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THE IMPLICATIONS FOR CLASSROOM PRACTICE OF THE OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION MODEL FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING: AN EVALUATION OF MODES OF IMPLEMENTATION IN KWAZULU-NATAL SCHOOLS.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation, unless otherwise indicated in the text, is my own original work. This research has also not previously been submitted to any other institution for degree purposes.

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ABSTRACT

With the advent of political and social democracy in South Africa in 1994 came the need to restructure education so that it would reflect the new mulitcultural democracy, redress the inequalities of the past and ensure future social justice. South African society, after apartheid, had to be re-formed, in the sense of being formed anew; and it had to be re-constructed, in the sense of being built again. The classroom was perceived to be one of the critical sites in which this change could be effected and outcomes-based education (OBE) is the optimum educational instrument through which to initiate change.

At the heart of OBE lies learner-centredness which entails experiential learning in a physical and metaphysical world viewed as a set of interlocking (mutually dependant) systems. OBE focuses on a subjective being in the world and a subjective becoming in the world. It is because OBE is centred on process rather than product that outcomes are specified as the learning assessment instrument. It is for all the above reasons that the new South African national curriculum was based on OBE.

The primary aims of the curriculum are to achieve educational equality across racial groups and, secondly, to develop cultural competence amongst South Africa's previously legislatively divided peoples so that a new nation, united in its diversity, can evolve.

This dissertation examines the successes and failures of the implementation of OBE, in the form of the South African *National Curriculum Statement* (NCS), in the teaching of French as a Second Additional Language.

For educational policy to be implemented and the vision of transformation realised, teachers need to translate curriculum principles into pedagogic practices. The implications of the new national curriculum and of the OBE model

for the teaching of French are enormous. Learning French, a language which has both its own African identity and is a language of the world, encourages an understanding of other languages and cultures, promotes tolerance of diversity, develops critical thinking and prepares learners for a multicultural society. In these ways the learning of French has the potential of furthering the fundamental aims of the NCS. OBE, as an educational model, can optimise the teaching of a foreign language such as French and thus increase the potential of French learning to further the broad aims of the NCS. There is thus a reciprocity between learning French and the desired outcomes of the NCS, and the conduit is the OBE methodology.

OBE facilitates the teaching and learning of a foreign language such as French as it allows for the creation of a language learning (be it artificial) environment through the use of real-life situations and centres learning in the socio-cultural context of the learners. OBE links classroom exercises to the real world by sourcing learners' realities as contexts of learning and teaching and by making learning a productive learner experience. Classroom activities are thus relevant to a subjective rather than to an externally perceived objective real world.

The broad aim of my study is to evaluate how and to what extent OBE has been implemented in French classrooms. The study also describes and evaluates examples of successful OBE implementation. Research was undertaken in KwaZulu-Natal and the focus of the study was Grade 8 to Grade 12 French teaching and learning situations. My research has shown uneven application of OBE in "French" classrooms, but there are clear signs of creative and innovative learning facilitation which promises much for other "foreign" language learning and teaching and for the broader, nation-building aims of South African educational policy.

SOMMAIRE

La nouvelle démocratie politique et sociale qui s'est installée en Afrique du Sud en 1994 a révélé le besoin de restructurer l'éducation pour que celle-ci puisse être le reflet de la démocratie multiculturelle, redresser les inégalités du passé et assurer une justice sociale future. Après l'apartheid, il fallait re-former la société sud-africaine, la former de nouveau, et la re-construire, la construire de nouveau. La salle de classe a été considérée comme l'un des lieux essentiels où ce changement pourrait se faire et l'Apprentissage basé sur les acquis (OBE – sigle anglais), le meilleur outil éducatif pour le lancer.

Au coeur de la pensée OBE se trouve l'apprénant, ce qui implique une éducation basée sur l'expérience d'un monde physique et métaphysique perçu comme un amalgame de systèmes interconnectés et interdépendants. L'OBE est concentré sur un être subjectif dans le monde et un devenir subjectif dans le monde. Puisqu'il est centré sur le processus plutôt que le produit, l'OBE permet de transformer les acquis en instruments clés de l'apprentissage. C'est pour toutes ces raisons que le nouveau curriculum national de l'Afrique du Sud se base sur l'OBE.

Les objectifs premiers du curriculum sont d'arriver à l'égalité éducationnelle entre les différentes races ainsi que de développer des compétences culturelles parmi un peuple sud-africain sortant d'un séparatisme législatif pour qu'une nouvelle nation puisse évoluer, une nation unie dans la diversité.

Cette étude examine les succès et les échecs de la mise en pratique de l'OBE, élaborée dans la *National Curriculum Statement* (NCS) sud-africaine, dans le contexte de l'enseignement du français en tant que Deuxième Langue Additionnelle.

Pour que la politique éducationnelle soit mise en oeuvre et que la vision de la transformation se réalise, les enseignants doivent traduire les principes du curriculum en pratiques pédagogiques. Le nouveau curriculum national et le modèle OBE impliquent de grands changements dans l'enseignement du français. Apprendre le français, une langue ayant sa propre identité africaine tout en étant une langue mondiale, encourage la compréhension d'autres langues et d'autres cultures, mène à une plus grande tolérance de la diversité, développe une pensée critique et prépare les apprenants à affronter une société multiculturelle. Apprendre le français peut ainsi avancer les buts fondamentaux dont fait état le curriculum national. En tant que modèle éducatif l'OBE peut optimiser l'enseignement d'une langue étrangère telle le français ce qui mènerait à l'optimisation des objectifs généraux de ce même curriculum national élaboré dans le NCS. Il y a ainsi une réciprocité entre l'apprentissage du français et les objectifs visés du NCS, et c'est la méthodologie OBE qui en est le fil conducteur.

L'OBE facilite l'enseignement et l'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère telle le français car il permet la création d'un environnement qui s'y prête (tout en étant peut-être artificiel) par l'usage de situations véridiques et ancrées dans le contexte socioculturel de l'apprenant. L'OBE relie la salle de classe au monde réel en se servant de la réalité de l'apprenant comme source contextuel d'où puiser l'apprentissage et l'enseignement. L'apprentissage devient alors une expérience qui apporte à l'apprenant des fruits concrets. Les activités dans la salle de classe sont donc perçues comme étant pertinentes par rapport à la réalité subjective de l'apprenant plutôt qu'à une réalité perçue de l'extérieur.

Dans ce travail je tente d'évaluer comment et jusqu'où l'OBE est mise en oeuvre dans les salles de classe du français langue étrangère. L'étude tente aussi de décrire et d'évaluer des exemples d'une mise en pratique réussie de la méthodologie OBE. Une recherche a été entreprise dans la province du KwaZulu-Natal et l'accent a été mis sur des situations pédagogiques au niveau des Grades 8 à 12, les cinq dernières années d'école secondaire en Afrique du

Sud. Cette recherche montre une application irrégulière de l'OBE dans les salles de classe « françaises », mais il y a des signes prometteurs d'une facilitation créatrice et innovatrice qui avantagera de beaucoup l'apprentissage des langues dites étrangères ainsi que les objectifs d'ordre plus général de la politique éducative sud-africaine qui vise la construction d'une nation.

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Last but not least, I wish to thank my dear uncle, Sergio Balladon, for his relentless encouragement and jovial badgering. I dedicate this thesis to him.

CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
ASL	American Sign Language
CBE	Competency-Based Education
CBET	Competency-Based Education and Training
CNE	Christian National Education
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CREDIF	Centre de Recherche et d'Etude pour la Diffusion du Français
CUMSA	A new Currriculum Model for South Africa
DEIC	Dutch East India Company
EDUPOL	Education Policy and Systems Change Unit
FET	Further Education and Training
FETC	Further Education and Training Certificate
FL	Foreign Language
GET	General Education and Training
GETC	General Education and Training Certificate
KZ-N	KwaZulu-Natal
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
LOLT	Language of learning and teaching
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NECC	National Education Coordinating Committee
NEPI	National Education Policy Investigation
NETF	National Education and Training Forum
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NTB	National Training Board
OBE	Outcomes-based Education
OED	Oxford English Dictionary
PRISEC	Private Sector Education Council
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, Cultural Organisation

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

With the advent of political and social democracy in South Africa in 1994 came the need to restructure education so that it would reflect the new democracy and ensure social justice. A new national general education curriculum, the *National Curriculum Statement* (NCS), initially called *Curriculum 2005,* was devised for the "new" South Africa. The NCS was conceived, designed and structured as an outcomes-based curriculum. Outcomes-based education (OBE), an educational model, a philosophy, an organisational system and an approach to teaching and learning, was chosen as the optimum tool for educational transformation. South African society, after apartheid, was to be re-formed, in the sense of being formed anew and it was to be re-constructed, in the sense of being built again. The "new" South Africa, born in name through the one-man one-vote first democratic election of 1994, had to grow organically into its new constitutionally formed shape. The classroom was perceived to be the place to nurture this growth and outcomes-based education, with its focus on learner-centredness and experiential learning, was chosen as the instrument of transformation.

* * *

After centuries of colonisation and decades of apartheid, South Africa was a nation of separate and separated cultural and racial groups. Apartheid, with its ideology of separation, based on its belief in the supremacy of the White race and the inferiority of people of colour, entrenched difference while devaluing and undermining all races which were not white. This ideology was enforced in all political, social and economic institutions, not least of all, and perhaps with the most damning effect, in education. Education across racial groups was differentiated and unequal, and disadvantaged the majority of the population

while privileging the white population. The result of this political ideology was a lopsided society which was divided, disunited and which sought to maintain and sustain the inequality in favour of Whites in order to ensure continued White hegemony. Group-differentiation had inhibited the development of certain cultures and had hampered the forging of a shared South African identity out of diversity – one that finds its unity through diversity. Some communities had little sense of group identity, and the nation, as a whole, had little sense of a South African nationhood. Only the larger Afrikaner community expressed any sense of nationhood and this was limited to their own (inclusive of political and church affiliation).

With the advent of democracy the ANC and their partners recognised the necessity of overtly acknowledging and supporting all groups in practical ways which would redress the inequalities of the past and empower all groups, thereby leading (potentially) to the betterment of the individual. Not least of all, was the desire to improve the economic viability of the nation as a whole and the recognition of education as the key to this desire. It was clearly realised that redress, empowerment and betterment, without economic growth and development, would not be achieved, and that the key to all was transformed education. Yet the transformative education itself is dependant on the economy. This transformation of society was to be realised by transforming institutions and changing the attitudes and values of the population.

In line with the vision to transform education and reform society, the underlying principles of the new national curriculum were founded on the concept of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism – a philosophical concept and an educational process which recognises diversity and supports it – attempts to accommodate different cultures, and to prepare individuals to live in a multicultural society. It further attempts to redress inequalities which a previously culturally-unaware (or in the case of South Africa, a culturally segregationist society) might have created and fostered through its institutions and legal system. As an educational

process multiculturalism aims to establish equal educational opportunity and valorise previously disregarded indigenous and other knowledges. It also aims to build a sense of community or nationhood. Multiculturalism, therefore, has both a moral and a socio-economic thrust. It aims to rebuild society, to weave a new social fabric, to give all the opportunity to contribute to society, and to regain a sense of cultural, social and personal pride and value.

In order to achieve the aims of multiculturalism, outcomes-based education was chosen as the educational model on which to design and structure the new curriculum. OBE was seen as the means to translate the values of multiculturalism in a new transformative curriculum. OBE has at its core the belief that all learners can learn and its desired outcome is to have all learners exit the system as successful learners. OBE is thus primarily a system which is based on an understanding of lifelong learning and learning for life – of being and becoming in the world – and on the concept of equity and equality of opportunity. OBE stresses the learner. It also stresses and cultivates a symbiotic relationship between school and society. OBE assumes further that all knowledge is integrated and that the context is real life not the classroom. The accent is thus on process and the focus on "doing". The aim of OBE is that all learners must be equipped for life and prepared for lifelong learning.

The educational policy embodied in the NCS expresses a vision for society. For this educational policy to be implemented and the vision realised, teachers need to translate curriculum principles and concepts into learning and teaching techniques and strategies which they (learners and teachers) will use in the classroom. A curriculum framework such as the NCS, by its very nature, offers a broad picture. It gives little or no detail about what teachers should do day by day in the classroom. It is left to the teacher to work out the implications for classroom practice of the principles of the curriculum taking their *own* learners and contexts into consideration. The institution of OBE as the implementational tool of the NCS is a radical change from the previous curriculum frameworks

teachers worked with. South African syllabi of the past were traditional, content-driven, teacher-centred syllabi based on aims and objectives – on conformity and norms rather than creativity and outcomes. Teaching and learning within an OBE framework requires shifts in attitudes and perceptions and these changes need to be translated into classroom practice. Teaching and learning in an OBE classroom requires pedagogic practices to be adapted to the principles of OBE and this is particularly so for the learning of French (in effect a foreign language).

* * *

As an educator at tertiary level, a French teacher trainer and an author/compiler of prescribed books for French foreign language teaching at secondary level, I have been approached by French teachers and teacher organisations on various occasions since the publication of the NCS to speak on the implications of OBE for French teaching. I have also observed classroom situations and interviewed teachers who feel at a loss as to how to teach in accordance with the principles of OBE. Consequently, I am aware of the challenge that OBE presents French teachers and the need for research that can inform change. From a survey of the literature, it is clear that the impact of the OBE model on French foreign language teaching in South Africa has not been addressed. There is a need for research on the implications of the model on language teaching in general, and on French teaching and learning in particular. There is a need to develop and disseminate knowledge regarding pedagogic practice that will help facilitate the changes needed to comply with the tenets of OBE, in general and the NCS, in particular.

The focus of this study was the implementation of OBE in Grades 8 to 12 in French "second language" (L2) classrooms in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. The nature of the study is in part formative, as it intends to provide data which can direct and inform subsequent implementation and provide a baseline for further research. The broad aim of the study is to evaluate the mode of implementation of OBE in French classrooms in KwaZulu-Natal, to give

examples of successful OBE implementation and to evaluate successes with a view to these being used as a retraining tool. The research is guided by a number of research questions: What are the techniques and strategies currently used to teach French? Are methodologies and approaches in line with the tenets of OBE and of the NCS and the concept of multiculturalism? What are the present aims and outcomes of French instruction? How do these outcomes differ from those delimited in the Languages Learning Area of the NCS? Must teaching and learning be transformed in order to ensure that the Critical, Developmental and Learning Outcomes stipulated in the NCS are achieved?[1] What are the implications for teaching techniques, assessment procedures and learning strategies? My hypothesis was that French teaching and learning in most classrooms does not conform with OBE principles and cannot lead to the achievement of outcomes of significance as defined in the NCS. My assumption was that in most classrooms instruction is content-based, exam-driven and teacher-centred. The observation sessions which I conducted were specifically undertaken to test these ideas.

The broader issues that will be investigated in this dissertation are: if French is to be a specific means, and not merely an end in itself, in the overriding goal of educating and equipping learners with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that make them lifelong learners, critical thinkers and proponents of social justice, what does French bring to this goal which is peculiar to it as a language? What is the value to us as human beings of other ways of seeing the world? What intellectual and vocational value does French promise to potential learners? What needs could French answer in the South African context?

In this dissertation I will attempt to answer these questions and hope to produce knowledge which will be of use to teachers of French as well as to other researchers. The dissertation is made up of nine chapters, including an Introduction (this chapter) and a Conclusion (Chapter 9). Chapter 2 begins the formal study by providing an historical overview of educational policy in South

Africa prior to 1994. The chapter outlines the educational policies of the past to show the extent to which they influence the principles on which the new curriculum was founded. The study is diachronic in so far as I look at the early beginnings of education in South Africa then at the situation at the time of British rule in the nineteenth century. I then review the rise of Christian National Education (CNE) and the question of the language of learning. These issues are given particular attention as they determine two significant moments in the history of South African education: the Bantu Education Act of 1953 and the Soweto riots of 1976. I conclude the chapter with the 1990s when various sectors of society were involved in putting together proposals to transform education. These moves to transform education culminated eventually in the new outcomes-based national curriculum, the NCS.

Chapters 3 and 4 deal, respectively, with the NCS and OBE. In Chapter 3, I describe the NCS in relation to different types of curriculum and outline the principles and values which have determined its nature and design. I consider the genesis of the NCS starting with the *White Paper on Education and Training* in 1995 until the *Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9* of 2002 and the *Draft National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12* of 2002 and discuss in detail the criticisms which have been levelled at the curriculum and attempt to respond to them. I also detail the revision process which took place in 2001.

Chapter 4 looks at the origins of OBE internationally and in South Africa and attempts to arrive at a definition of the model. I discuss the principles on which the OBE paradigm is founded and show how these principles are grounded in the learning theories of recent decades. I further discuss how OBE has influenced the design and structure of the NCS and conclude with a brief consideration of how OBE has been received by parents and educators.

Chapters 5 and 6 relate specifically to French as a subject taught in South African schools. In Chapter 5 I look at the status of French in the NCS and

discuss the role and function the NCS prescribes for the teaching of French. I argue that in South Africa, a foreign language such as French is of particular value as it develops an awareness of the Other and fosters tolerance of diversity. I further argue that as such, the teaching and learning of French responds to one of the fundamental principles of the NCS. Chapter 6 defines French, in NCS terms, as a Second Additional Language and considers second language (L2) learning in relation to foreign language (FL) learning and first language (L1) learning. This chapter provides an overview of the trends in L2 learning methods over the last few decades and briefly discusses the learning theories in psychology which have underpinned such methods. I pay particular attention to the communicative approach and argue that OBE incorporates and optimises this approach.

Chapter 7 describes the empirical research strategy employed in the study which comprises three components: informal interviews, a survey questionnaire and on site classroom observations. The informal interviews were conceived as a preparatory step to devising a survey questionnaire and the observational indicators of the classroom observation sheets. The purpose of the questionnaire was to elicit information about:

- teacher opinions and judgements with regard to their classroom practice;
- their conception of how to implement OBE in the classroom; and
- their opinion regarding whether they are implementing OBE in the classroom, or not, and to what extent.

The classroom observations were to enable me to formulate an understanding of the *status quo* regarding classroom practice, so that I could describe and subsequently analyse and evaluate what teaching methods and approaches are being used to teach French. Chapter 8 follows closely on to the previous chapter as it describes and evaluates outstanding examples of outcomes-based education in practice in the French classroom. Appendix D and the video recording which is supplied as an adjunct to this dissertation, illustrate the classroom practice described.

In this study, in discussing what the implications of OBE are for day to day classroom practice and by illustrating OBE principles with practical examples, I hope to be of use to French teachers. I hope that my research will concretize for them what the real everyday implications of the OBE model are and what implementing the NCS in the classroom involves. I also dare to hope that the examples I will give will infuse them with enthusiasm to implement OBE in their teaching of French.

(For ease of reader access, each chapter's endnotes are placed at the chapter's end.)

Endnotes

[1] See Appendix A which contains relevant extracts from the NCS.

CHAPTER 2

EDUCATIONAL POLICY IN SOUTH AFRICA PRIOR TO 1994: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

2.1 Introduction

When South Africa's first democratically elected, non-racial government came into power in 1994, it inherited a system of education which had been conceived, formulated and maintained in terms of an ideology – both political and economic – which rested on the notions of division, differentiation and inequality. The National Department of Education of the time consisted of nineteen[1] separate departments, divided along racial and geographical lines, each with its own schools, curriculum, examinations and budget. The basic principle of this education system was to prepare learners of different races in different ways for the position they were expected to occupy in the social, cultural, economic and political life of the country. What they were taught, how they were taught and the resources made available to them, differed according to their racial classification. The educational system reflected the apartheid ideology of separate development which was based on the principle of white supremacy, and which led to White learners being privileged over learners of other races. Initiatives to formulate policy which would change this divided and unequal educational system began in 1990 when the then President F. W. de Klerk announced the unbanning of the liberation organisations, the release of political prisoners and the acceleration of the move towards democratic elections. These announcements unleashed a plethora of educational policy documents which, after the 1994 elections, provided a basis for policy frameworks which would culminate in a new national curriculum, the *National Curriculum Statement* (NCS).

In this chapter I will give an historical overview of the educational context out of which the NCS grew. I will explore the educational policies of the past so as to elucidate the extent to which they influenced or conditioned the principles on which the new curriculum was founded. To understand the basic principles of the NCS and what they attempt to respond to, at a particularly crucial moment of South Africa's history, we need to take stock of the situation in education in South Africa at the time of change, and how it got to be what it was. I will attempt to clarify the vital link that exists between the educational policies of the past and the educational response of the present. The study will be diachronic in so far as I will be looking at education in South Africa from 1652, when the first white settlers arrived at the Cape, until 1994 when the changing political dispensation of the country brought with it the possibility of transforming educational policy.

2.2 Early beginnings

Although it was only with the Bantu Education Act of 1953 that the philosophy of separate and differentiated education was defined in ideological terms and made law, division and difference had to a large extent been the reality of education in South Africa since the very beginning of the "colonial" history of the country. In the Cape, during the rule of the Dutch East India Company (DEIC), education was not a priority. Although concerned with the well-being of its employees, the DEIC was a commercial concern more preoccupied with trade and profits than with education or the socio-cultural development of the inhabitants of the region. Over the two centuries during which the DEIC administered the Cape, only a few elementary schools providing for the white settlers' children were established. With regard to the education of people of colour the Administration came into contact with – the Khoisan, slaves and ex-slaves – only sporadic and half-hearted attempts were made at either education or evangelisation.

The very first formal school to exist on South African soil was opened in 1658 specifically for the Angolan slaves who had been brought to the Cape by the Portuguese (Kallaway, 1984:45). The aim of the school was to teach the slaves Dutch and to inculcate in them the rudiments of the Christian religion. The endeavour, however, had a short history. Despite the now legendary "tot of rum" and "inch of tobacco" used to persuade the slaves to attend school, the institution was forced to close shortly after it was opened due to the recurrent truancy of its learners. In 1663 a second school was established, this time for the children of the settlers, but young slaves and Khoisan children were also allowed to attend. Although the DEIC was the effective government for the first hundred and fifty years of the history of the Cape, education was, in the European tradition, under the direction the Dutch Reformed Church.[2] The Church, concerned that the respective social conditions of the children attending the schools were not being reflected in the schooling situation and that class divisions between the settler and slave children would be blurred, suggested segregation. In 1685 a separate school exclusively for slave children under the age of twelve was established (Kallaway, 1984:46).

2.3 British occupation

At the time of British occupation, which began in 1806, there was little formal organisation of education or state intervention. The white settler population was small and there was little contact with Black tribes. It was only during the first quarter of the nineteenth century that a network of mission stations and schools was established. There were two reasons for this development. The first was that numerous wars – there had been eight such wars between 1779 and 1850 – with the south-bound migratory Xhosa tribes had become a challenge to the Administration. Attempts at curbing these wars had been fruitless; various strategies and counter-measures had been tried – treaties, cattle raids, intermingling of races through trade, no-mans'-land barriers – all to no avail. The official policy of the Cape

government, whether the DEIC, the Batavian Republic[3] or the British, had been to keep the Whites and the Blacks apart: frontiers kept the Black tribes from encroaching on to Colony territory, and laws, as extreme as the death penalty, were devised to keep the White colonists from venturing into the hinterland (Behr, 1988:13).

Sir George Grey, High Commissioner and Governor of the Cape, changed this policy; he masterminded an integrationist policy which he hoped would put an end to the wars with Black tribes. The idea was to instruct the Black tribes in the "arts of civilized life" and turn them into consumers of the colonists' goods and producers for their markets (Rose & Tunmer, 1975:206). Through education and religion Grey planned to:

> [...] change by degrees our at present unconquered and apparently irreclaimable foes into friends who may have common interests with ourselves (cited in Rose & Tunmer, 1975:204).

Britain would finance mission schools for the children of the Black tribes: Grey argued that these mission schools would be cheaper than war, and he hoped that through education the enemy would be tamed.

George Grey's policy for the political and economic integration – translated into educational policy – of the White and Black races became a basic organisational principle under British rule until 1910. The degree of "civilisation" and not race was to be the criterion by which a person was judged. Although this policy of integration failed dismally in that it was not implemented in practice, the concept of the civilising nature of education was retained and remained a major characteristic of educational philosophy especially with regard to education dispensed by missionaries to the Black population.

The second reason for the development of education policy during early British rule was that the White population had reached the 100 000 mark (Behr, 1988:11) and the burgeoning population of White school-goers made it necessary for the Administration to set up a formal educational system. A Department of Education was established in 1839 and a Superintendent-General was appointed. James Rose-Innes who filled this position for twenty years was successful in establishing a network of schools and mission stations spread over the Cape Colony and in other parts of the country. Even though these "established" schools were ostensibly open to all classes and races in line with Grey's policy of integration through education, a system of segregation had come into being. The Watermeyer Commission, set up between 1861 and 1863 to investigate education, found that state schools were in effect reserved for white children only. It was only in the poorer districts and in outlying areas that discrimination on the grounds of colour was not applied. Furthermore, in the same small towns it was not uncommon to find that White inhabitants had set up their own schools for White children alongside the state schools which were attended by Black children. Effectively, therefore, schools were segregated on the grounds of colour in all areas. On the basis of its findings, the Watermeyer Commission recommended that schools be reclassified, with A schools serving the White community, B schools, which were mission schools under church control, reserved for poor White and "Coloured" children, and C schools for the "Aborigines" who were the Koisan and Black children. The A and B schools would be state-aided while the C schools would receive full grants. These recommendations were incorporated into Education Act No.13 of 1865.

In the Boer Republic of the Transvaal (Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek) and the Orange Free State[4] segregated schooling also prevailed (Behr, 1988:19-20). Education for "non-whites" was provided only by the missions which received little or no government aid. The Boers were not prepared to

consider integration of Black and White be it in education or in other spheres. The Voortrekkers believed that, in God's eyes, they were the chosen people and no equality could be envisaged with a heathen brethren. Education, amongst other things, therefore had to be separate. When the British took over the Transvaal Colony in 1902, at the end of the Anglo-Boer War, they began to give their attention to the education of Blacks and to make provision for the education of "Coloured" children. Segregated state schooling was enforced in terms of Section 29 of the Education Act of 1907 which provided that no "Coloured" person should have access to the schools for Whites. By 1910, the Director of Education in the Transvaal was able to say that:

> [...] in educating White children and coloured children in separate schools, the principle of social segregation is carried out and it is a principle that no one has challenged (cited in Hartshorne, 1999:20).

In the Orange Free State, however, Black education remained entirely in the hands of missionary societies up to Union in 1910 and in Natal,[5] too, Black education was a missionary undertaking. Natal, however, was the forerunner with regard to the provision of state education for Blacks: in 1884 the especially established Council of Education became responsible for Black education in Natal. The Council maintained the schools, framed regulations, laid down curricula, appointed teachers and authorised the payment of grants to mission schools (Behr, 1984:174).

The role of the missionary societies in the education of Blacks in South Africa was in fact of great importance right up until 1948. The mission schools, state-aided or not, provided the bulk of education for Blacks while the state provided for White education. Mission societies, arriving in the country as early as the seventeenth century and increasingly so in the nineteenth century, moved rapidly from the concept of the school as a tool for evangelisation to institutions for education *per se* and established

educationally reputable institutions such as Lovedale, Healdtown, Adams and others, which were to produce a Black elite. The extent of missionary participation in Black education in South Africa up until the 1950s can be gauged from the fact that at that time, there were 2702 mission schools, with 215 956 enrolled learners, compared with 68 state schools for Blacks, with 7710 learners (Behr, 1984:173).

2.4 1910-1948

2.4.1 Introduction

After Union in 1910, when the four self-governing colonies came together and became provinces in the Union of South Africa, Native[6] Education remained within provincial control although all other matters pertaining to Blacks fell under the Ministry of Native Affairs. There was, however, a measure of standardisation. For instance, all secondary school courses in Black schools were identical to those offered at schools for Whites (Behr, 1984:177). Nevertheless, educational opportunities were in no way equal and enormous differences prevailed. The Government contribution per learner for the education of Whites was ten times larger than that for Blacks. There were insufficient teachers, so the missionaries, still the main providers of Black education, often engaged Blacks as teachers who knew little more than their learners, and paid them themselves. Over 70% of Black children of school-going age were not at school, and there was a lack of facilities for those who wanted to go to school. Overcrowding in urban areas was common. The Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Black Education, appointed under Government Notice 978 of 12 July 1935 gives a picture of the appalling conditions in Black education at the time:

> The committee witnessed the most appalling instances of overcrowding in some of the urban areas. In one school there were nearly four hundred learners huddled together, most of them sitting on the floor of a badly lighted and badly ventilated wood and iron room which could under normal circumstances have accommodated not more than 50 or 60 learners with desks. There was scarcely room for a blackboard, or a teacher's table – let alone other educational equipment such as maps.

> Four teachers were simultaneously trying to instruct the classes crowded together in this way (cited in Behr, 1984:178).

Furthermore, there was disparity in standards: a Standard 6[7] certificate gained by Black learners in their schools did not designate the same level of education as that received by Standard 6 children in a White school, the Black learners were two standards behind the White learners, although at the Junior Certificate and Matric[8] levels the standards were purported to be identical. The medium of instruction in primary school was the mother-tongue (the number of years of mother-tongue instruction varied from province to province), after which English or Afrikaans was the medium of instruction. Further, there was no compulsory education for Blacks, and the school life of the majority of learners did not proceed beyond Standard 1 (which represented merely three years of primary school education which meant that most Black children were functionally illiterate).

In fact, from the time of Union in 1910 until the coming to power of the National Party in 1948, little changed in Black education. It remained neglected and limited with initiatives for development coming almost exclusively from the missions. Although in the 1930s commissions were set up precisely to investigate Black education, no follow-up action was taken. The struggle for power between Afrikaans- and English-speaking white South Africans took centre stage.

2.4.2 Christian National Education

Foremost in this struggle was the issue of the survival and the strengthening of the Afrikaner people. Fearing domination by the English and the loss of their identity, there was a growth of Afrikaner Nationalism and a revival of the concept of Christian National Education. The Christian National Education (CNE) movement needs special attention here as it was the cornerstone of apartheid educational policy from 1948 and determined both White and Black education for almost fifty years.

CNE was an offshoot of the Christian National movement which had its origins in the Protestant-Calvinist ethos of the Afrikaner people and was born in reaction to British domination. When the latter took power in the Cape Colony in the early nineteenth century, an anglicisation policy made English the official language (1822) and the sole medium of instruction in schools (1865); the wishes of the Dutch majority, who outnumbered the British 8 to 1, were ignored. According to Behr (1988:99):

> Language became the warp of the growing national consciousness, the symbol and expression for social and political independence. Part of the cultural struggle was a growing determination to have the principle of mother-tongue instruction set in the matrix of the education of 'het volk', the people.

The Christian National movement spread northwards to the mainly Boer communities of the Transvaal Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek and the Orange Free State. After the annexation of the Transvaal by the British in 1877 bitterness and resentment were high; again the question of language and medium of instruction in schools came to the fore and Afrikaner Nationalism resurfaced, finding a voice in the Christian National movement.

The founder of the movement was the Reverend S. J. du Toit, minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, founder member of the Afrikaner Bond – a militant political and cultural organisation aimed at furthering the cause of the newly developing Afrikaner nation – and editor of the newspaper *Die Patriot*. As Superintendent of Education when the Transvaal once again became a Republic in 1881 he reorganised education taking the tenets of CNE as his educational philosophy. He made religion the dominant aspect of teaching, the Church the controlling force and Dutch the only medium of instruction. He also championed the cause of Afrikaans as a language independent of Dutch. Du Toit effectively sowed the seeds of an Afrikaner nationalism which was to emerge and strengthen each time Afrikaner

culture was threatened. The movement gained momentum after the British victory in the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902), and then again in the 1930s when the struggle for political domination between the two white language groups reached its climax.

In 1939 the Institute for Christian National Education was founded and the concept of CNE was reformulated, developed and extended. In 1948, after the mainly Afrikaner-backed National Party came to power, the three main Afrikaans church denominations met to put together a joint policy on education based on the ideals of CNE. The outcome was a definitive document entitled *Problems in Education Politics* which was to become the theoretical basis of National Party educational policy. The exponents of CNE believed that God intended that there be an Afrikaner nation with a land and language of its own and a religion based on traditional Protestant-Calvinist principles. Education had to have a Christian base and had to promote a love for one's own culture and heritage (Behr, 1988:98).

Hartshorne (1999:24) points out that although Professor J. C. Coetzee, one of the main authors of *Problems in Education Politics,* affirmed that this document was a blueprint for the education of Afrikaans-speaking children only, and that other cultural groups had the right to educate their children in a manner consistent with their own beliefs, Article 15 of the document does not bear this out. This Article in fact has a strong bearing on the direction the National Party government was to take with regard to Black education:

> We believe that the calling and task of White South Africa with regard to the native is to Christianise him and help him on culturally, and that this calling and task has already found its nearer focus in the principles of **trusteeship, no equality and segregation** [...] [W]e believe that the teaching and education of the native must be grounded in the life and world view of the whites, most especially those of the Boer nation as the senior white trustee of the native, and that the native must be led to ...[an] acceptance of the Christian and National principles in our teaching ...[It] is the right and task of the state [...] to give and control native education (cited in Rose & Tunmer, 1975:127-8, my emphasis).

In 1949, a year after it took up office, the National Party government set up the Eiselen Commission to investigate Black education with a view to establishing a Black education system which would conform with CNE principles. The premise on which the Commission set about its investigations and thereafter formulated its recommendations was that there be "no equality and segregation" between White and Black education. The terms of reference were:

> a) The formulation of the principles and aims of education for Natives as an independent race, in which their past and present, their inherent racial qualities, their distinctive characteristics and aptitude, and their needs under ever-changing social conditions are taken into consideration.
>
> b) The extent to which the existing [...] educational system [..]. should be modified [...] in order to conform to the proposed principles and aims, and to prepare Natives more effectively for their future occupations (cited in Rose & Tunmer, 1975:244).

This was a watershed period for Black education and the policy outcome of the Eiselen Commission Report (1951), the Bantu Education Act promulgated in 1953, was to affect the education of Black South Africans for forty years. From the vantage point of the twenty-first century, one can state that, effectively, education was one of the major agents of the intellectual and educational destruction of generations of Black South Africans.

The essential recommendation of the Eiselen Commission, in line with its terms of reference and the tenets of CNE, was that both the content and method of teaching and learning be specific to Black children brought up in a Black culture, speaking a Black language, and "imbued with the values, interests and behaviour patterns characteristic of the Bantu" (cited in Behr, 1988:34). Education for Blacks had to have a separate existence and different outcomes from White education. While education for White children stressed intellectual and cognitive development, the outcomes of education for Black children were limited to the learning of handicrafts such as sewing and carpentry along with the basics of literacy and numeracy. According to

policy, there was no place for the Black citizen in the White community outside of certain forms of menial labour. The ideal of separate education, designed specifically for Blacks and according to the White person's view of what Blacks should be allowed to involve themselves with in their daily lives, was clearly indicated by Dr H. F. Verwoed, then Minister of Native Affairs, in the now notorious Senate Debate of June 7 1954:

> It is the policy of my Department that (Bantu) education should have its roots entirely in the Native areas and in the Native environment and Native community. There Bantu education must be able to give itself complete expression, and there it will have to perform its real service. The Bantu must be guided to serve his own community in all respects. There is no place for him in the European community **above the level of certain forms of labour**. Within his own community, however, all doors are open. For that reason it is no avail for him to receive a training which has as its aim absorption in the European community, while he cannot and will not be absorbed there. Up till now he has been subjected to a school system which drew him away from his own community and practically misled him by showing him the green pastures of the European but still did not allow him to graze there. This attitude is **not only uneconomic because money is spent on education** which has no specific aim, but it is even dishonest to continue with it. The effect on the Bantu community we find in the much discussed frustration of educated Natives who can find no employment which is acceptable to them (cited in Malherbe, 1977:546, my emphasis).

This recommendation totally disregarded the wishes and opinions of Black parents who, according to the Eiselen Commission's findings, did not want their children to be taught "Bantu handicrafts" and other "Bantu-specific" subjects. For them, the objective of schooling was that children obtain certificates that would enhance their job prospects. Despite the fact that Blacks did not receive equal pay to Whites, Blacks felt that having the same qualifications would be a powerful tool in pressing for improved financial treatment. They were therefore against any differentiation in education. Despite opposition from the very people the State was meant to serve, educational policy was determined according to an ideology that was based on one cultural group's determination to remain in power – the White Afrikaner.

Afrikaner nationalists believed that it was essential for their survival culturally, politically and economically that power be in their hands. To protect their own people, employment and economic practices limited the Black population to unskilled and semi-skilled work, this was thus entrenched in educational policy through the definition of curricula and the provision, or withholding, of resources. Four separate ministries of education for the four racial groups in South Africa, (Whites, Blacks, Coloureds, Indians), were established under centralised control. Black education was taken out of the hands of the missions and religious institutions and put under the central government control of the Department of Bantu Education. Further, the quality and quantity of educational opportunity and development offered to each group varied with White education receiving by far the greater share of financial resources and Black education the least. In 1967 (the year after the four separate departments of education had been created) R241 242 was spent on White education and R35 109 on Blacks (Malherbe, 1977:733). With a population of approximately twenty million Blacks and four million whites the disparity in resources for the two population groups was enormous.

Before 1948 there had not been a coherently formulated educational policy for Blacks. Now there was a state strategy, one of segregation and domination, and educational policy was integrated into that state policy making inequality and limitation of opportunity in education law. The aim was a totalitarian control of learner and educator and the subjection of a particular racial group – the Blacks – to a subservient level, thus limiting educational potential and opportunity on the basis of race in a divided structure. This led to the disempowerment of the Black with no chance of upliftment.

The main provisions of the Bantu Education Act remained constant for twenty-six years. Dissatisfaction amongst Black learners, educators,

parents and educational bodies was widespread. But it was the language issue that was to make this general long-smouldering discontent erupt into rioting, destruction of property and death – and ultimately begin a process that would lead to the surrender of the apartheid government.

2.4.3 The language issue

The language situation in Black education had remained very much constant since the institution by the British in the early nineteenth century of state-aid to mission schools: English was the dominant language of education and the mother-tongue was the medium of instruction in primary school.[9] When the National Party came to power in 1948, one of its main concerns was to expand the influence of Afrikaans. The CNE document dealing with Black education laid down that:

> (t)he mother tongue must be the basis of native education and teaching but [...] the two official languages must be taught as subjects because they are official languages and [...] the keys to the cultural loans that are necessary to his own cultural progress (cited in Rose & Tunmer, 1975:127-8).

However, as Hartshorne (1992:197) states:

> (w)hat was clear from the beginning was that the concern was as much for Afrikaans as for the development of mother tongue instruction, and that the intention was to reduce the influence of English.

Thus in the 1950s, mother-tongue instruction in primary schools was extended year by year, class by class, up to Standard 6 when a public examination granting entry into secondary schools would be written in the vernacular instead of in English. Both English and Afrikaans were introduced as compulsory subjects in the first year of schooling; both were made compulsory subjects in secondary school; and, most importantly, both English and Afrikaans were to be used as mediums of instruction in secondary school. Effectively, this meant that half the subjects were taught and learnt in Afrikaans while the other half were taught and learnt in English

– both "foreign" languages to the vast majority of Black children who lived in communities where English and Afrikaans were little spoken.

Black learners were thus disadvantaged as a result of what can be termed a punitive and cognitively limiting linguistic policy. In White schools, dual medium education was not required – it had in fact been rejected in the 1940s in favour of separate schools for each of the two main language groups. Thus, for White children schooling from primary right through to secondary and tertiary level was in the mother tongue. The educational interests of Black children were, however, not considered, the overriding preoccupations of the architects of the policy were ideological and political factors, and the interests of the Whites were paramount, in particular that of the maintenance of White Afrikaner Nationalist domination.

Black parents also came to see mother-tongue education as another way to prevent their children from accessing White economic domains. Black parents wanted their children to learn English in the belief that knowledge of English was the key to economic upliftment.[10]

For over twenty years the language issue was at the centre of opposition to and criticism of the Bantu Education system. Opposition was constant, from many different sectors of society – teachers, churches, community organisations. Year after year, school boards and teachers' associations recommended that the language medium policy be reviewed. In 1972 the Department agreed to limit mother-tongue instruction up to Standard 4 (instead of up to Standard 6), thus effectively reducing it from eight to six years. Another concession was to change the schooling structure to conform with the other education systems. Thus, in 1975 primary school classes were reduced by one year and Standard 6 disappeared altogether from primary schools; Standard 5 became the final year of primary school and Standards 6 to 10 constituted the secondary school classes.

These changes were in themselves positive steps, but the immediate effects were almost all negative. Firstly, in the year the Standard 6 level was moved to secondary schools, both Standard 5 and Standard 6 primary school leavers had to be admitted into secondary schools thus causing enrolments into the first year of secondary school to double. To cope with the increased number of learners, the best primary school teachers were moved into secondary schools causing disruption in the schools they had left. Furthermore, as the reduction in the number of primary school years was seen as giving learners one year less to prepare for secondary school, the curricula in Standards 3 to 5 became overloaded. Finally and above all, due to the revision of the medium of instruction policy, the public primary school-leaving examination – now to be written in Standard 5 – had to be written in English and Afrikaans, at the end of only one year's experience in using the dual medium approach. The issue of the use of Afrikaans as medium, previously only a cause for dissatisfaction at secondary level, was now also an issue at primary school level. In 1976 the primary school teachers and learners had to cope with a policy that was seen not only as unfair but also educationally indefensible.

Throughout 1975 and the first half of 1976 teacher groups, principals, school boards and the Soweto Urban Bantu Council urged the Department of Bantu Education to take a more flexible stand regarding the language issue. These calls fell on deaf ears and on 16 June 1976 children and teachers took to the streets: rioting erupted and 176 people died – most of them children.

> [O]f the 1200 people who were killed, admitted to hospital or brought before the courts in 1976, 44 per cent were in the age-group 13-16 years (Hartshorne, 1992:46).

The Soweto riots were a tragic event in the history of South African education and began the slow but relentless process of active protest against an unfair, discriminatory and limiting educational system.

In the July of the same year, the Government changed its language policy – one medium, to be decided upon by the school, could be used from Standard 5 upwards.[11] Also, the 1953 Bantu Education Act was replaced by the 1979 Black Education Act which left the issue of mother-tongue instruction open-ended, stating merely that mother tongue instruction should be maintained "at least up to Standard 2". However, the protest continued long after the medium question had receded into the background. The essential issues of inequality and discrimination without any control of education by those directly involved, remained, and the disruption of education which began in 1976 continued through to 1980, moving from Soweto to Port Elizabeth and to Cape Town with more deaths, detentions and numbers of young people going into exile.

2.4.4 The De Lange Commission

Calls from all sectors of society for a commission to be set up to investigate education finally led to the government calling on the Human Sciences Research Council to effect this investigation. After a year of research, intense discussion and negotiation, in 1981 the De Lange Report, named after the Chairman of the Commission, was published. Although the investigation was essentially a reaction to the breakdown in education that was threatening, it was also a response to the business sector which had repeatedly expressed concern that Black education was not preparing youth adequately to make a contribution to the economic development of the country. Since the beginning of the 1970s there had been an awareness that the skills training given Black learners was inadequate and that general education did not prepare them for further education or training. Economic

growth and productivity were becoming compromised as Whites alone could not provide the specialised manpower needs of the country.

The terms of reference of the De Lange Commission therefore reflected both these manpower concerns and the need for reform in order to restore law and order. The Commission was to concern itself with:

1. Guiding principles for a feasible education policy in the RSA in order to:
   - allow for the realizations of the inhabitants' potential;
   - promote economic growth in the RSA, and
   - improve the quality of life of all the inhabitants of the country.
2. The organization and control structure, and financing of education.
3. Machinery for consultation and decision-making in education.
4. An education infrastructure to provide for the manpower requirements of the RSA and the self-realization of its inhabitants.
5. A programme for making available education of the same quality for all population groups (Hartshorne, 1992:152).

What the De Lange Commission had to say about the provision of education in South Africa was revolutionary in the context of educational policy of the previous forty years. The Report stated unambiguously that fairness and justice in education demanded equality of opportunity for all, irrespective of race. Restrictions on access to education and on the provision of educational facilities based purely on race or colour had to be eliminated. The Report stated that this could only be possible with the full involvement and participation of all concerned parties in the decision-making process. Finally, and as importantly, the Commission recommended the decentralization of power and the removal of divisions created on racial lines. The five fundamental principles (of eleven) recommended by the Commission were:

1. Equal opportunities for education, including equal standards in education, for every habitant, irrespective of race, colour, creed or sex, shall be the purposeful endeavour of the State.

2. Education shall afford positive recognition of what is common as well as what is diverse in the religious and cultural way of life and the languages of the inhabitants.

3. Education shall give positive recognition to the freedom of choice of the individual, parents and organisations in society.

4. The provision of education shall be directed in an educationally responsible manner to meet the needs of the individual as well as those of society and economic development, and shall, *inter alia*, take into consideration the manpower needs of the country. [...]

5. The provision of formal education shall be a responsibility of the State, provided that the individual, parents and organised society shall have a shared responsibility, choice and voice in this matter (cited in Hartshorne,1992:156-157).

The Government's response to the report was slow in coming, was also inadequate and above all inflexible. The Government held fast to policies of separation and discrimination reiterating that CNE, separate schools and separate education departments were non-negotiables. Its final response was the promulgation of the National Policy for General Education Affairs Act of 1984 in which the principles of the De Lange Report are present, but are so reworded that the Government stance on separation and division is not compromised and its responsibility to provide equality is played down. For instance Principle 3 of the De Lange Report reads: "Education shall give positive recognition to the freedom of choice of the individual, parents and organisations in society." In legislation the following was added: "subject to the provisions of any law regarding the attending of a school for a particular population group by a learner of another population group" (cited in Hartshorne, 1999:74). Legislation effectively maintained the segregation, division and differentiation which had characterised educational policy since the promulgation of the Bantu Education Act of 1953.

The major issues were not addressed and progressive ideas were ignored. The Government was prepared to implement equality but only in the context of separate education. Further, the reality of implementation was that financing determined the extent of the reform. "Real policy", in the words of Hartshorne (1999:81), a member of the De Lange Commission, as opposed to "paper policy", lay in the resources that were made available, and financing continued to privilege the White group.

The *status quo* in education thus remained unchanged, and along with the so-called political "reform" which involved the Tricameral Parliamentary system,[12] dissatisfaction led to a renewed period of protest. The 1984-1986 period of unrest in schools was more intense and more political than that of 1976-1980. Stayaways, boycotts, the call for "liberation before education", and overt violence in the education sphere were such that it became clear that a "lost generation" – as it was to be referred to later – was in the making. In the field of education alone 700 people were detained, and the services of 1585 Black teachers considered subversive were terminated.

By 1990 education was in a state of crisis; confrontation between the state and a people whose tolerance of inequality, discrimination and "window dressing" attempts at reform had reached its limit, and maintaining the State of Emergency proclaimed in 1986 was no longer feasible. On 2 February 1990 the announcement by the Government that democratic elections would be held in 1994 led to the opening up of dialogue between heretofore banned organisations and educational policy plans started to be developed in anticipation of the formal termination of apartheid. All sectors were involved: the private sector, the labour movement, the democratic movement, the international aid community, NGOs and the state itself. 1990 marks the start of the post-apartheid era with the foundations for a democratic, equal, non-discriminatory educational policy for South Africa being laid.

Various sectors of society committed to change became involved in putting together proposals to transform education: the private sector through the Private Sector Education Council (PRISEC), the Urban Foundation's Education Policy and Systems Change Unit (EDUPOL), internationally funded NGOs, the National Training Board (NTB) with its *National Training Strategy Initiative*, and the National Education and Training Forum (NETF). Even the apartheid state, in a bid to have its say in curriculum reform, drew up the *Education Renewal Strategy* and CUMSA (*A New Curriculum Model for South Africa*) (Badat, 1997; Greenstein, 1997; Jansen, 1999, 2001).

One of the more significant initiatives of the time for future policy was the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI), launched in 1990 and commissioned by the NECC, the National Education Crisis Committee, a body representing teachers, parents and students mainly from educationally disadvantaged black communities (Greenstein, 1997; Jansen, 1999). The NEPI brief was to "produce an analysis of education options and their implications in all the major areas of education policy." (NEPI, 1993:1). Although, according to Badat (1997), the NEPI report did not influence future policy, it is clear from where we stand now, that the report, published in 1993, laid out the broad principles and values which are to be found in the new national curriculum, the NCS: equality, redress, development, "commonality and diversity" (NEPI, 1993:105), non-racism, non-sexism and democracy.

The transformation of education finds expression in the creation of the NCS, which is seen by its authors as "[a] starting-point for removing apartheid from our schools and curricula" *(Draft Revised National Curriculum Statement,* 2001:4). This new curriculum not only removes apartheid from schools and curricula, it builds on the values of the South African Constitution. It was developed at a crucial time in the history of South Africa

when it was necessary to react to a *status quo* in education which was the product of apartheid history. The NCS, which affects all aspects of schooling, was conceived as a tool for the transformation and the reconstruction of society.

2.5 Conclusion

The history of South African education cannot be disassociated from the class, cultural, racial and political tensions that have characterised this country's history: tensions between trader and slave, Dutch and British, Afrikaans-speaker and English-speaker, and above all and at all times, between White and Black. For two centuries the territory that was to become South Africa was made up of pockets of white settlers of European descent battling to survive and educating their children as best they could in the religious traditions of the old Europe they had left. Alongside them were the missionaries evangelising and educating the Black tribes that were increasingly settling in areas adjacent to or alongside the Whites. Union in 1910 brought some form of cohesion and political stability to the country but not one which considered a unified educational policy for all its peoples. Divisions and differences, privilege and neglect were the characteristics of education at that time.

