Modern language pedagogy, spiritual development and Christian faith: A study of their interrelationships

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Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD
Institute of Education, University of London
2000

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Abstract

This thesis sets out to investigate the relationship between the design of modern language pedagogy, spiritual development in the school context, and Christian faith. It does so in the context of recent discussions of spiritual development across the curriculum, and draws upon literature on faith-learning integration emerging from the evangelical and Reformed Christian traditions.

Part one of the thesis develops a framework within which the interconnections between these areas can be examined. Negatively, a range of objections to establishing a relationship between Christian faith on the one hand and spiritual development and modern language teaching methodology on the other are countered. Positively, the structure of teaching 'methodology' and the roles of control beliefs, spiritual virtues and metaphor in shaping an approach to teaching are elucidated. Five 'significant themes' in Christian reflection on the nature of the human person are discussed in terms of their theological centrality, pedagogical relevance and distinctive contribution to a view of the learner as a spiritual being. Hospitality to the alien is proposed as a metaphor which could fruitfully inform modern language learning.

Part two of the thesis examines three modern language pedagogies using the framework developed in part one. The version of communicative language teaching implicit in the National Curriculum for Modern Foreign Languages, the humanistic pedagogy of Charles A. Curran (Community Language Learning), and the critical pedagogy of Claire Kramsch are explored in turn for points of connection or tension with spiritual development and Christian faith.

The thesis concludes that a Christian conception of the learner's spiritual development does lead to identifiable modifications in the design of modern language pedagogy. The thesis has implications for how modern language pedagogy is understood, for how spiritual development is approached across the curriculum, and for discussions of the relationship between religion and education in school settings.

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PREFACE

This study is my own work, but it has left me indebted in various ways to various people. Some groundwork for the present argument was laid in my M.Phil.F. thesis, which was completed in 1997 at the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto. The findings of that thesis provided the basis for some sections of chapters 6 and 7 and a preliminary sketch of some sections of chapter 3. The debts are indicated in footnotes in the appropriate places; I mention them here in order to indicate my continuing gratitude to those in Toronto who helped me with the earlier study, especially Jim Olthuis and Bob Sweetman.

The further study which has led to this thesis would not have been possible without the support of the Whitefield Institute and the Stapleford Centre. The former has provided financial assistance and a programme of stimulating seminars. The latter has been my place of employment, and has been generous in supporting my work on the thesis. I have not only been helped with travel expenses and allowed to devote the necessary time to study, but have also benefited from discussion with and feedback from my colleagues John Shortt and Trevor Cooling.

My supervisors, Paddy Walsh and Roger Flavell, have offered timely and sagacious advice, and have done so in a cordial and supportive spirit which has helped to make the process enjoyable. Barbara Carvill of Calvin College, Michigan has also been an inspiring and stimulating discussion partner at various stages of the work. Working with colleagues on the Charis project resources has also been important part of the process. Many others have helped in smaller ways - past pupils who made teaching a challenge and a mystery, teachers in discussion during in-service training sessions and seminars on initial teacher training courses, academics in debate at conferences and in more informal settings, friends and colleagues who have offered encouragement and prayed when it was needed. I am grateful to them all.

Finally, my family have been unfailingly supportive - even Amy, at three years old, has added her prayers that daddy would be able to complete his "fesis". To her, and to Julia, Nathaniel and Miriam, go my heartfelt thanks.

Chapter 1
Introduction: A three-way relationship

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1.   Contexts of the present investigation

The question of how a Christian approach to spiritual development might relate to modern foreign language teaching and learning does not leap from the pages of the professional and academic literature in either field. The virtual absence of literature discussing this relationship gives the impression that the question is not generally recognised as important. In view of this, I will begin by setting out three main contexts which shed some initial light on its significance.

a.   Personal context: Faith, spirituality and the language classroom

The first context is a personal one, for the issues investigated here have been raised for me in personal ways since the beginning of my career as a modern language teacher. The very physical layout of the school in which I held my first teaching post gave fresh impetus to a question which had intrigued me since I began my training. My own spiritual background sowed the seeds from which the question initially grew. Having come to Christian faith in an evangelical context some years before, I was at the time of my training beginning to explore the personal implications of a theological perspective characteristic of (but by no means exclusive to) some forms of evangelical and Reformed Christianity. According to this perspective, which is discussed in more detail

below, faith and spirituality are best understood not as merely private devotional concerns, but rather as a reorientation of the whole of life, with public consequences. This vision of things clearly invited reflection on how it might impinge upon my particular calling as a modern language educator.

Now, in my first school, my classroom opened onto a small landing directly next door to the Religious Education (RE) classroom.[1] From time to time through the week students would file out of one room and into the other, from RE to French or German, or vice versa. The school was a Roman Catholic voluntary aided school in which RE was regarded as an important part of the curriculum and taught by some talented teachers. My existing curiosity concerning whether my own Christian faith carried any significance for my work as a modern language educator was given a fresh twist as I wondered about my students' experience of their curriculum.

In the one room they grappled with such weighty matters as God, salvation, life, death, heaven, hell, abortion, euthanasia, community and purpose. When they trooped next door into my room, perhaps into a GCSE German class, they repeated set phrases and learned how to order meals in restaurants, change travellers' cheques and talk at a fairly inconsequential level about what they did at the weekend. Even allowing for the differing purposes of different curriculum areas and students' limited facility in the new language, the contrast seemed somewhat sharp. My job as a modern language teacher was not to cover the same specific subject matter as RE, but did this mean that the big questions were irrelevant to language teaching? If my colleagues next door were succeeding in their educational mission, must my lessons not seem shallow and trivial in content? If my lessons were successful, were learners receiving the impression that deeper spiritual questions are irrelevant to learning about other cultures and absent from the reality inhabited by foreigners? How might these two areas of learning be connected in any coherent way?

The issue was brought further into focus by the process of working on the school's mission statement. This process gave rise to a period of focused reflection on the Christian nature of the school and what it might imply for the various parts of the

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[1] I capitalise Religious Education or use the abbreviation RE throughout to indicate that I am referring to the particular curricular discipline, as opposed to any wider process of religious education to which any area of the curriculum could conceivably contribute.

school's task. After a number of consultations and discussions a four-part mission statement was drafted. Three of the aspirations listed had to do with the pastoral and academic aspects of school life and the school's place in the wider community. The remaining statement (placed second in the list) affirmed the school's aspiration to "make the faith-life of the school inform and affect work in all areas of the curriculum".[2] Professional responsibility was now joined to personal curiosity: what implications did this have for me as a modern language teacher?

Lest it should seem that this was a purely teacherly puzzlement, I offer one more reminiscence from my time at that school. During a year 8 French lesson in which the class were completing worksheets, a student raised a hand. The student concerned was generally conscientious and I expected a query concerning some detail of French usage. Instead she startled me somewhat by asking how the Bible could be true given what they had been taught in history. The follow-up question was: "Sir, are you afraid of dying?" Experiences such as this kept my question alive from yet another direction: how should I teach modern languages to students who did not leave their spiritual concerns at the door, but brought all that they were with them into my classroom?

The need to develop at least the beginnings of some answers to such questions became even more of a practical necessity when I became involved as a curriculum writer in the Charis curriculum project in 1994. This project, based at the Stapleford Centre, near Nottingham, was set up to produce teaching materials for various curriculum areas, including modern foreign languages, which aimed to:

"• enable teachers to respond to the challenge of educating the whole person;

• help teachers to focus on the spiritual and moral dimensions inherent in their subject;

• encourage pupils towards a clearer understanding of Christian perspectives on the fundamental questions that arise in all areas of knowledge; and

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[2] St John Houghton R.C. School Mission Statement, cited in *Saint John Houghton R.C. School Prospectus*, n.d.:1.

- contribute to the breadth, balance and harmony of pupils' knowledge and understanding."[3]

Involvement in writing materials for teaching French and German in the context of these aims provided a further stimulus for reflection on the connections between faith, spirituality and language teaching.

These episodes in my professional experience, unanticipated by my training and under-represented in the language learning literature, fuelled my continuing interest in the connections between spirituality and modern languages. This thesis investigates some of the philosophical and pedagogical issues which arise from taking this concern seriously. If, as Bridges suggests, applied philosophy may be characterised as the rendering of a felt perplexity more explicit in order to lay it open to more systematic investigation,[4] then the experiences described above offer glimpses of the particular perplexity which is investigated in what follows.

b.   Curricular context

I have begun with the personal context in order to indicate the grounds for my own particular concern with the issues pursued here. My interest in these concerns is not, however, idiosyncratic. It intersects not only with the broader theological perspectives alluded to above and discussed further below, but also with some important strands of recent discussion about the school curriculum.

i.   Spiritual development across the curriculum

For some time now, and particularly over the past decade, there has been widespread discussion in the British educational context of the role which should be played in

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[3] These aims appear in the introduction to each Charis volume. See Baker et al., 1996a, 1996b; Baker et al., 1998a, 1998b. For more detailed information concerning the Charis project, see Shortt, 2000; Smith, 1999a and http://www.stapleford-centre.org.

[4] Bridges, 1998:388.

curricular thinking by a concern for the spiritual development of learners.[5] In a broad sense, this concern is present in the 1944 Education Act, the preamble of which required every local education authority to "contribute towards the spiritual, moral, mental, and physical development of the community" through its educational provision.[6] The issues discussed in this thesis come to the fore, however, in developments since 1977. These developments have had the two important (and related) effects of rendering problematic the relationship between spirituality and religion while at the same time emphasising the importance of spiritual development for the whole school curriculum.

The 1977 HMI document *Curriculum 11-16* set out to map various areas of experience within the curriculum, and included the spiritual area of experience as one of the eight areas with which education should be concerned. A supplement offered two definitions of this area which have been cited many times since and raise issues which remain topical. The first definition related spirituality to "the awareness a person has of those elements in existence and experience which may be defined in terms of inner feelings and beliefs; they affect the way people see themselves and throw light for them on the purpose and meaning of life itself". While these elements of experience may be connected by some with God, the connection is not essential; they are defined in less specific terms which have to do with "matters of the heart and root of existence". The second definition takes an opposing line: "The spiritual area is concerned with everything in human knowledge or experience that is connected with or derives from a sense of God or of gods. Spiritual is a meaningless adjective for the atheist and of dubious use to the agnostic."[7] Here spirituality and religion are bound much more closely together. On the one hand we have a view of the spiritual as pointing to a

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[5] The story of these developments has been told more fully elsewhere (Barnes & Kay, 1999; Copley, 2000; Erricker & Erricker, 2000; Gilliat, 1996; Priestley, 1985a; Wright, 1998a). Here I provide only an outline as background to the present study. In referring to the British context I intend here to indicate the specific context of the present study, not the full extent of discussion of spirituality in education. Such discussion has also been on the increase, for instance, in the American and Australian educational contexts (see e.g. Götz, 1997; Huebner, 1985 (USA) Fisher, 1999; Wallace, 2000 (Australia)), and also finds a broader echo in the growing literatures on topics such as spirituality and nursing or spirituality and business management (see e.g. Dyson, Cobb, & Forman, 1997; Martsolf & Mickley, 1998). The findings of this study are likely to be of relevance to other educational contexts, but the study is not conducted with their particularities in view.

[6] HMSO, 1944, part 2, section 7.

[7] DES, 1977.

universal realm of human experience which is only contingently connected with religion. On the other lies the claim that religion and spirituality cannot be divorced without evacuating spirituality of meaning.

It should be noted that these two definitions were not at the time correlated on the one hand with a broad cross-curricular fostering of non-religious spiritual qualities and on the other with a focus on religious themes within the confines of RE. Both approaches to spirituality seem to have been considered in relation to the contribution of the whole curriculum to provision for the spiritual area of experience. HMI documents from the late 1970s contain accounts not only   of spirituality in terms of general forms of awareness in relation to subjects such as environmental education, but also of how religious issues are raised in the teaching of classics and history.[8] This point, that the distinction between religious and non-religious conceptions of spirituality should not be identified with the distinction between RE and the rest of the curriculum, will be discussed further in chapter 2.

The first of the two definitions was the one given greater prominence in subsequent documents. These have underlined that the notion of spiritual education is intended to include, but is broader than, RE.[9] This does not in itself, however, resolve the question of how spiritual education is related to religious belief, unless such belief is held to be relevant only to the particular curricular discipline of RE. The dilemma raised by the original two definitions has reappeared regularly throughout the ensuing debate. To take two recent examples, Nigel Blake contends that "insofar as one's account of spirituality is partial and particular" it is "too specific to ground a secular curriculum", while David Carr, in contrast, argues that "any attempt to address such questions by appeal to some 'free-floating' secular or decontextualised notion of spiritual development is little more than a vacuous evasion".[10] The continuing differences of opinion regarding the relationship of religion to spiritual development, in spite of ongoing efforts to find

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[8] HMI, 1977:46,51; 1979:3.

[9] DES, 1985:32: "Religious education...is contained within this area but is not identical with it."

[10] Blake, 1996:447-448; Carr, 1999:461. Given the complexity of the debate, there are, of course, not simply two views, but rather a range of more detailed positions, some of which will be discussed in more detail in chapter two.

formulations acceptable to all parties, are illustrated by the fact that recent OFSTED and SCAA documents have been accused of being both too religious and too secularist.[11]

While the 1977 document was an important milestone, the sequence of developments set in train by the 1988 Education Reform Act gave a new impetus to spiritual development as a cross-curricular concern. The Act, formulated in a more secularised context but reflecting a concern to carry forward the provisions of the 1944 Education Act, reaffirmed the importance of spiritual development in its requirement that the curriculum should promote the "spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of society".[12] In keeping with the earlier HMI discussions, the emphasis was placed on the spiritual dimension as part of the overall aims of education rather than as an object of study or a discrete section of the curriculum.[13] This requirement was repeated in the 1996 Education Act and reappears in the rationale of the 2000 revision of the National Curriculum (see below).

It was not, however, the 1988 Act itself which gave the biggest boost to concerns about spiritual development as a cross-curricular issue. Exhortations to schools to consider the contribution of the whole curriculum in relation to the spiritual area of experience existed in earlier documents, but so did the observation that in practice schools had found it hard to break with traditional divisions, so that it generally "proved extremely difficult to avoid aligning [the areas of experience] with subjects when considering issues of 'balance' within the curriculum".[14] The strongest impulse towards breaking down this compartmentalisation was provided by the commencement of OFSTED inspection of provision for spiritual development after the 1992 Education (Schools) Act.[15]

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[11] Re OFSTED, see Carey, 1996; Flew & Naylor, 1996; White, 1994; for SCAA see Blake, 1997; Thatcher, 1999a. McCreery's claim (1994:94-5) of a virtual consensus in favour of the first of the original HMI definitions fails to represent the full range of views, and requires qualification in the light of contributions such as Wright, 1998a.

[12] HMSO, 1988:1. For an account of the political discussions preceding and surrounding the Act, see Copley, 2000:69-78.

[13] Wright, 1998a:16-17.

[14] DES/WO, 1983:15.

[15] Gilliat, 1996:168-169.

The new inspection framework required specific inspection of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The difficulties in defining exactly what was being inspected here, together with the belated response of schools to an area for which many were ill-prepared, have given rise to considerable activity in terms of both academic discussion and the development of new resources for schools and teachers. OFSTED reports have regularly suggested that spiritual development is a problematic area for a significant proportion of schools. The 1994/5 annual report noted that "most, if not all, National Curriculum subjects should contribute to pupils' spiritual development", but regretted that "in practice, this potential is exploited only rarely".[16] The problem has been particularly noted at the secondary level. At this level, according to the following year's report, "spiritual development...remains problematic for most schools", while the report for 1996-7 states that "in nearly half of schools provision for spiritual development is unsatisfactory".[17] The most recent report notes some improvement, recording that provision is now "good or better in about one third of schools"; however, things are still unsatisfactory in a further third of schools.[18]

During this period, a variety of official discussion documents were published which attempted to describe the general contours of spiritual development. As the roles of particular official bodies shifted, spiritual development remained a significant theme. The discussion paper on spiritual and moral development published by the National Curriculum Council in 1993 was republished by the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority in 1995. It embraced a broadly anthropological approach to spiritual development as "something fundamental in the human condition which is not necessarily experienced through the physical senses and/or expressed through everyday language", while also acknowledging that religious beliefs and a relationship with God fall within the scope of the term. The relevance of spiritual development to every curriculum area was reaffirmed.[19] These themes were taken up again in a later SCAA

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[16] OFSTED, 1996:46.

[17] OFSTED, 1997:25; 1998:41.

[18] OFSTED, 2000:45.

[19] NCC, 1993:2; SCAA, 1995:2.

document under the umbrella heading of 'Education for Adult Life'.[20] In the closing years of the twentieth century, things went quieter for a time on the spiritual front, and Secretary of State for Education David Blunkett's emphasis from 1998 onwards on education for citizenship seemed for a time likely to supplant spirituality as the National Curriculum came up for review and revision.[21]

In fact, the rationale which prefaces the revised National Curriculum published in 2000 (the first time that an overall rationale has been provided) reaffirms the importance of spiritual development. After a statement of the importance of the relationship between education and social values, the rationale states that "foremost is a belief in education, at home and at school, as a route to the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, physical and mental development, and thus the well-being, of the individual".[22] In addition, two broad aims are presented as "an essential context within which schools develop their own curriculum", the second of which states:

> "The school curriculum should aim to promote pupils' spiritual, moral,
> social and cultural development and prepare all pupils for the
> opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life."[23]

The commentary on this aim goes on to suggest that education should develop students' "knowledge, understanding and appreciation of their own and different beliefs and cultures, and how these influence individuals and societies".[24] Religious beliefs are not explicitly mentioned, but it seems reasonable to infer that they are included. Finally, the requirement that spiritual, moral, social and cultural development should be promoted through the curriculum is repeated a third time as the requirements of the 1996 Education Act are cited.[25] The revised National Curriculum thus gives considerable

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[20] SCAA, 1996.

[21] Copley, 2000:69.

[22] DfEE/QCA, 2000:11.

[23] DfEE/QCA, 2000:11.

[24] DfEE/QCA, 2000:11.

[25] DfEE/QCA, 2000:12.

prominence, at least in its statement of values, aims and purposes, to spiritual development.

This prominence is backed up by continued reference to provision for spiritual development across the curriculum in recent revisions of the OFSTED inspection framework.[26] The latest OFSTED handbook explains, with the now customary ambivalence concerning the precise relationship between spiritual development and religion, that

> "Effective provision for spiritual development depends on a curriculum
> and approaches to teaching which embody clear values and provide
> opportunities for pupils to gain understanding by developing a sense of
> curiosity through reflection on their own and other people's lives and
> beliefs....To the extent that spiritual insights imply an awareness of how
> pupils relate to others, there is a strong link to both moral and social
> development. Although religious education and spiritual development are
> not synonymous, religious education can make a significant contribution
> to spiritual development."[27]

Almost a quarter of a century after the original HMI reflections on the spiritual area of experience, there is still plenty of encouragement in official documents to explore the relationships between spiritual development, religion and areas of the curriculum outside of RE. Reflection on these relationships forms part of the "essential context" for curriculum development.

This is precisely the kind of reflection with which this thesis is concerned, with particular reference to the teaching of modern foreign languages. In engaging in such reflection I will not be assuming that the descriptions of spiritual development offered in government documents are an adequate basis on which to proceed, or even that their

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[26] OFSTED, 1999a:64,67; 1999b:39.

[27] OFSTED, 1999a:67. As with many similar statements, the reference to the importance of beliefs suggests that religion may be relevant in the curriculum outside of RE, and that encounter with it may contribute to spiritual development, while the qualification that spiritual development is not to be identified with RE, but represents a broader category, tends to be read as encouraging the more anthropological understanding of spirituality described above.

motives are pure; I will offer an alternative account of spiritual development in education as a basis for this study.[28] The value of these documents is that they have provoked debate by posing an issue which merits more substantial and systematic investigation.

ii.   Developments in Religious Education

Alongside these wider developments in the formation and inspection of the school curriculum as a whole, there has been a parallel move towards a focus on the spiritual conceived as a broad domain of human experience within the field of Religious Education. The present study is not about RE, so I will survey these developments only briefly as a relevant part of the backdrop.

By the 1980s the confessional approach to RE, which saw the goal of such education as the nurture of pupils into adherence to a specific (Christian) faith, was no longer dominant. It had given way to a phenomenological approach premised on a 'bracketing out' of the learner's own beliefs and ideas (i.e. their temporary suspension) and an attempt to gain a vicarious sense of the significance of religion from the believer's perspective. This approach sought on the one hand to do justice to the plurality of religious beliefs, and on the other hand to encourage personal autonomy in the learner. Critical openness in the face of a variety of religious beliefs and experiences, rather than initiation into a particular faith, was seen as the desirable goal.

Although the new phenomenological approach was designed to overcome what were perceived as problems with a confessional stance, it was in turn subjected to sustained criticism. Whether or not the defect was an inevitable feature of the theory, it was felt by many that the practice often ended up as a superficial tour of religious curiosities, the outward 'phenomena' of religion, which did not contribute adequately to the personal development and spiritual growth of pupils.[29] The focus could easily come to rest primarily on the external, on exotic details of other religions' practices or on their

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[28] For criticism cf. e.g. Erricker, 1998; Thatcher, 1999b. The account of spiritual development on which this study will be based is developed below.

[29] See Slee, 1989. A number of writers regard the practices criticised as distortions of phenomenology, which could be interpreted as an empathic entering into the believer's experience, rather than necessary features of it. See Jackson, 1997:10-28; Leech, 1989.

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institutional structures, rather than on issues of truth, commitment and personal faith. The approach has thus been accused of reflecting a "western, consumerist attitude to knowledge...which assumes without question that the most intimate and sacred truths at the heart of religious traditions are available for packaging, selection and intellectual consumption by the inquiring mind".[30] Interestingly, what was felt by some to be missing from the phenomenological approach as widely practised was a concern for pupils' spiritual development.[31]

Accordingly, one line of response to the problems arising from the way in which the phenomenological approach was practised has focused on spiritual experience.[32] It is pertinent to note here that one of the motivations which are said to have led to the use of the term 'spiritual' in the 1944 legislation was the desire to escape from the controversies which beset the term 'religious'.[33] A focus on spirituality can seem to offer the same benefits in the contemporary context, which is characterised by a widespread interest in spirituality both within and outside of traditional religious contexts. There is also the additional attraction of focusing on those dimensions of personal experience and meaning which were felt to be lacking in what went before. The work of David Hay has been significant, putting forward arguments for seeing religious experience as biologically natural but partially screened out by secular culture.[34] Hay's research contributed to the development of fresh pedagogical approaches which, seeking to develop phenomenology in a more subjectively oriented direction, emphasised that "to concentrate on externals such as discussions of doctrine, moral stances, pilgrimages, rituals and so on, is to ignore the most central issue in religion - its spirituality".[35] The proposed remedy for this perceived imbalance is an emphasis on helping pupils to explore their own inner experience.

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[30] Slee, 1989:129.

[31] See Hay, 1985; Priestley, 1985b.

[32] This is not the only direction of response; the Warwick RE project, for instance, has focused on ethnography. See Jackson, 1997.

[33] Priestley, 1985a:28.

[34] Hay, 1982, 1990a, 1990b.

[35] Hammond et al., 1990:13.

A related development has been an exploration of the connections between RE and PSE, raising questions about the contribution which could be made by RE to pupils' personal development.[36] As the focus is shifted onto the contribution which RE can make to the learner's personal and spiritual development (but without the older assumption that this would mean growth into a particular faith) a convergence becomes evident between the concerns of RE as a distinct field and the kind of wider concern with the spiritual area of experience in the curriculum as a whole which has been sketched above.[37]

On the face of it such a convergence might seem a healthy sign, holding out the possibility of a greater coherence and depth in the curriculum as a whole. It should, however, be remembered that what has been described above is a convergence between a *legislative* concern for spiritual education in the whole of what the school does and a focus among *religious educators* on spiritual development. As the OFSTED reports cited above suggest, the response to the shift in legislative emphasis from educators working in curriculum areas other than RE has been decidedly patchy. With a few exceptions, it is still the case that the majority of the literature produced in discussions of spiritual development is written by specialists in RE. In some curriculum areas there has been near silence. Modern language learning has been a case in point, and represents a gap in the discussion to which this thesis is addressed.

c.   Theological/philosophical context: Faith-informed scholarship

A third significant context for the present study, one mentioned above in my account of the personal context, is the growing literature on what has come to be referred to as 'faith-learning integration'.[38] This broad heading is applied to studies of the implications of Christian faith for academic or educational endeavour, usually in disciplines outside of theology or religious studies.[39] Within this broad area of debate, my own thinking has been significantly influenced by discussions emerging from the Kuyperian tradition.

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[36] See Grimmitt, 1987; Hammond et al., 1990:17-18; Ungoed-Thomas, 1990.

[37] In fact the blurring of the boundaries between RE and PSE was one of the criticisms made of *New Methods in Religious Education* (Hammond et al., 1990). See Copley, 1997:165-169.

[38] Badley, 1994; Heie & Wolfe, 1987.

[39] See, for instance, the bibliography appended to Marsden, 1997.

This tradition has grown out of the work of Abraham Kuyper, a prominent Dutch theologian, journalist and politician of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.[40] Kuyper, whose achievements included the founding of the Free University of Amsterdam and a spell as Prime Minister of the Netherlands, sought to apply in various areas a Reformed vision of Christian faith as carrying implications for every aspect of life. This vision included the contention that Christian conviction should give rise to specifically Christian scholarship, rooted in Christian presuppositions. While there has been much modification of Kuyper's somewhat sweeping formulations, as well as divergence of opinion concerning the way in which they should be improved, his basic concerns have been widely influential in Reformed and evangelical Christian circles, and scholars working within a broadly Kuyperian tradition have made significant contributions to discussions of faith-learning integration.[41]

The basic concern of these discussions is to develop a fruitful engagement of Christian conviction with intellectual inquiry and educational practice as an alternative to withdrawal from or conformism with regard to the secular academy. This position has, of course, a long history in the "faith seeking understanding" tradition of Christian reflection, of which the Kuyperian movement can be seen as a recent instance.[42] It fell on hard times, however, with the rise of the modern emphasis on scholarly detachment, consensus and neutrality. With this emphasis came a tendency to regard religious beliefs as extrinsic to proper scholarly inquiry, which must proceed from an independently critical vantage point. Scientific knowledge came to be regarded as universal and impartial, while religious faith came to be seen as parochial, prejudiced and divisive; inquiry based in objective reason should therefore have priority over the particular

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[40] See Heslam, 1998. The 'Kuyperian' tradition is also often referred to as 'neo-Calvinist' or 'reformational'. The most influential expression of Kuyper's views in the English-speaking world is the set of lectures which he delivered at Princeton University in 1898 (Kuyper, 1931). For a more concise statement of some significant themes, see also Kuyper, 1998. An international school of philosophy has grown up around the systematic development of Kuyperian themes by Dutch philosopher Herman Dooyeweerd (Dooyeweerd, 1984).

[41] See Hart, 1988; Heslam, 1998:8; 1999; Marsden, 1987. Marsden speaks of the near triumph of "Kuyperian presuppositionalism" in the North American evangelical community (p.14). The influence on British evangelicalism has been less pervasive (see Bartholomew, 2000).

[42] See Helm, 1997:3-25.

biases offered by religious belief.[43] The positivist movement went further, regarding religious belief as not only extrinsic to inquiry but lacking cognitive meaning.

More recently the intellectual climate has shifted. It is now commonplace to refer to our situation as post-positivist and to acknowledge the potential and possibly unavoidable influence of a variety of pre-theoretical factors - economic, gender-based, ethnic, cultural, ideological - upon intellectual inquiry. A formerly "disengaged, spectatorial" view of reason is coming under criticism even from its former proponents.[44] A growing acknowledgement of the persistence and significance of various kinds of plurality, the attention given to the role played by paradigms in scientific thinking, a widespread suspicion of claims to objectivity, and the hermeneutical tradition's rehabilitation of preconceptions and prejudices as potentially constructive elements in inquiry have all contributed to the change of climate. This shift has fuelled a re-emergence of a tradition which predated it, that of advocacy of self-consciously Christian scholarship in a variety of areas. Increased recognition of the particular assumptions which colour various kinds of inquiry has created some fresh openings for exploration of the nature of Christian scholarship.[45] As Marsden has recently put it,

> "Religious commitments, after all, are basic to the identities and social location of many if not most human beings, and academics routinely recognize such factors as having intellectual significance. Religious beliefs, moreover, typically involve affirmations about reality and values that are far more specific and far-ranging than beliefs inherent to gender,

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[43] Marsden, 1997:21. Marsden provides a helpful overview of recent discussions.

[44] Hirst, 1993. Hirst, who formerly rejected the notion of Christian beliefs having any formative role in educational thinking, since the latter must be based on the nature of rational knowledge as the final court of appeal (Hirst, 1971; Hirst, 1976 cf. Hirst, 1974:43), has more recently emphasised that reason is exercised "from the very start in inextricable involvement in our exerting our other given capacities" (Hirst, 1993:190). While Hirst does not have the relationship between reason and belief in view here, the shift in his position both reflects the wider shifts alluded to here and places in question the assumption that beliefs should play no role in educational inquiry.

[45] This should probably not be overstated. Marsden notes that despite the changes summarised above, nevertheless in many academic circles "when the subject of religion is mentioned, the categories of Enlightenment skepticism seem to be miraculously resuscitated" (Marsden, 1997:26).

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race, ethnicity, or class."[46]

It is pointed out by advocates of faith-informed scholarship that excluding religious belief has failed to achieve the anticipated unity on the large questions concerning human existence and ways of living - ideological pluralism has not been overcome by the secular academy or the appeal to disengaged reason.[47] Furthermore, it is argued that in many areas of thought there are beliefs which are religiously significant (whether this be in terms of derivation or antagonism) which do in fact play a role in the production of scholarship; if this is so, then to act as if such beliefs were irrelevant is a form of false consciousness, and as such hardly conducive to inquiry which seeks truth.[48]

This emphasis on the constructive role of beliefs need not lead to the position that virtually any kind of assumption, however idiosyncratic or untenable, should be equally acceptable as the starting point for sound academic inquiry. In fact, Christians who advocate faith-informed scholarship and, in doing so, reject a picture of the disciplines as founded in faith-free neutrality tend to be equally resistant to the idea of a relativist array of perspectives.[49] Between the two poles of truth secured by means of a view from nowhere and truth made unavailable through the inescapability of particular assumptions and angles of vision lies the possibility that a particular starting point may enable rather than inhibit the discernment of reality.[50] The point being made is not that everyone is entitled to their own perspective, but that a Christian view of reality involves certain beliefs about the way things are, beliefs which are widely and defensibly held to be true, and that if it is the case that the process of investigating the

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[46] Marsden, 1997:5.

[47] Griffioen, 1998:128; Marsden, 1997:28.

[48] Clouser, 1991; Marsden, 1997:29.

[49] Griffioen, 1998, for instance, distinguishes 'worldviews', which involve contestable beliefs about the nature of things, from 'perspectives', which simply involve perceiving the same thing from different (cultural) standpoints. The former can be meaningfully contested since they involve rival truth claims made by people living in the same world. A worldview (an articulated contestable *Weltanschauung* rather than a more implicit culturally shared *Weltbild*), for Griffioen, seeks to offer a "reliable map of the world" in order to "show what roads to take or not to take" (p.126). For discussion of how worldviews can enter into debate and mutual critique without assuming the availability of a standpoint outside of any worldview, see MacIntyre, 1990.

[50] Wolterstorff, 1997a.

world must involve at least a provisional trust in some set of beliefs, then it is quite proper for scholarly inquiry to explore the potential of Christian beliefs for making sense of the world.

Beliefs proposed as guides to inquiry must, of course, be defensible and open to criticism. The rise and fall of logical positivism, however, illustrates some of the difficulty of this point. Those holding beliefs which are rendered indefensible by some particular criterion of defensibility may legitimately and in some cases correctly challenge the criterion rather than concede indefensibility. It is not, moreover, necessary that such beliefs be defended in every piece of research which bases itself upon them - if any inquiry is to progress beyond first principles it needs to be able to accept some of those principles tacitly for at least some of the time in order to focus on other matters. Moreover, in the case of an influential, longstanding and widely defended belief system such as Christianity the burden of proof can be argued to lie with any who would seek to demonstrate its irrationality. Thus the concerns of those who advocate faith-informed scholarship move beyond apologetics to the claim that it is appropriate for Christian scholars to take Christian beliefs as starting points rather than potential conclusions of inquiry.[51]

Reformed contributors to this discussion have been particularly vocal in resisting the tendency towards the privatisation and "spiritualising" of religious belief, a process encouraged by its exclusion from public intellectual inquiry.[52] They assert the relevance in principle of religious reflection to every area of inquiry. Such a stance follows from an understanding of religion as encompassing the whole of life, rather than as a matter of private, individual concern. Rather than allowing religion to be circumscribed on the basis of the self-understanding of a post-Enlightenment culture, they seek to critically examine that culture on the basis of Christian self-understanding.

If such assertions are to be developed beyond their initial value as rallying cries, they need to be accompanied by accounts of the role which religious commitments might

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[51] This does not, of course, preclude critical examination of those starting points; it merely implies that such examination will not be the purpose of every investigation.

[52] Wolterstorff, 1997b.

play in particular kinds of inquiry. There have been a variety of attempts to formulate such accounts, many of them having in common an emphasis on the pretheoretical starting points of theoretical thinking. Thus many have focused on assumptions or presuppositions which undergird inquiry, focusing the attention of Christian scholarship on the task of identifying those assumptions tacitly made by scholars in any field which are inconsistent with Christian assumptions and developing alternative accounts which are more consistent.[53]

While this approach has sometimes been followed in a manner which regards Christian beliefs as foundational axioms from which conclusions in various areas can be arrived at by processes of deduction, the difficulties with such an approach have been widely recognised.[54] Specifically Christian beliefs are insufficient in number and specificity to provide an adequate basis for the wide range of topics of inquiry represented in the modern academy. Functioning as axioms from which to start a deductive process is not, however, the only role available to Christian belief. There may be other relationships between belief and the various disciplines which are less linear but no less real, and the impact of Christian commitment may not be restricted to the role of propositionally articulated beliefs.[55] These points have led to a general interest in clarifying how Christian faith could play a regulative or a transforming role within the processes of inquiry.[56]

Many writers in the Kuyperian tradition have picked up on the idea of worldviews and

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[53] See e.g. Clouser, 1991; Plantinga, 1984. A particularly lucid example is Plantinga's brief discussion of Herbert Simon's theory of altruistic behaviour as based on the two mechanisms of docility and bounded rationality (bounded because failing to adequately recognise the imperatives of biological self-interest) (Plantinga, 1996:179-180). On the Christian account of things, Plantinga points out, such behaviour is vastly *more* rational than egoism.

[54] See e.g. Nelson, 1987.

[55] Allen (1993) discusses permission, debarment and commendation (whereby "it is required that some of a set of practices be adopted but which ones of that set are left to choice") as alternatives to requirement in the relationship between Christian belief and educational practice. Allen's account still tends to focus on individual beliefs; for a critique and expansion of Allen's model, see Smith, 1995.

[56] On the idea of transformation in relation to the role of Christian belief, see Nelson, 1987; Niebuhr, 1952; Shortt & Cooling, 1997; Walsh & Middleton, 1984 and most recently Sandsmark, 1998; Thiessen, 1999; Walsh, 2000; Wright, 1998b, 1999b.

their role in shaping intellectual priorities and approaches.[57] Worldviews are less a set of propositions to be deduced from than a belief-informed vantage point from which we survey matters. Rather than taking beliefs one by one and following chains of deduction from them, a worldview-oriented approach seeks to discern broader patterns of belief and commitment and the relationship between those patterns and our characteristic ways of thinking and acting. While focusing on the specific matters which concern us, we take for granted a broad and loosely structured assumptive background which plays a role in guiding our inquiry. Christian belief, or some other set of commitments which are indifferent or antagonistic to Christian belief, may be a significant part of what informs such a background.

Others have worked with different formulations. In a number of important contributions to the discussion Nicholas Wolterstorff has propounded a theory of 'control beliefs' - beliefs which we adopt in order to weigh the kinds of theories which we will regard as acceptable.[58] Such beliefs may function both positively and negatively.

> "Because we hold them we are led to reject certain sorts of theories -
> some because they are inconsistent with those beliefs; others because,
> though consistent with our control beliefs, they do not comport well with
> those beliefs. On the other hand, control beliefs also lead us to devise
> theories. We want theories that are consistent with our control beliefs.
> Or, to put it more stringently, we want theories that comport as well as
> possible with those beliefs."[59]

Like the worldview approach (which he finds unsatisfactory), Wolterstorff's idea of control beliefs does not regard Christian belief as providing theoretical results through the application of logical deduction - "the theories are not already there in the belief-

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[57] See e.g. Holmes, 1983; Marshall, Griffioen, & Mouw, 1989; Olthuis, 1985b. For a history of this development see Wolters, 1989.

[58] Wolterstorff, 1984, 1989, 1993.

[59] Wolterstorff, 1984:68. As a secular example of such control beliefs Wolterstorff mentions Skinner's stipulation that theories of behaviour should not make reference to states of mind. Hay's discussion of J. B. Watson (Hay, 1982:105-108) suggests that religious questions can play a significant role in the formulation of the basic assumptions of even such an apparently un-religious theory as behaviourism.

content, just waiting to be extracted...for the most part the Christian scholar has to obtain his theories by using the same capacities of imagination that scholars in general use".[60] Nevertheless, Christian belief may suggest certain lines of inquiry, or certain kinds of theory as being more likely candidates than alternatives. Although Christian belief does not provide theories in advance, it can contribute significantly to the particular shape of theories which are developed and to the evaluation of rival theories. I will discuss the relevance of Wolterstorff's model further in chapter 3.

It is pertinent here to note a further point concerning these various accounts of how Christianity and scholarship might mix. Although they most often focus on the role which particular articulations of Christian conviction might play in intellectual inquiry, this focus need not imply an assumption that the issues all revolve around sets of formally stated beliefs taken apart from the spiritual commitments and orientations which flow from such beliefs or in which they are embedded. This point is in fact reflected in a certain ongoing unease with the term 'worldview', which could be regarded as too intellectualistic and spectatorial (perhaps more so than the more cumbersome term 'life- and worldview' (*levens- en wereldbeschouwing*) given prominence in Dutch Kuyperian thought).[61] Interestingly, this broader concern with faith as permeating all of life has sometimes been expressed in the language of 'spirituality'.[62]

These recent discussions of the relationship between faith and learning have naturally included contributions to the long historical tradition of Christian reflection on educational matters, and have encouraged Christian reflection on areas of the curriculum other than RE and daily worship. The renewed energy of these discussions is reflected in the founding of new journals such as the *Journal of Education and Christian Belief* and the *Journal of Research on Christian Education*, which invite Christian discussion of education without a specific focus on RE.

This has necessarily been a very selective sketch of a wide-ranging field of discussion,

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[60] Wolterstorff, 1984:77-78.

[61] See Fernhout, 1997; Wolters, 1989.

[62] See e.g. Olthuis, 1997.

even within the bounds of the particular Christian tradition on which I have focused.[63] The concern here is not to offer a full survey of these developments, but rather to outline them as a significant part of the background to this thesis, which has as one of its central concerns the relationship between Christian faith and an area of the curriculum not usually considered to be significantly related to it. I will develop the relevance of the idea outlined here to modern language pedagogy in chapter 3.

What is important at this point is to note a significant convergence with the discussions concerning spiritual development outlined in the previous section. On the one hand we have a body of literature which is seeking to explore the possible relationships between religious commitment and inquiry in areas outside of theology, areas which the modern academy has tended to regard as secular in principle. On the other we have a continuing educational discussion which is asking how a concern for spiritual development, a concern at least traditionally associated with religion, should be actualised in curriculum areas outside of RE. There would seem to be a fairly obvious convergence of interests, but it is one which has not been explored to any great extent. The concerns of this thesis place it at the intersection between these two discussions, with modern language pedagogy being the field in which their convergence is to be examined.

2. Christian faith, spirituality and modern language pedagogy

a. Questions of relationship

Thus far I have outlined a series of contexts which give point to the question being addressed in this thesis.[64] When this converging constellation of discussions is brought into relationship with the specific interest in modern language education indicated at the start of this chapter, what emerges as an area of inquiry is a three-way set of relationships (figure 1).

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[63] I have, for instance, not covered here explorations of narrative categories as alternatives to or redefinitions of the notion of worldview (see e.g. Fernhout, 1997), or discussions of the significance of canonical criticism for pedagogy (see e.g. Brueggeman, 1982). For a wider survey of various possible models for relating Christian beliefs specifically to education, see Smith, forthcoming-a.

[64] Since the relationship of these discussions to the field of modern language pedagogy is the focus of the thesis, I have not included a survey of relevant aspects of that field in this outline of relevant background issues. That task is undertaken in chapters 3, 5, 6 and 7.
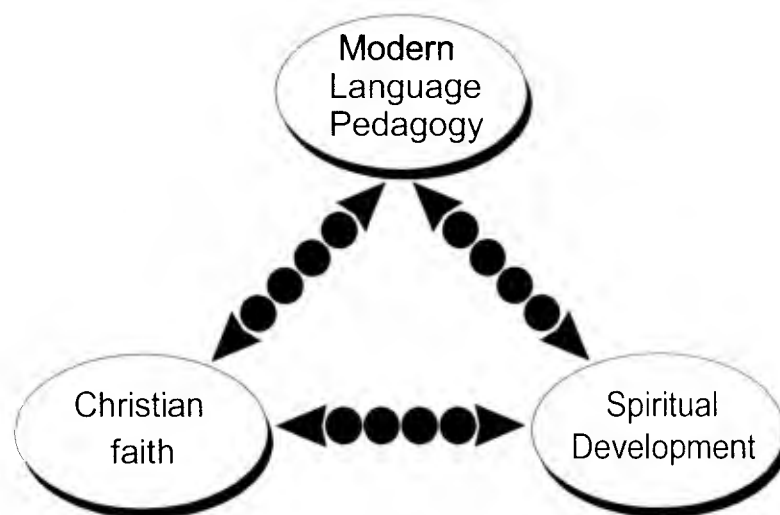
Figure 1

The thesis which I am setting out to investigate involves specifying the nature of these three relationships. My thesis is that a Christian conception of spiritual development could lead to identifiable modifications in modern foreign language pedagogy. The areas of investigation required can be set out in terms of three sub-questions:

- How does a concern for spiritual development relate to modern language pedagogy?

- How does Christian faith relate to a concern for spiritual development in an educational context?[65]

- How does Christian faith relate to modern language pedagogy?

It should be noted at the outset that the answer to none of these three questions is obvious. All three relationships are in some way problematic.

Regarding the first question, the development described above of an emphasis on spiritual development as a concern which carries significance for the whole curriculum, and of school inspection criteria based on this emphasis, suggests that there should be a relationship. The literature on spiritual development has, however, been selective in the

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[65] I take 'faith' to be a broader category than belief, including belief but also associated forms of trust and commitment. I explore some aspects of this is chapter 3. The term 'pedagogy' is defined below, and the reasons for choosing it are explored in chapter 3.

attention given to different parts of the curriculum. Areas such as English literature, art, music and science make fairly regular appearances when curricular examples are offered, perhaps because of the ease with which these areas can be associated with ideas such as awe and wonder or the exploration of personal identity. Modern language education has, however, received virtually no attention.[66] There has been a corresponding lack of discussion on the modern language teaching side. While there has been some discussion of cross-curricular concerns, including moral development,[67] the issue of spiritual development has passed undiscussed in professional publications such as the *Language Learning Journal*. The limited extent to which the documentation relating to the National Curriculum for Modern Foreign Languages addresses the concern expressed in the more general National Curriculum documents for cross-curricular spiritual development will be discussed in detail in chapter 5. The first question, then, remains very much an open one.

The second relationship, that between Christian faith and spiritual development, is much more immediately familiar. It is also the only one of the three to have received a significant amount of attention in recent debates over spiritual development.[68] However, as the above summary of recent developments pointed out, the relationship between religion and spirituality has become problematic in recent debates. The apparent triumph of the first of the two definitions of spirituality put forward in 1977, the one which emphasised universal features of human awareness and self-understanding and placed religion in a contingent relationship to such features, seems to offer grounds for distancing spiritual development from particular religious beliefs. The difficulties of dealing with religious conviction in the common schools of a religiously plural society can make this an attractive move, especially when the focus of concern is on spirituality as something which must be fostered across the curriculum. At the same time, it seems implausible to regard spirituality and religion as entirely separate categories. This tension has given rise to considerable divergence of opinion. David Carr, for instance,

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[66] Outside, that is, of work related to this thesis; see Smith, 2000; Smith & Dobson, 1999; Smith & Carvill, 2000.

[67] Harris, 1995; Khruslov, 1993; Smith, 1997b.

[68] See e.g. Thatcher, 1999c; Wright, 1998a, 1999a.

has argued that spiritual education can only take place in the context of a substantive religious tradition and that the whole idea of providing for spiritual development across the curriculum is therefore problematic in the context of common schools.[69] Mike Newby, in contrast, has argued that spirituality should be divorced from religion in order to make current educational concern for spiritual development meaningful.[70] The traditional proximity of notions of spirituality and religion does not make the question of their relationship a straightforward one in the context of current educational debates.

As regards the third question, it can be observed on the positive side that the idea of a constructive relationship between Christian faith and language teaching has plenty of historical precedent. Kelly, surveying 2,500 years of the history of the discipline, points to religious, moral and social aims as constituent features of thinking about language teaching throughout Western history.[71] The early spread of Christianity caused significant changes in attitude towards non-classical languages and provided new motivations for studying them.[72] Christian motives were again to the fore in the late Middle Ages, when European attention began to turn to foreign language learning. Roger Bacon, for instance, explored the significance of language learning in relation to Christian learning, the administrative needs of the church, the promotion of justice and peace in international relations and the nature of missionary endeavour.[73] In the sixteenth century the Protestant Reformers included language education in the scope of their reforming efforts. Luther called for an improved foreign language pedagogy, commenting that "the Holy Spirit is no fool. He does not busy himself with inconsequential or useless matters. He regarded the languages as so useful and necessary to Christianity that he ofttimes brought them down with him from heaven".[74] His colleague Melanchthon worked to translate the call into practice, contributing an

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[69] Carr, 1996.

[70] Newby, 1996.

[71] Kelly, 1969:369-379. For further discussion of the history of Christian involvement in second and modern language teaching, see Smith & Carvill, 2000:19-52.

[72] Hovdhaugen, 1982.

[73] Burke, 1962, part 3, chapter 4; for discussion see Smith, 1996.

[74] Luther, 1962:361.

improved and widely used Latin grammar.[75] In the following century, John Amos Comenius, widely regarded as the father of language education in the modern period, saw himself as elaborating a consciously Christian approach to education. His innovations in the area of language learning, which have earned him lasting fame, were deeply intertwined with his theological convictions, in particular his theologically-informed understanding of the human person.[76] Even in more recent times, Charles Curran's Community Language Learning claimed to be rooted in a specifically Judeo-Christian understanding of education.[77] The idea that Christian faith may have implications for foreign language learning is hardly new or untried.

It is, however, somewhat alien to the more recent culture of applied linguistics, the discipline most commonly associated with research on modern language teaching and learning. Applied linguistics has worked hard to establish itself as a scientifically based discipline and in doing so has participated in the tendency of modern scientific discourse to distance itself from religious belief as a relevant basis for reflection. Howatt notes the considerable gap which separates Comenius' approach from current paradigms, suggesting that approaches "derived from interpretations of man's relationship to God and nature are not easily assimilable to the secular traditions of the twentieth century".[78] It is significant here that the only example in the brief list of overtly Christian contributions given above which is taken from recent decades comes from a writer who (together with other proponents of humanistic psychology) was critical of the prevailing scientific paradigm and met with criticism for failing to build his work on a publicly verifiable basis.[79] The idea of relating Christian faith to modern

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[75] Manschreck, 1958.

[76] Smith, forthcoming-b; cf. Murphy, 1995. Howatt refers to Comenius' Orbis Pictus as "a work of great pedagogical strength founded on intellectual rigour and deeply considered philosophical and spiritual values" and, like Murphy, points out the distortions which have occurred when Comenius is read through secular lenses, resulting in interpretations which "undervalue the coherence of Comenius' philosophy in the context of the intellectual and theological preoccupations of his own time" (Howatt, 1984:46,50).

[77] Curran, 1972:49; cf.Curran, 1969. It seems to me that this claim requires qualification (see Smith, 1997c), a point to which I will return in chapter 6.

[78] Howatt, 1984:50.

[79] See Brumfit, 1985:84.

language teaching has plenty of historical precedent, but is more lacking in terms of contemporary plausibility. Present-day study of teaching procedures concerns itself largely with questions of effectiveness, and it is difficult, at least at first sight, to see what contribution could be made to this discussion by Christian faith. This is reflected in the lack of discussion of modern language teaching in the recent literature which seeks to apply Christian faith to general educational matters.[80]

In fact, the picture is not quite as bleak as the above account suggests. There has recently been renewed interest in the relationship between Christian faith and language learning, as reflected in the establishment of the North American Christian Foreign Language Association (NACFLA) in 1991 and its annual conferences.[81] April 2000 saw the appearance of the first issue of the *Journal of Christianity and Foreign Languages*, a refereed journal considering Christian perspectives on the teaching of foreign language and literature. This new journal has emerged from the NACFLA conferences. These developments are, however, well outside the mainstream in terms of general discussion of modern language education, and have tended to concentrate on questions arising from the interpretation of literature more than on language pedagogy. The material which has appeared to date has reopened rather than resolved the question of how the relationship between Christian faith and language teaching might be conceived at the present time.

These three relationships together form the core of this investigation. Before outlining how the argument will proceed, two further clarifications need to be made. First, the term 'spiritual development' is notoriously ill-defined, so it is necessary to give some indication of what is intended by it in the present study. Second, given that Christian faith, spiritual development and modern language pedagogy are all expansive topics, it is necessary to specify more precisely the angle from which they will be approached.

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[80] A 1990 bibliography of evangelical writings on education, which contains over 2000 entries, offers only a single entry under the heading 'modern languages', a brief article arguing the benefits of exchange visits abroad (Schwarz, 1990).

[81] For a list of papers presented to date, see http://www.spu.edu/orgs/nacfla/index.html. Less formal networks of Christian language teachers at the secondary school level have also emerged in the UK and Australia, and have produced occasional newsletters which include reflection on the issues discussed here in brief and popular form. I have had personal involvement with all three of these networks.

b.   What is meant by 'spiritual development'?

One of the most common themes in recent publications on spiritual development is the difficulty or, in the view of many, the impossibility of arriving at a clear and agreed definition of the term 'spiritual'. David Hay suggests that "the meaning of the word 'spirituality' is probably even more obscure today than it was in 1944", while Clive and Jane Erricker state bluntly that "part of the confusion we still experience is a lack of clear terminology - we still don't know exactly what we are talking about".[82] Some such statement has become one of the most common opening gambits in books and articles on spiritual development.[83]

Some have argued that the difficulties are inherent in the nature of spirituality or of its relationship to language, that spirituality is not the kind of thing which is susceptible to definition. If, as in some accounts, the spiritual is identified with all that is intangible, mysterious and ineffable in the educational experience, then to attempt to define it seems at best like trying to grasp the wind, at worst like dispassionately pinning a living butterfly to a board. Webster, for instance, argues that a precondition for addressing the spiritual adequately in education "is to perceive that the notion of the spiritual is ultimately impenetrable" because it "draws attention to what is invisible but not illusory, to what is powerful but not explicable, and to what is non-rational but not meaningless".[84] This does not mean that nothing can be said, but rather that the language of spirituality can point and evoke but not ultimately lay bare that which lies behind or beyond our efforts at conceptualisation. To rely on defining the term as a way of mastering the complex patterns of experience, belief and commitment with which it is associated may therefore be to place a greater load on the single word than it can bear.[85]

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[82] Erricker & Erricker, 1997:2.

[83] This has led some to doubt whether the term 'spiritual' has any meaningful educational application at all, and to argue that it can be collapsed without remainder into terms such as 'moral', 'aesthetic' or 'personal and social' (Lambourn, 1996). My disagreement with this conclusion will be outlined below.

[84] Webster, 1985. Cf. Priestley, 1996.

[85] This is not a problem unique to the term 'spiritual' - other words which indicate complex areas of experience which are deeply intertwined with our most basic values, words such as 'love', or 'education' itself, can be equally resistant to being reduced to a single authoritative definition.

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Others have pointed to the political sensitivities involved in recent legislation, and have suggested that there are some benefits provided by continued vagueness. Thus King points out that vague generalities "allow the term to be used flexibly in situations where greater clarification would bring greater difficulties", and suggests that the vagueness of recent official discussions "permits a range of possible understandings and approaches that can satisfy or at least not antagonise the majority of teachers, parents and children".[86]

While I have some degree of sympathy with each of these standpoints, I am particularly interested here in a third reason for difficulties with definition, namely the normative use and contested status of the term. This parallels the difficulties which have emerged in arriving at a single universally acceptable definition of terms such as 'education' itself.[87] Concerning the first issue, problems arise when it is not recognised that the term 'spiritual' commonly has both descriptive and normative uses. On the one hand it can refer to an inalienable human quality or capacity: we are all beings with a spiritual dimension to our lives by virtue of being human. On the other hand, there is a common use of the term 'spiritual' which indicates a desired quality, something to be attained, something which calls us beyond our present state. Here the opposite would be 'unspiritual'. A parallel can be found in our uses of the term 'human' - we are all human, yet we also speak of human and inhuman behaviour, and we might aspire to greater humanity.[88] Attempting to discuss the 'spiritual' without regard to this distinction invites dispute since it draws in normative as well as descriptive considerations (see also chapter 4 below).

Matters become more complex when it is noted that the term 'spiritual' was not coined in the context of educational discussion, but retains its association with a range of divergent spiritualities and their associated beliefs and commitments. Even if the term is

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[86] King, 1996:344. As mentioned above, there is evidence that the word 'spiritual' was chosen in the framing of the 1944 education act for this very reason (see Priestley, 1985a).

[87] Walsh, 1993:3-35.

[88] It seems to me, moreover, that the two uses are not cleanly separable - given the relationship of spirituality to human values, descriptions which have significant content are likely to involve some normative assumptions. I discuss this point further in chapter 4.

seen as having a different sense in the educational context, the case for retaining it seems to be thin if this sense has no connection at all with usage in other contexts. These divergent spiritualities may not only practice spirituality differently, but may carry different convictions concerning what 'spirituality' should most authentically be understood to be. This means that both descriptive and normative uses of the term 'spiritual' are likely to be loaded in contestable ways. Whether the differences are explained in terms of the essential contestability of the term or in terms of a complex geometry of descriptive, normative, open and loaded uses,[89] they are unavoidably relevant as long as the interests of individuals and communities with diverse spiritual commitments in the educational process are recognised.

In view of these difficulties, I do not attempt here to offer a definition of spirituality which is adequate for all purposes. There is, however, a need to identify what it is that is being related to Christian faith and modern language pedagogy. To meet this need I will offer a brief characterisation of spiritual development which is intended to be sufficient for present purposes. I will approach the matter by discussing the relationship between four aspects of spiritual development which can be found in a broad cross-section of the existing literature.[90]

The first two aspects are closely related in terms of both their substance and their role in the debate. First, various accounts of spiritual development focus on the fostering of capacities which are part of "the phenomenology of the distinctively human".[91] Capacities which have been suggested as belonging in this category include transcendence or self-awareness, creativity and the powers of the imagination, empathy and relational consciousness (an awareness of and capacity for connecting with others), the development and maintenance of a coherent personal identity, gaining a sense of meaning and purpose, and making free and responsible choices.[92] A second, related approach emphasises particular experiences which can be seen as depending upon these

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[89] Gallie, 1955/6; MacIntyre, 1973; Walsh, 1993:14-35.

[90] For a more extended discussion, see Smith, 1999b.

[91] Hill, 1989.

[92] See e.g. Hay & Nye, 1998; Hill, 1989; Nye & Hay, 1996.

capacities. These typically include experiences of curiosity and mystery, awe and wonder, connection and belonging, heightened awareness, and deep feelings associated with that which is felt to be ultimately important.[93] The promotion of spiritual development, according to these two approaches, involves fostering these capacities and providing regular opportunities for these experiences within an educational context which values them.

These two approaches to the spiritual are related not only in that the experiences and capacities listed are clearly connected, and commonly appear in the same lists of aspects of spirituality, but also in that they refer to that which is shared by humans in general and avoid appeal to particular confessional orientations.[94] There are, however, some difficulties in regarding capacities and experiences as a basis for dealing with spiritual development in a way which avoids controversy.

Regarding capacities, it may be observed that for capacities to develop, they must be exercised in specific situations and in particular ways. This immediately renders at least some of the capacities listed above more value-laden. Is any free and responsible choice, for instance, to be welcomed as a sign of spiritual development, or are some choices more healthy than others? Can creativity be exercised in unhealthy ways? Similar questions could be multiplied. To take an analogy, the possibility of abstractly describing the human capacity for language does not remove the necessity of speaking a particular language when we open our mouths. In a similar manner, what we actually encounter in concrete instances is not spirituality in general but particular patterns of spirituality.

A focus on experiences also raises further questions. What makes an experience spiritually significant? It seems more plausible to regard experiences as spiritual when they are connected in some way with identity and values - compare a sense of mystery when contemplating the origins of the universe with a sense of mystery when I gaze

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[93] See e.g. Bradford, 1995; Hay & Nye, 1998; Kibble, 1996; Nye & Hay, 1996; Radford, 1999.

[94] Cf. e.g. Götz, 1997; Huebner, 1985. Huebner's comments are not untypical: "Talk of the 'spirit' and the 'spiritual' in education need not, then, be God talk, even though the traditions wherein 'spiritual' is used most frequently are religious traditions. Rather, the talk is about lived reality, about experience and the possibility of experiencing...The experience itself is important; not the source, the reason that explains, nor the label that names." (p.164,167).

ineptly at my malfunctioning car engine. It also seems plausible to suppose that an experience will be more significant in terms of spiritual development if there is reflection on its meaning and implications than if it is merely a passing feeling.[95] This must surely include being open to the possibility that the experience is in fact deceptive or unhealthy - developed spiritual traditions do not commonly endorse all spiritual experience as necessarily good.[96] As the following example from David Hay's research on religious experience shows, the personal significance of an experience and the way in which it is integrated into the process of personal growth is dependent on its interpretation in the light of beliefs. Hay records the comments of a committed Marxist and a committed Anglican interviewed on the same day:

> "At times of selfishness, I stumble into otherworldliness, when I feel the need to lean on some emotional peg (I suppose some people would call it prayer). But when I catch myself, I stop it by saying 'There is no power that can help me'...The aspect of subservience disgusts me.'"

> "[Religious experience is] something that is there all the time. One's awareness is limited by one's willingness to submit to it. Very often it demands an unconditional giving which is not as easy as shutting ourselves off. This experience is the true end of man."[97]

Serious reflection on the meaning of spiritual experience seems particularly pertinent in the educational context, where the provision of educational experiences of other kinds for students (compare, for instance, science experiments) is commonly, and surely rightly, accompanied by reflection on their significance within some wider framework of meaning.

These considerations suggest that attempts to deal with spiritual development, even defined in terms of common capacities and experiences, will remain superficial unless

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[95] Brown & Furlong, 1996:4; Marfleet, 1992.

[96] I will discuss further in chapter 4 the tendency of experientially oriented discussions of spiritual development to focus only on positive experiences and to neglect evil and alienation as factors in spiritual experience.

[97] Hay, 1982:156.

they are related to two further aspects. First, there must be some reference to wider frameworks of interpretation which make sense of spiritual capacities and experiences. Here particular beliefs and commitments become centrally relevant - the process of making sense of our identity and experiences and deciding how to respond is belief-laden.[98] Second, attention must be focused on the patterns of living which emerge - spiritual development is not about capacities and experiences in isolation, but about how they feed into a developing character, set of commitments and pattern of behaviour.

These further aspects can be related to themes present in the spiritual development literature. They are related, for instance, to the suggestion that spiritual development involves facing and answering fundamental questions. Examples of such questions include: Whom or what can I ultimately trust? What is of highest value? Where will I find purpose and meaning? How will I relate to others? How can I deal with my weaknesses, hurts and fears? Answering such questions involves facing questions of truth and arriving at beliefs concerning the meaning of life, but it also involves living in particular ways: setting particular priorities, giving time to particular relationships, and so on.[99] Another relevant theme in the literature is the development of particular spiritual virtues, such as humility, hope, love or self-denial. Here again, spirituality is seen as expressed in a particular quality of life which is connected with beliefs about authentic living.[100] Both of these avenues suggest a need for some point (or points) of orientation and inspiration. Any serious exploration of these matters seems very likely to involve engagement with one or more of the longstanding traditions of spiritual reflection found in religions and with the truth claims associated with them.

A focus on patterns of belief and on lived responses thus extends the notion of spiritual development. Spiritual development will be seen not merely in terms of decontextualised capacities and experiences, but in terms of a process of personal formation in which beliefs concerning the truth about life and lived responses to

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[98] Cf. Carr, 1996.

[99] For discussions of spiritual development along these lines, see Beesley, 1993; Olthuis, 1985a; Smith, 1997a.

[100] For discussions of spiritual development in relation to spiritual virtues, see Carr, 1995; Schwehn, 1993.

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spiritual questions are both crucial. In this connection, two recent definitions of spirituality advanced by Hendrik Hart and Andrew Wright seem to me to be helpful:

> "In brief, I will use 'spiritual' and 'spirituality' to designate our self-conscious awareness and nurturing of the interconnectedness of all aspects of human life and the rest of existence with the existential boundary issues of life, as we are empowered or inspired to do so by a motivating dynamic or spirit."[101]

> "Spirituality is the developing relationship of the individual, within community and tradition, to that which is - or is perceived to be - of ultimate concern, ultimate value and ultimate truth."[102]

These two definitions are both overlapping and complementary. They share an emphasis on the growing and active relationship of the individual to some point of challenge and orientation beyond that individual, in the light of which his or her life is shaped. In addition they point to the sense of spirituality as that which animates or empowers (Hart) and to the role of community and tradition in shaping our spiritual responses (Wright). Implicit in both definitions is the idea that spiritual orientations and the inspiration which both empowers and is drawn from them are not something placed in parallel with other aspects of life, but rather something life-shaping. Our capacities and experiences are brought together and patterned in particular ways as we give ourselves to particular belief-laden orientations from which we receive inspiration.[103]

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[101] Hart, 1997:21.

[102] Wright, 1998a:88.

[103] Cf. Rodger, 1996:48: "Our spirit...relates to the basic orientation or disposition of our life: the way we are in the world, in terms of those things to which we are sensitive; of which we are aware; by which we are attracted; which we value; by which we can be moved to act; which shape and guide our lives." Mott-Thornton's proposed definition is more diffuse and cumbersome, but seems to point in a similar direction: "spirituality is that quality of being, holistically conceived, made up of insight, beliefs, values, attitudes/emotions and behavioural dispositions, which both informs and may be informed by lived experience. The cognitive aspects of our common spirituality can be described at any given time as being a 'framework' of ideals, beliefs and values about oneself, ones relations with others and reality/the 'world'. Logically intrinsic to this framework, and rooted in a notion of what is real and ultimately significant, is some conception of the good life (possibly, but not necessarily, related to a supreme will and agency), which informs (implicitly, via a network of unexamined assumptions/prejudices or explicitly, via rational justification), but may not determine, all action" (Mott-Thornton, 1998:69). Such attempts to do justice to the belief-laden and life shaping dimensions of spirituality seem to me to be

This brief account suggests that in pedagogical terms attention should be given not only to the general provision of certain experiences and opportunities to exercise general capacities, but also to how a given pedagogy might contribute to the shaping of the learner's character (what spirit or ethos does it carry) and to how it mediates the learner's encounter with spiritually challenging issues, questions and truths (or truth-claims). This, in broad terms, is the kind of investigation carried out in part two of this thesis.

I will discuss issues related to this conception of spirituality in more detail in chapters 2-4. I will conclude this initial orientation by commenting briefly on three points.

First, this way of conceiving of spiritual development has implications for discussions of the relationship of the spiritual to the moral, the aesthetic or the emotional. An emphasis on the relationship between spirituality and character suggests that the spiritual may incorporate the moral, setting it in a wider context.[104] If spirituality has to do with the drawing together of the various aspects of our being and experience in a pattern or orientation which transcends them, then spirituality will draw upon these other aspects of experience without reducing to them.[105] Aesthetic or emotional experience become spiritually significant when they are brought into relationship with a more ultimate point of orientation or source of meaning. The mundane is on this understanding not left behind in order to arrive at the spiritual; it is spiritually animated as it is brought into relationship with ultimate questions of meaning, questions which

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more adequate than more reductive definitions in terms of ideas such as "a heightening of awareness" (Hay & Nye, 1998).

[104] This contra those writers who wish to strictly separate the spiritual from the moral or regard the spiritual as in itself amoral (Blake, 1997; Priestley, 1985a). Mapping the relationship between spirituality and morality depends, of course, not only on particular understandings of the spiritual but also on conceptions of morality. If, for instance, morality is understood in terms of dutiful rule-following, then the spiritual is likely to be seen as quite distinct from it (Carr, 1995); if ethics is understood in terms of virtue, the distance from the moral to the spiritual may seem shorter.

[105] This may be compared with Dewey's argument that the religious is not so much a separate area of experience as a quality which may belong to any other experience, although my emphasis on the importance of beliefs and questions of truth is at odds with Dewey's reduction of the religious to its beneficial effects in terms of adjustment to life (Dewey, 1934:10, 14). An example: I experience a little outbreak of joy while reflecting on God's grace in my life, and another when I reach today's target number of words added to my thesis. In purely emotional terms the two experiences may be very similar, but their spiritual significance differs. The spiritual takes up the emotional into a wider context.

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require us to make choices and orient our lives to that which we believe to be of ultimate worth.[106]

Second, the account sketched above suggests that the dichotomy between exclusively religious definitions of spirituality and general anthropological ones which are independent of any belief is a false one. Spirituality can be characterised in terms of plural belief-laden orientations without specifying the specific content of those orientations. Interestingly, Hart's definition emerges from his discussion of the phrase "the spirit of the Enlightenment", which ascribes a particular spirit to a movement which opposed itself to spirituality in the religious sense. Wright's definition equally allows for orientation and inspiration to be found in something such as an ideal of universal reason. It is quite possible to recognise spirituality as both universal and unavoidably contentious - the plurality of spirituality grows from differing commitments and orientations which imbue people with different spirits. This means that a view of spirituality as leaving behind the need to consider controversial issues of belief and commitment should be rejected as an evasion.[107]

Third, the term 'development' is also not without its problems. Due to its strong associations with theories of faith, moral or cognitive development such as those of Fowler, Kohlberg or Piaget, the term 'development' seems to imply linear progression through a fixed sequence of stages.[108] I am aware of no commentator who regards this as an appropriate model for spiritual development. The term spiritual development has, however, probably largely because of its use in legislation and official documentation, stuck as the most common term for the subject under discussion here. I have used the term in this chapter and elsewhere in the thesis largely for this reason, because of its role in identifying a wider discussion. I do not intend to indicate thereby a sequence of predefined developmental stages, and will use the phrases "spiritual growth" and

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[106] This inverts the priorities of an account such as Radford's, which subsumes the spiritual under the aesthetic (Radford, 1999).

[107] On this point I am in agreement with commentators such as Carr, Thatcher and Wright (Carr, 1996, 1999; Thatcher, 1996; Thatcher, 1999a, 1999b; Wright, 1997, 1998a, 1999a).

[108] This is not the only possible set of connotations for 'development' - consider, for instance, the development of a photograph.

