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(Signed) S.C. de Salis.

LANGUAGE EDUCATION AND TEACHER EDUCATION :

The Pre-Service Education of Teachers of  
Languages at the Centre for Education,  
University of Tasmania.

by

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Educational Studies.

University of Tasmania.

December, 1987.

ABSTRACT

Recent developments and changes in language education have been described, and their implications explored by many theorists and practitioners with regard to their effects on language syllabuses, materials and assessment. There has been less discussion about how these changes should affect the initial preparation of those who are to teach languages in the schools.

Changes discernible at present in language education include more overt support for such education and related changes in its aims and approaches which, by now, are sufficiently well-established to be summed up by the label of the 'communicative approach'. Despite this 'improvement' in the approach to language education, an examination of the student teachers' experiences as language learners during their secondary and tertiary years shows some deficiencies which have to be remedied during the Dip.Ed. year if they are to become competent and informed language teachers.

The Dip.Ed. course at the Tasmanian Centre for Education is examined with particular reference to those components which introduce students to the specific areas of knowledge and skill required of language teachers. The Tasmanian course is compared with equivalent courses in other Australian states, in Britain and in the West German state of Bremen. An examination of the ways in which students are assessed suggests that there is a lack of coherence in the course which imposes an unnecessary burden on students in this area.

(ii)

The perennial question of the relationship between theory and practice is addressed, with reference to both language education and teacher education. Both are interlocking parts of one educational process, and several inadequacies of the Dip.Ed. course result from a destructive distinction between the two areas.

There is also a failure to conceptualise the Dip.Ed. course as one part of an on-going developmental process which begins when students first become language learners, and which must continue after they have become language teachers. The concluding chapter describes ways in which the Dip.Ed. course could perform its role more effectively.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the following people who have provided me with information in the course of my research:

### Britain

Harold Baynes, Hertfordshire College of Higher Education.  
Michael Buckby, Language Teaching Centre, University  
of York.

Frank Corless, Department of Education, University  
of Southampton.

David Harris, Institute of Education, University of  
London.

Barry Jones, Homerton College, University of Cambridge.

### West Germany

Dr. Heinz Bolte, Wissenschaftliches Institut für  
Schulpraxis, Bremen.

### Australia

Ron Botham, Sydney Institute of Education, Sydney  
College of Advanced Education.

Faye Ennis, Education Department, Victoria.

Margaret Gearon, Department of Education, University  
of Melbourne.

James Hunt, Centre for Education, University of Tasmania.

John Johnson, Department of Language and Literature,  
Melbourne College of Advanced Education.

Penny McKay, ALL Project, CDC, Adelaide.

Howard Nicholas, School of Education, LaTrobe University.

Ann Pryor, School of Education, Canberra College of  
Advanced Education.

Angela Scarino, ALL Project, CDC, Adelaide.

Rita Tognini, Education Department, Western Australia.

Jane Zemiro, Sydney Institute of Education, Sydney  
College of Advanced Education.

TERMINOLOGY AND ACRONYMS

The following acronyms are used:-

AFMLTA	Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations.
ALL	Australian Language Levels.
CDC	Curriculum Development Centre.
Dip.Ed.	Diploma of Education.
ESL	English as a Second Language.
FIPLV	Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Langues Vivantes.
HSC	Higher School Certificate.
L1	First language.
L2	Second language.
LOTE	Language Other Than English.
MLTAT	Modern Language Teachers Association of Tasmania.
PGCE	Post Graduate Certificate of Education.

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## CHAPTER 1

### LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA

#### 1.0 Introduction

Before examining present practices in the education of future language teachers during the Dip.Ed. year, it is necessary to describe the current situation of language education in Australia, with particular reference to Tasmania, in order to understand what student teachers are to be prepared for.

There are two aspects of language education where significant changes can be discerned at present in Australia. Firstly, as will be seen, there is more overt support for such education, allied to a growing awareness of the variety of languages which could be taught and the complex factors to be taken into account when selecting the languages to be offered in particular schools. Secondly, there has been a fundamental change of approach to the teaching of languages, a change not always evident in the classroom practices of teachers.

### 1.1. Official Support for Language Education

Although it might seem more likely that the need for language education would be questioned in multilingual countries where bilingualism could be 'picked up' naturally outside the schools, van Els et al. point out that such a question is more pressing in English speaking countries, while countries like their own, the Netherlands, take the teaching of other languages in their schools for granted. (1)

In English speaking countries the teaching of other languages in schools is constantly threatened, due mainly to that status of English as an internationally significant language which results from the historical accident of Britain's former position as a world power, a position subsequently taken over by another English speaking country, the United States of America.

However, as the National Policy on Languages points out:

the international strength of English, while welcome and beneficial to Australia, must neither be assumed to imply the absence of economic reasons for second language learning in Australia, for this is a false assumption which is costly to our future, nor must it be allowed to diminish the commitment Australian education makes to the cultural and intellectual values and benefits accruing from the study of other languages for all Australian students. (2)

If education, besides extending what the child learns in the home environment, is also to provide what is unlikely to be learned in that environment, it is essential that languages be taught in a predominantly monolingual country.

Thirty years ago in Australia it was generally taken for granted that an adequate secondary education included the learning of a second, usually European, language, particularly the literary registers of that language. Once languages were dropped as a requirement for matriculation in the 1960's, their position became more tenuous in the school curriculum, especially while the previous aims and methods of teaching remained unchanged.

Several recent developments, however, indicate the growth of more positive attitudes to language education in Australia. At the national level the Report of the Senate Standing Committee on Education and the Arts of October, 1984, was followed by the publication of the National Policy on Languages in 1987, commissioned by the then Minister for Education, Senator Susan Ryan. In the latter it is firmly stated that:

the study of at least one language in addition to English ought to be an expected part of the education experience of all Australian students, ideally continuously throughout the years of compulsory education. (3)

This is a more definite endorsement than that of the previous report, where Recommendation 80 suggested that all secondary students 'should experience language learning for a minimum period of one year, at levels suitable to their abilities'. (4)

A further indication of support is the establishment of the ALL (Australian Language Levels) Project in February, 1985, a national project, sponsored by the Curriculum Development Centre in Canberra and the Education Department of South Australia. Through its work the Project seeks to:

co-ordinate the energies, expertise and experience of all those involved in languages education in Australia, from classroom practitioners to teacher trainers, syllabus planners and writers, educational administrators, and statutory assessment bodies. It seeks to break down the sometimes artificial barriers that often exist between individual languages, between states/territories, between different areas of the curriculum . . . . . , between the primary and secondary education sectors, and between theory and actual classroom practice. (5)

In Tasmania, besides support for the ALL Project, further official support for language education is expressed in the Education Department document Secondary Education : The Future, where 'using and studying the English language and other languages' is described as among the most important fields of knowledge and experience in the curriculum. (6) The state Education Department also released in August, 1987 a policy statement on the study of languages in Tasmanian secondary schools and colleges, in which it affirms its 'commitment to the study of languages other than English as an essential field of experience in the curriculum in Tasmanian schools.' (7) In other states and territories similar policies are either being drafted or have already been published. (8)

Although such support for language education in Tasmanian secondary schools and colleges is encouraging, there is at present no suggestion that languages should be introduced in Tasmanian primary schools. These extend only to Grade 6, unlike those in South Australia, Western Australia, the Northern Territory and Queensland, where primary education includes Grade 7. Tasmania did, in 1971, introduce a primary language programme which was abandoned when it was deemed to have failed, although the definition of what constituted failure is questionable. Primary language education continues in approximately seventeen private schools (9), and in a very small number of state primary schools (approximately six). (10)

In this Tasmania differs from other states. South Australia, for example, plans 'the extension of LOTE teaching to all state primary schools by 1995' (11), and there are similar moves in New South Wales (12), Queensland (13) and Western Australia (14), although these states have not set a definite date as yet. In primary schools in the Northern Territory, over 2000 pupils are involved in language programmes; the languages taught include Aboriginal, Asian and European. (15)

Such official support for language education flows from the perceived benefits of this education both to society as a whole and to the individual. The value of language education as a national resource was stressed by David Ingram, president of the Australian Federation of

Modern Language Teachers Associations (AFMLTA), at a recent national conference. In his paper entitled Languages and the Export Economy he stressed that:

if Australia is to improve its international performance, to become more effective in international relations, and to rectify its gross balance of payments problems through increased exports, then it must urgently improve and extend its teaching and learning of languages. (16)

The emphasis on the social and national significance of language education does not, of course, necessitate any neglect of the benefits of such education to the individual. The two are not at odds. On the contrary, general support for language education engenders in pupils a more positive attitude towards such learning than is the case if the wider society is apathetic or even hostile about language education.

The National Policy on Languages stresses that language learning is a central element of the universal aims of education, 'nurturing powers of reason, of reflection and communication, of appreciation of difference and commonness, of access to knowledge and artistic achievement'. (17) A similar argument for the benefits of language learning to the individual was put more dramatically by George Steiner:

To learn a language besides one's native idiom, to penetrate its syntax, is to open for oneself a second window on the landscape of being. It is to escape, even if only partially, from the confinement of the apparently obvious, from the intolerant poverty so corrosive just because one is unconscious of it, of a single focus and monochrome lens. (18)

## 1.2 Which Languages Should be Taught in Australia?

Although, as demonstrated in the previous section, there may be agreement that language education is of benefit both to the individual and as a national resource, there remains a further question as to which languages are the most appropriate for particular situations.

Among the factors which influence the choice of languages for education in Australia there is first of all the 'coming of age' which has loosened the links between this country and Europe, although this is balanced by the policy of multiculturalism which includes the development of positive attitudes to 'community languages', many of which are European, for example Italian, German and Dutch. Allied to the 'turning away' from Europe is a growing awareness of the importance of the Asian countries, whose geographical closeness balances the cultural closeness of European languages for English speakers.

The complexity of the language situation in a multicultural Australia means that there are no simple answers to the question of which languages should be taught in which schools. The National Policy on Languages indicates some of the factors which must be taken into account. These include:

- a) the importance of Aboriginal languages and their endangered state; (19)



- b) the fact that between 15% - 20% of Australians 'daily use a language other than English ..... and for a significant further percentage there is some cultural, emotional or other form of identification and attachment to such a language'; (20)
- c) the need for effective teaching of English as a Second Language, for to be without English in Australia is to be without 'the means of participating effectively in public life'; (21)
- d) the desirability of providing English as a Foreign Language courses both for our own economic benefit and as a means of foreign aid. (22)

An indication of further factors to be considered in the choice of languages to be taught in Australian schools is given by the fact that, although thirty-one languages were examined at Year 12 in 1986, only 17.3% of all school students are in any one year doing language study, and of those that do the majority learn French, German or Italian. These therefore maintain their predominance at tertiary level and necessarily at secondary level as there are few teachers for other languages. In 1980, although some thirty languages were offered in universities around Australia, French, German and Italian accounted for 59% of all languages students. (23)

In Tasmania eleven languages were taken at Year 12 in 1986 (24), but only four of these are available for further study at the University, French, German, Italian and Japanese. Far from there being any plans to

expand the language department, it seems possible that the number of languages offered could be reduced. Support for a wider choice of languages in primary and secondary schools may therefore be undermined at the tertiary level, not only because students will be discouraged from learning languages not offered at the universities, but also because the supply of language teachers will be restricted or reduced.

The choice of languages to be taught in a particular school will therefore be a complicated one, affected by a number of factors which will vary from school to school and from state to state. The 1984 Standing Committee declined to 'draw up a list of specific languages which might merit priority consideration'. (25) The National Policy on Languages on the other hand, after stating that 'the teaching of any language desired by school communities is educationally and culturally warranted' (26), goes on to stress the importance of Aboriginal languages, and to propose, as 'languages of wider teaching' the following: Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Greek (Modern), Indonesian/Malay, Italian, Japanese and Spanish. (27) These languages are proposed because they 'offer literary and cultural prospects to their learners in addition to being justified because they are languages of national, regional and/or international importance to Australia'. (28)

In a small state such as Tasmania, the range of languages that can be offered in schools obviously has to be narrower, and the languages policy of 1987 states that priority will be given to the following: Chinese,

French, German, Indonesian, Italian and Japanese. (29)

Secondary Education : The Future suggests that Asian languages 'should now be given higher priority than was previously the case', although it is stressed that this should not be to the exclusion of studies of the traditional European cultures and languages. (30)

The apathetic and even negative attitude towards language education during the 1960's and 1970's cannot be ascribed solely to the ethnocentric monolingual narrowness of an English-speaking society. It may also have been a reaction against the continued use, in language education, of methods which had become inappropriate and which were used to achieve aims no longer relevant to the majority of students. However, the general change in attitude towards other cultures and languages, a change given concrete existence in the concept of 'multiculturalism', has been accompanied by changing approaches to the teaching of languages. These are described in the following sections.

### 1.3. The Aims of Language Education.

Approaches to language education do not inevitably and necessarily change simply because of greater understanding and knowledge about language teaching and learning. They are shaped by the explicit and implicit aims of such education and those aims are, in their turn, affected by a number of factors, including the perceived purposes of education, its structure, and the prevailing political, social and intellectual climate of a society.

Louis Kelly, in the introduction to 25 Centuries of Language Teaching, distinguishes between two types of mastery which have channelled language education into particular paths over the centuries, namely the aims of 'intellectual mastery', dominant during the Middle Ages and the 18th and 19th centuries, and that of 'practical mastery', which he suggests is becoming as dominant in our century as it was during the Renaissance. (31) McArthur makes a similar distinction between a 'marketplace tradition' in which languages are learnt for specific purposes, and a 'monastery tradition' in which languages are learnt for cultural and religious reasons. (32)

At the simplest level, those who advocate 'intellectual mastery', the 'monastery tradition', support an approach which favours the skills of reading and writing and is based mainly on literary language and knowledge about that language. Those from the 'marketplace tradition' who see 'practical mastery' as the desired aim of language learning, favour the oral skills of speaking and listening above the written skills and prefer language which is in everyday use.

This type of polarisation is, of course, an oversimplification of a complex subject. Widdowson, in the introduction to Learning Purpose and Language Use, explains that his use of 'distinctions' should not be taken as demonstrating a binary view of reality; they are aids only in the investigation of that reality. (33) In this section I use the distinction between 'intellectual mastery' and 'practical mastery' in a similar way, as is also the case with the use of the traditional division of language into the four skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Other ways of describing language are discussed in the next section.

Those from the marketplace tradition may hope that teaching for practical mastery will make languages more acceptable in a climate which values vocationally useful subjects above more 'academic' ones, in which the function of education is instrumental and utilitarian, demanding that students be able to 'use' the languages they learn.

Since languages were dropped as a compulsory subject for students who wished to matriculate, much energy has been expended justifying their inclusion in primary and secondary curricula. Although this has the positive effect of a constant pressure that they be well taught, such constant pressure also has negative effects if teachers are forced to 'sell' their subject in competition with other subjects, to make it a more popular or 'relevant' option. (34)

An example of the arguments for language education as a vocationally useful, or 'relevant' subject are those put by Ian Hill in his article External Motivation and Modern Language Learning. (35) He claims that, whether we like it or not, 'the majority of high school students study a number of subjects because they are a necessary pre-requisite for getting a job and earning money', and concludes by suggesting that the more 'intangible rewards' of language learning might 'happen along the way' if the main motivating force of vocational usefulness is exploited. (36)

This pragmatic view of language education may, however, lead to an inconsistency if the instrumental value of language education is emphasised while at the same time we insist that it be compared with subjects of equal intellectual rigour when students have to make choices. If language is to be taught merely as a useful skill, it can then only be compared with subjects such as woodwork or typing.

Even if there were a clear-cut division between intellectual and practical mastery, the present bias towards the latter is not necessarily a 'better' aim, it merely fits better into the prevailing 'Weltanschauung'. The dominance of the aim of intellectual mastery at the beginning of this century was appropriate at a time when all language education, both in the mother tongue and other languages, was more 'literary' because the methods used were those originally developed in order to teach the classical languages.

When these classical languages finally began to lose their established place in the curriculum towards the end of last century, the 'modern' languages which took their place were 'sold', according to Nicholas Beattie, not as making a different contribution from that of the classical languages, but as being capable of the 'same sorts of effect'. (37) They attempted 'to put on all the prestigious robes of classical scholarship ..... (by) the adoption of the time-honoured practices which had accreted around the learning of Latin and Greek'. (38)

Not only was language study at the beginning of this century based on the written word, particularly in its literary and academic registers, but Perren claims that in addition language educators tended to see the speaking of the language as rather 'vulgar', particularly when the speaking skills were taught by foreigners (39), although Hawkins does suggest that even then native speakers found control difficult in 'the robust conditions of the nineteenth-century classroom and in self-defence resorted to construe and reading.' (40) The importance of the public examination also had its effect, for 'it is generally easier and cheaper to test language skills in writing'. (41)

Fussell's book The Great War and Modern Memory documents the respect in which literature was held at this time, the ready accessibility of literary reference to soldiers from all walks of life. There was no feeling that literature was 'not near the center of normal experience', no sense that it belonged to 'intellectuals or aesthetes or teachers or critics'. (42)

In contrast, a recent survey of community views of language education in Australia suggests that the highest priority in both the teaching of LOTE's and of English as the mother tongue is now given to the 'oral mode', to areas such as learning how to listen, to obtain information and communicate it orally, and to give clear spoken accounts of events. (43) The present emphasis on oral mastery therefore reflects a general change in opinions about the desirable aims of all language education.

