DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 100 172 FL 006 624

TITLE Teaching Languages to Adults for Special Purposes. CILT Reports and Papers, No. 11.
INSTITUTION Centre for Information on Language Teaching, London (England).
PUB DATE Nov 74
NOTE 100p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.75 HC-$4.20 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS *Adult Education; Adult Students; Course Descriptions; Evaluation Methods; Instructional Materials; Intensive Language Courses; *Language Instruction; *Language Programs; Language Research; *Languages for Special Purposes; Second Language Learning; Teaching Methods

ABSTRACT

This publication is the result of a conference on teaching foreign languages to adults for special purposes convened by the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research (CILT) in July, 1974. In the first chapter, which serves as an introduction to the volume, G. E. Perren summarizes work that has been going on since 1968 when CILT held its first conference. M.A.L. Sculthorp emphasizes the special relationship between intensive courses and special purpose language teaching in chapter two. Teaching problems are discussed in an administrative and organizational context by B. Fitzjohn in the third chapter. Chapter four contains a detailed description by J.L.M Trim of an adult language learning project established by the Council of Europe. In the fifth chapter, M. Kuhn writes in French about the development of teaching materials, and A.E.G. Pilliner discusses language program evaluation procedures in chapter six. The seventh chapter is devoted to descriptions of actual courses in which languages are taught for practical use. C.V. James discusses the aims and results of several recent surveys designed to estimate the language needs of adults. Research in special purpose language training now in progress in Great Britain is described in the first appendix. Appendix two contains a bibliography, and the CILT conference participants are listed in appendix three. (PMP)

Published by the
Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research
20 Carlton House Terrace
London SW1Y 5AP

Printed by Hanbury, Tomsett & Co. Ltd
Warner House
Warner Street
London EC1R 5ES

ISBN 0 903466 06 6

Price £1.50, post free in the United Kingdom

CILT Reports and Papers 11

Teaching languages to adults for special purposes

November 1974
Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research

Foreword

This publication results from an invited conference on *Teaching foreign languages to adults for special purposes* convened by CILT at Nutford House, London, 5-7 July 1974.

Although it has gained wide currency in recent years, *language teaching for special purposes* is not very satisfactory as a blanket term to cover a variety of vocational and professional reasons for learning or teaching languages; it may suggest much similarity of problems or solutions where in fact there is very little. Its use probably originated from the need to differentiate between teaching a language as an auxiliary to vocational study and teaching languages for general educational reasons — as in schools — where any interpretation of the pupil's needs is made on his behalf by the education system or by his teachers. By contrast, adults, whether free-ranging individuals or in institutions, often have their own conscious reasons for undertaking the labour of learning foreign languages related to their occupational needs. The making and publishing of courses presupposes identifiable *group* requirements rather than widely different individual needs, and it is clear that it is no easy task to identify collective needs so as to provide tidy blueprints for the construction of courses guaranteed to produce quick rewards.

It is also easy to confuse the idea of a *special language* (or segment of a language) with that of a *specialised aim*. Clearly the two notions interlock, but the second certainly seems the easier to define.

There is of course nothing very new about individuals learning languages for practical use in their career or occupation. In the past they have often done so by residence or study abroad or by hiring native informants and tutors at home as well as by taking established courses which seemed to be relevant. However, it is now realised that materials for such courses need to be based on an unprejudiced insight into contemporary language, close observation of all manner of jobs, and ability to exploit all kinds of didactic media in the interests of speed and economy. All this calls for continuous operational research into different languages as used in differing situations in different countries.

This may not produce a universal canon of teaching or provide for new generalisations about languages; it will, however, yield a body of practical experience which can be drawn on selectively.

G. E. Perren
Director,
Centre for Information on
Language Teaching and Research

August 1974

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G E Perren

Introductory: the past five years

Nearly six years ago CILT convened its first specialist conference, when an invited group of 50 met to discuss languages for special purposes. A report was published in April 1969[1]. It seems appropriate to recall the views of the earlier meeting and to draw attention to some of the work which has been going on since 1968.

The 1968 conference was exploratory in the sense that it attempted to clarify problems of organisation and research. No conference ever solves problems of this kind; at best it can only present them in terms which help us to see aims more clearly or define tasks more precisely. Papers by J. L. M. Trim and M. A. K. Halliday particularly drew attention to linguistic problems, that is those of identifying and defining the language (or portions of the language) to be taught, rather than the methods by which it should be taught. In 1968 it was assumed that teaching a language to adults for special purposes often implied an intensive course. This still applies, especially if *intensive* covers not only concentration in time, but concentration on limited aims. The customer is often in a hurry, has little time at his disposal and wishes to acquire particular skills related to his vocation or profession. He is an active learner rather than a passive pupil. Although in a sense languages are always *learned* for special purposes, when the learner is an adult he is often acutely conscious of what these are. However, even to adults, languages are frequently taught confusedly, for too many potential purposes at once, by teachers using courses ill-adapted to suit the learner's needs. This problem, of deciding the appropriate content of a course rather than the techniques of teaching it, is linguistic rather than pedagogical.

There are, of course, considerable theoretical difficulties in attempting to isolate any 'language of specialisms'. The notion, for example, that a distinctive 'special' register (appropriate to a specialist subject) can be identified

[1] *Languages for special purposes.* CILT, 1969. (CILT Reports and Papers 1.)

by contrast with .. 'general' register is fraught with confusion. As Halliday pointed out :

> '... theoretically the distinction between a general register and special register is without foundation; there is no such thing as a general register, in fact. But for language teaching purposes, it is useful ... to recognise a category of "special-purpose" languages, or language varieties' [2].

However, recognising a category is one thing but deciding what it should include for teaching purposes is another. Trim, after rejecting the usefulness of the idea of teaching 'restricted languages' in relation to particular social or occupational roles[3], went on to suggest that the notion of special languages (related to special purposes) also involved the concept of a 'common core' of general language which must be learned first, after which the special purpose language (or varieties) could be added. Nor did it seem that the characteristics of either special languages or of the common core could simply be extracted from frequency counts of words or structures occurring in a sample of texts, although this might provide important lexical evidence[4]. It was also pointed out that one could not assume the same special purpose language varieties for all languages, since different language communities distribute their language functions in different ways[5]. (In practical terms, this might mean that special purpose varieties or distinctive registers may be identified in one language, but may have no counterpart in another, and indeed that different methods for identifying them need to be used for different languages.)

The 1968 report did not go into socio-linguistic problems in much depth, but they were hinted at. Clearly to specify *what* should be taught, we need not only the kind of linguistic data discussed above, but also a great deal of information about the learner. 'Identifying the learner's needs' is a tricky business and we must be vare of foisting on him needs which we think he should have, but of which he is not conscious. The linguistic inventory of what he should be taught depends on what he wants to use the language for, in which modes he will use it (reading, speaking, etc.) and at what intellectual or technical level he will operate. The more explicit we make this description of the learner's requirements, the more we must consider his previous general education, intelligence, application to his studies and above all any previous knowledge of the special subject which he has acquired in his own (or any other) language. Clearly, when learning 'German for chemists' a knowledge of chemistry is an advantage.

To construct a publishable course requires us to make working decisions about the nature of the language to be taught, the specialist subject and the learners. Empirically these decisions are often taken in reverse order. There

[2] M. A. K. Halliday, in *Languages for special purposes*, op. cit. p. 25
[3] J. L. M. Trim, in *Languages for special purposes*, op. cit p. 19
[4] Halliday, op. cit. p. 24
[5] Ibid. pp. 25-26

seems to be some danger, however, of making imaginative and sometimes spurious assumptions about categories of need simply because we have no adequate descriptions of the use of languages in defined circumstances by mother-tongue speakers, let alone by second-language users, and certainly insufficiently reliable information to provide practical inventories or checklists of items to be taught.

Apart from any 'special purpose' for teaching language related to a defined subject (such as French for engineers or German for chemists), there may be a 'special purpose' in another sense, defined in terms of particular skills or modes of using the language. Here possibly the concepts of 'context' and 'function' used by James and Rouve* may be helpful. *Context* is used to denote broadly those areas of knowledge with which the language studied is concerned (scientific, literary, etc.), while *function* denotes the practical exercise of language skills required in particular tasks (translation, reading technical articles, telephoning, etc.). Both context and function can contribute in a general way to defining any special purpose of language teaching, although how far such notions are capable of sufficient refinement to provide an inventory of what to teach, as distinct from describing the general objectives of existing courses, may need consideration.

A course defined primarily by context is exemplified by that of German for chemists (*see* pp. 50-3). In this the learner (second-year chemistry undergraduate), the range of the specialist subject (chemistry at a level appropriate to a second-year undergraduate) and the language (of a limited range of German texts) are closely defined. The 'functions' are simple : to scan an article for information and to translate what is found relevant. The special aims of the resulting course are defined primarily by its subject or context, chemistry. On the other hand, when the context is more general, functions may still be clearly defined and give shape to the course. An example is the Chinese course described on pp. 62-9 where skill objectives are laid down in some detail, although the contexts are very general.

Most language courses which are arguably for special purposes fall somewhere within these extremes, but the time required or available to study them provides another dimension. Among *ab initio* courses, German for chemists assumes only 30 hours (teaching and private study). By comparison, the Chinese language course, (which is not so much for special as for general purposes, but which provides an excellent example of intensive techniques and planning), demands 1,000 hours. Language distance and differences in writing systems may account for very great variations in the time required in any intensive course, but the relative concentration on defined functions or contexts is a factor.

The following chapters indicate not only what has been happening during the last five years or so in course design and construction, but also show

* C. V. James and S. Rouve : *Survey of curricula and performance in modern languages, 1971-72*. CILT, 1973, pp. 4-5

increasing concern about specifying aims and objectives more closely. Miss Sculthorp (chapter 2) surveys earlier work, notes its empirical nature, and points the need for more effective fieldwork to anticipate future demands. She brings out the special relationship of intensive to special purpose language teaching. As she says, 'the adult learner . . . is highly conscious of himself and of his purpose'. This point is perhaps taken up by M. Kuhn (chapter 5) when making a distinction between 'matériaux d'apprentissage' and 'matériaux d'enseignement' and in stressing 'l'autonomie progressivement exigée de l'apprenant'. Mr Fitzjohn (chapter 3) very clearly puts teaching problems in an administrative and organisational context, emphasising the shortage of time available for language learning by most students.

All the examples of actual course development described in chapter 7 have been comparatively recent, and despite their differences in language, in techniques of teaching and in aims, all have been developed and used institutionally. It is probably true to say that all have been empirical, although in a sophisticated way, rather than derived from any integrated theory of language or adult needs. It is for this reason that Dr Pilliner's paper is particularly interesting in providing a discussion of evaluation procedures.

By contrast, the project described by Mr Trim (chapter 4) began by seeking a theoretical base which later could be validated by experimental work and development. Because of the size and scope of the project, a general theory was essential, and because of the nature of the media to be exploited a grander design was necessary. The problems of identifying learners' needs and of anticipating them has been tackled by Richterich, that of defining the content of a common core and threshold level of language performance as a prerequisite for the learning of specialised language by Wilkins and van Ek[1].

In chapter 8 Mr James describes the aims and comments on the results of several recent surveys designed to estimate the language needs of adults. These have concentrated on what are primarily social dimensions — the occupational needs of particular groups, the relative importance to them of different languages and different modes of using them — and some have assessed in social terms the levels of performance required.

However, such surveys do not directly tackle the linguistic problem of deciding exactly those items it is appropriate to teach or learn for particular vocational purposes, which is what the teacher is concerned with. So far this question has mostly been dealt with pragmatically, and it would be rash to try to extract any typology from the evidence of course construction and its associated research which is presented here. But it does seem that we may be moving towards more secure theoretical bases. In 1968 it could be said :

> 'For language teaching, linguistic studies are often most valuable when linked to a rather specific requirement. Many studies are being conducted

[1] See *Systems development in adult language learning: a European unit/credit system for modern language learning by adults*. Council for Cultural Co-operation, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 1973

> to assist in the planning of a course at a particular institution, sometimes in response to a particular outside demand. The danger here is of excessive fragmentation and duplication; this has happened in the past, and it reinforces the need for disseminating results and co-ordinating research . . .' [8]

Whether the dangers of fragmentation remain so acute is debatable, but certainly the need for shared information and co-ordinated research continues.

Confusion has often arisen from the assumption that a special purpose implies a corresponding 'special' and limited language. It may do, but the purpose has to be very closely defined before we can find out for sure. Again, how much we can generalise about purposes across languages or about languages across purposes is a complex question. How much does the design and content of a course in French for engineers tell us about constructing a course in Russian for engineers? Or how much does a course in German for chemists tell us about making a course in German for social scientists? The terms we use require as much precision as the aims we seek. 'How specialised can you make your purpose?' may, however, be a good question for a language teacher to face from time to time. On his reply may depend the effectiveness of his teaching.

[8] Halliday, op. cit. p. 28

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M A L Sculthorp

Intensive courses: towards a strategy for teaching

The reorganisation of Europe in the early 1960s, involving as it did the participation of different language communities on the political and economic planes, brought with it the realisation that in no country was the ability to use foreign languages satisfactory for the new purposes. Usually, language teaching was offered to an intellectual minority, syllabuses were academic, and oral expression was neglected.

In this country, between 1962 and 1964, the demand for short courses was high and the expectations of the enquirers equally so, for Britain's first attempt to enter the European Economic Community caused a panic among firms and organisations experiencing an absolute need for staffs to use the language of the European country into which they had ventured — where they had, for example, won a civil engineering contract, set up a board mill, or gone selling pedigree cattle. In increasing numbers men whose jobs made foreign language demands on them were naturally turning for help to those who had been the regular providers of after-school education, the organisers of evening classes, and education and training officers in industry were referring the foreign language needs of their firms to local centres of further education, who were for the most part unprepared for this different type of demand. Resourcefulness found *ad hoc* answers, but it was evident that the problem needed to be researched.

In the normal educational development of a person, foreign language courses are usually followed over a very considerable stretch of time, probably many years, with well-spaced periods of learning and consolidation, until, unless the course is cut short, the gradual build-up of knowledge and skill eventually includes the totality of features of the language with which the native speaker is familiar. There is no sense of urgency in this educational process. There needed to be developed, in contrast to the traditional pattern of learning, the foreign language course that is applied as first-aid in an emergency, where the severe constraints imposed by a crisis situation usually mean that in a minimum period of time a maximum effort has to be exerted — and success-

fully. We who were then working together at Ealing Technical College were trying to implement the recommendations of the various governmental and national committees that had reported on foreign language needs, and, with the aid of a grant from the Nuffield Foundation, had undertaken the production of courses geared to a range of adult learners. To this extent prepared, we entered a busy period of promotion of intensive language courses for adults with well-defined needs and we gained valuable experience in those years from agreeing to put on highly condensed full-time courses ranging from three weeks' to three months' duration and evolving course patterns in miniature that were capable of refinement and expansion as time permitted. When urgency enters into the situation, then the concept of *intensiveness* -- the telescoping of the time-scale of learning, the distillation of the items to be learned, and the tensing-up of the language effort - - is accepted for the benefit it can bring.

Some of the educational factors that had assumed prominence by 1960 promised special assistance in the task of teaching languages to adults. The psychology of learning emphasised the role of motivation, and focused attention on the learner's wish and ability to teach himself as far as possible. The behaviourist theory was accepted largely because many teachers expect to use constant training to achieve learning and this was a theory easy to put into practice with the means already to hand. The supremacy of speech over written communication in present-day life was a phenomenon that influenced the general aims of language teaching to adults, and a psychologically favoured vehicle for conveying meaning without the obstructing intermediary of translation was that of visual representation. It so happened also that educational technology had developed rapidly, and filmstrip- and cine-projectors, teaching machines, tape recorders and language laboratories were soon in common use in the colleges. These aids not only by-passed translation, but were apt for presenting the fashionable forms of audio-visual and audio-lingual materials and furthermore could to some extent be used as teaching machines for self-instruction. New transatlantic linguistic theories were circulating and, although only half-digested by the untrained at the time, at least they caused teachers and course writers to look again at the presentation of grammar and at the selection and sequencing of teaching points in language courses.

In France, sponsored by UNESCO, the CREDIF researchers had pioneered the study of spoken French and had produced *Le français fondamental (1^e^ et 2^e^ degrés)*, invaluable frequency lists, both lexical and syntactical, for the general language. This work was followed by the compilation, primarily from written texts taken from various branches of science, of a general vocabulary of scientific orientation (VGOS) capable of being introduced by the teacher in parallel with the general language course, as appropriate for learners with specialised interests. The linguistic analysis of spoken French served as a basis for the audio-visual course for adults, *Voix et images de France*, designed to be taught intensively over a ten-week period in order to equip an adult beginner with the ability to live, pursue research or take up a post in a French-speaking environment. The method, called structuro-global, demanded at each stage the extrapolation of language and contrasted with the audio-

lingual courses being written in the United States which permitted English translation to be printed as a support to learners and relied very heavily on substitution drills rather than on a free exploitation of language. An analysis of spoken German, undertaken by Alan J. Pfeffer, was published too late for the information of teachers undertaking the first wave of intensive courses in German for adults.

This, then, was the background support that was available to language teachers faced with the particular demands for short courses, the means at their disposal for planning and implementing the courses. The technical aids held out great promise for men to work at their own pace, in their own time, but few courses had been produced in the right form for use with the equipment, and fewer still were at the levels required or concerned with the interests of particular learners. Experimentation was the only answer to filling the lacunae.

Course planning starts with objectives. Firms asking for the intensive courses invariably expressed their needs in very general terms, so that the course providers themselves had to move to closer specifications. Since the aim of teaching/learning is to modify behaviour, it is of vital importance to spell out the behaviour and to match the language to it, concentrating on what is required of the learner in his present occupation and on the list of additional tasks that he would be required to perform through the medium of the foreign language. At the outset we encounter a basic difficulty. How many linguists, researchers or teachers, are familiar with other men's jobs? Yet any attempt to find and apply a linguistic basis for adults needing a foreign language for professional purposes must be realistically rooted. The fact-finding itself has appeal for extravert researchers. The CREDIF workers had employed tape recorders for recording specimens of oral communication in a variety of general situations; the Ealing workers used the same techniques in particular situations. Before they wrote the general adult courses in German and Spanish, they made four- to five-week visits to Germany and Spain following a well-prepared plan for collecting samples of recorded speech in selected environments. Language fieldwork became a regular feature of the preparation of courses: specimen lessons in a vocational school in Switzerland and samples of shop-floor instruction in the factory had to be collected for engineering students learning German in order to take up a four-year apprenticeship in Switzerland; the range of problems encountered at airports needed to be fed into courses for passenger-handling staff in a range of European languages, including Portuguese and Greek; the way in which the processes are talked about in a tobacco factory in England had to be investigated in order to teach English to be used on the job to the company's European managers.

This spadework has several useful effects: the course writers and the teachers have the evidence they need, there is a resultant soundness of language register and lexical content in the course, and the learner sees and appreciates the relevance to himself of what he is mastering. This is not to say that authentic tape recordings can necessarily be used in their raw state. Course writers and teachers are aware that the foreign learner must have a far greater

range of passive comprehension than of active participation, and the weighting of the student's activities must reflect this. Comprehension must proceed from a form of language simplified by the native speaker out of consideration for the foreign listener to the form of language used among native speakers that the listener is likely to hear in his own circumstances. His own utterances are going to be limited but must always be appropriate, economy and flexibility being the criteria for the language items taught for active use.

The adult learner on an intensive language course is highly conscious of himself and of his purpose. The teacher's role is to enable him to learn effectively in order to achieve his purpose. The teaching programme is thus *learner-oriented*, and one must use economically what the adult learner brings to the task. His level of general intelligence and aptitude for languages must affect his achievement, but his degree of motivation, his application, and his flexibility in the face of learning methods will be even more important in the short course. He may or may not bring with him experience of learning a foreign language; the important thing is that because there is an element of urgency in intensive courses, and because we simply do not yet know completely how new language learning takes place in very mature learners, one must take the learners into one's confidence, explaining the nature of the course and its conduct, drawing attention to the considerable differences between the written and spoken forms of language and the reason for the teaching methods adopted and the learning techniques recommended. The usefulness of the technical aids has to be made clear, and the simplicity of operation demonstrated, so that new techniques meet with no prejudice. But one must ultimately respect any habits of learning that lead to success, since for any learning task a range of techniques may achieve the aim. Rote-learning is not to be despised, print as a support to tape recording may help, misleading though it can also be, and if the learner has been made aware that translating is anathema to the teacher he will only try to conceal the fact that he is often mentally resorting to it. When private methods are used and are failing to come off or are hindering the pace of his progress the learner will be more susceptible to advice. Testing provides the feed-back that can modify the materials and the methods, and frequent testing is all the more necessary in the short intensive course if the concentration of effort and the rapid pace are not to be wasted, and good learning habits are reinforced by success in the interim tests.