As I have shown, educational policy was only integrated into state policy in 1948, however, the apartheid policy of the exclusively White government effectively limited opportunity for growth and development of the majority of South Africans with the aim of maintaining the economic and political superiority of the White race and keeping the Black race in a state of subjection and servitude. After nearly forty years, this educational policy, which did not change, react or respond to the widening divide that was being created between the economically viable and the economically dependent, between the rich and the poor, the educated and uneducated, White and Black, led to a total breakdown in education. Only with

fundamental change and the transformation of the political structure, could a new educational system be set up that could serve each South African and ultimately the whole of South African society.

The crisis in education in the years 1976 to 1986 precipitated political change that was to engender a new educational system culminating in the formulation of a national curriculum for all peoples of South Africa. The NCS is a direct response to this country's particular educational history. Inequality, division and differentiation based on race and on the notion of differing cognitive abilities and roles in society, was to be replaced with the principles of equality of opportunity for all peoples irrespective of colour, creed, race or sex, the recognition of the potential of each individual to contribute significantly to society, and the concept of unity in diversity in the pursuit of a sense of nationhood.

Endnotes

[1] The Department of National Education, five White departments, one 'Coloured', one Indian, and eleven Black.

[2] In Holland as in Britain, education had been traditionally under the authority of the Church. In England, it was only in the early 19th century that the concept of State intervention in schools began to take shape.

[3] The Cape was ruled by the Batavian Republic between 1803 and 1806, and the Commissioner General, T.A. de Mist set up an educational system that differed from that of the Dutch East India Company in that it was more national than religious.

[4] The Voortrekkers began occupying the territory which was to become known as the Orange Free State between 1836 and 1854 when it became an independent Republic.

[5] In 1835 Britishers settled at Port Natal and were followed in 1837 by Voortrekkers who set up the Voortrekker Republic of Port Natal. This was short-lived as the British annexed Natal in 1843.

[6] In the history of South Africa there have been many variations in the names designating the different ethnic groups which make up the South African population. Different periods used different terminology. Blacks, or Africans, or Bantu and formerly Natives and still earlier Kaffirs and even Aborigines, refer to the dark brown people, speakers of Bantu languages.

[7] Standard 6 was the last year of primary school. The Certificate determined entry into secondary school.

[8] The Junior Certificate was an exit level certificate granted after successful completion of two years at secondary school, at the Standard 8 level, and the Matric Certificate was the final qualification at secondary school after four years, at Standard 10 level.

[9] In 1935 when the Welsh committee began its investigations into the language situation in Black schools, the situation was as follows: in primary school the vernacular was a compulsory subject; at secondary level a vernacular language was not a compulsory subject; the mother-tongue was to be used as medium of instruction for six years in Natal, for four years in the Cape and in the Free State, and for two years in the Transvaal. Thereafter an official language was to be used as medium of instruction and this was usually always English.

[10] Black parents' continued desire that their children be educated through the medium of English is evident from the fact that the majority of all schools (only excepting "Afrikaans" schools), whatever their racial composition, opt for English as the language of learning and teaching.

[11] Statistics in 1978 show that 96% of Black learners were being taught through the medium of English, proof of the level of dissatisfaction with the previous status quo.

[12] The Tricameral Parliament, set up in 1983, was made up of the white Parliament (the House of Assembly), and a Coloured and Indian Parliament (the Houses of Representative and Delegates respectively). The two latter houses were subservient to the white House, they were nevertheless to administer matters considered to be "own affairs" of the people they represented. "General Affairs" were controlled by the central Cabinet. Ultimate power rested with the State President and the President's Council. As the majority party in the white House of Assembly also controlled the majority in the President's Council, ultimate power rested in the hands of the National Party.

CHAPTER 3

THE *NATIONAL CURRICULUM STATEMENT*: A NEW NATIONAL CURRICULUM FOR SOUTH AFRICA

3.1 Introduction

The *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) defines the word "curriculum" as: "A course of study at a school, university, etc." and as, "the subjects making up such a course." The word in the general lexicon therefore connotates both a framework for teaching and learning and the content of that framework. These two meanings of "curriculum" as a framework and as the detail of what is to be taught, are derived from the Latin roots of the word: the noun *cursus* and the verb *currere*. *Cursus,* meaning a track or a course, in the sense of race-course or a course-to-be-run, emphasises the fixed, "mapped out" nature of a curriculum. The infinitive *currere,* however, expresses a process, in the sense of running a course with the stress being on the running, rather than on the track.

The dual definition of curriculum proffered by the OED is mirrored in the different curriculum models which have been developed in recent decades. New theories (see Chapter 6) about teaching and learning, as well as changing assumptions regarding what is knowledge, have led to a shift regarding the perceived role and function of a curriculum and this has impacted on curriculum development.

There are essentially two main groups of curriculum models. The first group conceives the curriculum as a prescriptive plan, a "course-to-be-run" (Doll, 1993:4), which is unalterable. The second group of curriculum models conceives of the curriculum as a guide which will be modified in practice, "in the running", so to speak. In the first part of this chapter, I will describe the two types of

curriculum and then define the national curriculum, the *National Curriculum Statement* (NCS), in relation to this description.

3.1.1 The prescriptive curriculum

Let us look first at the prescriptive curriculum. The curriculum as a fixed plan is the more traditional type of curriculum which prescribes the subjects to be offered by schools and lists the content of the subjects to be taught. It also organises and sequences content by grade and suggests how learners should learn and teachers should teach. Furthermore, the manuals, text-books and the materials to be used are stipulated. It also stipulates the type of assessment and the mark allocation. Curriculum is thus equated with the use of subject syllabus.

With this type of curriculum the teacher's role is to "carry out instructions", to transmit the knowledge prescribed in the syllabus. The teacher has no say in the creation of the curriculum which is conceived by experts in the field of curriculum development. The advantage of this type of curriculum is that it ensures that a core of generally considered basic or important knowledge is taught and that, in theory, all learners will be exposed to the same body of knowledge, irrespective of their socio-economic or cultural group. It is argued that this makes for a cohesive, homogenous group of people with the same cultural store of knowledge.

However, this type of curriculum assumes that knowledge is fixed and unchanging and that learning is linear. Cognitive theories (Piaget, 1966, 1972, 1974; Bruner, 1960, 1966) have shown that this is not the case. Knowledge is not a transmissible commodity which can be moved, like a little hard object, from one brain to another and filed in neat sequential order. Acquiring knowledge is a process which is "all over the place". As the brain is a parallel processor, learning involves integrating, or "fitting together" like a game of Lego, new knowledge with existing knowledge. Furthermore, it is a process which involves not only the intellect, but the emotions as well and is therefore mitigated by the social

environment in which learning occurs. In a social context such as South Africa where society is made up, on the one hand, of a large, rural, educationally deprived population and, on the other, of a first-world urban middle class, the prescriptive curriculum cannot cater for difference. It assumes that it is possible to teach exactly according to the plan's intentions and that learners all learn precisely what is taught, that is, exactly the same thing.

With the prescriptive curriculum the emphasis is on transmission of knowledge from teacher to learner. No cognisance is taken of the knowledge of learners who are seen as receivers of knowledge. If, as constructivist learning theory indicates, making meaning is personal and unique to each learner, then the differing ways of learning of individual learners needs to be taken into consideration. The prescriptive curriculum, however, is imposed from the outside and the learners' learning context, background, interests, aptitudes, or particular needs are not taken into consideration; neither are the variables inherent in the teacher such as aptitude and attitude, interests, strengths, limitations, and differences in teacher training .

Furthermore, in today's fast-changing world, fact-based knowledge gathering is of little use. It is vital to learn how to process knowledge. With the rate of technological change, absorbing facts which are then regurgitated in an exam is of little use to learners after school. The prescriptive curriculum, set in stone so to speak, does not prepare for life. The prescriptive curriculum ignores integration of learning areas, integration of skills and the transfer of knowledge from one discipline to the other, from one task to the other. The prescriptive curriculum promotes knowledge gathering as opposed to knowledge processing which is real learning in cognitive theory terms and necessary for lifelong learning.

This type of prescriptive content-rich type curriculum fits into Ralph Tyler's curriculum model which has become known as an objectives or product approach to curriculum development (Tyler, 1949). The old Natal Education

Department French syllabus is an example of this type of content-rich curriculum. Twenty years ago it stipulated in detail the grammatical structures (articles, prepositions, conjunctions, etc.), the tenses (present, future, *passé composé,* etc.), and the vocabulary (the family, sport, holidays, etc.) around which grammar was to be taught in each Standard (Grade). The subject content and the sequence of its learning were rigidly laid down. The syllabus also stipulated the content of the summative assessment that had to be carried out at the end of the year (an essay, a letter, grammar exercises, a translation into French and a translation into English). The teachers' role in this type of product-driven curriculum is that of a transmitter of knowledge while the learner learns for the exam, that is, is a receiver and repeater (not an independent producer).

3.1.2 The process-type curriculum

At the other end of the curriculum spectrum is the kind of curriculum which considers teaching and learning as a process with the curriculum conceived as a guide and not as a set of instructions. This type of curriculum reflects a more post-modern view which considers the curriculum as something which develops and changes in the context of learning. Contrary to a modernist view of curriculum, it is based on the assumption that knowledge is not fixed, but that meaning is made by the teacher and by learners, that their understanding is modulated by their contexts and backgrounds, as well as by their interaction with others and the material they encounter. The teacher is considered not as a transmitter of knowledge, but as a mediator in the learning process. The curriculum plan is thus conceived as a guide, as something which will be modified in the course of teaching and learning by the specific context of both the learner and the teacher. The teacher, as a professional, will critically assess the classroom situation and adapt the plan, or the curriculum, according to the needs and the context of the learners. A curriculum which allows for this type of modification can be called a curriculum in practice and is in line with Lawrence Stenhouse's model (Stenhouse, 1975) which recognises that teaching and learning is a process, a "running of a course". This change of focus from the

Tylerian model places more emphasis on learning, which is participatory and experiential, than on teaching, and therefore, on the "runner running" and less on the course run, although neither product nor process, course or runners, can be separated.

Where does the NCS stand in relation to these two extremes of curriculum model? The NCS is a hybrid of the two models sketched above: it is a national curriculum which outlines the country's educational priorities and in that way, provides an educational policy framework and above all, an ethos. The ANC's 1994 discussion document *A Policy Framework for Education and Training,* defines curriculum in the following way: "The curriculum is understood to be more than teaching and learning activities that take place in learning institutions" (cited in Graham-Jolly, 2002:28).

3.2 The NCS a hybrid curriculum[1]

A national curriculum is, to some extent, a political statement; it is also the expression of a world-view. Consequently, the NCS makes a statement about the values and attitudes that need to be transmitted, but at the same time, outlines the minimum knowledge and skills that learners require to pass on to the different stages of the educational system. It is therefore prescriptive, albeit in a very different way from the traditional syllabus outlined above, in that it is an outcomes-based curriculum which sets out what to teach and how to teach it but without giving detail of the content to be "covered" nor the sequence in which this content is to be taught. The NCS is concerned with more than just facts, it identifies competences not content, and these competences comprise skills for learning and for life, and values and attitudes. French teachers looking for a list of the grammatical structures to be taught in Grade 10, or the themes around which to contextualise learning in Grade 8, will not find either in this curriculum. The NCS recognises teaching and learning as a process in that it stipulates not teacher inputs in terms of content knowledge, but learner outcomes in the form of assessment criteria. Outcomes to be achieved in relation to specific Learning

Areas are prescribed and Assessment Standards per grade are set down. For example, one of the Learning Outcomes for the Languages Learning Area states that:

> The learner will be able to listen for information and enjoyment, and respond appropriately and critically in a wide range of situations. (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Languages,* 2002:28)

The Assessment Standard at Grade 7 level states:

> We know this when the learner:
>
> - Listens to and responds to simple questions (e.g. "Have you ever been to Cape Town?" "When did you go there?")
> - Listens to a telephone message and takes it down.
> - Listens to short, simple stories and factual texts. [...] (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Languages,* 2002:34)

While Learning Outcomes are stipulated, what constitutes the manner of achieving, and the actual achievement of the outcome is left to the teacher. The Assessment Standards merely guide the teacher. As the above-cited Assessment Standard shows, it is left to the teacher to decide on what, in grammatical and lexical terms constitutes a "simple" question, or a "factual" text. The degree of difficulty of a text or the content of the text is not stipulated. These can be chosen according to the interests, needs, context and background of the learner and the resources available to teachers.

In this curriculum context, teachers are thus envisaged not merely as transmitters of knowledge but as mediators who in the classroom, on a daily basis, use the curriculum in a flexible, critical manner, adapting it to the needs of learners and to their own particular personal or material resources.

> The *National Curriculum Statement* envisions teachers [...] as mediators of learning, interpreters and designers of Learning Programmes and materials, leaders, administrators and managers, scholars, researchers and lifelong

> learners, [...] assessors and learning area/phase specialists (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Overview*, 2002:9).

The NCS thus empowers teachers but also demands more of teachers than the traditional content-driven type curriculum. A process-driven curriculum implies that teachers think critically about their teaching, about their learners, and that they be reflective and adapt and modify the content and their teaching approach to the needs of learners as well as to the context of learning. Teachers thus have a say in the curriculum in that their input will influence learning. This assumption about teachers' input in the learning process is in line with Stenhouse's (1975) concept of a descriptive rather than a prescriptive curriculum. Stenhouse sees teachers as learners who explore topics with learners and the curriculum allows teachers to make choices determined by the needs of their classroom or environment.

The NCS is a hybrid but mostly process-type curriculum which was developed at a crucial time in South Africa's ideological history and is underpinned by certain assumptions which determine its nature. In the following section of this chapter I will consider the principles and values which underpin the NCS and which have determined its nature and design.

3.2.1 The principles underpinning the NCS

A curriculum is not only a political, but also a social construct, and as such, is conceived in relation to a number of social, economic, political, ideological or moral and, of course, educational assumptions. The nature and design of the NCS is a political choice as much as any other and is determined by the values held by the ruling party. The NCS has been conceived by curriculum developers and policy makers at this time in South Africa's history as a response to the existing social, political and economic context and is underpinned by the vision the ANC has for the upliftment of the nation.

In the Preface to the Curriculum, the then Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal states:

> [...] our education system and its curriculum express our idea of ourselves as a society and our vision as to how we see the new form of society being realised through our children and learners (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Overview*, 2002:1).

What is this vision of a new South African society? Which principles embodied in the curriculum aim to realise this vision? I will argue that the concepts of multiculturalism and lifelong learning are the two poles around which the core principles of the national curriculum crystallize. It is these principles which determine the hybrid nature of the curriculum – both prescriptive and, outcomes-based, descriptive. I will demonstrate how these principles are reflected in the design and structure of the curriculum.

The vision for the "new" South Africa, as encapsulated in the national motto, "Unity in Diversity", is for a multicultural society which is unified because equality, tolerance and justice prevail in national institutions and throughout society. The Preamble to the Constitution pledges to:

- Recognise the injustices of our past;
- Honour those who suffered for justice and freedom in our land;
- Respect those who have worked to build and develop our country; and
- Believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity (*The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, 1997:1).

Accordingly, as the supreme law of the land, the Constitution aims to:

- Heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights;
- Lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by law;

- Improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person; and
- Build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations (*The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, 1997:1).

In this four-pronged pledge, the Constitution affirms the values of social equality and justice, political democracy and economic empowerment, while recognising the multicultural nature of society and the need to develop unity as a nation.

The Bill of Rights supports this recognition of cultural diversity; setting out the basic rights which apply to all citizens, it states that everyone is equal before the law and may not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, ethnic or social origin, colour, or culture (Article 9, *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, 1997:5-6). It states further that "Everyone has the right [...] to participate in the cultural life of their choice [...]" (Article 30, *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, 1997:11) and that:

> Persons belonging to a cultural, religious or linguistic community may not be denied the right, with other members of that community
>
> a) to enjoy their culture, practise their religion and use their language; and
>
> b) to form, join and maintain cultural, religious and linguistic associations and other organs of civil society (Article 31 (1), *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa,* 1997:12).

The values expressed in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights provide the foundation on which the NCS is built and are at the core of the national curriculum.

> *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, 1996 (Act No 108 of 1996) provides the basis for curriculum transformation and development in contemporary South Africa. [...] (It) expresses the nation's social values and [...] the *Revised National Curriculum Statement* seeks to embody these values in the knowledge and skills it develops (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Overview*, 2002:6-7).

As mentioned in Chapter 2, discussions about educational policy had already begun in the late 1980s when preparations were being made for a democratic dispensation. The first curriculum framework document to spell out the key principles which would inform the design and structure of a democratic national curriculum was the 1995 Department of Education document, *A Curriculum Framework for General and Further Education and Training.* The ten principles outlined in this document are the same as those listed in the first version of the NCS, which was *Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century* (1996:4-6). They are:

- Human-resource development;
- Learner-centredness;
- Relevance;
- Integration;
- Differentiation;
- Redress and learner support;
- Nation-building and non-discrimination;
- Critical and creative thinking;
- Flexibility;
- Progression; and
- Credibility.

As noted above, these principles, which determine the nature, design and structure of the NCS, relate to economic, political, social, educational and ideological imperatives and can be grouped under two overarching notions, that of multiculturalism and lifelong learning. I will discuss both of these notions in relation to the South African context.

3.2.2 The concept of multiculturalism

Multiculturalism, as a philosophical concept, is based on the ideal of social justice and the recognition of diversity. As such, it is one of the foundation stones of democratic South Africa and the references to the Constitution bear witness to this. Educationally, multiculturalism is a process taking place in schools and educational institutions, and informing the curriculum and subjects. It aims to develop in learners, values, skills and knowledge which will lead them to work towards equality in society and their own upliftment and thus the nation's as a

whole. At a more pedagogical level, multiculturalism is a way of equalizing educational experiences.

The concept originated in the United States of America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and was linked to the needs of African Americans who were the "second class citizens" of the American population. Politically and educationally, the concept of multiculturalism then resurfaced in the sixties and seventies during the civil rights movement. In South Africa the concept came up in ANC policy discussions and statements just prior to 1994 when democracy was seen to be becoming a reality. Multiculturalism in South Africa is an acknowledgement of the diversity of South African society and the current divided and unequal nature of the society. As a result of colonisation and apartheid, South African society – multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural as it is – lacks social or economic unity. The national and ANC imperative is to transform the society – to unify it through knowledge about different cultures, through the fostering of tolerance; to develop a sense of nationhood; and thus, consequently, to build an equal, harmonious society.

Multiculturalism affirms diversity, and educationally, requires that a teaching and learning environment be instituted which caters for difference while preparing all equally for the world of work. Banks (1995:xi) argues that the aims of multicultural education are:

> [...] to create equal educational opportunities for learners from diverse racial, ethnic, social-class and cultural groups. One of its important goals is to help all learners to acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to function effectively in a pluralistic democratic society and to interact, negotiate, and communicate with peoples from diverse groups in order to create a civic and moral community that works for the common good.

Inherent in the concept of multiculturalism is the recognition that equality and equity are not the same thing. Equal access to education does not guarantee equal opportunity to succeed.

The NCS is infused with the principles of multiculturalism. The principles of learner-centredness, relevance, regard for differentiation, redress and learner-support cited above, central to the design of the curriculum, aim to guarantee all learners equal access to success in school and to prepare them equally for life.

A learner-centred educational approach ensures that the diversity of learners is taken into account:

> Curriculum development processes and delivery of learning content (knowledge, skills, attitudes and values), should take account of the general characteristics, developmental and otherwise, of different groups of learners. Different learning styles and rates of learning need to be acknowledged and accommodated (*Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century. A User's Guide*, 1996:5).

Regarding differentiation, redress and learner support, the document refers to learning programmes which are not prescribed, do not form part of the curriculum and are conceived by teachers. Here, the need to bridge gaps, respect diversity and to redress are important features.

> Learning programmes should facilitate the creation of opportunities for all learners, including those who are disabled in some or other way, to strive towards the attainment of similar learning outcomes. [...] learning programmes should, while acknowledging that **all learners have special needs,** make special provision for accommodating those learners with learning or other disabilities in mainstream education. [...] certain aspects of education and training [...] have either not been equally available to all learners in the past, or have been grossly neglected. Learning programmes need to acknowledge this and include special measures for redressing this neglect (*Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century. A User's Guide*, 1996:5, my emphasis).

This recognition of the "special needs" of all learners is a vital element in the concept of multicultural education. The other, is the fostering of cultural tolerance and the affirmation of cultural difference.

> [...] cognizance should be taken of differing cultures, languages, and religious beliefs. The selection of topics for learning and teaching, and of teaching approaches and methods need, for example, to reflect cultural sensitivity. Learners should be able to recognize the uniqueness of our multi-cultural situation (*Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century. A User's Guide*, 1996:5).

Regarding nation-building and non-discrimination *Curriculum 2005* states:

> Learning programmes should, therefore, encourage the development of mutual respect for diverse religious and value systems, cultural and language traditions; multilingualism and informed choices regarding the language/s of learning; co-operation, civic responsibility and the ability to participate in all aspects of society; and understanding of national, provincial, local and regional, developmental needs (*Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century. A User's Guide*, 1996:5-6).

It is a curriculum conceived as the antithesis of the former non-democratic South African prescriptive curricula:

> In the past [the curriculum] has perpetuated race, class, gender and ethnic divisions and has emphasised separateness, rather than common citizenship and nationhood. It was therefore imperative that the curriculum be restructured to reflect the values and principles of our new democratic society (*Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century. A User's Guide,* 1996:1).

It is clear then that the NCS is founded primarily on the principles of multiculturalism and is essentially indicative of a multicultural educational policy. The National Curriculum recognises the multicultural aspect of South African society, supports polyethnicity and commits itself to re-establishing social justice and equality through education. It emphasises the curriculum's role in recognising, fostering and affirming cultural diversity. Furthermore, in respecting the philosophical concepts of multiculturalism, it aims to guarantee equal opportunity to succeed.

> The challenge for the *Revised National Curriculum Statement* is how the goals and values of social justice, equity and democracy can be interwoven across the curriculum. The promotion of values is important not only for the sake of personal development, but also to ensure that a national South African identity is built on values different from those that underpinned apartheid education (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Overview,* 2002:8).

3.2.3 The concept of lifelong learning

Closely linked to the principle of multiculturalism and of multicultural education is the notion of lifelong learning which, applied to both the learner and the teacher,

is a guiding principle of the National Curriculum. The overview section of the NCS states that: "It seeks to create a lifelong learner who is confident and independent" (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Overview,* 2002:8) and "The NCS envisions teachers who are [...] lifelong learners" (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Overview,* 2002:9). However, the document which stands out in this regard is *Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century* (1996),[2] the forerunner of the NCS. In this document it is stated that the most crucial, central factor in the transformation of education is this concept of lifelong learning. Lifelong education is what will "empower people to participate effectively in all the processes of a democratic society" and to excel in all fields (*Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century. A User's Guide,* 1996:3).

The concept of lifelong learning stems from the recognition that today, at least in Western, industrialised countries, the rate of social, technical and economic change is so great, that most people will have to change jobs more than once in their lifetime. The seminal document *Learning to Be: The World of Education Today and Tomorrow,* published in 1972 by the UNESCO International Commission on the Development of Education under the chairmanship of Edgar Faure, former French Prime Minister and Minister of Education, recommended that lifelong education[3] should become "the master concept for educational policies in the years to come for both developed and developing countries" (cited in Candy, 1994:16).

Although lifelong learning is certainly not a new concept, what is significant about the use of the term, is the idea that lifelong education should be a lifelong process for *all* individuals and that governments should use this as the basis upon which to design their education systems.

The first expressions of a South African interpretation of lifelong learning can be found in documents published by the ANC and the Congress of the South African

Trade Unions (COSATU) in the early 1990s. In these publications the concept of lifelong learning is linked to issues of equitable access to learning, redress and life skills, as well as the marketability of South Africa's human resources.

The 1996 *Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century* outlines the key educational values which inform the curriculum and here, along with multiculturalism, lifelong learning is privileged. It is the concept of lifelong learning which underpins the principles of human resource development, relevance, integration and critical and creative thinking.

> The vision for South Africa encompasses a prosperous, truly united, democratic and internationally competitive country with literate, creative and critical citizens, leading productive, self-fulfilled lives [...]. The realisation of this vision requires appropriate, lifelong education, training and development to empower people to participate effectively in all the processes of a democratic society [...]. (The curriculum framework) takes as point of departure, that successful modern economies and societies require citizens with a strong foundation of general education, the desire and ability to continue to learn to adapt to, and develop new knowledge, skills and technologies, to move flexibly between occupations, to take responsibility for personal performance, to set and achieve high standards, and to work cooperatively (*Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century. A User's Guide,* 1996:3).

In the NCS, lifelong learning as a concept has two underlying motivations. One is related to human resource development and the market and the other to human development and democratic citizenship. The NCS has multiple goals and the challenge it offers is to see them as interdependent.

This notion of lifelong learning is one of the most compelling principles of the NCS and determined to a great extent the choice of the outcomes-based educational (OBE) model. In the *Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century. A User's Guide* document it is stated that "A commitment to outcomes-based learning is central to the Lifelong Learning Development Framework" (1996:20). How outcomes-based education translates this principle will be dealt with in detail in Chapter 4, however, it is important to note at this point that within the framework of a process-type curriculum, OBE is a logical choice. OBE is

about outcomes, not objectives. It is about competence, not content. It is about life, not about exams. Thus, as noted previously, OBE is an integrative, pluralistic system which presupposes a learning paradigm which is "in process" and prepares for lifelong learning. This process-type system is opposed to the linear, sequential ordering characteristic of a content-driven curriculum. An OBE based system, like a process-type curriculum is transformative in that it is continually emerging, coming into being.

3.3 The genesis of the NCS

3.3.1 The evolutionary process

The NCS, a curriculum for transformation, has been a curriculum in transformation for over eight years. Since 1996, when the curriculum was first formulated and implemented under the title *Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century,* the nature, design and conceptual basis of the curriculum has been the subject of discussion, revision and controversy. The curriculum has consequently been reviewed and revised, with the public being given the opportunity to comment on the drafts until the final *Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9* was released in 2002. The NCS for the Grades 10-12, released in 2002 in draft form, has also been revised and is scheduled to be published in its final form at the end of 2004. It has therefore taken eight years for the process of curriculum development in the "new" democratic South Africa to be completed.

The development of the National Curriculum has been a protracted process, firstly because it has been about change, and, paradoxically, although change is a condition intrinsic to life itself, human beings generally resist, and often fear change. But the curriculum also took a long time to develop because the change it was proposing was radical, revolutionary, and total. When the political dispensation of the country changed in 1994, the education and training system – the system on the macro-level and schooling on the micro-level, with the curriculum as the overarching determiner of education – had to change as well.

As previously noted, the educational transformation that was envisaged was as sweeping as the political transformation that had preceded and engendered it: the democratic elections of 1994.

The education and training system that was in place at the time of the change in political dispensation was based on principles of racial inequality and entrenched and ensured white economic power. Curricula were designed according to the Nationalist government policy which had pre-determined the appropriate socio-economic level of each race group. The educational system and curricula for "non-whites" ensured that learners in those race groups were schooled only to be adequate workers. It was an authoritarian and closed system, mimicking in its pedagogical approach the hierarchical, authoritarian, oligarchic structure of the government of the National Party. The curriculum was content-based, prescriptive, imposing a canon of knowledge that was to a large extent white, middle-class and eurocentric. The ethos was competitive and individualistic.

With the advent of a democratic government, education too had to be democratised, in its structure, its systems and in its approach. It also had the difficult task of setting right the consequences of the wrongs of the previous system. Pedagogically it had to be transformed in order to meet the needs of the new century, taking into consideration the economic consequences of globalisation, of a technocratic society and the ensuing changing nature of the job market. Education and training had to be transformed so as to bring about, or, at least allow for, economic equality and, consequently, sustainability.

Furthermore, change was not simply a question of exchanging one system for another and starting anew, "from scratch" so to speak. There were millions of learners still in the system who were disadvantaged, and millions of others who were excluded or had excluded themselves from the system and who had to be integrated and accommodated without disadvantaging them. Education, while taking into consideration the social, economic needs of a country in

transformation, had to recognise the needs of *all* its learners, diverse and different. There was, therefore, no easy fix.

The major undertaking of the transformation of education while recognising and affirming all learners with their diverse needs, demands time and is a slow process for a very practical reason – the formulation of a new national curriculum had to be arrived at in a participatory manner, in consultation with representatives from all fields involved in education. The National Education Co-ordinating Committee (NECC) played a particularly important role in this transformation. Formed in 1985 (as the National Education Crisis Committee), and representing teachers, parents, learners and workers mainly from educationally disadvantaged black communities, the NECC, which had initially co-ordinated the fight against the inferior and racist education system, after the reforms instituted in 1990, engaged in debate with national bodies and business in order to find democratic educational alternatives. After years of apartheid, when the majority of the population had been totally excluded from decision-making of all and any kind and power was very much in the hands of the White elite, it was necessary to include all, to ensure that change was truly democratic – that is, for the people, and, crucially, by the people. However, as laudable and as necessary as this may have been, participation and representation, with the discussions and negotiations that they entail, in practical terms, slow down the process and consensus and closure is longer in coming.

A further reason for the protracted nature of the process of curriculum creation was that the curriculum, needing to be founded also on sound educational assumptions, had to be both visionary and pragmatic. The idea of the transformation of society is by its very nature founded on an ideal, a vision – because vision, along with hope, is what moves us into the future. However, a vision is often difficult to translate into practical, workable terms in a short space of time.

It is within this context of an undertaking of major proportions, with the accompanying anxiety, resistance, and justified concern on the part of the thinking citizenry, that led to the NCS taking eight years to be finalised.

In this section, I will look at the genesis of the NCS, I will then compare the first and the revised versions of the curriculum and finally, I will consider the nature of the changes made, the reasons for the changes and their implications for learning and teaching in general in South Africa.

Table 3.1: Trajectory of the development of the *National Curriculum Statement*

1995
White Paper on Education and Training:
South African Qualifications Act (No 58 of 1995)

1996
National Education Policy Act (No 27 of 1996)
Lifelong Learning through a National Curriculum Framework
Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century. A User's Guide

1997
March : launch of *Curriculum 2005*
April : Discussion Document: *Curriculum 2005 Specific Outcomes, Assessment Criteria, Range Statements Grades R to 9* (referred to officially as the *Statement of the National Curriculum for Grades R-9*)

1998
Curriculum 2005 Assessment Policy Grades R-9

2000
A South African Curriculum for the 21st Century. Report of the Review Committee on Curriculum 2005

2001
Draft Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9

2002
Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9
Draft National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12

Curriculum change began soon after the 1994 democratic elections when the National Education and Training Forum (NETF) revised the old apartheid syllabuses with the intention of eliminating racist language and beginning the

process of the rationalisation of the nineteen education departments. At this stage, the aim was not to develop a new curriculum, but to revise and rationalise. A year later, in 1995, the White Paper on Education and Training was issued. In general educational terms, this White Paper stresses the need to make changes to education and training and to transform teaching and learning "in order to ensure that the human resources and potential in our society are developed to the full" *(Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century. A User's Guide,* 1996:3). More specifically, the White Paper states the need to move from an aims and objectives approach to an outcomes-based education approach. The National Education Policy Act (No 27 of 1996), which followed the White Paper, supported the outcomes-based approach and made provision for the development of a curriculum design structure which supported an integrated educational system. The curriculum was to incorporate the following domains:

- Critical Cross-Field Outcomes;
- Specific Outcomes;
- Range Statements;
- Assessment Criteria; and
- Performance Indicators.

Later, as the curriculum itself was being developed, other elements were added to the design structure:

- Phase Organisers;
- Programme Organisers;
- Expected Levels of Performance; and
- Learning Programmes

The first major curriculum statement was the 1996 document entitled *Lifelong Learning through a National Curriculum Framework* and the *Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century. A User's Guide* which set out the principles that were to underpin the curriculum. This first curriculum framework document provides "a philosophical base and an organisational structure for

curriculum development initiatives" *(Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century. A User's Guide,* 1996:3). The framework was informed by principles enunciated in the education and training policy documents drawn up between 1994 and 1996: the abovementioned White Paper on Education and Training, the National Education Policy Act as well as the South African Qualifications Act. In March 1997 a new national curriculum, under the name *Curriculum 2005* was launched by the then Minister of Education, Mr Sibusiso Bengu. In April of the same year, *Curriculum 2005 Specific Outcomes, Assessment Criteria, Range Statements Grades R to 9. Discussion Document* was released for comment. This document was supplemented a year later with the issuing of *Curriculum 2005 Assessment Policy Grades R-9.*

Curriculum 2005 was as radical as the political change the country had just experienced: it introduced OBE into the South African school system and the reaction was overwhelming. Many academics, educators, parents as well as the general public, either via the media or in scholarly journals, had an opinion on the curriculum. Many critics questioned the validity of OBE as an educational system. In the years following the curriculum's release and implementation[4] dissatisfaction was so widespread that in 2000, the new Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, appointed a review committee to investigate the curriculum and make recommendations for its revision.

3.3.2 Criticisms of the Curriculum by the Review Committee

The brief of the Review Committee was to comment on the structure and design of the curriculum, as well as the pace and scope of its implementation. It was not to comment, however, on the outcomes-based foundation of the curriculum as this was non-negotiable. The process of revision, under the chairpersonship of Professor Linda Chisholm, began in January 2000 with a high level of participation in the form of curriculum developers and educators including the opportunity for the public to comment on the changes. The committee's hundred-plus-page report, *A South African Curriculum for the 21st Century. Report of the*

Review Committee on Curriculum 2005, known as the Chisholm report, was issued in May 2000. As a result of this review process, the curriculum was substantially revised. A draft of the revised version was made available for public comment in July 2001 and in May 2002 the *Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9* was released, replacing the 1997 *Curriculum 2005* and with implementation planned for 2004 starting in the Foundation Phase.[5]

The *Sunday Times*, carried an article in its 4 June 2000 edition which cited Professor Chisholm as stating that "It is clear [...] that implementation of *Curriculum 2005* cannot continue in its present form". It also presented graphically and in simple terms, the changes[6] proposed by the review process:

Table 3.2: Proposed changes to *Curriculum 2005*

IN	OUT
• A streamlined, revised *Curriculum 21*[7]. • A *National Curriculum Statement* expected in June next year that will clearly explain to 'what is to be learnt and at what level it is to be tested'. • Plain English. • Six learning areas for Grades 4 to 9: Languages, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Arts and Culture and Life Orientation. • History and Geography, previously neglected, will be reinstated as a key part of the Social Sciences. • A strong focus on the teaching of Maths and Science with 70% of classroom time to be spent on Maths and Language teaching in Grades 1 to 3 and 50% in Grade 4 onwards. • Learning area statements – it will pin down what a pupil should know and be able to do in each of the six learning areas. • Learning outcomes or targets that will explain what concepts, content and skills learners should learn in each of the six learning programmes in each grade. • Assessment standards that will describe in detail what a pupil should be able to do and know in each grade. • A reasonable time-frame. • Training teachers in the selection and use of textbooks.	• *Curriculum 2005* in its current form. • Existing policy documents on *Curriculum 2005.* • Complex jargon. • Eight learning areas. • Technology and Economic and Management Sciences to be dropped for now as there are a shortage of teachers and a lack of resources. • The myth that reading and maths should not be specifically taught. • The 66 specific outcomes (targets) against which learners had to be tested in each grade. • Assessment criteria, range statements, performance indicators, expected levels of performance and phase organisers. • Programme organisers or themes, for instance transport, that teachers included in language and maths which lead to boredom among learners. • Rushed implementation. • Macro-planning – the practice whereby schools choose the same topics to teach different learning areas. • Group work as the only learning method. • Evaluation by phase, for example testing a pupil at the end of Grade 3 rather than each year from Grades 1 to 3. • A General Education and Training Certificate in 2002.

• Flexibility and teacher discretion in the classroom. • Grade-by-grade benchmarks or targets. • Curriculum 21 will be introduced in the Intermediate and Foundation phase when appropriate and will be done by phase (Grades 1 to 3 and Grades 4 to 6) and in the Senior phase by each grade. Subject to negotiation the General Education and Training Certificate to be awarded to learners when they complete Grade 9 will be put into practice only in 2006.	

The criticisms levelled at the curriculum by the Review Committee, and the subsequent changes made to the 1997 version, relate primarily to three aspects of the curriculum: the complexity of its design structure and terminology; the inadequate training of teachers and the unavailability of suitable teaching materials; and, finally, its conceptual basis. I will deal mainly with the latter criticism as it concerns the fundamentals of the curriculum – impinging on both the educational and social principles which underscore it.

Although the Review Committee report is critical of the conceptual basis of the curriculum it does not take issue with the principles which underpin it. The Committee points out that *Curriculum 2005's* goals of overcoming the legacy of apartheid education and preparing South African learners for a global economy are indeed the way to achieve social transformation. They express reservations, however, as to whether the design of the curriculum gives all learners the chance of attaining those goals. The report expresses doubts as to whether the stated overarching social purpose of multicultural education and lifelong learning can in fact be achieved with the structure, content and suggested pedagogy of the curriculum as it stands.

Curriculum 2005 was conceived and designed as an integrated curriculum, and the design structure reflects this. Knowledge, skills and values are clustered into Learning Areas, while being interrelated by means of Critical Cross-Field Outcomes (called Critical and Developmental Outcomes in the 2002 NCS). The

overall learning purpose of the curriculum is expressed in the twelve cross-curricular outcomes which address the curriculum's overriding aims of multiculturalism and lifelong learning.

> Learners will
> - Identify and solve problems and make decisions using critical and creative thinking.
> - Work effectively with others as members of a team, group, organisation and community.
> - Organise and manage themselves and their activities responsibly and effectively.
> - Collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information.
> - Communicate effectively using visual, symbolic and/or language skills in various modes.
> - Use Science and Technology effectively and critically showing responsibility towards the environment and the health of others.
> - Demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation.
>
> [...] it must be the intention underlying any programme of learning to make an individual aware of the importance of:
> - Reflecting on and exploring a variety of strategies to learn more effectively.
> - Participating as responsible citizens in the life of local, national, and global communities.
> - Being culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts.
> - Exploring education and career opportunities.
> - Developing entrepreneurial opportunities (*Curriculum 2005 Specific Outcomes Assessment Criteria Range Statements Grades R-9,* 1997:10).

These cross-curricular outcomes refer to generic skills and apply to and across the eight Learning Areas which make up the curriculum.

1. Language, Literacy and Communication
2. Human and Social Sciences
3. Technology

4. Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics and Mathematical Sciences
5. Natural Sciences
6. Arts and Culture
7. Economics and Management Science
8. Life Orientation (*Curriculum 2005 Specific Outcomes Assessment Criteria Range Statements Grades R-9*, 1997:9).

Each of these Learning Areas is defined "in relation to larger political, social and economic determinants" (*Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century. A User's Guide,* 1996:15). For example Languages, Literacy and Communication is described as:

> central to lifelong learning and empower(s) people to :
> - make meaning;
> - negotiate meaning and understanding;
> - access education, information and literacies;
> - think and express their thoughts and emotions logically, critically and creatively;
> - respond with empathy to the thoughts and emotions of others;
> - interact and participate socially, politically, economically, culturally and spiritually;
> - understand the relationship between language and power, and influence relationships through this understanding;
> - develop and reflect critically on values and attitudes;
> - communicate in different contexts by using a range of registers, varieties and means;
> - use standard forms of language where appropriate (*Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century. A User's Guide,* 1996:10).

Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics, Mathematical Sciences is described as a learning area that should "empower people to work towards the reconstruction and development of South African society" (*Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century. A User's Guide,* 1996:16). In the same vein, Economic and Management Sciences is described as "fundamental in preparing citizens of

South Africa to understand the critical importance of reconstruction, development, and economic growth for a sustainable economic future" (*Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century. A User's Guide,* 1996:18).

The rationale for these Learning Areas has been expressed primarily in socio-political and ideological terms, and the authors of the review report, while acknowledging the necessity of *Curriculum 2005* to deal with issues of social justice and economic growth, argue that the means to achieve this have not been addressed. In other words, *Curriculum 2005*, in the first instance through the definition of the Learning Areas, and then, as we shall see later, in the Specific Outcomes, does not sufficiently highlight the cognitive tools that will enable learners to bring about social, political, and economic changes. In this earlier version of the NCS, cognition has been sacrificed to a social vision.

Furthermore, the Commission argues, *Curriculum 2005* does not spell out the knowledge and skills that will allow learners to achieve the goals of multiculturalism and lifelong learning. Content is not adequately specified, and there is a danger that teachers will leave out crucial areas of content that are necessary to achieve understanding at certain levels and that lead on to higher levels of understanding and achievement.

As an outcomes-based, process-type curriculum, *Curriculum 2005* does not specify content or inputs, it describes the outcomes to be achieved. Learning programmes, intended to be designed by teachers, are meant to provide content, which is not merely specific to a Learning Area, but is integrative, taking into consideration the content of other Learning Areas. The stress is on integrating existing knowledge – the knowledge learners already have and which is linked to their context and everyday life – and scholarly knowledge.

> An integrated approach to education and training implies a view of learning which rejects a rigid division between academic and applied knowledge, theory and

practice, knowledge and skills, head and hand (*Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century. A User's Guide*, 1996:5).

The 1997 document states that "Curriculum developers, formal providers and teachers need to ensure that integration, of subjects and of theory and practice, [...] takes place" (*Curriculum 2005 Specific Outcomes Assessment Criteria Range Statements Grades R-9,* 1997:7). This integration of existing knowledge with scholarly knowledge is a pedagogical and organising principle which relates to learner-centredness and equity pedagogy and is a valid and justifiable principle in a multicultural society.

However, integration of this kind can lead to low levels of achievement: if there are no markers for the teacher to follow with regards to progression, to different levels of complexity of content and performance, learners may learn merely a little more than they already know. It may be impossible for a teacher who lacks resources, or resourcefulness, to take learners from a level of everyday knowledge to a higher level of learning. The transcript that follows of an actual Grade 1 lesson, reproduced in Hoadley and Jansen (2002:135-136), illustrates how everyday knowledge can become a dead-end which does not lead on to further learning.

John (teacher) I want us to talk about milk. What do we do with milk?
Learner We pour it on cereal. And on tea.
John Who drank milk this morning?
(There is no response from the learners.)
John Where do we get milk?
Learner In oats.
Learner Cornflakes.
Learner In tea.
Learner From a cow.
John Let us brainstorm a cow.
(John sticks a picture of a cow on the board, over the word 'cow'. He writes the word 'milk' on the board. Although there are real cows milling about all over the township in which the school is situated, John continues.)
John Let me show you a cow. Some of you don't know a cow.
Learners We do.
John Show me where we get meat[8] in the cow.
(A learners goes to the board and points to the cow's udders
John leads the learners in singing a song about milking a cow. The learners all know the song, and sing enthusiastically.)
John You said we get meat from the cow. Who doesn't eat meat?

(There is no response from the learners. John writes the word 'meat' on the board.)
John What colour is a cow's meat?
Learners Brown.
John We don't say it is brown, we say it is red. What else do we get from a cow?
Learners Fur.
(John writes the word 'fur' on the board.)
John How many things do we get from a cow?
Learners Three.
John Count them.
(John points to the three words as the learners count.)
Learners One, two, three.
John Name things which we get from milk.
Learner Cheese.
Learner Amasi.
Learner Butter.
John What else do we get from milk?
Learner Long life.
John Long life is milk.
(There is a silence.)
John Have we finished? Maybe we will remember later. Let's go to meat. What do we get from meat?
Learners Bones.
Learner Fat.
Learner Lean meat.
Learner Biltong.
John Let's move on to fur. What do we get from it?
Learners Shoes.
Learners (shout)Belts. Leather. Jackets.
Learner A pillow.
Learners Shirt, school bag.
John What I want us to do is to draw a cow. You must keep quiet because you will make mistakes if you talk.

In this lesson, there is no systematic development of the known. The teacher does not lead learners on to abstract concepts, the discussion remains fixed in the everyday with learners not being afforded the opportunity to arrive at new knowledge from the basis of their own experiences. Moreover, there is no systematic organisation of ideas, no development in learners of the thinking process. There is no linking of ideas. Everyday knowledge is not extended to include more scholarly knowledge. Learners here in fact learn nothing, they do not progress vertically either in learning content or in learning processes. The dire consequences for learning standards, for the quality of education and the preparedness of learners for the real world is obvious and the revised curriculum attempts to ensure that this type of situation is avoided.

This is not to say that the original version of *Curriculum 2005* does not give any consideration to progression. Three of the design features relating to assessment in fact were intended to ensure vertical progression. Firstly, the Assessment Criteria broadly state what was to constitute a learner's achievement in relation to a specific outcome. The Range Statements, Performance Indicators and Expected Levels of Performance which accompany the Assessment Criteria each provide more detail with respect to the scope, depth and level of complexity of the achievement.

However, the Assessment Criteria are vague giving no indication of how to assess performance at different levels. For example in the Languages, Literacy and Communication learning area, Specific Outcome 1 states, "Learners make and negotiate meaning and understanding", the first of the Assessment Criteria for the three phases (Senior, Intermediate and Foundation) is the same: "Original meaning is created through personal texts" *(Curriculum 2005 Specific Outcomes Assessment Criteria Range Statements Grades R-9*, 1997:20-21). The Range Statements which are intended to indicate the depth, breadth and scope of achievement, hardly vary at all.

> Senior phase:
> At this level learners create a wide range of texts of different kinds.
>
> Intermediate Phase:
> At this level learners create a wide range of texts of different kinds with some guidance.
>
> Foundation Phase:
> At this level learners are guided to create a wide range of texts (*Curriculum 2005 Specific Outcomes Assessment Criteria Range Statements*, 1997:20-21).

The establishing of varying levels of difficulty and the setting of standards is left to teachers. Teachers in such a situation are likely to resort to normative assessment: if the majority of the class can do the task, the "difficulty" of the task is right, and the best performer gets an A grade with the other learners graded down from there. This type of assessment defeats the object of personal

development and relies on "competitiveness". Thus, this approach to sequence, the level of content, and to complexity is not specific at all.

The Review Report contends that:

> [...] because the main concern of the designers has been to foreground integration, there has been an under-specification of the requirements for conceptual coherence across all the eight learning areas. This under-specification has led to successive rounds of attempts to compensate for the under-specified content, sequence, and progression. [...] Consequently there has been a proliferation of design features, but not enough clarity. The result is a curriculum that is 'technically over-designed' yet remains under-specified (cited in Gultig, Hoadley & Jansen, 2002:13).

3.4 Changes made to *Curriculum 2005*

The criticisms levelled at the 1997 *Curriculum 2005* version of the National Curriculum have been addressed to varying extents in the revised NCS curriculum of 2002.

Firstly, the definition of Learning Areas has been modified. The Languages Learning Area defines the learning area in relation to multilingualism and the importance "for learners (to) reach high levels of proficiency in at least two languages (so that) they are able to communicate in other languages" (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Languages,* 2002:4). It is also defined as the means to develop cognitively with the socio-political jargon taking a very second place to the immediate value of language learning in personal developmental terms:

- It develops reading and writing, the foundation for other important literacies.
- It is the medium for much of the other learning in the curriculum, such as Mathematics and the Social Sciences.
- It encourages intercultural understanding, access to other view, and a critical understanding of the concept of culture.
- It stimulates imaginative and creative activity, and thus promotes the goals of arts and culture.
- It provides a way of communicating information, and promotes many of the goals of science, technology and environmental education.

- It develops the critical tools necessary to become responsible citizens (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Languages*, 2002:4-5).

Secondly, the criticism regarding the abstract nature of the specification of content has been addressed. The Learning Outcomes relating to each Learning Area have been revised so as to be more discipline-specific. These outcomes, unlike the Critical Outcomes mentioned above, relate specifically to a particular Learning Area and describe what learners should be able to do at the end of a learning experience. In the 1997 version, Specific Outcomes were expressed in abstract terms:

> Languages, Literacy and Communication:
> Outcome 1: Learners make and negotiate meaning and understanding.
>
> Outcome 2 : Learners show critical awareness of language.
>
> Outcome 3: Learners respond to the aesthetic, affective, cultural and social values in texts.
>
> Outcome 4: Learners access, process and use information from a variety of sources and situations.
>
> Outcome 5: Learners understand, know and apply language structures and conventions in context.
>
> Outcome 6: Learners use language for learning.
>
> Outcome 7: Learners use appropriate communication strategies for specific purposes and situations (*Curriculum 2005 Specific Outcomes Assessment Criteria Range Statements Grades R-9*, 1997:11).

The 2002 revised NCS has taken the Chisholm Committee criticism into account and the outcomes per learning area have become more content-specific. For example in the Languages Learning Area, Learning Outcomes (previously called Specific Outcomes) have been reduced from seven to six, with only five for additional languages. The Learning Outcomes are more concrete, being rooted in what constitutes the essential receptive and productive skills of communication and the role of language in life and learning:

Learning Outcome 1: Listening
The learner will be able to listen for information and enjoyment, and respond appropriately and critically in a wide range of situations.

Learning Outcome 2: Speaking
The learner will be able to communicate confidently and effectively in spoken language in a wide range of situations.

Learning Outcome 3: Reading and Viewing
The learner will be able to read and view for information and enjoyment, and respond critically to the aesthetic, cultural and emotional values in texts.

Learning Outcome 4: Writing
The learner will be able to write different kinds of factual and imaginative texts for a wide range of purposes.

Learning Outcome 5: Thinking and Reasoning
The learner will be able to use language to think and reason, as well as to access, process and use information for learning.

Learning Outcome 6: Language Structure and Use
The learner will know and be able to use the sounds, words and grammar of the language to create and interpret texts (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Languages*, 2002:6-7).