"spiritual development" synonymously in the remaining chapters.

c.   Focus of investigation

The remaining task in this introductory discussion is to specify the focus of the inquiry more precisely. The three questions stated above draw in a broad range of issues. They have a potential bearing upon the aims, content and pedagogy of modern language education in the current educational context. They have implications for the way in which we conceive the relationship between religion and education, for they require a probing of how particular beliefs and spiritual commitments may be connected with areas of the curriculum usually considered neutral and unproblematic as regards religious faith. They also have implications beyond the bounds of modern languages for how spiritual development as a cross-curricular concern is to be understood and developed. The very breadth of the issues potentially implicated in an exploration of the three relationships discussed here necessitates a further focusing of attention.

First, the approach taken in this thesis will be philosophical. There are other avenues of investigation which could prove equally interesting, such as empirical investigation of pupils' experience of modern language learning in relation to spiritual issues or of how spiritual issues are dealt with by modern language course materials. Given the paucity of previous discussion of this particular area, however, together with the complexity of the issues involved, a philosophical approach may have the merit of helping to clarify what other kinds of investigation might reasonably look for. Empirical investigation at the present point in time would be investigating a situation in which modern language teachers have been given little help in reflecting on how their subject might be taught with an eye to spiritual development (see chapter 5). It would, moreover, require some idea of what to look for. There is so little by way of a conceptual framework in place for asking questions about the interrelationships of Christian (or any other) faith, spirituality and modern language pedagogy that elaborating such a framework seems an important initial step.

Second, in referring to modern language pedagogy, it is mainly questions of teaching methodology which I have in mind - what are learners asked to say, read or do? What is the basis upon which the teacher (or theorist) designs the teaching process? What

techniques and procedures are favoured and how are they patterned? Which ways of teaching modern languages in schools might comport well with a concern for spiritual development or with Christian faith? This will inevitably draw in issues relating to aims and course content, but these will be discussed inasmuch as they are relevant to methodological approaches rather than forming a focus for investigation in themselves. 'Modern language pedagogy' is, then, intended to refer to the way in which the teaching and learning process is designed. (My reasons for preferring the broader term 'pedagogy' to the narrower 'methodology' are discussed in some detail in chapter 3, which also offers a more detailed discussion of what is involved in a 'methodological approach').[109]

The focus on philosophical issues and their relevance to pedagogical design implies somewhat different interests from those pursued in many discussions of spiritual development. My focus will not be psychological or developmental, dealing with processes occurring in the learner, but rather will deal with the ways in which particular beliefs relevant to spiritual development might inform or conflict with particular pedagogical designs. The strategy followed in order to gain some purchase on these connections is to approach education for spiritual development and modern language pedagogy as both involving reliance on particular understandings of human nature.

Seeking to address spiritual development in the whole curriculum implies some view of learners as persons with a spiritual dimension, however defined. This view will include both some conception of the spiritual capacities which are to be developed and some conception of what it would be to become more fully developed spiritually. A particular view of spiritual development is bound up with an implicit or explicit vision of what it means to be authentically human.

On the side of modern language pedagogy, the situation is similar. Although a great deal of discussion of modern language learning takes place in terms of particular theories of language and its acquisition, the considerable variation in pedagogical approaches is to

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[109] It should also be noted that when discussing   modern language pedagogy it is primarily the teaching of modern foreign languages in general school contexts which I have in mind. I do not exclude the possibility that the arguments developed here will have implications for other forms of language teaching, such as the teaching of English as a second language, but such wider implications will not be specifically under discussion here.

some degree bound up with different understandings of the nature of the learner. This point will be given more substance later in the thesis (see in particular chapters 6 and 7), but the fact that modern language pedagogies have been constructed using the tools of both behaviourist and humanistic psychology is for the moment a sufficient pointer to its pertinence. The concern in this thesis will not, therefore, be the common one of how particular pedagogical designs enhance language acquisition, but rather the ways in which they both presuppose and foster particular conceptions of the self. Focusing on conceptions of personhood and personal development can serve as a reminder that although much research naturally homes in on the linguistic dimension of what is happening in the classroom, this aspect is embedded in wider educational processes. It may also serve as a bridge between discussions of spirituality and the concerns of the modern language educator (see chapter 3).

This interest in conceptions of the person provides a natural basis for considering (and narrowing down for the purposes of the study) the relevance of Christian faith, for there is a long and substantial tradition of Christian reflection on human nature. It also, as I will argue in chapter 4, allows for a consideration of the relevance of Christian faith at different levels of particularity. At the most particular level, a Christian conception of the spiritual nature of the person and of spiritual growth will involve conscious commitment to and following of Christ, the empowering present of the Holy Spirit in the believer and participation in the Christian community. In the context of a Christian school such overtly confessional considerations may be brought into explicit relationship with teaching and learning. It is also, however, the case that more general stances regarding human nature can be articulated on the basis of such confessional specifics. As Wolfhart Pannenberg puts it "a particular type of piety involves not only a specific theological focus and corresponding life-styles but also a particular conception of the human world, the world of human experience".[110] Christian beliefs about human nature can therefore be approached not only at the level of confessional commitments but also at the dependent but more general level of implied claims about the shape of being human. This implicative field of beliefs about persons and their development is as applicable in principle as that arising from any other worldview or set of commitments

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[110] Pannenberg, 1984:16.

to public discussion of general educational questions.

The framework developed here for relating the three specified areas will, then, be concerned with assumptions about the nature of persons, that is, of teachers and learners. Here again I do not wish to argue that this is the only interesting approach. It would be possible to approach these relationships in terms of conceptions of culture, relating a Christian understanding of culture to the ways in which culture is understood and taught in the modern language classroom.[111] Conceptions of language would provide another promising approach, given the existence of Christian theological and philosophical reflection on the nature and significance of language.[112] The particular approach taken here has been selected partly in order to narrow the scope sufficiently, partly on the basis of my existing interests, knowledge and competence and in order to develop further some arguments advanced in my M.Phil.F. thesis,[113] and partly because it represents in itself a rich enough topic for investigation.

3.   Overview of the thesis

The first part of the thesis (chapters 2-4) will be concerned with elaborating the three relationships outlined above into a framework within which particular pedagogical options can be examined.

Chapter 2 focuses on the relationship between Christian faith and spiritual development in a negative way. I consider various objections which have been made to linking educational discussions of spiritual development with religious belief. The fact that a number of commentators have argued that links between spiritual development and religion are either non-existent or undesirable raises an immediate question: is the

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[111] Cf. e.g. Gundry-Volf & Volf, 1997; Volf, 1996, and the use made of Volf's analysis in Smith & Carvill, 2000.

[112] See e.g. in the Kuyperian tradition Vande Kopple, 1991; Verburg, 1965, 1971; Wolterstorff, 1987, 1995; Yallop, 1980, 1993, n.d..

[113] Smith, 1997d. That thesis took as its starting point a single theme (the ontological relationship between connection and conflict) from articles by James H. Olthuis which discuss a Christian perspective on intersubjectivity. It examined the potential relevance of this theme to an evaluation of the pedagogies of Charles A. Curran and Claire Kramsch. The findings of that thesis are taken up in the broader context of the present study and have provided the basic material from which chapters 6 and 7 have been extended and reworked, and also the initial skeleton of some subsections of chapter 3.

present argument not predicated upon a confusion of educational spirituality with religious spirituality and therefore missing the point of the current debate? This kind of objection is more basic than differences over points of detail; if sustained it would place the validity of the thesis as a whole in question. I will contend that the arguments upon which it is commonly based are faulty. While there is continuing disagreement over the issue, there is no compelling case for abandoning an exploration of how a view of spiritual development related to Christian faith could inform the curriculum.

Once this part of the ground is cleared, I turn in chapter 3 to the relationship of modern language pedagogy to Christian faith on the one hand and spiritual development on the other. The issue here is the feasibility of meaningfully relating a view of spiritual development to language teaching processes. The chapter first considers factors which appear to make such a connection implausible. Shifting into constructive mode, it then moves on to draw upon recent discussions of the nature of modern language pedagogy in order to elaborate a model of how faith and spirituality could relate to pedagogical designs for modern language learning. Working out such a model in greater detail will help to specify what particular aspects of spirituality and of modern language pedagogy are relevant to the line of investigation pursued here. Specifically, I will describe the role which can be played in the design of modern language pedagogy by particular assumptions concerning the spiritual nature of the person.

Chapter 4 returns to the relationship discussed in chapter 2, that between Christian faith and spirituality, but with a more constructive agenda. Chapter 4 identifies specific themes in Christian faith which could function in the ways described in chapter 3. I develop a Christian understanding of spiritual development, laying the basis for exploration of actual modern language pedagogies in terms of their compatibility with such an understanding.

This completes the first part of the thesis. After a summarising interlude, the second part (chapters 5-7) moves on to consider particular approaches to modern language pedagogy in the light of the issues raised.

Chapter 5 turns to the documentation relating to the National Curriculum for Modern Foreign Languages and asks whether the pedagogy implied in it supports the concern in

more general National Curriculum documents for the promotion of spiritual development. I argue that there is little evidence of such support, and identify two main directions in which a more spiritually sensitive pedagogy might be developed. These are explored in turn in the following two chapters, each of which takes a more developed pedagogical proposal and considers its resonances and tensions with a Christian conception of spiritual development.

Chapter 6 examines Community Language Learning as described in the work of Charles Curran. Curran's work is discussed not only as a prominent example of a 'humanistic' or 'personalist' approach to modern language teaching, but also as an unusual effort to work both Christian and existentialist themes into a pedagogical design.

Chapter 7 turns to the cultural dimension of modern language learning and conducts a similar examination of the critical foreign language pedagogy proposed by Claire Kramsch in a number of recent publications. Kramsch's assumptions concerning the nature of persons and of interpersonal interaction are compared with the Christian themes discussed in chapter 4.

Finally, chapter 8 revisits each of the three relationships which have been under examination and considers what conclusions can be drawn from this study and what further investigation is invited by it.

PART 1:

A framework for interrelating faith, spirituality and modern language pedagogy

Chapter 2
Basic Objections to Relating Spiritual Development to Christian Faith

Outline:

1. Varieties of basic objection

2. Appeals to context

    a.   **Appeals to the social context**

        i.   **The secularity of the contemporary social context**

        ii.   **The traditions informing our social context**

        iii.   **Secularism and pluralism**

    b.   **Appeals to the educational context**

    Summary

3. Negative evaluations of religion in relation to spirituality

    a.   **Religion as restrictive**

    b.   **Religion as exclusionary**

    c.   **Religion as fictitious**

    d.   **Religion as other-worldly**

    Summary

4. Problems with the particularity of religious belief

    a.   **Arguments concerning the scope of religion**

    b.   **Arguments concerned with impartiality**

    Summary

1.   Varieties of basic objection

In the relevant entry in their recent survey of key concepts in the philosophy of education, Winch and Gingell overtly assume that spiritual education in our present context can only take place on a secular basis.[1] It seems to be a similar assumption which leads to readings of recent official documents as severing spirituality from religion. A recent article on teachers' and inspectors' interpretations of spiritual development, for instance, offers the accurate observation that official documents

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[1] Winch & Gingell, 1999:227-8. The entry on spiritual education leans significantly on the work of Mike Newby (Newby, 1997), who has argued for a secular approach to spiritual development. This chapter considers Newby's work in some detail. Parts of the argument of this chapter appear in Smith, 2000.

"declared early on that 'spiritual' was not synonymous with 'religious', but neither defined what connection there may be between the two, nor offered a concise definition".[2] Despite the fact that this seems to leave the possibility of a connection between spirituality and religion open, the article then shifts without argument to a more tendentious description of the "inability of two teachers to detach spirituality from a religious base in any way, despite the fact that OFSTED (1994) and the National Curriculum Council (1993) and the Schools Curriculum Assessment Authority (1996) all state that spirituality is not about religion".[3] The claim that religion and spirituality are "not synonymous" has been transmuted into the claim that spirituality is "not about" religion, and we are apparently intended to regard the "inability" of these hapless teachers to abandon their religious interpretations as regrettable. Similar insinuations that it is outdated and inappropriate to attempt to connect spiritual development in schools with religious belief are not uncommon. John White argues that the spiritual in education should be "all but uncoupled from religion" in order to avoid indoctrination, while Jane Erricker would seem to be expressing thoughts which are quite widely shared when she claims (while criticising Terence Copley's work in a recent review) that "the tide of faith has receded" and any approach to spirituality in schools which regards it as best understood "in the context of a religion" is "shipwrecked on the beach".[4]

This premise, if accepted, raises immediate problems for one of the relationships outlined in chapter one, namely that between spiritual development and Christian faith. If the parameters of any viable approach can only be secular, then an exploration of the implications of Christian faith for spiritual development in schools would seem to be at best ephemeral, at worst misguided.

This difficulty is a basic one in that it questions not merely particular details of any given Christian account, but rather the validity of the whole enterprise. If the objections to drawing upon Christian faith are successful, they settle the tension between the more

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[2] Sokanovic & Muller, 1999:9.

[3] Sokanovic & Muller, 1999:14. Curiously, this is in spite of the accusation that the relevant OFSTED document displays "an obviously religious bias" (p.9). See further Smith & Shortt, 2000.

[4] Erricker, 2000:23; White, 1994a:373.

religiously coloured and the more generically anthropological definitions of spirituality discussed earlier in favour of the latter, excluding an approach such as that taken in this thesis.

The arguments considered in this chapter would, if successful, also tell against efforts to relate Christian faith in any formative way to modern language education, thus short-circuiting a second of the three relationships laid out in chapter 1. What would remain would be a possible relationship between spiritual development and modern language pedagogy, both considered apart from Christian faith (Figure 2). This chapter will therefore discuss in some detail whether arguments for the exclusion of Christian faith, or religious belief in general, are successful.
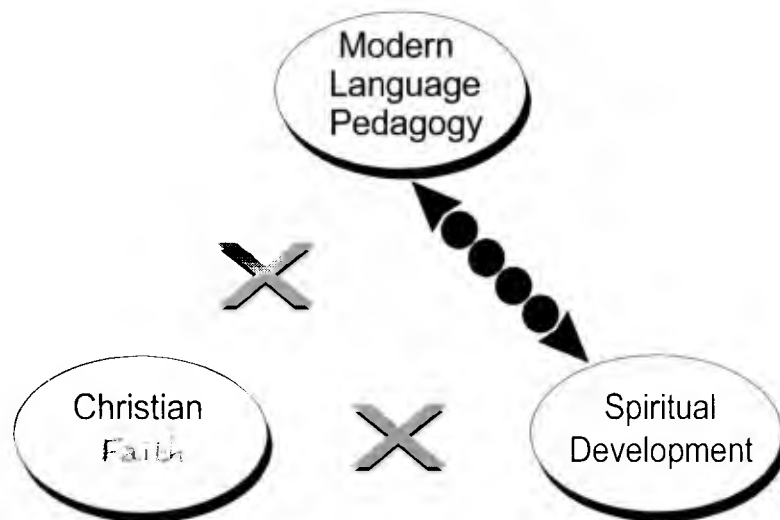
Figure 2

The need here is not to demonstrate the superiority or the necessity of a Christian approach, but rather to show that those arguments which would *debar* a Christian approach do not hold. This much is sufficient to allow the rest of the investigation to proceed in good conscience. The focus here, therefore, will be on the negative aspect of the relationship between spiritual development and Christian faith, on objections to such a relationship; chapter four will return to this relationship with a more constructive agenda.

The objections considered in this chapter fall into three broad categories. The first concerns arguments based on appeal to the *context* of spiritual education, either the

broad social context or the specific educational context. These lines of argument claim that the nature of one or both of these contexts precludes religious approaches. The second set of arguments concerns the *value* of religious contributions to spiritual development, typically contrasting a positive view of spirituality with a negative view of religion and suggesting that the latter is not an acceptable basis for spiritual development. The third group of objections concerns the *scope* of spirituality and religion and the relationship between the universal and the particular. The issues here are whether spirituality and religion are separate entities, and whether the universal should have precedence over the particular. I will survey each kind of objection in turn, suggesting in each case reasons why the case against a religious approach does not hold. While it will be my contention that the arguments surveyed are not compelling, I will also seek to identify issues raised which should be taken into account by Christian educators.

2. Appeals to context

a. Appeals to the social context

i. The secularity of the contemporary social context

A first line of argument invokes the present social context as unsupportive of religiously informed approaches to spiritual development. This appeal to the nature of our society is made by various writers, but has been put forward particularly forcefully in a number of articles by Mike Newby.[5] We are, Newby claims, in a post-religious society in which religious insights can only have experiential significance if they lose their religious character.[6] The idea of promoting spiritual maturity within the context of particular religious beliefs is therefore untenable. Three characteristics of our society are singled out for attention: its *secularity*, its *pluralism* and its prevailing post-modern *scepticism*. Given this kind of context, to continue to expect religious traditions to shape education and provide a basis for identity is, Newby suggests, to suffer from a failure of perception, a failure to face reality. Only a "thin tradition, enriched by, and reflected in,

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[5] Newby, 1988, 1994, 1996a, 1996b, 1997, 1998. Similar appeals can also be found in the work of Nigel Blake (1997) and Michael Grimmitt (1987); comparable assumptions appear to lie behind Jane Erricker's comments, quoted above.

[6] Newby, 1988:180-181.

a liberal education" can fit our context.[7] The secular spirituality which alone can thrive in the contemporary world should not be seen as "land to be reclaimed by the church"; rather "it is a post-religious spirituality of agapaistic love rising out of the ashes of dead orthodoxy".[8]

It would, of course, be possible to argue about this depiction of 'society'. The term 'secular' is itself far from straightforward, a point which I will discuss further below. Even assuming that the term 'secular' is clear,[9] it may still be asked whether such a characterisation might not obscure important features of the contemporary context in view of the continued widespread presence of religious commitment. Newby himself notes that "a substantial percentage of citizens appear to seek a return to traditional Christian teaching on the grounds that this conserves moral standards and protects the young from becoming prey to corruption and aimlessness", but does not seem to give much weight to this "substantial percentage" in his characterisation of the context to which we must be true.[10] The much-discussed contemporary problem of pluralism is, after all, in significant measure a problem of *religious* pluralism. The existence of contributions to the debate concerning spiritual development which read the same social context in a diametrically opposite way, as in fact *requiring* a religiously grounded approach, makes this kind of questioning pertinent.[11]

Such matters could and should be debated, but Newby's argument would remain problematic even if his description of society were accurate beyond question. The difficulty concerns the relationship between social description and educational intervention. A familiar way of posing this difficulty questions the move from an 'is' to an 'ought' - the empirical observation that there is a decline in religious belief does not justify enlisting public institutions to accelerate the decline unless there are normative

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[7] Newby, 1997:287.

[8] Newby, 1994:17. Some implications of Newby's appeal to the Christian idea of agape in this connection will be discussed further below.

[9] On the difficulties in giving the term a precise application, see Haydon's attempt at clarification (Haydon, 1994). On the remaining difficulties in Haydon's account, see below.

[10] Newby, 1997:285. On the persistence of religion in a 'secular' society, and the consequent difficulties with the term 'secular', see e.g. Gates, 2000; Hay, 1982, 1990.

[11] See e.g. the discussion in Mott-Thornton, 1998:79-82.

grounds for regarding such a move as desirable.[12]

Appeal to a fact-value dichotomy is, however, a premature basis for dismissal of Newby's position. While the move may be fraught with complications, there is nothing obviously nonsensical about consulting the social context when framing educational priorities. Closer attention to the complications may yield a more nuanced evaluation of Newby's argument.

Any context for human action presents us with innumerable features which must be identified, ordered and assessed for their relative significance. This process is itself theory-laden, a fact which helps to account for the contrasting interpretations of our societal context noted in passing above. My main interest here, however, is in the point that moving from description to proposals for action which will perpetuate or modify the situation requires a further kind of judgement. Once any set of contextual factors is identified and regarded as significant, judgements have to be made first as to which factors may in some sense impede our efforts, and then as to which of these factors are to be conceptualised as *boundaries* (givens within which we must work) and which as *problems* (obstacles to be overcome).

Suppose, for instance, we come (rightly or wrongly) to regard students' attention spans as regrettably short because of the impact of electronic media. When we move from description to educational response we may (at one extreme) reinvent our educational practices to make them resemble the short dramatic inputs of those media as far as possible, or (at the other extreme) increase the intensity of educational interventions specifically designed to counteract the effects of the media. Judgements as to which response (or, more likely, balance of responses) is most appropriate will be rooted in broader educational values and priorities. We may, for instance, believe that there are parts of our cultural heritage which cannot be adequately accessed, or future life opportunities which cannot be seized, without the capacity for sustained attention.

Newby has clearly made this kind of judgement. Some features of the social context are regarded as boundaries within which anyone who is not blind or deluded must work. Secularity, pluralism and scepticism are the "constraints of late-modern life" which

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[12] This is Mott-Thornton's argument against Newby (Mott-Thornton, 1998:83-88).

render Newby's secular approach "the *only* spiritual justification for religious education".[13]

Other social trends are, however, presented as factors to be resisted and counteracted by educators. Education should, Newby urges, enable people to "break free of the shackles of materialism, obsession with competition, and instant pleasure-seeking which beset modern life".[14] He acknowledges that some might defend these tendencies on the grounds of realism - they are so widespread and entrenched that they could be seen simply as social conditions which we must accept and work with. Such a line of thought must, however, be resisted, for these tendencies are, in Newby's view, a "deeply pervasive form of corruption".[15] These are not boundaries, but problems.

Obviously the point here is not that it is improper for Newby to make such judgements; they are an inevitable accompaniment of responsible action. The point is that the social features brought forward in support of the secularist viewpoint being propounded have themselves been identified as boundaries, rather than problems to be overcome, on the basis of that viewpoint. The societal factors which allegedly support secularist approaches are presented as aspects of a context to which we must be true, while other, less supportive features of the same context are repudiated and cast as contingent impediments.[16]

To offer such contextual factors as somehow *compelling* the adoption of the approach within which they have been construed as boundaries is circular.[17] The believer will be

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[13] Newby, 1997:289, Newby's emphasis.

[14] Newby, 1997:283.

[15] Newby, 1988:175-176.

[16] Regarding these impediments, Newby comments in defence of his negative judgement upon them that "our value system is only likely to accord with the usual conduct of people if we are quite content with society as it is" (Newby, 1988:173). This comment both undermines his appeal to "society as it is" as justifying his stance and invites the surmise that certain features are accepted as boundaries because he is "quite content" with them.

[17] This may not in itself invalidate the position advocated - a degree of circularity may be unavoidable here and shared by other accounts; it does, however, undermine attempts to use appeals to context as refutations of alternative positions, since those alternatives can make similar appeals to different, equally internally consistent and perhaps equally empirically plausible interpretations of the social context, and to a different set of judgements concerning the distribution of boundaries and problems.

more likely to place certain forms of scepticism and some aspects of secularisation with hedonism and materialism; they represent failures to be overcome, not boundaries to be accepted as inevitable.[18] The appeal to context cannot in itself provide sufficient grounds for preferring secularist contextual judgements to those of the believer.

ii.   The traditions informing our social context

Newby's argument from the social context is synchronic in emphasis - it points to particular features of the context in which we now live, features which are seen as the result of fairly recent social change. It is worth noting briefly a similar but distinct kind of contextual argument with a diachronic focus, suggesting that particular traditions which have made us who we are render certain moves unacceptable when it comes to spiritual education. Blake's criticisms of the work of the SCAA Forum broach this issue.

Blake suggests that the members of the SCAA Forum were confused. Their work is based on an Enlightenment emphasis on truth and consensus, yet they accuse the Enlightenment (falsely in Blake's view) of fostering relativism. They appear ignorant of important strands in their own intellectual tradition which would place in question their attempts to ground morality in spirituality. Blake argues that the SCAA discussion does not take the Enlightenment tradition seriously enough, and seeks to show the problems with its appeals to spiritual and moral tradition by showing that a similar appeal to different aspects of the same tradition can point in different directions. This alternative approach would appeal to a secular Enlightenment tradition which rejected spirituality and proclaimed the independence of rational inquiry and moral reflection from spiritual sources.[19] On this view "the project of redeeming knowledge, education and morality through spirituality itself undermines ...the very traditions in whose name educators have claimed their cultural authority, these past two hundred years".[20] To move in a different direction now would be to abandon "the high tradition of Western culture since

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[18] An interesting parallel is provided by recent concerned media discussion about the kind of educational intervention needed to overcome another form of late-modern scepticism, namely growing public scepticism towards scientists. This form of scepticism is widely regarded as an obstacle to be overcome, not as a constraint which must delimit educational practice.

[19] Blake, 1997:123, 128, 129, 132, 134; cf. SCAA, 1996.

[20] Blake, 1997:123,132.

the eighteenth century" and "to betray our culture and identity, the intellectual resources by which we live".[21]

While this is a distinct line of argument, and may even be in tension with certain kinds of appeal to the *contemporary* context inasmuch as that context may be seen to be betraying a longer tradition which should be reaffirmed, the difficulties are basically the same as with the first line of argument discussed above. Blake's criticisms of the SCAA Forum highlight the questionable nature of any appeal to a particular strand of tradition as necessarily determinative for current practice. Neither "we" nor "our tradition" can be assumed to be seamless entities, especially in the modern Western context, which has been shaped by a diversity of events, movements and ideologies.[22] To identify a given strand of our tradition as authoritative is to make the kinds of contextual judgements already discussed - it is to identify parts of our past as worthy of rediscovery or continuation, and other parts as blind alleys best left behind.

Such a process of identification and evaluation may be valuable in the course of constructing either secularist or faith-informed approaches, but in neither case will it provide a generally compelling refutation of the other alternative. The judgements involved are informed by particular commitments, and are open to alternative construal. Here again, the point is not to suggest that discussion of the social context is inappropriate, but rather to clarify the status of such discussion. Appeals to a secular tradition are no more compelling in and of themselves as refutations of faith-informed approaches than appeals to a secular present-day context.

iii.   Secularism and pluralism

The arguments considered so far emphasise secularism as a defining and authoritative feature of our context. One way of reformulating the contextual argument would be to place the central stress on pluralism, regarding secularism as one element of such pluralism rather than as the field on which pluralism plays. Rather than privileging a single ideological strand of our tradition or our present circumstances, this points us to the pluralised nature of our context as a factor which renders any particular committed

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[21] Blake, 1997:128.

[22] This is an important theme and conclusion of Taylor's lengthy study of the conflicting sources of our contemporary sense of self (Taylor, 1989:502-3).

stance problematic as a basis for considering spiritual education.[23]

This point can, however, be interpreted in more than one way. Many discussions, rather than seeing the existence of plurality as giving room and therefore presenting challenges of negotiation to differing perspectives, secular or religious, instead imply that pluralism inherently favours secularism. One reason why secularism can appear to be better placed than alternatives in relation to pluralism is the common assumption that once competing religious perspectives are removed from the game, all we are left with is the level playing field. Marshall brings out the questionable status of this assumption with the following illustration:

> "Imagine a situation where people are trying to agree as to what sports, if any, to play. Some people want hockey, some football, some basketball; some want no sports at all. They discuss and suggest various compromises. Finally, someone says, 'We can't play a sport that pleases everybody, its sure to be a sport that at least somebody does not want. The only solution that would be fair to all is to play no sports at all.' This person is usually someone who did not want sports anyway. They claim to be fair, but fail to see they are offering their own preference and are rejecting everyone else."[24]

What is proposed as an equitable solution has the covert effect of some participants getting their way at the expense of others.[25]

Interestingly, it is not only strongly secularist accounts such as Newby's which imply that secular approaches represent the level playing field. Haydon's much more moderate discussion, which does not rule out a significant role for religious perspectives in

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[23] See e.g. Bigger, 2000:23; Erricker, 1998.

[24] Marshall, 1994:4.

[25] One example of such an approach is White's suggestion (1996) that the differences between religious believers and committed humanists with regard to spiritual development can be resolved if we bracket out beliefs. Another is Adshead's advice (2000) that representatives of religious perspectives should stop displaying "cussed awkwardness" and accept a secular humanist approach to spiritual development as the only alternative to making spirituality a site of theological conflict in schools. This seems tantamount to proposing that there would be no argument if everyone would only be reasonable enough to agree with secularists. It may be true that there would be no dispute if everyone acquiesced to any given standpoint, but this is hardly helpful as long as divergence remains.

educational discussion, implies a similar assumption and seeks to offer grounds for it. Haydon suggests that a secular discourse is one which does not make serious use of religious concepts.[26] He goes on to distinguish three kinds of secular polity, suggesting that the polity is secular:

> "(1) if the considerations which enter into public decisions on law and policy are exclusively secular; or
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> (2) if non-secular considerations can enter the debate, but secular ones are privileged ('privileged inclusive secularism'); or
>
> (3) if non-secular considerations can enter the debate alongside secular ones, and neither is privileged ('non-privileged inclusive secularism')."[27]

On the one hand, these distinctions tell against Newby's argument that a secular context excludes a religious approach to spiritual development, for an exclusive secularism is only one of three options which may each be compatible with a 'secular' context. On the other, Haydon seems to continue to privilege a secularist viewpoint in identifying the third option as a form of secularism. He recognises and seeks to respond to this point by adding:

> "Where neither sort of consideration is privileged, it might be suggested that there is no more reason for calling the polity secular than for calling it religious. It seems, though, that the mere non-privileging of religious

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[26] Despite the attempt at clarification, Haydon's account leaves a number of difficulties. His characterisation of secular thinking in its limit case as "thinking into which religious concepts and beliefs do not enter at all", for instance, shifts a few lines later to thinking into which "distinctively religious" concepts or beliefs do not enter (Haydon, 1994:66). Does this mean that thinking is not religious if the religion in question works with concepts available to non-adherents? If so this seems an unwarranted limitation on what can be counted as religious discourse (on this point see further chapter 4). Also, it does not seem to allow for the possibility that religious concepts may enter indirectly into reflection. A religiously committed economist, for instance, may not introduce theological concepts into his or her economic discussion but may nevertheless be guided in that discussion by a set of values which have been partially shaped by reflection on religious matters. Some aspects of 'secularisation', such as the separation of various spheres of social endeavour from ecclesiastical authority, are compatible with, and may even be required by, particular religious viewpoints. This would include some which would still insist on the relevance of their religious worldview for those institutions but not construe that relevance in terms of ecclesiastical (or, in some cases, even theological) jurisdiction. See, e.g., in the Kuyperian tradition Clouser, 1991; Kuyper, 1931.

[27] Haydon, 1994:68-69.

considerations is already sufficient to render a polity secular."[28]

It seems to me that this would only follow if "non-privileging" meant "not taking seriously", and that the inclusiveness of the position would then be in question.[29] The world of mundane affairs is not inherently secular in the sense of a non-religious discourse concerning it being inevitable; it is in principle open to religious or secularist interpretations. If *neither* is privileged, then the resulting polity seems more aptly described as a form of pluralism than as a variety of secularism.

With all of this in mind it is not clear that pluralism necessarily invites secularism.[30] Just as evaluative stances regarding contextual factors are inevitable, so every programme for a pluralist society represents an attempt to be inclusive within a horizon which marks the bounds of permissibility and participation.[31] If so, then it is not the presence of an evaluative horizon *per se* which is problematic in a secularist account. What should be clarified, however, is that a secularist account has no inherent superiority over religious accounts on this score. Both offer a horizon within which the plurality of beliefs and practices can be interpreted and negotiated, and the superiority of a secularist umbrella when it comes to accommodating difference is open to dispute.[32]

The suggestion that a religious framework is inappropriate because of plurality masks the fact that secularism is also a particular perspective, and that believers from various

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[28] Haydon, 1994:69.

[29] Haydon's argument seems to me to be unclear on this point. He points out earlier in his argument that for a discourse to be *religious*, it need not assume the truth of religious claims - "a discussion between theologians...may acknowledge the room for doubt about such claims, but still be firmly in the religious realm, because it takes seriously the possibility that religious concepts have a real application and may be used to express true claims" (Haydon, 1994:66). On the next page he says that the academy is often *secular* in that when religious claims arise, "they are treated hypothetically only" (p.67). Then we are told that the *non-privileging* of religious claims is enough to make a polity secular. It seems to me that if all that is necessary for a discourse to remain "religious" is that it takes the *possibility* of religious truth seriously, then an "inclusive" polity must work with a "religious" discourse in relation to public discussion. To describe such a polity as a form of secularism is tendentious. If, on the other hand, the possibility of the truth of religious discourse is excluded in advance, then it is difficult to give much sense to the term "inclusive".

[30] Mott-Thornton, for instance, argues that genuine respect for pluralism leads to plurality of educational provision in which different beliefs can inform different schools, rather than a common secular provision (Mott-Thornton, 1998).

[31] Mouw & Griffioen, 1993.

[32] See e.g. Newbigin, Sanneh, & Taylor, 1998; Weithman, 1997.

traditions have much in common in terms of dissatisfaction with that perspective. Pluralism is likely to appear as more of a problem to a dominant perspective than a marginal one. Where there is in some sense a Christian society, then the question of how to deal with pluralism is likely to be uncomfortable for Christians. However, it is not only too *much* pluralism which can cause furrowed brows among believers; too *little* pluralism is at least as problematic when the umbrella under which believers are asked to shelter is hostile to or even covertly subversive of their basic commitments. Where the dominant perspective in a given area has been secularist, an increase in pluralism can be perceived as a welcome development by believers.[33]

If Newby's account of our social context is accurate, and a secular worldview has replaced a religious one, then the ethical burden may fall most squarely on *secularist* perspectives when it comes to negotiating pluralism.[34] It is secularist educators who must consider whether understandings of reality other than their own are fairly represented within educational provision. As Haydon argues, in a secular social context all learners will inevitably encounter a great deal of secular thinking, and so "it is only the secular school which can expose its pupils to one sort of thinking only".[35]

This does, however, still leave the problem of a plural   context in which it seems difficult to justify basing common education on the beliefs of a particular group (including secularists) when those beliefs are not widely shared. One approach to this plural context, that offered by neutralist liberalism in its call for schools to adopt a position of maximal neutrality in relation to various visions of the good, will be discussed later in the present chapter. At this point it will suffice to note that pluralism and secularism are not synonymous, and that far from excluding faith-informed inquiry, the pluralism of our context may actually invite it as a counterweight to potential secularist hegemony.

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[33] Cf. Heie, 1996.

[34] It seems here that Newby cannot have it both ways. If religious belief remains such a formidable obstacle to alternative views as Newby's heroic rhetoric of liberation from the domination of the church suggests, then the argument from the secular context protests too much. If the context is as Newby describes it then the liberatory rhetoric becomes dubious. Some pertinent features of a potential positive role of religion in a predominantly secular context in terms of resisting intellectual hegemony are summarised (drawing from the work of Stephen Carter) in Macedo, 1995:239-240.

[35] Haydon, 1994:73.

None of the above implies that proponents of religious perspectives can act as if challenging contextual factors did not exist. A more modest conclusion, that the present social context presents particular difficulties and challenges for such perspectives, and that faith-informed approaches cannot expect to be taken for granted or presented as the consensus, would be more sustainable, if less exciting. The positive point which emerges from the arguments considered is that faith-informed approaches to spiritual development must reckon with factors such as pluralism and secularisation. What has not been established by the appeal to social context is the stronger thesis that religious perspectives are out of bounds and that secularism must provide the parameters for future developments.

b.   Appeals to the educational context

A different kind of contextually based objection to working with a Christian framework appeals not primarily to the *social* context, but to the *educational* context. The idea here is that whatever the merits of faith-informed spirituality as practised in other contexts, once spirituality enters the realm of formal education it becomes subject to the norms of that realm. Accordingly, it is no longer to be regulated by the belief-frameworks offered by religious communities.

This kind of argument from the educational context involves regarding a particular complex of values and their promotion as essential to education, and seeing these values as at odds with the concerns of religious believers. Such a position is articulated by Michael Grimmitt, who states as a basic premise that "education is not a value-free process; nor does it seek to create a value-free context within which to engage in, for example, the study of religions".[36] The value-laden nature of the educational context lies in "its intention to bring about changes in the way in which pupils understand themselves and the world".[37] Such an intention raises a basic issue in relation to religion:

> "How are we to treat something which is inherently value-laden (i.e. a
> religious belief/value system) in a context which itself is value-laden

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[36] Grimmitt, 1987:44.

[37] Grimmitt, 1987:44.

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with value assumptions which are not necessarily compatible with those of religion and religions?"[38]

Thus far we have only a very general point: investigation of the relationship between religious beliefs and some aspect of education may expose a conflict of values. Grimmitt goes beyond this observation, however, to prescribe parameters within which the conflict may be resolved. The idea that a religious perspective should be allowed in cases of conflict to lead to changes in educational practice is unequivocally rejected. This would amount to what Grimmitt terms "religious absolutism", or the view that religious beliefs and values should provide the norm against which other kinds are evaluated.[39] This, Grimmitt argues, collapses the distinction between school and church, between nurture and education, and seeks an imperialistic relationship between theology and secular disciplines. Instead, education must work out of an unconcealed secular perspective, and any concessions must be on the side of religion: "If there is a price to be paid for establishing a relationship between education and religion, then ... that cost has to be met by the religions, not by education."[40]

My interest here is not in the detail of Grimmitt's account of Religious Education (which is not the subject of this thesis), but rather in the degree to which his argument offers another kind of contextual argument against linking spiritual development to Christian faith. Such an argument would run along the following lines: whatever spiritual development might mean in the religious context, the educational context provides its own binding norms and concepts which must take priority over religious ones. When we are considering educational matters, the context provided by religious belief would therefore be superfluous in cases where it agreed with educational ideas, and unacceptable in principle where conflicts became evident.

In response, one issue should be clarified at the outset. Seeing a difference between spiritual development as understood in an educational context and spiritual development as understood in, say, a church context is not in itself an objection to relating the former

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[38] Grimmitt, 1987:44.

[39] Grimmitt, 1987:39.

[40] Grimmitt, 1987:46.

to Christian faith. "Different from" does not entail "unconnected with". It is therefore perfectly possible to agree that school and church differ, and that not everything which would belong to an account of spiritual development in a church context can be transferred to a given educational context, while still holding that Christian belief has implications for those aspects of spiritual development which belong to the realm of education. Educational ideas may be in certain ways distinct from yet nonetheless informed by or revisable in the light of theological convictions. It is not necessary to see education as an extension of theology in order to see it as amenable to theological illumination, comment and critique.

In order for the education/religion distinction to become an objection of the kind described it is therefore necessary to specify further that there is something in the nature of education, either as demanded by our particular context or in some more timeless manner, which excludes any normative role for Christian belief. Grimmitt provides us with examples of both lines of argument. On the one hand, he argues that education is "by nature contextual - that is, it exists, operates and participates in a specific social, cultural and ideological context".[41] The secular and pluralistic nature of our contemporary context disqualifies particular religious beliefs as a basis for educational practice.[42] This is, of course, the argument discussed and countered above; once the educational context is admitted to be value-laden and those values are referred back to society the argument from the educational context collapses into the argument from the social context, and is subject to the weaknesses discussed above. This line of thinking provides no new argument.

On the other hand, Grimmitt argues that the nature of education itself as a "normative and discriminatory concept" precludes a determinative role for religious belief.[43] Here we do have a more distinctive argument from the educational context. It is, however,

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[41] Grimmitt, 1987:39.

[42] Grimmitt, 1987:39, 45-46.

[43] Grimmitt, 1987:44. This is, of course, in tension both with the invocation of the argument from social context (presumably if the essential nature of education is closed to religious norms this would remain the case if the social context were not secular) and with Grimmitt's overall emphasis on the social construction of reality and the ideologically value-laden nature of inquiry. This tension is vividly illustrated by the close juxtaposition of appeals to the normative concept of education and a description of the contrasts between Islamic and Western secular conceptions of education (Grimmitt, 1987:44-47).

one which seems to imply conflicting requirements for an acceptable conception of education. On the one hand, such a conception must be sufficiently basic, open and formal to be plausible as an account of the nature of education which must be accepted by people of varying commitments. If it does not have these properties, then the argument is based not on the nature of education but on Grimmitt's ideological position. On the other hand, in order to fund Grimmitt's argument it must be sufficiently rich both to frame a programme of Religious Education or provision for spiritual development and to exclude various religious conceptions, otherwise the conflict which concerns Grimmitt would not exist.[44] These requirements seem to be significantly at odds - if the conception of education advanced is sufficiently contentious to exclude religious perspectives on education, then it is unclear why it should be seen as compelling assent from Christian educators, who are within their rights to argue for alternative conceptions of education.[45] The status of education as a contested concept is now well enough established to seriously undermine the idea that appeal to a single loaded conception of education provides an argument which can be assumed to work in advance against particular religious objections.[46]

It may also be noted that the difficulty need not lie with the conception of education

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[44] Grimmitt here seems to be following a similar line of argument to that mounted, and later to a significant degree abandoned, by Paul Hirst (Hirst, 1971; Hirst, 1976, 1993). For responses to Hirst's earlier work which counter his argument for the autonomy of educational reasoning in relation to religious convictions see Allen, 1993; Smith, 1995; Thiessen, 1990, 1997.

[45] Grimmitt attempts to develop an account of human development which is based on human givens and independent of frameworks of belief. He bases his account on psychology, anthropology and the social sciences, of which he seems to take a positivist view despite his rejection of the idea of value-free knowledge (Grimmitt, 1987, contrast p.80 with p.91). A single example will illustrate the difficulties of this project. Grimmitt cites an account of human development from Wall which defines fully self-aware persons as those who are "transparent to themselves and find their identity in this self knowledge which renders them able to stand aside from any belongingness-identity they may have. Their security is internal and based on self understanding and acceptance, not external and dependent upon adoption by a group of any kind...such norms and loyalties are not for them a vital source of personal security" (Grimmitt, 1987:96). A few lines later Grimmitt refers to this as "the ideal of what *should* happen in adolescence", admitting that reality is generally otherwise. The ideal described here may be cited from a psychologist rather than a theologian, but this does not alter the fact that its emphasis on individual self-reliance and independence of community is hardly neutral in relation to religious beliefs of various kinds or sufficiently incontestable (or culturally universal) to require allegiance in the place of such beliefs. As soon as we move beyond the bare enumeration of formal features of human development to ideals of maturity, beliefs and values play an unavoidable role.

[46] This point holds whether education is regarded as an *essentially* contested concept (MacIntyre, 1973) or as subject to the kind of geometry of open and loaded uses proposed by Walsh (Walsh, 1993:14-35).

which is being advanced; arguments from the educational context can also founder because their portrayal of a religious understanding of spirituality is too narrow. Thus Blake describes an understanding of spirituality which sees it as tied to the extra-mundane and as requiring us to detach ourselves from our this-worldly concerns. This he presents as "very much a Christian and Western belief".[47] He goes on to draw negative conclusions concerning the prospects for spiritual education:

> "spirituality (including bodily spirituality) is a kind of experience which it is contradictory to incorporate into education, because it puts in question the fundamentals which underpin education. Spirituality, if it is anything, is an escape from, or at least a distancing from the very world of experience that education addresses or serves. By the same token, the educator cannot be sure that a successful education in spirituality would not lead a student to the rejection of everything else that education had tried to instill. The rest of education is firmly to do with the 'this-worldly', the mundane. How can we guarantee that the spiritually enlightened student might not come to renounce it all? We cannot."[48]

As Carr points out in reply, Blake's account depends upon a sharp disjunction between the immanent and the transcendent which misrepresents orthodox Christian understanding.[49] If an account of spirituality is offered which can show legitimate

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[47] Blake, 1996:451.

[48] Blake, 1996:454. I have taken up these matters with Blake, who commented in response that "it was just too categorical to say 'spirituality...puts in question the fundamentals which underpin education'. More exactly and cautiously, it might or might not. The problem is that in a secular context, nothing can be guaranteed - no specific version of spirituality is the necessary or guaranteed destination" (personal communication, 21 September 1999). Blake points here to a difficulty with generic appeals for 'spiritual development' in schools, namely that they provide no guarantee of the particular kind(s) of spirituality which will be adopted. This could be seen as an argument in favour of particularising the idea of spiritual development; it does not support the idea that *any* conception of spirituality undermines education.

[49] Carr, 1996b. Ironically, Blake recognises the concern of Christianity with the mundane and the material, but instead of concluding that his construal of Christian spirituality is skewed, he suggests that Christians are often concerned with that which is not spiritual (Blake, 1997:131). This highlights a difficulty of the language: if spirituality is construed as private, individualistic and other-worldly, then there are many Christians who will regard 'spirituality' as alien to and a misdescription of their concerns (see e.g. Jones, 1997). (This is not to deny that actual instances of spirituality practised by Christians may display these characteristics, merely to point out that there are authentically Christian reasons for criticising such tendencies). If, on the other hand, the term 'spirituality' is to be put to Christian use, then those same Christians will seek to understand it in terms other than those offered by Blake.

concern with the mundane and the material (compare the account sketched here in chapter 1 and developed further in chapter 4), then the force of Blake's contrast between spiritual and educational concerns is considerably diminished. If spirituality and education address, at least in part, the same world of experience, then the possibility that spirituality may call into question certain aspects of our conceptions of education is not in itself a very telling argument against spiritual education.

The arguments from the nature of the educational context mounted by Grimmitt and Blake do not, then, any more than Newby's arguments from the social context, succeed as objections to examining cross-curricular spiritual development in the light of Christian faith. Such arguments do alert us to a significant issue, namely the differences and relationships between those particular aspects of and approaches to spiritual development which are appropriate to a given educational context and those which belong in other settings. They do not, however, provide compelling grounds for regarding the educational context as impervious to interrogation from the standpoint of faith.

Summary

Thus far, arguments have been considered which invoke the secular social context, a particular strand of Western tradition, the presence of pluralism or the (contextual or essential) nature of education in order to exclude religious perspectives from a formative role in shaping educational conceptions of spiritual development. Positively, these arguments have indicated some of the challenges faced by a faith-informed approach to spiritual development, pointing to the need for such an approach to demonstrate sensitivity to a secularised and pluralised context and continuity with educational concerns. Negatively, a central theme in my discussion of these arguments has been the necessity of interpretive judgements when appealing to the context as justification for a particular approach, and the grounding of these judgements in the very approach which is taken to be supported by them.[50] The broad conclusion has been that contextual arguments are not in themselves compelling unless further grounds can be

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[50] Whether we take this to show that all positions fall short of some desirable degree of justification or incline towards a more post-foundationalist acceptance of such forms of circularity is beside the point in relation to the question of whether those approaching the issues from religious perspectives should see the arguments as compelling their assent.

offered for preferring the interpretive position which funds them. I will now turn to arguments which undertake precisely this task.

3. Negative evaluations of religion in relation to spirituality

In order for contextual arguments to gain in force, it is necessary for them to show not merely that religious approaches are out of fashion or at odds with some current conception of education, but also that such approaches are undesirable, so that any move to counter current trends would be misguided. If this can be established, then a case can be made for preferring secularist contextual judgements to those of the believer. Here again, Newby's discussions of spiritual development provide a particularly spirited example.

Newby insinuates that one reason for regarding the passing of religious belief as a good thing is its irrationality. Freud is cited as authority for the view that religion persists because it is comforting rather than because it resists critical thought, though the point is not elaborated .[51] For present purposes it will have to suffice to note that contentions that religion is irrational are not subject to sufficient consensus to preclude consideration of religious perspectives on education. As long as religious perspectives are seriously advanced and defended, the burden of proof lies with any who would seek to show that they are intrinsically irrational. I shall therefore focus in more detail on Newby's other arguments against religious perspectives.

Newby makes three main claims regarding undesirable features of religious frameworks. First, they are *restrictive* - they constrict human development by imposing rigid beliefs and practices and inhibiting freedom of inquiry. Consequently, they are *exclusionary*. They induct the learner into a tightly defined identity which leads to a condemnatory attitude towards those who do not share it. Finally, they are *fictitious,* and should be recognised as such in the interests of educational honesty.

Although Newby ties these points loosely to his invocations of the social context, they seem to be separate arguments which fund, rather than flow from, the contextual judgements discussed above. If sustained, they would tell against a religiously grounded

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Newby, 1996b : 97-8

[51] Ironically, the rest of Newby's argument seems to suggest that religious belief is anything but comforting. For a discussion of the weaknesses of Freud's case against theism which also emphasises the ways in which believers need to attend to Freud's arguments, see Westphal, 1998.

approach to spiritual development whether or not the social context is supportive. Importantly, they also seem to offer grounds for questioning religious approaches to spiritual development whether these are pursued in common schools or in faith-based schools. There are, however, difficulties with each of them. I will consider each in turn.

a.   Religion as restrictive

Newby represents religion as restrictive and therefore oppressive. Religious approaches to spiritual development are likely to "oppress persons under a burden of beliefs and observances which distorts that very spirituality we had sought to generate".[52] If spiritual development were founded upon initiation into the perspective of a single ideological tradition with its "thick, dogmatic prescriptions", then "the initiate would possess a tightly defined view of human well-being not shared by those outside the tradition".[53] We should "give up pretending to show respect for authorities that inhibit change by repressing unrestrained enquiry". This stance "requires no supporting argument unless we remain convinced that the only spiritual hope lies in a revival of tightly defined tradition".[54]

It should be noted immediately that many believers would not recognise this description of religion. Religious beliefs may become an oppressive burden if they lose their vitality or are imposed coercively upon non-believers, but they are less likely to be so to those convinced of their truth. While there clearly are occasions when believers struggle with their own beliefs and traditions, the belief, for instance, that there is a loving God who transcends and judges the powers that oppress may from the standpoint of faith be a joyous, liberating thing, not an anachronistic strai - tjacket. Likewise, religious beliefs will be less likely to be perceived as repressive restraints upon intellectual inquiry by those who hold them to be true and therefore capable of guiding such enquiry in positive directions. Newby's rhetoric of untrammelled autonomy set over against oppressive

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[52] Newby, 1988:180.

[53] Newby, 1997:285-286.

[54] Newby, 1996b:95. Dewey writes similarly of the emancipation of spiritual factors in experience (or, in his terms, "the religious") from "a load that is not inherent in them, a load of current beliefs and of institutional practices that are irrelevant to them" (Dewey, 1934:8). The simplistic rhetoric of imposed traditional ideas versus autonomous freedom seems almost automatic in many discussions, as if imposition were the only possible educational role or interpretation of religious belief.

authority represents a perspective which, from a religious point of view, should itself be questioned, and not adopted as a dogmatic prescription for human flourishing. The claim that religion distorts spirituality will also be contested by believers, at least if such distortion is regarded as intrinsic or inevitable. It seems that we are led to the limited and unsurprising conclusion that from the viewpoint of a committed secularism the adoption of a religious framework for understanding spiritual development is unacceptable. This does indicate the necessity of debate between religious and secularist viewpoints regarding common schooling, but it does not establish that religious perspectives should be excluded in advance.

It could be argued, however, that this is exactly where Newby has a point. Perhaps he is saying that however religions appear to believers, they will be a burden to those who do not believe. In the context of the common school, those who do not share any given religious belief will outnumber those who hold it. If any such belief shapes educational frameworks, there will be an element of imposition. Since beliefs, however attractive to their proponents, may become a burden to those who reject them, adopting a religious framework will be oppressive to the majority. This might even redeem the contextual argument - if the majority of learners are of such a kind that a religious framework will be burdensome to them, then the existence of a secular majority might be grounds for excluding religious perspectives from any guiding role.

This consideration should be given due weight, but it falls short of mandating a secular approach, for the following reasons. First, educators are commonly in the business of providing learners with categories, frameworks, definitions and beliefs about the world which those learners did not necessarily affirm beforehand. These might turn out to be (in fact or in the learner's perception) unnecessarily restrictive; they might, on the other hand, prove illuminating and provoke further exploration. They might even be held to have proven their value (in terms of truth or illumination) to such a degree that they should be persevered with in the face of (though not without attending to) negative perceptions from learners. The key question, then, is: on what grounds could it be determined *a priori* that, religious beliefs or frameworks will fall into the oppressive category while secularist equivalents will prove illuminating? The fact that so much of Newby's secularist thinking regarding spiritual development draws from Christian

sources is itself evidence that things are not so straightforward as the argument outlined above might seem to suggest.[55]

Second, to take this argument as grounds for adopting a secularist framework ignores the presence of learners who *do* hold religious beliefs - might they not find an approach predicated on autonomous opposition to religious traditions and authorities oppressive or spiritually distorting? This suggests an important point. If it is possible to utilise educational approaches originating in *secular* perspectives without violating learners who hold *religious* beliefs, then it should in principle be possible to adopt approaches with *religious* roots without violating *secular* learners. If this is *not* possible, then it is the whole possibility of common education which is called into question, and not merely the contribution of religious perspectives.

Third, the argument seems to preclude a potentially transformative process of inquiry on the part of learners. An individual to whom religious beliefs seem false, burdensome or oppressive may, on further experience or investigation, come to reverse that judgement, whether partially or radically. If religious beliefs are to be excluded, or reinterpreted in secular terms in order to sanitise them for the classroom (see below), then the possibility of such a process is excluded from the educational context. This point also undermines the idea that whether religious beliefs are oppressive or not is a matter of perspective. There is surely room for discussion and defence of such beliefs in order to explore whether the perception of oppressiveness might not be little more than ill-informed prejudice or insufficiently self-critical adherence to an alternative (secular) ideology.

This last consideration returns us to Newby's assertion that initiation into a religious perspective necessarily leads to a "tightly defined" view of life. This is no doubt true of some religious perspectives, but it will not do as a general description of religion. Since this point is repeated by Newby and used as grounds for the further assertion (discussed below) that religious socialisation leads to condemnatory attitudes, I will briefly discuss a counterexample taken from a paper by N.T. Wright titled "How can the Bible be Authoritative?" Wright suggests as a model for biblical authority the analogy of trained Shakespearean actors working out a final act for an unfinished Shakespeare play. The

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[55] See Newby, 1996a and further discussion below.

actors are to be responsive to the authority of what is already before them. The existing acts set some constraints upon their improvisation - "anyone could properly object to the new improvisation on the grounds that this or that character was now behaving inconsistently, or that this or that sub-plot or theme, adumbrated earlier, had not reached its proper resolution".[56] The actors are not, however, passive functionaries following detailed instructions or determined by the preceding text. They are exercising - indeed stretching - their human faculties and taking responsibility for what they create. In a later discussion of his proposal, Wright states that:

> "the initial task of the actors ... will be to immerse themselves with full sympathy in the first four acts, but not merely so as to parrot what has already been said. They cannot go and look up the right answers. Nor can they simply imitate the kinds of things that their particular character did in the early acts. A good fifth act will show a proper final development, not merely a repetition, of what went before."[57]

The detailed implications need not detain us.[58] What is of interest here is that the example is drawn from current evangelical discussion of the authority of the Bible, an area of Christian discussion which the outsider of average prejudices might assume to be a likely home for restrictive religious determinism applied to individual identity. Far from being a secularising compromise, Wright argues that his proposal is more consistent with a biblical perspective than approaches which begin from secular understandings of authority. It is tragically true that the experience of many is less wholesome, but as long as there are such positive counterexamples, it will not do to rule out religious perspectives on the assumption that they are *inevitably* tightly constrictive in relation to human capacities for responsible thought and action.[59]

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[56] Wright, 1991:18-19.

[57] Wright, 1992:141.

[58] For more detailed discussion of Wright's proposal in relation to liberal discussions of Christian education see Smith, 1995; Thiessen, 1997.

[59] Compare Hay's finding that "all recent studies of the 'experiential' dimension of religion show that it is typically associated with personal integration, a sense of meaningfulness in life, and concern for social justice." (Hay, 1982).

In fact the difficulties for Newby's argument run even deeper. Consider the existence of modern secular ideologies (such as communism) which have offered   tightly defined moulds for personal identity and waged war upon alternatives. Consider also the possibility that some forms of secularisation can ossify religious traditions making them restrictive and condemnatory of difference.[60] Both phenomena undermine the use of this argument for secularism. That religion can and often does exhibit the qualities which Newby indicates is not in question. That it has them uniquely or by definition is a claim requiring much more justification.

b.   Religion as exclusionary

The issue of condemnatory attitudes towards others connects with another of Newby's criticisms of religion. According to Newby, it follows from the alleged restrictiveness of religious traditions that persons reared in them "would, by definition, give a largely condemnatory account of life outside".[61] Newby himself provides grounds for doubting this when he notes that "nearly all traditional faiths have, as an integral aspect of their tradition, ideals of caring that require compromise".[62] Ideals of caring are, however, regarded by Newby as elements of compromise in religious traditions which dilute their core identity. This move enables him to adopt the notion of agapaistic love from Christianity in his account of spiritual development while still rejecting the Christian faith as oppressive. Such elements of caring are viewed as moments of secularisation within the faith tradition.[63]

This is a curious argument. Newby himself describes these caring ideals as "an integral

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[60] Sweetman, 2000 offers a detailed and important case study of this kind of process.

[61] Newby, 1997:286; cf. Baldwin, 1996:209.

[62] Newby, 1997:286.

[63] Newby, 1996a, 1998. Macedo likewise objects to religious approaches to public education insofar as these are condemnatory towards those with differing beliefs, though he only discusses a particular subset of religious views associated with American fundamentalism and appears to allow greater possibilities for religion to offer more healthful impulses (Macedo, 1995). There is some similarity with Newby's approach in that healthy religious contributions are accepted because they can be justified on the grounds of public reason, and are thus distanced from dependence on their religious source. This distancing is, however, different in kind, for the question of whether religious approaches are publicly acceptable is decided in terms of whether others can find good in them on other grounds rather than purely on the basis of whether they are religiously motivated.

aspect" of the traditions concerned, implying some recognition that they are not incidental or peripheral to the identities of the traditions in question.[64] The idea of agapaistic love is a central and characteristic feature of Christianity, and Newby ascribes to "Biblical sources" an understanding of spirituality as belonging to the "life of love".[65] On what grounds, then, must such emphases be construed as compromises or as secularising impulses, rather than, say, as authentic responses to God or service of God? When believers do behave in inhumane ways, might this not rather be viewed as the moment where the faith tradition is betrayed?

A given individual may, of course, have experienced a certain faith tradition as narrow and needlessly condemnatory. The point here is not that faith traditions do not display such qualities, but that the practice of automatically ascribing negative qualities to their identity and positive qualities to compromise is tendentious. Such an approach pre-determines the outcome of any investigation in a manner hostile to the traditions in question; any religious tradition must on this basis appear oppressive. Moreover, the prior exclusion of caring elements from religious identity seems to be the only ground for regarding these elements as necessarily a secularising move, as if they could not be religiously motivated and sustained. With this kind of hermeneutic, how could Newby ever discover whether he is mistaken? What would count as evidence?

If religious traditions can authentically exhibit caring tendencies then Newby's objection becomes merely an observation that religious traditions can fail, not an objection to religion *per se*. The stronger objection depends upon the constrained hermeneutic. Like the argument from context, this argument tells us more about Newby's assumptions than about the viability of religious frameworks. The question of whether a particular tradition can enhance spiritual development cannot be determined aprioristically; it must be answered by exploring the tradition's resources without applying a grid which excludes its most caring elements from its identity at the outset.

This will lead to complex judgements and disagreements as to what precisely constitutes

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[64] Newby, 1997:286.

[65] Newby, 1996a:45. On the dependence of certain of Newby's ideas upon Christian presuppositions see further Stafford, 1989:123.

an unacceptable form of exclusion (for any determinate educational proposal will exclude some alternatives).[66] Any substantial view of human flourishing is likely to be in some sense condemnatory towards that which is seen as threatening such flourishing, Newby's hostile rhetoric concerning religious authority being a case in point. Newby's third claim, that realist approaches to religious texts should be excluded, illustrates this point further.

c.   Religion as fictitious

Leaning on the contextual argument discussed above, Newby argues that spiritual development can involve interest in religious texts provided they are not interpreted in a realist manner:

> "If the sacred stories become items in the vast repertoire of fiction, they remain just as capable of addressing the human spirit as they ever were, and arguably more so, since unsettlable issues of 'beliefs' have been effectively sidelined."[67]

This argument extends Newby's basis for adopting Christian themes and motifs in his own account yet arguing that "anything that is a distinctly religious insight, in the supernaturalistic and not simply the historical sense, has no experiential significance in the post-religious age".[68] Religious ideas may still be helpful, provided they are

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[66] It is, for instance, sometimes argued that the very idea that one set of beliefs is in some way better than another is tantamount to exclusion or even racism (e.g. Bigger, 2000:15). This seems to imply the inadmissibility not only of evaluative stances or truth claims but also of belief itself in the form of any firm conviction which is not universally shared.

[67] Newby, 1997:287. This form of argument, with its appeal to the changing context, echoes Dewey's views. Dewey made such an appeal in his reference to changing social context as a means of "getting rid of inconvenient aspects of past religions", a method which could be pressed home against elements of traditional religions which he saw as outmoded (Dewey, 1934:6). In a manner similar to that employed by Newby, Dewey denied hostility to what was essential in religion, yet asserted that "the opposition between religious values as I conceive them and religions is not to be bridged" (Dewey, 1934). On Dewey's hostility to religion in relation to his educational thought see further Rosenow, 1997.

[68] Newby, 1988:181. Newby suggests that Religious Education must therefore focus attention away from the beliefs which gave rise to spiritual insights. This hardly seems to amount to the kind of critical engagement to which he elsewhere seems to be committed. To take a loose parallel, would he allow that learners should be offered the historical results of past rational reflection for consumption without any attempt (in principle if not exhaustively) to help them to come to grips with the reflection which led to those results?

rigorously amputated from the worldview within which they arose.

It might reasonably be argued that since realist readings of religious texts are controversial, and many today find non-realist readings more plausible, a realist approach should not be simply assumed in school. Newby goes further, urging that only non-realist readings are acceptable. The idea of a transcendent reality must be excluded, and it is necessary that "learners know (or come to know) the fictional nature of myth", that they come to understand religious texts "for what they are, and not for objective descriptions of events in time and place".[69] Exploiting the moral wealth of such texts in a non-realist context provides "the *only* spiritual justification for religious education".[70]

The main issue at stake here is not so much the educational promises and perils offered by a non-realist approach to texts, but whether Newby has established that accounts of spiritual development which draw upon realist readings of religious texts are unacceptable by establishing the necessity of a non-realist hermeneutic. He has not established this, for at least three reasons.

First, the contextual argument will not hold. The empirical observation that non-realist readings of religious texts are now seen as more viable would not establish this necessity even if it accurately represented the current range of views. It could be interpreted as requiring the opposite, an educational treatment of the case *for* realist readings in order to expand the horizons of those who uncritically assume that they are no longer viable.

Second, a non-realist approach no more represents the consensus than does a realist one. Newby seems to assume that the issue between the two is largely settled, and that to lean in a realist direction is to be out of touch whereas an expressive approach deals with texts "for what they are".[71] This claims too much. Realist approaches to religious texts

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[69] Newby, 1997:287. Radford combines similar emphases with an implicit appeal to the supposed restrictiveness of religious frameworks, arguing that spiritual education must be based on the idea that "we define the conditions of our spirituality" (Radford, 1999:173). He appears, however, to leave slightly more room than Newby for interaction with truth claims in religious texts.

[70] Newby, 1997:287, Newby's emphasis.

[71] Newby, 1997:287.

are still defended.[72] To teach in common schools that only non-realist approaches are now viable, indeed to take it as a necessary baseline that students should *know* this, is therefore open to the charge of indoctrination. The approach which Newby proposes amounts to the imposing of a single, closed hermeneutic stance upon the text which does not allow it any authentic voice of its own, leaving the reader enclosed within (dogmatically) pre-established horizons. Far from being the only umbrella beneath which dialogue can take place,[73] expressivism must itself be placed in question if dialogue is not to be preempted.[74]

Third, Newby seeks to sideline certain "unsettlable" beliefs, yet proposes an approach which is based in a controversial stance towards religious texts and an ethic which he says has "no justification of a compelling rational nature for those not already predisposed to its truth".[75] If a position's controversiality debars it from serious educational consideration, not only is much that is of central educational relevance effectively sidelined but secularism may be no better off than religion.

Finally, it should be noted that the arguments considered above seem to be in tension. Religious perspectives are accused of being closed to and condemnatory of alternative views. It is ironic, therefore, to find a particular non-realist approach to religious texts being advocated to the exclusion of realist perspectives and thereby of large sections of the religious communities which regard them as authoritative. Newby's own apparent hostility to such religious perspectives, expressed somewhat xenophobically in his rejection of "thick dogmatic prescriptions characteristic of Middle Eastern religions as

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[72] See e.g. Alston, 1995; Scott & Moore, 1997. For a defence of 'critical realism' in the context of the debate surrounding spiritual development, see Mott-Thornton, 1998:140-164. It is interesting in the light of Newby's appeal to pluralism that Mott-Thornton's defence of critical realism is made precisely on the grounds that it can better accommodate such pluralism.

[73] Newby, 1996b:96.

[74] Newby maintains that his perspective is open to the falsification of its own framework, and suggests that there may come a day when realism re-establishes itself and the situation must be reconsidered (Newby, 1996b:98). However, the faults which he finds with such views would surely remain detrimental even if those views were more widely accepted - the contextual argument would not work any better in the reverse direction. The claimed openness is not reflected in the educational recommendation that students be unburdened of realist misconceptions.

[75] Newby, 1997:290.

flag-bearers of the spiritual life",[76] and his insistence that a non-realist approach to religious discourse is the *only* acceptable one, do not offer much encouragement for the belief that secularism is automatically better placed than religion with regard to exclusivity.

d. Religion as other-worldly

Leaving Newby's arguments and returning briefly to Blake's criticisms of spiritual education, we find a further criticism of religious spirituality. If spirituality is concerned with the other-worldly and with inner experience then it may simply provide an escapist alternative to dealing with concrete social and educational issues. The Enlightenment, Blake points out, espoused "the view that spirituality actually impoverished our understanding, corrupted our human relationships, hindered material and educational progress and blinded us to the workings of society".[77] Clearly this critique was largely levelled at Christian belief and practice.

I have discussed Blake's construal of spirituality as other-worldly above in the context of the alleged opposition between spirituality and education. I do not wish to deny that this is a feature of much which goes under the broad heading 'spirituality', and one rightly attacked. If, however, it is possible to see spirituality as closely intertwined with educational and social concerns, and to argue that Christian commitments ought to be read as pointing in this direction, then the objection becomes most sustainable as a caution concerning particular manifestations of spirituality rather than as a more fundamental objection to the whole enterprise. I will seek to develop such a view of spirituality in chapter 4.

Summary

The arguments surveyed in this section allege that there are features of religion which render it an undesirable influence in the educational context - it will lead to narrowness, condemnation of others, faith in fictions, or other-worldly disdain for this-worldly concerns. Such objections are salutary for anyone approaching educational issues from a

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[76] Newby, 1997:285.

[77] Blake, 1997:129.

Christian perspective, and give grounds for caution. What they do not establish, however, is that such negative features are either necessary or exclusive features of religion in general or Christian faith in particular. In fact, rejections of Christian approaches can exhibit the very characteristics of narrowness and exclusion which are denounced. These objections are therefore best taken as grounds for proceeding carefully, rather than as grounds for abandoning faith-informed approaches. However, even if the context of education and the various attacks on Christianity are not decisive, there is a third line of argument against relating Christian faith to spiritual development in schools, to which I will now turn.

4. Problems with the particularity of religious belief

The first group of arguments considered saw the context as antagonistic to Christian approaches, while the second expressed such antagonism more directly. A third set of arguments locates the problem not so much in the *substance* of Christian belief as in its *particularity*. Thus Blake takes it to be "agreed and accepted that any curricular justification for spiritual education would have to rest not on an account of particular forms of spirituality, but on some defensible general account of the nature of spirituality".[78] Assertions of this kind often accompany the assumption that religion is a narrower concern pertinent to some people, while spirituality is a broader anthropological phenomenon.