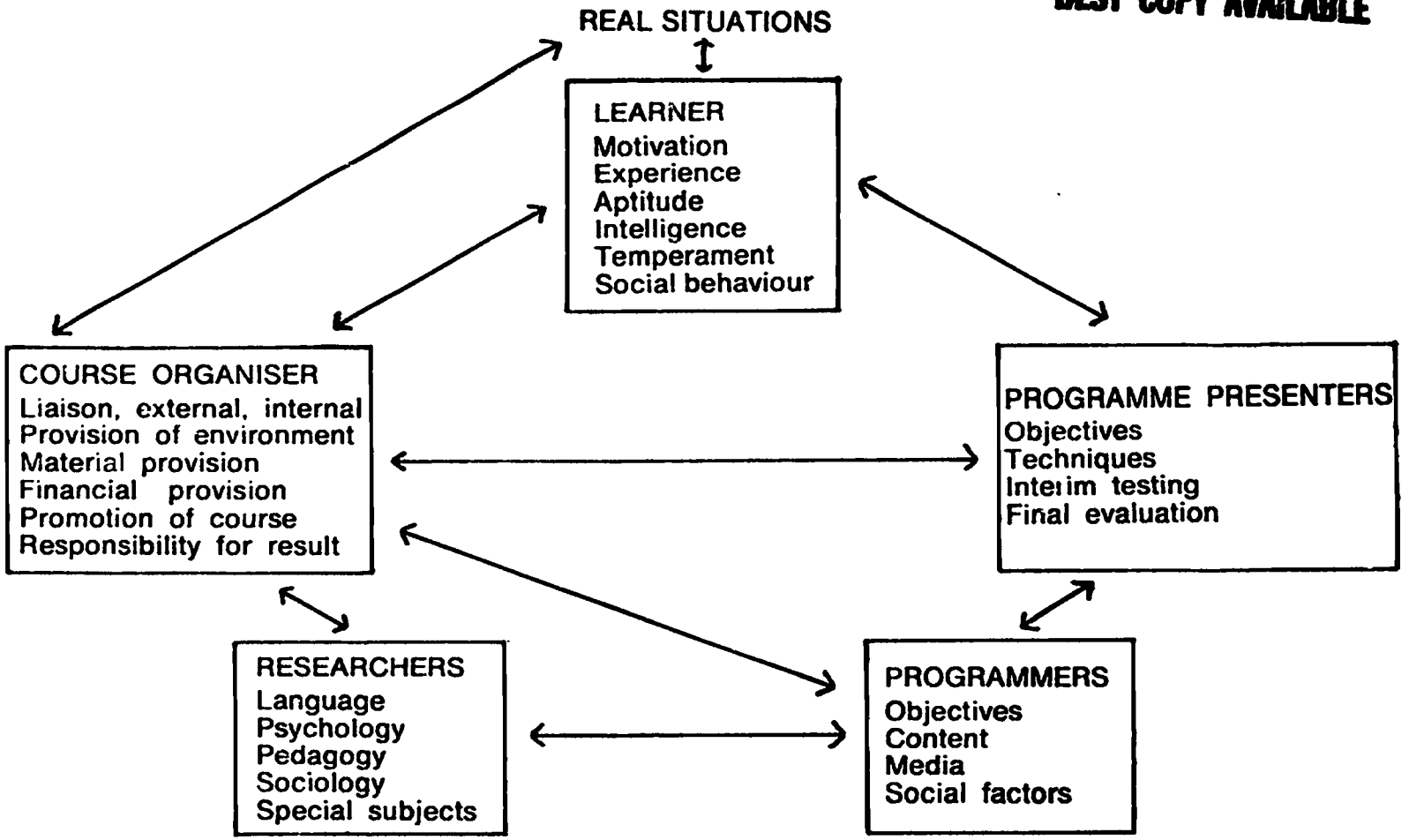
Another aspect of what the adult learner brings with him is more personal, for he may bring anxieties that prevent him from gaining full advantage from the intensive course. If he comes with the drawback of a hearing or speech defect, he is hampered but has already learnt to cope with it in normal conditions and will be appreciative of the extra care the teacher takes to provide clarity and the right sound level in live or recorded speech-utterances and patience in listening to his own oral contributions. Many adults too have poor powers of retention but usually have the tenacity to put in extra time working at repetitive over-learning in order to compensate, and they are helped if tapes and machines are made available for extra individual practice. In a group, particularly from one organisation, there may be initial tensions over

status or social standing, although the happy conduct of an intensive course usually dispels them. A small group with a common interest in learning can generate a dynamism that aids the process and its cohesion as a team is an added benefit to the firm. Because the intensive learning of a language in adult life imposes a great strain, it can help to remove the men from the distractions of family life and from the exigencies and problems of the job. If the course members are living away from home more time is available for study and the social element that desirably accompanies the language course then assumes more significance and members can be properly introduced to foreign social usage through the social participation of native speakers.

At its conclusion, the short intensive course seldom lends itself to testing by external examinations and it is unfortunately rarely possible to apply the relevant test, that is, to observe the man in action in a normal situation. The substitute sometimes suggested, role-playing, is seldom satisfactory since it is a selfconscious exercise and usually bears little resemblance to the reality of his job that only the man knows. The running assessment of linguistic ability that has been made as the result of regular testing and daily observation is probably all that can be conveniently used to evaluate the success of the learner. In my experience, the organisation whose practical problems have led to the provision of a bespoke intensive course will not be interested in formal examination but will be very appreciative if a profile is provided of the capabilities of the learners at the end of the course. Advice should be given concerning further language training, for it should be made plain that the language learning process must be a continuing one. In turn, the course organisers need advice: a structured questionnaire completed by the course members, with free comment also invited, is a convenient way to get it.

It has been expedient to refer here to an experience which can be seen in perspective. The pattern of courses alluded to evolved during a long series of full-time intensive courses commissioned by industry between 1962 and 1964. They have been described as *ad hoc*, they served an immediate purpose only. Ten years have passed, Britain is part of the European Economic Community and European languages are even more necessary to the country now. There is an upsurge of demand for English as a foreign language, and many men holding senior positions in the countries of mainland Europe find it necessary to come to this country in order to improve or perfect their English. The demand has stimulated the production of special course materials for particular categories of users, and there is no doubting the success of the best of these enterprises. But this demand is in no way matched by a similar demand in this country by Englishmen for intensive courses in foreign languages, and it is very doubtful that they are seeking such courses in the European countries where the languages are spoken. Instead there are indications that English civil servants and businessmen are not fully persuaded that the acquisition of foreign languages is a serious enough concern to warrant a sacrifice of time, money and effort. It is true that many non-intensive courses are flourishing, and there have been interesting developments in the manner of presentation of work to adult learners. In particular, the convenience of the individual learner has high

Schema for a learner-oriented language course



Note 1: There may be considerable overlap between personnel and functions

Note 2: Technical and secretarial contributions are assumed

priority – rightly. Places in language laboratories can be booked, self-administering programmes made available. Appointments can be made at intervals for private sessions with a personal tutor. These are attractive measures and a very great improvement on the stereotyped timetabling of the past. Yet the increments of learning can easily be wasted in a drawn-out learning campaign in all but the very advanced stages, and those who advise serious enquirers from the public and private sectors should spend time explaining to them how language knowledge builds up.

Finally, although this paper has mainly been concerned with the language training of non-linguists, the training of professional linguists is at least equally urgent. In particular, trained translators are wanted for the translation of all official papers of the Community, a high proportion of which work is technical in one sense or another. Our national language-education system is not yet meeting the needs of the '70s, and the answer is not more improvisation. The business of forecasting national needs has no very good record for reliability and in any case national and international needs for certain languages can change rapidly, for, say, political reasons, or maybe as a result of instrumental observations from outer space. The sudden demand for the crash course will no doubt still mean planning at short notice. But information recently obtained through extensive surveys could well point to the need to establish a few centres that would build up cadres of linguists for, say, Arabic or Chinese or Japanese, make systematic provision of language training for Europe-based specialists such as accountants, economists, lawyers, engineers, scientists, and professionally train or re-train translators and interpreters. These courses could constitute a new and more effective category of sustained intensive courses that would give a reality to the idea of a continuing educative process as the individual progresses through his career.

3

B Fitzjohn

Problems of organisation

The information and comments which follow are based on my experience with the following courses, all of which have been *ab initio*.

(a) Russian for teachers. One academic year. Full-time.
(b) Russian for reservists in the armed forces. Fortnight residential.
(c) French/German for businessmen. Five days. Full-time.
(d) Various languages as an element in full-time courses in definable specialist fields with professional implications (e.g. BA Librarianship, Post-graduate Diploma in Art History, etc.).

It must be stressed that these courses have taken place in a variety of institutions and organisations with which I have been from time to time involved. Descriptions and comments which follow are strictly personal and do not necessarily represent the views of the institutions or organisations concerned.

Time required

The Russian courses for teachers were full-time for one academic year (33-40 weeks). This is generous and untypical. An acute shortage of time and the way it is distributed are the major common problems in organising foreign language courses for special purposes. The very concept 'for special purposes' implies that foreign language study is a subsidiary contribution to another, main, interest and there will usually be pressure to achieve the required level of linguistic competence in the minimum of time (and often with the minimum of effort — but that is another problem). The shortage of time may reflect itself in a restricted period and a sense of urgency ('we fly out to Stockholm a week on Tuesday'; 'the teachers will be released for one academic year only'; 'the reservists' annual camp is fifteen days'), or a restricted allocation of time over the period of a longer course (2 hours per week on the BA course in Librarianship).

The pedagogic problems of intensive language teaching are not the concern of this paper. But however modern, imaginative and effective the classroom activities may be, they need to be supported by an unusually efficient

but enlightened administration to ensure that wastage of time is kept to a minimum. An hour or two (5% of a 40-hour course) can easily evaporate in searching for a room, a car parking space or lunch. Academic staff do not always find it easy or agreeable to spend time making the detailed and precise administrative preparations which will obviate delays and misunderstandings.

The greater the control which the course organisers can exercise over the students' activities during the period of the course, the more effective the tuition is likely to be. On the short courses for army reservists with which I have been concerned, the students were wholly encapsulated. Even when formally 'off duty' they were living-in with their colleagues and teachers and a high degree of saturation was achieved. Although this is a useful principle which is sometimes applied in industry, it presents difficulties for the normal college. When a residential course is impracticable, the next best way of fully exploiting a few-day period seems to be the sort of partial encapsulation which we used on our short five-day businessman's course. Students spent ten hours a day in the instructional area and morning coffee, lunch, afternoon tea and a free bar were provided to ensure that they had no excuse for leaving during that period. This made a considerable impact but the strain was great on students and teachers alike and it could not have been maintained for long. Conventionally organised courses with periodic release for meals and refreshments plus daily travel problems do not have the same 'punch'.

It is becoming increasingly common for a business firm or other organisation to contact a college with a request for a special short course to be provided almost immediately. A typical example was the request we received for an *ab initio* course in Russian of five half-days to be given the following week to a team of eight businessmen due to visit the USSR the week after that. Some colleges have certainly found it possible to offer this sort of service and it would be interesting to have details of how they have overcome the problem of having course materials, teaching staff and accommodation free and available on request within the constraints of the public authority system.

Sometimes the student, in addition to being limited in the amount of time available for language study, is only able to attend for tuition irregularly. Expensive private tuition agencies can make the necessary individual arrangements without undue difficulty, but one also hears of local authority colleges which operate an individual 'booking' system for tuition as well as language laboratory practice. Once again, it would be interesting to learn how these *ad hoc* arrangements can be absorbed into a college's teaching programme without a good deal of wastage of resources while they are standing by or without severely restricting the client's right of access.

The problems of organising the limited language contribution to a full-time course are a little different. It seems that the language teacher, anxious to retain and develop his part in the course and therefore not to give offence, all too often has to accept without question, not only the restricted number of hours allocated, but also their place in the timetable, such as 9-11 on Mondays,

4-5 on Thursdays and Fridays; there is a range of unpopular timings which can limit the effectiveness of the language tuition offered.

One can only hope that the very evident growth in the demand for languages amongst specialists in other fields will mean an enhanced respect for language tuition and a willingness to give it a higher priority in the allocation of time.

Aims and targets

The need to develop very efficient teaching methods so as to exploit to the full the limited time available will not be disputed. But the publicity given to the allegedly effortless effectiveness of modern teaching methods has in some part been responsible for the setting of unrealistic aims and targets.

All too often a potential client or student makes his initial request for language tuition on the basis of a total misconception of what constitutes 'modern' language teaching and what it can realistically be expected to achieve in a limited time. We have been asked on more than one occasion for a ten-week course of two or three hours per week in French or German at the end of which the student is expected to be 'fluent' and to have a 'thorough knowledge of business and commercial usage'. When we try to point out that this aim is too ambitious, we get the reply 'but I thought you had one of these language laboratories'. The interest in foreign language learning is growing and spreading, and the results which are achieved are often remarkable, but expectations are sometimes unreasonable, which can lead to serious disappointment.

Even with the comparatively long full-time Russian language courses for teachers, I do not believe the results achieved always matched the aims as originally stated. The levels reached by several students were truly remarkable. But there were also some who 'passed' the course without being able to read *Pravda* or arrange a day's sight-seeing itinerary in Moscow reliably.

We really need to ensure by careful public relations that a potential client has a realistic understanding of what can and cannot be achieved in a limited period of time, before he starts to learn. A big step forward would be some generally acceptable standardisation of terminology in which to express and define the levels we hope to achieve. Terms like 'a basic (or 'thorough') working knowledge' and 'a reading knowledge' and 'a high standard of oral fluency' are not very helpful unless they represent levels of attainment which have been much more closely defined and which are generally known and understood. Perhaps we should think of terms such as 'an active vocabulary of x words'.

Assessment and testing

The students themselves (or their sponsors) often expect their course to prepare them for a recognised qualification (e.g. London Chamber of Com-

merce or Institute of Linguists examinations), or at least to receive some form of certification from the College or Department. Whatever methods we may use to test progress, it seems we have to choose between 'passing' all students and issuing valueless certificates, and declaring some of our clients to be failures. Both alternatives pose delicate problems. These were particularly keenly felt on the Russian language courses for teachers. As the 'students' were by profession teachers of foreign languages, the failure to succeed in a new language, even under the most favourable conditions, was a humiliation and could have had serious personal consequences.

But even in the more usual situation where the student who is learning a foreign language for a 'special purpose' is almost by definition a non-linguist, often such a student has great ability and motivation. His achievements when he tackles the problem of acquiring a new foreign language are sometimes spectacular. But how does one deal with the student who, at the outset or after a few lessons, is clearly doomed to failure? A middle-aged managing director who has committed himself to a language course heavily in terms of cash and valuable time arrives faithfully every morning in his chauffeur-driven car in confident anticipation of a pentecostal experience. How does one break it to him that he is wasting his time? How does one justify denying a student his degree in librarianship because he has failed to master basic Italian? Naturally, as teachers of foreign languages, we rejoice as the importance of foreign language learning becomes ever more generally acknowledged. But if a knowledge of one or more foreign languages becomes a generally accepted prerequisite for success in an ever wider range of careers, we must appreciate the responsibilities which face us.

Teaching aids and materials

The problem of finding course material can be a very difficult one. The range of specialisms for which we are expected to provide bespoke language teaching is widening, but so is the sophistication of language teaching itself and the degree of research, preparation and programming which has to precede the actual tuition. The Russian language courses for teachers were near-ideal in this respect because the carefully researched and expensively produced school courses were in themselves immediately relevant to the teacher's professional needs. The expertise and experience of modern language teaching has also been applied to the needs of the general businessman because the potential clients are known to be wealthy and the market profitable. But we are now being asked to provide modern effective language tuition to meet a wide range of new specialist needs (e.g. for technologists, librarians, art historians, surveyors, musicians, fashion designers, to name but a few). Foreign language teachers are having to acquaint themselves with the specialisms of their clients and students before planning courses for them. This is time-consuming and courses are often called for at short notice. It seems desirable to establish well-publicised channels through which foreign language teachers, faced with the problem of preparing courses for particular specialisms, can contact and liaise with others already working in similar fields.

The pursuit of quora

Lastly, those of us who work in Polytechnics and other institutions will be aware of the growing pressure to avoid being profligate with our resources. It is clear that it will become increasingly difficult for us to offer language courses to small special groups. In addition to persuading our clients to be realistic in the levels which they expect to achieve, we are now finding ourselves telling the organisers of a course in surveying, for instance, that if there is an intake of 20 to 24 students, this can justify not more than two language options — and not the five or six originally asked for.

At the City of Birmingham Polytechnic we are looking carefully at the possibility of offering 'multi-purpose' classes which will serve a number of courses. Although this may be regarded as little short of a contradiction in terms when we are thinking of 'languages for special purposes', we do have the advantage of unusual size and the apparent need for a similar provision of language tuition with a business orientation on a very large number of courses. In some cases this will form an integral part of the student's course, in other cases it may be an 'optional extra'. Quite apart from the pedagogic problems which will be apparent to all, we are wondering how we are going to ensure credit in Delaney terms for students who come to us from other Departments and take our optional extra.

4

J L M Trim

A unit/credit scheme for adult language learning

This paper refers to a project established by the Council of Europe, under the direction of J. L. M. Trim. Further details have been published in *Systems development in adult language learning*, Council for Cultural Co-operation, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 1973.

In September 1971, a group of experts was convened to investigate the feasibility of a European unit/credit scheme for adult language learning, with the aim of placing at the disposal of adult language learners a multi-faceted learning system adapted to their individual needs and objectives, and suitable for use within a framework of permanent and recurrent education.

At its first meeting, the group considered the report and recommendations of the symposium on modern languages in adult education held at Rüschlikon, Switzerland, in May 1971, and agreed to concern itself with the following tasks :

'(a) to break down the global concept of language into units and sub-units based on an analysis of particular groups of adult learners, in terms of the communication situations in which they are characteristically involved. This analysis should lead to a precise articulation of the notion of "common core" with specialist extensions at different proficiency levels;

(b) to set up on the basis of this analysis an operational specification for learning objectives;

(c) to formulate, in consultation with the Steering Group on Educational Technology, a system defining the structure of a multi-media learning system to achieve these objectives in terms of the unit/credit concepts.'

In its first year of existence, the group addressed itself to three problem areas : the first was the development of a model for the analysis of adult language needs; the second was the investigation of the notional and functional categories which, being important to all language learners, might determine the grammar and vocabulary of the 'common core', the common objective of

all language learners, as distinct from the uses of languages for the purposes of particular specialisms; the third area was the specification of an initial common language-learning target, known as the 'threshold level', attainable by the majority of learners after a comparatively short period of study and below which no general proficiency levels may usefully be distinguished. Preliminary studies on these problems were commissioned from René Richterich, D. A. Wilkins and J. A. van Ek.

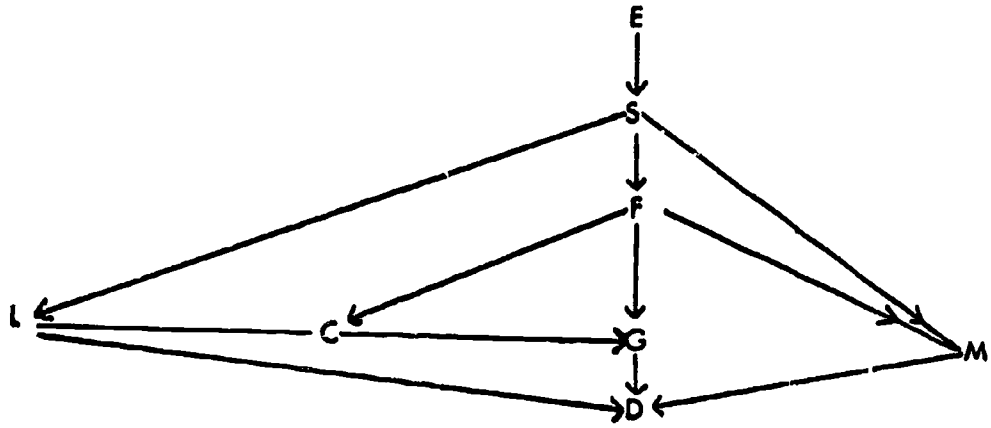
A project was formally established in January 1973. During the first half of that year its work was devoted to the development of a model for the operational specification of language learning objectives, based on the analysis of language-using situations and taking into account situational, functional, notional, lexical and grammatical categories derived from the earlier work, and integrating them, together with categories defining language behaviours in terms of the reception and production of language embodied in any one of a set of possible media, into a meaningfully structured model.

The model makes it possible, in principle, to move systematically from the analysis of situations to a specification (selection and ordering) of the vocabulary required for the control of those situations. As such, it already provides a useful tool for course constructors, bearing in mind that many other pedagogical factors, such as the learner's mother tongue, previous educational experience, etc., must also be taken into account.

The model may be briefly summarised as follows: the overall objective of language learning is to become a member, to a greater or lesser extent, of a foreign language community. As members of a language community we participate in a series of language events (E), the number of which is indefinitely large. Indeed, most such events are unique. Even if we go shopping, or to eat in a restaurant, we do not do or say exactly the same things on each single occasion. Underlying (a class of) particular occurrences, however, we may recognise a 'communicative situation' (S), an abstract construct which describes the general form of a whole class of related events. A communicative situation (such as taking/serving a restaurant meal, buying/selling in a shop, visiting/receiving a visit from private guests, etc.) involves a chain of interactions performed by means of a combination of practical actions, gestures and utterances, dependent on the nature of the situation and the interaction. Each individual interaction moves the situation along a path which allows some freedom to the participants but is steered overall by the sociological properties of the situation and the roles assumed by the participants. Thus communication is initiated and terminated, relations defined, information requested, given and received, orders given and taken, disagreements expressed and resolved, undertakings given and accepted, queries raised and answered, etc. These language functions (F), dictated by the structural properties of the situation, in part determine the grammatical structures (G) to be used, as well as the concepts to be expressed (C) and the behavioural mode (M) (whether speech or writing in one form or another is employed, who speaks and who listens, etc.). The conceptual content also influences the choice of grammatical structures as well as the choice of

vocabulary (L). The latter is also of course partly determined by the concrete objects and actions occurring in the situation, as is the behavioural mode.

The relations discussed above may be represented diagrammatically as follows:



Key:
E = language events
S = language situational categories
F = language functional categories
C = conceptual and notional categories
L = lexical categories
G = grammatical categories
M = behaviour modes
D = partial ordering of objectives (delta diagram)

Naturally, it is possible to meet the linguistic demands of a situation at various levels of adequacy. A minimum vocabulary of words and set phrases and a rudimentary grammar will suffice to carry one through a straightforward, essentially practical, situation (e.g. supermarket shopping), whereas to make or deal with complaints, seek or give advice on the less obvious aspects of quality, to negotiate price reductions, or to exchange local gossip while waiting to be served, requires much more. In general terms, we could say that the more knowledge of a language and skill in its use we acquire through study and experience, the better equipped we are to deal with all the possible complexities of a situation. This truism is however too vague to be of use to course planners, who are concerned with making the most of the limited resources which adult learners (or for that matter all learners) have at their disposal, and who are therefore obliged to establish priorities among learning objectives.

The most rational basis for the establishment of priorities is surely that of cost-effectiveness. The aim of situational analysis is to provide a theoretical model for applying cost-effectiveness criteria to the selection and ordering of learning objectives. Effectiveness is here dependent upon communicative value and productivity. The communicative value of a linguistic item depends on its importance for the performance of a language function and the importance (i.e. the seriousness of the consequence of failure) of that function in controlling

a situation, while productivity depends on the transferability (and utility) of the item and its associated functions to other situations. 'Cost' as used here depends on the investment of resources (especially of learner effort) required to bring about the learning of the item concerned.

Whether it will prove possible to quantify cost-effectiveness values in this field remains to be seen. The application of the principle requires course planners:

(a) to select from the situations in which a learner could find himself those most relevant to his needs, whether social, vocational, or individual;
(b) to select from the *interactions* which could occur in those situations those whose successful completion is most essential to the achievement of the goal of the situation;
(c) to select from the *functions* whose performance can fulfil the requirements of interactions those of the widest general usefulness;
(d) to select from the *notions* appropriate to the concrete objects and actions and to the interactional functions in a situation those which are most generally applicable and most nearly indispensable;
(e) to select from the grammatical structures capable of expressing the notions and functions chosen those which are most economical of learning effort in view of the learner's prior knowledge, whilst being capable of entering into the expression of the widest range of notions and functions;
(f) to select from the lexicon (words and idiomatic phrases) available for the expression of the notions and concrete situational features chosen those which have the widest application to different situations.