In the revised NCS, there is added focus on the role of language as a tool for learning across all disciplines. The ways in which the Languages Learning Area contributes to the curriculum in general are presented as a "unique feature" (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Languages* 2002-5) of the learning area.

The above-mentioned criticism regarding under-specification of the sequence, pace and progression of content has been addressed in the revised curriculum. Furthermore, the criteria for assessment have been completely revised and are grade-specific. Assessment Criteria in the 1997 version have given way to Assessment Standards which give clear indications of what is expected as performance at the level of each grade. For example, in the Languages Learning Area, for Learning Outcome 1 the NCS states: "The learner will be able to listen for information and enjoyment, and respond appropriately and critically in a wide range of situations" (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Languages* 2002:6). The Assessment Standards are per grade and clearly

describe the level at which learners should demonstrate their achievement of the outcome, as well as the depth, breadth and scope of the demonstration of that achievement within the level in which learning is taking place:

> We know this when the learner:
>
> Grade 4 : Shows understanding of instructions by responding physically [....]
>
> Grade 5 : Listens and responds to instructions [...]
>
> Grade 6: Listens to and responds to a fairly complex sequence of instructions (e.g. how to play a game) [...]
>
> Grade 7: Listens to and responds to simple questions (e.g. Have you ever been to Cape Town? When did you go there?) [...]
>
> Grade 8: Listens to and responds to questions (e.g. What should I/she do.) [...]
>
> Grade 9: Listens to and responds to questions (e.g. 'What did he tell you?') [...] (*Revised National Curriculum Statement: Languages*, 2002:14-15, 34-35).

Assessment Standards are consequently more structured allowing for greater conceptual progression. Being linked to grade-specific Assessment Standards, the concept of progression and cumulative learning is highlighted and allowed for. The Overview to the revised NCS stresses this as a necessary feature:

> It is important that the curriculum sets out progressively more complex, deeper and broader expectations of learners. Conceptual progression is a term used to describe this feature of a curriculum. In the *Revised National Curriculum Statement*, the assessment standards in each Learning Area Statement provide the conceptual progression in each Learning Area from grade to grade (*Revised National Curriculum Statement: Overview,* 2002:13).

While these revisions go a long way to clarifying the standards to be achieved at the level of each grade, they also make the curriculum more prescriptive. This is a move away from the more curriculum-as-process concept to the curriculum-as-plan concept without, however, prejudicing the outcomes-based framework.

Alongside the criticisms pertaining to the conceptual basis of *Curriculum 2005* are those regarding the complexity of its design and the confusing terminology. The revisions detailed above, apart from strengthening the conceptual goals of *Curriculum 2005,* go a long way to streamlining the composition of the

curriculum. As is clear from table 3.3, while the overall structure of the revised curriculum remains the same, (Learning Areas, cross-curricular Critical Outcomes, Learning Area Outcomes, Assessment Standards and Learning Programmes), its design has been significantly simplified.

Table 3.3: Changes in the structure of the *National Curriculum Statement*

1997 *Curriculum 2005 (Statement of the National Curriculum for Grades R-9)*	**2002 *Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9***
8 Learning Areas	8 Learning Areas
Language, Literacy and Communication Human and Social Sciences Technology Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics and Mathematical Sciences Natural Sciences Arts and Culture Economics and Management Science Life Orientation	Languages Human and Social Sciences Technology Mathematics Natural Sciences Arts and Culture Economics and Management Science Life Orientation
7 + 5 Critical Outcomes Learners will • Identify and solve problems and make decisions using critical and creative thinking. • Work effectively with others as members of a team, group, organisation and community. • Organise and manage themselves and their activities responsibly and effectively. • Collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information. • Communicate effectively using visual, symbolic and/or language skills in various modes. • Use Science and Technology effectively and critically showing responsibility towards the environment and the health of others. • Demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation. ... make an individual aware of the importance of: • Reflecting on and exploring a variety of strategies to learn more effectively. • Participating as responsible citizens in the life of local, national, and global	7 Critical + 5 Developmental Outcomes The critical outcomes envisage learners who will be able to: • Identify and solve problems and make decisions using critical and creative thinking. • Work effectively with others as members of a team, group, organisation and community. • Organise and manage themselves and their activities responsibly and effectively. • Collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information. • Communicate effectively using visual, symbolic and/or language skills in various modes. • Use Science and Technology effectively and critically showing responsibility towards the environment and the health of others. • Demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation. The developmental outcomes envisage learners who are also able to: • Reflect on and explore a variety of strategies to learn more effectively. • Participate as responsible citizens in the life of local, national, and global

communities. • Being culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts. • Exploring education and career opportunities. • Developing entrepreneurial opportunities.	communities. • Be culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts. • Explore education and career opportunities. • Develop entrepreneurial opportunities.
Specific Outcomes	Learning Outcomes
Unit Standards	-
Assessment Criteria	Assessment Standards
Phase & Programme organisers	-
Range Statements	-
Performance Indicators	-
Expected Levels of Performance	-
Learning Programmes	Learning Programmes

The six rubrics of the original:

- Critical Cross-Field Outcomes;
- Specific Outcomes;
- Assessment Criteria;
- Phase and Programme Organisers;
- Range Statements; and
- Performance Indicators and Expected Levels of Performance,

have been reduced to three:

- Critical and Developmental Outcomes;
- Learning Outcomes; and
- Assessment Standards,

while the terminology of the rubrics has been modified in order to render meaning more explicit. The Learning Areas remain the same, apart from changes in two descriptors which again reveal a desire for simplification: Languages, Literacy and Communication becomes Languages, and Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics and Mathematical Sciences changes to Mathematics. The Critical and Developmental Outcomes also remain unchanged, with only slight variations in the phraseology, derived as they are from the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* and contained in the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA).

The Learning Outcomes, while being specific to the Learning Areas, are still informed by the generic Critical and Developmental Outcomes. They describe the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values the learners should know, demonstrate, and be able to use at the end of a level. Within each Learning Area, some of the outcomes have remained the same, some have changed, and in some Learning Areas, as discussed above in relation to Languages, changes have been quite considerable, more, however, for conceptual reasons than for the need to simplify or clarify terminology.

The third major criticism tabled in the Review Report concerns teacher training. At the time of the release of the curriculum in 1997, there was widespread dissatisfaction regarding implementation dates of *Curriculum 2005.* Released in April 1997, implementation dates for Grades 1 and 7 were set for the January of 1998. This short notice to implement a revolutionized curriculum was considered unmanageable and unrealistic. The curriculum was to be implemented before it had been discussed, before it had in fact been finalised, but more importantly, before teacher retraining had been undertaken. Furthermore, a learning and teaching support framework had not been put into place. Educators, who considered that they had not been consulted on the changes, felt sidelined, but primarily overwhelmed. Retraining in OBE principles and *Curriculum 2005* and in new areas of learning such as Life Orientation were criticised as being inadequate both in terms of quality and quantity; learning support material was uneven in its distribution, and unavailable to large numbers of teachers, and was furthermore often of poor quality.

The review committee recommended the provision of resources, the development of trainers and learning support materials and the consolidation of national and provincial curriculum structures to drive the implementation. It also recommended that the implementation of *Curriculum 2005* be phased out and that the revised curriculum be put into operation in stages "within manageable time-frames" (*Report of the Review Committee on Curriculum 2005*, 2000:6).

This recommendation was, however, not taken into consideration, and *Curriculum 2005* continued to be implemented in the Foundation Phase.

Amongst the different criticisms levelled at *Curriculum 2005* the most severe and controversial were in response to the outcomes-based educational philosophy which underpinned the curriculum. It was said (Jansen, 1999a; Young & Kraak, 2001; Kraak, 1999) that OBE was not suited to the realities of the South African classroom and that the very reasons for which the model was considered suitable – providing the means to achieve equity and redress – mitigated against it working. The unequal education of the past had created a classroom reality in which schools were under-resourced, teachers under-qualified and therefore lacking the capacity to implement outcomes-based education. Furthermore, it was claimed, the authoritarian, prescriptive education and training received by educators, along with the bureaucratic, syllabus-driven system of the apartheid era within which they had worked, were not conducive to educators using the creative thinking required by an OBE curriculum.[9]

3.5 Conclusion

The NCS, conceived within a particular political, social and economic context, was developed at a crucial time in South Africa's history. The NCS reflects the idea South African society has of itself and expresses a vision of how the society sees itself being realised. Based on democratic principles, the new National Curriculum encapsulates a vision of teachers and learners who are knowledgeable, multi-faceted and enskilled to react to the challenges of the twenty-first century. The NCS, a hybrid of various curriculum models, is both a plan and a process, both prescriptive and flexible. From its very beginnings and throughout the process of its development and revision, it has been firmly based on the principles of OBE. The NCS is a curriculum with prescribed learning outcomes and it is learner-centred, with the teacher conceived as a facilitator, responsible for guiding and bringing learners to achieving outcomes. The NCS is a new curriculum for the "new" South Africa in the making.

Endnotes

[1] See Appendix A which contains pertinent sample extracts from the NCS.
[2] It is also in this document that the choice of the outcomes-based educational (OBE) model as a human resource/human rights reform strategy is clearly enunciated.
[3] The same phenomenon is referred to by the Council of Europe as "éducation permanente".
[4] Implementation of the new curriculum was to be phased in over six years:

Grades	Year of Implementation
1 and 7	1998
2 and 8	1999
3 and 9	2000
4 and 10	2001
5 and 11	2002
6 and 12	2003

(*Curriculum 2005 Lifelong learning for the 21st Century. A User's Guide*, 1996)
[5] The General Education and Training (GET) Band, Grades R-9, is divided into three phases: the Foundation Phase (Grades R-3), the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4-6), and the Senior Phase (Grades 7-9).
[6] Not all of these proposed changes were in fact implemented.
[7] The Review Committee had proposed that the revised curriculum be called Curriculum 21, in reference to the 21st century. This name was not retained.
[8] This could be a typographical error in the original, however, the lesson is such that the teacher may very well have said 'meat' and not 'milk'.
[9] It was further argued that OBE would lead to the already privileged being even more privileged and the gap between the privileged and the under-privileged becoming even wider. There is no clear evidence of this yet, however, at the end of 2003, an exceptionally high failure rate at the level of Grade 10 once again put the curriculum in the headlines (*This Day*, 29 January 2004 "Alarming rise in failure rate after problems with curriculum"). Learners who had reached Grade 10 in 2003 were the first group to have experienced the NCS and OBE in their first nine years of schooling. As the Grade 10-12 curriculum was not yet ready for implementation in 2003, these learners entered a traditional, non-OBE system in Grade 10 and fared very badly in the end of year exams. The failures were blamed on OBE, my personal view is that it is more a question of how OBE was handled rather than OBE itself. One cannot but wonder whether better teacher preparation and training would have led to better teaching and therefore improved learning. More significantly, this high failure rate is more than likely related to issues of the language of learning than to the curriculum, this question, and others relating to criticisms of OBE, will be dealt with in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION: A TOOL FOR TRANSFORMATION

4.1 Introduction

One of the founding principles of the *National Curriculum Statement* (NCS) is outcomes-based education (OBE). Throughout the whole curriculum development process, the notion of OBE has been at the forefront. The first major curriculum policy document, and the forerunner of the NCS, the 1996 *Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century* (known as *Curriculum 2005),* was the first policy document to stress the need for a shift from the traditional aims and objectives approach to education to an outcomes-based approach. As noted earlier, this policy was in line with the principles of the White Paper on Education and Training (1995), the South African Qualifications Act (No 58 of 1995) and the National Education Policy Act (No 37 of 1996). When *Curriculum 2005* was submitted for revision in 2001 the review committee was unequivocally instructed that the outcomes-based principles were not negotiable. In the revised and renamed NCS, the commitment to OBE is again reiterated:

> The [...] *National Curriculum Statement* [...] affirms the commitment to outcomes-based education (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Overview*, 2002:6).

Although the NCS offers a particular, South African version of OBE, OBE, as an educational model, is internationally recognised and has widely influenced educational thinking around the world for decades. The development of an outcomes-based type approach to education was a consequence of a growing concern, particularly in the rapidly industrialising United States of America (USA), around the effectiveness of traditional methods of teaching. Traditional methods, which are input-driven and content-based, were seen as not preparing learners adequately for changing society and for an increasingly technical world. The

concept of an educational approach based on outcomes and specifying the competencies sought independently of the learning process, was born out of the performance-based education and training movement (1920s) and then, later, out of the mastery learning movement (1960s), and out of competency-based education (1980s).

4.2 The origins of OBE

The earliest origins of an outcomes-based approach date back to the 1920s in the USA to ideas of educational reform in industry and business which centred on specific outcomes in behavioural objectives form. This was the performance-based education and training movement. Then, in the 1960s, when American society was undergoing important changes and emerging as a consumer society, there was once again dissatisfaction with the educational system which was seen to not be preparing young people effectively for the developing economy. Demands were consequently made on education for greater accountability, more community and business involvement in decision-making, and for an increased emphasis on the economy (Tuxworth, 1989:2-25). The mastery learning movement of John B Carroll (1963), James H Block (1975) and Benjamin Bloom (1976), along with the concept of competency-based education (CBE), began to take centre stage (Blank, 1982; Tuxworth, 1989; Burke, 1989; Grant, 1979; Guskey, 1985; Horton, 1981; Nickse, 1981).

In John B. Carroll's seminal article, *A Model for School Learning* (1963) which influenced the development of mastery learning in the 1960s, the traditional notion of aptitude is challenged. Carroll expressed the belief that all children have the potential to learn, but differ in the time required to do so. According to Carroll, the learner's perseverance and the quality of instruction influence the learning time, not the learner's inherent ability. Benjamin Bloom, who introduced the notion of mastery learning in 1968, studied traditional teaching techniques and found that material was divided into learning units at the end of which was a test. After each test, a new unit of learning was introduced. The results of these tests

showed that there were often lots of good results at the beginning of the learning units, fewer at the end and thus, which suggested that mastery decreased as the various steps in the ladder had not been totally mastered before continuing. Bloom concluded that what was missing to maintain good results was a feedback and corrective process. He proposed that material be divided into even smaller segments of learning; that tests be held more frequently, not necessarily for marks, but to provide individualized feedback on learning. Corrections of tests were to provide suggestions on how to master shaky elements. These formative tests were both diagnostic and prescriptive. Those learners who had not mastered the material were to engage in corrective work for a class or two and were then to be administered a second formative test. Others, who had mastered the material, were to engage in parallel stretching or enrichment activities. The final result would be that students would be more similar in their achievement, in their motivation and learning rate.

With mastery learning the role of the teacher is that of facilitator and instructional leader, while learning is a co-operative endeavour. Grading is criterion-referenced and students are graded according to what they have mastered or learned. All students can receive an A grade, if all demonstrate they have attained the specified learning standard (Guskey, 1985). Mastery learning is also based on the specification of learning objectives, or outcomes, which describe what pupils will be able to do, what they will know, at the end of a learning unit. Outcomes in mastery learning, like in OBE, do not describe the content or the material that will be used to bring this behaviour about; it describes the behaviour itself.

In the late 1970s, the mastery learning movement, with its strong behaviourist leanings, developed into competency-based education (CBE) which focuses more on the outcomes, on the competency achieved and less on the learning process itself. It also allows for an even more learner-centred type learning environment. CBE specifies the competencies sought, independently of the

learning process, thus the means to achieve the competencies sought can be various and variable. Instructional strategies are less specific and can be varied to accommodate the needs, interests and backgrounds of learners. Instruction becomes more learner-centred with a recognition of individual needs and differing contexts of previous learning. As in mastery learning, the role of the teacher is that of facilitator.

According to Thompson (1981) there were a number of forces in the 1970s which moved schools in the USA towards CBE. There was, first of all, widespread dissatisfaction with secondary education: schools were seen as insufficiently articulated to motivate learners, too badly designed to accommodate individualities, and were aimless. There was little means to document outcomes of learning; the public wanted to hold institutions accountable for results. The growth of consumerism made the quality of the schooling product a national issue. There was a new consensus about priorities for schools; there was a move back to the need for excellent cognitive skills. Added to these were the transitional needs of youth; what was needed was to integrate youth into adult and economic life from which they had been shielded and alienated. The youth had been driven to live in an abstract, passive world of their own. There was also an evolution of pedagogical emphasis upon individualisation and experiential learning. Moreover, CBE was related to moves to make continuing education and training available to sectors of the population which had never participated in the formal system. In a system which stresses outcomes and recognises competencies as a means to progression, further learning is possible irrespective of where or how the competencies are acquired. This flexibility democratises education and allows for lifelong learning.

The forces that contributed to the development of competency-based education were, therefore, societal and economic: the demand for the personalisation of education and for accountability. The stress in education was, within the CBE

framework, on the learner demonstrating skills, observable outcomes, actions and on a learner-centred pedagogy.[1]

It was within this context of the application of CBE/mastery learning that outcomes-based education came into being. The term "outcome-based education" was coined in the 1980s by William Spady,[2] an American educator and author who used it to define a particular approach which evolved out of CBE and mastery learning. As he has said "like all important concepts, OBE has gone through several stages of evolution, and that evolution continues to this day" (Spady, 1994:203). OBE, while maintaining many of the principles of mastery learning and CBE stresses an integrated, experiential, holistic approach, focusing not only on knowledge and skills but also on attitudes and values.

4.3 OBE

4.3.1 A definition of OBE

OBE has been defined in many ways, as an approach to teaching and learning, as an educational model, as a philosophy, as a system for the management of the curriculum and of assessment. In fact, as Malcolm (1999:77-113) has shown, OBE has many names and at least as many forms. In the United Kingdom and New Zealand, OBE is called the "National Curriculum", in Australia it is called "Profiles", in some states in the USA, "National Standards" and in others, as in Canada it is called "OBE" (Malcolm, 1999:80). In South Africa, OBE has been influenced to a certain extent by these different models (Malcolm, 1999:79; Jansen, 1999a:16), but has since developed into a hybrid having its own particular form and is now, in 2004, known as the NCS. Spady, the "father" of OBE, states that "the term OBE has acquired many different usages and applications" (Spady, 1994:203), and he himself describes three different types of OBE – traditional, transitional and transformational (Spady, 1992:10) – which all vary among themselves. Furthermore, even when the term OBE is used, how it is implemented varies from country to country, from school to school, from classroom to classroom.

A single definitive description of OBE is, therefore, not possible, but not only because there are so many different models each with their own particularities. The very nature of OBE, as an *approach* makes it difficult to define. The OED defines the word *approach* as "a way of addressing a task, of dealing with a subject in a particular manner, an attitude." If OBE is indeed an *approach* to teaching and learning, it implies that "practising" OBE involves a way of "feeling" and a way of thinking. OBE is therefore, in many ways an attitude of mind – hence the ubiquitous pairing of the term OBE with the phrase "paradigm shift": to change from a traditional way of teaching to an OBE manner indeed requires one to change one's way of thinking and feeling about teaching and learning.

OBE, then, at its most essential level, is about an attitude of mind, about a philosophy of teaching. As Spady (1994:9) has said, at its most fundamental level, OBE strives for all learners to learn effectively and to learn things which are of worth. This is not new in education. However, how this goal is realised is variable, with some systems being more successful than others. OBE as a system for the management of the curriculum and of assessment attempts to structure teaching and learning to maximise the possibility of effective, worthwhile learning happening in the classroom. To achieve this overall aim, Spady (1994:10) delimits four principles in the OBE paradigm:

- Clarity of focus: focussing on outcomes allows the teacher to teach and the learner to learn effectively;
- Expanded opportunity: by giving learners the time, the resources and the instructional techniques they particularly need to learn effectively;
- High expectations: of learners while enabling them to reach those standards;
- Designing down: structuring and planning instruction starts with what the learner is going to end up being able to do.

These four principles touch on the two key characteristics which are common to OBE irrespective of the different operational features each school may use.

Firstly, OBE focuses on a clearly defined "performance result" (Spady,1994:5) or outcome, which is the determiner of all teaching and learning and is in opposition to the input-based traditional approaches. Secondly, it stresses that "what and whether learners learn successfully is more important than when and how they learn it" (Spady, 1994:5). OBE's baseline principle is that *all* learners can be successful and can achieve competence.

4.3.2 Outcomes versus inputs

An OBE system, as its name suggests, is based on outcomes. Outcomes are the result of learning, are what learners are able to *do*, as opposed to *know,* at the end of the learning experience:

> Outcomes are clear learning results that we want students to demonstrate at the end of significant learning experiences. [...] Outcomes are what learners **can actually do with what they know** and have learned – they are the tangible application of what has been learned (Spady, 1994:2, my emphasis).

Inputs are the content of learning, the resources provided, the instructional strategies used. Input is that from which learners learn; outcomes are the result of that learning, what learners are able to do with what they know and have learned as a result of having engaged with that input. Outcomes represent the ability to manipulate knowledge, negotiate meaning – put "facts" to work.

OBE implies that when the teaching and learning environment are structured, the focus must be on the desired outcomes of the education process. In an OBE learning environment, what the learner should be able to do at the end of the learning process is clearly stated and made known to all, teacher and learners, at the beginning of the learning experience.

Stipulated outcomes are formulated using a performative verb, are learner-centred, and are defined broadly. In the South African NCS Languages Learning Area statement, one outcome reads:

> Speaking: The learner is able **to communicate** confidently and effectively in a spoken language in a wide range of situations (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Overview*, 2002:20, my emphasis).

This is in contrast to the traditional aims and objective approach where teachers, in preparing lesson plans, would indicate that the aim of the lesson was, for example, that, by the end of the lesson every pupil would be able to conjugate the verb *être* (to be). The statement expressed both the input, or objective, and the outcome which was specific and not related to skills and use in relation to meaning and the integration and inter-relatedness of all knowledge. The input was stated as the same for all learners and the outcome was expected to be same whereas it is clear from experience that what one teaches is not necessarily what is learnt.

In an outcomes-based model, outcomes are not determined by teachers or schools but are set by a higher authority representing government. Outcomes are formulated by departments of education and thereby ensure that learners achieve competencies that the nation as a whole considers important. It is also a way of setting standards which are equal. The input, which is the actual content of learning, that through and from which learners learn, is left to teachers and to schools, who determine the input according to the particular needs, interests, and, crucially, contexts from which learners come. This differentiation of responsibility for inputs and outcomes allows for learner differences to be taken into account – all learners have the opportunity of learning things that relate to their own lives – whereas prescribed outcomes provide the common framework which ensures national standards. Furthermore, because outcomes are not based on "facts" but on the processing of knowledge and the integration of competencies, teaching and learning which leads to the desired outcomes prepares learners for lifelong learning.

With the focus on outcomes – what the learner is able to do at the end of a learning experience – learning is learner-centred. The teacher can acknowledge

inputs from the learners themselves, from their environments and contexts, and everyday experiences. Learners who come to the classroom having already achieved the stated learning outcomes can be recognised and applauded. Furthermore, the focus on outcomes leaves room for the recognition that learners achieve outcomes in different ways. Outcomes also imply that teachers need to allow for different needs and cater for these by using a variety of teaching strategies and providing a variety of activities to achieve those outcomes. Malcolm (1999:80) cogently states:

> [...] teachers must either use a variety of single inputs, or multidimensional inputs that enable all children to respond. Instead of being frustrated that children learn different things from an activity, teachers can design activities especially to facilitate differences. The converse is also true: just as one input can lead to different outcomes, so different inputs can lead to the same outcome. Teachers can run a number of activities in parallel that suit different students but that all address the same general outcome.

4.3.3 Competence for all learners

The demonstration of competence is the second key feature of OBE. Competence can be defined as a demonstration of ability, performing or acting, as well as a demonstration of understanding of the knowledge underpinning performance, and a demonstration of the ability to integrate understanding of the underpinning knowledge and performance or action (Spady, 1994:2-3). Competence in OBE terms is consequently a macro-concept. It subsumes the psychomotor, intellectual and affective abilities of learners, and as such, outcomes, which are expressions of the competences to be achieved by the end of the learning process, are focused on knowledge and skills, as well as attitudes and values. In this way, OBE is an integrated educational system in which head and hand and heart are brought into the learning sphere. OBE aims at an holistic education for all learners.

Malcolm (1999:82) notes that traditional curricula in North America, Australia and South Africa have been content-driven, stressing the acquisition of knowledge only and geared to matriculation, higher education and employment to the

detriment of an holistic education. The stress of traditionalist approaches on "academic" achievement persists despite the reality that few learners in fact go on to higher education and that business and industry claim that school-leavers are not adequately prepared for the world of work. Traditional curricula do not provide the competencies needed in today's fast-changing, global economy, nor for an increasingly complex, multicultural society. An outcomes-based curriculum, on the other hand, sets as its outcomes the very skills needed in the modern workplace: problem-solving, team work, self-management, critical thinking, the application of knowledge, and in post-modern society, tolerance of diversity, equality and equity.

Outcomes-based education is founded on the belief that *all* learners can learn, that all learners *are able* to achieve irrespective of their background and previous knowledge. OBE negates the notion of good versus weak learners and replaces it with the concept of fast and slow learners. Malcolm argues (1999:83) that there are two ways of viewing this OBE characteristic. The one view is that of behaviourists who believe that anyone can be taught anything given sufficient time and a good teacher. The other interpretation, Malcolm goes on, views learning as a process, in which successful learning is measured by learners' progress towards the attainment of an outcome. Both interpretations of "success for all" remove the time limits on the achievement of standards. In outcomes-based education thinking, the pace of learning, and the method of learning are to be adapted to individual learners essentially by not stipulating rigid time frames and relying on Assessment Standards. The aim is to enable all learners to realise their potential.

In short, OBE is a learner-centred, experiential approach to education and training that is primarily characterised by a focus on outcomes and outputs as opposed to inputs and syllabi.

An outcomes-based learning system is the antithesis of a traditionalist transmission approach which concentrates on teacher input and on learner memorisation and reproduction of content in isolated segments. In a traditionalist approach, learning is fragmented as each curriculum is discrete; there is no integration amongst the curricula of different subjects and no wish for them to be. The result is that learners are evaluated on the ability to accumulate facts within a strict range in terms of the syllabus. The success of a teacher is measured in terms of learners' marks acquired for "giving back" the knowledge dispensed by the teacher. Such teaching produces passive learners without the skill or ability, or need, to transfer or apply knowledge. Learning is aimed at passing exams. Learners are not prepared for life after school where skills and competencies need to be applied. There is little promotion of the "intelligent" use of knowledge, merely for accurate absorption; there is little "using" of knowledge in context or applying of knowledge. There is little critical thinking and a lot of rote-learning. The role of the teacher in such a traditionalist approach is that of omniscient sage who transmits knowledge which passive learners absorb.

OBE's integrated methodology allows learners' intellect, skills and attitudes and values to develop together. Being an holistic approach, teaching and learning involve theory and practice, the mind and the manual. OBE aims to educate the whole person, hence it is learner-centred and activity-based and the teacher is a facilitator, guiding the learner in self-directed learning.

Table 4.1: Traditionalist versus outcomes-based approaches

Traditionalist Approach	Outcomes-Based Approach
Time: learning is structured according to amount of time spent in the education system	Credits: learning is structured by the specification of Learning Outcomes for student achievement
Focus is on content to be taught	Focus is on competences to be learnt
Focus is on teacher input	Focus is on learner outcomes
Teacher-centred environment	Learner-centred environment
Content-based teaching	Activity-based learning
Learning for the exam	Learning for life
Grade driven	Continuous assessment
Rote learning	Critical thinking

4.4 OBE in the South African context

As discussed above, in the USA, CBET, the forerunner of OBE, was a distinct response to a changing economic and social environment. So too in the 1990s in South Africa, an OBE discourse was born out of a period of societal change. However, whatever the similarities between the above delineated social and economic changes in the USA and those in the South African context, what distinguishes the impetus for South African OBE, and what has given it its particular characteristics, is the very fundamental and total nature of the changes striven for. South African society, after apartheid, was to be transformed and reconstructed. The school was the place to nurture this transformation and OBE was chosen as the tool of the transformation and reconstruction strategy.

Education was to be the means of transformation but to enable this to happen, the educational system itself was to be reformed and revolutionized. As discussed in Chapter 2, during apartheid, and to a large extent throughout the history of the country, education was characterised by inequality, both with regards to access and to quality. The consequences of this inequality relate as much to social justice as to economic development. As a basic human right, equal educational opportunity has to be provided to all citizens, irrespective of race, gender or sex – all principles entrenched in the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*. While Article 9, subsections 2 and 3 ensure equality:

> 2) Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms. to promote the achievement of equity, legislative and other measures designed to protect or advance persons, or categories of persons, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination may be taken.
>
> 3) The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth.

Article 29 ensures the right to education:

> Everyone has the right
> a) to a basic education, including adult basic education; and

b) to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible.

An added imperative within the context of equality, and one which is perhaps peculiar to South Africa as a direct consequence of its history, was the need for an education system with built-in mechanisms which would redress past inequalities.

Reform in education was also an economic imperative. For South Africa to develop, to take its place in the global economy, it needed an educational system which would prepare each learner effectively to make a meaningful contribution to the development of the country. The education system had to lead to the development of skills and the building of capacity. An outcomes-based approach to education aims to enskill South Africans to be able to contribute to national growth and development; to enable them to become lifelong learners, and allow for the integration of education and training thereby overcoming the dichotomy between knowledge and skills, theory and practice, the academic and the applied.

The above are the tangible arguments validating the transformation of education in South Africa. More subtle, but not less crucial, are those arguments related to the development of a sense of national unity. The former racial and cultural separation of schooling, with an underlying value system emphasising difference, had led to an exclusive Afrikaner nationalism which mitigated against the development of a South African nationhood. Acknowledging the value of diversity and fostering multiculturalism by changing the values, attitudes and knowledge transmitted through the process of teaching and learning can go a long way towards diminishing prejudice and finding a common ground between South Africa's diverse peoples. The changing needs of the new South Africa make the transformation of education a human rights, a human resource and a national necessity. This is clearly articulated in the *Overview* to the NCS:

> The imperative to transform South African society by making use of various transformative tools, stems from a need to address the legacy of apartheid in all areas of human activity, and in education in particular. Social transformation in education is aimed at ensuring that the educational imbalances of the past are addressed, and that equal educational opportunities are provided for all sections of our population. If social transformation is to be achieved, all South Africans have to be educationally affirmed through the recognition of their potential and the removal of artificial barriers to the attainment of qualifications (*Draft National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12: Overview*, 2002:9).

The South African OBE model was conceived as the means to bring about the needed transformation. The outcomes-based National Curriculum, conceived at a time of social, political and economic transformation, was unequivocally intended as a tool for change.

4.4.1 Origins of OBE in South Africa

Kraak (1999:38) argues that the origins of OBE in South Africa lie in three areas: the popularity after 1985 of a competency-based approach in South African industry; the influence of Australian outcomes-based models in the early 1990s and thirdly, the resurgence of the tenets of People's Education which were first expressed by the liberation movements of the 1980s. These three antecedents were melded together to form the "South African OBE" which goes beyond the limited cognitive parameters of competency-based models by incorporating elements of progressive pedagogic principles.

According to Kraak (1999:38) the move to competency-based education and training (CBET) in industry began in the mid 1980s and was part of the State's strategy of allowing for a freer market and labour force. Kraak goes on to say that CBET did not fundamentally change the discriminatory, limiting and limited apartheid work and training environment and as a result, CBET was indicted by oppositional groups working in industry and labour. CBET did not broaden the base of training nor improve the development of employment possibilities for black workers. It was in this context, he goes on, that there was a shift in thinking from CBE to OBE.

Jansen (1999a:5), in mapping out the historiography of OBE in South Africa claims that the most formative initiative for the development of OBE in educational policy was the work undertaken by the National Training Board (NTB) in conjunction with the trade union organisation, COSATU, and the ANC. Although discussions between the NTB and these organisations centred on labour, the view that education and training should be integrated had an obvious impact on schools and future curriculum policy. The extensive research done by leaders in COSATU on the Australian and New Zealand education and training systems lead to the exploration of the OBE model. In the NTB's *National Training Strategy Initiative* (1994), there is evidence of a shift away from the competency-based education and training mindset which had prevailed in industry since the 1980s, to an outcomes one.

For Kraak (1999:39), the "turning point" in the OBE discourse, however, was the establishment of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and later the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), whose responsibility it is to oversee the implementation of the NQF. The aim of the NQF is to provide a single qualification structure for education and training; it abolishes academic and vocational tracks and offers an integrated system in which learners are not differentiated by the track they are on but by the modules achieved at each level. The NQF thus allows for prior learning, in whatever system or environment, to be recognised. Kraak goes on to say that the NQF was a direct consequence of the labour-centred initiatives of the previous years and that OBE, which is fundamental to the NQF structure, thus became increasingly central to policy.

The reports which firmly brought OBE into South African education were the 1995 *A Curriculum Framework for General and Further Education and Training,* and the 1996 *Lifelong Learning through a National Qualifications Framework.* However *Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century* (1996), forerunner to the NCS, is the first public document which enunciates the choice

of the OBE model as a human resource and human rights reform strategy. It also clearly commits the curriculum to the principle of OBE:

> A commitment to outcomes-based learning is central to the Lifelong Learning Development Framework (*Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century. A User's Guide,* 1996:20).

The third force which influenced the adoption of an outcomes-based model in education and training was the People's Education movement in the 1980s. This movement initially emerged in the 1970s as a political movement which was centred in schools. In the 1970s, the broadly based United Democratic Front movement used the classroom as one of the sites of the struggle against apartheid. The school boycotts were very successful and soon schools became inoperative which eventually led to the total breakdown of the schooling system. This meant that large numbers of secondary school students were being deprived of further schooling, even if only of the limited education provided by Bantu Education. The slogan and principle of "Liberation first, education later" became self-destructive. The success of the boycotts meant that there was no longer a site from within which to transform education or create a new education proposal. No alternative could be found as interaction between and amongst teachers and students no longer existed.

In the mid 1980s, during a period of renewed protest and when tertiary institutions also took to the streets, the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) was formed and it set about proposing an alternative education. The movement realised that up until then, educational protest had been limited to a reaction against Bantu Education. It consequently began to design a pedagogic alternative and a South African People's Education[3] was defined, firstly in broad terms and then more specifically. The main proposals of People's Education included:

- the democratisation of education through the participation of a cross-section of the community in decision-making on the content, quality and governance of education;
- the negation of apartheid in education by making education relevant to the democratic struggles of the people;
- the achievement of a high level of education for everyone;
- the development of a critical consciousness;
- the bridging of the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical life;
- the closing of the chasm between natural science and the humanities, and between mental and manual labour; with emphasis on worker education (Eric Molobi, first General Secretary of the National Education Crisis Committee, cited in Kraak, 1999:22).

Although these educational ideas were barely developed during that period, many of the principles of People's Education are to be found in South African OBE.

4.4.2 OBE and the NCS

As previously stated, the outcomes-based educational model, designated as the implementational tool of the NCS, was chosen by the South African Department of Education explicitly for its transformative possibilities and qualities. This purpose cannot be stressed enough, because OBE is the means in the classroom to redress the educational imbalances of the past and provide equal educational opportunities to all individuals in all sectors of society:

> Outcomes-based education forms the foundation for the curriculum in South Africa. It strives to enable all learners to reach their maximum learning potential (*Draft National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12: Overview*, 2002:9).

OBE is also conceived as the means by which learners will be effectively prepared to make a meaningful contribution to the economic development of the country and will be enabled to become lifelong learners. Furthermore, OBE is seen as the means to effect changes in attitudes and values that will forge a new

national identity based on the concept of multiculturalism which prepares learners to live fulfilled lives in a multicultural society.

The general education and training framework within which OBE is structured is one based on two programmes leading to certification: the General Education and Training Band (GET) with a General Education and Training Certificate (GETC) awarded at the end of Grade 9, and the Further Education and Training Band (FET) with a Further Education and Training Certificate (FETC) awarded to learners having achieved the specified outcomes at the end of Grade 12. These two bands are registered at Level 3 and Level 4, respectively, of the NQF. The GET is divided into four phases. The Foundation Phase incorporates Grades R, 1, 2 and 3 with learning programmes in Literacy, Numeracy and Life Skills; the Intermediate Phase, Grades 4, 5, and 6 with six Learning Areas, Language, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Life Orientation and Arts and Culture; and the Senior Phase, Grades 7, 8, and 9 during which the Learning Areas are increased to eight with the inclusion of Technology and Economic and Management Sciences.

The FET band is not divided into phases, but allows for choice in the pathway learners want to follow in order to achieve the FETC. There are three pathways that can be followed: the General Academic pathway, the General Vocational pathway and the Occupational pathway. The General Academic pathway is the pathway offered mainly at schools, the other two being offered at colleges and other institutions. The General Academic pathway is the one in which learners receive general formative education based on *subjects*. Within this Academic pathway there are three components, a Fundamental Learning Component, a Core Learning Component and an Elective Learning Component each of which allows for a number of choices. The rules of combination are as follows:

1. The Fundamental Learning Component comprises:
   - Two languages, one being a Home Language and the other one being at Home or First Additional Level, provided that one of the two languages is the language of learning and teaching.

- Mathematics or Mathematical Literacy
- Life Orientation

2. The Core Learning Component comprises at least two subjects selected from one of the learning fields.

3. The Elective Learning Component comprises at least one subject selected from any learning field (*Draft National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12: Overview*, 2002:17).

This framework of bands and phases with electives within the final phase supports an OBE design structure which is made up of two pillars: outcomes and assessment. At the heart of this dual-supported structural framework lie the concepts of integration and learner-centredness which further the overarching aim of social transformation.

4.4.3 Integration

The concept of integration is expressed in various ways in the South African OBE curriculum:

- outcomes are integrated between and amongst themselves; outcomes determine teaching and learning;
- outcomes relate to the cognitive and affective and psychomotor domains;
- assessment is integrated into teaching and learning; assessment is determined by outcomes; and
- assessment tests varied forms of knowledge from the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains.

In the NCS, there are three categories of outcomes: Critical Outcomes, Developmental Outcomes and Learning Outcomes. The Critical and Developmental Outcomes describe the overarching results of education which teaching and learning in general must strive to achieve. They relate to skills in problem-solving, in co-operative work, self-direction, and critical thinking. They also relate to metacognitive skills and relate to attitudes and values such as an holistic view of reality, responsibility to self and society, tolerance, preparedness for life. These generic outcomes describe the type of citizen the education

system aims to create and in this way, define the type of society the nation envisions. The Learning Area Outcomes relate specifically to the eight Learning Areas. The Learning Area Outcomes are rooted in what constitutes the characteristics of the particular Learning Area and are packaged into *subjects*.

The three types of outcomes are interlinked and integrated across learning areas. The Critical and Developmental Outcomes are cross-curricular outcomes which are taught, learnt and assessed across disciplines and by all disciplines: problem-solving skills and co-operative work will be taught and learnt in Languages as well as in Mathematics. Learning Outcomes which are specific to learning areas are also integrated: in the Languages Learning Area, for example, the Learning Outcomes which refer to listening, speaking, reading and viewing, writing, thinking and reasoning, and, language structure, although presented as six separate outcomes, "should be integrated when taught and assessed" (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Languages*, 2002:7). The integration of themes within and across Learning Areas is seen as a priority as is the awareness and critical appraisal of values that need to be integrated into learning:

> The principle of integrated learning is integral to outcomes-based education. Integration ensures that learners experience the Learning Areas as linked and related (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Overview*, 2002:13).

Integration is also a feature of the type of outcomes described: the competencies the outcomes describe and that learners need to achieve pertain to different domains of cognition as well as to the affective and psychomotor domains. Outcomes refer not only to knowledge, but also to skills, attitudes and values and understandings. As such, South African OBE is an holistic approach developing the different domains of competence. Head, hand and heart are integrated in the descriptions of what learners should be able to demonstrate or perform at the end of a learning process. In the NCS Grades 10-12, this commitment to integration is linked to the application of competence:

> The integration of knowledge and skills across subjects and terrains of practice is crucial for achieving applied competence as defined in the NQF. Applied competence aims at integrating three discrete competences, namely practical, foundational and reflective competences. In adopting integration and applied competence, the *National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12 (Schools)* seeks to promote an integrated learning of theory, practice and reflection (*Draft National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12: Overview*, 2002:10).

The second pillar of South African OBE is assessment: while outcomes define what the learner is meant to achieve at the end of the learning process, Assessment Standards delineate the level at which learners demonstrate achievement of the Learning Outcome. The Assessment Standards define the extent, the breadth and depth, of that achievement. Each Learning Area Outcome has a related Assessment Standard and these are set by grade. They specify more complex, deeper and broader knowledge, skills and understanding at the different levels thus ensuring conceptual progression. For example Outcome 1 of the Languages Learning Area reads:

> Listening: The learner will be able to listen for information and enjoyment, and respond appropriately and critically in a wide range of situations.

For this outcome, one of the Assessment Standards articulated for each of Grade 7, 8 and 9 states:

> Grade 7:
> We know this when the learner:
> Listens to a telephone message and takes it down.
>
> Grade 8:
> We know this when the learner:
> Listens to a short conversation.
>
> Grade 9:
> We know this when the learner:
> Listens to a longer conversation (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Languages*, 2002:34-35).

Progression by grade is central to the NCS OBE.

With the Assessment Standards being aligned to Learning Outcomes in the different Learning Areas, integration of teaching and learning and assessment is assured. The Critical and Developmental Outcomes are sited within the Learning Outcomes of the Learning Area and the Assessment Standard. The Critical and Developmental Outcomes are assessed integratively within the Learning Outcomes of all the phases in the relevant Learning Areas.

Integration is also assured as assessment is continuous, ongoing during the process of teaching and learning. Continuous assessment guarantees that each learner's achievement is measured during the course of teaching and learning during the year, and that feedback is provided on an on-going basis and the information used to support a learner's development and to improve the learning and teaching process. This is clearly stated in the NCS documentation:

> Assessment [...] is a continuous, planned process of gathering information about the performance of learners measured against the Assessment Standards of the Learning Outcomes (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Languages*, 2002:45).

Assessment is thus integrated into teaching and learning by virtue of the fact that it is continuous, however, it is integrated also in that applied knowledge is tested. Assessment in the South African OBE curriculum is not atomistic or instrumental, as in the behaviourist tradition: the OBE of the NCS stresses the need to assess the *application* of knowledge:

> Assessment should [...] ensure that learners integrate and apply knowledge and skills (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Languages*, 2002:45).

4.4.4 Learner-centredness

Learner-centredness is the second central feature of OBE in the NCS and is given impetus in the outcomes and the Assessment Standards.

> The outcomes and assessment standards emphasise participatory, learner-centred and activity-based education (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Overview,* 2002:12).

A teaching and learning environment which puts the learner at the centre of the learning process and not the teacher or the syllabus, is characterised by flexibility and gives expression to the educational aims of equality and equity mentioned earlier. Putting the learner at the centre of the learning and teaching process allows the diversity of individuals to be respected and recognised. In the South African context, this diversity is a particular issue. The reality of post-apartheid South African education is that learners do not constitute a homogenous learning level group. South African learners come from a diversity of cultures, languages and socio-economic backgrounds. There is also a multiplicity of different school environments: rural, urban, peri-urban with resources and facilities which vary from decidedly third world and underdeveloped to the most sophisticated, typical of the wealthiest nations of the developed first world. The historical reality of the educational opportunities afforded to these different groups is also vastly different, with different groups benefiting or suffering from an inequitable and biased learning environment. The differences need to be acknowledged and need to be catered for in terms of the Aristotlean definition of equality: "True equality exists in the treatment of unequal things unequally."

The South African classroom is a multicultural, multiethnic environment to which learners bring cultural "baggage" in terms of knowledge, skills, world views and behaviours which are varied and different. A learner-centred OBE methodology makes the learner the starting point of learning, thus differing world views, skills and knowledge can be affirmed. Learners are thereby empowered by their difference, they learn from it, share it, and grow through it.

A feature of OBE is that while outcomes are determined in advance and laid down in the curriculum, the learning programmes and instructional strategies which are the means to achieve these outcomes are left to the teacher and the

school to determine. In this way, it is the learners who determine the teacher or schools' choices regarding the content and the methodologies of teaching and learning for a particular school or classroom. The learners' needs – for instance, the learners' entry level in terms of foreknowledge, level of proficiency, interests – will be analysed by the teacher. Instructional design, which is an ongoing process of observation, reflection and analysis, will be adapted accordingly. Consequently, the different needs of learners can be catered for and the different contexts and environments of learning can be taken into account.

The NCS made this pedagogic objective explicit right at the start of the curriculum process, in the very first version of the NCS – *Curriculum 2005* – and it is a principle which has not changed:

> Curriculum development, especially the development of learning programmes and materials, should put learners first, recognising and building on their knowledge and values and lifestyles experience, as well as responding to their needs. Different learning styles and rates of learning need to be acknowledged and accommodated both in the learning situation and in the attainment of qualifications. The ways in which different cultural values and lifestyles affect the construction of knowledge should also be acknowledged and incorporated in the development and implementation of learning programmes (*Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century. A User's Guide*, 1996:5.).

The input – what is to be the context of the learning experience – decided upon by teachers, can accommodate differences amongst learners. Input can be varied, taken from different sources: from learners themselves, their particular experiences, their environment, the media, and this input can take into account the interests and needs of those specific learners. In any teaching and learning environment, but particularly so in a multicultural learning environment, the recognition of difference is paramount, the learner is central to the learning experience. Furthermore, the participatory, experiential learning which is a feature of OBE encourages the sharing of different life experiences and world views and prepares learners for the multicultural society in which they will have to live and work.

Another feature of NCS OBE which gives expression to a learner-centred methodology aiming at equity and equality is assessment. The outcomes-based principles which underpin assessment are centred on the learner:

- The purpose of assessment must always be made explicit.
- A criterion-referenced approach must be used.
- Assessment must be authentic, continuous, multi-dimensional, varied and balanced.
- Assessment must be an on-going, integral part of the learning process.
- It must be accurate, objective, valid, fair, practicable, effective and time-efficient.
- Assessment must gather information from several contexts and use a variety of methods according to what is being assessed and what the needs of the learner are.
- The methods and techniques used must be appropriate to the knowledge, skills, or attitudes to be assessed, as well as to the age and the development level of the learner.
- It must be bias-free and sensitive to gender, race, cultural background and abilities.
- Assessment results must be communicated clearly, accurately, timely and meaningfully.
- Evidence of progress in achieving outcomes must be used to identify areas where learners need support and remedial intervention (*Draft National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12: Overview,* 2002:27).

The emphasis is on continuous assessment which makes use of varied, multi-dimensional assessment procedures. Continuous assessment, providing information on the progress and needs of learners, gives teachers information on how to adapt instruction while giving learners the opportunity to measure their own performance and monitor it. Learners are advanced or not according to their demonstrated achievement. There is, therefore, transparency and learners are active in the learning process, taking responsibility for their achievements. Finally, by assessing continuously and in varied ways, learners become active participants in learning. Continuous varied assessment in this OBE paradigm allows for and recognises multiple intelligences and difference. It recognises that

all intelligences are a valid means by which to succeed in life and the NCS OBE supports, develops and gives credit to these different intelligences.

Arguably, the recognition of diversity, which OBE through its learner-centred pedagogy strives for, along with the valorisation of difference, is perhaps the first step in the achievement of the creation of a sense of nationhood. Whereas the apartheid curriculum fostered an exclusive nationalism – Afrikaner, English-speaking, Zulu, or Xhosa, etc. – based on difference, OBE, attempts to transcend difference in order to achieve a commonality in diversity. Undoubtedly, creating a sense of nationhood through education, achieving unity in diversity, are complex issues (Greenstein, 1997). However, it is my contention that a learner-centred classroom which allows for the integration of different world views can go a long way to the elimination of prejudice and the discovery of a common ground. Moreover, integration of content, values and attitudes, will help learners acquire the knowledge, attitudes and skills needed to function effectively in a pluralistic democratic society. It will prepare them to interact, negotiate and communicate with peoples from diverse groups by "crossing borders" and achieving cultural competence. It will also prepare them to create a civic and moral community that works for the common good.

4.5 OBE and Constructivist learning theory

Integrated and learner-centred OBE, as articulated in the NCS, ensures that the process of learning is as important as the content of learning. In OBE the "how" of learning and teaching is considered as equally important as the "what":

> Outcomes-based education considers the process of learning as important as the content. Both the process and the content of education are emphasised by spelling out the outcomes to be achieved at the end of the process (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Overview*, 2002:10).

The word *process* is defined in the OED as "the action or fact of going on or being carried on; progress, course." The OED goes on to define *process* philosophically as something which is in the course of *becoming*, as opposed to

being. If OBE "considers the process as important as the content" then, in terms of the OED definition, OBE considers learning to be an ongoing process of constant *becoming* with no end or finite state. The broadly stated Learning Outcomes which are a feature of the outcomes-based NCS also suggest that learning is an ongoing experience, a process which is lifelong and not finite.

The three principles of the outcomes-based NCS – integration, learner-centredness and process – are firmly grounded in the learning theories of recent decades, and in particular, in the constructivist approach. The fundamental premise of a constructivist approach is that cognition is the result of "mental construction". In other words, learners learn by fitting new information together with what they already know. In constructivist learning theory, knowledge is not an objective construct which exists "out there" (Malcolm, 1999:84). What a person knows is not just received passively, but is actively constructed by that person and integrated into the person's existing "body of knowledge", which through the incorporation of new knowledge, shifts and re-coheres in response to the new. Hence, what we know is always in a process of "becoming", and, thus, we as beings are as a consequence also always in a process of becoming. Constructivism also believes that learning is socially mitigated, that it is affected by the learning context as well as by the learners' beliefs and attitudes. The main underlying assumption of constructivism is:

> [...] that individuals are actively involved right from birth in constructing personal meaning, that is their own personal understanding, learning from their experiences. In other words, everyone makes their own sense of the world and the experiences that surround them (Williams and Burden, 1997:21).