The introduction of comprehensive education may also have had an influence on language education in that it has often resulted in teachers being faced with mixed ability classes rather than the more uniform groups whose home background prepared them better for the abstract generalisations required when intellectual mastery was the dominant aim. In addition, students themselves have more influence now than used to be the case. Two surveys conducted in Tasmania showed that at both junior and senior levels 'predominant pupil interest in the speaking skill was evident' (44), and that the area of the HSC course students found the most enjoyable and 'useful' was conversation. (45) Subsequent changes in Tasmanian language syllabuses demonstrated an awareness of this expressed preference on the part of pupils. For example, a description in 1983 of the new French syllabuses explains that at the junior stage 'the stress has been placed on the oral skills' and that the skill of writing is 'least important at this stage'. Similarly in the revised HSC syllabus oral work is 'given new stress'. (46)



Approaches to language education do not develop in isolation from other aspects of life in any given country. This is shown for example by the influence political factors have had on the history of language education in the United States of America. During the period of 'splendid isolation' language education was a low priority and the skill most favoured was the reading skill. (47) With their entry into World War II came the discovery that the country was so 'linguistically backward' that the army had to set up special training programmes for those who needed to use languages in the course of their military duties. (48) Stern claims that these wartime language programmes 'changed the approach to language teaching in the U.S.A. in a radical way', for, among other factors, they 'demonstrated the possible advantages of intensive language training and of an oral emphasis'. (49)

The Russian launching of Sputnik strengthened the awareness in the United States of America that lack of linguistic ability could be a national disadvantage and that linguists were necessary if the country was to keep up with scientific knowledge. In 1958 the National Defence Act made provision for an increase in funding because the country was not 'prepared linguistically to exercise the full force of its leadership in the building of a peaceful world'. The general aim was to encourage 'the wider teaching of foreign languages at all levels of instruction', but an emphasis was to be placed on 'competence in speaking foreign languages.' (50)

Official support for language education does not, of course, necessarily entail an increase in the numbers of students who are studying languages. The present situation in Australia is similar to that described in a recent report on language education in the United States (Mercury, 18/5/1987). It states that the United States continues to be 'the only country in which a student can earn a doctorate without ever taking a language course', that a United Nations study of 30,000 pupils in nine countries demonstrated that American students ranked next to last in their comprehension of foreign cultures, and that only 5% of college graduates are fluent in any (second) language. In Australia not only can students earn a doctorate without having to take a language course, but even in the schools this is not considered essential:

Almost half of all Australian school students never study a language other than English at any time during their schooling. Fewer than 12% of students matriculate with a language other than English. (51)

The need to justify the inclusion of language education in the curriculum may, however, have the positive effect of producing a constant pressure that languages should be well taught, a pressure which can lead to continued search for 'better', or more effective and appropriate, approaches to language education. Such a search is discussed in the next section.

#### 1.4. The Achievement of Desirable Goals in Language Education.

How to achieve the goals seen as desirable in language education is a question which has been answered in a variety of ways during this century; ways usually described by such labels as the 'direct' and 'natural' approaches, the 'grammar-translation method', the 'audiolingual methods', the 'cognitive approach', and most recently, the 'communicative approach'. These are part of language education history now and described in much of the literature. Richards and Rodgers, for example, provide a detailed analysis of the differences between the theories of language and of language learning demonstrated by each method/approach. (52)

Although the most recent development in language education, the 'communicative approach', differs from previous ones in important ways, it is also an evolution from them. It does not discard them, but rather 'alters and expands their components'. (53) Some examination of previous approaches is necessary, therefore, in order to understand the ways in which they contribute to the communicative approach. These can be broadly divided into three groups, the grammar-translation, the natural and the scientific.

##### 1.4.1. Grammar-Translation

As has been described in the previous section, the dominant aim of this approach was intellectual mastery. It was also the only approach that had reading and writing skills as the primary goal (if we discount

the American reading methods which did not include writing in their goals). Richards and Rodgers describe the grammar-translation method as the only one which never had any literature offering a rationale (54), nor did it have any explicitly formulated theories of language or language learning.

Despite this, its influence has been pervasive, for, with the exception of the communicative approach, other approaches, while incorporating expanding knowledge about languages and language learning, have also been, either explicitly or implicitly, reactions against the grammar-translation methods. All have had the predominant goal of practical mastery, although they have differed in the means taken to achieve this end. They have also, as McDonough points out, been 'heavily influenced by particular theoretical orientations' (55), for the distinction made here between 'natural' and 'scientific' approaches is somewhat arbitrary. The former were also based on 'scientific' theories about language acquisition.

#### 1.4.2. 'Natural' Approaches.

These are based on presumed similarities between classroom language learning and the 'acquisition' of languages in non-school contexts, either by the child acquiring its native language (or languages in the case of bilinguals), or those who acquire a second language through 'immersion', for example by living in the country in which the language is spoken.

A typical 'naturalist' at the end of last century was Francois Gouin, who contrasted his own failure to learn German by the traditional methods with 'nature's method' by which the child learns its mother tongue. (56) His theory of language learning was set out in his book L'Art d'enseigner, published in 1880 in Paris, and translated into English in 1892. (57) The most recent exponent of this school of thought is Stephen Krashen who bases his approach on the natural acquisition of a second language as well as on the child's acquisition of the mother tongue. (58)

Hawkins, in discussing Gouin, says he 'extrapolated from mother tongue acquisition to (adult) foreign language learning without acknowledging that qualification was called for. His conclusions concerning the natural method are not supported by recent research in language acquisition'. (59) The situation is similar in the case of L2 acquisition, where research shows that for adequate language learning, even in an immersion situation, some structured learning is necessary, whereas the 'natural' approaches suggest that formal instruction 'is either unnecessary, impossible or counter-productive'. (60)

The notion that all language learning is similar and that we may be failing in the classroom situation because of the 'unnaturalness' of that situation, is being replaced by a growing understanding that although some insights can be provided by increased knowledge about the 'acquisition' of languages, not all the strategies used by the 'acquirer' are applicable in the classroom without modification.

#### 1.4.3. Scientific Approaches.

These depend on disciplines like psychology and linguistics, and tend to take the theory first and try to apply it in the classroom situation, rather than using that situation as a starting point. An early example of an approach based on scientific principles is that described in Palmer's book of 1917, The Scientific Study and Teaching of Languages (61), in which he stressed the usefulness of the new science of phonetics. Sweet, some years earlier, had also stressed phonetics, as well as interpreting language learning in terms of the associationist psychology of his time. The description, the 'direct method', in fact signified the importance of making a direct link or association between the words of the new language and their referents, rather than the indirect route taken by translation through the mother tongue. (62)

The excitement generated by the promise of science in the early years of this century is demonstrated by Palmer's comment:

The remarkable advance in the comparatively new science (of phonetics) is one of the most hopeful signs of progress and a pledge of eventual perfection. (63)

This confidence in science continued and culminated in the audiolingual methods of the 1960's, despite the lack of interest displayed by theoretical linguists in the learning of languages other than the mother tongue. Steiner, for example, claimed that 'many modern analytic linguists are no great friends to language. Not many ..... have inhabited the husk of

more than one speech'. (64) Loveday also suggested that in many Western countries, bilinguals were regarded as 'anomalies' by linguists, who felt 'the natural state of affairs was to grow up speaking one language'. (65)

The advent of Chomsky marked a turning point not only for linguistics, but also for language education. His scepticism about the 'significance for the teaching of languages of such insight and understanding as have been attained in linguistics and psychology' (66) was reinforced by an influential book, The Psychologist and the Foreign-Language Teacher (1964), in which Wilga Rivers stressed that while psychological theories might have some value and interest, they must be adapted by teachers to fit particular situations. (67)

This is not to say that other disciplines have ceased to be important and helpful. In fact, the range of such disciplines has widened. Stern for example discusses the concepts of language education in relation to linguistics, anthropology, sociology and sociolinguistics, psychology and psycholinguistics and educational theory. (68) However, the emergence of the concept of a distinct discipline, 'applied linguistics', an 'inter-disciplinary approach to the solution of all kinds of language based problems' (69), has released language education from its previous dependence on other disciplines, making it an independent activity in its own right, although it may be 'illuminated by some particular insights from different areas of linguistic theory'. (70) Van Els et al. describe applied linguistics as a problem-oriented discipline as opposed to the 'theory based' discipline of linguistics, a discipline which sees knowledge of how a language is structured as the only knowledge necessary for its teaching. (71)

#### 1.4.4. The Communicative Approach.

In 1976 Colin Wringe began his account of developments in language education with this statement:

'In contrast to the situation some ten to twelve years ago, the current mood among modern language teachers is one of disillusion and uncertainty.' (72) With the benefit of hindsight, this despondent mood could be explained as part of what might be called a Kuhnian 'paradigm shift' - 'the emergence of new theories is generally preceded by a period of pronounced professional insecurity.' (73)

Wringe indicated his own awareness of a changing situation by ending on a more positive note: 'the way seems open for a sustained improvement in the quality and effectiveness of language teaching.' (74) That 'improvement' is now generally labelled the 'communicative approach', an approach which is based on a change in perspective, a different view of both language and of the language learner.

The view of language should be described as 're-discovered' rather than new. As described by Aarsleff, it was understood by Locke and Condillac several centuries ago, and repeated by Bréal at the end of last century: 'Speech is first of all a means of communication: it would lose the most essential of its functions if it ceased to serve for the exchange of ideas.' (75) Nor is it new in language education; Jespersen argued in 1904 that one 'ought to learn a language through sensible communications.' (76)



However, previous approaches, strongly influenced by theoretical linguistics, made an unnatural division between the means and the end, between language as a formal system and language as a communicative system. Saussure 'divorced sign from signified and thereby seemed to justify the study of language as something detachable from objects and events'(77), (although Toliver goes on to suggest that Saussure had more reservations about this step than many of his followers have had). The separation was fruitful for many linguists, as demonstrated by the insights of Saussure and Chomsky, but it was not so fruitful for language education, and the communicative approach marks an acknowledgement of this, a return to Jespersen's point of view.

It may also, in some cases, incorporate an expansion or an extension of the traditional division of language into four skills, those of speaking, listening, reading and writing. Although these could be combined in various ways, as the oral and written modes for example, or as productive and receptive language use, they represented a division which, although useful, often precluded other, equally helpful, conceptualisations of language.

It is clear, for example, that different ways of reading are required for different purposes, a point made by Palmer in 1917 when he divided reading into 'intensive' and 'extensive'. (78) Skimming through a newspaper, or finding a number in a phone book are obviously different types of reading from that required for close study of a literary text.

Similarly, a phone conversation necessarily combines the skills of listening and speaking, but may, in addition, include the skill of writing if one needs to take down a message. Moreover, the listening skill required for a phone conversation is understood to differ from that required in a face-to-face conversation, while the jotting down of a message is at one end of a continuum which may include (though not necessarily for all students), the essay writing skills once visualised as the principal aim of language study.

As the ALL Project Guidelines point out, there are in fact many ways in which 'the universe of communication relevant to school learners might be set out', and the three basic dimensions of language use seen as relevant for school learners in these Guidelines are the interpersonal, the informational and the aesthetic. (79) Within these categories, the four skills all play a part which approximates more closely to the everyday use of language, in that each skill is more complex and all four skills are more closely inter-related than the previous division indicated.

The changed view of language is combined with a change in the view of the language learner. Before 1970, language learning was exclusively related to instruction, the learner could only learn what was taught (80), and what was taught was carefully simplified and graded so that the learner was prevented from making errors. The shift of focus to the learner in the communicative approach results from research

on the acquisition of first and second languages which has produced a better understanding of the active role of the learner as one who constructs ('creates' in Chomsky's terms) linguistic systems rather than passively receiving them. The learner's language is a dynamic system rather than a static accumulation of knowledge and skills. Such 'approximative systems' are judged by their gradual movement towards the target, instead of being measured by how far they fall short of that target. Errors, therefore, become evidence of the learner's present stage of development, rather than 'sins' to be avoided or penalised.

### 1.5 Conclusion

Karl Popper says that 'the tentative adoption of a new conjecture or theory may solve one or two problems, but it invariably opens up many new problems'. (81) This may be the case with the communicative approach, for as van Els et al. point out, so much has been written on it in such a short time, that 'misunderstandings and terminological confusions are inevitable'. (82) For example, the key concept of 'communication' may be a 'rallying point' (83), but it is also 'something so complex that it will probably never be reduced to a simple formula or a neatly packaged syllabus. Communication is qualitative and infinite; a syllabus is quantitative and finite'. (84)

In addition to the difficulty of defining exactly what is meant by 'communication' in a communicative approach, there is the question of whether teachers in fact find it easy to introduce new approaches into their classroom practice. Evert Jansen's study of language teaching in Tasmanian schools (1983) demonstrated the danger of the assumption that new improved methods are all that is needed to lead to new improved teaching. (85) He investigated the 'major social forces which influence the development of foreign language teaching style' and found that conservative pressures on teaching must be taken into account before effective implementation of innovation is likely. Although he found that teachers did perceive a significant change 'in the direction of a weakening commitment to the traditional, cognitive approach', the fact remained that 'many traditional techniques continue to be used regularly and frequently in the foreign language classroom'. (86)

The important factor is not so much the continued use of 'traditional techniques', as the purposes for which they are used. In the communicative approach there is still a place for these techniques as a means to further ends, those of communication, rather than mastery of these techniques being an end in itself. The ALL Project, for example, describes communication as using language 'for a purpose other than the display or practice of forms'. (87) However, 'exercises' in which language elements are controlled and focussed upon are supportive, they 'feed' the learning process. (88)

As demonstrated in this chapter, the language scene for which Dip.Ed. students are to be prepared is a complex one, and therefore their pre-service development must include more than the simple communication of 'new ideas and practices' as suggested by Wringe. (89) It must produce in student teachers the beginnings of a comprehensive understanding of the changed perspectives implied in the communicative approach to language education. They need not only the means of withstanding the 'conservative pressures' demonstrated by Jansen, but, more positively, they need the ability to make informed choices and decisions in the classroom. This is essential because the communicative approach represents less direct guidance for the teacher; unlike former approaches, it has no single text or authority (on the contrary, there is almost an over-abundance of texts and authorities). Blanket recommendations can no longer be considered applicable to all language learners for decisions depend on situations in particular classrooms.

In order to understand the starting point for the teacher educators who have the task of preparing language teachers for the situation described in this chapter, the next chapter will give an account of the students who enter the Dip.Ed. course, the language learners who are to be transformed into language teachers.

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## CHAPTER 2

### THE DIP. ED. STUDENTS AND THE TEACHER EDUCATORS

#### 2.0. Introduction.

The rising level of support for language education and the changing approaches to that education must guide any consideration of the best ways to prepare language teachers for their task. In such preparation, as in all education, success depends less on materials and techniques than on 'what goes on inside and between the people in the classroom'. (1) Brumfit describes teaching similarly as 'primarily a product of the relationship between human beings'. (2) An examination of the people concerned with the Dip.Ed. course is therefore a necessary preliminary to an analysis of the course itself.

No learner is a 'tabula rasa', least of all learners who are over twenty years of age, so students enter the Dip.Ed. year with particular strengths and weaknesses.

It is important neither to underestimate, nor to leave out of consideration, the influence on the trainee teacher of between three and six years of university or polytechnic education, and of seven to nine years of secondary education. At the same time as embarking on a professional course of teacher training, the trainee is the more or less finished product of an educational system. (3)

In addition, the students' reasons for joining the course will shape their expectations of what the course can achieve for them as future teachers.

Although, as Turney points out, the work of teacher educators is a crucial factor in the pre-service education of teachers, research on 'their role, influence, effectiveness and training, has been sadly neglected'. (4) There are a number of people concerned in the preparation of future language teachers, and this chapter examines their roles, and their qualifications for undertaking the task.

## 2.1. The Students

### 2.1.1. The Linguistic Competence of the Dip.Ed. Students.

The minimum pre-requisite for the language methods course in Tasmania is a sub-major, i.e. two years of tertiary language study. In practice most students will have majored in the language they intend to teach, and a proportion will also have gone on to do an honours year. Because students who enter the course are assumed to have acquired all the necessary linguistic skills and knowledge, there is no formal assessment of their ability to use the language they will teach.

Informally, of course, there is often some sort of assessment, particularly during the practice teaching sessions. This is borne out by discussion with several of the supervising teachers in Tasmania, who indicated that one of their major concerns, one of the criteria by which they judge students, is their linguistic ability. Comments were made on the students' errors in language use, their lack of grammatical knowledge (sometimes rather esoteric grammatical points, particularly if they were taking HSC classes), and poor pronunciation.

This is similar to the situation in Britain, where Spicer and Dawson claimed in 1978 that:

it is still possible ..... for someone to become a qualified teacher and teach a foreign language without ever having demonstrated that he is capable of sustaining a conversation in that language, let alone whether he is capable of conducting a lesson in it or that his pronunciation is acceptable as a model for his pupils. (5)

More recently, Harold Baynes in his dissertation The Training of the Specialist Modern Languages Teacher in the P.G.C.E. course (1983), again raised the question of whether 'initial degree courses provide adequately for the acquisition of what might be termed acceptable linguistic competence and cultural knowledge for potential teachers'. (6) He found that some British institutions in fact impose additional conditions of entry to courses besides the passing of the first degree, for example that students should have spent a year abroad or should show evidence of oral fluency in some way. (7)

Yet students who have majored in a language during their degree years are generally deemed to be 'successful' language learners. In order to discover the reasons for these criticisms of their linguistic competence, it is necessary to describe the path by which they reach the Dip.Ed. year.

