and a loss of clarity and confidence in the process. But perhaps the greatest drawback of all concerns the time that it took to collect, organise, analyse and interpret extensive data of this nature in order to come up with useful findings and conclusions. I conclude that the research process, although valuable, could usefully be refined and streamlined for use by other teachers and researchers.

Chapter 3 - Conclusion

The research method adopted in this study was innovatory in many ways, and for that reason alone, extremely difficult to carry out. The process involved collecting and organising research data into syllabus accounts. These were then analysed and key issues around learner and teacher roles in curriculum development identified and explored further in the light of the curriculum guidelines.

The limitations of this research process only became apparent through the research in practice. Having noted the main drawbacks, it is important to comment on the advantages. This research method did provide unique insights into complex classroom processes. It also succeeded in illuminating key aspects of participant roles which required further scrutiny. Finally the findings suggested a new approach and identified a number of areas for further debate and research. These outcomes are indicative of what research is all about.

CHAPTER 4

SYLLABUS ACCOUNTS

Introduction

This chapter comprises the core research material. It consists of three retrospective syllabus accounts (or records) of a basic ESL programme for industrial workers which took place at Alrode CEP from 1986 to 1987. The programme adopted a process approach which combined ESL with learner training and problem-posing. I begin with an overview of the programme, followed by the main body of this chapter - the three syllabus accounts.

This chapter is organised as follows:

- 4.1 Overview of the programme
- 4.2 Syllabus account I
- 4.3 Syllabus account II
- 4.4 Syllabus account III

4.1 Overview of the Programme

In this overview of the programme, I describe how the Advanced English group, which is the focus of this research, was set up. I then identify the four chronological programme periods and the four syllabus themes. Finally, I give an overview of theme development during the programme.

4.1.1 Setting up the group

In July 1986, I and another English teacher requested a meeting with workers who were interested in attending classes at the new Alrode CEP centre. We wished to clarify the approach and learners' expectations; to ascertain learners' English and mother tongue needs and levels, and to group learners appropriately. The CEP invited management to this meeting to officially launch the programme and to introduce the teachers. The meeting was tense and the teachers were clearly perceived as part of this management initiative. Although more than forty men attended, only thirty-seven stayed for the grouping exercise. We began the exercise by describing our non-formal, needs-based approach. We used interpreters to explain the grouping procedure and purpose to the workers (see Starting Out, appendix A). While the workers completed the grouping exercises, we identified learners who struggled to write their name. After checking their

literacy skills, we advised them to attend mother tongue classes and to move to English later. We also advised very advanced learners to attend formal night school.

From this grouping session we provisionally sorted learners into beginner, intermediate and advanced English groups, based on the test exercises and an informal oral assessment. Eight learners joined the mother tongue class and twenty-seven joined the three English groups. The advanced group, the focus of this study, comprised seven learners. These learners could communicate orally and in writing and could manage the most difficult reading exercises. During the first two weeks of the programme, four more learners joined this group, making eleven in all. We used the same grouping exercises with these new learners, although it was more informal as we could chat before and after learners had completed the test. We were also able to agree for instance, that two friends who were at different levels could join the advanced group. (It transpired that the better learner coached his friend very successfully. Unfortunately, both learners were retrenched in 1987 and left the group.)

4.1.2 Programme periods

The entire programme spanned a period of sixteen months, from August 1986 to December 1987. It comprised one hundred and seventeen lessons or two hundred and

thirty-four teaching hours. The classes were held on two weekdays, from 4-6pm. Forty-five minutes of the two-hour lesson was work time and an hour and a quarter was personal time. The programme had four distinct chronological periods, each with a particular focus as follows.

Period 1 Getting to know each other and the approach

5.8.86 - 4.12.86 (34 lessons)

Period 2 Exploring issues and new ways of learning

27.1.87 - 29.6.87 (41 lessons)

Period 3 Learning independently

1.7.87 - 29.8.87 (16 lessons)

Period 4 Consolidating and evaluating

31.8.87 - 25.11.87 (26 lessons)

Period 1 comprised thirty-four lessons and was the second longest period of the programme. It lasted from August until December 1986. Period 2 spanned forty-one lessons and was the longest period. It lasted from January until the end of June 1987. The start of this period was disrupted by the retrenchment of two learners. A month later, four more learners reluctantly left the programme because they were offered permanent overtime. Towards the end of period 2, the four remaining advanced learners combined with the intermediate English group. The end of period 2 was spent preparing for working independently during period 3, when the teacher-researcher would be

absent. Period 3 covered sixteen lessons and was the shortest period. It lasted from July until the end of August 1987. During this time the group worked on their own, using the prepared workbooks and materials. Period 4 consisted of twenty-six lessons and was the third longest period. It lasted from the end of August until the end of November 1987.

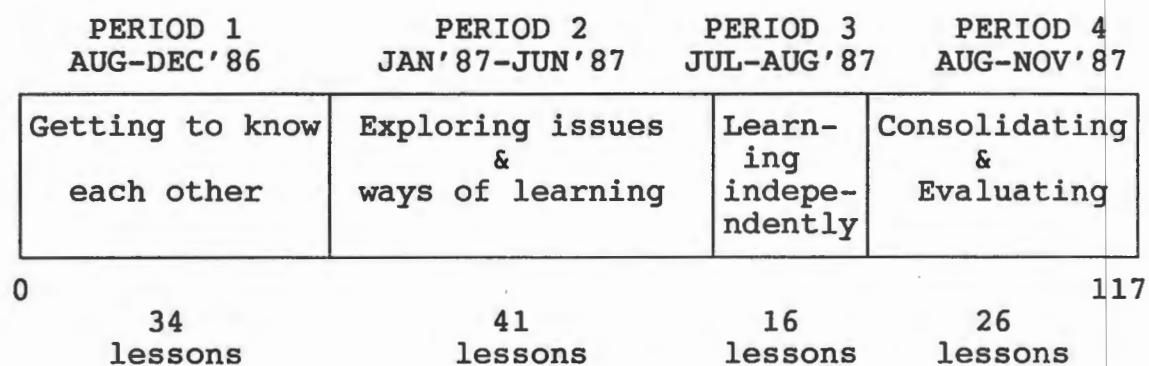


Fig. 8 : Programme overview

4.1.3 Theme accounts

The three syllabus accounts record the three main programme themes as follows:

- Account I About ourselves
- Account II About our context
- Account III Learning how to learn

These three themes constitute parallel threads which merge and overlap during the programme. However, in this chapter each theme is described in a separate account so as to highlight its particular features. For instance, the first and second themes have a content focus, whereas the third theme focusses on the processes involved. The account of

each theme is organised and recorded in terms of topics and/or the main activities or tasks. Different task types characterise different themes. The first theme emphasises communicative and language tasks; the second theme focusses on problem-posing tasks to foster critical thinking and reflection; while the third theme describes learner training tasks. Task descriptions cover how tasks arose and their purpose, the input or materials used, how tasks were tackled, the roles of learners and the teacher, and what happened during this process, including evaluation and outcomes. Different themes feature more prominently during particular programme periods as described next.

4.1.4 Theme development in this programme

The first theme 'about ourselves', launched the programme and was pursued intensively during period 1 and the start of period 2. It also featured in the self-study work during period 3 and the assessment in period 4. This theme led naturally into the second theme 'about our context', which took over during periods 2 and 3. During periods 3 and 4, the third theme 'learning how to learn' assumed greater importance as we engaged in new ways of learning and assessed an evaluated. These three themes overlapped as the programme unfolded through periods 1 to 4, as the diagram overleaf shows.

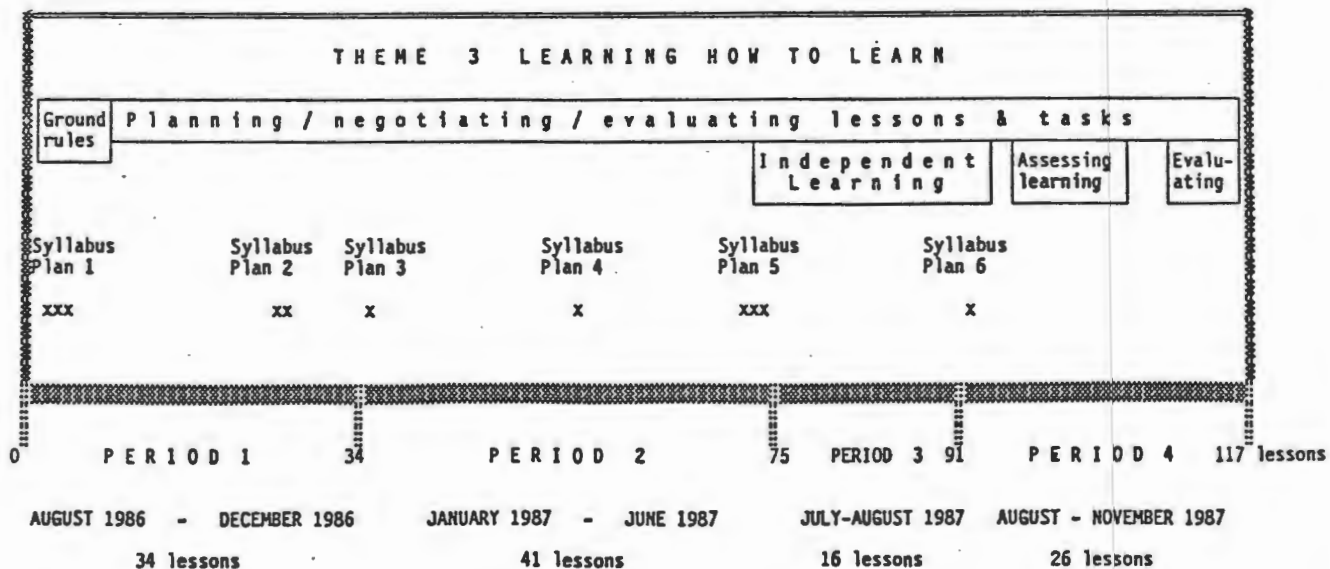
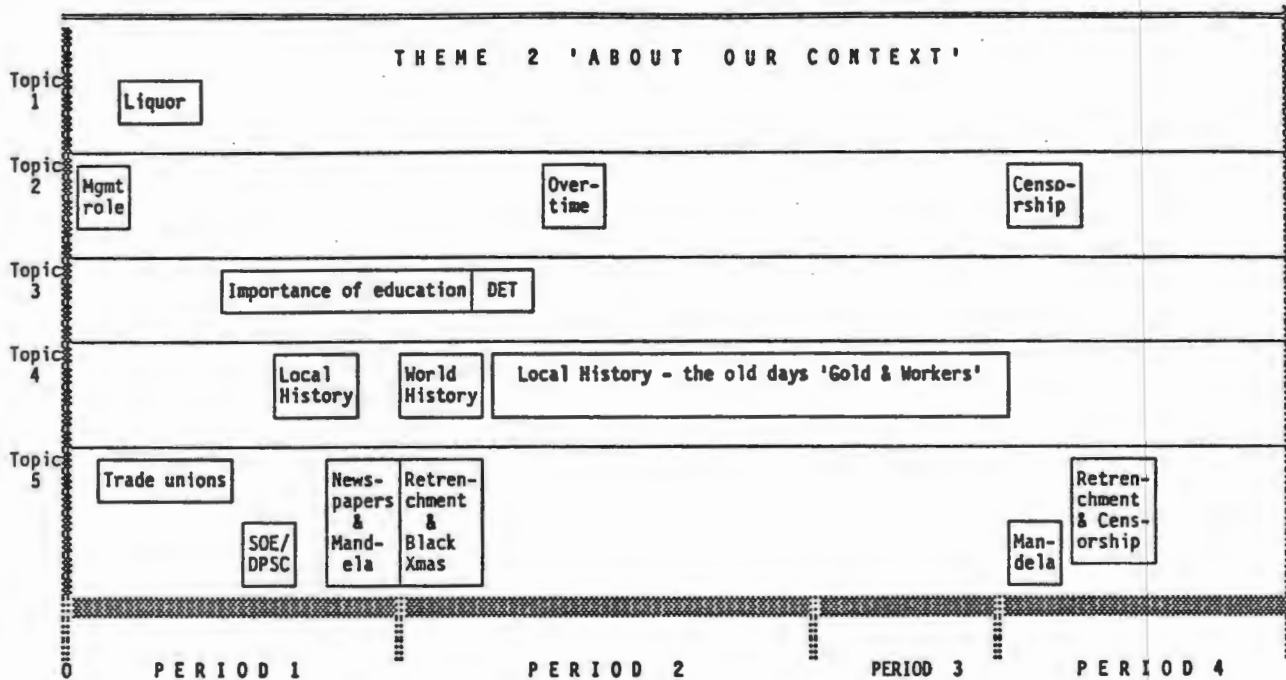
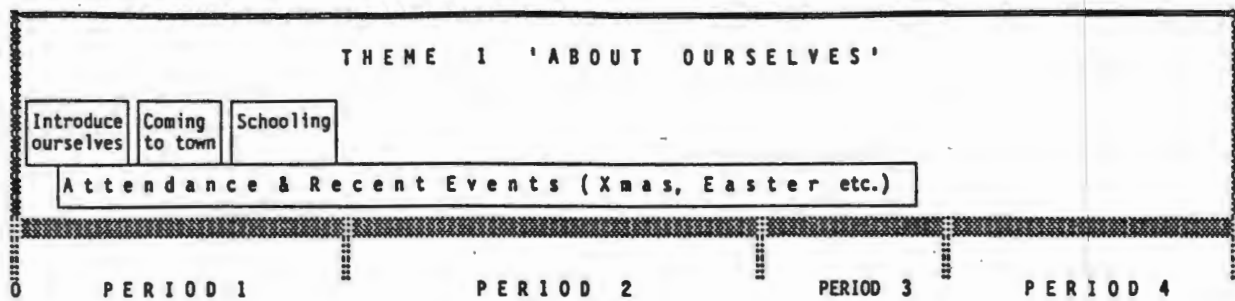


Fig. 9 : Theme development across four programme periods

period 1 getting to know each other and the approach

During period 1, the main focus was on getting to know each other and the approach. Introductions, discussions, reading and writing tasks opened up interesting areas to explore together, including experiences of schooling and coming to town. The theme 'about ourselves' dominated this period and generated topics such as 'education' and 'history', which were pursued under the second theme 'about our context'. The second theme also covered issues which arose spontaneously from unexpected incidents in the group (e.g. concerning management), from discussion around learners' needs (e.g. 'liquor'), or from current events affecting people's lives (e.g. 'DPSC', 'retrenchment'). Learners' written and spoken texts which emerged from task-work during this period were also used for roleplay, monitoring, editing, spelling, punctuation and grammar tasks so as to develop oral communication, reading and writing skills.

While this theme task-work was happening, the group was also involved in tasks to foster management of learning. These metacognitive tasks involved joint decision-making about the ground rules for working together, joint lesson planning according to goals, planning and evaluating using files, joint syllabus planning and later on, negotiation of lesson tasks. At the same time, the development of classroom language promoted interaction and learner control over learning. The development of these learning skills

equipped learners to play an increasingly significant role in syllabus development and directly influenced the way in which the programme unfolded. Towards the end of period 1, we evaluated the initial syllabus plan and drew up a second one which we tackled during period 2.

period 2 exploring issues and new ways of learning

During period 2, the theme 'about our context' slowly took over and became the main focus. Topics and issues such as 'history', the 'DET' and 'overtime' continued to arise spontaneously from discussions around learners' experiences, current events and incidents occurring in the group. Language learning tasks around these topics and issues continued as in period 1, but were more complex. Towards the end of period 2, the history topic took over at the same time as the group's interest in learning independently was growing.

Parallel to this emphasis on contextual issues was a growing interest in learning new ways of learning. This was partly in response to a change in the composition of the group. Reduced numbers enabled learners to work individually, in pairs and in small groups and to develop ways of learning independently. Following this, we combined with the intermediate group. These changes are reflected in the syllabus plans drawn up at this time. At the end of this period, we spent several lessons preparing for the independent study period which followed. This

included drawing up a new syllabus plan and a self-study workbook for learners.

period 3 learning independently

During period 3, the teacher was absent and the group worked independently on the self-study workbook. It was pre-arranged for learners to consult the other English teacher who was teaching a group in the same room. The self-study workbook prepared during period 2 contained various oral, reading and writing tasks around the theme 'about ourselves' and the history topic. Written instructions accompanied the workbook (Appendix C). The main goals of this workbook were to provide learners with the opportunity to develop the skills and awareness needed to become more independent learners, while at the same time, providing opportunities for practising speaking, reading and writing English.

period 4 consolidating and evaluating

At the start of period 4, we evaluated the group's experience of working on their own during period 3. Learners were clearly more confident and assertive and less dependent on the teacher. They asked to continue working independently for some time. After this, we drew up a simple syllabus plan for the rest of the programme. Before we could tackle this, the issue of certificates arose, which diverted our attention. Management's idea of awarding prizes and certificates generated lengthy debate.

Following this, we planned and carried out an assessment and jointly evaluated the results. Other issues which arose during period 4 such as 'censorship' and 'retrenchment' were tackled in a cursory fashion mainly because of competing needs and learning priorities. Therefore, after a short period of revision, we spent the final lessons evaluating and drawing conclusions about learning generally during this programme.

4.2 Syllabus Account I

About Ourselves

Introduction

My main aim at the start of this programme was to set the scene for implementing a process approach. This included finding out learners' attitudes, needs, interests, concerns, backgrounds and language skills' levels. I also had to inspire confidence and encourage learners to interact and to share information about themselves. The first activity was 'introducing and writing about ourselves', as described in 4.2.1. This entailed various discussion, reading and writing tasks and led to more in-depth exploration of learners' experiences of coming to town and of schooling, as described in 4.2.2. In 4.2.3, I describe activities around other shared experiences. These three communicative activities generated oral and written texts which we used for follow-up language tasks on spelling, editing, monitoring, grammar and roleplay, as described in 4.2.4. Finally, in 4.2.5, I describe more advanced language work and the research implications.

4.2.1 Introducing and writing about ourselves

Introducing and writing about ourselves was a way of breaking the ice and getting to know one another. It also provided an insight into how well learners 'communicated in English and their level of confidence. The writing task

provided a tangible outcome to conclude this activity.

In the first lesson of the programme I explained that we would get to know each other and practise speaking, reading and writing English. I gave out name labels and introduced myself in Zulu and English in the following way.

"Ngingu Marian Clifford.
Ngisuka eEngilande.
Ngihlala eNorwood.
Ngingu tisha.
Ngisebenza eOrange Grove.
My name is Marian Clifford.
I come from England (overseas).
I stay in Norwood in Jo'burg (do you know Norwood?)
I'm a teacher.
I work in Orange Grove (do you know Orange Grove?)
And you?"

This attempt to speak Zulu served as an ice-breaker and with prompting, the next learner introduced himself. This continued round the circle as learners introduced themselves in English or in a combination of mother tongue and English. Most learners were reticent, although a few spoke with more confidence. We repeated introductions at the start of the next few lessons, especially when new learners joined. When we discussed whether to use African or English names, the group insisted on addressing me as "teacher" (which later became "Miss Marian" or "Marian"); while learners preferred to be addressed by their first names or as "Mr. Walter".

After evaluating these introductions, we moved to other things. However, the opportunity to introduce ourselves arose at other times during the programme. For instance,

towards the end of period 1 when two trainee teachers visited, learners spontaneously introduced themselves and prompted the visitors to do likewise with questions such as: "Where you stay?", "You work?". In period 2 when the groups combined, learners once again initiated introductions and generated extensive interaction with the new group. With each practice, introductions became longer, more natural, spontaneous and interactive as learners prompted one another and expanded on the model dialogue. The question tag "And you?" was very useful. It enabled the group to initiate and to sustain discussions, thus overcoming some of the communication problems experienced by second language learners. Slowly learners applied this question tag to other situations such as getting information and opinions, socialising and making requests, as illustrated in the following exchange "Hi Peter, how are you?" "Fine thanks, and you?"

reading, discussing, writing and spelling

Writing about ourselves followed naturally from these introductions. When I proposed this, learners agreed readily and stressed how difficult it was to write in English. I explained that we would begin by reading a story from a past USWE learner to help us to write our own stories. I prepared learners for reading Lickson Keetse's story (Appendix B text a), by discussing the title, the photograph, who Lickson was, and what he might tell us about himself. After this pre-reading preparation,

learners then read the story silently. While reading, some learners voiced the text, so I explained why we usually read silently in our heads. To encourage learners to read beyond the text I asked where Lickson stayed and worked, what kind of job he did, what his mother tongue was, where his wife and children stayed, if the children went to school, why he says he tries to have enough food, what he thinks about his job and why he says he does it 'nicely'. This worked very well and the group guessed, for instance, that he spoke Sotho (from his surname and address).

During the grouping test learners had written stories without preparation. These were short and uninspiring, as Anderson's story illustrates.

ANDERSON MANKHALEMELE
 NR33511015 SECTION
 KATLEHONG TOWN SHIP.
 I AM A OPERATER FOR 3.YEARS IN THIS COMPANY
 THIS COMPANY IS A BIG.

Fig. 10 : Anderson's original story

When I asked learners to read their stories aloud to me, one learner, Apolis was unable to do this. His text looked like this:

She	is	good	you	wife
my	wife	is	name	is
my	wife	is	give	you
She	is	very	good	
g	washing	you	child	

Fig. 11 : Apolis' story

When I questioned Apolis, I discovered that he was not married and did not know anyone called Veronica! He had copied his story from another learner because he did not know that he should write a true story about himself. His only experience of writing in English had been rote copying at school. Therefore he had acquired mechanical writing skills but had never experienced writing to convey information. From this initial editing it was clear that learners needed to practise writing communicatively in English, which we then proceeded to tackle.

Before writing stories called 'About myself', some learners asked for help with spelling the words 'try' and 'enough', which they wanted to use. We discussed why these words were difficult and then compiled word patterns as follows.

<u>try</u>	<u>enough</u>
<u>my</u>	<u>tough</u>
<u>by</u>	<u>rough</u>

I then asked the group to write about themselves, using a guided writing worksheet. They need not worry about length or spelling, as we would share these stories afterwards and improve them. Everyone managed to write something. Here are two examples:

About Myself

My name is Mandla Vabile.
 I come from Umtata
 I have three children.
 I try to have enough food
I start my work at 7.00 am.
When I get money I take
it ~~at~~ home and
my wife buy food for
my children and I try
to do my job nicely.

Fig. 12 : Mandla's story

About Myself

My name is WALTER MBAMBO
 I come from DUNDEE, NATAL, 3000
 I have MY HOME IN KATLEHONG.
 I HAVE A WIFE AND TWO
BOYS. THE NAMES FOR THE
BOYS EZEKIEL AND MESHACK.
MY WIFE IS SAMARIA
AND MY GRANDSON IS
MDUDUZI, AND I HAVE
TWO SISTERS IN HOMELAND

Fig. 13 : Walter's original story

In his writing, Mandla borrowed ideas and structures from Lickson's model story. However, he made the link between his job and his family more explicit, i.e. he needs to work 'nicely' in order to get money to buy food for his family. In contrast, Walter used the guided prompt 'I have', to talk about his home and family.

evaluating this activity

When we evaluated this activity, everyone was keen to continue reading, discussing and writing. Motivation was high and group interaction and confidence had grown. Later, we used these writings to develop editing skills and for various discussion, reading, writing and language tasks as described in 4.2.4. The discussions and writings also revealed the experiences that learners had in common. The following extract identifies coming to town and schooling.

"I liked school
I passed my standard 6 in 1954.
Then I liked money so I left school.
I moved to town.
So now I want to proceed to learn."

Fig. 14 : Extract from a learner's story

We spent the rest of period 1 exploring these shared experiences. These activities followed a similar pattern to writing about ourselves as described above. These activities are recorded together in the next section.

4.2.2 Sharing experiences of coming to town and of schooling

Before sharing our experiences of coming to town and of schooling, we read relevant extracts from learners' stories. Learners were keen to talk and read and write more in English and were very enthusiastic about tackling these activities.

We usually began by reading and then discussing a relevant text before writing a draft story. We also reflected on ways of preparing for writing. Texts used for these activities included 'When I first came to Johannesburg', 'I walked to South Africa' (Appendix A), and a learner's story called 'Why I left school' (Appendix B, text b).

Pre-reading these texts included discussing where the text came from (e.g. the book title and cover), what the title meant (e.g. who came to town, where from, to which town), who wrote it, why, and what was in it. If there was a contents page we tried to guess where we might find the story we wanted to read. With the actual story, we looked at the title and pictures to guess what it was about. We also wrote up unfamiliar words and phrases such as 'journey', 'with bare feet', 'clothes'. This pre-reading revealed conceptual problems around understanding maps and geography. For example, although people had heard of place names such as 'Zimbabwe' and 'Botswana', no-one knew if these were towns, countries or suburbs! Given our purpose, I decided to leave this problem for the moment. However, this lack of understanding of geography emerged many times during the rest of the programme and often prevented learners from fully comprehending texts. We eventually tried to tackle it (see 4.4.1).