This way of distinguishing the scope of spirituality and religion in terms of a preference for the universal over the particular can take various forms and lead to various conclusions; commentators who take opposing positions may nevertheless share the assumption which Blake articulates. It forms the underlying premise of both negative and positive arguments concerning the viability of spiritual development as a cross-curricular concern. The negative argument regards spirituality as inevitably embedded in particular religious stances and traditions and draws the conclusion that the notion of spiritual education is not viable, agreement with Blake's statement cited above being the necessary connecting step in the argument.[79] On the positive side, many reject such

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[78] Blake, 1996:445.

[79] Carr, 1995, 1996a, 1996b; McLaughlin, 1996.

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pessimism and urge the desirability of spiritual education, but share Blake's premise in assuming that such education should not be grounded in particular religious categories.[80]

The generality assumption can also be found in accounts with varying attitudes to religion. Lealman, for instance, argues for an abandonment of the "tribal consciousness" of particular religions in favour of "something approaching global - or even cosmic - vision".[81] This implies a hostility towards particular religious perspectives similar to that already explored in Newby's writings. However, the generality assumption can also inform positions which limit or exclude a role for religious belief in shaping accounts of spiritual development while remaining avowedly friendly to religion. Once the priority of a non-particular account is assumed, it becomes possible to view spirituality and religion as simply different things, the one concerned with universal human capacities or experiences and the other with particular beliefs which may be the outcome of such experiences. Religious belief is then regarded not as undesirable, but as more restricted in scope than spirituality; on this view it can be held that Christian belief is a perfectly fine thing, but that it simply offers the wrong kind of account when it comes to spiritual education. In this section, then, I will first discuss claims concerning the pre-religious universality of spirituality before returning briefly to the issue of pluralism, this time in the context of neutralist liberal objections to religious frameworks.

a.   Arguments concerned with the scope of religion

A view of spirituality as concerned with universal human capacities and experiences is widely assumed in the recent literature.[82] Where attempts are made to characterise spirituality, they commonly focus on shared capacities for creativity, awe and wonder, self-transcendence and the like (see chapter 1). Spirituality is understood as a particular quality of universal human experience, and is regularly contrasted with religion. Religion is associated with a narrower belief system which may grow out of spiritual experience as an attempt to make sense of it. Thus Rodger, for instance, writes of a

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[80]   e.g. Beck, 1986; Götz, 1997; McCreery, 1994; Nye & Hay, 1996; Priestley, 1996; Rolph, 1991.

[81] Lealman, 1996:27.

[82] It is instructive to compare the recent literature with earlier publications such as Bowley & Townroe, 1953, which assumes spiritual development and religious development to be coterminous.

"rediscovery that spirituality is a fundamental human characteristic which, though it may most often take a religious form, is not synonymous with religion",[83] while Mott-Thornton describes the language of recent government literature as an attempt to "disengage the language of spirituality from its association with religion".[84] Hay and Nye, while continuing to affirm a Christian perspective, maintain that "spiritual awareness is something common to all humanity and is therefore broader than the outreach of any particular religion". They define spirituality in terms of "a heightening of awareness or attentiveness" in relation to ourselves and to that which is not ourselves.[85] This spiritual awareness is, according to Hay and Nye, the element in our constitution which is particularly open to the development of religious faith, but this is a secondary and contingent development: "it may be that these more cognitive signs of spiritual activity are in many cases the secondary products of spiritual stirrings found in awareness- mystery- and value-sensing".[86]

Given that spiritual experience defined thus broadly is a part of everyone's experience, while only some people adhere to particular religious beliefs, this line of thinking seems

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[83] Rodger, 1996:45. This statement would find wide acceptance among recent writers on spiritual development. See e.g. McCreery, 1994; Nye & Hay, 1996; Priestley, 1996; Rolph, 1991 and most of the essays in Best, 1996.

[84] Mott-Thornton, 1996:76.

[85] Hay, 1999; Hay & Nye, 1998. Here, as elsewhere, Hay builds upon the work of Alistair Hardy.

[86] Nye & Hay, 1996:151. Hay's work displays some ambivalence on this point. The widespread spiritual experiences documented in his surveys are described in his earlier writings, albeit with some hesitation, as 'religious'. In a number of passages he suggests that religious discourse is close to being a necessary vehicle for spiritual experience if it is to be integrated meaningfully into public life: "If they do not use traditional religious language, most people are struck dumb when they try to describe the meaning of their experience" (Hay, 1982:210; cf. Hay & Nye, 1998:19). He also cites with approval Stephen Katz's rejection of the idea of uninterpreted experience (Hay, 1982:91). At the same time, Hay affirms a "common core theory" which regards all spiritual experiences as "at a deep level, of the same kind" (Hay, 1982:90), and adds to this the suggestion that differences in religious interpretations are a matter of cultural creativity and variation: "The vast variety of religions can be accounted for in the same way as modern linguists sometimes account for the multitude of languages. Religious 'competence', one might conjecture, is built in or structured into us in a way analogous to linguistic competence; the vast and colourful differences are the result of the human skill of varying whatever can be culturally varied" (Hay, 1990:9). Hay states more recently that "the bond between spirituality and the Christian religion is itself a constriction of meaning which has had serious practical consequences in the school curriculum" (Hay & Nye, 1998:53). Thus while Hay still affirms an important role for religious language of some kind as a public vehicle for spiritual experience, issues of truth and of the implications and status of particular beliefs seem to play a very secondary role in relation to the primacy of common experience.

to imply that a religiously grounded approach to spiritual development is too narrow and out of tune with the nature of spiritual experience. Despite the close association of these developments with experiential approaches to Religious Education, religious belief slides towards relegation as a secondary and optional outgrowth of a more basic shared spirituality.[87]

In fact, despite the apparently widespread assumption that religious belief can be safely contained or sidelined once some sufficiently general account of spiritual capacities and experiences has been provided, a general approach raises a number of difficulties. A basic difficulty concerns the way in which the terms 'spirituality' and 'religion' are interpreted and put to work. The rhetoric of the spiritual development literature often seems to assume that 'spiritual' is the positive but elusive term while we already know what 'religion' is. This assumption may be dubious in the light of recent disputes over the viability of the latter term as applicable to faith communities.[88] The argument pursued earlier in this chapter suggests that the common tendency to associate 'spirituality' with good things and 'religion' with bad things is too simplistic.

In addition to a tendency to associate religion rhetorically with imposition, exclusion and anachronism,[89] there is a further tendency to assume that religion is tied to a narrow scope of application. This seems to be implied by the OFSTED statement that "'spiritual' is not synonymous with 'religious'; all areas of the curriculum may contribute to pupils' spiritual development".[90] The semi-colon seems to imply that while spirituality is of concern throughout the curriculum, only Religious Education is concerned with the 'religious'.

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[87] In Hay and Nye's recent study of children's spirituality the use by children of "conventionalised 'God-talk'" is interpreted as a limitation on their responses, to be contrasted with more "personal" expressions. This stance seems to stand in some tension with Hay's emphasis elsewhere on the value of religious language for giving public articulation to what would otherwise be an inarticulate private experience (Hay & Nye, 1998:87).

[88] Jackson, 1997:50-60.

[89] See e.g. Best, 1996:14, 27, 45, 47. Contrast Crawford, 1996:140: "Most theological understandings of Christian faith presume that by nature it cannot be imposed".

[90] OFSTED, 1993, Part 4:86. Compare Nye and Hay's comment that ""Spirituality needs to be approached in a variety of ways, not only in the Religious Education classroom and through religious metaphor" (Nye & Hay, 1996).

Two points need to be made here. First, as noted above, the assertion that spiritual and religious are not synonymous carries no logical implication that they are not profoundly connected or even necessarily mutually implicated; telling us that they are not the same in fact tells us very little in any positive sense about how they are related. Second, the implied assumption that religious belief is only relevant to any significant degree within Religious Education (with its corollary that a spirituality relevant to the whole curriculum must be kept distinct from religion) is false. Issues to which religious belief is relevant arise in obvious ways in areas of the curriculum such as music, art and literature, personal, social and moral education, history, and certain areas of science (origins, environmental concerns, the status of scientific truth, etc.); it is part of the concern of this thesis to show that they also arise in less obvious ways in a subject such as modern language education.[91]

A further problem concerns the viability of universal accounts of spirituality. Even if it is granted that it is possible to construct a general definition of spirituality which is non-controversial (though this is open to serious doubt),[92] it is unclear that the result would be of very significant benefit in terms of an educational approach to spiritual development. The closer that any definition of spirituality gets to universality, the more content-free it becomes. As various writers have pointed out, if we are to foster spiritual growth in an educational context then we need not just an abstract, general definition of spirituality but some conception of healthy directions of spiritual growth.[93] As I argued in chapter 1, we may share certain spiritual capacities, but we put them to use in a variety of conflicting ways. The problem with the highly generalised accounts of spirituality which litter recent discussions is that they offer insufficient orientation. As Patricia White points out, the wider and more inclusive the category becomes, the harder it becomes to specify what would *not* count as spiritual development. Given a sufficiently broad definition "all of us, most of the time, are making spiritual progress, not least ruthless professional criminals, developing views of their victims and possible

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[91] As I noted in chapter 1, earlier HMI discussions of spirituality in the curriculum seemed at times more clearly aware of this point.

[92] Goetz, 1991.

[93] Götz, 1997:206; Mott-Thornton, 1998:22.

interpretations of their behaviour".[94] Once more normative concepts are introduced in order to specify healthy directions of spiritual growth, claims to universality are immediately endangered.[95]

This point is compounded by the necessity of interpretation if we are to articulate our spiritual capacities and experiences even to ourselves. I will skirt for present purposes around the complexities of contemporary discussions of the relationship between language, cognition and experience and home in on the pedagogical context. If our concern with spirituality is an educational one, then it seems inadequate to merely foster mute experience. Educators will in some measure be in the business of shaping a context for experience and exploring the meaning of experience. The question concerning whether a particular spiritual experience was the touch of God, a sign of mental imbalance or the effects of a bad pizza, or whether it should be embraced, resisted, treated or repented of is not only of more than academic interest to the individual concerned, it is of educational consequence once educators concern themselves with children's spiritual growth. In such instances, beliefs come into question in a manner which is not simply secondary or incidental, but intrinsic to the interpretation of spirituality.[96]

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[94] White, 1994b:7. It is interesting in this connection to consider the development of Hay's definition of spirituality as a "heightening of awareness" in Hay & Nye, 1998 (see similarly Rodger, 2000). Nye suggests later in the same study that there is "at the very least a permeable boundary lying between the kinds of vivid spontaneous spiritual experience which people tend to remember for the rest of their lives, and the low key spiritual awareness someone aspires to as a personal life stance", whereby "the feature which varies along the continuum is one of intensity of awareness" (Hay & Nye, 1998:89). If the heightened awareness which constitutes spirituality need not after all be all that heightened, the definition with which we seem to be left is that spirituality is awareness. This is certainly abstract, general and non-sectarian, but it is also exceedingly uninformative.

[95] Take, for instance, humility, which would be regarded as an essential component of spiritual growth by Christians, yet has a controversial status in relation to educational aims. Mendus, for instance, has argued that humility is a virtue which liberal education renders problematic (Mendus, 1995). On the same issue, see further chapters 3 and 4 and also Goetz, 1991:27; MacIntyre, 1984:182; Schwehn, 1993:46-49 and the discussion in Shortt & Smith, 1999.

[96] See Smith, 1999. Here the limitations of an approach to spirituality which seeks to describe common characteristics of spiritual experience outside of the experiencer's frame of meaning become apparent. To take a particularly vivid example, Geels (Geels, 1992) describes a case from his research of a Scandinavian petty criminal and drug addict whose doctor had given him only a short time to live. He decided to take a large dose of drugs and jump off a bridge. Just before he jumped he saw a vision of Jesus inviting him to entrust his life to him. He made his way down from the bridge, found himself free from addiction and became a pastor working in prisons. Whatever the merits of general descriptions of spirituality in terms of a common core experience, such descriptions are surely of limited value to the individual concerned; if the person involved in this incident had accepted Geels' explanation that the

A parallel may help to summarise the point clearly. Hay claims that spirituality is biologically based and therefore at some level common to all humans while remaining open to diverse cultural interpretations. Accepting this analysis for the sake of argument, if we take sexuality as a parallel it quickly becomes apparent that a capacity which is shared by all people may nevertheless be not only open to cultural variation but subject to belief-laden controversy. Adultery and marital intercourse may be biologically identical, but to regard them as simply cultural variations on a common core would itself be a controversial standpoint in relation to deeply held beliefs.[97] I suggest that the same holds for spirituality.

This general point takes on particular force when we consider the formative nature of educational practice. It can be argued that "any educational programme will embody implicitly, if not explicitly, certain developmental effects that impact upon the domain of the spiritual".[98] If this is so, then spirituality as actually influenced or shaped by what goes on in concrete classroom contexts will necessarily partake of some degree of potentially controversial particularity. This is a central point for the present study, and will be explored further in later chapters. The key contention here is that even if some kind of spiritual capacity is universally shared, as soon as we move from abstract description to educational involvement in shaping how that capacity is directed and exercised then particular beliefs become relevant.

Finally, it should be noted that the above argument implies that if particularity is a problem, it is not one which is avoided by adherence to an experientialist, "common-core" approach to spirituality. This approach, while widely represented in recent discussions of spiritual development, is itself a particular perspective rooted in Western liberal theology and Romanticism.[99] The view of religious language as a secondary and

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vision was a manifestation of the ego's defence mechanisms, it seems unlikely that he would have survived. The particular beliefs which give sense to spiritual experience are of intrinsic importance both to the nature of the experience and to the way in which it is integrated into one's life.

[97] Lest this analogy should seem unfairly reductionist, compare Hay's parallel use of a food analogy (Hay & Nye, 1998:14-15).

[98] Mott-Thornton, 1998:76; cf. Rodger, 2000:11.

[99] See Wright, 1996, 1997, 1998.

optional expression of universal religious experience is, as Wright points out, not shared by the majority of religious believers themselves. Wright contends that "at the heart of the contemporary religious situation is not a common, variously expressed, experiential dimension of human essence, but rather a set of ambiguous, competing and often overlapping narratives about the true nature of reality";[100] placed alongside this standpoint, the experiential common-core approach, like Newby's secularism, is not a more neutral playing field on which the alternatives can be arrayed, but rather itself a contested account of spiritual reality. As Goetz puts it, the search for a spirituality in general "assumes without proof that the reduction of tension achievable at the expense of integrity is more beneficial than the search for a true coincidence of opposites".[101] In a plural context we need not merely an account of spirituality in general but also an account of spiritual difference.

b.   Arguments concerned with impartiality

It is in part a clearer perception of the failure of experiential-expressive models of spiritual development to escape particularity (or their achievement of universality at the expense of educational content or substance) that leads some writers to conclude that spiritual development can only be understood in any substantial way within the context of particular traditions and frameworks of belief. It is the combination of this perception with a continued reliance on the generality assumption as articulated by Blake, the idea that the particular is not viable, which leads to the negative argument mentioned at the start of this section: spiritual development cannot be extricated from particular perspectives, therefore we cannot pursue spiritual development in the schools of a plural democracy. Here the motive of impartiality comes clearly to the fore. Thus Terence McLaughlin advocates a liberal "principled forbearance" when it comes to promoting holistic visions of the good through compulsory education, and insists that a conception of spiritual development must be neither religious nor secular if it is to be serviceable in the common school, a stipulation which it may be impossible to meet.[102]

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[100] Wright, 1996:173.

[101] Goetz, 1991:36.

[102] McLaughlin, 1996.

The relationship between liberalism, religion and education is a large and complex topic in itself. The discussion at this point must be brief and restricted to the identification of reasons why a neutralist liberal perspective does not provide a case against investigation of a Christian approach to spiritual development. It would be possible to enter into debate concerning the viability of the liberal approach, either in terms of its controversial particularity as a perspective which claims privilege over others,[103] or in terms of the point discussed above that education will in practice inevitably have particular spiritually formative effects upon learners.[104] While I consider both of these arguments to be worth pursuing, it will be more economical for present purposes to suggest reasons why a study such as the present one is important even if the neutralist liberal case is accepted as valid.

First there is the simple point that at least some liberal accounts, including that offered by McLaughlin, allow for forms of schooling other than common schooling in which more substantively grounded approaches to spiritual development would be appropriate.[105] Such accounts bid to restrict the application of a Christian educational approach to certain contexts, but do not debar the approach itself.

Even in the context of the common school, however, it should be noted that once appeals to pluralism are disconnected from advocacy of secularism and followed through more rigorously, they lose their force as objections to exploring the relevance of particular frameworks of belief to spiritual development. If the goal is not to impose a single (secular) approach, but rather to act justly in the light of a more thoroughgoing sense of plurality, then investigation and articulation of the implications of particular perspectives becomes essential, both in order to maximise the clarity and fruitfulness of

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[103] For objections to liberal claims to neutrality from Christian perspectives see e.g. Hart, 2000; Sandsmark, 1998; Wolterstorff, 1997. Other political perspectives, such as communitarianism or Mott-Thornton's conservative pluralism are, of course, more accommodating to more particularistic accounts of spiritual development, and so less pertinent at this point.

[104] This is an important aspect of Mott-Thornton's case against a liberal approach (Mott-Thornton, 1998).

[105] McLaughlin's objection to the use of public coercion to impose "thick" accounts of the good is accompanied by an affirmation of the role of such thick accounts in "forms of distinctive schooling chosen by parents as part of the exercise of their moral rights over their children's upbringing and education" (McLaughlin, 1996: 14).

dialogue between differing perspectives and in order to establish the actual parameters of possible cooperation.[106]

Even where there is a strong commitment to the ideal of religious neutrality in schools, extended to include neutrality in relation to secularist visions of the good, such investigation of the implications of particular perspectives seems to be required rather than debarred - if the idea of religious neutrality is intended as more than a blind article of faith, and if potential violations are to be identified and regulated, then detailed investigation of the relationship between religious belief and a wide range of educational practices would seem to be essential. If such investigation reveals that in some area of educational practice which is not easily dispensed with it is necessary to choose between approaches which are controversial in relation to religious belief, then the idea of neutrality needs to be revisited and its desirability or achievability reassessed.[107] The ideal of "principled forbearance" implies that we know when we are forbearing from what and when such forbearance might not be possible. This points to one of the questions which will be discussed in the final chapter of this thesis, one raised by McLaughlin at the end of his paper, namely the question whether the debate concerning spiritual development might not call the adequacy of neutralist liberal frameworks into question, rather than simply being constrained by them.[108]

Summary

In sum, then, rejections of particularity in accounts of spiritual development raise problems on a number of levels. Such rejections are of doubtful self-referential coherence if particularity is the ground for rejection, since universalistic accounts are

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[106] Cf. Haydon, 1994.

[107] If, as Mott-Thornton argues, "schools have always and always will be agencies of spirituality, affecting the spiritual life of those who pass through them" (Mott-Thornton, 1998:76), then it might turn out to be certain liberal conceptions of the common school which are problematic, not the idea of spiritual development.

[108] Mott-Thornton argues that "it is of vital importance that the cultural and political constraints are identified and laid out first so that the various candidates for spiritual development can be evaluated, as it were, objectively with reference to educational criteria" (Mott-Thornton, 1998:78). The argument put forward in the previous paragraph suggests that this is not so. There seems to be no good reason why investigation of the implications of particular perspectives should be prevented *a priori* from calling political and educational frameworks into question.

themselves controversial and rooted in a particular Western tradition. They are also of doubtful educational value, rendering the notion of spirituality too abstract to found educational practice and underpin particular forms of spiritual development or growth. They are, furthermore, empty in the absence of careful investigation of the implications of particular frameworks of belief for spiritual development, for in the absence of such investigation their claim to neutrality or commonality cannot be substantiated. While discussions along these lines have raised legitimate concerns regarding fair treatment of students of diverse beliefs and the existence of spiritual experiences and concerns outside of traditional religious frameworks, they have not provided a case against emphasising the importance of particular beliefs for our understanding of spirituality.

5.   A cumulative case?

A final question to be considered before moving on from the various objections discussed is whether, in spite of their individual weaknesses, they might amount to a cumulative case against a Christian approach when taken together. This does not seem to be so. The reason is that while some of the arguments surveyed are clearly mutually supportive (the negative evaluations of religion, for instance, seeking to fill the gaps which emerged in the argument from the social context), others seem to be in tension with one another. If the negative evaluations of religion were conclusive, for instance, then a more supportive social context would not be a good reason for adopting religious frameworks, and the appeal to social context would therefore have relatively little weight as a separate argument. There are similar tensions between appeals to the social context of education and appeals to more enduring features of the concept of education itself - if something is an enduring and essential feature of education then presumably a resurgence of religion in the social context would not change that fact. Again, as soon as secularism is acknowledged to be a particular stance, then arguments based on an affirmation of secularism are in tension with appeals to the plurality of our social situation and with the idea that accounts of spiritual development should not be based on particular ideological stances.

What we have, then, is not a cumulative case, but rather a collection of arguments coming from at least partially incompatible perspectives. Instead of a single case for the

opposition we are presented with two main alternatives: the view that spiritual development should be based on some other particular stance (such as secularism, the Enlightenment tradition or 'cosmic spirituality'), and the view that spiritual development may not be based upon any particular stance, and is therefore either impossible in the current educational context or possible provided that it can be characterised in a sufficiently universalised manner. To take the former view as ruling Christian approaches out of court is to terminate discussion and opt for the imposition of a particular perspective; as long as other stances remain themselves debatable, there is a place for approaches informed by Christian faith. The latter view is perhaps the more widely persuasive, but I have argued above that it is also open to challenge and that even if accepted it would seem to require investigation of the implications of particular faith stances if its claim to neutrality or commonality is to amount to much in practice.

This thesis undertakes just such an investigation, and the implications of its findings for questions of pluralism and neutrality in education will be a proper area of concern once those findings are elaborated. The arguments against Christian approaches which have been surveyed here, while providing helpful cautions, are not successful as objections to the viability of such an undertaking. It is therefore now appropriate to turn to more constructive concerns.

Chapter 3
Faith, spirituality and teaching methods

Outline:
1. Problems in relating spirituality and Christian faith to methodology
      a. Ideas associated with teaching as 'method'
      b. Problems with construals of teaching in terms of 'method'
            i. The validation of methods
            ii. The role of ideological diversity
            iii. The wider educational context
2. The structure of teaching processes
      a. Approach, method, technique
      b. Expanding the notion of an approach
            i. The tacit level
            ii. The relevance of metaphor
            iii. Varieties of relevant belief
      c. Relating approach to design and procedure
3. An alternative account? Contextually guided eclecticism
4. Conclusion

In chapter 2 I sought to remove some apparent obstacles to taking the relationship between Christian faith and spiritual development seriously in educational settings. The present chapter tackles a similar task with regard to the relationship of a Christian concern for spiritual development to modern language pedagogy (Figure 3). I consider factors which are likely to make such a relationship appear implausible before going on to develop some contours of a positive account of the relationship.

I will be interested in the ways in which a Christian conception of the spiritual nature of the person could inform modern language pedagogy. Inevitably, this will involve anticipating some aspects of the discussion in chapter 4, where I will articulate such a conception. The reason for focusing first on the structure of modern language pedagogy is that the aim in chapter 4 will be to offer not a general Christian account of spirituality, but rather one developed with an eye to its pertinence to modern foreign language education. The present chapter aims to make clearer what kind of account is required.[1]

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[1] Some parts of sections 1b, 2a and 2c of the present chapter draw upon an earlier, briefer and more sketchy discussion in Smith, 1997b.
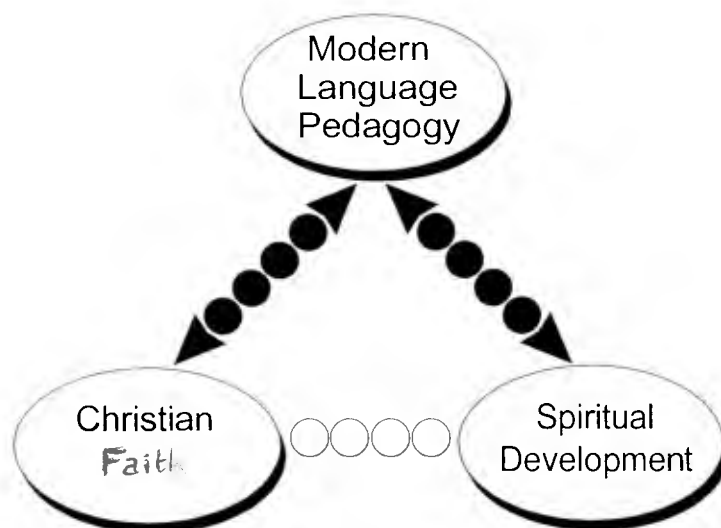
Figure 3

1.   Problems in relating spirituality and Christian faith to methodology

a.   Ideas associated with teaching as 'method'

Before developing a conception of modern language pedagogy designed to facilitate discussion of its spiritual dimension, I will offer a brief account of past conceptions which stand in the way of such an enterprise. Two interconnected features which have until recently characterised much investigation of modern language pedagogy raise difficulties for the present investigation. The first is the construal of teaching in terms of 'method', and the second is the search for an objective scientific underpinning which will indicate and validate the best teaching 'method' or methods. I will discuss recent shifts in the prevailing view of both of these issues and outline an alternative account in terms of the interplay of approach, design and procedure later in the chapter. Before doing so I will outline the difficulties presented by reliance on the concept of scientifically validated 'method'.

In modern foreign language education, questions of teaching methodology have been particularly prominent, and the different ways of teaching languages have been understood predominantly in terms of 'method'.[2] This is a term shaped by a long and complex intellectual history. In medieval times 'method' was "a leisurely intellectual

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[2] Brumfit, 1991.

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art, not a purposive science of technique"[3] - in fact, Walter Ong states that until the sixteenth century "there was no word in ordinary usage which clearly expressed what we mean today by 'method,' a series of ordered steps gone through to produce with certain efficacy a desired effect - a routine of efficiency".[4] The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw a dramatic surge of interest in 'method' in this more modern sense of secure and efficient technique. Conceptions of scientific 'method' and pedagogical 'method' were closely intertwined in these discussions.[5] Bacon and Descartes provided particularly influential formulations of the general preoccupation with 'method', the latter offering a particularly clear account of the ideas which have come to be associated with the modern concept of 'method' as a "routine of efficiency".[6] Descartes saw 'method' as a way of escaping from the vagaries of tradition, custom and subjectivity. In his account 'method' is associated with repeatability without significant variation in different contexts, the exclusion of ideas rooted in contingent subjective or contextual factors, secure control over variables affecting the process, and a guarantee of reliable results if the routine is properly followed.[7] The "messiness" of particular beliefs, customs and commitments was to be replaced by "the cleanliness of method".[8]

These connotations have continued to be associated with 'method' in modern pedagogical as well as scientific discussions. To think of teaching in terms of 'method' therefore invokes a particular set of expectations. As Richards puts it, specifically in relation to language teaching methods, "a method, because it imposes a uniform set of

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[3] Hamilton, 1989:45. Ong suggests that 'method' to the Greeks had meant "craft or wiliness in a personalist rather than a technological setting" (Ong, 1958:225).

[4] Ong, 1958:225.

[5] Ong gives an extensive account of this process, and its particular debts to a growing concern with medical technique. He describes the pivotal role played by Ramus, "who constantly nurtures his interest in method by forays into medical writers without any apparent consciousness that their focus tends to be different from his" (Ong, 1958:228).

[6] Ong, 1958:225,232.

[7] Descartes, 1968; cf. Smith, 2000.

[8] Lundin, Walhout, & Thiselton, 1999:11. A good sense of the continued force of these connotations can be obtained by reflecting on the difference in connotation between the comment "I've found a new way of practising my golf swing" and the parallel statement "I've found a new method for practising my golf swing".

teaching roles, teaching styles, teaching strategies, and teaching techniques on the teacher, will not be affected by the variations that are found in individual teaching skill and teaching style in the real world".[9]

There is an immediate problem here for the present investigation: a teaching 'method' does not seem to be the kind of thing which can or should be affected by variations in spiritual commitment or religious belief.[10] Given that "for over a century, language educators have attempted to solve the problems of language teaching by focusing attention almost exclusively on teaching *method*",[11] this suggests that the possibility of a fruitful link between faith, spirituality and modern language pedagogy will be far from obvious under the terms of recent discussion.

This view of teaching as a matter of repeatable and reliable 'method' has also continued to be associated with scientific investigation and validation. Teaching 'methods' have commonly been understood as "the application of theoretical findings and positions" drawn from a particular range of sciences.[12] This reflects an understanding of 'applied linguistics' (the discipline most closely associated with the systematic study of language teaching) as a form of applied science.[13] Applied linguistics has been significantly shaped by the conviction that the application of scientific method to the study of language teaching and learning could definitively validate particular pedagogical

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[9] Richards, 1990:37.

[10] According to Weinsheimer, "the universality of method, its claim to be the sole path to truth, depend on the totality of its control over itself," implying that whatever is construed as prejudice, including religious belief, becomes a threat to methodological purity. This need for complete self-transparency and control, Weinsheimer argues, is actually "the point of maximum vulnerability in methodologism" (Weinsheimer, 1985:15); I discuss the relevance of such criticisms further below. See also Dunne, 1993:116-117, Huebner, 1985:159-161.

[11] Stern, 1983:452.

[12] Brown, 1994:14.

[13] See van Els, Bongaerts, Extra, van Os, & Janssen-van Dieten, 1984:2-11. Mackey notes that the term was first used in the 1940s "by persons with an obvious desire to be identified as scientists rather than as humanists; the association with 'applied science' can hardly have been accidental" (Mackey, 1966:197). Corder (1973:137-139) goes as far as to argue that only the specialist can even adequately identify or talk about problems related to the discipline. See my discussion of Widdowson's critique of the 'applied science' view below.

options. At first, the aim was a single complete and correct 'method'.[14] In the 1970s, this gave way to a proliferation of diverse new options. The various options proposed tended, however, to be presented as complete, all-encompassing alternative 'methods', each promising to deliver the right way to go about teaching languages, and the attempt to find ways of empirically demonstrating which of these 'methods' was actually the best continued.[15] While the weaknesses of this approach are now widely acknowledged (see below), the 'method' concept and the accompanying hope for scientific validation have proved resilient and remain influential.[16]

This appears to present the current investigation with a further difficulty. If the authority of a 'method' lies in its scientific validation, and if the relevant forms of scientific investigation are further conceived (as is commonly the case) as a "generically human enterprise", for which we are required to "strip off all our particularities - particularities of gender, of race, of nationality, of religion, of social class, of age - and enter purely as human beings,"[17] then how could spiritual commitments and religious beliefs relate in

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[14] Weideman, who surveys the history of attitudes to scientific validation of pedagogy in modern applied linguistics, comments that "applied linguistics has always been linked with the expectation, inspired by the unquestioned belief in scientific enquiry and research, that if one could only subject the practice of language teaching to scientific scrutiny, one would somehow arrive at the 'best' way of actually going about the business of teaching and learning a second or foreign language" (Weideman, 1987:78).

[15] Stern, 1983:491-495.

[16] See e.g. Jarvis, 1991; Liu, 1995. The resilience of the concept of 'method' can be seen in Stern's chapter inaptly titled 'The break with the method concept' (1983:477-496). All of the studies which Stern discusses in the chapter in fact retain the 'method' concept, while attempting to move away from the idea of a *single* regimented 'method'. While there has been significant criticism of the idea of 'method' in recent academic discussions (see below), the idea remains well entrenched among practitioners and in the marketing of resources. On a recent visit to the annual Language World conference, it was not difficult to find items such as an advertisement on the Sony stand boasting that "the Sony LLC-9000 Language Learning System provides both students and teachers with the best possible method of learning a language", or a book claiming to be based upon "Elizabeth Smith's new method of instant learning" (Smith, 1998).

[17] Wolterstorff, 1999:36. This generic humanness is open to various particular formulations; for instance, the publicness of scientific knowledge may be contrasted with more individual or group-based value-judgements (see e.g. Brumfit, 1985:84). This is, however, potentially ambiguous. If 'public' means open to public discussion and critique then the publicness required of grounds for pedagogical convictions does not exclude philosophical argument or religious debate. MacIntyre (1990, especially 145-148) has suggested ways in which fruitful public debate may occur between incommensurable paradigms. If, however, publicness is construed in terms of value-neutrality, universal assent or verifiability (Corder, for instance, contrasts scientific public knowledge which is "open to scrutiny and disproof by anyone who knows how to set about it" (1973:21) with personal value judgements) then we simply have a variant on the objectivism described by Wolterstorff, a variant which faces the difficult task of showing how and why considerations which are not such that they can be readily disproved by

any positive way to pedagogy?

On two counts, then, relating spirituality and Christian faith to modern language pedagogy as commonly construed seems problematic. If pedagogy is construed as 'method', and its evaluation is understood as the province of a belief-neutral empirical science (or even a fairly narrow range of sciences), then particular spiritual perspectives seem at best irrelevant, at worst a potential contaminant. On these terms, the idea of a Christian approach to modern language pedagogy sounds out of place.

The difficulty is compounded when 'method' is understood in terms of logical deduction of a behavioural specification from a theoretical basis, since this seems to suggest that talk, for instance, of a 'Christian method' would imply the possibility of logically deriving particular teaching practices from particular Christian beliefs.[18] When this is translated into an attempt to imagine a Christian teacher who holds the chalk differently, asks questions differently, arranges the chairs differently, and so on, the imaginative feat proves too much and ends once more in impressions of nonsense.[19] This, added to the considerations outlined above, may go some way towards explaining the fact that while there has historically been significant faith-informed discussion of foreign language pedagogy, this kind of discussion has been notable by its absence in more recent times (see chapter 1).

Finally, a difficult feat of imagination is rendered well nigh impossible once it is observed that much of the current discussion of spirituality in education is rooted in a Romantic tradition which opposes modern scientism. Historically, Romanticism sought meaning in "a certain way of experiencing our lives, our ordinary desires and

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anyone with a little technical expertise should be excluded from consideration.

[18] Some important difficulties with this kind of understanding of methodology, concerned particularly with the difficulty of identifying which or how many behaviours need to be specified and the difficulty of reconciling such a specification with any kind of ongoing responsiveness to the actual learning responses of pupils, are discussed at length by Davis (1999).

[19] Something like this assumption seems to underlie some of Paul Hirst's argument against the idea of Christian education (Hirst, 1971). Interestingly, while many Christian educators react (in my experience) with puzzlement to the idea of a Christian foreign language pedagogy, some (generally at the more fundamentalist end of the spectrum) claim to be seeking or even to have found the true Christian teaching 'method', the 'method' approved or revealed by God. What is interesting is that both reactions can be seen as rooted in acceptance of the features of the 'method' ideal described above; unpicking this ideal in relation to teaching may lead to more thoughtful Christian responses.

fulfilments, and the larger natural order in which we are set", emphasising not the need for methodical detachment and rigour, but rather the need to "experience these desires as rich, as full, as significant - to respond to the current of life in nature".[20] This emphasis yields a view of education as a liberation of the expressive learner from the constraints of externally imposed schemata. In this tradition, feeling and intuition are valued above rational certainty and objective description, and inward experience is valued more than outward behavioural detail.[21] These emphases continue to exert a significant influence upon discussions of spiritual development.[22] If, as for a number of recent writers, spirituality has to do with the inner world, the undefinable, the ineffable, the intangible, the mystical, or with individual personal experience and self-expression,[23] then it would seem to be in significant tension with the idea of reliable 'method' outlined above. The two ideals seem designed to be at war, and any attempt to understand some aspect of education in terms of both is likely to be fraught with tensions.

Like the relationship between Christian faith and spiritual development, then, that between a faith-informed conception of spiritual development and modern foreign language pedagogy faces obstacles. From the side of spirituality, the methodical seems suspect. From the vantage point of scientifically validated 'method' spirituality seems irrelevant.

As I will argue below, these difficulties are surmountable given modifications on both sides of the dilemma. The point of dwelling on the apparent difficulties at the outset, apart from outlining the wider context of my argument, is to indicate a little of the complexity involved in an idea such as 'spiritual development across the curriculum'. Much of the recent discussion of spiritual development has been conducted in very general terms, assuming cross-curricular applicability. It cannot, however, be assumed that conceptions of spiritual development emerging from certain trends of thought

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[20] Taylor, 1989:372.

[21] Wright, 1997:11, Gergen, 1991:18-47.

[22] Wright, 1997, 1998.

[23] See e.g. Priestley, 1996; Webster, 1985.

within Religious Education will be plausible or applicable without significant friction within the professional cultures and pedagogic structures characteristic of other disciplines. This underscores the need for the present kind of *discipline-specific* investigation of what spiritual development across the curriculum might mean.[24]

b.   Problems with construals of teaching in terms of 'method'

I already indicated in chapter 1 some grounds for regarding an experientially focused view of spiritual development as inadequate, a point which will be developed further in chapter 4. Here I will dwell briefly on some ways in which the 'method' ideal has been placed in question in recent discussions of modern language pedagogy. Just as the broader modern ideal of guaranteed knowledge and control through the application of impersonal 'method' has come under sustained attack,[25] so also there has been a growing suspicion of the concept of 'method' in recent discussions of modern language pedagogy. It is now not uncommon, at least in academic contexts, to meet with the view that "the usefulness of the concept of 'methodology' is, at the very least, seriously undermined, at worst, utterly discredited".[26] This development is related both to the issue of objective scientific validation and to the construal of teaching in terms of 'method'.

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[24] It also highlights the need for reflection upon the tensions between official calls for spiritual development across the curriculum and the methodological and technicist focus of other recent educational initiatives associated with the National Curriculum, such as the literacy and numeracy hour and the codification of master-teacher skills (see Davis, 1999).

[25] Polanyi, for instance, has argued that committed, personal knowledge rather than "the vain pursuit of a formalized scientific method" provides "the only relation in which we can believe something to be true" (Polanyi, 1958:311). Gadamer denies that 'method' is the royal road to truth, and argues that the Enlightenment "prejudice against prejudice" has obscured the positive enabling role which can be played by prior assumptions and judgments (Gadamer, 1989:270). It is relevant to the present discussion to note Gadamer's comment that the "prejudice against prejudice itself, which denies tradition its power" is "primarily directed against the religious tradition of Christianity - i.e., the Bible" (p.270-2). Feyerabend argues that the idea of a single and regulated 'method' is likely to render potentially fruitful alternative routes of inquiry invisible (Feyerabend, 1975). The much discussed advent of postmodernity directly challenges the 'method' ideal with a view of knowledge as plural, historical, uncertain, shifting, partial and influenced or controlled by a variety of extra-personal forces. Pennycook lists the work of critical theorists, feminists, Third World writers, postmodernists, philosophers of science, anthropologists, sociologists and philosophers of education and critical pedagogues as all in their different ways undermining "the roles of positivism and patriarchy, the claims to universality, objectivity and truth, and the belief in inherent progress, within the domains of linguistics and applied linguistics" (Pennycook, 1989:595).

[26] Byrnes, 1991:355.

i. The validation of methods

As mentioned above, the proliferation of teaching 'methods' has undermined confidence that the application of scientific knowledge will lead progressively towards a single best 'method'. Rather than progressive convergence, the reality has been a shifting pattern of rival approaches - audio-lingual, communicative, humanistic, natural, and so on. Applied linguistics is, according to Davies, a loose federation, "often warring...more on the model of Yugoslavia than of Australia or the European Community...in no case is there a single monolithic, unitary view, nowhere is there complete agreement of what the discipline is about".[27] It is not uncommon for commentators to make observations such as the following:

> "Viewed historically, language teaching has always been subject to
> change, but the process of change has not resulted from the steady
> accumulation of knowledge about the most effective ways of teaching
> languages: it has been more the product of changing fashion."[28]

The mere existence of a plurality of 'methods' is not the decisive problem; efforts have been made to compare empirically the effectiveness of rival methods. 'Method' has, however, proved very difficult to define as an experimental variable.[29] While introductions to the field of language teaching have tended to present a range of discrete rival methods, recent commentators have stressed the highly diverse characteristics of and considerable overlaps among the various 'methods' which make up the standard list. The term 'method' may be used to characterize anything from a specific bundle of techniques to a broad and general approach, and there may be a considerable gap between what the 'method' specifies and what goes on in any given classroom.[30] Closer inspection of the standard list even reveals considerable uncertainty as to how many

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[27] Davies, 1993:15. Widdowson's alternative image is "the Holy Roman Empire: a kind of convenient nominal fiction" which "does not correspond with any very stable definition of just what it is" (Widdowson, 2000:3).

[28] Wilkins, 1972:207; cf. Mackey, 1965:138-9; Molero, 1989.

[29] Stern, 1983:482-496.

[30] Brumfit, 1991:138-142; Larsen-Freeman, 1991:122.

'methods' to distinguish.[31] Add to this the huge number of variables which must be defined and taken into account when studying 'methods' in a classroom setting, and the result has been a growing consensus that while empirical investigation still has a role to play, that role is more modest than once thought, for 'methods' are not readily susceptible to global comparison in empirical terms.[32] The standard list of 'methods' has become suspect (at least among researchers) as a way of differentiating between language teaching practices.[33] Some form of principled eclecticism is commonly urged as a more responsible alternative for teachers than choosing one or another of the full-scale 'methods' available.

ii.   The role of ideological diversity

A variety of reasons are advanced for the obstinate persistence of methodological diversity. Could it be because teachers misunderstand, uncritically assimilate or doubt the relevance of scientific theories? Is it because they appropriate them as entire packages, then discard the entire package when weaknesses show? Is it because applied linguists are an academic elite, out of touch with teachers' discourse and experience, and therefore fail to pass on methodological wisdom effectively? Or is it because of the interplay of market forces, political agendas or teacher preferences?[34] The factors are doubtless many and complex, but there is one which is particularly relevant to the present study. It concerns the fact that discussions of language teaching, scientific or otherwise, are not self-grounding, but rather are inevitably embedded in broader cultural and philosophical trends and involve deep-seated interpretive differences. This wider context helps to account for changes in methodological fashion.[35] Davies suggests on

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[31] Pennycook, 1989:602.

[32] Larsen-Freeman, 1991:121-122. Larsen-Freeman points out the inverse problem, that the small-scale descriptive studies which have proliferated in reaction to the problem of global evaluation tend to provide insufficient grounds for generalisation (p.123). For a list of variables involved, see Brumfit, 1984. Brumfit goes as far as to state in connection with this survey of variables that "no one is going to prove, even provisionally, that a particular language teaching procedure is better than another" (p.19-20).

[33] See e.g. Richards, 1990:37, Byrnes, 1998:272-274.

[34] See e.g. [Brumfit, 1991   :136-142; Kramsch, 1995   ; Richards, 1984   .

[35] Byrnes, 1991:355; Molero, 1989:161.

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this basis that:

> "It may be that we shall always have to take account of changing fashion simply because we have no way of finally establishing 'the best way' to learn or teach a language. Since there is no easy way of evaluating the internal logic of a theoretical model of language, the question of what constitutes the best language-learning theory may not be a matter for experimental research at all, but a matter for philosophical argument about what kinds of aims we are interested in at any one time."[36]

Davies goes on to argue that applied linguistics can never cease to be in some measure "speculative". The scientific method does not tell us which possibilities to test, which experiments to conduct, so guiding inspirations must come from elsewhere.[37] Moreover, the mere collection of pieces of information does not in itself offer a direction for educators to follow. Discussions of the best way forward involve not only experimental, but also various other kinds of considerations - philosophical, ethical, political, social, perhaps even spiritual.[38]

This suggests, as a number of researchers have pointed out, that investigation of the role of such broader issues and commitments is a very pertinent aspect of research on modern language pedagogy. Pennycook, for instance, argues that the tendency in the past to think of 'methods' in terms of the top-down application of scientifically authorised theory to the classroom has obscured the political, economic and social forces which shape 'methods', and has also undervalued the experiences, insights and

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[36] Davies, 1993:14. The definition of speculation which Davies offers includes religious ideas as one of a number of possible sources of inspiration.

[37] The recent emphasis on the validity of teacher-initiated rather than theorist-imposed understandings of language teaching invites similar conclusions. Kumaravadivelu, for instance, emphasizes that "the research path is by no means the only path that has the potential to lead to the construction of a pedagogic framework. There may well be other possibilities, all equally valid" (Kumaravadivelu, 1994:32). Brumfit, following Popper, argues that discussions of 'method' must involve "discussion of any philosophical issues which emerge from general educational debate...the origin of the idea is unimportant - it may come from fiction or anecdote - so long as it can be argued convincingly as a source of ideas for teachers" (Brumfit, 1984:19).

[38] Davies, 1993:16.

innovations which have their origins in the classroom itself.[39] Endorsing this view, Kramsch calls for applied linguists and language teachers to engage in "an intellectual exploration of the historical and social forces that have shaped their respective discourses", arguing that such exploration is urgent because "language not only reflects the interests and biases of the discourse community which generated it, but creates and perpetuates them as well".[40] In other words, it is not only concrete language teaching practices which should be investigated, but also the various kinds of commitments which animate and sustain them. Investigation of pedagogy must be sensitive to interpretive differences and the beliefs underlying them.

In sum, one does not have to go far in recent discussions of modern language pedagogy to discover critiques of the lack of clarity which has accompanied talk of 'teaching methods', scepticism regarding the possibility of rigorous empirical validation of the single best 'method', and calls to acknowledge the interpretive and ideological factors at play in continuing methodological diversity. This has resulted in an ongoing discussion concerning how modern language pedagogy should be understood in the context of what Kumaravadivelu has termed the "postmethod condition".[41] While the various proposals put forward are diverse in their detail, they share an implicit or explicit recognition of the role of beliefs and assumptions in shaping pedagogy.[42] This represents a substantial shift away from the exclusion of the contingent which characterises the modern concept of 'method', and would seem to allow in principle for the possible relevance of a

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[39] Pennycook, 1989:609. Pennycook points out that the theory-practice hierarchy expressed in the existence of a "troubling relationship in which methods serve the advancement of academic careers and limit the practice of teachers" has further ramifications in a global profession in which the academics tend to be male and the practitioners female, arguing that the concept of 'method' has contributed to maintaining "a hierarchically organized division between male conceptualizers and female practitioners" and to the imposition of Western educational practices on the Third World periphery (p.609-11).

[40] Kramsch, 1995:13-14, 10. Cf. Byrnes, 1991:356.

[41] Kumaravadivelu, 1994.

[42] Kinginger, for instance, discusses the metaphors and "coherence systems" through which teachers make sense of their practice (Kinginger, 1997). Prabhu writes of the need for particular teaching practices to resonate with teachers' "sense of plausibility", which involves interconnected pedagogic perceptions rooted in a particular view of the world (Prabhu, 1987, 1990, 1995). Pennycook argues that changes in language teaching practices "have represented different configurations of the same basic options rather than some linear, additive progress toward the present day, and that these changes are due principally to shifts in the social, cultural, political and philosophical climate" (Pennycook, 1989). Brumfit describes "methods" as "cultures socially emerging from human practices", leading to particular "constellations of techniques" (Brumfit, 1991:136,138).

Christian conception of spiritual development to modern language pedagogy.

iii. The wider educational context

Finally, it should be noted that this shift away from the method ideal involves a reconnection of methodological issues in modern language teaching with wider educational discussion. A narrow focus on methodology as a "routine of efficiency" can deflect attention from broader questions arising from the status of modern language learning as part of *education* and therefore operating within the wider context of debates about what constitutes *good* education. An approach to pedagogy involves the fostering of certain forms of interpersonal interaction in the classroom. Particular ways of teaching may have some impact not only upon linguistic skills or understanding, but also upon the learners' broader attitudes, or upon aspects of their personal development. As Byram has argued, where teaching processes are designed with only the methodical development of learners' linguistic skills in mind, there is a danger that these wider educational dimensions of language teaching will be ignored.[43]

The present thesis addresses precisely this concern. Exploring the relevance of a Christian conception of spiritual development to modern language pedagogy makes little sense on a view of teaching as method in the sense of a self-enclosed technical routine to be evaluated only in terms of its efficiency with regard to language acquisition. It makes much more sense once pedagogical decisions in the modern language classroom are seen to influence the learner's personal growth in ways wider than the linguistic and to be influenced by wider differences in belief and commitment, forming an interdependent part of broader educational discussions. If modern language pedagogy is seen to have these wider dimensions, then an examination of the particular kinds of contributions which specific pedagogies may make to areas such as values education and spiritual development becomes a significant task both for schools which are aiming to be Christian and for schools which aim to transmit other values or achieve neutrality. Drawing upon this broader view of modern language pedagogy, and also upon recent literature concerning the idea of faith-informed scholarship, I will seek in

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[43] Byram, 1989:13, 22-23. The relationship between modern language pedagogy and broader educational goals and values becomes evident, for instance, in discussions of the role of language teaching in promoting learner autonomy (see e.g. Dickinson, 1987:27-28).

the remainder of this chapter to clarify further the role which might be played in pedagogical design by a Christian conception of spirituality.

2. The Structure of Teaching Processes

a. Approach, method, technique

In 1963 Edward Anthony made what has become a classic distinction between *approach*, *method* and *technique*.[44] In this threefold division, *techniques* are particular actions and technologies which are applied in the classroom to achieve specific objectives, such as administering a vocabulary quiz or asking a question. A visitor to a class sees mostly techniques.[45] These techniques do not, however, occur randomly. They are organized and patterned in certain ways, making up a procedure which has an overall consistency. This general procedure, or constellation of techniques, is what Anthony terms a *method*. Method is, however, in turn dependent on a wider framework of assumptions and beliefs; it is a procedure for realizing a certain vision of things. The overall coherence of a method, in spite of the variety of techniques which it may include, derives from its consistency with a set of beliefs about the nature of language and of language learning. This wider framework is termed by Anthony an *approach*, and is clearly related in some way to the philosophical undercurrents and "speculations" discussed above. An approach "states a point of view, a philosophy, an article of faith - something which one believes but cannot necessarily prove".[46] In sum, then, *"techniques* carry out a *method* which is consistent with an *approach"*.[47]

Anthony's basic schema has been appropriated and developed in various ways, and the terminology itself has been subject to revision. In order to maintain some distance from the connotations of 'method' I will henceforth follow Richards and Rogers in replacing Anthony's terms with 'approach', 'design' and 'procedure' (see

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[44] Anthony, 1963.

[45] Anthony, 1963:66.

[46] Anthony, 1963:64.

[47] Anthony, 1963:63.

figure 4) and continue to refer to the whole in terms of 'pedagogy'.[48] I will also take the categories to apply to the teacher's way of teaching in general, and not specifically to the course materials used.[49]
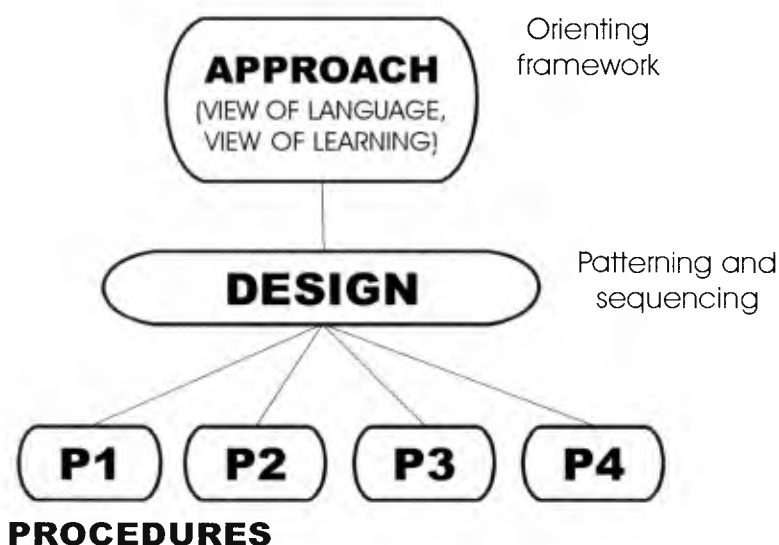
Figure 4

Most of the published discussion of Anthony's categories has focused on the levels of design and procedure - approach has been more taken for granted, and perhaps for that reason has been treated inadequately. An approach to language teaching is sometimes taken to consist of theories drawn from linguistics and psycholinguistics;[50] this is,

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[48] Richards & Rodgers, 1982; Richards & Rodgers, 1986. The concern is not so much to embrace the possibly quixotic task of eliminating terms such as 'method' and 'methodology' from language teachers' discourse, but rather to place the terms in quarantine in order to put certain of their associations out of play for the purposes of the present discussion. The term 'pedagogy' does not seem to share these associations.

[49] See Mackey, 1965:139; Strain, 1986.

[50] In Anthony's account, "approach" is made up of "assumptions dealing with...the nature of language teaching and learning" (Anthony, 1963:63-4). While this could perhaps be interpreted fairly broadly, Richards and Rodgers (among others) take 'approach' somewhat narrowly as consisting of linguistic and psycholinguistic assumptions, i.e. a theory of language plus a theory of language learning processes (Richards, 1984:7; Richards & Rodgers, 1986:16-19; see also Byrnes, 1991:357). This takes inadequate account of some disciplines which have had considerable importance for recent developments in language teaching, such as philosophy of language, let alone the non-linguistic and non-theoretical dimensions of an approach. While it could be argued that those aspects of other areas of thought, such as sociology or political theory, which are relevant to an approach to language teaching will be mostly those aspects which are related to views of language and of learning, defining approach in terms of the two disciplines of linguistics and psycholinguistics tends to obscure the variety of assumptions which may in fact be operative. (Discussion, for instance, of sociological assumptions embedded in sociolinguistic theories which have been important for language teaching can be found in Williams, 1992).

however, far too narrow. I suggest that the notion of an approach can be expanded usefully on a number of levels. It should be noted that my concerns here are different from those of most existing discussions. I am not concerned with rendering 'methods' empirically identifiable or measurable with regard to their effectiveness, but rather with the more philosophical question of the role which a Christian conception of spiritual development might play in the construction of pedagogy.

b.   Expanding the notion of an approach

i.   The tacit level

First, to view approach only on the level of systematically formulated theories misses pre-theoretical determinants of practice.[51] Hudson suggests that

> "Every generation of students is susceptible to its teachers'
> presuppositions, and that these presuppositions are potent just to the
> extent that they are unspoken. It is assumptions, prejudices and implicit
> metaphors that are the true burden of what passes between teacher and
> taught."[52]

Even if it is an overstatement to regard this tacit backdrop as the "true burden" of teaching, the point that consciously articulated theories are far from being the sole shaping factors in an approach to teaching and its effects on learners is pertinent to present concerns. I raise it at the outset in order to avoid giving the impression that the discussion of relevant varieties of belief which follows below is intended as a sufficient account of the potential role of faith and spirituality in education, as if these were exhausted by their more cognitive aspects.[53] While the second part of this thesis will be concerned with the ways in which particular belief-laden orientations become evident in

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[51] For discussions which relate closely, if in varying ways, to this level, see e.g. Polanyi's accounts of the 'tacit dimension' of knowing (Polanyi, 1958; 1966:3-25 cf. Zigler, 1999), Gadamer's discussion of "effective-historical consciousness" (Dunne, 1993:117-121; Gadamer, 1989), and Dooyeweerd's account of the role of the "heart" or the "religious root unity" of the person in theoretical thought (Dooyeweerd, 1984). This dimension of an approach is related to "incarnational" approaches to faith-learning integration, i.e. those which stress the outworking of faith in the educator's lived spirituality (Badley, 1994).

[52] Cited in Widdowson, 1990b:40. I discuss the role of metaphor in more detail below.

[53] Cf. Hay, Nye, & Murphy, 1996:47-55.

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theoretical discussions of pedagogy, and not, for instance, with observation of teacher-student interactions, this should not be taken to deny a more tacit and personal aspect of the relationship between faith, spirituality and pedagogy.

The soil in which a given way of teaching is rooted is likely to consist not only of conscious principles, but also of unconscious factors related to such sources as past experience, personality, social or cultural background, or a broad ideology or *Zeitgeist*.[54] In concrete instances, the influences on a particular constellation of practices may lie as much in the realm of what is taken for granted or unreflectively lived as in that of the consciously (let alone theoretically) formulated. Approaches will be to varying degrees consciously systematised and internally coherent, but given their basic "where I'm looking *from*" status, they will not be completely articulated; one of the hardest things to discern is the full contour of our own implicit perspective on the world.[55]

Consider, for instance, the role of character in the formation of a way of teaching, a factor commonly referred to under the heading of 'presage variables'.[56] Given that Christian faith involves the cultivation of particular character qualities and ways of interacting with others, it seems reasonable to suppose that these variables may involve not only the individual personalities of teachers but also some reflection of their spiritual orientation in their character. Stevick, in a review of Curran's work, suggests that the warmth of the teacher's personal attitude towards students may be a significant factor causing variations in the results achieved by different exponents of the same method.[57] He cites the example of a teacher of his acquaintance who, despite using a

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[54] Cf. Hart, 1997; Olthuis, 1985.

[55] This means not only that approaches should not be seen as sealed-in discrete units, clearly demarcated one from another, but also that the boundary between approach and design is not necessarily a sharp one. In other words, an approach is not something which we have in its fullness in advance of any actions, only to apply it subsequently. It is open to an ongoing process of formation as our beliefs and assumptions both inform and are informed by our experiences. A further point (noted above) is that an approach to language teaching is unlikely to be autonomous in relation to broader approaches to education as a whole. This means that a given language teacher's approach will be shaped not only by ideas specific to language teaching but also by more general beliefs about education, including those gained from the non-subject-specific elements of their training and from interaction with colleagues who teach other subjects. This is a further reason for regarding the definition of approach in terms of linguistics/psycholinguistics as inadequate.

[56] Stern, 1983:498-500.

[57] Stevick, 1973.

textbook made up "primarily of dialogs, grammar notes and ordinary drills" and a pedagogy which "all language teachers that I know would find fault with at several points", consistently produced "superior - often strikingly superior - results".[58] He accounts for this in terms of the teacher's personal orientation towards students. Paul Tench, in an article discussing Christian involvement in foreign and second language teaching, briefly discusses the possibility that this kind of variable may be connected with spirituality. He cites Strevens' finding that one of the strong recurrent reasons for success in the learning and teaching of foreign and second languages is that "teachers cherish learners",[59] and suggests that this is an area in which lived Christian spirituality should provide significant resources which impact the teaching situation.[60]

Mark Schwehn's exploration of the relevance of spiritual virtues to education both develops this tacit dimension of an approach and illustrates how it is interwoven with the role of beliefs discussed below. Schwehn argues that "all higher learning depends not simply upon the possession of certain cognitive skills but also upon the possession of moral dispositions or virtues that enable inquiry to proceed".[61] He specifies further that the virtues he has in mind are virtues which have been historically connected with self-consciously religious communities - they are *spiritual* virtues, and in them Schwehn sees an important link between spirituality (including the process of spiritual formation or growth) and learning.[62] Any community of learning, Schwehn argues, is informed by a certain ethos or spirit of inquiry, and we should therefore consider the spiritual virtues not as an additional consideration separate from the curriculum but rather as something which can inform the learning process.

Spirits of inquiry differ. The writings of Max Weber are used to sketch a learning ethos

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[58] Stevick, 1973:267-268.

[59] Tench, 1985:42.

[60] That something more than the merely affective is involved here is evident as soon as it is reflected that a teacher may evidence a loving orientation towards students whom he or she dislikes on a personal level; what is at stake is a basic orientation towards the other which is expressed, among other ways, in terms of affective welcome. It is this kind of basic orientation, which may be rooted in a particular religious commitment or more broadly reflective of the spirit of the age or of an institution, which I mean when I refer to the teacher's "lived spirituality".

[61] Schwehn, 1993:44.

[62] Schwehn, 1993:44-47. See also Carr, 1995.

which is motivated by a desire for mastery, manipulation and control and emphasises the importance of a particular range of virtues: clarity, honesty, diligence, dedication, and devotion to rigorous procedures. Schwehn, building upon the work of Parker Palmer, wishes to emphasise virtues which are "less matters of purely personal integrity and more interpersonal or social in character", virtues which are bound up with "care taken with the lives and thoughts of others".[63]

One example of the virtues which Schwehn wishes to re-associate with learning, one which will prove significant in later chapters, is humility. He argues that lack of motivation among students can be related to a lack of humility. He cites the example of some of his students who concluded from a quick reading of a text from Augustine on friendship and loss that Augustine was just obscure and mistaken. They dismissed the passage as unworthy of further attention. Acknowledging that he may have failed to motivate them, Schwehn nevertheless argues that they

> "could have overcome my failings had they been sufficiently humble;
> had they presumed that Augustine's apparent obscurity was *their*
> problem, not his; and had they presumed that his apparent inconsistencies
> or excesses were not really the careless errors they took them to be.
> Humility on this account does not mean uncritical acceptance: it means,
> in practical terms, the *presumption* of wisdom and authority *in the*
> *author*."[64]

Schwehn goes as far as to argue that "*some* degree of humility is a precondition for learning", and goes on to argue in a similar manner for the place of charity, justice and self-denial in the learning process.[65]

The point that is particularly relevant in the present context is Schwehn's argument that "to 'teach' these virtues means first to exemplify them, second to order life in the classroom and throughout the academic community in such a way that their exercise is

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[63] Schwehn, 1993:44. Palmer has explored similar ideas with regard to the spirituality of the teacher (Palmer, 1983, 1998).

[64] Schwehn, 1993:48, emphasis original.

[65] Schwehn, 1993:49.

seen and felt as an essential part of inquiry".[66] The first requirement, that of exemplifying the virtues which are considered to be important to learning, relates to the tacit level of a pedagogical approach to which I am pointing in this section. The second requirement suggests that a coherent approach will involve bringing tacit personal orientation into harmony with conscious and explicit pedagogical design in the light of particular beliefs about authentic learning.

In sum, a first level at which faith and spirituality may inform a pedagogical approach involves implicit attitudes and spiritual virtues, or more generally the lived spirituality of the teacher. As Palmer puts it, "the connections made by good teachers are held not in their methods but in their hearts - meaning *heart* in its ancient sense, as the place where intellect and emotion and spirit and will converge in the human self".[67] This tacit level is distinguishable from, but not independent of, the role played by conscious belief.

ii.   The relevance of metaphor

A further pertinent aspect of a pedagogical approach is the role played by metaphor. In recent decades an increasingly voluminous body of literature has explored the constitutive role played by metaphors in the shaping of theory and practice in general,[68] in education more specifically,[69] and in foreign and second language education in particular.[70] Metaphor is also closely associated with spirituality.[71] This raises the possibility of points of contact between spiritual and educational metaphors.[72]

There has been a marked shift in the prevailing view of metaphor across a range of disciplines. Until fairly recently the prevailing view, shaped by empiricism, saw metaphor as a poetic decoration designed to make language more colourful, but at the

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[66] Schwehn, 1993:60.

[67] Palmer, 1998:11.

[68] E.g. Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Ortony, 1993; Sacks, 1979; Soskice, 1985.

[69] E.g. Beavis & Thomas, 1996; Munby, 1986; Taylor, 1984; Van Brummelen, 1992.

[70] E.g. Block, 1992; Kinginger, 1997; Kramsch, 1995; Nattinger, 1984; Prabhu, 1995; Thornbury, 1991.

[71] See e.g. Lakoff & Johnson, 1999:567-568.

[72] Shortt, Smith, & Cooling, 2000.

same time less truthful and trustworthy.[73] On this view, metaphors are like water lilies. They add to the beauty of the scene, but must be skimmed away if we want our gaze to penetrate beyond the surface. John Wilson provides a forthright example of this kind of perspective in his discussion of language:

> "The beliefs of men, and perhaps particularly their religious beliefs, tend to seek expression in the most poetic form...This is desirable for many reasons, provided only that we do not lose sight of their prose meaning. Pure poetry is one thing; nobody 'takes it seriously'. Pure prose, such as a scientific text-book, is another; nobody feels inclined to read it in the sing-song, faintly mystical voice which we reserve for poetry. But mixed communications are dangerous, for we may easily allow their poetic force to blind us to the prose meaning ... Prose communication consists of words of which we are intended to make logical sense: words which we are supposed to understand with our reason, not appreciate with our feelings...this is the type of communication which we ought to use in arguing, discussing, solving problems and discovering truth."[74]

This passage is interesting in the present context in two ways. First, the implications of a view of metaphor as poetic decoration are clearly spelled out: if we are concerned about the facts, we must purge our language of such dubious appeals to the passions and stick to unadorned prose.[75] Second, religious belief is associated (in contrast with science) with the poetic - before it can enter serious discussions it must be converted into cold prose. An implication of this for the present discussion would be that the only approach to the role of faith which could have a legitimate bearing on educational discussion would be one which attends to the implications of propositionally formulated religious beliefs. This seems to me to be mistaken.

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[73] See e.g. Soskice, 1985:1-14.

[74] Wilson, 1956:49-50.

[75] This view has a long pedigree. Roger Lundin quotes the admonition from the seventeenth century British scientist Thomas Sprat that we should banish "Specious Tropes and Figures" from "all civil Societies as a thing fatal to Peace and good Manners", and that the Royal Society should adopt instead "a close, naked, natural way of speaking...as near the Mathematical plainness as they can" (Lundin et al., 1999:39).

The empiricist view of metaphor is now widely regarded as untenable.[76] Scholars in a wide variety of disciplines, notably including the natural sciences, have explored the essential role which metaphor plays in extending our understanding of reality by looking at one thing in terms of another.[77] Becoming accustomed to a certain metaphor or group of metaphors can focus our attention in particular ways and guide us into certain patterns of practice. For present purposes, I am interested less in the role which metaphor might play in the process of discovery than in the capacity of metaphor to orient value-laden forms of practice and to connect discourses which might otherwise be seen as unconnected.[78]

The first point, that metaphor can orient our practice in particular ways, has been widely discussed. A striking example is offered by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, who point out that in Western cultural contexts we tend to talk about argument as a form of warfare. We *attack* others' positions and *defend* our own. Our criticisms may be *on target* and if so may *demolish* or even *shoot down* an opposing argument. This, Lakoff and Johnson argue, is not merely poetic embellishment - it is the normal way for us to talk about arguing, and it both reflects and helps to shape what it is that we do when we argue.

In order to make the point clearer, they suggest that we imagine a culture where argument is primarily viewed as a dance. We might then look at arguments more in terms of the ways in which the participants cooperate through turn-taking (a point obscured by warfare metaphors), and see the ideal as a poised performance which leaves both parties and any onlookers enriched and satisfied. While some metaphors remain little more than interesting images, others become more deeply and pervasively embedded in our ways of thinking and may shape both the way in which we see the

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[76] See Soskice, 1985.

[77] See e.g. Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Ortony, 1993; Sacks, 1979. Definitions of metaphor vary; for present purposes, the broad definition of metaphor offered by Soskice will suffice: "*metaphor is that figure of speech whereby we speak about one thing in terms which are seen to be suggestive of another*" (Soskice, 1985:15).

[78] The former kind of role for metaphor, that of leading to new discoveries by directing the researcher's attention in a particular manner, is discussed, for instance, by Schön (1993).

world and the way in which we live in it.[79]

That this is a common phenomenon in the field of educational is widely recognised.[80] Once metaphors of economic production, for instance, become established in educational discourse, then those who lead schools become the *senior management team*, the curriculum becomes a *product* which we *deliver* to the children and parents who are its *consumers* and/or the school's *customers*, its delivery must be subjected to *quality control*, the school must *market* itself to parents and employers, and so on. The same metaphorical perspective can colour descriptions of the learning process itself, as in this example from an article on second language learning:

> "if learners invest in a second language, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital. Learners will expect or hope to have a good return on their investment - a return that will give them access to hitherto unattainable resources."[81]

Such metaphorical networks are not merely a poetic way of describing what happens in schools - they both reflect and in turn help to create and sustain certain ways of doing, understanding and experiencing education. They form "storehouses of expectation", shaping what teachers expect from themselves and from learners, and what they expect others to expect from them.[82]

How does this bear on the question of how faith and spirituality relate to pedagogy? One answer to this question points to the cognitive claims of metaphor. A dominant metaphor, or network of metaphors, can be read as embodying an implicit set of claims to the effect that the associations which it evokes are appropriate, revealing of the way things are, and fruitful as guides to practice in the area concerned. The view of the school as an economic entity described above is embedded in a worldview which differs

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[79] The argument example is found in Lakoff & Johnson, 1980:3-6; a more wide-ranging discussion of its cultural implications is found in Tannen, 1998.