In Tasmania, where primary language education is the exception rather than the rule, the education of the future language teacher usually begins in the secondary school. This not only means there is less time overall for such learning than there is for other subjects,

most of which are introduced in the primary years, but it also sets language learning apart as different, possibly less 'natural' than other learning. As Stern points out:

the question of age in relation to second language learning has been one of the most debated issues in language teaching theory ..... In this debate anecdotal opinion, practical experience, theoretical arguments, and research are mixed up; and even after more than thirty years of serious discussion and some research on this question the issue of the relationship between age and second language learning has been far from resolved. (8)

Due to a greater understanding of the many other factors involved, one of the arguments for earlier introduction of language learning in schools is now generally discounted, namely the 'critical period' argument, the belief that lateralisation of the brain is completed by five years of age (Penfield), or at least by puberty (Lenneberg). (9) However, it still remains true that differences in age and stage require different methods of teaching. Younger students learn more through ear and tongue, through physical 'doing', and will therefore benefit more from an orally based course than older students, while they are also less inhibited than adolescents by the fear of making mistakes, more prepared to take risks and use the language.

The sequence of L1 acquisition makes it seem more 'natural' to begin language learning with oral skills, but it may in fact be 'unnatural' in our society after a certain age, for many older students become uneasy if they are unable to use written language to support

their learning. The argument that to begin language learning at the secondary level is just as effective as beginning at primary level relies on the supposition that older students are able to use learning strategies unavailable at a younger age (an argument that could also be used for other subjects like mathematics). However, these include the use of those very grammatical rules in ways which are condemned as a feature of the grammar-translation method.

Besides being set apart from other subjects by its later introduction, such learning in the Australian context may not be reinforced outside the classroom by contact with native speakers, particularly in Tasmania where the proportion of the community whose mother tongue is a language other than English is small (4.1% compared with, for example, 22.1% in Victoria or 16.7% in South Australia (10) ).

Because language education aims to provide an alternative to an established, complex and adequate behaviour in a relatively short time, the standards by which the new behaviour is to be judged must be clear. Smalley and Morris claim that of all school subjects, only languages 'set before the pupil perfection as an attainable goal. The native speaker is the criterion against which all performances are measured'. (11) Hawkins makes a similar point:

We have to remember that foreign language learning differs from all other subjects in that the native speaker's performance is taken as the criterion. In every other subject the teacher defines success and failure. (12)



At its most absurd, this is like measuring the maths pupil against Einstein, or the art pupil against Picasso. More reasonably, no-one expects a learner in any other subject to achieve a complete grasp after only four to six years of study, or even by the end of tertiary study. In addition, Klein claims that the child acquiring its mother tongue spends about 9,100 hours in active learning during the first five years of its life, and even then does not achieve 'complete mastery'. He goes on to say that an adult may achieve 'reasonable mastery' after six weeks of immersion classes, i.e. 500 hours. (13)

For the school language learner the amount of time allocated to language learning and its distribution precludes this type of absorption. Hunt's survey (1987) of language learning in grades 9 and 10 in Tasmania showed that there is a 'wonderful variety' both in lesson length and in distribution. Few schools allocate more than two and a half hours a week to language learning, and lesson distribution ranges from four 35 minute periods to two 80 minute periods a week. (14)

A rough calculation shows that at the most the language students who complete HSC in Tasmania will therefore spend about 120 hours a year, or 600 hours spread over five years, in language learning. This excludes the interruptions to lessons which are part of normal school life and would cut the number of hours considerably. Three years of tertiary study adds another 300 hours at the most, so the student who enters the Dip.Ed. year will have had, as a generous estimate, approximately 900 hours of language learning. The Tasmanian student in addition has had one of those years 'off' because most students spend only one HSC year in language study.

Of course, it is not only the quantity of language learning which must be taken into account when considering future language teachers, it is also the quality of that learning; whether the type of language learned is likely to be useful in this particular context. Dip.Ed. students have proved themselves to be capable of the type of language use required for success in whatever is the current final assessment for secondary and tertiary education. Although the lower secondary years are generally more attuned to the communicative approach, Hunt's survey shows that a gradual change in approach begins in year 9. The text books currently in use 'place nearly all their stress on written language and an unnecessarily rigid grammatical progression', the use of the target language is 'relatively restricted', while language games and similar activities are used 'only occasionally'. (15)

The HSC year lies uneasily between the secondary and tertiary levels, catering, on the one hand, for those who wish to go on to university, while also trying to perform the task of 'finishing' satisfactorily the language education of those who will not continue at university. The new syllabuses presently being prepared will take more account of changed approaches in language education. This will bridge the gap between HSC and lower levels, but at the same time it may make the HSC a less adequate preparation for university if the degree course remains as it is at present.

The handbook of the University of Tasmania shows that the path to a degree for the language student concentrates mainly on written language and literature. All four languages, French, German, Italian and

Japanese, state, in various ways, that their aim is for students to become fluent users of the language, but an analysis of, for example, the third year assessment of French shows that literature accounts for 47% and written language for 29% of the final marks, while oral language is only 14%, the remaining 10% being taken by 'modern society'. The German course is even more heavily weighted in favour of literature and written language. (16)

This bias towards intellectual mastery is bound to cause some conflict in those who go on to teach languages in the secondary schools, where the aims of language education, particularly in the junior years, are based on a more communicative language use. If the 'best' students are those who go on to university, then, given that university courses are biased towards 'form, accuracy and analysis', rather than 'function, fluency and use' (17), teachers may see the goal of school language learning, in the more senior years at least, as the former. On the other hand, if students are to be judged by criteria based on 'function, fluency and use', the teacher will have to abandon, to some extent, the priorities established at university.

At present, therefore, the Dip.Ed. student is unlikely to be linguistically prepared for the communicative approach, which demands a confident use of oral language. However, although criticism of the student teachers' linguistic competence may be justified, it is not the students themselves who are to blame. They have worked hard to achieve success in the type of language education available to them.

It must, however, be pointed out that the university course is not designed to be a teacher education course:

in most countries, university modern language courses are very rarely designed with future teachers in mind. On the whole, the preparatory value of these courses has been fortuitous. Despite not having been intended to provide 'an adequate preparation for future language teachers', they have been regarded as having done precisely this. (18)

The Leathes Report of 1918 in Britain suggested that while university courses are not 'primarily intended for the training of teachers', they should 'incidentally provide most of what teachers require'. (19) The suggestion has been made many times since. For example, in 1980 an article in Babel recommended the introduction during the degree years of a segment aimed at intending teachers of German which would be 'preparatory to, not in lieu of, a proper postgraduate course of teacher education'. (20)

In Tasmania, a submission in 1981 from the Centre for Education pointed out that in the period from 1976 to 1980 the proportion of language graduates who became teachers was 81.4% and recommended a greater recognition of the needs of these students in the undergraduate courses, adding that this should not be interpreted as a 'depreciation of the literature studies and translation exercises', which had a 'vital, but ..... not exclusive place in the course'. (21)

Wilga Rivers in 1978 pointed to the narrowness of the range of options in university language departments, suggesting that they catered only for the needs of a small minority of language learners, those who go on

to further academic study. (22) That the problem remains is shown by the fact that the National Policy on Languages still feels it necessary in 1987 to recommend that the CTEC should address

the question of balance between literature studies and more practically-oriented content in tertiary language teaching. Although both are highly desirable, the latter focus appears to be inadequately met at present. (23)

#### 2.1.2. Applied linguistics.

A further area of linguistic knowledge necessary to the future language teacher is that of 'linguistics', or theory about language in general, rather than knowledge about and skill in a particular language. The linguistic disciplines of benefit in language education include psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics, but applied linguistics, the application of these to the teaching and learning of languages, is obviously of vital importance.

The Tasmanian Dip.Ed. student will have had little introduction to this area of knowledge. Strevens makes the point that there are few countries where the education of the 'young adult contains much information or understanding of the kind which is essential to the language teacher'. (24) At the secondary level there are few courses of the type Eric Hawkins has advocated in his projected new 'trivium' - mother tongue, 'language awareness' and foreign languages. (25) The NCLE Report Language Awareness explains that this type of course in schools involves:

both making explicit and conscious the knowledge and skills pupils have themselves built up in the course of their experience of language, and developing powers of observation and purposeful analysis of language in their immediate environment and more widely in the world. (26)

Among the problems discussed in the report are those of trying to fit an additional subject into an already crowded school curriculum, whether such a subject would be 'little more than a cover for the reintroduction of grammar teaching and other discards of recent years', in what way knowledge about language improves one's ability to use language, and the difficulties of assessing such courses. (27)

Interestingly, one of the papers in the report discusses aspects of Australian experience with such courses and claims that there was a similar movement in this country in the early seventies, which peaked in 1976 and has 'been in a state of steady decline since then'. (28) On the whole, it seems unlikely that such courses will become popular in this country and it is more important for language teachers to be able to incorporate this type of knowledge into their teaching, as is suggested by the ALL Project in its eight principles of language learning; principle six is that learners should 'become aware of the role and nature of language and of culture'. (29)

At the tertiary level, Wykes and King pointed out in 1968 that the teaching of linguistics and phonetics was neglected in all Australian universities (30), while the report Foreign Languages in Tasmanian Government Schools (1976) recommended that:

in addition to the present undergraduate units in grammatical theory, provision should be made for the study of sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics, and courses in all three of these fields should be obligatory for intending teachers of foreign languages. (31)

Unfortunately, such suggestions have not been implemented, and at present in the University of Tasmania the only possibility for any study of this type is a unit in the first year German course entitled 'An Introduction to Linguistics and German Linguistic History'. Streven's warning is timely. He claims that teachers entering their pre-service courses will have only a 'scanty' understanding of the nature of language. Such understanding as they do have 'may even be compounded of folklore and confusion'. (32)

In addition to suggestions that applied linguistics courses in some form be introduced at secondary and tertiary level, there have also been suggestions that applied linguistics should be a central element in the pre-service education of all teachers. In Linguistics and the Teacher, for example, a number of linguists and educationalists support this idea strongly. Michael Halliday, in his contribution to the book, 'Linguistics in teacher education', lists some of the knowledge he believes teachers need. He includes some basic phonetics and phonology, something on language development in children, and on the relation between language development and cognitive development, a deep study of language variation and varieties, of institutional linguistics (bilingualism and multilingualism, language development and planning), and, finally, the whole question of the place of language in the value systems of communities; 'how language expresses ideologies and creates a culture as a complex of semiotic or meaning systems'. (33)

Whether one agrees or not with the arguments for the introduction of applied linguistics courses for all student teachers, it is obviously an essential area of knowledge for future language teachers, both of the native language and of other languages. The students have, during their education, been more concerned with the 'products' of language in the form of literature, than with language per se. They do not have the concepts or the terminology necessary for other types of language analysis, for as Mike Riddle points out, 'knowing how to use one's language is not equivalent to having a conceptual framework to draw on to explain how it works'. (34)

Insofar as pedagogical knowledge and skill are concerned, Dip.Ed. students who follow the usual path, going directly from school to university and on to the Dip.Ed. year, will have had no opportunity either to practise teaching or to study any aspects of education. They could, however, be described as very knowledgeable about the teaching task in that they have had many years of experience as learners. They have a great deal of implicit knowledge, just as the language learner has a store of knowledge about language in general. In neither case can the learner be described as suffering from a deficiency, as being 'empty', waiting to be filled. Teacher education is partly a matter of making explicit the knowledge and understanding of the teaching task which is already possessed by the student.



2.1.3. Student Reasons for Undertaking the Dip.  
Ed. Course.

The Dip.Ed. student chooses to enter a profession which does not have a high status in Australia. There are several possible reasons for the low status of the teaching profession. Firstly, because everyone has been a pupil, they feel they know a great deal about the activity, that teaching is not as esoteric as medicine or law, with their specialised techniques and bodies of knowledge. Secondly, because the degree years are not conceptualised as part of teacher education, that preparation seems less rigorous than the preparation of a doctor or lawyer. Witkin suggests further that teacher status suffers because teachers are not trusted to assess as well as to teach. The final assessment of pupils has been done externally, as though to 'check up on' whether teachers have performed their task satisfactorily. (35) In medicine or law the profession itself is trusted to maintain standards, rather than an outside body.

It is also possible that teaching has a low status because it is a predominantly female profession, especially at the lower levels and in certain subjects. As a corollary to this, Fielding et al. argue that teaching is devalued because it deals only with children and is therefore an extension of the mother/home role, a role which is not highly valued in our society. (36) Teachers have power only in the world of children, not in the 'adult' world, while pupils are not clients in the sense that doctors and lawyers have clients, for pupils have no choice, either about attending school or about who will teach them.

The status of the profession is related to the status of the Dip.Ed. course which appears to carry less prestige than other professional qualifications. Baynes, for example, describes teacher education as 'more rushed, less open to checks and balances, more sudden, less well defined, more stressful, and above all, more open to public view and comment' than the education of members of professions such as medicine, law, accountancy or architecture. (37)

In addition, the academic value of a course 'which has a pass-rate throughout Australia of over ninety percent' is questioned. (38) The British PGCE course has an equally low failure rate of about two percent. (39) Describing a similar situation in the United States, Banks quotes Conant's comments on the low esteem in which degrees in education have been held there (40), and also cites Lieberman:

although the higher requirements now expected of teachers may eventually help to raise the status of education as a profession, the present status ..... is based chiefly upon the much lower requirements in force during the past four decades. (41)

By contrast, an example of teacher education which carries high prestige is the system of teacher qualification in France, a hierarchical system where the 'top' teachers are paid more and work shorter hours than those who have succeeded, after their university courses, in the competitive state examinations for the Agrégation and the CAPES (Certificat d'aptitude pédagogique à l'enseignement secondaire). The 'top' teachers

teachers, the 'professeurs agrégés', will expect to teach in the sixteen-plus 'lycée' or at the university. They have, however, almost no professional preparation, whereas those who gain their CAPES, which is somewhat lower on the scale of status and qualification, will have 'in addition to excellent command of their subject, a year's course in which their time is divided between study ..... and three short periods of teaching practice'. (42)

Despite the generally low opinion of the teaching profession in Australia, students still choose to join the Dip.Ed. course. In some cases, their reasons are negative; they join 'in the expectation of an easy time' (43), for many 'teaching is a second or third option which they adopt through force of circumstance rather than free choice' (44), they lack a 'vocational sense' and are 'unashamedly heading into teaching because they expect light work, short hours, long holidays and reasonably good pay'. (45)

This is, however, only one side of the picture. Other writers suggest that

a gross determining factor predisposing many young adults to a career in teaching is a desire to work in an environment which allows an integration of professional practice with a generalized commitment to caring for and nurturing children. (46)

Connell et al. make a similar claim:

it still remains true that most teachers went into teaching not because of the chance it gave them to become a millionaire, but because it was a job where they thought they could actually do some good. (47)

For students who have majored in a language and who want to capitalise on the skills and knowledge they have spent many years acquiring, teaching appears to be the main option. That the ability to use another language is not one generally prized by employers is demonstrated by the fact that the National Policy on Languages finds it necessary to suggest that public and private employers should routinely enquire of applicants about their LOTE study. (48) It also points out the need for

the development of courses specifically designed for the purposes of economic affairs focussing on the development of communicative skills in relevant business and trade-related contexts. (49)

There is, in fact, a growing interest in encouraging language learning as a component of other professions. The Japanese course at Drysdale House, Hobart, is one example, where students doing a course on catering, cooking and hotel management also study Japanese language and culture. However, there may be little advantage in this type of course unless students have had adequate language learning experience during their school years.

## 2.2. The Teacher Educators.

Specialisation increases as students go through the education system, beginning in the secondary schools when pupils have timetables consisting of different 'subjects' and teachers are identified by subject rather than by the level they teach, as is the case in the primary school. They become subject 'experts', and this pattern is reinforced by the degree and secondary Dip.Ed. structure. During their degree years, students narrow down their range to two major subjects, followed by concentration on one subject if they go on to honours.

In the Dip.Ed. year, students wishing to become secondary teachers choose their methods according to the subjects studied during the degree years. The Dip. Ed. year itself, like the honours year, can be seen as a year of concentration on one subject, namely Education. However, this is a different type of subject in that it is not studied at any other level of education - it suddenly becomes a subject in the Dip.Ed. year. It is also a subject divided into several sub-subjects, so that there are a number of people concerned with the preparation of the future teacher. These can be divided into three groups; the generalists, the methodologists and the supervising teachers in the schools.

### 2.2.1. The Generalists

The generalist is to education as the theoretical linguist is to language learning. Just as it is possible to abstract general rules and theories from specific languages, to discuss language rather than a particular language, similarly we can generalise from innumerable teaching experiences and discuss education as an abstract subject. The similarities can be carried further in that both areas have divided to accommodate expanding knowledge according to three particular disciplines, namely philosophy, psychology and sociology.

However, language students will not get very far unless they are taught a specific language, for all language is particular, even though we may abstract general rules from specific languages. Similarly, although we may generalise from innumerable teaching experiences, there is no such thing as teaching in the abstract. All teaching is inseparable from what is to be taught.

Like most university staff (but unlike the methodologists as will be shown in the next section), the generalists are appointed on the strength of their subject knowledge rather than on their demonstrated skill in teaching that knowledge. This is not to suggest that some are not excellent teachers, but they are rarely appointed for their teaching skill, nor do they have to undergo any 'training' in the way teachers in the primary and secondary sectors do, or pass a qualifying examination as the French university teacher does. Like the theoretical linguist who cannot necessarily speak a foreign language, the theoretical educationalist does not have to be able to teach.

### 2.2.2. The Methodologists

There is not necessarily a distinct division between the generalist and the methodologist, in many cases the same person can be placed in both categories. However, the latter is closer to the school classroom, and is usually the one who visits students in schools and liaises with supervising teachers. In many ways the methodologist is a mediator, linking the 'two masters', the university and the school. (51)

There are no set qualifications for the methodologist. Most will have a first degree, a Dip.Ed. and possibly some further degree such as an M.A. or M.Ed. Many have followed the circular path of their students, from school to university, back to school, and in this case, back to university. Some methodology courses are taken by practising teachers, while in other cases the methodologist is not currently involved in school classroom teaching.