After pre-reading, learners read these stories silently and then asked questions. Learners usually managed to guess

words and phrases from the context. If necessary, I helped by asking questions. Clarifying the stories in this way often generated further discussion. To encourage learners to read critically and to relate the text to their experience, I asked other questions such as:

"So was it like that for you? How did you come to town? Did you find a job? And the wages? Where did you stay? Did you also have trouble with your pass? Do many people you know stay in hostels? Why?"

Learners identified with these texts and they elicited good discussion around the group's experiences. Interesting stories emerged, especially around schooling experiences, as people asked questions, prompted and translated for one another. We discovered for instance, that in this group two learners had never attended school, three learners had passed Standard 6 (twenty-two years ago), three learners had passed Standard 4 and Standard 1, four learners had passed Standard 3 and two learners had passed Standard 2 (see Fig. 2). Most learners had left school because there was no money and they had to work. Another learner left because his parents had divorced and another because he believed that educated people were lazy and drank liquor! In this way, we touched upon issues such as wages, hostels, the pass laws, migrant labour and unemployment, the problem of liquor, education and liberation, etc. These were taken up in theme 2.

After this preparation everyone wrote stories using the readings in different ways to help to write their own

stories, as the following examples illustrate.

"When I First Came To Johannesburg
My name is Thabo ...
I come from Nigel.
I first came to Germiston in 1964.
I took three weeks to find a job.
I first got a job as an operator at Claxo Allenbury's.
I worked there for three years.
That time they paid me ₪3.10.
That time my pass was not right for Germiston.
So I asked the company to save ₪1.00 to help me if
the pass office needed some money.
I could ask the company to give me that money."

Fig. 15 : Thabo's story

"When I First Came To Johannesburg
Peter M. My Life Story
I was born in Lesotho in 1952 7th July.
In 1967 I came to Johannesburg to look for a job.
I started working as a painter assistant.
That time they paid me R25 a week.
I worked there for three months.
After three months the job became short.
I planned to be a self-employed painter.
I worked for three years as a painter.
One day I was working in Johannesburg in Mrs
Jein's house.
I painted the house inside and outside for R700.
I finished the house after two months.
Mrs Jein asked me this question -
"Peter, how much have you got in the bank?"
I told her "I've got R130".
She asked me, "Where are you going to paint?"
I told her I had no job.
She told me she was going to get me a better job.
She phoned I.R. Works Manager.
From that day I had a better future.
I became an operator.
I was so happy about that job."

Fig. 16 : Peter's story

"Why I Left School

I was born in Transkei in 1959.
I left school in Standard 2.
My father did not go to school.
My problem why I left school is that my father divorced my mother.
I was only 8 years old.
I looked after my cattle, kraal and my house.
I started to look for work in 1978.
Till now I work nicely.
My mother died in 1985.
Thank you." Apolis

Fig. 17 : Apolis' story

"Why I left School

When I was a young boy I was not interested in school because I saw that many educated people were very lazy to do other jobs with their hands.
They liked to talk and drink liquor.
When I was in Standard five, I decided that it was better if I left school to avoid being lazy and drinking liquor.
But now I see education is very important for the people.
That is why I started to learn at this school.
I am happy to learn in this school because I will understand many things.
Thank you." Written by Danniell

Fig. 18 : Danniell's story

These four stories show how, for instance, Thabo and Apolis stuck to the model text to help get started, while Peter and Danniell wrote more personal and creative stories. Apolis' story was a great improvement on his first attempt (Fig. 11). These stories were used for editing and other language tasks, as described in 4.2.4.

4.2.3 Sharing what happened recently

At the start of most lessons, we chatted for a few minutes and discussed, for instance, why learners were delayed or had been absent. This often led to unexpected activities such as roleplay and writing stories. To initiate these conversations I asked questions such as:

"Apolis, how was your weekend/holiday? What did you do? How were things at home?
You look tired Walter?
What happened to your eye Peter?
What happened today Walter? Did you have a problem?
Where's Thabo today?
Meshack, what happened to you last week?"

This produced responses from learners such as:

"The weekend I'm working.
I'm busy to look for the place to stay.
On Sunday I'm go to the church/I'm visit my friend.
I'm get accident at work.
Peter he is go fetch passport for wife.
I was busy at work. I was sick. I was at home."

Later in the programme other reasons were added, such as:

"His father died. I worked overtime/night-shift.
I went to the doctor. I had an accident".

Responses grew longer as the group began to initiate these interactions. I helped by prompting with questions like:

"Can someone ask Thabo why he was absent?
Can someone tell Peter what we did last time?
What did we learn last time?
Peter, can you ask someone what we learned?"

With help, learners responded: "We learned to talk about ourselves", or "We read about liquor". This served as revision. As learners latched on to the useful question form "What happened?", questioning became more natural and spontaneous. At times mother tongue discussion took over and I had to request an explanation in English.

Subsequently learners encouraged each other to try to discuss and to offer explanations in English.

filling the register and roleplay

We used the information about absenteeism to fill the register. We began by discussing the purpose of the register and then how to fill it. Learners took turns to do this, which entailed reading the register, asking why people were absent and filling in reasons in note form, such as 'was sick', or 'went home'. With practice this became easier and engendered more interaction as learners asked questions and narrated longer stories. These discussions around absence and recent events often led to roleplaying problematic situations such as apologising and explaining absence or lateness. Occasionally we tape-recorded and analysed these. The following is an extract from a roleplay which took place in the group, which we then wrote up.

Marian : "Elliot you weren't here on Monday, what happened?"

Peter : I went home on Friday. I came back in Monday. The problem was the car. It broke down. I started work on Tuesday.

Marian : Did you phone work to tell them?

Peter : No, there was no phone where I broke down.

Marian : Did you explain to your manager what happened? ... "

Fig. 19 : Extract from a roleplay

Often learners also wrote these stories about what happened on the weekend, at Easter, at Christmas etc. These were used for editing, spelling, punctuation and grammar tasks.

evaluating

Learner evaluations of these activities were very positive and the group was keen to read, to discuss and to write more stories. They also requested more feedback and help with "spelling". This meant everything about writing, including grammar, syntax, discourse, punctuation, and vocabulary (the Zulu word 'ukubhala' means 'spelling' and 'writing'). Thus the group needed to learn about different aspects of writing and how to identify where their stories were unclear and to correct them. These tasks are described in the next section.

4.2.4 Language tasks

Language tasks carried out around this theme-work focussed on three main areas: grammar awareness (the use of the simple past for narration), monitoring learners' oral communication (how learners use the simple past), and editing for a clear story, including editing for grammar, punctuation and spelling and drawing up editing guidelines.

4.2.4.1 Grammar awareness - using the simple past for narration

Narrating events about coming to town, schooling experiences and recent events required the ability to express past completed action in English. This was attempted through conscious discussion, monitoring, editing and awareness-raising tasks.

I began these tasks on the simple past by writing up 'I'm come', and 'I came'. I then explained how a learner had informed my colleague "I'm come visit you Saturday." She understood that he wanted to visit her the following Saturday. Eventually she realised that he was annoyed because he had visited her the previous Saturday when she was out! I then wrote up errors from learners' stories and asked when these events took place:

"I like school. I pass std 6. I leave school."

We corrected these and agreed that it was important to be able to understand and to use the past properly in

English. We then began to focus on the past in reading, speaking and writing. The following is a selection of the kinds of tasks carried out.

When reading a text, we underlined and discussed key past words, as in the following examples.

"I first came to Johannesburg in 1979. I came by from Piet Retief by bus. It took two weeks to find a job."

We then discussed and recorded these forms. Another task involved substituting personal details and extending or changing a text about the past. In this extract from Thabo's story, the substituted information is underlined.

"I first came to Germiston in 1964.
I came from Nigel by taxi ...
My pass was alright ... "

Soon after introducing the simple past, learners asked me to write up irregular verb pairs which they recorded for reference purposes. The list grew as we added more pairs from time to time as follows.

I buy	I bought	I go	I went
I leave	I left	I get	I got
I say	I said	I come	I came
I know	I knew		

Learners also found the following matching task useful.

go	slept	say	said
buy	went	go	----
drink	cleaned	drive	----
sleep	bought	come	----
clean	drank	leave	----

We also used cloze or gap-filling exercises to reinforce and check learners' understanding of the past using texts

that we had read. In the following example, the group retold Saaimon's story. I wrote this up and then rubbed out the past forms as shown here.

"About Saaimon

started	got	liked
was born	liked	passed
moved	left	got

Saaimon ___ ___ in 1945.
He ___ standard 6 in 1951.
He ___ school.
He ___ married in 1961.
His first child ___ a boy.
Then he ___ money.
He ___ to town.
He ___ to the city in 1962.
He ___ working in Germiston."

Fig. 20 : Simple past cloze exercise

As a learner re-read the story aloud, we filled in the missing words and discussed how 'was born' is different. Learners then repeated this task on their own.

4.2.4.2 Monitoring oral communication - the simple past

To focus learners on how we express the past when speaking, I jotted down the group's errors made during discussions. At a convenient break I read the appropriate sentences back and asked the group, for example:

"Someone said, 'I come to town in 1972.' Is it clear? You said, 'Then I'm go see my friend.' Is that okay? Peter, your story was very clear, except for two mistakes you made when you talked about the past. Do you remember what they were? You were telling us about your first job?"

Usually someone offered a correction. If not, I encouraged

the group to help by asking:

"What did he say?, Can anyone try to say it in a better way?, Can anyone help Peter?, Does anyone remember how we say that in the past?"

Gradually learners began to prompt each other. A less obvious, but equally effective way of giving immediate feedback to the speaker was through the use of non-verbal signals such as looking wide-eyed, raising ones eyebrows, looking puzzled, nodding ones head backwards and pointing a thumb over one shoulder. Although the group agreed that this feedback helped a great deal, when they were under pressure to communicate they continued to make the same mistakes. In an attempt to change this, I tentatively experimented with interrupting the speaker while he spoke. For instance, as he said: "Then I'm going ...", I interrupted with, "Sorry?", or "Pardon?" This made an instant connection between meaning and the form being used, which learners appreciated. Other strategies included asking quizzically:

"I'm going?"
"Sorry, what did you say?"
"Can you say it again please?"
"Try that last sentence again. See if you can say it more clearly?"
"Please tell us again about 1971."
"Can anyone say that in a better way?"

Invariably someone could offer a correction. Soon learners were correcting themselves as they spoke by saying, for instance: "Then I'm go ... then I was go", or "Then I was went ... then I went". Gradually these monitoring strategies became routine and by period 2 learners were

using them to nudge one another. Learners also tried new ones, as when Meshack asked: "Sorry Walter, there's something wrong there?"

4.2.4.3 Editing stories

Editing tasks of various kinds were all aimed at helping learners to clarify the way in which the intended message or meaning in the text was conveyed. This entailed editing for particular grammatical features, punctuation and spelling. We also drew up general editing guidelines.

editing for meaning and structure

From the beginning of this programme, I encouraged learners to read their stories aloud to the group to hear if the message made sense and if the ideas were in a clear order. Initially learners were reluctant to try this, but after experiencing it, everyone grew more enthusiastic. Having heard the story, I encouraged learners to think about the communicative impact by asking questions such as:

- "What did Peter say?"
- "Who can tell us about Meshack?"
- "What did Peter say about his family?"
- "Can you tell us about Walter?"
- "What was Apolis' story about?"
- "What happened to Apolis?"
- "Can anyone tell us his story again?"

I also asked the following kinds of questions to relate the information to the group's experiences

- "So is everyone here married?"
- "How many people come from Natal?"
- "Which language do most people here speak?"

Using translation when necessary, learners helped each other by asking questions; by asking the writer to repeat parts of his story to check out his meaning; by discussing the content of the story and the writer's meaning, and by suggesting better ways of saying things. Other learners' stories had clear ideas but were structured badly or omitted key information, as in this extract.

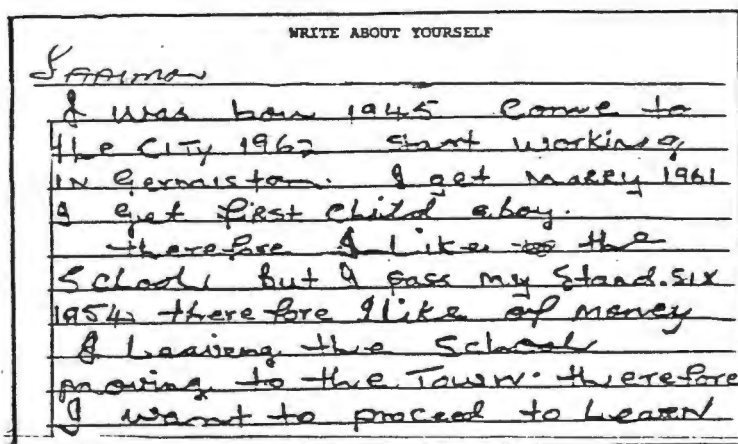


Fig. 21 : Extract from Saaimon's original story

After Saaimon had read his text, I asked the group for the main dates and events and wrote them up as follows:

1945	He was born.
1962	He came to the city.
1961	He got married.
1954	He passed std 6.

I then asked if these were correct and in a good order. We discussed discrepancies in his birthdate and schooling dates. It transpired that Saaimon was unsure about dates in general, although he was clear about the sequence of events. We also identified missing information and discussed how Saaimon could write a longer story with four parts, using paragraphs as follows.

- 1 was born
- 2 went to school
- 3 got married, had children
- 4 came to town

We also discussed why it is important to organise the ideas clearly for the reader. We discussed who will read our stories and how this affects what we write. After editing, learners rewrote their stories. Where necessary, I then made final corrections, typed them and gave back perfect copies which learners then compared with their drafts. These editing tasks were useful and became very popular (learners reminded me if I overlooked someone's turn).

editing for grammar, spelling and punctuation

We worked on editing for grammar, spelling and punctuation as part of editing for a clear story. As learners read their texts aloud, we discussed parts where the grammar, spelling or punctuation interfered with the message. For instance, with grammar, I asked learners to focus on how past action or events were expressed. The writer, with the help of other learners then underlined or changed his draft. If necessary, I also identified problems and gave the writer the opportunity to make further corrections.

At times, pronunciation and intonation caused confusion. For instance, it was not clear whether the speaker was referring to the past or the present because of difficulty pronouncing (and spelling), the following word endings:

worked, stopped, talked, (pronounced 't')
 lived, cleaned, played, died, (pronounced 'd')
 started, visited, waited, did, (pronounced 'id')

We tackled these problems by listening to and then pronouncing these word-pairs:

'work - worked', 'die - died' and 'wait - waited'.

At this stage we only discussed spelling problems which interfered with our understanding of the message. The spelling in Ndodomzi's story below is very poor. However, when he read it aloud to us, the message was perfectly clear, except for confusion around 'coka' (it meant 'coca cola', not 'cocoa'). The teacher rewrote this text to show Ndodomzi how we write these words.

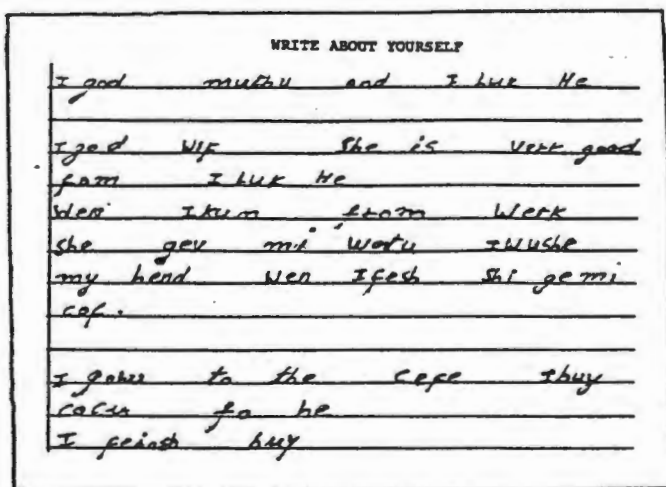


Fig. 22 : Ndodomzi's original story

Other significant spelling problems which arose when learners read their texts aloud included word pairs which were confused, such as 'come' and 'came' (spelt 'cem' by learners). We handled this by asking learners to listen

and identify the sound difference in the minimal pairs 'come' and 'came' and 'some' and 'same'. We then took each word and made spelling patterns which learners recorded as follows.

came	come
<u>same</u>	some
<u>name</u>	
<u>game</u>	
<u>surname</u>	

For punctuation we compared speaking with writing and how we use a full stop to indicate the end of an idea and a capital letter to start again. We also discussed the use of paragraphs to separate themes.

Other less significant punctuation or spelling mistakes were usually tackled at the last editing stage. The writer looked closely at his story and underlined words that he thought were misspelt or where punctuation was needed. He then checked these out. When necessary I underlined other parts of his story and asked the learner to try to correct these. Learners also exchanged texts and helped each other by underlining or discussing problem areas. From time to time the whole group analysed and corrected errors common to most learners and discussed ways of remembering the corrections. For example with the word 'Saturday', learners proposed sounding each syllable as it looks, i.e. Sat/ur/day.

drawing up editing guidelines

After practising these various editing skills, we drew up simple editing guidelines as follows:

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| <u>"Writing Drafts</u> | |
| 1 | write a first draft |
| 2 | read this aloud to someone who knows English well |
| 3 | correct it and rewrite it |
| 4 | now check full stops, commas and capitals |
| 5 | now check the past |
| 6 | now check your spelling". |

Fig. 23 : Editing guidelines

These guidelines provided a summary of the editing skills tackled thus far for learners to refer to when necessary.

evaluating

From time to time we evaluated these editing tasks. We discussed, for instance, how spelling mistakes usually do not block understanding, as in Ndodomzi's case. We also discussed how the reader automatically corrected spelling, punctuation, grammar, word order, vocabulary and missing words in his text by reading aloud. Learners agreed that having an audience to listen and to give feedback helped. On the whole, learner evaluations were positive. Everyone was enthusiastic about using their writings for language tasks because they felt that these made you think. Learners also realised that they made more mistakes when concentrating on communicating and not on the technical aspects. They also complained about never receiving

feedback on their English outside the class. As a result they continued to speak unclearly and to reinforce bad habits. Learners also felt that they learnt more from the teacher than from each other because the teacher was able to identify and to correct their errors. They were concerned about missing some errors.

4.2.5 Advanced language work

Finally, I describe more advanced editing and grammar tasks tackled later in the programme and some of the research that this entailed.

advanced editing and grammar awareness

Later in the programme, editing and grammar tasks became more sophisticated and identified areas of further research. I illustrate this using Apolis' story. In the group we often wrote up stories narrated orally by learners. One of these came from Apolis, the least able and the least confident learner in the group who told us about his brother's car accident on the weekend. We worked on this story for most of one lesson. Although Apolis struggled to get his story across, with prompting, questioning and translation from the group he was able to relate the events. We monitored the use of the past and when the story was clear I wrote it up as follows:.

"The Car Accident

My brother had a car accident in Thokoza Location.
His car was white.
It was a 1970 model.
It happened early on Saturday morning.
The car which caused the accident did not stop at the
stop street.
There was no-one injured, but the car was damaged.
The man who caused the accident said, "You must not
put me in jail."
The man took the car to the garage.
He had no licence.
He was also drunk."

Fig. 24 : Apolis' story

During this process, spelling and punctuation problems arose and were tackled on-the-spot, including the use of inverted commas for direct speech. No-one knew how to indicate that someone is speaking, so I explained the use of speech marks (this seemed easier than explaining indirect speech). Although at the end of this process the content and structure of Apolis' story was clear, it raised other grammar questions around the use of the articles 'a' and 'the' and the pronouns 'he' and 'she'. These affected meaning as it was often unclear who or which car Apolis was referring to. We tackled some of these problems later in the programme.

using the articles 'a' and 'the'

The use of 'a' and 'the' had arisen earlier when describing jobs and family relations. However we only tackled this

when we had several examples from learners' stories and when the group seemed ready and keen to understand it. We began by looking at extracts from learners' stories to check how 'a' was used and what it meant. These were some of the examples studied:

"I'm machine operator (I'm a machine operator)

I'm got the wife (I've got a wife)

While attempting to explain this, I drew the following diagram which seemed to help the group to understand the concept.

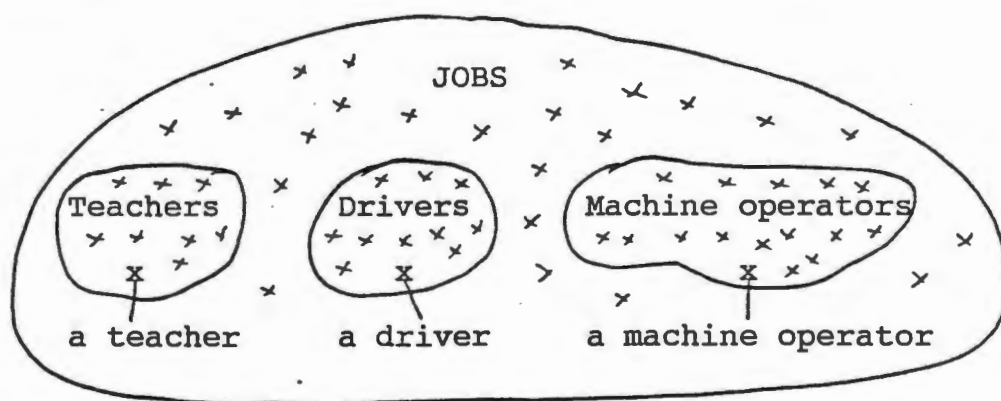


Fig. 25 : 'A/the' diagram

The group then offered a translation for 'a', meaning 'nomayiphi' in Zulu, or in English, 'one of a group, the same as many others'. We then contrasted 'a' with 'the', as used in texts such as the following extract.

"I am a mother ...
 I am a member of Manyano.
 I am the mother of my daughter.
 I am the father of my daughter ...".

Fig. 26: Extract from Jane Hoko's story

Here we decided that 'the' meant 'that special one', as opposed to 'any one'. We discussed how Apolis' text uses articles to denote new or given information and then constructed a cloze exercise as follows:

"The Car Accident

My brother had ___ car accident in Thokoza Location.
 ___ car was white.
 It was ___ 1970 model.
 It happened early on Saturday morning.
 ___ car which caused ___ accident did not stop at ___
 stop street.
 There was no-one injured, but ___ car was damaged.
 ___ man who caused ___ accident said, "You must not
 put me in jail."
 He took ___ car to ___ garage."

. Fig. 27 : Cloze exercise on 'a/the'

Initially this use of articles was difficult for learners to grasp. However, over time and with more examples it became clearer. Later on, learners' wrote stories called 'Who am I?', which used these articles well, as this extract shows:

Who am I?

*I am a man.
 I was born in 1948.
 I am working at Paragon Rubber.
 I am a married man.
 I have four children.
 Their names are Vusumzi,
 Phakamile, Nalorhiwe and Mbongeni.
 I am the man of my wife.
 I am the father of my children.
 I am a quiet man.
 I am a learning man.
 I am the first son at home.
 I am not a lazy man.*

Fig. 28 : Mandla's story

using the pronouns 'he/she'

During task-work learners needed to refer to family members, friends and other learners. Initially we discussed the 'he/she' gender distinction that learners found difficult and then the double subject problem as in the example: "Peter he is go fetch passport for wife". I asked who went to fetch the passport and then explained that in English we do not have to repeat the 'who' part, as it is usually enough to refer to the person once. We followed this with a Zulu translation to show where the error came from ('Peter, uye' = 'Peter he went'). We then corrected other examples.

In Apolis' text, 'he' and 'she' indicate given information and replace the proper noun. We discussed replacing 'the man' with 'he' in the following sentences, because the man has already been introduced in the story:

"The man took the car to the garage.
The man had no licence.
He was also drunk."

We checked other examples and then used worksheets, strips and cloze exercises to reinforce this. Here is an example.

"The Car Accident

The accident _____ on Saturday morning.
The man who _____ the accident ___ not stop at
the stop street.
___ was drunk.
___ _____ the car to the garage.
___ _____ no licence.
___ _____ not want to go to jail."

Fig. 29 : Cloze exercise on simple past and pronouns

Throughout the rest of the programme we monitored and edited the way we indicated given or new information. We also checked what 'it', 'he' or 'they' referred to in texts, and if it was given or new information.

Language research

All of these language tasks-in-process provided a window from which to view the process by which learners were acquiring English. These insights identified areas of further research and gave direction to the programme. An example was how learners acquired the ability to express past completed action. For instance, at the start of the programme learners said:

"On Sunday I'm visit my friend" or
"On Sunday I'm visiting my friend".

After focussing on the simple past, learners began to use 'was' to signal past as in:

"On Sunday I was visit my friend"
"On Sunday I was visited my friend" or,
"My father was had a house in Thokoza",

When under pressure, learners reverted to incorrect forms. However, in time, the group began to use the correct form interspersed with incorrect forms, as this extract shows.