[80] On the importance of metaphor for education see e.g. Munby, 1986; Ortony, 1993; Taylor, 1984. On metaphor and Christian education see e.g. Sullivan, 2000; Van Brummelen, 1992.

[81] Peirce, 1995:17.

[82] Beavis & Thomas, 1996.

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from that underlying the organic metaphors (learners as plants, learning as growth, teaching as watering, etc) which have often characterised progressive or learner-centred perspectives on education. An influential set of metaphors can thus be analysed and criticised on the basis of the beliefs which it implies, and the practice which it promotes can therefore be challenged with reference to underlying commitments. The Christian educator may thus be inclined to resist certain metaphors and to look for others which comport better with his or her Christian control beliefs.[83]

This approach seems to me to be valid as far as it goes, but stated thus it is at least in danger of implying that the significant business is all conducted in more propositional terms - metaphors are decoded into propositional beliefs before the real connections can be traced. The expanded view of the role of metaphor found in many recent discussions and outlined above suggests that in practice metaphors are somewhat more than illustrative representations of an underlying set of propositions. Fertile metaphors evoke a range of associations which is not entirely predictable, a feature which both renders them notoriously vulnerable to a wide range of interpretations and reinterpretations and seems to form at least part of the basis on which they can weave their way into a wide variety of particular practical concerns. Max Black discusses this feature of metaphor in terms of "resonance" and the openness of metaphors to "implicative elaboration", suggesting that a metaphorical utterance "works by 'projecting upon' the primary subject a set of 'associated implications' comprised in the implicative complex". In other words, the connections made by a fertile metaphor commonly involve not merely the defining qualities of the vehicle and tenor, but a wider range of reminiscences and secondary associations attributed to each.[84]

When metaphors are employed in the context of a theologically oriented discourse, these "associated implications" can function to bring the theological context into interaction with the matter under discussion.[85] The metaphor may facilitate an envisioning of some

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[83] This is the approach discussed, for instance, in Van Brummelen, 1992.

[84] Black, 1993:25-28; cf. Stevick (1990:36-37).

[85] Black distinguishes a "metaphor-theme", i.e. an abstract formula of the form 'the metaphor of A as B' which can be put to widely varying uses in different contexts, from actual metaphorical statements (Black, 1993:25). In the latter case, the context can provide parameters for interpretation of the metaphor which are by definition absent in the former.

practical concern in theologically-oriented terms. In order to make this point clear, I will briefly discuss an example from the work of Comenius, whose significance as a Christian theorist of modern language pedagogy was indicated in chapter 1.

For Comenius, teaching is (among other things) a form of gardening. The seeds of learning, virtue and religion are, he says, "naturally implanted in us".[86] The human mind is like a seed which, "if placed in the ground, puts forth roots beneath it and shoots above it, and these later on, by their own innate force, spread into branches and leaves, are covered with foliage, and adorned with flowers and fruit".[87] He sees the school as a garden in which the task of the teacher is to "water God's plants".[88] Accordingly, he suggests that the different textbooks to be used in the different classes should have horticultural titles which "please and attract the young and...at the same time express the nature of their contents". Thus, "the book of the lowest class might be called the violet-bed, that of the second class the rose-bed, that of the third class the grass-plot, and so on".[89] In keeping with this fondness for garden metaphors, Comenius urges as the overarching goal of education that each person is to become "a garden of delight for his [*sic*] God".[90]

These garden metaphors are explicitly rooted in the text of the Bible. The opening chapters of the Great Didactic are devoted to an exposition of what it means to be created in the image of God, a significant theme of the opening chapter of Genesis. According to Comenius, this includes lordship over creation, understood not as exploitative mastery but as service, a wise tending of the garden which involves working to bring all things to their proper fruition so that "all creatures should have

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[86] *Great Didactic*, V, XIV. All quotations from the Great Didactic are taken from Keatinge, 1967.

[87] *Great Didactic* V:5.

[88] *Great Didactic* XVI:2.

[89] *Great Didactic* XXIX:11. The suggestion is worked out further in the *Pampaedia* (*Pampaedia*, X in Dobbie, 1986), where the progression is amended and extended to the nursery garden, the seed-bed, the violet bed, the rose garden, the shrubbery and the park.

[90] *Great Didactic*, Dedicatory Letter.

cause to join us in praising God".[91] That the opening chapters of Genesis provide an important context for the basic ideas of the Great Didactic is even clearer from the dedicatory letter, which opens with a description of the original paradise:

> God, having created man out of dust, placed him in a Paradise of desire, which he had planted in the East, not only that man might tend it and care for it, but also that he might be a garden of delight for his God.

After a description of the delights of Paradise, the "pleasantest part of the world" in which "each tree was delightful to look at," Comenius reiterates that "each man is, in truth, a Garden of Delights for his God, as long as he remains in the spot where he has been placed". He goes on to state that the church, too, "is often in Holy Writ likened to a Paradise, to a garden, to a vineyard of God".[92] In short, it is clear that hovering behind Comenius' garden imagery is the garden of Eden as described in Genesis 1-3.

This context invites a reading of the imagery in the context of Comenius' theological convictions.[93] Comenius states regarding the term 'nature' that:

> "by the word nature we mean, not the corruption which has laid hold of all men since the Fall (on which account we are naturally called the children of wrath, unable by ourselves to have any good thoughts), but our first and original condition, to which as a starting-point we must be recalled."[94]

Talk of human 'nature' does not therefore refer simply to the way things are, to humans as we find them around us, but to the good creation now distorted by the Fall, but recoverable through the processes of redemption. God's work through 'natural' agencies such as education is, in Comenius' view, to play a significant role in this process of

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[91] *Pampaedia* II:13. Cf. *Great Didactic* IV:4: "To be the lord of all creatures consists in subjecting everything to his own use by contriving that its legitimate end be suitably fulfilled; in conducting himself royally, that is gravely and righteously, among creatures...[not being] ignorant where, when, how and to what extent each may prudently be used, how far the body should be gratified, and how far our neighbour's interests should be consulted. In a word, he should be able to control with prudence his own movements and actions, external and internal, as well as those of others."

[92] *Great Didactic*, Dedicatory letter.

[93] See further Smith, forthcoming.

[94] *Great Didactic* V:1.

renewal. Human 'nature' is not a possession already within our grasp - it is a calling from which we have stumbled and which must be progressively recovered and realised. In Comenius' description of this process, to compare the development of the child with the 'natural' growth of a seed does not discourage the teacher's formative intervention, but rather invites it. As he points out, "herbs and grains have to be sown, hoed and ground; trees have to be planted, pruned and manured, while their fruits must be plucked off and dried; and if any of these things are required for medicine, or for building purposes, much more preparation is needed".[95] Leaving 'natural' processes unattended is not a benevolent but an irresponsible course of action: just as "a wild tree will not bring forth sweet fruits until it be planted, watered and pruned by a skilled gardener, so does a man grow of his own accord into a human semblance (just as any brute resembles others of his own class), but is unable to develope into a rational, wise, virtuous and pious creature, unless virtue and piety are first engrafted in him".[96] A garden is not a refuge from civilisation but rather something to be shaped in God-pleasing ways by a wise and careful gardener.[97] The garden for Comenius is not an image of unspoiled nature, but rather of nature carefully brought under discipline that it might bear greater fruit.[98]

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[95] *Great Didactic* VI:3.

[96] *Great Didactic* VII:1. Comenius cites examples of children who were raised by wild animals and whose human faculties remained undeveloped (*Great Didactic* VI:6). Cf. *Pampaedia* II:3: "nature should not be allowed to lie neglected and contribute neither to the glory of God nor to man's salvation". Cicero's statement that "the seeds of virtue are sown in our dispositions, and, if they are allowed to develope, nature herself would lead us to the life of the blest" is explicitly rejected - not because such seeds are not present but because something more than nature is needed to bring them to fruition (*Great Didactic* V:13). Contrast Rousseau's complaint that "Man...not content to leave anything as nature has made it,... must needs shape man himself to his notions, as he does the trees in his garden" and his admonition "Do you not see that in attempting to improve on [nature's] work you are destroying it and defeating the provision she has made?" (Boyd, 1956:11, 17).

[97] *Great Didactic* XVI:2. cf. *Pampaedia* I:15. Here, it is helpful to attend to the experiential context. A recent visit which I paid to a medieval stately home made the contours of Comenius' image visually vivid. The route laid out for visitors led through the house and out into a very beautiful and carefully patterned flower garden. On one side of the garden, a path edged by a low wall and offered views of rolling open countryside beyond the garden's boundaries. The contrast with the modern urban experience of gardening was striking. To the modern city dweller, a garden is a small intrusion of nature in the territory of culture, a vulnerable patch of green offering relief from the overwhelming dominance of human artefacts, a clearing in the concrete jungle. At this historic country house the garden was, as for Comenius, an island of culture in the sea of nature, a place where disciplined beauty was brought forth from the unruliness of nature.

[98] see e.g. *Great Didactic* XVI:48; also Schaller, 1992:24: a garden for Comenius is to be read as "nicht Natur, sondern *gestaltete* Natur" - not nature but nature *given form*.

A collection of organic images widely present in progressive educational discussion, and readily associated with the child-centred approach of Rousseau, is in Comenius' writings given a different set of resonances through its link with biblical imagery. While there is a clear and important context of articulated beliefs, this strand of Comenius' writing links theological assumptions with educational recommendations not so much by formulating beliefs and working through their implications as by taking the garden of Eden, with its associations of human responsibility and stewardship, God's pleasure and the incursion of sin, as a resonant image which will lead the imagination along particular lines when education is in view.[99]

I am not suggesting here that a particular educational practice is *justified* because of its relationship to a biblical metaphor. Metaphors offer partial perspectives, they can conceal or distort as well as reveal, and they can be interpreted or applied in a wide variety of ways which may not all be equally felicitous. At the same time, in cases where metaphors come to play a role in guiding our thinking about normative questions, such as 'how should we educate?' or 'how should we relate to learners?', the connections which may be made with particular spiritual or theological themes may provide a defensible orientation. The experience, for instance, of education in a classroom conceived as a factory and one viewed as a garden (in Comenius' sense) is likely to differ. If a particular set of commitments which are defensible as a factor in educational reflection tend to render one metaphor more appealing, they will also tend to favour the associated practice.

What I am suggesting, then, is that the relationship between a theological perspective and educational discourse can be established not only through relationships of entailment or comportment between propositionally expressed beliefs and classroom practices but also metaphorically through a process of association which encourages a particular way of seeing things and inspires a particular educational ethos. Whether or not metaphors employed in this way prove helpful or illuminating will not be established by appeal to their source, but by their fruits. If, however, they do prove illuminating, and are authentically grounded in a defensible theological perspective, then they may provide a genuine form of interaction between faith, spirituality and

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[99] Provided, of course, that the reader is sufficiently attuned to the theological context within which the metaphor is employed.

practice.

iii. Varieties of relevant belief

Anthony characterised 'approach' using the language of belief, of unprovable articles of faith. This characterisation opens space for the question of whether Christian beliefs might be a variety of belief which Anthony's account could be extended to include. It also invites further clarification of the role of belief in general.

At the most inchoate level, beliefs may be largely inarticulate and implicit elements of a more basic trust, and as such functionally part of the tacit level discussed above. They may form part of a general disposition or attitude to the world rather than being the focus of conscious reflection, and may be expressed implicitly or metaphorically.[100] The concern in this section is with more explicit articulations of belief.

When beliefs are more explicitly formulated, they are open to various degrees of systematisation and development, ranging from a pre-theoretical belief, which could be worked out in a number of directions, to a highly determinate theory. A teacher may believe, for instance, that it is important to take students' emotions into account when teaching. This belief may be pre-theoretical without necessarily being vague. It is sufficiently specific to set a teacher's ideas against those of a hypothetical opponent or to focus attention on certain aspects of learners' experience.[101] It could, however, be given greater specificity by being developed more systematically in the terms of one or another psychological theory before or alongside or after being worked out in the design of a teaching process.

We can thus distinguish three interconnected levels: inarticulate ways of viewing things,

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[100] Cf Craig's distinction between philosophy and philosophies, according to which "sometimes a philosophy is scarcely any more than an attitude which, because of the breadth of its application, makes a deep difference to the way in which life is lived. ... very often there are beliefs underlying such general attitudes and behavioural patterns. They can display a very wide range of degree of detail and precision, but once they are there, even in a vague or largely unarticulated form, we have arrived at what I would like to call a philosophy" (Craig, 1996:133). This general 'philosophy' is contrasted with developed philosophical systems - various systems can be developed from the same general philosophy. See also Craig, 1983.

[101] This contra Craig's characterisation of the level of "philosophy" as vague (Craig, 1996:133). Vagueness is relative: "Christ died for my sins" is vague in relation to a penal substitution theory of the atonement, but not in relation to "My sins are sorted out" or a general feeling of optimism concerning my state of being.

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articulated but pre-theoretical beliefs, and the elaboration of such beliefs into more systematic theories in order to deal with more detailed issues.[102] All three form complex webs of which explicitly religious beliefs and orientations are one element, and all three may bear directly upon practice (figure 5).

APPROACH

TACIT ORIENTATIONS

PRE-THEORETICAL BELIEFS

SYSTEMATIC THEORIES

DESIGNS
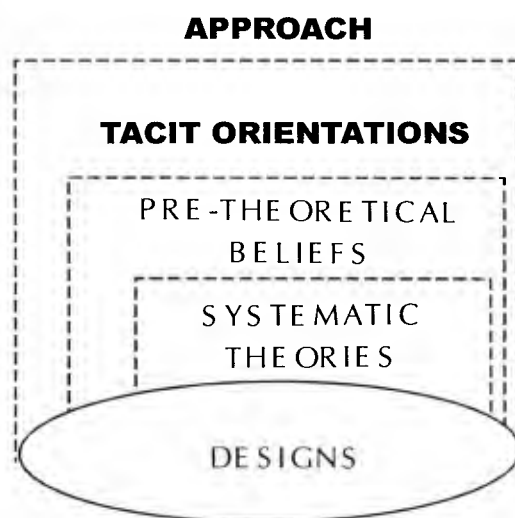
Figure 5

It was suggested in the previous section that a particular spiritual orientation can shape pedagogy at a largely tacit level; the question now is whether it is reasonable to relate Christian belief, whether at the pre-theoretical level or in more theologically or philosophically developed forms, to the construction of modern language pedagogy. Anthony described the relevant range of beliefs in terms of beliefs about language and beliefs about learning, and I have mentioned above the later construal of these categories in terms of theories in the realms of linguistics and psycholinguistics, neither of which are hotbeds of theological reflection. This raises the question of how the approach to modern language pedagogy taken here relates to the more common discussion of such pedagogy under the auspices of applied linguistics. In what follows I will argue that there is some overlap between the concerns raised in discussions of faith-learning integration and those raised by some recent discussions of the nature of applied linguistics. I will deal in particular with Henry Widdowson's influential analysis of the nature of the discipline, since he dwells in a particularly relevant manner on the role of non-linguistic disciplines and concepts in applied linguistic inquiry.

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[102] Of course, today's theoretically formulated insight may become tomorrow's tacit assumption, and a tacit assumption may be foregrounded for the purposes of theoretical exploration.

Widdowson focuses on the relationship which should hold between pedagogic practice and the various disciplines which are brought to bear upon it.[103] Countering the assumption that ideas developed in linguistics or other related disciplines can simply be applied in teaching situations so as to provide scientifically validated methods, Widdowson emphasises the issue of pedagogic relevance. As he puts it:

> "different domains of inquiry and action work to different criteria
> of significance. There is no reason to suppose that what goes on
> in one domain is necessarily relevant to what goes on in another.
> Relevance is a matter of significance to one's own concerns."[104]

If this is so, then it is by no means inevitable that concepts which have proven illuminating in a particular area of disciplinary inquiry (say, those associated with Chomsky's grammatical theories in linguistics) will be relevant to the teaching situation. Accordingly, Widdowson suggests that theories must be subjected to two forms of appraisal before being worked out in designs for classroom practice. First, they must be evaluated "within their own terms of reference, within the context of their own theoretical provenance" - are they valid and coherent in the context of the discipline within which they have been developed? Second, they must be evaluated in terms of their "relevance or validity in principle with reference to the domain of inquiry which constitutes the context of application" - in this case, are they genuinely applicable in the language classroom?[105] This is what Widdowson goes on to refer to as the "principle of pedagogic accountability", which asserts that "the recognition of the validity of a description in its own terms does not commit us to acknowledge its pedagogic relevance in principle" - theoretical constructs useful to some academic discipline may turn out to be useless to the teacher.[106] In Widdowson's framework, both of these conceptual tasks of appraisal *precede* empirical evaluation of any resulting practices - there are questions to be asked before we put an idea into practice and turn to the question of whether it 'works'.

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[103] Widdowson, 1990a; Widdowson, 1990b.

[104] Widdowson, 1990a:29. Cf. Chomsky, 1973.

[105] Widdowson, 1990a:31-32.

[106] Widdowson, 1990a:37.

The point which is of interest here concerns an implication which Widdowson himself does not develop but which seems to follow from his argument. If the relationship of academic theory to modern language pedagogy is defined in disciplinary terms, for instance as consisting in the application of insights from linguistics, sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics, this has both negative and positive implications. Negatively, it means that ideas emerging from other disciplines must make a special case for being worthy of consideration - in the normal course of things, they are likely to be seen as less relevant. Positively, it means that ideas generated within the core disciplines will be presumed to be applicable to language teaching.

In reacting against certain aspects of this view, Widdowson's argument suggests different expectations. He focuses his critique on the positive assumption, that work emerging from certain disciplines has an automatic applicability to modern language pedagogy.[107] He suggests that no theory can claim relevance to the practice of language teaching *in advance* simply because it comes from, say, linguistics or psychology. Each theory must be appraised in a way which makes its pedagogic accountability explicit (or finds it lacking). The criterion for acceptance of a theory is not whether it comes from an approved discipline, but rather whether it is coherent, valid and relevant.

This shift in the criterion for acceptance would also seem to have consequences for the negative expectation that certain disciplines will not be relevant. It may be possible to argue for the contextual validity and pedagogic relevance of ideas from a wide variety of sources.[108] After all, the communicative approach has been strongly influenced by speech act theory, which emerged not from linguistics but from philosophy.[109] On these criteria, it is difficult to see how any restriction could be placed *in principle* on the range of disciplinary sources which might be considered. If ideas from Christian philosophy or theology can be defended as contextually valid and of pedagogic consequence in the

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[107] On this see also Widdowson, 1991.

[108] Cf. Widdowson's comment that applied linguistic inquiry "has to be linguistically informed without being linguistically determined, for these problems are inextricably bound up with other conceptions of reality, embedded in different discourses which have their own legitimacy, and these we have somehow to come to terms with. The business of applied linguistics in this view is to mediate between linguistics and other discourses and identify where they might relevantly interrelate" (Widdowson, 2000:22).

[109] Howatt, 1988.

language classroom, then the fact that they fall outside some particular grouping of source disciplines should not debar them from consideration.[110] To be sure, Christian theological or philosophical ideas will have no more automatic privilege than linguistics or any other discipline - their pedagogic relevance will have to be demonstrated. There does not, however, seem to be any reason why they should be excluded in principle. If theories in obvious disciplines such as linguistics can turn out to be of limited pedagogic relevance, then perhaps theories in what will seem to many to be less obvious disciplines might surprise us in the opposite direction by proving relevant to language pedagogy.[111]

A complication arises if we ask how "validity" is to be determined at either of Widdowson's levels of appraisal. To what extent, for instance, is there a theory-neutral or value-neutral way of weighing the "validity" of rival overall theories of education? The idea of "relevance" may prove equally controversial; as Widdowson notes, "relevance, by definition, is a matter of selective attention based on shared assumptions", and these assumptions may not always be universally shared.[112] For the committed secularist, any insight which has religious import may be deemed inadmissible even if coherent and consequential - on some of the views countered in chapter 2 Christian belief may be either irrelevant, or relevant but not valid, in the realm of pedagogy. Conversely, particular theories may meet with comparable Christian objections (see chapter 6 and 7). Appraisals of validity beyond a minimal level are likely to be controversial.

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[110] It would, of course, be possible (and perhaps sensible) to regard applied linguistics as concerned only with the relationship between a limited set of linguistic disciplines and language education if it were also accepted that the discipline could then only provide a very partial account which would not in itself yield an adequate basis for pedagogical recommendations. Applied linguistics would then form only one strand in the study of foreign and second language pedagogy. Given the tendency for serious research on foreign and second language pedagogy to be identified with applied linguistics, it may, however, be more realistic to follow Widdowson in urging a wider range of considerations upon 'applied linguistics', even if the term then seems less than adequate. Once applied linguistics sets its sights on understanding and directing modern language pedagogy, it must take a much broader range of considerations into account.

[111] Cf. Ellis's use of Widdowson's framework to question the relevance of certain Chomskyan theories in Ellis, 1995, doubts which echo Chomsky's own (Chomsky, 1973). If, as Widdowson argues, "the stability of what we know is held in equilibrium by different forces of belief" (Widdowson, 1990b:47) then it seems at least possible that Christian belief might prove relevant.

[112] Widdowson, 1990b:44.

In considering what kinds of beliefs and theories may play a 'valid' role in shaping pedagogy, it should be recognised that while general judgements in terms of a basic degree of coherence and defensibility (not only logical but also moral, economic, etc.) may be possible and necessary, particular evaluative frameworks are also likely to play a role in judgements concerning theoretical and pedagogical validity. As I argued in chapter 2, this indicates the controversiality, but not the inadmissibility, of bringing Christian faith into consideration.

Drawing in some ideas from Wolterstorff's work on faith-learning integration (discussed briefly in chapter 1), we can develop these issues further by considering the function which Christian beliefs might play amid the broader spread of data, beliefs and theories which inform modern language pedagogy. Wolterstorff distinguishes three functions which particular beliefs may play within the process of theorising.[113] In the first place, we take certain of our beliefs concerning entities within the scope of a given theory as data with which our theory must be consistent. We take it that certain things exist and have certain properties when we undertake to theorise about them. Behind these lie what Wolterstorff terms "data-background beliefs," those beliefs which form the conditions for accepting as data what we do. These might include, for instance, beliefs concerning the reliable functioning of our perceptual apparatus. Most important for Wolterstorff and for present interests, however, is the third function of belief. Certain beliefs may function as "control beliefs," beliefs which lead us to reject or devise certain kinds of theory on the basis of an idea concerning what kind of theory is acceptable.[114] In general, "we want theories that are consistent with our control beliefs. Or, to put it more stringently, we want theories that comport as well as possible with those beliefs."[115] Wolterstorff argues that this is one of the important functions which

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[113] Wolterstorff, 1984, 1989, 1999.

[114] The term 'control' may suggest a greater degree of determination of the outcomes than Wolterstorff actually intends. These beliefs contribute to but do not determine the shape of the inquiry.

[115] Wolterstorff, 1984:68. It does not follow that control beliefs are unrevisable, although certain of our beliefs will be more deeply embedded and more resistant to change than others (Quine & Ullian, 1970). We may make one or several of our control beliefs in one inquiry the object of another inquiry, or we may find that we cannot make our theories comport well with a certain belief which has been acting as a control. It is important to emphasise that Wolterstorff's distinctions are distinctions of function, not of essence - a belief functioning as a control belief in a particular inquiry is not *essentially* a control belief for every inquiry.

Christian belief can play for Christian scholars in the process of theorising.[116]

Wolterstorff's discussion focuses on the construction and evaluation of theories, and is therefore most directly relevant to the first tier of Widdowson's model, where theories are weighed for coherence and validity. His description of the way in which Christian beliefs can perform a regulative function is, however, also pertinent at the practical level. Our basic beliefs about matters such as authentic human personhood, interpersonal relationships and the like may - most often tacitly, but sometimes consciously - frame our sense of what is pedagogically valid without being theoretically elaborated. The relationship between such "control beliefs" and Widdowson's "principle of pedagogic accountability" is two-sided. On the one hand, such beliefs will play a formative role in determining what we count as pedagogically "valid" when we evaluate pedagogical proposals; on the other hand, not all of our beliefs will prove to be pedagogically relevant. If Christian beliefs are relevant to pedagogical designs, they cannot be assumed to be relevant *en masse*; they must be shown to have pedagogical consequences.

Are there, then, Christian beliefs which could have sufficient bearing on language teaching to be plausible candidates for such a role? The range of beliefs which may play a role in pedagogical discussion makes this likely. Modern language pedagogy can be shown to be influenced not only by beliefs about the nature of language and of learning processes, but also by social, political and economic beliefs,[117] beliefs about the nature of the human persons involved,[118] ethical beliefs,[119] and probably more besides. For the purposes of the present study, I will focus on anthropological beliefs, which offer one promising point of contact between pedagogical proposals and Christian perspectives on

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[116] He does not take this to imply that this is the only way in which Christian belief may function within theorising, or that Christian convictions may not affect our data beliefs and data-background beliefs.

[117] See, e.g. Pennycook, 1989, 1990.

[118] See, e.g., Yoshikawa, 1982.

[119] See, e.g., Smith, 1997a.

spirituality.[120]

The modern language classroom exhibits three distinct anthropological foci: the nature and calling of the learner, the nature and calling of the teacher, and the nature and calling of those humans who are portrayed in teaching materials as representatives of the target language and culture and potential interlocutors.[121] An implicit or explicit set of beliefs concerning the human beings who appear in these three roles must therefore be a significant part of any approach to modern language teaching, and will play some role in the process of organising procedures into a design. If there are characteristic Christian beliefs concerning the nature of the human person, then the possibility clearly exists that such beliefs, functioning as part of an approach, may be capable of playing a guiding role in this process. Whether we conceive investigation of this possibility as complementary to or as an additional consideration within applied linguistics, it is (as I will show more concretely in part 2) a form of investigation which is important to an understanding of how modern language pedagogy relates to its broader educational contexts.

c.   Relating approach to design and procedure

A language teaching approach can be seen as a specialised kind of worldview. If a worldview can be characterised as "the integrative and interpretive framework by which order and disorder are judged, the standard by which reality is managed and pursued",[122] then a language teaching approach is that more focused integrative and interpretive framework by which pedagogical order and disorder are judged and sound language teaching practice is regulated and pursued. It takes shape from a variety of tacit attitudes, metaphors, explicit beliefs and available data. It may include beliefs which comport well or badly with Christian convictions concerning the spiritual nature of the learner.

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[120] This is not, of course, to suggest that Christian belief may have no implications for the other areas of reflection mentioned, but simply to set some bounds for the present study. On those bounds see further chapter 1.

[121] The terms nature and calling refer to the fact that anthropological reflection in an educational context has both descriptive (what is this person like? how does she function?) and normative (what should this person become? where does he fall short?) dimensions. This point will be developed further in chapter 4.

[122] Olthuis, 1985.

Having thus expanded the notion of approach it is pertinent to give some consideration to the relationship of approach to design and procedure. This relationship is loose and interactive rather than linear and deductive. Similar approaches may lead to or be consistent with a plurality of designs. An example here is the variety of 'methods', with their differing designs for classroom practice, which are conventionally grouped together under the heading of humanistic approaches. These both differ from one another and show a common consistency with various convictions characteristic of the general approach.[123] A given constellation of procedures chosen from the range available will comport well or badly with a given approach, but the approach is *not* a set of detailed specifications or the basis of a unique set of procedures.[124] A design is a creative construct developed in a particular context under the guidance of an approach, an attempt to translate an approach into a repeatable constellation of more detailed procedures at a particular place and time.

The substitution of the term "design" for "method" accentuates this point.[125] What makes one design different from another is principally the way in which a range of procedures is configured or patterned in a manner consistent with the approach adopted, yielding an educational experience with particular characteristic emphases and priorities.[126] Much as the same notes, rhythms and instruments can be variously

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[123] See Stevick, 1990. Whether the various humanistic pedagogies are described as variations on a single approach or as a family of approaches which bear close family resemblances may depend largely on the level of detail at which we wish to describe approaches for particular purposes. Charles A. Curran's work provides an instance of different designs emerging from one particular humanistic approach (see chapter 6).

[124] A given approach or design may require, commend or exclude certain specific procedures (as a communicative approach generally requires an information gap, or Community Language Learning excludes error correction during beginner level oral practice), and may permit a range of others in varying proportions (cf. Allen, 1993; Smith, 1995). Taken as discrete elements, most of these procedures will be relatively open to use by teachers holding a variety of approaches, and are perhaps the area most susceptible to empirical assessment in terms of whether they achieve what they set out to achieve.

[125] Richards & Rodgers, 1986:19; Weideman, 1987.

[126] Brumfit, 1991:138; Swaffar, Arens, & Morgan, 1982. This patterning also qualifies the idea of eclecticism (see below). Even if the conscious criterion at work in a given classroom is a pragmatic one of what "works", only the most doggedly randomised and incoherent selection of activities is likely to avoid exhibiting some implicit pattern of emphasis. Some empirical support for this point is provided by the study of teacher responses to questionnaires designed to elicit methodological priorities in Swaffar et al., 1982. The authors of the study conclude: "Methodological labels assigned to teaching activities are, in themselves, not informative, because they refer to a pool of classroom practices which are universally used. The differences among major methodologies are to be found in the ordered hierarchy, the priorities assigned to tasks. Not *what* classroom activity is used, but *when* and *how* form the crux of the matter in

combined into very different pieces of music, so the value of particular procedures is relative to their place in a wider design and approach.[127] An approach is a belief-laden *orientation* which is embodied through a design process in various particular *implementations*.

Finally, an approach is not simply something which is applied in a top-down manner. The development of a new procedure, new discoveries concerning the effects of a procedure or simply fresh experience with learners may modify a design or the beliefs which make up an approach (consider, for instance, the significance of the development of new printing technologies for the picture-based pedagogy of Comenius's illustrated textbooks). As Richards and Rodgers note, language teachers may "stumble on" a successful procedure and form beliefs which justify it later.[128] Moreover, the creative construction process which goes into the design of an episode of language teaching involves particular skills, personality strengths, traditions, experiences, educational situations and a variety of constraints (age and background of students, parental expectations, budgetary limitations etc.).[129] A design is not purely a set of incarnated ideas, but rather the fruit of an interaction in a given context between a set of beliefs (coherent or drawn from conflicting sources), personal qualities, goals, etc. and a set of available procedures (see figure 6).

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distinguishing methodological practice" (p.31).

[127] Anthony, 1963:66.

[128] Richards & Rodgers, 1986:29; cf. Prabhu, 1995.

[129] This points to the possibility of a given teacher believing in a particular approach but, whether consciously or unawares, using a constellation of procedures which is in tension with certain elements of that approach. In this case, the approach which is operative is surely that implied by the actual practices rather than that which is simply assented to or verbalized.
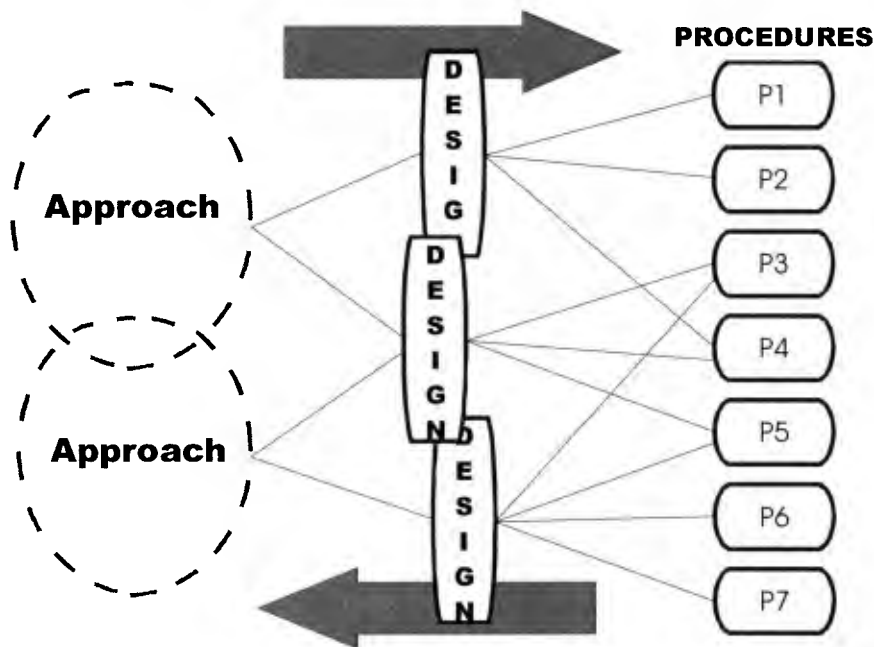
Figure 6

It follows from these points that it is misleading to expect the beliefs and orientations which make up an approach to yield unique and distinctive procedures which can be deduced from them (although this possibility is not excluded; an example may be the teacher's silence in the Silent Way[130]). This does not, however, mean that such beliefs or orientations only have any effect at the level of approach, for they guide the coherence of the design, a design which in turn structures the utilization of procedures. This construal of the relationship between Christian beliefs and language teaching processes does not, therefore, imply that there is a "Christian method" which can be definitively deduced from Christian beliefs, but rather that a range of pedagogical designs may comport well or badly with those beliefs.

3.   An alternative account? Contextually guided eclecticism

Before moving on to apply the account developed above to specific issues, it is pertinent to consider what may seem to be an alternative to a construal of pedagogy as rooted in particular beliefs and orientations. This alternative is an eclecticism which seeks to be guided by the needs of the particular teaching context.

With regard to eclecticism in general, it is common to contrast a "mindless

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[130] See Stevick, 1990:101-130.

eclecticism", which "engulfs learners in an endless variety of activities", with a "principled eclecticism", in which there is some reason for choosing and ordering the selected elements.[131] Eclecticism in and of itself offers no criteria for selection, and therefore no way of knowing whether we might have chosen the least helpful elements from each of a range of alternatives, and no principle for ordering these elements or determining their frequency. If we blend elements in a more principled way, then what results is not simply a collection of fragments from existing designs, but rather a fresh design patterned by a particular approach.[132] In other words, the activities of the eclectically minded teacher have basically the same structure as do those of the convert to a single specific 'method': elements will be combined into more or less coherent sequences on the basis of a variety of basic assumptions.

What seems to offer more of an alternative to an exploration of the guiding role of beliefs is the contention that different contextual factors such as age of students, learning styles, cultural context, or social objectives can provide the needed guidance.[133] The way in which the appropriate teaching processes will be found is by close attention to these contextual factors in an attempt to see what they require, rather than by following a prior set of principles. It follows that pedagogies are necessarily plural, and can only be assessed for their validity in the light of local contextual needs.

In fact, this view remains in need of something like the above account of approach, for reasons which were explored in the discussion of contextual arguments in chapter 2. Seeking to do justice to contextual variability requires various value-laden judgments to be made. Out of the myriad features presented to us by a particular context, some have to be isolated and identified as variables. Their pedagogical significance has to be identified, they must have a relative weight assigned to them, and they must be construed as problems or boundaries.[134] These various judgements, especially the last

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[131] Wrigley, 1993:463.

[132] Cf. Prabhu, 1990:167.

[133] Brumfit, 1984, lists four broad varieties of contextual factors: social situation, educational organisation, teacher-related, and learner-related.

[134] As Prabhu puts it, "if we look for variation merely on the assumption that the teaching context matters for teaching methodology, we are sure to find indefinite variation on many dimensions, thus making it impossible to justify any instructional method for any single group of learners" (Prabhu, 1990:164).

kind, involve the implicit or explicit operation of a belief-laden approach as described above. This does not diminish in the slightest the importance of attentiveness to contextual factors, but it does mean that rather than offering an alternative to the above account, a contextually oriented eclecticism is in fact an instance of it.[135]

4.   Conclusion

In this chapter I have offered an account of the structure of modern language teaching processes with a particular view to clarifying the role which a Christian orientation could play. I have argued that in spite of the apparent oddity of the idea of a Christian approach to modern language teaching 'methods', recent discussions of pedagogy open up space for exploring such matters. I have suggested that an expanded account of a language teaching approach offers resources for understanding the formative role which may be played by spiritual virtues, theologically oriented metaphors and beliefs about the spiritual nature of the person. I will examine particular modern language pedagogies in the light of this suggestion in part 2 of the thesis. First, in chapter 4, I will discuss some particular Christian convictions concerning spirituality which might inform an approach, thus providing the more abstract account which has been developed in this chapter with some positive content.

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[135] Freeman & Richards, 1993, following Zahorik, 1986, identify three main varieties of conceptions of teaching in second language education. These are science/research conceptions, theory/philosophy (value-based) conceptions and art/craft conceptions, and may be seen to correspond broadly to the three general options described above, namely the method ideal, acknowledgement of the role of beliefs and orientations, and context-sensitive eclecticism. It is an implication of the argument of this chapter that all three conceptions are actually in some sense value-based, a point which Freeman and Richards seem to acknowledge to a limited degree (p.203). What must be rejected in Freeman and Richards' account if the above argument is valid is the suggestion that value-based approaches leave no room for teacher agency (being strongly predetermined by the value base), while art/craft conceptions are creative and individualistic. Both conceptions may be understood as entailing the teacher responsively and creatively working out of a given orientation.

Chapter 4
Contours of a Christian conception of spirituality

Outline: 1. Significant themes
2. **Criteria of significance**
     a. **Confessional centrality**
     b. **Distinctive contribution**
     c. **Pedagogical relevance**
3. **Significant themes in Christian anthropological reflection**
     a. **Gift and call**
     b. **Affirmation of the world**
     c. **Orientation**
     d. **Relationship**
     e. **Fall**
4. **Hospitality as a metaphor in modern language education**
5. **Beliefs in interaction with theories: Sartre and Bakhtin**
     a. **Sartre: the Other as enemy**
     b. **Bakhtin: the Other in dialogue**
6. **Conclusion**

Thus far I have defended the viability of relating Christian faith to spiritual development in the educational context and outlined a framework for understanding the relationship of a spirituality informed by Christian faith to modern language pedagogy. I return in this chapter to the relationship between Christian faith and educational conceptions of spiritual growth, but with a more positive agenda. Having argued that Christian beliefs may be a defensible and applicable source for discussions of spiritual development and modern foreign language education, it is time to become more specific concerning particular Christian beliefs which can be applied in the ways outlined. How would Christian belief give particular shape to an educational conception of spiritual development? (figure 7)
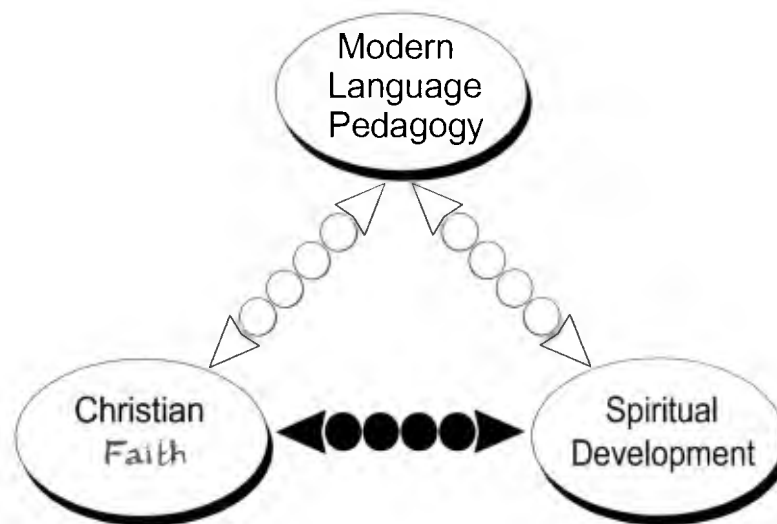
Figure 7

My aim in the present chapter, therefore, is to develop the broad conception of spiritual development sketched in chapter 1 and the somewhat abstract argument of chapter three in more specific terms. I will therefore discuss particular Christian themes (reflected in beliefs, orientations and metaphors) and their relevance to particular theories about the nature of persons. This will both complete the groundwork which the first half of the thesis represents and prepare the way for discussion of specific modern language pedagogies in the second part.

1. Significant themes

Christian spirituality is in itself a vast and highly variegated field of study, and this thesis makes no claim to offer anything approaching a comprehensive account of it. In order to focus attention in a way which meets the needs of the present argument, I will approach the task of outlining some contours of a pedagogically accountable Christian conception of spiritual development by identifying some basic themes within Christian reflection on the nature of persons as spiritual beings. Beliefs about the nature of persons were identified in the last chapter as one point of connection between pedagogy and spirituality - a cross-curricular concern for spiritual development implies a need for some conception of what it means for learners to be and to grow as spiritual beings. There is a wealth of Christian reflection on this issue.

A first task is to define more closely what I am seeking to describe. This chapter offers

an account which is significantly related to Christian belief but which is not restricted to the doctrinal. My focus on pedagogy (in the sense outlined in chapter 1) means that I am less concerned for present purposes with the teaching of doctrines than with the ways in which forms of pedagogical interaction are informed by or in tension with assumptions about the world which relate to Christian belief. This is not intended in any way to imply that the teaching of doctrines is not an important part of the wider picture, only that it is not the main focus here. In chapter 1, I noted Pannenberg's observation that:

> "A particular type of piety involves not only a specific theological focus
> and corresponding life-styles but also a particular conception of the
> human world, the world of human experience."[1]

It is this "conception of the human world" and its educational significance with which I am particularly concerned here. While I will seek to show that the anthropological themes which I discuss are authentically rooted in Christian doctrine, I will be concerned not primarily with their doctrinal formulation, but rather with the conception of spiritual personhood which they project.

A brief example may help to make the significance of such an approach clearer. Take, for instance, the Christian belief that grateful responsiveness to God's grace is an essential basis for spiritual growth. If the relationship of theology to spiritual development in school is understood solely in terms of the teaching of doctrines, then discussion will turn on whether or not this doctrine is taught and what truth status is accorded to it. If, however, we attend to the broader question of what kind of conception of the human world comports well with the belief, other questions arise. Is, for instance, a pedagogy which instils a strong sense of autonomous self-reliance and independent mastery in tension with Christian emphases on humility and grace? Whether or not any doctrines are mentioned, the spiritual trajectory fostered by the pedagogy is in tension with that implied by the Christian belief.[2] This points to the inadequacy of a dichotomy between a view of spiritual development in terms of induction into religious faith on the one hand, and a view concerned with the human spirit in general on the other (see chapter 1). Pedagogy may be controversial in relation to Christian faith even where no

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[1] Pannenberg, 1984:16.

[2] Cf. Palmer, 1983.

doctrines are taught. It is this concern for how beliefs interact with pedagogical designs which have formative effects on learners (rather than, for instance, any intention of downplaying the importance of doctrine or diluting confessional particularities) which leads me to concentrate in what follows not only on the confessional basis but also on a more general articulation of the view of personhood which it implies.

2.   Criteria of significance

Christian faith and spirituality have a rich and complex history which can be reflected only partially in the present discussion. The themes discussed here have been selected against three criteria of significance: confessional centrality, distinctive contribution and pedagogical relevance. Before turning to the themes themselves, I will expand briefly upon each of these criteria.

a.   Confessional centrality

The first criterion of significance concerns relative centrality to Christian belief: the themes discussed must be grounded in beliefs which are nearer the core than the periphery of Christian conviction. While my account is developed primarily in interaction with evangelical and Reformed perspectives, my aim will be to paint with a brush broad enough to draw in a substantial cross-section of Christian theological standpoints.[3] There are two reasons for this.

First, it is more consequential for general educational discussions if the characterisation of spirituality which informs the study reflects the basic beliefs of a broad cross-section of Christians than if it represents the more detailed views of a smaller sub-group. Put more concretely, if, as I will go on to argue, certain approaches to modern language pedagogy are in tension with certain Christian perspectives on spirituality in education, then the more broadly based the Christian perspectives in question, the greater the number of people who will be affected by the finding and the more potentially troubling are the implications for the project of common schooling.

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[3] It seems to me that a great deal of what follows could be affirmed by Christians from a wide variety of confessions, but it is not necessary to my argument to establish this, and to argue it in any detail is beyond my present scope and competence. I leave it to others more intimately familiar with other Christian traditions to weigh the question of how much revision would be needed for my account to fit well with their understanding of Christian faith.

The second reason concerns the difficulties attaching to the adjective 'Christian'. Given that the Christian faith lives and has lived in a variety of traditions of faith and practice which can diverge sharply in relation to particular issues (not least in the area of spirituality), general descriptions of "Christian" belief or practice are likely to be loaded.[4] The articulation of Christian beliefs about persons which I will offer here is, as I have noted, informed by particular Christian traditions. It is also more than a detached description; my aim will be to draw from those traditions that which promises to be helpful in relation to the present discussion, and so my account will also be a proposal concerning how a Christian contribution *should* be construed. The question thus arises as to whether 'Christian' means simply consistent with the belief or practice of some particular group which espouses Christian faith, or whether it is held to refer to something more characteristic of Christianity in general. If the latter, is a parochial set of criteria being imposed on the many by means of the suggestion that it defines what it is to be Christian?

In response, two points may be noted. First, ideas which are more centrally rooted in the structure of Christian belief would seem to have a less problematic claim to represent a 'Christian' understanding of spirituality than ideas which are peculiar to a particular denomination. The incarnation, for instance, would seem to be more central or basic on most accounts than, say, views concerning infant baptism.[5] Second, it is not necessary for the present argument to regard the themes discussed as boundary markers, that is, as defining the bounds of inclusion or exclusion in relation to true Christian faith. I will argue that the themes presented are informed by confessionally significant Christian beliefs, not that they are divinely sanctioned or unchallengeable. It will suffice if substantial numbers of Christians are likely to affirm them for reasons which are

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[4] In fact, by no means all Christian traditions have regarded "spirituality" as a good thing. In some evangelical circles, for instance, the term has tended to be associated with Roman Catholic devotional practices and therefore resisted (Gillett, 1993:1-2). Another example is the association of spirituality with dualism and a retreat from intellectual engagement or social responsibility which renders it suspect in the eyes of Christians who emphasise social engagement (Jones, 1997; Leech, 1992). Focusing on beliefs about persons has the helpful side-effect of skirting round this issue.

[5] This is not to deny that beliefs or practices which are not broadly shared may be centrally important to a particular group, in which case the present account may need to be extended in order to specifically reflect the concerns of that group. I also accept that judgements as to what is central do not escape the possibility of being contentious or tendentious. For the purposes of establishing the general points which I am arguing, however, a broad account which leaves open the possibility of its being modified by others will be adequate.

relatively central to their faith.

b.   Distinctive contribution

A second criterion is concerned with the relationship between Christian ideas about spirituality and those characteristic of other perspectives. Here the relationship between particular confessional beliefs about spirituality and the wider discussion of spiritual development comes to the fore. I argued in chapter two that the attempt to base an account of spiritual development on a universalised account of spirituality is problematic, and that particular perspectives on spirituality need to be taken into account. This does not entail denying either that there may be considerable overlap between different accounts or that there is any universal aspect to spirituality. It does, however, imply that particular perspectives and spiritual orientations are distinct in controversial ways.[6] To put it in terms of the relationships diagrammed in chapter 1, if it is to be shown that *Christian* faith has particular implications for our understanding of spiritual development and of modern language pedagogy, then some account is necessary of what *difference* Christian faith makes, as compared with other perspectives.

This question of distinctiveness needs to be posed with some care, for it is my experience that claims to distinctiveness are easily misinterpreted as claims to *wholesale* difference. This misunderstanding emerges in counter-claims to the effect that if an idea which is presented as being important for Christian reasons could be affirmed by some non-Christian person or group, then the claim to be offering a *Christian* perspective fails or becomes superfluous.

It is, however, unclear how much sense can be made of the idea of a perspective which differs in all respects from all other perspectives. Differences are commonly articulated against a backdrop of common concerns. Moreover, the fact that people with differing beliefs may share much in the way of experience and cultural history, together with the significance of Christian faith in the history of Western thought and culture, makes it improbable (even if it were conceivable) that an avowedly Christian account would

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[6] Cf. Goetz, 1991.

differ in all respects from all of the alternatives.[7]

This suggests that distinctiveness or similarity will generally be complex and partial rather than wholesale. Two faith perspectives may largely agree on a point which separates them from a third, and may still diverge significantly from one another in terms of the overall pattern of belief within which the particular point finds its context. Thus, while the claim that Christian belief can point in distinctive directions would indeed sound hollow if its implications were in harmony at all relevant points with those of (all or most) other perspectives, the claim is not necessarily undermined by areas of overlap.[8]

Here, I will take the criterion of distinctiveness to imply that the themes discussed will differ in some respects from some alternative perspectives, particularly taken as wholes, but that the themes will not necessarily all differ in the same respect or from the same alternatives.[9] More concretely, they should be able to perform a guiding function (compare the discussion of control beliefs in chapter 3) when educators are faced with the task of discriminating between alternative understandings or courses of action. If a given Christian belief, or a conception rooted in Christian belief, can lead a teacher or a school to affirm, reject or modify one or more of the pedagogical alternatives, then it may be said to be capable of playing a guiding role and to exhibit the requisite measure of distinctiveness.

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[7] In a Western cultural context it is quite possible that agreements between Christian and non-Christian perspectives are in some measure rooted historically in the cultural influence of Christian ideas or in the influence of culturally significant non-Christian ideas on the self-understanding of Christians. Thus in some cases apparently "neutral" secular ideas may be acceptable to Christians precisely because Christianity has contributed historically to the shaping of those ideas (or vice versa). (Cf. Wolterstorff, 1984:83). A fuller Christian discussion of these points would also need to factor in the themes of common grace and the creation of all in God's image.

[8] Cf. Cooling, 1997:12-15; Marsden, 1997:68-70; Spickard, 1996.

[9] This is quite consonant with everyday perceptions of distinctiveness. If we describe someone as having a highly distinctive appearance, we do not mean that there is no commonality in physical form, colouring or dress between them and others (again, this would be hard to imagine), or that particular elements (of clothing, stature etc) are not shared by many others. We mean rather that there is something characteristic about this combination of features, some but not all of which may be unique. Given their role within a greater whole, even the quite commonplace elements may contribute to the distinctive overall effect. The analogy also illustrates the point that more reductive accounts will perceive less distinctiveness; there are parallels in the spiritual development debate to the assertion that all people are basically the same because they are all made from the same chemicals.

c. Pedagogical relevance

This last point leads directly to the third criterion of significance, which echoes Widdowson's principle of pedagogical accountability (see chapter 3). It is quite conceivable that there exist convictions which are theologically important and controversial, but which have little or no plausible connection with educational thought and practice, let alone with modern language pedagogy. It is equally conceivable that there are practices which are important to modern language educators, but for which Christian faith commitments are of no discernible consequence or offer no guidance. My interest in the present study is with the interface, with the idea that certain Christian convictions could shape particular educational conceptions of spiritual development, and therefore of modern language pedagogy as informed by a concern for such development. I will therefore be concerned with themes which have pedagogic relevance, and not simply with those which would be central on theological criteria alone.

One important implication of this third criterion is that it frees the account offered from any need to pretend to comprehensiveness. What is required for present purposes is not a general or a comprehensive account of Christian spirituality *per se* (which would include, for instance, particular disciplines of prayer and worship practices), but rather the identification of a set of themes arising from Christian faith which can inform approaches to modern language pedagogy.

This relates to the point discussed above concerning the relationship between confessional commitments, general conceptions of the human world and pedagogy. As noted above, in recent discussions of spiritual development a dichotomy is commonly implied between religious development rooted in a particular piety as the preserve of the few, and spiritual development for the many, seen either as an impossibility or conceived in terms of broad anthropological categories which are understood to be independent of religion (see chapter 2). It is true that Christian spirituality necessarily engages the self in particular ways. In other words, if Christian spirituality is "the lived experience of Christian belief",[10] it obviously presupposes Christian faith and commitment and could not be developed unless such faith were present. Within

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[10] McGinn & Meyendorff, 1986: xv.

Christian educational contexts it may be possible and appropriate to think of spiritual development in education in a way which is closely integrated with the development of Christian spirituality. This may also be seen as the shape which all true spiritual development should take. But it would be problematic from a Christian point of view, let alone a secularist one, to see Christian spirituality as a general form of personal development fostered by educational processes in all schools outside of repentance and Christian faith.

However, while spiritual development in the more general educational sense which it has recently acquired cannot be conflated with Christian spirituality unless it coincides with faith in Christ, the latter may have implications for how the former is framed and interpreted. Christian beliefs and conceptions of the human world will lead to particular normative views concerning personal development in general.[11] This concern with the more general educational implications of Christian belief is a further reason for focusing on pedagogical significance.

In sum, then, the present aim is to identify a set of themes in Christian reflection upon the nature of the person which are significant in terms of (i) their importance in relation to Christian understandings of spirituality; (ii) their distinctiveness over against at least some other conceptions of spirituality; and (iii) their relevance as potential guiding convictions (control beliefs) in educational reflection.

3. Significant themes in a Christian conception of persons as spiritual beings

a. Gift and call

The specific formulation of the idea of being human (and being spiritual) as gift and call is taken here from a helpful discussion by Olthuis,[12] but variations on the theme can be found in a variety of Evangelical and Reformed discussions of anthropology in both philosophy and theology. Various accounts emphasise the need to do justice to and to interrelate the giftedness and dependence of our existence on the one hand and our

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[11] I am therefore both sympathetic to Thatcher's critiques of National Curriculum spirituality if it is viewed as a kind of surrogate for Christian spirituality (Thatcher, 1996; 1999) and more sanguine concerning the possibility of making connections between the two.

[12] Olthuis, 1993; see also Olthuis, 1994a, 1994b.

responsibility for our lives and what we make of them on the other.[13] Theologically, this dual emphasis can be related back to the basic themes of our status as created beings, dependent on grace for spiritual life, and as those called to image God responsibly and play a role in shaping creation.[14]

An understanding of personhood in terms of a gift-call structure sits uncomfortably with views of the person which give central place either to deterministic environmental factors or to a strong conception of individual autonomy. It emphasises both how much we receive and our accountability for giving further shape to what we receive.[15] A gift brings both blessing and obligation. To receive a gift, especially a precious one, and to discard it, abuse it or make no use of it would show ingratitude and contempt. Our sense of obligation when given clothes as gifts has become a common subject of humour. Spirituality begins as a gift received by all, but the gift brings with it a calling, a responsibility to develop our spiritual capacities which entails choices and may lead to different responses. Spirituality on this view is neither predominantly our own construction nor simply a universal given.[16]

The language of gift and call has connotations which are intentionally brought into play here. Standing over against an ideal of self-sufficiency, the language of spirituality as gift points to receptivity, humility, responsive hearing and gratitude as attitudes basic to spiritual development. These relate to the Christian emphasis on grace and on the dependence of true human spirituality on the work of the Holy Spirit. The terms also

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[13] Evans discusses humans in terms of both being and becoming as "substantial achievers" (Evans, 1993); the language of gift and call is echoed in other Reformed philosophical accounts (Geertsema, 1993; van der Walt, 1990) and in Evangelical and Reformed theological accounts (Jewett & Shuster, 1996), as well as in writings on Christian education rooted in other Christian traditions (Brueggemann, 1982:20; Palmer, 1998:30). The terms have played a significant role in Pauline theology, influenced by the play on words present in the German terms *Gabe und Aufgabe* (Jewett & Shuster, 1996:64n.44) and also relate to the distinction between the broad and narrow image in discussions of the *imago Dei* (Cf.Cairns, 1973:43-4).

[14] Cf. Genesis 1:26-28 and 2:7.

[15] Compare Pauline statements such as "what do you have that you did not receive?" (1 Corinthians 4:7) and "work out your salvation with fear and trembling" (Philippians 2:12).

[16] Contrast e.g. King's view of spirituality as definable in terms of "the changing mutualist interactions of persons who create and recreate transforming visions of life in the very flow and untidiness of our experience". (King, 1996:350). The interdependence of gift and call points away from the autonomy/heteronomy polarity. To receive a gift is to be entrusted with something which calls for a use which honours the giver. Giving and receiving are suggestive of interdependence, a theme which will emerge further below.

suggest an understanding of our spirituality and our selfhood not as a possession but as a trust, and our responsibility for what we have received in trust in turn denies a reading of gratitude as mere passivity. We are responsible for shaping what we have received, and called to exercise that responsibility in wholesome ways.

Thinking of spirituality in terms of gift and call may help to remove a common source of confusion discussed in chapter 1, namely the failure to distinguish different uses or aspects of the term 'spiritual'. If the spiritual is discussed only as a universal given, then we are pushed in one of two directions. One is to describe spirituality in a way which applies equally to all and avoids controversial value judgements. Spirituality becomes both generic and amoral (gift without call), for to relate spirituality to the possession of praiseworthy qualities would introduce a normative and divisive element.[17] The difficulty with such accounts, as I argued in chapter 2, is that they provide inadequate educational orientation, for virtually any kind of development, including growth in outright evil, turns out to be compatible with them.[18]

The other direction is to associate the spiritual by definition with admirable qualities. This approach ends up unable to make sense of malignant forms of spirituality, and concludes that certain individuals (usually including Hitler) are not classifiable as 'spiritual'.[19] In this case we lose any basis for asserting the spiritual nature of all students, for to *be* spiritual is already an achievement (call without gift). Either that, or we are led to an unrealistic picture of the world in which all are spiritual and spirituality is a praiseworthy quality.[20]

Noting the dual aspect of spirituality as gift and as calling can provide a basis for keeping in view both the sense in which spirituality is something common to all and the sense in which spirituality is not simply a given. We are faced not merely with a universal capacity, but with different spiritualities, with deep and important differences

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[17] Cf. Priestley, 1996:17.

[18] Thatcher, 1999; White, 1994.

[19] See e.g. Carr, 1995:86, 89.

[20] A further distinction is perhaps necessary here, for spirituality may justly be regarded as a gift shared by all which in itself confers value and dignity on human persons. The difficulty arises when spirituality is described in universal terms but also associated with positive character qualities such as humility or empathy; this is why I refer here to a 'praiseworthy' rather than, say, a 'positive' quality.

between them, and also with the necessity of giving some determinate shape to our own life. A coherent approach to spiritual development requires some idea of what it means to see all learners as spiritual (and therefore capable of *spiritual* development) *and* of what it means to grow spiritually (to undergo spiritual *development*); it requires a sense of both gift and calling.[21] This means neither ignoring the element of shared capacity and experience nor emphasising this to the point where the necessity of choices and the profound consequences of different responses are glossed over by vague generalities. Seeing our responsibility as both real and rooted in a gift points to the importance of receptivity, discernment, humility and gratitude as desirable spiritual qualities.

b.   Affirmation of the world

It is common in recent discussions of spiritual development to associate spirituality with transcendence, inwardness and the immaterial. From a Christian perspective, however, there are fundamental problems with any straightforward opposition between spirituality and materiality. The original goodness of creation, the incarnation of Christ, and the eschatological emphasis on the resurrection of the body and the restoration of creation are all important to Christian belief. They all imply an affirmation of the material world in general and the embodied character of human existence in particular, and a corresponding rejection of the idea that materiality is itself the source of evil or that immateriality is necessarily good.[22] The New Testament writers are comfortable with phrases such as "spiritual bodies", and it is widely recognised that the Pauline distinction between "spiritual" and "fleshly" is to be read as a distinction not between spirit and matter, but rather between that which is oriented towards God and that which

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[21] The need of accounts which are over-dependent on a universalised notion of spirituality to face the controversial question of the particular spiritual goods towards which development is to be fostered was discussed above in chapter 2. Mott-Thornton suggests that while it may be possible to construct a formal definition of spirituality which is not specific to any particular tradition, once we turn to a notion of spiritual *development* the universality disappears (Mott-Thornton, 1998:68-78).

[22] This is an important reason for the Christian church's early opposition to Manicheism (a movement espousing an ontological dualism which ascribed the body, the material world and time to an evil agency set over against God), Docetism (which involved denial of the full humanity of Christ) and (in a more complex way) Gnosticism (which advocated escape from the material cosmos through the possession of secret knowledge). See Bouyer, 1968:235; Zizioulas, 1986:35-36. On the affirmation of materiality see also Pannenberg, 1984:107-108; Williams, 1996.

is not.[23]

Throughout Christian history there has, nevertheless, been a repeated tendency to assimilate the Pauline spirit/flesh contrast to an opposition between the immaterial and the bodily.[24] It is, however, a tendency which has repeatedly been resisted from within the Christian tradition, and a denigration of the material or an automatic association of the good with the immaterial are in tension with Christian orthodoxy.[25] Charles Taylor has argued at length that Christian spirituality, in particular the spirituality of the Reformation, lies at the roots of the modern affirmation of ordinary life as a locus of personal significance. By denying a hierarchy of callings in which clerical vocations brought an automatically closer proximity to God, the Reformers were "denying the very distinction between sacred and profane and hence affirming their interpenetration".[26] Taylor goes on to argue that

> "As a result, certain of the original potentialities of Christian faith, which tended to be neutralized in the amalgam with ancient metaphysics and

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[23] For "spiritual bodies" see 1 Corinthians 15:44. Compare also passages such as Romans 12:1-3, with its call to "present your *bodies* as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your *spiritual* worship" (emphases added; see similarly Romans 6:13; 1 Corinthians 6:13, 15, 19). Paul's lists of the "works of the flesh" do not focus only on the sins of the body, but include items such as discord, jealousy and selfish ambition (Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Corinthians 3:3), rendering still more dubious an identification of Paul's usage of *sarx* (flesh) and *pneuma* (spirit) with an opposition between (material) body and (immaterial) spirit. Where Paul does distinguish material and spiritual, they are not opposing principles (e.g. Romans 15:27, 1 Corinthians 9:11). For fuller discussion see Berkouwer, 1962:194-205; Robinson, 1952

[24] Cf. Taylor, 1989:220. It is this tendency which lends some plausibility to Blake's misidentification of Christian spirituality as necessarily bound up with repudiation of mundane concerns (Blake, 1996; see chapter 2 above).

[25] This point is discussed at length by Taylor, who goes as far as to assert a "great gulf" at this point between Christianity on the one hand and Stoicism or Platonism on the other (Taylor, 1989:218). For discussion of the early church's engagement with this issue which supports Taylor's contention that the affirmation of the everyday world was not a novelty of the Reformation but rather a recovered orthodox emphasis, see Zizioulas, 1986. Zizioulas discusses the implications of the Eucharist for an affirmation of the material world and work within it, concluding that "unlike ancient Greek and especially Neoplatonic attitudes to spirituality, the patristic mentality, based on a eucharistic approach to life, stressed that being "spiritual" meant accepting and sanctifying the material world and not undermining its importance in any way" (Zizioulas, 1986:35). The emphasis on the resurrection of the body offers a further point of contrast with classical thought: for Christians, "spirituality was so materially conceived that the human entity was regarded as lacking an essential part without the body". (Zizioulas, 1986:36; cf. Bouyer, 1968:222-225, 234-235). See also Carr's response to Blake, which emphasises similar points (Carr, 1996b:459-462). For more general recent discussions of the issue see e.g. Amy & Recob, 1982:14-15; Cairns, 1973:30-31; Jewett & Shuster, 1996:25-40; Olthuis, 1993:159-160; Spykman, 1992:218-240.

[26] Taylor, 1989:217. Cf. Marshall, 1988.

morals, were allowed to develop. The crucial potentiality here was that of conceiving the hallowing of life not as something which takes place only at the limits, as it were, but as a change which can penetrate the full extent of mundane life."[27]

This emphasis within Christian spirituality seems to me to be important not only in terms of clarifying the nature of Christian spirituality and distinguishing it from spirituality as a form of escapism[28] but also because (and here I agree with Blake) a vision of spirituality which sees it as penetrating and hallowing the full extent of mundane life would seem to be a more promising resource when it comes to developing the notion of spiritual development across the whole curriculum than alternative visions which identify spirituality closely with the mystical, the inward or the immaterial.[29] I will return to this point below.

c. Orientation

If spirituality hallows rather than opposes materiality, how is it to be discerned? A third theme which helps to shed some light on this is that of patterning and orientation (discussed in chapter 1). Christian spirituality is expressed in a growing patterning of the whole of life ("heart, soul, mind and strength") after Christ, who is the image of God.[30] Spirituality is not to be understood as the enclosure of a particular sacred part of life, but as the bringing of all things, including the material, the social, the intellectual, and so on, into their proper relationship to God.[31] This means that Christian warnings concerning issues such as money, sex and power should be read not as rejections of the mundane, but rather as warnings concerning the destructive effects of giving ultimacy to such things in place of God. Spirituality has to do with how we orient life. This point is echoed in Sheldrake's definition of spirituality as "the whole of life viewed in terms of a

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[27] Taylor, 1989:221.

[28] Cf. Hull, 1995:131-132.

[29] Cf. Carr, 1996a, Blake, 1996.

[30] Mark 12:30; 2 Corinthians 4:4.

[31] This is a common Reformed emphasis, but not a uniquely Reformed one. Zizioulas finds very similar formulations in the early church, particularly in Irenaeus, which he regards as paradigmatic for orthodox Christian thought (Zizioulas, 1986:36).

conscious relationship with God, in Jesus Christ, through the indwelling of the Spirit and within the community of believers".[32]

This understanding of specifically Christian spirituality suggests a particular perspective on spiritual development in general educational contexts. It suggests a way of thinking of spirituality less as a particular component of human experience and more in terms of a particular patterning and orientation of life and experience. Spirituality has to do with our being animated and inspired in relation to some ultimate source of meaning and orientation.[33] This implies the importance of particularity, of diversity and of frames of reference.

Emphasising particularity points us to the fact that while it may be useful for certain purposes to discuss spirituality as a common human gift, growth takes place in particular concrete ways involving particular aspirations, hopes, virtues and so on. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to follow at one and the same time a path of spiritual growth based on mistrust of the body and a principled turning away from the material, and another which emphasised the hallowing of the material world, let alone to worship both God and Mammon.[34] Spiritual growth demands particular choices and commitments.

This brings us immediately to the importance of diversity. Spirituality takes patterned forms, hence we can speak of Christian, Muslim, New Age or Secular Humanist

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[32] Sheldrake, 1999:57.

[33] Compare again Hart's definition of spirituality as "our self-conscious awareness and nurture of the interconnectedness of all aspects of human life and the rest of existence with the existential boundary issues of life, as we are empowered or inspired to do so by a motivating dynamic or spirit" (Hart, 1997:21). This brings out the close connection of orientation with inspiration and animation. Taylor's understanding of spirituality in his *Sources of the Self* also emphasises patterning and orientation. He associates the spiritual sources of our sense of identity closely with frameworks "in virtue of which we make sense of our lives spiritually" (Taylor, 1989:18). This emphasis is also consonant with interpretations of the biblical language of 'soul', 'spirit' and 'heart' in terms of the totality of human nature brought into relationship with God and the urging of the person's central focus in a particular direction (cf. Anderson, 1969; Carey, 1977. For further discussion see Smith, 1997). Seeing spirituality as an orienting of the whole of life helps to explain both the common complaint that discussions of spirituality tend to have a catch-all flavour (White, 1994) and the perception on the part of various authors that apparently non-religious viewpoints such as an ultimate trust in human reason may take on a spiritual, or even a religious, character (see e.g. Dewey, 1934:25,42; Taylor, 1989:340-351).

[34] Matthew 6:24. Cf. Hull, 1995; Hull, 1999. Jewett argues that "if we think of ourselves Christianly, we cannot suppose that universal, ideal being is our essential being, while our individual, historical being is accidental, non-essential being" (Jewett & Shuster, 1996:25).