Many methodologists are excellent teachers who have 'moved on' to pass on their knowledge to future teachers. It seems then that the methodologist differs from other university appointments in that skill in teaching is taken into account. It may be for this reason that the methodology section of the Dip.Ed. is sometimes believed to be less 'rigorous' than the more 'academic' sections, 'rigour' in this case being associated with research or 'theoretical' work rather than 'practical' work. 'Courses in which the student learns the practical aspects of teaching are frowned upon by many academic staff members'. (52)

What are the qualities to be looked for in the 'good' teacher educator? There is no real evidence that those who are excellent teachers in the schools are necessarily those who are good at passing on their skills to others, just as in sport the best player is not necessarily able to train others to play that sport. In fact, for those who are to educate future language teachers, the range of knowledge, experience and skill demanded may be extensive, and would include the following:

- at least six to seven years teaching experience, preferably in a range of situations, possibly including both primary and secondary;
- a continued involvement teaching in schools;
- a sound background in applied linguistics, and ideally a post-graduate degree in this area;
- competence in at least two languages (preferably an Asian and a European) and some understanding of further language systems.



### 2.2.3. The Supervising Teachers in the Schools

Those teachers who supervise student teachers during the practice sessions are generally experienced practitioners, and in a small community like Tasmania most of them will be known personally to the methodologist so that there may be less division between the tertiary and secondary institutions here than there is in other places.

However, although students are placed with experienced teachers, this does not necessarily mean that those teachers are able to explain just what makes their teaching successful. They have had no specific help towards the best way to assist students who come to them. The situation may be compared to that of learning another language from a native speaker who can provide input but may not be able to analyse why the learner makes particular mistakes. An apprenticeship situation has benefits only if the supervisor has the understanding both to analyse where the learner is going wrong, and to help that learner develop existing skills and knowledge to a further stage.

In addition, students will not necessarily be placed with teachers who are 'au fait' with new perspectives in language education. If students have the opportunity to observe a wide range of teaching styles, this need not be a disadvantage, but usually they are placed with only two or three language teachers in the course of the Dip.Ed. year, so those teachers will

necessarily be their principal models. This may be less than helpful to students; as McDonough points out, teachers are particularly prone to 'egocentric error'. They tend to assume that

because something has regularly occurred in a certain way in their own class, it normally occurs this way. Teachers are particularly at risk in this respect because there are normally few opportunities for them to observe other teachers. (53)

### 2.3. Conclusion.

Although there are changes occurring in language education, these are so far more evident in the early stages of that education than at the upper secondary and tertiary levels. Dip.Ed. students have, therefore, been through a system in which the aims of intellectual mastery gradually begin to dominate after those early stages. In addition, there are certain 'gaps' in the linguistic education of the students, particularly in the area of applied linguistics. Because this area contains essential information for the language teacher, the students' lack of knowledge will have to be rectified, at least to some extent, during the Dip.Ed. year.

In Tasmania, the education of the future language teacher begins in the secondary school. That education does not end with the Dip.Ed. year, despite a commonly held belief to the contrary. However, this year is a water-shed, the period during which the student moves from behind the pupil's desk to the front of the class. The scene has been set with a description of language education, the actors have been introduced in this chapter. The next chapter provides the 'script' of the play, the Dip.Ed. course itself.

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### CHAPTER 3

#### THE DIP.ED. COURSE AT THE TASMANIAN CENTRE FOR EDUCATION.

##### 3.0. Introduction.

The Dip.Ed. at the Tasmanian Centre for Education is a one-year post-graduate course, an 'end-on' course, which provides the knowledge and skills deemed necessary for the beginning teacher. Although the course has been offered for over seventy years (1), it is only in the last decade that a Dip.Ed or some equivalent qualification has become obligatory for a secondary teacher. Because the Dip.Ed. is the only possible qualification for the Tasmanian secondary teacher of languages, it is this course which will be examined.

All Australian states have Dip.Ed. courses, and comparisons will be made between several of these and the Tasmanian course, as well as between these and the Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) courses in Britain. The latter are similar to our own, presumably because, as with so many Australian institutions, our courses were originally modelled on the British system. In order to present a different system of teacher education, I will also make reference to that of the Wissenschaftliches Institut für Schulpraxis in the West German state of Bremen. Appendix C lists the institutions which have been researched.

The Dip.Ed. year at the Tasmanian Centre for Education can be divided into non-subject-specific components and subject-specific components. As my principal concern is with the preparation of teachers in a particular subject, the latter components are the ones which will be discussed in detail, although it is necessary to set these within the wider context of the whole Dip.Ed. year.

The subject-specific components are the methods courses and the school experience sessions. The language methods course is examined both with regard to its content and to the ways in which that content is presented to students. The overall assessment of the Dip.Ed. course is discussed, as well as the assessment of the methods course and the school experience components.

### 3.1. Non-Subject-Specific Components.

The more general part of the Dip.Ed. course can, in its turn, be divided into two sections. The first of these is entitled Foundation Studies, and consists of 'the study of human development and thought from a sociological, psychological and philosophical standpoint'. (2) These aspects are studied and assessed through three separate units, Educational Psychology, Education and Society, and Philosophy of Education, which together are allocated 108 hours overall and are given a weighting of 20% within the course.



Several years ago, Tasmanian students, in addition to the Foundation Studies, chose from a range of options, some of which extended what they studied in their methods courses. These have now been replaced by the section entitled Classroom Practice and Educational Technology, allocated 60 hours and given a weighting of 15%. The aims of this section are set out in the Handbook as follows:

The first section of the course provides students with an introduction to those general principles and practices of class teaching which are common to the various levels of schooling and to a wide range of subject teaching. The second section deals with the organisation and administration of education. Section 3 explores the operation and use of audio-visual equipment, including the preparation of software. (3)

Other institutions have similar 'practical' courses as well as the more theoretical units. The introduction of such an element is presumably a response to the frequent complaints that the Dip.Ed. year is 'over-theoretical' and that students need to know more about 'techniques' to survive in the classroom.

In Britain, Harold Baynes found that the number of hours allocated overall to the principal elements of the PGCE course, excluding the practice teaching sessions, varied widely between institutions. Out of six institutions, the lowest number of total hours was 199, while the highest was 342. (4) Within these institutions, the number of hours allocated to non-subject-specific and subject-specific courses varied also. In some cases, twice the number of hours was given to the former as to the latter, while in others the situation was reversed. In other institutions, the number of hours allocated was much the same for both, while one institution divided the time equally between the two, giving each 140 hours. (5)

In Tasmania, the total number of hours for the Dip. Ed. course, excluding practice teaching, is 310, of which 152 are allocated to methods courses, and 168 to the non-subject-specific components. The two components are therefore fairly evenly divided. Other institutions may give less time to the methods courses; for example, of two institutions which have a total of 276 hours overall, one allocates 100 hours and one 96 hours to the methods courses (the Sydney Institute of Education and the University of Western Australia respectively).

The Bremen course is organised differently from both the Australian and the British courses. Although it is also an 'end-on' course, students will have had an opportunity to study some educational theory during their first degree, so that theoretical subjects are of less importance during the course. The students, like their counterparts in Australia and Britain, will have studied two major subjects during the degree years, and they are assigned to two Fachleiter (teacher trainers) in these subjects, as well as to a third Fachleiter who deals with more general pedagogical and psychological aspects of teaching.

The Bremen students meet each of their Fachleiter at a two hour weekly seminar. In addition, they are appointed to a school where they spend twelve lessons each week, either observing or teaching under supervision. The three Fachleiter visit the school regularly in order to observe and to advise students on problems arising from their teaching practice.

### 3.2 Curriculum and Method Studies.

#### 3.2.1. Language Methods and Non-Language methods.

Tasmanian students choose two methods, each allocated four hours a week (76 hours overall), and given the same weighting (20%). Most Australian institutions follow this pattern, although there are some exceptions. The University of Western Australia, for instance, divides Curriculum Studies into a 'major' and a 'minor' teaching area. The pre-requisite for the former is that the student should have majored in the subject in the first degree, while the second only requires a sub-major. Major method students have 66 hours of seminars and minor method students have 26 hours. This is similar to the British situation where students also prepare in two methods but one is a 'subsidiary' and allocated less time than the main method. Baynes found that the difference in time allocation ranges from 68 - 150 hours for the main method to 20 - 81 hours for the subsidiary. (6)

There could, of course, be some subjective division into 'major' and 'minor' by the students themselves, according to whether they studied the subjects to sub-major or major level in their first degree. However, this does not seem to justify dividing the two methods into 'major' and 'minor', particularly if it cannot be ensured that the latter is allocated enough time for adequate development. Baynes, for example, questioned the quality of language teaching which could result from a course of only 20 hours. (7)

The only double methods courses possible in Tasmania are in music and visual art, whereas a larger institution such as the Sydney CAE, while providing double curriculum courses in these and other areas, also provides single courses in ESL and the following languages - Classics, French, German, Hebrew, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese and Modern Greek. This means that students with the necessary pre-requisites can do a double language course or a language course combined with ESL. Other institutions also provide the opportunity for students to choose two language methods. The University of New South Wales has separate French, German and Spanish methods, the Melbourne CAE has a double method for languages, and at the Canberra CAE many of the students opt for the teaching of ESL in their second semester after doing language method in the first semester.

The advantage for language students who take only language related methods courses is the greater amount of time available for further development and practice in the necessary skills. However, the disadvantage is the lack of flexibility entailed in the restriction of the students' future options to one teaching subject. The system of two equal methods, one in languages and one in another subject seems more beneficial, both to the student teachers and to the schools.

The second method generally taken by language students in Tasmania is either English or social science, although there are sometimes students whose second method is mathematics or science. Students themselves will presumably make useful connections between their method courses, but this tends to be left to chance, just as it is in schools. The lack of integration between subjects, both in schools and in the Dip.Ed. year, is particularly unfortunate when the subjects concerned are as closely related as English and other languages.

There were, perhaps, once good reasons for the lack of cooperation between these two areas of language education. Perren, for example, claims that even when the teaching of grammar was regarded as 'an acceptable aim in English, and an essential objective in foreign language teaching, there had been disputes about which side would introduce grammatical concepts, nomenclature etc. which both needed.' (8) Once the English teacher became less concerned with 'form, accuracy and analysis' and more interested in 'function, fluency and use' (9), the two moved even further apart. However, the communicative approach represents a parallel development in the teaching of LOTE's, so that the two are again closer in their approaches to language learning, although those who teach in only one of these areas are not always aware of this.

The situation is similar in social science, for, while it is true that pupils should be introduced to a variety of cultures and language education can only introduce them to one or two, as the ALL Project stresses, part of the learning process in language education is that learners should be exposed to 'socio-cultural data and direct experience of the culture(s) embedded within the language they are learning.' (10) Both the language teacher and the social science teacher are working towards the same goal, although in different ways. To do so can strengthen and extend the learning of the pupils, but only if the different ways result from a coherent and conscious policy.

### 3.2.2. Combined Languages and Separate Languages in the Methods Course.

For larger institutions catering for larger numbers of students, the separation of languages within the methods course is a viable proposition. At the Sydney CAE, for example, there is usually an average of fifty students taking one or more languages. Those languages with larger numbers (French, German, Italian and Modern Greek) can therefore be taken in separate classes for the three hours allocated to method courses. The languages with smaller numbers (Indonesian, Japanese, Hebrew) have two hours a week with a specialist part-time lecturer and are combined for the remaining hour for general methodology. (11) At Melbourne University, students are divided into workshop groups according to their languages, for example, French, Italian and Spanish students work together.

In institutions with smaller numbers of students, the language method courses combine all languages, whether European or Asian. The mixture of languages is not necessarily a disadvantage, as it provides opportunities for students to teach each other and to gain insights into other language systems. However, provision should be made, as used to be the case in Tasmania, for tutorials devoted to the teaching of individual languages. Unfortunately the provision of such tutorials depends on the availability of funds to employ part-time specialists. In recent years such funding has not been forthcoming.

A further dimension is added when native speakers join the courses in order to become teachers of their languages. The activity of teaching one's mother tongue as a foreign language requires, to some extent, a re-learning of that language in a different way. It is partly for this reason that the Dip.Ed. language methods course is no longer considered an adequate qualification for ESL teachers. In addition, ESL is directed at a different type of learner, with different needs from those of the English speaking pupil learning French or Japanese.

At present, the Tasmanian course caters for all these different types of students, with the exception of the student who wishes to teach ESL. Tasmanians have to go outside the state to qualify in this area. Although the smallness of the numbers means that there can be positive advantages in this situation, there will also be disadvantages, particularly for those students preparing in a language unknown to the methodologist, and preparing for language teaching situations outside the more usual school classroom.

### 3.2.3. Primary Languages.

A further development in some institutions over recent years is the introduction of community language courses for the primary area. Latrobe University in 1985 began offering specialist studies in community language teaching at the B.Ed. level, where classes combine primary and secondary teachers, most of whom are native speakers of the language. Melbourne CAE has introduced a course for teachers of Italian in primary schools into the B.Ed. primary course. The South Australian CAE also offers a Graduate Diploma in community languages.

In Tasmania, those who wish to use their linguistic abilities must do so in the secondary area or not at all, as there is no provision for primary foreign or community language teacher development. The question of language programmes in the primary area is complex and requires more discussion than is possible in this context. However, the following points should be made:



- the types of course and of teaching required differ from those required at secondary level;
- because there is no opportunity for Tasmanian primary teachers to undertake development in this area, where primary programmes do exist, they are usually taken by visiting specialists who may themselves rely on knowledge gained during experience in the secondary context;
- because schools rely on extra funding to pay such specialists, if such funding is withdrawn, as has been the case with multicultural funding, the programmes have to be abandoned;
- if provision were made in pre-service primary teacher education for such development, those teachers with linguistic skills might feel more confident about using them to develop language programmes, while principals would be more likely to consider such programmes if there were teachers on the staff capable of taking them.

### 3.3. The Methods Course - Content and Presentation of Content.

#### 3.3.1. Content of Dip.Ed. Method Courses.

The methods course is designed to turn the language learner into a language teacher by introducing the 'theory, methods and practice of teaching modern languages in secondary schools.' (12) The topics covered during such a course can be assumed to summarise the knowledge deemed necessary for this process. Appendix A presents an analysis of these topics as they are presented in several methods courses in Australian institutions.

On the whole, the courses examined are similar in their general outline. All, for example, include some sort of historical overview of language teaching methodology. This part of the course will cover the well-documented history of the different approaches in language education, and the theories of language and language learning on which they are based.

Courses also place language education in the broader context of the community and the school, so that students become aware of issues which may be important to them as teachers. National developments such as the National Policy on Languages and the ALL Project have implications for the classroom teachers, while each state has its own particular characteristics, its own attitudes to different languages and to language education in general. Teachers have to deal with the wider community and therefore need some knowledge of the structure of that community in order to influence it and to understand its influence on them and on their task.

In the school context, teachers are seen to need information on the place of languages in the overall curriculum, its contribution to that curriculum and its relationship to other subjects, particularly as many language teachers will teach other subjects. Courses also discuss the organisation and management of classes, including such aspects as group work, teaching across ability levels and individualized programmes.

Obviously, the main concern of these courses is with what happens in the classroom, the teaching and learning of the language. The headings under which this is dealt with give an indication of the main issues in language education at the moment. Besides a stress on the four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking, another frequently mentioned topic is the place of 'grammar' in communicative language education.

Other activities explicitly mentioned include the use of drama, games, songs, poems, but literature is only mentioned once. Its place, so secure twenty years ago, is now taken by 'authentic materials' (newspapers, magazines etc.) and by the songs, games and poems already mentioned. Other areas singled out for attention are the teaching of vocabulary and of civilization or 'culture'. Resources and media are given comprehensive coverage, including the possible uses of computers in language education. Finally, assessment of language learning is covered in all courses.

With regard to lists of books, either as prescribed reading or as reference books, practice varies between courses. In some cases, there is a minimum short list which is enlarged on during the course, in other cases the reading list takes up several pages and is divided for easy reference into sub-headings such as methodology, curriculum planning, making and using materials. Frequently mentioned books are Eric Hawkins' Modern Languages in the Curriculum, Wilga Rivers' Teaching Foreign Language Skills, and Krashen and Terrell's The Natural Approach.

More importantly in the long run, courses introduce students to a number of journals, including Babel, the journal of the AFMLTA. In 1982 Evert Jansen, as part of the research for his dissertation on language teaching in Tasmania, carried out a survey which included a request for information about Tasmanian teachers' professional reading habits. The results showed that the main methodology textbooks known were those read during the Dip.Ed. year, and that the principal source of information once students became teachers is Babel and the newsletter of the MLTAT. Teachers at that time expressed dissatisfaction with the theoretical and esoteric nature of Babel and showed more enthusiasm for the local newsletter. (13) However, Babel has undergone some changes recently and is now more useful to the practising teacher. The editorial policy since 1985 has been to 'provide a varied selection of material, particularly articles of "across the languages" interest and practical ideas for the classroom teacher.' (14) Both Babel and the local newsletter contain reviews of recent literature, so that at least teachers who read these can keep up to date to some extent.

It seems probable that the reading done during the Dip.Ed. year will be the main contact with literature about languages and language learning throughout the teacher's career, unless they return to university to study for a further degree. While this is less an indictment of teachers than of a system which gives little encouragement or time for reading and reflection, it suggests that it may be more useful for the methods course to introduce students to a wide range of literature rather than adopting the 'set text' approach.

### 3.3.2. Course Content in the British PGCE Course.

The investigation of the PGCE course in Britain by Harold Baynes showed that the course suffers from the same problem as the Australian Dip.Ed. courses, namely the lack of time available 'to prepare teachers for all eventualities in their future careers.' (15)

As a result of Baynes' study, a working party was set up to examine the question of the content of language method courses and to produce a 'common core' of content. Such a list would ensure that no major item was neglected during the PGCE year, as well as reducing the load on courses. The idea of a common core is that essential items are covered during the PGCE year, while the less essential items are left for later in-service development, although this, of course, entails that in-service is not voluntary but seen as a necessary continuation of pre-service teacher education.