WHY I LEFT SCHOOL

When I was a young boy I was not intrusted for the school, because I was saw many educated people they was Very lazy to do other job by his hand. They like to talk and drink liquor. When I am in 5ed Five. I started to dicyde better I must leave school. To are voyd to be lazy and drink liquor. But now I see educated is Very inpotad for the people. That is why I started

Fig. 30 : Extract from Danniell's story

Gradually I became more aware of learner language and I noted the following phrases that continually emerged:

"I finished to drink beer.
I went to visited my friend.
Then I went to washed myself.
We struggled to had an education.
I started to worked in 1962.
I began to worked as a kitchen boy.
I started washed myself.
I started to work / working/ work.
He said this child must looked after my cows.
You had to travelled.
I come from Germiston in 1969. (I came to Germiston)
I came from Natal. (I come from Natal)
I born 1956.
I borned ..."

At the time I did not understand why learners produced some of these utterances, until I had enough data to notice patterns. I researched these errors and was better equipped to tackle some of them, using examples from learners' own spoken and written English.

Summary

The theme 'about ourselves' took up most of period 1 and part of period 2. The main communicative activities around sharing personal experiences offered opportunities for genuine interaction. A variety of texts, including stories from other learners were used to stimulate discussion and to help learners to write. These activities revealed valuable information about people's lives, experiences, concerns and language needs. They also raised broader issues which were pursued in theme II.

These activities also generated various language tasks to improve the group's reading, writing and oral skills. At the same time, these tasks developed learners' awareness of how English works and how to learn and improve on their own. Language tasks-in-process also provided diagnostic data and an insight into learner interlanguage and the language learning process. As a result, areas of research were identified and follow-up tasks devised.

Thus, the various communicative and language tasks carried out in this theme provided direction in developing the syllabus, leading into the next theme 'about our context'.

4.3 Syllabus Account II

About Our Context

Introduction

The second theme 'about our context' flowed from and ran parallel to the first theme 'about ourselves'. It became the main theme during periods 2 and 3. It explored areas of common concern for the group, plus a number of issues emerging from incidents and events during the programme.

This theme comprised the following five main topics:

- 4.3.1 The dangers of liquor
- 4.3.2 Management interference
- 4.3.3 The importance of education
- 4.3.4 History
- 4.3.5 Current events

All of these topics were unplanned (except for 'the dangers of liquor'), and were explored in an ad hoc fashion as they arose, using a problem-posing method. This entailed reading, discussion and writing tasks, culminating in some form of action or decision-making by the group. These topics also provided stimulating content for developing language and cognitive skills through a variety of tasks. Thus language and cognitive development were integral to problem-posing.

4.3.1 The dangers of liquor

The topic of 'liquor' was proposed by learners when we planned our first syllabus (see 4.4.2). An older learner who often had to chair meetings in English asked to debate topics such as 'liquor', 'smoking' and 'the Church' as these would stimulate learners to exchange opinions and to debate in English. The group agreed to start with 'liquor' because there were conflicting views on this in the group. This topic generated various language tasks and also linked up with theme 1 activities around sharing schooling experiences (e.g. the claim that educated people drink liquor). This provided further stimulus for the debate around liquor.

debating, reading, writing, editing and language work

To prepare to debate 'liquor', we worked on the language needed for this. We translated phrases suggested by learners and stuck flashcards on the wall as follows:

I think that/I believe that - Ngicabanga/Ngithemba ukuthi

In my opinion - Ngokucabanga kwami

I want to say that - Ngifuna ukubeka umqondo ukuthi

I agree - Ngivuma

I don't agree/I disagree - Angivuma

Firstly - Kuqala

It's good because - Kuhle ngoba

It's not right/good because - Akulungile/akukuhle ngoba

Fig 31 : Classroom language flashcards

During the debate and other discussions during the rest of the programme, learners referred to these cards. We also added more phrases as they came up.

To launch the liquor debate, we read and discussed an article called 'The dangers of liquor' (Appendix A). Although we translated unfamiliar terms into Zulu and Sotho, we found that nobody understood the parts of the body referred to in the text. We tackled this in the next lesson by labelling a diagram of the body affected by alcohol (Appendix A). We also looked at the spelling and pronunciation of words such as 'stomach', 'alcohol' and 'liquor'. Discussions around the reading and the diagram generated extensive debate. Learners identified two main dangers of liquor: the health hazard and social problems such as family poverty, violence and general suffering. The two main reasons given for excessive drinking were the oppression, misery and hopelessness of people's lives, and the social pressure to drink. A non-drinker told how he is constantly teased and accused of 'listening to his wife'. When I asked whether drinking was a problem for men or for women, most learners felt that a woman should not drink because she is responsible for the house and for the children. The man on the other hand, is not accountable to his wife because he works and brings home the wages. One learner disagreed vehemently and claimed that there was no difference between men and women drinking. He subsequently

wrote about this (see Fig. 33). I guided this debate with questions and gave my opinion when necessary. For example, everyone believed that only poor black people got drunk. When I asked whether rich black people got drunk, learners agreed. I then suggested that alcohol abuse is a problem which affects everyone regardless of colour, class, gender, etc. However, the group refused to believe that rich white people had problems which caused them to drink! After these lively discussions, everyone wrote what they thought about liquor. These texts reflected the debates in the group. Peter, for instance, highlighted the social problems, whereas Danniell expressed strong views on women and liquor.

"What about Liquor?"

There are many ways that liquor can damage our lives. Today there are many kids walking the streets, no parents to look after them. There are husbands and women today who are divorced. Many people are suffering. They have left their jobs because of liquor."

Fig. 32 : Peter's writing about liquor

DEBATE DANGERS OF LIQUOR

I am very disappointed about liquor. Because the vast of people they like liquor. I don't believe that people said the woman and the liquor. Because liquor is for the man. My opinion I say liquor is not for the man. Liquor is for anybody as long you like to drink liquor.

I want to know the difference by the liquor to the man and the woman. Because I think is not right for anybody the man and the woman.

I think liquor is not right for the woman. Because the woman is responsible for the man and the children. The man is responsible for the woman and his children. That is why I say liquor is not good for the people.

Fig. 33 : Danniell's writing about liquor

We edited these writings as described in the first account. We also used them for spelling, punctuation and grammar tasks. For instance, we looked at how 'drink' and 'drank' differ in meaning, sound and spelling. We then practised distinguishing the sounds of these word pairs:

drink	drank
stink	stank
think	thank

These language tasks in turn generated further debate on this topic. Finally, we discussed what we could do about liquor problems. The group decided not to pressurise people to drink alcohol when they visited their homes. Some learners thought the Church should try to influence people. Learners who enjoyed drinking liquor said they would not give it up but would try ways of drinking without getting drunk. A non-drinker said he would continue to counsel alcoholic friends who asked him for help. Finally learners suggested that husbands or other people should speak to women who drink.

evaluating

Participation during this taskwork was good and everyone contributed something. At the end, learners agreed that it had been very useful: they had learnt how to drink and not get drunk, about illnesses and your body, and how to use and spell words properly. A learner who had been a professional boxer commented: "I've learned that liquor is a tough guy: I must be prepared before I meet liquor!"

4.3.2 Management interference

Management interfered in this programme on at least three main occasions. Firstly, they tried to sit in on lessons, then they ruled on the question of overtime, and finally, they censored materials. This interference generated discussion leading to decisions or action of some kind by the group.

At the second lesson of the programme, the CEP officer sat in on our lesson while we were discussing the group's English needs. His presence was intimidating, especially when he gave his views on learners' needs and asked what textbooks we would use. When he left we speculated that he was attending in order to improve his own English; to make sure that learners attended; or to check up on what was being learnt. The group accepted my suggestion to speak to the CEP co-ordinator. I was informed that the officer had misunderstood his role and that he would only collect the register or deliver messages.

A second incident occurred during period 2 when four learners informed us that they would miss lessons because of overtime. They were in a dilemma about this: they stressed the importance of education and how much these classes had helped them; but they also needed to earn extra money. These learners had been told to return their materials and to resign from the programme. We discussed

this and agreed to ask the CEP to allow learners to keep the materials and to rejoin the programme when overtime finished. Although the CEP agreed to this, no learners returned to the classes. I discovered later that the learners affected had not been informed of these decisions. However, overtime was continuing and they were reluctant to pursue this matter.

Finally, during period 4, management confiscated 'Learn and Teach' magazines that learners had been found reading at lunchtime. Although the CEP head office asked me to attend a special management meeting to explain the use of such materials, this meeting never took place. When we discussed this, learners were adamant that they wanted to continue reading the magazine and asked to buy past editions to read at home. They especially liked the stories about 'the old days', 'Mandela' and 'Cosatu'. When we discussed why management did not like the magazine, a learner suggested that they wanted the workers to be ignorant. In the end, to avoid unnecessary conflict the group decided to buy their own copies of 'Learn and Teach' or to take out a subscription. They also planned to keep the magazine out of sight at work. Meanwhile we continued to photocopy articles to read and this issue did not arise again.

4.3.3 The importance of education

The topic of education pursued ideas raised during theme I around learners' schooling experiences. Discussion, reading and writing tasks explored attitudes towards learning and the causes of poor education. These tasks also generated more language tasks.

reading and discussing attitudes towards learning

During this topic we read various texts on non-formal adult literacy classes, on learning in Mocambique, and on why schooling is important (appendix A). After pre-reading, reading silently and checking these texts, we discussed how the ideas related to learners' experiences. During these discussions, the group revealed deep-seated fears about learning. They described how terrifying the initial grouping session at CEP had been. There had been too many workers at one time; they had not understood the purpose of the evening; and they had found the grouping exercises childish. Learners also spoke of workers who had noted the improvement in their English and now wanted to join the classes. However, they were intimidated by colleagues and by the white foremen who teased them about wasting time because they were too old to go back to school. White workers accused learners of wanting to become managers or of attending classes so as to avoid working. When I asked why these workers ridiculed them, a learner suggested that some of these workers were envious and would also like to

learn. When we discussed what to do about this, some learners revealed how they try to persuade other workers to join the class. They show them their files and books and explain what they learn. (In practice, only five new learners joined the programme).

discussing the causes of inadequate education

During discussions around the various readings, the group mentioned poverty as a major reason for missing out on schooling. To explore this I asked questions such as: "Why was your father poor?, Why did he get low wages?, Why was money important?". These raised further issues around the history of the land, labour and education in South Africa. Many of these questions drew a blank from the group who were unable to explain these complex issues.

Learners also mentioned that education was not so important in their youth, particularly for girls, as parents wanted 'lobolo'. Even today, education for girls was wasted because they became housewives and mothers. Learners also stressed the importance today of 'international education', for communicating with the rest of the world. To pursue some of these ideas I asked questions such as:

"Why didn't your father believe in education?, Did you receive education at home when you did not go to school?, Why is education at school important today?"

For learners education has status value and can give you a better job and a better life, if you know English. Thus,

education and particularly English, lay at the root of the problem. Inferior Bantu education meant that Blacks did not get good jobs and were discriminated against. The only remedy was to become educated. When I asked if anyone would get a better job after attending these classes, only two learners thought they might get promoted. Most thought this unlikely because the best jobs were reserved for White and 'Coloured' workers who were better educated.

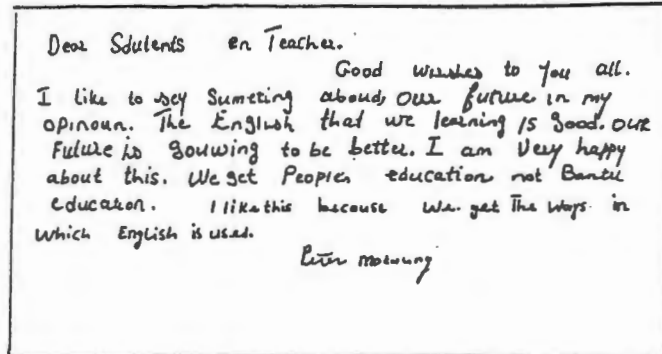
During these discussions it was difficult to get to the deeper root causes of educational and employment inequalities. After some probing, 'apartheid' was mentioned, although we still insisted that inferior education was the main cause of inequality and that education was the only avenue available to redress this situation. When learners claimed that 'Bantu education' produced 'cheeky' students, I responded by showing the educational expenditure for each 'population group' in the country. The group was astonished to learn that so little was spent on Black education compared with other groups. When I asked why it was so unequal, the group said that the government wanted to keep the Black man down. When I probed further, the group shrugged their shoulders again.

At one point I wrote up 'people's education' and asked what this meant. Although a few learners had heard of this, no-one could explain it. We guessed what it meant and

compared learning in our class with learning in a government night school. Some learners had experienced these and were highly critical of them. I then wrote up the popular slogan at the time 'liberation before education'. Learners had seen this and other slogans but did not know what 'liberation' meant! Once the meaning was clear (using the more familiar word 'freedom'), the group expressed vehement opposition to this slogan, preferring 'education for liberation'. As one learner wrote: "If liberation is there, we must have say to the government. If we are not educated how can we say something to these people?". We debated why scholars were boycotting school and demanding 'liberation before education'. Most learners felt that these children were throwing away their chance of some kind of education and that boycotting was not a solution. I responded that I believed they were demanding 'liberation before education' because they knew they would never have an equal chance in life until they had a say in the running of the country. Boycotting was a way of putting pressure on the government. This led to discussing politics, elections and democracy as practised in other countries. It opened up potentially huge areas as I realised that learners lacked general knowledge and skills around geography, history, economics, politics and how different governments operate. I was not prepared to tackle these at this stage, so I cut short the discussion.

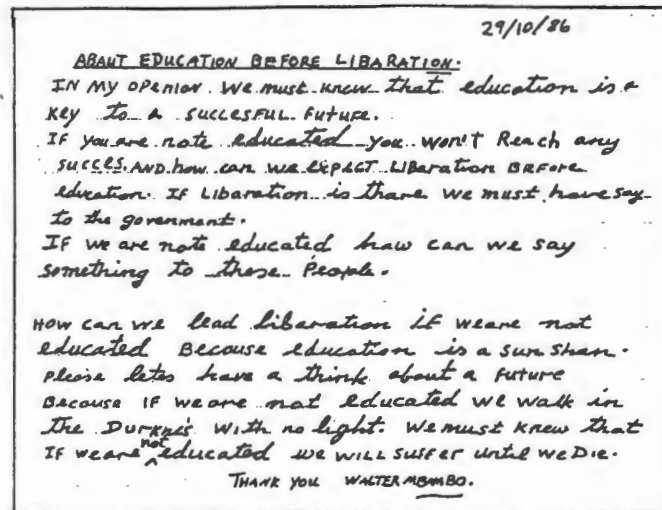
writing

As we could go no further and to round off this issue I asked if learners wanted to write about education. They were very keen to do so. The following two corrected texts illustrate the strong feelings engendered by this topic.



Dear Students and Teacher.
Good Wishes to you all.
I like to say something about our future in my opinion. The English that we learning is good. Our future is growing to be better. I am very happy about this. We get Peoples education not Bantel Education. I like this because we get the ways in which English is used.
Peter Mwangi

Fig. 34 : Peter's writing about education



29/10/86
ABOUT EDUCATION BEFORE LIBERATION:
IN MY OPINION WE MUST KNOW THAT EDUCATION IS A KEY TO A SUCCESSFUL FUTURE.
IF YOU ARE NOT EDUCATED YOU WON'T REACH ANY SUCCESS AND HOW CAN WE EXPECT LIBERATION BEFORE EDUCATION. IF LIBERATION IS THERE WE MUST HAVE SAID TO THE GOVERNMENT.
IF WE ARE NOT EDUCATED HOW CAN WE SAY SOMETHING TO THESE PEOPLE.

HOW CAN WE LEAD LIBERATION IF WE ARE NOT EDUCATED BECAUSE EDUCATION IS A SUNSHINE. PLEASE LET US HAVE A THINK ABOUT A FUTURE BECAUSE IF WE ARE NOT EDUCATED WE WALK IN THE DARKNESS WITH NO LIGHT. WE MUST KNOW THAT IF WE ARE ^{NOT} EDUCATED WE WILL SUFFER UNTIL WE DIE.
THANK YOU WALTER MUMBO.

Fig. 35 : Walter's writing about education

Some of these stories were subsequently published in the CEP Newsletter, which further motivated the group to write and to edit stories. (CEP, 1986). When editing these, the same complex issues around inequality in society arose. Although these were important to tackle, I was relieved to continue with other learning.

further discussion

Learner's writings and these texts also raised issues around certification and the companies' motives in setting up this CEP programme. Learners noted the hypocrisy of 'Sullivan Code' companies which offered educational programmes to their workers while maintaining pay and promotion differentiation between black and 'coloured' workers and resisting union recognition.

Later in period 2, learners informed us of a DET night school opening at a nearby company which would offer standards 5-8. Classes would be free and held outside worktime. The group was vehemently opposed to the idea of school standards, Black teachers, and subjects like biology and Afrikaans. They did not want to attend classes after work and were content with the current classes. They agreed to show management our syllabus plan and explain why this was what they wanted to learn. On enquiring, I discovered that the companies were legally bound to the CEP programme (after the programme, most of the companies joined the DET centre).

During the final evaluation discussions in period 4, some of these educational issues emerged again (see 4.4.5).

4.3.4 History

The history topic was mainly pursued during periods 2 and 3. It consisted of two aspects: local South African history, and world history. We pursued local history to a greater extent than world history because it was more accessible and relevant for learners. On the other hand, world history fascinated learners but was more remote from their experience and therefore more difficult to tackle.

4.3.4.1 South African history

reading, discussing, writing and editing

South African history was embedded in learners' stories about their lives, as this extract shows:

"I was born in Umtata, Transkei, in 1948. I grew up in Umpeko village. I looked after my father's cattle and I ploughed his fields. At that time my father was a mineworker."

Fig. 36 : Extract from Mandla's story 'Why I left school'

During discussions around coming to town and schooling, we mentioned the discovery of gold, industrialization, the migrant labour system, land dispossession and mission and farm schools. One learner had been a miner, which aroused further interest in reading about 'the old days'.

Eventually we tackled this as a way of also extending our language work on the simple past for narration. We began by reading and discussing a story called 'the old days'

(appendix B, text c). This generated questions and discussion as learners related the text to personal experiences and those of their parents and grandparents. On discussing the final sentences of the text as shown here, we discovered that learners needed extensive background knowledge in order to understand how this dramatic change in people's lives had come about:

"In the old days the people worked for themselves
In the old days the land belonged to the people.
Now most people work for the bosses of the mines,
factories and farms."

Fig. 37 : Extract from 'The old days'

Although learners knew that the land had been taken from their forefathers and that many people had been forced to work on the mines, they did not know when, why, or how this had come about. This revealed potentially enormous areas to explore further. Subsequently three of the four advanced learners chose to learn more about history and at the same time to practise reading, to learn new vocabulary, and to understand how the past is expressed (the fourth learner wanted to work on reading and spelling). I gave these learners adapted extracts from a local history book to see how they managed it (Callinicos, Appendix A). After some preparatory work on difficult concepts such as 'subsistence farmers', 'pre-industrial society' and 'colonialism', the group read and discussed this on their own. I encouraged learners to use each other, to underline

difficult parts in the text, and to try to guess without relying on the dictionary.

When we discussed this reading, I realised that the pre-reading had been inadequate. Vocabulary problems revealed major conceptual gaps in learners' background knowledge of, for example, dates and historical periods (e.g. '1913', '18th century', 'colonialism'); basic map-reading and political geography (e.g. 'a republic', 'urban', 'rural'); as well as numeracy (e.g. 13% of the land). We tried to deal with some of these terms through discussion. However, we needed more time to tackle these in a more structured way. In spite of these enormous constraints on reading comprehension, learners asked interesting questions such as: who made money, why and when. I found these questions difficult to answer spontaneously as I lacked guidelines and appropriate materials to help me. In spite of these drawbacks, learners were highly motivated and when we planned the independent learning period they asked to continue working on history. We agreed upon the learning goals and drew up lesson guidelines for the self-study workbook (see Appendix C, lessons 1-6). When I returned in period 4, these learners were engrossed in the history work and subsequently bought the book to read at home. As we were nearing the end of the programme and because I was daunted by the scope and complexity of this topic, we did not

pursue it any further except as part of the final assessment (see 4.4.4).

4.3.4.2 World history

reading and discussing

World history arose from general conversation in the group. After a trip to KwaNgwanase in N. Natal I related disturbing tales about the 'Inkatha Youth Brigade', which I casually compared to the 'Hitler youth brigade'. Nobody had heard of Hitler, Nazis, World War 2, the holocaust or what or where Germany was. A few learners had heard about a war, but did not understand what it was; who was involved; where it took place; what happened, and the outcomes. I briefly talked about these things but soon realised that it was an enormous topic. As learners were fascinated to know more, I searched for suitable materials, but in vain. Eventually I found some children's books which I showed learners. Looking at these books convinced learners that this topic was enormous and would take up a lot of time. Some learners concluded that learning about history was not really learning English and that they preferred to concentrate on improving their speaking and writing. As a compromise, we passed the books around the group for the next two months. At each lesson, learners asked to swop books and I had difficulty keeping track of them.

4.3.5 Current events

The topic 'current events' dealt with unpredictable issues that arose during the programme through conversation around people's daily lives. The main issues centred around trade union activities and political events in the country.

Trade union issues included union recognition, the role of trade unions, retrenchment and sanctions. Political events focussed on the DPSC and the State of Emergency, Nelson Mandela, 'Black Christmas' and newspapers and censorship.

4.3.5.1 Trade union issues

reading and discussing

During period 1, a learner explained that he had been absent due to a strike at his company over the arrest of a union organiser. We discovered that two companies represented in the group were non-unionised, although one of these was negotiating with UWUSA, the Inkatha union, (United Workers' Union of South Africa). The other two companies were recently unionised under COSATU. Later, after reading the article on education, 'A Different Kind of School' (appendix A), a learner asked for the address and telephone number of SADWU to give to some workers he knew. Nobody had heard of this association for domestic workers and this led to more discussion on the role of unions. There were mixed feelings in the group: the anti-unionists believed that their jobs were more secure

without unions; while unionists supported the work of trade unions in fighting for workers' rights.

During period 2, I pursued this topic by introducing the book My Life Struggle (Appendix A). It was relevant, of interest and at a suitable reading level. I hoped that it would generate more discussion, reading and writing in the group. We had a pre-reading discussion around questions such as:

"What is the book about? Who wrote it? Who is Petrus Tom? Whose life struggle is it about? Why is his life a struggle? Who is he writing this book for?"

The group chose to read the book at home and to bring questions to the lesson. These questions mainly focussed on unfamiliar vocabulary, although there were also problems with dates and places mentioned in the book. However, we did not spend time on this because we had become engrossed in the history topic.

On another occasion towards the end of period 2, a learner informed me that he was an Uwusa shop steward. He asked for my help with reading a recognition agreement that he and another union official had signed at a meeting with management that day. In this document I discovered clauses which prohibited the workers from striking or from asking for wage increases for a year. The shop steward was horrified and took the document back to the union. Later in period 4, the same learner commented that his union was

not good for the workers and he and other workers had joined the COSATU union. (In 1989 he wrote to inform me that he was now a Numsa shop steward.)

discussing sanctions and disinvestment

The related issues of sanctions, disinvestment and unemployment arose when two learners did not return after Christmas because of retrenchment. The ensuing discussion became quite heated as learners were anxious about losing their jobs. Many feared unionisation because this caused trouble and loss of jobs. Learners also blamed sanctions and at a poignant moment in the debate demanded my opinion: "And you?" When I expressed approval and gave my reasons, the response was: "But who will feed our children?" I empathised with the group and explained that I was not personally threatened by sanctions and so could afford to take this stand because I believed that pressure from sanctions was forcing South Africa to change. However, it was clear that the group's overriding concern was with keeping their jobs.

This issue arose again in period 4 when a shop steward excused himself from the lesson to attend a union meeting about retrenchment. We discussed this situation briefly and he reported back to us in the next lesson. The most recently employed workers were retrenched, although the union had managed to negotiate a reasonable retrenchment

deal. This success story began to alter the attitudes of some learners who began to see the need for union-negotiated retrenchment deals. (When I visited the group in September 1988, the anti-unionists were now desperate to join a union because of job insecurity and deteriorating work conditions.)

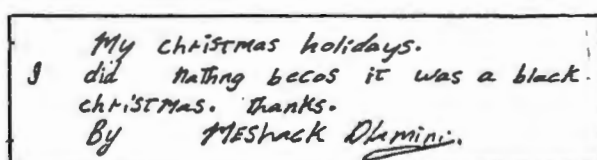
4.3.5.2 Political events

discussing, reading, writing and editing

During period 1, a learner explained that he had been absent from class because he had been looking for his missing brother. I referred to an article on the DPSC in 'Learn and Teach' magazine (appendix A). We read and discussed this and the learner subsequently went there for help. They began investigations, but unfortunately this learner was retrenched and did not return in period 2. No-one knew if he had found his brother. On another occasion a learner asked if we could read Nelson Mandela's speech in the same issue of 'Learn and Teach' (appendix A). After debating whether to read this within earshot of management, we decided to go ahead. At the end there was a short silence and I was hesitant about what to do until learners began asking the meanings of words like "dedicated" and "humble". This led quite naturally to more in-depth discussion of the content. It was interesting to note that learners used this vocabulary in their own

stories later on when they wrote for instance: "I am a dedicated worker.". In period 4, learners again asked to change the lesson plan and to read another story about Mandela which they had discovered in 'Learn and Teach' (appendix A).

