THE INTERRELATIONSHIP

BETWEEN

SOCIAL AND COGNITIVE FACTORS

IN

SECOND/FOREIGN

# LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT.

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Erratum p.10:

"... within a wider continuum of language development..." was omitted in error.

The final sentence should therefore read as follows:

" There is nothing wrong with seeking to situate foreign language study within a wider continuum of language development but ...."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

ABSTRACT.

Foreign language pedagogy has often been influenced by findings drawn from the area of first and/or second language acquisition with confusing results. The thesis explores the extent to which the inter-relation of variables in foreign language learning differs from that in natural acquisition processes and varies across a range of learning contexts, thereby encouraging different pedagogical approaches.

Chapter one argues that some models underestimate the different variables involved and suggests that a socio-cultural approach is more effective in identifying and explaining the shifting relation between context and cognition.

Chapter two seeks to situate foreign language study within a more general process of 'functional differentiation' in the child's widening linguistic repertoire, arguing that not only does the relation of context and cognition change between L1 and L2 but also within L2 itself.

Chapter three examines the shifting relation between context and cognition with reference to the language programme of European Schools in general, and the one at Culham in particular. The latter provides a basis for answering two questions: (1) is there a correlation between success in an acquisition-poor environment and the extent of the learner's analytic competence; (2) does motivation play an increasing role in affecting success in contexts where goals are long-term rather than immediate?

Data collected from the school are analyzed in chapter four. Response to both questions would seem to be positive although the complexity of the learners' backgrounds produced greater variation in the role of affective factors than anticipated.

Finally, chapter five argues that the relative success of foreign language study from an early stage in schemes such as the European schools or the immersion programmes depends upon a precise interplay of socio-cognitive variables which is unlikely to be replicated elsewhere.

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INTRODUCTION

The predominance of the English language internationally - and the view of many English mother tongue speakers that those who do not speak it ought to-has resulted historically in the UK in a negative attitude towards the study of foreign languages.[1] The traditionally grammar-translation methods that prevailed in UK schools particularly since the turn of the century both stemmed from, and in turn reinforced, this attitude since they were premised on the assumption that learners would rarely, if ever, have to use the language studied for purposes of practical communication.[2] The predominant aim of foreign language learning was, as in the case of the Classics, to 'train the mind' and to prepare learners to appreciate the literature of the foreign language in question.

Changes in the UK's socio-economic status after World War Two, however, particularly the demise of Empire and entry into the EEC, began to challenge this historical tradition.[3] Foreign language study gradually began to be seen, in successive HMI reports, as having less a cognitive/aesthetic than a practically communicative function, and it is noticeable that the inclusion of a foreign language as a foundation subject in the National Curriculum in 1988 was motivated by the need to enlarge the country's linguistic expertise in the areas of "... trade, tourism and international relations".[4] This shift in perception of the role and value of foreign language study has, over the same period of time, been paralleled by a shift in perception of the methods needed to achieve a more skill-based goal. If, in the past, foreign language teaching had borrowed heavily from the arsenal for the teaching of Latin or ancient Greek, it now became increasingly open to research findings from the related areas of first and second language acquisition.

This can be seen most clearly in what has become known as the 'communicative'

approach whose main objective, as argued by Brumfit and Johnson (1979) is to teach 'language in use'[5]. The emphasis in this approach is placed less upon developing in learners a conscious appreciation of linguistic form than upon creating, as in a natural acquisition context, opportunities in which they can use the language for interactive purposes. Learners, it is expected, will gradually internalize the linguistic form as a result of communicative interaction and, in this process, any errors they make should be corrected only in so far as they impede the exchange of meaning.[6]

There is no doubt that the communicative approach has helped rectify many of the inappropriate procedures that characterized earlier foreign language study. It is to be wondered, however, to what extent its reliance upon duplicating in the classroom the process of natural acquisition models merely creates mirror-image problems from those of the past. As Barnes (1987:141) remarks:

> "...it is seldom useful --and often quite misleading in the education context -- to treat both foreign and native languages as if the lessons of the one could be applied to the other".