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spirituality, of particular Christian spiritualities in particular times and places, or of the spirit of the Enlightenment.[35] What we encounter in the world around us is particular spiritualities rather than spirituality in general. It is not adequate, however, to treat this divergence either as simply the outcome of individual differences and preferences or as merely a cultural overlay diffracting a homogeneous spiritual experience. The differences are neither entirely idiosyncratic nor unrelated to questions of truth and ultimate commitment. The patterning of spirituality is not simply an individual affair - it involves divergent orientations offered and shaped by particular communities, frameworks of belief and visions of reality and the good life.

Wider frames of reference are therefore a vital element of spirituality. Our spiritual development is shaped by issues such as whom or what we trust, what we come to value or to consider dispensable, what we believe to be true, and so on.[36] Our responses to such issues clearly will vary with cultural context, but they also involve commitments which may be held or contested across cultural contexts. There are Christians in Iran and Muslims in England, and conversion can bring a radical change of spiritual orientation without an abandonment of one's cultural identity. While much diversity of spiritual expression may be compatible with Christian faith, a Christian viewpoint cannot regard all differences as innocent cultural variations and open to relativistic celebration, for it matters ultimately whether our real point of orientation is God or an idol.

Finally, it should be noted that a conception of spirituality as patterning and orienting the mundane suggests that spirituality across the curriculum is not to be reduced to pauses for silent reflection or momentary experiences of wonder. These may be of both spiritual and pedagogical benefit, but to identify the spiritual aspect of education with

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[35] Priestley proposes that 'spirit' and 'spiritual' are belief-free, while 'spiritualities' diverge: "We all have a spirit, just as we all have a sex, male or female. In the same way 'spirit' merely denotes 'life'. To transform a passive state of being into an active one is to become sexual or spiritual. It is only when we arrive at the third word in the trilogy, the abstract noun, that there comes the need for a preceding adjective. There are different sexualities and there are a vast range of spiritualities. It is at this point that religion enters in, offering a Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, Protestant, Catholic, Methodist, Secular Humanist or whatever type we may wish to describe" (Priestley, 1996:15). Examples such as 'the spirit of the Enlightenment', or the possibility of referring to someone as manifesting a 'Christian spirit', as well as the descriptive/normative duality discussed above suggest that this is wrong. All members of this group of vocabulary items can be used in both descriptive and normative contexts and qualified by particular orientations. Cf. also Walsh's discussion of normative/descriptive and open/loaded uses of contested terms (Walsh, 1993:24-32).

[36] Cf. Beesley, 1993:23-24; Olthuis, 1985.

them leaves most of the everyday processes of teaching and learning outside its scope. The view of spirituality outlined here suggests not only a broad approach to curriculum content, one which will take spiritual difference and the role of spiritual commitments in the world seriously, but also the need to question the patterns and orientations discernible in the detail of the school's overall pedagogical practice. This point will be taken up particularly in chapters 6 and 7.

d. Relationship

Already implicit in the discussion so far is the importance of relationship. Enclosure within the self is in Christian terms the very opposite of spiritual development, which is seen rather in terms of the kinds of relationships which exist and grow between the self and that which lies beyond the self - God, other people and the rest of creation.[37] As Thatcher puts it, "a spiritually developed person is one who has made some progress in the life task of loving God and one's neighbour".[38] Spiritual growth is on this view not merely a process of self-construction, self-fulfilment or self-exploration, but rather one of growing relationships. To receive one's spiritual life as a gift and to respond with self-giving both place spirituality in a relational context. Understanding spirituality in terms of the patterning and orienting of our lives in the light of that which we fundamentally trust also points to spirituality as residing in the relating of the self to a point of reference which transcends it.

Christian contributions to the recent discussion of spiritual development have repeatedly emphasised this relational aspect, and in doing so have expressly resisted two tendencies in modern Western discussions of spirituality. The first is an emphasis on private individual experience, whereby spirituality becomes a matter of personal preference and individual self-exploration. The second is a related over-emphasis on the inward, on spirituality as something which is to be found *inside* the individual, and which can therefore easily be detached from relationships with God and others and from the issues of truth, love and justice which become inescapable in the wider relational context.[39]

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[37] Cf. Holt, 1997:28-35.

[38] Thatcher, 1999:51.

[39] Cf. Fallding, 1999; Hay & Hammond, 1992; Leech, 1992; Sheldrake, 1998; Thatcher, 1991; Thatcher, 1996; Thatcher, 1999; Williams, 1997; Wright, 1996, 1997, 1998.

It should also be noted that existence in relationship is seen as a constituent part of being human, rather than as a superimposed responsibility. Discussions of this point often relate it to the Trinitarian nature of God, in whose image humanity is made.[40] The Christian emphasis on the basicality of loving God and our neighbour suggests, as Olthuis puts it, that "community, mutuality, neighborliness, intersubjectivity are constitutive of the very nature of each human person", and that therefore, "in distinction from any form of individualism...neighborly love is not a choice. It is an inherent dimension of being human".[41] To fall out of this relationship into an over-preoccupation with the self is therefore to be seen as spiritual deformation rather than spiritual development.

e.   Fall

Cutting across all of the considerations discussed so far and qualifying all of them is the Christian insistence upon the significance of sin, which may be manifest not only in neglect of the spiritual, but also in its distortion. Closely related to the point that our spiritual selves are called to grow in particular normative directions is the insistence that not all spiritual developments are necessarily good. The importance of themes such as discernment, self-examination and repentance in discussions of spirituality in the Christian tradition testifies to an awareness that spirituality is not immune to deception and evil.[42] This means that it is not only the unspiritual which stands opposed to healthy spirituality. If the world in which we are our spiritual selves is a fallen one, and if our own fallenness cannot be evaded by attributing it entirely to some part of the self which is thought of as inessential, such as bodily appetites, or to some aspect of the world outside the self, such as social structures, then discussions of spirituality must reckon with not merely the possibility, but the actuality of unhealthy spirituality.

When spirituality becomes identified primarily with beautiful experiences (such as awe,

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[40] See e.g. Sheldrake, 1998; Wright, 1998.

[41] Olthuis, 1993:160-161. Cf. Jewett & Shuster, 1996:19, Anderson, 1982:167-172; Pannenberg, 1970:89-90.

[42] It is interesting in the light of the tendency in many discussions of spiritual development to focus on spiritual experience as something assumed to be basically positive, universal and therefore less problematic than truth claims that the idea of discernment of spirits in the Christian tradition has been significantly associated with the task of *evaluating* affective experiences in terms of their tendency towards or away from God (Wakefield, 1983:115-116).

wonder and appreciation of beauty), fine qualities (such as empathy or creativity) or even with being happy, much that is important to a realistic engagement with spirituality is lost from view.[43] Compare the following example of advice offered to teachers:

> "Have a clear understanding of what spirituality means. Begin to develop an understanding of your own inner world of thoughts, feelings and emotions. This is your spiritual world...Get to know your spiritual self. Quiet reflection is the route to this destination. Give yourself time to be with yourself, and begin to explore your spiritual self by sitting quietly in a positive way focusing on aspects of yourself which create good feelings. Make sure to create thoughts and images which do not lead to a critical frame of mind. If negative thoughts occur to you, acknowledge them and ask them to move on so that you can concentrate on positive ones."[44]

Such advice not only contrasts in its self-absorption with the relational emphasis discussed above; it also utterly neglects the darker aspects of spirituality, which must be taken into consideration for several reasons.

First, spirituality in the world as we find it may have as much to do with the ways in which we experience and deal with fear, guilt, loss of meaning, anger, jealousy, or the 'dark night of the soul' as with peace and happiness. Spiritual growth must often take place in the context of *broken* relationships - with others, with the environment, with God. The themes of forgiveness and reconciliation therefore become centrally important in the context of the relational aspect of spirituality.

Second, spirituality has throughout history been understood as, among other things, a struggle against evil, a "grappl[ing] with things seriously out of joint".[45] A proposed path of spiritual growth must include some conception of how evil is to be overcome, whether the evil of supernatural spiritual forces, the evil arising from unjust social

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[43] Sokanovic and Muller present evidence of teachers identifying spiritual development with happiness (Sokanovic & Muller, 1999).

[44] Hawkes, 1999:21.

[45] Hill, 1976:9.

structures, the evil experienced directly at the hands of others, or the evil found lurking in one's own person.

Third, to ignore the significance of evil for spiritual development is to dilute the significance of the questions of orientation and commitment discussed above. The array of different spiritual orientations with which we are surrounded is not to be reduced to a range of consumer options or cultural variations which can be dealt with armed only with personal inclinations. The presence of an assortment of cults and New Age spiritualities whose spiritual expressions range from solipsism to suicide, as well as the claims of most major spiritual traditions that deciding the question of whom or what to trust can have momentous consequences in this life and the next, demands at the very least an earnestness in the face of diversity which is not adequately captured by much of the current discussion of spiritual development.

At the same time, the Christian understanding of evil in terms of a fall disfiguring an originally good creation opens space for hope. Evil is not understood as an inevitable feature of the structure of things. If evil is reduced to the way things inevitably are, it loses its character as that which ought not to be, and it becomes difficult to see how it might be healed.[46] The relationship between creation, fall and redemption offers hope that broken relationships can be healed.[47]

These last two themes are both particularly pertinent to relationships in the educational context - relationships among learners, between learners and teachers, and between both and the others who become part of the curriculum content. The relational emphasis leads to the question of what kinds of relationships and relational virtues are fostered. Taking our fallenness into account faces us with the question of how failures and breakdowns in relationship will be dealt with.

In sum, the interlocking themes which I have outlined here suggest that spirituality involves both humble receptivity and responsible agency, that it orients and patterns rather than opposes the material and the mundane, and that it is to be found in the

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[46] Cf. Olthuis, 1993:167-170; Ricoeur, 1995:260.

[47] The importance of seeing fallenness in relation to creation and redemption will become apparent in later discussion of views which regard conflict as an inevitable feature of intersubjective encounter.

context of fallen but redeemable relationships with God, others and the rest of creation. This network of significant themes in Christian reflections on personhood is not exhaustive, but it will provide an adequate basis upon which to test the contention that Christian beliefs can play a relevant role in the formation of approaches to modern language pedagogy.

4.   Hospitality as a metaphor in modern language education

In the chapters which follow, I will be investigating the ways in which these themes impinge upon particular approaches to modern language pedagogy. I suggested in chapter 3 that a further way in which the basic orientation embodied in an approach may become evident is in the metaphors which come to the fore in its articulation. This will also be a theme in what follows, and so I will prepare the ground here by suggesting a way in which Christian emphases may come to metaphorical expression in discussions of modern language learning, one which also links to the spiritual virtues which were discussed in chapter 3 and which appeared in passing above.

A metaphor suggested by Carvill (and elaborated further by Smith and Carvill) as one which relates Christian faith to modern language learning involves seeing such learning as a form of hospitality.[48] This image has strong roots in the Judaeo-Christian tradition, it accentuates the ethical and spiritual aspects of modern language education, and it accords with the relational emphasis outlined in this chapter. I will comment briefly on each of these points.

The idea of hospitality to the stranger comes to the fore in the Pentateuch, where there is a repeated insistence that Israel should care for the widow, the orphan and the stranger.[49] This goes beyond the negative requirement to avoid ill-treating strangers to a call to "love [the alien] as yourself".[50] This formulation echoes the command earlier in the same group of laws to "love your neighbour as yourself" - loving the stranger is

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[48] Carvill, 1991a, 1991b; Smith & Carvill, 2000; see also Smith, 1998.

[49] See Exodus 22:21; 23:9; Leviticus 19:33-34; Deuteronomy 10:19; 24:17; 27:19. The admonition to care for strangers is related back to the Israelites' negative experiences as strangers in Egypt.

[50] Leviticus 19:34.

presented as a specific instance of loving one's neighbour.[51] In the New Testament we find Jesus citing Leviticus 19:18 as one of the two commandments which summarise the Torah, and doing so in a way which also picks up on the theme of love for the stranger. When an expert in the law asks what it means to love one's neighbour, Jesus responds with the parable of the Good Samaritan in which, contrary to expectation, the neighbour turns out to be the Samaritan (ethnically different, mistrusted, to be avoided) rather than the Jewish victim of robbery lying by the roadside.[52] In a further parable, that of the sheep and the goats, the point is driven home even more sharply, for one of the characteristics separating the righteous from the unrighteous in the face of divine judgement is whether the stranger was invited in.[53]

Within Christian ethical and missiological reflection, the theme of hospitality to the stranger has been extended beyond its original literal application, which was mainly to refugees from situations of conflict and suffering in other nations,[54] to include a more general ethic of caring welcome towards those who are different or culturally marginal.[55] Hospitality has also been used as an image for the teacher-learner relationship in discussions of Religious Education.[56] Extending its use to the context of modern language education is thus consonant with a substantial existing tradition of ethical and educational reflection. It also resonates positively with approaches to spirituality in education which emphasise the educational importance of spiritual virtues, and connects with Schwehn's argument that spiritual virtues should be seen as integrally important to genuine learning (see chapter 3). Schwehn focuses on humility, charity, self-denial and justice; hospitality is a further virtue which is deeply rooted in

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[51] Leviticus 19:18.

[52] Luke 10:25-37.

[53] Matthew 25:31-46.

[54] Cf. Spina, 1983.

[55] See e.g. Gittins, 1989; Gittins, 1994. One danger discussed by Gittins in relation to a missiological use of the hospitality metaphor is that those who hold the most power will tend to see themselves as hosts rather than guests. There is a parallel to this concern in the context of modern language learning: the hospitality image should be applied in such a way as to avoid the implication that the learner is always the host of the foreign guest. Pedagogy should focus not only on the role of host, but on how to be a sensitive guest in the foreign context. This point is discussed further in relation to Claire Kramsch's pedagogy in chapter 7.

[56] See Smith & Carvill, 2000:79-88.

the Judaeo-Christian spiritual tradition.

Applying the idea to the modern language classroom draws attention to the spirit in which other languages and cultures and the people who represent them are received and interacted with or visited. It suggests a view of learners as hosts or guests of the foreign language and culture, a view which stresses the ethical and interpersonal context of learning.

As the argument of part 2 of the thesis develops in chapters 6 and 7, the significance and distinctiveness of this way of viewing learning will become more apparent; here I will briefly sketch some of its implications in terms of self-other relationships in the particular context of linguistic and cultural difference. Thinking in terms of hospitality suggests the possibility of combining a rooted identity with openness to difference. Hospitality implies having a home - giving notice that the house stands vacant is not hospitality; neither is inviting a group of people to a nearby field. Belonging to a particular home is not in this sense a handicap. Hospitality also implies, however, a certain vulnerability, a home which is held as a trust and therefore opened up the benefit of others, and not a castle enclosing a carefully protected sovereign territory. The calling of the host is to give space to the guest, not merely food and water but an attentive ear.[57] The calling of guest is to be sensitive to but also to enrich the home, perhaps bringing change. Neither is obliged to ape the other, but rather to show care and openness. There is always a risk - ill-intentioned guests can leave wounds rather than riches; there is, however, also always the possibility of growth.

The significance of these ideas, sketched provisionally here, will become more fully apparent in subsequent chapters. At this point I simply wish to highlight for future reference an image which, if applied to the encounter with other languages, cultures and people in the modern language classroom, both echoes concerns which are important to Christian faith and highlights a particular ethical and spiritual attitude within which teaching and learning may take place.

5.   Beliefs in interaction with theories: Sartre and Bakhtin

Having outlined in fairly general terms some significant themes, as well as imagery and

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[57] Cf. Luke 10:38-42.

virtues, drawn from Christian reflection on personhood and spirituality, I turn now to a consideration of how this Christian framework may inform or conflict with particular theories in relation to the nature of persons. It is often pointed out that the language of the Bible or of Christian confessions of faith does not provide a developed scientific or philosophical theory of the person; it may, however, interact with more theoretically systematised accounts.[58]

I will take the ideas of Sartre and Bakhtin as illustrative examples of more theoretically developed perspectives on personhood in general and intersubjectivity in particular. These two authors are chosen here because of their significance to later stages of the overall argument. Discussion of Sartre and Bakhtin will lay groundwork for chapters 6 and 7 in which I will discuss their influence on certain humanistic and critical pedagogical approaches to modern language pedagogy. Assessing the relationship of Sartre and Bakhtin to the themes outlined above is therefore a preparatory step towards evaluating the relationship of particular pedagogical designs to Christian faith.

In addition, discussion of these two thinkers will serve two more general purposes. First, it will help to put some flesh on the more abstract discussion in chapter 3 of the relationship between broad beliefs and more theoretically systematised understandings. Examination of these sets of ideas will illustrate how a theme such as the relational nature of personhood can be given quite divergent theoretical elaborations, and dwelling briefly on the relationship between Christian beliefs and particular theories of the person before relating all of this to particular pedagogies will help to avoid losing sight of the complexities of the relationship.

Second, discussion of such divergent examples as those provided by the work of Sartre and Bakhtin will illustrate the point discussed above that a particular set of beliefs will overlap with and differ from other perspectives in various ways, such that its distinctiveness is likely to lie more in the whole pattern of belief than in each belief taken singly. In discussing Sartre and Bakhtin I will focus particularly on the relational nature of personhood, but the discussion will also illustrate how the interrelationship between this theme and the others discussed becomes important in judging how well a theory comports with Christian belief.

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[58] Cf. Berkouwer, 1962:199; Robinson, 1952:16.

a. Sartre: the Other as enemy

In the course of elaborating his existential psychology Sartre declares: "the other is indispensable to my own existence, as well as to my knowledge about myself...hence, let us at once announce the discovery of a world we shall call intersubjectivity".[59] Intersubjective relationships play a central role in his view of personhood and personal development. At the same time, however, he strongly stresses individual autonomy, emphasising that "I carry the weight of the world by myself alone".[60] It is within the tension between these two emphases that Sartre's anthropological viewpoint takes its distinctive shape.

Sartre's famous dictum that for humans existence precedes essence expresses a resistance to any form of external definition or guidance of the individual. He develops this theme in a way which interconnects the role of God and that of other people.[61] If God does not exist, then there is no higher authority or vantage point from which the individual can be predefined or directed - "man [*sic*] is nothing else but that which he makes of himself" and therefore "can no longer want but one thing, and that is freedom, as the basis of all values".[62] Sartre understands the person as a free project oriented towards transcendence, a centre of infinite possibilities which resists any finite limitations upon its self-realisation. This radical freedom from external definition is extended to relationships with others - each individual has "the entire responsibility for his existence squarely upon his own shoulders" and "cannot pass beyond human subjectivity"; advice or guidance from others cannot therefore provide any authentic point of orientation.[63] In Sartre's striking formulation, the human person's defining

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[59] Sartre, 1957:38.

[60] Sartre, 1957:56-57.

[61] It is interesting to connect the following with the account of the fall in Genesis 3, of which Sartre's account can be read as a perverse re-reading. There also the individual's withdrawal from fellowship with God is intimately connected with a similar breakdown between people. This withdrawal into individual autonomy is, however, viewed as a loss of authenticity, not its realisation. Shame, fear and pride result from guilt and broken relationship, not from the mere existence of another subject or a point of orientation outside the self.

[62] Sartre, 1948:28; 1957:15, 45.

[63] Sartre, 1948:29,32,37-38.

project is to be God.[64]

This raises an obvious question: how are we to understand intersubjectivity if others are primarily a threat to our individual freedom? Despite the impression given in some of the passages from which I have quoted above, Sartre does not wish to portray a collection of monadic subjectivities without essential interconnection. Without compromising his emphasis on radical individual autonomy he looks for a "fundamental transcending connection with the Other which would be constitutive of each consciousness in its very upsurge".[65] Free self-assertion and fundamental connection come together as Sartre draws from Hegel a view of identity as based on negation. I gain identity by setting myself over against others - the Other is "the self which *is not* myself", founded on a "double, reciprocal relation of exclusion" - yet this also means that I need others in order to form an identity.[66] This point is developed by Sartre as follows.

For Sartre, I discover that I am fundamentally related to others when I experience the sense of shame, fear and pride which arises when another's evaluating gaze is felt.[67] This gaze pierces my self-constructed sense of reality and brings a basic threat to my transcendent possibilities as a free subject. Until the arrival of this alien gaze, my world was made up of objects organized around my subjectivity. I was its centre and its master. Suddenly, with the arrival of a rival subject, a rival centre around which the world can be organised, "an object has appeared which has stolen the world from me".[68] The effects for a self which would be God are dramatic - Sartre writes of the arrival of another subject as the "total disintegration of the universe".[69] As I experience the gaze of

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[64] Sartre summarises his view of human being as founded on a striving to freely create and realise one's own possibilities in the statement that "man fundamentally is the desire to be God" (Sartre, 1957:63).

[65] Sartre, 1966:315.

[66] Sartre, 1966:312, 319. Sartre draws upon Hegel's master/slave dialectic, referring to the "richness and profundity of the detailed insights with which the theory of the Master and Slave is filled to overflowing" (Sartre, 1966:322; cf. Hegel, 1971:171-176). He shifts the focus, however, from epistemological to affective issues.

[67] Sartre, 1966:387. The triadic formulation may be a play upon faith, hope and love.

[68] Sartre, 1966:342.

[69] Sartre, 1966:344.

this other subject, "I am put in the position of passing judgment on myself as an object, for it is as an object that I appear to the Other".[70] Thus I perceive "my transcendence transcended", "the death of my possibility" - for this reason Sartre asserts that "my original fall is the existence of the Other", for "nothing can limit me except the Other".[71]

This fall places the individual in a quandary. The Other brings not only shame but also a new level of self-awareness. Therefore, I "need the Other in order to realize fully all the structures of my being", yet I must also pursue the death of the Other, the reduction of the Other to an object, in order to escape being subjected to an external viewpoint and regain my own unlimited possibilities.[72] I cannot be myself without the Other's presence, yet I cannot be God without the Other's subjugation. This struggle for possession of the dominant subjectivity can have no harmonious resolution - "so long as consciousnesses exist, the separation and conflict of consciousness will remain".[73] This is how self and Other are at once intrinsically related and in fundamental opposition to each other. Free subjective possibilities can only be maintained through the suspension of the subjectivity of the Other.

Sartre's anthropology can, then, justly be described as relational in focus, since the Other plays a crucial role in the individual's development. It is, however, in significant tension with the Christian themes discussed above, a fact which shows that a broadly stated relational emphasis can be given very divergent theoretical articulations. Interpreted as an account of *fallen* relationships deformed by a sinful preoccupation with self-assertion, Sartre's evocation of intersubjective warfare can be regarded from a Christian perspective as containing much truth. It provides in this respect a salutary corrective to naively optimistic accounts of the relational dimension of spirituality by reminding us that relationships are far from always blissful. However, the way in which autonomous self-assertion is rendered normative, with the resulting conflict with others read as necessary and unalterable, is in stark tension both with the belief that spirituality

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[70] Sartre, 1966:302.

[71] Sartre, 1966:352, 354, 382.

[72] Sartre, 1966:303, 319, 394.

[73] Sartre, 1966:329; cf. p.307: "the Other...cannot without contradiction appear to us as organizing our experience: there would be in this an over-determination of the phenomenon".

involves receiving our life and others' lives as a gracious gift and with the belief that broken relationships are redeemable, that conflict between self and other is not inscribed in the very nature of things.[74] The self as portrayed by Sartre is profoundly inhospitable.

Sartre is, of course, explicitly opposing theism in developing his account,[75] but for present purposes the incompatibilities at the level of implications for how personal development is understood are of more consequence than the overt rejections of theistic belief, for the former are more likely to be carried over into any pedagogical approaches rooted in this kind of anthropological perspective. This point will be explored further in chapter 6.

b.   Bakhtin: the Other in dialogue

At the conclusion of his discussion of the dialogical self, Charles Taylor recommends that if we wish to form a dialogical understanding of personhood we should turn to Bakhtin.[76] Bakhtin read Buber, who is often alluded to when the relational dimension of spirituality is discussed,[77] and some of their formulations show striking similarities. Like Buber, he set out a dialogical understanding of personhood in opposition to a universalised notion of consciousness, an objectification of persons and the ideal of a monologic self-possessed subject.[78] In contrast to Buber, his understanding of dialogue and of spirit sees both as deeply intertwined with the concrete social contexts in which

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[74] Sartre's statement that "man is condemned...because he did not create himself" (Sartre, 1966:53) vividly expresses his sense that to receive one's being from another is to lose oneself.

[75] He describes his account as "nothing else than an attempt to draw all the consequences of a consistent atheism" (Sartre, 1957).

[76] Taylor, 1991.

[77] See e.g. Bainbridge, 1999:10; Hay, 1998:15; Huebner, 1985:171.

[78] On Bakhtin's knowledge of Buber, see Holquist, 1990:2; Perlina, 1984. Buber's essay titled 'The word that is spoken' (Buber, 1965b:110-120) shows particularly striking resemblances to Bakhtin's ideas. On the propriety of reading Bakhtin's work in literary theory as at the same time an elaboration of a philosophical anthropology, cf. Todorov, 1984:x. For Bakhtin's opposition to idealism see e.g. Bakhtin, 1984:80-81, 288. For his opposition to the "finalization" of persons, see e.g. Bakhtin, 1984:58-9.

they take shape.[79] His work was significantly influenced by Russian Orthodox Christianity, and it has been persuasively argued that his dialogic formulations are specifically indebted to Trinitarian theology.[80]

Bakhtin shares Buber's sense that relationship is basic, that "the most important acts constituting self-consciousness are determined by a relationship toward another consciousness (toward a thou)".[81] This is not, as in Sartre, a limitation to be lamented, but rather an enabling condition. Authentic human being is communion, for "to be means to be for another, and through the other, for oneself. A person has no internal sovereign territory".[82] Correspondingly, the fall of the self is not identified with the arrival of another subject, but rather with the enclosure of the self within its own bounds; Bakhtin writes of "separation, dissociation and enclosure within the self as the main reason for the loss of one's self".[83] The self must be hospitable if it is to prosper.

Bakhtin focuses on language as the medium within which selves interact and are

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[79] In his later writings Buber also stressed the concrete context of communication, but in his earlier association of spirit with I-Thou relations, spirit is presented as the realm of pure relation in a manner which seems to imply some disjunction between this relation and the material conditions of human interaction. In his essay on dialogue, for instance, Buber asks us to image two men sitting beside one another. They do not speak, do not look at one another, have no thoughts in particular, and betray nothing by attitude or gesture. Nevertheless, communication streams from one to the other and "the silence bears it to his neighbour," for "speech can renounce all the media of sense and it is still speech" (Buber, 1965a:3-4; cf. See Buber, 1937:4-11, 33, 103). In *I and Thou*, this realm of pure relation is contrasted with the "burden of the world of It", which forms "the exalted melancholy of our fate" (Buber, 1937:96-98). I-Thou dialogue is closely associated with silence. The pedagogical consequences of this distancing of spiritual dialogue from the material conditions of speech, consequences which run in a different direction from those which can be drawn from Bakhtin's work (see chapter 7), can be found in Buber's idea of "inclusion", whereby the teacher enjoys a direct, unmediated experience of the perspective of the learner (Buber, 1965a:96-98).

[80] On this last point see the detailed studies by Mihailovic and Coates (Coates, 1998; Mihailovic, 1997). For other positive explorations of the relationship of Bakhtin's thought to Christian belief (an issue which has occasioned controversy among Bakhtin scholars) see Clark & Holquist, 1986:120-145; Emerson, 1990; Ugolnik, 1990. Much of the present discussion of spirituality in Bakhtin is drawn from his interaction with Dostoevsky, another Russian Orthodox thinker (Bakhtin, 1984; cf. Thaden, 1987).

[81] Bakhtin, 1984:287. Buber referred to the "streaming reciprocity of the universe", stating that "in the beginning is relation" (Buber, 1937:16, 18; see also the essay 'Distance and relation' in Buber, 1965b:59-71).

[82] Bakhtin, 1984:287. In the same passage, Bakhtin states: "The very being of man (both internal and external) is *the deepest communion. To be* means *to comunicate*". His main interest, therefore, is "not that which takes place within, but that which takes place on the *boundary* between one's own and someone else's consciousness, on the *threshold*" (p.287, emphases original).

[83] Bakhtin, 1984:287.

formed. He denies that speaking is an act of autonomous creation, arguing that "every utterance must be regarded primarily as a response to preceding utterances".[84] More is intended here than the simple fact that the language system precedes the individual speaker. Once they are taken up into utterances, words carry a variety of accents and nuances which imply particular evaluative stances towards the world. It is within utterances, themselves responses to other utterances stretching in a chain back through time, that words come to us. They are not typically taken by speakers from the dictionary, but from the mouths of other speakers, and they "taste" of their previous contexts and usages, so that "our speech is filled with others' words, varying degrees of otherness or varying degrees of 'our-own-ness'".[85] Bakhtin is, then, concerned not with language as a collection of individual words or as a transparent medium of communication, but with discourse as an evaluatively charged form of interaction.

The emphasis on the importance of others' words for identity does not mean that the individual is merged into his or her relationships. Communion is not to be construed as fusion or sameness - individuality, responsibility and difference are also stressed, and intersubjective conflict remains a live possibility.[86] The fact that the speaker must first of all receive language from others, along with the imprint of its value-laden history, does not, therefore, imply a social determinism or passivity on the part of the recipient of language. It is a point of considerable importance in Bakhtin's account that hearing is a form of agency.[87]

This becomes evident in two ways. First, the *speaker's* discourse is ongoingly shaped by the anticipated and actual responses of the hearer, and so there are two agents involved

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[84] Bakhtin, 1986:91.

[85] Bakhtin, 1986:87-89.

[86] Cf. e.g. Bakhtin, 1981:315-316, where Bakhtin describes the "battle between points of view". In the Dostoevsky book, Bakhtin states: "In a human being there is always something that only he himself can reveal, in a free act of self-consciousness and discourse...As long as a person is alive he lives by the fact that he is not yet finalized, that he has not yet uttered his ultimate word" Bakhtin, 1984:58-9.

[87] "In the actual life of speech, every concrete act of understanding is active" (Bakhtin, 1981). Bakhtin criticises linguistics (in particular Saussure's linguistics) for operating with the "fictions" of the active speaker and the corresponding passive listener (Bakhtin, 1986:68; cf. Verburg, 1974 for further historical examples). For Bakhtin the speaker is first a recipient and must also take into account the agency of the hearer if his or her utterance is not to be closed off to the possibility of a modifying response (Bakhtin, 1981:281; Bakhtin, 1986:69).

in the production of the speech-deed. Bakhtin developed a typology of "double-voiced discourse", that is, discourse which bears the traces not only of the speaker's individual voice but also of the hearer's actual or anticipated responses and the voices of the discourse community from which the speaker has received his or her linguistic resources.[88]

Second, it follows that the *hearer's* role is not understood in terms of passive reception, but rather in terms of active engagement. As utterances are received from others, they are affirmed, built upon, polemicized with, supplemented, refuted, and so on, even as the utterance is still in progress, and this active engagement leads to further utterances in response. A speaker is not an autonomous originator, and a hearer is not a passive receptor; both are socially embedded agents who responsively and responsibly re-accent what they receive from others.[89]

This implies that communication is not to be taken for granted as a smooth flow of information from one mind to another. The evaluatively charged nature of discourse and the active engagement of two selves in its construction mean that harmony is not guaranteed by a pre-established sameness in speaker and hearer or an automatic mechanical transmission of messages from one to the other.[90] Where genuine differences in evaluative stance exist and persist, leading to a conflict of voices, they should not be glossed over in the name of some higher-level resolution.[91] At the same time, however, authentic agency need not be exercised in negation. There is also the possibility of affirmation of others, of mutual acceptance leading to a polyphonic

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[88] Bakhtin, 1984:181-204. Bakhtin drew examples from Dostoevsky's novels of such phenomena as the "word with a sideward glance", when a speaker's discourse displays a polemical awareness of the words of others about the object under discussion, or the "word with a loophole" which sees the speaker leaving space in his or her discourse for retraction or reinterpretation of his or her own words at a later time (Bakhtin, 1984:199).

[89] Bakhtin, 1986:69, 77, 91.

[90] Cazden, 1989.

[91] Bakhtin is concerned with "the life and behaviour of discourse in a contradictory and multi-languaged world" (Bakhtin, 1981:275).

harmony within which differences retain their reality but do not conflict.[92]

Spirit is located within this process of dialogical utterance and response, and Bakhtin therefore emphasises spiritual diversity as opposed to spirit in general.[93] In a revealing comment, Bakhtin suggests that "Dostoevsky made spirit, that is, the ultimate semantic position of the personality, the object of aesthetic contemplation, he was able to see spirit in a way in which previously only the body and soul of man could be seen".[94] This "ultimate semantic position" or, elsewhere, "spiritual orientation"[95] is closely associated by Bakhtin with the individual's responsibility for taking up evaluative stances, affirming or resisting what is received.[96] In this way the person's spiritual orientation lies not above or before but at the heart of and interwoven with his or her thoughts, utterances and interactions, giving shape to ideas and discourse. Spirituality and the self are for Bakhtin "saturated with the semantic",[97] that is, with particular evaluative positions grounded in an ultimate sense of meaning and articulated in discourse.

I will discuss some implications of Bakhtin's understanding of personhood and language for modern language pedagogy in chapter 7. For now it is sufficient to note

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[92] "Even *agreement* retains its dialogic character, that is, it never leads to a *merging* of voices and truths in a single *impersonal* truth" (Bakhtin, 1984:95). Different voices may be "consonant but not merging or ... hopelessly contradictory,...an eternal harmony of unmerged voices or... their unceasing and irreconcilable quarrel" (Bakhtin, 1984:30; see also p.21 on polyphony). The dialogicality of thought may be expressed by its being "adorned with polemic, filled with struggle, or...on the contrary open to inspiration from outside itself" (Bakhtin, 1984:32). Cf. Emerson, 1997:72.

[93] Bakhtin, 1984:31. Here, as throughout this section, I am drawing upon Bakhtin's later, language-oriented work. For discussion of the idea of spirit in his earlier work, see Morson & Emerson, 1990:192-196.

[94] Bakhtin, 1984:288. Perhaps appropriately, given his understanding of dialogue, it is difficult to separate Bakhtin commenting on Dostoevsky from Bakhtin himself; he credits Dostoevsky with "the discovery of a new integral view on the person" (Bakhtin, 1984:58) and with having glimpsed new sides of human nature through his perception of something of the true condition of the social world (Bakhtin, 1984:27, 87, 270, 285). Dostoevsky's ideas become interwoven with Bakhtin's development of his own philosophical anthropology.

[95] Bakhtin, 1984:93.

[96] Bakhtin also speaks of a "worldview", a "voice-idea" and a "voice-viewpoint" in relation to his assertion that for Dostoevsky "the ultimate indivisible unit is not the separate referentially bounded thought, not the proposition, not the assertion, but rather the integral point of view, the integral position of a personality" (Bakhtin, 1984:93). This integral position informs the person's various thoughts, so that "the theoretical side of the idea is inseparably linked with the ultimate positions on life taken by the participants in the dialogue", expressing "an entire spiritual orientation" (Bakhtin, 1984:89, 93).

[97] Zavala, 1990:83.

that there is much in his perspective which resonates positively with the Christian themes outlined earlier in this chapter - the resistance of a polarity between autonomy and passivity through the articulation of a view of receptive, responsive agency; the importance of diversity and the allowance of the possibility (but not the inevitability) of conflict rooted in ultimate orientations (and therefore not bridgeable through the imposition of an overarching schema); the affirmation of social interaction as a realm where spirit is at home; and the underlying belief in being as communion. These emphases not only resonate with Christian themes, but also contrast significantly with Sartre's account of the sovereign individual self and perpetual intersubjective conflict.

Possible weaknesses in Bakhtin's account in terms of the present discussion include an inadequate engagement with the problem of evil; dialogue is considered a good in itself almost regardless of its content, and the nature and role of firm commitments and final accountability remains open to question.[98] The point here is not that Bakhtin's theories as a whole are expressions of Christian orthodoxy, or that other theories might not also harmonise with the Christian beliefs discussed. Bakhtin's ideas do, however, illustrate how the themes discussed may positively inform, as well as stand in critique of, particular theoretical developments.

6.   Conclusion

In the first four chapters of this study I have focused on developing a defensible framework within which to examine the relevance for modern foreign language education of a conception of spiritual development informed by Christian faith. I have in the present chapter articulated in outline a Christian perspective which can inform that framework. In the remaining chapters the central focus will shift to modern language pedagogy. Applying the discussion so far to particular pedagogical options, I will explore the ways in which the framework which I have elaborated might suggest objections, modifications or further development.

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[98] Cf. e.g. Morson & Emerson, 1990:198; Emerson, 1997:157-159.

Interlude:
Relating the theoretical framework to instances of pedagogy

The first part of this thesis has been concerned with the development of a theoretical framework within which discussion of the relationships between Christian faith, spiritual development and modern language pedagogy would make sense. That task had a negative and a positive aspect.

Negatively, it involved identifying and countering perspectives in these areas which tend to make talk of their interconnection appear implausible or illegitimate. Thus chapter two concerned itself with the various types of argument (contextual, evaluative and scope-based) which have been put forward for the segregation of spiritual development from religious belief in educational contexts. Chapter three went on to consider the difficulties which an understanding of modern language pedagogy as an instance of method or applied science places in the way of both a rapprochement with general discussions of spiritual development and a faith-informed approach in particular.

Positively, a framework was developed within which particular pedagogical options could be interrogated in relation to their contribution to spiritual development and their compatibility with Christian faith. Thus, chapter three went on to show the relevance of descriptions of pedagogy in terms of approach, design and procedure for understanding the possible roles of spirituality and Christian faith in the shaping of pedagogy. It was suggested that particular beliefs, orientations and metaphors rooted in Christian faith might play a role in the development of an approach to language teaching. In order to provide a more concrete basis for developing this suggestion, chapter four presented five themes from Christian reflection on personhood which are significant for spiritual development in terms of confessional centrality, distinctive contribution to an understanding of spiritual development, and relevance to pedagogical concerns. These themes (gift and call, affirmation of the world, orientation, relationship and fall) were brought into interaction with the ideas of Sartre and Bakhtin in order to show how they might provide a basis for discriminating among more philosophically developed anthropological accounts of the kind which can and do influence pedagogical theorising.

Finally, hospitality was suggested as a metaphor which could inform modern language pedagogy in a manner consonant with the themes discussed.

Against this backdrop, I turn in the second part of the thesis to a discussion of particular pedagogical options. In terms of the relationships mapped in chapter one, the next three chapters will focus on the relationship between a Christian approach to spiritual development and designs for modern language pedagogy (figure 8).
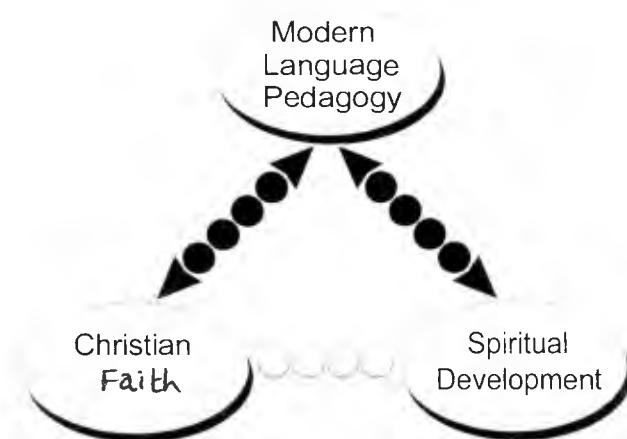
Figure 8

The main focus of chapter 5 will be the pedagogy implied by the National Curriculum for Modern Foreign Languages (NCMFL) and its relationship to the view espoused in other National Curriculum documents that spiritual development should be promoted through all subjects in the curriculum. I will argue that the pedagogy represented in the NCMFL is in general insufficiently developed to offer clear support for spiritual development, and that where it is more developed its contribution to spiritual development is in doubt.

The next two chapters (6 and 7) seek to respond to the hints and absences identified in the National Curriculum documentation by considering particular pedagogical designs which are more developed and potentially more spiritually interesting. They examine in turn how the affective emphasis of humanistic pedagogy and the cultural emphasis of critical pedagogy could relate to spiritual development and Christian faith.

In none of these three discussions do I claim to be offering a global account or critique of the pedagogical options discussed. Both the examples and the issues discussed are

selected in the light of the central interest of this study, which is to shed light on the relationship between spiritual development, Christian faith and modern language pedagogy. Many of the questions usually addressed to such pedagogical designs (what is the place of grammar? Which aspects of linguistic competence are fostered? etc.) are therefore left to one side. In their place, two questions are foregrounded here:

- in what ways could this pedagogy contribute to learners' spiritual development?

- are there points of continuity or tension between the approach underlying this pedagogy and the Christian themes discussed in chapter four?

Pursuing the first question will test the assumption made in various official documents that such a concern is indeed appropriate to the modern language classroom. This will be the main focus of chapter 5. The second question concerns the suggestion (chapter 3 above) that Christian faith can inform or be in tension with pedagogical approaches and designs. Chapters 6 and 7 will examine this issue in more detail.

PART 2:

Application to specific modern language pedagogies

Chapter 5: The National Curriculum for Modern Foreign Languages and spiritual development

Outline:

1. Spiritual development in the National Curriculum for Modern Foreign Languages
2. Pedagogical context
    a. Communicative language teaching: promising features
        i. Aspects of authenticity
        ii. Relevance to spiritual development
    b. GCSE and modern language pedagogy
3. Aims and pedagogy in the National Curriculum
    a. Aims and objectives
    b. Culture and experience in the programmes of study
        i. Cultural awareness
        ii. Personal experience
    c. Pedagogical models
4. Conclusions and ways forward

1. Spiritual development in the National Curriculum for Modern Foreign Languages

The National Curriculum for Modern Foreign Languages (NCMFL) introduced for the first time a centrally standardised foreign language curriculum for schools. It has thus far appeared in three statutory versions. For convenience, I will henceforth refer to these collectively as the NCMFL and individually by their date of publication, thus: NCMFL 1991, NCMFL 1995 and NCMFL 2000.[1] Each has been preceded and accompanied by various consultative materials and non-statutory commentary which will also be taken into account.

The NCMFL is a component of the broader National Curriculum, which includes the

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[1] The date of publication has not necessarily been the date of implementation. The NCMFL 1991 first came into force on 1st August 1992 for pupils in the first year of Key Stage 3, and it was not until 1st August 1996 that the provisions of the NCMFL were in force for all pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4.

emphasis on spiritual development across the curriculum discussed in chapter 1. It would therefore seem reasonable to look for a concern for spiritual development in the NCMFL documentation. The overall purpose of this chapter is to assess whether such a concern is in fact present and how it is implemented. A first question, however, is whether the National Curriculum documentation offers any clues as to which aspects of modern language teaching and learning might offer points of connection with spiritual development, and therefore which parts of the NCMFL might need to be scrutinised.

The NCMFL has been accompanied by various kinds of non-statutory guidance on matters such as teaching in the target language, assessment, and promoting economic and industrial understanding. During the same period of time there has been a succession of official documents discussing spiritual development across the curriculum.[2] However, until the recent publication of NCMFL 2000, the only advice amid this welter of official guidance which specifically addressed spiritual development in the modern language curriculum appeared not in a publication for teachers, but rather in the early editions of the *Handbook for the Inspection of Schools,* published by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) for the use of school inspectors.[3]

The 1994 handbook is upbeat about cross-curricular provision for spiritual development in the National Curriculum, insisting that spiritual, moral, social and cultural development "should be addressed consistently through all the subjects of the curriculum".[4] It goes on to state that while Religious Education will make a central contribution to spiritual development, "other subjects can play no less significant a part in inviting pupils to reflect on the purpose and meaning of life". Modern foreign languages are explicitly included in the list of illustrative examples which follows.[5] The following account is given of how modern language education might contribute:

> "In modern languages and classical studies the study of other languages
> and cultures contributes to pupils' understanding and values, beliefs and

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[2] NCC, 1993a; OFSTED, 1994b; SCAA, 1995, 1996b.

[3] OFSTED, 1994a.

[4] OFSTED, 1994a:15.

[5] OFSTED, 1994a:17-18.

attitudes by offering them insights into, and points of comparison with, the ways in which other peoples, whether today or in the past, have interpreted the world around them."[6]

Beyond this scant account, the OFSTED document offers the assurance that in relation to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development "the National Curriculum programmes of study in many subjects contain many explicit references to material which can be illuminating in these respects".[7] No specific references are given. In the most recent edition of the inspection framework even this guidance is removed, leaving only some more general references to spiritual development and an instruction to inspectors to evaluate how well the pupils have learned to "respect differences and understand the feelings, values and beliefs of others".[8]

Despite its extremely modest scale, the guidance offered by OFSTED does provide a starting point for further inquiry. Given the emphasis it places on the cultural dimension of language learning, an obvious question concerns the relationship between cultural and spiritual development. It seems straightforward enough (at least *prima facie*) to assume that exposure to another culture through the medium of its language could contribute significantly to the goal of cultural development, and this may well involve various changes in "understanding and values, beliefs and attitudes," but where does this shade over into spiritual development?

Reading the example in its context and against the background of the other documentation relating to spiritual development offers at least a broad answer. It seems fair to infer that cultural learning connects with spiritual development where it brings challenge or illumination in relation to beliefs and values concerning personal identity and the meaning of life (including explicitly religious beliefs and values).[9] Given the

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[6] OFSTED, 1994a:18.

[7] OFSTED, 1994a:17.

[8] OFSTED, 1999:37. Inspection-related documents which specifically address modern language teaching have not been much more helpful. Dobson's survey of inspection findings, for instance, devotes a long paragraph to modern language teaching's contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, but offers examples only of the last three areas, passing over the spiritual in silence (Dobson, 1998:22).

[9] Cf. e.g. NCC, 1993a; OFSTED, 1994b.

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connections which exist between broad spiritual orientations, religious beliefs and the formation of cultural attitudes and practices, this line of inquiry is indeed promising.[10] Encountering another culture may provide opportunities to explore the contingency of some of one's own beliefs and attitudes. New perspectives may be opened up either by unfamiliar beliefs and attitudes present in the target culture or by familiar ones which are manifested in culturally unfamiliar ways.[11]

This line of approach seems to require at least two important assumptions, neither of which, as I shall argue below, is necessarily valid in the context of National Curriculum modern language teaching. First, it does not seem that just any encounter with another culture would be adequate; learning, for instance, about the different colour of German postboxes or the circumstances under which Germans usually shake hands may be of limited spiritual value, however useful on other grounds.[12] It seems, therefore, to be presupposed that the foreign culture is presented *in such a way as to bring spiritually challenging issues to the fore* at least some of the time. It also seems that the *development of certain virtues* is assumed - increased intolerance towards foreigners or new-found knowledge of French restaurant menus would both count as changes in attitudes or understanding with regard to culture, but neither seem to be very obvious instances of spiritual development. Attitudes such as empathy, tolerance, growth beyond an egocentric outlook - or the hospitality to strangers discussed in chapter four - are more like what the OFSTED handbook appears to have in mind. Adopting these as goals is likely to have implications for pedagogy which would need to be spelled out.

The 2000 revision of the NCMFL offers a different example of the contribution of modern language education to spiritual development:

> "MFL provides opportunities to promote:
>
> * *spiritual development*, through stimulating pupils' interest and

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[10] Progression in the cultural dimension of foreign language learning in the National Curriculum is to include "increasing pupils' awareness of factors which have influenced culture" (SCAA, 1997:4).

[11] Consider, for instance, with reference to religious beliefs in particular, the different potential learning experiences of a Christian and a non-Christian student encountering Christian faith as practised or manifested in the target culture.

[12] Cf. Byram, 1989.

fascination in the phenomenon of language and the meanings and feelings it can transmit."[13]

Here the focus is upon the learner's relationship to the language being learned. Two aspects of this are apparent. First, language itself can fascinate, perhaps occasionally calling forth the 'awe and wonder' which is so frequently associated with spiritual development in recent discussions. Second, language and self are closely intertwined. Given the pervasive role of language in the formation, maintenance and expression of personal identity, the experience of learning a new language and a growth in language awareness might reasonably be supposed to have some potential role in the learner's spiritual growth. Again, questions arise immediately. Presumably not just any experience of "meanings and feelings" would count as spiritual development (a Spanish expletive used in anger? A personal preference for sausages over burgers expressed in French?). Seeing this learner-language relationship as of potential spiritual significance seems to imply a further premise: that language is understood and presented not simply as a tool for getting things done, or a set of behaviours distanced from the learner's sense of self, but as *a source of fascination in itself and as something impacting upon the learner's capacity for self-expression and sense of identity.*

Both of these snippets of advice are presented as examples rather than as exhaustive or definitive accounts, so it is pertinent to ask what else it might be reasonable to look for when consulting the programmes of study for evidence of concern for spiritual development. I suggest that a third relationship is significant, namely that between the learner and other persons in the classroom. As Frank Brooks puts it, the modern language classroom is "a place where people come to learn not only the foreign language but also to learn to live and act together as a social group, to learn what is expected and what is accepted within that social reality, to learn how to interpret the daily goings on in the classroom".[14] The pedagogical shifts of recent decades have made

[13] DfEE/QCA, 2000:8. Again, the passage cited is the full extent of the guidance offered.

[14] Brooks, 1993:238. Brooks argues that the forms of interpersonal interaction modelled and practised in the classroom have an impact on learners' attitudes to communication with outsiders in the foreign language: "when students do great amounts of seat work, independently working on teacher-prepared worksheets, they react negatively and in confused fashion when they are suddenly thrust into the position of being asked to respond orally to a visitor's query, which is asked in the target language" (p.236).

the modern language classroom a place where work in pairs and small groups is commonplace and where many facets of everyday life are discussed by learners in the new language. While such forms of interpersonal interaction are also present in other classrooms, in the modern language classroom regular experience of interacting with others in a variety of contexts through language is a focal element of learning. If, as I suggested in chapter four, spiritual development should be thought of in terms of interpersonal relationships, and not merely as what goes on inside the individual, then the particular ethos and forms of relationship developed within the modern language classroom can be seen as a potential arena for spiritual development. Students and teachers will (for instance) be engaged in attending (respectfully or otherwise) to others' attempts to convey meaning, making very public mistakes, apologising and forgiving or failing to forgive, and communicating about personal matters in a new medium. As with the cultural aspect, this interpersonal element involves certain assumptions. In particular, it presupposes a *pedagogical attentiveness to dimensions of classroom communication and interaction beyond the narrowly linguistic* - a conscious concern with ethos as well as with linguistic progression.

In sum, it seems reasonable to approach the pedagogy implicit in the NCMFL with an interest in three relationships:

- *The learner's relationship to the target culture*: which texts and aspects of the target culture are brought to the fore? Are spiritually challenging themes, issues or stories foregrounded? What kinds of virtues inform this relationship? What kind of relationship between the learner and the target culture or its members is fostered?

- *The learner's relationship to language*: how are learners encouraged to regard the language being learned? Is attention given to the connection between language and identity? Is there opportunity for reflection on and appreciation of language? What kinds of examples of language use are presented to learners?

- *The learner's relationship to his or her immediate neighbours*, the other persons present in the classroom: within what kind of ethos does interpersonal interaction take place? What assumptions are evident concerning issues such as how breakdowns in communication should be handled? What kinds of attitudes

and virtues inform this relationship?

Given the focus of this thesis, I will approach these relationships within the National Curriculum with a particular interest in how they impinge upon pedagogical process, drawing in aims and content at relevant points.

2.   Pedagogical context

Since the National Curriculum documentation does not spell out a detailed pedagogical design, it will be helpful to consider it in the context of the changes in language teaching which preceded it and upon which it explicitly built.[15] This will not only provide a clearer context for interpreting what the NCMFL stands for pedagogically, but will also help to flesh out the preliminary orientation sketched above. I will sketch this context with a particular interest in identifying strengths on which a National Curriculum which was serious about spiritual development could build, and also weaknesses which such a curriculum might be expected to address. The two most important shifts in modern language education preceding the National Curriculum were the rise of the communicative approach to language teaching and the introduction of the GCSE examination.

a.   Communicative language teaching: Promising features

Communicative language teaching (CLT) can be regarded as a broad ideal which has been worked into a range of different, even conflicting, approaches and designs.[16] The present chapter will be concerned with that version of CLT which has been most influential in British schools. There are a number of features of the general approach which seem promising for the development of a concern for spiritual development within modern language education. In particular, the ideas which cluster around the ideal of authenticity are pertinent.

i.   Aspects of authenticity

The ideal of authenticity has three main facets. First, the term 'authentic' has perhaps

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[15] See DES, 1988:10-14; DES/WO, 1990a:3, 9.

[16] See, for instance, the discussions in Johnson & Porter, 1983. The contrasting pedagogies discussed in this chapter and chapters 6 and 7 are all, broadly speaking, communicative in orientation.

become most familiar to teachers in the context of talk of 'authentic texts'. This term refers to the idea that foreign language texts used in the classroom should be those composed in the target culture by native speakers for genuine communicative purposes, rather than ones written artificially for the pedagogical purposes of the language classroom. The use of such 'authentic texts' became a prominent characteristic of GCSE language teaching.[17] The emphasis on authentic texts is also commonly accompanied by the recommendation that such texts should be encountered by means of legitimate tasks. In other words, what the learner is asked to do with the texts should have some resemblance to their intended use outside the pedagogical setting.[18]

This concern for legitimate tasks relates closely to another form of authenticity, namely authenticity of language use. CLT arose from a variety of theoretical and practical sources[19] as an alternative to the long-dominant emphasis on the structural dimension of language, an emphasis frequently accompanied by pedagogical reliance on artificial utterances used as examples of possible structures. Theories of communicative competence emphasised the importance of mastering rules of *use*, without which a knowledge of a language's grammar may not in itself lead to the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately.[20] Grammatical categories, it was pointed out, do not map straightforwardly onto the communicative functions of language ("can you close the window?" may not be a query, for instance), and structurally correct utterances can fail through inappropriacy. With the development of notional and functional syllabuses as

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[17] Grenfell & Harris, 1999:20-21.

[18] The has been some variation in the terminology used. Widdowson distinguishes between 'authenticity' in the relationship between a text and a reader in terms of the uses to which a text is put and 'genuineness' as a property of the text itself in terms of the purposes for which it was originally written (Widdowson, 1978:80). It has, however, remained common to talk of 'authentic texts' as those written by native speakers for a variety of communicative purposes as opposed to those composed specially for the language classroom.

[19] Brumfit lists as theoretical sources linguistic discussions of communicative competence, anthropology, sociolinguistics, social psychology, philosophy (especially speech act theory) and ethnomethodology as well as developments in general pedagogy (Brumfit, 1988:4-7 cf. Brumfit & Johnson, 1979; Canale & Swain, 1980; Savignon, 1990). Howatt adds the influence of the Graded Objectives movement in secondary schools, of experiments in French teaching at primary level, and of work oriented to the communicative needs of adult learners, as well as other contextual factors such as the rise of television and the invention of the cassette recorder and the photocopier (Howatt, 1988).

[20] Hymes, 1972:278.

supplements or alternatives to the traditional grammatical syllabus,[21] attention shifted from language as a structural system and from decontextualised examples of possible *usage* to language *use* as a contextualised form of action.[22] The aim was to move from "language put on display" to more realistic practice in using language for practical communication, approximating more closely the ways in which the language being learned is used outside the educational context.[23]

A third related aspect of authenticity involves a primary focus on the learner rather than the language structure.[24] A focus on linguistic form, it is argued, leaves the meanings expressed somewhat arbitrary and the individual learner secondary to the central focus on the impersonal, systematic structure of the language.[25] An emphasis on authenticity in terms of the learner's subjective sense of meaning is present in varying ways and to different degrees in different variants of CLT. Functional/notional approaches have continued to rely on a predetermined linguistic syllabus, interpreting orientation towards the learner in terms of a prior analysis of projected learner needs. More process-oriented versions of CLT place a more primary emphasis on the creation of opportunities for the learner to use the target language to express personally significant meaning in an interpersonal context. It is argued that

> "If we present the learner with language only as an object, as if it was
> [*sic*] separable from the learner's relevant psychological and social
> experience, we are almost certainly postponing development of the
> learner's ability to communicate through the language. We may be
> divorcing language learning from its essential interpersonal nature and
> offering it as a static object to learners who have themselves experienced

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[21] i.e. syllabuses based on an inventory of language functions or of semantic categories rather than a structural analysis of the grammar of the language (Finocchiaro & Brumfit, 1983; Littlewood, 1981; Wilkins, 1976).

[22] Widdowson, 1978:1-21. Cf. Savignon, 1991:33: "Language structures and vocabulary are viewed as tools for doing, not as facts for knowing."

[23] Widdowson, 1978:53.

[24] Breen, 1983.

[25] Howatt, 1988:14.

the use of their first language as very much an interpersonal undertaking."[26]

This concern for the personalisation of language learning leads to an emphasis on the use of language for personal self-expression. It is based on a view of language as "closely related to individuals' self-concept and identity" or, less individualistically, as "a vehicle for identity and identities in interaction with each other".[27]

ii. Relevance to spiritual development

If these emphases within CLT are brought alongside the three relationships identified above as possible contexts for spiritual development, an impression of positive potential results. First, in the turn to authentic texts there is the possibility of a more direct relationship to the target culture, including the possibility of using texts from that culture which deal with spiritually significant themes. Reading, say, a poem or a letter from the problem pages of a French teenage magazine may offer richer possibilities in this regard than those which could be offered by study of example sentences designed to embody particular structures. The opportunities for exploring the spiritual/cultural interface noted in the OFSTED inspection handbook would seem to be potentially enhanced by an emphasis on encountering examples of language use drawn directly from the target culture.

Second, the characteristic aim of shifting from a focus on abstracted examples of language usage to a more natural language use also seems potentially relevant to spiritual development. One important implication of this shift is that more aspects of language become relevant. As Widdowson puts it,

> "Realizing linguistic knowledge as use, as opposed to simply manifesting it as usage, must necessarily commit the learner to an acceptance of conditions which control normal communication. Thus he will have to be concerned not simply with whether his sentence is correct or not but

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[26] Breen & Candlin, 1980:94.

[27] Grenfell, 1991:7; cf. Johnson, 1988.

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whether the statement that it counts as is true or not."[28]

If learning a language is not simply a matter of examining linguistic structure, but of dealing with the "conditions which control normal communication", this invites a consideration of aspects of language learning beyond the narrowly linguistic. It suggests a need to consider the wider human context of communication. This may include not only Widdowson's example of the truth value of statements, but also the beliefs, values, norms and motives involved in communicative interaction. This offers a potentially more fertile basis for discussing the relationship of language learning to spiritual development than that offered by a structurally focused pedagogy dealing with language abstracted from its interpersonal context.[29] Once it is accepted that the content of CLT "needs to reflect and support the integration of language with other forms of human experience and behaviour",[30] it does not seem forced to regard spiritual development as a relevant concern.

Third, connecting this concern for communicative language use with an emphasis on the personal and interpersonal context of language learning suggests an increase not only in the amount of interaction going on between learners (through pair and group work), but also in the degree to which such interaction is personally significant. Learners carrying out a survey of likes and dislikes or attitudes to a particular issue among members of the class, or practising giving and receiving invitations, are examples of possible activities. A concern for personally engaged interaction between learners offers another potential point of contact between language learning and wider aspects of personal development.

There are, then, elements within CLT which the NCMFL could have identified, highlighted and developed in relation to a concern for spiritual development. The emphasis on possibility and potential in this section has not, however, been accidental.

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[28] Widdowson, 1978:133.

[29] I do not wish to claim here that a structural approach cannot contribute to spiritual development, only that there are features of communicative approaches which broaden the basis on which the contribution of modern language education can be discussed. It should also be noted that the point which I have drawn from Widdowson's comment does not imply that all classroom utterances have the same relationship to questions of truth; this would deny any distinction between communication, practice and role-play. The point is rather that if no classroom utterances are regarded as faced with questions of truth, then we return to a linguistic artificiality which the communicative movement has sought to escape.

[30] Breen & Candlin, 1980:102.

The account of CLT given above is both selective and idealised, and it will be necessary to qualify it in various ways both in what follows and in the next two chapters.

b.   GCSE and modern language pedagogy

Whatever the virtues, realised or otherwise, of CLT as a broad approach, there has been significant dissatisfaction with the particular pedagogic designs which laid the groundwork for the National Curriculum, some of it in areas relevant to the present discussion. The NCMFL explicitly built upon the changes which had recently been introduced in the GCSE examination. This was significantly influenced in turn by the Graded Objectives movement (GOML) and the work of the Council of Europe on the Threshold Level. The GOML movement sought to tackle problems of motivation over the long haul of a secondary school modern language course by developing a series of smaller-scale criterion-referenced tests linked to certificates, similar to graded music examinations.[31] These specified particular subsets of linguistic skills, defined in terms of the ability to carry out particular communicative transactions, which were linked to progressive levels of achievement. The Council of Europe work was also concerned to define a range of testable skills which could represent a basic level of linguistic competence. The Threshold Level was an attempt to describe the settings, topics and language functions which would represent a minimum level of linguistic attainment necessary for an adult language learner to "cross the threshold into the foreign-language community".[32]

In the emphasis placed on language functions and semantic notions, on authentic texts and tasks, and on role play modelled on actual communicative situations, GCSE language teaching clearly reflects important emphases in discussions of CLT. There are, however, shortcomings in relation to the interests of the present discussion which weigh against the sense of potential outlined above.

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[31] Clark, 1987:30; Page, 1996. This dovetails with the emphasis noted above (and discussed further below) on language as a tool or skill. As Green puts it, "there is a qualitative difference between testing a skill that has been acquired and testing an ability to deal with intellectual matters. If the acquisition of a foreign language is principally likened to...acquiring a skill such as playing a musical instrument or learning to swim then it follows naturally that testing one should be very much like testing another" (Green, 1990:46).

[32] van Ek, 1979:106.

First it should be noted that the needs analyses which eventually fed into GCSE syllabi were not focused on the general educational needs of a school language learner, but rather on the survival needs of the tourist or migrant worker abroad.[33] Given this background it is easy for a concern for practical communication to become identified with the meeting of various material needs in the target language context, and GCSE language teaching has tended to construe the relationship between the learner and the target culture predominantly in terms of the role of the tourist.[34]

This underlying emphasis highlights a problem with the notion of authentic texts. "Authenticity" defined in terms of orientation to a genuine target language audience does not in itself provide any criteria for distinguishing between the relative value of the myriad texts available within the target culture. Given the tourist orientation of GCSE language teaching, there has been a tendency for the texts used to consist largely of consumer ephemera, the result being to "substitute the tyranny of grammar for the tyranny of endless menu cards, bus tickets, timetables and postcards".[35] This focus on texts associated with consumer transactions was accompanied by a virtual absence of literary texts in the modern language curriculum up to GCSE.[36] Granting the need to master some basic skills needed to navigate in a foreign context, this nevertheless seems a less than obvious basis for a spiritually challenging encounter with the target culture.

This inadequacy in the notion of authenticity as a guide to selection is replicated in the teaching of productive language skills. With authenticity understood in terms of a relationship between the messages to be rehearsed and language use in the target culture,

> "the model runs the danger of giving insufficient attention to the actual nature of these messages. Students may be asked, for example, to convey the contents of a bus timetable, or describe a route through a fictitious

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[33] Cf. Trim, 1979; Wilkins, 1983.

[34] This was carried over into GCSE; Clark describes GOML syllabi as being typically "set out in terms of tourist-related social and transactional tasks in various predictable situations" (Clark, 1987:32).

[35] Green, 1990:45.

[36] Cf. Bird & Dennison, 1987; Buckby, Morris, Page, & Woods, 1986.

town; tasks which, it may be argued, have little meaning or motivational value for them".[37]

Even where the notion of authenticity is applied with a stronger emphasis on authenticity to the learner's personal concerns,[38] difficulties remain. Lying is, for instance, a common communicative act among native speakers of a language, and it is often engaged in for purposes in which the individual concerned has a high degree of personal investment. Taking authenticity as the primary criterion, it might therefore be a potential target competence. This is not a far-fetched example; Rivers argues explicitly that lying in the classroom is a justified communicative behaviour because of its common incidence outside the classroom as a "form of real communication".[39]

It may be noted in a similar vein that a great deal of real communication may be of personal interest to those who engage in it, but nevertheless inconsequential, or even counter-productive, in relation to wider educational goals. A learner with a highly materialistic outlook and an addiction to shopping might find language learning which focused largely on consumer transactions authentic in all of the senses discussed above, but once a concern for fostering spiritual development is brought into play, such learning is likely to seem inadequate from an educational point of view.[40]

There is, moreover, a potential tension between authenticity in terms of the target language context and authenticity in terms of the pedagogical context. A concern with goals such as fostering a fascination with language or an awareness of beliefs and values present in the target culture may lead to a use of texts which departs significantly from that to which they would have been put in their original context. Texts written to serve utilitarian purposes may, for instance, be examined for their cultural significance.

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[37] Johnson, 1988:62. Melrose states that "there is a strong suspicion that the role plays of the functional-notional approach may be no more than a polite exchange of products" (Melrose, 1992).

[38] Breen, 1983.

[39] Rivers, 1983. I have argued elsewhere in detail that a consistent concern for honesty would lead to modifications in certain typical features of GCSE pedagogy, which can often involve learners in falsifying personal information in order to meet the constraints of particular simulations (Smith, 1997).

[40] Cf. Hull, 1995; Hull, 1999.

This returns us to the earlier point that communicative approaches may, through their focus on natural language use, widen the scope for considering dimensions of communication beyond the narrowly linguistic. Once these broader aspects are brought into play, it soon becomes apparent that pedagogy must be guided by substantive values beyond that of authenticity, given that speech acts may be authentic but irrelevant or unethical, and that particular educational values may support a use of texts which does not echo their use in the target language context. If this wider human context is not addressed, then CLT has not so much overcome the decontextualisation of language found in structural approaches as shifted its locus from grammatical forms to communicative skills.

The question of whether adequate attention is given to how particular skills are incorporated into broader human orientations is relevant to another feature of the Council of Europe work (one also reflected in GOML) which laid the groundwork for GCSE modern language learning, namely its emphasis on behavioural objectives. Van Ek argues that "language-learning objectives, like other learning-objectives, are defined in terms of behaviour. The aim of learning is always to enable the learner to do something which he could not do at the beginning of the learning-process."[41] This emphasis on specifiable behaviours as the testable outcome of learning dovetails with the communicative emphasis (derived from speech act theory) on doing things with words,[42] and at the same time directs attention *away* from the wider human context, the beliefs and values which inform natural language use.

A focus on the mastery of behavioural skills and of the segments of language specified by a prior needs analysis stands in some tension with the view that CLT should be concerned with the relationship between language and identity. An interesting and pertinent question arises here concerning the view of the person underlying this strand of communicative pedagogy. Other proponents of CLT have argued that such teaching requires a new, non-behaviourist view of the learner. Widdowson, for instance, focuses on the learner's rationality, suggesting that under behaviourism the learner "is meant to submit himself [*sic*] like a circus animal to the direction of the trainer and to respond to

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[41] van Ek, 1979:103.

[42] Austin, 1962.