At the start of period 2, we talked and wrote about what we had done at Christmas. One learner's story was as follows.



My Christmas holidays.
I did nothing becos it was a black
Christmas. Thanks.
By Meshack Dlamini.

Fig. 38 : Meshack's story, 'Black Xmas'

After reading this to the group, we discussed what he meant by 'black Christmas'. The group described the army presence in the townships and their fears. They did not understand what was happening, but felt that things were getting worse. I discovered that nobody in the group knew about the white elections to be held in May. I explained how I felt about these. During the evaluation at the end of the lesson a learner commented: "It hurts deep down inside here to talk about our suffering, but it's good".

Reading newspapers came up early in the programme when we discussed which newspapers we read, why and what parts. Most learners read the headlines or the sports pages of 'The Star' or 'The Sowetan'. Nobody knew the 'New Nation' or 'Weekly Mail'. We looked at these and discussed how you

can tell that they are anti-apartheid. Most learners could find their way around these newspapers but commented that the 'Weekly Mail' was too expensive. Later in period 4 we looked at the newspaper 'Ukukhanya' (appendix A). During the pre-reading we discussed the content, headings and pictures to see who wrote it and why. We discussed whether we would find the information here in other newspapers. As one learner commented: "The newspaper is half-half", meaning only half the story and only half true! This led to discussing media censorship under the state of emergency. When we discussed why information was restricted and who was responsible, the group gave three reasons. Firstly, the government did not want blacks to know the truth and to cause trouble; secondly, they did not want people overseas to get scared; and lastly, they did not want whites to get scared and to leave the country. When I asked who wrote newspapers, the group said it was the government. I explained as best I could, how newspapers worked, how they differed, who wrote them, and how the government was trying to control them. We then discussed how to judge what was true in newspapers. One way was to think about what kind of newspaper it was and who wrote it before reading it. Another way was to ask yourself questions while reading such as: "Is this my experience? Do I agree?". We decided that 'Ukukhanya' was not 'cut' by the government. Learners took it home to check whether the content was true or not. However, we did

not pursue this because in the next lesson the related issue of management censorship of materials came up (see 4.3.2).

Summary

These topics around the theme 'about our context' aimed to explore and to contextualise learners' experiences. A problem-posing approach was used to analyse issues and to try to get to the root causes, to encourage learners to think and to use language cognitively, and to come up with a solution or some form of action. Language tasks undertaken during this theme-work built upon earlier work described in 4.2, and included more editing, monitoring and grammar work around the use of the simple past for narration. Thus, problem-posing, cognitive development and language skills development went hand-in-hand. As learners learnt more about language and developed more effective strategies for decoding, analysing and comparing texts, they were better able to handle discussion and reading and to try to come to grips with issues affecting their lives. At times, however, the problems were not purely linguistic ones: conceptual and general knowledge gaps related to learners' general background knowledge prevented them from coming to grips with texts and ideas. This limited the effectiveness of our cognitive approach and of problem-posing generally. At times this caused frustration for all concerned.

4.4 Syllabus Account III

Learning How To Learn

Introduction

Part III 'learning how to learn' describes learner training tasks integral to the whole programme. These tasks provide an insight into how learners developed the skills to learn how to learn, i.e. how to plan, manage and evaluate learning effectively.

The five main areas of learner training identified were:

- 4.4.1 Planning, managing and evaluating lessons
- 4.4.2 Planning the syllabus
- 4.4.3 Learning independently
- 4.4.4 Final assessment
- 4.4.5 Final programme evaluation

4.4.1 Planning, managing and evaluating lessons

From the start of this programme, learners were encouraged to participate in planning, managing and evaluating lessons. This entailed negotiating ground rules and practical aspects of the programme, planning and evaluating lessons, and negotiating lesson tasks. In order to develop these skills learners needed to understand the idea of goals and how to use files. A final aspect of planning, managing and evaluating lessons was the use of classroom language.

Negotiating ground rules and practicalities

At the start of the programme I explained my job and why I was involved in this CEP project. We then discussed practical issues such as the venue, the seating arrangement, transport to class, shift work, informing about lateness or absence, keeping a register and homework. Two learners raised the issues of lesson breaks and smoking and we agreed upon rules for these. Later in this period we discussed preparing the room, relaying messages to the CEP and giving homework. During period 2, we had to re-negotiate the venue and lesson times. By this time, the group was actively participating in these kinds of decisions about the programme.

Planning and evaluating lessons

Planning and evaluating lessons required learners to learn about lesson goals and using files. I began by asking if

anyone knew what lesson 'goals' meant. Learners suggested a Zulu translation 'isifezo' and the phrase 'What we are going to learn'. I wrote these on the board with the lesson goals as follows:

<p>"<u>GOALS-ISIFEZO</u> (What we are going to learn) 1. To introduce ourselves 2. To read and write about ourselves 3. To decide what we need to learn this year"</p>
--

Fig. 39 : Lesson 2 goals

We referred to these goals from time to time during the lesson. To evaluate at the end, I asked what 'goals' meant. With prompting, a learner compared it to scoring a goal in soccer (he was a keen sportsman). I then went through each goal, asking questions such as:

"Do we need to practise introducing ourselves again?
We didn't have time for goals two and three, shall we do these next time?
Do you want to practise working out people's ages again?"

The more confident speakers responded and I wrote up the goals for the next lesson as follows:

<p>"<u>GOALS</u> To practise talking, reading and writing about myself To talk about our ages To decide what to learn this year"</p>
--

Fig. 40 : Lesson 3 goals

Tasks around using files helped learners to plan and evaluate. I gave each learner a file and explained about using these to store our work. I then asked what we had

learnt from the worksheets we had used thus far. With help, learners suggested 'about myself' and 'ages', which we wrote on file dividers as follows:



Fig.41 : File dividers

In the next four lessons we spent time practising punching holes and using files to classify, to store and to retrieve papers until it became easier for the group. We added more file dividers to organise our work into tasks, topics and skills. We referred to these often when planning and evaluating lessons, and later on, for syllabus planning. We evaluated lessons by asking questions such as: "What did we learn from this?" "Did it help you?" "Why?" "Why not?". Initially my questions baffled learners. Although translation helped, most learners were shy to speak. They were also unfamiliar with what they were expected to do. As this became clearer, their confidence grew and participation improved.

Negotiating lesson tasks

Throughout this programme learners helped to make decisions about lesson tasks. At times, the group took the initiative and requested certain tasks or altered our lesson plan. For instance, on two occasions learners made direct requests to read texts about Mandela (Appendix A).

On the first occasion quite early on in the programme, the group debated whether to risk reading a Mandela text in the open-plan classroom. Having agreed to go ahead, the group asked a young black trainee teacher who was visiting to read the speech aloud but softly. On another occasion during period 4, we negotiated the plan for the next lesson when I would be absent. We also nominated one of the learners to co-ordinate the lesson. The lesson goals and the plan were as follows:

"Lesson for Wednesday 2nd September 1987

Goals:

To practise talking and writing about the weekend

What to do:

- 1 In pairs, ask each other about the weekend
- 2 Check and help each other
- 3 Write a draft in your diary
- 4 Now read your story to the group. Check your message
- 5 Listen to the other stories. Check that the message is clear
- 6 Check the past and any spellings
- 7 Write your story again"

Fig. 42 : Negotiated lesson plan

On my return, as we were about to evaluate this lesson, a learner requested that we postpone it until the learner co-ordinator was present. He proposed instead that we practise speaking. When we finally evaluated the previous lesson, it transpired that the group had changed lesson task 4 above. Instead of reading their stories to the group, learners had written them on the board and the group had helped to correct them. Everyone agreed that this was

a good way of learning because weaker learners could learn from better ones.

numeracy

Very early in the programme we negotiated the numeracy task of working out years from dates. Learners often spoke about dates as follows: "I'm born 1960" "The first born is 1979", "I'm start at this company 1960". However, no-one could work out the number of years. We discussed when it was important to know your age in years (e.g. when applying for a job). I tried a subtraction on the board and then explained in terms of decades: "From 1950-1960 is 10 years", and so on. These attempts were not very successful, although the group was now keen to learn this. I admitted that I had not taught this before and that I did not know how long it would take to learn. We agreed to work on it for one lesson and see. Fortunately we discovered a learner who could work this out using a different method, so he taught the others. I encouraged him to verbalise in mother tongue as he explained to the group what he was doing. Through this 'talking demonstration' some learners learnt how to work out years. When we discussed whether to spend more time on this, the group said there were more important things to learn so we left it.

However, the need for numeracy arose many times during the

programme (e.g. to calculate GST, wage increases and interest on savings; to understand hire purchase, figures and percentages). On each occasion we negotiated whether to tackle it or not. However, we usually decided not to spend time on these because of other priorities. By the end of the programme, although everyone agreed that knowing about numbers, dates and money was important in their lives, they chose to leave this for a future programme (Appendix F, lines 457-470).

maps

Negotiating map tasks occurred several times during this programme. Initially this arose in period 1 when learners were unable to explain where their homes were or journeys they had taken, as illustrated in the following extract:

"In 1973 I came to Johannesburg.
That year was the first time I came to Johannesburg.
When I took that journey I had twenty rand in my pocket and my family was sad because they did not know that place.
My family took me to the station and I bought a ticket ... I took two days on the way by train.
When I arrived in Jo'burg I saw two men who knew me. They said to me, 'Where have you come from?'
I said, 'I have come from home.' "

Fig. 43 : Extract from Mandla's story about coming to town

We began by checking out places and routes on a map of Southern Africa. Only two learners had any idea of maps and everyone had trouble distinguishing between a country,

a province, a city, a suburb, the land, the sea, etc. We also discovered that only the urban-based worker understood the political connotation of 'homelands' as used by Mandla:

"I grew up in homeland.
I have two sisters in the homeland."

Most learners used 'homeland' to mean 'my home' or 'the place where I was born in the country'. Explaining what 'homelands' were turned out to be far more complex than I had anticipated. In the light of other more urgent needs, we decided to leave it and to pursue more immediate needs to speak, read and write English.

However, the need to understand geography and maps resurfaced frequently during the programme while reading texts or discussing current events. This gap in people's knowledge also limited the problem-posing process. By the end of the programme, I was convinced that understanding maps was essential background knowledge for understanding what was happening in people's lives and in the world.

However, I was not confident about teaching it and I had no readily available resources or teaching ideas to help me.

I was also unsure about how to start and how to sequence these tasks and how long they would take. In any case, the group's final comment on this was that geography was a school subject for 'upper students', rather than an area to be tackled in an English class. It was clear that our perceptions on this matter differed.

Using classroom language

Tasks to develop the language needed to plan, control and evaluate learning were carried out at appropriate moments during lessons. Our first task arose while we were editing Meshack's story, which included the line: "I am proud of myself". No-one knew what 'proud' meant (Meshack's friend had dictated this sentence to him). We discussed the dangers of writing unknown words and how to say when you do not understand something. We came up with four useful phrases which I wrote on flashcards as follows:

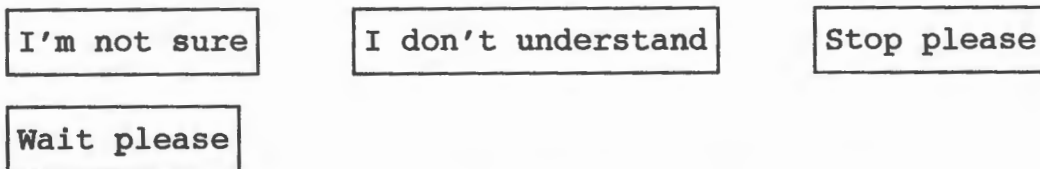


Fig. 44 :Classroom language flashcards

We subsequently referred to these cards whenever the need arose. We also added more phrases, such as:

"Speak louder please" "Repeat please" "Please move"
"Sorry teacher" "Excuse me Walter".

This language enabled learners to interrupt, to attract attention, or to make requests. The language for evaluation included the following phrases:

"It was difficult" "It was easy" "It helped" "It didn't help"
"It's good because ..." "It's not right/good because ..."

The question tag "and you?", and the language for discussion as described in syllabus accounts I and II were also useful for planning, managing and evaluating

learning. As the programme progressed, learners used this language more frequently until it became spontaneous.

4.4.2 Working independently

Towards the latter half of period 2 when the group was reduced to four learners, we began to experiment with new ways of learning. In the smaller group, individual interests and needs became more apparent so we spent time working on different tasks individually, in pairs, or in small groups. Towards the end of period 2 we agreed to combine the intermediate and advanced English groups. Subsequently, lessons began with whole group tasks followed by individual, pair, or small group work. Learners chose how they wanted to work, depending on their level, interests and needs. This freed me to adapt and devise tasks for individuals.

At the end of this period, we discussed my pending absence for six weeks and the various options. By this stage, learners were familiar with working on their own. Without hesitation the group opted to work independently rather than have a new teacher or study at home. They argued that they would learn more this way. However they needed materials to keep them busy for this period.

Preparation for period 3 included discussing where to go for help, what learners wanted to learn and how. We drew up a new syllabus plan (see plan 5 below), and devised a

self-study workbook. The other English teacher taught in the same venue and agreed to help learners when necessary. Syllabus and workbook discussions revolved around learners' needs. The weak speller and reader opted to work with the intermediate learners on easier reading and writing tasks, while the three advanced learners decided to work together on history and more difficult reading and writing tasks. They also requested more exercises on the past and the use of the tape recorder, spelling games and the book 'Gold and Workers'. In the workbook we also included tasks that both groups could work on at different levels, such as diaries and letter-writing (Appendix C). The rest of the time the two groups could work separately but helping each other when necessary.

We then spent time discussing some of these tasks, such as the purpose of diaries and airmail letters and how to use them. We drew up instructions for the airmail letter task as follows:

"Lesson 7

Write a draft letter to Marian.

In pairs, read your letters to each other.

Check that the message is clear.

Now check the spelling, the capitals and full stops.

Write the letter again on the airmail letter.

Stick the letter and post it."

Fig. 45 : Lesson guidelines for workbook

At the lesson prior to my departure, we went through the workbook instructions together.

During my absence in period 3, we exchanged letters, and although everyone wrote to me, these letters were short and indicated that learners needed more preparation on the purpose of writing to me and what kind of information and sentiments to convey.

On my return in period 4, I found learners engrossed in their workbooks and oblivious to my presence. The three advanced learners were busy reading the history book, while the fourth learner was busy working on the workbook with other learners. Everyone asked to continue working like this for the next few lessons, as nobody had completed the workbook. We briefly evaluated period 3. Learners were delighted to receive my letters and I returned theirs (later on we tackled some letter-writing problems).

Attendance during this period had been good and the group had been happy to work on their own. At first they had used the other English teacher, but soon found that they could cope on their own and so consulted her less and less (this was born out by the teacher).

When we eventually checked the workbook I discovered that learners had often ignored the lesson instructions.

Instead they had worked through the book in pairs or small

groups and had reinterpreted tasks or omitted difficult ones, such as the tasks around 'The long walk' in lessons 14 and 15. In addition, the group had not kept diaries and appeared unmotivated by this task. They had instead opted to read more from 'Gold and Workers'. From this feedback I realised that learners had problems with the workbook instructions. These were a challenging reading task in themselves and needed to be discussed more carefully beforehand. They could also have been written in mother tongue. The resistance to writing diary entries also suggested that it was a novel idea for the group and required more preparation.

On the whole, it was clear that this period had given learners more confidence and had equipped them with better learning skills to work alone or with others. At the same time, it highlighted aspects of learner training that needed further attention, as well as some of the pitfalls of self-directed learning.

4.4.3 Syllabus planning and evaluation

During this programme, syllabus development happened through an ongoing process of joint learner/teacher planning, reflection and evaluation. This process also entailed drawing up general syllabus plans at regular intervals. These plans comprised learning goals and served as content plans or guides for learning. They cut across all three programme themes and reflected learners' expressed needs. We used these plans to evaluate what we had covered during a particular period and then drew up new plans. In all, we drew up six syllabus plans during the programme.

syllabus plan 1

In the first two weeks of the programme we discussed the grouping exercises which learners had completed at the initial meeting. This led to a discussion on what was difficult about speaking, understanding, reading and writing English. Most learners said that reading was not so difficult, but they were more worried about writing and speaking. I agreed with these assessments, although I suspected that one or two learners had problems with reading. I then asked when and why learners needed to speak, read and write English. The response was poor, so I prompted by suggesting, for instance:

"What about at work/ at the shops/ at the post office? Do you have to fill forms? What about letters and newspapers?"

(Adapted from USWE Needs Questionnaire, appendix A)

From this emerged a list of goals which I wrote up as follows:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <u>"What we will learn in this group</u> | |
| 1 | To speak and understand better, at work, in the shops. How to explain something |
| 2 | To fill forms such as job applications |
| 3 | To write letters, notes and messages |
| 4 | To read newspapers such as The Sowetan |
| 5 | To read work programmes". |

Fig. 46 : Syllabus plan 1

When we read and discussed this draft plan in the next lesson, learners proposed the following items to be included in the plan:

- To debate subjects like liquor, smoking, the Church.
- To fill post office and bank forms.

These were accepted by the group. Apart from these direct requests, this syllabus was a general, functional one which largely reflected the teacher's suggestions and the needs questionnaire used.

syllabus plan 2

At the end of period 1, we reviewed our initial plan. We looked through the file dividers, worksheets and other materials in learners' files. The fifteen file dividers included thus far were as follows:

about myself	he/she	ages
about liquor	to/from	forms
about education	in/at/on (time)	letters
about the past	a/the	spelling
about someone	capitals	in/at (place)

Fig. 47 : List of file dividers

These dividers referred to a mixture of topics, skills, communicative and language tasks. Many of these overlapped, which made it difficult to sequence the dividers. For instance spelling, punctuation and grammar tasks were part of topics or communicative activities. At the end of period 1, in order to evaluate and to plan new goals I asked questions around each divider, such as:

"Why did we do this? How did it help you? What did you learn from this? Can you do this now? Let's try and see. Must we practise this some more next year?"

We then looked back at our initial syllabus plan and I asked questions such as:

"Did we do this? Do you need this? Shall we work on this next year? What about writing messages and notes, filling forms, reading newspapers and work programmes?"

Although we agreed that we had spoken a lot about ourselves and about liquor, everyone was keen to continue to practise speaking and to monitor this. We also discussed the stories learners had written about themselves, their pasts and liquor. The group felt that their writing had improved and they wanted to continue working on this and on editing. They also wanted to learn to use a dictionary, as this need had emerged during reading and spelling tasks. The group was unenthusiastic about 'writing notes and messages', 'filling forms', 'reading newspapers' and 'reading work programmes'. Learners rarely needed to write notes or messages and could cope with newspapers (in period 4, we discussed newspapers and censorship, see 4.3.5). We crossed these items off the plan and then wrote up what the

group wanted to work on after Christmas, as follows:

"1 more on spelling 2 more on asking questions 3 more on using the past 4 how to use dictionaries"

Fig. 48 : Syllabus plan 2

This syllabus plan related to theme I tasks and was shorter and more focussed than our initial one.

syllabus plan 3

During the first part of period 2, we re-negotiated our learning plan for 1987. We began by looking back at our files. We had an additional three dividers on 'history', 'dictionaries' and 'describing someone/something'. We then looked at syllabus plan 2. I discovered that the group used the term 'spelling' to refer to all of the skills needed to write clearly in English. However, although the group expressed a desperate need to write better, they had no specific writing purpose in mind. Eventually we agreed upon letter writing as a focus. When we discussed using a dictionary for reading, one learner revealed that he had trouble reading difficult words. We went on to discuss a variety of reading strategies to help him. A few learners commented that they usually read aloud, so I decided to use this opportunity to carry out a short reading experiment.

reading and grammar

I asked a good reader to read a text aloud to the group while other learners followed in their texts. When I asked the reader what he had read, he said that he had been too busy pronouncing the words. The other learners also commented that the reader's voice had distracted them, as they were forced to follow at his pace and could not concentrate on the meaning. Then everyone read the text again^{ly} silently, after which they were able to relate the gist of the story. Although learners agreed that reading silently was the best way to get to the message, we noted that vocalising words could sometimes help to understand them. Following this, one of the weakest readers in the group commented that learning about the past and about 'a' and 'the', had helped him to read better. He now understood when a story talked about the past, or when it used 'a' or 'the' to mean 'any one', or 'that special one' or 'the one we have already introduced'. The others agreed with him and asked for more of these tasks. Our new syllabus plan was as follows:

Goals for 1987

- 1 Talking about the past and asking questions
- 2 Gap exercises on the past and 'a' and 'the'
- 3 Learning to spell by yourself
- 4 Writing letters - business, work, family
- 5 Reading - understanding words we don't know
- how to find words in a dictionary

Fig. 49 : Syllabus plan 3

This plan was a mixture of very specific tasks such as 'gap

exercises on the past and on 'a/the'' alongside general topics such as letter writing. This syllabus plan also highlighted the group's growing interest in history.

syllabus plan 4

Towards the latter half of period 2, learners expressed very clear ideas about what they wanted to work on. Two learners asked to continue working together on history, on how the past is expressed in English and on editing their writings. Another learner wanted to practise speaking and understanding, using the tape recorder. The fourth learner who spoke English fluently, wanted to work intensively on reading and on a spelling game we had used in the group. I agreed with these assessments and we drew up this plan:

"1 to read more about history (2 learners) 2 to practise writing and correcting this (2 learners) 3 to practise reading and spelling (1 learner) 4 to practise speaking and understanding (1 learner)"

Fig. 50 : Syllabus plan 4

syllabus plan 5

Towards the end of period 2, when we agreed to combine the intermediate and advanced groups, we compared the strengths and weaknesses of both groups and their respective syllabus plans. Both syllabus plans involved working on the past, so we agreed to continue with this. On noting that the intermediate group was much shyer to speak English, the advanced group also offered to help them to speak more.

Soon after combining groups, we discussed our plans for period 3 when I would be overseas. We then discussed and drew up the following plan for the advanced group based on their expressed needs and priorities:

"1 to read, speak and write more about history 2 to read, speak and write more about the past 3 to write letters and diaries 3 to practise spelling difficult words 4 to practise talking"
--

Fig. 51 : Syllabus plan 5

syllabus plan 6

On my return in period 4, after evaluating the independent learning experience, I asked the group what they wanted to focus on for the rest of the programme. Three advanced learners said they were not worried about reading, but wanted to speak more. They felt that if you could speak better English, then reading and writing would be easier. The fourth learner said that he still had trouble with spelling and needed to work on this. We wrote up our simple plan as follows:

"more on spelling (1 learner) more on talking (3 learners)"
--

Fig. 52 : Syllabus plan 6

As it turned out, most of what remained of period 4 was spent preparing and carrying out the end-of-year assessment and evaluation as described below.

4.4.4 Final assessment

The issue of CEP certificates and prizes arose during period 4 when the CEP asked the teachers to identify three learners from each group to be awarded progress certificates, and one learner to receive an attendance prize. I now describe the initial discussions around this issue and then how we planned and conducted the assessment.

Discussing assessment

The two English groups met to discuss the issue of the assessment and prizes. During the meeting both I and the other English teacher expressed concern about making this selection. However, both groups told us to go ahead and to select people. I argued that it was impossible to make this choice when everyone had started out with different skills and needs and had learnt different things. Similarly, we could not measure attendance because this was often determined by factors beyond people's control. Although the groups acknowledged these arguments, they were keen to receive these prizes and certificates. Everyone wanted a certificate to show to their families and to encourage themselves and other learners to attend. They also argued that if the companies wanted to spend money on prizes then we should accept these. When I asked the group why they thought the companies wanted to award prizes and certificates, they offered three main reasons. Firstly, the companies wanted to motivate other workers to join;

secondly, they wanted to check up on what had been learnt; and lastly, they wanted to use this as a way of selecting workers for promotion. The last reason caused some consternation in the group. After some animated discussion we finally agreed to ask the CEP to award a prize to every learner for attendance and progress. We then went on to discuss certificates and the purpose of assessment. I proposed that we carry out a meaningful assessment of what we had learnt this year and that we ask the CEP to write this on the certificates. Finally we drew up a proposal to this effect, which the CEP agreed to.

Planning the assessment

I started planning the assessment by asking the group what they had learnt this year and how we should assess this. One learner replied that I should do this because, as he stated: "You know further where we can't see". I explained that we had covered a great deal and I could not choose what to assess. Also, people had worked on different things and I did not know what were the important things that had helped people in their lives. I also needed the group's help to identify what problems they still had. Although learners accepted this, they were not really sure why joint assessment was necessary. Some learners appeared very confused about the whole business. However, I decided to carry out the assessment to show learners what was involved.