If these decisions are correctly taken, the result will be to order the situations and materials in such a way as to enable the learner to achieve the most rapid progress, both in meeting the most necessary requirements of the situations of greatest importance to him and in acquiring a general ability to communicate in a wide range of situations.

This framework of criteria for deciding between alternatives should be of assistance to planners in avoiding outright errors and imbalances. Needless to say, to make the decisions is often very difficult in view of the multifarious nature of learners, situations and needs, as well as the conflicts which must arise between criteria.

The clusters of situations characteristic of the social life of different classes of learners vary widely, and may be arranged in different orders of priority. While it is possible and desirable for different clusters and priorities to be established for different classes of learners, it will not be possible in practical terms to meet the strict conditions given above for each individual learner until the technology of individualised instruction is much more advanced.

There are also certain dangers in attempting to match teaching too closely to the present social role of a learner. Apart from the unacceptability

of so narrow a view of the needs of the individual, such limited instruction would fail to equip him to face the continuous change in the conditions of life and work characteristic of our age — and from which the argument on which our work is based proceeds. Furthermore, motivation for study is rarely confined to a desire to perform present tasks more efficiently, but has future career prospects in mind. A young waiter, for instance, probably studies with an eye to becoming a hotel manager and looks to his studies mainly to provide the knowledge and skill necessary for the performance of that job, which he cannot acquire from daily practice and observation. Beyond this directly vocational instruction however, his study should be designed to equip him to respond more freely and adequately to the demands of situations not directly envisaged in his career plans.

Fortunately the dilemma posed is more apparent than real. If courses are constructed in accordance with the principles set out in the diagram above, a high proportion of the language acquired in order to deal with one situation will be available (no doubt with some reduction in adequacy) for the interactions that are required to deal with many others. Indeed, intelligent course planning must incorporate the principle and practice of such transfer, the possibility of which is inherent in the nature of language itself.

The aim of introductory situation-based courses is thus not confined to enabling the learner to participate with a certain effectiveness in the situations explicitly handled, but aims to engender in him an organised linguistic competence which he can bring to bear with a certain proficiency upon whatever situations he encounters. This competence will always be biased (to a greater or lesser extent) by the particular learning sequence followed. Learner-dependent and learner-independent factors lead us to establish orders of precedence within courses which will differ from one group of learners to another, in view of their different priorities and backgrounds. Clearly, in dealing with a situation introduced towards the beginning of the course a learner cannot dispose of the same language resources as when it is introduced towards the end of the course.

However, the general proficiency 'spun off' in the course of situational learning will tend to converge in different learners (a rough analogy might be drawn with the way in which crossword-puzzle solvers converge on the solution from different directions). As this proficiency develops, it 'feeds back' upon the ability of the learner to deal more adequately with situations already generally handled. There is thus no necessary contradiction between situation-based learning programmes and generalised learning objectives. In fact, most contemporary language courses contain elements of both. The task of a rational learning system is to consider both and to bring them into proper relation.

We are now in a position to specify in principle the characteristics and objectives of a unit/credit language learning system, based on the systematic application of the principles developed above within the limits imposed by practicality.

For each language, a range of proficiency levels is to be established speci-

fying within certain limits the linguistic knowledge and skills to be commanded by a learner. The number of levels to be set up is largely a matter of practical convenience. Some examining bodies (e.g. Trinity College, London, in respect of its examinations in spoken English) recognise as many as ten levels, others as few as two or three. A balance has to be struck between the requirements of reliability and administrative feasibility, which tend to keep the number low, and those of informativeness and motivation, which tend to increase the number. A good deal of discussion and negotiation will no doubt be necessary before a decision on the number and designation of levels can be made which would command general acceptance. Meanwhile, a system of five levels ranging from 'threshold', or initial general proficiency, to full professional proficiency would seem to afford a reasonable basis for discussion (with additionally a level 0 for 'no measurable proficiency', and 6 for 'native-like' proficiency).

It is possible to interpolate one or more preliminary levels between 0 and 1 to represent a highly restricted ability to deal with stereotyped basic situations by means of a limited number of stock phrases, combined with the ability to extract a bare minimum of information from the utterances of the interlocutor. While this is certainly a legitimate first learning objective for some classes of learner (e.g. migrant workers), it is doubtful whether it can be properly considered a level of general proficiency.

Each level is to be defined by :

(a) the linguistic resources assumed (grammatical, lexical, including idiom, phonological and phonetic);
(b) appropriateness of response and use (notional, situational, functional) required;
(c) accuracy and consistency demanded in reception and production;
(d) immediacy and fluency required;
(e) range of linguistic operations involved.

Definitions must be separately established for proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing. These definitions are to be made as concrete and explicit as possible, covering the linguistic, notional and functional content and the behaviour and media conversions involved. Grades may be established for relative degrees of skilled performance. A range of situational options should then be defined, to be handled at an appropriate level and clustered according to the learners' needs and motivations. The communicative ability adequate to control at a given level a coherent cluster of situations serving a definite social need defines the objective of a learning unit. A range of unit specifications at different levels can then be developed so as to combine economy with flexibility in providing for the diversified but overlapping needs of different classes of learner.

According to this approach, the teaching of language for special purposes is not simply to be based on some analysis of the frequency of structures and lexical items found in some corpus of spoken and written text. It is rather a matter of field studies to determine the characteristic interactions in which the language users are engaged. Praxeograms may then be drawn up defining the

sequences of operations which serve the interactions. The operations may then be defined according to their behavioural, functional, notional and linguistic content, as has been outlined above.

The actual learning task facing the student can then be defined in a more complete way than hitherto, by comparing this multidimensional objective with his 'prior knowledge', that is to say, what he is already able to do. Clearly the task facing an experienced sales executive with 'O' level French is different from that facing a university modern language graduate, if both aim to become foreign sales representatives of a firm with a substantial export business. Practical considerations will, presumably, always force course planners to attempt a reconciliation between the accurate assessment of the needs of an individual learner with a defined 'here-and-now' problem (and less easily definable future expectations) and the exigencies of institutional teaching and educational economies.

The basic objective which the Council of Europe group has set itself is to make the many factors which have to be taken into account in arriving at particular solutions fully explicit, so that the decisions which have to be made at all levels of the educational process can be as rational as fallible human beings can make them.

Appendix

A close analysis of the language functions useful to the performance of some class of job at different levels would provide a basis for language units which would form part of a language diploma or a vocational diploma. As an example, we may consider the case of the language skills which may be required in secretarial work in a firm or other body with international connections. Among the language activities that may be involved are the following :

(a) copy-typing of a foreign language (L_2) text from print;
(b) typing of a letter from a longhand L_2 script;
(c) typing of an L_2 letter from dictation, taken down in longhand;
(d) typing of an L_2 letter from dictation, using an L_2 shorthand system;
(e) typing of a standard letter in L_2 given precise instructions as to its content, but not a literal dictation;
(f) typing of a standard letter in L_2, given general instructions as to content;
(g) typed acknowledgements in L_2 according to a standard procedure but without any specific instructions;
(h) composing non-standard letters in L_2 from a mother tongue (L_1) original, involving close translation;
(i) composing non-standard letters in L_2, given precise instructions as to content, but no text;

(j) composing non-standard letters in L2, given only general instructions regarding its content;
(k) abstracting the gist of an L2 letter in L1;
(l) providing a close translation of an L2 letter in L1;
(m) sending an L2 telegram by telephone;
(n) composing an L2 telegram from an L1 text, or instructions;
(o) establishing telephonic connections with L2 contacts (in and out);
(p) giving and receiving L2 telephone messages;
(q) greeting and entertaining L2 visitors;
(r) answering queries from L2 clients;
(s) booking travel accommodation in L2;
(t) interpreting at a business conference from L2 to L1;
(u) interpreting at a business conference from L1 to L2.

It is clear that these activities (the list is unlikely to be complete) vary greatly in the demands they make upon a secretary. They may also be further differentiated according to the linguistic range and complexity of the letters, texts and messages concerned, the variety of situations and kinds of personal relations involved, the clarity of input, the speed, accuracy and reliability of work demanded. A personal assistant who can perform all these tasks to a high standard on a bilingual basis is a highly skilled professional worker, and commands so high a salary that no firm could employ her unless her skills were in constant demand. A small firm, only part of whose work involves intermittent foreign contacts, might prefer a secretary to be able to deal competently if slowly with only the more elementary operations, and call in professional assistance where necessary.

Modules can be established for each of these secretarial tasks, differentiated in appropriate cases according to the linguistic level of the input and output and the degree of skill demanded. The modules can be grouped into units at the same level for convenience of examining, and the units combined into certificates and diplomas. At the highest levels (say 4 and 5), the content is sufficient to justify an autonomous diploma. Level 4 might require full control of the actual secretarial skills involved, with a modicum of straightforward interpretation. Level 5 might then add to that a full mastery of the language in not only straightforward but also unforeseen and complex situations involving the exercise of judgment and discretion and control over their linguistic expression, as well as a range of styles and an ability to communicate effectively under adverse conditions. At lower levels, the restrictions of range, knowledge and skill would mean that the credit obtained would be capitalisable as part of a wider qualification.

It must of course be borne in mind that the job demands upon a secretary may vary widely from one country to another, and that the linguistic content will be dependent on the nature of the business of the firm by which the secretary is employed. Flexibility between modules is therefore all the more necessary.

5

M Kuhn

L'élaboration de matériaux didactiques

1 On ne trouvera pas dans les lignes qui suivent une quelconque taxonomie des principes et des modalités relatifs à la création de produits didactiques. Depuis des années, et dans tous les pays, le discours universitaire sur l'audio-visuel a suffisamment découragé ou stérilisé l'expérimentation dans ce domaine. Le fossé va en effet s'élargissant entre ceux pour qui l'audio-visuel n'est que prétexte à publications ou enseignements et ceux qui sont confrontés à une tâche précise de production. Les premiers théorisent volontiers leur propre vision du programme éducatif idéal et imposent plutôt qu'ils ne proposent au créateur potentiel les préalables impératifs d'une problématique irréaliste à force de rigeur; absorbés par les mille et un problèmes de conception et de mise en forme, les seconds n'ont généralement ni le souci ni le loisir de se livrer à une réflexion sur leur pratique.

Ce sont eux cependant qui sont à même de formuler non des questions rhétoriques sur la création pédagogique en général mais une interrogation ouverte et motivée sur leur propre activité. Certes, nombre de publications sont le fait de praticiens qui se fondent sur leur expérience pour tenter de définir un futur souhaitable et réaliste en matière d'élaboration de matériaux didactiques; cependant, à force de réfléchir à ce que *devraient* ou *pourraient* être des conditions idéales de production pédagogique, on oublie trop souvent ce qu'elles *sont* réellement. Au risque d'être taxé de myopie prospective, je vous propose de débattre de quelques problèmes fondamentaux liés aux conditions actuelles de conception de 'produits' destinés à l'apprentissage.

Une production pédagogique, quelle qu'elle soit, existe et se définit en fonction d'un public destinataire. Dans une structure d'enseignement classique, cette production peut être le fait d'un enseignant — supposé compétent — à qui est confiée, pour une discipline donnée, la charge d'un groupe d'enseignés. Cet enseignant assume une responsabilité totale puisque c'est lui, et lui seul, qui analyse les besoins du groupe, conçoit, produit, applique, apprécie et éventuellement modifie ses propres matériaux didactiques.

Il s'agit là d'une activité pédagogique de type artisanal totalement incompatible avec un projet de formation en langues qui s'adresserait au plus grand nombre :

— il est en effet irréaliste de fonder un enseignement de masse sur un corps d'enseignants suffisamment nombreux et qualifiés pour remplir toutes les tâches mentionnées ci-dessus;

– il est dangereux de généraliser une expérience ponctuelle réussie en transformant tel produit artisanal qui s'est révélé efficace dans un cadre pédagogique précis en article de série utilisable partout et par tous;

— il est impossible enfin, pour de simples raisons de coût, d'envisager la mobilisation de toute la gamme des media et des supports pour des micro-publics nombreux et variés.

Tout ceci mène à la conclusion selon laquelle la fabrication de matériaux didactiques ne peut qu'être le fait d'une équipe.

Mais si la nécessité du travail collectif est incontestée, on ne saurait faire l'économie d'une réflexion sur les problèmes qui se posent à chacun au triple niveau de la marge d'initiative, du degré de responsabilité et du partage des compétences. Il n'est rien de plus trompeur, par exemple, que l'apparente harmonie dans la distribution des tâches telle que la révèle le générique d'un film ou d'un programme de télévision. S'agissant de la fabrication de matériaux destinés à l'apprentissage d'une langue vivante, donc à la transmission d'un outil de communication, l'efficacité passe obligatoirement par la co-responsabilité et l'échange permanent au sein de l'équipe de production. Ceci est particulièrement évident lorsqu'on fait appel à des media sophistiqués comme le film et la télévision qui posent avec acuité le problème des rapports entre conception et réalisation.

Séparer ces deux fonctions est aussi pernicieux que les confondre. La responsabilité 'en relais' — ou séquentielle — voit l'auteur élaborer *seul* un contenu donné et le transmettre au réalisateur qui donnera à la matière proposée sa forme filmique ou télévisuelle. Traiter séparément et successivement fond et forme, ignorer leur interaction fondamentale, ne peut mener qu'à l'élaboration d'un produit décevant qui réunit dans une même insatisfaction auteur, réalisateur, producteur et public. Confier les tâches de conception et de réalisation à une seule et même personne baptisée 'auteur-réalisateur' ne donne pas de meilleurs résultats et risque d'aboutir à des produits soit ennuyeux à force d'uniformité, soit purement gratuits si l'auteur ne cherche dans sa création qu'une satisfaction 'artistique' personnelle et égoïste.

La qualité des produits dépend donc directement du type de communication qui s'établit au sein de l'équipe de production. Il est indispensable que la mobilisation des talents et des fonctions s'effectue non pas en termes de séparation ou de confusion mais sur la base d'une complémentarité active et permanente qui s'exerce à chaque instant du processus de création. Outre qu'elle suppose chez chacun des individus concernés une disponibilité et une ouverture tant professionelle que psychologique, cette complémentarité pose de

manière aigüe le problème des structures et des modalités pratiques de la production. Or ces structures elles-même sont définies par le type de système de formation mis en place, c'est-à-dire par la nature-même des rapports établis entre la production, la diffusion et la réception.

C'est ici qu'intervient la distinction entre 'matériaux d'apprentissage' et 'matériaux d'enseignement'. Loin d'être purement formelle, celle-ci indique que l'on ne peut éviter de choisir clairement le public auquel on s'adresse — l'étudiant ou l'enseignant. Elaborer des produits destinés indifféremment à l'un ou à l'autre, c'est risquer de ne satisfaire ni l'un ni l'autre. La fabrication de produits pédagogiques ne pouvant être dissociée du mode de diffusion/réception qui sera retenu, trois hypothèses peuvent être envisagées :

(i) le produit fini passe directement du producteur au consommateur;
(ii) le produit fini est administré à un groupe par l'intermédiaire d'un enseignant qui joue un rôle de distributeur;
(iii) le produit brut, ou semi-fini, est livré à un enseignant qui le façonne, l'adapte et le complète avant de l'appliquer au groupe dont il est responsable.

La première et la dernière de ces formules ont au moins le mérite de la clarté : l'une élimine purement et simplement l'enseignant 'classique', l'autre lui donne au contraire un rôle déterminant en l'associant directement aux tâches de création. C'est hélas la seconde qui est à la fois la plus ambiguë, la plus coûteuse — et la plus répandue ! On peut certes reprocher à cette classification d'être par trop caricaturale et d'ignorer les multiples stratégies pédagogiques qui combinent l'une ou l'autre de ces formules; il n'en reste pas moins vrai que chacune de ces trois options correspond à une orientation dominante qui aura une influence décisive sur le type de production retenu.

La plupart des systèmes de formation qui fonctionnent actuellement s'inspirent de l'une de ces trois approches. Aucun ne semble donner vraiment satisfaction et c'est peut-être dans le monolithisme et la rigidité qui caractérisent chacun d'eux qu'il faut chercher la cause de leur relative inefficacité. Face à cette situation bloquée, il semble qu'il faille s'orienter vers un éclatement, une démultiplication institutionnelle des centres de production et de diffusion. Le mérite revient au J. L. M. Trim d'avoir envisagé une redistribution dynamique et cohérente des responsabilités en proposant l'étude d'un système multi-media qui définit les tâches de production/diffusion en termes d'interaction et de complémentarité et ce au triple plan local, national et international[1].

Au terme de cette première partie, il est possible de formuler une première série de questions :

(a) Comment envisager - - à court ou à moyen terme — la mise en place d'un système multi-media tel qu'il est envisagé par le Professeur Trim?

[1] J. L. M. Trim : *A European unit/credit system for modern language learning by adults : provisional suggestions regarding multi-media systems for language teaching to adults.* Council of Europe document CCC/EES (74) 3

(b) Cette mise en place peut-elle être progressive et si oui, à quels secteurs faut-il s'attaquer en priorité?
(c) Quels sont les facteurs de 'blocage' les plus importants?
(d) Comment éviter d'avoir à choisir actuellement entre un centre spécialisé dans la production pédagogique mais généralement limité quantitativement et qualitativement au niveau des matériels et des équipes et un organisme non-spécialisé qui dispose de toutes les ressources humaines et techniques mais répugne souvent à appliquer à un programme éducatif les normes habituelles de production?
(e) Comment concilier les qualités d'ouverture et d'innovation que peuvent apporter des réalisateurs polyvalents à des productions éducatives ponctuelles et la garantie de continuité offerte par une équipe de 'réalisateurs-pédagogues' spécialisés?
(f) Comment assurer aux auteurs la disponibilité et les compétences techniques indispensables sans les transformer en professionnels chargés de concevoir des produits dont ils ignoreront souvent la raison d'être (analyse des besoins) et l'impact (analyse des effets)?
(g) Comment éviter enfin, dans le cadre d'un macro-système de production/diffusion, les dangers du 'travail en miettes' et de la parcellisation des tâches que risque de favoriser la multiplication des lieux et des personnes?

2 Chacun s'accorde aujourd'hui à reconnaître que l'acquisition d'une langue vivante ne se conçoit qu'en termes de communication. Encore faut-il que la forme que prendra l'apprentissage ainsi que les matériaux proposés ne contredisent pas au départ l'objectif visé. Tout 'exercice de langue', si artificiel soit-il, peut certes être présenté comme une excellente préparation à une situation de communication à venir : l'effort d'acquisition imposé est assimilé à un investissement qui doit déboucher, à plus ou moins long terme, sur une pratique normale. Or ce décalage, dont l'enseignant justifie volontiers le caractère inévitable, contredit totalement le rapport à la langue de l'apprenant -- et singulièrement de l'apprenant adulte - - qui exige simultanéité et concordance entre l'activité pédagogique et l'activité langagière réelle. L'apprentissage de la communication en langues passe par l'exercice normale de la communication au cours de l'apprentissage.

Plus encore que pour toute autre discipline, la règle d'or du créateur de matériaux pédagogiques en langue vivante doit être la recherche de l'adéquation optimale entre l'apprentissage et la réalité. Deux critères majeurs doivent donc marquer à tout instant la conception et la fabrication de ces matériaux :

(i) l'authenticité des formes linguistiques et des situations langagières;
(ii) l'autonomie progressivement exigée de l'apprenant.

L'authenticité

Contrairement à une opinion fort répandue, le critère d'authenticité ne s'applique pas au seul niveau dit 'avancé'; il ne constitue pas une sorte d'objectif-récompense qui viendrait couronner un long et patient travail sur des

matériaux artificiels. En fait, la prise en considération de ce critère aux premiers stades de l'apprentissage correspond simplement au respect du caractère propre du sujet et de l'objet de la formation comme des media mis en oeuvre.

Le respect du public demandeur de formation ne passe pas seulement par l'analyse des besoins exprimés ou latents; il dépasse largement l'indispensable étude des convergences et des divergences entre langue-source et langue-cible; il implique en priorité la prise en compte des rapports profonds entre la communication verbale et l'environnement socio-culturel et professionnel. Pour prendre le seul exemple du contenu lexical d'un niveau élémentaire, aucune liste de fréquence ne peut correspondre à la 'liste d'urgence et de pertinence' établie à partir de l'observation d'un public spécifique. Comme l'ont montré de nombreuses expériences d'alphabétisation, la participation active du public à la définition du contenu de la formation est indispensable si l'on souhaite établir une interaction authentique entre les 'mots' et 'les choses de la vie'.

Le respect de la langue en tant qu'outil de communication impose une double démarche. Il est indispensable d'analyser les catégories notionnelles et situationnelles liées au fonctionnement normal de la langue; c'est ce que fait David Wilkins dans sa description de 'l'approche communicative' [2]. Il est non moins indispensable de replacer les formes lexicales ou grammaticales correspondant à ces catégories dans leur milieu naturel, c'est-à-dire dans un cadre de communication normal. C'est ici que les matériaux non-didactiques jouent un rôle décisif. Certes, ce type de matériaux intervient souvent dans l'élaboration de produits didactiques, mais uniquement comme point de départ, voire comme alibi. La procédure est généralement la suivante :

1. analyse d'un document authentique (article de presse, programme de radio ou de télévision . . .);
2. sélection d'un certain nombre d'éléments formels;
3. construction d'exercices destinés à l'acquisition, à l'activation ou au contrôle de ces éléments.

En isolant tel ou tel aspect grammatical ou lexical d'un 'texte' complexe, on ignore généralement la plupart des traits pertinents qui faisaient sa spécificité et son authenticité en tant que message. Comment s'étonner de l'absence de transfert lorsque sont proposés d'autres documents du même type? En fait, le produit authentique n'est ni un prétexte, ni une simple illustration, mais un matériau d'apprentissage privilégié qui doit être appréhendé et analysé globalement. Présent à tous les niveaux et à tous les stades de la formation, il permet d'établir et de maintenir un contact permanent avec le fonctionnement normal de la langue. Son apport au plan psycho-pédagogique est déterminant, la fréquentation précoce et régulière des matériaux authentiques constituant pour l'adulte un facteur non négligeable d'intérêt et de motivation.