This conceptualisation of how one learns brings the learner into central focus and privileges the process of learning over the content. If each individual constructs his or her own reality and therefore learns different things in different ways even when provided with what seems to be very similar learning experiences, learning and teaching strategies need to be learner-centred and stress the process of

knowing over the accumulation of facts or the development of skills if successful learning is to take place.

A constructivist learning process is the antithesis of the traditional teacher-centred, content-driven approach in which learners passively receive knowledge which they are required to repeat at a later stage for evaluation purposes. Learners engaged in constructivist learning are active, making meaning, constructing and processing knowledge. Learning involves a process of ongoing transformation, of infinite "becoming". This infinite "becoming", or transformation, occurs at the confluence of activated resources within learners and those resources provided by the classroom situation. The teacher facilitates learning by giving learners access to the tools they need to engage in the "becoming" process: an awareness of the resources they already have, new information, and a situation or context which allows, challenges and motivates learners to learn experientially, through participation. Building on *their* knowledge and skills, making sense of what *they* are learning by doing, behaving and reflecting, a "transformation" takes place and new knowledge and a new "being" comes into existence. A process which is based on transformation "[moves] beyond stability to tap the *creative* powers inherent in instability" (Doll, 1993:3, my emphasis). Creative, constructivist learning is lifelong learning going beyond the immediate recall needs of (thereafter quickly forgotten) facts for normative assessment tests.

Creative learning precludes a controlled system focussing on input and predetermined output and supposes rather the achievement of outcomes through a complex, unpredictable arrangement which allows learners to create and choose rather than to order and follow. In such a paradigm, the relationship between the teacher and a group of learners, and amongst the learners themselves is different from that of the modernist, traditional transmission approach which is premised on the teacher as the knowledge-bearer and the learner as an empty vessel or a *tabula rasa* whose mind has to be filled or written

on, respectively. In the looser, more exploratory, post-modern-like, interactive, experiential structure, learners and teachers are seen as a group of people interacting together to explore and discover through the sharing of their group diversity. Curriculum content is interpreted and created through the interaction of teacher and learner, learner and teacher, learner and learner, with each individual learner being at the centre of the learning process. Learner-centredness is at the heart of a constructivist approach to learning:

> Curriculum development, especially the development of learning programmes and materials, should put learners first, recognising and building on their knowledge and values and lifestyles experience, as well as responding to their needs (*Curriculum 2005 Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century. A User's Guide*, 1996:5).

The NCS, in its commitment to outcomes-based education, defined simply as a learner-centred process which is activity-based and "designed to promote problem-solving and critical thinking" (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Overview*, 2002:4), gives considerable emphasis to constructivist approaches to learning.

4.6 OBE and foreign language acquisition

In the context of the foreign language classroom, a learner-centred pedagogy is essential if effective language acquisition is to take place; the particular characteristics of the discipline of foreign-language learning require it. Firstly, in foreign language teaching and learning, the end is also the means: in other words, to learn to speak French, you need to speak in French; to learn how to use the subjunctive in speech, you need to use the subjunctive in speech. Learning has, therefore, to be experiential, with the learner actively participating in the creation of meaning. Secondly, although a language is made up of a body of knowledge such as grammatical or syntactical rules and structures, lexical items and so on, which need to be understood and assimilated, learners themselves provide a certain amount of content within a particular context. In foreign language acquisition, input from learners is paramount as they have to

bring to bear on their speech acts what it is that they personally want to say and how they want to say it. Thirdly, speaking a language entails taking the *savoir-faire*, (know-how of language), and using it to make and negotiate meaning, the *vouloir-dire,* (intended meaning: what the speaker wants to say is not always understood in this way by the listener/receiver). Furthermore, speaking a foreign language[4] involves a *savoir-être* (social know-how, or pragmatics), which is usually acquired by first language speakers by osmosis from their cultural and linguistic community, but which has to be learned by foreign language learners who frequently do not have a natural foreign cultural and language community on which to draw and whose practices "normally" act as input to learners.

Reagan & Osborn (2002:64) argue that it is this latter aspect of foreign language learning that makes it distinct from any other discipline.

> Languages are unlike any other subject taught in a classroom in that they involve the acquisition of skills and behaviour patterns which are characteristic of another community (Gardner, 1985 cited in Reagan & Osborn, 2002:64).

Communicating successfully in a foreign language entails expressing a culture, a world view which might be distinct from that of the learners'. To speak French appropriately requires that learners assimilate and/or identify with French behaviour and establish a personal profile which functions appropriately in French communication events. Establishing such an identity in the target language requires the speaker to undergo a process of transformation in which a new culturally competent identity comes into being, or, is "constructed".

Foreign language acquisition, therefore, is the result of a fusion between the learner and that to-be-learned; the two cannot be separated. Foreign language acquisition entails the modification and the construction of knowledge, and also requires the development of new skills forged within the learners' consciousness through contact with the raw material of the language: input from the (albeit artificial) classroom, teachers, and peers. Pedagogical practice needs to take

these characteristics of foreign language learning into account for learning to be effective. The teaching and learning process must allow for the creation of knowledge and skills, and needs to engage learners as active participants rather than as mere observers in real-life domains. Foreign-language pedagogy must put learners in a real-life situation that demands, and permits, personal input and creative output.

4.6.1 Group work

There is no one single teaching strategy which is best suited to OBE-inspired foreign language acquisition: learning and teaching are complex activities requiring multiple, flexible approaches, and the nature of the teacher and the needs of the learner are as varied as the approaches available. However, the strategies and principles of collaborative or co-operative group work make group work a particularly effective technique to bring about OBE-type foreign language teaching and learning. The fundamental characteristics of group work are that it engages learners actively in learning, teaching them to be less reliant on the teacher and more reliant on their own ability both as individuals and as members of a group, to think, and to seek information from other sources. Group work relies heavily on input from learners, both as individuals and as members of a group, and on their recognition of co-team members as a potential resource. In group work the teacher passes control for some parts of the lesson over to learners who, in the group work situation, are challenged to access, gather and process information. Learners are also challenged to negotiate the learning space, and to arrange and process information with their group members. Most importantly, in the foreign language classroom context where communication is the overarching outcome, group work is particularly apt as it recreates the interactive social context which epitomises social communication: learners are put into a personal relationship situation which demands interaction and co-operation and thus promotes learning.

In an effort to identify what helps to make group work successful as an organisational and pedagogical strategy which facilitates learning, Killen (2000:73) lists the following criteria:

- A clear focus on learning;
- Preparation of (and by) the learners;
- A clear set of guidelines for learners;
- Management of the learning environment;
- Direction, but not intrusion, by the teacher;
- Willing participation by all learners;
- Monitoring and feedback by the teacher;
- Careful time management by the teacher and the learners; and
- A logical conclusion (Killen, 2000:73).

In the teaching unit described in Chapter 8 in section 8.2, and which is given as a prime example of OBE-inspired teaching and learning, group work is used successfully and to particularly good effect.

4.7 Reception and criticisms of OBE

As touched on earlier, when the outcomes-based curriculum was first released in 1997 under the name of *Curriculum 2005,* there was widespread reaction. Many educationists, scholars and parents, whether via the media or in scholarly journals expressed an opinion on the curriculum. According to Jansen (1999a:3):

> Since the mid 1990s OBE has triggered the most important curriculum controversy in the history of South African education. Not since the De Lange Committee of the 1980s has such fierce public debate ensued .

Headlines in the press read "Scrap Curriculum 2005" (*Mail & Guardian* 2 June to 8 June 2000), "Nice policy, shame about the capacity" (*Sunday Times*, 4 June 2000), "Myopic gambling with the future of education" (*Mail & Guardian*, 28 February to 6 March 2003). Jansen's article (1999b) "Why outcomes-based education will fail: an elaboration" outlines ten reasons why OBE will impact negatively on South African education. One of Jansen's main criticisms is that OBE is not suited to the realities of the South African classroom:

> OBE is destined to fail in the South African education system because it is based on flawed assumptions about what happens inside schools, how classrooms are organised and what kinds of teachers exist within the system (Jansen, 1999b:149).

Young (2001) argues in the same vein. According to him the very reasons for which the model is considered suitable – providing the means to achieve equity and redress – mitigates against it working because the unequal education of the past has created a classroom reality in which schools are under-resourced and teachers are under-qualified, therefore lacking the capacity to implement outcomes-based education. He believes OBE cannot work in South Africa because the authoritarian, prescriptive education and training received by the majority of educators, along with the bureaucratic syllabus-driven system of the apartheid era within which they had worked, had not encouraged educators to think creatively – an essential element of an OBE curriculum.

Critics believe that OBE will lead to the already privileged being even more privileged and that the gap between the privileged and the under-privileged will become even wider. *The Sunday Times* of 4 June 2000, two years into implementation of OBE, states:

> The lesson of *Curriculum 2005* is that the bureaucracy involved and the teaching infrastructure are poorly prepared to deliver education to the poorest of the poor. Of course, the rich of all races have enjoyed the benefits of the new curriculum in the well-resourced and well-financed schools of the former white suburbs. It is, ironically, the schools serving the poor which have failed (*Sunday Times,* 4 June 2000).

Inherent in this concern is the recognition that OBE is in fact a good approach, but the belief is that this is true only in ideal, first-world circumstances where schools have good material resources, resourceful teachers and in which learners benefit from a home environment which fosters and supports learning.

Detractors of OBE are fearful that the OBE approach, with its aim of allowing success for all learners, will lead to a lowering of standards, irrespective of the context of learning. Lowering of the standards of the curriculum is considered as

detrimental to more advanced or more able learners as it limits the challenges that could be offered to them. Critics argue that in its desire to assure success for all learners, and because of the stress on co-operative work, OBE forces those who are more advanced to slow down and help the slower, less motivated learners, thus compromising their own progress.

These criticisms have not only been levelled at OBE in South Africa. Spady, Marshall and Rogers (cited in Battistini & Smith, 1995) have responded cogently to these concerns. They note that the principles of clarity of focus, designing down, high expectations and expanded opportunity which are the four principles on which OBE systems are built (see above), do not allow for low standards. Furthermore, they argue, instructional delivery and strategies vary; all learners do not do the same thing at the same time and in the same time. Thus flexibility is a key characteristic allowing precisely for varying abilities. Faster learners are not compelled to wait for slower learners and can be challenged irrespective of the level of their peers. Learning in an OBE classroom is learner-centred and varied. It is in the traditional classroom that the rate of learning is determined by the average learner and the pace is set by the teacher – a pace which all learners, irrespective of their ability, have to follow.

Finally, Spady, Marshal and Rogers (cited in Battistini & Smith, 1995) note that in their criticism critics assume that success and standards are opposites, that success is only possible if standards are lowered. They counter that OBE is guided by what has been called the "criterion-based elevator" which guards precisely against the lowering of standards. Spady *et al* explain:

> The relationship between standards and success would have to follow a pattern similar to that of a teeter-totter, which is apparently what the critics assume. That metaphor dictates that standards and success are direct opposites and that success is gained at the expense of standards, and vice-versa. If that were true, and it is not, the only way to increase one would be to decrease the other – which is exactly the opposite of what OBE strives to achieve. Instead of the teeter-totter, OBE implementation is guide by the metaphor of a criterion based elevator that is powered by the four Principles. The elevator is used to raise the levels of achievement, learning, challenge, and success for all students without

> impeding the progress of either faster or slower students. [...] This is routinely accomplished without the successes of some negatively affecting the successes of others because the standards toward which they are working are not comparatively or competitively defined (cited in Battistini & Smith, 1995:17).

All students in the OBE classroom can progress without negatively affecting the successes of others because the Assessment Standards toward which they are working are not defined comparatively. Competition is not a dominant feature of the OBE classroom as it is in traditional teaching. Furthermore, one of the fundamental tenets of OBE is that in the active learning OBE classroom, learners are not expected or required to do the same activity at the same level at the same time. Moreover, sound OBE implementation does not require that team-work implies constant tutoring of slower learners by faster learners. The OBE dynamic is to expect all learners to mix and to give each the opportunity of achieving the same high level skills as the highest achievers in the class.[5]

Not all reaction to OBE has been negative however. In the *Mercury* of 12 June 2000 a letter to the Editor entitled "Outcomes Education alive and well" a principal of a school writes:

> It is with great regret that I read press reports stating that *Curriculum 2005* [sic] is "on its way out", that it was a "spectacular and costly failure". [...] As a dedicated educationist [...] (who has) applied what is essentially an excellent model, I feel despair that the demise of *Curriculum 2005* [sic] can be so triumphantly heralded by the media (*Mercury*, 12 June 2000).

The same writer cites Clem Sunter, South African guru of socio-economic predictions, as having "great hope for the future of education and South Africa in applying an outcomes-based model in our schools".

Visiting British teachers on a visit to explore South Africa's education system and observe progress made in the implementation of OBE were "positive that it [would] produce well grounded individuals who [would] contribute effectively in the country's economy" (*Mercury*, 31 October 2002).

My personal view is that South African education as practised prior to the implementation of the new curriculum was in dire need of transformation. The old education system produced a school-leaving population which in the main was passive, unquestioning and lacking in initiative. It also promoted the insular, limited and limiting views of human differences that mirrored the politics of the government in power.

Learner-centred, outcomes-based and built on the principles of multiculturalism, OBE can only improve education in South Africa. A traditional education system disadvantages learners: they grow up miseducated about diversity, only vaguely aware of their limited, parochial, blinkered view of the world, have little sense of their own culture as South Africans, are non-reflective, are not prepared by school for lifelong learning and, finally, grow up with a sense of entitlement or a lack thereof.

4.8 Conclusion

OBE, in putting learners at the centre of the learning experience with others, allows for the fostering of a sense of responsibility in learners for their own learning. In putting the focus of learning on learners, learners are encouraged to take the initiative, to become questioning, reflective. Furthermore, OBE allows for individual differences, a diversity of views and for different ways of living and seeing the world to exist side by side and to be recognised as equally valid and valuable. OBE as an educational approach and a management system can, in the long run, only improve South African education.

Endnotes

[1]This move towards CBE in the USA was reflected in Britain during the same period. Hyland (1994). notes that in Britain during the 1970s, there was a call to make education relevant to the workplace, to add in a practical element which would make education relevant to the real world. There was a need for education to aid Britain's ailing economy. The transition to a competency-based model is evident in government white papers throughout the 1980s. The NCVQ was set up in 1989; the aim was to "establish a National Vocational Qualification framework which is

comprehensible and comprehensive and facilitates access, progression and continued learning." It states that it will only accredit qualifications "which meet employment needs."

[2] The first published use of the term was in Spady's 1982 article "Outcome-Based Instructional Management: Its sociological Implication". Prior to that, Spady's published work was on competency-based education.

[3] The ideas of Paulo Freire resonated with and profoundly influenced the South African People's Education movement. Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1972) played a key role in educational thinking within the liberation movement in South Africa.

[4] This may also be true of varieties of, for example, English in which the cultural differences of Australia, America, South Africa, and Britain need to be taken into account if one is to express oneself appropriately in the language. This also holds for the French spoken in Paris as opposed to that in the provinces or of other French-speaking countries.

[5] The criticisms of the Review Committee appointed by the then Minister of Education Professor Kader Asmal have been reviewed in Chapter 3 as they concern criticisms of the Curriculum and not of OBE as such. In fact, as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the Review Committee was expressly instructed that the outcomes-based principles were not under review.

CHAPTER 5

FRENCH AND THE *NATIONAL CURRICULUM STATEMENT:* THE CHALLENGE OF DIVERSITY

5.1 Introduction

One of the primary aims of public education, along with the transmission of knowledge and the development of intellectual abilities, is the promotion of the values necessary for personal growth and for nation-building. The values a nation chooses to promote are dependant on the social context. The present educational policies of South Africa were formulated in the years preceding and immediately following 1994, the year democracy was instituted for the first time after decades of apartheid and centuries of some form or other of racial rule which denied the humanity of the majority of the population. The *National Curriculum Statement* (NCS)[1] was therefore devised against the background of the need to create a democratic society, heal the divisions of the past and foster unity in diversity. It is within the context of cultural diversity and the need to promote tolerance and openness that the NCS committed itself to promoting multilingualism.

In this chapter I will show that the vision of multilingualism as it is expressed in the NCS is selective and that the status of foreign languages is very minor. The NCS is centred on that which is South African and I believe does not adequately prepare learners for the post-modern realities of a nation composed not only of a heterogeneous population of South Africans, but also a growing number of foreign immigrants. Ten years into democracy, diversity no longer merely refers to the different races, ethnic groups, cultures and languages which are South African. The parameters

of diversity are changing as the population is being made up increasingly of people coming from other countries and continents. Education must open learners to the Other which is not only a South African of a different cultural group, but those from other countries. I will argue that this discovery of the Other and of Otherness can best be made through the learning of foreign languages.

5.2 A limited multilingualism

5.2.1 The status of languages in the NCS

At the outset, and throughout the NCS there is a clear and unmitigated policy commitment to multilingualism. "(M)aking multilingualism happen" (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Overview*, 2002:7) is cited as one of the strategies that finds expression in the curriculum and the policy statement regarding the number of languages to be learnt is clear:

> In a multilingual country like South Africa it is important that learners reach high levels of proficiency in at least two languages, and that they are able to communicate in other languages (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Overview,* 2002:20).

This commitment is to be seen within the paradigm of multiculturalism and the promotion of cultural diversity as defined in the Department of National Education Language in Education Policy in terms of Section 3(4)(m) of the National Education Policy Act of 1996 (Act 27 of 1996):

> In terms of the new *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, the government, and thus the Department of Education, recognises that our cultural diversity is a valuable national asset and hence is tasked, amongst other things, to promote multilingualism, the development of the official languages, and respect for all languages used in the country, including South African Sign Language and the languages referred to in the South African Constitution (*Language in Education Policy*, 1997:1).

The Language in Education Policy also supports and promotes the teaching and learning of all languages used by communities in South

Africa, including those important for international trade and communication.

> The main aims of the Ministry of Education's policy for language in education are:
> [...]
> 3. to promote and develop all the official languages;
>
> 4. to support the teaching and learning of all other languages required by learners or used by communities in South Africa, including languages used for religious purposes, languages which are important for international trade and communication (*Language in Education Policy,* 1997:2).

Policy is therefore strongly in favour of a broad multilingualism which includes official and foreign languages. This policy commitment to multilingualism is expressed in the National Curriculum through its stated support of the eleven official languages: Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu, Sesotho, Sesotho sa Leboa (Sepedi), Setswana, Siswati, Tshivenda and Xitsonga; of the heritage languages approved by PANSALB;[2] and of Sign Language and Augmentative and Alternative Communication. The Languages Learning Area of the NCS includes:

> - all the eleven official languages: Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu, Sesotho, Sesotho sa Leboa (Sepedi), Setswana, Siswati, Tshivenda and Xitsonga; and
>
> - languages approved by the Pan South African Language Board (PANSALB) and the South African Certification Authority (SAFCERT) such as Braille and South African Sign Language (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Languages,* 2002:4).

The multilingual language policy is therefore clear: the nation through the Constitution, and the State through the Department of Education, commit themselves to the promotion of multilingualism. There is, however, a mismatch between the policy and the implementation strategy, in both the General Education and Training Band (GET) (Grades R-9) and in the Further Education and Training Band (FET) (Grades 10-12) curricula.

Firstly, the NCS Grades R-9 does not stipulate clearly how, and to what extent, policy is to be put into practice. The implementation of policies is left to school governing bodies:

> [The Department of Education's language-in-education] policy gives School Governing Bodies the responsibility of selecting school language policies that are appropriate for their circumstances and in line with the policy of additive multilingualism. The Languages Learning Area Statement provides a curriculum that is supportive of whatever decision a school makes (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Languages*, 2002:4).

In addition to this *laissez-faire* attitude to implementation, the NCS GET curriculum is confusing with regard to descriptors and is vague in its requirements. This lack of clarity is particularly evident in the *Overview* to the GET where the Languages Learning Area is first introduced. The very first statement with regards to policy and requirements notes the importance of reaching "high levels of proficiency in **at least two** languages" and, of learners being able "to communicate **in other** languages" (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Overview*, 2002:20, my emphasis). Despite this reference to "other languages", the phrase "other" languages is never explained nor are "other" languages mentioned again in the *Overview*. The only reference to what could constitute an "other" language is the reference to the Second Additional Language. However, this reference is made only in relation to official languages:

> The Languages Learning Area Statement covers all official languages as:
>
> - Home Languages
> - First Additional Languages
> - Second Additional Languages (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Overview*, 2002:20).

There is no mention of languages which are not official languages. Adding even further to the confusion is the definition of the policy of additive multilingualism which refers only to two languages, both of which are official languages.

> 1. All learners learn their home language and **at least** one additional official language.
>
> 2. Learners become competent in their additional language, while their home language is maintained and developed (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Overview,* 2002:20, my emphasis).

The vague "at least" in the first point is not explained nor amplified, and there is no clarity as to what the role, function or place of the second additional language may be, while no mention is made at all of "other", non-official languages.

Table 5.1: Additive multilingualism

	Home Language Official Language	1st Additional Language Official African (for min. of 3 years) or non-African Language	2nd Additional Language** Official African (for min. of 3 years) or non-African language, or Foreign Language Not compulsory
R ↦	Start Home Language		
↕			
Grade 1 ↦	Continue Home Language	Add 1st Additional Language	
↕			
↕			
Grade 9 ↦	Continue Home Language as LOLT* Switch to 1st Additional Language as LOLT	Drop 1st Additional Language Continue 1st Additional Language as LOLT Continue 1st Additional Language	

*LOLT=Language of Learning and Teaching
**There is no clarity as to when the teaching and learning of the 2nd additional language is to commence.

This imprecision is rectified to some extent in the Languages Learning Area statement which develops the description given in the *Overview*. The introduction to the Learning Area expands the above-quoted definition of additive multilingualism by adding a third point to the above two and by prescribing that a Second Additional Language be learnt.

> 3. All learners learn an African language for a minimum of three years by the end of the General Education and Training Band. In **some circumstances**, it may be learned as a second additional language (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Languages,* 2002:4, my emphasis).

However, this third point gives rise to further questions. Although it effectively allows learners the possibility of learning a third language, the Second Additional Language, the problem is that it is unclear why this might be a Second Additional Language only in "some circumstances". Furthermore, this third language, is obligatorily an African language for a minimum of three years. No mention is made of whether the African language could be learnt as a First Additional language or what the status is of non-official, or foreign languages.

At this point in the Languages Learning Area statement, there is in fact no direction given regarding the place of foreign languages. It is only in the description of the categorisation of languages as Home Language, First Additional Languages and Second Additional Languages that the concept of a foreign language is introduced, but then only by the way.

> The second additional language is intended for learners who wish to learn three languages. The third language may be an official language or a foreign language (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Languages,* 2002:4).

This categorisation of languages into Home Languages, First Additional Languages and Second Additional Languages attempts to define the

status of the language for the learner and determines the purpose for which the language is learnt. The categorisation also has implications for the manner in which the languages are approached by learners and teachers, and for the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards. A Home Language is an official language which a learner understands and speaks when first coming to school; the First Additional Language is an official language a learner may not know on entering school, while the Second Additional Language is "intended for learners wishing to learn three languages" (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Languages* 2002:4). This third language may be an official or a foreign language.

The minor status of "other languages", and in particular foreign languages, is evident, too, in that there is no learning area statement dedicated to them. For each of the eleven official languages there are three different learning area statements, one for each category. For example there is a learning area statement for Siswati-Home Language, Siswati-First Additional Language, and Siswati-Second Additional Language, and so on, for all the other ten official languages. Yet, foreign languages, although supported by the NCS, and which can be taught and learnt as Second Additional Languages, do not have a learning area statement dedicated to them. There are, therefore, no Learning Outcomes specific to French as a Second Additional Language nor Assessment Standards. A school governing body wishing to offer its learners French as a subject at school, finds no guidance in any of the NCS documents as to the modalities of implementation of foreign language teaching. Furthermore, this lack of information gives educators of those languages a sense of exclusion.

The basic requirements for the implementation of the multilingual language-in-education policy, spelt out in the NCS GET band curriculum are, therefore, incomplete. The multilingualism it defines is also limited.

The three-part definition (quoted above) of, and implementation requirements for additive multilingualism rest in fact on two imperatives: the recognition of the value of the home language which is an official language, and the early, sustained teaching and learning of another official language, which for a minimum of three years, has to be an indigenous African language. The emphasis is consequently on two official languages. The learning of a third language, the Second Additional Language, is not required and plays a minor role, while foreign languages, as shown above, have virtually no status whatsoever.

The emphasis on a home language[3] is a recognition of the cognitive benefits of learning through the home language and is to be lauded. The principle of mother tongue instruction has strong pedagogical foundations.[4] Moreover, this policy of home language instruction is in line with the Constitution which provides for the promotion and creation of conditions for the development and use of all official languages and provides for every person to have the right to study in their own language.

The introduction of another official language, the First Additional language, right from Grade 1, and continued until Grade 9, effectively means that learners are immersed in bilingual education at a very early age. This requirement has cognitive and emotional benefits which are well documented and are referred to specifically in the Language in Education Policy document:

> [...] drawing on comparative international experience [it has been demonstrated that], under appropriate conditions, most learners benefit cognitively and emotionally from the type of structured bilingual education found in dual-medium (also known as two-way immersion) programmes (*Language in Education Policy*, 1997:2).

However, this policy of bilingualism only partially realises the goal of promoting multilingualism. In reality, the first additional language, for the

vast majority of all those learners who are not mother tongue speakers of English, is more than likely to be English because School Governing Bodies believe it is the best choice if upliftment is to be achieved.

According to the latest available census statistics (2001), the most-spoken language in South Africa is isiZulu, with 23.8% of the population speaking isiZulu as the home language.[5] Merely 8.2% of the population are English mother tongue speakers. The number of mother tongue English speakers is decreasing due to emigration and in the 25-34 age group only about 7% speak English (*Independent on Saturday*, 19 October 2002).

Despite the above facts and although all eleven official languages have equal status according to the Constitution, English is in effect the *lingua franca* of the country and the *de facto* language of state, politics, justice, broadcasting.[6] Furthermore, and more significantly with regard to education, English is perceived as the language of prestige, of power, and of financial and professional success. As Minister Phumzile Mlambo-Ncguka said at the launch of the Advancing Multilingualism in a Democratic South Africa conference in Durban in April 2004, there is a perception of a "lack of, or poor economic value attached to [...] indigenous languages" (*Daily News*, 1 April 2004).

The LANGTAG[7] language-in-education policy (1996:124) states that the learner's home language should be used as the language of learning and teaching (LOLT) and the goal of language-in-education policy is, *inter alia*, to "promote the use of students' primary languages as languages of learning and teaching" (*Towards a National Language Plan for South Africa*, 1996:124). The reality in schools, however, is that learners, and the care-givers who support them, want to be proficient in English, and choose English as the LOLT. Consequently, the first additional language for the vast majority of non-English speakers, is English.

According to Professor Vivian de Klerk of Rhodes University's Department of Linguistics, "English is fast overtaking indigenous languages as parents send their children to English-speaking schools at the expense of the indigenous languages" *(Daily News*, 1 April 2004). Professor Lydia McDermott of the Multilingual Studies Programme at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, notes that in most schools in northern KwaZulu-Natal, where she trains teachers, the LOLT is, in practice, a mixture of English and Zulu, with learners writing the Grade 12 exam in English, a language they do not understand well and in which they have not learnt to conceptualise or formulate ideas (discussion with Professor Lydia McDermott, 21 May 2004).

So while the goal of policy is to promote multilingualism, and to encourage the acquisition of at least two South African languages, the loose requirements make for a situation where learners acquire one other official language apart from the home language, and for the majority, this first additional language is English. In this way, learning English is therefore not strictly promoting multilingualism, it is in fact reinforcing the hegemony of English and undermining the value of other languages. Today, the perception is that not being proficient in English will limit success in the workplace. However, learning in a language which is not the home language is cognitively indefensible.

With regard to the Second Additional Language, the requirement that all learners learn an African language for a minimum of three years is aimed at increasing learners' knowledge of South African languages, and goes some way to opening the lines of communication and understanding between fellow citizens who have been separated for decades. However, as discussed above, learning a language for a mere three years with little

time-table time allocated to it in schools cannot afford any real proficiency of use.

With regard to the stated role and function of languages in general and foreign languages in particular, the Languages Learning Area statement in the GET band curriculum statement supports the NCS policy commitment to multilingualism by making a clear and convincing case regarding the importance of language and languages. The intrinsic value of language learning is recognised as the means through which human beings shape their identity and knowledge of the world:

> Languages are central to our lives. We communicate and understand our world through language. Language thus shapes our identity and knowledge (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Languages*, 2002:5).

The statement goes on to present language as unique amongst all the eight learning areas as the means through which all other learning and teaching takes place. The uniqueness of languages as an integrative tool and as contributing to the curriculum is acknowledged in the following manner:

- It develops reading and writing, the foundation for other important literacies.
- It is the medium for much of the other learning in the curriculum, such as Mathematics and the Social Sciences.
- It encourages intercultural understanding, access to other views, and a critical understanding of the concept of culture.
- It stimulates imaginative and creative activity, and thus promotes the goals of arts and culture.
- It provides a way of communicating information, and promotes many of the goals of science, technology and environmental education.
- It develops the critical tools necessary to become responsible citizens (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Languages*, 2002:5-6).

The privileged position of languages is clear from its ranking position in the list of learning areas. The Languages Learning Area is one of the eight learning areas[8] and holds a honoured position in the NCS GET band curriculum. This importance is evident first in the nomenclature of the learning areas. "Languages" is systematically and repeatedly in all documentation the first on the list of the eight learning areas. This representational significance is then given credence in the statements regarding the role of language.

> Languages serve a variety of purposes, which are reflected in the Languages Learning Area Statement. These are:
>
> - Personal – to sustain, develop and transform identities; to sustain relationships in family and community; and for personal growth and pleasure.
> - Communicative – to communicate appropriately and effectively in a variety of social contexts.
> - Educational – to develop tools for thinking and reasoning, and to provide access to information.
> - Aesthetic – to create, interpret and play imaginatively with oral, visual and written texts.
> - Cultural – to understand and appreciate languages and cultures, and the heritage they carry.
> - Political – to assert oneself and challenge others; to persuade others of a particular point of view; to position oneself and others; and to sustain, develop and transform identities.
> - Critical – to understand the relationships between language, power and identity, and to challenge uses of these where necessary; to understand the dynamic nature of culture; and to resist persuasion and positioning where necessary (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Languages*, 2002:5).

However, the learning area statement falls short in its description of the purpose of learning a Second Additional Language, particularly when this Second Additional Language is a foreign language. According to the NCS, the learning of a Second Additional Language has a practical purpose only; the aim is for the learner to be able to communicate with speakers of the language:

> The purpose of learning a second additional language is to be able to interact effectively with other South Africans. Part of being a good South African citizen is being multilingual (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Languages,* 2002:9).

In the case of a Second Additional Language which is a foreign language, over and above its function as a tool for communication, the added purpose is that the foreign language could prepare learners for a particular profession:

> Learners may also study a foreign language such as French [...] as their second additional language. This will enable them to communicate with people from other parts of Africa and the world. It can prepare them to work in tourism (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Languages*, 2002:9).

Taken at face value, this type of argument regarding communicative competence and the "usefulness" of Second Additional Languages as a tool for general communication and for the workplace is compelling, and it has often been used by supporters of foreign languages. For the general public, and particularly today when jobs are at a premium, the "relevance" of a subject in practical terms is very important. However, consideration of the realities of the classroom experience reveal that the stated aim "to prepare for the world of work" is not attainable even in the most ideal of circumstances.

First of all, too little time is allocated on the timetable to Second Additional Language learning for any kind of real communicative proficiency to be attained beyond greetings, talking about the weather and the ability to comprehend, more or less, an article in a newspaper designed specifically for foreign language learners. Of the thirty-five hours formal teaching time per week, 25% is allocated to languages, that is 8.5 hours per week for all languages. This is divided amongst the two or perhaps three languages learnt, one of which is the LOLT, which could be an additional language,

rather than a home language, and therefore needing special attention. Consequently, few learners complete Grade 9 with the foreign language skills required to prepare them to work competently using that language in a profession.[9]

Thus to claim that the purpose of learning a foreign language is to enable learners to communicate in that language in their personal and professional lives is, at best, misleading and in the context of a pluralistically cultural society such as the one in South Africa, short-sighted. To state simply that the purpose of learning a Second Additional Language is for general communication and employment only confuses practical use with educational intent. The value of learning a Second Additional Language, and particularly one which is not a South African language, goes beyond its practical usefulness.

5.2.2 A limited multilingualism: NCS FET band

The Draft NCS for the FET band continues to afford languages a privileged position. In the six clustered fields of learning[10] Languages, now called Communication and Language Studies, are in first position in the list and language is defined in an all-encompassing manner:

> Language is a tool for thought and communication. It is through language that diversity and social relations are expressed and constructed. Learning to use language effectively enables learners to think and acquire knowledge, to express their identity, feelings and ideas, to interact with others and to manage their world (*Draft National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12: Overview,* 2002:50).

Furthermore, the purpose of language learning is defined in broad, holistic terms which is not the case in the GET band curriculum. The purpose of language learning in these higher grades falls essentially under two desired outcomes – the fostering of cross-cultural communication and tolerance:

> In view of the linguistic and cultural diversity of South Africa, its citizens must be able to communicate across language barriers and foster cultural and linguistic tolerance and understanding (*Draft National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12: Overview,* 2002:51).

and the preparation of learners for global communication:

> The language curriculum will prepare learners for the challenges they will face as South Africans and members of the global community (*Draft National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12: Overview,* 2002:51).

A major difference between the GET band curriculum and the FET band curriculum is that in the FET band curriculum Home and First Additional Languages are grouped together in one learning field while Second Additional Languages are in another learning field. In the GET band curriculum, all three categories of language are grouped under the Learning Area Languages. In the FET curriculum, Home and First Additional Languages are part of the Communication and Language Studies learning field while Second Additional Languages are in the learning field Human and Social Studies and Second Additional Languages. This division effectively eliminates the lack of clarity characteristic of the GET curriculum with regard to the position of Second Additional Languages and allows for differentiation in the rules of combination.

The rules of combination state that to obtain a Further Education and Training Certificate (FETC), a candidate must offer the following components:

1. A Fundamental Learning component comprising
   a) Two languages, one being a Home Language and the other one being at Home or First Additional Level, provided that one of the two languages is the language of learning and teaching.
   b) Mathematics or Mathematical Literacy.
   c) Life Orientation.

2. A Core Learning Component comprising at least two subjects selected from one of the learning fields.

3. An Elective Learning Component comprising at least one subject selected from any learning field (*Draft National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12: Overview,* 2002:17).

The range of language options offered in the FET curriculum is therefore less confining than in the GET curriculum: in the FET band learners are obliged to learn two languages and may opt to learn two further languages as their core component and yet another language in the elective learning component:

> Learners will be obliged to include at least two languages as fundamental and further languages may be taken as core and /or electives (*Draft National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12: Overview,* 2002:51).

These rules of combination effectively, in theory, allow learners to choose to learn five languages. This is indeed multilingualism in practice, however, as in the GET band, it is limited in that foreign languages are given a minor role. While Home and First Additional Languages may be chosen as fundamental components, and Second Additional Languages which are official languages may be taken as core or elective components, Second Additional languages which are foreign languages may only be chosen as electives.

5.2.3 The status of foreign languages

With regards to the range of languages offered, the FET curriculum is ambiguous and inconclusive. In the Languages Learning Area statement under the heading "Scope", it is stated that learners are provided the opportunity of learning "other" languages:

> Language learning in grades 10-12 includes all the official languages [...], and can be extended to other languages endorsed by the Pan South African Language Board (PANSALB) (*Draft National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12: Languages,* 2002:52).

However, in the list of subject options available, there is provision only for the eleven official languages and no foreign languages are listed. The status of foreign languages in the FET curriculum is consequently obscure. This ambiguity and lack of clarity is due to the fact that at the time of drafting, a final decision had not yet been taken as to whether the eighteen foreign languages presently being offered as subjects for the Senior Certificate,[11] were to be included in the bouquet of subjects offered for the FETC. The future of foreign languages as per the FET curriculum remains uncertain as it remains under review:

> With regard to foreign languages, the existing 18 foreign languages will remain in *Report 550 (2001/08)*[12] for the interim period, until their status is determined otherwise (*Draft National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12: Qualifications and Assessment Policy Framework,* 2002:26).

The status of French and other foreign languages is therefore unknown and the subjects are threatened as they could be discontinued in the FET band. The draft curriculum, in reporting on the status of foreign languages states the following:

> With regard to foreign languages being included in the NCS, the following criteria will be used:
>
> a) Section 6(5) of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996)* states that all languages commonly used by communities in South Africa, including foreign languages, should be promoted.
>
> b) Section 4.3.4 of the *Language in Education Policy, 1997,* declares an intention to support and promote the teaching and learning of all other languages required by learners or used by communities in South Africa, including languages used for religious purposes, languages that are important for international trade and communication, and South African Sign Language, as well as Alternative Communication.
>
> c) The *Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9 (Schools)* states that a Second Additional Language is intended for learners who wish to learn three languages. The Second Additional Language may be an official language or a foreign or classical language.

d) Article 3(f) of the *Protocol on Education and Training in the South African Development Community (SADC)* stipulates that member countries should work towards the reduction and eventual elimination of constraints to better and freer access, by citizens of member states, to good-quality [*sic*] education and training opportunities within the region. Foreign languages involved here include French, German and Portuguese.

e) The Senior Certificate enrolment figures for foreign languages for the period from 1996-2001. Twelve (12) of the eighteen (18) foreign languages have had enrolment figures of less than twenty (20) candidates in the Senior Certificate over the last six years (*Draft National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12: Qualifications and Assessment Policy Framework,* 2002:26).

The possible exclusion of foreign languages from the bouquet of subjects offered in the NCS brings to the fore the previously stated contention that while policy is firmly committed to multilingualism, there is no real implementation strategy to "make multilingualism happen". The NCS does not translate policy into action in a significant manner. While in the GET band curriculum statement a very minor place is given to foreign languages, in the draft FET band curriculum their status is under review and they may be excluded completely.

5.3 The value of learning a foreign language

5.3.1 Overview

As asserted earlier, the value of learning languages other than official languages goes beyond practical usefulness. Firstly, learning a foreign language has an educational worth which is pertinent in any geographical or social context in that it provides an opportunity for personal growth. Secondly, learning languages other than our own has implications for the shaping of values which are vital in a pluralistic cultural context such as South Africa.

At the most basic level, learning foreign languages is an experience which leads to personal growth. It is "broadening". Expressing and negotiating meaning in a language which is foreign conjures up questions and critical

appraisals of both the familiar and the unfamiliar, thereby leading to a better knowledge of self, of others, and to an awareness of one's place in the greater scheme of things. Learning the language of an Other, on the one hand, widens the context of one's own life, geographically, intellectually and emotionally, and on the other, leads individuals to see themselves as one part of the larger whole the parts of which are linked and interlinked.

This broadened view of the world is one of the fundamental aims of education. Much has been written about what it means to be an educated person. Jarvis (1980) argues that what characterises an uneducated person is a limited world view, one with little sense of being part of a wider context, of being part of a community of humankind. He goes on to say that for the "uneducated" person, life is limited to the immediate surroundings and there is little curiosity about what is not known and little tolerance of that which is unfamiliar. The educated person, he argues, has a broad view of the world, is responsive to the multiplicity of ways of seeing, perceives phenomena as complex, and is aware of the interrelated nature of all things.

While acquiring another language, learners embark on the road of becoming informed human beings, and along the way learn about other human beings, their similarities and their differences. They learn to understand themselves and others. Education is about personal growth and the development of the community. Foreign language learning fosters this growth and development through learning about different peoples and cultures.

At a deeper level, the study of languages serves to help us understand that which we as humans have in common. Language is an expression of our essential humaness, that is, what we share as human beings and

makes us distinct from other forms of life. Different languages express the diversity of human action, of how socially, culturally and politically humankind interacts in diverse ways with the physical and metaphysical worlds. Learning languages, and particularly languages which are foreign to the cultures of the country we live in, is a valuable means to enable individuals to reflect on humankind, on difference, to learn to be tolerant of these differences, and more importantly, to understand them:

> In studying languages other than our own, we are seeking to understand (and, indeed, in at least a weak sense, to become) the Other - we are, in short, attempting to enter into realities that have, to some degree, been constructed by others and in which many of the fundamental assumptions about the nature of knowledge and society may be different from our own (Reagan & Osborn, 2002:13).

But learning a foreign language also helps us understand the diversity that underlies, not only our languages, but also our way of constructing and organising knowledge and the many different, equally valid, realities in which we live and interact.

In the context of a pluralistic society this last benefit is perhaps the most important argument in favour of learning a foreign language. In order to speak another language competently, one is required not only to learn about the other, one is also required to restructure one's view of reality, and learn to see the world differently.

According to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (Lyons, 1990) there is a correlation between language and perception. Although the debate regarding linguistic determinism is no longer as intensely discussed as it was thirty years ago and even though the more extreme hypothesis has fallen into disrepute, most linguists, psychologists, and philosophers would accept that language has a certain influence on perception and thought. Speakers of different languages may have the same conceptual framework as far as deep philosophical concepts of space and time are

concerned, however, with regard to other less basic concepts the world-views of different language speakers are different. Many of the concepts with which we operate are culture-bound. For example, the concepts of *orgueil* (honour), *patrie* (fatherland), or *honneur* (honour), or even *cuisine* (cooking) depend for their understanding upon socially transmitted knowledge and can't be simply described, but need to be explained within the context of specific social practices. Another oft-used example of culturally determined meaning is that of the pronouns of address. How to use *tu* (you, in informal address) and *vous* (you, in formal address) in French is a matter of socially acquired knowledge. It falls into the category of social know-how.

Learning the language of the Other requires knowledge of the patterns of living, acting, reacting, seeing and explaining the world of the target country. Knowledge of a foreign language encompasses much more than a passing acquaintance with the grammatical system of the language.

This aspect of foreign language learning is what makes it distinct from any other discipline:

> Languages are unlike any other subject taught in a classroom in that they involve the acquisition of skills and behaviour patterns which are characteristic of another community (Gardner,1985 cited in Reagan & Osborn, 2002:64).

Communicating successfully in a foreign language entails expressing a culture, a world-view which might be distinct from that of the learner's. To speak French appropriately requires that learners assimilate and/or identify with French behaviour and establish a personal profile which functions appropriately in French communication events. Establishing such an identity in the target language requires the speaker to undergo a process of transformation in which a new culturally competent identity comes into being.

Foreign language acquisition, therefore, is the result of a fusion between the learner and that to-be-learned; the two cannot be separated. Foreign language acquisition entails an understanding, and a "becoming" to some extent like the Other. In "becoming" like the Other, one identifies with ways of being and of seeing the world, one understands differences. In this way, foreign language learning goes a long way towards promoting the values of tolerance and openness and preparing learners to live in a pluralistic society.[13]

5.3.2 The value of foreign languages in South Africa

This brings me to the other function of learning languages other than one's own national languages, that of developing in learners values which exemplify the moral aspirations of the South African nation as laid down in the Constitution. The Working Group on Values, Education and Democracy, formed by the then Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, states in the introduction to its report that:

> [...] public education is one of the major vehicles by which the values of a people are acquired by the children and young adults who make up our schools' population (*Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy,* 2000:2).

The Constitution expresses the values and moral aspirations of the nation and Gevisser and Morris (2002:191) have identified therein ten fundamental values which have relevance for education: democracy, social justice and equity, equality, non-racism and non-sexism, an open society, accountability, the rule of law, respect, reconciliation, and *ubuntu*. It is this latter concept of *ubuntu* which is of particular relevance in the context of learning foreign languages as it is a concept the meaning of which dovetails admirably with the above discussion regarding the personal growth capacity of foreign language learning. The fostering of the

spirit of *ubuntu* is inextricably linked to the educating role of foreign language learning.

The concept of *ubuntu* defies a word for word translation as it encompasses a complex, rich web of meanings. In Asmal and Wilmot's *Spirit of the Nation: Reflections on South Africa's Educational Ethos* (2002), the concept comes up as the subject of discussion on numerous occasions, and definitions are varied. Battersby (2002:30) talks of *ubuntu* as an ethos of tolerance and generosity of spirit. Porteous (2002:228) argues that while the *Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy* places *ubuntu* within the broad framework of tolerance, her research in schools shows that learners, parents and teachers place the concept more in the realm of humanity, kindness and compassion. Gevisser & Morris (2002:193) confirm this interpretation; they note that *ubuntu* is an ethos deriving from African mores which means "I am human because you are human". O'Regan (2002:165) also stresses the humanity aspect by understanding the concept to mean: "human beings are human beings because of other human beings". Indeed, at the centre of *ubuntu* is the idea, expressed in isiZulu, that *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu,* which Shutte (2001:3) has translated as "persons depend on persons to be persons". This expression sums up the ethic of *ubuntu* which is based on the ethic of communalism, collectivity and solidarity:

> The idea of community is the heart of traditional African thinking about humanity. It is summed up in the expression *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* [...]. This means that a person depends on personal relations with others to exercise, develop and fulfil those capacities that make one a person. At the beginning of one's life one is only potentially a person. One's life, if all goes well, is a continual becoming more of a person through one's interactions with others. Personhood comes as a gift from other persons (Shutte, 2001:12).

These various definitions have one compelling understanding in common: *ubuntu* encapsulates what it means to be human and, in existentialist terms, expresses the belief that for the self to realise its essence as a

human, it needs to interact with others. Furthermore, its actions towards the Other need to consider the humanness of the Other. Actions must therefore be humane, expressing tolerance, generosity of spirit, compassion:[14]

> [...] ubuntu [...] embodies the concept of mutual understanding and the active appreciation of the value of human difference. It requires you to know others if you are to know yourself, and if you are to understand your place – and others' – within a multicultural environment (Gevisser & Morris, 2002:193).

Ubuntu therefore has a particular relevance in a society, like the South African one, made up of different ethnic, racial, cultural and linguistic groups. *Ubuntu* also resonates strikingly with the above definition of what it means to be educated and the contribution that learning languages other than one's own brings to the process of personal growth. Learning the languages of the Other fosters the spirit of *ubuntu* in that learning about the Other, their ways of being, living and thinking, entails understanding the diversity of human action and how different cultures interact in different ways with the world. Learning the languages of the Other entails interacting with others in communication situations. It enables individuals to reflect on differences; it entails "becoming" the Other and this leads to a sense of solidarity and community. Arguably, the more the Other is "foreign", the greater the effort involved to bridge the gap between self and Other. This greater effort leads to greater possibilities of personal growth and greater fostering of the spirit of *ubuntu.*

South Africa is made up of diverse South African cultures and "unity in diversity", South Africa's national motto, needs to be encouraged in schools through the fostering of the values of tolerance, respect, and *ubuntu.* Paradoxically, ten years into democracy, the need to develop the spirit of *ubuntu* is becoming an even greater imperative. This is not because racial tension among South Africans is necessarily on the

increase, but because South African society is made up more and more of non-South Africans of foreign cultures who are not being accepted by the South African population. Xenophobia has become a fact of South African life.

Between 1994 and 2003 a total number of 49 382 immigrants entered South Africa (see Appendix B.1), of whom just over half came from African countries (16 325). For the same period, there was a nationwide total of 152 414 refugee applications (see Appendix B.2) and 885 081 illegal immigrants (see Appendix B.3) from African countries who have been repatriated over the period 1999 to 2003. One can safely assume that if just under one million illegal immigrants were repatriated over five years, another million undocumented migrants[15] are still in the country.

The movement of people across the borders of states is a feature of modern global societies. South Africa, as a modern society, is not immune to the growing phenomenon. However, in South Africa, the presence of migrants has led to xenophobic and racist reactions and these reactions have become a disturbing and increasingly prevalent feature of the society.

The University of Pennsylvania report (1998) on xenophobia details the findings of an investigation in 1996 and 1997 into the status of migrants in South Africa and notes widespread abuse. This abuse comes in many forms and is perpetrated by officials, employers, as well as those who feel threatened economically. Abuse is in the form of exploitation of labourers on farms and in mines; assault, bribery and theft by officials in the army and by police during the arrest process; the use of discriminatory, racist and unreliable identification means as a the basis for deportation. People are arrested for being "too black", for having a foreign name, or for "walking like a Mozambican". In the detention centres living conditions

have been found to be unhygienic and dangerous with several reports of physical abuse. The report states:

> In general, South Africa's public culture has become increasingly xenophobic, politicians make unsubstantiated and inflammatory statements that the 'deluge' of migrants is responsible for the current crime wave, rising unemployment, or even the spread of diseases. As the unfounded perception that migrants are responsible for a variety of social ills grows, migrants have increasingly become the target of abuse at the hands of South African citizens, as well as members of the police, the army, and the Department of Home Affairs. Refugees and asylum-seekers with distinctive features from far-away countries are especially targeted for abuse (University of Pennsylvania, 1998:4).

The report goes on to detail how foreign traders are targets of intimidation and endure physical and verbal abuse from local traders while getting no protection from the police. These attacks and the attendant looting have been reported in areas in Gauteng province where gangs go about in a bid to "clean the township of foreigners".

Intolerant reactions to foreigners in South Africa have been explained within the context of poverty, unemployment and limited social mobility. With an unemployment rate of 41.8%,[16] and little real hope of improving one's living conditions, the poor and jobless don't want to share and are afraid of losing possible opportunities to non-South Africans. There is resentment, fear, anger and a sense of injustice. These considerations of economic survival are compelling arguments to explain the wave of xenophobia. Another compelling argument is related to questions of morality and values.