We began by going through the file dividers and materials and I asked why we had tackled these tasks. One learner's response was: "I'm just doing what the teacher says". When I asked if it was important to know why you did something, the group agreed that this helped them to learn and to remember. We then wrote up the main things we had covered in the programme as follows:

- | |
|---|
| <p><u>"talking</u>
-talking about myself
-talking about my past
-talking about what happened
-asking for something
-talking in the group
<u>reading and writing</u>
-writing about myself
-writing about the weekend
-reading/writing about the old days
-using a dictionary"</p> |
|---|

Fig. 53 : Assessment list

We used this list to plan the assessment. Everyone agreed that we should check how well we could speak and write about ourselves and our past. For the oral test, I suggested that we exchange teachers and see how well learners could communicate with someone they did not know very well. We could tape record these personal interviews and then listen to them afterwards to identify areas to improve. We decided that 'talking in the group' happened all the time and that I could judge this. For the reading assessment, Learners agreed that I should decide on this. I chose the reading tasks from the self-study workbook that learners had not done, including the map task (Appendix D).

Conducting and evaluating the assessment

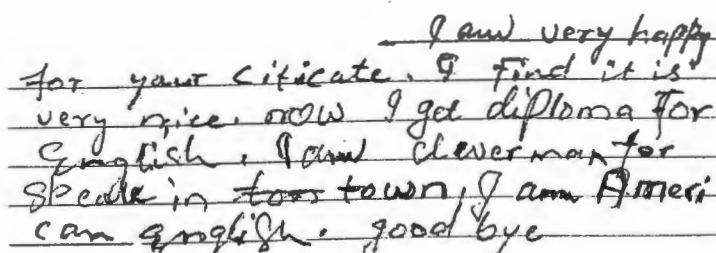
After two lessons spent carrying out these oral and written assessments, I discussed with each learner how they had managed each task, using the following general criteria:

- 1 a little
- 2 quite well
- 3 well
- 4 very well/fluent/no problem

Initially it was very difficult to get learners to assess themselves as they expected the teacher to do this. I explained that I would give my opinion, but that the learner's judgement was also very important. After some examples and prompting, learners began to contribute and to judge their progress. On the whole these assessments were accurate, although learners were more likely to underrate rather than to overrate themselves. When discrepancies arose between my assessment and the learner's, we looked back at exercises from the assessment and from learners' files. I also found it necessary to point out problems in the assessment which learners had not noticed.

The final results of this assessment were good, although learners still had problems with speaking and writing accurately. I gave a summary of this assessment to the CEP to write on the certificates. When I visited the group after the programme, I discovered that the certificates that had been awarded at a ceremony in February 1988 did not reflect the assessment we had carried out so carefully. Instead they stated that the learner had

received a special award for completing the advanced English course (Appendix E). Although I was disappointed, the learners that I spoke to were not at all concerned as they were pleased to have a certificate. A letter to me from a learner in July 1988 made the following comments about certificates:

A photograph of a handwritten note on lined paper. The text is written in cursive and reads: "I am very happy for your certificate. I find it is very nice. now I got diploma for English. I am clever man for speak in town. I am American English. good bye".

I am very happy
for your certificate. I find it is
very nice. now I got diploma for
English. I am clever man for
speak in town. I am American
English. good bye

Fig. 54 : Extract from a letter to the teacher in 1988

After this assessment, three weeks of the programme remained. When I asked the group what we should tackle, a learner answered: "You must tell us and teach us - you are the teacher". When I responded that learners had different problems and that I needed their help to identify the most important things to work on, a learner suggested: "You tell us one thing to start with and then we can add more things". Another learner then suggested revising some of what we had done during the year. The group agreed readily to this so we revised some of the assessment tasks.

4.4.5 Final programme evaluation

After the assessment and revision, we evaluated aspects of the programme (Appendix F contains the transcript of the main discussion). We reflected upon our experiences in the programme and upon broader issues about learning and education. This included evaluating the role of a teacher, evaluating attitudes towards learning and ways of learning, and assessing future learning needs.

Evaluating the role of a teacher

I began by asking the group what kind of teacher was suitable for teaching English to adults. Learners expressed strong feelings about wanting a white teacher rather than a black teacher (this had been mentioned earlier in the programme). The group argued that a white teacher has a better command of English and that this forced learners to speak English rather than their mother tongue. As a learner said:

"In this class we're learning a lot now from you because English is your mother tongue. So if somebody can teach me, like our black teachers, they don't know deep enough like you." (lines 31-34).

A learner also explained that if translation is available, you do not try so hard and you do not remember and learn: "I know that it's going to be easy if I say, 'Ah, sorry, I don't know that'." (lines 74-76). We discussed using translation, dictionaries and having a bi-lingual teacher. However, the group insisted that a black teacher would not do for them: "so the English from you, teacher, is not the

same as from the black who has been teached to speak English". (lines 179-81). The group held strong views on how adult teachers should behave, compared with schoolteachers:

"We only need to explain, like a big man ... 'cos I like to learn but I can't do it. So the teacher must help me on that. But he mustn't shout 'cos tomorrow I won't be here." (lines 196-201).

Eventually a learner concluded that a black teacher is acceptable, under certain conditions: "the black is alright if he can teach us nicely, quiet, no shouting, nice English." (lines 215-216).

When a learner spoke about "going up" through the school standards at night school, another learner challenged him as follows: "Sorry, can I ask you a question? Why you didn't go to the night school in the location?" (lines 286-288). The mention of government schooling caused quite a stir in the group and a number of criticisms emerged based on the group's formal schooling experiences. They described how black teachers in DET schools were impolite, disrespectful, impatient, arrogant, lazy and authoritarian. The following extracts capture the strong feelings expressed by learners:

"... it's better a white teacher, better than a black man, 'cos a black man, sometimes he's got no manners. He's not going to respect us, maybe like he knows better than us. Maybe he'll never be patient and he's gonna get cross with us." (lines 312-317).

"You can't ask a black teacher one word three times when you don't understand ... 'cos he'll fight with you. He say you must listen, listen nice, be quiet, mustn't ask some questions." (lines 330-335).

Learners told how at a nearby company, nearly all the learners had resigned from the formal school centre. They offered various reasons for this as follows:

"When I made a mistake here, the teacher is coming to sit against you and show you how to do it. But another teacher won't do that. He'll write on the blackboard there and then he sits there and reads the newspaper. By the time he stands up from there, he'll say, 'Have you all finished? Oh! Oh! Oh! What you doing now?' So now you're scared. Next time ... you're not coming back anymore!" (lines 380-390).

At the end of this discussion a learner concluded that /generalising about people was dangerous:

"In my opinion ... it's the person. They're not all the same the teachers, like the foremen at work. Some foremen they explain to you properly. Some foremen, when you make a mistake at work, he says you're stupid, and now you'll never be alright anymore". (lines 348-354).

Evaluating attitudes towards learning and ways of learning

In general, the group expressed satisfaction with the way they were learning in these classes and made important observations about what helped them to learn. Initially the idea of moving from book 1 to book 4 as in school was attractive to some learners. However, another learner immediately interrupted saying:

"Do you people understand what kind of books we're talking about? ... these books, where these books coming from? Not from government ... We got a lot of books here - I don't know which is 1, which is 2, which is 4". (lines 244-247).

Other learners said they learnt relevant things here and that there was no time to go back to the beginning as in school: "I agree with Meshack, 'cos maybe we can start 1, 2, 3 and then, when Mr. Walter must be learn 8, he will be

old!". (lines 264-266). A little later 'Mr. Walter' concluded: "I'm too old to go back to school now! The way you teach us with these magazines you give us, is an easy way to learn". (lines 394-397). Dictionaries were also seen to be useful for learning on your own.

Learners also emphasised how important it was to be exposed to language in their daily lives in order to learn it more easily. The length of time that learners had lived in Johannesburg was therefore significant. It was also useful to know English-speaking people who could give feedback. However, only one learner had an English friend at work. This learner discovered that his friend did not correct him when he made mistakes because he was busy concentrating on the message. However, he then asked his friend to correct him in future. Other learners then described how they are pressurised to speak as quickly as possible at work so as not to waste time. If they did not manage this, the person called an interpreter or switched to Afrikaans! This was additional argument for demanding a white teacher.

Learners also observed that talking, experimenting and making mistakes helped you to learn. One learner drew an analogy with a child learning to walk:

"This is like the child. If the child is lazy to walk, he'll take time to walk. But if he stand up, 1, 2 and fall down, it's alright. Tomorrow he'll find it's alright. Same with these gentlemen, they must talk!" (lines 435-440).

The group also revealed that they were now far more aware of mistakes than before and could notice when their black friends and supervisors made mistakes. They gave the example of the CEP personnel officer whose spoken English they now realised was very poor!

Assessing future learning needs

During these discussions we reflected on the group's future learning needs. Conflicting views were expressed around the purpose of learning and whether it was a formal or non-formal pursuit. Another learner added that a broader education was needed in order, "to understand what's happening in the world and in the country". (lines 272-273). On another occasion the group expressed a general need for further practice of all the skills, including editing. Specific areas of focus mentioned were numeracy, local and world geography, economics and history (the land, mines and migrant labour). We then drew up a summary of these needs:

"1 to speak, understand, read and write better 2 to learn about numbers (GST, wages, interest, ages) 3 history and economics (S.Africa and the world) 4 geography and maps (S.Africa and the world)"

Fig. 55 : Final summary of needs

Summary

Syllabus account III described how learning was jointly negotiated and carried out during the programme, both at the level of the lesson and of syllabus plans. Through these tasks learners gained confidence and refined and developed their metacognitive skills and awareness of learning and how they learn best. This process continued through the six syllabus plans and the period of independent learning, to the final programme assessment and evaluation in period 4. The joint assessment and evaluation involved learners in reflecting upon what they had achieved during this programme, what helped them to learn, and their future learning needs. These activities provided an insight into the learning skills and attitudes held by the group at the end of this programme.

Therefore, 'learning how to learn' was integral to the whole programme and provided direction in both what and how subsequent learning was tackled.

Summary of Chapter 4

Chapter IV comprised three syllabus accounts of the main themes covered in this programme. Accounts I and II 'about ourselves' and 'about our context', comprised the two main content themes. Account III 'learning how to learn' described the learning processes engaged in by the group across the entire programme. These three accounts overlapped and ran parallel to one another, although they had distinct emphases. Account I focussed on language and language skills development, account II entailed more problem-posing linked to language learning, and account III emphasised metacognition and the development of independent learning skills to be able to plan, negotiate, manage and evaluate learning.

Together these three syllabus accounts show how language and cognitive skills development were integrated with learning skills and awareness. In the end, learners improved their English, their ability to reflect and to take action in their lives, and their ability to learn more effectively.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS OF THE SYLLABUS ACCOUNTS

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the syllabus accounts in terms of the roles that learners and the teacher played in syllabus development during this programme. Syllabus development in a process approach is about how the learning experiences (content and process) that learners encounter in the classroom came about. Obviously learners and the teacher were not solely responsible for what took place: other factors and agents intervened in the process, including unpredictable, external events and the programme administrators. However, a process approach is open to these influences and expects the participants to engage with them as part of the process of syllabus development. In this chapter I focus on the roles that learners and the teacher played in determining the classroom syllabus during the programme.

This chapter is organised as follows:

5.1 The teacher's role

5.2 The learners' role

5.1 The Teacher's Role - from Initiator to Negotiator

During this programme the teacher adopted a variety of roles which affected both what and how learning took place. These roles ranged from being an instigator, manager and director of learning, to acting as a negotiator, resource person and learning partner. These roles fluctuated in response to what was happening in the group and the demands made upon the teacher. In this section I focus on the teacher's role in launching the programme, in training learners, in dealing with task-work, in deciding what topics and tasks to tackle, in dealing with language work, in problem-posing, and finally, in assessing and evaluating learning.

Launching the programme

At the start of this programme the teacher's role was paramount. She was responsible for launching the programme in a particular direction, according to her vision and the approach adopted. This included initiating theme and task-work and setting the syllabus in motion. In this way, she also defined the parameters for learner and teacher roles. The teacher began by presenting learners with tasks around the theme 'about ourselves', and tackling writing, based on an analysis of learners' initial writings. The teacher prepared tasks by selecting, adapting and devising materials using the resources at her disposal, which consisted mainly of learners' writings and texts from books

and magazines aimed at adults. The teacher also guided the group carefully in carrying out these tasks, as learners were unfamiliar with the approach that the teacher was advocating. Thus, at this stage the teacher took the initiative in putting in place the foundations of the approach. This entailed adopting a 'nurturing' role with learners.

Learner training

While this theme-work was happening, the teacher also presented the group with tasks to foster joint management of learning. These metacognitive tasks engaged learners from the start of the programme in jointly deciding with the teacher what to learn and how. This included deciding about the ground rules for working together, planning lessons and the syllabus according to goals, using files for planning and evaluation purposes, and later on, negotiation of lesson tasks. Other tasks entailed reflecting upon and evaluating learning experiences during and at the end of task-work. All of these tasks were the teacher's ideas, to which learners responded.

At this early stage of the programme, in spite of metacognitive training, most of the decisions about what to learn and how were made by the teacher. Even the first syllabus plan drawn up reflected the needs questionnaire and teacher prompts more than learners' ideas.

Nevertheless, through engaging learners in these tasks, the

teacher began to relax her hold on the syllabus and to encourage the group to take more control. During task-work the teacher also emphasised natural interaction, fluency and spontaneity rather than formal accuracy, and encouraged the use of mother tongue and interpreters. In this way, natural language acquisition occurred simultaneously with metacognitive skills development. The combination of meaningful theme-work, fluency, and metacognitive training combined to help learners to overcome their initial shyness and to engage in task-work. Once engaged in task-work, learners automatically influenced what transpired. The more learners participated, the more they were able to engage effectively in negotiating learning with the teacher.

During periods 2 and 3, another significant role for the teacher was to assist learners in trying out new ways of learning. The teacher presented the group with options for the independent learning period and ensured that learners were adequately prepared for this. This included advising the stand-in teacher on how to handle the group, jointly drawing up a syllabus plan and some task guidelines, using available resources to design tasks and compiling these into a self-study workbook. The teacher's return in period 4 signalled the start of a new role for both parties. In the interim, learners had adopted a new independent style of working which forced the teacher to respond in a more flexible, consultative, resource role. This illustrates

the interdependency of learner and teacher roles whereby a change in one automatically affected the other. This interdependency was also seen in the roles adopted during task-work generally.

Dealing with task-work

Having designed and presented learners with tasks, the teacher both guided and observed these tasks-in-process. This was a complex, demanding role which entailed analysing learner behaviour, noting learners' direct questions and informal comments, giving help when necessary, diagnosing learners' utterances and writings and generally 'tuning-in' to learners' needs. The teacher's ability to analyse learners' oral and written texts was important for gaining insights into the group's experiences, concerns, language needs, how they tackled learning and their level of confidence and motivation. Decisions about follow-up tasks were based largely upon the teacher's analysis and interpretation of this information in the light of her previous experience and knowledge and the overall syllabus framework and programme goals. Throughout the programme tasks-in-process continued to afford the teacher further insight into the group's needs and the general direction to take. The more motivating and familiar the task-work, the more effectively learners engaged. When this happened, the insights afforded the teacher were more illuminating and enabled her to make more informed decisions about what to tackle next. Thus, although learners influenced the

learning process through tasks-in-process, ultimately it was the responsibility of the teacher to interpret this information and to make decisions about what to tackle next and how to go about it.

Deciding about topics and tasks

On occasions, the particular concerns of the teacher or of learners took precedence in the programme (e.g. prizes, assessment and history). This was also observed in the teacher's handling of management interference in the programme. The teacher reacted strongly to these incidents and made sure that they were discussed and resolved. Given a real choice, learners may have preferred to spend time on other things. Also, learners' suggestions about what to tackle in the programme had to be sanctioned by the teacher. For instance, the liquor topic was an unusual request which the teacher agreed to tackle because of the strong arguments presented by learners and also because this was important for encouraging learners to participate in decisions around the syllabus. On the whole, unless learners were vehemently opposed to pursuing an issue, the teacher's recommendation usually held sway.

While observing task-work the teacher often made recommendations to the group about which topics or tasks to pursue and, equally importantly, which ones not to (e.g. numeracy, history and maps/geography). The teacher was often hesitant about making such important decisions on the

spur of the moment. However, the teacher's judgement was particularly crucial when topics were complex or remote from learners' experiences (e.g. world history). On these occasions, learners were unable to fully gauge what topics entailed, how long they might take and how best to tackle them. As a result, the rationale for the decisions taken often appeared arbitrary and learners had to place their trust in the teacher. The teacher's experience and background usually afforded her a better insight into the scope and complexity of the topic in question (e.g. the group's lack of understanding of 'homelands' suggested that geography was an extensive and complex topic). On occasions when the teacher was unsure about pursuing a topic, or overwhelmed by what it might entail, planned tasks usually took precedence. For instance, although the issue of media censorship revealed serious gaps in the group's understanding of the role of the media and who controls it, the teacher did not pursue it because it seemed complex and lengthy. Therefore, it was convenient to drop this in favour of prior syllabus plans. Decisions around language work were equally problematic for the teacher.

Dealing with language work

Dealing with language work was an even greater challenge for the teacher. Firstly, the teacher had to be highly sensitive to different learner levels and needs in the group. This entailed listening to learner language and

diagnosing problems. This required a sound understanding of English structure and of the process of second language acquisition. Sometimes the teacher had to make judgements spontaneously during the lesson and decide whether to tackle a problem now, later, or not at all. Decisions about what seemed logical, useful and easy to tackle, and what seemed complex and needed research and careful preparation were reliant on the teacher's prior experience and theoretical background, including her understanding of how adults acquire a second language, and how the teacher can facilitate this. At times these decisions appeared arbitrary and 'intuitive' (e.g. teaching 'a' and 'the'). Tackling language work on the spot meant that the teacher had to 'think on her feet' and offer explanations and give appropriate feedback. This was very exacting. At other times the teacher had to research, adapt/devise and sequence language tasks before presenting them to learners in an appropriate way. The methodology used was also crucial in encouraging learners to think cognitively about language and to discover for themselves how English works and how it is acquired. As soon as learners engaged with these tasks, the cycle began again as the teacher listened to learner language. Thus the teacher's role as diagnostician, researcher, provider of comprehensible input and of more cognitive approaches to language awareness-raising was significant. This determined to a large extent the input that learners were exposed to and how they went about learning.

Another area that proved particularly problematic for the teacher was problem-posing.

Problem-posing

During problem-posing around issues, the teacher again took a prominent role. Having agreed with learners to explore a specific issue or topic, the teacher usually presented an oral or written 'code', which the group discussed critically. During this process the teacher asked probing questions to engender debate and analysis so as to take the group's views further. This usually led to action or a decision of some kind. With particularly sensitive, emotional or complex issues, the teacher's role was more difficult. For instance, while discussing retrenchment, the teacher had to be able to handle potential conflict, to facilitate open discussion and debate, to be prepared to give her own opinion and to allow the group time to reflect and to reach their own conclusions.

Problem-posing around bigger, more complex topics such as education and history was even more demanding as it required a good understanding of related areas such as history, geography, numeracy, economics, politics and law. The lack of suitable materials and teaching guidelines also meant that the teacher had to find or devise materials and work out how to present learners with appropriate facts and figures and how to phrase the right questions. Even

materials ostensibly written for ESL learners assumed background knowledge which the group lacked, and so had to be extensively adapted. In addition to these drawbacks, the problem-posing process sometimes left learners paralysed and unable to answer difficult questions. This happened when discussing the root causes of poverty and poor education; who Hitler was and where and why World War II happened; why people in South Africa lost their land and went to work on the mines; and what elections and democracy mean. Although these questions served to heighten the group's awareness, the discussion often reached a 'dead end' and could go no further. These blocks disturbed the group interaction and diverted attention away from the group to the teacher who became the central focus. When this occurred it was difficult to ascertain whether the problem lay with language or with the group's inadequate background knowledge. In these situations, the teacher was forced to assume a pivotal role and to attempt spontaneous, sometimes arbitrary explanations.

Another drawback was that problem-posing could not solve major problems. Problem-posing was most successful when dealing with an immediate, tangible issue which could be resolved in some way and so rounded off. For instance, through writing about liquor and proposing concrete ways of dealing with alcohol abuse, this topic was brought to a close and we could move on. Similarly, most of the management issues were handled to their conclusion.

However, topics such as education and history were much broader and more complex and could not be covered in a systematic, contained fashion. Consequently they were only touched upon and eventually left in the air. Retrenchment, however, was both a concrete issue pertinent to learners' lives and a broader issue which extended to the question of economic sanctions and the role of unions. As an immediate solution was not possible, the issue had to be left. When it arose later, it was evident that although our discussions had not resolved the issue, they had at least opened it up for debate and exposed its complexities.

Issues which could not realistically be resolved or adequately covered caused frustration for everyone. Decisions about whether to tackle them or not were very difficult to make. They required the ability to judge how potentially complex issues were, how much learners already knew, the level of learner (and teacher) motivation, whether suitable materials existed, and whether the teacher knew enough and felt sufficiently confident to handle these issues.

Another question that emerged during problem-posing concerned the extent to which the teacher's own agenda played a role in determining the learning experiences that occurred in the programme. The teacher effectively guided the problem-posing process through the codes selected, the questions posed and her management of the discussion. This

relied on the teacher's understanding of the issues at stake. Probing questions tried to direct the group's thinking and to elicit answers and solutions which the teacher felt were important (e.g. issues around management interference). Therefore, whether the teacher liked it or not, she directly influenced the direction that discussions took. However, learners did not always alter their views in line with the teacher's (e.g. retrenchment remained a contentious issue until the end). Nevertheless, the problem-posing process left the teacher feeling uncomfortable at times about taking the lead and pushing her agenda.

For all of the reasons outlined above, the teacher's role during problem-posing was problematic. Dealing spontaneously with issues risked a loss of focus in the programme which was disconcerting for everyone. An added worry for the teacher was that in leaving complex topics and moving to safer ground, she may have inadvertently curtailed some of the potentially most interesting discussions and learning opportunities.

Assessing and evaluating

During period 4, the end-of-year assessment and evaluation highlighted important differences in learner and teacher roles and perceptions, which persisted even after the programme. In spite of attempts to encourage learners to jointly engage in assessing their strengths and weaknesses,

the teacher had to assume a pivotal role in designing, implementing and evaluating the assessment. During the final evaluation, the teacher also assumed a leading role by launching the discussion in a particular direction and asking questions to elicit the desired information. However, as learners engaged in these discussions, they succeeded in manoeuvring them towards their own concerns. From time to time the teacher intervened to redirect the discussion, as control vacillated between the group and the teacher.

From these experiences it appeared that in spite of learner training, the teacher retained an important role in assessing and evaluating learners' performance. At the same time, the teacher encouraged learners to consciously reflect upon their learning. Through encouraging this, learners assumed the position of 'experts' about their own learning, with the teacher as a useful third party, whose views are important but not all-important.

Conclusion

In conclusion, although the teacher's role at the start of the programme was clearly an initiator and director of learning, as the programme unfolded this role became more nuanced and more flexible. In responding to tasks-in-process, the teacher's role was gradually transformed from being solely an initiator of learning, to responding to and taking direction from learners. At times, the teacher acted as an advisor and a resource person. At other times, the teacher was clearly the decision-maker and manager of learning, especially in implementing the approach generally, in providing the materials, in planning the syllabus, in dealing with language work, in managing problem-posing and in assessing performance. At these times the teacher played a prominent and exacting role. Although learners' contributions directed the teacher, she retained important decision-making powers because of her knowledge and expertise in certain areas and her broader vision of what was possible to handle in this situation and how to go about it. I now examine in more detail the roles adopted by learners and how these contributed to syllabus development during this programme.

5.2 Learner Roles - From Cautious Participants to Initiators and Co-researchers

Like the teacher, learners assumed different roles during the programme in order to meet the changing demands of the learning situation. Although learners did not adopt new roles in a linear fashion, there was evidence of a general shift from being shy, wary participants, to more confident negotiators, 'co-researchers' and, at times, even directors of learning. I now examine learners' roles as they initially experienced the approach; as they contributed to tasks-in-process; as they planned and evaluated the syllabus; as they managed learning; as they assessed learning and evaluated the programme; and finally as they took on the role of 'co-researchers'.

Experiencing the approach

For learners, the first part of the programme was spent adjusting to a new group of people and to an unfamiliar approach. Therefore they relied on the teacher for direction and for providing learning experiences. The group's initial shyness was captured in a later statement from a learner: "My tongue was very sore to learn something". At the beginning learners indicated their unfamiliarity with both language and metacognitive tasks. In spite of initial reticence and caution, the more confident learners still managed to make important contributions about what to tackle and how (e.g. suggesting

the liquor debate). These contributions increased as learners got to know each other, gained more experience of task-work, and improved their communication in English. The use of classroom language, the emphasis on fluency, and the use of mother tongue and translation helped to boost confidence and participation. Thus for the first part of the programme, learners were preoccupied with experiencing and coming to grips with the process approach being used. Slowly the skills and confidence that they were acquiring began to have an impact on syllabus development, primarily through contributions during task-work.