Widdowson (1990:161), in a critical re-assessment of the communicative approach, echoes the point when arguing that the assumption that learners will simply acquire form as a by-product of functional use, as in a natural acquisition context, results in them gaining little more than an "imperfect repertoire of performance" without any "underlying competence".

Widdowson's re-assessment has to be set against his wider concern as to what constitutes effective foreign language pedagogy. As he suggests, the problems with the communicative (i.e. 'message-based') approach are not unique. On the contrary, they reflect an historical failure to develop a set of procedures based on what is specific to the foreign language context and an over-readiness to accept findings from other related, but distinct, linguistic contexts. There is nothing wrong with seeking to situate foreign language study but, as Roberts (1993) also argues, such a continuum should not only indicate what foreign

language learning shares with other language processes but also what is specific to itself.[7] Put another way, such a continuum should be able to describe the common variables involved in language development and define how the relation between these variables changes at any given stage of the acquisition-learning process.

Within this framework, the aim of the current thesis is fourfold:

* First, it seeks to critically re-examine the history of foreign language study in order to indicate the ways in which findings from other language processes have often been used inappropriately as the basis for pedagogy;

* Second, it seeks to outline a model of language development which will examine the shifting relation of the socio-cognitive variables involved and their precise interaction in the area of foreign language study;

* Third, it seeks to illustrate the above model through a concrete analysis of language performance at the European School at Culham, UK, that is, through a process/product study of the differences between second and foreign language proficiency; and

* Fourth, it seeks to make tentative recommendations for foreign language pedagogy in the UK today at primary and secondary levels.

For the purpose of uniformity, I shall use the term L1 throughout the thesis as a general term for mother tongue, first and native language, and L2 as a general term for second language acquisition/learning, using SLA, FL or any other appropriate term to refer to a precise context when the need arises.

For similar reasons of uniformity and style, I shall use the masculine gender as applying to both male and female.

Notes (introduction):

1.   See Hawkins (1981:26).

2.   As Harding (1967:4) puts it, teaching was "based on grammar and translation" and foreign languages, such as French and German, were highly valued for the "mental gymnastics".

3.   Hawkins (op.cit.). Cf also Stern (1963:11,12 & 15).

4.   DES report (1988:2)

5.   The communicative approach, which assumes that the L2 learner can acquire the form through its functional use, is examined in greater details in chapter 2 (Cf also Widdowson (1990).

6.   See <u>Ready Reference Sheet 152</u>, CILT, London, 1985. Point 7 in particular refers to the need to distinguish between an 'error' (such as 'à le bureau') which is inappropriate but which 'does not obstruct communication' and a 'mistake' (such as 'la' instead of 'les') which 'confuses the message'.

7.   See Roberts (1993:24-26).

CHAPTER ONE.   MODELS OF LANGUAGE ACQUISITION / LEARNING

1.1   INTRODUCTION.

First language acquisition is a relatively uniform process whose complexity is often minimized by the fact that almost all children reach a high level of proficiency without undue difficulty [1]. Second language acquisition, particularly in an instructed context, on the other hand appears as much more complex in that the end product is both more differentiated and uncertain. As Kennedy (1973:66) was to put it, referring to classroom-based instruction, only a very few learners "... ever seem to reach a very high level of proficiency".

In one sense, this difference in proficiency levels can be explained away as a function of the different amount of exposure to, and motivation for, language learning in the two contexts. It is also possible, however, that pedagogy itself plays a contributory role. In so far as teaching procedures do not take sufficiently into account the constraints of an instructed, as opposed to a natural, context, they may very well act to reinforce rather than overcome natural differences in exposure and motivation. If we examine trends over the past half century in the area of foreign language pedagogy, particularly in terms of the latter's reliance upon research in the area of first and second language acquisition, such a possibility would seem readily apparent. The underlying assumptions of much current pedagogy would appear to be that the strategies employed by the child to acquire his mother tongue are similar, if not identical, to those employed by a learner in an instructed context, regardless of the different variables involved. It is not simply a question, as Ellis (1985:5) has pointed out, that "SLA research has tended to follow in the footsteps of L1 acquisition research, both in its methodology and in many of the issues that it has treated."