The South African Human Rights Commission at a consultative conference on xenophobia held in Braamfontein in 1998 acknowledged that "there is an increase in the level of xenophobia in the country" and adopted a Programme of Action which proposed, *inter alia*, the following:

- A nation-wide public awareness and information campaign on racism and Xenophobia and its effects [...].

- Public service official should undergo training on racism and Xenophobia, on the theory and practice of migration and refugee policies and on the understanding of international human rights and humanitarian instruments as well as develop an awareness of the social and political situation in the countries responsible for the influx of migrants to South Africa.

- **South Africans are urged to practise African cultural values like ubuntu ("hospitality and solidarity") in their relations with others in their midst.** (South African Human Rights Commission, 1998:2, my emphasis).

There is indeed a need to develop the values of *ubuntu,* of tolerance and solidarity. The wave of immigration into South Africa is changing the parameters of diversity. Diversity no longer refers only to the different cultural groups making up the South African nation. South African society is diverse in that it now includes a growing number of "Others" who are foreign. Since 1994 South Africans have lauded themselves thankfully, although somewhat bemusedly, for the "miracle" that has taken place. Despite years of racism and separation, there has generally been tolerance and goodwill amongst the South African races and cultures. These values and a "spirit of generosity" or *ubuntu*, are not being shown, however, to those peoples coming from foreign lands. Ordinary South Africans are not accommodating to the reality of continental mixing or global multiculturalism. The challenge of diversity – ten years into democracy – is shifting. The issue now is how South African society and the institutions of society such as schools can foster the spirit of *ubuntu,* of tolerance of diversity in relation to that which is foreign. Individuals need to be prepared for life in a global society in which borders are fluid and the presence of foreigners is a fact of daily life. The values of *ubuntu* need to be garnered to bring about this tolerance of the Other which is not South African.

5.3.3 French as a language of the Other

The teaching and learning of French is particularly appropriate for promoting understanding between communities and for creating an awareness of the Other. French grants learners the opportunity to learn about diversity in multiple ways. French shares with other foreign languages the characteristic of being a language of the Other. French, however, is unique amongst foreign languages in that it is the language of many culturally diverse Others. Learning French obliges learners to reach out and understand not just one other culture, the French culture of France, for instance, but the multiple cultures of the Francophone world. The Francophone world is a community made up of forty different ethnic groups, spread over the five continents, for whom the French language is the common denominator. In this way, French provides multiplicity in the diversity of its peoples, its histories, its world views. Learning the French language opens up the world and the concept of multiculturalism in a particularly cogent manner.

5.4 French in education in South Africa

As discussed above, the role and function of French in the NCS Grades R-9 and Grades 10-12, is marginal both educationally and administratively. There is no Department of Education requirement which enforces the learning of a foreign language at any stage of the learners' academic career and no promotion whatsoever of foreign languages which are, in fact, barely visible in the NCS.

On the ground, French is offered as a subject in a very limited number of schools. In 2003 there were one hundred and thirty-four schools nationwide offering French as a subject. Figures show that the greatest number of schools offering French are to be found in Gauteng, where there are sixty schools offering French, followed by the Western Cape with thirty-seven, and then by KwaZulu-Natal where twenty-one schools offer

French as a subject. This figure of twenty-one schools out of the one thousand four hundred and sixty-two secondary schools in KZ-N represents a mere 1.5% of the total number of schools in the province. Furthermore, figures over a five year period, 1999-2003, show a decrease in the number of schools in most provinces offering French as a subject of learning and teaching.

Table 5.2: Number of schools offering French as a subject for the Senior Certificate examination

Province	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999
Eastern Cape	8	12	13	10	9
Free State	1	3	3	2	2
Gauteng	60	59	66	70	72
KZ-N	21	18	19	16	16
Limpopo	2	2	1	0	0
Mpumalanga	4	2	2	3	5
Northern Cape	0	0	0	0	0
North West	1	2	1	0	0
Western Cape	37	38	39	40	36
	134	**136**	**144**	**141**	**140**

Statistics provided by the Department of Education, National Examinations and Assessment, Republic of South Africa

French has never enjoyed a prominent position at the centre of South African education. In fact, a French presence in the educational system has never been assured. One could even say that its continued existence, on the fringe of curricular offerings, has required tenacity and persistence on the part of promoters of the discipline to keep the subject alive. French enrolments have always been limited and susceptible to a variety of factors outside and inside the classroom.

Historically, French as a subject has been offered to a small, white, urban elite which is largely female. Even today, 75% of learners of French, both at schools and at universities and technikons, are female (*Secrétariat Général de la Francophonie,* 2004:7). Traditionally French was not offered in schools for Black, Indian and Coloured learners and it was only in the

1980s that this changed to a very limited extent when the then *Bureau de Coopération Linguistique et Educative* of the French *Ministère des Affaires Etrangères* in South Africa, in conjunction with the *Alliance Française*, offered to support the teaching of French in disadvantaged schools in areas such as Soweto, Mitchell's Plain and Wentworth. This attempt to promote French was partially successful. Schools in Mitchell's Plain and Soweto still offer French today, however, the number of historically black schools offering French is less than minimal.

The policy requirements of the new curriculum are not facilitating any change to the *status quo*. The democratisation of education notwithstanding, with the prioritisation of the eleven official languages and weak centralisation of requirements, French is set to remain, in the short term, at least, a subject with a limited learner base.

In 2003-2004, in the national education system, there were approximately 1 700 learners of French in the GET Band, 15 000 learners of French in the FET Band, and 2 700 learners at tertiary level, at both universities and technikons. Outside of the national educational system there were 2 672 learners in ten language centres and nineteen *Alliance Française.* (*Secrétariat Général de la Francophonie*, 2004:15).

The report of the *Secrétariat Général de la Francophonie* on its survey (2004) of French teaching institutions asserts, however, that there is a growing awareness of the importance of the French language for South Africa by South Africans:

> This is evident in the fact that there is a growing number of French courses being offered in companies, in government Ministries and departments, which indicates that there is a growing awareness of the importance of South Africa's role economically and politically on the African continent" (*Secrétariat Général de la Francophonie*, unpublished draft, 2004:15, my translation).[17]

The report (2004:13) goes on to note that there is a steady and marked increase in requests made to language centres such as the *Alliance Française* for French language courses for businesses. Growth in trade with Africa and the globalisation of business concerns in South Africa, have made companies aware of the need to have staff who are proficient in the language of their clients. French has become increasingly useful in local businesses mainly in the sphere of export and import trade with the French-speaking countries of West Africa. Companies are calling on the *Alliance Française* with more frequency to provide courses in basic French for employees; these companies include both local and French companies such as *Danone*, *Royal Canin*, *Total*, *Air France*, *Crédit Agricole*, *Peugeot*, *Avantis-Pasteur* (2004:13).

The same report (2004:13) also notes that there is a growing number of requests made by South African government departments and ministries for French language courses to be set up for their staff. Increasing diplomatic and political relations with the African continent, through NEPAD, the AU, the African Renaissance movement and the SADEC peace-keeping initiatives of the South African states in the French-speaking Great Lakes region has no doubt been one of the causes of this growing interest in the French language.

The report concludes that the French language and Francophone cultures can only become more prevalent and thus relevant in the years to come:

> Interest in the French language and in the French-speaking world can only grow in a country such as South Africa which is seeking to be a part of the family of nations and which aspires to playing a major role on the southern African continent (*Secrétariat Général de la Francophonie*, unpublished draft, 2004:15, my translation).[18]

This view is validated in that over a five-year period the number of candidates who wrote the Senior Certificate examination has increased.

Table 5.3: Number of candidates writing French for the Senior Certificate examination between 1999 and 2003

Province	Grade	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999
Gauteng	Adv	-	-	-	-	2
Eastern Cape	HG	25	36	34	39	43
Free State	HG	2	6	2	3	3
Gauteng	HG	354	345	367	402	291
KwaZulu-Natal	HG	110	108	111	61	100
Limpopo	HG	2	2	-	-	-
Mpumalanga	HG	2	2	6	18	9
North West	HG	2	1	3	-	-
Northern Province	HG	-	-	2	-	-
Western Cape	HG	275	273	233	271	246
Free State	SG	-	-	2	-	1
Gauteng	SG	57	63	96	115	98
KwaZulu-Natal	SG	20	23	11	4	4
Mpumalanga	SG	5	5	7	-	4
Northern Cape	SG	-	-	-	-	-
North West	SG	-	-	-	-	-
		854	**864**	**840**	**913**	**801**

Statistics provided by the Department of Education, National Examinations and Assessment, Republic of South Africa

In 1999 there were eight hundred and one candidates who wrote the Senior Certificate French exam and in 2003 there were eight hundred and fifty-four, which represents an increase in the number of candidates of 6.6%. Although the growing number of foreigners from French-speaking African countries in South Africa could explain this increase in the number of French candidates, a growing awareness of the pertinence of French in the southern African region may be another reason. Research needs to be undertaken to explain this increase and to ascertain whether this is an ongoing trend.

Another positive and encouraging statistic quoted in the report of the *Secrétariat Général de la Francophonie* (2004:7) is that of the total number of learners of French in South African schools and universities, 33% are from historically disadvantaged groups. With French previously being a predominantly "white" subject, this demographic change is heartening. French is not being made available in historically black

schools, however, there are more black learners in historically white schools choosing to learn the subject.

The above selected indicators – the increase in the number of Senior Certificate examination French candidates and the greater proportion of previously disadvantaged learners learning French – are encouraging. French can only improve its position, reach more learners and take its rightful place in the linguistic scenario of the country as a vehicle for the fostering of values and as a symbol of diversity.

5.5 Conclusion

In relegating foreign languages to the sidelines by limiting their role, and by not supporting them actively, the NCS is promoting and implementing a selective multilingualism. This selective multilingualism, with the only hard and fast implementational stipulation being that learners are required to learn two official languages, confines the multilingual framework within which South African education has been conceived to a narrow "safrocentrism", that is, centred on that which is South African.

Cultural diversity and multilingualism are supported in the freedom of choice that the NCS allows, however, these principles are not promoted. The open-ended interpretations of language learning requirements that the NCS invites, allow the vast majority of learners who have an African language as their home language to get through the educational system having learnt their home language and one other language, which, as mentioned above, will in all likelihood be English.

Understanding the way of living of a foreign people is important to the survival of a world in which there are conflicting value systems and where borders which in the past isolated and protected people from foreigners and foreign ideas are crumbling as a result of the needs of the down-

trodden in search for a better life. How is one to liberate one's ideas from the laager of ethnocentrism and xenophobia if not through the study of other cultures? It is critical to recognise that in order to penetrate foreign cultures, knowledge of foreign languages is imperative.

I have attempted to show that the challenge for South Africa is to work towards a truly comprehensive multilingual perspective which takes into consideration the past, present, as well as the future reality of South African society. To entrench the citizenry in a limited South African multilingualism is to repeat the exclusiveness of the Afrikaner Nationalists in the time of apartheid.

Education needs to prepare learners, the future full citizens of the country, for a borderless society, along with the demands this brings for tolerance, acceptance and inclusion. If South Africa is to be a truly democratic country not only for its own citizens but for all its inhabitants, education needs to play a role in the transformation of attitudes, in the development of values – particularly the value of *ubuntu*. South African education needs to acknowledge in practice the reality of being one with the world, of joining a global society. Actively promoting *ubuntu*, by requiring the learning of foreign languages (the languages of the Other of a different country) can go a long way in preparing the population to live harmoniously and productively in the new open globalised reality.

I believe that education needs to go beyond the present multilingual educational policy to include non-South African languages and cultures. For the NCS' multiculturalism to be truly multicultural and to prepare learners for the realities of the future, it needs to promote the teaching and learning of foreign languages.

Endnotes

[1] Appendix A comprises extracts from the *Revised National Curriculum Statement.*

[2] PANSALB, the Pan South African Language Board, was established in 1996 on the basis of a constitutional directive to manage language development and the protection of language rights. The Board reports to the Minister of Arts and Culture. With regard to foreign languages the Pansalb document states: "A Pan South African Language Board established by national legislation must: b) promote and ensure respect for: 1). all languages commonly used by communities in South Africa, including German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Portuguese, Tamil Telegu and Urdu [...] (PANSALB, 1998. *Pansalb's position on the promotion of multilingualism in South Africa.* 1998. Pretoria: Pansalb.)

[3] Home language refers to "the language most often spoken at home, which is not necessarily the person's mother tongue" (Statistics South Africa, 2003:vii) but which is the language learners understand and speak when first coming to school in Grade R. The home language is in the vast majority of cases is the mother tongue. A PANSALB survey undertaken in 2001 states that: "Contrary to many public assumptions about this, there are fewer South Africans who appear to make use of code mixing (i.e. mix other languages in with the dominant home language) on an individual bases in their homes. [...] The often-cited practice of multilingual communities mixing codes, appears to have been exaggerated" (PANSALB 2001).

[4] In the 2003 UNESCO Guidelines on Language and Education it is stated that: "UNESCO supports mother tongue instruction as a means of improving educational quality by building upon the knowledge and experience of the learners and teachers." It goes on to state as its first principle that "[m]other tongue instruction is essential for initial instruction and literacy and should be extended to as late a stage in education as possible: every pupil should begin her [or her] formal education in his [or her] mother tongue" (UNESCO, 2003:28).

[5] IsiXhosa is spoken by 17.6% of the population, Afrikaans by 13.3%, Sepedi by 9.4%, Setswana by 8.2%, English by 8.2%, Sesotho by 7.9%, Xitsonga by 4.4%, SiSwati by 2.7%, Tshivenda by 2.3%, isiNdebele by 1.6%, and other languages by 0.5% of the population (Statistics South Africa, 2003).

[6] On this issue of the use of all official languages in broadcasting, the SABC has clearly stated that the implementation of policy in this regard is mitigated by practical considerations: "The SABC has a mandate in terms of the broadcasting act to broadcast in all the official languages – but this cannot be taken to mean that all must get equal time on the SABC's TV channels. This would be impractical and unaffordable. What the SABC aims to give the language groups is a fair share of airtime. Broadcasting is not about upholding language rights, but about understandable communication with the audience in general" (*The Independent on Saturday*, September 19, 2002).

[7] LANGTAG was a Language Task Group, convened by the Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, to advise government on developing a policy and implementation plan based on the constitutional language provisions. The Task Group presented government with a comprehensive report, the LANGTAG Report, 1996, which provided a clear framework for the development of a language policy and plan.

[8] The eight Learning Areas are: Languages, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Arts and Culture, Life Orientation, Economic and Management Sciences, and Technology.

[9] A survey of schools in KwaZulu-Natal showed that in Grades 8 and 9 learners received a maximum of five periods per week of instruction in French which amounted to approximately one hundred hours of instruction per year.

[10] The term Learning Area has been replaced in the Draft NCS Grades 10-12 by the term Learning Field which groups subjects. These learning fields are formed with the GET learning areas and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) organising fields in mind. The six fields of learning are: Communication and Language Studies (Home and First Additional Languages); Arts and Culture; Services, Business, Commerce and

Management Studies; Engineering and Technology; Human and Social Studies and Second Additional Languages; Physical, Mathematical, Computer, Life and Agricultural Sciences.

[11] The Senior Certificate is awarded at the end of Grade 12 after successful completion of the national examinations. When the NCS becomes implementational at Grade 12 level this certificate will fall away and be replaced with the Further Education and Training Certificate (FETC).

[12] *Report 550 (2001/08)* lists, amongst other subjects, the eighteen foreign languages which are presently offered for the Senior Certificate. The status of the foreign languages was still under review and a decision has not yet been officially published.

[13] The UNESCO International Conference on Education (2001) emphasised the importance of foreign language learning "as part of an intercultural education aiming at the promotion of understanding between communities and between nations" (UNESCO, 2003:26).

[14] Nelson Mandela, in his reaching out with warmth, curiosity and compassion to all people, of different persuasions and walks of life, perhaps best personifies this spirit of *ubuntu*.

[15] Illegal aliens is a term that Human Rights Watch considers objectionable, and prefers the term "undocumented migrants".

[16] This is the unemployment rate at September 2003 provided by Statistics SA and cited in the *Witness* newspaper of 26 March 2004. The figure of 41.8% is the expanded definition of the unemployment rate which includes learners, students, home-makers, retirees, people disabled to the extent that they are unable to work and unemployed people who have not looked for work for a month. The rate of unemployment of the "officially unemployed" is at 28.2%. The officially unemployed are those who have not worked in the previous seven days, are available to start work in the following week and who have actively looked for work in the previous month.

[17] "L'augmentation des cours de français dans les entreprises, dans les ministères et dans les administrations sud-africaines (qui) traduit la prise de consicence du rôle économique et politique à jouer par l'Afrique du Sud sur le continent africain" (*Secrétariat Général de la Francophonie,* Unpublished Draft, 2004:15).

[18] "L'intérêt pour la langue française et pour le monde francophone ne peut que se développer dans un pays qui cherche à s'intégrer au concert des nations et qui aspire à jouer un rôle majeur sur le continent Sud-Africain (*Secrétariat Général de la Francophonie*, Unpublished Draft, 2004:15).

CHAPTER 6

FRENCH AS A SECOND ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

6.1 Introduction

How one acquires a second language (L2) in relation to a first language (L1) has been the subject of enquiry for decades and second language teaching methodologies have developed and changed in response to theories put forward in the fields of psychology and linguistics. Many of these methodologies have been developed in an attempt to make L2 learning as similar as possible to L1 acquisition. Learning a foreign language (FL) is, however, seldom seen as similar to L2 learning and L2 learning is frequently in practice FL learning precisely because there is no language community available as input.

In this chapter I will briefly discuss L2 learning in relation to FL and L1 learning and give an overview of the trends in L2 language teaching methods; this will be accompanied by a brief discussion of the learning theories in psychology which have underpinned these language learning theories. I will then discuss how outcomes-based education (OBE), the implementational tool of the *National Curriculum Statement* (NCS), facilitates the teaching and learning of a second language such as French and will elaborate on the thesis that OBE takes the communicative approach and adds to it making it the optimal approach for second language teaching and learning.

6.2 French as a Second Additional language: terminology

In the NCS French is categorised as a Second Additional Language. In South Africa there is no Francophone community to speak of and French is in essence a FL which is taught and learnt as such. In the NCS, however, both the term FL and L2 are avoided.

As noted earlier, the languages offered by the Department of Education for teaching and learning in schools are categorised as Home Languages, First Additional Languages and Second Additional Languages. In effect, there are two categories: L1, the Home Language, which is the language learners can understand and speak when they first come to school, and additional languages. Learners choose the L1 and one additional language (the First Additional Language) and may choose a third language, the Second Additional Language, if desired. The First Additional Language, is an official language, and therefore spoken in the community, while the Second Additional Language may be one of the eleven official languages or a foreign language, such as French.

The Second Additional Language category makes no distinction between an official South African language and a foreign language. As noted earlier, the NCS therefore groups together official and non-official languages as potential Second Additional Languages. The NCS thus conflates a L2 with a FL and uses the term "additional language" to indicate "another" language. The NCS equates a L2 and a FL even though for the official languages language communities exist in the country to supply input for psycholinguistic processes, for foreign languages no language communities of any significance exist in the country and an artificial language learning environment has to be created. The NCS effectively ignores the substantial difference between the two categories of language as well as the implications the difference has for language learning and teaching. Although it may be politically advantageous for foreign languages to be linked in this way with South African languages,[1] it is not defensible pedagogically. However, as I will consequently show, OBE allows for the successful creation of an artificial language learning environment through the creation of real-life situations and it is up to the teacher to ensure that this difference between a FL and a L2 is taken into account in the learning environment.

The importance of exposure to a language community in the learning of a L2 or a FL explains why there are so many different terms used to define languages which are not the L1. In the field of *didactique des langues étrangères* (foreign language teaching and learning), a field of study which developed in the 1970s in France out of applied linguistics, different terminology is used to define different types of L2 learning. The reality of the francophone world is that French is spoken on five continents in language communities with very diverse multilingual language contexts. The diversity of the terminology in the literature to refer to the different language learning contexts takes cognisance of the reality of the multiplicity of situations in which French is taught and learnt.

French can be spoken and learnt as a *langue maternelle*, a mother tongue, but also as a *langue non-maternelle*, a "non-mother tongue". This term is used when referring to the French learnt by school children in countries such as Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Guinea and Togo. In these countries French is the official language. It is the language of education, and it is widely spoken. However, it is not necessarily the home language of all children.[2] French is also referred to as a *langue seconde*, or second language in countries such as Mauritania where Arabic is the official language but where the population is bilingual speaking both French and Arabic.[3] That French is widely spoken in the community in these francophone countries is of crucial importance to its designation either as a *langue non-maternelle,* a *langue seconde* or as a foreign language.

Français langue étrangère, French as a foreign language, refers to the French taught and learnt in countries in which French is not spoken in the community, such as South Africa. *Français langue étrangère,* or the acronym FLE, as it is commonly referred to, has become a field of study in its own right. FLE distinguishes between French learnt by learners who do not have a French-speaking community in their country and French for learners in Francophone

countries such as those mentioned above on the African continent, the Caribbean Islands and Canada.[4]

As mentioned earlier, French in South Africa is effectively a FL and in this chapter I will use the term FL when referring to the teaching and learning of French in South African schools, however, in discussing the theory I will use the term L2 in the sense that Sharwood Smith uses it:

> [A second language is] any language other than the first language learned by a given learner or group of learners a) irrespective of the type of learning environment and b) irrespective of the number of other non-native languages possessed by the learners (Sharwood Smith, 1994:7).

A second language learner is someone who has already acquired at least one language.

6.3 Second language learning in relation to first language learning

Second language learning is defined in relation to first language learning because how one "knows" a first and a second language is quite different. The ability to learn a first language, provided the appropriate environment triggers (a language community) are present, are in Chomskyan terms, an innate faculty as language is species uniform and species specific to human beings and infinitely creative. According to Chomsky, children are born with the ability to discover for themselves the underlying rules of a language system. A "universal grammar" is part of the brain and language develops. "Language acquisition is the growth of the mental organ of language triggered by certain experiences" (Cook, 1985 cited in McLaughlin 1987:93).

The universal grammar is considered to consist of a set of principles which are universal to all human languages. Equipped with this universal grammar, what children learn from the language environment is the ways their own languages make use of these principles and the variation on those principles which may exist in the particular language they are learning. Chomsky argued that children

do not consciously analyse grammar, nor are they exposed to grammatical instruction, yet learning "happens". Children learn language through imitation and practice but the more complex grammatical structures are learnt by other means and the process of generalisation from input is one example of such learning. Children seem to pick out patterns and then generalise them to new contexts. A child saying "I putted the plates on the table" is applying the rule of adding the suffix -ed to a verb to create the past tense. Through the incorrect use of a rule it is obvious that the rule has been understood and acquired.

First language, or mother tongue acquisition is an "instinct", a faculty all humans are capable of actualising given the right environment. Steven Pinker, in his book, *The Language Instinct* (1994:18), describes first language learning in this way:

> Language is not a cultural artifact that we learn the way we learn to tell time or how the federal government works. Instead, it is a distinct piece of the biological makeup of our brains. Language is a complex, specialised skill, which develops in the child spontaneously, without conscious effort or formal instruction, is deployed without awareness of its underlying logic, is qualitatively the same in every individual, and is distinct from more general abilities to process information or behave intelligently.

Babies are born unable to speak but are in some way prepared in advance to recognize language, to understand it and to make sense of the rules. From the ordinary speech they hear daily they are able to produce, in uniform stages irrespective of the level of language they are exposed to, what Pinker has delightfully referred to as "Syllable Babbling, Gibberish Babbling, One-Word Utterances, and Two-Word Strings, [and] All Hell Breaks Loose" (1994:269).

> [...] people know how to talk in more or less the sense that spiders know how to spin webs. Web-spinning was not invented by some unsung spider genius and does not depend on having had the right education or on having an aptitude for architecture or the construction trades. Rather, spiders spin spider webs because they have spider brains, which give them the urge to spin and the competence to succeed (1994:18).

Children all over the world, irrespective of the language they are exposed to, take approximately the same amount of time to become fluent. Children start talking around twelve months and reach fluency around the age of five. Further, as Elgin (2000:225) has mentioned, even when children of that age are exposed systematically and constantly to two languages spoken by native speakers, for instance English and Chinese, the child will learn to speak both languages in the same amount of time, although there might be a slight delay in beginning to talk.

Leneberg's Critical Period Hypothesis (Lightbrown & Spada, 1993:11) refers to the notion that there is a specific and limited time period in human development when the brain is predisposed for success in language acquisition. Leneberg observed that the ability to develop language does not continue indefinitely and that children who have been deprived of a language learning environment, through extreme isolation or deafness, cannot acquire normal language behaviour if deprivation goes on past puberty.

The famous case of Genie who at the age of thirteen had no language, supports the Critical Period Hypothesis. Genie had been isolated, deprived, neglected and abused since the age of twenty months. Her mother and brother had been forbidden by her abusive father to speak to her and she had been beaten every time she vocalised or made any kind of noise. Discovered in 1970, she was taken into a rehabilitation centre and then into a foster home. After five years of therapy and normal living conditions, the period during which a normal child would have acquired language, Genie had developed language but showed signs of incomplete development. Her speech was characterised by a longer than normal gap between comprehension and production, inconsistency in the use of grammatical forms, over-use of formulaic or routine speech, and the absence of some specific syntactic forms and mechanisms present in normal grammatical development (Rymer, 1993). This natural experiment study led researchers to confirm Leneberg's theory that there is a critical age for the acquisition of the first language.

The results of another study, this time of American Sign Language (ASL) users who were exposed to ASL at different ages,[5] also showed a clear pattern which supports the hypothesis that there is a critical period for first language acquisition. Three groups of ASL users were studied: Native signers who had been exposed to sign language from birth; Early learners, who were first exposed to ASL between the ages of four and six; and Late learners who had been exposed to ASL after the age of twelve. On word order, there was no difference between the three groups but on tests focusing on grammatical markers, the Native group outperformed the Late learner group. Furthermore the Native signers were consistent in their use of grammatical forms while the Late learners and the Early learners consistently used ungrammatical forms (Lightbrown & Spada, 1993:13).

6.4 Second language learning: a brief overview

6.4.1 Overview

How learners learn a second language has been the subject of inquiry by psychologists and linguists for decades and research is ongoing. Learning a second language involves a complex mental and psychological process which involves learner characteristics such as intelligence, personality and learning style. The age at which the second language is learnt is also significant. Studies have led theorists to maintain that, as in L1 acquisition, there is a critical period for L2 acquisition. As mentioned above, in terms of the Critical Period Hypothesis there is a time in human development when the brain is predisposed for language learning and this critical age ends around adolescence and puberty. Consequently, it follows that adults learning a second language cannot depend on innate structures which contribute to language learning and depend rather on those learning abilities which are used for other learning skills. It is argued that these general learning skills are not as effective for language learning as those innate language learning capacities which exist in the young child.

However, it is difficult to compare children and adults as L2 learners as the conditions for learning are often very different. Children frequently learn a L2 implicitly in an informal language learning environment. There is no strong pressure to speak fluently and accurately and their efforts, whatever their standard, are praised. Adult learners, on the other hand, are often in situations which require complex language and the expression of more complex ideas. Adults are often frustrated by their limitations and can experience feelings of inadequacy. However, adults are able to understand the mechanics (the "grammar rules") of the language and can apply them explicitly which gives them an advantage over children who do not necessarily theorise and understand the structure of the language in informal L2 situations. Children learning an L2 formally, generally do so in a classroom situation in which they are taught (and learn) the rules of grammar of a particular L2 explicitly. Their L2 success is usually rated on how well they can apply the rules. It seems from research (Krashen, 1981, 1982; Ellis, 1985) that adults fare better in such contexts. Motivation would seem to be the differentiating factor here.

There is no general agreement about what precisely motivation and attitudes consist of as they are difficult to ascertain because of their abstractedness. However, there is agreement that there is a correlation between motivation and success in L2 acquisition but it is unclear whether motivation ensures success or whether success enhances motivation.

According to Ellis (1985), the most extensive research into the role of attitude and motivation in L2 acquisition has been conducted by Gardner and Lambert. Ellis (1985:118-119) gives the following summary of their major findings:

> 1. Motivation and attitudes are important factors, which help to determine the level of proficiency achieved by different learners. Gardner (1980) reports that a single index of attitude/motivation derived from various measures of affective responses to L2 learning is strongly related to measures of French proficiency in Canadian school leavers [...].

2. The effects of motivation/attitudes appear to be separate from the effects of aptitude. The most successful learners will be those who have both a talent and a high level of motivation for learning.

3. In certain situations an integrative[6] motivation may be more powerful in facilitating successful L2 learning, but in other situations instrumental[7] motivations may count far more. For instance, Gardner and Lambert (1972) found that an integrative orientation was related to successful learning of French in schools in both Canada and USA, but that instrumental motivation was more important in the Philippines. They explained this in terms of the role the L2 plays in the learners' community. Where the L2 functions as a 'foreign language' (i.e. is not important outside the classroom for the learners), an integrative motivation helps; but where the L2 functions as a 'second language' (i.e. is used as means of wider communication outside the classroom), an instrumental motivation is more effective [...].

4. The level and type of motivation is strongly influenced by the social context in which learning takes place [...].

Learner characteristics aside, learning conditions also affect success in L2 acquisition. One of these conditions relates to the learning environment and the learner's degree of exposure to the language outside the classroom. Whether the second language is spoken in the community and to what extent, will have an impact on the learning process.

Developments in psychology and language learning models in the field of linguistics help us understand the ways in which learners learn and this knowledge has informed the development of different teaching methodologies and approaches to second language teaching. Beginning in the last century, there have been two major psychological schools of thought with regard to approaches to learning in general: behaviourism and cognitivism. Behaviourists, beginning their work in the late nineteenth century, attempted to explain all learning in terms of some form of conditioning. Pavlov, Watson and Vygotsky all postulated that human behaviour could be explained in terms of simple stimulus-response connections and asserted that learning a language was no different. In the early 1960s, Skinner extended the notion of conditioning by considering the role of environmental factors such as reinforcement.

According to the behaviourists, learning a language involves a process of habit formation. Learners receive input from other speakers and positive reinforcement for correct utterances. Habits are consequently formed. In L2 learning, it is assumed that one starts off with habits related to the first language. These habits cause errors in the L2 and new habits need to be formed.

In behaviourist terms, learning a language is learning a particular type of behaviour. It entails giving the learner a small "part" of the language, such as a structural pattern, which is the stimulus, and the learner responds by repeating the structure or by substituting or transforming a part of the structure. The teacher reinforces the response by giving the correct response which the learner repeats. Learning is seen as a mechanical process of habit formation. The learner is considered as a passive agent who learns mechanically and there is little recognition given to the mental processes involved in learning. Skinner argued that instruction could be improved by the application of four procedures:

- teachers should make explicitly clear what is to be taught;
- tasks should be broken down into small, sequential steps;
- students should be encouraged to work at their own pace by means of individualised learning programmes;
- learning should be programmed by incorporating the above procedures and providing immediate positive reinforcement based as nearly as possible on 100 per cent success (Williams & Burden, 1997:9-10).

Edy Roulet (1976), cited in Bérard (1991:11), explains the contribution of structural linguists and behaviourist psychologists to language learning methods:

> The first contribution of structural linguists was to provide descriptions of what constituted the main aim of the new pedagogy, that is spoken language in context [...]. The second contribution of structural linguists is without a doubt their concept of language as a system, a concept developed by Saussure right at the beginning of the century. From behavioural psychology and in particular Skinner's theory of operant conditioning, the new methodologies have borrowed the concept of language as a network of aptitudes, a play of stimulus-response associations which are fixed by reinforcement in a social situation (my translation).[8]

While behaviourism is concerned with human behaviour in response to stimuli, cognitive psychology is concerned with the mental processes that allow individuals to learn. In a cognitive approach, the learner is seen as an active participant in the learning process using mental strategies to work out the system of the language to be learnt. It is the work of Piaget and his stress on the constructive nature of the learning process that has had the most impact on language learning theories. The main underlying assumption of Piaget's constructivism is that learning is not merely an accumulation of facts and the development of skills, it is about individuals being actively involved in the construction of personal meaning. Individuals learn because they are creating a personal understanding of new input from their experiences. Learners and their mental processes are therefore brought into central focus in this learning theory. This rationalist, process approach believes that language learning is the result of critical thinking and happens as a result of a desire to communicate. This implies that learners through a process of problem-solving, interpret the form of language as something meaningful.

Although there is no one particular cognitive method of language teaching, there are some characteristics that can be outlined in any approach that is cognitively oriented. Omaggio (1986:66), citing Chastain (1976) has defined the characteristics of a cognitive approach to language teaching in the following manner:

1. The goal of cognitive teaching is to develop in students the same types of abilities that native speakers have. This is done by helping students attain a minimal control over the rules of the target language so that they can generate their own language to meet a previously unencountered situation in an adequate fashion.

2. In teaching the language, the instructor must move from the known to the unknown; that is, the student's present knowledge base (cognitive structure) must be determined so that the necessary prerequisites for understanding the new material can be provided. This knowledge base includes not only students' present understanding of the new language, but also their understanding of how their native language works, as well as their general knowledge of the world. Students must be familiar with the rules of the new language before being asked to apply them to the

generation of language. The foundation or competence, must come first. Performance will follow once the foundation is laid.

3. Text materials and the teacher must introduce students to situations that will promote the creative use of the language. The primary concern is that students have practice going from their underlying understanding of the way the language works to using the language in actual communication of ideas.

4. Because language behaviour is constantly innovative and varied, students must be taught to understand the rule system rather than be required to memorize surface strings in rote fashion. Therefore, grammar should be overtly explained and discussed in a cognitive classroom (Omaggio, 1986:66).

Learning should always be meaningful; that is, students should understand at all times what they are being asked to do. New material should always be organised so that it is relatable to students' existing cognitive structure.

The cognitive and behaviourist schools of thought greatly influenced language educators and second language teaching methods and approaches, however, not only psychology and linguistics have played a part in the development of second language teaching methods. The aims of language teaching and the perceived needs of learners in political and social terms has also had an impact on what is taught and the ways in which it is taught.

6.4.2 The grammar-translation method

In the nineteenth century and earlier, second language learning was influenced by a humanist or classicist approach: one learnt a foreign language in order to become "cultured". Consequently foreign language learning involved the reading of the literature and learning about the cultural heritage related to the language. This learning about the culture of France and the French, for instance, conferred on the learner a social and intellectual status superior to that of those who had not learnt a foreign language. In order to achieve this aim, languages were learnt through the grammar-translation method,[9] also known as the traditional or classical method. This method was originally used in schools for the teaching of Latin and Greek and then became a method for the teaching of modern

languages as well. The primary purpose of this method was the reading and translation of great literary texts in the foreign language. Language was conceived as a matrix of rules and exceptions that were studied using the literary text as a vehicle for learning and as an example of the norm. The foreign language was compared to and learnt in relation to the mother tongue. Translation into the mother tongue was the main activity in this method, and translation was the starting point for the theoretical study of the grammar. There was no pre-established order in which grammar was studied; the order in which it appeared in the text determined the order in which grammatical structures were learnt.

The 1840 directive of the French Department of National Education regarding teaching strategies in the classroom elucidates how the grammar-translation method was used in the study of foreign languages in schools at the time:

> The first year [...] will be dedicated solely to grammar and pronunciation. With regard to grammar, each day pupils will learn off by heart for the following day the lesson that was given by the teacher the preceding day. Exercises will consist of translations into and from French and incorporate the application of previous lessons. [...] With regard to pronunciation, after having explained the rules, the pupils' ear will be accustomed to correct pronunciation through frequent dictations, dictations will then be learnt off by heart and recited. [...] In the second year [...] Greek and Latin texts will be translated into English and German and vice versa. [...] In the third year, teaching will be more literary (Puren, 1988:50, my translation).[10]

The language used in the classroom was the mother tongue, learning consisted of a limited interaction between teacher and learner, and errors were not tolerated. Vocabulary was taught by learning lists of words and meaning was reached via translation into the mother tongue. No creativity was expected of the learner who was passive and received instruction from the teacher, the sole authority. There were few opportunities for speaking the language,

6.4.3 The direct method

The grammar-translation method continued to be used in schools in France until 1902 when a National Education circular laid down the use of the direct method

which, along with its corollary, the active method, was the first method specific to modern foreign languages. The direct method was used in France, Germany and to a great extent in the United States at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries and was advocated by educators such as Berlitz, the founder of the famous Berlitz language school, and the linguist Jespersen. It became government policy in France to teach languages with the direct method at a time when France wanted to open itself up politically and economically to the world. The direct method led to foreign languages no longer being considered as a means to cultural enrichment but as a practical tool which facilitated communication.

The direct method was founded on a "natural approach" and was based on the way in which children "naturally" learn their first language. The basic principles of the direct method are:

- The mother tongue is not used to explain the meaning of words in the foreign language. The teacher uses objects and images to explain the meaning of foreign words, and meaning is therefore learned through the "direct" association of words and phrases with objects and action. The idea is that the learner think in the foreign language as soon as possible.
- The spoken word is privileged over the written word and correct pronunciation is important. The language is presented to learners in meaningful sentences and exchanges are often in the form of questions and answers.
- The teaching of grammar is implicit and the learning inductive; rules are not learnt explicitly. It is assumed that rules are learned through practice. When grammar is taught, it is taught in the foreign language.

The major criticism levelled at the direct method is that it decontextualises language. It plunges learners into expressing themselves in an unstructured situation which can lead to inaccuracy and vagueness and to errors becoming "fossilized". Furthermore, the use solely of the target language in the classroom

often impedes real learning. Certain concepts can more speedily and more effectively be transmitted in the mother tongue than in the target language. To illustrate this point, Omaggio relates an anecdote told to her by a colleague who had observed a lesson during which the teacher was explaining how to tell the time in French.

> Using a clock face with moveable hands, the teacher began by repeating several times the expression Quelle heure est-il? (What time is it?). The class dutifully repeated the expression after her model. She then proceeded to move the hands of the clock to indicate one o'clock and repeated Il est une heure. Il est une heure. The class repeated enthusiastically in chorus. Next, the hands were moved to two o'clock, and the class repeated Il est deux heures after her model. This activity went on for several minutes until the students appeared to have grasped the concept. At this point, one boy in the back of the class, seated close to the observer, leaned over and whispered to his friend, "What's she saying? I don't get it." The boy's friend looked at him scornfully and replied, "You dummy! It's so obvious. She's saying 'This is a clock. This is a clock'" (Omaggio, 1986:59).

6.4.4 The audiolingual method

The direct method, with the basic principles of avoiding the mother tongue, of stressing oral communication and inductive grammar instruction, existed until the 1950s when the audiolingual method was developed. The audiolingual method arose in the USA after World War II in response to the needs of the American army which wanted to teach its personnel, who were to occupy foreign countries, foreign languages as quickly as possible. The audiolingual method was born out of behaviourist psychology which attempted to explain all learning in terms of some form of conditioning.

In the audiolingual method, also known as the Aural-Oral Method of language teaching, learning is effected through rote learning or drills and learners reproduce the correct form of the language. Omaggio (1986:61-62), citing Chastain (1976), sets out the characteristics of the audiolingual method by listing five basic tenets:

- The goal of second language teaching is to develop in students the same abilities that native speakers have. Students should therefore eventually handle the language at an unconscious level.
- The native language should be banned from the classroom; a "cultural island" should be maintained.
- Students learn languages through stimulus-response techniques. Students should learn to speak without attention to how the language is put together. They should not be given time to think about their answers. Dialogue, memorization and pattern drills are the means by which conditioned responses are achieved.
- Pattern drills are to be taught initially without explanation. Thorough practice should precede any explanation given, and the discussion of grammar should be kept very brief.
- In developing the "four skills" the natural sequence followed in learning the native language should be maintained (cited in Omaggio, 1986:61-62).

The major disadvantage of the audiolingual method is that it does not take different learning styles into account. The spoken language is privileged over the written and learners become frustrated at not being able to see the language in written form or have written confirmation of their learning. Furthermore, the avoidance of grammar discussion is seen as frustrating, and the continuous repetition demotivating and boring. There is a disregard for meaningful learning and there is no room for creativity on the part of the learner.

6.4.5 The audio-visual methods

At around the same time the audiolingual method was being developed in the United States there was a movement by the French government to strengthen France's presence in the colonies, to restore France's prestige globally and, furthermore, to react against the growing hegemony of English. The teaching of French as a foreign language became a matter of State. The Ministry of National Education set up a commission based at the CREDIF *(Centre de recherche et d'Etude pour la Diffusion du Français)*[11] under the chairmanship of Georges Gougenheim. The commission was to make a study of everyday language and draw up a list of lexical items and grammatical structures which would constitute basic French, *le français fondamental*. The aim was to facilitate the learning of

French and thereby ensure the development of the teaching of French as a foreign language.

In 1954 the results of the study by Gougenheim's team were published as two "essential vocabulary" lists: a *français fondamental premier degré* (basic French level one), made up of 1475 words; and a *second degré* (level two) of 1609 words.[12] *Français fondamental* was considered the indispensable basis for the first stage in the learning of French as a foreign language for learners in a school environment. It aimed at giving learners a progressive, rational acquisition of the language which would allow them to master the language as it was spoken by native speakers in everyday situations. The *français fondamental* lists were to become the notional and linguistic structures on which subsequent French foreign language teaching manuals (based on the audio-visual method) were developed in France in the 1960s and 1970s.

In the audio-visual method, similarly to the audiolingual method and in line with behaviourist psychology, learning is broken down into small sequential steps which are presented as structural patterns and are drilled in exercises stressing memorisation of dialogue, choral repetition, transformation and substitution of language structures. Explanations of what is being done (grammatical descriptions) are given only after the successful assimilation of the pattern drill. Listening and speaking are prioritised: speaking is the aim of learning, and listening to dialogues is the main aid to learning. The association of sound and image allows dialogues to be presented in context and situational information is given. The characteristics of spoken language are also taught; intonation being important, is a feature of the dialogues.

The lexical and structural content of audio-visual methods used for French are selected from the data provided by Gougenheim's *français fondamental* which determined what vocabulary and which structures should be learnt first in relation to their frequency of use. This content is presented according to a strict

progression of simple to more complex. Perceived difficult structures are interspersed through in the lessons and each lesson focuses on a limited number of structures. The different phases of each lesson followed a set order:

- presentation of a recorded dialogue accompanied by fixed images;
- explanation of the dialogue in tranches;
- memorisation;
- development which is done with images or with structural exercises; and
- transposition, a phase which allows the learner to use the linguistic elements learnt in previous stages.[13]

The advantage of the audio-visual method over the audiolingual method is that it takes into consideration the social context in which the language is used by an image which shows who the speakers are and the social context in which the communication is taking place. The major drawbacks, however, are that the language and the settings of the dialogues are far removed from reality. The language scenario is nearly always the same: two to four people speaking one after the other, without ever interrupting one another or talking at the same time, speaking without hesitation, without self-correction, and there are no background noises or interruptions. Furthermore, the sociocultural aspect of the language is limited as there is no diversity in the social groups presented. The interlocutors are white, middle-class of an indeterminate age.

In audio-visual methods, all that is needed is learner receptivity. The role of the teacher is to develop in the learner good language habits while learners are passive, responding by rote without having to be truly productive. Learners are never required to say anything that they have not seen before or committed to memory. The method does not encourage the original creation of meaning, that is, genuine productivity. There is no opportunity for interaction or for the negotiation of meaning which is the essence of communicating in a language. There is no active learner engagement in analysing the language, or developing new strategies for learning. As in the audiolingual method, such mechanistic

learning and response can lead to demotivation, and we have noted earlier the importance of motivation and attitude to the learning process.

6.4.6 The communicative approach

6.4.6.1Origins and evolution

A factor which led to audio-visual methods falling into disfavour and the development of the communicative approach was Noam Chomsky's critical review of Skinner's 1957 work *Verbal Behaviour.* According to Chomsky, behaviourism with its stimulus-response notions did not account for the creativity involved in the mental processes of linguistic behaviour. The mental processes required to produce language implies that meaning is processed at a deep structure level and that speech cannot be produced with simply mechanically produced strings of learned responses. Language learning is not simply the reproduction or production of memorised strings of learned response to environmental stimuli. Language learners create their own system of rules through the subconscious formulation of hypotheses about how language works. The behaviourist viewpoint of language acquisition which influenced the audiolingual and audio-visual methods was thus seriously questioned and brought into disrepute.

Chomsky's interest in the deeper levels of meaning in understanding and producing language was congruent with cognitivist approaches in psychology. For both cognitive psychologists and linguists, the speaker's knowledge of a language is based on a set of internalised rules by which an infinite variety of sentences can be generated. These rules are not necessarily conscious nor can they necessarily be verbalised. In a cognitive approach to learning, the learner is seen as an active participant in the learning process using mental strategies to work out the system of the language to be learnt.

Although Chomsky does not consider the implications of his theories specifically for second language learning, other linguists have proposed L2 theories which

are similar to Chomsky's ideas on first language learning. Undoubtedly the most widely discussed model of L2 acquisition is Krashen's Monitor Model (1981, 1982) which comprises five hypotheses:

- the acquisition-learning distinction which states that adults have two distinct ways of developing competence in a second language;
- the natural order hypothesis which maintains that in a non-formal learning environment grammatical structures are acquired in a predictable order;
- the monitor hypothesis which refers to the way learners uses "learnt" knowledge to improve utterances generated by means of "acquired" knowledge;
- the input hypothesis which maintains that learners acquire more language when they are exposed to language which is comprehensible but which contains structures "a little beyond" the learners' current level of competence; and
- the affective filter hypothesis which states that input can only be acquired when affective conditions are optimal.

Language theorists (Krashen, 1981, 1982; McLaughlin, 1987) argue that second language learning resembles first language learning in that linguistic competence is innate. The second language learner, like the child during the development of the first language, creates rules after a process of hypothesising. As learners are exposed to the second language, so they progressively create their own systems to account for what has been processed to date. A personalised language system is therefore created. It is argued that inherent in each learner's mind there is a set of mechanisms which are responsible for creating grammar rules from the language a learner is exposed to. This internal grammar:

> allows the speaker to produce (and interpret) millions of sentences that he or she has, hitherto, never personally encountered but which nevertheless accord with the norms followed by other adult native speakers of the language. This structural creativity means that learners, like native speakers, can use their system to produce thousands of sentences they have never encountered (Sharwood Smith, 1994:31).

This is a firmly anti-behaviourist view which concurs with the cognitive view of learning as a creative process.

Within this framework of cognitive theory, second language learning is viewed as the acquisition of complex cognitive skills which involve an element of automaticity[14] and leads to restructuring.[15]

The cognitivist concept of learning as a creative process was supported by the transformational-generative school of linguistic theory based on Chomskyan principles. In Chomsky's work on transformational-generative grammar, a distinction is made between competence and performance: competence refers to the subconscious, internalised knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, syntax, the system of the language that the native speaker has, while performance refers to the actual production of language and includes hesitations, slips, fragmentations and so on. Although theorists maintain and accept this distinction between competence and performance in language, the theory is criticised in that it does not take cognisance of the appropriateness of the utterance in a particular socio-cultural context nor does it take account of the rules of appropriate sociocultural behaviour which can be related to language. Bérard (1991:22) notes that linguists such as Dell Hymes (1971) refer rather to a "communicative competence" which incorporates more than just a knowledge of the grammatical structure of a language. Communicative competence is a broader notion which includes grammatical competence as well as sociolinguistic and contextual competence. This broader view of a communicative competence is taken into account in second language methodologies which use a communicative approach.

In the communicative approach[16] the four skills, (listening and reading, speaking and writing), are developed according to the language needs of the learners. Language is conceived as an instrument of communication – of social interaction. Linguistic aspects (sounds, structures, lexical items, etc.) make up grammatical

competence which is only one of the components of the more encompassing competence, communicative competence. The latter takes into consideration linguistic and other dimensions of the communication situation and is made up of verbal and non-verbal elements, knowledge of the psychological, sociological and cultural codes which allow for the appropriate use of language in a given situation. In the communicative approach knowledge of the grammar is balanced by knowledge of the pragmatics of a language. [17]

> The champions of the communicative approach believe that to communicate effectively implies adapting linguistic structures to the communication context (status of the speakers, age, social class, place, etc) and to the intention of the communication (or language function: request to identify an object, ask for permission, give orders, etc.) (Germain, 1993:203, my translation).[18]

According to the communicative approach, learning a language does not consist, as behaviourists believed and the audiolingual method assumed, in the creation of habits and reflexes. For the communicative approach, and the cognitive psychology that underpins it, language learning is a creative process determined by internal and external influences. Learning is not a passive event, determined by external stimuli. It is an active process which takes place in the minds of individual learners.

Generally then, the communicative approach to L2 arose out of cognitive linguistic models and psychological theories, and as a reaction against the behaviourist-based audiolingual and audio-visual methods.

In France, there was an hiatus between the use of the audio-visual method and the rise of the communicative approach. During this hiatus, there was much criticism of audio-visual methods and there were attempts to improve them and develop them into methods which were more flexible, where dialogues were more realistic, and where more freedom was given to the learner to be creative.[19] It was felt that although the original audio-visual methods may have been suitable for beginners, they were too limiting for intermediate level students, or

for what the French called the *Niveau 2* (level 2). François Debyser (1970) (cited in Bérard 1991:15) spells out the main needs of an intermediate level learning programme in the following way and in so doing brings to the fore the limitations of the audio-visual methods:

- more stress on objectives;
- focus on the learner;
- more active teaching strategies;
- actualising free expression and creativity
- the development of true communicative competence
- going beyond a structuralist methodology inspired by applied linguistics
- the use of authentic texts
- greater diversification of teaching techniques (my translation).[20]

It is clear that these proposals concerning the needs of intermediate level students are also criticisms of audio-visual methods and they paved the way for the advent of the communicative approach in French FL teaching and learning.