Learner contributions to tasks-in-process

Once learners understood the purpose of task-work and engaged with it, the balance of power began to alter. Social conversation and interaction around tasks became more natural and spontaneous, and group discussions became more complex as learners provided problems and life experiences to share, explore and build upon. Many issues emerged from learners' own experiences, through discussions or from learners' writings (e.g. education, Apolis' car accident). Learners' writings in particular, were used extensively throughout the programme. These often altered the course of lessons and the general programme direction quite dramatically. Learners usually wrote from their experience and did not stick to the model texts, so that these materials constituted powerful interventions in the development of this syllabus.

On other occasions, learners took over the teacher's role (e.g. the numeracy task and the writing lesson). The liquor debate also indicated that learners could handle diverse views sensitively. This set the scene for the rest of the programme whereby difficult issues were tackled instead of being avoided. Learners also extended tasks in unforeseen ways which altered the lesson plan and the pace of learning (e.g. initiating introductions). Resolving issues, such as agreeing to accept prizes and to have an assessment also affected subsequent lessons.

Through tasks-in-process and evaluation, learners indicated their preference for particular topics, tasks and even materials (e.g. numeracy, history, Mandela texts). The depth of feeling about issues also determined whether these were pursued or not and for how long (e.g. retrenchment and history). A good example was the issue of maps which learners felt was for school children. Although this perception conflicted with the teacher's, it held sway and maps were not pursued to any extent in the programme.

As learners took more responsibility for expressing and for meeting their needs, risk-taking and manipulation of tasks increased (e.g. reading the Mandela texts, experimenting with ways of improving writing using the board, postponing the lesson plan and proposing an alternative). The way in which learners responded to language work also affected follow-up tasks (e.g. editing, the register and monitoring

became very popular and led to more discussion and roleplay). At the same time, the insights provided by learners into the language learning process that they were going through provided essential information for subsequent decision-making about language work. In this respect, learners contributed more as 'co-researchers' with the teacher (see below).

Planning and evaluating the syllabus

Throughout the programme, learners developed general learning skills experientially. This included learning how to plan and evaluate learning. Learner contribution to syllabus planning and evaluation increased as their confidence, participation, and awareness of learning grew. This was evident in the way that syllabus plans were drawn up. The ability to negotiate syllabus plans entailed weighing up factors such as what the task involved, other needs, the time available and the level of motivation and enthusiasm for particular topics and tasks. Even with the first syllabus plan, learners were able to propose the debate around liquor. As learners made more demands, took more risks and articulated their needs and ways of meeting these more clearly, drawing up syllabus plans with the teacher became a longer and more sophisticated process which entailed evaluating learning and discussing alternatives. This was evident in the second syllabus plan which took longer to draw up and was more evaluative in nature than the previous one. Learners were clearer about

their needs and able to assist in refining the plan. The third syllabus plan was more specifically geared towards meeting individual learner's language needs. Discussions around the plan addressed specific reading and grammar problems. By the time the fourth plan was discussed the groups had combined and learners had clear ideas about what they wanted to work on and how. Everyone was motivated by the prospect of learning what they really needed to learn. Negotiating syllabus plan 5 was linked to discussions around the independent learning period. This plan reflected the group's increasing ability to articulate and to prioritise their needs and how to tackle them. Both learners and the teacher proposed tasks, while learners made specific requests for materials and how they wanted to work. This plan was explicitly geared towards independent study. The final syllabus plan which was drawn up after the independent study period was very short and simple and clearly reflected individual needs.

These plans and the way in which they were negotiated illustrate the group's increasing ability to reflect critically on their learning and to gauge their needs and ways of meeting them. Although syllabus plans gave the programme direction, they did not constitute blueprints or a forecast of what was actually covered. In reality, some of these learning goals were not tackled, while additional, unlisted goals were. These changes came about during the course of the programme and were the result of

tasks-in-process and ongoing negotiation and joint decision-making.

Managing learning

As noted above learner contributions during tasks-in-process provided direction in the syllabus. The use of classroom language was another way in which learners attempted to control the input they were receiving, the pace of learning, the help needed from the teacher and other learners, and the general direction and quality of their learning. Learners often extended the use of classroom language. For instance, the question forms "And you?" and "What happened?" were used by learners to initiate, to sustain and to take discussions into new directions.

Managing the teacher was another key aspect of managing learning. The teacher was a learning resource which learners used more effectively as the programme unfolded. For instance, learners demanded help and feedback from the teacher on their writing; in providing information needed to explore issues; in helping to make strategic decisions about what to tackle and how; in diagnosing language problems; and in assessing performance. Learners argued on several occasions that the teacher was better equipped to assist in these ways. The teacher responded by providing the help requested. Thus learners challenged the notion that they must learn from each other and that the

teacher is only a facilitator. In reality the teacher was a valuable learning resource which learners learnt to make effective use of as part of learning how to learn.

Learners also succeeded in managing the way in which they worked by choosing to work in pairs, individually, in small groups, etc. This was evident during the independent learning period and subsequently. During the period spent working independently on the workbook, the learning responsibility rested almost entirely with the group. In the teacher's absence, learners exercised control over the pace, method and to a certain extent, even the content of their learning. Attendance during this period was good and the stand-in teacher played a minor role as learners became absorbed in their workbooks. In using the workbooks, learners reinterpreted tasks, ignored instructions, omitted tasks that were too difficult or confusing, and moved around and worked with other learners when necessary. During subsequent evaluations, the group provided feedback on designing and using future workbooks. Learners also asked to continue working on their own using the teacher as a consultant. It was evident that through working in this way without a teacher, learners had developed a more independent learning style and greater confidence. Having recognised the advantages, learners then demanded that the teacher adapt accordingly.

Assessing learning and evaluating the programme

During the assessment carried out towards the end of the programme, learners revealed greater confidence and awareness of how they learn best. At the same time, they relied a great deal on the teacher's judgement and skills and argued strongly that assessment was the teacher's role. As a learner pointed out: "You know further where we can't see". Subsequently learners and the teacher drew up the items to assess, while the teacher suggested ways of assessing these, and devised the tasks. When carrying out the joint assessment, learners again hesitated as they expected the teacher to point out their errors, to award marks and to judge their work. Learners resisted the idea of assessing their own work, although after some coaxing they could offer tentative judgements. On the whole these corresponded closely to the teacher's conclusions. When these perceptions differed, interesting discussions around assessment criteria ensued. Subsequent discussions about what to tackle in the rest of the programme once again revealed the group's reluctance to assume responsibility for planning learning, as well as hesitation and confusion about their role and that of the teacher. One learner demanded that the teacher decide what to work on: "You must tell us and teach us - you are the teacher". After discussing learner and teacher roles, a learner suggested that the teacher present options to which they could respond. An alternative suggestion from a learner to do revision was accepted with enthusiasm.

The final evaluation at the end of the programme triggered strong emotional responses from the group which resulted in learners taking the initiative and managing the interaction. Through asking questions of the teacher and of each other, learners succeeded in guiding the discussion towards their concerns. They debated confidently and were not afraid to tackle controversial views and to challenge each other and the teacher, for instance, over the issue of night schools. The group also expressed firm opinions on the question of mother tongue speaking teachers, which clashed with the teacher's views. Ironically this issue was a source of miscommunication between the teacher and the group! On the whole this evaluation discussion gave an insight into how learners felt about aspects of learning, their awareness of future learning needs, and their ability to discuss difficult issues in English.

In these varied ways, learners showed themselves capable of taking the initiative and assuming responsibility for learning. They succeeded in managing their own learning when this was appropriate, usually in co-operation with the teacher. Managing the teacher included expressing frustration and dissatisfaction at the teacher's reluctance to perform her role and to give learners the benefit of her experience, skills and knowledge. Ultimately managing learning in all of these ways enabled learners to determine to some extent syllabus content and process.

Co-researchers

As described above, learners assumed important roles as 'co-researchers' in this programme. They tried out and evaluated new ways of learning; they provided insights into broader issues that were explored through problem-posing; and they provided invaluable data on language problems.

The learners' role in researching language problems was significant. Learners were aware of their weaknesses in English vis-a-vis their real-life needs and so often raised language problems with the teacher which led to task-work. Learners' writings and utterances also provided important information about the language learning process that learners were going through and the problems they were experiencing (e.g. learning how to express completed past action). At other times, learners took on the role of co-researchers as they shared hypotheses in an attempt to make sense of English and to understand what works well for them and why (e.g. during editing, monitoring and grammar tasks). As learners reflected upon language and their learning, this gave the teacher direction in researching and presenting follow-up tasks. Subsequent task-work revealed limitations and the need for further research (e.g. into aspects of grammar and syntax). This cyclical process continued throughout the programme. Ultimately, although the teacher provided input, explanations, etc., learners determined what they learnt depending on what they were ready for.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the role of learners during this programme began to change as their confidence and their ability to handle learning grew. Learners started out as shy, passive, acquiescent recipients of learning and grew to become more confident and assertive participants. These changes occurred as learners improved their cognitive learning skills and awareness, alongside their language capacity. In this way, learners showed that, given the opportunity and under the right conditions, they were capable of planning, negotiating, managing and evaluating their own learning, with the teacher's help. This included working with or without direct teacher supervision, and, when appropriate, giving responsibility to the teacher. Thus, from time to time the group made it clear that they expected the teacher to take on certain roles and they resisted her attempts to shift the onus onto them. In addition, learners quite naturally took on the role of co-researchers with the teacher in trying out new ways of learning and in coming to grips with broader issues and with language problems. Ultimately, it was the combination of improved language, cognitive and learning skills, plus greater confidence which equipped learners to participate more in the programme and therefore in shared syllabus development with the teacher.

Chapter 5 - Conclusions

During this programme the teacher provided, set in motion and maintained a process approach explicitly geared towards fostering learning, language and cognitive skills development. Although the approach set the broad guidelines for learning it did not determine exactly what transpired. Some issues arose directly from the group's experiences, while others arose unexpectedly and were inspired by external events. However, the way in which the teacher and learners responded to these issues determined what was pursued, in what depth, how, for how long, etc. In this way, learner and teacher roles were unpredictable as they fluctuated according to what emerged during the programme. At the same time, general patterns were evident.

At the start of the programme, the roles of the teacher and the learners were clearly distinguishable. As the programme progressed, these roles became more interdependent and more variable in response to the learning process. Yet throughout the programme the teacher played a pivotal role as the implementer, developer and manager of the approach. Although the teacher was in control and retained a strong hold over the direction of the syllabus, especially at the beginning, learner contributions were clearly a powerful influence on the unfolding of the programme.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

In this chapter I draw conclusions about the roles adopted by learners and the teacher in curriculum development in a process approach.

I begin by briefly reviewing learner and teacher roles in process syllabus development in a popular education/ESL approach, as outlined in the literature. I then examine the findings of this study in the light of the literature and draw conclusions about learners and teacher roles in process syllabus development. I also highlight the main contradictions or ambiguities which come to light.

Following this, I assess the implications of these findings for teacher development and support, and for learner training, and draw further conclusions.

Finally, I assess learner and teacher roles in curriculum development, with reference to the conducting of this particular study.

This chapter is organised as follows:

6.1 Learner and teacher roles in process syllabus
development

6.2 The Implications for teacher development and learner
training

6.3 Curriculum development in practice

6.1 Learner and Teacher Roles in Process Syllabus Development

The teaching programme which is the focus of this study combined a popular education approach with a process approach to basic ESL for adults. In 6.1.1, I review what the literature or the theory says about learner and teacher roles in process syllabus development. In 6.1.2, I compare this with the findings from this study and draw conclusions. In 6.1.3, I assess the implications of these roles for teacher and learner training.

6.1.1 Process syllabus development in theory

As outlined in chapter 2, a popular education approach and a negotiated, task-based ESL approach are very similar. Both are extensions of a learner-centred approach and view learners' affective, cognitive and linguistic needs as central to the development of the syllabus in the classroom. The dual purpose of both approaches is to foster learner training and natural language acquisition, although the ultimate goal of popular education is to develop critical thinking skills leading to action for change. Language and learning skills serve this purpose. Both approaches emphasise the process of learning/teaching and adopt a process syllabus model which integrates content and process and which does not pre-determine goals.

"We should not, therefore, be so much interested in what learners say about the content and form of their course as in the process by which they arrive at their

opinions". (Littlejohn, quoted in Clarke, 1991:23). Both approaches aim to maximise learner participation and contributions. The syllabus is set in motion through negotiation and a needs analysis of some kind. In a popular education approach, dialogue is the central process which arises out of codes depicting themes or problems in learners' lives. In a process approach, tasks based on learners' needs and interests are the mini-curricula around which negotiation occurs. Tasks and dialogue encourage natural language acquisition.

The role of learners and the teacher in syllabus development in these approaches is described in terms of their contributions. In both approaches, learners and the teacher contribute through explicit, joint planning, negotiation and formative evaluation. Materials are mostly provided in advance and learners and the teacher select from these in the light of learners' needs. Both parties are also encouraged to design or to bring in additional materials. (Breen, 1987b:167; Wallerstein & Auerbach, 1987). In popular education, learners contribute to syllabus development primarily through dialogue; and in a process approach, through tasks. Tasks and dialogue expose learners' experiences, perceptions, needs, etc., and involve learners' cognitive, affective and language processes. Classroom interaction also helps learners to control what and how they learn. In both approaches, the teacher implements the approach and encourages learner

contributions through task-work or dialogue. In popular education the teacher's role is to facilitate the process of dialogue; whereas the process teacher facilitates, "the process of communication between the learners, their tasks and the data to which the various tasks are directed". (Candlin & Edelhoff, 1982:9). In these various, complementary ways, learners and the teacher jointly manage learning and develop the syllabus.

6.1.2 Process syllabus development in practice

The approach recorded in the syllabus accounts in this study had three aims: to promote critical thinking leading to action, to develop metacognitive skills and awareness, and to foster language and cognitive skills development. These aims were closely interlinked throughout. Characteristics of this approach included an emphasis on the learning/teaching process, a process syllabus, and learner contributions. In drawing conclusions about the roles of learners and the teacher in syllabus development in this programme, I compare the findings from the syllabus accounts with the literature. I also indicate areas of confusion or ambiguity.

6.1.2.1 The teacher - the main agent of syllabus development

In this programme, the teacher played a pivotal role as the specialist responsible for developing a coherent syllabus with the group. The teacher was "the crucial variable" (Nunan, 1989:134), and "the prime agent of curriculum development". (Nunan, 1988:1). The powerful nature of this role is disputed in much of the literature. I now assess the teacher's role as the implementer, developer and manager of this programme and draw conclusions.

Implementer and overall syllabus manager

The teacher implemented and subsequently managed the development of a particular syllabus model. This model determined to some extent the general direction that the syllabus took, the content and learning/teaching processes experienced, the learner/teacher relationship and the roles adopted. Syllabuses are:

"... imbued with particular educational philosophies, views of the subject matter and how it may best be learned, beliefs about the relationship between teacher and learner, all of which underpinned by particular definitions of a desirable social order and world-view." (Candlin, 1984:31).

The approach had very clear aims, even if these were not clearly articulated or discussed with learners. The main aims, as stated above, were to develop language, cognitive and metacognitive skills and awareness, and to promote critical thinking leading to action. These goals were pre-determined. In the literature, the aims are implied

rather than made explicit. The emphasis on the syllabus in action in the classroom and on the participants jointly developing the syllabus can distort the true nature and purpose of the approach. A process approach clearly does have aims and therefore combines both product and process. This needs to be acknowledged.

"Although the process model does not advocate ignoring aims, the emphasis on process and procedures rather than on outcomes could result in an aimless journey. There is little point in substituting a pedagogical magical mystery tour for a reasonably well-defined educational destination". (White, 1988:102).

The goal of encouraging joint syllabus development and training learners to plan, manage and evaluate learning determined to a large degree the roles that learners and the teacher subsequently adopted and also the way in which the syllabus developed. The teacher's choice of initial theme content, the topics that were pursued and the learning processes that were encouraged in the group were all in tune with the overall approach and learners were expected to respond accordingly. For instance, the two main content themes reflected the goals of the approach and the concern for linking a personal perspective with a broader social one. Problem-posing also made assumptions about the world and about how to change it. Finally, self-directed learning implies an individualistic, humanistic outlook.

To what extent then can White's description of the process approach as "a pedagogical magical mystery tour" (ibid), be

substantiated or refuted? In the absence of a structured syllabus, the process syllabus did allow the participants to shape the general direction, albeit within the broad parameters set by the approach. The teacher played a key role in this, through her interpretation of the goals of the approach and her ability to translate them into a coherent syllabus. The open-ended nature of the syllabus risked fragmentation and lack of focus, and the teacher had to ensure a sense of coherence, continuity, purposefulness and progress. The teacher did this by translating learners' long-term needs into manageable objectives and tasks and drawing up syllabus and lesson plans. These plans provided the participants with a rationale for what was happening in the classroom. They reflected learners' needs and also provided internal logic and cohesion between themes, topics, skills, tasks, etc. Throughout the programme the teacher continued to reconcile the need for coherent learning with the reality of a process syllabus which develops in response to unpredictable events and learners' emerging needs. In these ways, the teacher determined how the syllabus should look. The teacher also directly controlled some of the nitty-gritty aspects of the classroom, including learning content and process.

Syllabus content and process

The teacher generated a great deal of the learning content and processes experienced during this programme.

content

In terms of content, the teacher provided the materials used. These were mainly authentic materials which came from learners and from the USWE resource centre. The teacher was responsible for selecting, devising/adapting, sequencing and presenting materials as the need arose. Some materials worked better than others. Therefore, questions arise around the quality of materials provided and their specificity to particular groups. In addition, the fact that materials "provide concrete models of desirable classroom practice, [and] ... act as curriculum models" (Nunan, 1988:98), implies that materials are an important influence on the kind of learning that takes place in a programme. The question of teacher or learner control over materials is therefore pertinent. (Clarke, 1991:21). In the literature, the role of task designers is not examined (be it the teacher or outside specialists), and the scope of learners' influence appears ambiguous.

"We see here some indication of the limits to free negotiation and the fact that compromise will have to be made ... There seems to be some ambivalence here concerning the degree of contribution by the learners, when the amount of pre-categorization is quite considerable, even including the area of 'suggested procedure'. (Clarke, 1991:22).

In this programme, learners provided materials in the form of their writings and other documents brought to class. They also selected articles to read, and authenticated other materials through either engaging with them meaningfully or rejecting them. (Nunan, 1988:102). However, both the production and selection of materials by

learners took place within the parameters set by the teacher. This gave the teacher ~~enormous~~ leverage over syllabus development. A similar ambiguity is apparent in the practice of a well-known popular educator:

"I would bring in readings ... very carefully selected excerpts, appropriate in theme, language, and comprehensible politics, not sectarian or jargonish or ... abstract." (Shor 1988:22).

The teacher's influence over other programme content tackled was also far-reaching. The teacher often made strategic decisions about themes, topics and tasks to tackle during the programme. Although learners supplied key information around these decisions, the teacher usually had the final say. This role carried enormous responsibility, as the choice of tasks determined much of what took place in the programme as well as the power relations in the group. (Nunan, 1989:20)

"Drills and the like vest power in the teacher, while communicative tasks such as roleplays, problem-solving tasks and simulations give much more control to the learner." (Nunan 1989:86).

This was quite daunting for the teacher especially as decisions often seemed arbitrary and based on 'intuition' more than well-founded judgement. This risked undermining the teacher's confidence and the participants' faith in the programme.

process

As manager of the teaching/learning processes provided in the programme, the teacher played an equally powerful role. The fact that the teacher spoke English and that this was the medium of instruction inevitably meant that

learners were at a disadvantage and that the teacher largely controlled the interaction.

"When we ask learners to communicate in a language over which they have only partial control, we are asking them to take risks which many of them may feel unhappy about." (Nunan, 1989:86).

The teacher also co-ordinated and guided the learning process in the group. She diagnosed and analysed needs into manageable objectives and then researched, sequenced, graded and presented a variety of tasks. The way in which learners worked on these tasks was a key aspect of the teacher's role. Through encouraging a more cognitive approach to learning and developing learners' cognitive learning strategies, the teacher in fact made a direct intervention in the learning approach adopted by learners. This is supported by Nunan who states:

"As soon as the teacher stopped asking display questions and started asking questions which prompted learners to activate their background knowledge learner language and interactions changed dramatically." (Nunan, 1988:102).

The teacher was also concerned about maintaining learning momentum and relevance for the group. Thus her response to tasks-in-process and the feedback provided feedback was important, as well as her handling of unexpected events that arose. Assessing performance was another powerful role that the teacher performed in establishing assessment criteria, drawing up the tasks to measure this and then assessed the group's performance.

As far as problem-posing is concerned, managing this

✓ complex process entailed a very influential role for the teacher, although this is only tacitly acknowledged in the literature, if at all. (Shor, 1988:19; Wallerstein & Auerbach, 1987, Teacher Guide:5). The teacher often had to handle very sensitive issues and to ensure a safe climate for learners to express opinions and to explore issues. During problem-posing the teacher observed, identified and posed the problem, asked the questions, diagnosed, and provided the information or analyses needed for problematising and critical thinking. The depth and direction of teacher questioning and the kind of information provided were influenced to some extent by learners' responses. However, the teacher's own experiences, theoretical and ideological orientation, general knowledge and understanding of the issue were the critical factors affecting her judgement.

✓ The literature fails to acknowledge the extent of teacher control and the complex role that she is expected to play in this process. For instance, it is stated that the teacher should not impose her views during problem-posing, but allow learners to draw their own conclusions about root causes of problems and action to take. (Wallerstein, 1983a:17). Yet in practice the teacher controls the process which leads to decision and action.

"I provide an analysis or an insight or a question or some information which matters at a key moment in the dialogue, but is not being generated by the students themselves." (Shor, 1988:19).

On the whole, the teacher's role is played down and deemed neutral. Yet popular education argues that education cannot be neutral. This contradiction is a very real one which needs to be examined more closely.

6.1.2.3 Learners as secondary agents of syllabus development

In the programme investigated in this study, learners helped to shape the syllabus rather than controlling it, and provided direction in both direct and indirect ways as described below. Through responding to the syllabus model implemented by the teacher, learners automatically reduced the teacher's tight hold over learning and gained some control over the direction that the syllabus subsequently took. Learners assisted in shaping the syllabus mainly through the nitty-gritty classroom decisions. The degree to which this happened was directly related to the skills and experience that learners acquired during the programme. The more learners participated and learnt how to plan, manage and evaluate learning, the more direction they provided to the syllabus. However, this relied on the teacher's ability and willingness to train learners and to relinquish control.

In the literature, learners have been assigned a more powerful role, which in the light of this study appears unrealistic, ambiguous and contradictory. I now assess the extent to which learners influenced learning content and process in this programme. I draw conclusions and highlight problem areas.

learning content

In terms of learning content provided during this

programme, learners supplied tangible materials in the form of their writings, completed tasks, articles selected from magazines, etc. Learners' writings were a major source of learning, in terms of pursuing issues and developing language and editing skills. Learners also authenticated materials through using them in their preferred ways. In addition, learners made decisions about topics and tasks to tackle. These contributions were of both a direct and indirect nature and usually happened through planning and evaluation and tasks-in-process. Throughout the programme learners provided direction in terms of their general language needs and long-term goals and purposes in attending. However, although learners were clear about their general needs in English, they were not sure how realistic they were, what they entailed or how to reach them. They were not experienced enough to be able to map the learning route in detail. Also, they could not make decisions about topics and tasks which were beyond their experience. Asking learners to make these kinds of decisions was unfair as they could not judge what was possible. Attempts to do this merely caused tension, confusion and a lack of confidence in the teacher and in the programme. These decisions required teacher guidance until learners could participate meaningfully. In the meantime, learners gave direction to the syllabus, but trusted the teacher to handle the rest. These findings are supported by other research. (Holec, 1980, 1987).

Subsequent topics and theme-work revolved around events,

issues and problems pertinent to learners' lives. Many of these emerged through social conversation and classroom interaction, and through planning and evaluation. Through syllabus and lesson planning and evaluation, learners became aware of the learning options available to them as well as of their own strengths and weaknesses. This was reflected in the syllabus plans drawn up which engendered in-depth discussion and slowly began to reflect learners' most urgent needs. In addition, lesson and task evaluation often determined follow-up tasks and lesson goals, and at times took the syllabus into unanticipated directions. Thus, refining objectives and learning routes took time and was a long-term but worthwhile process.