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the stimuli provided without recourse to thought". He argues that it should instead be recognised that "the acquisition of abilities requires the learner to assume a more active and responsible role involving, among other things, an awareness of his own learning processes and of the relevance of particular exercises to their development"[43] The shift away from behaviourist views of the learner is different but even more marked in versions of CLT which draw upon the personalistic themes of humanistic psychology, a point which I will discuss further in the next chapter.[44] It has been argued, however, that the basic orientation of GOML and the Council of Europe work is "essentially behaviouristic in character".[45]

The relevance of this to the present topic has to do with the limited scope for allying either spiritual development or a Christian view of the person with an essentially behaviouristic pedagogy.[46] Identifying learning with the mastery of a series of discrete behaviours offers little scope in itself for engaging the learner spiritually, and a behaviouristic pedagogy stands in tension with the emphases on grateful responsibility (gift-call) and core spiritual orientation discussed in chapter 4. It pays insufficient attention to the ways in which discrete behaviours are taken up and given meaning in wider human contexts and orientations, and thus tends to divert attention away from beliefs, values and attitudes as foci of teaching and learning. Taken together with the consumer/tourist orientation, this has led to complaints that the skill-oriented training characteristic of GCSE is of limited educational value, despite the gains which GCSE provided in terms of innovation in testing procedures, increased accessibility to learners of varying ability, and increased practical relevance.[47] To summarise, in contrast to the

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[43] Widdowson, 1978:109n2.

[44] See Yoshikawa, 1982.

[45] Clark, 1987:28, 32; cf. Howatt, 1988.

[46] For discussion of the tensions between behaviourism and Christian views of personhood, see e.g. Evans, 1979; Hay, 1982:105-107; Van Leeuwen, 1985.

[47] See Byram, 1989, 1991. Byram claims that "encouragement has been formulated in terms of tangible aims, vocational or utilitarian profits ultimately to be gained from the ability to use the language," arguing that "these tangible, motivating aims have then tended to cast into the shadows other educational aims of language teaching." (Byram, 1989:23). Roberts alleges that "the cognitive behaviourism of earlier (audio-lingual) days has been resurrected in a new - if more covert - form of social behaviourism which programmes pupils to operate in set contexts ('In the hotel' or 'At the bank') but not outside: i.e. which encourages them to learn the language presented rather than to learn from it in

virtues often claimed on behalf of communicative pedagogy in general, it is more difficult to see where concern for spiritual development might flourish within the more specific context of behaviouristically oriented learning geared towards the material survival needs of the tourist overseas.[48] Some alternatives will be explored at length in chapters 6 and 7.

3. Aims and Pedagogy in the National Curriculum

Having discussed some pertinent aspects of the pedagogical context within which the NCMFL was designed and introduced, I return now to the National Curriculum itself, mindful of the invitation in the OFSTED inspection handbook to seek "explicit" and "illuminating" material relevant to spiritual development in the subject-specific curriculum documents.[49]

It should be noted at the outset that any attempt to examine the pedagogy put forward in the NCMFL documentation must accept a measure of ambiguity. The Harris report, which remains the most extensive exposition of the thinking behind the NCMFL despite the various subsequent revisions, displays a striking ambivalence in relation to pedagogical approaches and designs. On the one hand the report denies that any particular pedagogical option is prescribed. The NCMFL is presented as simply a statement of the skills which learners should by some stage have acquired. It is clearly stated that the "statutory requirements of the National Curriculum are not intended to bind teachers to any particular teaching approach" and that there is no desire to "recommend anything that would restrict teachers' freedom to adapt to the particular circumstances of their school".[50] This feature of the National Curriculum documents would seem to lie in part behind Brumfit's charge that they are "vague" in relation to

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a way that allows the expression of personal meaning" (Roberts, n.d.:9). The content of GCSE has been described by various writers as "dull, superficial and irrelevant," "pedestrian," "anodyne" and "inconsequential" (Coyle, 1999 citing Clark, Salter and Powell).

[48] This does not imply a rejection in principle of giving some weight to the tourist role. Even the tourist has other interests and needs which are easily forgotten or sidelined.

[49] OFSTED, 1994a:4:17.

[50] DES/WO, 1990a:10.

methodology.[51]

This denial is, however, immediately qualified by the statement that "at times the link between a teaching approach and the skills and processes to be taught in the programmes of study is so strong that that approach is inevitably implied".[52] Indeed, a particular approach is quite frequently implied; the regular references to such matters as the achievement of communicative competence, the use of authentic materials, coverage of functions and notions, the importance of group work, pair work and role play, the overriding importance of the ability to use the language for practical communication "even if the grammar or pronunciation is not always correct", and, perhaps above all, the insistence on maximal use of the target language as the medium of instruction make the outlines of the favoured pedagogy fairly clear.[53] This is explicitly (and unsurprisingly) identified as that which is to be found in GCSE teaching.[54] The correspondence with GCSE-style communicative teaching and the emphasis on target language use are sufficiently strong for some to have written, despite the vagueness, of a "national methodology".[55]

The extensive use of examples of 'good practice' in the Harris report introduces further ambiguity. Labelling examples of teaching activities as 'good practice' in a government document which lays down the framework within which teachers' performance will be publicly judged seems in practical terms to come close to prescription. At the same time, the fact that the descriptions offered are presented strictly as examples, with no legally binding force, distances the curriculum itself from any of the possible instantiations offered. The statutory curriculum thus evades strict accountability for the

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[51] Brumfit, 1995:145.

[52] DES/WO, 1990a:10.

[53] DES/WO, 1990a:9-13,58-62.

[54] DES/WO, 1990a:9.

[55] Macaro, 1997:35. This echoes a pattern of public disavowal accompanied by *de facto* prescription in the development of the GCSE examination (Bird & Dennison, 1987:23,27)).

educational effects of any particular example offered.[56] The question of how far a pedagogical design could depart from the examples given before it might no longer be considered "good practice" is never addressed.

This raises particular difficulties for an attempt to identify and discuss the modern language pedagogy characteristic of the NCMFL. On the one hand the broad outlines of an approach are present; on the other hand, the documents distance themselves to a degree from any particular design. It is difficult, therefore, to apply specific criticisms to NC pedagogy, for it will often be possible to find in it the potential for pursuing pedagogical designs which differ from those criticised. For this reason, the discussion which follows will not attempt to identify the National Curriculum with a systematic pedagogical design, but will rather treat the National Curriculum documents as a field of tensions out of which questions emerge which can be pursued further in relation to more specific designs. I will focus my attention on particular tensions which appear when the NCMFL is examined in the light of a concern for spiritual development, and will pursue some of these further in relation to more distinctive pedagogies in the next two chapters. In what follows I will first discuss the aims and objectives set out in the NCMFL, then explore the treatment of cultural learning and personal self-expression in the programmes of study, and finally consider some pedagogical implications of the focus on using language for practical communication.

a. Aims and objectives

The "educational purposes of teaching a modern foreign language" in the National Curriculum are presented as being:

> "to develop the ability to use the language effectively for the purposes of practical communication;
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> to form a sound base of the skills, language and attitudes required for further study, work and leisure;

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[56] Cf. e.g. DES/WO, 1990a:38, where the reader is assured that "the topics listed are only some possibilities out of many. It is not compulsory to choose any particular topic, nor are the examples given intended *in any way* to restrict teachers' and learners' choice of subject matter" (emphasis added). See also NCC, 1991:16.

to offer insights into the culture and civilisation of the countries where
the language is spoken;

to develop an awareness of the nature of language and language learning;

to provide enjoyment and intellectual stimulation;

to encourage positive attitudes to foreign language learning and to
speakers of foreign languages and a sympathetic approach to other
cultures and civilisations;

to promote learning skills of more general application (e.g. analysis,
memorising, drawing of inferences);

to develop pupils' understanding of themselves and their own culture."[57]

While there is no mention here of spiritual goals, this list of aims does include themes
discussed already, notably a concern for learners' attitudes and understanding in relation
to other cultures and the development of an appreciation of language. As a number of
commentators have noted, however, it is precisely these aspects of the list of aims which
become problematic as soon as the detail of the National Curriculum is examined.

The guidance given by the Secretary of State to the original Modern Foreign Languages
Working Group mentions both the vocational/economic and the cultural/empathetic
arguments for the inclusion of foreign language study in the National Curriculum, but
goes on to state that "the main intention of the National Curriculum requirements is that
they should instil *basic competence* in at least one modern foreign language".[58] The
prioritising in the Harris report of EC languages over the other languages listed (and the
concomitant downplaying of community languages) is justified in terms of "the central
position of the EC languages in terms of their value in commerce and employment,
particularly with the advent of the Single Market in 1992 and the UK's obligations to its

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[57] DES/WO, 1990a:3. The list echoes earlier statements without significant change; cf. DES,
1988:2.

[58] DES/WO, 1990a:120, emphasis added.

community partners".[59] The rationale offered for learning a second foreign language is likewise "in order to satisfy the country's aspirations as a competitive market leader in the global economy and to equip more of its young people with marketable foreign language skills in a wider range of languages".[60] As the early emphasis on cross-curricular themes faltered, the only cross-curricular theme to which a supplementary publication was devoted offering further guidance to modern language teachers is economic and industrial understanding.[61]

Sir Ron Dearing's 1993 review of the National Curriculum seems to pick up on this clear tendency in that it makes no allusion to cultural or linguistic aims, referring only to the economic justification for including modern foreign languages.[62] Perhaps more surprisingly, the Association for Language Learning has at times adopted the same tone. A leaflet published to promote modern language provision to school governors offers only one kind of justification for regarding such provision as important:

> "the United Kingdom needs a skilled and flexible labour force in order to respond to the economic challenge and opportunities of the expanding European market, and other world markets...young people must be able to compete on equal terms in the labour market with their counterparts in other countries".[63]

In the most recent documentation, there is an apparent shift of emphasis in the rationale

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[59] DES/WO, 1990a:71.

[60] DES/WO, 1990a:86.

[61] NCC, 1992.

[62] "We must assume that today's school children may need to pursue part of their career in any part of the world. Britain's economic prosperity will also depend increasingly on our relationships with the our trading partners in both Europe and the wider world" (Dearing, 1994:45. Cf. Pachler & Field, 1997:3,7).

[63] ALL, n.d., perhaps following the somewhat pessimistic advice of Owen that teachers should resort to the thankless task of attempting to argue the broader educational benefits of foreign language study only if all else fails (Owen, 1990). This may be contrasted with an earlier HMI study of schools which had introduced five years of foreign language learning for all of their students. The reasons offered by these schools for including a foreign language for all were educational, emphasising issues such as cultural awareness, generalisable listening and speaking skills and the "spirit of cooperation" engendered by work in pairs and small groups (DES, 1987:17).

offered for modern foreign languages. NCMFL 2000 offers the following statement regarding their importance:

> "Through the study of a foreign language, pupils understand and appreciate different countries, cultures, people and communities - and as they do so, begin to think of themselves as citizens of the world as well as of the United Kingdom. Pupils also learn about the basic structures of language. They explore the similarities and differences between the foreign language they are learning and English or another language, and learn how language can be manipulated and applied in different ways. Their listening, reading and memory skills improve, and their speaking and writing become more accurate. The development of these skills, together with pupils' knowledge and understanding of the structure of language, lay the foundations for future study of other languages."[64]

Here cultural and cognitive gains seem to be placed in the foreground, and elsewhere in the same document spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are explicitly highlighted as goals appropriate to modern language teaching.[65] It remains to be seen (despite the confident indicatives in the passage cited) whether this rationale will be accompanied by the shifts in classroom practice which would be likely to realise its aspirations. The document itself offers no explicit comment on this question.

The question is significant given that there seems to have been a clear order of priority in the most formative NCMFL documents within the range of aims put forward. The concern here is not to suggest that vocational and economic aims are illegitimate or incompatible with a concern for spiritual development (although there is little reason to suspect that references to economic activity have its spiritual dimension particularly in mind). It is rather to highlight the tensions which emerge when these aims are accorded such a dominant role and construed in primarily competitive terms. The question which this raises is how cross-cultural

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[64] DfEE/QCA, 2000:14.

[65] DfEE/QCA, 2000:8.

understanding is to both develop in itself and contribute to spiritual development by means of a curriculum which has been designed to focus primarily on the development of basic practical competence and which has been framed by a set of aims in which economic competition and an instrumental or adversarial view of other countries have tended to predominate. I will discuss further below the question of whether the broader cultural and personal aims are supported by the pedagogy which is put forward in the NCMFL.

b. Culture and experience in the programmes of study

i. Cultural awareness

Despite the drift towards a predominantly instrumental emphasis at the level of overarching aims, there is a clear interest in cultural awareness in the programmes of study. With regard to culture, the Harris report offers the assurance that the "recommended programmes of study place a high value on cultural awareness",[66] and emphasises that treatments of the target culture should "represent a suitably broad spectrum of human experience".[67] Teaching materials should "reflect the reality of social attitudes and experiences as a basis for extending pupils' understanding of issues to do with gender, race, nationality, religion and class".[68] This is related both to "the attitudes and understanding of pupils about the great diversity of their fellow humans" and to "their personal and social education".[69]

The Harris report seems to recognise the limitations of existing GCSE teaching in its

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[66] DES/WO, 1990a:49. Cf. p. 38: "An increasing cultural awareness is essential to successful language learning" and p.49 "one of the main aims of modern language learning [is] the development in learners of sensitivity to the culture (in its widest sense) of the communities whose languages are being studied".

[67] DES/WO, 1990a:80.

[68] DES/WO, 1990a:81; cf. SCAA, 1997:58 where this range of aspects of culture is said to apply to all attainment levels. In a passage which could be taken as being echoed in the OFSTED advice discussed above, the Harris report states that "by its nature, the study of languages frequently confronts learners with their own and others' attitudes to many issues to do with gender, race, nationality, religion or class. Pupils' understanding of these issues will be influenced by the information and views presented to them during their course, whether directly by the teacher or through the various materials they encounter." (DES/WO, 1990a:80).

[69] DES/WO, 1990a:80-81.

comment that "learners should have access to a wide range of experience, not one limited to simulating life abroad".[70] It moves away from a prescribed list of topics and introduces broader "areas of experience", with the examples offered including items such as political events, stereotyping, environmental issues, architecture, the benefits and dangers of technology and religious life.[71] The examples of good practice in the report include both standard GCSE fare and activities which go beyond what was typical at GCSE (for instance, students writing poems and prose pieces based on Camus' *L'Étranger*).[72] There would seem to be substantial scope here for the development of spiritually challenging content and of pedagogical approaches which enable learners to engage with it in non-mechanical ways. This broadening of teaching content was met with optimism by some; Byram, for instance, stated that

> "we can thankfully leave behind the narrow interpretation of language
> learning which has dominated British education for the past decade
> and which was embodied in the GCSE...teachers and learners are
> heartily sick of tourist transactions and 'survival' in an alien and
> implicitly hostile environment. The promise of the Harris report to
> introduce a much richer content through more 'areas of experience' is
> a welcome indication of change and potentially the most far-reaching
> innovation".[73]

Nevertheless, the connection with spiritual development cannot be assumed to be automatic. The specific inclusion of religion in the "spectrum of human experience" which should be encountered in the target culture is interesting in the present context, for this aspect of culture has not typically been a significant presence in GCSE teaching materials (beyond, that is, the names of a few festivals and the word for 'cathedral' on a tourist map). Part 2 of the programmes of study proposed by the

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[70] DES/WO, 1990a:38.

[71] DES/WO, 1990a:39.

[72] DES/WO, 1990a:64.

[73] Byram, 1991:43.

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Harris Report includes under Area of Experience B (personal and social life) not only religious festivals, but also, as a separate subheading, "religious life".[74] While topics which are not specifically religious may also provide spiritual challenge, the inclusion of religious life seems to offer a particularly direct point of contact between modern language education and spiritual development, provided that the pedagogy employed moves beyond naming religious dates and artefacts.

However, tracking the vicissitudes of this proposal through the rest of the report and through subsequent documents yields a much less promising picture. Within the Harris report, the examples of good practice fail to include religion as a concern even where it might have been pertinent to do so. One of the examples from schools, for instance, focuses on Easter in Germany as a topic. As far as can be discerned from the brief cameo provided, however, the work set focuses only on the travel and tourism aspects of the Easter holidays.[75] A more extensive example is the guidance offered on how to sequence "less familiar topics of greater breadth", which might move towards "more sophisticated language" and "more controversial topics" as they progress.[76] It is suggested that such extended topics would benefit from cross-curricular cooperation, and two sample topic outlines are provided. One of these is headed "the study of a country", and sixteen aspects of such a study are listed.[77] It would appear from the list that the significant features of a country are its physical geography, tourist potential, economy, important historical events, and artistic output. One item on the list suggests, rather reductively, that learners should be able to "predict future events" based on "knowledge of geography, history, economics". Another echoes the narrow work/leisure dichotomy of many GCSE materials in its suggestion that in studying a town learners should "plan the siting of (eg) a leisure centre or a large industrial complex". Neither religion nor any other basic beliefs or commitments are mentioned, and a basically reductive and materialist view of the

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[74] DES/WO, 1990a:39; DES/WO, 1990b:104.

[75] DES/WO, 1990a:67.

[76] DES/WO, 1990a:41.

[77] DES/WO, 1990a:41-42.

foreign culture seems to be implied.[78]

If we turn to the further development of the NCMFL the precarious position of religion in relation to culture becomes even more apparent. In the final publication of the initial version of the curriculum, the reference in the Areas of Experience to "religious life" was amended to the more indirect "personal, teenage and social attitudes towards religion".[79] In the much briefer delineation of the areas of experience in NCMFL 1995 religion is not mentioned. This absence is replicated in NCMFL 2000, in which all reference to religion has disappeared from the requirements relating to breadth of study.[80] Given the attempt in this later version of the curriculum to minimise the prescriptive detail, it must be admitted that exploring the role of religion in the target culture is not excluded, but there is nothing to draw the teacher's attention to the matter. Religion is mentioned only in the appended advice on the inclusion of all pupils, where it is stated that "teaching approaches that provide equality of opportunity include...taking account of pupils specific religious or cultural beliefs relating to the representation of ideas or experiences or to the use of particular types of equipment, particularly in science, design and technology, ICT and art and design".[81] Religion seems to have migrated from being a challenging aspect of culture which could contribute to personal development to being a potential handicap on the part of the learner, a complication which may hinder access to certain tasks or equipment. The overall picture with regard to the contribution of cultural learning to spiritual development remains somewhat mixed.

ii.   Personal experience

The apparent concern to move beyond the limited range of experience which had characterised the GCSE is also reflected in the repeated emphasis in the Harris report on the importance of relating learning to students' personal experience. This picks up

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[78] Even the mention of "imaginative writing, art and song" is qualified by the specification that students could consider how these represent "modern town and country life" DES/WO, 1990a.

[79] DES/WO, 1991:28.

[80] DFE/WO, 1995; DfEE/QCA, 2000:17.

[81] DfEE/QCA, 2000:22.

on the ideals of the more process-oriented versions of CLT, discussed above, and the increased flexibility of the areas of experience as compared with GCSE topics seems to offer increased scope for realising such ideals. Learners are to have frequent opportunities to develop and justify their own opinions, and learning should draw "as often as possible" on "learners' own experience and interests".[82] Open-ended tasks, creative writing, discussion of personal information and pauses for reflection are to assist in this, and the hope is expressed that learners will be "using the target language for very much the same purposes as their mother tongue".[83] Some concern for the interpersonal is evident in the emphasis in the programmes of study on cooperation and interaction.[84] A heightened awareness of language is also emphasised as a desirable outcome of language learning.[85]

Here again some hesitation is appropriate. First, referring learning to learners' own experience may be a necessary condition for spiritual development, but it would not seem to be a sufficient one. A learner's possibly self-centred declarations in the target language that history is boring or that coke is better than lemonade would clearly be describable as learning which relates language use to the learner's own experience and interests, but it is not clear how spiritual growth could be thereby entailed. The question also arises as to how the focus on the learner's own existing experience will relate to the encountering of others' experiences and other cultures' interpretations of life (see further chapter 6). This indicates the interdependence of the personal and the cultural emphases. In the foreign language classroom it seems natural to link reflection on spiritually significant beliefs and experiences already available to the learner to an encounter with spiritually significant beliefs and experiences in the target culture.

The degree to which the curriculum itself contributes to the realisation of this personalistic strand in its aims is also a matter of interpretation. The affirmation of

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[82] DES/WO, 1990a:37,59.

[83] DES/WO, 1990a:59,60-61.

[84] DES/WO, 1990a:35.

[85] DES/WO, 1990a:49.

the importance of language awareness is accompanied by the admonition that this should be a by-product of a focus on mastering the new language rather than a focus of attention in its own right.[86] The priority of learning the skills of practical communication is repeatedly made clear.[87] The attainment targets with their level descriptions have been criticised for emphasising the memorisation of chunks of language at the lower levels where many students will remain, thus rendering the opportunities for developing language awareness and self-expression minimal.[88] It has been clearly stated that the programme of study, rather than the level descriptions, should form the basis of planning for teaching and learning.[89] However, the public prominence given to level-related achievement in the National Curriculum in recent years, with all its consequences for the ways in which not only learners but also teachers and schools are evaluated, make a certain amount of teaching to the level descriptions almost inevitable.

A significant factor in the ongoing development of the National Curriculum has been the continued dominance of the GCSE examination. From the overhaul implied by the Harris report's subordination of the GCSE examination to the programmes of study and attainment targets, through the reaffirmation of a revised GCSE in the Dearing review, to the decision to reinstate GCSE in the place of attainment target levels as the main form of assessment at Key Stage 4, the GCSE examination, albeit in somewhat revised form, has maintained its formative role.[90] The extent of its influence on pedagogy is reflected in a recent guide to GCSE language teaching published in the popular *Pathfinder* series. Teachers at Key Stage 4 are advised that although students may benefit "from time to time" from activities which go beyond the demands of the examination, care should be taken to motivate pupils by

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[86] DES/WO, 1990a:35.

[87] See e.g. DES/WO, 1990a:54.

[88] Roberts, n.d.:16. Roberts argues that overall, "the government's utilitarian bias may be diluted, but it is never seriously challenged. Beneath references to the 'imaginative' and 'creative' lies the same narrowly functional view of language that characterised the GCSE" (p.14).

[89] SCAA, 1994:i.

[90] Coyle, 1999. Cf. NCC, 1991:51.

constantly linking activities to examination tasks, for which "the learning of set phrases for topics" will often be an appropriate preparation.[91] This, together with the concurrent continuities in course book design,[92] may go some way towards explaining the fact that the kinds of criticisms of GCSE language learning before the National Curriculum which were discussed above can still be found in discussions of modern language learning several years into the implementation of the NCMFL. Grenfell and Harris, for instance, argue that the reality is often

> "highly routinised practice of stock phrases ... pupils are often
> 'walking phrase books' and spend most of their time ordering meals
> they are not going to eat, planning journeys they are not going to
> make, and speaking to and hearing about people they do not know.
> Indeed, it could be argued that much that goes on in the name of
> communicative language teaching in the average coursebook is just as
> repetitive as audio-lingualism, is just as contrived as situational
> language learning. The stress on transaction for contrived pragmatic
> purposes obscures the value of interaction on various psychological
> and social levels."[93]

The results of Macaro's study of target language use and collaborative and independent learning under the National Curriculum seem to support this allegation. Macaro says of the pupils studied that while they affirm the importance of foreign language learning,

> "they view the learning of French much more as a tool to further their

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[91] Buckby & Corney, 1999:1,5.

[92] The response to the new areas of experience has often been to retain the existing range of topics but cross-reference them with areas of experience, although some wider ranging materials have begun to emerge (see Coyle, 1999; Smith & Dobson, 1999). The topics typical of GCSE tend to be foreshadowed in Key Stage 3. An early study of the implementation of the National Curriculum indicated that at Key Stage 3 "the great majority of the lesson topics consisted of personal and family details; pets; hobbies and pastimes; house and home routines; numbers, dates and prices; shopping, café or restaurant; the weather" (OFSTED, 1993:7). At Key Stage 4 "teaching was often dominated by a narrow approach to the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) syllabus" (p.8).

[93] Grenfell & Harris, 1999:26; Brumfit notes that this criticism is sufficiently common to have become a cliché Brumfit, 1995:136.

own goals rather than as a means of satisfying a genuine interest in the target language community or the target language culture. Pupils asserted that it is important to learn French so you can speak it if you go to France on holiday. Their accompanying comments suggest that this was so they could buy things and find accommodation rather than to interact with people at a social level."[94]

Such findings provide no basis for denying the positive potential which can be found in some of the National Curriculum documentation, or for assuming that there are not schools where this potential is exploited in more creative ways.[95] What they do underline is the fact that spiritual development cannot be assumed to be an automatic or universal by-product of foreign language learning under the National Curriculum, whether it is conceived primarily in relation to cultural awareness, appreciation of language or personal identity and interaction.

c.   Pedagogical models

Perhaps the two strongest emphases in the pedagogy suggested by the National Curriculum documents are the emphasis on practical communication and the insistence on the use of the target language as the medium of instruction. Taken together, these are in danger of eclipsing the broader educational goals which might provide points of contact with spiritual development. If getting a message across using the target language as its vehicle becomes an overriding concern, then the wider human context of communication may fade into the background. The examples discussed below, which take the form of pedagogical models presented to teachers for emulation, offer indications of this happening within the NCMFL documentation.

First, there are some examples in NCMFL documents of sample authentic texts which deal either with religion directly or with themes which might provoke spiritual

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[94] Macaro, 1997:49. It is hard not to regard this as a reasonably natural outcome of the dominant aims of the National Curriculum as described above. It is certainly a clear echo of the emphases characteristic of the Council of Europe work which laid the basis for GCSE language learning.

[95] Dobson's review of inspection findings, for instance, notes an instance of a French class learning about the history and abolition of slavery as part of a focus on Francophone countries (Dobson, 1998:22).

reflection. An example of the former kind is a French text dealing with career aspirations.[96] One of the perspectives offered in the text is that of a French teenager who feels called to become a priest. He explains why he would take such a vocation seriously, mentions that he is ridiculed because of it by classmates, and expresses the hope that he might work with the needy in a Third World context. An example of the latter kind is a pair of poems based on the language of daily routine.[97] One, by a teenage girl, uses the dreary succession of events in the day to evoke a sense of drudgery, alienation and futility. The second, a response (apparently) by the girl's mother, uses a similar list of daily chores to show how hard she works for her daughter's benefit. The poems are an interesting example of how very basic vocabulary can be used to explore themes which may carry spiritual significance (the value and purpose of work, of education, of service to others).

Both of these texts offer interesting possibilities, but the tasks which accompany them are very restricted. In the case of the text about career aspirations, which forms part of a collection of examples of students' work, we are told that various tasks accompanied the text, but only one is reproduced. It involves simply identifying which career each person represented in the text would like to pursue by picking out the relevant nouns. This tests vocabulary recognition and scanning skills but does nothing to engage with the spiritually significant meanings present in the text.[98] The other text, the two poems, is followed by an exercise which involves ticking boxes to indicate whether statements which reformulate the content of the poems are true or false. The final statement for each poem does relate to whether its author is happy, but this is treated as a yes/no test of comprehension and not explored further. As with the first text, the pedagogy applied does not encourage the learner to relate the text to his or her own experience or beliefs.

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[96] SCAA, 1996a:41.

[97] SCAA, 1996c, Einheit 8, Aufgabe 6.

[98] It is, of course, possible that in the episode of teaching from which this example was taken there was such an engagement in one or more of the other tasks set. The SCAA document offers no indication of whether this was so. The point here is even if they existed, such pedagogical efforts are absent in the official representation offered to teachers; there is no discernible stimulus to consider them.

The question of what might be concluded from such examples is complicated by the fact that they appear in collections of material designed to illustrate assessment procedures. This means that it may be argued in their defence that they are not intended to give a rounded pedagogical picture or to show all that may be done with a text in the classroom, but only to show how specific language skills are tested. A consideration of the broader context, however, renders such examples less innocent. The very strong and very public emphasis placed upon assessment results during the implementation of the National Curriculum (as reflected in the early in-service training emphasis on assessment procedures and the prominence of league tables) and the presence of advice such as that cited above which urges teachers to motivate their students by making teaching tasks clearly oriented towards examination success both suggest that classroom pedagogy is likely to be strongly influenced by assessment models. Moreover, the pedagogy represented in these examples harmonises well with the skill-based orientation of GCSE-style CLT, and thus runs *with* the grain of existing pedagogical trends.[99] This suggests that a much clearer lead would be needed if there really were a desire to take modern language pedagogy in a more spiritually interesting direction. In the light of this, the fact that these are the only kinds of examples which teachers have been given within the NCMFL documentation of work done with such texts, with no models offered of how to use them in a way which might contribute to spiritual development, must be interpreted as a lack.

A second kind of example can be found in the in-service training pack produced by the National Curriculum Council (NCC) to support the new insistence on the use of the target language as the medium of instruction. Like the Harris report, the document is silent about spiritual development - perhaps this is not surprising in a resource designed to offer teachers practical advice on how to teach through the medium of the target language. In an appendix, however, teachers are provided with

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[99] This can be related to the comments made above on the persistence of criticised features of GCSE and the instrumental focus of learners. Given that most language teachers have not been used to addressing spiritual development as an overt concern, and that the dominant pedagogy is of limited value in this regard, examples which have spiritual potential but are exploited in a way which simply confirms existing pedagogy are likely to foster a lack of engagement with spiritual concerns.

a selection of "reflections on using the target language" from pupils and teachers. These are not explicitly identified as models to follow; they are merely listed without commentary as "reflections".[100] However, the positive tone of these reflections clearly echoes the intention to encourage teachers to use the target language more. The "tips from teachers" style, together with the way in which examples are presented in other National Curriculum documents, together with the status of this resource as a training pack endorsed by the NCC, invites the assumption that the ideas offered are examples of 'good practice'.

The concluding teacher reflection (the longest of those included) makes interesting reading in relation to the concerns pursued here. A French teacher reports:

> "I've noticed that one of my colleagues - a French lady - has particular success with getting the kids to speak back to her in French - as they perceive her as French they are less inclined to try speaking English to her. I decided to try this out for myself and made myself French - fortunately small girls are not too hot on accents! - eventually, of course, they caught me speaking English and this was when I invented an identical twin sister. I use the English sister when I am just too tired to do a proper lesson and/or there is something really complicated to explain and I am too tired or too lacking in imagination to do it in French. I make sure I don't do it often. I never mix English and French. I'm either the English sister or the French sister for the whole lesson so that we (the class and I) can all keep the illusion up. It becomes a sort of game and whichever sister I am I adopt a very scathing attitude to the sister who isn't there. The kids like the bitching and insults. Most of them know, of course, that it's a game, but it helps to create a special atmosphere - one that is quite fun - and they feel less embarrassed about trying to express themselves in French because it's the only way...and it also stops them being afraid

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[100] NCC, 1993b:46.

of me and French because they think I'm loopy.[101]

There is a clear recognition of a "special atmosphere" which can arise from a cooperative - here even a colluding - relationship between teacher and pupils, and its value in reducing learner anxiety. However, even leaving aside the question of whether the deception practised is reducible without remainder to role play,[102] it is surely extraordinary to find constant "bitching and insults" offered as a linguistic model in order to create a "fun" atmosphere in a curriculum which is supposed to attend throughout to spiritual and moral development. Offering this as an example for possible emulation, and adopting a pedagogy which affirms and encourages pupils' enjoyment of such language use, suggests a view of target language practice in which a focus on the quantity of target language use is detached from and eclipses any concern for the spiritual and ethical qualities of the relationships within which communication takes place. Unintentionally, this example provides one of the clearest indications of the ways in which tension may arise between affirmations of spiritual and moral development across the curriculum and a narrow emphasis on immediate pragmatic goals related to practical communication skills.

It is my contention that these examples of places where tension with spiritual concerns becomes visible in the NCMFL are significant despite being small in number. The NCMFL documentation provides only a restricted number of examples of the pedagogy it seeks to encourage. Of these, only a very few have a clear connection with spiritual development. As I have sought to show, the way in which these few instances are handled is not encouraging. Moreover, the kinds of failings which I have described are precisely the kinds which might have been predicted on the basis of the overall interpretation of the NCMFL documents and their background

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[101] NCC, 1993b:61.

[102] While we are repeatedly assured that the learners know that it is "only a game", the narration suggests that the subterfuge has not been presented to pupils as a game, but rather as the truth, with fresh evasion being invented to delay detection of the discrepancy with reality. In the pupils' reflections on the previous page we hear from a pupil (we are not told whether he or she is from the same school but the parallels are very close) whose teacher "said she could not speak any English; she said she had a twin who could speak English and who came in handy when she had to tell us something in English". This pupil states that "Now I am in Year 8 I have realised that our teacher is really English and was using this method of speaking to us in French" (NCC, 1993b:46). Apparently, this pupil did not know for at least a year that this was a game.

offered here. Rather than being occasional lapses, the examples discussed are consistent with the broader patterns and emphases of the NCMFL, and the issues which they raise are therefore of broad import for modern language pedagogy in the National Curriculum.

4.   Conclusions and ways forward

As I noted above, it is difficult to arrive at a firm overall picture of the pedagogy suggested by the NCMFL, especially when the effects on actual teaching of inertia arising from familiarity with existing GCSE tasks and topics are taken into account. It is possible, however, to draw some broad conclusions concerning the question of whether the concern for spiritual development in the National Curriculum as a whole is adequately addressed, and to discern some areas requiring further investigation.

It was asked above, on the basis of claims made in the OFSTED handbook for inspections, whether the NCMFL does indeed offer material which is "explicit" and "illuminating" in relation to spiritual development. The answer which has emerged is a hesitant 'maybe', given a generous interpretation of the relevant documents. *Explicit* attention to spiritual development is restricted to the single sentence quoted above from the most recent version of the NCMFL. Apart from this statement there is nothing to draw the attention of language teachers to the issue or to explain how it should be approached. If the documents are approached in the light of a previously worked out set of expectations regarding where spiritual development may be found, then it can be granted that there is material which *could* be illuminating. Certain aspects of the communicative pedagogy inherited from existing teaching practices, such as the emphasis on authentic language use and self-expression, together with the interest in cultural awareness, have genuine potential if interpreted generously and carried forward creatively.

This must, however, be qualified in a number of ways.

First, there is little evidence that these aspects of language learning have been discussed in the documentation with spiritual development in mind. Only in the most recent documentation is the NCMFL clearly cross-referenced with the general

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requirement that spiritual development should be promoted. This raises the question of whether concern for spiritual development played any role at all in the development of the pedagogical design offered in the NCMFL.

Second, these aspects of learning are set within a framework in which utilitarian goals and a consonant pedagogical emphasis on practical communication have tended to dominate. The apparent shift in the recent documentation leaves the question of how well the pedagogical design which emerged from earlier documents will accommodate the broader aims highlighted. There is no indication of whether these aims are seen as implying pedagogical revisions.

Third, those themes which might connect with spiritual development are not developed in a way which would answer relevant pedagogical questions such as how cultural insights relate to spiritual insights, how these might be fostered, or how bland references to the learner's experience might be spiritually significant. References to culture and experience provide a possible starting point for a consideration of spiritual development, but they are not adequate in themselves. Simply correlating some elements of the rhetoric of spiritual development discussions with that characteristic of some current trends in language learning does not offer a very firm basis for claims that spiritual development is being promoted across the curriculum.

Fourth, the positive potential which these themes represent is undermined within the documents themselves by examples in which spiritual and moral aspects of learning are downgraded or ignored. As a generalisation it could be said that insofar as there are points of contact for spiritual development in the NCMFL they are not developed pedagogically, and insofar as there is a developed pedagogy, it is often in tension with a concern for spiritual development. The connections need to be worked out pedagogically in a more consistent way.

In the next two chapters I will examine more developed pedagogical proposals which address issues raised in the above discussion. In chapter 6 I will consider Community Language Learning as an instance of a humanistic pedagogy which attempts to work a central concern for the learner's self-expression and personal identity into the

processes of language teaching and learning. In chapter 7 I will explore the contribution of critical pedagogy, in particular that developed by Claire Kramsch, to the teaching of culture. These two lines of development, focusing respectively on the individual learner and the target culture, relate to the underdeveloped possibilities for making connections with spiritual development which were discussed above. They also represent significant lines of development within the broad attempt to move beyond the confines of GCSE language learning. In both cases I will show how such attempts to develop more detailed pedagogical designs which emphasise identity or cultural awareness can be controversial in relation to Christian belief.

Chapter 6
Existential experience, Christian belief and language learning in the work of Charles A. Curran

Outline:

1. The relevance of Charles A. Curran: personalism and theological basis
2. Curran's pedagogy: Approach and design
3. Roots of Curran's approach: Existentialism and Christianity
   a. Sartre and the God-project
   b. Christian theology and learning as an incarnate-redemptive process
   c. The defensibility of the connection with Christian theology
4. Tensions within Curran's approach: Will to power and will to community
   a. Curran's attempted resolution
   b. Remaining tension between autonomy and community
      i. Aggression versus dependence
      ii. Activity versus passivity
      iii. Inner versus outer
      iv. Teacher space versus learner space
      v. Construction versus destruction
   c. Pattern and significance
5. Tensions with Christian theology
   a. Four contrasting accounts
   b. Curran's community and hospitality
6. Curran, humanistic education and spiritual development

In chapter 5 I sought to assess the promise and limitations in relation to spiritual development of the National Curriculum for Modern Foreign Languages (NCMFL) as represented in official documentation. One of the main findings was that where promising leads were offered in the documentation, these were not sufficiently developed pedagogically to offer a model of spiritually sensitive modern language teaching which would be clear enough for a detailed evaluation. It was noted that two possible areas for further exploration in relation to spiritual development corresponded with two kinds of proposal offered by critics of the GCSE style of communicative language teaching (CLT) as ways of developing pedagogy in richer and more fruitful directions. These two areas are on the one hand the emphasis in more process-oriented versions of CLT on personalisation and subjective involvement, and on the other the

recent interest in the intercultural aspects of language learning.

This chapter and the next explore these two directions in modern language pedagogy, but not in terms of an overview. To remain at the level of broad characterisations of areas of interest would not move the discussion significantly beyond the point reached in chapter 5. What is still needed in order to show the viability in practice of the argument of chapter 3 concerning the relationship of Christian faith to pedagogical design is a more focused discussion of more developed designs. The next two chapters therefore engage in a detailed examination of the work of particular theorists who have worked out such designs. The aim is to explore the relationships between spiritual development, Christian faith and modern language pedagogy in a more detailed and concrete way than could be achieved by a more general survey. The present chapter will discuss Charles Curran's Community Language Learning (CLL) as a well developed example of a process-oriented design which stresses the connections between language learning and the development of personal identity and interpersonal connection.

1.   The relevance of Charles A. Curran

There are some immediate reasons why CLL might seem an unlikely choice for a case study in the present context. Curran's work was most influential in the teaching of English as a foreign language in the 1970s and early 1980s, and has since begun to recede from view amid the general reaction against at least some aspects of the first wave of humanistic pedagogies and against comprehensive pedagogical packages presented by single individuals.[1] His most characteristic pedagogical design, which involved the teacher playing a non-directive supporting role, standing outside a circle of learners engaging in free, self-directed conversation, was never widely adopted in foreign language learning, and is not a live option in current school classrooms. His opposition to the idea of an imposed syllabus or testing regime would make any attempt to implement his design in the context of the NCMFL difficult to say the least. In short, CLL does not, at least in anything like its classical form, represent a very plausible way forward for school-based modern language learning.

This is not a decisive objection in the present context, since the aim of this study is not

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[1] See e.g. Atkinson, 1989; Maley, 1983, and chapter 3 above.

to arrive at and recommend a particular pedagogical design, but rather to clarify the relationships which hold between spiritual development, Christian faith and pedagogical designs in modern language education. This means that the non-currency of a given design does not make it irrelevant. It should also be pointed out that the particular design commonly associated with CLL is not the only possible outcome of Curran's approach - some or all of the approach could in principle remain relevant to more feasible designs (see further below). Nevertheless, given that non-current designs may well outnumber current ones, the objection retains some force unless there are particular reasons to take Curran's work seriously.

There are, in fact, a number of considerations which make an examination of Curran's work virtually obligatory given the particular concerns of this thesis. Curran's design is highly relevant to the particular set of relationships explored here in at least two ways, one general, the other specific.

First, Curran's work is a particular instantiation of a closely related group of approaches deriving inspiration from humanistic psychology.[2] The humanistic movement in psychology, in which the work of Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers played a leading role, was characterised by an emphasis on the "whole person," and in particular on the affective aspect of subjective experience, offering a view of human nature as "essentially active, voluntary, responsible, relational, caring and free".[3] This stance was developed in contrast with Freudian or behaviourist conceptions of the person as reactive and subject to forces beyond his or her control. Self-awareness, self-direction and self-actualisation are central goals for the client or learner under humanistic approaches. These goals are seen as being achieved less through objective analysis and technological intervention than through an emphasis on self-exploration, immediate existential experience and the fostering of a sense of emotional integration.[4]

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[2] At a fairly high level of generality they could be seen as variants of a common approach sharing the broad assumptions of humanistic psychology. This level of generality is, however, sufficiently uninformative about the particular convictions which lend the various designs their individuality to make it more useful to think in terms of a related family of approaches. There are both commonalities and significant differences - Galyean, for instance, embraces behaviourism, while Curran resists it (Curran, 1972:13; Galyean, 1979:122).

[3] Yoshikawa, 1982:391; cf. Underhill, 1989.

[4] Cf. May, 1969; Rogers, 1961, 1969.

Curran's Community Language Learning is commonly grouped in this connection with Caleb Gattegno's Silent Way, Georgi Lozanov's Suggestopedia, James Asher's Total Physical Response and Beverly Galyean's Language from Within.[5] Various labels have been attached to these approaches. Given the connections with humanistic psychology, the widespread use of the term 'humanistic' seems justified, but the designation 'personalist' is also both apt and significant to the present discussion.[6] While these approaches would fall within a broad conception of CLT, a shared characteristic which distinguishes them from the functional-notional strand of CLT is a tendency to focus more on psychological and interpersonal factors than on linguistic discussions. Like the functional-notional strand, the personalist variants of communicative teaching are based on an analysis of learner needs, but the needs which are examined are affective rather than linguistic in character. As Galyean puts it, "the subject being studied is considered to be the vehicle through which the skills of self-identity, self-acceptance and interpersonal relating are taught."[7] Humanistic or personalist language teaching claims to go "deeper than a linguistic model of development, placing language acquisition within an overall human growth model".[8] On this view, "language learning/teaching has a 'transcendent' quality and...person-centred learning is uniquely able to enhance the individual's power of self-reliance and trust". The underlying aim is "to make learners more trusting of their inner powers; to make them positively critical, self-directed, and aware of others' feelings and opinions".[9]

This perspective is particularly pertinent at this point because of the way in which it links the concerns of much current literature on spiritual development with one of the responses to perceived shortcomings in functional-notional CLT described in the last chapter. In chapter 5 I suggested that within the communicative movement one area of potential relevance to spiritual concerns is the re-embedding of language use in its

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[5] See Blair, 1982.

[6] Parkinson & Maher, 1988:126. Scovel's term "interpersonal methods" also points to an important emphasis, although all classroom pedagogies must be in some sense interpersonal (Scovel, 1983).

[7] Galyean, 1979:121.

[8] Parkinson & Maher, 1988:130.

[9] Parkinson & Maher, 1988:131.

interpersonal context, suggesting the legitimacy of focusing on aspects of communication beyond the narrowly linguistic. One line of response to the tendency towards banality in the particular form of CLT which has been characteristic of GCSE is a call for personalisation, moving towards a more learner-centred model which could emphasise self-expression and the link between language and identity. This is a central focus of the humanistic approaches, which are characterised by their desire to look beyond the linguistic level to the involvement of the 'whole person' in the language learning situation. They are therefore an obvious place to turn for potential resources for developing this line of inquiry.

The case for drawing them into the study becomes even stronger when it is noted that in humanistic discussions the 'whole person' aspect of language learning is not uncommonly expressed in language which echoes prominent themes in the literature on spiritual development, in which concern for the 'whole person' is also prominent.[10] The language of transcendence, trust, inner powers and awareness quoted above is a case in point. It is therefore unsurprising that the few recent mainstream discussions of language teaching which relate it explicitly to spirituality or religion are to be found in discussions of humanistic approaches. Thus Kemp claims regarding humanistically oriented teachers that:

> "[they] are likely to see second language learning as something which
> involves the whole person rather than as something which is simply an
> intellectual pursuit. Together with the practicalities of the lesson format,
> at the forefront of their mind is the awareness that like themselves,
> learners have emotional and spiritual needs."[11]

Kemp goes on to argue that this kind of emphasis can best be motivated and sustained by a "religious humanism" which can serve as a basis for an emphasis in the classroom on "concern for harmony between individuals, concern for the internal harmonizing of things in everyone, and concern for the general purpose of life as a whole".[12] Stevick, in

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[10] Best, 1996.

[11] Kemp, 1994:244. Galyean also refers to "spiritual" needs as falling within the compass of humanistic interests (Galyean, 1979:126).

[12] Kemp, 1994:248.

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a survey of humanism in language teaching upon which Kemp draws, also discusses the relevance of a "religious humanistic vision" and goes on to discuss at some length a possible relationship between Christian faith and language teaching.[13] The fact that this latter discussion arises specifically from Stevick's examination of CLL points to the second, more specific reason for considering Curran's work in some detail.

In addition to the general relevance of Curran's work as an extensively articulated outworking of general humanistic emphases, Curran is highly unusual among recent theorists of modern language pedagogy in making an explicit claim that his pedagogy is connected with Christian belief and in providing it with a theological rationale. Curran's works are therefore among the small number of writings on the teaching and learning of modern foreign languages which explicitly address the concerns of this thesis. Curran also draws significantly upon Sartre's understanding of human nature, discussed in chapter 4 above, which is overtly opposed to Christian belief. I will argue below that this gives his work the intriguing distinction of exemplifying in a single approach how language pedagogy can both draw upon and be in conflict with Christian concerns. Both of these points make Curran's work particularly relevant to the present argument. The present chapter will accordingly focus on the continuities and tensions between Curran's pedagogy and the Christian themes outlined in chapter 4.

While the issues involved are complex, they can be expressed simply at the outset in the form of a puzzle. The puzzle concerns Curran's response to the discovery that his pedagogy led to outbreaks of aggression and anger in his learning groups. This anger showed itself in "direct hostility to other group members", despite Curran's constant emphasis on the creation of a warm learning community.[14] Curran was not alone in encountering this - Bolitho reports that "on one occasion ... I had to intervene and suspend a session when two students with a hearty contempt for each other used the freedom of the CLL situation to vent their aggression on each other".[15] How should the teacher respond to such episodes? Curran (in contrast to Bolitho) argues that the teacher

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[13] Stevick, 1990:32, 77-95. There is also a brief discussion of the use of a humanistic approach to engage modern language learners in discussion of religious life and "personal aspects of faith" in Appel, 1989.

[14] Curran, 1969:217.

[15] Bolitho, 1982:85.

must respond with affirmation, and that the learners should be able to express hostility towards one another "without any feeling of guilt or of a need to apologise afterwards".[16] Here is the puzzle: why would an educator propose a pedagogical design which claims to be Christian and to foster community and yet affirms interpersonal hostility, denies the need for intervention when it arises, and rejects the idea of subsequent repentance, forgiveness or reconciliation?

2. Curran's pedagogy: Approach and design

CLL is a specific application in the field of second and foreign language learning of Curran's general pedagogy, Counseling-Learning (C-L), which is in turn squarely embedded in the broader humanistic movement sketched above. Curran wrote on psychotherapy in a broadly Rogerian vein before applying his ideas to a general theory of learning and finally to a pedagogy for the modern language classroom. He presents his theory as opposed on the one hand to the Cartesian-Kantian tradition and on the other to a behaviourist conception of the person. Descartes and Kant are charged with detaching the intellect and the will from embodied experience, subordinating the concrete to the abstract and dichotomising the learner through a pronounced mind-body dualism.[17] Behaviourist theory feeds on the same dualism, and continues to exclude the learner's affective experience from serious consideration.[18] A basic goal of Curran's approach to education is the overcoming of this dichotomy, the reintegration of rational and animal, or of psyche and soma.[19] This is to be achieved through a view of the person derived from the work of Carl Rogers,[20] one in which affective existential experience is conceived as playing the central, integrating role, both relativising and connecting the

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[16] Curran, 1969:219; 1972:102.

[17] Curran, 1968:56,213; 1969:38-39; 1972:38-41.

[18] Curran, 1972:13.

[19] Curran, 1969:208; 1972:55,90.

[20] Rogers, 1961, 1969. Curran was a student under and later a colleague of Rogers, and adopted Rogerian terms such as "client-centred therapy," "unconditional positive regard," "self-actualization," "becoming a person" and "nondirectiveness" in his articulation of his own approach to psychotherapy (Curran, 1968:39; 1969:187; 1972:21,25,52,99; 1976:47).

intellect and the body.[21] Curran writes that

> "What is especially fresh and pertinent in modern counseling and
> psychotherapy is the way it sees man [*sic*], not ideally or abstractly, but
> engaged in living with the totality of his being. The concept of the human
> person has, in this way, assumed a whole new existential dimension. This
> is what is particularly stimulating to our present view."[22]

This focus on the moment of existential experience is closely connected to the emphasis
on the unity of experience and the consequent involvement of all aspects of the learner
in the learning process:

> "When we ask how man [*sic*] functions, we find that every moment of
> life is a moment of total response. Every stimulus that comes to us from
> the world about us evokes response by the whole of our being. There is
> no such thing as a purely physical reaction, or a purely emotional, or a
> purely mental, or a purely spiritual...the lines of continuity reach off into
> all the rest of our being, and there is no part that is not to some degree
> involved."[23]

Learning can therefore not be understood simply on a cognitive level - aspects of the
learner such as the emotional, the bodily, or the spiritual must be taken into account. It
follows that the relationship of the learner to the teacher and to other learners is not
simply seen as formal   or cognitive in nature. In his elaboration of C-L, Curran
therefore argues that while the cognitive focus of education makes it different in
emphasis from counseling, nevertheless a recognition that the underlying relational
processes are similar would lead to a pedagogy which would

> "stand out in sharp contrast to our present highly intellectualized, socially
> isolated and teacher-centred educational methods. Its aim would be to

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[21] On occasions when Curran distinguishes the basic aspects which make up the "whole
person", five aspects are presented in standard sequence (soma-instincts-emotions-intellect-will) in which
emotion always appears as the central connecting term between the bodily/instinctive and the
intellectual/volitional aspects (Curran, 1969:11,222; 1972:3,33).

[22] Curran, 1969:8.

[23] Curran, 1968:63; cf. Curran, 1972:19,72; 1976:19.

incorporate teachers and learners together in a deep relationship of human belonging, worth and sharing."[24]

The idea of the learning group as a community takes on a central role in Curran's elaboration of this contrast. In Counseling-Learning the teacher is to relinquish the dominant position in the classroom, and standardised curriculum and evaluation are rejected as being unlikely to result in self-invested, 'whole-person' learning.[25] In keeping with the client-centred view of counseling, Curran argues that "the person of the learner is the source and centre of the learning", and that fully engaged learning will result when the affective threat of the teacher as controlling judge is removed.[26] Nevertheless, he rejects the term 'learner-centred' on the grounds that neither teacher nor learner are to have special power in the overall learning community: "the learning relationship...is neither student-centred nor teacher-centred, since both knower and learners need mutual understanding and recognition."[27]

In general discussions of modern language methodology, CLL has become firmly associated with a specific pedagogical design with which Curran and others experimented. In this design, the learners sit in a circle with one or more knowers (Curran's preferred term for teachers) positioned outside the circle. The learners begin a conversation, being free to choose when to begin and what to talk about. In the early stages of learning, the procedure is for anyone who wishes to speak to signal this to a knower. The learner speaks in his or her mother tongue, and the utterance is then repeated back in the target language, slowly and in a warmly supportive manner, by the knower. Finally, the learner repeats the utterance in the target language to the group. The aim is on the one hand to replace learner passivity with an engaged, active stance, and on the other to minimise anxiety - the speaker does not have to originate target

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[24] Curran, 1969:211, referring to American classrooms.

[25] Curran, 1972:15-16.

[26] Curran, 1972:22.

[27] Curran, 1972:101. The ambiguity of Curran's approach on this point is reflected in the writings of Curran's colleagues. Samimy and Rardin describe CLL as a "person and learner-centred approach" (Samimy & Rardin, 1994:381), while LaForge argues that in spite of the "learner-centredness" of the approach, "group life is, in the final analysis, subject to teacher responsibility and control" (La Forge, 1982:69). The tensions between individual and community discussed in more detail below offer some grounds for this instability.

language utterances, and the hearers have already heard any target language utterance in the mother tongue. As facility with the new language increases, target language conversation can become more direct, with the knowers called upon less often and for more specific help. The knower is to avoid intervention or correction of learner utterances. When the conversation is over, it is followed by a period of reflection, in which a recording of the conversation is used as a basis for discussion of grammatical or other linguistic issues which have arisen.

Curran sees the learning process as proceeding through five stages.[28] In the embryonic stage the learner controls the frequency and topic of utterances but is completely dependent on the knower for target language equivalents. The knower's non-judgmental acceptance is intended to lower affective barriers on the part of the learner. In the self-assertion stage, the learner is growing in confidence and ability and begins to use some phrases independently. In the third stage, the separate existence stage, the learner is able to converse in the target language and begins to resent the knower's assistance. This stage is described in terms of adolescence, and is accompanied by expressions of anger and resentment. In stage four, the reversal stage, the learner begins to realise and accept that he or she is still incomplete as a knower and needs more teaching. Now it is the learner's responsibility to offer the accepting affective stance which will enable the knower to teach more. Finally, in the independent stage, the learner is fluent and needs the knower only for fine-tuning. Only from stage three or four onwards, when the learner's growing confidence and independence will make intervention less threatening, is the knower permitted to correct linguistic errors.[29]

This pedagogical design is not the only one which could be consistent with the CLL approach, in fact it is not the only one suggested by Curran himself.[30] This suggests that

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[28] For what follows, see Curran, 1972:128-135; 1976:29-30; 1982a (with parallel passages in Curran, 1968:307-308; 1969:220-221).

[29] Curran, 1976:25. Cf. Stevick, 1973:263-264.

[30] Curran's other proposal used an apparatus called the Chromacord® Teaching System which employed a moving filmstrip and colour-coded lights and signals (Curran, 1976:61-85). This design made little lasting impression, but its existence underscores the point that the learning circle design should not be conflated with the C-L/CLL approach. Stevick even argues that "Counseling-Learning does not rule out any techniques which existed before it, or which had their birth in theories of learning which are quite different from Curran's", the key feature being the nature of the relationship within which these techniques are contextualised (Stevick, 1980:114). The learning activities listed in Samimy's 1989 study

the various practical criticisms which have been made of this design need not necessarily tell against the broader approach.[31] The learning circle design has, however, become firmly associated with the approach and has been dubbed by Stevick "classical CLL".[32] Since there are clear connections between significant features of Curran's approach and the practices recommended in this particular design, I will also take it as the most significant point of reference, while acknowledging that other consistent designs are possible. The focus here will not, however, be on the viability of the design in any given classroom context, but rather on the relationship of Curran's approach to Christian belief, and on whether tensions at this level exhibit any connection with the pedagogical practices required by the classical design.

3.   Roots of Curran's approach: Existentialism and Christianity

While Curran's ideas derive from a number of sources, the relationship between two centrally significant ones is of particular interest in the present context. Curran's educational approach is significantly shaped on the one hand by Sartre's existential psychology, and on the other by an unusual use of concepts drawn from Christian theology.

a.   Sartre and the God-project

Sartre's understanding of intersubjectivity and the nature of the human person has been discussed already in chapter 4. To recap briefly, the human individual is one whose defining project is the desire to be God. Given this basic project, the appearance in the individual's world of another human subject (i.e. something which does not submit to object status) brings both a new kind of self-awareness and a fundamental threat to the individual's attempted sovereignty. The other becomes the one who is needed for the individual to achieve self-awareness but who must also be resisted and subjugated if the

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of CLL bear little resemblance to the circle design (Samimy, 1989).

[31] These are summarised in Stevick, 1990:97-98, and focus mainly on the applicability of the design in conventional classrooms with larger groups, transfer of students between classes and schools, and the requirements imposed by a wider curriculum and evaluation structure. See also Bolitho, 1982:81; Brown, 1977; Brumfit, 1985:81-86; Legutke & Thomas, 1991:39,48.

[32] Stevick, 1980:114. Discussions of CLL, while commonly noting the difficulties of tight definition, generally address themselves to this design. See e.g. Bolitho, 1982; Brown, 1977; Larsen-Freeman, 1986:89-108; Rardin, 1982; Samimy & Rardin, 1994; Schwerdtfeger, 1983:4.

individual is to retain a state of completely free possibility.

Curran's approach to psychotherapy carries broad echoes of Sartre's existentialist psychology in its rejection of Freudian and behaviourist alternatives in favour of a vision of the free individual and an emphasis on the integral wholeness of existential experience. Sartre rejected "equally the theory of malleable clay and that of the bundle of drives", and emphasised as a basic principle of his psychology that "man [*sic*] is a totality not a collection. Consequently he expresses himself as a whole in even his most insignificant and his most superficial behaviour."[33] There is, however, more at work in Curran's approach than the general influence of existentialism upon humanistic psychology.[34] Curran appeals specifically and repeatedly to Sartre's definition of the person as "the being whose project is to be God," and this idea plays an important role in shaping his approach.[35]

Curran characterises his view of the person as an "essential existentialism," in which the existentialism refers to the emphasis on the unity of the person already discussed, while the essentialism refers to the view that the essence of the human person is a striving for self-transcendence.[36] This striving is ambivalent. On the one hand it arises from the need to love and be loved and to enter into community - in one of his works Curran seeks to assimilate Sartre's God-project to Augustine's description of the fundamental restlessness of the human spirit.[37] On the other hand, it is a narcissistic expression of the will to power, which resists finitude and resents the limits represented by others. This is the God-project proper, a desire for deification which resists the "incarnate" limitations of existential experience and life in community. The withdrawal of the teacher's agency from the early stages of learning in CLL is an attempt to accommodate learning to the

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[33] Sartre, 1957:61,68. Cf. Curran, 1968:35: "Our model of the person, then is not ideal but real; not his rational promise but his existential, moment-to-moment, involved self. His animality and rationality and whatever other abstract names we give him are, in fact, one unified, integrated operant as we observe him in his daily existence...engaged in living from moment to moment through all levels of unified being."

[34] On this, see May, 1969.

[35] Curran, 1969:30; 1972:64-65,67; 1976:15; Sartre, 1957:63.

[36] Curran, 1969:29.

[37] Curran, 1969:30,35,192. See below for further discussion of this point.

demands of this God-project in a way which will eventually see it transformed into the will to community.

Already in this brief tracing of the way in which Sartre's description of the God-project is taken up in Curran's work, the language of Christian theology (the second major source mentioned above) begins to appear. The relationship between the two strands, and the pedagogical implications thereof, will be discussed in more detail below. First I will describe in more detail the role played by Christian theology.

b. Christian theology and learning as an incarnate-redemptive process

Curran is highly unusual among theorists of modern language learning in that he claims explicitly that his approach is connected with Christian faith. The connection is made in two ways.

The first and more conventional way is through the claim that the view of the person espoused is more congruent with Christian belief than the alternatives rejected. Curran wishes to oppose to the Cartesian-Kantian tradition the "Judeo-Greco-Christian tradition of the view of man and of the human encounter as something engaging him in his whole, existent and corporeal person."[38] In keeping with the discussion of the affirmation of everyday life discussed in chapter 4, Curran argues that a view of the person which affirms the importance of the body and the emotions and refuses to reduce the person to his or her intellect comports well with Christian belief. In addition, a view of the person derived from Aquinas according to which "man [*sic*] is not hopelessly lost in his confusions, but has strength within himself which grace augments and supernaturalizes" is regarded by Curran as corresponding with a view of counseling in which the client gains "victory through his [*sic*] own efforts - granting that the counselor's gift of himself was necessary to make this possible."[39] This, together with a view of sin as "the absence of a desirable goodness for which one is, realistically, striving" enables Curran to correlate a version of Christian theology to the humanistic optimism of a broadly Rogerian therapy.[40]

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[38] Curran, 1972:.

[39] Curran, 1969:292,210.

[40] Curran, 1969:124.

The second kind of connection between Curran's approach and Christian belief is at once more intimate and more elusive. Curran does not only claim that his approach is broadly consistent with Christian theology. He also makes modified use of Christian theological concepts in developing his theory of learning, claiming that they might positively illuminate the processes involved.

Curran suggests that there is not only the potential for consistency, but also a "parallel or correspondence" between religious realities and psychological processes. This means that "while there is obviously a basic difference between the relationship of man with God and counseling therapy or educational relationships, these can nevertheless support and reinforce one another."[41] Since both theology and psychology are concerned with the nature of the person and of interpersonal encounter, Curran suggests that theological concepts may prove illuminating in a psychological (and hence an educational) context. Accordingly, he gives a substantial role in his educational theories to terms such as incarnation, redemption, rebirth, dying to self and resurrection.

What distinguishes this from the first way of making the faith-learning connection is that these concepts are not introduced in their original sense and then related to educational concepts; they are introduced *as* educational concepts and function metaphorically in the pedagogical context. Each is given a new psychological or educational meaning which is distinct from, but retains affinities with, its theological meaning.

'Incarnation', 'rebirth' and 'redemption' are the most central of these terms in Curran's writing. 'Incarnation' is used in two main senses which are somewhat different from one another. One sense applies to a process in which the learner experiences increased self-congruence. Curran suggests that a central manifestation of the God-project, the desire to be as God, is a tendency to resist a sense of finitude by distancing the self from the concrete affective and somatic aspects of personhood and from affective openness to other people. The self in this state tends to take refuge in intellectualised abstraction. This gives rise to a split between the 'I' (similar to the Freudian superego) and the 'myself' (the self of concrete existential experience) which must be overcome if good

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[41] Curran, 1969:175.

learning is to take place.[42]

For Curran, high quality learning depends on self-acceptance as the basis for openness to change, and on the engagement of the whole person, not simply an intellectual capacity, in the learning process. If the self is resisting new experience which might modify it, and thus threaten its sovereignty, such learning will be blocked. It is therefore important to Curran's pedagogy that the learner should achieve self-congruence, or a greater acceptance of the 'myself' on the part of the 'I', leading to a more integrated 'whole-person' experience of learning. One of Curran's uses of the term 'incarnation' is to describe this process - the disincarnate 'I' must become incarnate in order to form a more integrated, and therefore more teachable, self.[43]

In language learning, resistance to finitude may express itself as a clinging to the security of the identity already formed in relation to the mother tongue, leading to a distancing of the self from the experience of the new language with its strange pronunciation and new meanings.[44] Under these conditions the new language cannot be adequately integrated into the learner's self as a means of genuine self-expression. The learner must, Curran argues, relinquish his or her God-like security and accept the insecurity of not knowing the new language, becoming 'incarnate' in order to be open to the birth of a new target language self. As Curran puts it, the 'incarnation' process and the resulting whole-person learning should be experienced as "a movement from a dead 'old' self to an exciting 'new' self-birth", or even as a "resurrection"[45].

The result of this 'incarnation' and 'rebirth' is 'redemption', a term used by Curran to refer to the enhancement of the individual's sense of worth and dignity.[46] This comes about both through a growing sense of self-acceptance which is closely related to the

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[42] There is an echo here of Roger's view that people should become more identified with their flow of experience, with the self as thinker about experience diminishing in importance Van Belle, 1980:49. Curran does not, however, go as far as Rogers (cf. Rogers, 1969:154), retaining a stronger role for the cognitive, for external authority and for self-control (see e.g. Curran, 1969:190). On the differences between Curran and Rogers, despite the similarities, see further Stevick, 1990:83-85.

[43] Curran, 1972:19,67, 98. Cf. also Curran, 1968:208; 1976:15,45; Stevick, 1990:79.

[44] Curran, 1976:20.

[45] Curran, 1976:56.

[46] Curran, 1968:99; 1972:67; 1976:42.

idea of incarnation, and through meeting with an accepting attitude from others, one which affirms "what the self truly is and can be".[47]

A second sense of the term 'incarnation' refers to the relationship between the knower and the group of learners. To the beginner in a modern language, the knower has the God-like attributes of an omniscient judge who has absolute command of the new language and rules over what goes on in the classroom. This role presents temptations to both knower and learner. The knower may be tempted to live out his or her God-project through distanced domination of the learners, filling the learning space with his or her own competent discourse. Conversely, the learners' own God-projects are likely to make them resistant to receiving from the knower under such circumstances. The first sense of incarnation, discussed above, addresses itself to learner resistance. This second sense requires the *knower* to take the initiative by leaving the God-like position. This involves a dying to self on the part of the knower, a relinquishing of the position of dominance and expertise in order to take up a role as a group member and join the learners in their vulnerable state. In practical terms, this means yielding control over the curriculum to the learners themselves, adopting a supporting role and accepting learner criticisms without resistance or self-defence. This stance on the part of the knower is referred to by Curran as another form of 'incarnation', and it also contributes to the process of 'redemption' described above, this time through the knower's acceptance and affirmation of the individual worth of the learners.[48] There must be 'incarnation' (of different kinds) on both sides of the relationship for 'redemption' to occur.

c.   The defensibility of the connection with Christian theology

All of this invites the question as to whether there is a genuine and defensible connection with Christian theology here. In raising this question, it is not my intention to return to the issue of whether it is permissible to bring Christian theology into interaction with views of language learning - the claim that such interaction is viable was explored at length in Part 1. The question here is more whether what we find in Curran is a genuine case of interaction.

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[47] Curran, 1968:48; 1978:23, cited in Stevick, 1990:80.

[48] Curran, 1968:214,336; 1972:31; 1976:12,46.

Such debate as there has been concerning Curran's claims to a Christian basis has centred on the second of the two strategies described above, the adaptation of Christian theological concepts. Curran has been accused of conflating theology with therapy, reducing incarnation and redemption to matters of interpersonal psychological processes. Oller argues that

> "to suggest that personal 'wholeness' can be achieved through language acquisition [is] to assign to the language teacher a messianic role (a godlike status) and to invite the student to a kind of submission that is idolatrous...Language teaching, though it is a high calling...is something other than the 'incarnation' of God...and is something less than the 'redemptive'."[49]

Oller's objection is that Curran's language implies a reduction of redemption in the sense intended by Christian theology to a process of growth in self-esteem fostered by the teacher. He reads Curran as claiming that the teacher can 'redeem' students in the Christian sense by means of language pedagogy. I would agree with his contention that this would be an over-inflated claim.[50] The difficulty with this critique is that Curran would also agree. He avoids, at least in his statements of intent, an identification of religion with the experiences of the therapeutic (or the teaching) process, stating explicitly that "religion is not a substitute for the counseling therapy relationship or vice versa".[51]

It is true that such qualifying statements are found in Curran's earlier works in the field of counselling therapy, and do not reappear in the later educational publications. It is also true that Curran's enthusiastic style of exposition could easily leave the unwary reader with the impression gained by Oller. To this degree, Oller's cautions may be apt. In view of Curran's statements of intent, however, a more charitable reading (such as that offered by Stevick) would accept Curran's language as metaphorical and as based

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[49] Oller & Richard-Amato, 1983:xii. Stevick (1990:77-96) discusses Oller's objections at some length.

[50] Rejecting it need not imply that the language teacher's activity cannot be in a broad sense 'redemptive', even on the terms of Christian theology. It simply involves insisting that there is a good deal more to redemption and rebirth than learning a new language and growing in self-esteem.

[51] Curran, 1969:192.

on a view of the sacred as illuminating, rather than reducing to, the secular.[52]

If this line is taken then, if my argument in chapter 3 is correct, Curran's use of theological metaphors is in principle interesting and viable. These metaphors may function by awakening associations for the informed reader and encouraging reflection on the relevance of issues such as dominance versus humility to the teaching situation. In the case of a Christian teacher, these resonances may help to motivate and sustain the adoption of the stance of vulnerable participation described by Curran.[53] While I think that Curran's metaphorical approach is in principle defensible, however, this does not mean that it is not open to criticism in practice. It seems to me that there are difficulties with Curran's metaphors, in particular his talk of incarnation, which are different from those alleged by Oller, but equally theologically misleading.