In France, the development of the communicative approach was also affected by socio-political factors: the formation of a larger more encompassing European Union; and the growing phenomenon of migration. Both factors led to a need for a different type of linguistic competence. Teachers in the field of French as a foreign language were faced with the specific problem of teaching French to learners who were not language students, who were learning French in a foreign country, and who needed the language in order to gain access to documents written in French or to work in a French environment. The objectives, syllabus and methods of teaching had, therefore, to be determined in relation to the country of origin of the learners and to the present and future needs of the learners in the foreign country. Teaching approaches had, therefore, to be conceived in relation to the domains of use of the language to be acquired, for example, the foreign service, the labour market, or schooling.

> The communicative approach in the teaching of modern languages is related to society making different demands from languages [...]. In certain sectors and for certain social groups, skills in foreign languages have now entered the professional domain and users expect to acquire a know-how which is immediately or quickly usable (Beacco, 1995:47, my translation).[21]

In response to the new sociological demands on language education, in 1971 the *Comité de l'éducation extra-scolaire et du développement culturel* (Committee for Continuing Education and Cultural Development) of the Council for Cultural Cooperation at the Council of Europe, set up new structures to allow for multidisciplinary research in the field of continuing education. The work of the commission gave rise to models and tools for the development of didactic material in response to a needs analysis amongst foreign adults. The content of teaching material was organised taking into consideration the threshold levels, *niveau-seuil,* of minimum communication in the foreign language.[22]

The Council of Europe published the *Niveau-Seuil*[23] (Threshold Level), a notional syllabus based on the needs of adults learning French as a foreign language. In the *Niveau-Seuil,* the language needs of learners are determined in relation to the speech acts judged to be needed in certain sociocultural domains. A functional approach to language learning thus developed at this time as did a new definition of language learning:

> Learning a language is learning to behave adequately in communication situations in which the learner is likely to find himself and to use the codes of the target language (Puren, 1988:372, my translation).[24]

The *Niveau-Seuil* proposes a particular way of structuring teaching and learning – a functional communicative approach. Whereas the audiolingual and audio-visual methods aim at oral communication based on linguistic competence in the classroom situation, the functional, communicative approach, which structures teaching and learning around a notional syllabus, is based on the perceived real language needs of learners in real-life situations. The relationship and interaction between speakers in various communication contexts and in various social roles is thus prioritised and thus also the function of language. Communicative competence, as opposed to purely linguistic competence, i.e. grammatical correctness, is the desired outcome.

6.4.6.2 The communicative approach in the classroom

As I have shown above, cognitive theories of learning are in direct opposition to behaviourist learning theory as they emphasise the role of internal mental processing rather than external behaviour. Cognitive theory, in relation to language learning, claims that the process by which new linguistic knowledge is internalised is different from the process by which mastery over this knowledge is achieved.

New knowledge involves "knowing that" (Ellis 1994:8), or in Chomskyan terms, relates to the notion of competence, while knowledge which has been integrated and has become automated is "knowing how" and relates to the notion of performance. Errors produced are more than likely the result of "knowing how" rather than "knowing that". Thus, in cognitive terms, in the classroom it is necessary to provide conditions of learning that allow learners to produce their knowledge in authentic communicative situations.

As noted above, in the traditional classroom based on the behaviourist theory of learning, emphasis is placed on forming habits and practising grammatical structures in isolation. The focus is on teaching *about* the language. The stress is on language structures (grammar) rather than the message or the information the language carries. The teacher's goal is to transmit vocabulary and grammatical rules while the learners' goal is more than likely to be to pass an exam than to use the language to communicate.

In the communicative approach, the communication of meaning is emphasised. Grammatical forms are made explicit only in so far as they clarify meaning. The goal of learning, as in the traditional classroom, is learning the language. However, the teaching stresses language *in use* rather than learning about the language. Interaction, conversation and the expression of meaning are the focus of teaching and learning. Language is taught in context and topics of discussion are of general interest to the learners. Learners' success in such an instructional

situation is measured by the degree to which learners are able to communicate in the language rather than by the accuracy with which they use particular grammatical features.

The fundamental difference between a traditional and a communicative approach is evident particularly in the attitude to errors. In the communicative classroom, errors are considered inevitable and essential to the learning process and, in effect, reflect the process of learning. In behaviourist-based methods, errors are severely penalised and avoided. In the communicative classroom there is no intensive focus on error correction. Errors are corrected, but not insistently and consistently. The focus is primarily on letting learners express their meanings. Allowing learners to speak freely, means allowing errors. Errors are considered a natural and valuable part of the learning process. Insisting on correctness stifles the desire to communicate. Fluency before accuracy is the hallmark of the communicative classroom. Research by Sandra Savignon (1972, cited in Lightbrown & Spada 1993:81) shows that L2 programmes which focus only on accuracy and form do not give learners sufficient opportunity to develop communicative ability in the L2.

In the communicative classroom, the stress is on developing communicative abilities in the L2, therefore emphasis is on meaningful input through conversational interactions with teachers and other learners. When learners are given the opportunity to engage in conversations they are put in a situation in which they negotiate meaning, that is, they express intention, clarify thoughts and opinions and this negotiation of meaning leads them to acquire language, the words and grammatical structures which carry the meaning. Conversation, interaction and genuine questioning characterises the communicative approach.

Meaning-based interaction with the concomittant attitude to error correction is the major characteristic of the communicative approach. This approach has implications for activities carried out in the classroom and the content they entail.

According to Bérard (1991:49) the characteristics of the communicative classroom can be grouped under three headings: texts, activities and group work.

The use of authentic texts, rather than texts created expressly for the L2 classroom, is a characteristic of the communicative approach. Taken from real life (newspaper or magazine articles, print, television or radio advertising, films, television programmes, etc.), authentic texts bring the second language, as it is used in the world, into the classroom. There are four reasons authentic texts are privileged in the communicative classroom. Firstly, learners can be positively motivated if they can understand exchanges taken from real life – the second language is reinvested with authenticity and is not simply a school subject. Secondly, real-life texts favour learning for life and lifelong learning; the reading and discussion of a newspaper article of general interest stimulates debate and the expression of opinions, a televised political debate creates an awareness of political issues. If one develops working techniques in the classroom related to authentic documents, learners can reinvest these techniques outside the classroom. Thus in a communicative classroom learning to learn is as important as the linguistic content of the documents. Thirdly, in an environment in which there is no target language community, authentic texts are the only contact learners have with the language as it is used by its community. Using the print and visual media in the classroom recreates in a way the non-existent linguistic environment. Fourthly, authentic texts allow one to work on the relationships that exist between the produced text and its conditions of production, and its target audience and its intentions. In this way the linguistic, the pragmatic and the social functions of language are studied simultaneously and communicative competence is developed.

Classroom activities which are considered worthwhile in a communicative classroom are those which demand a certain amount of creativity on the part of the learner and which allow the learner to take the initiative. Bérard (1991:56)

lists the following types of activities as those which are congruent with a communicative approach:

- activities related to written or visual texts which require the learner to complete a task according to instructions which guide the activity to a certain extent;
- simulations and role plays: the former are mainly repetitions of reality and are located either in specific situations (post office, bank, street) or are devised in terms of speech acts (give advice, give orders); role plays have a more dramatic intention requiring learners to interpret a character which has been defined beforehand;
- games: although having various specific objectives – lexical, grammatical or communicative – , games stress the pleasure learners can get from playing with the foreign language and from using their expressive abilities in a game situation (my translation).[25]

Such activities allow learners to be in real situations in which they complete a task in the second language. Exchanges with other learners in the group in the L2 constitute real-life situations and are similar to real situations outside the classroom in which learners are required to negotiate meaning and negotiate with others in order to complete a task. Listening and speaking to one another is paramount in a communicative classroom because it allows learners to use the communicative abilities they have. Learners are, therefore, put into situations in which they communicate meaningfully in the L2.

Group work is a feature of the communicative classroom because it enhances the chances of learner-to-learner interaction. Research by Michael Long (1976 cited in Lightbrown & Spada, 1993:85) found that in group work learners produce a greater quality and variety of speech than in teacher-centred activities. Learners ask more questions and speak more spontaneously and this leads to a greater variety of language uses and functions, amongst them, disagreeing, hypothesising, requesting, clarifying.

In the communicative classroom, a network of communicative contexts is put into place through various group configurations: a communicative situation can be set

up in groups of two, in small groups, between one learner and a whole group, between two groups, between the teacher and a group (Bérard, 1991:58). Communication skills are developed in this way, not only with regard to content but also in relation to skills in learning how to speak to a group, in expressing information, knowing how to formulate a request, checking that one has been understood, for example. In group interaction of this kind, learners learn to become aware of the Other, aware of their own behaviour and become aware of how they interact and this in the context of the second language.

In the communicative classroom, the role of the teacher changes. The teacher is no longer the central focus but a facilitator:

> In order to facilitate communication in the classroom, one needs above all to create a different atmosphere and initiate the sharing of responsibilities: when the teacher agrees to give up his monopoly on questions and corrections, begins to discuss objectives and activities with learners, and when learners listen to what their classmates are saying and start speaking to them directly, only then will a communication network be set up that resembles what goes on in real life (Grancolas, 1980 cited in Bérard, 1991:58, my translation).[26]

For the learner to be more active and the relationship between learner and teacher to be less vertical there needs to be a redistribution of roles. The teacher organises group work, suggests texts and activities, explains the functioning of the language when necessary, but learners intervene regarding the sequence of events, the type of texts chosen and activities to be done. Negotiation between teacher and learners becomes the key phrase in the communicative classroom. The communicative approach requires learners to be active, to take the initiative. while the teacher is required to take a back seat, to listen to learners. In this approach, interaction is the key to successful learning.

6.4.6.3 The communicative approach and OBE

The communicative approach is an approach to L2 acquisition and is based on psychological and linguistic principles and hypotheses. As we have seen above, in a communicative approach, language learning takes place in a communicative

context. Meaning is privileged over grammatical and lexical forms. Language is taught in context. Learning is centred on discourse and different aspects of communicative competence are taught simultaneously.

OBE, as noted earlier, is a philosophy, an educational model, an approach to teaching and learning in general. As discussed in Chapter 4, OBE focuses on what learners will be able to do at the end of a learning experience. OBE is founded on the belief that all learners can succeed, irrespective of their background and it is thus learner-centred. Integration is the touchstone of OBE and teaching and learning integrates intellect, skills, attitudes and values. Furthermore, subject areas are integrated and above all, the real world is brought into the classroom.

Although the two above approaches are fundamentally different in that they belong to different domains – one refers to L2 methodology while the other is an educational model – there are some striking similarities which make them particularly compatible in the classroom.[27] In OBE terms one talks of *competence* and not *content*, of *doing* rather than *knowing.* In the communicative classroom the aim of teaching and learning is communicative *competence* as opposed to linguistic or literary *content*; of speaking the language rather than *knowing about* the language. Both approaches are learner-centered, activity-based and conceive of learning as a creative process. In both approaches, the teacher is a facilitator guiding the learner in the making and negotiating of meaning, in guiding the learner towards productivity and thus creativity.

I contend that OBE is not only compatible with the communicative approach, it also facilitates the teaching and learning of a foreign language. It does this by allowing for the creation of real-life situations and thereby creates in the artificial classroom environment a language learning environment as nearly authentic as possible, thus supplying the wanting, yet essential to L2 learning, foreign language community.

One of the fundamental principles of OBE is that the learner is the central focus of the learning process. Putting the learner at the centre of the learning and teaching process allows the diversity of individuals in the classroom to be respected and recognised. It also allows for the learner to be the starting point of learning, and thus differing world views, skills and knowledge can be affirmed. Learners are thereby empowered by their differences, learn from them, share them and grow through them.

With regards to L2 acquisition, learner-centeredness is of particular importance because it allows the learners' world to be brought into the classroom. In an OBE classroom, learners' experiences from their living and learning contexts are used to develop learning situations. OBE, stressing as it does the learner and the learners' life experience, turns the classroom into a real-life situation in which learners communicate with other learners and the teacher, and are able to express themselves on issues of interest and importance to themselves. OBE integrates the learners' real life with school life.

OBE centres learning in the socio-cultural context of the learners. It links classroom exercises to the real world, thus making school and classroom activities relevant to the real world and the real world relevant to the classroom. Classroom exercises such as debating, dictating, writing letters or résumés are linked to the real world: a debating session could be set in the simulated context of a political debate in parliament between two ministers, a dictation could be linked to a court-room situation and letter writing could be in the context of the world of work. Furthermore, in the OBE classroom current issues which are socially and politically relevant are raised and used as contexts for learning. Classroom exercises are linked to the real world thus broadening the learners' view of the world and preparing them for life after school.

In foreign language acquisition, when there is no linguistic community in the target language to speak of, this linking of classroom activities with the real world also creates an artificially "authentic" linguistic environment which makes up for the absence of a foreign language community.

The classroom is a real-life situation in which learners learn, express themselves, communicate about topics that matter in their own lives and that have relevance for their own living environment. In this way, OBE optimises the communicative approach.

6.5 Conclusion

In the French foreign language classroom, OBE goes to the very limits of the communicative approach. It makes for the creation of communication contexts which allow learners to communicate in the foreign language in the real world of which the classroom is a part. OBE, as an attitude of mind, an approach and a management system acts as a framework for the communicative approach and maximises the potential for functionally competent second language learning. OBE adds to the communicative approach and in partnership with the communicative approach, creates an optimal second language teaching and learning environment.

Endnotes

[1] A fourth category in the NCS over and above the home language, first additional and second additional language categories would lead to further marginalisation of non-official languages and possibly even less time allocated to them on time-tables.

[2] In Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea and Togo, French is the sole official language however national languages abound. In Benin there are fifty two indigenous national languages of which about ten are spoken by 90% of the population. Radio and television spend just over half of air time broadcasting in nineteen of these national languages. In Burkina Faso about ten national languages are spoken alongside French. In Guinea there are approximately twenty local languages of which about eight are spoken by the entire population either as a mother-tongue or as a second language. In Togo there are about forty African languages spoken by the population two of which are very widely spoken and are used in the media. In Cameroon, French is an

official language alongside English and there are over two hundred and thirty Cameroonian languages spoken in the country, none of which are spoken by a majority of the population.

[3] In Algeria 30% of the population speak French, French is also widely used in the media. In Morocco 20% of the population is French-speaking, French is the language of education and it is a language widely used in the media. 20% of the Tunisian population speaks French and French is widely used in the media, French is taught at school from the fourth year of primary school.

[4] In educational policy in the USA French, along with Spanish and other languages other than English, is termed a "foreign language". This terminology is becoming increasingly problematic in the US as many of the languages taught in schools are not "foreign" to learners. Italian, Chinese or Spanish are languages which are spoken extensively by certain communities but are termed "foreign languages". Nor are Native American languages, American sign language or French foreign to the United States. Documents have begun referring to these languages as "world" languages, Modern and Classical Languages, or LOTES (Languages other than English) or as Second Languages (National Standards for foreign language Education Project, 1999:27) however the term "foreign languages" has remained the most widely used in government policy documents.

[5] This is the study by Elissa Newport and her colleagues, cited in Lightbrown and Spada, 1993:13. Just like oral languages, American Sign Language makes use of grammatical markers (-ed and –ing in English) the only difference is that these markers are indicated through specific hand movements.

[6] An integrative orientation to language learning occurs when the learner wishes to identify with the culture of the L2 group. If learners have a favourable attitude towards the speakers of the language, they will desire more contact with them.

[7] An instrumental orientation to L2 learning is when the learners' goals for learning the L2 are functional. If learners need to speak the second language in a wide range of social situations or need it for professional reasons, they will see the communicative value of the L2 and sill be motivated to acquire proficiency in it.

[8] "Le premier apport de la linguistique structurale a été de fournir des descriptions de l'objet qui consitutait précisément l'objectif prioritaire de la nouvelle pédagogie, à savoir la langue parlée en usage [...] Le second apport de la linguistique structurale réside sans aucun doute dans la conception de la langue comme système, qui avait été développée par Saussure dès le tout début du siècle. De la psychologie behavioriste, en particulier de la théorie du conditionnement de Skinner, les tenants de la nouvelle méthodologie ont retenu essentiellement la conception de la langue comme un réseau d'aptitudes, un jeu d'associations entre des stimuli et des réponses établies par le renforcement dans une situation sociale" (Roulet cited in Bérard 1991:11).

[9] As Omaggio (1986:54) notes, the grammar-translation method was compatible with the view held by psychologists at the time that mental discipline built up the powers of the mind.

[10] "La première année [...] sera consacrée tout entière à la grammaire et à la prononciation. Pour la grammaire, les élèves apprendront par coeur pour chaque jour de classe la leçon qui aura été développée par le professeur dans la classe précédente. Les exercices consisteront en versions et en thèmes, où sera ménagée l'application des dernières leçons. [...] Pour la prononciation, après en avoir exposé les règles on y accoutumera l'oreille par des dictées fréquentes, et on fera apprendre par coeur et réciter convenablement les morceaux dictés. [...] Dans la seconde année [...] les versions et les thèmes consisteront surtout en morceaux grecs et latins qu'on fera traduire en anglais et en allemand, et réciproquement. [...] Dans la troisième année, l'enseignement aura plus particulièrement un caractère littéraire" (Puren 1988:50).

[11] The CREDIF is a research centre dedicated to the study of the French language and to the development of the teaching of French. It has carried out studies on *le français fondamental* (basic French) and on scientific French. It organises courses for teachers and develops teaching manuals for children and adults.

[12] Gougenheim, Michéa, Rivenc, Sauvageot. 1964. *Elaboration du français fondamental.* CREDIF.

[13] An example of a French foreign language teaching manual based on the audio-visual method is Gauvenet H. et al. 1964. *Voix et images de France*. Paris: CREDIF.

[14] According to cognitive psychologists, L2 acquisition involves the building up of a knowledge system which can eventually be called on automatically. When learning a language there is a process going on in the brain which requires that the task of speaking for instance, be broken down into sub tasks. Levelt (Levelt cited in McLaughlin 1987:135) refers to first-order and second-order goals: the first-order goal is to express a particular intention; the second-order goal is to decide on a topic; the third-order goal is to formulate a series of phrases; and lower-order goals are to retrieve lexicon needed, to activate articulatory patterns, to utilise appropriate syntactic rules, and to meet pragmatic conventions. The development of a complex task such as speaking involves the *"building up of a set of well-learned, automatic procedures so that controlled processes will be freed for new tasks"* (McLaughlin 1987:136) However repeated performance allows these tasks to eventually become routine and they can be produced automatically. So learning to speak a language involves a certain amount of automatising of sub skills. However, in cognitive terms, learning is not a case of simple habit formation, as for the behaviourists, it is rather an attempt by the learner to organise and structure new information acquired and fit it in with previously acquired knowledge. In cognitive theory the restructuring, reorganising of old information when new information is made available is an essential element of learning. Learning requires a constant modification of what has already been learnt.

[15] William Selinker argued that in this process of constructing a personalised grammar, the learner constructs an interlanguage which evolves over time as strategies are used to make sense of input and to control output and as progress is made in getting closer to the target language. Pit Corder refers to an "idiolect" which is the individual learners own personal "dialect" of the language being learnt in the transitional phase.

[16] The following French foreign language teaching manuals use a communicative approach: Courtillon, R et al. 1982. *Archipel*. CREDIF. Paris: Didier; Verdelhan, M et al. 1982. *Sans Frontières*. Paris: Clé International.

[17] According to Levinson, the concept of communicative competence overlaps with the definition of pragmatics which takes as its central notion that of appropriateness. "Pragmatics is the study of the ability of language users to pair sentences with the contexts in which they would be appropriate" (Levinson 1983:25).

[18] "Les tenants de l'approche communicative considèrent qu'une communication efficace implique une adaptation des formes linguistiques à la situation de communication (statut de l'interlocuteur, âge, rang social, lieu physique, etc.) et à l'intention de communication (ou fonction langagière: demander d'identifier un objet, demander une permission, donner des ordres, etc." (Germain 1993:203).

[19] An example of a French foreign language teaching manual based on this adapted audio-visual method is Montredon.J et al. 1976. *C'est le Printemps* . Paris: Clé International.

[20] "- une réflexion plus poussée sur les objectifs
- une orientation sur l'enseigné
- des méthodes plus actives
- le développement de l'expression libre et de la créativité
- la mise en place d'une véritable compétence de communication
- le dépassement de la méthodologie structuraliste dérivée de la linguistique appliquée
- l'utilisation de documents authentiques
- une plus grande diversification des procédure didactiques (Debyser cited in Bérard 1991:15)."

[21] "L'approche communicative de l'enseignement des langues vivantes se trouve pourtant correspondre à une nouvelle forme de demande sociale en langues [...]. La compétence en langue étrangère étant passée, en certains lieux et pour certains groupes sociaux, du côté du captial professionnel, les utilisateurs attendent d'un enseignement qu'il leur permette d'acquérir un savoir-faire immédiatement ou rapidement réinvestissable" (Beacco 1995:47).

[22] The work done by the Council of Europe focused on learners and their particular needs and it is in this context that the term *apprenant*, learner, comes into use in opposition to the terms pupil or

student. The term learner is a more generic term which includes learners who are adults in continuing education, it also expresses a focussing of attention on the learner as the centre of the learning process.

[23] The Council of Europe, Brussels, published various works on notional syllabi, the first being in 1973 by D.A. Wilkins, *Contenu linguistique et situationnel du tronc commun d'un système d'unités capitalisables d'un système d'apprentissage de langages vivantes par les adultes,* the second in 1976 by D. Coste et al, *Un Niveau-Seuil,* and in 1977 Van Ek, J.A. and Alexander, L.G., *Waystage.*

[24] "Apprendre une langue, c'est apprendre à se comporter de manière adéquate dans des situations de communication où l'apprenant aura quelque chance de se trouver en utilisant les codes de la langue cible" (Puren 1988:372).

[25] "Activités à partir de documents écrits, visuels qui supposent de la part de l'apprenant une tâche à réaliser. Selon les consignes de travail, les productions sont plus ou moins guidées; Simulations et jeux de rôles: les premiers sont plutôt des répétitions de la réalité et sont élaborées soit à partir de situations cadre (la poste-la banque-la rue...) ou de consignes données en termes d'actes de parole alors que les seconds ont une dimension plus théâtrale, demandant aux apprenants d'interpréter un personnage défini préalablement; Jeux: ces activités, si elles ont des objectifs variés: lexicaux, grammaticaux ou communicatifs, mettent surtout l'accent sur le plaisir que l'apprenant peut avoir à jouer avec la langue étrangère et à exercer ses possibilités d'expression."

[26] "Pour faciliter la communication dans la classe, il s'agit avant tout de créer une atmosphère différente et de susciter un partage des responsabilités: quand l'enseignant aura accepté de perdre le monopole des questions et des corrections, de discuter avec les élèves des objectifs des activités proposées, quand les élèves sauront véritablement écouter ce que disent leurs voisins et leur parler directement, alors se tissera un réseau de communication beaucoup plus proche de ce qui se passe dans la vie réelle (Grancolas, 1980 cited in Bérard, 1991:58)

[27] It is not surprising that the communicative approach and outcomes-based education, both approaches to teaching and learning, are similar in their principles. The communicative approach developed in Europe in the 1970s in response to a certain social context, (see above) while the stress on lifelong learning, one of the main features of OBE, developed in Europe also in the 1970s (see Chapter 2) in response to the same social context.

CHAPTER 7

FRENCH CLASSROOM PRACTICE IN KWAZULU-NATAL: A STUDY

7.1 Introduction

The formulation of the *National Curriculum Statement* (NCS) and the adoption of the outcomes-based education (OBE) model as an educational reform strategy is transforming South African education. This reform process and the commitment to an OBE paradigm has implications for classroom practice. As noted earlier, prior to the implementation of OBE instruction was informed by a narrowly prescribed syllabus in which the content and pace of learning was fixed. The NCS, (then *Curriculum 2005),* published in 1997 and implemented at Grade 8 level in 1999, requires that the content of instruction, learning strategies, outcomes and classroom techniques be adapted to reflect the new OBE paradigm and be in harmony with the principles of the new curriculum.

In 2001 and 2002, I carried out a study in French Second Additional Language classrooms in KwaZulu-Natal to ascertain what the *status quo* was with regard to teaching and learning practices. The aim of the study was to evaluate the extent to which the NCS outcomes-based principles were being put into practice and to find out what teaching methods and approaches were being used to teach French. The study was primarily a qualitative study with a small element of quantitative analysis. The data was systematically obtained by means of a variety of complementary data collection methods. In this chapter I will describe how the study was undertaken, what instrumentation was used and will report on the results obtained.

7.2 The research strategy

7.2.1 Overview

The study was conducted in KwaZulu-Natal (KZ-N) and more specifically, in the Durban and Pietermaritzburg areas (see Appendix C.1 for a list of schools in KZ-N offering French as a subject). This province was chosen for practical and purposive reasons: practically, KZ-N is the province in which I am based therefore allowing for easy access and low costs; also I have worked extensively over the years with KZ-N French teachers on other projects and have established positive working relationships with them. More importantly, this province represents the typical context required for the evaluation: as in other provinces in the country, French in KZ-N is taught almost exclusively in former Model-C schools which are well-resourced and with teachers who are well trained. Furthermore, KZ-N French teachers have always been known to be at the forefront with regards to French second language curriculum reform and teaching methods. In the 1980s it was the French teachers of this province who revised the core syllabus for French which then became the national syllabus when the nineteen Departments of Education were dissolved. More recently, it was KZ-N French teachers who collaborated with the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs' *Bureau de Coopération Educative* in Pretoria to spearhead and produce the first Learning Programme for French after the implementation of the NCS. Based on this track record of reflection and involvement in curriculum reform, I assumed that French teachers in KZ-N would at least be as aware and as involved in the reform of classroom practice in the wake of OBE as their counterparts in other provinces.

There are twenty-three schools in KZ-N offering French as a subject and a total of thirty-two teachers teaching French. Thirteen schools are in the greater Durban area, seven are in the Pietermaritzburg area, two are in Empangeni and one in Eshowe.

The instrumentation used in the study was made up of three components: informal interviews, a survey questionnaire and on-site classroom observations which can be summarised as follows:

7.2.2 The instrumentation

Interviews constituted the first component of the study. Four interviews were held in the course of 2000 on a random sampling basis with French teachers in the Greater Durban area. The aim of the interviews was to discuss teacher perceptions with regards to OBE and to discuss how classroom practice had been affected as a result of the implementation of OBE. The interviews were considered a preparatory step to the conception and preparation of the survey questionnaire and to the observational indicators of the classroom observations.

The second component of the study was a survey. The survey questionnaire (Appendix C.2) was sent to all of the thirty-two French teachers teaching in KZ-N schools. The questionnaire comprises questions aimed at eliciting firstly facts, secondly beliefs and attitudes, and thirdly behaviour. Questions are both open-ended and closed-ended. The questionnaire aims to source information in order to:

- set up a teacher-characteristics profile;
- ascertain what teachers of French know about and understand by OBE;
- discover what the general attitude is towards an outcomes-based curriculum;
- determine what beliefs and principles inform French teaching in general; and
- establish what teachers' perceptions are regarding their classroom practice (what they say they are doing or what they think they are doing).

A pre-test questionnaire was devised and tried out on two respondents during the initial interview sessions in 2000. The questionnaire was revised and then sent to the group.

The third component of the study comprised on site classroom observations. These were conducted in schools in the Greater Durban area. A total of seven

out of the thirteen schools in the Greater Durban area were visited. I was unable to conduct classroom observations in three schools due to teacher reluctance at having an observer in the classroom. Observations were also not carried out in three other schools in which French was taught as an extra-curricular subject, outside of school hours and to very small groups of one to three learners. I considered that classroom practice in such *quasi* private lesson-type situations was not comparable with teaching techniques used in a conventional classroom situation.

Thus, a total of seven schools were visited and ten teachers observed. A minimum of six classes were observed at each site and the grades ranged from 8 to 12. A total of forty-seven classroom situations was observed. The observational studies were done at three junctures: in April 2001, then between August and December 2002, and finally in February 2003.

The aim of the classroom observations was to ascertain what teaching techniques and learning strategies were being used in the French classroom and thus partly answer the research question posed: how and to what extent are the NCS OBE principles being put into practice in the French L2 classroom in KZ-N. The observation protocol consisted of a detailed report and indicator specifications.

One of the problems faced was how to decide on the criteria to use in evaluating classroom practice. The observational indicator table used aimed to direct observations so as to get an answer to the research question posed above. The observational indicators and the criteria which inform comment on the observation report were decided upon after a study of the NCS documents detailing the main characteristics of an OBE approach. The characteristics which determined the observational indicators and the observation report and the questions they initiate are as follows:

1. In an OBE classroom learners are active: they talk, read, write, they "do", they are not passive learners.

- What percentage of lesson time is devoted to each mode of learning (passivity and activity)?
- For what percentage of lesson time is the teacher guide and facilitator rather than sage on centre stage?

2. In an OBE classroom, teaching and learning are learner-paced, the pace of work is individualized, different tasks are set for different abilities.

- What kind of learner-support is provided?
- How is the redress of inequalities provided for?

3. In an OBE classroom teaching and learning are learner-based. The learner is the source of the topic and of the activity; the learner initiates learning.

- Are the topics and activities sourced from the learners? Are their lifestyle and experiences taken into consideration?
- Are different cultural values recognized, respected, discussed?

4. In an OBE classroom teaching and learning is geared to being lifelong learning. It is linked to the outside world, to the future needs of the individual, of society, of commerce and industry. There is a concern for the development of life skills, team-work, problem-solving, self-management; the collecting, analysing and organising of information; the use of science and technology.

- Is the classroom content and are skills linked to the outside world, to the future world needs of learners?
- Is there an integration of theory and practice, knowledge and skills, head and hand?

5. In an OBE classroom teaching and learning takes into consideration the aim of nation-building.

- Are there overt or covert attempts to foster social consciousness and tolerance, or critical awareness with respect to inequality, democracy and transformation?

6. In an OBE classroom assessment is continuous and often formative.

- Do learners engage in peer assessment and self-assessment?

- Do teachers carry out portfolio assessment and performance assessment?
- What form of summative assessment is used?

These principles and questions were translated into an observable set of indicators and informed the comments made on the observational report.[1] The observational indicators chosen to inform the classroom observations were based on the following questions:

- Is learning experiential?
- Is learning participatory?
- Are different learning areas integrated into the teaching and learning?
- Are there learner-initiated options?
- Are questions teacher-led?
- Is there group work?
- Does the teacher provide individual assessment?
- Is assessment formative?

The observational indicators were calibrated into three columns which allowed for the observer to indicate to what extent these criteria were present in the classroom. However the division into "none", "little", "much" proved to be too vague in the "little" section and did not allow for precise indications of behaviour. For instance group work was often present as a teaching strategy, however often for a negligible length of time only – in once instance, for only five minutes out of a sixty-minute period. It is regrettable that the categories do not allow for details to be given regarding duration or frequency, however, the observation reports which accompany the observational indicators allow for more detailed information to be given.

A further weakness of the observational indicators, which became apparent to me during my analysis of the classroom observation sheets, is that there is no observational indicator to account for lifelong learning. Nor is there an entry to

indicate whether subject matter is organised around a real-life experience. It is important in assessing teaching practice to ascertain what the teaching is organised around. Although this information is given in the observation report, it could have been schematised and been part of the observational indicators.

The observation report (Appendix C.3) written for each class observed, details the number of learners in each class, the seating arrangements, the teaching strategies and techniques employed, the evaluation procedures employed and the interpersonal dynamics between learners and teacher, and learners and learners. The report also gives details about the duration and frequency of certain teaching strategies neither of which criteria are detailed in the observational indicators table. These reports allow me to elaborate on the observational indicators and give additional information about classroom practice.

The subjects (both learners and teachers) were aware of observation and this awareness of the research may have threatened the validity of measurements. Potentially this awareness could have skewed teaching to be more OBE-influenced than would normally have been the case. However, if this was the case, it would indicate that teachers are aware of what OBE teaching entails and are able to implement it. In one case, however, the teacher's comment to the observer clearly indicated a misconception about, and a total lack of awareness of, a basic OBE principle. The teacher told the observer: "If you weren't there, I would get them to work more on their own, or in pairs, but I suppose you want to see me performing." This totally erroneous perception of the observer's expectations, despite having expressed the aim of the observation clearly in writing (Appendix C.4), translates a perception that letting learners work in pairs or on their own, and passing the responsibility of learning to the learner, is opting out of the teacher's function, that is teaching, which is perceived necessarily to be, to be active all the time. The teacher's comment is a clear indication of a

teacher-centred perception of what is good teaching and a total lack of awareness of a basic tenet of OBE – the role of the teacher as a facilitator.

7.2.3 Results of the questionnaire

Thirty-two questionnaires were sent out in July 2002 and by October 2002, fifteen responses had been received. A reminder questionnaire was sent in October 2002 to the seventeen respondents who had not yet replied. A further ten responses were received to make a total response rate of 78% (twenty-five responses out of thirty-two questionnaires sent).

The questionnaire comprised three sections: teacher characteristics, teacher perceptions regarding OBE, and teacher perceptions with regards to classroom practice.

7.2.3.1 Teacher profile

French teachers are highly qualified and have vast experience.

French teachers are a highly qualified workforce and have long experience in teaching. The fact that French teachers are experienced and have a long service record possibly accounts for their reflective approach when answering questions in the survey questionnaire. 72% of respondents have a postgraduate diploma and 52% a postgraduate degree at either Honours or Masters level. 76% have been teaching for over five years and almost half of the total number of teachers have been teaching for more than ten years.

Teachers do not feel equipped to teach within an OBE framework.

68% of French teachers have attended one or more seminars or courses on OBE (48% have attended more than one, 20% have attended one). However, despite this high rate of training, a mere 28% of respondents felt that they are equipped to teach within an OBE framework, while 68% only felt partially equipped to do so.

7.2.3.2 Perceptions and beliefs regarding OBE

Contradictory responses to OBE.

To the question: Do you consider OBE to be a good teaching model? The sample was evenly spilt between ten "yes" responses and ten "unsure" with one negative response. Two responded "partly" and one respondent considered he was unable to answer, while another did not respond.

The positive responses showed that teachers generally consider OBE to be a good educational model because:

- "It allows pupils to enjoy more freedom to choose what they would like to do/ contribute, and this encourages interest;"
- "It makes education more relevant to children's lives after school has finished;"
- "[It promotes the teaching of] usable skills in real-life situations;"
- "It enhances student thinking and learning;" and
- "Students are involved."

The negative and unsure responses were related to perceptions about OBE not being suitable for all groups of learners and about standards: "Not well organised from top down and seems to cater for average and below average ability pupils only". Some teachers were uncertain as they felt they did not know enough about OBE to comment; one respondent felt "overwhelmed" by OBE while another considered the weight of the paperwork involved taxing.

Teachers generally believe that OBE affects them negatively in the classroom.

To the question: How does OBE affect you in the classroom? 36% of the responses were negative (nine out of twenty-five), 28% were positive (seven out of twenty-five), and 20% (five out of twenty-five) said that OBE had not affected them.

With regards to negative responses, the often recurring concern was the time-consuming nature of assessment procedures and task-planning. Another negative perception regarding the effect of OBE in the classroom was that it contributed to "uncertainty and chaos". One teacher found it demanding and another stressful.

The positive responses were almost entirely related to how OBE had led teachers to become more reflective about their teaching:

- "[OBE] forces me to rethink my teaching;"
- "Makes me think about what I am teaching;"
- "Forces you to think more about what you are teaching, the value of it;"
- "Makes one more focussed;" and
- "Made me examine the way in which I teach and pupils participate."

Another positive effect was that teachers felt that they had become more aware of learners' needs.

Five respondents felt they had not been affected by OBE and amongst the reasons given were the following:

- "I have always used conversational French approach [sic] and group work;"
- "My teaching has always been fairly OBE."

Teachers believe OBE is suitable for French teaching.

Surprisingly, although only 40% of respondents consider OBE a good educational approach and 36% find that it affects them negatively in the classroom, 76% of respondents consider OBE to be suitable for French teaching. The reasons given varied but generally responses showed that respondents considered that OBE and the communicative approach to French teaching were not only congruent, but one and the same thing. It was noted that language teaching is by its very nature outcomes-based in that it aims at communicative skills – that it is task-oriented and activity-based:

- "It [OBE] is in line with the communicative approach;"
- "It would perhaps encourage a more varied and communicative approach; communication skills are outcomes;"
- "Language teaching has always been outcomes-based, only terminology has changed;"
- "Acquisition by learners of capacity to communicate in foreign language is by definition, outcomes-based, although, again, I am not sure of the terminology;" and
- "Language teaching has always had an OBE element."

Those who were not sure of the suitability of OBE for French teaching (20%) held the view that formal grammar lessons and "straightforward" teaching, which was "necessary in French", was incompatible with OBE.

Teachers generally claimed that they were teaching differently since the introduction of OBE.

Five out of twenty-five respondents (20%) stated that their methods were more learner-centred and one mentioned that they were now "pupil-driven". The other responses (80%) indicated that the differences in teaching methodology were related to an adaptation to a more communicative approach. Five out of twenty-five respondents (20%) stated that their teaching is more OBE although they do not elaborate in what ways. Two of the five equated the manual *Encore Tricolore*, which espouses a communicative approach, with OBE and considered that as they were using the manual, their teaching had adapted to an OBE approach.

Perceptions and beliefs about OBE are generally contradictory. Teachers seem to consider that they are already doing what is positive about OBE (the communicative approach), and whatever else that they are not already doing is negative in that it is time-consuming, overwhelming and detracts from the real purpose of education which is for the teacher to "teach". However, there were many positive comments regarding the fact that the new approach had forced

them to be reflective, to rethink their teaching, to be more focussed and learner-centred. OBE was also defined as fostering creativity, being intellectually challenging and relevant to life. From the responses it seems that teachers understand some of the core principles and advantages of OBE but have a limited grasp of the mechanics of its implementation in the classroom. Furthermore, there seems to be a resistance to change on the part of some. The fact that at the time of the questionnaire there had still been no final draft of the FET curriculum and no decision taken as to the status of French as a teaching subject could have led to negative attitudes.

7.2.3.3 Perceptions about classroom practice

Respondents were asked to indicate on a 1 to 5 point scale (5 = always, 4 = mostly, 3 = sometimes, 2 = rarely, 1 = never) the frequency with which certain activities were used in the classroom. Respondents were asked to base their answers on their teaching over the previous two weeks in Grades 10 and 11.

Receptive versus productive activities

32% of respondents stated that learners spent more time speaking, reading, writing and viewing than listening while 28% stated that learners spent equal time listening and doing other activities. 12% indicated that learners spent more time listening, that is being receptive as opposed to being productive.

Group work

Respondents were asked for what percentage of class time learners worked in pairs or in small groups. 48% of respondents said group work is used sometimes, with 4% saying they always used group work and 0% saying they never used group work.

Differentiated activities

40% of respondents stated that learners were always or mostly doing the same activity in class. 12% of respondents stated that learners rarely do the same activity.

Assessment

Respondents were asked to give ordinal responses regarding the frequency with which they engaged in formal, informal, peer, and self-assessment with their learners. They were also asked to indicate the frequency with which they carried out portfolio assessment.

The majority of respondents stated that they *often* engaged in formal assessment while a minority *often* engaged in informal assessment; peer assessment was carried out only *occasionally* by the majority of respondents while self-assessment was *rarely* carried out by the majority of respondents. The frequency with which portfolio assessment was carried out was equally distributed throughout the sample: 26% stated they engaged in portfolio assessment *often*; 26% *occasionally*; 26% *rarely*, 22% *never*.

7.3 Classroom observations

7.3.1 Narrative of observed events

The following section comprises a detailed report on each of the ten teachers observed in the seven different schools. The reports are presented in alphabetical order according to school. The detailed observation reports and the observational indicators relating to each lesson observed have been conflated into one report and one grid scheme per school. The numbers in the observational indicator grids refer to the various grades.

7.3.1.1 Crawford College Durban, Mrs A

Six lessons were observed in all: one each in Grades 8, 9, 10, 11 and two in Grade 12. In each class there were between 4 and 10 learners present. Learners

sat at rectangular tables in clusters of three to four learners; rarely using the blackboard, the teacher circulated, going from one group to the other or sitting with learners at their table. Files and pencils were rarely used accessories; learners mostly talked and interacted.

Elements of OBE were obvious in the teaching approach. There was a conscious attempt to implement OBE: learning was related to a context outside of the classroom; teaching was learner-centred and activity-based; and formative and self assessment were used.

During the Grade 8, 9, and 10 classes there were some good learning experiences which brought the real world into the classroom. For example, in the Grade 9 class a French awareness project put learners in a situation in which they had to find three products of different types on which there was French written. These products and their labels were displayed and in the lesson, learners had to study the texts and draw up a list of key words in accordance with the type of product. They had to ask each other questions, and also ask themselves questions. Using the dictionary, they then had to pick out the adverbs, nouns and verbs in the texts and work out the rules of agreement with adjectives. Learners worked in pairs with no intervention from the teacher. Another lesson which linked the classroom to the real world involved preparation for an inter-school quiz on French general knowledge; another involved preparation for the school play in which speech acts involving a telephone conversation were practised.

Teaching and learning was OBE-oriented. The teacher acted as a facilitator with a great deal of interaction taking place between the teacher and learners on a horizontal plane. Self-expression and teamwork were encouraged, as was creative, critical thinking.

In the classes a lot of English was spoken and there was a lot of chatting about other issues. The teacher seemed to accept this and the work continued nevertheless.

At Grade 12 level, teaching was exam-oriented, book-bound with teacher-led learning and passive learners and a great deal of English was spoken. The teacher expressed the view that in Grade 12, teaching is about preparation for the end of the year exam.[2]

Crawford College, Durban was one of the schools whose teacher was interviewed during 2000. During the interview it became apparent to me that at that time, the teacher was implementing OBE in a particularly successful way. She explained to me that during the six months preceding the interview and at the time of the interview, all the teaching and learning in a number of grades was planned around a project which involved other learning areas and which was to culminate in the performance of a play. I attended a performance of the play (see Chapter 8 and video) and resource material related to the learning experience was made available to me (see Appendix C). This learning experience, which is a prime example of OBE at work in the French classroom is described and evaluated in Chapter 8.

Table 7.1: Observational indicators. Crawford College, Durban, Mrs A

Observational indicators	None	Little	Much
Learning is activity-based	12*	11	8 9 10 12
Learners are given the opportunity to demonstrate what they learn	12 12	11	8 9 10
Teacher provides learners with individual feedback	9	8 12	10 11 12
Learners are organised in groups	11 12 12		8 9 10
Teacher integrates themes from different learning areas	12	11 12	8 9 10
Learner-initiated options	11 12 12	10	8 9
Teacher-led questions		8 9	10 11 12 12
Formative assessment	9 10 11 12 12		8

* The numbers in this and all the following tables represent the grades in which the observational indicators were assessed.

7.3.1.2 Crawford College, North Coast, Mr B

In this school, six classes were observed: two Grade 8 classes, one Grade 9, two Grade 10 classes and one Grade 11 class. There were between 4 and 12 learners per class. Seating arrangements were informal and varied according to the class: learners either sitting in a circle, in a semi-circle or in clusters with the teacher in the middle of the circle or moving around.

I found that as a general rule an OBE approach to teaching and learning was evident in these classrooms. It was clear that the teacher had an OBE mindset and that this coloured all his teaching irrespective of the grade being taught or the ability of the learners.

Teaching was consistently activity-based with learners being doers of a variety of different activities not passive listeners. There was much evidence of learner *learning* and there was consistent teacher feedback. Group work was a feature of the vast majority of lessons. Themes were not integrated across Learning Areas but subject matter was organised around school events or related to learners' experience. There was evidence of learner-initiated themes and teaching options in the majority of cases and few teacher-led questions. The teacher, although a strong presence in the classroom, was guide and facilitator.

There was good OBE-type teaching going on in this classroom. Although the teacher indicated in his response to the questionnaire that he was unaware of the implications of OBE and would be indifferent to it until a clear policy had been communicated regarding the FET band, his teaching reflected OBE principles. On the whole in his classrooms, at all levels from Grades 8-11, learning was activity-based, learner-centred and participatory. Learners were allowed to take responsibility for their learning and for the process of learning. They were allowed and encouraged to take responsibility for the organising and managing of learning activities.

In one of his classes, the teacher had planned to teach the plural of possessive adjectives and the lesson was to be organised around a section in the manual, *Tricolore*. However, at the beginning of the lesson a learner interjected with a request asking that another learning activity be done instead, viz. that they discuss the French food they were going to cook in class in a few days' time. Then the teacher told learners what his intention for that activity was: that he would look for recipes himself and then discuss them with the learners. The learners contested his plan, and suggested that they find recipes themselves, at home. The teacher hesitated, reflected, and then agreed. He consequently altered the beginning of the lesson to positively exploit the interruption. Learners suggested recipes they could bring (*soufflé, crèpes, crème brûlée*, etc.) and the teacher wrote up the French words on the blackboard for later practice and for copying down. Only then did the teacher return to his original lesson plan.

In most lessons, the learners' world and life experiences were brought into the classroom and were used as a resource. An example follows. The lesson began with a general conversation in French on who was absent and on the homework that had been done over the weekend. The teacher then went on to tell a story about what he had done on the previous Saturday. Learners were asked to pay attention and to remember what he did. In his first telling, the teacher used simple constructions with the *passé composé* (composed past) and a list of activities, (*je me suis réveillé, j'ai préparé du café, je suis allé au jardin botanique;* I woke up, I made coffee, I went to the Botanic gardens*)*. He then told learners that he would recount the story in another way, and used the *après avoir* (after having) and *après être* (after being) construction. The teacher wrote the second construction on the blackboard and then asked learners to recount what they had done on Saturday. The learners used the simple past tense. The teacher then reformulated their account using the *après avoir* or *après être* construction. The teacher asked questions to measure the learners' understanding of the difference between the *avoir* (to have) and the *être* (to be). Thereafter, the teacher went around the class asking learners for their Saturday

activities which he wrote up on the board. He then asked them to recount their activities using the *après avoir* or *après être* construction. In pairs, and in dialogue form, learners described their activities on Sunday. The teacher circulated and gave individual help.

In all classes observed, the teaching and learning experience entailed listening, speaking, reading and viewing, writing, thinking. Use of language and awareness of structure were implicitly part of the participatory experience. All the processes were underpinned by an awareness of values and attitudes. It was very obvious to the outside observer that the values of tolerance and democracy underpinned the teacher's attitude and philosophy of teaching.

The teacher had an excellent command of the language and an excellent grasp of effective foreign-language teaching methods. His learners were spontaneous, motivated, enthusiastic and confident. This teacher very clearly taught in a manner which conformed with OBE principles and which espoused the principles of a democratic South Africa, notwithstanding the fact that he denied having an understanding of OBE principles.

Table 7.2: Observational indicators. Crawford College, North Coast, Mr B.

Observational indicators	None	Little	Much
Learning is activity-based			8 8 9 10 10 11
Learners are given the opportunity to demonstrate what they learn		11	8 8 9 10 10
Teacher provides learners with individual feedback		11	8 8 9 10 10
Learners are organised in groups	11	9 10	8 8 10
Teacher integrates themes from different learning areas	8 8 9 10 10 11		
Learner-initiated options		8 10 10 11	8 9
Teacher-led questions		8 8 9 10 10 11	
Formative assessment	9 10 10 11	8 8	

7.3.1.3 Durban Girls' College, Mrs C

A total of four classes were observed: one Grade 9, two Grade 11 and one Grade 12. In each class there were between 9 and 20 learners. Learners were

sitting in rows facing the teacher. Files with photocopies were open in front of them. Pencil in hand they listened to the teacher who stood in front of the class, using the blackboard, gestures and mime. The teacher spoke French 95% of the time in all classes.

What I observed at this school, with this particular teacher, was good traditional teaching. The teacher was in control much of the time, there were few learner-led options and most of the teaching was teacher-centred. Teaching was by deduction (explanation of the rule and immediate practise of the structure, albeit not always both written and oral) with clarity of exposition and with a carefully planned focus of going from the known to the unknown.

In the junior classes, learning structures, practising them and getting them right seemed to be the main planned outcome. The aim of learning these structures in French appeared to be to get them right in an exercise, and then to pass a test. In these classes English was the language of communication 95% of the time and very little learning was activity-based. Furthermore, little learning was done in the context of a real or simulated communication situation. Communication did not seem a priority – correct answers did.

Surprisingly, the only class in which the classroom experience was integrated with the real world was the Grade 12 class. The class was centred around a conversation between the teacher and learners as a group about the swimming gala that was to be held that day and also a discussion about the organisation for an outing to see the French film *Chocolat*. This was followed by teacher preparation of an event to be held in the course of the week, a dinner at the Alliance Française with French learners from Hilton College. The teacher prepared learners for this event. However, instead of putting the learners at the centre of the learning experience and allowing them to be active, the teacher chose to role-play a conversation with one of the learners herself while the other learners listened.

The main disadvantage of the traditional teaching observed at this school is that it is teacher-oriented, teacher-based and -paced – the beginner "does" little communicating in the target language and certainly little or nothing within a real-life situation. Learners were learning for the long distance goal of communicating at Grade 12, and dare one say, for the exam. Also, fast learners were disadvantaged as were the slow learners. The teacher aimed at the average learner without stretching the more able or helping the slower learner.