Learners also raised issues for critical reflection in more subtle ways: through showing signs of confusion, dismay, anger or tension. These were often symptoms of underlying conflict, based on the fact that participants:

"... carry with them particular perspectives which affect how the objectives, content/experiences and evaluation of the syllabus will be viewed and judged. Guarding these two potentially contrastive perspectives from working against the process of co-investigation by teachers and learners of some chosen content or experience is a continuing and active syllabus problem." (Candlin, 1984:34).

In this study, mismatch between learner and teacher perspectives surfaced around perceptions of learning, and of planning, prioritising and assessing in the group. For example, learners firmly resisted self-assessment because the idea was novel and because they felt that this was the

teacher's role. The impression they gave was that the teacher was wasting time asking strange questions to which she should know the answers.

"Even in the case of adult learners working in a situation unconstrained by examinations, it is likely that they will wish to trust the teacher, as expert, to most effectively determine the route from unknowing to knowing. And, in a large number of cases this trust can be expected to be justified." (Clarke, 1991:19)

This conflicted with the teacher's view of self-assessment as important in the long-term for learning how to learn.

"Often the point of tension and rupture occurs in the participants' alternative interpretations of each other's long-term needs ... and short term wants and lacks ... " (Candlin, 1984:34).

Instances of learner dissatisfaction during the programme were evidence of mismatch. Although the decision to tackle these rested with the teacher, issues that were not properly addressed persisted and resurfaced later on. However, when mismatches were explored, they often affected the participants' roles and took the syllabus into new directions. The importance of critical reflection is noted in the literature. (Holec, 1987; Nunan, 1988, 1989).

learning/teaching processes

Learner influence over learning/teaching processes and the teacher's role occurred mainly through tasks-in-process, conscious evaluation and classroom interaction. Through tasks-in-process, learners provided direct feedback to the teacher on the relevance and usefulness of tasks and the methodology used. This feedback came in many forms depending on the task and the way in which learners

interpreted it to suit their levels, interests, needs, attitude towards the task, internal language syllabuses and stage of interlanguage development, and ways of learning and thinking. Ultimately, these learner variables directly affected what learners learnt from tasks. Although these variables were primarily under the learner's direct control, the teacher could encourage a more cognitive learning approach.

Through engaging in conscious formative evaluation around methodology, learners also became more reflective and analytical about their learning which generated discussions around learners' preferred strategies, ways of working in the group and particular language difficulties. All of this feedback gave the teacher an indication of the way forward and was particularly important in devising follow-up language work.

The use of classroom language also enabled learners to influence learning content, process and the teacher's actions. The group became more interactive as learners grew more confident, more assertive and more willing to take risks. In discussions, acquiring the language of debate enabled learners to steer discussions into new directions. Through the language of planning and evaluation, learners had a say over lessons and the syllabus. Finally, learners influenced the teacher's actions in the classroom, both through asking questions to

obtain the information they required, and through making requests to control the pace, quantity and quality of learning. In these ways, learners ensured more comprehensible input and greater potential learning intake.

6.2 Implications for Teacher Development and Learner Training

The roles adopted by the teacher and learners in syllabus development in this programme were influenced by many variables including the curriculum model itself, external events, the participants' views on language and language learning, their respective roles and status, their 'hidden curriculum' and their motivation for learning/teaching. The process approach placed enormous demands on the teacher and on the learners. Both parties were required to be 'action researchers' and to possess certain attitudes, knowledge and a variety of quite sophisticated skills. The implications of the approach for teacher development and for learner training are not adequately explored in the literature, except by Nunan. (1988, 1989). In this section I assess the implications of a process approach for teacher development and support, and for learner training.

6.2.1 Teacher development and support

In the literature it is claimed that the "operation of the approach is within the grasp of native and non-native speaker teachers alike, whether highly-trained or not." (Candlin & Murphy, 1987:4). At the same time, the selection, grading and sequencing of tasks in a principled fashion is seen to require competent, knowledgeable teachers. (Candlin & Murphy, 1987:19). This contradiction is a feature of the literature on learner-centred process

approaches to ESL. In giving prominence to learners and to the learning process in a 'learner-centred' approach, the teacher's role has been obscured and underestimated. In reality, as we have seen, the teacher fulfils a highly demanding, determinative role. This correlates with findings about the process approach in education and the fact that it "rests upon the quality of the teacher". (Stenhouse, quoted in Clarke, 1991:22). The teacher's role has major implications for teacher development and support. (Nunan, 1988:160; White, 1988:35).

In order to develop a coherent process syllabus, the teacher needs training as a teacher and as a curriculum developer. This has been possible in Australia.

"... in a language programme based on a learner-centred philosophy, teachers have been prepared to redefine their roles and to take on many of the tasks previously seen as the province of curriculum specialists." (Nunan, 1988:160).

In order to implement a process approach the teacher requires a high level of confidence and competence in a number of related areas. Firstly, the teacher needs to understand and to share the goals and the philosophy underlying the approach. This may not suit all teachers.

Local research found that:

"... implementing the process syllabus in its pure form involves a major redefinition of roles on the part of the teacher and the students and that the redefinition of the teacher's role may only suit certain types of personalities." (Stein & Janks, 1991:15)

Secondly) most of the tasks demanded of the teacher in a

process approach rely upon the teacher's knowledge of four key areas: a knowledge of the structure of English; an understanding of the process of second language acquisition and how to foster this; an understanding of how adults learn; and finally, a good general knowledge of the world. This is supported by recent research.

"Having an excellent knowledge of the topic or area is important because the teacher has to be able to facilitate and set learning tasks, if needed, on any aspect of the topic negotiated by the class."
(Stein & Janks, 1991:14-15).

Other research has revealed that although the teacher accepts fundamental principles of a learner-centred approach, aspects of it are difficult to implement.

"... many teachers expressed doubts regarding the feasibility of consultation, pointing out a number of potential obstacles: the conflicting ideas held by teachers and learners about their respective roles; the resultant problems of reconciling learner-perceived needs with teacher-perceived needs; the learners' inability to state their needs clearly."
(Brindley, quoted in Nunan, 1988:96).

Bartlett & Butler's study of the Australian Migrant Education Program in Australia (AMEP), found that teachers needed support in the form of needs assessment skills, course curriculum guidelines, programme management to ensure continuity, course planning skills, bilingual help to negotiate the syllabus with learners, educational counselling to group learners appropriately, conflict resolution skills and teacher role specifications.
(Bartlett & Butler, in Nunan, 1988:37). Teachers also needed administrative support.

These findings are supported by this study which also identified additional teacher needs. These include language awareness-raising skills in order to know "when to turn on the spotlight of consciousness-raising and when to turn it off ... knowing just how to aim it so that it will help the student instead of blinding him." (Stevick, in Rutherford, 1987:27). Further requirements are access to a well-stocked resource centre, the skills to adapt or devise materials, and ample time to attend to all of this.

"... in order for a teacher to be able to undertake materials provision for such a syllabus, local resources would have to be considerable and a large number of 'ideas books' containing ready-made but flexible modules would be necessary".
(Clarke, 1991:22).

Assessment of learners and teachers, including self-assessment were also identified as areas of need in this study. This correlates with other findings which indicate that teachers are unconfident about assessment. (Nunan, 1988:116). Yet these skills are essential for both learners and teachers using a process approach.

Teacher development also needs to address the contradictions highlighted in this study concerning the relative degree of control that teachers and learners exercise in a process approach. Unless teachers are aware of these and their implications, the approach could be overwhelming and could confuse and demotivate the participants.

Finally, the assertion that "handling the approach makes better teachers" (Candlin & Murphy, 1987:4), is only valid if teachers are already well-trained and can reflect critically upon the approach and have access to the necessary ongoing support.

6.2.2 Learner training

Process syllabus development is also very demanding for learners. In order to cope with it and to exploit its potential, learners need to understand clearly what it is. The approach has very clear broad goals which learners need to understand, even though detailed objectives are not stipulated. (White, 1988:35). Learners also need to understand the underlying principles and how it will work in practice. Without this understanding, the teacher and learners risk misunderstanding each other and the syllabus may not develop in a fully co-operative, negotiated way.

The approach also requires learners to participate in joint negotiation with the teacher from the start. This may be unrealistic, given the fact that one of the goals of the process approach is to teach learners how to do this through doing it. The process approach is experiential and is a process in itself, not a product. Learners and the teacher do not 'do' a process syllabus, they develop it. This means taking into account learner and teacher abilities, their state of language, cognitive and metacognitive development, their backgrounds, their

assumptions about learning and their roles, their attitudes towards a process approach, etc. Clarke maintains that learner involvement in negotiations around the syllabus is dependent upon three factors: the culture of the environment in which it is being implemented, the learners' cultural norms, and their state of cognitive development. (Clarke, 1991:18-19).

The literature does not clearly acknowledge syllabus development as a learning process. For instance, the task and process syllabuses require learners to participate from the very start in difficult decision-making about learning. The negotiated syllabus and the popular education approach, on the other hand, are more realistic. They acknowledge that learners may not be able to assume this demanding role and that the teacher may have to be more assertive at the beginning and adapt to circumstances.

"As most learners find it difficult to articulate their needs and preferences, the initial stages of a course can be spent in providing a range of learning experiences ... This does not mean, however, that activities and materials should be foisted on learners at the whim of the teacher. Learners should be encouraged to reflect upon their learning experiences and articulate those they prefer". (Nunan, 1988:6).

Another area to target for learner training is self-assessment. This is a highly sophisticated skill that takes time to develop and which needs to happen throughout rather than at the end of the programme. It is also a potential source of mismatched perceptions and may require critical reflection before learners (and teachers) can

experiment with and develop self-assessment tools.

Finally, the benefits of learner-training, especially in metacognitive skills are clearly articulated in the literature. (Allwright, 1981; Candlin and Edelhoff, 1982; Holec 1980 & 1987; Wenden & Rubin 1987). Under the right conditions, learners can become better learners.

"... learners can and will achieve better learning competence provided the right conditions are created for them to start thinking about the learning process in different terms ... once the ball is set rolling, it will keep rolling and will even gain momentum."
(Holec, in Wenden & Rubin, 1987:154-155).

However, the question remains as to whether learner training is a discovery process for learners and an integral part of a process approach or whether a separate learner training module should be provided on how to handle negotiation.

6.3 Learner and Teacher Roles in Curriculum Development

As explained in Chapter 1, this study is primarily concerned with action in the classroom and with questions pertaining to the participants' roles in syllabus rather than curriculum development. Therefore, I have not explored in any depth the role that other parties played in this, such as the curriculum specialists, the syllabus designers, programme managers, funders, etc. Likewise, the influences on the development of this syllabus from external events are not examined, even though it is clear that external influences highlighted gaps in learners' general knowledge and gave this syllabus a broader adult basic education focus. The literature on process approaches tends to neglect these kinds of influences and focusses on the actions of the main participants. Having said this, even at the level of the syllabus, broader influences can be identified and some of these are included in the conclusions which follow.

Apart from carrying out syllabus development, learners and the teacher can also play a role in curriculum development through the procedure outlined in Candlin's task syllabus. (Candlin, in Candlin & Murphy, 1987). This process syllabus model asserts that curriculum development can occur through ongoing evaluation of the syllabus in action, and that curriculum change can be effected through a dialectic process between syllabus accounts and curriculum

guidelines (see chapters 2 and 3). The extent to which curriculum renewal actually occurs will depend on a number of factors, and is beyond the scope of this study. However, in the analysis of the syllabus accounts in this study, tensions were exposed between the theory underlying a process approach and its practical implementation. These areas of debate constitute the final conclusions from the syllabus accounts and are the data upon which curriculum development can be based. I now summarise these conclusions and then briefly discuss the roles that learners and the teacher played in curriculum development in this programme.

6.3.1 Curriculum guidelines - some issues

The main conclusion drawn from this study, which conflicts with some of the theoretical background on process approaches is that the roles of learners and the teacher in curriculum development are not equal. Learners and the teacher do not jointly negotiate and develop the curriculum on equal terms. In assessing the influence exerted by each party, the teacher appears to be the main agent of curriculum development. Learners play a secondary, although very important role.

"If the chips are down, 'the teacher knows best', and therefore don't let us indulge in any nonsense about 'negotiating' the curriculum".
(Stern, speaking of Widdowson, in Brumfit 1984:8).

The participants' roles are complex and closely interlinked, as the approach has a strong experiential

basis. However, the teacher has overall responsibility for introducing, managing and developing a coherent syllabus and is therefore in a powerful position. The curriculum framework is a given and is not negotiable. In the literature, the political and ideological role of the curriculum and how this affects learner and teacher roles is not critically examined. Instead the theory emphasises what the teacher and the learners do as they interpret and translate the pre-determined curriculum framework into the syllabus for that group. The framework provides the parameters within which content and methodology are selected and learner and teacher roles are defined and developed. A syllabus has been described as:

"a window on a particular set of social, educational, moral and subject matter values. Syllabuses ... stand, then, for particular ideologies." (Candlin, 1984:30).

Ultimately, the curriculum is a powerful tool in the teacher's hands. In practice, the constraints imposed by this can result in tensions and misunderstandings in the group.

Another major area of mismatch identified in this study concerned planning decisions. Deciding what to tackle in the programme was a major stumbling block for both parties. Learners were very clear about their long-term goals and needs but could not set objectives or prioritise these. They were also unable to make decisions about topics to pursue which fell outside their experience of the world. Therefore, deciding on the merits of one topic over

another was meaningless. For the teacher, decisions about topics to pursue or language tasks to tackle were also extremely difficult to make. Translating long-term goals into manageable objectives was made even more difficult by the intervention of unpredictable events which disrupted the learning plans. In addition, decisions around language tasks required a sophisticated understanding of how to sequence and how to present and teach language tasks. As the literature has shown, this area is the subject of much current research. Deciding which topics or issues to pursue and which to dismiss was also difficult for the teacher, given the huge gaps in learners' background knowledge. In the end, the arbitrary nature of these decisions was disturbing for the teacher.

Other areas of mismatch between the theory and the practice of a process approach relate to learner and teacher roles in planning and assessing learning, in providing materials, and in problem-posing. The question of teacher bias was also pertinent, particularly with regard to materials provision and problem-posing. These questions are either ambiguous or not adequately addressed in the literature.

Finally, all of these issues raise doubts about the efficacy of a process approach as a model for wider implementation. It requires highly trained teachers and learners. Even then, questions around the sequencing of language tasks and the need to integrate general knowledge

and conceptual development into a syllabus for adult learners remain unresolved. Handling classroom processes is already an enormous challenge for the teacher. To expect her to be a remarkable applied linguist, curriculum developer and adult educator might be deemed unrealistic in many circumstances today. However, the process approach in its present form might still appeal to 'maverick' style teachers.

"The result turns out to be an emphasis on virtuoso teaching, with all the wisdom lying in a single teacher's head ... Often, there is little recorded on paper - no developed curriculum, syllabus, or materials for others to use ... An obvious result is that rugged individualism can prevail over co-operation and team effort."

(Dubin & Olshtain, quoted in Clarke, 1991:22).

6.3.2 Conclusions regarding teacher and learner roles in curriculum development

From the above it appears that syllabus accounts of a process approach in action are able to offer illuminative evaluation of the theory and practice of a process approach. However, this requires enormous effort on the part of the teacher in meticulously recording practice and then reflecting on it. The teacher also mediates between the accounts and the curriculum guidelines. Her conclusions will therefore reflect her ability as a teacher and as a researcher, as well as her understanding of the theoretical framework underlying the approach. Thus the teacher is again seen to play a crucial role in managing curriculum development in a process approach.

The extent to which learners effect curriculum development will depend on the roles that they adopt in the classroom, the extent of their participation and the quality of their feedback. Ultimately learner influence will depend on the role that the teacher adopts: how well she is able to carry out this kind of research, and then to interpret and exploit the results.

At the end of the day, curriculum development is a much bigger and more complex issue which goes beyond learners and teachers to the policy-makers who determine what adults in society need and how this will be provided. These realities fall outside the scope of this study. However,

the findings and recommendations from small-scale research such as this study constitutes an additional source of information which may influence the decision-makers.

CHAPTER 7

A NEW APPROACH

Introduction

The conclusions reached about the role of learners and the teacher in a process approach have broader implications for practice. In this final chapter, I briefly review the main advantages and limitations of the process approach and assess its applicability to the South African context. I then propose a new approach which takes into account the findings and which I argue is more appropriate and realistic for South Africa at this juncture. I conclude this chapter and this study with suggestions for further research.

This chapter is organised as follows:

- 7.1 The old approach
- 7.2 The new approach
- 7.3 Suggestions for further research

7.1 The Old Approach

A process approach is particularly suited to the teaching of adults and of language. It encourages creativity, spontaneity and flexibility, and is responsive to learners' changing needs in society. It encourages the discussion and resolution of issues affecting individuals, the group and the wider community, and the exploration of current local, national and international events. The approach is particularly motivating for adults who have specific needs, and is very appropriate for small-scale work such as ABE linked to development. Finally, because of its emphasis on action research and the 'teacher-as-researcher' and learners as 'co-researchers', it offers a valuable model of both teacher and learner development.

However, the limitations associated with this process approach are formidable. First and foremost it is difficult to implement on a large scale. It is both costly, labour-intensive and defies strict public accountability. (White, 1988:35). It also tends to lack structure and systematicity which can demotivate and undermine the participants. The approach can be threatening to all but the highly confident, experienced teacher, especially if the textbook is abandoned in favour of teaching resources. (White, 1988:102). Some teachers found that negotiation led to a sense of "anarchy and ... a

dereliction of duty" (Clarke, 1991:20), and that the approach did not take into account variables in the learning context. In the end, it is also possible that the approach may not suit the participants' learning styles and personalities.

"The recognition that most learners and teachers would not in fact be able or willing to attempt the implementation of the pure model is a reality not to be ignored." (Clarke, 1991:26)

Finally, teachers have to be highly skilled, confident and committed, with plenty of time to spare. They also have to be prepared to assume the role of curriculum and syllabus implementers, developers and assessors.

7.2 A New Approach

In South Africa, the use of a process approach with adults learning basic ESL in a non-formal context has been developed over a number of years. (Clifford, 1991; Kerfoot, 1991). Feedback from teachers and learners during this time supports many of the conclusions drawn in this study. Although teachers and learners appreciate many aspects of the approach, they have requested a structured syllabus with materials and some form of accreditation. These demands have come at a time when the country is considering establishing a national system of adult basic education linked to the formal education system and job grading. (Cosatu, 1991). This move towards large scale provision of ABE with accompanying accreditation and formal accountability is a challenge to applied linguists and adult educators.

Although a pure process approach is pedagogically appealing, it is impractical for South Africa's requirements. With conservative estimates of from 6-12 million adults in need of basic education (French, 1982; Wedepohl, 1984), it is unlikely that South Africa, even with the necessary political will, will have the finances, the expertise, the teachers, the syllabuses, the materials and the infrastructure to implement and maintain such a costly and labour-intensive approach. Also, as most of the teachers are likely to be second language speakers of

English, they may not be adequately equipped to handle a process approach and will therefore require intensive ongoing training. Teacher development in the future is likely to favour in-service and distance training models.

Against this backdrop, a pure process approach appears utopian. A modified form is needed which harnesses important features of a process approach while adapting it for more widespread use.

"It seems extremely unlikely that a pure Negotiated syllabus would be appropriate in anything but a few very unusual circumstances ... a more pragmatic approach is likely to prevail with a considerable amount of covert, or indeed overt, teacher/designer influence over fundamental decisions concerning content, materials and working methods."
(Clarke, 1991:24).

The approach that I propose here is a hybrid. It combines important features of a process approach such as negotiation and flexibility, together with the systematicity and accountability usually associated with 'product' approaches. It also incorporates similar skills to a process approach but within a more structured and coherent framework. This approach could be used with differentiated syllabuses and courses which slot into a broad national basic curriculum and accreditation framework for adults. This curriculum could include mother tongue literacy, ESL, and a broad range of skills and general knowledge. The curriculum, syllabuses and courses could be devised through careful research and piloting with target audiences.

"A more realistic approach is ... to identify recurring learner types and to prepare general course outlines which can be utilised with successive intakes of students." (Nunan, 1988:62).

Such a course could be based on relevant general themes or topics which are linked to form a cohesive course. The goals of the course, units, modules, lessons and tasks could be clearly stated so that learners and the teacher discuss and evaluate these. The design could be cyclical and content cohesion could be provided by themes which move from the known to the unknown and from the personal to the social. These could link learners' personal lives to the broader social /political/ historical /geographical context and thus provide an integrated view of social reality.

"The separation of knowledge into so many discrete autonomous forms and fields encourages the fragmentation of inquiry and awareness ... Such a partial, fragmented approach to understanding the world represents a poor basis from which to frame courses of transforming social action that stand a reasonable chance of being effective." (Lankshear, 1990:151).

Further cohesion could be provided by integrating language skills, cognitive skills, conceptual development, metacognitive skills and awareness and other general skills and knowledge such as numeracy, history and geography.

Language development could be fostered through language awareness-raising tasks based on three core language content areas: the language of description, narration and instructions (the latter is needed for understanding instructions in learning tasks, for instance). Further language development could take place naturally through

classroom interaction and other task-work. Flexibility could be built in to allow for choice and for teachers and learners to supplement units with additional materials, including learners' writings. This is similar to Wallerstein's idea of providing model materials "to support teachers and to stimulate curriculum-writing by students." (1987, Teacher's Guide:v). Learner training could be fostered through planning and evaluation tasks which include self-assessment procedures, and through encouraging participation and the use of classroom language. Critical thinking could be encouraged through problem-posing using various codes, with teacher guidelines provided.

All of these elements could ensure that the methodology remains highly negotiable, and that the content retains a degree of flexibility. However, the key to the widespread use of this course might be to combine its implementation with teacher development and curriculum development. To this end, the syllabus and course materials could form the core materials for courses aimed at trainers, teachers and learners. The syllabus and materials could constitute a guide or framework around which learners and the teacher negotiate and evaluate learning in the classroom, and around which teachers and trainers negotiate and evaluate in-service trainer and teacher development programmes. Additional trainer and teacher guides could be provided.

In this way, the important action research feature of a process approach could be retained. At the same time, the need for good teachers who are well-trained, flexible and versatile could be met. This model resembles the 'mixed syllabus' proposed by Clarke (1991:24). It is also similar to a 'curriculum renewal' process which links teacher development, methodology, materials, syllabus and curriculum development. (Clark, 1985).

7.3 Suggestions for Further Research

The areas of adult basic education and English as a second language are relatively young and both require a great deal more research. Nunan argues for more rigorous research in order to avoid the predominance of 'fads and fashions' in the field (Nunan, 1988:175). He also pleads for more collaborative research. (Nunan, 1988:2). Both are needed in order to give the necessary impetus to ABE/ESL work generally, and more specifically in South Africa.

This study has revealed a number of avenues for further research. Firstly, more evaluative studies of process approaches in practice are needed, including popular education approaches which have attempted to integrate ESL work. Specific areas to investigate could include:

- the role of materials in a process approach
- teacher control in a process approach
- learner contributions in a process approach
- the ideological basis of problem-posing in ESL work
- categorising learner strategies (Clarke, 1991:20)
- tasks, task typologies and task sequencing
- assessment, self-assessment and language proficiency

Secondly, an aspect of this study which was dealt with very superficially was the role of the broader curriculum in a process approach and how this is developed. This could be

a joint education/applied linguistics study.

Thirdly, an interdisciplinary approach is needed to investigate a range of topics around the integration of ABE with ESL. One such area could be the feasibility of a 'language-across-the-curriculum' approach to ABE/ESL.

Finally, ABE/ESL work in South Africa requires an enormous amount of careful research into a number of areas, including the following:

- a national accreditation system
- a broad ABE/ESL curriculum framework
- models of teacher development and accreditation
- differentiated syllabuses, courses and materials
- teacher and trainer manuals

Without this research the ABE/ESL field in South Africa is likely to remain disjointed, neglected and the 'poor relation' of mainstream schooling.

APPENDIX A

PUBLISHED TEXTS FROM SYLLABUS ACCOUNTS

Syllabus Account I

Grouping learners

USWE Starting Out, USWE, Johannesburg, 1985.

Coming to town, schooling

Petros Mavuso 'When I first came to South Africa'. In We Came to Town, Kerfoot (ed), 1985, p.46.

Josiah Moyo 'I walked to South Africa'. In Reader, Learn and Teach, Johannesburg, 1976.

Learn and Teach 'The long walk', in Learn and Teach Magazine, No. 1, 1985, p.23-26.

Syllabus Account II

Liquor

Learn and Teach 'The dangers of liquor'. In Learn and Teach Magazine, No.4 1985, p.22-23.

Learn and Teach Diagram of body, In Learn and Teach Magazine, No.5 1985, p.53.

Education

Learn and Teach 'A different kind of school'. In Learn and Teach Magazine, No.5 1986 ,p.31-33.

Sached 'Each one teach one in Mocambique', In The New Nation, April 30th - May 6th 1987, p.10.

Andries Mulaudzi 'In the schools we learn many things' In We Came to Town, Kerfoot (ed) 1985, p.32.