The difficulties stem, I suggest, from Curran's use of incarnational language as part of an attempt to move away from an intellectualised view of the self. The result for at least one of Curran's uses of 'incarnation' is to associate God with the Cartesian disembodied intellect. In the first sense of 'incarnation' described above, the disincarnate state is one of intellectual abstraction, emotional detachment and self-enclosed isolation from others. Becoming 'incarnate' means becoming more real, more concrete, more open and more involved. The existentialist reaction to Enlightenment intellectualism is thus presented in terms of 'incarnation'. But the incarnation in Christian theology is not a matter of an insubstantial, detached, abstract, self-enclosed deity progressing to greater reality by taking on flesh, but rather of a God already deeply involved with and passionately concerned for creation condescending out of mercy to take on the *less* substantial frailty of flesh in order to overcome evil.[54] Similarly, Curran's second usage of 'incarnation' refers to the teacher's stance in relation to the group of learners. Insofar as this use of the term suggests a move from self-preoccupied and insensitive

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[52] Stevick, 1990:77.

[53] For a comparable metaphorical approach by an evangelical writer, see Hill, 1976.

[54] A central New Testament passage in this connection is Philippians 2:6-8: "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.
And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!".

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detachment to involvement, the metaphor seems to imply something more like a deist conception of God than that found in Christian theism. I suggest on these grounds that Curran's first use of incarnation, and in some measure his second, fail as bearers of a connection with Christian faith, or at least communicate in misleading ways.

Some aspects of the second usage of incarnation, however, seem to me to be more successful. If the aspects emphasised are the teacher's humility and care for the learners and the relinquishing of potential privilege in order to take up a position of vulnerable service, then the image of incarnation is much more appropriate and the metaphor may authentically communicate a call to have the same attitude as Christ, taking up the position of one who serves.[55]

Curran's other metaphors are harder to evaluate in detail because they tend to be used in a more diffuse or incidental way. It is pertinent to some of the issues discussed below, however, to question whether Curran's 'redemption' is adequate in its evocation of Christian themes. The redemption described by Christian theology involves changes not just within the sinner and his or her feelings and attitudes, but also in the sinner's situation and standing before God; it involves dealing with sin, which forms a barrier to reconciliation. The process which the term 'redemption' designates in Curran's educational theory appears to be principally a subjective change in affective state (a growth in confidence and self-worth) occurring within the learner.

An evaluation of the success of Curran's other strategy for relating Christian faith to his pedagogy, that of claiming a congruence between Christian belief and his understanding of the person and of the learning process, demands a more detailed evaluation of those aspects of his theories. It is to this that I will now turn.

4. Tensions within Curran's approach: Will to power and will to community

In what follows I will argue that Curran's attempt to weave together Sartre's conception of the self as defined by its God-project, the anthropological optimism of humanistic psychology and a Christian emphasis on community results in unresolved tensions which make his pedagogy problematic from the standpoint elaborated in chapter 4.

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[55] See the previous note. Whether this attitude does in fact require the particular pedagogical structure advocated by Curran is much more doubtful.

a.   Curran's attempted resolution

As noted above, Curran regards the human person as rooted in a conflict between two forms of the essential drive towards self-transcendence:

> "There are within us two wills that are in conflict with one another. The first, the will to power over another, can be described as self-centred satisfaction in controlling another. The opposite of this is the will to community - the urge to give oneself to another and the needs of others."[56]

This kind of formulation reflects Curran's attempt to contextualise Sartre's emphasis on self-other conflict within a Christian emphasis on community.[57] It raises obvious questions concerning how the two wills interact, which is more basic, which will win out, and how one or the other is fostered. Here Curran's stance is surprising, given his emphasis on loving community, for he insists that the proper route to community is the positive affirmation and encouragement of the will to power.

When describing the initial stages of personal growth, Curran seems to follow Sartre and present the will to power as the prior instinct. Because of the basic will to power, when others appear on the individual's horizon they appear as threats:

> "They are in themselves...threatening and anxiety-provoking. They are so because, as a result of their mystery and uniqueness, we cannot control or manipulate them and so protect ourselves."[58]

The instinctive reaction of hostility must, however, be controlled if community is to become possible. The individual must recognise that others represent a boundary to his or her desire to be God and gain a realistic sense of the confines of the empirical human situation. Curran refers to this as a process of "containment and cylindering of the self".[59]

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[56] Curran, 1968:114.

[57] Original sin may also be in view, but the connection is not made explicitly.

[58] Curran, 1968:44. Cf. Curran, 1972:95.

[59] Curran, 1968:109.

This need might lead one to expect a more traditional pedagogy, in which the individual is constrained by a disciplinary framework and taught to conform to group expectations. In Curran we find exactly the opposite. Curran argues that the will to power must be affirmed if it is to give way to the will to community:

> "By having this self-assertion approved and encouraged by the adults around them, children then grow in the sense of their own self-worth and esteem. They need this genuine consensual validation of their early ego-assertions, or expressions of "will-to-power"."[60]

How are we to understand this tactic? Here the Sartrean strand of self-deification shades over into the structurally similar but more optimistic perspective characteristic of Carl Rogers. For Rogers, too, individual freedom is a basic value, such that "the only question which matters is, "Am I living in a way which is deeply satisfying to me, and which truly expresses me?"[61] This state of free self-affirmation and self-expression is to be achieved by trusting constructive forces within the individual - "the potential to learn and the power to act lie within the person."[62] That which is most likely to threaten self-actualisation is being subjected to the evaluations of others, since such evaluations come from outside and turn the individual into an object. So far, so Sartrean. Where Rogers' more optimistic brand of humanism supervenes is in the emphasis on the therapist's unconditional positive regard for the client and the belief that if the client is thus supported in a non-directive manner, removing the potentially distorting threat of external evaluation, his or her inherent goodness will lead to an autonomous self-affirmation which is warm and open towards others.[63]

The thinking behind Curran's affirmation of the will to power runs along the same lines. If the will to power is not resisted, but rather accepted and affirmed, then the appearance of the teacher as an objectifying threat in the eyes of the learner is cancelled. The belief is that this will remove the self's need to maintain protective barriers, and so create the

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[60] Curran, 1976:7.

[61] Rogers, 1961:119; cf. p.21: "Each person is an island unto himself, in a very real sense".

[62] Rogers, 1977:151.

[63] Rogers, 1977:139,151. Cf. Van Belle, 1980:90.

space for the will to community to take hold, leading to an acceptance of the presence of others and eventually to a warm sense of community. The idea seems to be that if the will to power is allowed to develop unopposed, it will evoke a felt need for community which it cannot itself assuage. In contrast, any form of evaluation on the part of the teacher is likely to increase the sense of threat, arouse hostility, and therefore sustain isolation. If this is avoided, a positive growth towards community

> "can be depended upon to occur provided that nothing is done to impede, interrupt, or conflict with it...The teacher...may be seen as someone like the counselor and physician who creates those conditions which enable the internal forces in the person himself to move toward the independent learning growth process."[64]

This expected move towards community is described in Christian terms. The individual must learn the value of giving oneself as an act of love to others, and if others appear as a threat, then rather than yielding to the permanent isolation which seems to follow from Sartre's vision, the self must learn to love its enemy.[65] Here again we see Curran seeking to marry his existentialist sources with a Christian framework.

b. Remaining tension between autonomy and community

There remain signs, however, that the marriage is not altogether harmonious. A significant difficulty is the acceptance throughout Curran's writings of the idea found in Sartre and Rogers that the agencies of self and other are mutually exclusive. This becomes visible in a number of ways in the language which Curran uses to describe knower-learner interaction. The metaphors which emerge in his descriptions of such interaction suggest a view of the individual as inherently in conflict with other agents. They reflect a series of polar oppositions: aggression versus dependence, activity versus passivity, inner versus outer, teacher space versus learner space, and construction versus destruction.

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[64] Curran, 1972:104.

[65] Curran, 1969:33,124.

i.   Aggression versus dependence

First, Curran associates dependency with sickness, and growth with self-assertion and aggression. The learning process is compared to the process of recovering from illness:

> "Illness can be thought of as similar to ignorance, in that both force the person into a kind of invalid regression where he is fearful, anxious and dependent. Growing health is the mobilization of forces within oneself that push one back out again, from a kind of imitation of the embryonic state, to self-assertion and independent self-determination."[66]

Curran goes on to state that "it is this independent self-assertion which marks the internalization of knowledge and the complete cessation of dependency needs on the knower."[67] Aggression is characterised by Curran as one of the six essential elements of learning, one especially conspicuous in the third stage of the learning process, when "there is an almost dramatic determination for learning growth, which is sometimes manifested as strong self-assertion over the knower, and even anger if the learner is impeded from using what he has learned".[68] It is this emphasis which structures the progression through the five stages of Curran's learning theory, from initial dependence on the knower, through a stage of aggressive self-assertion, to a position where the learning self is secure enough to learn further because the teacher has been made dependent on the learner, and finally to complete independence. At the outset, Curran suggests, "the very fact that learners in this process begin by speaking puts them in an assertive or aggressive position".[69] The self-assertion which drives the process is regarded as a natural development, an authentic resistance to the sickness of dependence, even when it erupts in stage three in "indignation and anger" and "direct hostility to other group members". Curran argues that "the indignation and anger of Stage III...are...a constructive force for learner independence".[70] I will return to this

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[66] Curran, 1972:103.

[67] Curran, 1972:104.

[68] Curran, 1972:103. The six elements are security, attention, aggression, retention, reflection and discrimination. See Curran, 1976:6-8.

[69] Curran, 1982b:143. This comment seems to imply an identification of agency with aggression.

[70] Curran, 1969:217; 1972:133.

point below.

The same emphasis on aggression appears when the focus is on the agency of the teacher rather than that of the learner. Curran writes, with a telling description of cooperation in terms of alternating aggression, of "the learner, whose cooperation in letting...keys enter, submitting to the aggression of the key-turning process of the knower, and then in turn actively being aggressive to pull the bar in the lock, is equally important to the entire process".[71]

ii.   Activity versus passivity

This opposition of aggression and dependence is echoed in a wider tendency to correlate learner activity with teacher passivity, suggesting that the teacher's agency must be suspended if that of the learner is to be exercised. The teacher is presented as one who must do nothing to "impede, interrupt, or conflict with" an independent learning process driven by "internal forces in the person".[72] Descriptions of the CLL process by counselors in Curran's experimental classes are consonant with this view:

> "It is important that there be in me no willing or wishing, but a relaxed state of almost passiveness, which is, however, creative as it provides additional creative force to the other person."

> "I am participating in one continuous flow of thoughts that goes through me in two directions...I am participating in a passive role, giving myself to what they want to say, not producing something myself"[73]

It seems that only one party to the teacher-learner relationship may be active at any given time, and that learner activity is therefore viewed as entailing teacher passivity.

Again, at those points in Curran's exposition where the teacher is placed in the more active role, the polarity is mirrored in reverse. Curran describes a C-L lecturing exercise in which students are responsible for reflecting the lecturer's utterances back to him or

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[71] Curran, 1982b:138.

[72] Curran, 1972:104.

[73] Curran, 1968:311-2; 1982a:128.

her in the style of a Rogerian non-directive counselor, and provides a transcript of such a session. When one of the students offers thoughts of his or her own instead of simply reflecting back what the lecturer said, the lecture is abruptly halted and the learning process is regarded as sabotaged.[74] Here teacher agency appears to require learner passivity.

iii.   Inner versus outer

The move towards passivity on the part of teacher in order to make room for the internal forces within the learner reflects a further opposition. The inner, where the subject is regarded as sovereign, is contrasted with the threat of the other's external evaluation. Thus, for instance, the practice of having learners listen to recordings of themselves speaking in the target language is "intended to increase the internalization-identification of the learner as, say, a "French" person and to decrease the external existence of the counselor-expert."[75] The reason why prescription or advice are inadvisable is because they come from *outside* rather than *inside* - "the person may be impeded by being told from the *outside* what he 'ought' to do and what he 'ought' to know".[76] Even expressing agreement is a form of external judgement which should be avoided by the knower.[77] Curran seems to associate what comes from outside with manipulation and force.[78] An inner world under the sole sway of the individual agent is thus opposed to an outer world representing imposed force and alien judgements.

iv.   Teacher space versus learner space

The active/passive tension is also expressed in Curran's writing in terms of spatial metaphors. Knower and learner are presented as rivals for possession of a single space:

"One way of explaining this kind of hostility and resistance on the part of

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[74] Curran, 1972:178-179.

[75] Curran, 1972:131.

[76] Curran, 1972:104, emphasis original. As Stevick puts it, the learner must "work and speak out of his [*sic*] own wholeness, which is unlike the wholeness of any other person" instead of becoming "entangled in the ... web of the *understander's* expectations" (Stevick, 1980:101, emphasis original).

[77] Stevick, 1980:1012.

[78] Curran, 1972:104. Cf. e.g. Curran, 1968:70: "the personality is not changed by being forced from the outside like a machine."

the learner is to consider such an experience as an encroachment by the knower into the space of the learner...if the knower projects himself into that space, allowing no room in it for the learner, he destroys any opportunity for the learner to expand into it...In allowing the learner to occupy all the learning space, the knower must be willing to 'die' to his own urge to move into the learner space, for it is only in allowing the learner himself to fill that space that the knower can bring about new life, both in himself and in the learner."[79]

The space between teacher and learner thus appears as a bounded area subject to competing territorial claims. It is described not as a space in which teacher and learner interact, but rather as a space which can only be occupied by one or the other, and should ideally be occupied exclusively by the learner.

v.   Construction versus destruction

This pattern of opposition between teacher and learner finds its most dramatic expression in a cluster of metaphors positing the destruction or death of the teacher as the basis of learner growth. In a passage which reflects the oppositions already discussed above, Curran states:

> "To the extent that the knower freely undergoes a constructive death-wish for himself (which is simultaneously a life-wish for the learner), the learner experiences a know-feel learning space into which he [*sic*] can expand. The knower self-destructs while the learner self-constructs. Obstruction to learning, therefore, is removed in inverse ratio of knower destruct to learner construct."[80]

As the learner grows, the knower is spoken of as being in danger of "annihilation" and of being "devoured". As the learner gains in independence, the knower is "becoming, in a sense, 'nonexistent'", and as a result, "if a question were to be asked, the language counselor would not answer it because he is trained to accept his state of

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[79] Curran, 1972:91-93.

[80] Curran, 1972:93.

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'nonexistence'".[81]

c.   Pattern and significance

While many of the formulations cited in this survey of basic oppositions within Curran's theory might, if taken individually, be regarded as passing uses of perhaps not entirely felicitous imagery, taken together they cannot be discounted so easily, and this for reasons beyond the mere quantity of occurrences. In the first place, the various oppositions are mutually reinforcing. They all interlock to provide a picture of autonomous individual agencies locked into a conflict which is rooted in the necessity on both sides of self-assertion as the basis of self-actualisation. This conflict can apparently be resolved only by one party withdrawing or being eliminated from the fray. Second, this picture coheres remarkably well with the basic understanding of selfhood and intersubjectivity found in the work of Sartre and (in modified form) Rogers, whom Curran acknowledges as sources. What we find in Curran's writings is not merely a collection of accidental images, but rather a more systematically patterned expression of basically Sartrean assumptions concerning the normativity of an aggressive form of individual autonomy and the resulting inevitability of self-other conflict. Third, these underlying assumptions and the imagery in which they are expressed cohere with some of Curran's more distinctive pedagogical recommendations, such as the initial silence of the teacher, the yielding of control over curriculum content to the learner, and the affirmation of learner aggression when it emerges in the group setting.

It is these coherences which provide the answer to the puzzle posed above, at the beginning of my account of Curran's work. The puzzle was: why would an educator propose a pedagogical design which claims to be Christian and to foster community, and yet both affirms interpersonal hostility and denies the need for repentance, forgiveness or reconciliation? It can now be seen that this aspect of Curran's pedagogical design is not a momentary aberration. It is embedded in a broader pattern of thought which is the consistent outcome of the Sartrean strand in Curran's thinking. According to this strand,

the will to power is the essential core of authentic personhood which must be affirmed for growth to take place. The resulting tensions between this affirmation of individual will to power, with its alternating aggression and passivity, and the

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[81] Curran, 1972:92,95,148.

accompanying insistence on the importance of community as the ultimate goal, emerge clearly in the following description of the learning process:

> "An adult is then also encouraged to learn aggressively and assert his knowledge - supported by the community around him. At the same time, each individual experiences a committed awareness of, and concern for, the community he is engaged with. This provides a learning structure balanced between the forces of self-assertion and the need to belong"[82]

To point to the strain in this somewhat precarious-seeming balance is not to imply that Curran does not sincerely place importance on the promotion of community. Indeed, the strain results from the continued emphasis on community in the context of a developmental process based on self-assertion. I suggest that the tensions are best understood as resulting from Curran's losing battle to integrate two irreconcilable worldviews, and that the affirmation of aggression at the expense of reconciliation is an instance of the Sartrean strand in Curran's thought coming to expression at the expense of the Christian strand.

5.   Tensions with Christian theology

The foregoing analysis of Curran's understanding of teacher-learner interaction offers a basis for returning to the question of the defensibility of Curran's Christian claims, and in particular of his claim that there is a conceptual compatibility between his view of the person and Christian belief. On the positive side, as I have noted above, Curran's intention to provide a more holistic and integrated view of the person seems consonant with the discussion of affirmation of the world in chapter 4, and his frequent use of the language of incarnation suggests that he is sensitive to a central Christian theological grounding for such an emphasis. His constant emphasis on the importance of community also has obvious affinities with the relational emphasis in chapter 4, though here (as I have suggested above and will argue further below) there are also significant tensions with Christian emphases. On the negative side, there are some substantial tensions with Christian convictions. I will develop this point a little by comparing Curran's work with some contrasting accounts.

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[82] Curran, 1976.

a. Four contrasting accounts

First, from a Reformed or evangelical theological perspective such as that from which the present study proceeds, the optimism of Curran's view of the person, with its emphasis on grace as the completion of an innate goodness already at work in the individual even under fallen conditions, will inevitably be suspect. Sin is seen instead as that which places the person in radical need of grace and repentance. This brings the theological legitimation of the anthropological optimism of humanistic psychology into question. Confessional differences within the broad bounds of the Christian faith come into play here, but even if the specifics of a Reformed or evangelical account of sin are not accepted, Curran's conception of sin seems somewhat minimalist. His adoption of a Rogerian optimism concerning the constructive forces within the individual, to the extent of affirming outbreaks of interpersonal hostility as a sign of constructive engagement with the learning process, raise the question of whether human fallenness is taken sufficiently seriously (see chapter 4).

Second, it is interesting to return briefly to Curran's identification of Sartre's 'desire to be God' with Augustine's view of the human spirit as essentially restless (see above). There are difficulties with Curran's synthesis. In Augustine, self-transcendence is not authentically found in the desire to be God, and the ultimate point of rest is not found through affirmed self-assertion, but rather through a yielding to God as the true focal point of the self.[83] This must take place through a tearing of the self away from its self-preoccupation and desire to be its own centre. Moreover, the turn inward is not for Augustine a turn to a space sovereignly possessed by the individual and vivified by internal forces, nor is it based on the assumption of the innate goodness of the inner self; for Augustine, "the way within leads above", and the ultimate point of exploring the inner self is that this self is "illumined from another source".[84] Without this illumination, the soul is likely to misperceive its real nature and remain in darkness. As

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[83] For a detailed discussion of an Augustinian understanding of self-transcendence, see Westphal, 1992. Westphal argues that in the Augustinian tradition, "self-transcendence means willing to be myself while at the same time willing to let God be God, that is, willing to be myself without insisting on being God", and immediately contrasts this with Nietzsche's cry of "how could I endure not to be a god!" (p.170).

[84] Taylor, 1989:135. Taylor develops this point at some length in contrasting Augustinian, Platonic and Cartesian conceptions of inwardness.

Taylor puts it, for Augustine "evil is when this reflexivity is enclosed on itself. Healing comes when it is broken open, not in order to be abandoned, but in order to acknowledge its dependence on God."[85] All of this contrasts significantly with a view of self-assertion as the ground of authentic selfhood, the inner self as inherently constructive and the individual's sovereign territory, and dependence as sickness. The Augustinian perspective coheres (unsurprisingly) with a view of the self as a gift which comes with a call to self-giving in the context of loving relationship, and a view of sin as a rebellion against these conditions in the form of self-enclosure and self-assertion. The Sartrean perspective can be read as participating in just such a rebellion, and where Curran depends upon it his proposals cohere less well with the Christian themes set out in chapter 4.

Third, the systematic opposition of self and other in Curran's appropriation of Sartre can be contrasted at almost every point with the Bakhtinian understanding of intersubjectivity which was outlined in chapter 4 and found to be closer in spirit than Sartre's individualism to the Christian themes discussed. For Bakhtin, "a person has no internal sovereign territory", and "the very being of man (both external and internal) is the *deepest communion*."[86] I become myself not in spite of others, but with the help of others, and a view of agency as possible only in the presence of a corresponding passivity is explicitly replaced by a view of agencies in dialogue.[87] Taylor, drawing upon Bakhtin, characterises dialogic agency as follows:

> "Think of two people sawing a log with a two-handed saw, or a couple dancing. A very important feature of human action is rhythming, cadence. Every apt, coordinated gesture has a certain flow. When one loses this flow, as occasionally happens, one falls into confusion; one's actions become inept and uncoordinated...Now in cases like the sawing of a log and ballroom dancing, it is crucial to their rhythming that it be shared."[88]

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[85] Taylor, 1989:139.

[86] Bakhtin, 1984:287.

[87] Bakhtin, 1981:281; 1984:287; Bakhtin, 1986:68.

[88] Taylor, 1991:310.

In other words, the space between people is not, as an emphasis on individual self-assertion would imply, one with room for only one agent. An anthropological model along more dialogical lines might have offered a more felicitous basis for Curran's attempt to develop a community-oriented pedagogy (with the qualifications regarding the idea of community discussed below).

Fourth, Mark Schwehn's argument that virtues such as humility and self-denial (see chapter 3) should be regarded as both pedagogical goals and conditions of learning provides an interesting counterpoint to Curran's views. Like Curran, Schwehn is concerned with the development of a learning community, committed to a view of learning which embraces the development of facets of the person beyond the cognitive, and interested in relating learning to Christian spirituality. Schwehn does not go on, as Curran does, to develop a theory of learning and a pedagogical design which might contribute towards the goals which he advocates. He does, however, specify that any such design should make the exercise of humility, self-denial and related spiritual virtues "seen and felt as an essential part of inquiry".[89] While it is perilous to attempt to predict learner responses from a theoretical presentation of a pedagogical design, it seems fair to question whether Schwehn's stipulation would be met by Curran's emphasis on the consistent affirmation of self-assertion. It is fair and pertinent given Curran's stated concern for the growth of the whole person to ask what kind of spirit or personal orientation are likely to be fostered by his pedagogy, and whether these are compatible with Christian virtues.

b.   Curran's community and hospitality

The argument so far has focused on the threats from within Curran's approach to the realisation of his goal of loving community. Before standing back from Curran's work to take stock of where the argument has led, I would like to focus on a difficulty which would remain even if the will to community were in fact to win out (which may be the case more often in practice than the tensions in Curran's theory might lead us to expect). The point at issue has to do with the relationship between community and hospitality, and emerges from a consideration of the role of culture in CLL.

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[89] Schwehn, 1993:60.

One of the critical questions which has been directed at CLL is whether it is possible to deal with the cultural dimension of modern language learning within its terms.[90] There are two particular features of CLL which give rise to this concern.

First, the emphasis on the affective layer of personhood and the existential experience of the individual is accompanied by an assumption that these are aspects of the self which represent a universal common ground. There is little consideration in Curran's writings of the relevance of group affiliations conditioned by factors such as ethnicity, socio-economic status or faith tradition for the ways in which learners interact. Where such factors are considered, in connection with their potential conflict with the values of the classroom, they are presented as alternative loyalties to be overcome by the CLL process.[91] This process is regarded as capable of providing a "freeing experience" which will leave its participants unencumbered by the values and judgements of the cultural context.[92] When Curran writes of community it is essentially an affective sense of belonging which he has in mind.[93] Curran justifies his lack of attention to social, cultural and political factors with the claim that what is shared at the affective level is prior to "birth, color or geography", and that:

> "for all their laudable motives and purpose, social and political issues
> may not really engage one with persons: they may, like many other
> "objective" issues, lead away from and displace a truly personal
> relationship."[94]

In sum, Curran's pedagogy is designed not to develop awareness of cultural values, but to focus attention on affective experience.

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[90] Stevick, 1990:97.

[91] Curran, 1972:108.

[92] Curran, 1972:38; cf. Rardin, 1976:21. Characteristically, such values are discussed in terms of external imposition on an otherwise unencumbered self. Cultural values are to be collapsed into personal values through individual self-investment (Curran, 1968:7).

[93] This in itself can be criticised as a reductive view of community. It makes no reference, for instance, to shared histories or beliefs and orientations. There is a parallel here to the understanding of the "whole self" as focused on the affective aspect of selfhood. While this may be more holistic in relation to intellectualism, it can still be argued to be reductive from a Christian point of view insofar as it reduces the spiritual and the communal to the affective.

[94] Curran, 1968:26.

The second difficulty grows out of the first. The overwhelming emphasis on the development of affectively open relationships between learners and between learner and knower goes hand in hand with a lack of any discussion of the relationship between the learners and the target culture or speakers of the target language. The point here is not merely the highly dubious assumption that cultural differences will play little role in communication as long as there is affective openness. The point is that the whole learning experience is focused in on the subjective horizon of the individual learner or the learning group. The material which forms the basis for language learning is constructed by the group from within the internal frames of reference of the native culture learners. The topics for discussion are chosen by learners on the basis of their own experiences, and the discourses studied are *native* language discourses, translated into the target language by the knower. This, together with the resistance of the overall pedagogical approach to strategies which might threaten the learner's sense of personal security, seems to provide little room for significant use of materials derived from the target culture and designed to *challenge* learner perceptions and perspectives. The critical pedagogy advocated by Claire Kramsch, which is discussed in the next chapter, provides a stark contrast at this point.

This weakness has been addressed in later writings on CLL, in particular in those by Paul La Forge, but the manner in which it has been addressed remains telling. La Forge writes out of the experience of using CLL to teach English in Japan, and therefore places a much greater emphasis on the role of cultural factors. La Forge recognises that "When the teacher provides learner space in a supportive way, the learner develops according to the norms of his native culture", and discusses at length ways of adapting CLL learning activities to Japanese cultural expectations.[95] This addresses the first of the weaknesses identified above by modifying Curran's emphases. However, when La Forge devotes an extended discussion to the "implications of Counseling-Learning for the study of culture" it turns out that what is meant by culture is the ways in which the members of the learning group interact.[96] Moreover, the purpose of attending to these patterns is in order to adapt to them so as to provide for maximum learner security:

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[95] La Forge, 1983:29.

[96] La Forge, 1983:90-115.

"each culture has its unique forms which provide for acquaintance upon forming new groups. These must be carefully adapted so as to provide cultural security for the students of foreign language."[97]

La Forge recognises that "the CLL group may become so focused on 'process' that the 'content' goals become dim", and recommends an extension of CLL to include a "sociolinguistic viewpoint", but here again cultural content is not in view.[98] Content is understood in terms of linguistic skills. Even in La Forge's more culturally sensitive reworking of CLL, then, the focus of attention remains firmly within the perimeter of the counseling group, and the second weakness identified above remains.

This inward focus of CLL is pertinent to the present discussion in two main ways. First, it will be recalled that two aspects of communicative language teaching identified in chapter five as offering avenues of inquiry in relation to spiritual development were personalisation (an emphasis on the relationship of language to identity and on its capacity to express feelings) and culture (an emphasis on encountering other perspectives on the world). Curran's pedagogical reworking of themes from humanistic psychology provides an example of how these two emphases can come into conflict. When the spotlight is trained firmly on the learner's subjective experience, interiority and self-expression, the encounter with another culture recedes into the background, and where culturally significant materials are used, they are in danger of being reduced to raw material for the learner's self-exploration, rather than yielding a genuine encounter with otherness.[99]

Second, the observations made above about the relationship between sin and self-enclosure, and between healing and openness, can be transposed to the group level. Schwehn develops this point in relation to group learning in American colleges, arguing that "collaborative learning does not by itself cultivate benevolence". It may instead foster the existing tendency towards the formation of peer networks which are relatively

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[97] La Forge, 1983:66.

[98] La Forge, 1982:69,72,79.

[99] Widdowson touches on this point in his questioning as to whether language teaching can coherently be based on both 'authenticity' (being true to language use in the target culture) and 'autonomy' (relating learning primarily to the subjective horizon of the learner) (Widdowson, 1996).

closed to the perspectives and needs of those outside them.[100] If the community produced in the learning group is enclosed and inward-looking, oblivious or closed to outside perspectives, it is open to challenge from a spiritual angle. The theme of hospitality to the alien seems particularly pertinent here - an emphasis on community coheres with Christian belief, but the community in question must be a hospitable one if it is not to become an instance of preoccupation with self shifted up to the group level.[101] In the modern language learning context, with its potential for cross-cultural encounter, this would seem to be a crucial consideration if spiritual goals are in view.

6.   Curran, humanistic education and spiritual development

I indicated at the beginning of this chapter my intention to focus on a single pedagogical design in detail rather than attempting a survey. This makes it possible to do more justice to the complex interweaving of conviction and practice which I am seeking to describe. However, it also limits the scope of the conclusions which can be drawn. The difficulties which emerge when Curran's pedagogy is considered in the light of the Christian approach to spiritual development proposed in this thesis may not emerge in quite the same way if another humanistic design is considered. Given the distinctiveness of Curran's attempts to combine a Sartrean existentialism with a metaphorical use of theological terms and an allegedly Christian anthropology, the detail of the critique developed here may not be applicable, at least in any straightforward way, even to fairly closely related pedagogical options.

Given the degree to which Curran's design shares with other humanistic pedagogies a substantial debt to existentialism and humanistic psychology, it is nevertheless likely that some of the problems identified here will be more widely pertinent. The emphasis on the goodness and central importance of the individual's inner self is a basic tenet of a humanistic approach in general, and is explicitly opposed to ideas such as sin or self-

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[100] Schwehn, 1993:90.

[101] The emphasis in the biblical hospitality tradition on the connection between openness to the stranger and openness to God is pertinent here; its tension with common humanistic emphases can be seen in the following comments from Rogers: "Experience is, for me, the highest authority...Neither the Bible nor the prophets - neither Freud nor research - neither the revelations of God nor man - can take precedence over my own direct experience" (Rogers, 1961:23-24). That which is within the self here takes precedence over any source of orientation or inspiration beyond the self; the self becomes its own point of ultimate orientation.

denial by other influential writers on humanistic language learning. Gertrude Moskowitz, for instance, states that:

> "some of the purposes of using humanistic communication activities to teach foreign languages are to improve self-esteem, to develop positive thinking, to increase self-understanding, to build greater closeness among students, and to discover the strengths and goodness in oneself and one's classmates."[102]

In the introduction to her handbook of humanistic techniques she adds that "rather than self-denial being the acceptable way of life, self-actualization and self-esteem are the ideals the exercises pursue"; the techniques proposed are overt in their exclusive focus on positive feelings and qualities.[103] Beverly Galyean, to take another example, surely reinforces the concerns raised above about enclosed horizons when she asserts that humanism "views all learning as learning about oneself".[104] From a Christian viewpoint, while a sober self-examination and an emphasis on the importance of the 'inner life' are to be affirmed, self-preoccupation may be the very opposite of spiritual development. Spiritual growth is about a great deal more than feeling good about oneself, and may even start from feeling bad about oneself.

These are merely brief pointers to the wider relevance of the critique developed here; to develop them further would require giving detailed attention to other pedagogical designs which are connected with them, a task which will not be undertaken here. I will conclude this chapter instead with two further observations.

First, the emphases characteristic of humanistic approaches (such as the 'whole person' understood primarily in affective terms, the belief in inner goodness, the prioritisation of the individual's subjective horizon and self-exploration, the belief that community results from freedom for individual self-assertion) are also characteristic of some approaches to spiritual development which are to be found in the current literature. In

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[102] Moskowitz, 1982:20.

[103] Moskowitz, 1978:2,25-26.

[104] Galyean, 1979:122. The aptness of this claim is amply illustrated in the examples of learning activities provided in Galyean, 1977.

chapter 4 I discussed an example from an article by Hawkes which presented spirituality as a positive exploration of one's inner feelings in which any negative thoughts were to be excluded. I argued that such an approach was incompatible with a Christian understanding of spirituality, which must include an openness to a source of life beyond oneself and a wrestling with sin. There are clear parallels with the argument of this chapter. Since conceptions of spiritual development are plural and controversial, pedagogical designs will comport well or badly to different degrees with different conceptions. The argument of this chapter confirms the expectation that a pedagogy which comports well with Hawkes' description of spirituality will not be a promising candidate for compatibility with Christian convictions.

Accordingly, the kind of humanistic pedagogical approach explored in this chapter would need to be significantly modified before it would comport well with Christian faith. This does not imply blanket rejection - there are elements which seem to me to be quite consonant with a Christian approach to spiritual development. These would include the emphasis on the importance of reflection, the interest (despite its limitations) in community and interpersonal relationships, and the teacher's humility in implied imitation of Christ. Nevertheless, taking the interweaving of approach, design and techniques as a whole, I suggest that CLL exhibits points of tension with a conception of spiritual development rooted in the Christian themes developed in chapter 4.

Second, it is pertinent to ask whether the strong association of humanistic approaches with themes such as self-transcendence, self-exploration and the 'whole person' described earlier in this chapter means that something like these approaches must be adopted if we are concerned with the spiritual development of the learner. Does the promotion of spiritual reflection in the language classroom imply a humanistic pedagogy?

The indication in chapter 5 of alternative lines of inquiry suggested that this is not the case. As Bishop puts it in a critique of pedagogies which rely upon self-disclosure in public settings to promote self-understanding,

> "There are other, less invasive, ways of attaining these educative gains.
> The private dimensions of human experience may be affirmed, for
> instance, through analysis of, and commentary on, literature, film and art

that explore these areas of human experience. Confession is by no means a prerequisite for reflection."[105]

In the context of modern language pedagogy, this points us back in the direction of the other strand discussed in chapter 5, the emphasis on the potential offered by the cultural aspect of modern language education for encountering the beliefs and values of others and so having one's own beliefs and values strengthened or challenged. It is a pedagogical design reflecting this emphasis which will be explored in the next chapter.

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[105] Bishop, 1996:438.

Chapter 7
Culture, power and autonomy in the work of Claire Kramsch

Outline
1. The relevance of Claire Kramsch's work
2. Sources: Critical pedagogy and Bakhtin
   a. Critical pedagogical sources
   b. Bakhtin and double-voiced discourse
3. Critical foreign language pedagogy
   a. The learner and the cultural context
   b. Fostering awareness of difference
   c. Reorienting classroom practice
4. Self and others in Kramsch's pedagogy
   a. Culture and subjugation
   b. Empowerment and growth
   c. Conflict and liberation
5. Pedagogical effects
6. Mastery, conflict and communion
7. Conclusion: Conflict and hospitality

It will be recalled from chapter 5 that one of the suggestions provided in official discussions of spiritual development across the curriculum was that the contribution of modern foreign language education might be to offer learners "insights into, and points of comparison with, the ways in which other peoples, whether today or in the past, have interpreted the world around them".[1] Chapter 5 went on to discuss some widely noted weaknesses in the form of communicative language teaching (CLT) which has provided the pedagogical foundation of the National Curriculum for Modern Foreign Languages. Two lines of development were identified which are commonly mentioned in recommendations for improving current practice and potentially relevant to a concern for spiritual development: on the one hand a move towards greater personalisation, and on the other an interest in cultural awareness. The former was the subject of chapter 6; exploring the latter will be the task of the current chapter.

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[1] OFSTED, 1994:17-18.

As in chapter 6, I will not attempt to offer an overview of approaches to teaching for cultural awareness, but will rather examine a particular example. The aim here is not to survey the field, but rather to explore specific pedagogical approaches and designs in sufficient detail to make their resonances and tensions with the Christian themes discussed in chapter 4 evident. The particular pedagogy examined in this chapter is the "critical foreign language pedagogy" proposed by Claire Kramsch in her book *Context and Culture in Language Teaching* and in a number of related articles.[2]

1. The relevance of Claire Kramsch's work

Unlike Curran, Kramsch makes no claim to relate her work to Christian belief - indeed, I have not found any mention of Christianity in her writings. The theme of spirituality is also absent. The relevance of her work to the concerns of this study does not, therefore, lie so close to the surface as was the case with Curran. Before outlining the ways in which her work is nevertheless relevant, it is worth noting that this lack of explicit connection with discussions of spirituality or Christian belief brings some benefit at this stage in the argument. If the discussion were focused entirely upon educators who have made faith and spirituality overt concerns in their pedagogical writings, it might still be possible to conclude that such matters are relevant only to the work of those who have taken the somewhat uncommon step of dabbling in them. Examining the work of educators who have consciously set out to deal with the relevance of faith and spirituality is a natural and necessary starting point. This chapter moves on to consider the pertinence of these considerations to a pedagogical approach which does not address them directly.

While Kramsch does not address spiritual development, her pedagogy is very relevant to the suggestion that spiritual development might be promoted by fostering insights into the interpretations of the world found in another culture. She echoes the criticisms noted in chapter 5 of the cultural limitations of common implementations of mainstream CLT, asking:

> "How can intercultural understanding arise from a skill-oriented,

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[2] The discussion of Kramsch's work below is drawn from the more extensive study of Kramsch's pedagogy in Smith, 1997b. Some further aspects of Kramsch's proposals are discussed in Smith, 1997a.

behaviorally conceived foreign language proficiency? Do global understanding, cross-cultural awareness automatically grow out of being able to master the present tense, order a meal in a restaurant or handle social situations...?"[3]

While still seeing her work as communicative in orientation, Kramsch seeks to modify CLT in ways which move it beyond functional uses of language in the direction of a "critical foreign language pedagogy".[4]

If a critical pedagogical orientation holds that pedagogical design "largely depends on deeply held beliefs and values",[5] then it seems likely that its concerns will connect with those of this thesis. Cultural awareness plays a central role in this pedagogy - Kramsch states that "a critical pedagogy...searches for evidence of effective learning in the insights gained by the learners about foreign attitudes and mindsets".[6] Her conception of what it would mean to educate the 'whole person' is consequently somewhat different in emphasis from that found in Curran's work:

> "FLL [Foreign Language Learning] is oriented towards the learner, but the whole learner, in his or her biological, neurological, psychological, social, affective and personal make-up. FLL takes an integrative view of the learner drawing on a variety of related fields: psycho- and socio-linguistics, semantics, pragmatics, information-processing theory, cultural anthropology and ethnography, literacy studies and teaching of English as a second language, and even foreign language policy."[7]

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[3] Kramsch, 1991:223.

[4] Kramsch, 1993a:13,70; 1995b:83.

[5] Kanpol, 1997:4. Kanpol in fact suggests that critical pedagogy must be considered in relation to "spirituality, which among many other facets of life must guide the explanations and interpretations of the criticalist" (p.5). Some versions of critical pedagogy have connections with liberation theology, and there has been discussion of the connections between critical pedagogy and Christian education; see e.g. Freire, 1996a; Kuhlman, 2000.

[6] Kramsch, 1993a:184.

[7] Kramsch, 1990:29. Juxtaposing this account with Curran's (see chapter 6) highlights the point that talk of the 'whole person', despite its expansive appeal, must be read as relative to the particular collection of parts which have been understood as making up the whole.

Here a range of linguistic, socio-cultural and political categories are foregrounded more than affective ones. For Kramsch, the whole learner is to be developed less in the sense of encouraging exploration of inward experience than in terms of promoting awareness on the part of the learner (and the teacher) of his or her culturally shaped frames of reference.[8]

This critical pedagogy is of potential relevance to the present discussion in at least two ways. First, the emphasis on raising learners' awareness of the cultural factors which have shaped their identities and of alternative ways of interpreting the self and the world seems highly relevant to a conception of spiritual development which foregrounds beliefs and life orientations. While such critical reflection should not be identified with spiritual development, it is likely to include, or could be oriented towards, spiritually significant issues. It is possible, for instance, to focus on spiritually challenging material drawn from the target culture.[9] Moreover, an emphasis on encountering other cultures also leads naturally to an interest in learners' values and attitudes towards those who are different, and to a concern both with enabling learners to explore these values and attitudes and with fostering personal change where these are hostile.[10] A critical pedagogical orientation which regards education as essentially concerned with "reflection about the very conditions of existence"[11] may contribute significantly to education for spiritual development.

Second, theorists oriented to critical pedagogy have been particularly suspicious of a conception of pedagogy as an uncontroversial matter of efficient method, and have emphasised the role of particular commitments in shaping pedagogical designs.[12] Kramsch emphasises that particular pedagogical choices create an educational culture which has effects beyond the confines of the transmission of linguistic skills, and argues

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[8] Kramsch, 1993a:124.

[9] Neuner and Hunfeld, for instance, argue that the content of the foreign language curriculum should engage, among other things, with basic existential experiences such as birth, death and mode of being in the world, norms and values including religious orientation, and spiritual dimensions including reflexivity and imagination (Neuner & Hunfeld, 1993:113).

[10] See e.g. Byram, 1997:34-35.

[11] Freire, 1996b:90.

[12] See the discussion in chapter 3 in relation to authors such as Pennycook (1989; 1990).

that research in the field of foreign language learning must not only examine practices themselves, but also engage in an intellectual exploration of the particular commitments and metaphors which animate them.[13] An investigation of the ways in which the particular orientation evident in Kramsch's critical foreign language pedagogy might comport with or conflict with Christian faith would therefore seem to be the kind of investigation which Kramsch would endorse.

2. Sources: Critical Pedagogy and Bakhtin

a. Critical pedagogical sources

Kramsch draws significant resources for her 'critical foreign language pedagogy' from the critical pedagogical tradition stemming from the work of Paolo Freire. Freire sought to develop a liberatory pedagogy in the context of education for adult literacy in Latin America. He wanted a pedagogy which would contribute to social change by making the oppressed more conscious of their social position and its contingent status. The problem with traditional pedagogy, Freire argues, is that the learner is simply the passive recipient of deposits of knowledge, and is not encouraged to develop a voice of his or her own. This results in a continuation of existing oppression, for it does nothing to break down the tendency for the oppressed to internalise the values of their oppressors. Overcoming this inauthentic consciousness through a process of 'conscientisation' is regarded by Freire as a central educational concern.[14] Conscientisation renders the social situation visible and presents it to learners as a problem in order to replace fatalistic acceptance with critically grounded action. Freire notes that:

> "The central problem is this: How can the oppressed, as divided, unauthentic beings, participate in developing the pedagogy of their liberation? Only as they discover themselves to be the 'hosts' of the oppressor can they contribute to the midwifery of their liberating pedagogy."[15]

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[13] Kramsch, 1995a:13-14; see also chapter 3 above.

[14] Freire, 1996b:90.

[15] Freire, 1996b:30.

This "central problem", that of how the oppressed can be at once moulded by the conditions of their oppression and active contributors to a learning process which would transform those conditions, is taken up in a different key in the writings of Henry Giroux, a central figure in more recent North American critical pedagogy.

Giroux approaches Freire's concerns with a central interest in questions of language, identity and meaning, arguing that "how we are constructed in language is no less important than how we are constructed as subjects within relations of production".[16] The self is significantly shaped by existing cultural and ideological discourses, but is not wholly determined by them; Giroux rejects deterministic theories of ideological hegemony and affirms the ability of the individual to critically examine and resist existing discourses and ideologies.[17] This clearly returns us to a modified version of Freire's central question: if the self is constructed from and moulded by existing discourses, then on what basis can the self come to critique those same discourses?

Giroux's answer to this question involves an interplay of difference, power and discourse. A significant reason for regarding deterministic visions as inadequate, Giroux argues, is that the ideological and cultural terrain is not uniform but plural and full of contradictions. The self is not formed in a stable, coherent context framed by a single ideology, but rather in the midst of an ongoing struggle between competing and contradictory discourses, each striving for the right to name reality. The result is therefore not a "free, unified, stable and coherent self", but rather a multiple self - the human subject is "a terrain of conflict and struggle,...a site of both liberation and subjugation".[18] Since differences are not peaceably arrayed, but are in conflict with one another, the self can become engaged in resistance to some discourses by using the leverage provided by others. Since the conflict takes place in the context of unequal power relations, competing discourses are not simply different or contradictory, but also more central or marginal in terms of social hegemony. For Giroux this raises the possibility that the margins may offer resources with which to critique dominant

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[16] Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991:116.

[17] See his essay on 'Ideology and agency in the process of schooling' in [Giroux, 1997 #217:71-94].

[18] Giroux, 1997:202-203.

ideologies. Authentic agency will be expressed in resistance to oppressive discourses in the interests of social transformation - discourse is "the power which one is trying to seize".[19]

This means rejecting both a liberal pluralism, which implies that differences are just variegated parts of a harmonious whole, and a humanistic approach to education, which posits a coherent and unitary 'whole' self as the centre of learning. The incompatibilities with the kind of approach represented by Curran (see chapter 6) emerge clearly in Giroux's rejection of:

> "the liberal-progressive tradition in which teaching is reduced to getting students merely to express or assess their own experiences. Teaching collapses in this case into a banal notion of facilitation, and student experience becomes an unproblematic vehicle for self-affirmation and self-consciousness. Within this perspective, it is assumed that student experience produces forms of understanding that escape the traditions that inform them."[20]

For Giroux, it is a mistake to over-privilege the student's voice, for "experience has to be read critically: it never speaks for itself".[21]

It is a short step from this pedagogical approach, which emphasises the role of language in identity formation and wishes students to "engage the multiple references that constitute different cultural codes, experiences and languages",[22] to issues connected with the cultural dimension of foreign language education. Kramsch takes this step, suggesting that conscientisation is an appropriate goal for foreign language education and offering a further recontextualisation of Giroux's reworking of Freire's "central problem". Kramsch's version of the problem asks how teachers and learners whose

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[19] Giroux, 1989:144, citing Foucault.

[20] Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991:117. While it may be something of an over-simplification, the observation that Curran reduces the political to the personal while Giroux subsumes the personal under the political would indicate a genuine point of contrast (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991:126; Curran, 1968). The relevance of this to the emphasis on inner experience in much discussion of spiritual development will be clear.

[21] Giroux, 1992:158.

[22] Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991:118.

subjectivities and educational settings are pervasively shaped by their native culture can genuinely engage with and understand a foreign culture. In Kramsch's words, "the fundamental paradox of language teaching [is] how to teach a foreign culture via an educational culture that is part of the learner's native culture".[23]

b.   Bakhtin and double-voiced discourse

Another source for Kramsch's pedagogical ideas is Bakhtin's account of 'double-voiced discourse'. This account shares with the critical pedagogical sources outlined above a concern to maintain a place for the individual's agency given the extent to which the individual is affected by social forces, particularly through language.[24] I provided an outline of Bakhtin's view of language in chapter 4, but will review here some points which are particularly pertinent to Kramsch's pedagogy.

As I noted in chapter 4, Bakhtin does not view language as a transparent medium for the transfer of messages. He argues that:

> "there are no 'neutral' words and forms - words and forms that can
> belong to 'no one'; language has been completely taken over, shot
> through with intentions and accents. For any individual consciousness
> living in it, language is not an abstract system of normative forms but
> rather a concrete heteroglot conception of the world...Each word tastes of
> the context and contexts in which it has lived its socially charged life; all
> words and forms are populated by intentions."[25]

This means that language cannot be viewed as the individual's personal property, freely available for self-expression:

> "language, for the individual consciousness, lies on the borderline
> between oneself and the other. The word in language is half someone

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[23] Kramsch, 1993a:202. Cf. Kramsch & McConnell-Ginet, 1992:21, where Kramsch states that the "ultimate mystery of human understanding and learning" centres on the question: "given the interaction of context and text, of the cultural and the particular, of social experience and individual learning, where do understanding and change take place?".

[24] Giroux also appeals to Bakhtin (Giroux, 1997:132-135).

[25] Bakhtin, 1981:293.

else's. It becomes 'one's own' only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention."[26]

Becoming a responsible linguistic agent thus involves reworking others' words in the light of one's own evaluative stance, taking alien words and making them "internally persuasive".[27] Normal discourse is therefore, according to Bakhtin, not single-voiced, as if language were transparently available to the individual's sovereign intentions, but rather double-voiced, an arena where the intentions of the individual speaker and those of various discourse communities interact.

Kramsch takes up this idea of double-voiced discourse in her foreign language pedagogy to describe the position of the learner in relation to the foreign language and culture.[28] The traditional emphasis on the learner's utterances becoming as indistinguishable as possible from those of the native speaker is, Kramsch argues, inappropriate.[29] The task of the teacher is to "have learners not just parrot a society's conventional discourse but find a voice of their own in the foreign language".[30] This suggests a pedagogy which, rather than assuming a smooth progression towards native speaker-like communicative competence, emphasises the cultural dimension of language learning as "a place of struggle between the learners' meanings and those of native speakers".[31] In keeping with critical pedagogical emphases, the goal is to move learning beyond socialisation to conscientisation.[32]

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[26] Bakhtin, 1981:293. Cf. Bakhtin, 1986:69: "the unique speech experience of each individual is shaped and developed in continuous and constant interaction with others' individual utterances. This experience can be characterized to some degree as the process of assimilation - more or less creative - of others' words...These words of others carry with them their own expression, their own evaluative tone, which we assimilate, rework and accentuate."

[27] Emerson, 1986:31.

[28] On the significance of Bakhtin for Krasmch's theory, see Kramsch, 1993a:26-27; Kramsch & McConnell-Ginet, 1992:12-13.

[29] Kramsch, 1998.

[30] Kramsch & McConnell-Ginet, 1992:12.

[31] Kramsch, 1993a:24.

[32] Kramsch, 1993a:243.

3. Critical foreign language pedagogy

The sources described above form a significant part of the background to the distinctive emphases of Kramsch's pedagogy. In this section I will describe these emphases further, before engaging in a closer discussion of some particular strands in the next section.

a. The learner and the cultural context

Kramsch views the individual as from the outset embedded in a particular social and cultural context. The self is constructed through a recombination of resources provided by the social and cultural environment. Language plays a central role - our language is not transparently available for individual self-expression, for

> "native speakers of a language speak not only with their own individual voices, but through them speak also the established knowledge of their native community and society, the stock of metaphors this community lives by, and the categories they use to represent their experience."[33]

Our voices are not pure expressions of our individual subjectivity, for "our personal thoughts are shaped by those of others" and our speech is "full of invisible quotes, borrowed consciously or unconsciously".[34] A complete determination of the self by the social and cultural context is not, however, inevitable, for the reasons outlined in the discussion of Giroux above. The discourses which surround us are multiple and in conflict. The self which is constructed in such a context thus carries difference, and therefore the basis for shifts in the balance of different possibilities, within itself.[35] Language is not a monolithic straitjacket, but rather a place of struggle between a variety of personal and social voices and meanings. People therefore have "considerable creative leeway" in what they do and say, for the multiplicity implies the possibility and importance of choice.[36]

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[33] Kramsch, 1993a:43. Kramsch argues that language and culture must be treated as aspects of the same domain of experience (Kramsch, 1991:218,237; cf. also Kramsch, 1993b).

[34] Kramsch, 1993a:34,48; see also Kramsch, 1991:226.

[35] See especially Kramsch & von Hoehne, 1995.

[36] Kramsch & McConnell-Ginet, 1992:8.

b. Fostering awareness of difference

This exercise of personal agency depends on disruption of the illusions of a single-voiced self and a natural cultural context. There is a tendency for the native cultural context and the meanings embedded in the native language to be viewed as natural and inevitable rather than arbitrary and contestable. If passive acquiescence is to give way to responsible agency, the individual must become sensitive to the different and conflicting discourses which have shaped his or her self; a "destabilization of one's own subject position" enables "an exploration of the many discursive voices that such a position entails".[37]

This is closely tied to the realisation that culture is arbitrary and revisable, that "different events could have been recorded if other people had had the power to record them".[38] The realisation that the patterns which have shaped both the wider culture and the individual embedded within that culture are multiple, arbitrary and revisable highlights the individual's responsibility to maintain or contest existing patterns. It also increases the chances of an authentic encounter with a foreign culture by enabling an approach to it which is conscious of its otherness and does not assume that it can be fully or properly understood through the values and categories of the native culture. For this openness to otherness to exist, learners "have to be aware of their own cultural myths and realities that ease or impede their understanding of the foreign imagination".[39]

The echoes of Freire's idea of conscientisation are clear, and Kramsch's critical foreign language pedagogy sees such consciousness-raising as a central aim.[40] Passive acceptance by the individual of the shaping effects of existing cultural patterns is not only avoidable but also unacceptable. The individual must in some measure contest existing patterns both in order to achieve authentic personal agency and in order to take up a role as an agent of social change.[41] Kramsch summarises these themes as follows:

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[37] Kramsch & von Hoehne, 1995.

[38] Kramsch, 1995b:85.

[39] Kramsch, 1993a:216; cf. Kramsch, 1983:438.

[40] Kramsch is clear that this involves political goals and not merely developmental ones, since it involves challenging dominant cultural values (Kramsch, 1995c:10).

[41] Kramsch, 1993a:94.

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"Because language is at the intersection of the individual and the social, of text and discourse, it both reflects and construes the social reality called 'context.' Because of the multiplicity of meanings inherent in any stretch of speech, contexts are not stable; they are constantly changed and recreated by individual speakers and hearers, writers and readers. The dominance of any established 'culture' is alternately adopted and contested, adapted and ironicized, by the emergence of new meanings. In the creation of spoken and written texts, individuals manipulate and shape imposed contexts to fit their own individual needs and bring to the fore their own meanings."[42]

Foreign language learning can, Kramsch argues, play an important role in this process. The foreign language brings with it new cultural patterns, different from and marginal to the learner's native culture. These can provide the basis for a new awareness on the part of the learner of his or her own culturally conditioned frame of reference, and by helping learners to become distanced from their own cultural context can lay the basis for criticism and action for social change.[43]

A pedagogy which assumes that learners simply need to encode universal meanings into a new linguistic medium and to become socialised into new communicative patterns is therefore rejected as overly supportive of the status quo. Kramsch argues that although mainstream CLT recognises cultural variation, it construes it in terms of sets of rules which can be learned and used to express any meaning appropriately, and therefore perpetuates the assumption that "because we are all humans, we can all understand each other provided we share the same code".[44] This is, Kramsch argues, likely to leave learners "blind to their own social and cultural identity, implicitly assuming a consensus between their world and the other".[45] She seeks to oppose this consensus-oriented approach with a pedagogy which takes "a philosophy of conflict as its point of departure" and faces learners with the challenge posed to communication by cultural

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[42] Kramsch, 1993a:67.

[43] Kramsch, 1993a:124,216,243.

[44] Kramsch, 1993a:1.

[45] Kramsch, 1993a:24.

difference instead of focusing on how much information is safely conveyed to the 'sympathetic native speaker'.[46] Cultural awareness will not be achieved through an emphasis on doing things with words and an understanding of communication as a straightforward competence. Instead, Kramsch argues, we must confront learners with cultural difference; the goal is "not a balance of opposites, or a moderate pluralism of opinions but a paradoxical, irreducible confrontation that may change one in the process".[47]

c.   Reorienting classroom practice

Kramsch discusses an incident from her classroom as a paradigmatic example of the kind of classroom event which is to be seen as offering significant possibilities to a critical foreign language pedagogy.[48] One of her students attempted to say in German "I like challenges, but this class is ridiculous", and came up with the sentence: "Ich mag Herausforderungen, aber diese Klasse ist lächerlich!" Kramsch argues that in addition to the inappropriacy of "lächerlich" in this context (it suggests a ridiculously small task, rather than a burdensome one), the choice of "Herausforderungen" in this context would be more natural for an American speaker than a German one. She suggests that the learner has attempted to express in German an American notion of challenge, which is related to the overcoming of obstacles and an entrepreneurial spirit. This learner utterance thus reveals a clash of cultural assumptions, and therefore represents an important learning opportunity.

Here some of the basic differences between Kramsch's approach and both mainstream CLT and Curran's Community Language Learning (CLL) are evident. Both, for different reasons, have tended to downplay the significance of learner errors. The humanistic concern for the affective security of the learner led Curran to debar error correction in the early stages of learning. This was linked, as I argued in chapter 6, with a tendency to focus on and affirm the subjective horizon of the learner at the expense of serious attention to the target culture. CLT has tended to focus on the amount of

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[46] Kramsch, 1993a:1; cf. Kramsch, 1995c; Kramsch, Cain, & Murphy-Lejeune, 1996:100.

[47] Kramsch, 1993a:231.

[48] Kramsch, 1993a:15-21.

meaning which has been successfully transferred from speaker to hearer or from writer to reader, downplaying formal grammatical errors where they would not significantly impede comprehension by a 'sympathetic native speaker'. Learning about the target culture is seen as important in order to enhance this process of meaning transfer by achieving a culturally appropriate communicative competence in imitation of native speakers.

Kramsch insists on the educational importance of foregrounding errors of the kind described above. Such a procedure both highlights to learners the points at which their communication has failed due to their dependence on their own personal and cultural frames of reference and also draws attention to their efforts to forge a voice of their own in the new medium, rather than merely imitating native speaker utterances and thus being socialised into native speaker norms.[49] The moments of breakdown and discrepancy are therefore seen as potentially the most educationally significant moments.[50]

Communicative tasks must, then, be re-oriented to highlight differences in frames of reference. Written texts should thus be approached by means of an "oppositional" reading stance which highlights the different voices and perspectives which can be discerned in an apparently unitary text.[51] A collection of several published translations of a German poem could be approached as different rewritings of the poem rather than in terms of faithfulness to the original.[52] The cultural content of the foreign language course should be chosen not merely to be entertaining or accessible to students, but for its value in challenging their assumptions and attitudes.[53] In speaking tasks, learners should be encouraged to investigate the effects of manipulating the context of

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[49] On the problems with taking imitation of the native speaker as the basic goal, see also Byram, 1997:11-12.

[50] For a more detailed discussion of Kramsch's relationship to mainstream CLT, see Smith, 1997a, 1997b. The emphasis on consciousness-raising also implies a rejection of 'direct' or 'natural' pedagogies which induct learners into the target language without promoting reflection upon it (Kramsch, 1993a:92).

[51] Kramsch & Nolden, 1994:34. For an example, see Kramsch, 1993a:98-103.

[52] Kramsch, 1993a:168.

[53] Kramsch, 1993a:189.

utterances. For instance, a student can be asked to tell the same story to the same person repeatedly with variations in spatial setting (face-to-face or back-to-back, at a simulated party or interview) or temporal setting (varying the amount of time available). Speakers can be asked to vary their adopted social role or their mode of delivery, whispering, interrupting or even shouting each other down "in an attempt to impose their story on one another".[54] Even from these few examples, the differences between these tasks and information gap activities in mainstream CLT are evident.

4.   Self and others in Kramsch's pedagogy

After the discussion of how Curran deals with interpersonal hostility in chapter 6, it is interesting to find in the last of the examples given above a task which encourages learners to shout each other down as each attempts to impose his or her voice. In this section I will argue that, as with Curran, tensions between Kramsch's pedagogy and a Christian approach to spiritual development emerge in the detail of her conception of interpersonal interaction in the classroom. I will not be offering an overall evaluation of her pedagogical approach, which seems to me to contain a great deal that is interesting and illuminating, but will rather focus on a particular strand in her thinking related to the issue of individual agency. While this may give a somewhat imbalanced impression of the whole, it will allow a sharper focus on the particular issues with which this thesis is concerned. I will discuss three interrelated ideas in Kramsch's account: cultural location as a form of subjugation, personal growth as a seizing of power, and conflict as the path to liberation.[55]

a.   Culture and Subjugation

A basic impulse in critical pedagogy is the concern for an approach to education which might lead to the liberation of learners from some form of oppressive subjugation, whether this is understood in terms of material social conditions or in terms of hegemonic discourses. Educational processes must be analysed in the context of unequal power relationships. It is the existence of this condition of subjugation, particularly in terms of its impact upon the learner's sense of self, which makes some form of

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[54] Kramsch, 1993a:95.

[55] Here I am closely following the account given in chapter 4 of Smith, 1997b.

conscientisation more pedagogically appropriate than straightforward socialisation. Developing critical pedagogical themes in the context of foreign language education therefore involves Kramsch in identifying relevant forms of subjugation. Three related levels of subjugation can be identified in her account.

The broadest level has to do with the view of the self as embedded in a wider cultural fabric, shaped by the thoughts and discourses of others and deeply connected with a particular community and culture. This state of affairs could be construed in various ways. It could, for instance, be described in the language of nurture, enabling conditions and support - without a wider social and cultural context our personal development would be severely impoverished. Kramsch's descriptions of the cultural context tend in a different direction, and focus on the subjugation and powerlessness of the individual. Culture is viewed as an arbitrary constraint which is legitimised by a false appearance of rightness and inevitability. Kramsch comments that "culture, in order to be legitimate, has always had to justify itself and cloak its laws in the mantle of what is 'right and just' rather than appear in the naked power of its arbitrariness".[56] It is this arbitrary power to which the individual is subordinated as he or she is socialised into a particular cultural perspective.

When this individual enters an educational institution, a second layer of subjugation appears. Educational institutions both form and are formed by particular traditions and systems of thought.[57] In them, learners are subjected to particular norms concerning what counts as knowledge or appropriate behaviour, norms which not only reflect the general influence of wider cultural frameworks, but are actively imposed by the teacher within the specific culture of the institution. Learners therefore find themselves, Kramsch suggests, in an educational system "that by its nature reminds them how powerless they really are".[58]

Yet another level of subordination is added, according to Kramsch, when the educational activity is the learning of another language. If learners had no hand in

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[56] Kramsch, 1995b:85.

[57] Kramsch, 1991:221; 1993a:247; 1995c:9.

[58] Kramsch, 1993a:243, cf. p.23.

designing their own cultural and educational context, they certainly carry no responsibility for the shape of the target language and the culture which is interwoven with it. When the aim of foreign language learning is understood in terms of socialisation into the norms of native speaker communication, the learner's existing powerlessness is compounded:

> "Constrained by the linguistic rules of the foreign language and its rules of use, constrained also by their own socialization patterns in their own culture, language learners are indeed in a position of uncommon subordination and powerlessness."[59]

On all three levels, Kramsch sees the voice of the self as "enmeshed and regulated by the voice of the other",[60] and the metaphors of unwelcome restraint on individual agency point in the direction in which authentic personal growth must lie.

b.   Empowerment and growth

The state of multiple subordination described above is presented by Kramsch as a state of inauthenticity from which the individual is to emerge by grasping power through discourse. Learners must learn to take advantage of the multiple meanings embedded in language in order to manipulate discourse for their own ends:

> "Taking advantage of the multiple levels of meaning is one way for them to counteract the fundamental powerlessness brought about through what Harder...has called the 'reduced personality' of the language learner and gain control over the norms of interaction and interpretation established by the teacher."[61]

Rather than acquiescing to the teacher's norms, or seeking (unrealistically) to become carbon copies of an idealised native speaker, learners should appropriate the language

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[59] Kramsch, 1993a:238. Cf. Kramsch & von Hoehne, 1995:335: "Developing a voice of one's own in contexts one has not chosen, to express meanings constrained by rules of grammar and ways of speaking that are not one's own, is among the major challenges of the language learning voyage of discovery".

[60] Kramsch, 1993a:28, citing Sheldon.

[61] Kramsch, 1993a:52.

for their own purposes.[62] They will grow as they "discover the range of their power to assign new values to a seemingly stable and predetermined universe of existing meanings".[63] The subordination will never be entirely overcome, but increased personal power will lead to a pleasure which derives from "the ability to impose one's own norms".[64] Kramsch states that:

> "Learners have to construct their personal meanings at the boundaries
> between the native speaker's meanings and their own everyday life. The
> personal pleasures they can derive from producing these meanings come
> from their *power* to produce them."[65]

Resistance on the part of the learners should therefore not be regarded by the teacher as undesirable. It should rather be encouraged, so that learners can gain "a sense of conversational power and control that the system traditionally withholds from them as non-legitimate for non-native speakers".[66] Learners should be encouraged to "play power games with the teacher and with one another".[67]

In this description of a movement from subordination to power games, the idea of ownership plays a significant role and places self and other in principled opposition. Learners need to appropriate the target language, to make it their own.[68] Existing patterns, structures and meanings are disempowering because they are not mine but someone else's:

> "There is little pleasure in accepting ready-made meanings, however
> pertinent. The pleasure derives both from the power and process of
> making meanings out of *their* resources and from the sense that these

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[62] There are connections here with the personalisation theme discussed in chapters 5 and 6.

[63] Kramsch, 1993a:104.

[64] Kramsch, 1993a:53.

[65] Kramsch, 1993a:238-239, emphasis original.

[66] Kramsch, 1993a:242-243.

[67] Kramsch, 1993a:30.

[68] Kramsch's call for a "pedagogy of appropriation" (Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996:210) consciously echoes Widdowson's exploration of similar issues (Widdowson, 1994; cf. Kramsch, 1996).

meanings are *ours* as opposed to *theirs*."[69]

The assumption behind this comment and others cited earlier appears to be that if I had no control over or hand in the construction of a meaning or structure, then to accept it must be construed as disempowerment. Gaining power involves "constructing *our* space within and against *their* place, of speaking *our* meanings with *their* language".[70] Self and other appear to be engaged in a struggle over property rights. In fact, if language and meaning already belong to others but must be appropriated by the self, language learning even becomes a form of theft:

> "Learners of a foreign language, challenged to learn a linguistic code
> they have not helped to shape, in social contexts they have not helped to
> define, are indeed poaching on the territory of others - a kind of
> oppositional practice, that ... places them in opposition to the current
> practices of the discourse community that speaks that language."[71]

The cluster of metaphors used to characterise the learner's growth - possession, territorial dispute, poaching - suggests that to achieve authenticity the learner must adopt a position which is in conflict with the teacher, the educational institution and the target culture. This reflects the positive role accorded to conflict in Kramsch's pedagogical theory.

c.   Conflict and liberation

The importance of conflict for Kramsch's account will already be clear. If existing discourses and institutions necessarily subjugate the individual, then empowerment involves coming into conflict with them. If authentic growth involves gaining control over discourse, and there is more than one agent seeking authenticity, then power games and a struggle for control will ensue. If learners have been socialised into a view of language as an unproblematic vehicle for their free self-expression and an acceptance of their cultural outlook as inevitable, then the conflicts arising from cross-cultural

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[69] Kramsch, 1993a:238, citing Fiske, emphases original.

[70] Kramsch, 1993a:237, citing de Certeau.

[71] Kramsch, 1995b:90; cf. Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996:210.

encounter and a struggle with a new language might break open their horizons.[72] The main arenas of conflict thus correspond to the three levels of subjugation outlined above.

First, insofar as cultural subjugation is not passively accepted, the individual is involved in "the constant struggle between individual and social meanings in discourse", a struggle which "needs to be accepted and exploited rather than ignored".[73] The individual's attempts to forge his or her own voice come into conflict with the voices of the community in a process in which "the social order and the individual constantly trick each other, outdo each other in a fight not only over commodities and facts, but over who will impose their meanings on those facts".[74]

Within educational institutions this struggle continues with the additional dimension of resistance to the ideology and values of the educational system. Here, teachers and students "use the system but resist it for their own purposes".[75] This places teachers in an ambivalent position, for they must respond both to society's demand for socialisation and to the needs of their learners, responsibilities which would seem on this account to be all but irreconcilable. Their role as authorities representing the national and educational culture means that there will be conflict with learners as the latter "resist the self-evident and invisible culture teachers try to impose".[76] Kramsch argues that:

> "the struggle between the desire of students to appropriate the foreign language for their own purposes, and the responsibility of the teacher for socializing them into a linguistically and socioculturally appropriate behavior lie at the core of the educational enterprise. Both are necessary for pleasurable and effective language learning. The good teacher fosters compliance and rebellion."[77]

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[72] Cf. Schultz, 1990:24-25.