[2] D. A. Wilkins: *Modern languages: the linguistic and situational content of the common core in a unit credit system.* Council of Europe document CCC/EES (72) 67

Le respect du caractère spécifique de chacun des moyens de production et diffusion mis en oeuvre s'impose à l'évidence si l'on veut éviter de transformer les instruments de la communication en simples machines à enseigner. On évitera donc de séparer un message de son support. Il est par exemple dangereux d'analyser le contenu linguistique d'un article de presse indépendamment de sa présentation journalistique (mise en page, typographie ...). Inversement, choisir le cadre formel de la bande dessinée pour véhiculer un contenu didactique traditionnel relève d'une approche quelque peu démagogique. Par-delà les critères de rentabilité ou de mode, le choix de tel ou tel medium ou support se fait surtout en fonction de sa capacité à assumer pleinement une tâche spécifique. Ainsi la télévision favorise clairement ce qu'on pourrait appeler le réalisme de la 'pédagogie-vérité' : elle permet de montrer la langue en situation réelle et naturelle de fonctionnement; elle prolonge la vue et l'ouïe par une sorte de focalisation sur les messages langagiers environnants — on peut, par exemple, présenter tous les signifiants qui agressent le visiteur en pays étranger (signalisation routière, directions, enseignes ...) en respectant la fréquence naturelle des occurrences telle qu'elle est proposée par l'environnement. Respecter les potentialités propres à chaque medium, c'est aussi rejeter la contrainte du support unique et opter pour une véritable approche multi-media fondée sur la complémentarité et non sur la simple juxtaposition.

L'autonomie

Le critère d'autonomie est, en situation de communication verbale, indissociable du critère d'authenticité. De même que la fréquentation des documents authentiques doit être intégrée très tôt dans la stratégie d'apprentissage et ne pas être présentée comme l'étape ultime, de même la part du travail autonome doit jouer dès le début un rôle essentiel dans le processus de formation. Ignorer cette forme d'activité ou retarder exagérément son introduction risque de compromettre gravement les possibilités de communication normale; le passage brutal d'un cadre d'apprentissage sécurisant à une prise en charge personnelle et non-assistée est pour l'adulte en formation aussi traumatisant que la découverte de documents authentiques après un travail prolongé sur des produits didactiques artificiels.

Cette incitation au travail autonome s'exerce à trois niveaux :

(i) Autonomie relative par rapport aux 'agents d'enseignement'. L'enseignant responsable d'un groupe est souvent pour l'enseigné un interlocuteur trop privilégié qui tend à faciliter constamment la communication en langue étrangère, masquant ainsi en partie la multiplicité et la variété des interlocuteurs potentiels de toute situation normale d'échange et de dialogue.

(ii) Autonomie relative par rapport aux 'matériels d'enseignement' spécifiquement conçus pour une utilisation didactique. Le meilleur exemple en la matière est probablement fourni par le laboratoire de langues qui, mal ou trop utilisé, peut devenir un outil de conditionnement et un simulateur d'expression verbale aussi médiocre que dangereux.

(iii) Autonomie relative enfin par rapport aux 'méthodes d'enseignement'. Le risque de dépendance et d'accoutumance est ici d'autant plus élevé que la méthode se veut complète : la pratique normale de la langue est alors aisément assimilée à une pratique pédagogique où tout semble prévu; or chacun sait que l'un des aspects fondamentaux de la communication en langue est l'aptitude à réagir avec succès à l'imprévisible, même et surtout dans les situations dites 'typiques'. Cette part qu'il est nécessaire de faire à l'imprévisible indique d'ailleurs qu'il est impossible d'envisager l'élaboration de matériaux de travail autonome selon les principes de l'enseignement programmé : celui-ci implique en effet le risque de conditionnement et de simulation évoqué à propos du laboratoire de langues.

Au cours monolithique et fortement structuré qui présente une succession linéaire de 'leçons', on préférera des ensembles de matériaux nombreux, compacts et variés qu'accompagnent des suggestions méthodologiques et des conseils d'exploitation autonome ou semi-autonome. On retrouve ici la notion de modules d'apprentissage indépendants mais combinables telle qu'elle est définie dans le projet de système d'unités capitalisables en langues étudié par le Conseil de l'Europe. Bien entendu, le degré d'autonomie envisageable est fonction des niveaux et des phases d'apprentissage : le travail autonome augmente en même temps que s'élève la compétence; il a une importance variable selon que la visée pédagogique concerne la sensibilisation, la présentation, l'acquisition, le renforcement ou le contrôle. L'essentiel est qu'il soit intégré à la formation initiale avant de devenir la forme privilégiée de l'entretien et du perfectionnement individuel et permanent.

La définition du contenu et de la forme de l'apprentissage en termes de recours au document authentique et de pédagogie de l'autonomie ne manque pas de poser un certain nombre de questions :

(a) Comment organiser pratiquement l'accès permanent et régulier à des produits originellement conçus, réalisés et diffusés dans une perspective non-didactique?

(b) Comment assurer entre les équipes de production une coordination qui est indispensable si l'on veut préserver la compatibilité et la combinabilité des produits?

(c) Selon quelle proportion optimale est-il souhaitable de combiner les productions de matériaux bruts, semi-finis et finis?

(d) Comment garantir la continuité et la cohérence dans une optique de répartition des tâches de production entre producteurs 'primaires' (création de documents originaux non-didactiques), producteurs 'secondaires' (choix des documents, plus suggestions et exemples d'exploitation) et producteurs 'tertiaires' (mise en forme définitive et application)?

6

A E G Pilliner

The evaluation of programmes

This discussion must begin with the recognition of a distinction between programmes designed to bring about rather narrowly defined and specific changes in people's behaviour, and programmes designed to serve more general and more broadly based educational ends. To make this distinction at the outset is necessary because the process of evaluation has many facets. It is one thing to evaluate a programme whose purpose is to educate children for a democratic society. It is another to evaluate one aimed at providing university students of chemistry with the limited expertise required to read the specialised German literature in their subject.

But first let me state a definition of evaluation, or rather its purpose, which covers all facets of the process and is relevant to all programmes, however extensive or restricted in scope. *The purpose of evaluation is to provide information which can be used in decision-making.* The decisions may be of various kinds: in general, whether the programme should be continued, modified, terminated, or replaced by some other programme. More specifically, decisions will be based on the answers to questions such as: Is the programme securing, or has it secured, acceptance and co-operation from the students and institutions for whose benefit it was devised? Is there, or has there been, a clash of personalities between the researcher and the people in the institutions where the actual work is done, impeding the operation of an otherwise acceptable programme? Is the impact of 'side-effects', unforeseen and undesirable, outweighing, or has it outweighed, the benefits anticipated or achieved? Was the outcome commensurate with the work put in and the expense involved? The list could be extended indefinitely.

The switches between the continuous present and the past tenses in the previous sentences relate to the distinction made by Michael Scriven between two main aspects of evaluation: 'formative', when conducted alongside the development of the programme (and preferably serving as a component in its development); and 'summative', when used subsequently to assess the effectiveness of the concluded programme. A steering committee is engaged in

'formative' evaluation when its members respond to the investigator's account of progress to date by expressing approval, disapproval, or a desire that the programme be modified in the light of the events he reports. The committee is exercising its 'summative' evaluation function when its members discuss the investigator's completed report and assess the quality of the contributions his work has made to the area concerned.

Clearly, the formative evaluation function of the steering committee is the more important; by the time it switches to its summative function, the committee can do little except approve or reject the programme. Herein, to my mind, lies a major weakness of the system of control by steering committee as frequently operated. Its efficiency in conducting formative evaluation is limited to action on what is reported to it, usually by the investigator himself. This is in no way to impugn the investigator's integrity, but rather to doubt his omniscience. In the first place, he is likely to see what he expects to see — a human enough failing. Secondly, often he cannot possibly know all that is happening just when it is important that he should do so — particularly if his programme encompasses a number of institutions in different parts of the country.

On both counts, independent reporting by some other person would aid the committee in its task. Ideally, this would be a person appointed by the committee on the basis of known skill as an observer and evaluator in the area concerned. Failing that, it should not prove impossible to arrange for reports from those at the receiving end of the programme — both the staffs who operate it locally and the students who serve as guinea-pigs. Most investigators would welcome this. Quite apart from the fact that the skills of a good researcher do not necessarily coincide with those of a good evaluator, the research in itself is a full-time job.

There are three basic types of programme. The most common and long-established type is the *instrumental*. Characteristically, it is a package of material, complete in itself, designed to bring about rather specific changes in those subjected to it, and, at least in intention, relatively stable as to outcome in the face of variability in the circumstances of its use. The first step in setting up the instrumental programme or package is usually a specification of objectives seen as desirable and the intention in selecting the package's contents is that those using it will achieve these pre-specified objectives. The package may be quite literally material, as in the case of programmed instruction, or it may include the teacher whose role it then is to utilise the package to the best advantage. An approximate example of an instrumental programme is that mentioned previously: the package of material for chemistry students wishing to have access to articles in the original German.

The instrumental programme has been criticised by educationists who see it as based on the Skinnerian behaviourism which reduces human beings to the status of laboratory animals; as failing to take account of the reality of the situation — the variability in intelligence, attitudes and motivation of the

students unlucky enough to be exposed to it; and as unacceptable to the teacher who sees it as depreciating his role as educator.

But in the context of programmes designed to help students anxious to learn a foreign language for a special purpose, this criticism is inadmissible. It violates the general principle that evaluation should be related to the purpose of the programme. The Sheffield Japanese programme has a limited objective entirely acceptable to highly motivated learners. Nobody claims that it is educational in the sense that a programme embracing all aspects of the language and culture of Japan would be educational. It is an instrumental programme designed for people with an instrumental purpose in view and must be judged solely on that context.

The second type of programme is that known as *interactive*. By contrast with the instrumental type, objectives are not spelled out initially. The programme's emphasis is on process rather than product — 'to travel is better than to arrive'. As Becher puts it: 'The learner is seen, not as a complex stimulus-response machine, or a high-grade variant of the pigeon or the rat, but essentially as a social animal who derives his motivation and refines his understanding by interacting with others. Knowledge is seen, not as something which comes in pre-ordained packages, but as something socially defined, stemming from the identification and collective probing of shared concerns'.

The third type of programme is the *individualistic*. Its main emphasis is on the differences rather than the similarities among learners. Each learner sets his own goals and decides what he needs to achieve them. The purpose of the programme is to provide for these needs, while the teacher's role is that of tutor or counsellor to individuals. A programme in this category 'places main emphasis on personal autonomy, and reflects the belief that full understanding only develops from an active involvement in exploring ideas' (Becher).

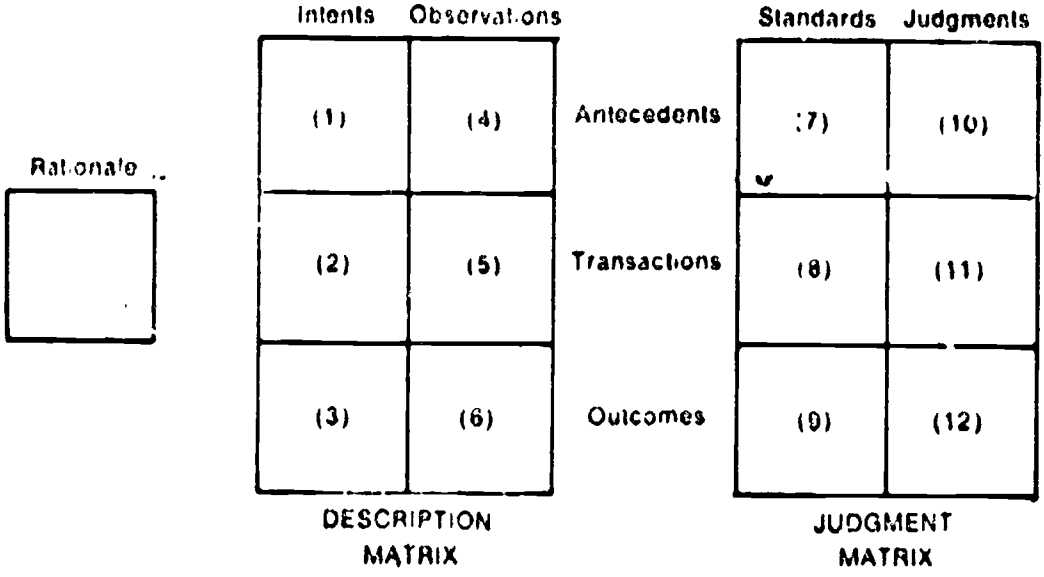
In a wider educational context, a more extended discussion of the second and third types of programme would be rewarding. In the present context, with its emphasis on special purposes and limited objectives, it is hard to see how to make use of the concepts they embody. Though admirable, their relevance is marginal.

We conclude, therefore, that the instrumental programme must supply the framework for the present discussion. Three conceptually different components can be identified: *antecedents*, *transactions* and *outcomes*. By *antecedents* is meant what the student brings to the programme. More often than not we are content with a summary description of antecedents such as 'second-year honours students wishing to study German for chemists', or 'engineering students from overseas who need a special course in English'. But we should perhaps do well to remember that antecedents include the student's cognitive skills, attitudes, cultural background, aspirations, potential; in short, the whole gamut of personal characteristics which he brings with him, and which the summary description glosses over.

By *transactions* is meant those characteristics of the programme which may do affect its outcome. In a narrow sense, the term includes the package of material referred to earlier, and the students' and teachers' manipulations of these materials in accordance with the plan of the programme's originators. In a wider sense, it embraces learner experiences and strategies, teacher styles, instructional techniques, assessment procedures — in short, the impact of the programme on all concerned with its working. Beyond that again, it encompasses the community attitudes and social contexts of the institution in which the programme is located; in a word, the ethos of the environment.

By *outcomes* is meant the acquisition of knowledge, the development of skills, the enhancement of achievement, the modification of attitudes; more generally, the changes in students' behaviour which are concomitant with their exposure to the programme. To the extent that these are intended outcomes, they are taken to signal achievement of specified objectives. However, outcomes also include side-effects which may be positive or negative. One student, reaching the limited objective, may be inspired to go beyond it to a rewarding study of the language for its own sake. Another, equally successful in reaching the objective, may have developed study habits which hamper his attempts to go further.

To the distinctions between antecedents, transactions and outcomes we add a further distinction between *description* and *judgment*. Evaluation may consist simply in describing the *intents* of the programme and *observations* of what actually happened when it was used. But evaluation may go beyond this and include judgment requiring the provision of *standards* for judging. The diagram proposed by Robert Stake may help to clarify the interrelationships among these several concepts.



The box on the left of the diagram contains a statement of rationale, the philosophical background and basic purposes of the programme. In the case of an interactive or individualistic programme, the statement of rationale would dwell on considerations such as those indicated in the quotations from Becher. The programmes which are our concern are mainly instrumental and the statement of rationale is likely to be more specific. Probably it would include a discussion of the instructional techniques proposed as appropriate to the special purpose in hand; for example, linear or branching programming, or the use of a language laboratory in some special way. It might include also an outline of the linguistic principles guiding the thinking of the programme's initiators.

For the evaluator, the statement of rationale provides a means of judging whether the planning of the programme is a logical implementation of the principles and techniques the statement proposes.

The other boxes are numbered for easy reference. Cells (1)-(3) state the intentions of the programme initiator in respect of antecedents, transactions and outcomes. Typically, this column represents the proposals he makes at the outset in requesting financial support and which the funding body transmits to experts for evaluation. Cells (4)-(6) record the events which actually occurred when the programme was put into operation. Together, these six cells (1)-(6) constitute the *description matrix*. At this stage we move from descriptive to judgmental evaluation. Cells (7)-(9) include the standards on which the judgments in cells (10)-(12) are based. Together, these six cells (7)-(12) make up the *judgment matrix*.

Readers of this paper are invited to use their own real data to fill these cells in accordance with the following wholly fictitious example.

(1) Physics staff and students in Northshire University have agreed on the need for students to be able to read original articles in Russian technical journals. It is decided to try out an appropriate programme with second-year volunteer students (presumably highly motivated). The programme is to be devised by two members of the physics staff and a co-opted linguist, all Russian speakers.

(2) An audio-visual 'packet' is devised directed at teaching students to read Russian material relevant to their physics studies. The linguist agrees with the physics teachers that the proposed Stage I should prove successful, but expresses reservations about the efficacy of Stage II. His objections are over-ridden by the physics teachers.

(3) It is estimated that students should master Stages I and II in 30 lecture-hours.

(4) In the event 40 per cent of the students who had previously expressed interest did not participate further.

(5) Presentation of the material took longer than expected.

(6) About 90 per cent of the students completed Stage I, but only 50 per cent completed Stage II.

(7) Scrutiny of previous records ('O' and 'A' level performance in physics, German, etc.; grades on most recent university physics examinations)

revealed no significant average difference in these respects between attenders and non-attenders for the experimental Russian programme.

(8) Some short-comings in the presentation and content of the package became apparent.

(9) On subsequent tests of ability to read Russian, devised to serve as a surrogate for actual library sessions, students averaged 81 per cent on Stage I material, but only 39 per cent on Stage II material.

(10) The comparative performance statistics of attenders and non-attenders led to a cautious judgment that the attenders were an unbiased sample of the whole group; the judgment was cautious because unidentified factors impelling some students but not others to press on might represent important differences between the two groups.

(11) Students liked the audio-visual approach and judged that they could do with more teaching of this kind.

(12) Physics teachers were pleased with the test results for Stage I, but now agreed that the linguist's reservations about Stage II had been well-founded.

The description in this example has followed the column-by-column arrangement of the two matrices. It would have been just as informative, in some respects perhaps more so, to have read the items in row-by-row arrangement; that is, (1), (4), (7), (10); (2), (5), (8), (11); and (3), (6), (9), (12).

With regard to the description matrix, it should be noted that the vertical links in the 'intents' column are *logical*: given x, if I do y I should get z. In the 'observations' column, the links are *empirical*: I started with x' and did y' and the outcome was z'. Stake calls these vertical links *contingencies*. Horizontally within the description matrix, the relationship is one of greater or less *congruency*. Is what happened congruent with what was intended, x' with x, y' with y, and z' with z?

In the judgment matrix, judgments are based on standards deemed appropriate. In our example, the entry in cell (7) is previous information about the students, both attenders and non-attenders, which enables some kind of judgment to be made of the representativeness of the attenders. The link between cells (8) and (11) is weak (suggestions for a better one would be welcome). That between cells (9) and (12) is stronger: (9) is information about students' test performance and (12) is the judgment based on this performance. Of course, in any real case, the entries in each cell would be much more extensive. Cell (9), for example, might contain additional important information of a less objective kind than that carried by test results.

Standards merit some further discussion. Should judgments be based on absolute or relative standards? Among evaluation experts this issue is still a matter of controversy. Lee Cronbach's view is that the near-impossibility of designing properly controlled experiments precludes comparisons among different major programmes, particularly since the seemingly similar objectives of these programmes may have different connotations for their originators. He would like to see fewer comparisons and more intensive studies of process using

both measurement and description. Michael Scriven maintains that comparisons are possible and credible and that setting up one programme against another is the best evaluation procedure. For Scriven, judgment in absolute terms is inadequate. How does one know whether a 'better' absolute would not have been achieved if the programme had been different?

This paper has attempted to show how some kind of structure can be imposed on the process of evaluation. It has stressed the mainly instrumental nature of programmes designed to achieve the limited objectives which concern this Conference and the implications for evaluation. It has touched on, but hitherto insufficiently identified, the several roles the evaluator can play. One basic principle he must bear in mind, whatever role he adopts: he must be prepared to accept the pre-suppositions of those who initiated the programme he sets out to evaluate. Otherwise, he is rightly open to the charge that his judgments will be based on irrelevant criteria. If he is not prepared to judge the programme on its own terms, he should refuse the brief.

As to the roles themselves, I cannot do better than quote from Robert Stake, one of the most significant figures in the area of evaluation:

> 'Educators . . . can hope to clarify their responsibility [as evaluators] by answering each of the following questions:
>
> (1) Is this evaluation to be primarily descriptive, primarily judgmental, or both descriptive and judgmental?
> (2) Is this evaluation to emphasise the antecedent conditions, the transactions, or the outcomes alone, or a combination of these, or their functional contingencies?
> (3) Is this evaluation to indicate the congruence between what is intended and what occurs?
> (4) Is this evaluation to be undertaken within a single programme or as a comparison between two or more curricular programmes?
> (5) Is this evaluation intended more to further the development of curricula or to help choose among available curricula?
>
> With these questions answered, the restrictive effects of incomplete guidelines and inappropriate countenances are more easily avoided'.

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7 Examples of course and materials development

7 i

J Coveney

French for engineers

The combined B.Sc. degree course in Engineering with French, which began at the University of Bath in 1966, has a limited linguistic aim, namely to provide a course of language study which will enable the engineer to work professionally in French. The course is not intended for potential technical translators, nor are students expected to become familiar with *all* engineering registers. A notable feature of the course is that some of the engineering syllabus is taught through the medium of French, the purpose being to expose the students to the French language within the context of the other discipline and thereby to increase their motivation. A period of training in a French industrial establishment forms an integral part of the course.

The minimum qualification for entry is an 'O' level pass in French. In the first and second years of the four-year degree course the student concentrates on language studies in the School of Modern Languages with an introduction to the use of the foreign language in an engineering environment in the School of Engineering. In the third year formal teaching is given in French of the engineering subjects 'Vibrations mécaniques' and 'Dynamique des machines'. This teaching of part of the engineering syllabus in French is continued in the fourth year with 'Mécanique appliquée', a general course in applied mechanics relevant to all fields of engineering.

Soon after the inception of this combined degree course in Engineering with French a grant was obtained from the Department of Education

and Science, on the recommendation of the Committee on Research and Development in Modern Languages, for the collection of recorded material in French industry with a view to its use in the Bath combined degree course and for eventual preparation of a course for publication. This course, *Le français pour l'ingénieur*, is to be published (Harrap).

Le français pour l'ingénieur consists of thirty units, with tapes, a *Livre du professeur* and a *Livre de l'étudiant*. The tape recordings which accompany each unit are approximately ten minutes in length and the course is entirely in French so that it is acceptable in other countries. Over a period of three years recordings were made of conversations on technical matters in a wide variety of French industrial establishments. The recordings were transcribed and analysed and a selection was made on which *Le français pour l'ingénieur* is based. The aim has been to provide as representative a coverage as possible of the whole field of engineering. Some excellent material has had to be excluded owing to the amount of disturbing background noise which the recordings contained. Where the background noise is not too obtrusive it has been retained in order to add a touch of realism.

Le français pour l'ingénieur is designed for students of engineering and practising engineers who wish to improve the standard of their spoken French in order to be able to communicate on technical matters in French with French-speaking engineers. It is envisaged that students using the course will have studied French to 'O' level and will have followed a bridging language course of about a year before embarking on the material.

The material on tape consists of conversations and *exposés* recorded in French industrial establishments in which the speakers discuss various engineering subjects in French, make calculations, and refer to plans and diagrams. It is not the intention to teach the students engineering through the medium of French but to arouse his interest and increase his motivation for learning the foreign language by providing him with conversations on elementary engineering subjects with which he is already familiar through his technical studies. While listening to the recorded conversations, the student completes the accompanying diagrams which are unlabelled in the *Livre de l'étudiant* but labelled in the *Livre du professeur*.