History

Callinicos, L. Extracts from chapters 1-5 in Gold and Workers, Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1981.

Trade unions

Petrus Tom My Life Struggle, Ravan press, Johannesburg, 1985

DPSC

Learn and Teach 'A helping hand'. In Learn and Teach Magazine, No 6 1986, p.8-10.

Mandela

Learn and Teach Extract from Mandela's speech, in Learn and Teach, No.6 1986, p.42.

Learn and each Mandela's story, in Learn and Teach, No. 4 1987, p.2-5.

Newspapers

ELP (English Ukukhanya, ELP Newspaper, Johannesburg, Literacy Project) 1987.

Syllabus Account III

USWE Topic Book, USWE, Johannesburg, 1985.

USWE Needs questionnaire, USWE, Johannesburg, 1985.

APPENDIX B

UNPUBLISHED TEXTS FROM SYLLABUS ACCOUNTS

a Lickson Keetse's story 'About myself'



Lickson Keetse
P O Addney
Monyebodi School
Private Bag X2
Pietersburg
0712

About myself

My name is Lickson Keetse.
I come from Pietersburg.
I have three children.
I try to have enough food.
I start work at 7.00am.
I try to do my job nicely.

b Alfred Dukwe's story 'Why I Left School'

Why I Left School

I was born in Transkei in 1950.
I grew up on the farm.
My father was a farmworker.
I left school in Standard 4, and began to work on the farm because my father was paid low wages on the farm. He was paid only two rands a month.
Because he earned low wages he could not afford to send his children to school and give them food to eat and clothes to dress.
That is why I left school and began to work to help him with his children because he got low wages.
After that I left the farm and went to Cape Town to work there.
In Cape Town I had lots of problems because when I looked for a job I got a nice job but they wanted an educated person.
Then I decided to go to night school.

c 'In the old days' (original text source unknown)

I

In the old days, the people lived on the land.
The men looked after the cattle. The people
got milk and meat and skins from the cattle:



The women worked in the fields. The women
planted manies and beans.



2

The women also looked after the children.
They cooked food and cleaned the huts.



The women also made pots from clay.

They made mats from grass.



Some men worked with iron. They made
tools and spears and hoes from iron.



3

In the old days, the people worked for
themselves.

In the old days, the land belonged to the
people.

Now most people work for the bosses of
the mines, factories and farms.



CONTENTS OF THE SELF-STUDY WORKBOOK

Advanced group

What we will learn from July 3rd to August 17th

To read and write better

- about the history of South Africa
- a letter from Marian in England
- about a relative or friend
- about what people learned at home and in town.
- about migrant workers
- about different jobs and timetables
- about 'The long walk'
- in my diary

Extra reading

- Learn and Teach, We Came To Town, Upbeat

Spelling

- practising difficult words.

Speaking and Listening

- talking about the history of South Africa and how life has changed
- talking about the stories
- listening to the story about 'The long walk'.

HISTORY

Goals and lesson guidelines for Lessons 1-6

Goals:

1. To learn more about the history of South Africa.
2. To be able to tell someone about this in English.
3. To be able to write about this in English.

What to do in the lessons:

- 1 Read the stories from 'Gold & Workers'. Discuss anything you don't understand.
- 2 Tell each other what you read in English.
- 3 Tape record your stories. Listen to your stories and try to improve them.
- 4 Discuss what was good and bad about life in the old days and life now. Make sure that everyone says something.
- 5 Write a story in rough about:

How Life in South Africa has changed.
6. Read your stories to each other and try to improve them.
7. Exchange stories and try to correct the spelling, full stops, capitals etc.
8. When your stories are okay, write them again correctly. Give them to Dawn to check and to make copies for the other learners to read.
9. Read your stories to the other learners. Discuss anything that is not clear. Let the learners read your stories again quietly. Check if they agree or disagree with you.

Lesson 7

- Write a draft letter to Marian.
- Read it to each other. Check that the message is clear.
- Now check the spelling, fullstops, etc.
- Write the airmail letter. Stick it and post it.

Lesson 8

- Read the story about Musa's grandfather.
- With a friend, check that you understand it.
- Tell each other about your grandfather or another relative or friend.
- Help each other to say it in a clear way.
- Now write a story about this person.
- Read it to each other and try to improve it.

Lesson 9

- Read the story 'what I learned in the country and in town'.
- Read We Came To Town, pages 28 - 31.
- Tell each other what you learned at home and in town.
- Write about what you learned.
- Read your stories to each other and try to improve them.

Lesson 10

- Read and discuss the story about the migrant worker.
- Write what you think about migrant workers.

Lesson 11

- Listen to the story about Enoch, a street cleaner.
- Discuss it. Play it again if it helps you.
- Read the story quietly to yourself. Discuss it again.
- Now write a story about jobs.
- Read it to each other and try to improve it.

Lessons 12 & 13

- Read and discuss Sibongile Letsatsi's story.
- Check that you understand it with your friend.
- Discuss the chart 'About our Jobs'.
- Try to fill it in together.

Lessons 14 & 15

- Listen to the story about 'The long walk'.
- Discuss it. Play the tape again if it helps you.
- Now read the story to yourself and then discuss it.
- Look at the map and draw the journey that Joao took.
- Now do the gap exercise.
- Check your answers with each other.

Do as much as you like of these lessons.

If you have time, read Learn and Teach and Upbeat.

Enjoy your lessons! Good luck and see you in August.

Marian.

CONTENTS OF THE FINAL ASSESSMENT

Assessment Ideas Discussed with Learners

Writing

Write a story for the group about the old days in South Africa.

Check this with a friend and try to improve it.

Reading

Read the story about 'The long walk' (lesson 14 from self-study book).

Do the gap exercise about this.

Speaking & Understanding

Talk to Dawn. Tell her about yourself and your family.

Ask her some questions.

Tell her about your past.

Tell her what you did yesterday or last weekend.

Ask her what she did last weekend.

Ask her if you can go outside.

GUIDE TO THE ORAL ASSESSMENT (for teacher's use)

ALRODE CEP ORAL ASSESSMENT - ADVANCED GROUP 1987

Assessment

<u>QUESTIONS ETC</u>	<u>LANGUAGE AND SKILLS LEARNED</u>	
1. TALKING ABOUT MYSELF <u>Greetings</u>	"How are you? I'm fine, and you?"	1 = a little 2 = quite well 3 = well 4 = very well
What's your name? Spell please.		
Tell me about yourself.	"I work, stay, live, come from at/in (place)	
Tell me about your family.	"I have got 1 child/children". "They...." "My wife...."	
Tell me about your home.	a/the (general vs special one) "I'm a father / the father of my child"	
Tell me about your job	at/in (place) "I have a house" at/in/on (time) a/an (one of a class of jobs) "I'm an operator" "My job is a messenger"	
2. ASKING ABOUT SOMEONE <u>Can you ask me</u>	Present + Interrogatives; Where, When, what, who, why, how, how many etc. "Where do you stay/come from?" "Are you married?" Past - "When were you born?" What do you do? Where do you work? What's your job?	
Some questions about myself? What do you want to know about me? Can you ask me about my job/work?		
3. TALKING ABOUT MY PAST		
Tell me about when you first came to Johannesburg and why	Simple Past - "I came, arrived, saw, Past with infinitive - "I started to work..." "I came to find/look for work" at/in/on (time) in/at (place) to/from (direction) "I came to Johannesburg from Natal" means - "by train/car/combi/bus/taxi" a/the (specific/general) and (new/given)	
Tell me what you did when you were little at home. What education did you have?		
4. TALKING ABOUT WHAT I DID		
What did you do last night/yesterday/today/ on the weekend/ Xmas/at Easter/during your holiday this year?	Simple Past + with infinitive Time/Place/Direction (Prepositions) Specific/general (a/the) Given/New info. (a/the)	
5. ASKING ABOUT SOMEONE		
Can you ask me about the past	"What did you do on the weekend/ yesterday/today/last Xmas/last week?" "What happened?" "Where were you?"	
6. TALKING ABOUT WHAT MY FRIEND DID		
Who is your friend? Tell me what he did last holiday/ last weekend?	He/She went Past + inf. "to visit" "to look after" Possessive "his family" Double subject eg "My friend he went" Preps direction "to Natal" "home" Preps place eg "at home" in Thokoza"	
7. ASKING FOR SOMETHING <u>ASKING FOR PERMISSION</u>		
How do you ask to go out? At the Post Office, how do you ask for a Money Order Form? What do you say at the cafe? (Roleplay this)	"Please can I go out/to the toilet?" "Please can I have"	
8. COMMANDS/REQUESTS IN CLASS		
	"Repeat please" "I don't understand" "Please move" "I'm not sure" "sorry" "louder please" "it helped /didn't help"	



**CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMME
ALBERTON**

SPECIAL AWARD

presented to

for

CHAIRMAN

T = teacher L's = learners L = learner

- 1 T: What is a good teacher?
- Meshack: The white person is good to teach our black teachers because they have to know what they didn't learn before then they can teach us, our children, what they know, what they get from somebody else with their mother tongue. Like you.
- 8 T: So you think somebody whose mother tongue is English, is a better teacher than a black teacher. Do you all think that? Everybody? What do you think? Johan, Mandla, do you agree?
- 13 Mandla: What I think is, a person who knows all languages.
- T: All languages?
- L's.: Yes...
- T: So they must know English, Zulu and Sotho?
- L.: Yes.
- T: Do you agree?
- 20 Meshack: Yes, but I think we're talking about English.
- T: Yes, but we're talking about teaching English here, but if there's a teacher here who comes to teach English, they must know Zulu, maybe, as well as English. They must know English first, but do you think they also must know some Zulu?
- 27 Meshack: It's not necessary. That is our home language, we know it. So we want this language we don't know. Say for instance here, in this class, we're learning a lot now, from you, because English is your tongue. So if somebody can teach me, like our black teachers, they don't know deep enough like you. We're getting better in the English, especially we're talking better

- 36 English now, although some words is still missing but we can now understand better.
- T: If there was a teacher - a white teacher or a black teacher, it doesn't matter - do you think it's good for that teacher to know English and some Zulu or Sotho? It can help in the class, or not? What do you think?
- 43 Meshack: If it's a black man, it's good that teacher to know English.
- T: But if he knows English, that's good. If he knows some Zulu or Sotho, do you think that can help in the class? What do the other people think?
- 49 Danniell: But teacher, I don't think you can help us when you know English and Zulu.
- T: Why?
- Danniell: Because always we use Zulu language, you see. Now is a better way then we use English language all the time.
- 55 T: What about the people who only know a little bit of English? It's hard, eh? What about the people who came at the beginning of this year, didn't know much English, eh? Johan? Solomon? It was hard with me! You didn't understand me. True, eh? Don't you think it was hard, to explain something?
- 62 Johan: No, I think for me, I don't know about Hezekiah, Solomon ... maybe different.
- T: But for you, it was okay?
- Johan: Yes, it was okay, teacher. I think it's another words, something difficult.
- 67 T: Some words ... sometimes difficult. And if I can translate into Zulu, is that good? But I can't. If I could do that, it could help me? I could explain quickly this word 'disagree', what it means. Don't you agree?
- 72 Walter: But if we have that help I think it can take a little bit longer to understand. You know what I mean? Because I know that it's going to be easy if I say "Ah, sorry, I don't know that", so you say "Oh! 'disagree'?" So now, the way we are, the way you teach us,

- 78 to me, the way you teach us, because you don't know the Zulu and we don't know the English, so we're all in English.
- T: That's better?
- Walter: Yes, for me.
- T: So if I know the word 'angivuma' for 'disagree', if I don't know this word it's better, is that what you say, Frans, because then you must think, and if I tell you the word, it's too easy and you don't remember?
- 88 Frans: Yes, I must think.
- Walter: Yes, and then I must fight to myself, what does that mean? Then now I think, the whole night I'm think, what does that mean? Then tomorrow when you tell me once, now I'll remember. Otherwise if you've got two words, then it takes long, but I don't say, I think.
- 96 Frans: You see you can take the words there, I can write, but then I can see these words very hard for me. I can write a little bit on the side in my language and then I can remember - Oh, you say it like that.
- 101 T: Okay so translation?
- Learners: Yes...
- T: But then I can't tell you the translation. So how are you going to find out these words?
- 105 Walter: That's why you gave us a dictionary.
- Learners: Yes, dictionary.
- Walter: That's what help us. I can write it one side just like this. I can open my dictionary and then I find what that word means. I think it's better, to my side.
- 111 T: Okay, so it's not so important for the teacher to know Zulu?
- Walter: To help you teacher, it can be, or just to help you to know Zulu.

115 T: Yes, but I think it would be quicker. If you don't understand something I could explain it quickly.

Walter: But I think the teacher's worried because you don't know Zulu. That's why you're worried about Zulu or Sotho. So us, we don't worry about Zulu or Sotho, we're worried about your language, and now you, you're worried about our language (laughs).

124 T: Yes, I know, I understand. I want to learn Zulu or Sotho, but that's for me. What I'm saying is, I want to teach you English well, very well, the best I can. And I can teach it better maybe if I know more Zulu. Maybe it can help me to teach you better. That's what I'm saying.

131 Meshack: Yes, I think it can be better like that ... Like now, some other words, we used to translate, but I do understand now - you can tell us quickly. Like now you say 'angivuma', tells me that now you know something about our language.

137 T: Okay. If you can choose a teacher what teacher do you want? What do you think is a good teacher? We said that they must know English very well. Maybe they must know some Zulu, because it can help sometimes. Do you agree? It can help just for translation sometimes, but they must know English very well. Okay. What else must they do?

146 Meshack: To my side, it's that English, because we're here on this class for the English, because English is a problem to us, you see. When you talk with white man or whatever, you shop, or where you used to go to find out if you got the trouble.

152 T: Yes, okay. It's not about English now, I'm saying, what kind of teacher is good? Do you want a teacher who makes everybody sit quietly, not say anything, Do you know what I mean? Maybe the teacher comes with a red pen, goes round, puts red pen all over your work do you know what I mean? There are different kinds of teachers in schools, everywhere, night schools and these classes. What's a good teacher for you?

- 162 Do you want someone who shouts at you? Who screams?
- Meshack: No, the one who shouts at us, I don't think that he is a good teacher because now maybe I'll get angry for him ... Go to find out now, I'm not concentrate about you, maybe he's handling it badly.
- 169 T: What word did you say?
- Meshack: 'Concentrate'.
- T: 'Concentrate'. And anybody else? What do you think?
- Walter: What about the teachers - for me, I think, the black teacher can't be able to teach this class.
- 176 T: Won't? Why?
- Walter: The black teacher has been also taughted ... to speak English. Now we're also need to speak English so the English from you, teacher, is not the same as from the black who has been taughted to speak English.
- 182 T: Who has been taught.
- L: Has been taught, yes.
- T: So, what if maybe there's somebody whose English is the same as mine.
- 186 L: Black?
- T: Yes.
- L: It's okay. Yes ... It's just English must be good. I agree.
- T: What else do you want the teacher to do? You don't want the teacher to shout? You all agree?
- 193 L's: No.
- Walter: We're too old for that (all laugh).
- T: Okay, what else?
- Walter: We only need to explain, like a big man, just

197 to explain if I'm wrong, explain that you're wrong, you must make it like that 'cos I like to learn but I can't do it. So the teacher must help me on that. But he mustn't shout 'cos tomorrow I won't be here ... yes (laughs).

203 Meshack: In other words the teacher must be patient.

T: Patient? Okay, anything else? People who haven't said anything yet, any ideas? (mother tongue discussion...) What do you say, Philemon?

Philemon: No for black, it can't come alright, no.

T: For a black teacher?

Philemon: No.

211 T: Okay, let's forget about the black teacher. You want a teacher with good English.

Philemon: Yes, they must bring the white people to teach.

Frans: Also, the black is alright if he can teach us nicely, quiet, no shouting, nice English.

T: What else is 'nicely', 'teach us nicely', what does it mean?

219 Frans: 'Nicely' means ...

Philemon: You know what is trouble teacher? I know the Afrikaans. Ek praat Afrikaans. That Afrikaans I'm not learning to school. Everyday I stay with Afrikaner, that's why. Now everyday when you stay with white people, he talk, he write, you must be speaking. You must.

227 T: Yes, Frans?

Frans: Yes, it's like that. I agree.

T: Okay. If another teacher comes to the class, and this teacher comes and has got some textbooks, like school books, maybe book 1, 2, 3, 4, do you think the teacher is okay to teach you? Everybody must do book 1, then book 2, then book 3, then book 4. Do you think that's the way you want to learn?

236 Frans: Well there, the teacher will see. Will give us that books and see which one is go over this book, then he must get another one, to go on.

Philemon: Yes, when he see that we is better, then he can give book 5, he can read, he can write.

Walter: Do you people understand what kind of books we're talking about? ... (vernac discussion) You say, these books, where these books coming from? Not from government ... We got a lot of books here - I don't know which is 1, which is 2, which is 4 ...

249 Meshack: You see the problem is, if you can get the teacher these books, volume 1, volume 2 books, you know, that will take us back from when we was start to learn school, you know what I mean? 'Cos that teacher think he's going to teach us according what government wants. You see now this class, I don't think our teacher got this thing from the government. We have to teach the people this. You teach us what we get here, what he knows. It's better like that, not that can teach us about volume 1, 2 and all that, I disagree.

262 T: What do you think, Danniell?

Meshack: What do you think?

Danniell: I agree with Meshack, 'cos maybe we can start 1, 2 3 and then, when Mr. Walter must be learn 8, he will be old (laughs). You see! Now it's not alright for us. Just when we can learn to read and write even not so much, but when we get the chance to read and write and speaking, we can get better improvement.

272 Meshack: And to understand what's happening in the world and in the country.

T: What do you say, Philemon?

Philemon: Me, I know this school for big men, all country. At my home we go to school. Now we teach at school. Now we're here. The government wants to see when he goes up in that school. Must he start A, must do ...

280 Danniell: When he start A, better we can leave the school!

Philemon: Yes, can leave, but other people can go up.

T: And for you?

Philemon: Yes, I can go A ... If I don't know English ... Yes ... Do you think I can go up ...

286 Danniell: Sorry, can I ask you question? Why you didn't go to the night school in the location?

Philemon: Where? 'Cos the school is at work ... here.

Danniell: You must go to the night school.

Meshack: No, I think Philemon he try to say he want Std A up to Std what, what, of English - you know what I mean. (vernacular discussion)

294 Walter: Speak English, so that we can understand... (all laugh).

Danniell: You see teacher, that is why we say we want teacher when we talk English all the time, 'cos you see now, other people when we're talking, they can't listen and they can't ask, when we're talking like this, what these words mean. You see? Now when you know English and Zulu it will be difficult to teach the people, because when we talk Zulu, we can't think when I want to say in English I must say it like this.

306 T: But maybe in the beginning when you don't know much English, maybe you need a teacher who knows some Zulu and English. At the beginning, it can help you. Do you agree? (vernacular discussion)

T: In English please.

312 Meshack: He says it's better a white teacher, better than a black man, 'cos a black man, sometimes he's got no manners. He's not going to respect us, maybe like he knows better than us. Maybe he'll never be patient, he's gonna get cross with us. So if you leave this class, it's better you must try to find a white person to teach us, not a black person.

- 321 T: Why do you think a black teacher is like that? Why do you say he doesn't respect, thinks he's better than you, thinks he knows more? Is that right? Why do you say that?
- Johan: Because the black teacher is not polite.
- T: Why?
- Johan: I think, I don't know why. That's why he say it's better a white teacher.
- 329 T: Why do you say a black teacher is like that?
- Danniel: You can't ask a black teacher one word three times, when you don't understand.
- T: Why can't you ask?
- Danniel: 'Cos he'll fight with you. He say you must listen, listen nice, be quiet, mustn't ask some questions.
- 336 Johan: If you ask again, he fight again.
(vernacular discussion)
- Meshack: At Ican, they're having a class. The teacher there is a black man ... All the students resigned. Now the one is still there is about three students. All of them resigned for the sake of the black teachers.
- 343 T: Why? Because he wasn't good?
- Meshack: They haven't got the respect for the students.
- T: Is that why? Because they don't respect the students?
- Walter: But in my opinion, that way it's the person, they're not all the same the teachers, like the foremen at work. Some foremen they explain to you properly. Some foremen, when you make a mistake at work, he says you're stupid and now you'll never be alright anymore 'cos you'll never be okay about that. Now you think, everything you touch you're scared, 'cos I'm gonna make a mistake there. I'm gonna be stupid. So more so the teacher. You can find one. We didn't know that Marian can teach us like that. We had not a long time - only from last

361 August. And myself. I couldn't hold a pencil by the time I started here, but now I can see sometimes I can make a better word, and sometimes, 'cos I never been to school before. Now that's why I say we can be lucky to get one like Marian. If we can get one like Marian, even if it's black or white. But a black teacher, he has been taught to speak English! It's not his mother tongue.

Meshack: So, in other words, you was a blind man. Now let's say you can see a little bit. Now I'm a blind man - now you can show me the way - where I can go. You see it's impossible.

375 T: Walter - what about mistakes? What must the teacher do when you make mistakes.

Walter: I can say now teacher, it's many mistakes we make, about writing, about talking, about everything ... but because our teacher is patient, it's just behind us. Alright when I made a mistake here, the teacher is coming to sit against you and show you how to do it. But another teacher won't do that. He'll write on the blackboard there and then he sits there and reads the newspaper. By the time he stands up from there, he'll say, 387 "Have you all finished? Oh, Oh, Oh, what you doing now!" So now you're scared. Next time you're scared, otherwise you're not coming back anymore. I hear that at Ican, there's many people, but now there's no more ... 'cos they start from no. 1, no. 2, they don't even finish no. 2 'cos they take them back to school. I'm too old to go back to school now! The way you teach us, with these magazines you give us, is an easy way to learn, a very simple way. By my house I'm sitting, I get one of those magazine, I read and read and write then tomorrow when I come here it's better than yesterday. 'Cos that's why I say if we can be lucky to get another white teacher, never mind can speak Zulu or what, but if he can just learn us the way we are now, from here and forward.

405 Meshack: It's the same like Philemon said, now it's better the white teacher can teach us 'cos everytime we're going to speak English. Like now he said he never learned Afrikaans, but why, he work here with Afrikaans, he can praat Afrikaans. He can say 'Nie man ...' (laugh).

412 T: Yes, okay. Now, when we correct things in class.

Walter: What teacher?

T: When we correct things in class, I correct you or someone else. What do you think about that? Does it make you feel bad, or is it alright? No problem?

Learners: It's okay, no problem.

420 T: Does it help?

Learners: It help.

T: Who didn't say anything? Solomon? Hezekiah?

Walter: That's why the other people, it looks like the others are behind on talking, 'cos they're scared to talk. Now, we're trying to talk. Never mind we're talking other ways (laughs) but it can help. We learn here at school here. We must talk to get a little bit quicker to learn. Maybe next year we don't get this class, so now what we do? if you don't talk now? Solomon, Hezekiah, Johan, they don't talk.

434 T: Not so much, but they can talk nicely.

Meshack: This is like the child. If the child is lazy to walk, he'll take time to walk. But if he stand up 1, 2, 3 fall down - it's alright. Tomorrow he'll find it's alright. Same with these gentlemen, they must talk!

441 Philemon: No, no you see what is trouble? The trouble is they're not a long time working in Johannesburg. Wait here, I want to tell you! You see, the people who work here a long time - 10 years, 15 years - they know a little English. Like me, I left school, I working the farmer Afrikaner. That's why I can speak Afrikaans ... goed! (laughs). Now you, you start here in Johannesburg. That's why you talk English. Like the people from Rhodesia, they don't talk other language, they talk English.

T: How long have you been in Johannesburg?

454 Johan: 16 years.

T: That's a long time, and Hezekiah?

Hezekiah: 1969.

T: Oh, a long time. How many years is that?

Meshack: 16 years ... (discussion to work it out)

T: 18 years? And Solomon? Solomon: 1970.

460 T: 1970 - how long is that? How long is it 1970? Do you remember how we did this before? Oh! Next year, when you get a teacher, ask her to teach you about the years. 1970 to 1980 makes how many years?

L: 10.

466 T: And to 1987, makes 7 ... (explains) ... Do you remember we did this before? You must ask the new teacher to help you learn about how numbers work, and money, all these things. We didn't do so much this year.

Meshack: So where are you going now? Next year?

472 T: Me - to Cape Town.

Meshack: To teach there?

T: Yes.

Meshack: Never come back in Transvaal?

T: Yes, maybe I'll come back. I'll stay there for one year. Maybe I'll come back.

Walter: You're going there for work or you're going there for married? (laughs).

480 T: No. I'm only going for work! You're very worried about me! (laughs).

Walter: And you know who's coming here?

T: No, I don't know, I must ask Maggie. Do you see her, Johan? You must ask her what's going on next year. And I must ask Jacob what's happening next year.

487 Danniell: Sorry, teacher, when we will close this class?

T: On 30th, I think there's a party on Monday 30th, so we've got next Monday and Wednesday
... .

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