As a useful basis for comparison, I include the list compiled by the working party as their proposal for a core content for PGCE courses (Appendix B). The underlined topics are those which they suggest might be given little attention during the PGCE year, and left to be dealt with during later in-service development. They suggest that tutors might use the list to check that the essential has been done, rather than that it should provide seminar titles.

Obviously, some of the topics listed are not applicable to the Tasmanian situation. 'Effective use of foreign language assistant', for example, is hardly an issue except in HSC Colleges. The one French Assistant(e)'

is based in the Hobart Colleges, although he/she also visits other schools in all parts of the state. Similarly, 'visits and exchanges abroad' are less easily organised from Tasmania, although they do occur, for example the yearly visit to New Caledonia or Tahiti by a group of French students. Other areas not specifically mentioned in the Australian courses examined include the 'role and use of homework', and the 'use of foreign language and mother tongue as appropriate in the classroom'. The 'personal' category, which contains an interesting list of topics, is not listed in Australian courses as such. It must be borne in mind, of course, that the fact that a course does not specifically mention certain topics does not prove that these are not covered, either explicitly or implicitly.

### 3.3.3. The Presentation of Course Content.

The ways in which content is presented are as significant as the content itself, especially in a subject which aims to impart processes as well as products, to develop in students the ability to do something, besides handing over some content to them. This situation holds both in the teaching of other languages and in the preparation of language teachers. In the latter case, presentation of content can range along a continuum which has, at one end, a lecture type approach, the handing over of knowledge as a product, and, at the other, an activity based approach in which students construct their own knowledge through engaging in some activity.

It may be argued that good teaching differs according to the situation and that the lecture approach is therefore more suitable for older students, just as the 'grammatical approach' to language learning may be advocated for older learners. Most certainly all teaching must be adapted to the group being taught, to their age and stage, their needs and interests, but if a fundamental principle of learning is that it is more effectively achieved by doing, then that principle should not be contradicted in the Dip.Ed. classes; to do so can be interpreted as a trivialisation of the educational principles being advanced.

This is not to suggest that talk about an activity is not important, but the insights developed through discussion need either to arise from previous activities, or to be put into practice after discussion. For the student teacher the purposes of teaching are of primary importance, so they must reflect on what they wish to achieve as well as exploring ways of achieving these aims. It is perhaps less important to show them ways of presenting grammar or culture than to help them reflect on why they would present these as parts of an overall design. The reasons for teaching something will necessarily shape the ways in which it is taught.

The title given to a topic in a methods course tells little of the methodologists' purposes or methods in covering that topic. 'The Nature of Language', for example, may be presented through lectures on the many theories of language, discussion

about Chomsky and de Saussure, descriptions of different ways of teaching a second language, or an introduction to research about child language and second language learning. Students in such a context may be passive receivers of knowledge, although they may be required to do something with the knowledge, to join in the discussion or write an assignment.

However, some courses also give students the experience of learning a new language themselves, a concrete experience from which to reflect on the factors which might inhibit or enhance language learning. In Britain, Southampton University, for example, uses Mandarin in this way, while the London Institute of Education uses an 'exotic language'. The strategy is also used in several Australian courses, either through demonstration lessons in a language other than English not spoken or likely to be spoken by the students, or, in classes of mixed languages, by asking the students to prepare units to teach each other.

Such activities re-sensitize future language teachers to what it is like to confront a new language, something they may have forgotten, while demonstrating methods and techniques of language education. Discussion, therefore, has a two-fold purpose, to articulate the feelings caused by the language learning experience, and to examine the methods used, although the two cannot be neatly divided, for the learning experience is always shaped by the method used.



The students' expertise as language learners will distort the activity to some extent, in that they are able to use strategies unavailable to their future pupils, but the articulation, the bringing to consciousness of these strategies means that teachers will be able to pass them on to their pupils. Although knowledge of a particular language is obviously necessary for teachers, it is equally important that they have an understanding of how languages are learned, what strategies can be used when linguistic knowledge is inadequate.

Two further examples of activity-based approaches in teacher education will demonstrate the differences between these and a lecture-based approach. In 1986 I attended a conference of IATEFL (International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language), at which a session on teacher education demonstrated a method which has been developed for use in Spain. The Spanish had asked the British Council for assistance in developing 'participant-centred modules', i.e. materials which could be used by 'untrained trainers'. One such module contained a task giving practical experience of making a written summary of a reading passage, a task common in language classrooms as a means of checking on comprehension. The passages presented were on two theories important to language education, behaviourism and mentalism, so that the participants were working at two different levels; they were practising a technique used in the classroom, but with material useful to their theoretical knowledge as teachers. Having read and summarised the passage, they were directed into pairs or groups to check their understanding of what had been read, and a correct version was built up from group consensus, there was no 'expert' to do the marking.

A similar task-oriented method was exemplified at the same conference by Alan Maley in a seminar entitled 'Come Back Literature, All is Forgiven'. His argument was for a partial reinstatement of literature in language programmes, both on motivational grounds because it offers non-trivial content and can tap individual interests, and also because it enhances language learning. Seminar participants worked in groups on tasks of the following type: 'The lines in this poem are in the wrong order. Try to put them into the correct order. Then compare your results with a partner.' Again, the activity worked on two levels. Our own involvement as we discussed our tasks and worked out our solutions gave an insight into the value of this type of task for language learners, as well as being a practical example of how such tasks can be organised.

In both these cases the group members were engaged in trying out the activities suggested and in reflection about the pedagogical theory underlying these particular activities, their intention. The aim was not only practical, working out how to organise activities, but theoretical, thinking about why they should be used, the aim of such activities. This type of 'discovery learning' is advocated for school pupils, but tends to be neglected for older students, despite the obvious advantages it gives for combining theory and practice in courses where there is only a limited amount of time available.

### 3.4 School Experience

This section of the Dip.Ed. course is seen as the most important by the students because it is here that they are finally put to the test. The importance stems not only from the fact that in Tasmania they must pass in this section in order to gain their Dip.Ed. qualification, but from the even more important fact that their experiences in the classroom will contribute most to their future confidence as teachers. Brilliant results in written assignments will not counterbalance perceived failure before a class, just as brilliant results in a language course will be discounted if the learner cannot communicate with native speakers of that language.

British and Australian institutions usually organise school experience in two blocks, although institutions differ both in the amount of time allocated and in the distribution of the two blocks during the year. The Tasmanian Dip.Ed. allocates ten weeks for school experience. None of the other Australian institutions surveyed allocated more time than this, while some allocated one or two weeks less. In Britain, Baynes found that the number of weeks allocated in the institutions he surveyed was between ten and fifteen weeks. (16) He also found that it was common practice for students to be required to spend one or two weeks in schools before joining the course. (17) This, at least partly, conforms to the HMI recommendations on the 'Content of Initial Training', which state that students 'should spend at least 12 weeks and preferably more full-time in schools .....; this period should be preceded and followed by an associated programme of school visits'. (18) In Tasmania there is no similar recommendation that students should spend time in schools other than their two blocks of practice teaching.

There are two main points of view about the distribution of practice teaching, and in Australia, as in Britain, practice varies. Some institutions prefer to have two blocks of school experience towards the beginning of the Dip.Ed. year on the principle that theory is more useful after some practice, that until students have taught in schools, lack of concrete experience makes the course at the institution over-theoretical. Others prefer to leave school experience till later so that students can learn something about teaching in a supportive atmosphere before having to take classes themselves.

In Tasmania, 1987 has seen a change-over from later school experience in terms two and three, to earlier, the blocks of school experience now occurring in terms one and two. It is too soon to tell what the benefits or otherwise of the change will be. However, Baynes, when discussing this topic, makes the comment about the British situation that 'in the absence of evidence as to which institution has the "right" mixture or which pattern produces the better teacher, one must again conclude that the variation of practice in this matter cannot be taken as significant.'

(19)

The importance of practice teaching cannot be denied if students are to be able to teach on their own on completion of the Dip.Ed. year. Although other strategies such as simulation exercises and micro-teaching can be usefully employed to prepare students for the classroom, they cannot be a substitute for the 'real thing'. The Dip.Ed. year must, therefore, include some practice in the school classroom.

Turney has, however, picked out three main faults which make the school experience less valuable for students than it should be. Surveying research on this area of teacher education, he points to the evidence highlighting both 'the importance and defectiveness of current practice teaching patterns', and goes on to list the 'discerned faults' as

the gap between the educational theory advocated in the institutions and the practical experiences of student teachers, the lack of understanding and cooperation from some school personnel, and the trauma experienced by some students when faced with class teaching responsibilities. (20)

The three faults are, of course, interrelated, for the lack of 'understanding and cooperation' from supervising teachers is partly due to the 'gap' between 'educational theory' and the 'practical experiences'. Fielding makes this point when he discusses the 'two masters' problem, claiming that the student has, in the end, to make a choice between the university and the school, and that usually the 'model of education practice supported by the school must ..... prevail.' (21) He believes that the 'school model eventually secures the greater part of the student's allegiance.' (22)

Although the 'trauma' experienced by students must, to some extent, arise from their awareness of the conflict between the two institutions, they are also in the difficult position of being neither 'fish nor fowl'. On the one hand they are still students, assessed on their performance in the classroom, while on the other hand, the practice teaching sessions are their main opportunity to internalise the role of teacher. In the schools they may have some difficulty combining these two conflicting roles.

There are other possible ways of structuring school experience. In Bremen, as described earlier, students become members of a school staff, so that theory and practice occur in parallel throughout the year. At the school, students observe lessons given by regular teachers, teach classes under the supervision of teachers, and are regularly visited by the education institution's staff. This takes up two thirds of their time, while the remaining third is spent attending seminars at the institution.

At first sight, a system such as this seems preferable to our own, in that the problems described above would be, to some extent, alleviated. It would entail closer cooperation between the schools and the University, rather than forcing students to make some sort of choice between educational theory and practical experience. It would also lessen the 'trauma' of students, who, in our system, are only visitors to schools during practice teaching sessions, and therefore have no time to establish adequate teacher-pupil relationships. As visitors they also have to 'slot into' whatever programme their supervising teachers have designed, whereas the Bremen system would enable student teachers to carry through an activity, to plan, teach and assess it themselves.

There are, however, also disadvantages, the main one being the restriction of students to one particular school. As discussed earlier, it may be more helpful for them to see as wide a range of teaching styles as possible. The Bremen system does not allow for

this, although students can, of course, visit and observe at other schools. A further possible disadvantage is that the Bremen students cannot 'escape' from their mistakes, they must remain in the school and take the consequences. While practising teachers must, of course, be able to deal with this, it is perhaps more useful for student teachers to be able to leave their mistakes behind, although they must be encouraged to analyse why and where they went wrong.

While I would not advocate the introduction of a system such as the one used in Bremen in the pre-service year, it is one which could profitably be examined as a possibility for an induction year. This would extend the concept of pre-service education so that it became a two-year course, while also leading into a more natural and coherent policy of continued teacher development extending beyond the Dip.Ed. year. This suggestion will be followed up in the concluding chapter. (See page 127, and also page 94.)

Finally, it must be stressed that the worth of practice teaching always depends on the individual supervising teachers in the schools, whatever system is used. However, in Tasmania the present arrangement makes the supervision of student teachers a sideline to the normal routine of these teachers, or, more precisely, an extra duty added to their already heavy timetable. This duty is undertaken without any specific preparation being available as to how best to carry out the task.

Most institutions do send out circulars to supervising teachers giving them some information as to what the university expects them to do. In addition, those teachers who supervise language students in Tasmania receive a list of aspects to which they are asked to give special attention. Methodologists also visit the schools several times during the practice teaching sessions, although it is worth noting here that at the Sydney CAE methodologists do not supervise their own students; they are assigned to a school and supervise all the student teachers in that school, whatever their teaching subjects. In this case, any assistance given would have to be of a general nature rather than specifically related to the subject in question.

It is only supervising teachers who have established a confident relationship with their pupils who will not feel threatened by the advent of student teachers. Those who are not confident themselves are unlikely to encourage student teachers to experiment on their classes. However, under the present system in Tasmania, there is little organised evaluation of who might be the best teachers to supervise students, nor is there a great deal of help for those teachers who are asked to undertake this task.



### 3.5. Assessment of the Dip.Ed. Students.

#### 3.5.1. Assessment in Language Methods Courses.

The examination as a means of assessment does not appear to be used often in methodology courses in Australia, although there are exceptions. At the Adelaide University, for example, students may choose to be assessed either by examination or by course work. In general, the Australian practice is similar to that of Britain, where students are assessed on the basis of

regular course assignments and practical exercises, plus one or more longer essays or projects. In addition students may be assessed on dossiers of teaching material compiled during the course, and on visual aids or kits which they have devised. (23)

The London University Institute of Education, for example, requires four assignments from PGCE students, each of approximately 2500 words, on the following topics:

- two structures or patterns are chosen and notes are required on how the student would teach these;
- an evaluative report on the opening chapters or units of a course (detailed questions are provided to give the students a framework);
- an essay on a topic agreed between student and tutor;
- a plan for a series of four to five lessons based on one situation, including tests, pictures, data, suggested structures and vocabulary.

In some Australian courses the essay is the main method of assessment. The Tasmanian student, for example, writes three papers of 2000 words each on topics such as: 'The teaching of grammar: what the authors have to say', or 'How a baby learns to talk, and the relevance of this to foreign language learning'. In addition to these three papers each student also prepares a tutorial paper on one of the seminar topics. This type of assignment is also used at the Melbourne CAE, where students write a total of 4000 words, although for the last few years the topics have been chosen by the students rather than being set by the methodologist, and usually arise naturally out of discussion in seminars and from school experience.

Other methodologists assess students through more activity-oriented assignments. For example, at Melbourne University, students are required to prepare a folio containing materials and exercises suitable for teaching situations, as well as written summaries of the reading references applicable to these activities. At the Sydney CAE assessment is usually divided into three components; attendance at and participation in, all class activities (15%), demonstration of application of practical language skills (25%), and submission of six resource units to be assessed on their value for use as teaching aids and materials (60%). This is one of the few courses where assessment of language skills is mentioned, but of course such assessment is possible where languages are separated and taken by a specialist in the language.

Assignments therefore range along a continuum with the theoretical essay at one end and the practical, activity based project at the other. The two types of assignment obviously have different purposes and assess different aspects of the course. The more theoretical essay assesses knowledge rather than skill, although it will include discussion of the application of this knowledge in the classroom. Its main function is to assess the students' ability to read and draw conclusions from books on theories of language and language learning.

The more practical activity based assignments have one major advantage from the students' point of view, in that they involve the collection of materials to be used in the classroom. However, activities on their own are not sufficient, because students must be guided to an understanding of the purposes of the activities. The knowledge gained from the theoretical essay needs to be applied with understanding, and the activity based assignments are a means of assessing the students' ability to do this. For assessment to be useful, both types of assignment are necessary, not as separate entities, but as related parts of a coherent course.

### 3.5.2. Assessment of Practice Teaching.

The situation in Australia as regards the assessment of practice teaching is similar to that in Britain. Baynes, after examining the assessment of practice teaching there, describes it as a difficult question, 'full of pitfalls'. He discerned three underlying

assumptions made by institutions but rarely justified:

- a) that it is possible to assess student teacher performance
- b) that inequalities of placement, grouping, resources, school help or guidance, tutorial support, etc., can either be ignored or compensated
- c) that there is common agreement what constitutes success. (24)

His final comment is that 'whether just or not, efficient or not, assessment in the PGCE course is a very imprecise science'. (25)

In order to examine some of these problems, it will be useful to describe the somewhat different system of assessment used in Bremen. Here practice teaching is assessed through two components, reports and demonstration lessons. The reports are written on the students by the two methodologists, the education studies tutor, and the headmaster of the student's school. These comprise two thirds of the assessment and the remaining one third consists of a demonstration lesson given by each student in each of their subjects before an examination board. Those on the board are a chairman (usually a headmaster, school inspector, or head of one of the institute's departments), the three Fachleiter, a representative of the student's school, and a fellow trainee suggested by the student. The latter two members take part in the board's deliberations but have no vote.

The demonstration lessons must be accompanied by a paper giving information about the class, the didactical and methodological implications of the lesson plans and lessons, and after the lessons, the students must comment on their own performance and answer

questions on it from the examination board. Although this type of assessment obviously relies on the way the school experience is structured in Bremen, it does present some possible solutions to the problems evident in our own methods of assessing practice... teaching.

One of the causes of the 'imprecision' of assessment mentioned by Baynes is the fact that it relies on the subjective judgements of only a few people, rather than the assessment being carried out by a number of different teacher educators as is the case in Bremen. In Tasmania, it is the supervising teachers who make the judgement, with the methodologist as advisor only. The Sydney CAE has a similar system, although this would be necessary in a situation where methodologists do not supervise their own students. In other institutions, the teacher educators from the university or college do the assessment, while teachers write a report only.

Another problem in assessing practice teaching is the difficulty of breaking a complex activity like teaching into smaller parts in order to judge whether it has been carried out effectively. Micro-teaching does this to some extent, distinguishing between skills such as reinforcement, basic questioning, variability in teaching, explaining, introductory procedures and closure and advanced questioning. (26)

Although not as precise as this type of break-down, the school experience report form given to supervising teachers in Tasmania establishes some of the criteria by which they are to judge students. The form seeks information regarding specific areas and skills under the headings of relationships with children, preparation, knowledge and understanding, and teaching skills. Each area has specific suggestions to help the supervising teacher comment. There is a second section which asks for general comment on over-all performance and likely potential.