An important feature of *Le français pour l'ingénieur* is its realism, achieved by the combination of engineering and colloquial French in recordings of spontaneous conversations. Current engineering jargon, as well as 'franglais' and the basic technical terms used in a number of sectors of engineering, are included. There are fluent speakers and hesitant speakers, and the student is able to listen to the language of people with varied speech patterns, from those with a fluent and coherent delivery to those who hesitate and confuse genders and verbs. The student's understanding of the language can be enriched by listening to the syntactical and lexical mistakes made by the French themselves. No attempt has been made to restrict the language used so that the student

may be confident that what he is listening to is the real thing. The realism of the material is preserved by not presenting the tapescript to the student, but a full transcription and suggestions for exploitation are made available in the *Livre du professeur*.

The *Livre de l'étudiant* contains a résumé of the contents of each dialogue designed to introduce the subject matter and vocabulary of each topic. The purpose of the résumé is to enable the student to carry out linguistic preparation beforehand without destroying the impact of the actual recorded dialogue when it is subsequently presented. Some of the more difficult terms are explained in French in footnotes to the résumés. In order to make the course audio-visual, and to encourage active participation by the student, diagrams are supplied with each dialogue; these provide a visual focus for the student's attention while he is listening to the dialogues. Labelling the diagrams enables the student to check that he has assimilated the material; the diagrams can also be projected on to a screen for follow-up work in class, forming an aid to classroom discussion of the topics. A series of simple questions on the text follows each dialogue, designed to reinforce the diagrams as a method of learning the vocabulary. Having heard the tapes enough times to ensure that they understand the subject matter, the students can be required to write or record their own summary of specific points or of the whole dialogue.

The *Livre du professeur* contains the complete transcription of the dialogues. The aim is to present in print exactly what is said in its literal form, including hesitations, unfinished words, spoonerisms and anacoluthon. The *Livre du professeur* also contains the diagrams (with key) and the answers to the questions following each dialogue.

With material of this kind it is difficult to establish a linguistic progression. Nevertheless, in deciding upon the order of the units the primary concern has been the linguistic level of the units, both with regard to the nature of the language used and the clarity and speed of delivery of the speakers. These factors had to be considered in conjunction with the content of the units; however, there are some sequences of units where the order imposed itself.

It must be remembered that the teacher using this course will be a linguist and not an engineer, and that relationships with his engineering colleagues may be tenuous or even non-existent. Information is therefore given in the *Livre du professeur* (labelled diagrams, answers to questions) enabling the teacher to check that a reasonable amount of communication has taken place.

Finally, it must be borne in mind that the material in *Le français pour l'ingénieur* is intended for language practice, not for the teaching of engineering.

7 ii

C S Butler

German for chemists

There is in the Chemistry Department of the University of Nottingham a long history of teaching scientific German to undergraduates. In the period 1965-1971 various experimental schemes were run, ranging from weekly lectures, through the use of programmed material in booklet form, to a set of language laboratory lessons. This last method appeared to be particularly effective, and in 1971 support was obtained from the Office for Scientific and Technical Information for a two-year project whose aim was to judge the effectiveness of the language laboratory method and to develop a more efficient language laboratory course, as well as a version suitable for self instruction. A Research Officer was appointed in September 1971, to work with a team drawn from both the Chemistry Department and the Language Centre.

Aims of the course

The aim of the course is to permit second-year chemistry undergraduates (or postgraduates), with no previous knowledge of German, to read papers from German chemical journals for comprehension and, where necessary, for translation. A chemist who has followed the course diligently should be able to scan a German chemistry article for information, and to translate those sections of the paper which are particularly relevant to his problems. These skills are to be achieved within ten teaching hours, plus approximately twenty hours of private consolidation work, a restriction made necessary by the chemists' full timetable.

The form of the course

The perhaps unexpected choice of language laboratory tapes as a medium of instruction was motivated by a number of considerations. Even in a course designed to promote reading skills, an audio image of words and sentences is a valuable aid to understanding. Tapes can incorporate a programmed question-and-answer technique, which serves to ensure the immediate

feedback known to be of primary importance in language learning. Furthermore, in the language laboratory the student can work in privacy, at his own rate, calling a tutor for help when necessary. Investigation of student opinion showed that the language laboratory method was in most cases considered far superior to the traditional lecture/seminar approach.

The core of the course consists of ten taped lessons, each of approximately 30 minutes duration. Each lesson takes a small number of key grammatical points (e.g. noun plurals, particular tenses, modal verbs, the adjectival phrase) and offers step by step explanations, punctuated by up to seventy questions designed to test the student's grasp of new and previously learned material. Each point is illustrated by means of sentences taken from a corpus of recent research publications. In the final version of the course, care was taken to avoid excessive concentration on grammatical issues *per se*, primary consideration being given to the extraction of meaning via a combination of vocabulary look up and grammatical analysis.

It was considered unreasonable to expect the students to acquire, in a few weeks, a large enough range of vocabulary to allow them to cope with research papers. The emphasis in the course is therefore on the efficient use of word-lists and dictionaries, rather than on vocabulary learning. The vocabulary for the examples discussed on tape is given, together with the example sentences, in a 'student text' booklet. A further booklet contains tables of noun and adjective declensions, strong verbs, common prepositions with the main uses in chemical texts, etc.

In addition to the individual sentences used to promote accurate translation and comprehension of details, the course contains a number of connected passages of increasing length, which are used to teach the ability to scan material for comprehension of key points. In scanning, as indeed in translation, the student is at all times encouraged to make full use of his chemical knowledge, as well as his increasing knowledge of German.

As an essential back-up to the taped lessons, the student is expected to complete ten sets of written exercises designed to practise the points learned in each lesson. Each set will take the average student about two hours. Vocabulary lists are not given with consolidation exercises, the student being expected to make intelligent use of a German to English chemical dictionary. Model answers to consolidation exercises are available. In the self-instructional version of the course, which is still based on the use of the language laboratory tapes and consolidation exercises, four additional sets of revision exercises, with model answers, are incorporated.

Further novel features of the course

Apart from the somewhat unusual use of the language laboratory several other novel aspects of the course deserve mention.

In view of the extreme brevity and specialised nature of the course, it was considered essential that the linguistic content be reduced to the bare minimum needed to fulfil our stated aims. Since little information was available concerning the linguistic characteristics of chemical writing in German, the project team decided that a certain amount of time should be devoted to linguistic analysis of German chemical texts. A range of grammatical features was investigated at the beginning of the project, the results being used in deciding on the content of the first draft of the course. During the first run of the new course it became apparent that a major difficulty facing the students was the sheer structural complexity of the sentences found in this register of German. The nature of this complexity was therefore investigated.[1] It was hoped that such a study might suggest ways in which the student could be helped to overcome some of his basic difficulties.

Because of the inevitably small scale of these syntactic analyses, it was felt that mechanical processing of a much larger corpus of German chemical texts would constitute a very useful adjunct to the existing analyses. A computer-aided word count and concordance was therefore produced for a corpus of some 94,000 words, consisting of systematically chosen samples from recent chemical papers. As well as providing an invaluable fund of examples, the output from computer processing allowed a check on the quantitative importance of certain 'lexico-grammatical' items such as pronouns, prepositions and subordinating conjunctions.

The investigation into syntactic complexity led to the conclusion that the nominal group was the most important area of complexity, the number and relationship of clause constituents, and of clauses within sentences, being relatively straightforward. An attempt was therefore made to design a technique which, while providing the student with useful insights into the relationships both of the basic clause constituents and of the groups within these constituents, would yet be simple enough to be both teachable and usable. After some early experimentation with a procedure in which clauses were analysed into pre-verb, verb and post-verb segments, a more flexible and sophisticated technique was developed in which the sentence is divided into clauses, the complete verb in each clause identified and underlined, and a series of largely mechanical bracketing operations performed in order to isolate prepositional phrases, subjects and objects.[2] This bracketing technique, which can be extended to throw light on complex constructions such as the adjectival phrase, was considered useful by a majority of students.

The bracketing technique is a valuable aid, not only in translation, but

[1] C. S. Butler: 'Syntactic analysis of German chemical texts: on constructing a short course in German for chemists'. To appear in *IRAL*, Vol 3, 1975.

[2] C. S. Butler: 'A technique for sentence structure analysis as an aid to comprehension and translation of German chemistry texts'. *ITL. Review of Applied Linguistics* 21, 11-19, 1973.

also in comprehension at the sentence level, since it identifies groups of words which are grammatically connected and so constitute possible units of information. The technique cannot, however, help in the task of recognising which sentences or paragraphs in a paper are of particular relevance to the needs of a researcher. In order to make such recognition easier, an information retrieval technique was developed. The relevance of any particular article is assessed by translation of the title and, if necessary, of the abstract. Non-linguistic data in tables, figures and graphs, and within the text, are then scanned, and if necessary the sub-headings translated, in order to locate relevant sections of the paper. For each sentence in the relevant paragraphs, the meanings of all verbs and nouns are looked up, and a provisional assessment of relevance is made. The basic information in each relevant sentence is then extracted by means of the bracketing technique.

Testing and evaluation

The two drafts of the language laboratory courses were tested at Nottingham University and at a number of other institutions, information being obtained in the form of personal interviews, questionnaires on the content and presentation of individual lessons, an end-of-course questionnaire, also error analysis of the worked consolidation exercises and scripts produced in end-of-course examinations. The information obtained suggested modifications to successive drafts of the course. Plans have been made for a programme of post-course evaluation which, through the use of questionnaires, will seek to obtain information from past students about the usefulness of the course in their chemistry careers.

The fact that this German course for chemists has so far proved gratifyingly successful can be attributed to a combination of several key factors, among which are the precise definition of objectives, expert analysis of the linguistic properties of German chemical writing, careful attention to the problems of selection, grading, presentation and consolidation of material, and close co-operation between linguists and scientists. There can be no doubt that the use of the language laboratory has also made an important contribution to the success of the course.

7 iii

R E F Smith

Russian for social scientists

In 1968 Birmingham University Department of Russian Language and Literature started work on a language laboratory course with the help of a three-year grant from the Department of Education and Science (later extended by a further year).

The intention was primarily to provide a self-instructional course to give people already qualified in one of the social sciences a reading knowledge of Russian which would enable them rapidly to come to grips with material in their own subject. Such students are likely to be too few in any one institution to justify teacher time being allocated to cater for their special needs. Consequently, the course envisaged had to be highly programmed and self-instructional. By using language laboratory techniques we hope we have succeeded in overcoming the problems connected with the design of such a self-instructional course.

The target audience was envisaged as well-motivated, but not necessarily interested or experienced in learning a foreign language. We, therefore, had to provide a course which had intrinsic interest for specialists and our first task was to establish word-frequency lists for the fields of economics, politics and sociology.

A corpus of three million running words was selected separately from books, journals and newspapers of 1960 or later. The criterion used in selection was that the item should be judged by someone researching in the field as worth scanning in the hope of finding relevant information. The material did not have to be in fact of importance; Russian titles are not always highly informative and much has to be examined to find what is of direct use. In order to randomise our sample, one page in four was taken from the book and journal material; the typing of items started from the first, second, third and fourth pages in sequence in order to reduce the predominance of opening paragraphs. Broken sentences at the start and end of pages were ignored. Newspaper material was

typed as a continuous passage. We thus derived a sample of about ¾ million running words fairly evenly distributed over the three fields and from books, journals and newspapers. The 380 items in the sample came from 457 authors.

With computer assistance frequency lists were drawn up and used by the editor to assist in devising the texts of the *Basic course* of 50 lessons. The word count had shown there is a considerable vocabulary common to the three fields of the social sciences which we had examined: 1,200 words of the 2,100 with frequencies higher than 40 were common to all three fields and, in addition, more than 500 were common to two fields (*see* diagrams). The terminology specific to sociology is somewhat restricted, while that of economics and politics is a little more differentiated. The *Basic course* is thus common to the three fields; its vocabulary of just over 750 words gives an approximate text coverage of 65%.

We concentrated on a simple word count to establish the vocabulary for our fields (a) in order, primarily, to maintain the motivation of the specialists by using relevant items; (b) to demonstrate the way in which Russian structures these fields (e.g. Soviet accountancy uses conceptions quite other than those of our accountancy); (c) to find any differences both between the fields of economics, politics and sociology and between the language used in books, journals and newspapers.

We compared our word count with other Russian word counts. Vakar[1] expected 360 words to cover 75% of spoken Russian word occurrences. The nearly 900 words of our *Basic course* gives about 65% coverage of social science texts.

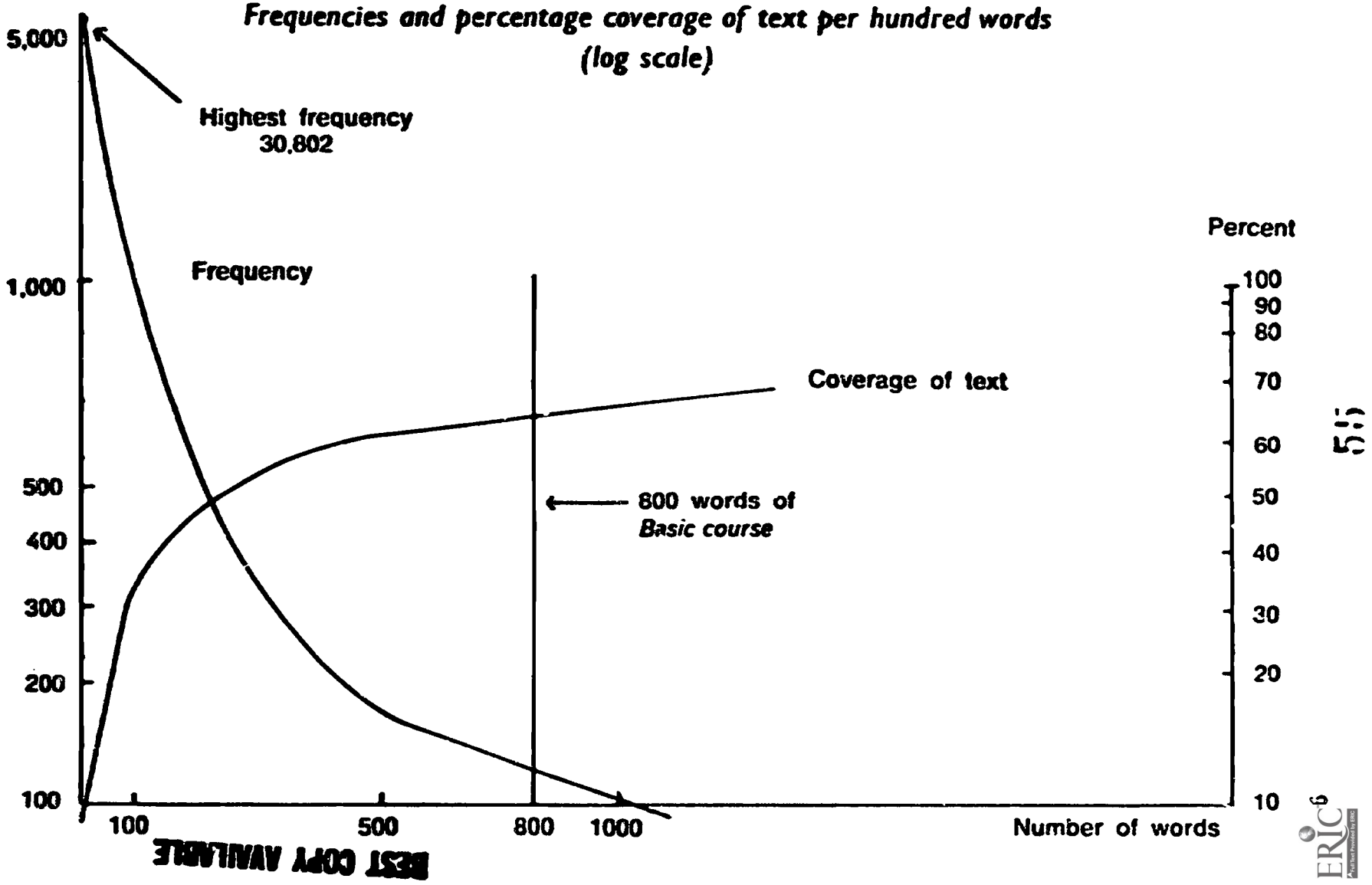
Three *Readers* for economics, politics and sociology consist of virtually undoctored post-1960 materials with accompanying translation of and commentary on possible terminological problems; structural and syntactical difficulties are dealt with by means of an appendix containing translation notes which are referred to in the texts. In this way we hope that we have bridged the gap between the highly programmed *Basic course* and the undoctored *Readers* which introduce the specialist to the authentic repetitious and cliché-ridden material found in so much Soviet social science literature.

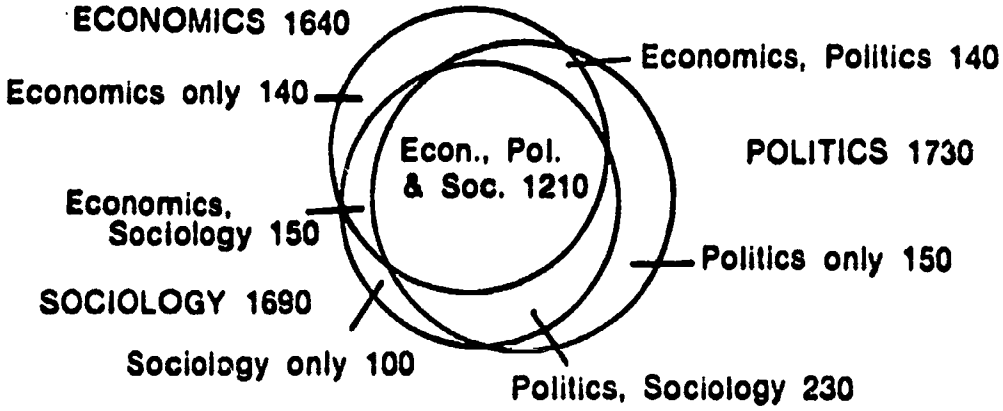
There was a major problem in moving from the carefully controlled materials of the *Basic course* to authentic unmodified materials. This has been tackled by the 'Translation notes' which deal with syntactical and other difficulties.

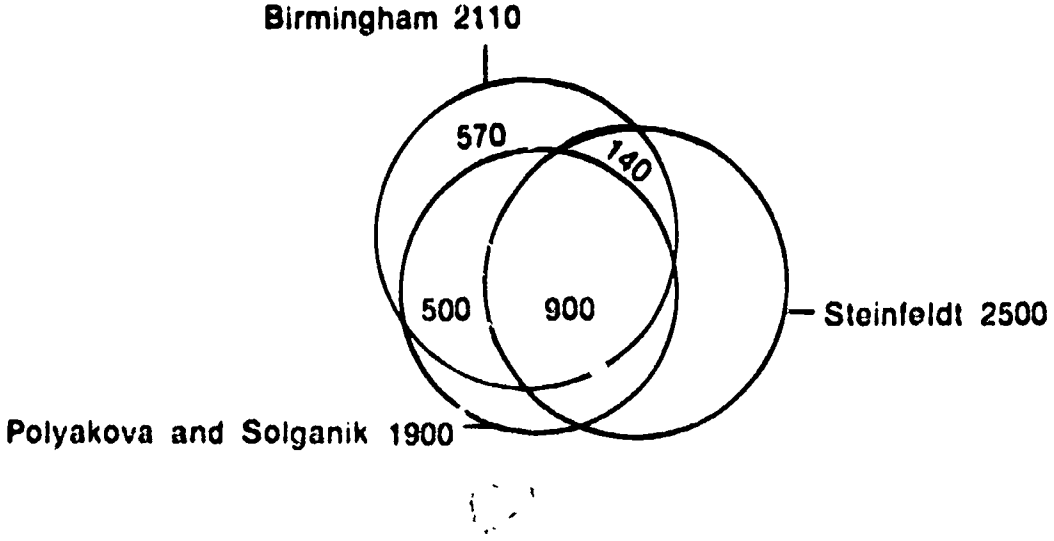
It proved difficult to arrange for adequate testing of the course, but results so far are encouraging in terms both of the level reached by students after a term's work and also the reduction in teacher time required.

Lists of the first thousand most frequent words for each of the three fields and a common list will shortly be available in duplicated form.

[1] N. P. Vakar: *A word count of spoken Russian: the Soviet usage*. Ohio State University Press. Columbus, Ohio, 1966.







7 iv

J Jelinek

Japanese–the integrated dictionary search method

The integrated dictionary search method was developed and tested specifically for teaching a reading knowledge of Japanese though it has already been applied to Russian, and other possible applications such as teaching a writing knowledge are being considered. The method is based on the availability of a device which combines the powers of a dictionary with those of a translating machine. In the case of the powers of a dictionary the comparison is homologous : exactly like a traditional dictionary, the device contains entries listed in an alphabetical or similar order, relies on a manual human operator for the retrieval of each relevant entry, and rewards such retrieval by pertinent suggestions for a translation into English. As with a traditional dictionary, these suggestions sometimes appear in the form of mutually exclusive alternatives from which the user has to choose, relying on his proper appreciation of the 'context'.

The comparison with a translating machine is a little more abstract in that the set of operations which in a conventional translating machine is stored in the form of a computed programme and is performed automatically without any appreciation of the purpose of the exercise, has in this case to be performed by a thinking and motivated human. These operations must therefore be incomparably simpler than a computer programme and a number of feedbacks must be built in to counteract human fallibility.

Yet this abstract comparison with a translating machine is also basically homologous, because the human operator shares with the translating computer the most relevant aspect : progressing consistently from left to right on the Japanese text, the user of the device is clearly told at each step (a) what he must do with the English output hitherto obtained, e.g. exactly how to alter the word order, how to modify endings or transform tenses, etc., and (b) exactly where in the device he should search for his next instruction. At the end of each sentence the user obtains one, or possibly several, English renderings merely by

strict observance of the simple search procedure. These English sentences will be no more polished than translating machines are able to make them at present. However, this is where the comparison ends. The human now has every advantage over the machine and, having understood the meaning, is free to adjust the rendering to his usual standard of English, with full appreciation of the context. The device offers him only very limited help in doing this, and as a matter of fact it is simply not known how this process operates. If we did know, machines would nowadays be translating to required standards.