Learning in this classroom context could have been more active and less passive. This would have made for more relevant learning; learning for life. The learners in this school were motivated, so boredom and disinterest were not an issue, and the teacher was lively, methodical, with an excellent command of the subject matter. Learners seemed to be motivated by marks, but they were evidently also enjoying the class. However, the question "is this for marks" was underpinned by another broader question: "what are we leaning this for?" Thus, the learning in these classes was only relevant in relation to passing a test or exam. The teacher stated categorically that she did not practise OBE and that marks are of paramount importance: "I don't do OBE. If you go into the junior school, you will see OBE in action, With the pressure of good marks and results ... I have been very busy, I just go in and do something."

Table 7.3: Observational indicators. Durban Girls' College, Mrs C.

Observational indicators	None	Little	Much
Learning is activity-based	11	9	11 12
Learners are given the opportunity to demonstrate what they learn		9 11 12	11
Teacher provides learners with individual feedback		9 11	11 12
Learners are organised in groups	11 11 12	9	
Teacher integrates themes from different learning areas	9 11 11 12		
Learner-initiated options	9 11 11	12	
Teacher-led questions		12	9 11 11
Formative assessment	9 11 11 12		

7.3.1.4 Durban Girls High, Ms D

Grades 9A, 9B, and three Grade 10 classes were observed. There were between nineteen and thirty learners in the classes. In all classes, learners were sitting in rows facing the teacher with files open in front of them and pencil in hand. The teacher was standing in front of the class, using the blackboard, gestures, mime and the cassette recorder. The teacher spoke French most of the time.

In these classes it was clear that the teacher consciously attempted to adapt her teaching to OBE principles. There was an attempt to bring the real world into the classroom, (before reading a text on *au pair* work in France, the teacher talked about her experiences in that field), learning was activity-based and learners were given the opportunity to demonstrate learning in role-play and in report backs much of the time. Assessment criteria were explained to learners and they were required to assess themselves. Teaching largely conformed to OBE criteria and outcomes. The learners were reading for meaning, and were required to synthesise information. Learners had to take responsibility for their learning. There was no spoon-feeding and learners were encouraged to look for solutions.

There was also, however, evidence of traditional, conventional teaching with the teacher doing all the talking and the learners being passive. In two of the five classes observed, there were no questions asked by the teacher in an attempt to measure understanding and no learner demonstration of having learnt. As was clear from the teacher questionnaire, this teacher has had only limited experience teaching (between one and five years) and she admitted to be still finding her "teaching style". There was evidence, however, of reflective teaching and the teacher is competent, enthusiastic and dedicated.

Table 7.4: Observational indicators. Durban Girls' High, Mrs D.

Observational indicators	None	Little	Much
Learning is activity-based	10		9 9 10 10
Learners are given the opportunity to demonstrate what they learn	10		9 9 10 10
Teacher provides learners with individual feedback	9 10	10	9 10

Learners are organised in groups	9 10		9 10 10
Teacher integrates themes from different learning areas	9 9 10 10 10 10		
Learner-initiated options	9 10		9 10 10
Teacher-led questions	9 10		9 10 10
Formative assessment	9 10 10		9 10

7.3.1.5 Durban Girls' High, Ms DD

Two Grade 8 classes of thirty-four and twenty-four learners were observed. In both classes, learners were sitting in rows facing the teacher who was standing in front of the class, using the blackboard.

In these classes there was very little evidence of communicative teaching or an OBE-inspired approach. The method used was a variation of the grammar-translation method. Little effective learning seemed to be taking place. There was little activity-based learning: learners were not given the opportunity to demonstrate what they had learnt and there was no teacher feedback. There were very few learner-initiated options and the teacher led most of the activities. One lesson was organised around a listening comprehension which was played to the learners. One line of the dialogue was played at a time, and after each line, the teacher stopped the tape, reread the text slowly, and then asked learners for the meaning in English, which they easily provided in chorus. The teacher then wrote the sentence on the board in French together with the English equivalent. The teacher did not seem to register that learners were understanding the dialogue with ease and that they were bored. On the occasions when learners were called upon to provide a translation, one third of the class responded spontaneously and enthusiastically, the other two-thirds did not respond as they were not paying attention or were doing other things. In all interaction, learners responded immediately and automatically by giving the English equivalent, leading the observer to infer that in this classroom this was the preferred method of teaching French. During writing exercises many pupils did not participate in the activity, but just sat, clearly bored. Many learners used this time for other activities – asking the teacher questions about administrative matters or doing other work. Learners did not say a single word in French in either of the two

classes and the only activity was to translate French sentences, totally decontextualised socially or linguistically, into English. When required to work on their own to prepare a dialogue, little preparation seemed to be happening. Half the class seemed to be working on other assignments. The teacher did not circulate and few learners went to the teacher to ask questions. The teacher was ignored when she asked questions. The teacher did not seem to care whether learners were working or not, learning or not.

Table 7.4: Observational indicators. Durban Girls' High, Ms DD.

Observational indicators	None	Little	Much
Learning is activity-based	8	8	
Learners are given the opportunity to demonstrate what they learn	8 8		
Teacher provides learners with individual feedback	8 8		
Learners are organised in groups	8	8	
Teacher integrates themes from different learning areas	8 8		
Learner-initiated options	8	8	
Teacher-led questions			8 8
Formative assessment	8 8		

7.3.1.6 Kloof High School, Mrs E

One Grade 9 class with twenty learners and one Grade 12 class of thirty learners was observed. Learners were sitting in rows facing the blackboard and the teacher.

This teacher's handling of lessons in many ways reflected OBE principles and was an example of a good communicative approach to foreign-language teaching. This teacher, however, was a little further away from the ideal of OBE than her colleague at the same school (discussed below). It must be noted, however, that one of the classes observed was a Grade 12 class during which preparation for the Senior Certificate examination was the primary aim. There was no group work, and no space for learner-initiated options in the Grade 12 and Grade 9 classes. The teacher seemed to have a tight, perfectly structured lesson plan which she followed rigidly, with no room for digression. Teaching

was, therefore, teacher-centred and content-based with little attention to the process of learning. There was no space for learner-initiated options.

Table 7.5: Observational indicators. Kloof High School, Ms E.

Observational indicators	None	Little	Much
Learning is activity-based			9 12
Learners are given the opportunity to demonstrate what they learn		9 12	
Teacher provides learners with individual feedback		9 12	
Learners are organised in groups	12	9	
Teacher integrates themes from different learning areas	9 12		
Learner-initiated options	9 12		
Teacher-led questions			9 12
Formative assessment*			

*Formative assessment was not evaluated in this observation session. An incomplete observational indicator grid was used and the observer did not notice this during the observation.

7.3.1.7 Kloof High School, Mrs EE

Three Grade 8 classes and one Grade 10 class were observed. There were thirty learners in two classes, twenty-two in another and fourteen in the fourth. Learners sat in rows with files open before them and pencils in hand. They faced the teacher who stood in front of the class, using the blackboard and cassette recorder. The teacher spoke French 90% of the time.

This teacher's handling of lessons in many ways reflected OBE principles and was a good example of communicative foreign language teaching. Learning was activity-based throughout the lessons and learners demonstrated what they were learning at different stages. Learning was outcomes-based. It was clear from the outset – it was often explicitly stated – what the desired outcome of the lesson was desired to be, and along the learning way learners were given the opportunity to put into practice what they had learnt. In all cases they learnt by doing. Work was frequently done in pairs, and the emphasis was on the weaker helping the stronger. Learners were given the opportunity, to a certain extent, to go at their own pace. The teacher circulated and gave individual feedback.

This was the only teacher during the whole observation period who integrated another Learning Area (Technology) into her French teaching. A Grade 8 class was centred around activities on the computer which involved various actions in French. Learners were obviously at ease and had evidently frequently used computer-assisted learning programmes in French.

Nevertheless, learning on the whole, was teacher-led and teacher-paced, and there were very few learner-initiated questions: learners were responsive, but only when called upon, or, they were spontaneous in the sense that they put up their hands to respond only at teacher-allocated moments. This passiveness was no doubt a reflection of the overall, and historically-favoured approach of teacher-as-central figure and learners as passive listeners and followers of instructions.

Table 7.6: Observational indicators. Kloof High School, Ms EE.

Observational indicators	None	Little	Much
Learning is activity-based			8 8 8 10
Learners are given the opportunity to demonstrate what they learn		8	8 8 10
Teacher provides learners with individual feedback		8 8 8	10
Learners are organised in groups	8*	8	8 10
Teacher integrates themes from different learning areas	8 8 10		8*
Learner-initiated options	8	8 8 8 10	
Teacher-led questions		8	8 8 10
Formative assessment**			

* During this class, learners worked individually in front of computers.
**Formative assessment was not evaluated during observation. An incomplete observational indicator grid was used and the observer did not notice this during the observation.

7.3.1.8 Maris Stella Convent School, Mrs F

Five classes were observed from Grades 8 through to 12, excluding Grade 9. There were between seven and nine learners per class. Learners were seated at two long rectangular tables for eight people and one square table for four. The teacher sat with learners or circulated. There was infrequent use of the blackboard. The teacher dictated texts or gave handouts. The teacher spoke French 80% of the time.

The teaching and learning at Maris Stella displayed similar characteristics to those evident at Crawford College, North Coast. I found that an OBE approach to teaching and learning was evident in these classrooms as a general rule and that the use of OBE was not grade dependant. An OBE approach was very evident in Grade 8 as in Grade 12.

Teaching was consistently activity-based with learners not being passive listeners but doers of a variety of different activities. There was much evidence of learner learning and there was consistent teacher feedback. Role-play and group work was a feature of the vast majority of lessons. Themes were not integrated across learning areas, in true OBE fashion, however, subject matter *was* related to the learners' experience. The teacher, although a strong presence in the classroom was guide and facilitator. There was very little summative assessment and assessment consisted mainly of continuous assessment.

There was some good OBE-type teaching going on in this classroom even in Grade 12 when ostensibly one would be preparing learners for the Senior Certificate examination. The lesson observed in Grade 12 centred around a planned outing to see the French film, *Amélie*. The teacher did not, as in the Durban Girls' College example, limit herself to a conversation between the teacher and the group of learners. This teacher used the experience to further learning; she used the experience to revise the telling of the time. An article on the film, written in English, was distributed for individual reading. In pairs, learners then worked on the article in terms of directives given by the teacher. One group then presented their discussion in French to the class. The teacher told learners to listen for structures related to time and place. The teacher then questioned the class on what they had heard. Homework involved writing a paragraph in French on why they would like to see the film. In this lesson, a real-life experience was exploited to further acquisition of the language. Learners worked in groups and listened for meaning and synthesised information.

At this school, in all grades learning was activity-based, learner-centred and participatory.

Table 7.8: Observational indicators. Maris Stella Convent School, Ms F.

Observational indicators	None	Little	Much
Learning is activity-based			8 10 11 11 12
Learners are given the opportunity to demonstrate what they learn		11	8 10 11 12
Teacher provides learners with individual feedback			8 10 11 11 12
Learners are organised in groups			8 10 11 11 12
Teacher integrates themes from different learning areas		11	8 10 11 12
Learner-initiated options		10 11 11 12	8
Teacher-led questions		8 10 11 11 12	
Formative assessment	11		8 10 11 12

7.3.1.9 St Mary's Diocesan School for Girls, Ms G

Two Grade 9 classes, one Grade 11 and two Grade 12 classes were observed. The Grade 12 classes consisted of three learners, the others were bigger classes of nine and twelve (Grade 9) and fifteen learners (Grade 11).

What I observed at this school, with this particular teacher, was very traditional teaching with lip-service being paid to the communicative approach and no evidence whatsoever of OBE principles being put into practice. In fact, the teacher, in the course of conversations about her teaching seemed to consider that OBE practice was irrelevant to French teaching. Firstly, she said, this was due to timetable constraints (Grade 8 had only two periods a week, and Grade 9 five periods over two weeks), and secondly, because French was an additional language it meant that little attention was given it at ministerial level and little importance at school directorship level. The teacher felt she could do whatever she liked, as long as learners passed the Grade 12 exam.

The teacher spoke almost only in French at all levels (over 80% of the time). She engaged in conversations about real-life situations in that she talked about the here and now of learners' reality at the start of all lessons and at intervals during

the lesson. She spoke at a normal conversational pace often including vocabulary which was clearly beyond the learners' level. It was difficult to deduce what the outcome of this "total immersion" was for learners. At all grades, learners rarely responded and when they did, it was in monosyllables.

The lip-service paid to the communicative approach was the frequent use – and over-use in my opinion, as it was rarely systematic or structured, nor was the outcome clear – of recorded texts. These in fact simply repeated what the teacher did throughout most of the classes, which was to speak French. However, the listening comprehensions *were* vaguely linked to a theme. The social context of the dialogues listened to were, however, not taken into consideration.

Learners were not given the opportunity to demonstrate what they had learnt: they listened to the teacher or the tape, responded to the teachers' questions, wrote in a haphazard fashion in their books or on handouts. When answering questions, their often monosyllabic answers were accepted without requiring precision or repetition of the correct expression – be it grammatical, structural or phonetic. The result of this type of teaching is that:

- at lower grades learners are exposed to a lot of spoken French; and
- in Grade 12, learners do not speak well, and their level of expression has minimally improved since Grade 9.

Furthermore, in Grades 9 and 11 and 12, elements of the grammar-translation method were evident: handouts of verb lists were given for homework and were the subject matter for tests. Vocabulary was rarely presented in context, and the writing out of conjugations or translations was a regular exercise.

The teacher had an excellent command of the language and a good rapport with her learners, however, the unsystematic and unstructured and apparently "aimless", outcome-less lesson planning severely impeded effective learning.

Teaching was almost solely teacher-centred, teacher-paced, and there was little if any significant demonstration of learning. When group or pair work was undertaken, it was for five minutes of a sixty-minute lesson or during the last three minutes of a lesson. The main activity learners undertook in all classes observed was listening. Major changes would be needed for teaching to conform to OBE principles. Learning in this teacher's classrooms was for the exam only. The teacher stressed communication only in that she spoke in French most of the time.

Table 7.9: Observational indicators. St Mary's Diocesan School for Girls, Ms G.

Observational indicators	None	Little	Much
Learning is activity-based	12 12	9	9 11
Learners are given the opportunity to demonstrate what they learn	12	9 9	11 12
Teacher provides learners with individual feedback	12 12	9 9	11
Learners are organised in groups	11 12 12	9 9	
Teacher integrates themes from different learning areas	9 9 11 12	12	
Learner-initiated options	9 12	9 11 12	
Teacher-led questions	12		9 9 11 12
Formative assessment	9 9 11 12 12		

7.3.1.10 St Mary's Diocesan School for Girls, Ms GG

Two Grade 8 classes were observed. There were twenty-one learners present in one class and twenty in the other. In both classes learners were seated in rows, facing the teacher who was standing at the front of the class, using the blackboard and the cassette recorder.

This was one of the more extreme examples of traditional teaching and one of the classes observed in which very few OBE principles were implemented. Learners were actively "doing" for five to ten minutes of the sixty-minute lesson. The rest of the time, learners sat through a number of exercises related to the theme, but without their being linked on a learning continuum. Exercises seemed to have been chosen randomly. There was no apparent link to anything previously learnt. Each lesson seemed to be discrete and there was no evidence

of an attempt to relate learning to real life. There was no teacher feedback and no assessment.

Learners were passive listeners who were attentive, responsive, but lacking in spontaneity. Teaching was pure "spoon-feeding" with minimal intellectual stimulation or cognitive development. No life-skills were taught, except to be passive and obey authority. There was no use of language to think and reason, to access, process and use information for learning. There was no scope for fast learners to be stretched and the slower learners were left to battle along without aid.

When learners worked in pairs, the noise level rose and the teacher was quite clearly uncomfortable and verbally entreated learners to quieten down. Her body language and facial expressions expressed this discomfort and embarrassment. When the teacher listened to the dialogues prepared by learners she seemed eager to get this part of the lesson over, as she repeatedly said "We're nearly done", "Only three more", and "We're done". Learners clearly did not share her eagerness to "be done" because they were clearly enjoying speaking French. Each activity seemed to be treated by the teacher as a list of chores to get through.

It must be mentioned that the teacher was visibly (and she later articulated this) uncomfortable at having an observer in the classroom. The teacher was not experienced, nor was she really qualified to teach French. She admitted to lacking confidence in her capacity to teach the language, as she considered her proficiency to be mediocre. Regarding OBE, she considered that the continuous assessment it entailed was onerous and she therefore did not do any continuous assessment in class and assessed only using summative testing.

Table 7.10: Observational indicators. St Mary's Diocesan School for Girls, Ms GG.

Observational indicators	None	Little	Much
Learning is activity-based		8 8	
Learners are given the opportunity to demonstrate what they learn	8	8	
Teacher provides learners with individual feedback	8	8	
Learners are organised in groups		8 8	
Teacher integrates themes from different learning areas	8 8		
Learner-initiated options	8 8		
Teacher-led questions			8 8
Formative assessment	8 8		

7.3.2 Results of the classroom observations

From my observations I conclude that out of the ten teachers observed only two teachers had clearly made the proverbial "paradigm shift" and used an OBE approach in all classes consistently. Four other teachers tried to integrate OBE teaching strategies in their classroom practice. In other classrooms, OBE was not the educational approach used and teaching was typical of the traditional transmission approach. Only one of the teachers observed made the Learning Outcomes known to learners at the beginning of the lesson. When no Learning Outcomes were made known to learners and when the observer enquired as to what the desired outcomes of the lesson or series of lessons were, teachers responded in a manner that showed that they had rarely planned the lesson with a clearly defined outcome in mind.

A communicative approach to French teaching was used by the majority of teachers observed. However, how the communicative approach was put into practice varied considerably. Different teachers, even in the same schools, used a communicative approach to varying degrees. Some schools were excellent examples of very good communicative approach teaching with the use of authentic texts, learner-centred, activity-based learning, group work and role-play. In other schools, only some aspects of the methodology of a communicative approach were used. For example, in most cases learners were exposed to only a limited range of different aspects of communicative competence. Listening

comprehension (most often listening to the teacher speaking French in the context of the classroom) was the competence privileged. Learners listened passively, be it to the teacher or to a taped dialogue and rarely did any follow up activities. Furthermore, listening comprehensions were often not situated in a social context and the sociolinguistic aspects of the communication (e.g. pragmatic and cultural competences) were not developed.

There was also some very traditional teaching which was exam-driven and centred on exercises in a manual. In these classrooms, learning was centred around discourse only on some occasions and words rather than meaning were privileged. Authentic texts were used but the exploitation of the text was limited to the teacher reading the text and translating it into English with no further exploitation or active engagement by the learners. In one extreme case, a derivative of the grammar-translation method was used.

Responses to the questionnaire made it clear that many teachers equate the communicative approach to second language teaching with OBE. There is a perception that if one uses manuals in the classroom which are conceived in accordance with the principles of the communicative approach (for example *Encore Tricolore,* and *Tricolore*), one is "doing" OBE. Hence, the prevalence in classrooms of learners sitting in rows, facing the teacher and the blackboard, with books or photocopies of pages taken out of books in front of them, pencil in hand, listening to the teacher who goes through the exercises from the communicative approach-inspired manual.

In general, the teaching was organised around a theme which was taken from a manual or determined by a text which had been chosen by the teacher for its thematic or grammatical interest. The theme changed every lesson or every two lessons.

In some classrooms teaching was clearly exam- and test-oriented. In a few it was life-oriented, but in the majority, the outcome of the lesson seemed to be the exercises done.

7.4 Conclusion

Some French L2 teachers have had some training in OBE and are reflective; they seem to have understood the basic principles of OBE but seem to be at a loss as to how to translate these principles into classroom practice. In the forty-seven classes observed there seems to be three categories of teaching practice. In the one category, teachers consciously and successfully integrate outcomes-based principles and teaching strategies are to a great extent activity-based and learner-centred. In these classes (Crawford College, North Coast and Maris Stella), learning is linked to the real world and assessment is continuous. A second category of teaching seems to ignore totally the principles of OBE and here teaching is teacher-centred and content-based, learning is rarely made relevant to the real-world and is exam-driven (Durban Girls' High, Mrs DD;, Durban Girls' College; St Mary's). The third category falls between the two. Teachers in this category use techniques which show an awareness of OBE and there is an attempt to shift emphasis from the teacher to learner. Role-play, problem-solving tasks, and the linking of topics to the real-life experiences of learners is evident (Durban Girls' High, Mrs D; Kloof High School; Crawford College, Durban).

French teachers are on the whole competent and dedicated. Schools are well-resourced and learners are generally motivated (except for the one class described above) and interested. Two schools stand out for the level of involvement of their learners in the learning process and the critical ability of learners. These two schools are Crawford College, North Coast and Maris Stella Durban. These are the two schools in which OBE was practised the most effectively and intelligently.

The adoption of an OBE strategy in the classroom has the potential to inspire a paradigm shift in language instruction because it pushes language instruction beyond the traditional skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing and the occasional study of culture.[3] To know French in OBE terms is to be able to use the language in real-life settings to transmit and receive information: to make use of media produced in the target culture for learning and enjoyment; and to participate in groups, societies and cultures where the medium of communication is French. What is to be stressed in an OBE approach to French as a foreign language is no longer a knowledge *of* French, but *knowledge for* communication and development and an *ability to* communicate in every day domains.

In Chapter 8 two examples of OBE in practice will be described. One is taken from Crawford College, Durban and the other Crawford College, North Coast. The two learning experiences to be described were observed when the research project was undertaken. These two learning experiences are pre-eminent examples of an OBE approach to Second Additional Language learning and exemplify good Second Additional Language teaching.

Endnotes

[1] The observational indicators were also inspired by the observational indicators of the study performed by Jansen et al. 1999. *'A very noisy OBE' A Report on the Implementation Of OBE Inside Grade 1 Classrooms.* Centre for Education Research, Evaluation and Policy. Faculty of Education. University of Durban-Westville.

[2] The OBE NCS has not yet been implemented in Grade 12 and the final Senior Certificate examination is based on the old, traditional curriculum.

[3] The 1990s in the USA has seen the development of the Standards for Foreign Language Learning (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 1999) under the aegis of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act. The Standards have five content areas : Communication and Cultures (which fall within the parameters of traditional content areas and that teachers have experience of but lack experience in integrating them with other areas), Connections, Comparisons, Communities (which encourage the exploration of connections with other disciplines, and leads learners to understand the systematic nature of languages and cultures and the use of language skills beyond the classroom. The aim is to lead learners to use what they know in creative ways and in combination with other knowledge and skills).

CHAPTER 8

OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION IN THE FRENCH CLASSROOM: AN EVALUATION OF MODES OF IMPLEMENTATION

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will describe and evaluate two examples of outcomes-based education (OBE) in practice in the French Second Additional Language classroom. One example is constituted of a teaching unit which comprises two lessons observed at Crawford College, North Coast during the classroom observation phase of the research (see Chapter 7). The second is a learning experience which I observed in its performance stage (a copy of a video recording of the performance is attached as an adjunct to this dissertation) and which had been described to me by the French teacher at Crawford College, Durban during the pre-classroom observation interviews. The Crawford College, North Coast teaching unit is a clear illustration of a learner-centred teaching and learning situation while the Crawford College, Durban learning experience is an example of integrated instruction.

The OBE emphasis on outcomes, which are demonstrable actions or performances, dictates that pedagogical practices are activity-based. Learners must be able to apply knowledge and skills in a tangible manner. Outcomes are a demonstration that learning has been achieved and learning in OBE terms is *doing*. Experiential learning is therefore a basic tenet of the OBE paradigm and the NCS. Both examples described in this chapter take outcomes as their starting point and practise Learning Area integration and employ group work.

8.2 Example of group work in a French classroom

8.2.1 Description of lesson activities

The teaching unit which I observed was made up of two lessons: one 30-minute lesson; and one 60-minute lesson which were part of a continuum. The main learning outcome was that "[t]he learner will know and be able to use the sounds, words and grammar of the language to create and interpret texts" (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Languages,* 2002:29). The twelve learners in the group were in Grade 8 and had had approximately forty to fifty hours of instruction in French; language acquisition was therefore at an elementary level. The first 30-minute lesson involved understanding the conjugation pattern in the present indicative of the *–er* group of verbs and then conjugating a number of these verbs with subject pronouns. The second 60-minute lesson involved using these same *–er* verbs, with nouns, prepositions and adverbs to create simple sentences. Both of the lessons comprised two parts: the presentation and explanation of new information by the teacher using mainly direct instruction but with significant participation of the class through activities, and the appropriation and use of this new information in the context of group work.

The first lesson began with the teacher telling learners what they were going to do: they were going to learn how to conjugate the fifteen or so verbs they had learnt as lexical items in a previous lesson. In order to aid memorisation[1] and avoid the use of English equivalents, these verbs had been learnt previously in conjunction with gestures which had all been chosen by the learners. *Chercher* (to look for), was symbolically represented by placing the hand above the eyes (Figure 8.1), *écouter* (to listen), by cupping the hand behind the ear, *jouer* (to play), by a motion of the hands and arms indicating the revolving of a skipping-rope over the head For *adorer* (to love or adore), learners had chosen a gesture indicating an object or creature being held up by the scruff of its neck and being gently slapped on the behind. This particular gesture was a source of great merriment each time it was used and evidently referred to a situation which was

meaningful to the class. Through this creation of gestures, the learners' own knowledge, and interpretation of reality, were brought together in the learners' work in the classroom. Some of the signs were stereotypical and clichéd (*chercher* and *écouter*, for example), while others were specific to the learners' world experience as individuals or as a group (*adorer*). The use of gestures to represent meaning symbolically is a distinguishing feature of the teaching unit and recurs at different stages of the learning and teaching process. The use of gestures means that meaning is not just known, but understood and can therefore be used meaningfully.

After the learners had practised the verbs by calling them out in unison using the gestures symbolising their meaning, the teacher chose one of the verbs and conjugated it orally. The teacher, observing the rule regarding the order in which the four language learning skills are best learnt, initially presented only those verb forms of which the stems are homophonous: for example, for the verb *chercher, je cherche, tu cherches, il cherche, elle cherche, ils cherchent, elles cherchent.* Learners repeated after the teacher. After this aural/oral presentation and activity, the teacher wrote the conjugated verbs on the board, while stressing the pronunciation and calling attention to the different spellings. The teacher then called out the conjugation of the *nous* and *vous* forms, which sound different to all the others: *nous cherchons, vous cherchez*. These were repeated in unison by the class and then the teacher wrote them on the board, drawing attention to the spelling.

The teacher then revised the personal pronouns *je, tu, il, elle,* etc. (I, you, he, she), which had also been learnt previously using gestures. The fingers, used in a counting motion, figuratively represented the eight subject pronouns: the thumb of the left hand as one representing the first person singular *je,* the index finger as two representing the second person singular *tu*, the middle finger the third person *il,* etc. (Figure 8.2). This whole-class expository teaching session took approximately ten minutes, that is, one third of the lesson.

In the second part of the session, which took up the remaining twenty minutes of lesson time, learners played a game which entailed group work. The game involved two groups whose configuration had been decided upon in a previous lesson. Group One chose a verb from the fifteen or so learnt previously and conjugated it, from memory, with a pronoun of their choice (for example *chercher,* with *ils* = *ils cherchent*). The phrase was then written on a sheet of paper, shown to the teacher who checked whether it was correct. One person in the group was then elected to make the appropriate gestures which would express the meaning of the verb chosen and the personal pronoun chosen. Group Two collectively deciphered the gestures and one person was elected to write the deciphered phrase on the board. Roles were then reversed and the game continued until all the subject pronouns had been used with a selection of the *–er* verbs. Points were given for the correct interpretation and spelling and at the end of the session scores were tallied and the winning group was announced.[2]

What could have been a dull, expository lesson on the conjugation of verbs with learners passively listening to the teacher then completing drill exercises, was turned into an exuberant game with every learner participating animatedly, actively engaging with the structures which they were required to construct, deconstruct and then reconstruct using different mediums of expression. Learners were "manipulating" language in an interactive way; they were required to work cooperatively within the individual groups and to work interactively in a competitive manner between groups. Furthermore, learners had control over their learning; they themselves decided on the rules of the game and on the *modus operandi.* There was much discussion, difference of opinion and negotiation, with the teacher intervening only to suggest a vote be taken when it was clear consensus was not going to be reached.

The second 60-minute lesson built on the first, reinforcing previous learning and then extending with the introduction of new foundational knowledge. The format of the learning was the same as that for the previous lesson: direct instruction with learner participation, followed by group work. The first step of the second session entailed the revision of the conjugations learnt the previous day and then association with the subject pronouns. The second step, was to tell the learners what they were going to do: they were going to create sentences with the verbs and pronouns they had learnt and also incorporate prepositions, nouns and adverbs of frequency. The interactive nature of the teacher's style was evident when a learner interjected at that point to say: "We've never done those". The teacher picked up on the *never* and began to teach adverbs, again using gestures to represent meaning. With the open hand held rigidly in a horizontal position in front of the chest with the palm facing inward, the teacher asked the class which finger was the most important. The class answered in chorus, "The thumb." "And the least important? the finger you *never* need to use?" asked the teacher. "The little finger", answered the class. The first symbolises *toujours* (always) the latter, *jamais* (never), the index finger *souvent* (often), the middle finger *quelquefois* (sometimes), the ring finger *rarement* (sometimes) (Figure 8.3). Pronunciation was practised and the new lexical items were memorised by class repetition in unison aided by the teacher's writing of the adverbs on the board. This part of the lesson took approximately fifteen minutes.

The teacher then invited the class to choose French nouns they knew that could be used in sentences. These nouns, like the verbs, pronouns and prepositions, had been learnt previously also accompanied by gestures to represent meaning visually. Hence, *la maison* (house or home), was represented by drawing in the air, a child's design of a house, *la plage* (beach), by the hands placed behind the head in a sign of relaxation, *la piscine* (swimming pool), by the breast-stroke action, *le café* (café), by the gesture which commonly symbolises the holding of a cup, (little finger in the air and bringing the cup to one's lips). The latter symbol was an obvious reference to an in-house joke, similar to that encountered for the

verb *adorer* mentioned above, as the gesture was accompanied by laughter each time it was used. Learners then individually wrote the nouns with their relevant articles on the blackboard. Learners then revised the nouns by calling them out aloud with the accompanying gesture: thus, listening, speaking, writing and viewing were being practised in this part of the lesson.

The teacher then consolidated understanding of the previously learnt prepositions *dans, sur, sous, devant, derrière* (in/inside, on, under, in front of, behind), again with the help of gestures (Figure 8.4). This part of the lesson which entailed the consolidation of previous learning took approximately seven minutes.

The learners, having acquired the language content which was necessary for the making of meaning in sentences, were then divided into groups. As in the previous lesson, group work involved playing a game in which two teams competed against each other and for which scores were kept. Group One created a sentence, wrote it out, had it checked by the teacher, then mimed it to the other group. Group Two collectively decided on the transcription, and the chosen scribe wrote it up on the board. The learning experience was based on the principle of going from the known to the unknown: by building on and building up knowledge already acquired, learners created sentences. The task was demanding in that learners needed to source the different pieces of the puzzle from memory. They were also challenged as word order had not been discussed, nor had the possible intransitive use of verbs. Thus, learners had the opportunity to ask themselves questions, to detect problems, to be reflective. Answers to questions and solutions to problems had to be found through discussion with other members of the group or by calling on the teacher for help. Moreover, learners had to associate the lexical items with a specific gesture – or conversely, interpret the gestures, articulate them and write them, thereby consolidating and confirming their assimilation of the function of the items. This latter part of the lesson took approximately thirty-five minutes. It was clear that a

Figure 8.1: Gestural representation of the verb *chercher* (to look for)

Figure 8.2: Gestural representation of subject pronouns

elle *il* *tu* *ils* *elles*

nous *je* *vous*

Figure 8.3: Gestural representation of adverbs

toujours

souvent

quelquefois

rarement

jamais

Figure 8.4: Gestural representation of the preposition *dans* (in)

lot of new learning, not planned by the teacher, was taking place. The teacher circulated from group to group explaining, where required, grammatical or syntactical structures.

8.2.2 Analysis of an empirical event

The described learning experience involved taking separate elements of French language (verbs, pronouns, prepositions, etc.) and combining them to construct sentences. In essence, this exercise is little different from the type of structural exercise found in most language manuals. In the following example from *Café Crème 2, Méthode de Français Cahier d'exercices* (Di Giura, *et al,*1998:85), elements of language are given in separate lists and learners are asked to take an element from each list in order to create five different sentences.

À partir du tableau, faites cinq phrases. Choisissez les éléments qu'il vous faut.

	je			cependant	le public	
Bien que	vous	répondre	correctement			ne pas suivre.
	M. Morice	expliquer	clairement	mais	certains	

~ Bien que vous expliquiez clairement, certains ne suivent pas.

The desired outcome is ostensibly the same as the one desired in the lessons described above. My contention is, however, that in the activities discussed above, learning is more effective for two main reasons: learners participate creatively in the learning process; and learning is a collaborative effort. With regard to the participatory aspect of the learning experience, learners provide input on three levels:

1. They have a say in the management of the learning environment (they decide on the composition of groups and on the rules of the game), they have control over how they proceed, and are responsible for the structure within which sentences are created.
2. They create some of the strategies of learning. The gesticulatory language is a mnemonic device which aids memorisation, and

kinaesthetically conveys meaning thus avoiding translation into the mother tongue. It turns learning into a game which is motivating and fun. However, more importantly, the expression of meaning by gestures chosen by the learners is direct proof of meaning having been made and negotiated.

3. Learners are involved in the learning process, they are not passive recipients of content. The combination of traditional learning techniques – memorisation, choral repetition, correction of pronunciation and spelling – along with group work, which is an open-ended learning experience, is particularly successful. Too often it is thought that in the outcomes-based classroom "traditional' teaching techniques, like memorisation, must be banished. But, in language learning, such techniques are essential, but just as essential, is to put learners in a situation where they can appropriate the learning, exploit it actively, in a real-life context in which they are motivated to make knowledge their own so that it can be used in future.

As for the collaborative feature of the learning experience, it is clear that group work should by definition be a collaborative exercise. Members of the group work together to achieve a common goal; they interact with one another and draw on one another's knowledge and skills. In this example, the basic characteristic of group work is enhanced: learners are required to construct sentences from elements which have been memorised. There is no written support; they depend entirely on each others' knowledge of the lexical items; their meaning and spelling and of the rules of conjugation and sentence structure and this collaborative construction of knowledge is all the more creative.

It was clear to me, the observer, that the learners in this classroom situation were inspired and stimulated by the exercise. The fact that groups were in competition with each other motivated learners to complete tasks efficiently and encouraged their learning. In this learning environment they had to rely on themselves and

each other to recall information and use it creatively to construct knowledge in a subjective, personal manner. When they had created their sentence, mimed it and were waiting for the other group to interpret their gestures, they spontaneously, in pairs or alone, went over the vocabulary to be learned, their hands making gestures which indicated that they were active and that learning was taking place.

During the above sessions, learning was a process with learners constructing meaning. The defining features of this learning situation are echoed in the Williams and Burden list (1997:205-207) of the characteristics of a constructivist approach to foreign language teaching and learning:

- Learners learn what is meaningful to them.
- Learners learn better if they feel in control of what they are learning.
- Learning is closely linked to how people feel about themselves.
- Learning takes place in a social context through interaction with other people.
- There is a significant role of the teacher as mediator in the language classroom.
- Learning is influenced by the situation in which it occurs.

In the learning activities I have described, all Killen's criteria for successful group work (quoted in Chapter 4) were met. The learning activities were an excellent example of a creative learning process in a foreign language classroom in which learners' competency is at an elementary level.[3] Learners took a finite set of options, accorded meaning to them, and then accessed skills to use them to negotiate, create and interpret meaning. In creative group work such as described in the example, learners learn because they are *doing* in a meaningful way, and in a situation over which they have control. This is the baseline of a creative learning process. It is also consistent with the outcomes-based principles of the NCS: the activities were learner-centred and activity-based with the process of learning holding a position of equal privilege as the content of learning. Many of the cross-curricular outcomes were met: learners identified and solved problems, made decisions using critical and creative thinking; worked with others as members of a group, organised and managed themselves and their

activities; collected, analysed, organised and critically evaluated information; and, communicated using visual, symbolic and language skills. The teacher in the example was a good facilitator. As the transmitter of knowledge in the first part of the lessons, the teacher became a guide and mentor, circulating from group to group, answering questions, asking questions, correcting and clarifying, facilitating the achievement of the outcomes of the Languages learning area (see above). Learners listened, spoke, viewed and wrote in French, reflected on the structure and use of language. Through these activities, along with participation and collaboration, learning took place, with knowledge and skills developing, advanced integrated knowledge coming into being as part of an organic, creative process.

What could have been a dry memorisation exercise involving interaction only between a mute learner and a list of words and rules under the authoritarian control of a didactic and dogmatic teacher, was instead a communicative, inter-personal game with creative interaction in French. Learners were *enabled* to learn effectively. They interacted with one another and the teacher. Drawing on the basic knowledge which had been provided by the teacher, they engaged with that knowledge, reconstructing it, making it their own. The learning brought meaning and functionality to the components of the language which enhanced the learners' understanding and their assimilation of the new content. Also, prior learning was activated, helping learners to reconstruct and integrate, but in context, not in isolation, their understanding of the new learning matter. Most importantly, learners were motivated to learn because the situation was meaningful to them, they saw it to be functional, and last, but not least, it was fun.

8.3 Example of an integrated learning experience in the French classroom

8.3.1 Narrative of thematic activities

Another example of a learning experience which is creative, fun and consistent with the principles of the OBE-inspired NCS is the *Antigone experience*, a project

conceived by the French and Drama teachers at Crawford College, Durban. While this learning experience is learner-centred, experiential and participatory, it is also one in which integration is the unifying factor. The *Antigone experience,* conceived as an integrated project, brought together not only the learning areas of French and Drama, but also Technology, Life Orientation, History, Jewish Studies, isiZulu and Art.

The learning experience centred around the twentieth century play *Antigone* by French dramatist Jean Anouilh. The play had been prescribed at Grade 11 as a prescribed text book for French and for Drama. The two teachers concerned saw an opportunity to put together an integrated project with Anouilh's text as the trigger for teaching and learning. The outcome of the 'experience' was a performance of the play for the general public (Appendix D.1). The specific Learning Outcomes of this experience in the French class were the six outcomes of the Languages learning area listed above and incorporate listening, speaking, reading and viewing, writing, thinking and reasoning, language structure and use. The outcomes of the learning experience for the Drama students were the four outcomes of the Arts and Culture learning area:

> Learning Outcome 1: Creating, Interpreting and Presenting.
> The learner will be able to create, interpret and present work in each of the art forms.
>
> Learning Outcome 2: Reflecting.
> The learner will be able to reflect critically on artistic and cultural processes, products and styles in past and present contexts.
>
> Learning Outcome 3: Participating and collaborating.
> The learner will be able to demonstrate personal and interpersonal skills through individual and group participation in Arts and Culture activities.
>
> Learning Outcome 4: Expressing and Communicating.
> The learner will be able to analyse and use multiple forms of communication and expression in Arts and Culture (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Arts and Culture*, 2002:37-38).

If one considers teaching from a traditional point of view, one would say that the aims and objectives in the French class and in the Drama class are totally

different and that integration is not possible. From an OBE perspective, however, this is not at all the case: the overarching outcome of the teaching and learning in this 'experience' was a performance and in the Languages learning area and the Arts and Culture learning area this performance was done in a communication situation in which knowledge and skills, values and attitudes which will be useful to learners after school were integrated.

8.3.2 Integrated learning

Integration is at the heart of the application of South African OBE:

> The principle of integrated learning is integral to outcomes-based education. Integration ensures that learners experience the Learning Areas as linked and related. It supports and expands their opportunities to attain skills, acquire knowledge and develop attitudes and values encompassed across the curriculum. (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Overview*, 2002:13)

OBE is an holistic approach which precludes the teaching of subject areas in isolation. The concept of integration is articulated in the NCS in a variety of ways, but predominantly in the terms of outcomes which is the pillar of OBE and the NCS (see Chapter 4).

As noted earlier, outcomes, which describe what the learner should be able to *do* at the end of a learning experience, are integrated between and amongst themselves and determine teaching and learning. The Learning Outcomes for each learning area are interlinked between themselves and integrated across learning areas. Thus in the Languages learning area the outcome *Speaking:* "The learner will be able to communicate confidently and effectively in spoken language in a wide range of situations" is integrated with the learning outcome *Language Structure and Use* as well as the other Learning Outcomes in the Learning Area. Furthermore, as these outcomes can be achieved in a French lesson or in a Drama or Technology lesson, the outcomes of the different learning areas may to be viewed as interlinked.

Integration ensures "that learners experience the Learning Areas as linked and related" *(Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Overview,* 2002:13). But outcomes in NCS terms are also integrated in that they relate to various domains of cognition as well as to the affective and psychomotor domains. Outcomes integrate theory, practice and reflection and this commitment to integration is linked to the concept of competence:

> The integration of knowledge and skills across subjects and terrains of practice is crucial for achieving applied competence as defined in the NQF. Applied competence aims at integrating three discrete competences, namely practical, foundational and reflective competences. In adopting integration and applied competence, the *National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12 (Schools)* seeks to promote an integrated learning of theory, practice and reflection (*Draft National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12: Overview*, 2002:10).

The overarching outcome for all the learning areas involved in the *Antigone experience* was a *theatrical performance.* However, the process involved in achieving this outcome also implied *expert performance* in which a variety of human capacities, multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1996) were concurrently used. The outcome of the project, the theatrical performance, required the integration of different domains of cognition as well as of the affective and psychomotor domains. In effect, the project integrated theory, practice and reflection. It implied the achievement of *expert performance.*

The 1995 Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) document, *Ways of Seeing the National Qualifications Framework* (cited in Gultig *et al*, 1998:63), defines expert performance in the following manner:

> Expert action or performance is [...] a simultaneous demonstration of a whole range of human dimensions. In traditional depictions of performance these dimensions are usually viewed as discrete units or compartments and can be broken up into: knowledge + understanding + skills + values/attitudes = performance. The assumption is that the units operate independently from one another and can be acquired separately. [...] Our understanding of performance is not that each component is separate, but that all components are integrated into a whole.

The HSRC document goes on to explain its view of performance as follows:

- What we know depends on how we think about or process information, (abilities relating to problem-posing, analysis and synthesis). This, we said, equals knowledge.

- Knowledge is part of performance and is not value-free. It is internalized understanding that a person brings to bear on a particular situation or activity. Understanding is thus not separate from knowledge – it is knowledge.

- The construction of knowledge occurs within particular value orientations or frameworks. Values are part of performance since they determine the ways in which we process information mentally and emotionally.

- Performance actions or utterances may be verbal or in writing, or they may involve using a tool [...]. The manipulation of tools and the manual dexterity required to do so are thus parts of performance [...] They depend on the mental and emotional dimensions of performance for meaning and expression (cited in Gultig *et al*, 1998:63-64).

The *Antigone experience,* conceived as an integrated project bringing together various learning areas and spanning different levels of competence, was a learning process which required from learners the acquisition of varied competencies. The theatrical performance and other visible and quantifiable manifestations of outcomes which the 'experience' involved, required the simultaneous demonstration of knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes.

Over and above these competencies, the *Antigone experience* required the demonstration of communicative competence and the ability to interact. The performance required the use of language in particular ways and in "a wide range situations" (Learning outcome 1, Speaking). It implied gestural aspects, and required interpretation. Furthermore, it was by its very nature a collaborative effort which implied interaction between learners within the same group, and between different groups; it also implied interaction with teachers. Communication and interactive ability are an integral part of performance on any level.

The HSRC definition of performance adds this communicative component to the components knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitude. Performance, in this definition is socially mitigated:

> Performance does not occur in a vacuum [...]. People act with or in relation to other people. The communicative or interactive dimension of performance provides one of the standards against which such performance is judged (cited in Gultig, *et al,* 1998:64).

The notion of expert performance as defined in the HSRC document is mirrored in the NCS understanding of integration. Different areas of knowledge and skills, the application of knowledge and the linking of skills to the real world is one of the fundamental principles of the NCS – they are also the characteristics of the learning experience I am now going to describe.

8.3.3 An example of integrated teaching and learning

Once the decision had been taken by the two teachers to engage in an integrated learning experience, the teachers proceeded with learners in a manner which developed critical thinking, participation and democratic values. In an interactive situation, with the teacher as guide, the teachers discussed the idea with Grade 11 learners and then, as in all real-life situations, they began by asking questions and allowing learners to ask themselves questions. The first question was related to the language of the text: the French class read the play in the original French while the Drama class read it in translation. A major issue was how the production was to be arranged so that the play could be performed in both French and in English. It was decided that the tragedy would be adapted to take the form of a trial and the adaptation would be written in English. During the trial there would be flashbacks during which extracts from the original French version would be performed. The scenes would therefore be in French and in English alternatively.

This led to the question of how the French scenes would be understood by the audience which would be largely English-speaking. It was decided to integrate a

PowerPoint presentation into the script so that visual images, juxtaposed with key sentences in English, could be projected on to a screen during the performance of the scenes in French. Grade 9 learners in the Technology classes were asked to participate in the project and their brief was to create the *PowerPoint* presentation. The *PowerPoint* presentation would comprise a few lines of text in English and self-explanatory images of archetypal or symbolic characters such as dictators, heroes, villains and lovers as well as scenes that depicted war, suffering and death. Learners chose iconographic characters like Luke Skywalker (hero) and Darth Vader (villain) from the *Star Wars* movies, and actress and actor, Claire Danes and Leo di Caprio (lovers) playing *Romeo and Juliet* in the Baz Luhrman film version of the play. These images linked Sophocle's legendary characters to those of contemporary icons thus allowing for learners and the young people in the audience to capture the pertinence of Ancient Greece to today's world.

Grade 10 drama learners were also drawn into the project as were the Grade 11 English class: Grade 10 drama learners played the Chorus, and they opened the performance with a reciting of an epic poem on the battle between Eteocles and Polynices. The poem was written by one of the learners in the English class (Appendix D.2). The judge's judgment, which ends the play, was also written in the English class by the learner playing the role of the judge. During the History and Jewish Studies classes, learners carried out research on the theme of tyranny and of police states over the centuries. This study led to the creation of a multimedia exhibition which was held on the two nights the play was performed. The music for the production, comprising extracts from Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* and the extracts of the score of Steven Spielberg's film *Schindler's List,* were chosen by learners for their mournful tone. Once again, learners were able to link the world of their own experiences to that of learning. The stage set with its Corinthian columns and aged map of ancient Greece was created in collaboration with learners in the Art classes. In a spirit of multilingualism and multiculturalism, learners studying isiZulu joined the project and at the start of the

production declaimed a praise poem to Antigone and Creon written by the isiZulu teacher (Appendix D.3); at the end of interval, in the Zulu tradition, learners invited the audience to go back into the hall with cries of *Wozani! Wozani!* (Come! Come!).

Grade 10 French learners were also involved in the project. They had the task of welcoming French-speaking invited guests and of escorting them to the venue where the pre-play reception was being held. In the Life Orientation classes learners discussed the catering, the decoration of the venue and how they would dress. In the French class the necessary expressions needed to communicate in such a situation were learnt and practised. On the evening of the performance these learners were highly motivated to say as much as possible to the guests because their French oral mark for the term was to be based largely on this real-life opportunity to speak French to French speakers. As an invited guest, I was impressed at how keen learners were to initiate conversation in French.

The *Antigone experience* was an integrated learning experience which eventually brought together more than the initial two learning areas, French and Drama, it involved learners in Technology, English, History, Jewish Studies, isiZulu Art and Life Orientation. It also involved learners in Grades 9 and 10 as well as the initial Grade 11. In this way, different learning areas were interlinked and learners experienced teaching and learning as an integrated activity leading to an overarching outcome. Furthermore, in working across and between learning areas, Critical and Developmental Outcomes were achieved. Learners worked effectively with others in different classes and learning areas as members of a group. They used science and technology critically and effectively and learnt to be culturally and aesthetically sensitive across social contexts.

The theatrical performance itself was an integrated experience as were the rehearsals and the planning and writing of the script. The day-to-day learning and teaching over the six months that led up to the performance, however, took place

in the individual classrooms, was centred on individual learning areas and stressed each particular learning area's outcomes. In the French classroom, these activities were grouped around speaking, listening, reading, writing and viewing and language structure and use.

The first activity related to the project that was undertaken in the French class was a research project on subjects that allowed contextualisation of the play within a modern framework (Appendix D.4): classical tragedy, Sophocles, the myth of Oedipus, Sophocles story of Antigone, Jean Anouilh, the Occupation of France by the Germans during World War II, the French Resistance. The class was divided into groups each of which researched a different subject. The results of the research were then presented orally to the class. Each group provided brief notes for the rest of class of its research topic thereby sharing the knowledge obtained during the group research. During this activity, learners were required to collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information. They had to organise and manage themselves responsibly and effectively and eventually also, communicate effectively using their language skills in various modes and domains.

During the studying of the text itself, learners read, analysed, discussed and interpreted the plot, the characters and the language. Parallel to this reading and discussion, learners worked in French on questions which allowed for an in-depth analysis of the characters and on analyses of various extracts in which they were required to describe, quote, interpret or express opinions (Appendix D.5). The French teacher describes this phase in the following manner:

> Over several weeks the French students tackled the text. Because the language is relatively simple in the original French, they were able to sight-read the parts. As they became more familiar with the characters they began to appreciate the impact and the imagery of the language. Many heated debate [sic] arguments ensued: Was Antigone being noble and selfless or unreasonable, self-centred and bent on her own martyrdom? Was Creon not correct in putting the pragmatic needs of government above all else?

> Opinions vacillated, as indeed they should, proving that Anouilh's skill was still working its magic in this African classroom in the year 2000.
>
> On the final day, there was utter silence we reached [sic] the last few lines and read aloud the closing speech ... a reaction that performers agree is a sincere tribute to the emotional power of the moment. (Afterwards came the "Youpi!" of delighted teenagers liberated from their suffering!)
>
> Throughout the play the students answered worksheets (in French) describing, quoting, interpreting the characters and their actions (Anne Lüssi, unpublished notes on the *Antigone experience*).