However, the main disadvantage of a system such as this is the reliance on only one or two people, people who, as described earlier, have had no specific development to help them in their task. This is not to denigrate these teachers, but the Bremen system does allow for both institutions, the school and the university, to report on students, and requires some consensus between them. Such a system would force those involved to clarify their views on what constitutes success.

It may seem a disadvantage of the Bremen system that the classroom teacher has little input into the final assessment of the student, for the headmaster's report is based on his own observations, although it may include remarks and observations by other members of staff. However, a further problem in our own system is that the necessity to assess students may conflict with the main objective of school experience, namely that the students should practise teaching. This

possibility of a conflict between the functions of advisor and examiner is also discussed in Baynes' dissertation, where he addresses the question of who should assess practice teaching: course tutors, class teachers, external examiners or inspectors.  
(27)

It is possible that freeing the supervising teachers, at least to some extent, from the responsibility of passing final judgement of student teachers, might allow them to advise and criticise more fully, while the student teachers would feel less pressure to conform to the types of teaching used by their supervising teachers in order to gain approval and a satisfactory assessment. Furthermore, if the final assessment were postponed to the end of the course, or even to the end of the suggested induction year, the students would be more able to experiment without having to fear that the failure of experiments would be recorded as negative achievements.

### 3.5.3. The Overall Assessment of Dip.Ed. Students.

In conclusion, further comparisons between the overall assessment of the Tasmanian students and the students in Bremen will enable me to bring together some of the issues discussed in this chapter. It is in this area that the advantages of the Bremen system become evident, in that methods of assessment there allow students to bring the different aspects of the course together into some sort of coherent whole. The ways in which our students are assessed, on the other hand, epitomise the lack of integration between the different components of the Dip.Ed. course.

In the Bremen course, there are three components in assessment; practice teaching (50%), an oral examination (25%), and a thesis (25%). The assessment of practice teaching has already been described. The oral examination, taken in front of the examination board which assesses practice teaching, is divided into three parts, each lasting twenty minutes. The aim of the examination is to assess students on their two methods subjects and on the general educational studies component of the course.

For the thesis, students are required to write forty pages on a theme arising from their teaching experience. The theme is agreed upon between the student and the examiner who is, in most cases, one of the Fachleiter, as the thesis is usually based on one of the student's teaching subjects, although it may arise from the general educational studies section. It must, however, be based on a teaching unit and include a methodological part outlining objectives and teaching strategies used. The thesis is evaluated according to whether the students show an ability to analyse their experience and to bring together the theory discussed at the seminars and the practice experienced in the school.

The ways in which assessment is carried out are less important, however, than the purposes of that assessment, and the procedures at Bremen appear to arise from a coherent policy in which all teacher educators, including those in the schools, work together. This is a complete contrast to the methods of assessment in Tasmania, where all components are assessed separately by the teacher educators concerned.



Different means of assessment are used by the different teacher educators. The three units of the Foundations section are assessed by examination (one two hour examination for each), as well as by assignments and tutorial papers during the year. The Classroom Practice and Educational Technology section is assessed by assignments and projects. The assessment of the other components, the methods courses and practice teaching, has been described in the previous sections.

Assignments for the non-subject-specific sections add up to a total of 16,000 words, which does not, of course, include the words written in examinations. The number of assignments required in the methods courses varies according to the subject, but the language method course requires 7000 words, so that, even if the students' second method is assessed by assignments of half that length, the language student will write more than 25,000 words during the year. In Britain, Baynes found that there was a fairly common assignment of 16,000 to 18,000 words for the PGCE student. (28)

The argument that may be used to justify this burden is the shortness of time in the Dip.Ed. year, as well as the fact that, once students begin teaching, few seem to have the time or the energy to read further on educational topics. The assignments force them to read up on each topic and to reflect, through writing, on what they have read.

These arguments might be more valid if students had fewer assignments overall, but given their other commitments during the year, it is unlikely that they will have the time to do more than cover these topics superficially. More significantly, it underlines the attitude to teacher development which sees the Dip.Ed. year as the principal agent of teacher education. Teacher educators appear to believe that anything 'missed out' during this year will never be supplied.

The timing of the assignments can also enforce a superficial treatment. If, as in Tasmania, school experience takes up the greater part of the first two terms, it is unlikely that students will be able to do the amount of reading and thinking necessary for an informed discussion of theoretical topics, especially if these topics are based on disciplines they have not previously encountered in their studies, for example, the disciplines of psychology or sociology. In this situation, it might be preferable to leave theoretical essays until third term, when they will have more time to read widely, and will also be able to relate their reading to their teaching experiences. In those institutions where school experience comes during the second half of the year, the first term will provide time for essays, but this will be a preparation for practice teaching, rather than an opportunity to reflect upon it.

The important point, however, is not so much the timing of assignments, nor the number of words, nor the different types of assignment used to assess the student teachers. It is the lack of integration between the different components of the course which is highlighted by the assessment procedures, a lack of integration which makes the Dip.Ed. year a difficult and often frustrating experience for students, as they skip from one topic or discipline or activity to another. Courses tend to be 'a confusing mass of jumbled bits and pieces, and while each piece is extremely valuable in its own right, it often has no apparent relation to any other part of the course.'

(29) It is for this reason that the year may come as an 'anticlimax' after the sustained intellectual effort required for a degree. (30)

The lack of integration apparent in the 'surface structure' of the Dip.Ed. course has its source in a lack of integration at a deeper level. It results from an over sharp distinction between theory and practice, a belief that intellectual mastery and practical mastery are two separate and mutually exclusive aims. This distinction has also bedevilled language education throughout its history. In the next chapter, the problem is discussed with regard to both these activities.

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CHAPTER 4INTELLECTUAL MASTERY AND PRACTICAL MASTERY IN  
LANGUAGE EDUCATION AND TEACHER EDUCATION4.0. Introduction

Kelly and McArthur described language education as divided into two separate schools of thought: the marketplace tradition, which pursued the aim of practical mastery, and the monastery tradition, which pursued the aim of intellectual mastery. (1) A similar division is discernible in teacher education, although in this case theory and practice may be split even more sharply into two separate and possibly conflicting components.

In both types of education it is, of course, expected that courses should lead to practical mastery, and that learners should be able to do something at the end of the course; the language learner should be able to use the language, the student teacher should be able to teach. Mastery of a language and mastery of teaching are, however, more complex than mastery of simpler skills where the learner is justified in expecting to be able to do something at the end of a course, to drive a car, for example, or to type. True mastery of a complex activity is not so much the ability to perform faultlessly, as the ability to perform appropriately without the help of an expert, an authority.

By 'authority' I do not mean such people as the doctor or the car mechanic to whom we turn when we lack the requisite expertise to solve a problem for ourselves. They solve the problem, but we remain reliant on their expertise, lacking autonomy. There are other authorities who teach us how to do something for ourselves, so that we cease to rely on their expertise, become 'authorities' ourselves in the sense of having sufficient knowledge to solve our own problems.

In this chapter I explore whether such knowledge can be acquired by pursuing one type of mastery to the exclusion of another. The pursuit of practical mastery, for example, may suggest the use of 'survival courses', courses that will enable the new teacher to 'cope' in the classroom, or, as the School Certificate Manual puts it for the language learner, the student should be able to 'cope linguistically' with certain situations. (2) Alternatively, some sort of 'natural' learning may be seen as more efficient; one learns a language through contact with native speakers, one learns to teach through contact with other teachers. In this type of course the learner is 'thrown in at the deep end', immersed in the language with little support from formal instruction, or sent into the classroom to discover what works through trial and error.

As discussed in the final section of the chapter, the demand for such courses may result from learners and the wider society feeling that formal education has failed to achieve what are believed to be its aims. For this reason, it is essential not only that courses set realistic aims, but also that learners are cognisant of what those aims are, as well as of what constitutes success in achieving them.

#### 4.1 Survival Courses and 'Natural' Learning.

##### 4.1.1. Language Education.

A survival course is one which imparts just enough knowledge and skill to enable the learner to respond appropriately in limited and specific contexts. Because survival courses concentrate on practical mastery, on the use of language in particular situations, they are not designed to introduce learners to the broader spectrum of language described, for example, in the ALL Project Guidelines, where three dimensions of language use relevant to school learners are distinguished; the interpersonal, the informational and the aesthetic. (3)

Language is something more than a convenient vehicle for conveying information. It is also, as Bantock points out, 'a means of exploring, privately, personal experience.' (4) This is demonstrated by the fact that people cling so tenaciously to their separate languages, often to their own disadvantage. Languages like Esperanto receive little support, even though the 'destructive prodigality' of languages in the world hinders the attainment of ideals like international harmony, delays the advancement of human knowledge and interferes with efficiency in more practical areas such as those of trade and commerce. (5)



Although courses teaching languages for specific purposes have their place, particularly for adults in situations where their language needs can be clearly specified, they are not appropriate in the school situation, not only because we cannot predict what the learners' future needs will be, but also because language education in schools has a broader purpose, as will be explained. Survival courses provide only limited expertise and are unlikely to lead to any sort of learner autonomy, although someone who has been educated through a more general language course may be better able to benefit from a survival course than someone who has done no previous language learning.

'Natural' language learning is the acquisition of a language through 'immersion', through being surrounded by users of the language, as the child is when she learns her mother tongue. However, even the child acquires language best in a supportive environment, where those around carefully adapt their own language use to her needs. As Bruner describes it, the transaction is between 'an aspirant novice with a high readiness to learn the rules', and an 'expert adult well-tuned to the needs of that novice.' (6)

While the acquisition of a language in situ obviously has certain advantages, unless it is supported by the type of structured learning that the adult provides for the child, or the language class provides for the second language learner, such 'natural acquisition' may result in 'fossilization', a stage at which the

learner ceases to learn because present strategies work, so that there is no felt need to develop further. Pidgin languages are an example of fossilization. They develop for use in limited situations and for limited purposes, and for this reason they are rudimentary languages, simplified in structure and vocabulary.

A further danger of attempting to teach language in schools through immersion courses has been pointed out by Michael Buckby, who suggested that the 'bain linguistique' has been responsible for many linguistic 'murders by drowning.' He went on to explain that:

many pupils in classes where English is the natural lingua franca, if not the shared first language, are unwilling to suspend disbelief, and to accept what they perceive as an artificial form of communication. This attitude can be changed over time, but this change requires a sensitive and encouraging preparation. (7)

#### 4.1.2. Teacher Education.

A survival course for the future teacher would be one in which the student is 'trained' to survive in the classroom, given a 'survival kit' of skills. Survival skills are set responses based on solutions which have been abstracted out, generalised from a multitude of past situations. All activities have such 'tricks of the trade' and they are necessary and useful to know. However, there are dangers if these are all that is known. As Gombrich points out in the case of art:

once a hack has learned how to make the image of a tolerably convincing head, he may be tempted to use this standard formula for the rest of his days, merely adding just such distinguishing features as will mark the admiral or the court beauty. (8)

Widdowson, in discussing courses in language for specific purposes, makes a helpful distinction between 'training' and 'education', describing the former as a process leading only to 'skills', a repertoire of responses to appropriate stimuli, and to 'competence', a conformity to existing rules. 'Education', on the other hand, results in 'capacities', the ability to exploit learned rules according to the needs of particular situations. (9) It is because survival courses are unlikely to lead to 'capacities' that they are criticised as an adequate method of preparation for future teachers.

Brown, for example, condemns teacher education programmes which believe it 'feasible to equip future teachers with only the necessary mechanical skills .... to the exclusion of true understanding.' (10) The suggestion that there is no time in the 'training' stage for discussion about the 'why' of languages and language learning is also criticised by Peter Strevens:

There is a danger that the very real practical need for a restriction of 'theory' components, at least in the more academic interpretation of the term, because of shortage of time, may be used as an excuse and a cover for anti-intellectual attitudes. (11)

The capacity for teaching is something more than the ability to apply stock responses to a situation, or to use the 'tricks of the trade.'

'Natural' learning for the future teacher would be that type of learning advocated by those who would do away with a period of pre-service education for teachers altogether, as when teachers in the secondary schools were not considered to need any further education beyond the

first degree. This situation depended on, and reinforced, the continuation of a particular type of education in the schools, one which was knowledge based. The teacher acquired the necessary knowledge during the degree years, and then went back to the schools to impart it to the next generation of learners.

This type of teacher development, where the teacher is 'thrown in at the deep end', may lead not only to the type of shock experienced by the language learner thrown into a 'bain linguistique', it may also result in a type of 'fossilization'. As in the case of the language learner, once present strategies work, there may be no felt need to develop further; 'a badly informed teacher will be averse to change, suspicious of the new.' (12) Van Els et al. also point out that, without a 'theoretical foundation', a teacher can only 'gratefully, but helplessly, accept the suggestions for solving his practical problems offered by others.' (13) Without some form of development, new teachers must, in their insecurity, revert to ways of teaching which are the only ones they know, namely the ways in which they were taught themselves. Lynch and Plunkett describe this as new teachers 'replaying their own education experiences' in a situation where success resides in an 'imitation of what went before.' (14)

The teacher who has to proceed by intuition and imitation is unlikely to have the ability or the confidence to initiate change or to adapt to change. Survival courses and 'natural' learning will not equip teachers to respond to a constantly changing educational environment, nor enable them to make informed judgements and decisions.

## 4.2 Intellectual Mastery and Practical Mastery

### 4.2.1. Language Education

The grammar-translation methods, as described earlier, (page 14), selected certain areas of language to teach, in particular those areas which would lead to intellectual mastery. However, other approaches may be equally selective if they pre-judge the needs of the learner, emphasising, for example, oral language to the exclusion of written language, or concentrating on one skill to the exclusion of others, as did the American reading method (see page 16). Such pre-selection may be partly a response to the lack of time available for 'complete mastery' of a new language, but it may also be based on particular theories of language and of language education.

Frequently, however, theories about language are generated because language can be analysed without reference to the fact that the analysis depends on the prior existence of language as a tool for use. Linguistic orthodoxy analyses speech apart from activity, but languages are structured as they are because of the uses to which they are put. Categories such as 'tenses' or 'functions' exist because linguists have chosen to divide up a field in this way, but they depend on a need, a desire to express certain things; 'the conditional tense in grammar conserves a special mode for expressing our sense of ..... unfulfilled possibilities for experience.' (15)

Although tools are generally taken for granted, for if we spent all our time contemplating them we would never get anything done, it is also true that an awareness and understanding of how they work not only allows us to use them more freely and creatively ourselves, but also guards us against manipulation by others skilled in their use.

The problem in language education has been not so much that theory of language was taught, but that it was taught as something separate from practice, regardless of whether it was introduced by deductive or inductive methods. The former requires that the 'rule' be given and the students then practise its application, while the latter advocates exposure to a number of similar instances leading to the formulation of the 'rule' by the learner. However, the 'rule' is the same in both cases, and depends on a specific language analysis. In both methods, therefore, the 'rule' takes precedence over language use, even though, paradoxically, it is language use which is the ultimate objective. As Stevick points out, we find it difficult to abandon the idea that 'the theory or body of knowledge is somehow primary and that our "applications" are secondary to it.' (16)

In the communicative approach, rather than helping the language learner towards some distant target of 'correct' language use by separating theory and practice, the task is to help learners acquire whatever is necessary for the expression and understanding of the meanings that they wish to use at any given stage of learning. The teacher does not pre-select certain skills (spelling, pronunciation, syntactical manipulation) or functions (greeting,

apologising, turn-taking) as the ones the pupil will need. These are theoretical entities which have been abstracted out of performance. The essential step is to put them back into performance, although that performance will be enhanced by some understanding of the structures on which it is based.

Rather than the separation of intellectual and practical mastery, a more helpful distinction is that made between the 'communication task' ('utilizing a limited repertoire optimally') and the 'learning task' (17), or between a focus on 'fluency' ('the maximally effective operation of the language system acquired by the student') and on 'accuracy'. (18) Both tasks are necessary and supportive of each other, but the learner can consciously do only one at a time, especially in the beginning stages.

During the 'communication task', the flow of events demands immediate response, and the only real 'error' can be failure to communicate, so that constant ad hoc, and mostly unconscious, adjustments will be made to remedy such failure. These adjustments are, however, based on 'theory', on knowledge and understanding, both of language and of its context of use. The learner needs not only linguistic competence, but also communicative competence, for the use of language 'appropriate to the circumstances is a normal part of a human's language ability.' (19)

It is during the learning task, when the focus is on accuracy, that reflection can take place about communicative deficiencies and inadequacies. However, the focus on language forms, on rules, supports the communication task rather than preceding or replacing it. It is this interaction between practice and theory which results in autonomous language use. Without the theory, the focus on form and accuracy, the learner has no understanding from which to develop improved language use; in the 'natural' situation, linguistic inadequacies are either left uncorrected or the learner resorts to 'safe' language, to the avoidance of error. On the other hand, without constant practice in purposeful language use, theory becomes an end in itself, divorced from the very system it explains. 'Correct' language then takes precedence over communicative language.

#### 4.2.2. Teacher Education.

The division between theory and practice in teacher education at the University of Tasmania is sharper than it is in language education because it is institutionalised by the structure of the Dip.Ed. year. The two components are undertaken by two separate institutions. Practice teaching is 'practice', the methods course is 'theory', perhaps mixed with a little practice, while the Foundation studies are 'pure' theory.