[73] Kramsch, 1993a:240.

[74] Kramsch, 1993a:237.

[75] Kramsch, 1993a:15, 247.

[76] Kramsch, 1993a:48.

[77] Kramsch, 1993a:246; Kramsch characterises this as a struggle between "autonomy and control" (p.246).

This struggle is not presented as a breakdown in educational relationships, but rather as being built into their very nature:

> "There will always be a struggle between the teacher whose charge it is to make the students understand and eventually adopt foreign verbal behaviors and mindsets, and the learners who will continue to use transmitted knowledge for their own purposes, who will insist on making their own meanings and finding their own relevances. This struggle is the educational enterprise *per se*."[78]

An ongoing struggle between teacher and learners should therefore be encouraged rather than overcome.

Finally, the encounter with the foreign language and culture makes the classroom "a place of struggle between the learners' meanings and those of native speakers".[79] The apparent dilemma between on the one hand being socialised into the foreign culture through the imitation of native speaker norms, or on the other hand failing to encounter the values of the target culture in any significant way because of attachment to the base culture norms inculcated through primary socialisation, is replaced by the goal of ongoing confrontation. It is the continuing experience and realisation of cross-cultural conflict and the incommensurability of different cultural values which can, according to Kramsch, lead the learners to a "third place", in the "interstices of the native and target cultures" yet not entirely "bound by either one".[80] Conflict loosens the seams of cultural straightjackets and brings the learner a new awareness of difference and a measure of freedom.

It is in the midst of this multi-faceted struggle that Kramsch suggests an important role for dialogue, a dialogue which is "motivated by ambivalent feelings of both empathy and antipathy" and is "always, potentially, headed toward harmony or order, or toward disorder or chaos".[81] Such dialogue is not underwritten by any guarantee provided by the

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[78] Kramsch, 1993a:239.

[79] Kramsch, 1993a:24.

[80] Kramsch, 1993a:23,257; 1995b:90; I discuss this point further below.

[81] Kramsch, 1993a:29.

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universality of meanings or the transparency of language - it depends on "an act of faith in the willingness and ability of people to bring about change through dialogue".[82] Where dialogue and understanding do occur, these are to be seen as "a small miracle, brought about by the leap of faith that we call 'communication across cultures'", or even as "epiphanies".[83] The terms suggest a transcending of natural boundaries, for communication should by rights be all but impossible if understanding across languages is so saturated with difference and conflict. The hope is that in the fresh spaces opened up by the ongoing clash of perspectives, learners will be graced with moments of connection:

> "In order to experience the failure of communication, one has to take up
> the challenge of communication. By doing 'as if' it were possible to step
> out of one's usual frame of reference, to take on a different perspective,
> to enter into dialogue with a foreign speaker in a foreign language, by
> doing 'as if' one could actually find answers to questions one wouldn't
> have even known could be asked, learners and teachers undergo an
> experience that does eventually change them and makes them see things
> differently."[84]

Dialogue, and the resulting personal transformation, are thus a paradoxical possibility emerging from conflict.[85]

5.   Pedagogical effects

While I am not aware of published evidence of the outcomes of a pedagogy such as that

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[82] Kramsch, 1993a:23.

[83] Kramsch, 1993a:2; 1995d:ix-x.

[84] Kramsch & McConnell-Ginet, 1992:21.

[85] This interpretation seems to make some sense of the apparent inconsistencies in Kramsch's formulations. She does at times write of the "intimacy and deep cooperativeness" which is "essential for cognitive and emotional growth" (Kramsch, 1993a:104) and of the contribution of foreign language learning to "international peace and understanding" through "the negotiation and joint construction of a reality that is agreed upon as a safeguard against communicative intolerance" (Kramsch, 1987, 1991). In other places, cultural difference is presented as irreducible and the voices which inhabit language are "by nature in conflict with one another" (Kramsch, 1993a:27). I do not intend to suggest here that Kramsch never affirms the importance of dialogue or cooperation, but rather to argue that the structure of her theory is more supportive of the emphasis on conflict, leaving the occurrence of mutual understanding somewhat mysterious.

which Kramsch advocates in terms of its impact upon foreign language learners' sense of self, Kramsch herself indicates on the basis of her own teaching experience some possible negative effects of a relentless emphasis on irreducible difference and conflict. She states that learners reach a stage in their interaction with the foreign culture where "every interpretation seems so relative to any other that there is a real fear of losing oneself in the process".[86] She goes on to point out that

> "the realization of difference, not only between oneself and others, but between one's personal and one's social self, indeed between different perceptions of oneself can be at once an elating and a deeply troubling experience."[87]

The experience is compared to that of cultural migrants, involving "feelings of being 'betwixt and between', no longer at home in their original culture, nor really belonging to the host culture".[88]

Kramsch's response to this is, as noted above, to propose that the goal of learning is the creation of an individual "third place", located differently for each learner, "between and beyond the social order of their native culture and that of the target culture".[89] The place which learners can "name their own" thus appears to be located in the midst of the very experience of dislocation which raised concern in the first place.[90] It is an individual place not too firmly associated with any community. Here again, belonging seems to be perceived as a negative thing, and it is pertinent to recall Bakhtin's warning (with its Christian echoes) that enclosure within the self rather than communion with others is the path towards loss of the self.[91] It is to the relationship between Kramsch's conflict-oriented pedagogy and a Christian conception of spiritual development that I will now turn.

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[86] Kramsch, 1993a:69n.5.

[87] Kramsch, 1993a:234.

[88] Kramsch, 1993a:234.

[89] Kramsch, 1993a:238.

[90] Kramsch, 1993a:257.

[91] Bakhtin, 1984:287.

6.   Mastery, conflict and communion

While this has inevitably been a partial account of Kramsch's work, it has highlighted some key themes sufficiently clearly to enable a discussion of the relationship between some significant aspects of her critical foreign language pedagogy and the Christian themes explored in chapter 4. I have described Kramsch's pedagogy in a way designed to focus attention on the understanding of authentic human agency which appears to inform it, one which associates agency with conflict and the exercise of power over others. While Kramsch does give a place to socialisation, to dialogue and to the aim of fostering international peace and understanding, I have argued above that this is set within a consistent pattern of ideas and metaphors which present language as the site of a struggle for possession. The view of learning involved is succinctly reflected in Widdowson's parallel claim that

> "you are proficient in a language to the extent that you possess it, make it
> your own, bend it to your will, assert yourself through it rather than
> simply submit to the dictates of its form...Real proficiency is when you
> are able to take possession of the language, turn it to your advantage, and
> make it real for you. This is what mastery means."[92]

The claim has a certain plausibility given the obvious underlying truth that learners must in some sense appropriate the new language if their abilities are to progress beyond mechanical repetition of formulae. At the same time, Widdowson's claim (like some similar passages in Kramsch's work quoted above) is made more contentious than this simple truism by the language of self-assertion which is used to describe "real" proficiency. This becomes clear as soon as alternative formulations are considered. How would teaching and learning be different if "real proficiency" were, for instance, formulated in terms of a playful and appreciative enjoyment of the language's resources, an exploration of its possibilities? Or in terms of the ability to turn the language to the

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[92] Widdowson, 1994:384.

purpose of serving, encouraging or consoling others?[93] Or in terms of the ability to form strong relationships with others through its medium? Regarding any of these as simply specific instances of asserting oneself, bending the language to one's will or turning it to one's advantage would seem incongruous to say the least.[94]

These alternative formulations of what "real proficiency" is suggest points of connection and tension between the pedagogical perspective discussed in this chapter and a Christian approach to spiritual development. Kramsch's insistence that foreign language learning is more than the accumulation of linguistic skills, and must be set in the wider context of personal development, is in keeping with the central concerns of this thesis. Her refusal to see communication across cultures as an essentially mechanical and peaceful exchange of information can be read as consonant with a Christian recognition of our fallenness. We do often misunderstand one another, and this is often to do with our failure to transcend our own horizons and agendas. The resulting conflict is a reality which it would be both naive and theologically unwarranted to ignore or downplay.

The difficulty comes when this conflict is regarded as normative, perpetual and authentically rooted in the nature of human agency, and the learner's relationship to the language or the teacher is construed within a binary opposition of compliance and rebellion.[95] On these points it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the approach described in this chapter promotes a different spirit from that outlined in chapter four. The kinds of specific concerns which come into play here will be familiar by now from earlier discussions. How is a grateful appreciation of the giftedness of life, including the gifts

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[93] Compare Byrnes' suggestion that Kramsch's proposal for a core guiding question for teachers, namely: "What do I believe is in the best interests of *my* students in *my* school, community or state, knowing what I know about how my students got to be the way they are?" should be replaced with a question which is more concerned for the interests of the community (Byrnes, 1995:15). On the positioning of self and others in articulations of the aims of foreign language education, see further Smith, 1998.

[94] Palmer has opposed a pedagogy which centres on the notion of mastery understood as the exertion of power over others and the environment to a spiritually rooted pedagogy which centres on love (Palmer, 1983).

[95] Volf, in his exploration of cultural diversity in relation to Christian theology, argues (in my view correctly) that "since social actors inhabit a common world, their language games are permeable and communication between them possible...The *incommensurability* is not universal, but always local, temporal and partial, just as the commensurability is" (Volf, 1996:109). Also relevant to the present discussion is his rejection of Lyotard's view that "to speak is to fight" and that speech acts should therefore be seen as a form of agonistics, a view which Volf counters with an emphasis on love, forgiveness and reconciliation (Volf, 1996:108; cf. Huebner, 1988:20-22).

received from other languages and cultures, compatible with the fostering of conflict and power games? How can a pedagogy which seeks to produce autonomy in the sense of an attempt to impose one's own voice at the expense of the voices of others be compatible with growth in humility or service of others? Where is there a role for reconciliation and relationships grounded in love if communication is predicated on irreducible conflict? How can an ethic of hospitality to the stranger be fostered when the stranger's language and culture are represented as another layer of subjugation to be resisted in a quest for ownership of discourse? In short, what spirit will this pedagogy foster in learners?

It is interesting in this connection to return to some of Kramsch's sources, especially as the ideas of both Bakhtin and Freire draw inspiration from Christian sources. Bakhtin does, it is true, place considerable emphasis on the conflicts of perspective which enter language, making it an arena of struggle rather than a transparent medium for the flow of information.[96] At times he uses the same rhetoric of forceful appropriation questioned above.[97] He also, however, emphasises that "to be means to be for another, and through the other, for oneself" and that "the very being of man [*sic*] is the *deepest communion*".[98] We not only contest the words of others, but also affirm and build with them, and the existence of more than one voice in discourse may lead not to irreconcilable conflict, but to a polyphony in which different voices sound in harmony without being submerged.[99] Conflict is present, but it is not ontologised; communication is fallen, not impossible.

Similarly with Freire, the emphasis on the importance of revolutionary conflict in overturning (but not inverting) the hegemony of the oppressors is placed within the context of love, which is necessary if such conflict is to be authentic.[100] Conflict is not liberatory in and of itself, but is rather an "initiation of love" which is to lead to

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[96] See e.g. Bakhtin, 1981:272, where Bakhtin describes the utterance as "a contradiction-ridden, tension-filled unity of two embattled tendencies in the life of language".

[97] See e.g. Bakhtin, 1981:294: "Language is not a neutral medium...Expropriating it, forcing it to submit to one's own intentions and accents, is a difficult and complicated process."

[98] Bakhtin, 1984:287.

[99] Bakhtin, 1984:21; Bakhtin, 1986:91.

[100] Freire, 1996b:38.

relationships in which the dynamic of hegemony/subordination is overcome. Where antagonism is overcome, what is to replace it is a dialogue which "cannot exist...in the absence of a profound love for the world and for people".[101] For Freire, "human beings in communion liberate each other", and revolutionary action must be "empathetic, loving, communicative, and humble, in order to be liberating".[102]

What is interesting here is not so much whether Kramsch has used her sources in a way which is faithful to them - she is presumably at liberty to draw from them selectively. It is rather that the themes sketched above seem to relate fairly clearly to the Christian dimension of Bakhtin's and Freire's work, and do not seem to find any clear echo in Kramsch's delineation of a critical foreign language pedagogy. Kramsch's rhetoric seems to associate community firmly with subjugation and agency with conflict, leaving the place of communion, being for another and mutual acceptance at the least very unclear.

7.   Conclusion: Conflict and hospitality

I have sought to show in this chapter that even though Kramsch does not draw upon any identifiably religious sources as she formulates her pedagogical approach and suggests elements of a design for the classroom, her approach nevertheless incorporates assumptions which make her pedagogy controversial in relation to a Christian conception of spiritual development. While I would certainly not wish to recommend blanket rejection of her proposals, it does seem to me that Christian educators concerned for spiritual development would need to make modifications in her approach if they wished to be consistent with their own convictions. Kramsch's approach both illustrates the potential for foreign language pedagogy to contribute to personal formation and highlights the controversial nature of that contribution.

I would like to make two closing points regarding Kramsch's critical pedagogy. First, it seems to me to be much less clear than in the case of Curran that the difficulties which I have identified in Kramsch's pedagogy are necessarily characteristic of the wider movement on which she draws. There is, it is true, a tendency in some critical

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[101] Freire, 1996b:70.

[102] Freire, 1996b:114,152. While Kramsch does occasionally speak of faith or hope as elements in communication (Kramsch, 1993a:23,226), I can find no mention of love.

pedagogical writings to lean heavily on battle metaphors to describe the nature of education,[103] but the task of evaluating such language would involve analysing on a case by case basis the uses to which it is put. Seeing (for instance) an irreconcilable conflict between (social) good and evil is not of the same order as understanding cultural difference in the same terms. Freire's work, as I have noted above, contextualises conflict within a basic emphasis on love. The argument of this chapter must therefore at least provisionally be regarded as a critique of aspects of Kramsch's critical foreign language pedagogy rather than of critical pedagogy in a wider sense.

Second, while it may have a place, I do not believe that the imagery of conflict and of subjugation and liberation provides the most helpful overall metaphorical framework for the development of cross-cultural awareness in the foreign language learning context, especially where spiritual development is in view.[104] Kramsch's emphases are not an inevitable corollary of a strong emphasis on the importance of the cultural dimension of foreign language learning. I have suggested in chapter 4, and in passing in the last two chapters, that the idea of hospitality is a strong candidate for a spiritually informed metaphor for foreign language learning. It can be noted at this point that seeing such learning in terms of hospitality is consonant with some of Kramsch's emphases. It allows for a concern for the learner's identity which calls into question the ideal of native speaker emulation - the role of the host is not to ape the guest, but to listen with love. Hospitality implies having a home, listening from a determinate space, while underlining the need for openness and the danger of the home space becoming enclosed and inhospitable to outsiders. It also allows for an emphasis on the importance of cultural difference and for scepticism towards a view of cross-cultural communication as reducible to information transfer in accordance with rules of appropriacy - the differences between host and guest mean that a broader personal engagement is needed for genuine hearing to take place. At the same time, hospitality as an aim undercuts the idea of interpersonal interaction as a struggle for possession, an idea which I have identified in both Curran and Kramsch as resulting from the role played in their theories

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[103] See e.g. Giroux, 1997:132-135.

[104] Again, Volf seem to me to be close to the mark when he suggests that "the categories of oppression and liberation provide combat gear...they are good for fighting, but not for negotiating or celebrating", or for reconciliation or forgiveness, and should therefore be placed in the context of the affirmation that "love, not freedom, is ultimate" (Volf, 1996:103-105).

by the ideal of autonomous self-possession. If the home is understood as a gift, a trust to be used for the good of others, rather than as a sovereign possession, then it can be understood not simply in negative terms, as a handicap to engaging with another culture, but also in positive terms, as that which enables encounter.[105]

It should also be emphasised that working with the idea of hospitality need not imply a fixity of roles according to which the learner is always the host and the foreigner the guest. Understanding cultural and linguistic study in terms of hospitality also implies that learners should learn how to be considerate and appreciative guests, and not merely consumers of foreign wares.[106] Again, this both affirms and qualifies Kramsch's account - a good guest does not seek to become indistinguishable from the host; he or she brings enrichment, something which was not present before. A sensitive guest must also accept some degree of vulnerability, and have some willingness to relinquish familiar ways, however temporarily. At the same time, his or her relationship to the host will not, normatively speaking, be a struggle for possession.[107]

In sum, assisting the development of a hospitable attitude towards otherness, providing guests (texts, recordings, images) which bring spiritual challenge and enrichment, and preparing learners to become such guests themselves may be the most significant contributions which foreign language learning can make to spiritual development. I have argued in this chapter that seeking to make some contributions would necessitate significant modifications being made to the critical foreign language pedagogy developed by Kramsch.

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[105] See Walsh, 1998. For a much more extensive elaboration of the pedagogical implications of seeing foreign language learning in terms of hospitality to the stranger, see Smith & Carvill, 2000.

[106] This dual emphasis in a hospitality-oriented pedagogy is discussed at length in chapter 4 and 5 of Smith & Carvill, 2000.

[107] Contra Derrida's understanding of hospitality as involving a conflict over possession of the home; see Caputo, 1997:111.

Chapter 8
Summary and conclusions

Outline
1. The scope of the findings
2. Review of the three main questions
   a. Spiritual development and modern language pedagogy
   b. Christian faith and spiritual development
   c. Christian faith and modern language pedagogy
3. Relevance to other curriculum areas
4. Significance for particular contexts
   a. Spiritual development across the curriculum
   b. Faith-informed inquiry
   c. Significance for particular school contexts

In Part 1 (chapters 2-4) the principal task was to construct and defend a framework within which an exploration of the relationship between a Christian conception of spiritual development and the design of modern language pedagogy would make sense. In part 2 (chapters 5-7) I explored the applicability of this framework to particular pedagogical approaches and designs, seeking to bring to light places where the aforementioned relationship becomes visible. The present chapter will summarise the findings of the thesis and discuss both what can be concluded from them and what implications the conclusions have for the wider discussions surveyed in the opening chapter.

1.   The scope of the findings

Since the preceding discussion has touched upon a wide range of issues, I will begin by setting some boundaries in order to clarify the intended scope of the findings. For this purpose, I will identify some concerns which border closely upon the present study, but which I did not set out to investigate and concerning which I will therefore *not* offer conclusions.

First, I will not be presenting within the thesis an alternative pedagogical design to replace those which I have criticised in chapters 5, 6 and 7. One important reason for

this is that advocacy of a specific pedagogical design is not envisaged under the terms set for the present study in chapter 1. This study set out to clarify and exhibit a set of relationships rather than to provide a new design. Moreover, a new pedagogical design could not be presented as following from the argument pursued in the previous chapters. The model proposed in chapter 3 for understanding the interaction of faith, spirituality and pedagogical designs included a denial that such interaction should be understood in deductive terms, as if Christian beliefs provided a foundation from which modern language pedagogy would be derived by deduction. The same caution also applies to the relationship between philosophical reflection on modern language pedagogy and the process of pedagogical design. In chapter 3 it was also emphasised that spiritual beliefs and commitments are an ingredient in a pedagogical approach, one which comes into interaction with a wide range of other concerns.[1] This means that while any pedagogy can be interrogated and potentially modified in the light of Christian concerns, it does not follow that specifically Christian concerns provide a *sufficient* basis for designing a single best pedagogy. I have affirmed throughout that theology and philosophy can inform pedagogy, but they do not in and of themselves produce it. Any pedagogical design for the modern language classroom must grow out of a range of considerations (including, for instance, linguistic, psychological, institutional, contextual and practical considerations) which have not been under discussion here. The present study claims only the status of a partial but pedagogically significant account.

Focusing attention on how particular pedagogies might need to be *modified* in the light of a Christian conception of spiritual development, rather than on the construction of a new modern language pedagogy, is not only consistent with the arguments advanced in chapter 3, but also connects with the practical context for the investigation described in chapter 1. If modern language departments in schools are to respond to the current interest in spiritual development, their response is far more likely to be in terms of introducing modifications in their existing pedagogy, to which they may be attached for a variety of quite justified reasons, than in terms of abandoning it in favour of an alternative package. This is another reason for framing the original thesis to be investigated in terms of the *modification* of pedagogy. Such modifications can be of

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[1] I refer advisedly to an ingredient rather than, say, a component. Ingredients may be partial yet of pervasive significance - vanilla essence is not a sufficient basis for baking a cake, but it has an impact on the characteristics of the overall result.

sufficient consequence in terms of the learner's experience of learning other languages to deserve careful attention.

Offering a new design is therefore neither strictly required by nor sustained by the arguments of the thesis. This does not, of course, mean that it would not be desirable to attempt particular pedagogical designs informed by the approach developed here, or that the themes discussed might not be pedagogically suggestive. There does in fact exist a body of curriculum resources and commentary on them which seek to work out the themes discussed in this thesis in practical terms.[2] The Charis curriculum materials, of which I am a co-author, are designed to promote spiritual and moral development in the modern language classroom. In order to avoid the impression of evasiveness in relation to a positive pedagogical design, I include a description of learning tasks drawn from these materials in appendix A.

A second (and related) point is that I am making no claims here (and provide no basis for doing so) concerning the relative *effectiveness* of different designs in relation to the more familiar concerns of language acquisition, communicative competence and the like. While this thesis has been concerned with modern language education, it has not dealt with language acquisition, but rather with other concerns and effects associated with modern language pedagogy, its broader educational effects. The literature which I have surveyed and the arguments which I have pursued relate to this concern, and do not provide a basis for claims about the achievement of linguistic goals.[3] I argued in chapter 3 that modern language pedagogy is underdetermined by a concern for effective language acquisition, that other concerns necessarily and legitimately come into play. Again, in the concrete context of actual pedagogical design these different concerns have to be coordinated. Investigating how well they coordinate is a task which is not

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[2] Baker et al., 1996a, 1996b; Baker et al., 1998a, 1998b; Shortt, 2000; Smith, 1999a, 1999b; Smith & Dobson, 1999; Smith & Carvill, 2000.

[3] It is, of course, possible to hypothesize, on the basis of general convictions about persons and learning, that faithful attention to the spiritual nature of the learners may, all other factors being equal, enhance the learning process and the classroom relationships which frame it. It may thus contribute indirectly to classroom-based language acquisition. The present discussion does not, however, provide grounds for such an assertion. It seems to me that the pedagogical issues here are sufficiently important to merit being taken seriously in their own right by modern language educators, whether or not they can be shown to enhance language acquisition. While assisting language acquisition is typically the main task of the modern language educator, it does not follow that other concerns can legitimately be ignored; we do not excuse pollution on the grounds that the main task of factories is to make goods.

undertaken here but which would form an important area for further investigation.

Another explicit limitation of this study is its focus on conceptions of the nature of the human person and on their implications for pedagogical processes. As I indicated in chapter 1, this is taken up here as a telling test case, and is not regarded as the only point at which Christian faith may prove relevant. Different understandings of language and culture could be more centrally investigated, and the present discussion of pedagogy also needs to be supplemented by an account of how particular kinds of course content might contribute to spiritual development, and of how they might be best woven into a pedagogical design. Again, a fuller picture would require the coordination of these concerns with those addressed here.

Finally, a question close to the concerns of this thesis, but also not answered by its arguments, is the question of the relative effectiveness of different designs in relation to their impact upon students' attitudes, insights and values. Do the pedagogies surveyed actually impact upon the spiritual development of students? Do they encourage particular virtues or attitudes? I have offered some partial and provisional answers to these questions by pointing where possible to some evidence of the personal impact of the pedagogies discussed in chapters 5, 6 and 7. Evidence such as Macaro's findings regarding student attitudes to modern language learning under the National Curriculum (chapter 5), Bolitho's and Curran's observations regarding student hostility (chapter 6) and Kramsch's indication that her pedagogy can lead to a sense of disorientation among learners (chapter 7) offer partial but nevertheless concrete pointers. I have, however, engaged in a philosophical analysis of these approaches and designs in order to clarify their intended and likely effects upon the learner, rather than an empirical investigation of what happens in classrooms where they are dominant. In practice, the difficulties involved in such empirical investigation may be even greater than those which have dogged attempts to demonstrate empirically how pedagogy can best aid language acquisition, particularly since the latter seems more easily measurable thanspiritual development. How and to what degree the particular kinds of non-linguistic pedagogical effects which have been under discussion here can be empirically investigated is another important area of inquiry which lies beyond the bounds of this thesis.

2. Review of the three main questions

Turning to more positive matters, it will be recalled that the thesis under investigation, as stated in chapter 1, has been that a Christian conception of spiritual development could lead to identifiable modifications in modern foreign language pedagogy. The area of investigation was further defined at the outset in terms of three sub-questions:

- How does a concern for spiritual development relate to modern language pedagogy?

- How does Christian faith relate to a concern for spiritual development in an educational context?

- How does Christian faith relate to modern language pedagogy?

The preceding chapters have been concerned with clarifying and exhibiting these relationships, a task which has been undertaken at length in light of the fact that none of the three relationships is obvious or generally accepted. I will now briefly review each relationship in turn on the basis of the preceding investigation.

a. Spiritual development and modern language pedagogy

I described spiritual development in chapter 1 as being concerned with the ways in which capacities, experiences, beliefs, commitments and ways of living become patterned in particular ways as they are related to sources of orientation and inspiration. I suggested that a spiritually oriented pedagogy would need to attend not only to the encouragement of certain experiences and abilities (such as creativity, wonder or empathy), but also to the ways in which pedagogy contributes to personal formation and mediates the learner's encounter with spiritually challenging issues, questions and truths. The preceding chapters have been principally concerned with the relationship between a Christian conception of spiritual development and modern language pedagogy. This has, however, involved some consideration of how a more general concern for spiritual development might overlap with the concerns of modern language teachers.

In chapter 3, I examined how tacit assumptions and attitudes, conscious beliefs and spiritually-oriented metaphors might in principle become legitimately involved in the

design of modern language pedagogy. I argued that an expanded account of the nature of a pedagogical 'approach' helps to make sense of the role of such factors and also escapes the limitations and exclusions implied by reliance on the language of 'method' to describe teaching. The process of pedagogical design is informed by an approach in which the spiritual commitments and orientations of the designer have a role to play. This role is an important one given that any pedagogical relationship will embody normative assumptions and result in formative effects which go beyond the narrow bounds of the content or skills to be taught (as is recognised, for instance, in discussions of the role of modern language pedagogy in promoting autonomy). The idea of modern language pedagogy being informed by a concern for spiritual development is not alien to recent discussions of the nature of such pedagogy; in fact, those discussions provide grounds for affirming its importance. This is a significant finding in that it provides a basis for investigating in more detail the implications of the current concern for spiritual development across the curriculum both in relation to modern language pedagogy and, by extension, in relation to pedagogy more generally.

In chapter 5, I examined the National Curriculum documentation for indications of where modern language education might contribute to spiritual development. While there was little evidence of a consistent concern for spiritual development within the National Curriculum for Modern Foreign Languages (NCMFL), three relationships were identified as potential arenas for spiritual development: the learner's relationship to the target culture, understood in terms of an encounter with the beliefs and ways of life of others; the learner's relationship to the target language, particularly where there is a focus on personalisation, self-expression and the relationship between language and identity; and the learner's relationship to the other persons present in the classroom, raising questions of classroom ethos and norms for interpersonal relationships. At least the first two of these have some level of official recognition. Nevertheless, the analysis of the NCMFL carried out in chapter 5 found that aspects relevant to spiritual development were pedagogically underdeveloped, and that where a more developed pedagogy was visible, it tended to be in tension with a concern for spiritual development due to a neglect of the ethical and spiritual dimensions of texts, tasks and teaching strategies. This indicates that the NCMFL will need to be modified and developed in particular ways if it is to promote spiritual development through its pedagogy. Given the

reaffirmation of this goal in the most recent versions of the National Curriculum documents, this   finding should be taken into account in any future revisions.

Considered at this level of generality (the relationship between spiritual development in general and modern language pedagogy in general), the conclusions drawn must be somewhat broad and provisional. What is identified is a set of places to look, rather than an adequate basis for addressing spiritual development in the modern language classroom. Not all assumptions, beliefs or metaphors are likely to be equally spiritually significant. Spiritual development may be promoted in cultural, personal and interpersonal contexts, but it is not reducible to them. Gaining greater clarity concerning whether and how spiritual development is addressed or promoted within modern language teaching requires a more substantial and specific understanding of spiritual development and a more detailed examination of specific pedagogies. Accordingly, the main concern has been to clarify the relationship between a particular Christian conception of spiritual development and particular pedagogical approaches and designs.

b.   Christian faith and spiritual development

The relationship between Christian faith and spiritual development was discussed in negative terms in chapter 2 and in positive terms in chapter 4. In chapter 2, I surveyed a variety of objections commonly advanced against the idea of connecting spiritual development in school contexts with religion. Three broad types of argument were identified. The first argued that religious conceptions of spiritual development are ruled out by the social or the educational context. The second presented a variety of negative evaluations of religion as a context for spiritual development, associating religion with restrictive tendencies, condemnation of outsiders, fiction and other-worldly evasion. The third saw the problem as lying in the particularity of religious belief as contrasted with the universality or impartiality required of an educational account of spiritual development. I concluded that these arguments contained a variety of flaws, and were consequently not conclusive. A Christian approach to spiritual development, while contentious, can be defended and remains a viable position within educational discussions of spiritual development.

In chapter 4, I offered a particular kind of account of a Christian conception of spiritual development. This was designed to provide a broad framework to facilitate the

identification of pedagogical tendencies which are in tension with Christian faith. It sought, however, to formulate this framework in terms of the conception of the spiritual person implied by Christian faith rather than in terms of Christian cre͜dal statements *per se*. The aim was to provide a basis for examining pedagogies not merely in terms of the stated confessional positions of their authors (thus restricting the discussion to those very few commentators on modern language pedagogy who have made their confessional commitments explicit), but rather in terms of the ways of dealing with and forming the learner which they specify or imply.

Three criteria of significance were proposed, namely theological centrality, distinctive contribution and pedagogical relevance. Against these criteria, five themes in Christian reflection on the nature of persons were identified. These were: the *gift-call* structure of human being, implying the importance of both responsibility and a sense of dependence and gratitude; *affirmation of the world* and *orientation*, rejecting an over-identification of spirituality with the mystical and immaterial in favour of a conception of spirituality as informing and orienting concrete everyday practices; *relationship* as the context in which the self is formed, with particular reference to the importance of love and reconciliation; and *fallenness*, suggesting the need in all of these areas to take account of human sin and alienation. Hospitality was proposed as a metaphor which could inform modern language pedagogy in a way which would be both responsive to spiritual concerns and rooted in Christian reflection. Having defended a Christian approach in principle in chapter 2, I showed in chapter 4 that such an approach leads to a conception of spiritual growth which differs in identifiable ways from alternatives, is of pedagogical consequence, and (given the discussion in chapter 3 of the relevance of anthropological assumptions to a pedagogical approach) is of specific relevance to the design of modern language pedagogy. I therefore offer this account as a basis for an educational approach to spiritual development in Christian contexts and for presenting a Christian standpoint in wider discussions.

c. Christian faith and modern language pedagogy

The account of modern language pedagogy provided in chapter 3 described how virtues, metaphors and beliefs rooted in Christian faith might play a role in its construction. At the same time it was made clear that this did not imply that pedagogical designs could

be *deduced* from Christian faith, resulting in a 'Christian method'. Christian convictions can play a role as part of an approach, but their influence on practice involves a creative design process, the outcomes of which are guided but not tightly determined by the approach. The resulting designs may show greater or lesser consistency, creativity or workability, and may be adapted to a variety of specific educational contexts. Shortcomings in a design need not necessarily reflect badly on the approach in which it is rooted, still less on the specifically confessional elements. The shortcomings *may* be so closely linked to features of the approach that they necessitate change at that level, but they may equally lead to further attempts at implementing the approach in more successful ways. The framework developed in chapter 3 avoids relating faith mechanistically to pedagogical techniques. At the same time, it describes a substantial link between faith and pedagogy in sufficient detail to provide a basis for studying particular pedagogical options.

In part 2, I examined divergent approaches and designs and showed points of tension with a Christian orientation, points where a Christian adoption of the pedagogy under discussion would need to be accompanied by modifications. I approached this in terms of the forms of personal growth which were implicitly or explicitly fostered by the pedagogy in question, comparing these with the conception of the spiritual person developed in chapter 4. In the case of the National Curriculum documentation, the points of concern related to the tendency to neglect the aspects of the language learning setting beyond the linguistic, conceiving language learning narrowly in terms of behavioural skills, and consequently tending towards neglect in practice of ethical, cultural and spiritual dimensions. Given the underdeveloped nature of the pedagogy presented in the National Curriculum documentation, the difficulty is not so much a clear incompatibility with Christian concerns as a neglect of issues which would carry considerable importance from the standpoint of a Christian conception of spiritual development, a neglect which was found at certain points to be consonant with practices which can be criticised from that standpoint.

The other two pedagogies discussed were more systematically developed and thus provided a firmer basis for discussion. Curran's work presented a complex mix of conscious dependence on Christian beliefs and tension with those beliefs resulting from the adoption of a view of authentic personhood as rooted in an unconditional

affirmation of the will to power. Positively, Curran places significant emphasis on the significance of the relational context of learning in terms of issues such as the presence of arrogance or humility in the teacher or the nature of the learning community. The tendency to affirm hostility as a form of healthy self-assertion and to make the individual self the central point of reference and focus of attention was, however, argued to be in tension with Christian pedagogical concerns.

Finally, I suggested that Kramsch's critical modern language pedagogy connects positively with a concern for spiritual development in its explorations of how an encounter with cultural difference can challenge the learner's taken for granted sense of self. This pedagogy was, however, found to display an association of authenticity with self-assertion comparable to that seen in Curran's work. This runs counter to the Christian themes of humility, reconciliation and hospitality.

While the chapters in part 1 showed that the thesis under discussion can be sustained in principle, the second part tested it more concretely. These case studies show that if the Christian convictions described in chapter 4 are taken seriously, the pedagogies discussed would need to be modified. The thesis is therefore sustained on the basis of these case studies.

Strictly speaking, this conclusion only holds for the three pedagogies examined; it is not proven that similar findings would emerge from an examination of any other given pedagogy. Three points should, however, be noted. First, this is sufficient to establish the thesis under discussion. Even if all other pedagogies turned out to be entirely benign from a Christian standpoint, the existence of well-developed pedagogical options which are in tension with that standpoint means that a Christian conception of spiritual development can play a role in decision-making and lead to modifications. Second, the pedagogies discussed here are distinctive but not idiosyncratic - they relate to broader educational and philosophical trends and ideas. While it does not follow from this that the criticisms made here would apply in the same way or to the same degree to, say, a different humanistic pedagogy, the family resemblances which exist among pedagogies do suggest that similar kinds of questions may need to be addressed to other pedagogical approaches and designs. Third, given the deep-rooted nature of the issues under discussion (such as conceptions of authentic growth and of the norms governing

interpersonal relationships), it seems at least likely that the kind of analysis conducted here will be applicable to any well-developed pedagogy. Such pedagogies will either address these issues in substantive ways, thus providing grounds for interaction with a Christian perspective, or they will neglect to address them, which could in itself provide grounds for Christian critique.

Clearly, while these points indicate that the results of this study are significant in their own right, they also invite further investigation to discover whether and in what ways other approaches and designs would need to be modified in order to comport well with Christian faith.

3. Relevance to other curriculum areas

While this study has focused on the modern language classroom, the issues at stake are of relevance to other areas of the curriculum. The focus on a single curriculum area has been quite deliberate. In my view, a major weakness of the recent discussion about spiritual development, whether in government documents or academic publications, has been the tendency towards generalisation (commonly on the basis of discussions emerging from the field of Religious Education) and the dearth of discipline-specific inquiry. It seems often to be assumed that what is needed is a generic account of spiritual development which can then simply be applied within any curriculum area. This approach fails to take into account the importance of interaction between a concern for spiritual development and the particular values, concepts, goals, classroom practices and professional cultures which characterise particular areas of the curriculum, particularly in the secondary school. It also risks missing insights into the nature of spiritual development which might be provided from perspectives rooted in particular subject areas - in the modern language classroom, for instance, encounters with cultural difference may be more central than awe and wonder.

Nevertheless, while I have sought to avoid a one-sided imposition of general ideas concerning spiritual development upon modern language pedagogy, and have sought instead to find points of contact with concerns internal to the latter field, there is scope for extending the investigation across the curriculum. Much of the discussion of the nature of pedagogy and of the ways in which Christian concerns become relevant is likely to be applicable, with the appropriate contextualisation, to other curriculum areas.

The framework developed in part 1 of the thesis may be helpful in considering the contribution to spiritual development made by particular pedagogical options in another school subject. The current state of the literature on spiritual development leaves plenty of scope for such investigation.

4.   Significance for particular contexts

The findings of this study are of potential relevance to a variety of contexts. They raise questions, for instance, in relation to teacher education. Does the training provided for language teachers equip them to be aware of and to tackle spiritual issues in the classroom? If not, how should it go about doing so? What does a concern for spiritual development require of teachers and teacher educators, not only in terms of competencies but also in terms of personal and spiritual qualities? How can time be given to such concerns? Another example would be discussions of learner motivation. Would a consistent concern for addressing the spiritual dimension of learning affect learner's motivation? How should modern language learning be justified to learners and to parents in the light of its spiritual aspect? Yet another would be the design of course materials (see appendix A) - what kinds of content would best contribute to both linguistic and spiritual development, and what kinds of learning activities should accompany it?

The list could be extended. However, chapter 1 presented a particular series of contexts which influenced the formulation of the thesis under investigation and gave it particular significance. These were the desire on the part of Christian schools and teachers to provide an education consistent with their basic beliefs and values, the requirement set out in recent legislation that all schools address spiritual development across their curriculum, and the issues raised by recent discussions of the implications of faith for learning. While there are many other discussions to which the present study may be relevant, I will now return explicitly to these three initial contexts in the light of the findings summarised above.

a.   Spiritual development across the curriculum

The findings of this thesis are supportive of the idea of spiritual development across the curriculum, and show that it is relevant to, and raises educationally significant issues

for, what might seem an unlikely area of the curriculum. Despite the inadequacy of the advice offered in official documentation, the issues raised by recent discussions of spiritual development are significant ones.

More specifically, two main implications can be noted for current discussions of spiritual development. One has already been discussed above; this study suggests that subject-specific investigation is not only fruitful, but also needed in order to clarify the issues involved in teaching for spiritual development. The other concerns the idea of a generalised spirituality. I have defended the importance of considering the relationship of spiritual development in school to Christianity in particular and, by implication, to other specific orientations (religious or secular). The conclusions summarised above suggest that if attention is shifted from generic definitions of spirituality to concrete pedagogical options, then the relevance of particular convictions and commitments becomes clearer, and the relationship between spirituality and faith has to be taken seriously. At the same time, it is clear from this study that the teaching of beliefs to learners is not the only form which this relationship may take. A shift of focus from the teaching of religion to more general pedagogical questions leaves the pertinence of faith intact.

b.   Faith-informed inquiry

In thus underlining the relevance of faith, this study both confirms and elaborates the claim that faith-informed inquiry can be appropriate and fruitful in the context of 'secular' disciplines. I have shown that Christian concerns can play a role in the investigation and evaluation of modern language pedagogies, an area of educational endeavour not commonly associated with faith-related concerns. I have, moreover, offered an account of *how* Christian concerns are involved, an account which draws not only upon external Christian philosophical discussions, but upon resources *within* existing mainstream discussions of modern language pedagogy. This thesis thus provides a case study, in a curriculum area which has received little attention in discussions of faith-learning integration, of how faith can inform pedagogical design. It also suggests that the current attempt to make sense of the idea of spiritual development across the curriculum has significant points of contact with studies of faith-learning integration, and that the two discussions should therefore be brought into closer

interaction.

c.   Significance for particular school contexts

This suggests that the natural tendency to discuss the role of religion in education in terms of the teaching of religion, and particularly of doctrines, in the context of Religious Education is much too narrow. This study has not been concerned with the teaching of doctrines, but with the often implicit formative effects of pedagogy, and has sought to show that issues of substance arise here in relation to religious faith.

It is true that this has been a partial account, an abstraction from the whole (whether the whole of language learning, including content as well as pedagogy, or the whole curriculum, within which the pedagogical effects discussed may be eroded or supported by other curriculum areas). For the issues raised here to be adequately addressed within the context of a Christian view of education, attention would have to be given to educational content, including what doctrines are taught, how they are taught, and what role they might play in giving sense to and motivating the spiritual attitudes and virtues which are seen as desirable outcomes. Spiritual development in a Christian context involves relating to God in Christ; the kinds of pedagogical effects discussed here may be supportive of such development, but they are not a substitute.

Nevertheless, the argument pursued here suggests that the issue of the relationship between religion and spiritual development is already raised once the contribution of pedagogical designs to personal formation is considered, whether or not any particular doctrines are taught. To put the point more concretely, the relationship between religion and education (and between religion and spiritual development) is in play not only in the content of the RE curriculum, but also (among other places) in the way in which modern languages are taught.

Any pedagogy will over time have formative effects which impinge upon the learner's spiritual growth in potentially controversial ways. The implications of this will differ for different schools.

A significant proportion of schools in the United Kingdom claim an explicit Christian basis for their educational efforts. This is commonly expressed in a mission statement such as the one referred to in chapter 1, and may include an awareness that Christian

faith is relevant to a wide range of aspects of the school curriculum, beyond the confines of daily worship and Religious Education. The findings of this thesis are significant for such schools in relation to their attempts to be consistent with their mission statement or founding orientation. This will involve examining not only the obviously religious elements of the school curriculum, but also the pedagogical approaches and designs adopted in less obvious areas such as modern language teaching. These can be supportive or subversive of the Christian stance of the school and of the spiritual development of pupils as understood in a Christian educational context. I have sought here to carry out such an examination. I have provided some parameters for a foreign language pedagogy informed by a Christian conception of spiritual development, analyses of particular pedagogies, and a framework which can facilitate further inquiry.

For schools which do not claim an explicit Christian basis, there are two basic possibilities. One (in my view the more viable) would be to acknowledge the inevitability of controversial beliefs and values being involved in the design of education and to make the school's standpoint explicit. This would both facilitate self-examination in terms of consistency and success as measured against the standpoint chosen and enable the school to communicate more clearly to parents the nature of the education offered. The standpoint chosen may comport well or badly at particular points with a Christian approach, and may therefore involve parents in complex decisions concerning the acceptability of the education offered. For such schools the significance of this study is similar to its significance for avowedly Christian schools: whether the standpoint adopted seeks to accommodate or depart from a Christian one, the present inquiry points to areas where consistency or internal tension within the overall educational provision may become evident.

The second approach would be that of neutralist versions of liberalism, which require the school curriculum to be neutral in relation to substantive visions of the good and to refrain from directing the spiritual growth of learners in ways which would be controversial between different faiths. For schools taking this stance, the present findings remain significant, but provide a somewhat different test of consistency. They suggest that the bracketing out of the teaching of particular doctrines will not (even if it

were accepted that such a move would itself be impartial[4]) deliver neutrality, and that it may be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for a school to forbear from involving itself in particular ways in learners' spiritual development. The argument presented here does not prove that a pedagogy could not be found which would be formative in ways acceptable to all standpoints, but it does suggest that this might be at the least a much more challenging task than is commonly suspected. The possibility must be considered that the more a pedagogy has to offer educationally (in terms, for instance, of personalisation or cultural awareness), the more it will intersect in controversial ways with the learner's spiritual growth. Further discussion of a wider range of pedagogical options would be needed in order to investigate this possibility.

While I have indicated some ways in which the present findings are significant for different kinds of school, and in doing so have indicated my own sympathies, it seems to me that the importance of these findings to some degree precedes the question of how schools should be organised in a plural context. I have shown that a Christian conception of spiritual development can lead to identifiable modifications in modern language pedagogy. Showing how this can take place has involved identifying ways in which pedagogical approaches and designs in modern foreign language education tend, whether explicitly or implicitly, towards particular formative effects upon learners on the basis of a particular idea of what it means to be authentically human. Modern language teachers teach more than modern languages.

I regard this as a very positive thing for modern language education. If modern language education is more than training in a particular skill appended to the rest of the curriculum, and can make its own particular contribution to the spiritual development of learners, then its place within the curriculum becomes more integral and more educationally significant. The preceding chapters suggest that this will involve closer

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[4] It is obviously controversial in relation to any view of religion or spirituality which sees their exclusion from either the public square or from the educational context as a distorting form of privatisation. To put the same point slightly differently, an approach which seeks to avoid dealing with the spiritual in education is obviously not neutral in relation to any position which sees the spiritual as an essential or centrally important element in education.

attention to relationships within the classroom - relationships with others, with language and with the foreign culture. What spirit or ethos is promoted by the pedagogy adopted? How are learners encouraged to relate to one another? How do they interact with the foreign culture? The Christian themes discussed in this thesis (such as hospitality to the stranger, humility and gratitude, broken relationships and reconciliation) offer rich resources for thinking through such issues.

The fact that this approach to pedagogy raises issues in relation to learners' growth which may not be easily assessable on the basis of examinations and attainment levels only tells against its importance if education is reduced to objectives which can be examined. The fact that the discussion carried out here is at something of a tangent to more common discussions of what processes might most effectively aid language acquisition speaks, in my view, for a broadening of the basis upon which modern language education is commonly studied and debated. It is my belief that a spiritually informed approach to modern language education could lead to pedagogy and content which engage learners more fully and contribute to the development of a hospitable attitude towards others. I believe that the value of the learners in our classrooms as bearers of God's image, and the significance of their spiritual growth, make it incumbent upon modern language educators in any kind of school to give the issues discussed here the kind of sustained attention commonly devoted to more narrowly linguistic matters.

APPENDIX A

As indicated in chapter 8, the purpose of this appendix is to offer illustrative examples of tasks and materials for modern language learning which were designed to be consonant with the approach which I have been advocating. The examples are drawn from the resources developed by the Charis project (see chapter 1). The description of them which is reproduced here is extracted from chapter 10 of the recently published book *The Gift of the Stranger: Faith, Hospitality and Foreign Language Learning*, in which Barbara Carvill (Professor of German at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan) and I have attempted to develop at greater length the implications of a hospitality-oriented pedagogy for modern language education.[1] I was the author of this chapter.

Samples from a Curriculum Project

[...] In what follows we will describe examples of learning activities from the Charis French and German materials (Spanish materials are not yet available) which in some way illustrate issues we explored in earlier chapters. We do not present these examples as in any way definitive or as the best way of applying the perspective we have advocated. They serve rather as fallible pointers to the kind of work which could be done, and as samples of what has been attempted thus far.

We will look at examples from the Charis French and German materials in the light of four questions:

- What images of strangers do we present through our course materials?

- What aspects of the stranger's experience are considered to be of interest?

- For what kinds of interaction with the stranger do we prepare learners?

- How do these broader concerns relate to linguistic goals?

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[1] Smith & Carvill, 2000. For further discussions of these materials see Shortt, 2000; Smith, 1999a ; Smith, 1999b The numbering of the figures in the appendix follows the numbering in the book from which they are drawn, not that in the main body of this thesis.

The Image of the Stranger

First, what kinds of images of the stranger do our course materials project? How do we present strangers who are not reduced to their consumption or leisure habits, but who more fully demonstrate their humanity as images of God?

One unit in the first Charis German book takes up the history of the White Rose movement. This movement was initiated by a group of students at Munich University who in the early 1940s, motivated in part by the Christian faith, began secret resistance against Hitler. After they had for some time been making and distributing tracts calling for Germans to stop supporting the war, they were caught by the Gestapo. The group's ringleaders were tried for high treason and summarily executed.

The topic of the White Rose is quite frequently included in German courses, but usually with more advanced learners and without reference to the faith dimension of its participants' motivation and attitudes.

The Charis unit begins with a photograph of Sophie and Hans Scholl and Christoph Probst, as the latter two were about to travel to the war front for active service. All three look very serious and somewhat anxious.

Learners are shown the photo without any captions and are asked what they see. By progressive questioning the teacher can move the conversation through the basic content of the picture (number of people, gender, age), appearances (clothes, facial expression), setting (How long ago? Where?), and mood (How are they feeling?), toward initial speculation as to what is going on (Why might they be feeling that way? What might be happening/or about to happen?).

The teacher then reveals, one by one, a series of further images which accompany the photo (see figure 1); discussion follows the presentation of each new image. Taken together, the series prompts an exploration of Sophie's family, her leisure interests, and her studies. Gradually the basic outline of the story of the White Rose emerges.

This activity gives the opportunity for utilizing basic vocabulary: words having to do with, for example, age, gender, appearance, clothes, feelings, and family. Instead of practising these words and concepts in conjunction with a cartoon image or an

arbitrarily chosen picture, however, using the photo of the members of the White Rose allows such practise to be grounded in a concrete historical setting. Learners can move beyond surface appearances and gradually get to know other aspects of the lives of the people whose image they are examining. As they do, they meet Germans who do not live just to work, shop, or play, but who believe in something strongly enough to be willing to lay down their lives for it.

Following this procedure need not mean that the teacher shift immediately into much more difficult levels of language use. It is possible to deal with depth dimensions of the life of the stranger before reaching advanced proficiency in the target language.

For example, a subsequent activity in this unit on the White Rose presents an account of a dream Sophie Scholl had in prison the night before her execution. In this dream she was climbing a steep path up a mountain toward a church. It was a sunny day, and she was carrying an infant in a white christening robe. Suddenly a crevasse opened up at her feet and she plunged in, but before she fell, she was able to place the infant safely on the other side. On waking, Sophie took the dream to mean that the cause for which she had fought would live on beyond her death, that justice would prevail.

A text such as this presents profound spiritual issues in language which is concrete and simple. Dreams, allegories, proverbs, fairy tales, and poems can all provide this combination of simple language with depth of meaning.

Meaningful learner response can likewise take place without recourse to extensive mastery of abstract language. Later in the same unit pupils are presented with a collection of statements made by various people at the time the White Rose was active. Sophie's sister, Inge, asks why it has to be they who act against Hitler; couldn't someone else do it? Sophie replies that so many people have fallen for Hitler's regime that it is time for someone to fall in opposition to it.

One of the questions following these statements asks learners whether they identify more with Inge or with Sophie. The response can be brief and simple: "I am like Inge." However, before giving that answer, students must reflect on how the lives of these two strangers relate to and perhaps challenge or illuminate their own.

What this unit illustrates is how biographically based instructional segments can be used

to explore different dimensions of the life of a member of the target culture. A similar approach to the one just described can be taken for Spanish learners with figures such as Bartholomé de las Casas from the colonial period, or Cardinal Romero from recent Latin-American history; for French students, public figures can be introduced such as Charles Péan, who campaigned for the closure of the Devil's Island penal colony in French Guyana. But also ordinary, uncelebrated inhabitants of the target countries whose experience of life is equally rich and appealing can get a voice.[2] Exploring the lives of these individuals not only gives more depth to the image of the stranger which is presented in our course materials; it also helps prepare learners to ask good, insightful questions of the foreigner whom they later meet and get to know. We will return to this point below.

Dimensions of Experience

A second question is already implicit in the above discussion of biographical material: What aspects of the stranger's experience are of interest to us? Are we interested only in the material, practical dimension of that experience, or does it have other aspects we could explore?

Many foreign language course materials are organized around various topics or themes, such as food and drink, accommodations, or school life. Many of these topics can be approached in a way which pays attention to more dimensions of experience than they now commonly do.

Consider, for instance, food and drink. In most existing materials the word "bread" is dealt with in the context of either family meals or shopping transactions as an item for consumption. But is this the only or even the most educationally interesting way to deal with this common vocabulary item?

Jacques Ellul's reflections on this very ordinary word are telling:

> "Even the simplest word--*bread*, for instance--involves all sorts of
>
> connotations. When the word *bread* is pronounced, I cannot help but

---

[2] A unit of work in Charis Deutsch, Einheiten 1-6 relates the life story of Frau Adeline Kelbert, an elderly German lady who had experienced life as a refugee through the Russian revolution and the World Wars and whose reminiscences provided fascinating material. This led to work in which learners prepare to interview older persons about their life story.

think of the millions of people who have none . . . The communion service comes to me: the breaking of bread at the Last Supper . . . I pass quickly to the moral lessons I learned as a child: that it is a crime to throw away a piece of bread, since it is a sacred substance. And from there, of course, I arrive at the enormous, incredible amount of wastefulness in our society . . . Memories come back to me: the warm, crusty bread of my childhood. The promised bread of life that will satisfy all hunger. And not living by bread alone . . . Not all of these memories are conjured up every time I hear the word, and they do not all come at once, but it is a rarity when none of them follows the oft-repeated request: "pass the bread."[3]

This does not mean that every vocabulary item should be subjected to large-scale word-association exercises. Ellul's comment might, however, provide a reminder that the consumer context is not the only possible framework within which students can encounter commonplace words as meaningful. Ask a Muslim or a Christian like Ellul what significance bread has for them, and we are into a new multi-cultural and spiritual dimension. This expanded awareness can in turn broaden the context within which learners think about the meanings which the word "bread" has also for them. It is along lines such as these that the theme of "bread" is developed in a Charis French unit.

In Charis Deutsch, Einheiten 6-10, the theme of light is dealt with in a similar way. The word itself can be associated at one end of the spectrum with regular household items such as lamps, candles, or matches—or, at the other end, with the symbolism of good and evil. Moreover, to capitalize on such associations conforms to practices rooted in the uniqueness of German culture. For example, pondering the role of candle-lit vigils in the former GDR before the fall of the Berlin wall and in more recent protests against racism and hostility toward foreigners, as well as the significance of light in the meaning and history of the advent crown--all provide ways of thinking about the symbolic aspect of light and darkness in a way which also opens up German cultural themes.

Preparation for meeting the stranger

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[3] Ellul, 1985:17-18.

The content of our language courses is informed by an implicit vision of our students' future. If the words, phrases, functions, and situations we rehearse in the classroom are focused on the linguistic needs of the tourist, then that is the role in which we cast learners in their future interactions with strangers. If the questions we practice asking in the classroom are all requests for information and services, then our learners' capacity for asking other kinds of questions when they visit the foreign culture will be limited. In short, the range of language and experience found in our courses represents a particular kind of preparation for encountering the stranger.

If we do want that encounter to go beyond practical transactions in the ways outlined in earlier chapters of this book, at least two requirements must be met in terms of the content of our courses. First, the syllabus must include the language needed to ask about and talk about personal and spiritually meaningful issues. Second, learners must have the opportunity to express themselves in the target language on these kinds of issues. As we noted above, such goals need not be restricted to advanced students.

For the second Charis German volume we developed a unit based on Dietrich Bonhoeffer. It begins with the story of his life, in particular his imprisonment and execution, using pictures and a simple German text. Learners are then presented with one of the poems he wrote while in prison, "Wer bin ich?" (Who am I?).

In this poem, Bonhoeffer reflects on the discrepancy between how other people see him and the way he feels about himself. Others compliment him for his calm courage, but inside he feels weary and lonely. Does this, the poem asks, make him a hypocrite? Or does he change from day to day? Bonhoeffer does not resolve this tension, but places the question of his identity in God's hand.

An immediate problem we faced at this point was that the poem was too difficult in German for the language level of the students for whom we were devising the materials. In order to overcome this difficulty, we adapted the basic ideas of the poem for use as follows.

First, the unit presents learners with a collection of German adjectives they could use to describe someone's character: words like shy, brave, friendly, serious, honest, or lazy. After familiarizing themselves with this vocabulary, they are asked to draw a triangle

around any words they have heard others use to describe them, a circle round any words which they would use to describe themselves, and a square round any words which represent qualities to which they aspire.

They are then presented with a simplified outline of Bonhoeffer's poem (see figure 2). The exercise provides them with spaces to fill in the words with the triangles, circles, and squares around them, in order to compose a simple poem about how others see them, how they see themselves, and how they would like to be. In this way, by loosely following Bonhoeffer's pattern, even learners of limited ability, without access to complex language, can compose a poem in German.

Relating the activity to Bonhoeffer's life and experience of imprisonment makes this more than an exercise in self-exploration; a stranger's questions to himself in a particular historical situation provide an opportunity for learners to be challenged and enriched, and to have their sense of the humanity of the stranger reinforced.

Another example of using a German poem to provide an opportunity for open-ended reflection on personally meaningful issues involves the use of lines written by a German teenager (see figure 3). The poem is presented with the main verbs removed, but includes an explanatory phrase following each open blank. Translated, the exercise would read as follows:

Take time to _____; it is the source of strength.

Take time to _____; it is the secret of eternal youth.

Take time to _____; it is the source of wisdom.

Take time to _____; the day is too short to be selfish.

Take time to _____; it is the music of the soul.

Take time to _____; it is the greatest power in the world.

A list of the missing verbs (pray, think, give, laugh, read, play) is provided, and pupils are asked to reconstruct the poem. The point here is not that they correctly replicate the original, but that they think about how well the different verbs would fit in different places, and then produce a personal version of the poem.

One more example. As part of the process of developing a French unit with an ethical focus, questionnaires were sent out to a group of French teenagers, asking them how often they told lies, whether it was ever justified to do so, why honesty was important, to whom they would be most likely to lie, and how they would feel and react if they found out that a friend had lied to them.

Their richly varied responses provided the basis for a range of activities in which learners can respond to the ethical views expressed by their French counterparts. For instance, they are presented with ten reasons offered by the French students for considering honesty important, and asked to place them in what they consider to be their order of importance (see figure 4). This exercise not only engages the learners in ethical reflection, but also provides preparation for talking to the stranger about moral questions. All of these activities are intended to make the target language a medium in which a broader range of experience, including its spiritual and moral dimensions, can be encountered even by learners who have not yet reached advanced levels.

Relating Broader Concerns to Linguistic Goals

When encountering the Charis project materials, some teachers are intrigued by the human interest of the content, but sceptical about whether it is practical to spend classroom time on such matters. After all, they have to cover enough linguistic material to get through the examination syllabus. Will it not be a distraction to wander off into all these other topics?

In response, linguistic goals need not be seen as necessarily in tension with broader educational concerns. For one thing, communicative approaches to language teaching have long maintained that using language more personally meaningful to the learner is likely to lead to more effective language learning and better retention. For another, broader concerns can be dealt with in a way which retains a clear linguistic focus. Two examples will illustrate this point with reference to grammar and vocabulary.

In an activity from the unit based on the theme of bread which was mentioned above, students are asked to place words representing basic aspects of their lives--bread, family, education, money, friendship, television, water, faith, love--on a grid in descending order of importance. (See figure 5) They are to do this by negotiating in

pairs: "I think water is more important than money"or "I think television is less important than friendship."

In a follow-up activity pupils are asked to role-play as members of two families with very different levels of affluence, and renegotiate the scale of values from those perspectives. Different levels of support are given to learners of differing ability.

What are students doing here? In terms of language skills, they are completing a grammar exercise: by the end of the activity they will have repeatedly practiced sentences containing a comparative. In terms of meaning, they are holding a discussion in the target language about their basic values. The two dimensions of learning go hand in hand, reflecting the fact that the various kinds of response to life which characterize us as human beings do not typically occur in isolation from one another, but as part of an integral whole.

A second example relates to the issue of covering required areas of vocabulary. The examination syllabi in the United Kingdom for the age range covered by the Charis materials typically include words for jobs, personal characteristics, and the various buildings in a town. These were all included in a Charis French unit based on the history of Montreal.

Montreal was founded in 1642 as a utopian Roman Catholic colony, with the purpose of spreading the Christian faith among the inhabitants of New France. Students are asked to imagine themselves founding a new colony in similar circumstances and to reflect on questions such as the following: Whom will you take with you? What character qualities, trades, and skills will be important? Which buildings will you construct first, and what will the priorities for further development be? Where will you locate the buildings? What will the rules for your new colony be?

After working with these questions, students have the opportunity to compare their responses with the choices made by the original settlers. In this way students can reflect personally and historically on the shape of social life in the situation outlined while covering familiar areas of vocabulary.

As we emphasized at the start of this chapter, we do not intend these illustrations to represent definitive prescriptions; they are merely examples taken from a particular

curriculum project to illustrate the themes explored in this book. They are rooted in an attempt to integrate into the design of foreign language materials a Christian concern for the interconnection of the spiritual and ethical dimensions of being human with all of the other aspects of life.

As students are enabled to engage with spiritual and moral themes in their own lives in the new medium of the target language and to encounter the significance of such themes in the lives of speakers of that language, we hope they will begin to develop fresh capacities for carrying out their calling as good strangers and hosts. Perhaps in ways such as these we can move students just a little closer to embracing the stranger.
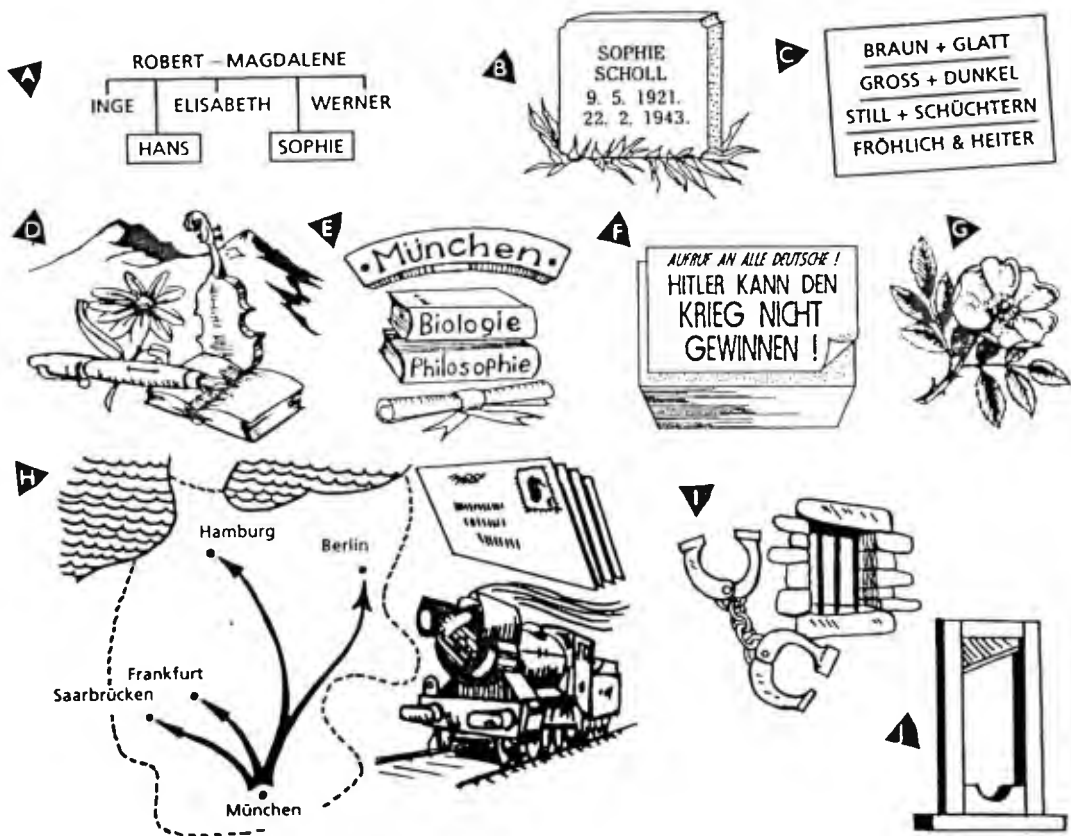

Figure 10.1

Ein Gedicht

Wer bin ich?

Wer bin ich? Sie sagen mir oft:

.Du bist _____

_____

_____

und _____

Bin ich das wirklich, was andere von mir sagen?
Oder bin ich nur das, was ich selbst von mir sage?

Ich glaube, ich bin _____

_____

_____

und _____

Wer bin ich? Bin ich beides zugleich?

Ich möchte aber so werden:

_____

_____

_____

und _____

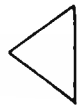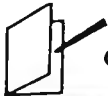Wer kennt mich? Wer bin ich? Wer werde ich sein?

Figure 10.2

C *Lies dieses Gedicht und füll die Lücken aus. Wähl Wörter aus dem Kästchen.*

Nimm dir Zeit

Nimm dir Zeit zum _____ .

es ist die Quelle der Kraft.

Nimm dir Zeit zum _____ .

es ist das Geheimnis ewiger Jugend.

Nimm dir Zeit zum _____ .

es ist der Urspung der Weisheit.

Nimm dir Zeit zum _____ .

der Tag ist zu kurz, um egoistisch zu sein.

Nimm dir Zeit zum _____ .

es ist die Musik der Seele.

Nimm dir Zeit zum _____ .

es ist die größte Kraft der Welt.

Sibylle

Beten
Denken
Geben
Lachen
Lesen
Spielen

D *Jetzt hör zu. Hast du recht gehabt?*

Figure 10.3

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Avec l'honnêteté on va plus loin

📁 *Dans le sondage sur la Feuille de travail 1, on a demandé:*

«Est-ce que c'est important d'être honnête? Pourquoi?»

A *Lis les réponses de quelques élèves*

A Oui, c'est important, je ne voudrais pas devenir escroc, voleur, je préfère être honnête.

B Oui, parce-que si on est honnête on ne fait de mal à personne.

C Oui, car même si on regrette d'avoir menti, une fois que c'est fait, c'est fait.

D Oui, pour qu'on puisse avoir confiance en tout le monde – surtout aux hommes politiques.

E Oui, car ne pas l'être, c'est un péché.

F Oui, pour gagner la confiance des autres.

G Oui, c'est important pour se sentir bien dans sa peau! Lorsqu'on ment, on se sent mal!

H Oui, pour réussir dans nos études il faut être honnête (ne pas tricher ni copier lors des examens).

I Oui, parce-que tu as plus de chance d'être aimé des autres.

J Oui, sinon la vie serait injuste.

B A ton avis, quelle est la raison la plus importante pour être honnête? Et la moins importante? Fais une liste.

Pourquoi être honnête?

1 _____
2 _____
3 _____
4 _____
5 _____
6 _____
7 _____
8 _____
9 _____
10 _____

C **A considérer**
Peux-tu trouver d'autres raisons pour être honnête?

Figure 10.4

Qu'est-ce que tu penses?
Le jeu des priorités

... est le/la plus importante(e)

... est plus importante(e) que ...

... est aussi importante(e) que ...

... est moins important(e) que ...

Règles du jeu: jouez en groupes de 2 à 4 personnes.

1 Découpe ces mots.

2 Mets les mots sur la grille. Tu dois dire une phrase en français pour expliquer ton choix.

3 Ton/ta partenaire peut changer la place d'un des mots. Il/elle doit donner des raisons. (Voir Feuille de travail 6a, B.)

4 Trouve encore des raisons pour ton choix. (Voir Feuille de travail 6a, C.)

5 Continue!

Quand tu es d'accord avec ton groupe vous devez expliquer votre liste à la classe.

Mots à découper

le pain	la famille	l'éducation
l'argent	l'amitié	la télé
l'eau	la croyance	l'amour

Figure 10.5

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations have been used in this thesis (including, where appropriate, the bibliography). While each is given in full on its first occurrence in any chapter, I list them here to provide a convenient point of reference.

ALL	Association for Language Learning
CILT	Centre for Information on Language Teaching
C-L	Counseling-Learning
CLL	Community Language Learning
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
DES	Department of Education and Science
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment
DfE	Department for Education
ELT	English language teaching
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GOML	Graded Objectives in Modern Languages
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationery Office
NC	National Curriculum
NCC	National Curriculum Council
NCMFL	National Curriculum for Modern Foreign Languages
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
PSE	Personal and Social Education
QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
RE	Religious Education
SCAA	School Curriculum and Assessment Authority
WO	Welsh Office

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