All the language activities chosen to promote linguistic competence in areas such as vocabulary and grammar were closely linked to the project. For example, learners prepared and then videotaped a TV news cast for Radio Thebes on the eve of Antigone's trial. The main aim of the exercise was the manipulation of different registers and tones, as well as developing an awareness of media body language and the techniques of interviewing different categories of people. Learners devised interviews with Creon's guards, a spokesperson for the palace, a fashion commentator, and a journalist. Another language activity was the preparation and presentation of the weather forecast for Radio Thebes, with, in the background, a map of Ancient Greece using the pictograms and jargon of contemporary weather forecast presenters. A third activity was the writing of thank you letters the day after the performance. Learners had received a letter from their French teacher thanking them for their input (Appendix D.6). With this letter as a model, learners wrote, on school stationery, letters to thank all those who had collaborated in the performance. Not only did they learn the form of this kind of letter in French, but they practised the life-skill of writing prompt notes of appreciation. The obvious pleasure of the recipients and the fact that these letters were the subject of conversation in the whole school for a number of days, was more positive feedback than any mark given in a traditional class situation could have procured.

One of the key features of this learning experience apart from integration is that it allowed for learner-paced learning. The learning experience allowed for different abilities to express themselves in different activities and at different

rates. In the spirit of OBE where there are no good or bad learners, and where each learner is enabled to develop skills at their own pace (Spady, 1994: 9-10) the different learning possibilities of learners were taken into consideration. Each learner benefited from the project at their own level of competence. The weaker learners played the role of secondary characters, but because they had limited roles, they also had to read the roles of the main characters when the latter were not able to be present at rehearsals. This allowed for slower learners to learn from faster learners and in this way, to progress more quickly than would have been possible in a traditional classroom.

The formative assessment which characterised this learning experience also corresponds with the integrative aims of OBE. French as a language and means of communication was used in real communication situations and the performance of learners was evaluated continuously. From the first day of the project the competence of each learner was evaluated taking into consideration skills and proficiencies as varied as pronunciation, fluency, progress made in the quality and frequency of participation, the quality of ideas expressed and finally, the learners' personal commitment to the project.

The written exam at the end of the semester was more summative but was also integrated as it took into consideration both the whole person and tested knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. The exam comprised an extract from the play with comprehension questions and questions relating to interpretation, an essay on a character whose role the learner had played in the production and the translation into English of letters and faxes received after the production (Appendix D.7).

One cannot deny that a project of this nature motivates learners and ensures their commitment at an optimal level. The learners at Crawford College, Durban literally and metaphorically had the opportunity to do what the curriculum advises as the best method of teaching and learning:

> Some teaching methods are more likely to achieve a particular outcome than others. For instance, learners sitting quietly at a desk being spoon-fed facts about collecting and evaluating information will never achieve the outcome of learning how to collect, analyse and evaluate information critically. To achieve this, they must be given opportunities to **perform** or **rehearse** the outcome (*Curriculum 2005 Specific Outcomes, Assessment Criteria, Range Statements*, 1997:8, my emphasis).

These learners learnt historical facts and learnt about human behaviour, they also learnt problem-solving skills and collaborative skills. They thought critically about values and attitudes and beliefs and how to express their feelings. They applied these different competences to a real-life situation, that of communicating, to an audience, in a convincing manner, the ideas, the emotions, the values expressed by Anouilh in his text. The *Antigone experience* involved the *performance* on stage, rather than on an exam pad in an examination hall, of varied competences. It also integrated knowledge and skills, the heart and the hand, theory and practice in an interactive situation and achieved *expert performance*.

8.4 Conclusion

In both the examples described above, the Crawford College, North Coast teaching unit and the Crawford College, Durban learning experience, teaching techniques, learning strategies and outcomes were characteristics of OBE principles and in line with NCS principles. Learning was learner-based and learner-paced; it was experiential and participatory and learners were required to process and apply knowledge in a social context. More importantly the learning processes in which learners were engaged were linked to real-life situations enabling the participants to become lifelong learners. Both these learning experiences reflect the aim of the NCS to:

> [...] create a lifelong learner who is confident and independent, literate, numerate and multi-skilled, compassionate, with [...] the ability to participate in society as a critical and active citizen (*Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9: Overview*, 2002:8).

The teacher in these learning situations was not merely a presenter of knowledge; in true OBE fashion, the teacher was a facilitator of the learning process in the learners. The teacher acted as a mentor who advised learners on their approaches to learning and to the task at hand. In these teaching and learning situations the teacher asked questions, helped learners find solutions to solve problems but let the learners do the thinking and problem-solving. Above all, the teacher facilitated creativity. Knowledge of linguistic structures or knowledge of a play had to be applied and the success of the 'performance' - gesturally mimed in class or acted on stage - was an indication of the extent to which meaning had been understood, negotiated and applied. Both the learning situations described are perfect examples of OBE classroom practice.

Endnotes

[1] As with figures, bonds and multiplication, which are the elements on which mathematics and its extended processes are based, letters and lexical items are the basic elements upon which we make and negotiate meaning. These elements will indubitably have to be memorised.

[2] Although this was not the case in this class, the final scores could have been kept as a group mark and used for assessment purposes.

[3] Using the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing in a process in which learners are called upon to actively construct knowledge in a personal manner, effective foreign language learning takes place. However, it must be noted that because the class chosen for analysis is a beginner class, the learners' creative output in French is limited. *Vouloir-dire* (intended meaning) is minimal and there is no actualisation at this stage of *savoir-être* (social know-how). The learning process involves no more than the assimilation, use and creative reconstruction of *savoir-faire* (know-how of language). The learning situation is also tightly structured and the linguistic elements at the learners' disposal are restricted. The success of the learning lies in the fact that by using group work as the teaching strategy and by creating a conducive learning space or context, learners are allowed and are required to make new knowledge their own, by using it in a manner which is meaningful to them. In this way, group work involves learners in a process of creative learning and adheres to the principles of OBE.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

In this study I have shown in what ways, and to what extent, outcomes-based education (OBE), the implementational tool of the *National Curriculum Statement* (NCS), affects all aspects of schooling: the curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, values, teacher roles and learner roles. I have also discussed how OBE affects teaching and learning strategies and techniques in particular as they apply to French foreign language learning and teaching in the French Second Additional language classroom.

I began the study with a brief historical overview (Chapter 2) of the educational context out of which the NCS and OBE grew in order to clarify the link which exists between the educational and socio-political policies of the past and the educational response of the national curriculum to these policies. From the overview it should be clear that one cannot in fact talk about "education" in the singular when referring to the history of education in South Africa; one should talk rather of "educations", and primarily of two types of education: White education and Black education. Although this White-Black dichotomy was not necessarily explicit in policy throughout the three-hundred year history of South African education, it was to a large extent the reality of education from the nineteenth century when education began to be formalised and became relatively widespread, until 1994. However, the Act which not only entrenched the dichotomy but defined it in ideological terms and made it law, was the Bantu Education Act of 1953. I have shown that it was this Act which defined South African education up until transformation in the 1990s and which led directly to a total breakdown in education in the 1970s and 1980s. The Bantu Education Act which entrenched separate and differentiated education based on preconceived ideas regarding the potential roles in society of the black population was a

watershed Act in the history of South African education. It heralded the beginning of the systematic enforcement of an unfair, discriminatory and limiting educational system for the vast majority of the South African population. The other significant moment in the history of South African education were the 1976 Soweto riots which began the relentless protest against an unfair educational system and fundamentally contributed to the demise of the apartheid government.

The transformation of the political scenario in 1994 was coupled with the reform of education. In Chapter 3, I have outlined the background to the development of the new National Curriculum and have shown how the curriculum, as a political and social construct, was founded on the bedrock of the necessity for economic, political, ideological, moral and educational transformation. I have shown how the National Curriculum was conceived as the only possible response to the political and economic context and that it was underpinned by the vision the ANC government had for the country. I described this vision in terms of the notions of multiculturalism and lifelong learning and argued that these notions determined the hybrid nature of the *National Curriculum Statement* (NCS) as well as its design and structure which was founded on the outcomes-based educational (OBE) model.

My discussion of OBE (Chapter 4) highlights the link between the increasing use of an OBE discourse in the development of the new curriculum and the need to transform and reform society. The OBE model was chosen explicitly for its transformative possibilities and qualities. OBE was seen as the classroom-based means whereby the educational imbalances of the past could be redressed and the means whereby equal educational opportunities for individuals in all sectors of society could be addressed. It was also perceived as the means through which learners would be enabled to make worthwhile contributions to the economic development of the country and become lifelong learners. Furthermore, an OBE-based curriculum was seen as the means through which to effect changes in

attitudes and values which would forge a new national identity based on the principles and practices of multiculturalism.

The new South Africa, born out of the "one-man one-vote" first democratic elections of 1994, had to grow organically into its new constitutionally formed shape. The school was seen as the place to initiate and nurture this growth and OBE was chosen as the tool of the reform and reconstruction educational process. OBE was chosen as a reform strategy to ensure social justice but also educational and, thus, potentially also, economic development. OBE was considered able to enskill South Africans to contribute to national growth and development by enabling learners to be lifelong learners. Furthermore, by allowing for integration and overcoming the separation between knowledge and skills, theory and practice, the academic and the applied, OBE links school to the real world.

The implications for the teaching of French of the new National Curriculum and of the OBE model on which the NCS is based, are enormous. Learning French, which entails the study of a foreign language and culture, develops the desired attitudes and values necessary for multicultural communication and interaction: it encourages an understanding of other languages and cultures; it promotes tolerance of difference; and it leads to an awareness of a different, but equally legitimate, view of the world.

In my study of the NCS, it became clear to me that French is barely visible in the new curriculum, that no awareness of foreign languages has been created and that there is little concrete recognition of the value and potential of learning "foreign" languages. In Chapter 5, I have demonstrated that the role and function of French as described in the NCS is a limited one and I have argued that teaching and learning French, a language which both has its own African identity and is a language of the world, is a way of achieving some of the fundamental multicultural aims of the NCS, that of preparing learners for a pluralistic society

and of upholding the principles of multiculturalism and of encouraging critical thinking. I have argued that in the face of the growing social phenomenon of xenophobia, the promotion of the values of tolerance need to be fostered actively and that learning a foreign language such as French goes a long way in promoting tolerance of diversity and openness towards the Other.

While the learning of French has the potential of furthering the fundamental aims of the NCS, so OBE, as an educational model, can optimise the teaching of a foreign language such as French and thus increase the potential of French learning to further the broad aims of the NCS. There is thus a reciprocity between learning French and the desired outcomes of the NCS, and the conduit is the OBE methodology. In Chapter 6 I have shown how OBE facilitates the teaching and learning of a foreign language such as French. OBE allows for the creation of an authentic language learning environment in the artificial classroom through the creation of real-life situations by centreing learning in the socio-cultural context of the learners. It links classroom exercises to the real world, thus making school and classroom activities relevant to the real world and *vice versa*. In this way the learners' view of the world is broadened and learners are prepared for life after school. It is apparent that OBE, centred as it is on doing, incorporates the communicative approach and adds to it making OBE the optimal approach for foreign language teaching.

The research question which underpinned my study was whether French, as it is presently taught in KwaZulu-Natal schools, conforms to the spirit and the letter of the NCS. Questions arising out of the primary research question include:

- Are learners being equipped for a community, a nation, a world where cross-cultural communication, multicultural understanding and respect are as necessary as being literate?
- Does learner performance at the end of Grade 12 reflect learners' competence to enter the world of work with all its demands regarding rapid change, global competition and information technology?

- Does learning French provide them with the essential skills they need to be self-directed learners, collaborative workers, complex thinkers, community contributors, and quality producers?
- Do learners achieve all the desired and potential outcomes relating to competency in language?
- Does the actual teaching in the classrooms - the strategies and techniques, the activities and practices - reflect the tenets of outcomes-based education?

The teacher survey and the on site classroom observations undertaken to answer these questions were comprehensive. The survey achieved a 78% response rate and classroom observations were carried out in a total of forty-seven classrooms. The study shows that the French teacher population is a highly qualified workforce with long experience in teaching and with a limited level of understanding of and training in OBE. With regard to perceptions about OBE, the vast majority of respondents considered OBE to be suitable for French teaching, usually because there was a belief that the communicative approach to second language teaching and OBE were one and the same thing. There is evidence of a perception that if one teaches French with a communicative approach, one is practising OBE. It seems from responses that teachers understand some of the core principles and advantages of OBE but have a limited grasp of the mechanics of implementation in the classroom. Classroom observations have shown that there is uneven application of OBE in French classrooms in KZ-N, but that there are signs of creative and innovative teaching which correspond with the principles of OBE.

There is scope for further study in this area. Although my research has touched on teacher perceptions, it has not specifically studied the correlation between outcomes-based teaching strategies teachers say they are using and the outcomes-based teaching strategies they are actually using in the classroom. A comparative study of perceptions and actual classroom practice would be useful

and could lead to insights into new strategies for classroom practices that could be adapted to conform broadly to OBE principles and thus be applicable in other countries. Another further research project could be undertaken after the implementation of the NCS in Grade 12 to evaluate the extent of OBE techniques used in Grade 12. The baseline data on French classroom practice provided in this study could act as a measure against which to track changes following the official implementation of the NCS in Grade 12. It is hoped that the present research will also serve as a starting point for debate, or an informed dialogue, between classroom-based research and curriculum policy in the field of French FL and Second Additional Language teaching and learning.

In a more practical vein, the examples of OBE classroom experiences described and evaluated in this dissertation could be developed to form part of a teacher's guide which could be used as a retraining tool. One of the aims of the guide could be to give encouragement to teachers who are overwhelmed and frightened of the changes required by the OBE based curriculum. The guide would be designed to encourage teachers to reflect on their classroom practice and on their successes and failures in implementing OBE. Furthermore, the scope of the guide could be widened to incorporate not only the teaching and learning of French as a foreign language, but other foreign languages such as German (and even English which in some remote areas of South Africa is in effect a foreign language) taught in South Africa. Another practical study which could be worked into a possible teachers' guide entails the integration of Learning Areas with French. Interviews with teachers during the research study made it clear to me that it is commonly considered impossible to integrate French with other Learning Areas as the linguistic competence of French learners does not allow it. However, cross-cultural understanding is one of the critical outcomes articulated in the NCS and French is ideally placed to effect the achievement of this outcome.

With regard to the implementation of OBE in the French classroom in KwaZulu-Natal, the classroom observations I undertook have led me to conclude that there are three categories of classroom practice currently being used. In the first category, teachers consciously and successfully integrate OBE principles and teaching strategies in their teaching. Classroom practice is activity-based and learner-centred; learning is linked to the real world and assessment is formative and summative. Learning Outcomes as well as the Critical and Developmental Outcomes are generally achieved. In the second category, the principles of OBE are totally ignored. Teaching is teacher-centred and content-based, learning is classroom-based and exam-driven. The third category falls between the two others. In this category teaching techniques show that teachers have some awareness of OBE and that there is an attempt to shift emphasis from the teacher to the learners. There is evidence that the Critical and Developmental Outcomes such as problem-solving and team-work have been singled out. There is also an attempt to link teaching and learning to real life and the world of work. There is, however, in all three categories, minimal integration across learning areas.

Although I am unable to make an unconditional statement that OBE is being implemented in French classrooms in KwaZulu-Natal, my research has shown that OBE is in fact being used very effectively as a framework for teaching and learning in *some* classrooms. In two out of the seven schools visited outcomes-based education was being implemented to very good effect. In Chapter 8 I have described and evaluated examples of OBE in practice in the French Second Additional Language classroom. The first example given is that of a learner-centred teaching and learning experience which used group work as its main teaching strategy. The second example is of an integrated learning experience which integrated learning from different learning areas. I have demonstrated that both these learning experiences are consistent with the OBE principles of the NCS: the activities are learner-centred and activity-based with the process of learning holding a position of equal privilege with the content of learning.

Learning is learner-based and learner-paced. It is experiential and participatory and learners were required to process and apply knowledge in a social context. More importantly the learning processes in which learners were engaged were linked to real-life situations. Learners met all the outcomes listed for the Learning Area Languages: they listened, spoke, viewed and wrote French, reflected on the structure and use of language. Many of the cross-curricular outcomes were met: learners identified and solved problems, made decisions using critical and creative thinking, worked with others as members of a group, organised and managed themselves and their activities, collected, analysed, organised and critically evaluated information, and communicated using visual, symbolic and language skills. The teachers in these learning situations were not merely presenters of knowledge. In true OBE fashion, they were also facilitators of the learning process in the learners. They acted as mentors who advised learners on their approaches to learning and to the task at hand.

As these examples make clear, teaching French in an OBE paradigm means that some teachers are not only teaching, facilitating the learning of French, they are training, enskilling learners to be successful individuals after they leave school. The fact that this is done in French adds to the value of what teachers do. Within the OBE paradigm, the teacher facilitates the intellectual and social development of the individual, through the medium of French. The fundamental paradigm shift for the teaching of French from an OBE base is that French is no longer an end in itself. It is a means to an end – that of education and training and personal development in a multicultural context.

My analysis of the survey of French classroom practices in KwaZulu-Natal schools has shown that, generally, the shift to an OBE approach has not been made. Teaching is content-based, textbook bound and is rarely related to real life. Learning is not learner-centred, the learners' world is not brought into the classroom, nor is it the starting point for learning. Moreover, there is no recognition in practice of the Critical and Developmental Outcomes which are the

cornerstone of the NCS. There is little acknowledgment or recognition that the all-encompassing Critical and Developmental Outcomes are the frame in which learning takes place and where the various Learning Area outcomes are activated. Problem-solving, critical thinking. collaborative work is happening in an incidental manner, without any evidence that outcomes to achieve any of these have been considered – which will have implications for the assessment process. Finally , and most importantly, the teaching of French is barely integrative. French is taught in isolation, as an end in itself – French for the sake of French – not as a means to the end of lifelong learning and critical thinking. It is not used as a tool for learning and in this, the shift has not been made.

In my study, I have discussed what the implications are of this paradigm shift for day-to-day classroom practice. I have illustrated these principles with practical examples. I hope that this study will be of use to French teachers, that it will concretise for them what the real everyday implications of the OBE model for French L2 teaching and learning are and what implementing the NCS in the classroom involves. I also dare to hope that the examples I have given will infuse French teachers with the enthusiasm to implement OBE.

My conviction that the OBE approach is the right one for education is balanced by the conviction that OBE is good for the teaching of French. Language teaching and learning in our schools needs a systematic educational underpinning and OBE provides this. OBE in general and the NCS in particular have the potential of transforming the teaching of French from instruction to education; from a decontextualised language learning exercise to a contextualised, life-skills learning experience mediated by a foreign language. If I have a great love for French to the point that I want others to learn it and love it, it is not the language and the culture *per se* that I love – it is all that this language and culture brings one in its self-developing potential. Therefore, as a teacher of French my aim, above all, is to educate, facilitate learning, but, from the unique perspective of the French language and culture.

Learning happens continuously and ineluctably from conception; pre-school children display a curiosity and a joy of learning that knows no bounds. When they enter the school system, children are programmed to believe that learning equals knowing what the teacher decides they must know. For logistical, disciplinary reasons they are required to suspend all natural behaviour and they eventually forget how to be creative learners making meaning of the world around them. The traditional classroom stifles the creativity of natural learning. The domination of teacher over learner and the limitation of learning to collections of facts which epitomised much traditional teaching was roundly condemned by Dickens. Dickens expresses his condemnation of traditional education ironically through the hectoring voice and dogmatic words of "Inspector" Gradgrind:

> You are to be in all things regulated and governed [...] by fact. [...] You must discard the word Fancy [...]. You have nothing to do with it. You are not to have, in any object of use or ornament, what would be a contradiction in fact. You don't walk on flowers in fact; you cannot be allowed to walk upon flowers in carpets. You don't find foreign birds and butterflies come and perch upon your crockery. You cannot be permitted to paint foreign birds and butterflies upon your crockery. You never met with quadrupeds going up and down walls; you must not have quadrupeds represented upon walls. You must use [...] for all these purposes [...] mathematical figures which are susceptible of proof and demonstration. This is the new discovery. This is the fact. [...] No little Gradgrind girl had ever seen the face in the moon [...] [or] learnt the silly jingle, Twinkle, twinkle, little star; how I wonder what you are! No little Gradgrind girl had ever known wonder on the subject [...] No little Gradgrind child had ever associated a cow in a field with that famous cow with a crumpled horn [...] or with the more famous cow who swallowed Tom Thumb: [...] it had only been introduced to a cow as a graminivorous ruminating quadruped with several stomachs (Dickens, ...:5-6).[1]

The great renewal in teaching is the recognition once again of the mind as a creative entity rather than a reservoir of facts. OBE celebrates creativity and is about development, not about gathering facts. If OBE can lengthen the natural learning impulse so that learners can make it apply to the formal school situation, their learning will and can only better prepare them to take on an active role in the real world, because they won't ever have left it.

I am convinced that outcomes-based educational policy is going to revitalise education in South Africa, that it is going to dynamise it. Education worldwide has made enormous progress since the days of Dickens, where children – threatened by the rod, crushed by imposed silence and discipline sat and listened to the stern sage in front of the blackboard and were then called upon to repeat off by heart what they had been told. Education in South Africa has made a quantum leap, and in less than a decade, in desegregating education and in offering equal education for all its people which is preparing them for life in the twenty-first century. OBE is moving education in the direction it needs to go in order to prepare learners for the world, to help them be successful people. OBE takes learning into the world and brings the world into the classroom, it gives learners a chance to succeed at their own pace, in relation to their needs.

Endnotes

[1] My thanks to Professor Lydia McDermott for making this extract known to me.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Extracts from the *Revised National Curriculum Statement: Languages* (2002:1-7)

Introducing the National Curriculum Statement
The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) provides the basis for curriculum transformation and development in South Africa. The Preamble to the Constitution states that the aims of the Constitution are to:

- heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights;
- improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person;
- lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by law; and
- build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations.

Education and the curriculum have an important role to play in realising these aims. The curriculum aims to develop the full potential of each learner as a citizen of a democratic South Africa.

Outcomes-based Education
Outcomes-based education forms the foundation of the curriculum in South Africa. It strives to enable all learners to achieve to their maximum ability. This it does by setting the outcomes to be achieved at the end of the process. The outcomes encourage a learner-centred and activity-based approach to education. The Revised National Curriculum Statement builds its Learning Outcomes for the General Education and Training Band for Grades R-9 (for schools) on the critical and developmental outcomes that were inspired by the Constitution and developed in a democratic process.

The critical outcomes envisage learners who are able to:

- Identify and solve problems and make decisions using critical and creative thinking.
- Work effectively with others as members of a team, group, organisation and community.
- Organise and manage themselves and their activities responsibly and effectively.
- Collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information.
- Communicate effectively using visual, symbolic and/or language skills in various modes.
- Use Science and Technology effectively and critically showing responsibility towards the environment and the health of others.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation.

The developmental outcomes envisage learners who are also able to:

- Reflect on and explore a variety of strategies to learn more effectively.
- Participate as responsible citizens in the life of local, national, and global communities.
- Be culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts.
- Explore education and career opportunities.
- Develop entrepreneurial opportunities.

Issues such as poverty, inequality, race, gender, age, disability and challenges such as HIV/AIDS all influence the degree and way in which learners can participate in schooling.; The Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9 (Schools) adopts an inclusive approach by specifying the minimum requirements for all learners. All the Learning Area Statements try to create an awareness of the relationship between social justice, human rights, a healthy environment and inclusivity. Learners are also encouraged to develop knowledge and understanding of the rich diversity of this country, including the cultural, religious and ethnic components of this diversity.

[...]

The Kind of Teacher that is Envisaged
All teachers and other educators are key contributors to the transformation of education in South Africa. This Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9 (Schools) envisions teachers who are qualified, competent, dedicated and caring. They will be able to fulfil the various roles outlined in the Norms and Standards for Educators. These include being mediators of learning, interpreters and designers of Learning Programmes and materials, leaders, administrators, and managers, scholars, researchers and lifelong learners, community members, citizens and pastors, assessors and Learning Area or Phase specialists.

The Kind of Learner that is Envisaged
The promotion of values is important not only for the sake of personal development, but also to ensure that a national South African identity is built on values very different from those that underpinned apartheid education. The kind of learner that is envisaged is one who will be inspired by these values, and who will act in the interests of a society based on respect for democracy, equality, human dignity, life and social justice. The curriculum seeks to create a lifelong learners who is confident and independent, literate, numerate, multi-skilled, compassionate, with a respect for the environment and the ability to participate in society as a critical and active citizen.

[...]

Languages Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcome 1: Listening
The learner will be able to listen for information and enjoyment, and respond appropriately and critically in a wide range of situations.

Learning Outcome 2: Speaking
The learner will be able to communicate confidently and effectively in spoken language in a wide range of situations.

Learning Outcome 3: Reading and Viewing
The learner will be able to read and view for information and enjoyment, and respond critically to the aesthetic, cultural and emotional values in texts.

Learning Outcome 4: Writing
The learner will be able to write different kinds of factual and imaginative texts for a wide range of purposes.

Learning Outcome 5: Thinking and Reasoning
The learner will be able to use language to think and reason, as well as to access, process and use information for learning.

Learning Outcome 6: Language Structure and Use
The learner will know and be able to use the sounds, words and grammar of the language to create and interpret texts

Appendix B.1

Statistics: Immigrants by country of previous permanent residence 1994-2003 (Jan – Aug)

COUNTRY	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003 (Jan-Aug)	TOTAL
WORLD TOTAL	**6195**	**5176**	**5542**	**4194**	**4677**	**3327**	**2456**	**4332**	**6545**	**6438**	**49382**
AFRICA TOTAL	**1631**	**1343**	**1601**	**1336**	**1200**	**1446**	**855**	**1450**	**2533**	**2530**	**16325**
South Africa											
Namibia/SWA	15	9	34	34	14	9	8	2	3	5	123
Lesotho	227	222	233	130	141	105	92	118	123	108	1150
Botswana	48	28	50	32	24	20	12	21	37	23	214
Swaziland	110	83	97	51	51	33	0	0	0	78	425
Algeria	2	0	3	7	1	0	0	0	0	28	13
Angola	2	0	7	10	9	20	0	0	0	24	48
Congo	0	0	0	8	26	19	0	0	0	94	53
Brazzaville	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	0
Zaire	244	78	93	75	49	44	42	0	0	46	625
Egypt	4	0	16	22	17	7	6	125	202	135	72
Ghana	72	0	149	151	117	74	70	0	0	101	633
Kenya	38	24	47	48	81	44	34	0	0	0	316
Malagasy Republic	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Madeira	7	8	10	4	3	1	0	31	51	36	33
Mauritius	38	39	51	51	31	24	3	0	87	101	247
Mocambique	45	41	53	42	50	555	11	198	0	99	798
Malawi	68	85	98	48	37	146	20	0	0	947	472
Zambia	75	66	69	68	72	52	38	86	101	116	435
Zimbabwe	556	405	394	270	300	177	38	326	464	580	2190
St Helena	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tanzania	4	0	18	16	3	0	7	0	0	23	62
Uganda	12	0	51	36	29	0	39	79	111	79	235
Other	62	255	128	138	145	106	76	424	1354	292	778

Statistics provided by the Department of Home Affairs (RSA)

Appendix B.2

Refugee applications 1994-2003

An estimated total in all categories of refugee applications received nation wide from January 1994 until 31 December 2003

COUNTRY	APPLICATIONS RECEIVED
Afghanistan	37
Albania	20
Algeria	270
Angola	13626
Argentina	3
Armenia	27
Austria	1
Azerbaidjan	1
Bangladesh	4060
Belaris	1
Belgium	4
Benin	156
Bosnia	57
Botswana	2
Brazil	3
Bulgaria	1502
Burkina Faso	57
Burundi	4418
Cameroon	1893
Canada	2
Cape Verde	4
Central Africa	6
Chad	11
Chechnia	2
Chile	4
China	2592
Colombo	3
Comoros	208
Congo	3434
Croatia	19
Cuba	3
Denmark	1
Egypt	589
Eritrea	518
Estonia	2
Ethiopia	5978
France	5
Gabon	60
Gambia	55
Georgia	21
Germany	4
Ghana	2251

Greece	2
Guadaloupe	1
Guinea	33
Guinea Bissau	57
Haiti	1
Hungary	10
Iceland	3
India	10072
Iran	47
Iraq	80
Israel	59
Italy	1
Ivory Coast	980
Jamaica	2
Japan	1
Jordan	60
Kenya	10449
Korea	5
Kirghizia	13
Lesotho	8
Lebanon	21
Liberia	668
Libya	6
Lithuania	5
Macau	2
Macedonia	13
Madagascar	12
Malagasy	1
Malawi	1426
Mali	410
Mauritania	12
Mauritius	28
Moldovia	3
Morocco	195
Mozambique	160
Myanmar	4
Namibia	6
New Guinea	1
Nepal	5
Niger	11
Nigeria	12187
Oman	1
Pakistan	12313
Palestine	36
Paraguay	2
Peru	4
Phillipines	1
Poland	14
Portugal	6
Romania	70
Russia	92
Rwanda	2017
Sao Tome	7

Senegal	4681
Serbia	57
Seychelles	1
Sierra Leone	331
Slovakia	5
Slovenia	1
Somalia	12227
Sri Lanka	52
Sudan	449
Swaziland	54
Switzerland	3
Syria	5
Taiwan	985
Tanzania Zanzibar	4472
Thailand	69
Togo	72
Tunisia	9
Turkey	102
UAE	3
Uganda	2179
Ukraine	21
Uzbekistan	1
USA	1
Vietnam	1
Western Sahara	3
West Indian Island	1
Yemen	5
Yugoslavia	120
Zaire (DRC)	24799
Zambia	263
Zimbabwe	2729
Total	**152414**

Excludes Angola, Somalia, DRC received in Jan-March 2000 at Braamfontein RRO (no statistics supplied to Head Office).
Excludes Somalia, DRC received in Jan 1999-March 2000 at Durban RRO and Angola received from Nov 1999-March 2000 (no statistics supplied to Head Office).
Excludes SomaliA DRC received in Jan 1999-March 2000 at Cape Town RRO and Angola received from Nov 1999-March 2000 (no statistics supplied to Head Office).
Excludes: RRO Rosettenville June and July 2002 (system crashed); April-December 2003 (claims no new applications received in Nov and Dec 2003 due to system not working); RRO Pretoria October-December 2003.

Statistics provided by the Department of Home Affairs (RSA)

Appendix B.3

Repatriation statistics for African countries from 1999 to 2003

COUNTRY	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Algeria	10	7	1	7	7
Angola	78	412	159	170	120
Botswana	112	43	67	33	42
Burkina Faso	0	1	2	1	0
Burundi	6	4	0	6	4
Cameroon	12	23	22	35	21
Cape Verde	1	2	0	2	1
Congo Brazzaville	53	59	86	137	149
Cote D'Ivoire	16	25	28	12	7
DRC	16	9	26	34	53
Ethiopia	27	33	29	33	37
Gabon	3	7	3	5	2
Ghana	77	54	88	98	90
Guinea	1	1	7	4	10
Eretria	0	3	0	2	1
Kenya	71	65	45	52	57
Lesotho	6003	6180	5977	5278	7342
Liberia	2	1	0	10	2
Malawi	3474	3309	2024	3132	4465
Mali	9	4	6	3	4
Morocco	12	4	4	9	4
Mozambique	123961	196647	94404	83695	81935
Namibia	3	6	2	11	7
Nigeria	99	211	155	348	371
Pakistan (sic)	121	160	311	513	473
Ruwanda	5	2	6	18	8
Senegal	77	104	95	136	47
Somalia	8	9	3	9	10
Swaziland	5610	3571	3258	1848	1075
Tanzania	440	616	603	754	960
Togo	2	0	1	1	0
Tunisia	1	0	2	0	0
Uganda	21	46	16	24	32
Zambia	59	92	29	57	52
Zimbabwe	42769	47649	47697	38118	55417
Total	**183166**	**259359**	**155156**	**134595**	**152805**

Statistics provided by the Department of Home Affairs (RSA)

Appendix C.1

Schools in KwaZulu-Natal offering French

1. Carter High School, Pietermaritzburg
2. Crawford Durban, Durban
3. Crawford North Coast, Durban
4. Crawford La Lucia, Durban
5. Durban Girls' College, Durban
6. Durban Girls' High, Durban
7. Epworth High, Pietermaritzburg
8. Empangeni High, Empangeni
9. Eshowe High, Eshowe
10. Hilton College, Hilton
11. Inanda Seminary, Durban
12. Kearsney College, Botha's Hill
13. Kloof High School, Kloof
14. Maris Stella School, Durban
15. Michaelhouse, Balgowan
16. Northlands Girls' High, Durban
17. Pinetown Girls' High, Pinetown
18. St Anne's DSG, Hilton
19. St Catherine's High, Empangeni
20. St Charle's College, Pietermaritzburg
21. St John's DSG, Pietermaritzburg
22. St Mary's DSG, Kloof
23. Thomas More College, Kloof

Appendix C.2

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

Please tick relevant box(es) or give full answers.

1. School

Name of school .....

IEB □ KZN □

2. Respondent

1. What formal training have you had?
   Matric (or equivalent) □
   Teaching Diploma (College of Education) □
   Graduate degree (BA, etc.) □
   Postgraduate diploma (HDE) □
   Postgraduate degree (Honours, etc.) □

2. How many years of teaching experience do you have?
   1-5 years □ 5-10 years □ 10 + years □

3. How many courses or seminars on C2005 / OBE have you attended?
   None □ 1 □ more than one □

4. Have you read any literature on C2005 / OBE?
   Yes □ No □

5. Is OBE promoted by your head of department / principal?

   Yes □ No □ Partly □

6. Do you receive active support from your head of department / principal to implement Curriculum 20025-compatible teaching?
   Yes □ No □ Partly □

7. Do you consider yourself equipped to teach in an OBE manner?
   Yes □ No □ Partly □

3. C2005 / OBE : Perceptions & Attitudes

1. Do you consider OBE to be a good teaching model?
   Yes □ No □ Not sure □

Why?

.....

2. Do you think an outcomes-based approach, in general, is suitable for French?
Yes □ No □ Not sure □

Why?
.....

.....

3. Do you consider teaching in an OBE manner suitable for:
grades 10-11: Yes □ No □

Why?
.....
grade 12: Yes □ No □

Why?
.....

4. In your opinion, how does Curriculum 2005 /OBE affect you in the classroom?
.....

.....

.....

5. Give one example of how you think your teaching will have to change / has changed, in order to conform with the principles of C2005 / OBE.
.....

.....

.....

4. Classroom Practice

When answering the following questions, please refer to your teaching **over the last 2 weeks in grades 10 and 11.** On the scale of 1 – 5, 5 indicates *all of the time*, 1 indicates *never*.

1. What percentage of class time do students spend:
listening (to teacher or other media) 1 2 3 4 5
talking or writing or reading 1 2 3 4 5

2. What percentage of class time do learners work in pairs or in small groups?
1 2 3 4 5

4. What percentage of class time are all learners doing the same activity (as opposed to different activities)? 1 2 3 4 5

5. In what percentage of classes is the subject matter organised around:
general themes 1 2 3 4 5

school events or learners' experience	1	2	3	4	5
a chapter in a text book	1	2	3	4	5
a grammatical point	1	2	3	4	5

6. How many text books do you use as a resource?
   none 1 2 3 or more
   Which one(s)?
   .....

5. Assessment

When answering these questions, please **refer to the last term** and to **grades 10 and 11** only. Please tick the appropriate answer.

1. How often, in a term, do you engage in formal assessment (tests, oral or written)?
   often □ occasionally □ rarely □ never □
2. Do you engage in informal assessment (giving marks/comments for performance in class)?
   often □ occasionally □ rarely □ never □
3. Do you carry out portfolio assessment?
   often □ occasionally □ rarely □ never □
4. Do your students engage in peer assessment?
   often □ occasionally □ rarely □ never □
5. Do your students engage in self-assessment?
   often □ occasionally □ rarely □ never □

6. All about you!

1. What do you enjoy most in your profession as a French teacher?
   .....
   .....
   .....

2. What do you want your pupils to be <u>able to do</u> after their years of learning French?
   .....
   .....
   .....

3. What do you want them <u>to have learnt</u>?
   .....
   .....
   .....

4. In your opinion, what is the value of learning French?

.....

.....

.....

5. Have your teaching methods changed over the last 3 years?

.....

6. If you answered yes, briefly state in what ways.

.....

.....

.....

7. Define in a few words what "good teaching" is for you.

.....

.....

.....

Thank you for your time!

Appendix C.3

Observation Report

School: .....

Teacher: .....

Date: .....

Grade: .....

Time: .....

Number of learners present: .....

Physical characteristics: .....

Lesson plan:

Observational Indicators	None	Little	Much
1. Learning is activity-based			
2. Learners given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn			
3. Teacher provides learners with individual feedback			
4. Students organised in groups			
5. Teacher integrates themes from different learning areas			
6. Learner initiated questions			
7. Teacher-led questions			
8. Formative assessment			

Commentary:

Appendix C.4

Letter to French teachers

21 February 2001

The French Teacher

Dear Colleague
I am presently involved in research on the implications for classroom practice of the OBE model on French teaching and learning. For this research to go anywhere, I need your help.

OBE has hit us all, and whether for or against it, we are all involved : many of us are at a loss as to what we need to do to make our teaching OBE-compatible. The question I hope to answer at the end of this research project is how does classroom practice need to be adapted to meet the outcomes of an OBE curriculum.

I have been involved in the teaching of French at secondary level for a long time, not directly, because I teach French at tertiary level, but as co-author of the anthology *Poesie de de Langue Francaise*, the *Recueil de Nouvelles* and as author of the latter's *Cahier d'exercices*. French teachers in KZN also know that I have been involved in many *Stage's* for French teachers over the years as well as in the setting and marking of the Delf exams. I am also passionate about French! So, the aim of the research is twofold: a doctoral thesis, but also, and above all, to provide teachers of French with a practical guide on teaching and learning practices consistent with an outcomes-based curriculum.

I sincerely hope that you will be willing to participate in this project which is not only extremely interesting to me, but which, I am hoping, will benefit all of us French teachers.

What would your collaboration involve? First and foremost, I need you to answer a survey questionnaire, at a later stage, I may also need to meet with you for an interview, and perhaps observe some of your classes.

I want to stress at the outset that the aim of this data collection is to get a picture of the teaching and learning practices in French classrooms, this is purely a descriptive analysis of the status quo. The aim of the research is not to make value judgements on the methods and approaches used. I will attempt to link the *status quo* to the desired outcomes of the OBE curriculum and hopefully offer insights on how, if any, classroom practices need to be adapted to conform to those outcomes. Further, as is customary in this type of research, all data collected will be treated in the strictest confidentiality.

I have attached a questionnaire and a postage paid return enveloppe. It should take you ten minutes to complete, and then return it to me. Please return it by the 31st of March.

Thank you for participating in this project. I hope your time will not have been wasted and that it will in the end be beneficial to you and to all of us French teachers. And I look forward to meeting you (again).

yours sincerely,

Appendix D.1

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The *Antigone Experience* developed out of a desire to create a piece of theatre that was inter-disciplinary. The work came partially from class work and involved a whole group of students not merely the 'theatrical' ones.

Understanding of concepts and ideas comes from action – in this case acting. The French students have benefited from the performance process – their skills in pronunciation and understanding of French have greatly improved.

The Drama students have worked under unbelievable pressure – yet again to produce some outstanding work. They have benefited from the performance process and from an involvement in the scripting process. Catherine wrote the courtroom links and the lawyers and judge immediately changed what she had written. All the students have a good understanding of the conflict in *Antigone* and are able to discuss their own viewpoints.

We used Sam Thurgood's epic *Eteocles and Polynices* poem performed by the Grade 10 Drama students to open the performance and Mr Nyasulu's Prose poetry to open the second half. Using these performances we hope help universalise the themes of *Antigone* and include different perspectives.

This is not a play – it is an experience!

Catherine Raw & Ann Lüssi

Appendix D.2

Eteocles and Polynices

The meeting of the brothers
As had long been foretold
By the wise and honoured messengers
Of a prophecy ages old

This day would en in bloodshed
A fact that all men knew
But it had seemed this morn so glorious
The sky a sapphire blue

The clouds were white and puffy
The day not hot, but warm
Not a breath of wind in the crystal air
Below, a raging storm

Two armies met on an unploughed field
Outside the mighty city
Soldiers waited in their ranks
Their mouths were dry and gritty

They could see the enemy
Standing so far away
Perhaps they would have drunk together
Had they met along the way

And now there would be battle
A pristine, glorious fight
That would end in death and maiming
Before this very night

The poets tell of glory
Of leaders, brave and wise
They rarely mention feasting crows
And maggots in dead men's eyes

The fighting now would soon begin
The swords would clash, the arrows fly
And some would yell, and some would scream
And some would kill, and some would die

The drummers started beating
The battle horns all moaned
The men were marching forward
Death's scythe was being honed

Two mighty waves of a man-made sea
Dashing against each other
Spraying foam on the dirty loam
As brother rended brother

Screams of war and screams of pain
Crows circled overhead
For them had been prepared a feast
The mighty hordes of dead

Heroes great were born that day
And many cowards died
Men often speak thus of the dead
For who can say they lied?

The battle rage on well past noon
The ground was red with blood
The sides called for a brief respite
To rest by lighter mud

But a pair of fighters battled on
Their bodies drenched in sweat
One was dressed in shim'ring white
The other's armour jet

One of them would soon be ding
The other one would die
That brothers great should come to this
Was truly cause to cry

To battle for a kinship small
To fight over a crown
Thousand dead, and just to settle
Who would rule one town

Why does man dream of ruling
And empire great in might?
Might well ask why a dawn begins
Or daylight dies in night

Long as man will last, it seems
He'll turn his might to war
If Man has some or Man has none
Still, he needs far more

They hacked and slashed, they cut and hewed
Their armour turned to red
One dealt his foe a mighty blow
That near took off his head

Their fighting slowed, the blood still flowed
And both began to cry
Each softly crumpled to the ground
And watched his brother die.

Appendix D.3

Praise Poems

Wayenz'indaba
Wamudi'uPolynices.
Wamsobozeal ngesikhulu isihluku.
Wamudi'u-Antigone inkosazana.
Uph'unembeza wakho?
Liph'iqiniso emoyeni wakho?

Nant'igaz'ezandleni,
Nans'inkemba yolaka.
Dlathuzela njalo Creon
Ugudiuz'amambuka.

Sing'enhla e Ntshonalanga
Using'ezansi eMpumalanga.
Umoya wakho uyoyaluza njalo njalo.

(Creon's soul shall never rest because his hands have Antigone's blood on them. Although praised for his brave deed of killing those he perceived to be traitors, his is criticised for taking Antigone's life.)

ꕥꕥꕥꕥꕥꕥ

Yenzek'indaba!
Wayinyqthel'emsileni Antigone.
Ubungayinzwanga yin'indaba
Watshal'uPolynices elahliwe?

Mana njalo nkosazan'mhlophe,
Mana njalo mlondi weqiniso.
Uyiqhawekazi lobuntu,
Uyiqhawekazi leqiniso.

Batsehel'abadl'ubhedu
Ubatshele nabadi'iphaphu.
Umoya wakho ukhululekile
Nokuthula bakulindele ngesizotha,
Akulutho okwasemhlabeni,
Isishinginshane esidlulayo.
Halala!

(Praise goes to Antigone who, in the face of death, follows her conscience and does what is right. She is given the name 'Nokuthula' – mother of peace and quiet – and is promised a hero's welcome when she enters through heaven's gates.)

Appendix D.4

The Antigone Experience: Classwork

Travail en groupes pour *Antigone*

Deux par deux vous allez faire des recherches à la biliothèque. En anglais, vous allez présenter vos conclusions à la classe. En plus, vous allez écrire quelques petites notes pour photocopier pour vos camarades de classe.

Voilà les sujets:

1. A biography of Jean Anouilh.
2. A biography of Sophocles.
3. Greek theatre. Explain the following terms/concepts: tragedy, hero, chorus.
4. The story of Oedipus (diagram of family tree).
5. The story of Antigone (diagram of family tree).
6. France in 1944. Look at Nazi occupation, Normandy invasion, Vichy government.
7. War-time politics. Explain the terms Fascist, Resistance, Collaborator, Vichy government.

Appendix D.5

The Antigone Experience: Classwork 2

Questions sur un extrait Le Prologue l.5-93

1. Décrivez le personnage d'Antigone. (4)
2. Quand Hémon a-t-il demandé à Antigone de l'épouser? (3)
3. Quelle était sa réaction? (3)
4. Créon aime-t-il être roi? Expliquez. (3)
5. Décrivez les gardes. (3)
6. Selon Créon, qui était le bon frère et qui le mauvais? (2)
7. Traduisez en bon anglais: "Quiconque... de mort." (2) Total 20 points.

l. 94-214

1. A ce point-là est-ce que les spectateurs comprennent pourquoi Antigone est sortie si tôt le matin? (2)
2. Il y a un *quiproquo* entre la nourrice et Antigone. Expliquez. (4)
3. Antigone: "... je n'aurai jamais d'autre amoureux..." Expliquez. (2)

l. 216-293

1. "C'est comme cela que ça a été distribué." Expliquez ce qu'Antigone veut dire. (2)
2. Déjà petite, Antigone était en conflit avec la société. Expliquez. (5) Total 15 points.

l. 294-372

1. Relevez tous les mots sensuels dans la description d'Ismène. (5)
2. Comment savez-vous qu'Antigone veut bien vivre? (3)
3. Trouvez un synonyme pour "pleurnicher". (1)
4. Que pensez-vous personnellement de l'avis d'Ismène? (3)
5. De quoi parle Ismène? (2)

l. 373-444

1. Qu'est-ce que c'est qu'une "tartine"? (1)
2. Décrivez la relation entre la nourrice et Antigone. (4)
3. Relevez toutes les expressions de tendresse de la nourrice. (4)
4. Qui est Douce? (1)
5. Antigone se fait des soucis pour Douce. Pourquoi? (2) Total 12 points.

l. 445-580

1. Qu'est-ce qui s'est passé la veille? (4)
2. Hémon, est-il bavard? (1)
3. Traduisez "C'est plein de disputes un bonheur." (2)
4. Citez une phrase qui montre qu'Antigone est braiment amoureuse d'Hémon. (2)
5. Voilà un moment clé (l.577-8) de la pièce. Expliquez l'effet dramatique de cette confession. (3) Total 12 points.

Etude de texte Mais c'est qui le héros de cette pièce?!

Après avoir étudié la scène du grand conflit entre Antigone et Créon, vous pouvez comprendre peut-être la confusion des spectateurs qui ont assisté à la première mise en scène en 1942. Ils ne savaient pas à qui ils devaient leur sympathie.

Relevez les mots de chacun pour remplir les colonnes suivantes: (Bien sûr, c'est votre opinion!)

Antigone a raison

Antigone va trop loin

Créon a raison

Créon va trop loin

Appendix D.6

Salle 12
Rez de chaussée
Crawford College
Rue Dan Pienaar
Glenmore
Durban 4001
le 26 mai 2000

Chers élèves

Du fond du coeur je voudrais vous remercier de votre enthousiasme et de votre engagement pendant ce dernier temps de répétition et de mise en scène. C'était une joie pour moi de travailler avec vous, et j'espère que vous aussi, vous en gardez de bons souvenirs. En tout cas, je suis sûre que vous n'allez pas oublier *The Antigone Experience!*

Maintenant, pour terminer l'exercice, je veux que vous écriviez quelques lettre de remerciement aux gens qui nous ont tellement aidés. De vraies lettres. On mettra les copies dans votre classeur. Donc, au travail, et bonne chance dans les examens la semaine prochaine!

Je vous embrasse

Madame Lüssi

Appendix D.7

The Antigone Experience: exam questions

A. Contextual
Lisez l'extrait suivant et répondez aux questions suivantes:

l.1757-1799
Le Choeur: "Et tu es tout seul maintenant, Créon. ..... Il ne reste plus que les gardes. Eux, tout ça, cela leur est égal; c'est pas leurs oignons. Ils continuent à jouer aux cartes... " *Le rideau tombe rapidement pendant que les gardes abattent leurs atouts.*

1. Créon apprend qu'Antigone, son fils Hémon et sa femme Eurydice sont morts. Il ne se met pas à pleurer. Il ne crie pas. Trouvez-vous qu'il est dur et sans émotion? Expliquez son attitude en vous référant au texte. (5)
2. Traduisez en bon anglais:

- c'est pas leurs oignons
- tu en as de la chance
- une sale besogne
- il te tarde d'être grand, toi?
- cela leur est égal. (10)

B. Writing
Ecrivez 150-200 mots sur le personnage que vous avez joué sur scène. Si vous n'avez eu qu'un tout petit rôle, vous pouvez choisir un des personnages principaux. (20)

C. Translation
Voilà des copies inédites des fax reçus le lendemain de notre mise en scène *d'Antigone*. A vous de les traduire en bon anglais.

a)
A l'attention d'Ann Lüssi
De la part de Judy Albrecht
Date: 25.05.00

Chers élèves, Chère Ann
J'ai eu le plaisir de regarder Antigone ce soir – bravo!
Vous, les élèves, avez bien parlé et bien joué. Félicitations à la section de français à Crawford, Durban.
Sincèrement,
J. Albrecht

b)
Chère Ann
Merci beaucoup de l'invitation et félicitations! L'interprétation d'*Antigone* était excellente. Bravo à tous les acteurs et à toutes les actrices!
A bientôt
Janine