After what has been said so far, it might be asked how this device which we are provisionally calling an 'Integrated Dictionary' [1] can be used in teaching a reading knowledge. This has already been taught successfully in five courses in the case of Japanese alone, and approximately 60 people have now acquired a reading knowledge of Japanese solely through this device. Nonetheless, those who have some experience of learning or even teaching languages and have not seen one of these courses in operation may justifiably be wondering at this point whether a proper distinction is being made between *deciphering skill* and *reading knowledge*. The Integrated Dictionary is a sort of machine in the shape of a book which the student can use after he has mastered the techniques of manipulating it to arrive at an English rendering of Japanese sentences. As long as he 'knows' no Japanese at all, he must search for every single element which makes up the Japanese sentence and correctly follow the instructions governing the shape of the English output. But then, you might ask, is this not learning how to decipher and what has this to do with learning to read and understand independently? This was the most agonising doubt in my own mind throughout the first year of the project[2], from the moment the target was set right up to the early days of the first pilot course. The doubt was only completely dispelled when I found that the manipulating of the device, i.e. the deciphering technique on its own, can be safely taught even to slow students in the space of two hours. In other words, the manipulation of the Integrated Dictionary has proved to be considerably easier to master than, say, driving a car. Of course, the Japanese writing system being what it is, it was not until the end of the second week of the course, when the preliminary stage securing reliable identification of Japanese letters and characters had been completed, that the Integrated Dictionary search itself could be taught. The supervised course of instruction lasts for eight weeks, five days a week, five supervised hours and one hour's homework being required each day and two hours homework at weekends. The answer seems to be that by far the greatest part of the time is spent on converting the skill of deciphering (with full reference to the device) into the target skill of reading more or less independently. The results show not only that this skill can be achieved by the average student in eight

[1] J. Jelinek: *Japanese-English grammar dictionary*. To be published by the Centre of Japanese Studies, University of Sheffield, September 1974

[2] J. Jelinek: *Final report: the development of Japanese scientific and technical reading courses*. University of Sheffield, December 1972

weeks — this we found on the first pilot course in 1970 and confirmed on every subsequent occasion — but also that through accumulation of improvements in every aspect of the technique and instructional handouts involved, this time can probably be shortened. The sixth supervised course, now in progress (July 1974), will show by exactly how much, because it is being conducted on the principle of an individualised timetable, allowing each student to proceed at his own speed.

At the time of writing, the 1974 supervised summer course is in its fifth week; two of the seven students have already finished, one at the end of the fourth week, the other at the beginning of the fifth. Their final test performance compares favourably with the results of undergraduate finals, both in terms of time and accuracy. (The same section of unseen text was used both in the finals and in this test. The only difference between the best two of the undergraduates and the two students of this course was that the Integrated Dictionary was available to the latter.)

An additional point concerning this teaching method, which might be of interest to those concerned with the more general educational problems of language teaching, is the possibility it offers of doing away with most of the restrictive or coercive practices: elements of military drill such as time stress, lack of room for imagination, compulsory memorisation of items carried out in advance of their application, embarrassing social situations, domination of people by machinery, etc. It has to be seen to be believed how much human energy is thus released, and how much tension and embarrassment saved. Far from losing any motivation we find people working at full pitch in a friendly co-operative atmosphere because they do not regard themselves as performing for the teacher or in front of classmates, but feel directly confronted with the object of learning. Since almost every drill task has been actually extracted from technical literature of the relevant specialisation (at the moment, separate panels are available for chemistry, food industry, shipbuilding, electronics, metallurgy and geography, and 20 other panels are in preparation), the highest motivation is maintained throughout the course.

Finally, I should like to touch on the question of how an integrated dictionary is made. If everything appeared too simple to be true when the student's job was discussed, it was because all the pains and hardship are concentrated in this area where I believe they rightfully belong. Although an integrated dictionary may superficially look rather like just another dictionary, it contains in fact a complete and systematic formulation of the grammar of the language. 'Grammar' here is understood as a system of rules governing the formation of correct sentences of the input language, but, unlike the standard academic procedure of formal grammars, it defines the formation of correct sentences not in a deductive way proceeding from general concepts and ending with a reference to a 'morphological component' which as a rule is left to the reader's imagination, but directly in terms of optically identifiable, non-overlapping segments of the language which are the actual entries in the dictionary.

It also includes a set of rules governing the rendering of these sentences in the output language (in this case English). Briefly, but not simply, one can make an integrated dictionary by merging a good lexical dictionary with a completely monolithic and comprehensive formal grammar of the language. In theory a variety of types of formal grammars are known and could be used for the purpose, but in practice it is likely to be easier to make one's own because, regrettably, the overwhelming trend in formal grammars, almost the only one which has so far led to concrete application to individual languages, has favoured not a monolithic system of rules, but a combination of at least two 'components' : the phrase-structure component and the transformational component. Typically, other structural impurities such as features or deletions are also abundantly attached to these grammars. The conversion of a formal grammar into an integrated dictionary is a simple mechanical process if the grammar can offer an answer to the following two questions : what is the complete list of word classes which can occur at any given point in the sentence? When we have this list of word classes for each point in the sentence, what possible structural functions can each of these word classes carry, initiate, continue, conclude at that given point?

A Chomsky-type transformational generative grammar does not answer either of these questions, because as a set of rules such a grammar is non-transparent. The rules cannot be easily confronted to give distributional definitions to word classes. This problem arises from the grafting of two mathematically different components — the fact which makes Chomsky grammars so difficult to apply in language teaching in general. The phrase-structure component alone is perfectly capable of formulating a complete grammar of a language, although Chomsky rejects such a possibility. Such a grammar can be consistently monolithic, although a phrase-structure grammar without the usual pyramidal shape and symmetry requires a vastly larger number of rules and accommodates rather fewer nineteenth-century linguistic concepts. It does however tell us all we need to know about the role of each terminal symbol.

7 v (CILT)

A modern Chinese course

These notes have been prepared by CILT, and are based on information provided by Mr R. P. Sloss and his colleagues.

History

The project grew out of an unsuccessful attempt to produce a scheme to establish an inter-universities Chinese language school; it became clear that no general specification of skill levels to be expected after an intensive one-year course of instruction in basic modern spoken and written Chinese, nor detailed syllabus or adequate teaching materials, existed; the initial aim of this project was to remedy these deficiencies. The project was formally inaugurated at Cambridge in October 1969 under the direction of R. P. Sloss and the general supervision of a Board of Management. Funds were provided by the Department of Education and Science, the Universities' China Committee and the Nuffield Foundation. Research and development of materials were planned over a four-year span divided into four phases (see also Appendix 1):

Year 1 *Investigation and evaluation* of the then current situation in the teaching of Chinese throughout the world, with interest centreing on such matters as student numbers, class size, staffing ratios, duration and intensity of courses and student motivation.

Year 2 *Production.*

Year 3 *Testing.*

Year 4 *Consolidation and revision.*

Aims

A distinction was made between (a) the language learning process by which basic practical skills are acquired in comprehension and speech and (b) that by which an intellectual grasp of an unfamiliar ideas system and culture is acquired. The first implies an essentially aural/oral course in basic

conversational Chinese; (b) requires a use of language at a level commensurate with adult professional interests. The emphasis throughout has been on enabling students to meet the linguistic requirements posed by real situations, and to avoid the over-simplification which is a common fault in many textbooks. The intensive one-year course is intended to provide beginning students with a sound knowledge of the basic grammar and lexis of the contemporary spoken and written language, and to train them to meet the skill levels specified in Appendix 2 (see below). In addition to the language classes, tuition is provided on historical, geographical, social, economic and political background. There are also sub-courses on the phonology of Modern Standard Chinese and on the Chinese writing system.

Course description

(a) *Structure*

Beginning in October each year, the course comprises 1,000 hours of instruction, provided in four ten-week terms, and lasts until mid-August of the following year. Breaks between terms never exceed two weeks. The weekly programme consists of five days of instruction, with approximately five hours of teaching each day (including formal lectures, conversational practice sessions, laboratory drilling and twice-weekly individual tutorials). On average, students need to spend at least fifteen hours per week in private study. Tuition is mainly provided by project staff, but additional special courses are available to students in the intensive language programme from other teachers of Chinese in the University.

(b) *Class size and selection of students*

The class is limited to seven or eight students in any one year; this allows for optimum use of limited space and has proved to be an excellent group size for this style of language learning. Admission is limited to those who have a serious professional or academic reason for wishing to acquire a good knowledge of modern Chinese and are of good academic standing; this normally means graduate status or the equivalent (e.g. taking employment experience into account). Those wishing to study Chinese out of personal interest and young students are not admitted. Since the course is not directed towards any existing examination but is intended as a general preparation for academic or professional work, it is not normally the practice to issue diplomas, although successful students may be provided with formal statements on the level of competence attained if they wish it. (Examples of types of students are given in Appendix 3.)

(c) *Materials*

Graded grammars, readers and tapes have been produced, and a Chinese-English dictionary of contemporary written usage has been in preparation by W. Kungsen since 1971 (now funded by the Department of Education

and Science); the dictionary may eventually be computerised. Dr P. Kratochvil, who has worked closely with the project, has contributed a booklet on pronunciation: *A course in Chinese pronunciation*. Given the needs of the students and the size of the classes the market for the materials will necessarily be small and specialised and large-scale production is not envisaged for use outside the course. It is hoped to arrange limited publication, but sets of unpublished textbooks and tapes may be obtained from the Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Cambridge.

The content of the reading materials has been drawn from newspaper and magazine articles from Mainland publications; the extracts average 2,000 characters each and cover as wide a spectrum of topics as possible, the articles being supported with vocabulary and background notes, romanised version and suggested translation. Extracts have been recorded by a variety of voices drawn from sources in this country and in Hong Kong. A parallel, but shorter and more elementary, series has been prepared from extracts from the Hong Kong press. A set of structure flashcards has been produced to enable students to review their knowledge of the structures. All study aids such as tape recorders, cassette recordings, textbooks etc. required by students are provided by the project without additional charge.

(d) *Methods*

(i) The course adopts the now conventional approach of working towards preset terminal objectives expressed as detailed specifications of performance in each of the four main language skills.

(ii) The content is controlled on a frequency basis; the active and passive lexical ranges to be covered are predetermined.

(iii) Elements in the course concerned with the spoken and written parts of the language are deliberately separated, in the conviction that the *milieu* of each is different, and that they require quite different treatment (especially true of Chinese).

(iv) The traditional separation and sequential treatment of isolated language features on an incremental principle was abandoned, because it inevitably produces 'textbook language'.

(v) The course progresses gradually from artificially simple situations to complex realistic ones, priority being the need to produce uncompromisingly real language, irrespective of the complexity of its context.

(vi) During the consolidation phase an element of direct method teaching was introduced to prod the students from passive learning into situations requiring their skills to be vehicles for invention, imagination and improvisation. One hour a day is devoted to this and has proved to be a major factor in building up self-confidence in the students. Both teacher and student have enjoyed these sessions which depend primarily on the teacher's inventiveness and demonstrate to the students the realistic nature of the approach.

Conclusions

The project has completed the task for which it was originally set up : to determine a reasonable skill specification for a one-year intensive course and to develop and test the materials required to sustain such a course. In so doing it has established that :

(a) A 1,000 hour course of four ten-week terms and a student-week of 25 hours is reasonable for a one-year course.

(b) Highly motivated adults are able to absorb a much greater amount than is generally supposed, particularly when the content of the materials is carefully chosen and the students' wishes within the detailed programme are consulted.

(c) Individual cassette recorders are essential for an aural/oral based course; even the reading texts should be supported by tapes. The written language should be emphasised from the beginning, with romanisation playing a subordinate role.

More generally, it has been shown that such a course can be developed in a relatively short time provided the ground work is carefully laid (see Appendix 1). The true measure of success is that the materials satisfy the expectations of students of high calibre within a framework of intense endeavour.

Continuation of the project

Work is in progress on an advanced course, financed by the Nuffield Foundation, to comprise :

(a) An advanced basic language programme, for a second 40-week year, of the same type and intensity as the first-year course; it will aim at maintaining and developing fluent control of the spoken language and reading skills acquired during the preliminary course, while progressively broadening its intellectual content.

(b) Optional second components, to give the student more specialised linguistic experience in the general field of his professional interests, e.g. politics, economics, current affairs; literature and the arts; history; science and technology.

The necessary lexical research is financed by the Department of Education and Science :

(c) To build up a lexical store (modern written usage) with English translations, which will provide back-up to the development programme (glossaries, annotated vocabularies and frequency counts may be produced as needed); later a small Chinese-English dictionary will probably be produced.

Appendix 1

Research and development plan

(i) An evaluation of the current 'state of the art';
(ii) a careful appraisal, using standard evaluation procedures, of all known texts and teaching systems; where possible a categorisation of these by various criteria;
(iii) the establishment of a specification of minimum viable skill levels and of vocabulary, grammar constraints;
(iv) the expression of (iii) in terms of a global time-budget, further broken down by terms, weeks and days;
(v) the production and testing of photo-type pilot materials designed to test underlying principles;
(vi) the blocking-in of the time-budget by material designed to meet the skill specifications which are within the pre-set constraints;
(vii) testing and revising and up-dating of the materials to the level of pre-production-quality control phase;
(viii) extended testing leading to eventual production.

Appendix 2

Specifications of skill objectives for the 1,000-hour course in Modern Standard Chinese

Comprehension

1. Able to comprehend fully social conversation related to everyday needs (within a defined prescription of *3,000 passive* lexical items).
2. Able to comprehend the greater part of a discourse, lecture where the subject matter is known and the topic previously specified (largely to be within the prescription of *3,000 passive* lexical items, with an opportunity provided for the preparation of any special vocabulary).
3. Able to gist at least the main topic and trends of emphasis in a discourse/lecture (excepting one in which the topic is highly specialised) where the subject is previously *unknown* and where *no* opportunity has been provided for the preparation of vocabulary (largely within the *passive* prescription).
4. Able to highlight items in a news-broadcast, *other than* items in which unusual or uncommon personal place names arise or in which topics of an unusual or non-current nature are discussed (largely within the *passive* prescription).

Speech

1. Able to express accurately basic human and social needs. Able to make requests and to respond to requests (within a defined prescription of *1,000 active* lexical items).
2. Able to talk about personal background and interests, and to elicit similar information from others (within the *active* prescription of items).
3. Able to talk about the course of study pursued and to express views about it, while at the same time displaying a capacity to sustain conversation on such matters (within the *active* prescription).
4. Able to talk about current local/political/world news (with particular reference to contemporary developments in China) in simple terms, and to be able to withstand questions on such matters (within the *active* prescription).
5. Able to deliver a 10-minute talk in colloquial Chinese on a prepared topic, using only brief notes, to withstand questions on it and to participate in a simple discussion on the matters arising (within a lexical range to be determined by the candidate, but largely to be within the prescription).

Combining skills

1. The ability to speak in the kind of situation which establishes its frame of reference on both sides only as the conversation unfolds — an interview with an official.
2. The ability to deal with simple two-way interpreting (*active* into Chinese, *passive* out of Chinese).

Reading

1. Within the known reading vocabulary range to be able to read without aids light narrative descriptive dialogue materials (drawn from a predetermined period of time and largely homogeneous in style) at the rate of 2,000 characters per hour (to be tested by comprehension questions *without* reference to the text).
2. Where 'unknown' vocabulary items do not exceed 5% of the whole, to be able to read with the assistance of conventional aids factual news/comment materials of intermediate depth at the rate of 1,000 characters per hour (to be tested by comprehension questions *with* reference to the text allowed).
3. To be able to make a full translation of previously unseen passages of a degree of difficulty corresponding to that of newspaper editorial serious essay technical manual or textbook, quality of translation being sought in terms of accuracy, sensitivity and resource. Unfettered use of conventional aids and generous time allowed. This is the sub-skill *written translation*).
4. Immediate sight-reading of a short, unseen passage, chosen from well within the best known vocabulary, to test the inherent appreciation of structure and the ability to phrase appropriately.

Composition

1. To be able within the known writing range (to be specified) to provide short, factual written answers in Chinese to questions. To be able to fill in simple forms.
2. To be able to write in acceptable simple Chinese short notes to meet personal/social needs.
3. Given the ingredients of a simple narrative (in English) to be able to re-state it in written Chinese. To be able within the known writing range to render simple instructions and directions into acceptable Chinese.

Appendix 3

Composition of student groups

1972-73:

1. A law graduate (Australian) taking up the study of aspects of Chinese law.
2. A history graduate (American) who also has taken the MA programme in contemporary Chinese studies at SOAS, intending to do PhD work in contemporary Chinese history.
3. An administrative official (British) of the Hong Kong Government on a year's study secondment.
4. A graduate in anthropology from LSE (British) wishing to do PhD work in the China field in connection with the status of women.
5. A graduate in political science (Kuwait) preparing to do PhD work on Chinese relations with the Gulf States.
6. A foreign correspondent of *The New York Times* (American) who is also a Harvard graduate, designated as his newspaper's correspondent for China.
7. A graduate in East-Asian history (American) who intends to do PhD work in contemporary Chinese history.

In addition, at different short periods the following two students joined the course :

8. A senior official of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office assigned to the Far East (an existing language officer qualified in Cantonese).
9. The BOAC traffic manager designated for Peking (a SOAS graduate in history of some years' standing).

1973-74 (provisional list) :

(a) Two Foreign and Commonwealth Office diplomats (both existing graduates in modern languages).
(b) A Royal Air Force aircrew officer (a graduate in modern languages).
(c) A Swiss diplomat (a graduate in law).
(d) An Iranian diplomat (a graduate in political science).
(e) A Cambridge graduate in English.
(f) An American graduate in history coming from the SOAS MA programme in contemporary China studies.

Note

The basic course has also been tested on two annual intakes of undergraduates.

7 vi

D P L Harper

English for foreign doctors and civil servants

The methodological principles adopted by the English Language Teaching Institute (British Council) are best illustrated by case studies of courses actually being taught. The following two examples of courses designed for quite different kinds of students may be cited.

Case study 1

1. *Students:* medical practitioners on clinical attachments to London teaching hospitals, usually working for an advanced medical qualification.

2. *Constraints:* time;
the multilingual background of the students and the varying degree of attainment in English, leading to a wide range of problems in all the skills;
teaching staff;
language tuition has to be concurrent with professional studies.

3. *Course:* two hours weekly for 30 weeks a year;
size : up to 50 members;
no streaming.

The aim of the course is to present the doctors with a range of languages likely to be used by patients in describing symptoms of illnesses and by role-playing to give them the opportunity of simulating doctor-patient interaction. A subsidiary aim is the improvement of reading comprehension of medical literature.

Examples of course and materials development (contd)

4. *Method:* lecture/exposition;
some paired work.

5. *Sources:* medical texts from published sources;
case histories;
material from recordings of consultation sessions.

Case study 2

1. ***Students:*** senior French civil servants attending a dual purpose course involving language tuition and a study of the British system of public administration. The latter part of the course is undertaken at the Civil Service.

2. *Constraints:* time;
tuition concurrent with professional course of studies;
the need to harmonise the short term aim of the language tuition, namely to help the civil servants to understand the subject areas of their professional tuition and to gather information from the media on a variety of subjects relevant to life in Britain, with the longer term aim of general language improvement. Expressed in the terms used by the Fonction Publique, the aim is to immerse the civil servants in *un bain d'anglais.*

3. *Course:* six hours daily for one week followed by three hours daily for five weeks;
size: up to 25 members, divided into three attainment groups as a result of initial testing.

For the aims of the course see under *Constraints.*

4. *Methods:* integrated classroom-language laboratory tuition using materials drawn from published courses and ELTI's tape library;
role simulation/confrontation;
seminars;
discussions.

5. *Additional sources:* lectures and seminars recorded at the Civil Service College;
recordings based on newspaper articles and political weeklies, etc.

7 vii

P M Hesketh

An RAF view of language learning

Note: **The views expressed are those of the author and are not to be construed as official policy.**

Besides recognising the desirability that as many personnel as possible should speak the language of their host country when stationed overseas, the Royal Air Force has identified a number of posts where linguistic proficiency is essential to a serviceman's effective performance of his duties. These posts include air attachés and support staffs, NATO exchange appointments, international projects personnel, liaison and NATO logistics personnel (both in UK and on the Continent). The levels of language proficiency which the Services recognise are :

1. *Service Colloquial Standard.* This level is measured by single-Service examinations designed to test a candidate's practical, everyday knowledge in exclusively oral/aural contexts. He must be able to act as an interpreter in simple situations, conveying meaning adequately but not necessarily with perfect grammatical accuracy and choice of words. His knowledge of military vocabulary is general (350-400 words) rather than specific. He is not expected to read or write the language. Experience shows that even for those who have scored average marks in a language aptitude test the period needed to achieve RAF Colloquial Standard is some nine to ten weeks intensive training for a language like German or Spanish and some 26 weeks for Russian. In some respects the scope of the examination resembles that of the GCE 'O' level.

2. *Civil Service Commission Linguist Standard.* This examination requires a thorough knowledge of the structure of the foreign language, the ability to comprehend readily, speak fluently and correctly, read technical material with relative ease and write with reasonable accuracy. The specialised single-Service vocabulary is extensive (1,500-2,000 words). The Civil Service Commission directs its oral examiners to assume a knowledge 'similar to that expected of a first-year university student'. Intensive

courses bring suitable students to this level in German in 40 weeks; a civilian student normally takes five to seven years to achieve a pass at GCE 'A' level, let alone to reach first-year university level.

3. *Civil Service Commission Interpretership.* A First Class Pass in the Interpretership, like an Honours Degree of a British university, gives exemption from all but the oral section of the Final Diploma of the Institute of Linguists. Most of the RAF annotations, however, specify the Second Class Interpretership, which requires the candidate to be thoroughly 'at home' in the foreign language, to have detailed knowledge of aerospace technological and military-political terminology and to undertake fairly demanding liaison interpreting and translation tasks. These very high levels of linguistic competence, ranging from pass-degree to near-native ability, do not however presuppose a facility for simultaneous interpreting, which is a highly specialised skill demanding specific training. The experience of Service language schools in providing intensive courses to Interpreter level enables selected RAF students to be trained in German in 18 months.

Certain Royal Air Force job specifications have been annotated as requiring one of these standards as essential for the effective performance of the task. It is no use, for instance, if the RAF student at the French Test Pilot School has to spend his first three or four months acquiring a role-related working fluency in the language instead of carrying out his flying duties; or perhaps if an air attaché in South America fails to help clinch an aircraft sales deal because his Spanish is not good enough. Because of the many considerations, including pre-employment language training, which are involved in selection of Service personnel for overseas posts, a method of language learning must be found which will both enable the individual to reach the standard and to complete his studies in the minimum time.

Because oral communication — 'language' — is a two-way system and a machine can only transmit limited information in one direction, some so-called 'self-study' methods can be used merely as adjuncts to a course of study controlled by a teacher, infinitely flexible and adaptable to the student's specific needs and ability. Full-time Service language courses can, in a matter of months, bring students to a degree of proficiency which could take years in the conventional civilian situation. Where 'in-Service' courses cannot accommodate RAF students, commercial language schools are used, chiefly on a one-to-one tutor/student basis; although this method may involve some penalties in terms of role-related skills and knowledge, it has been found to give good results in terms of general linguistic proficiency. Since Service students need to reach stipulated standards in the minimum effective time, full-time study is the most appropriate method of language learning.