There is an additional problem for the language methodologist who is confronted by an ever-expanding body of theory about languages and language learning from which to make a selection of what might be useful knowledge for the future language teacher. It is for this reason that an eclectic approach is often advocated for language teachers, who, faced with 'the daily task of helping students to learn a new language cannot afford the luxury of complete dedication to each new method or approach that comes into vogue.' (20)

However, while it is true that many teachers perform their task well without necessarily having conscious or explicit theories about what they are doing, they are guided by theories nonetheless. In choosing one classroom activity rather than another they are inevitably directed by 'philosophical perspectives.' Knoblauch and Brannon argue therefore, that teachers must become conscious of those theories which direct their choices, because differences in such theories are not mere 'label changes', they embody 'true intellectual oppositions.' (21) The 'variety that unreflective eclecticism appears to afford' comes at the price of 'contradiction at the deeper level of intellectual perspective and instructional purpose.' (22)

Barcan, on the other hand, suggests that theory is useful only to a few:

It is possible to over estimate the importance of the formal previous-training system of teacher preparation for the subsequent practice of teachers in schools. For a few beginning teachers education theory may be a useful aid. For many, the experience of pre-service practice teaching is valuable. But for many the first years of employment in the schools are the decisive influence. (23)

This, however, does not make clear what he means by 'theory'. Strevens, for example, argues that the purpose of theory is to provide 'understanding' as distinct from knowledge, and that this is not something that can be dispensed with. (24) If theory is the development of an understanding of what happens in the classroom, it cannot be separated from what happens there, the practice.

In teacher education, as in language education, some division does need to be made, particularly in the beginning stages, between practice in the form of personal engagement in specific activities, and the type of theory which permits reflection about those activities. During the pre-service year, therefore, the student needs the same separation between theory and practice as the language learner. While students are teaching, they cannot be consciously learning about teaching, the flow of events demands immediate response, just as it does in the interaction between language users. As Toliver suggests:

It is in a time-out that we hatch new strategies. Performances on the floor or in the field tend to be merely reactive or mechanistic in that chains of circumstances are relatively self-perpetuating and undeviating. (25)

However, Toliver goes on to say that a 'newly conceived strategy' generated in this way may still be 'entirely responsive to the surrounding context.' (26) In other words, the theory presented in the methods class must be responsive to the classroom context.

Just as the language teacher cannot pre-select the theory which will be needed by the language learner, the teacher educator cannot pre-select certain skills or areas of knowledge as the only ones the student will need, for decisions about theory cannot be separated from experience during practice. Brumfit stresses that methodology is an attempt to understand and to intervene in the process of learning and that this is achieved by proposing and exploring the range of possible options, not by validating any of them as ideals. (27) As Popper points out, the linguistic formulation of theories allows us to criticise them. (28)

#### 4.3. The Purposes of Education.

##### 4.3.1. Language Education.

Although assessment at the end of a language course is ideally shaped by the type of learning possible in the schools, in the long term judgements may be made, as in the following letter to The Mercury (3/9/1987), about whether 'learners' can do in the 'real' world what they were supposedly prepared to do, namely 'use' the language:

Many years ago I was taught French for seven years and German for five years, and the only benefits gained (in a practical sense) were dredging my memory when holidaying in Europe.

The belief, implicit in this complaint, that to speak a language confidently and fluently is the principal objective of school language learning, arises from a particular definition of what it means to 'know' a language.

To say someone 'knows' a language often implies that they can use it as we use our native tongue, without conscious effort. The unexamined concept of a 'bilingual' person, for example, is of someone who 'knows' two languages in this sense, they can speak both 'like a native'. Grosjean, however, in his comprehensive account of bilingualism (29), suggests that a 'fluency continuum' for each language and for each skill is a more useful concept, for then the phrase 'to know a language' would have to be defined more precisely. Many can be classified as 'receptive bilinguals' in that they can understand spoken or written language, but find it more difficult to speak fluently or write easily in that language. There are also 'literate bilinguals' who can read and possibly write in more than one language, but who are less able to use the oral registers. Joseph Conrad, for example, never felt he 'knew' English, despite his great novels in that language: 'In writing I wrestle painfully with that language I feel I do not possess but which possesses me - alas.' (30)

The primary purpose of language education in schools is not, however, the ability to speak a language 'like a native'. It cannot do this, not only because of the time factor, but also because we cannot predict which language(s) the learner may need, nor for what purposes. School language learning is educational rather than preparatory:

the educational value of foreign language learning is precisely that it can offer the pupil an experience different from that of the mother tongue and so contribute to an understanding of the polyglot world, and emancipate the learner from parochialism. The person who has never ventured outside his own language is incapable even of realising how parochial he is .... (31)

Language education in the school provides learners with an insight into language as a system, an insight which not only enlarges their understanding of the mother tongue, but also provides a framework either for further learning of the language introduced in the school, or for the learning of other languages in the future.

In order for language education to fulfil this educational and preparatory function, the learner needs a supportive environment, just as the child does in the early stages of language acquisition. Errors must be productive rather than destructive, for it is by making errors that further learning takes place, whereas fear of error in language learning leads to what Stevick describes as 'lathophobic aphasia', the 'inability to speak for fear of making a mistake.' (32) A lesser concentration on error would also save some of the time which is so meagrely allocated to language learning in schools. As Loveday points out, if the goal of such learning is essentially to understand and be understood, 'then much effort is wasted in class on trying to make the learner into a "chameleon" who has to pass for a native.' (33)

McDonough in fact suggests that increased frequency of error should be welcomed as a sign that a more complex language system is being developed, whereas correctness may only be a sign of the repetition of formulae. (34) This is reminiscent of Schank's concept of 'dynamic memory' as 'failure driven memory' (35) and his claim that failure is 'the root of change', (36), although he stresses that the learner must be able to explain why an expectation failed, for new knowledge does not come automatically on failure. (37)

In addition to a supportive environment and informative on-going assessment, the learner needs a clear idea of what the objectives of learning are, as well as of the criteria by which they will be assessed. This aspect of assessment is the summative, a 'summing up' at the end of a unit or course, and a chance for the learner to demonstrate that particular objectives have been achieved. The criterion referenced assessment now being introduced in language education demands that what is to be tested, and the criteria by which it will be judged, are clearly specified. The establishment of clearer objectives for language learners replaces that previous implicit norm, the ideal native speaker, against which students were measured, and which, inevitably, they failed to attain. It was this type of assessment which led to the criticisms of language education demonstrated in the letter quoted earlier.

#### 4.3.2. Teacher Education.

As in language education, the purposes of pre-service teacher education are preparatory and introductory. They should, of course, also be seen as educational. The Dip.Ed. qualification, unlike the students' first degree, is forward looking rather than backward looking, for whereas the degree sums up what the student has achieved, the Dip.Ed. qualifies someone to begin to teach. It does not prove that they will be able to do so. Assessment of such a course, therefore, must be of the students' potential, and the qualification must not be seen as a guarantee that they are already good teachers.

Student teachers, like language learners, need an opportunity to try out different strategies in a supportive environment without fear that failure will result in disgrace. They must also be helped to develop the ability to explain their failures, to judge where they went wrong and in what way. This type of formative assessment gives them some basis for further analysis of their own teaching activities and of procedures recommended by theorists and other experienced practitioners.

Practice teaching is the equivalent of the language learner's 'communication task'. Because it is an opportunity for students to begin to develop their own style, to be themselves in the classroom, success and failure must be informative rather than being seen as reward and punishment. (38) The freedom to make mistakes is as essential in the development of a future teacher as it is for the language learner. Yet a study by Sinclair and Nicoll suggests that practice teaching is more likely to be a time when student teachers are particularly prone to stick to 'safe' teaching methods, due to their perception of it as a test, not only of themselves as prospective teachers, but even of themselves as adequate people. (39)

The lack of clear criteria in language education led to the judgement that school language learners had not succeeded when they were not indistinguishable from native speakers. Similarly, there may be some intuitive judgement of beginning teachers which tests them against an implicit norm of a 'good' teacher. This is an ideal which is even more imprecise than the native speaker ideal was for the language learner.

At present there is, however, little distinction made between different levels of teaching skill and experience, so that it is difficult to set out clearly the objectives to be attained by the student teacher during the Dip.Ed. course, and the criteria by which these are to be judged. The description of effective teacher development in the ALL Project Guidelines can, however, be applied equally to pre-service teacher development:

Teacher development programs, when effectively planned and carried out, should foster the improvement of teachers' ability to analyse and solve their own problems, enabling them to constantly evaluate their curriculum and make improvements in a continuous process of renewal. (40)

There is, therefore, a need not only to clarify the purposes of the Dip.Ed. course, but also to look more closely at how those purposes may best be achieved. This will be the object of the final chapter.



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## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

#### 5.0. Introduction.

Without adequate teacher development, the benefits of changing approaches to language education and of the support which is currently evident for that education will be lost. As Turney points out, 'the quality of teaching in the nations' schools is dependent in large measure on the quality of teacher education, pre-service and in-service.' (1) However, while in-service teacher education remains a voluntary activity, the pre-service course is the main opportunity for informing future language teachers and for changing present teaching practices. The lack of any obligatory follow-up to the course in fact results in a misunderstanding of its purposes, as will be discussed in this chapter.

A further problem for the Dip.Ed. course is the fact that it must compensate for any 'gaps' left during the students' previous education. Other problems which have come to light during the examination of language education and teacher education, and which are discussed in this chapter, are the counter-productive separation between theory and practice, the lack of integration between the different components of the course, and the lack of clear criteria by which to judge whether the aims of the course have been achieved. Finally, there is a need to clarify who are the best people to carry out the task of educating language teachers, and to give those people more support.

### 5.1. Filling in the 'Gaps'.

In his examination of the British PGCE course, Baynes claimed that the course was 'seriously overloaded' because its task was to prepare teachers 'for all eventualities in their future career.' (2) The same problem is evident in the Dip.Ed. course. However, the problem is exacerbated by the fact that such courses must also compensate for any deficiencies resulting from the students' previous education.

As described earlier, teacher education as such is not considered to begin until the post-graduate year. The University of Western Australia sees this as a positive advantage, because students do not have to commit themselves to teaching 'until they have completed a bachelor's degree in a major discipline', which means that they are 'enriched in their preparation by close contact with the many-faceted University community', while, by completing the bachelor's degree, 'they acquire the necessary mastery of subject matter to teach in schools.' (3)

The first two arguments in favour of retaining the present system of a general degree followed by an end-on course are valid, namely that the students can keep their options open for a longer period, and that contact with other disciplines and professions is enriching. However, the third argument is more questionable, for it appears that language students do not acquire 'the necessary mastery of subject matter required to teach in schools.' As described in Chapter 2 their linguistic competence as teachers is often inadequate, nor have they had any introduction to the necessary area of applied linguistics.

Too much criticism of the students' linguistic abilities may be counter-productive, however, given that those who go straight from the degree course to the Dip.Ed. year often lack confidence in their ability to conduct lessons in the target language already. While most student teachers are nervous about their ability to keep order in the classroom, the language students will be under even greater pressure if they feel they are on trial for their linguistic, as well as for their pedagogic, abilities. Gaining linguistic ability is a slow and cumulative process, and teaching a language may well be part of that process. Given Australia's geographical situation, it is unlikely that we can demand students spend some time abroad before they begin teaching languages. Many do so after they have had a few years experience, taking advantage of the various schemes supporting such trips.

The deficiency could, however, be remedied to some extent by the inclusion in the Dip.Ed. year of a 'language for specific purposes' unit, which 'trained' students in the registers they need for classroom teaching. There is a wealth of expertise in this area by now, due to the production of such courses in other areas, such as the medical, legal, tourist and business contexts. It should, therefore, be possible to provide such courses for future language teachers. These could be part of the students' assessment, taking the place of some of the present assignments, and would not only increase their confidence during the practice teaching sessions, but would also mean that, with an adequate linguistic competence, they would be freer to concentrate on practising pedagogical strategies.

The lack of any opportunity to study applied linguistics before the Dip.Ed. year is less easily remedied. As was described earlier, the suggestion that the degree years take more account of the fact that a large percentage of language students go on to teach languages has been made many times over the past twenty years, but the suggestions have not been taken up. The problem could, however, be alleviated in the Dip. Ed. year, at least to some extent, if a unit in applied linguistics were made part of the course for all students, as is advocated in Linguistics and the Teacher.

(4) This could be fitted in by using some of the time at present spent in Foundation studies, for such a course would only be a more specific introduction to areas which are, presumably, already partly dealt with in these units.

I would also like to draw attention again to two 'gaps' of a different kind which were mentioned earlier. These were the lack of any provision for the development of language teachers in the primary area and in the area of ESL in Tasmania. This is not the place for discussion of these two areas, except to point out that both are of the greatest importance and their present neglect must be remedied. (5)

## 5.2. Further Profesional Development for Language Teachers.

Judgements of the Dip.Ed. course as an inadequate preparation for teaching arise partly from a failure to recognise that it is not designed to produce fully

fledged language teachers. The purposes of the course are introductory and preparatory. This is clear from the description given in the Handbook:

The Diploma of Education is a one-year course taken after the completion of a first degree. The course is intended to provide sufficient teaching practice and skills to enable the beginning teacher to cope with the early years of teaching and to lay a foundation for further professional development in both theory and practice of education. (6)

The introductory nature of the course should be more explicitly acknowledged by teacher educators, who tend to assume that teachers will never have another opportunity to catch up on anything 'missed out' during the Dip.Ed. year. It must be made clear that the Dip.Ed. is an 'initial' course, as is the case, for example, at the London University Institute of Education, where the 'Notes for Students' recommend that they should return after two years teaching experience to do further study, providing an opportunity 'to look more deeply at theoretical aspects of method, literature and applied language studies.' (7)

More urgently, however, even if the Dip.Ed. course is correctly understood as 'only' an initial or introductory course, that introduction should be extended by another year. If the induction year were considered as a second stage of pre-service development, to be completed before the granting of the Dip.Ed. qualification, the present pressure on the one year course would be considerably relieved. As discussed in Chapter 3, the system used in Bremen would be appropriate in this context, where students spend two thirds of their time in a school, returning to the Institut for the remaining third.



The principal reason that the course is judged by criteria other than those set out in the course outline is that the 'further professional development' described there is not an obligatory follow-up to the Dip.Ed. year. Such development is voluntary, it is not always positively encouraged by giving teachers time off or lighter teaching loads while they undertake further study, nor is it officially acknowledged by either promotion or financial reward.

In these circumstances it is not surprising that teachers themselves do not see any necessity for further development after the Dip.Ed. year. The concept is not presented to them as a real possibility as it is, for example, to teachers in the tertiary sector, who are encouraged to take study leave regularly. Their need for on-going development is taken for granted and provided for.

The French system described earlier is often criticised, not least by the French themselves (8), as being 'out of date and largely out of touch with present needs.' (9) However, Hawkins suggests that despite its competitive basis and the over-theoretical preparation of those teachers at the top of the hierarchy, some aspects of it are worth serious consideration. He points out that the concept of a higher certification for teachers, for example, was proposed as long ago as 1918 in the Leathes Report, explaining that Leathes saw this qualification as 'an honour hard to win', but that the intention was to give teachers an 'incentive ..... to continue to improve themselves and to attain a higher status ..... without leaving the classroom.' (10)

Study leave and higher certification are two of the ways in which further development could be undertaken by experienced teachers. Below I give a brief description of other types of development possible for the Tasmanian teacher, namely attendance at conferences and seminars, further qualifications, overseas experience and the learning of further languages. In examining these possibilities, it must be kept in mind that language teachers are, to some extent, a special case, for they need knowledge and skill both in the linguistic and the pedagogical areas. Not only must they extend their capacities as language teachers, they also need continual development as language users.

#### Conferences and seminars.

Annual state seminars or conferences are arranged by the Education Department through the Supervisor of Modern Languages and by the MLTAT. The system at present is that a biennial state conference for all language teachers alternates with specific language seminars in the non-conference year. In addition, there is a national biennial conference organised by the AFMLTA.

#### Further qualifications.

Courses for further professional development are provided by the University of Tasmania and the TSIT. Unfortunately there is at present in Tasmania no course specifically designed for the language teacher, as is the case in larger institutions. The Horwood Language Centre at the University of Melbourne, for instance, provides an M.A. in Applied Linguistics which

includes core courses in language and communication, sociolinguistics, phonetics and phonology, and covers areas such as first and second language acquisition, language teaching methodology and classroom based acquisition research.

Some of the courses currently available in Tasmania can be used by language teachers, at least for more general development, for example 'Language Policy Across the Curriculum', or 'Language and Literacy in Education'. This is particularly the case when classes are small and students can negotiate with the tutor, although for teachers to be able to organise their own study in any informed way, they require a certain amount of pre-existing knowledge.

#### Overseas experience.

There are a number of schemes which enable teachers to visit the countries where the language they teach is used, and many Tasmanian teachers take advantage of these. Hunt found, for example, in his survey of the grades nine and ten teachers, that almost all had been at least once to a country where the language they teach is used. (11)

Like other forms of professional development, these trips are voluntary, and may even be seen as a side-benefit rather than a necessity for the language teacher. As the FIPLV report on teacher education points out, it is, in fact, essential that language teachers 'extend and refurbish their linguistic competence by regular and purposeful visits to those countries whose national or official languages they teach.' (12)

The Tasmanian Education Department, in its Languages Policy, has also recognised the need for this type of development, and opportunities are to be provided for teachers to develop their language proficiency both here and overseas. The Department is giving consideration to offering two travelling scholarships each year for intensive language study overseas, as well as investigating ways of providing opportunities for teachers to attend intensive language courses during the summer vacations. (13)

#### Learning additional languages.

Although this is not commonly seen as further professional development, the study of additional languages not only benefits the teachers themselves, but also increases the number of languages which can be introduced in schools. Language teachers are expert and experienced language learners, but this expertise is not always fully exploited. It must be stressed, however, that learning a new language is a long process, even for an experienced language learner. It is not something which can be achieved satisfactorily in a one-off 'crash course'.

If some, or all, of the above possibilities for further development were made an obligatory, and acknowledged extension of the Dip.Ed. year, it would no longer be necessary for the course to provide a complete teacher education as it is expected to do at present. The task is impossible, not only because of the lack of time, but also because of the students' lack of maturity and experience.