7 viii

M N Hughes

Language teaching in the European Community institutions

Within the Commission of the European Communities (widely known as the EEC) facilities are provided by the Directorate of Training and Social Affairs for the further training of employees recruited from the nine member states. The teaching of the six official languages (Danish, Dutch, English, French, German, Italian) forms a substantial part of this programme, with a maximum target of over 8,000 civil servants, including the Commission's outposts in Luxembourg, Ispra and the Information Offices in various capitals, all of whom are expected to know one second language, and for special purposes even more. Until 1 January 1973 (the date of the accession of Britain, Eire and Denmark to the Communities, to join the 'Six') the four official languages were Dutch, French, German and Italian, but with French the dominant language of administration : indeed, no official of the Commission could expect to survive for long without a fairly fluent command of French in its spoken and written forms, which persists to a certain extent even today.

The accession of Britain in 1973 posed two problems : for the first time in five centuries English became an *official* language on the continent of Europe, and shared with French a status as a 'world language' which none of the other four languages enjoyed. Secondly, with the entry of Britain and Eire imminent, the year 1972 created a 'panic situation' among the employees of the Six who would soon be expected to have daily contact with the British (and the Irish) at all levels of the Commission's activities. My secondment from the British Council early September 1972 was to handle this situation by providing intensive courses in English for officials of all grades. In 1971/72 there were 16 courses of English out of about 30 for all languages; in 1972/73 there were 80 courses, of which 56 were for English alone.

The increasing flow of new recruits in 1973 from Britain, Eire and Denmark created further problems; among these there arose an urgent demand for courses in French (in the case of Denmark, English is widely known, with

French a 'minority' language), forcing us to reduce the number of courses for English and to increase the number for French (and the extension of my advisory duties to encompass courses for all six languages). In 1973/74 there were 74 courses : 29 for English, 19 for French and, on average, 7 for each of the other four, involving 30 language teachers, all recruited locally on a part-time basis.

The aims of these courses are to enable officials to acquire the language they need for the performance of their daily tasks — in offices (where as many as four different nationalities may be working), boardrooms, at Conferences, on missions, and for social contact: and thus to promote the policy of integration which is a pillar of the Communities' objective and indeed of its survival. The types of language courses reflect these aims -- *general* (mostly intensive) with emphasis on listening comprehension and speaking; *conversation* (as follow-up to the general courses); *report writing* (*rédaction*); and *specialist* courses (for the Commission's cadres of translators and interpreters). Some consideration is also being given to *self-learning* schemes (*cours libres*) to meet the needs of those who find it impossible to attend classes. Although these are held outside normal working hours (that is early morning, during lunch breaks, and early evening) it presents a severe challenge for busy officials who also have to be away frequently on missions -- as it does indeed for those responsible for the organisation of courses.

The methods of teaching are, where appropriate, audio-visual and audio-oral, with extensive use of three language laboratories, tape recorders, overhead projectors, slide projectors (with remote control), and a video tape recorder. Photocopying facilities enable us to keep abreast of topics of immediate interest, reduce a too rigid reliance on textbooks, and to orientate content to Community-based materials. This is reinforced by the application in the classroom of Commission situations (role-playing, simulation, and topic discussion, including problem solution).

A recent development has been the principle of harmonisation -- internally within the Commission itself in order to unify aims and approaches for the teaching of all six languages, and externally to include the Communities' three other institutions (Council of Ministers, European Parliament, Court of Justice -- the last two being located in Luxembourg) which also engage in language teaching programmes. This aspect of harmonisation is important in order to facilitate transferability of officials between institutions.

The unit credit scheme sponsored by the Council of Europe is of particular interest. If there is a *raison d'être* for the Commission's language teaching programme, it can be best summed up by J. L. M. Trim : 'The divisive effect of language differences seems certain to prove to be one of the major obstacles to European integration over the next generation' [1].

[1] *Systems development in adult language learning*. Council for Cultural Co-operation, Council of Europe. Strasbourg, 1973.

8

C V James

Estimating adult needs

The following discussion incorporates contributions made at the CILT Conference, July 1974, both verbally and as written interventions. These are acknowledged in footnotes, where the contributor's name is prefixed by an asterisk.

Questions of language teaching for special purposes (whatever the label used) centre around the task of defining precise *aims*, on which such matters as course and materials design and management must depend. But aims themselves are dictated by the necessity to satisfy certain real or imaginary *needs*. Definition of needs therefore becomes all-important; unfortunately, it is also the most difficult problem, to which no satisfactory solution has yet been offered. Nor is it likely that any one solution will meet all possible cases.

One aspect of the problem is clearly reflected in the variety of terms. Attempts are sometimes made to distinguish between needs and *demands*, with the possibility of 'requirements' [1] and even 'expectations' [2] also at hand. The notional distinction between needs and demands seems to concern the definite wishes expressed by employers or would-be learners on the one hand, and ideas of what those employers and learners perhaps *ought* to want, on the other.

The question cannot be dismissed as a verbal quibble. It is, however, extremely difficult to clarify. In the introduction to its report, the York (Emmans) research team on language needs in industry and commerce states the case :

'It could be questioned how far industry or any sector of industry was aware, or indeed could be expected to be aware, of its needs in foreign languages. The concept of need was itself too intangible to measure'. Further, 'it was quite possible that demand (even if it could be measured) would still not accurately reflect needs of which industry and other employers might not be aware'. Terminology is uncertain', but all would sympathise with the York team's way out of the dilemma : 'We settled for the more limited pilot survey of . . . use'.

[1] This term was in fact adopted for the York survey (discussed below).
[2] Ahlquist : *What need do Swedes experience for proficiency in English?* (discussed below)
[*] J. Jelinek distinguishes between 'existing demands', especially important for institutions mounting courses on commercial bases, and 'real needs', which are less susceptible to everyday changes.

In fact, most of the work done in recent attempts to identify student needs has concentrated on examination of existing patterns of occupational *use* – though the desires of potential students and, especially, existing supply of language courses have also been surveyed.

The imprecise terminology is a constant impediment. Indeed, it sometimes appears that although researchers are interested in basically the same phenomena, no two projects refer to them by the same nomenclature. Even worse, certain terms may well be applied to different phenomena within a single report. I have attempted to overcome this problem by relating all the phenomena to the categories used in James and Rouve, *Survey of curricula and performance*, discussed below.

Perhaps the most significant concerted effort, especially at an international level, has been the work of the group of experts sponsored by the Council of Europe, described in chapter 4 by J. L. M. Trim, and an important theoretical contribution to the topic under consideration here was R. Richterich's *Definition of language needs and types of adults*[1]. However, a necessary corollary has been the various attempts during the past decade to test such theory in practice and to perfect techniques, and these are the subject of the present paper.

The following pages are devoted to an examination and commentary of certain recent projects concerned with definition of adult language needs from the point of view of the kinds of data they produce and a possible way in which these may be integrated to form a profile of the potential language user and his needs. It is not a detailed analysis of each project (several of which would need many more pages to do them justice); nor does it necessarily deal with all projects conducted in this field. It is hoped, however, that it will acquaint those interested with important lines of investigation recently or currently followed and present a coherent picture of the present scene. The discussion begins with a list of the projects mentioned, plus their own statements of aims.

SURVEYS	*AIMS*
1. P. AHLQUIST, Lärerhögskolen, Stockholm, 1968 (thesis) *What need do Swedes experience for proficiency in English?* (mimeograph)	To discover the latest need experienced by the respondent for understanding (listening), speaking, reading and writing English.
2. I. LARSSON, College of Education, Malmö, Sweden, 1968 *The German language in parts of Swedish industry and commerce* (in *Pedagogical-Psychological Problems*, No. 101, December 1969)	To establish the incidence of German in parts of Swedish industry and commerce so that profiles may be obtained for the four language activities of listening to, reading, writing and speaking German.

[1] In the volume *Systems development in adult language learning*. Council for Cultural Co-operation, Council of Europe, 1973

3. K. EMMANS, and others, Language Teaching Centre, University of York, 1974 ***Pilot survey of national manpower requirements in modern languages in the United Kingdom*** (published under title *The use of foreign languages in the private sector of industry and commerce in the United Kingdom*. Language Teaching Centre, University of York, 1974)	To carry out a pilot survey of the manpower requirements in foreign languages of British industry and commerce.
4. W. J. C. STUART & E. V. LEE, London Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 1972 *Market survey on non-specialist use of languages in industry and commerce* (publication forthcoming)	To discover which types of staff need knowledge of foreign language(s) regularly in their work, and for what aspects of their work they need the language(s).
5. C. V. JAMES & S. ROUVE. University of Sussex/CILT, 1972 *Survey of curricula and performance in modern languages, 1971-72* (published CILT, 1973)	To describe the existing provision of teaching and levels of achievement in French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish within the State educational system of the United Kingdom.
6. Arbeitskreis der Sprachenzentren (AKS), Federal Republic of Germany (ongoing)* *Untersuchung zur Ermittlung des Sprachlehrbedarfs an Hochschulen*	To gain basic data on the need for language courses in Higher Education in the Federal Republic.
7. Informationszentrum für Fremdsprachenforschung on behalf of the Erfahrungsaustauschring Wirtschaft, Federal Republic of Germany (ongoing) *Untersuchung zum Stand des betrieblichen Sprachunterrichts und zur Entwicklung des Bedarfs an Fremdsprachen qualifikation*	To gain a more exact picture of language training in firms (course organisation, teaching forms and methods, language requirements).
8. Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband, Frankfurt (ongoing) *Analysis of learner's requirements in curriculum planning*	To develop a modular system (not only for language learning) within the Adult Education Association.

* I am most grateful to Mary Bianchi, Coordinator of VHS Certificates in Modern Languages, of the Pädagogische Arbeitsstelle, Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband, Frankfurt, for information on the work now being conducted in Germany.

9. S. BALTRUWEIT (chief researcher), Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband (Frankfurt) and the Informationszentrum für Fremdsprachenforschung (Marburg), 1974 *Survey of curricula and performance in modern languages in adult education* (publication forthcoming)	To identify points of entry for school leavers into the modular VHS Certificate system and to provide a general overview of foreign language qualifications.

Modes of language ('skills')

The Swedish researchers — whose influence on Emmans is several times acknowledged by the latter — began with the knowledge that the two languages which were the objects of their interests — English (Ahlquist) and German (Larsson) — were already needed. Ahlquist, indeed, found it 'safe to assume that roughly 50 % of the population [of Sweden] have studied English in one way or another'[6], and Larsson was operating within a wider project designed to ensure that the German already being taught in the basic schools was related as directly as possible to adult needs in industry and commerce[7]. Ahlquist was primarily interested therefore in the rank order of needs for the four modes of use of language 'skills') — *understanding* (listening) / *speaking* / *reading* / *writing* — and Larsson also set out to examine the same topic, together with gathering information on the percentage of Swedish employees who use German in their work. The high proportion of the latter (84 % of the firms approached required certain employees to have a knowledge of foreign languages, and 25 % of these specified German) testifies to the obvious need for German, a fact that was not therefore the object of enquiry.

These early projects both produced findings which set a pattern that seems to have been repeated, with only minor variations, in later studies. They produce some intriguing tensions in pedagogical circles, since the degree of congruence between adult needs (at least as far as these can be perceived in terms of actual use) and current methodological theories for school-level teaching is sometimes very small. In the hierarchy of language activities used in employment the comprehension skills occupy the highest place. Here there is a marked contrast with the pattern of language skills emphasised in school courses'.

In attempting to establish the rank order of modes, Ahlquist drew a useful distinction between the 'connection' in which the need was experienced

[6] I am grateful to Sven Salin, Skolöverstyrelsen, Stockholm, for details of the Ahlquist project.
Quotations from Larsson are from a working translation made by P. S. Green (University of York Language Teaching Centre).

[7] K. Emmans, and others: *The use of foreign languages in the private sector of industry and commerce in the United Kingdom*. Language Teaching Centre, University of York, 1974, chapter 6

and the 'external situation' — categories rather similar to the *functions* and *contexts* of some later surveys". The relevance of his findings to the question of 'special purposes' is important, for although the need to speak English is rated very high (it was felt by no less than 92 % of those who had studied English, and by 73 % of the sample representing the entire population of Sweden) the situation in which the need was felt was overwhelmingly a private one, i.e. in no way connected with work. This points to the necessity to distinguish between private and professional language needs. Another notable feature is that although some 30 % of his respondents felt no need to read English, the remaining 70 % found this mode more necessary than any other. In general the rank order of modes suggested by Ahlquist's results is :

reading /listening /speaking /writing

especially in situations other than those of private life (including tourism in English-speaking countries). But the order is by no means clear cut.

Such a result is in no way surprising when the language concerned is English — increasingly the *lingua franca* of the West — and the whole population is being sampled. The order is more clear cut in Larsson's investigation of the need for German in certain parts of Swedish industry and commerce. Like Ahlquist, Larsson separates the modes of listening and speaking and measures their use as independently as possible, finding it more apt to do so in certain types of employment ('areas of occupation') than in others. Dividing areas of occupation into two types, and acknowledging the possibility that 'occupational and spare-time needs demand different skills', she finds the following rank order :

Desk work : reading, listening /speaking, writing;
Service work : listening, speaking, reading, writing.

However, her overall rank order puts reading first : 'the skill of reading is the most frequent in those parts of Swedish industry and commerce which were investigated. Expressed in terms of days per year, reading occurs practically twice as often as the other skills. . . The skill of writing, in the sense of "independently composing a text in German", is the least frequent'[10]. The demand for the remaining two skills is about equal. Considering other variables (size of firm, geographical distribution, groups of industry) Larsson found no consistent tendency other than in variation in the absolute volume of demand : the rank order of modes remained unchanged. Her conclusion is therefore quite clear, putting reading first and writing last, and admitting of minor variations according to area of occupation.

Aims and techniques

The Malmö project (Larsson) had a definite goal in terms of 'pedagogical consequences'; it was designed to have a direct effect on the planning of the

[9] e.g. James & Rouve, *Survey of curricula and performance in modern languages 1971-72*, CILT 1973; *Survey of curricula and performance in modern languages in adult education*, DVV, Frankfurt, and IFS, Marburg, 1974
[10] Larsson (trans. Green), p. 20

teaching of German in schools[11]. To some extent the York project had a similar aim[12]. In techniques of investigation, too, there has been a visible progression which again links Malmö and York. Ahlquist sent a questionnaire to a random sample of 404 individuals; Larsson enlisted assessors in 1,200 firms (a technique echoed by Stuart and Lee, who approached some 2,600 member firms of the London Chamber of Commerce)[13]; Emmans first approached 46 firms in order to identify language users and then sent his questionnaire. Both Malmö and York followed up their postal approaches by more direct interview.

In several important ways, however, the York project differs from its Swedish predecessors. Its interest lay not simply in the rank order of skills in a given language (the need for which was already established and acknowledged) but first in discovering and quantifying which languages were in fact needed, and only then in the relative importance of the different modes. Moreover, it had a secondary aim of trying to discover the subsequent careers of modern language graduates from universities and polytechnics. Most importantly, it was a 'pilot survey' which 'was seen as exploratory. . . It was therefore accepted that it was necessary to test the feasibility of certain techniques'. This, however, 'did not imply that the team was not interested in the results revealed. . .'[14]. While the results are likely to attract most attention, in several respects it is the testing of the techniques that may well have the most lasting value.

Job categories ('areas of occupation')

From discussion of the Swedish projects, and especially Larsson's survey, it seems that, though the value of a general rank order of modes may be indisputable, it is necessary to refine this as far as possible, firstly with regard to what Larsson called 'areas of occupation'. (Whether all languages would show the same results in terms of rank order is not obvious from either survey; despite the fact that both English and German are common means of communication in Sweden, a fact that obscures results from a 'special purpose' point of view, comparison of the two surveys suggests that they might not[15]. To produce real evidence similar exercises would have to be conducted for more 'exotic' languages, such as Japanese.) Attempts to achieve such refinements have led to closer analysis both of occupational areas and of ways of using language.

Ahlquist makes no real attempt to do this, though his categorisation by age group and education has its own validity. Larsson goes further in attempting to identify the 'job category' of each user of German; even her broad categories of desk and service work are productive. Emmans makes reference

[11] Ibid. p. 1
[12] Emmans, Introduction
[13] They achieved a return of 28.8%
[14] Emmans, chapter 1
[15] See the account of the AKS project later in this discussion which supports such a view. The question of how justified it is to generalise across languages is not raised.

to the CODOT system of classification[16]. However, language use seems in fact to be concentrated in a small number of occupations. (Stuart and Lee used ten categories but found that some 80 % of language use was concentrated in only four.)

In his analysis of advertisements in the press[17], Emmans plotted the frequency of advertisements requiring foreign languages against 'occupational category', and here his findings confirm what has been said. Some 21 categories are listed, but no less than 61 % of the advertisements referred to only the first three. The top five (after which no score exceeds 5 %) are:

shorthand typists (24 %)
secretaries (23.8 %)
marketing executives (13.5 %)
finance executives (7.0%)
engineers (5.9 %) (total — 74.2 %)

Of the graduates in foreign languages traced by the York project[18] the overwhelming majority of those using language in employment belong to two categories only:

management and administration
teaching.

From replies by employees using foreign languages, just three occupational areas account for some 79.1 %, of the language use:

sales (32.6 %)
science, technology and engineering (32.6 %)
management and administration (13.9 %).

It seems clear from all this that whereas such indications of the job categories of language users do help toward a clearer definition of language needs, the categories are so broad that their potential value is much reduced.

Uses of language ('activities')

More productive – if infinitely harder – is closer definition of ways in which foreign languages are used, i.e. job activities which involve the use of foreign language skills. Ahlquist's categories were the broadest of all – he dealt simply with the four basic 'skills'. Larsson considers a number of variables, including 'occupation of those assessed', but her categories of *rank occurrence*, *rank knowledge* and *time occurrence*[19] do not lead to clarification in terms of

[16] The *Classification of occupations and directory of occupational titles*, with over 100 entries, some of which were conflated for the purposes of the survey.

[17] Job vacancies referring to language skills (excluding teaching, central and local government, armed forces and domestic situations) for period 1 June 1971 to 31 May 1972 in *The Times*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Financial Times*, *Sunday Times*.

[18] 494 graduates from 1960 (Sheffield University survey), plus 305 from 'new' universities and polytechnics, and a matching sample of 208 from 'traditional' universities. Returns: 88%/66 %/66%.

[19] *rank occurrence*: rank number of the four skills; *rank knowledge*: rank number of knowledge of the four skills; *time occurence*: rank number of times the need was expressed. (Green, *trans.*)

skills. Emmans lists some 23 'activities' involving the use of the foreign language, but once again it seems that though the activities may be sub-divided almost indefinitely, the actual combinations of skills remain comparatively few. In fact, the York team uses a seven-point scale, collating listening and speaking into 'conversation' and incorporating such intralingual activities as interpreting and translating. Their categories are :

> conversation interpreting FL-L1/interpreting L1-FL/
> reading/writing/translation FL-L1 'translation L1-FL,

putting the oral activities first. Their overall rank order, however, resembles that of Larsson :

> reading/conversation (listening speaking) translation FL-L1
> (reading FL/writing L1).

Stuart and Lee listed 21 language activities but also found that some 60% of language use fell within only seven of them, and these they incorporated into a six-point scale, bracketing listening and speaking together since 'most of the listening and speaking we do in a foreign language is in the course of conversation. . . and this involves a very close integration of the two activities, making them almost one' [*]. Nevertheless, they also list them separately, having in mind listening to lectures etc.

A basic aim of Stuart and Lee's survey was to find out 'more about oral communication than about written communication'; their categories therefore contain 'a deliberate preponderance of activities connected with oral communication' [*] and this shows quite clearly in their findings (in which numbers in brackets refer to percentages of the total language use identified) :

> listening and speaking (49)/(\) reading (19)/writing (17)
> listening (8) speaking (4) listening and writing (3).

This pattern is a compound of three types, presented as 'profiles' in a manner reminiscent of Larsson's. The skills listed are described as typical for the areas of occupation given in brackets :

1) chiefly oral some writing managers executives, sales, buying, transport distribution);
2) reading, some oral little writing (technical advertising marketing/research production);
3) writing some oral/little reading secretaries, accounts).

Their survey, in the authors' own words, 'is biased towards those aspects of language use in which we were particularly interested and ignores others in which we were not'. Nevertheless, it holds considerable interest methodologically.

Necessary languages

A notable difference between the York and LCCI surveys is, of course, their scale. The LCCI had a single narrow aim, whereas the York survey is

[*] Stuart
[*] Stuart

perhaps the widest and most ambitious yet attempted. Emmans, for example, set out to discover which languages were needed and to quantify demands, whereas Stuart and Lee make no attempt to do so. The AKS project — also a pilot — aims, like the York project, to establish which languages are required. In comparison of the two sets of findings, however, it should be stressed that whereas the York survey was a 'one-off' attempt at drawing a picture of the situation at one point in time, the AKS scheme aims to set up a continuous monitoring system of changing needs. The methodological implications, however, remain valid; indeed, the two factors already discussed (*areas of occupation* and *types of language use*) become immediately relevant. The order of needs for various languages, stated without reference to variations according to such factors as job category, is of limited interest to course designers.

Emmans states the overall order of languages needed as :

French/German/Spanish/Italian/Russian[22]

but a distinction is visible between firms listed in *The Times* first 1,000 firms and those given by the Invisible Exports Committee :

Times 1,000 : French/German/Spanish/Italian/Russian
EIC listed : French/Spanish/German/Italian/ —.

Moreover, not all the four York techniques[23] produce the same results; the survey of employees listed Portuguese and Dutch on a level comparable with Russian and it should be noted that it was found that the languages for which firms most frequently used interpreters or translators from outside agencies were, in order of magnitude : German/Spanish/French/Swedish[24]. It is obvious that the first three languages in demand are French, German and Spanish, and it is confirmed elsewhere in the report that all other languages mentioned are in fact used very much less than these three. What is not clear, however, is the extent to which language use reflects not so much demand as supply. Nor are regional differences shown; indeed, Emmans specifically records that 'one may infer . . . regional variations in the importance of various languages, corresponding to regional patterns of trade and industry'[25].

The AKS enquiry is not restricted to any set languages and has in fact detected demands for no less than 24, frequently in combinations of two or more. The ten most demanded were as follows (numbers in brackets show ratio of demand, :

English (10) French (5) Russian (3) Latin (2)/
Italian (2) Spanish (2) Chinese (2) Japanese (1)/
Czech (1) Serbo-Croat (1).