### 5.3. Theory and Practice in the Dip.Ed. Course.

Kelly claims that the emphasis in initial training courses for teachers has 'swung away from mere training towards education, towards developing the kind of professional awareness and understanding that will enable teachers to initiate and adapt to change.' (14) This type of understanding will develop best from courses which combine theory and practice, rather than from those where theory is seen as 'an irksome chore, done, not for its intrinsic worth, but only to secure a Diploma.' (15) It is the capacity for using knowledge which is needed, rather than the amount of knowledge which the students can prove they have absorbed.

The activity oriented course appears to give students a greater opportunity to activate their knowledge than the lecture approach, for in the former type of seminar students are actively involved, makers of knowledge rather than passive receivers. However, the lecture is part of a continuum of teaching strategies, just as the essay is part of a similar continuum of assessment procedures. Any of these strategies may have their place in a course which is coherent at a deeper level.

This is unfortunately not the case in the Dip.Ed. course at present, due to the over-sharp distinction made between the theory of education and its practice. The structure of the year is such that 'practice' is separated from 'theory' not only geographically and temporally, but also in that there are two different

groups of people responsible for the two aspects, the teachers in the schools and the staff at the university. One possible way to overcome this conflict between the 'two masters' (16), the university and the school, is to provide for more interaction between the two groups of teacher educators.

Several methodologists, for example, continue to teach in schools, which gives them an opportunity to keep in touch with developments there, to try out new techniques, and to demonstrate those techniques to student teachers. On the whole, however, the methodologists are seen as concerned only with future teachers, rather than with those who are practising already. Yet they ought to be a natural and continual source of assistance and information to all teachers, for they usually have more time and opportunity to keep up with developments in language education. They may be asked to impart their knowledge at seminars and conferences, but are less often invited into the schools at any time other than during the practice teaching sessions.

Not only should there be more opportunities for methodologists to visit schools, but teachers should also be encouraged to participate more in the university section of the Dip.Ed. course. Some, for example, could be invited to the language methods seminars, both to inform themselves about what happens in these seminars (this would obviously be useful to those who supervise student teachers), and also to give them an opportunity to share their particular areas of expertise with the students.

In addition, more interaction between the two groups of teacher educators could be provided by a structure in which those teachers who supervise practice teaching were first given some specialised development to assist them in this task. As suggested earlier, the present ad hoc arrangements do not give these teachers a great deal of support or assistance as to the most useful ways to carry out their task. Such a scheme would not only give teachers an incentive for further development if it were acknowledged by promotion within the teaching force, but it would also provide other options for those who wish to remain in the classroom, rather than being promoted into administrative positions. It would also make better use of their expertise as teachers.

#### 5.4. The Integration of the Dip.Ed. Course.

Not only is there an unnatural and unhelpful division between the school and the university during the pre-service education of teachers, there is also a lack of integration between the different sections of the course at the university. As discussed earlier, this is particularly unfortunate when it occurs in the students' two teaching methods, for methodologists should be the first to set an example when it comes to lessening the sense of 'ownership' which many subject teachers display about their subjects. In addition, however, methodologists and 'generalists' need to be more informed about each other's courses, not only to avoid a time-wasting duplication of effort and the dangerous assumption that certain areas can be neglected in one subject because they will be covered in another, but also to introduce more coherence into the course as a whole.

If the generalists are aware, for example, that an area like 'evaluation, measurement and assessment' (17) is being covered in some depth during methods seminars, their own treatment of this area should take account of the fact. On the other hand, if the methodologists know that the general theory of such an area is covered during other parts of the course, their task becomes the specific application of that theory to their particular subject.

The same argument holds for those areas of applied linguistics which may be covered as part of the Foundation Studies, but which are also covered during the language method seminars. As discussed previously, there are aspects of applied linguistics which are necessary knowledge for all teachers. At present these are scattered through the year in such a way that some students may miss out altogether on this essential area, while others receive only a superficial treatment of it. The language student, on the other hand, may well have to study the area twice over.

More importantly, the lack of integration between the components of the course imposes an unnecessary burden on students in the area of assessment. Rather than each component being assessed in some way which would give an overall picture of the students' abilities, their knowledge, skill, and understanding as whole people, they are assessed as educational psychologists, sociologists and philosophers, as linguists and social scientists, and, of course, as language teachers and teachers of other subjects.



A more integrated approach might ask the students to produce one major 'thesis' at the end of the course, as is the practice in Bremen, based perhaps on some form of action research. (The suggestion that the course be extended to include the induction year would make this a more viable proposition.) This would not preclude short assignments or projects being set as part of the formative, on-going assessment of each component, although there should always be close cooperation between the teacher educators to ensure that students do not become over-burdened with assignments as they are at present.

Such an assessment would not only allow the students to bring together all the separate threads of the Dip.Ed. year, but might also result in some clarification of the aims of that course and of the criteria by which achievement of those aims is judged. It is difficult to define what makes a 'good' teacher, for good teaching is based on a complex interaction between knowledge and skills. At present, the skills and the knowledge are assessed separately, so there is no opportunity to judge how they are put together by individual students.

Because the teacher in the secondary school is a subject teacher, rather than the teacher of a particular age group, it seems desirable that students should be assessed primarily as subject teachers. An integrated assignment should be subject based, showing how the supportive disciplines of philosophy, psychology and

sociology apply to the students' particular subjects, as well as incorporating knowledge and techniques gained during the Classroom Practice and Educational Technology seminars. The criteria by which to judge the achievements of the student teachers would then be related specifically to what makes a 'good' teacher of languages, rather than the more general concept which is used at present. The aim of the Dip.Ed. course is, after all, to produce a beginning teacher of a specific subject or subjects, and assessment procedures should be a means of achieving this aim.

#### 5.5. The Methodologists : Who Trains the Trainers?

At present there are no specific qualifications required for the language methodologist. The possible criteria by which such an appointment might be made were described earlier. To some extent they are similar to those required of a 'good' teacher of languages; the teacher should be an expert user of the language, have a knowledge of applied linguistics and be an excellent practitioner. The methodologist needs to fulfil all these requirements to a greater extent than the classroom teachers, as well as giving evidence of continual updating of knowledge and skill.

If the classroom teachers should be able to turn to the methodologist for advice, assistance and fresh ideas, the question arises of a similar need for the methodologists to have opportunities to seek advice, assistance and new ideas. To some extent, they will

find these in interaction between themselves and other teachers of their subject, both in the schools and at the tertiary level. They will also, presumably, discuss their task with other teacher educators in their institution, although it is not always evident that this does, in fact, happen.

There is, however, no system of conferences or seminars which would bring teacher educators together at a national level. They do, of course, meet at national conferences of language teachers, and the journal Babel is a vehicle for the exchange of ideas. In Britain, where such activities are perhaps more easily organised due to the smallness of the country, PGCE tutors in language methods meet regularly for conferences and seminars dealing with their specific area. They are also more able to share their expertise by visiting each other's institutions, a valuable exercise, especially when one methodologist has expertise in a particular facet of the activity. (18)

#### 5.6. Conclusion.

The Dip.Ed. year is an essential part of the overall development of a competent language teacher. It is, however, only one part of that development and it needs to be supported by an acknowledgement that the preceding degree also contributes to pre-service teacher education, and the further acknowledgement that compulsory in-service teacher development is not only essential, but must also be based on what has gone before.

If the Dip.Ed. year were conceptualised in this way, the shortness of the period would become less important. It is only if the course is expected to 'prepare teachers for all eventualities' (19), that it can be judged as inadequate. There is a great need to take a longer view, for, like language learning, learning to teach is an on-going and cumulative process rather than something that can be achieved once for all in a short period of time.

The function of the course is to give future language teachers a basis from which they can develop further, as well as an understanding that they have only begun their teacher education, and that they will need further development. It is not to give them 'training' in pedagogical skills and techniques, although these may be 'exercises' contributing to the overall activity, in the same way that exercises are used in the communicative approach to language learning.

The amount of time allocated to the course is less significant than the way in which that time is used. A clearer understanding of the purposes of such a course and a more comprehensive vision of the student teacher as a whole person, requires that the course be more integrated, not only with the past and future experiences of the student teacher, but also within itself. The value of the course is lessened at present by the lack of interaction between secondary and tertiary institutions, as well as between teacher educators within the tertiary institutions.

Colin Wringe has suggested that a period of initial training is 'an important agency of change insofar as it enables new ideas and practices ..... to be communicated to a new generation of teachers each year.' (20) However, it is more than just the 'communication' of new ideas and practices that is required. The ways in which they are communicated will also be of significance and they must, above all, be presented within a coherent context.

#### 5.7. Notes and References.

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  2. Baynes, H. The training of the Specialist Modern Languages Teacher in the P.G.C.E. course. Unpublished M.A.(Ed.) dissertation, University of London, 1983. p.2.
  3. Study in Education. University of Western Australia, Perth, 1987. p.5.
  4. Carter, R. (ed.) Linguistics and the Teacher. London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982.
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6. Centre for Education Handbook. University of Tasmania, Hobart, 1987. p.69.
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16. ibid. p.1.
17. Centre for Education Handbook. op.cit. p.74.
18. Several of the methodologists with whom I have communicated in the course of my research have indicated that such national communication and interaction would be welcome. This applies

particularly to those who are new to the job. As one pointed out, no one teaches the methodologist how to perform the task, and many come straight to it from the school classroom and then have to spend several years putting together a framework. Some kind of conference on language teacher education would therefore be of value as a means of sharing expertise.

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## APPENDIX A.

### The Topics Covered in Several Dip.Ed. Methods Courses in Australia.

The topics are grouped according to broad categories, and within each category are listed the titles under which the topics are covered by courses. Numbers in brackets after a topic title indicate the number of courses which list this topic under the same heading.

#### 1. Theoretical and General.

The nature of language. The theorists - Chomsky and Palmer.  
The national and state scene. Language teaching in Australia and (name of specific state).  
Communicative approach - current developments in Australia.  
Multiculturalism - the Australian approach.

#### 2. Aims and Objectives; Methodology.

History of methodology. Second language methodology.  
Introduction to the teaching of languages other than English.  
Aims and objectives. Aims in modern language teaching.  
Communicative competences and communicative approaches.  
Graded objectives and the communicative approach - theory and history.

#### 3. Curriculum and Syllabus.

Language in the curriculum. Modern languages in the curriculum. Syllabus design and curriculum development.  
Syllabus planning. Language syllabi in (name of specific State). Syllabus construction.

#### 4. Classroom and Teacher.

The role of the modern language teacher. Team teaching.  
Heterogeneity and grouping. Group work. Group work and individualization. Individualized programmes.  
Mixed ability groups. Classroom management. (2)  
Motivation. The specialist teaching space.

## 5. Lessons - Planning.

Preparation for school experience session. Discussion of school experience session. Lesson plans.

Planning a lesson. (2) Planning a modern language lessons.

Planning the first lessons. Planning a course of study.

Planning a unit.

## 6. Specific Classroom Activities.

### (i) The four skills.

Teaching techniques for the four skills.

The four language skills. Integrating the four skills. Teaching oral skills. Teaching written skills. Receptive skills. (2) Productive skills. (2) Advanced spoken/written skills. Combining reading and writing skills through the use of authentic documents. Developing writing skills. Listening comprehension. Aural comprehension. Dictation. Conversation.

### (ii) Grammar.

The place of grammar in a communicative programme. The place of grammar. Teaching grammar. Teaching grammar - inductive and deductive procedures. Preparing grammatical exercises. Written skills - the application of grammar. Oral and written drill patterns.

### (iii) Vocabulary.

Teaching vocabulary. (3) Vocabulary selection. Games to teach and review vocabulary.

### (iv) Other activities.

Consolidation activities. Classroom activities. Role play. Dramatisation, poetry, song and literature. Drama - its use in teaching. Using songs, poetry. Word games.

(v) Culture and civilization.

Cultural activities and the teaching of culture.

Developing cultural awareness.

Teaching civilization. (3)

7. Resources and Media.

Resources. Resource materials. Preparing teaching materials. Audio and video materials.

Using the media. Films, T.V., slides. Visual aids.

Use of the blackboard, OHP, flashcards.

Authentic documents.

Using computers. Computers in the L2 classroom.

Using standard text books. Choice of textbooks.

8. Assessment.

Testing. (2) Assessment. (2) Moderation.

Error analysis and correction techniques.

9. Other Topics.

Language camps and excursions.

Teaching senior classes, especially year 12.

Language Awareness programmes. (2)

English as a Second Language.

Foreign languages in the primary school.

APPENDIX BPGCE - SUGGESTIONS FOR TOPICS TO BE INCLUDED IN  
A COMMON CORE SYLLABUS.

Working party: Harold Baynes, Hertfordshire College of Higher Education; Alan Hornsey, University of London Institute of Education; John Partington, The University of Nottingham School of Education.

A. The Nature of the Subject.

The nature of the language.  
 The essential skills of a successful language user.  
 Language as a meaningful social activity.  
 The contribution of a modern language to the curriculum as a whole,  
Language aptitude. \*  
 Recent developments (e.g. GOML, 'language awareness'.)  
History of language teaching methods.  
Linguistic diversity in the United Kingdom.

B. The Teaching Skills.

Oral presentation and exploitation.  
 Communicative strategies.  
 Group work, pair work.  
 Teaching listening comprehension.  
 Introducing the written word; marking.  
 Advanced writing: letter-writing, precis, composition etc.  
 Intensive and extensive reading.  
 Strategies to cope with individual differences.  
 Class control.  
 Use of the classroom.  
 Use of Foreign Language and Mother Tongue as appropriate in the classroom.  
 Sixth form teaching: language, literature, area studies etc.  
Effective use of foreign-language assistant.  
Games, competitions, songs, playlets.  
 Role and teaching of grammar.  
 Translation in teaching and testing.  
 Presentation of a written text: Structured questioning.  
 Use of the more important duplicating and technical aids.

\* Underlined themes are those which might, according to local circumstances, be given little attention and left to the in-service trainers.

### C. Preparation.

Planning a scheme of work.

Planning a series of lessons.

Planning an individual lesson unit.

Syllabus planning : structure, situation, notions and functions.

Preparing with reference to motivation, interest, possible need and span of attention of learners.

Specification of objectives.

### D. Content.

Criticism and analysis of a selection of materials, course books, etc.

Preparation of aids, visual materials, documentary data, etc.

Possible approaches to use of published courses.

Selection and grading of language content and teaching materials.

Background study : materials, methods, programmes in French studies etc.

Making workcards.

Media : film, video, TV.

### E. Organisation.

Role of computers and language laboratories.

Sets, streams, mixed ability.

Languages as core or option subjects.

Role and use of homework.

Visits and exchanges abroad.

Record keeping.

Organisation of languages department.

### F. Assessment.

The public examination system : past, present and future.

Standards of attainment, pupil progress rates.

Graded objectives schemes.

Testing and feedback.

Examination terminology : norm - and criteria-referencing

Multiple choice, validity etc.

Positive and negative marking.

### G. Personal

Examining the qualities of a good languages teacher.

Developing respect for children's achievements.

Developing resourcefulness.

Use of voice and classroom presence.

Improving student's language skill: command of language, accuracy etc.

Combating student prejudice based on personal background of successful language learning (often through grammar-translation alone).

Developing involvement in and understanding of the professional world of language teaching : policy, language associations etc.

APPENDIX CAUSTRALIAN COURSES RESEARCHED1. AUTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Institution - Canberra College of Advanced Education  
School of Education

Title of Degree - Graduate Diploma in Education.

Course - Foreign Language Curriculum Studies.

Time Allocated - 1 semester (10 weeks)

Workshops - 4 x 2 hours per week.

Practice Teaching - 5 weeks.

2. NEW SOUTH WALES

Institution - Sydney College of Advanced Education  
Sydney Institute of Education

Title of Degree - Graduate Diploma in Education

Course - Single Curriculum Courses in Classics, French,  
German, Hebrew, Indonesian, Italian,  
Japanese, Modern Greek.

Time Allocated - 3 hours per week: languages with  
larger numbers - 3 hours specific  
language method; languages with  
smaller numbers - 2 hours specific  
language method, 1 hour general method.

Practice Teaching - 5 weeks - June/July  
3 weeks - September.

3. WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Institution - University of Western Australia  
Department of Education

Title of Degree - Diploma in Education

Course - Curriculum Studies and Study of Teaching/  
Modern Languages

Time Allocated - Major method - 66 hours. Minor  
method - 26 hours. For 8 weeks  
students are grouped according to  
their languages and taken by special-  
ist tutors.

Practice Teaching - 1 week - March (introductory)  
4 weeks - April/May  
5 weeks - August/September

4. VICTORIA

Institution - University of Melbourne  
Faculty of Education

Title of Degree - Diploma of Education

Course - Curriculum Studies in French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Russian, Spanish

Time Allocated - Lectures - 1 hour per week  
Workshops - Group A (French, Italian, Spanish), Group B (Greek, German, Indonesian) - 1½ hours per week.  
Other students - 1 hour per week.

Practice Teaching - 2 weeks - March April  
4 weeks - May/June  
3 weeks - October

Institution - Melbourne College of Advanced Education  
Department of Language and Literature

Title of Degree - Diploma of Education/ Bachelor of Education (Secondary)

Course - Method of Languages Other Than English

Time Allocated - 2 hours per week - 20 weeks

Practice Teaching - 2 weeks - April/May  
3 weeks - July  
3 weeks - October

5. TASMANIA

Institution - University of Tasmania  
Centre for Education

Title of Degree - Diploma of Education

Course - Curriculum and Method Studies - Modern Languages

Time Allocated - 4 hours per week

Practice Teaching - 5 weeks - April/May  
4 weeks - July/August