[1] The York project was primarily interested in these five languages, since these are the most commonly taught in the British educational system.
[22] Monitoring of newspaper advertisements/survey of graduate careers/questionnaires to firms questionnaires to employees
[23] Emmans, chapter 4
[24] Emmans, chapter 6

Language contexts

Having established the rank order, AKS introduces several useful refinements. If Ahlquist and Larsson began with given languages and set out to discover who needed what kind of skills in them, while Emmans enquired who in industry and commerce needed to do what in which languages, AKS — which is not concerned with the specific needs of any one sector of the economy (business, industry, etc.) and is therefore unhampered by concepts of special purposes or areas of occupation — proceeds further in the direction of defining *contexts* in the sense suggested by James and Rouve. In particular, it isolates differences in demand according to individual languages, as illustrated below:

English: life and institutions/literature/education/sociology/electrical engineering/chemistry;

French: linguistics[26]/life and institutions/engineering/literature/history;

Russian: mechanical engineering/life and institutions/literature/linguistics[26].

Language functions

Moving towards further definition in terms of *functions* AKS produces a series of six groups, which also make allowance for the possible distinction between demands related to private life and those related to professional uses. Figures in brackets indicate ratio of occurrence:

(a) general conversation/reading newspapers and magazines/reading technical publications (8);

(b) aural comprehension of political broadcasts on radio/TV (7);

(c) technical conversation/aural comprehension in technical contexts/aural comprehension in general context (6);

(d) reading *belles lettres*/writing personal letters (4);

(e) speaking in informal political discussions (3);

(f) writing technical papers/writing formal letters/filling in forms (2).

(The fact that two of these categories are concerned exclusively with politics may be inappropriate to other surveys.)

Language profiles

As a final refinement, bearing in mind that the object of the AKS survey is 'to ensure that the areas of greatest need are given priority in the development of courses', it combines context and function, producing a formula on which the course designer can begin to base his programme, e.g.

English/chemistry/reading
Italian/music/aural comprehension.

[26] i.e. theoretical linguistics

It is worth noting, too, that the data acquired by the AKS survey will be stored in a data bank and maintained up to date[27].

There is perhaps a sense in which definition of job categories goes some way to indicate *functions*. The York data may be interpreted rather in the way the AKS sets them out. If we take the AKS pattern :

English/chemistry/reading

and a e given :

French/shorthand typist/ - -

we may perhaps fill in the final column without conducting a survey[28]. This is certainly made easier by an indication of the *context* in terms of type of industry. In his survey of employees, Emmans does in fact note the 'sector of employment' in which language use occurs. Once again it is noticeable that the major part falls in a small number of categories - - only three with more than 10% :

(1) coal, petroleum, chemical and construction products (44.3%)

(2) metal, mechanical, engineering, and electrical products (13.8)

(3) clothing, footwear, textiles and leather goods (13.3)

(Total - 71.4%)

The data now available provide a kind of profile of the potential language user :

French/footwear industry/shorthand typist

but is not yet complete. In his survey of graduates, Emmans lists 'language activities' in a way which suggests the skills involved in conducting them, serving rather as statements of *functions*, and this extends the profile further :

conversation on the telephone
social conversation in connection with business
specialised technical conversation.

The profile may now be considered complete, as far as is possible by surveys of the type considered,

e.g. French / footwear industry / shorthand typist / conversation on the telephone / understanding and speaking.

It provides the language, context, job category, and functions, definable in terms of skills. What remains unstated is the *level of performance.*

Linguistic performance levels

From the types of technique and analysis so far discussed, it can be seen that language use in industry and commerce, in particular, is concentrated within a comparatively small number of *contexts* (sectors of employment), a small number of *areas of occupation* (job categories) and a small number of *functions* (activities). But the missing category -- linguistic level - - is dealt with

[27] The York team also hope that their national "map" of language requirements might be kept up to date (chapter 6). They rightly stress the fact that the value of such surveys depends very much on the ease and efficiency with which this can be done.

[28] In effect this was the procedure adopted by Richterich, op. cit. p. 76

by only one of the surveys mentioned, and then only in a tentative manner. This is not surprising, for the problem of definition of linguistic levels is of a different order from most of the other problems. It is a linguistic problem.

The York team does tackle it. For the survey of advertisements, which depend very much on a lay opinion from a large number of unrelated individuals, and which the team therefore elected to treat with some caution, an approximation of the traditional three grades (elementary/intermediate/advanced) was adopted. Demands were classified as : *basic knowledge/working knowledge / advanced*. It was found that the greatest demand was for working knowledge.

For the survey of graduates and questionnaires to employees, a rather more sophisticated system was adopted in which four levels were to be estimated for five 'skills'. The levels 'were defined by reference to specific examples of language tasks of varying degrees of difficulty... described in non-technical language which we could expect both graduates and non-graduate employees to interpret uniformly' [9]. In the event, expectations were not entirely satisfied. For the five 'skills' listed — (i) *conversation;* (ii) *interpreting;* (iii) *reading;* (iv) *writing;* (v) *written translation FL-L1* — the graduates responded in a manner which reflected the kind of university or CNAA course they had followed; for skills (i), (iv) and (v) the weight fell in level 3; for skills (ii) and (iii) it fell in level 4. Such estimates, even though purely subjective, are perhaps not inappropriate to the products of long and arduous training. More surprising were the estimates of the non-graduate employees. For whereas 'only 12 % of the sample stated that they had a language other than English as a mother tongue, more than 12 %... claimed a level 4 ability in all but "writing in the foreign language".' Clearly such a means of judging levels is not reliable, and Emmans noted 'the lack of any generally recognised series of definitions of levels of language skill' [10].

James and Rouve — though their task was to describe existing syllabuses, not to investigate language needs — were also faced with the problem of discussing levels. They chose, however, to consider levels of performance essentially as products of the contexts and functions in which the language use takes place, since 'we do not perform language *per se*, we employ language when performing particular tasks' [11]. Therefore the following profile :

> Russian / mechanical engineering / simultaneous interpreting at UN / listening and speaking

hardly calls for an estimate of linguistic performance, and even in less extreme examples the same may hold true, e.g. for the profile :

> French / footwear industry / shorthand typist / conversation on telephone understanding and speaking

[9] Emmans, chapter 3
[10] Ibid. chapter 3
[11] Ibid. Appendix A

it is implied that the relevant question is : Can she use the telephone in French? *not* At what level does she perform in French? So the best indication of her linguistic 'level' is an inventory - - not of lexis or structures - - but of secretarial tasks she can perform in French. Such an attitude is clearly influenced by principles of criterion-referencing (Can she perform the task?) as opposed to norm-referencing (Can she do it as well as the other girl?). The secretary may perhaps handle the telephone readily or reluctantly, confidently or hesitantly, but in effect there are only two relevant levels - - adequate and inadequate. Either she can be left in charge of the shop or she cannot. Insistence on levels of proficiency in such circumstances may be simply a side-effect of a desire for 'bilingualism' or 'near-native' proficiency - - goals as unnecessary as they are, for most students, unattainable.

There is certainly no widely agreed attitude to the problem of the degree of accuracy it is reasonable to expect of students learning a foreign language as a tool or instrument of another trade. Some experts relate the standard acceptable to the learner's use of his native tongue : 'Student performance in the foreign language should be measured against performance in the native language and not against an absolute standard. This may produce a conflict with socially acceptable standards of foreign language performance' [12]. Others may aim at 'conveying meaning adequately, but not necessarily with perfect grammatical accuracy and choice of words' [13]. A course which is designed 'to present. . . doctors with a range of language likely to be used by patients' [14] may not tackle the sociolinguistic implications of the doctors' own use of language : 'How much confidence will patients have in an NHS consultant who can only use the infinitive form of the verb but nevertheless make himself "understood" to his patients?' [15] The problem is extraordinarily intricate but fundamental to all language teaching.

Emphasis on adequacy of communication measured in terms of task efficiency is placed also by the Colchester English Study Centre and the English Language Teaching Development Unit : 'The most rewarding initial approach to tackling a new problem in the teaching of English for special purposes has been found to be *not* on the basis of linguistic phenomena (lexical and structural frequency lists etc.) but through forms of "work study" aimed at defining the acts of communication, effective performance of which would constitute suitable learning goals for the course of instruction'. The approach outlined in this statement was arrived at through an investigation of English language needs involving analysis of job descriptions, working documents, questionnaires and interviews 'in order to research in depth the usually unreliable statements of aims available from group sponsors and students' [16]. The data collected in this project is not available for public scrutiny (it formed the basis of the course

[12] *J. C. Sager
[13] *P. M. Hesketh (*see* chapter 7 vii)
[14] *D. Harper (*see* chapter 7 vi)
[15] *R. MacKay
[16] *J. Webb

English for Business[12]); however, the LCCI questionnaire discussed above was a slightly modified version of that used in this project — a fact that Stuart and Lee are quick to acknowledge.

James and Rouve do not, of course, neglect the question of describing language skills. Isolating *manifestational* skills as sub-divisions of the familiar four modes, they also postulate further refinement into microskills[13], though this is not developed in their report. The possible contribution of such an analysis to closer definition of linguistic performance has yet to be explored.

Further refinements of James and Rouve's categories of *contexts* and *functions* (which we have related above to 'sectors of employment' [Emmans] and 'interests' [AKS] on the one hand, and 'areas of occupation' [Larsson] and 'activities' [Emmans, Stuart and Lee] on the other) have been elaborated by Baltruweit in her analysis of Volkshochschul certificate syllabuses. Since these all fall within the zero grade[14] she isolates embryonic *contexts* (e.g. topics or themes) as *micro-contexts* and embryonic *functions* (e.g. dictation as a testing technique) as *microfunctions*. Both categories contribute to closer definition of linguistic performance in the sense of describing what the language user can actually do and are therefore relevant also to the question of levels. A somewhat different approach has been suggested by Hughes, who sees both theoretical and pedagogical importance in distinguishing between functions in which the linguistic act involves the *initiation* of language (conversing, writing an essay, etc.) and *intra-mediation* of language (interpreting, translating, abstracting, etc.)[15].

Language supply

At the beginning of the discussion of surveys it was pointed out that in most cases what began as an attempt to define or discover *needs* became, in fact, an examination of *utilisation*. Two surveys, however, set out to investigate the other end of the process, the question of *supply*. This was the objective of James and Rouve; it is also the aim of the IFS[16] survey of provision made by firms in the Federal Republic of Germany for teaching languages. Working through questionnaires to heads of personnel training departments and to heads of language departments (major German firms tend to mount their own language programmes), the IFS team should also bring valuable experience to help illuminate the many obscure corners that still remain.

[12] Oxford University Press, 1972-73

[13] e.g.

macroskill	*manifestational skill*	*microskill*
auricular	perception	of individual sounds
comprehension		of sounds in combination
		of intonation tunes etc.

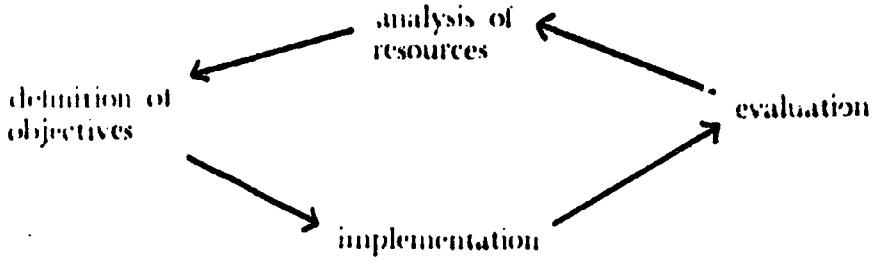
[14] i.e. do not involve specialist knowledge in a non-language field (*context*) or application of language skills to specific tasks (*functions*). *See* James and Rouve, op. cit. chapter 1

[15] *M. N. Hughes

[16] Informationszentrum für Fremdsprachenforschung, Marburg

Curriculum planning

All the projects mentioned above were concerned exclusively with the teaching/study of foreign languages. In other studies, however, languages may be only one element in a consideration of the curriculum as a whole. An example is the VHS Certificate Project now being conducted in the Federal Republic of Germany[42] which is concerned with the evolution of a model for curriculum development and which sees analysis of student requirements as being part of resource analysis, and as recurrent. A simplified version of the model illustrates the planning phases, of which two — evaluation and analysis of resources — become fused after the first cycle (5-7 years in the current project).



Without regular reassessment of resources and requirements, as well as evaluation of the syllabus, the system would stagnate and become irrelevant to changing needs[43].

[42] *See* M. Tietgens, C. Hirschmann and M. Bianchi: *Ansätze zu einem Baukastensystem-Werkstattbericht über die Entwicklung des Zertifikatsprogramms der Volkhochschulen.* Westermann, Braunschweig, 1974

[43] *M. Bianchi

Appendix 1: Current research

This list of research in progress, with special reference to *English*, *French* and *German*, is extracted from information gathered by CILT for the second edition of *Language and language teaching: current research in Britain* (to be published by Longman, 1975). The book will provide fuller descriptions of these and other projects than it is possible to set out here; entries can be traced in it by their serial numbers. (Nos. 530-1485 have already appeared in the first, 1971-72, edition.)

This list will [illegible] be incorporated, together with details of any other relevant projects that are reported to CILT, in the *Survey of research and materials development in vocational uses of English, French and German 1974*, being carried out by CILT for the Council of Europe. The survey is designed to cover work in eleven European countries, and a report will be presented to the Council of Europe.

530 A. A. Lyne, Language Centre, University of Sheffield. *An examination of French commercial correspondence with a view to establishing the linguistic features that characterise this register or style of French.*

674 W. Otley, 12 Bents Green Avenue, Sheffield S11 7RB (research at Sheffield Polytechnic *and* University of Sheffield). *Lexicology and sociolinguistics.* An enquiry into the practical aspects of the isolation and identification of specific registers in spoken English. The first study is of the professional English of salesmen.

863 C. H. Garwood, Department of [illegible] and Liberal Studies, University of Wales Institute of Science [illegible]nology. *Spoken English in work situations.* Analysis of langu[illegible]paration of materials for application in relevant fields of stud[illegible]

880 J. Adams, 23 Mount Aven[illegible]e, Huddersfield, Yorkshire (research at Huddersfield Polytechnic). *Drawing up of registers of language used in the marketing of textiles in France.*

883 M. G. Thomas, Languages Division, Thurrock Technical College. *Preparation of sales training courses in French, German and Spanish.*

944 M. G. Thomas, Languages Division, Thurrock Technical College. *Preparation of a conversion course in German for industry.*

948 S. Hind, 34 Greenloons Walk, Formby, Liverpool (research at Liverpool Polytechnic *and* University of Nottingham). *A lexicometrical analysis of German vocabulary in the field of heavy electrical engineering.*

1107 Dr P. Wright, Department of Modern Languages, University of Salford. *Survey of industrial language* (English).

1117 T. C. Jupp, Industrial Unit, Pathway Further Education Centre, Recreation Road, Southall, Middlesex. *Industrial English language training.* Research, development and evaluation of in-company courses for teaching English to Asian immigrants at work.

1140 Professor E. W. Hawkins, Language Teaching Centre, University of York, *and* K. A. Emmans, Teachers' Language Centre, University of York. *Pilot survey of national manpower requirements in modern languages.* Completed April 1974.

1189 A. H. Robinson, Newcastle upon Tyne Polytechnic (research at University of London). *Development of a technical vocabulary in French: the vocabulary of astronautics.*

1378 A. R. Pester, The Polytechnic, Wolverhampton. *Word groupings in French commercial documentation.*

1485 Dr R. R. K. Hartmann *and* C. S. Butler, Language Centre, University of Nottingham. *Registers and terminologies.* Completed spring 1974.

1502 A. W Ackerley, 21 Pershore Road, Evesham, Worcestershire (research in Department of Education, University of Keele). *Foreign language courses for businessmen.* Survey; enquiry into national needs and how they are met; investigation into requirements in two sample areas.

1509 C. N. Candlin, Linguistics Section, Department of English, University of Lancaster. *Study skills in English: materials production and course design.* Producing functionally-oriented language teaching materials . . . English for science, technology, business studies.

1518 Professor J. M. Sinclair, Department of English Language and Literature, University of Birmingham. *The structure of verbal interaction in selected situations.*

1538 J. Morrison, c/o Fowler, 9 Birchfie. Gardens, Gateshead, Co. Durham NE9 7TJ (research in Language Centre, University of Newcastle upon Tyne). *Investigation into the aural comprehension problems encountered by overseas first-year postgraduate students in the faculties of science, applied science and agriculture.*

1539 R. V. White, Department of Education, University of Manchester. *The concept of diatypic variety and English language teaching.*

1626 Dr P. Wright, Department of Modern Languages, University of Salford. *Preparation of materials: English for overseas students, especially of commerce, science and technology.*

1785 J. L. M. Trim, Department of Linguistics, University of Cambridge (and associates in the various European universities). *European unit/credit system in modern languages for adults.* To develop a structure of language learning for adult learners. . . . A specification of a 'threshold level' of initial language proficiency, and a system of interlocking specialisms at different levels around a common core, are being prepared.

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1799 Professor J. C. Sager, Department of European Studies, University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology. *Approaches to advanced language learning.* The teaching of special languages (journalism, politics, economics) at university level; development of teaching material . . . ; improving reading and listening comprehension in the foreign language; development of methods appropriate for the teaching of lexicography and terminology . . . .

1800 Mrs B. Rowe, Hatfield Polytechnic. *Preparation of German teaching materials for English students.* The project is specifically concerned with providing teaching material for industrial engineering students who have to work in Germany as part of their degree course. The language to be taught is that required for working on the shop floor in Germany.

1801 E. V. De la Croix, M. Gallais *and* Dr F. S. Huss, Department of Humanities, Hatfield Polytechnic. *French for industrial engineers.* To produce teaching materials which will enable industrial engineering students to reach a sufficient level of language competence to cope with their industrial training period in France.

1818 Dr L. Alesso Waywell, Department of International Studies, Leeds Polytechnic. *An investigation into and development of audio-visual teaching material applied to the study of economic and political institutions.* Preparation of a series of five films covering specialised areas of language teaching : aspects of the theory and practice of commerce. The film is made in English and various sound-tracks are added (French, German, Italian, Spanish).

1834 J. E. Hobbs, North Staffordshire Polytechnic. *Statistical analysis of German language used in connection with Algol.*

1847 G. Pollhammer, Cambridgeshire College of Arts and Technology. *A comparative study of English and German with special reference to the language of economics.*

1848 W. J. C. Stuart, London Chamber of Commerce and Industry Commercial Education Scheme, Marlowe House, 109 Station Road, Sidcup, Kent DA15 7BJ. *Market survey on the use of languages in industry and commerce.* To be completed 1974.

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Appendix 2: Select bibliography

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-6 D. N. Wood
-21 R. Lord
-133 J. Cerná
-205 E. H. Rocklyn
-328 M. H. T. Alford
69-39 P. Biggs
-82 E. Benes
-156 St John Nixon
-249 Fritz Schaarschuh
70-87 O. D. Mitrofanova
-91 T. F. Mitchell
-215 J. Brown
-363 A. Schmitz
71-62 J. Swales
72-112 K. A. Emmans
-180 L. G. Sayakhova
-278 M. Binyon
-333 J. M. Bishop
72-353 C. S. Butler
-356 G. Hatherall
-357 A. G. Jones
-363 F. Winterscheidt
73-63 M. Binyon
-141 V. Greasley
-177 A. Cooper
-184 R. B. Moss
-187 W. Stölting
-194 M. Golle
-213 H. G. Widdowson
-259 E. Halsall
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-207 H. Baetens Beardsmore
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Appendix 3: Conference participants

Professor D. E. Ager, *University of Aston in Birmingham*
Miss M. Allen, *British Council*
Mrs A. Allott, *School of African and Oriental Studies, University of London*
Miss E. Belevics, *Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research*
Mrs M. Bianchi, *Pädagogische Arbeitsstelle des DVV, Frankfurt*
Miss P. Biggs, HMI, *Department of Education and Science*
Dr G. Bonnin, *Thames Polytechnic*
Miss J. M. Brooks, *Hatfield Polytechnic*
M. Buckby, *University of York*
C. S. Butler, *University of Nottingham*
P. Collin, *Educational Publishers' Council*
J. W. Coutts, *High Wycombe College of Technology and Art*
Professor W. C. Darwell, *Polytechnic of Central London*
Dr A. Davies, *University of Edinburgh*
T. Doyle, *BBC TV Further Education*
K. Emmans, *University of York*
B. S. Fitzjohn, *City of Birmingham Polytechnic*
Professor R. Freudenstein, *Informationszentrum für Fremdsprachenforschung, Marburg*
Mrs. J. D. Geach, *Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research*
W. Grauberg, *University of Nottingham*
D. P. Harper, *British Council*
Professor L. P. Harvey, *King's College, University of London*
Miss P. Heron, *University of Aston in Birmingham*
Sqn Ldr P. M. Hesketh, *Royal Air Force*
J. E. Hobbs, *North Staffordshire Polytechnic*
M. N. Hughes, *British Council (attached to the EC Commission, Brussels)*
Mrs E. Ingram, *University of Edinburgh*
G. V. James, *Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research*
Dr J. Jelinek, *University of Sheffield*
Dr R. M. Klaar, *Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research*
M. Kuhn, *University of Nancy*
R. Leeson, *Ealing Technical College*
Dr A. G. Lehmann, *Linguaphone Institute*
Dr B. Lott, *British Council*
Miss H. N. Lunt, *Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research*
Miss J. McAlpin, *British Council*
Sqn Ldr D. MacDonald, *Royal Air Force*
R. Mackay, *University of Newcastle upon Tyne*

G. M. Matthews, *Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research*
R. F. Mildon, HMI, *Department of Education and Science*
Dr G. D. Morley, *Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research*
Professor P. Newmark, *Polytechnic of Central London*
R. Oldnall, *Lanchester Polytechnic*
G. E. Perren, *Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research*
Dr A. E. G. Pilliner, *University of Edinburgh*
D. A. Player, *Thames Polytechnic*
G. K Potter, *West Sussex Education Authority*, Chairman of CILT Board of Governors
Professor H. Prais, *Heriot-Watt University*
Miss J. E. A. Price, *Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research*
Mrs A. Ridler, *Council for National Academic Awards*
Mrs M. Roberts, *Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research*
A. C. Root, *Kingston Polytechnic*
A. W. Rowe, *Huddersfield Polytechnic*
Professor J. C. Sager, *University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology*
D. R. Scarbrough, *South Devon Technical College*
Miss M. Sculthorp, *University of Kent at Canterbury*
Mrs G. Seidel, *University of Bradford*
Professor R. E. Smith, *University of Birmingham*
W. J. C. Stuart, *London Chamber of Commerce and Industry*
J. L. M. Trim, *University of Cambridge*
G. R. Tyler, *Ealing Technical College*
Dr L. A. Waywell, *Leeds Polytechnic*
J. Webb, *Colchester English Study Centre*
S. G. Wright, *Diplomatic Service Language Centre*

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Survey of curricula and performance in modern languages, 1971-72, by C. Vaughan James and Sonia Rouve. Price : £3.50.

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