Equally important, the results of both L1 and SLA research are often transferred to the foreign language classroom -- i.e. to a context for which they were not intended -- with serious consequences.

Obviously, in one sense, all language acquisition/learning processes involve a common set of variables, i.e. what Hickmann (1986:9) refers to as 'language, thought and social interaction'[2]. What is important about such variables, however, is that they interrelate in quite different ways according to the precise process involved, and attempts to transpose findings from one process to another -- without taking this into consideration -- can be counter-productive. As Widdowson (1990:26) has argued, the transfer of findings "... without regard to their particular conditions of validity" can end up by imposing on the learner a set of objectives, and a method to reach these objectives, which simply do not cohere with the needs of the situation.

The danger Widdowson was referring to is the danger of ignoring the specificity of any acquisition/learning context and a refusal to base methodology on what is specific to that context. In this chapter, we intend to examine various models of language learning from the point of view of their danger in imposing one-sided frameworks on the foreign language teaching context and, through such a critique, to delineate a more complex model which will allow us to demonstrate what foreign language pedagogy has in common, and what distinguishes it from, other language processes.

1.2 TRADITIONAL MODELS:

Behaviourist and mentalist views of first language acquisition have a long history, and the debate between Skinner and Chomsky in the 1960s was, to a large extent, a re-run of the debate between Watson and Stern over fifty years earlier in seeking to explain how children acquire their native language.[3] What is interesting about such views, however, is

not so much their different starting points but their common assumptions that the process of first language acquisition is based upon learner strategies which equally apply to the second/foreign language context. Such assumptions have had serious long-term effects on syllabus design and pedagogy in second/foreign language learning.

1.2.1 Behaviourism.

Behaviourist accounts of L1 acquisition have long been in disrepute as a result of Chomsky's withering critique of Skinner's <u>Verbal Behavior</u>. The view that language can be treated as a purely 'behavioural' process, acquired through imitation, mimicry, repetition and reinforcement, simply cannot explain either the process of language acquisition (i.e. the fact that young children 'create' language, as illustrated through their interlanguage[4]) or their ability to reach adult competence. The intention here is not mainly to review behaviourist accounts as an inadequate theory for L1 acquisition but rather to examine those features of the model which assumed that there was no difference between the L1 and L2 language processes and the problems that ensued.

The transfer of behaviourist accounts of L1 acquisition to second language learning took place during the 1940s.[5] At first sight, it appeared that applied linguists such as Lado (1964:5) were only too aware of the danger of assuming that "learning a foreign language is the same as learning the mother tongue". While Lado recognized certain features that are specific to the foreign language context, such as the fact that L1 habits are already present, the central thrust of the new 'scientific principles' on which audio-lingualism was based was a direct application of Skinners's behaviourist learning theory. Out of Lado's 17 principles for modern language study, three deserve particular comment.

1.2.1.1 Habit Formation

Students, Lado (ibid.: 51) argued, must learn patterns of construction and "... establish them as habits. This is pattern practice." Such practice is developed through 'mimicry-memorization' and 'immediate reinforcement' with the reward mechanism being interpreted as praise when the learner is successful.

The idea that language acquisition or learning can be reduced to imitation alone is, of course, no longer tenable on empirical grounds. Littlewood (1984:10) refers to relatively early studies of young children's L1 interlanguage (Brown, 1973) which revealed that "... the order of frequency does not correlate with the order of acquisition" and which therefore, Littlewood adds, "cannot be explained in simple habit-formation terms." Further studies in L1 and L2 (Dulay and Burt 1973) confirmed that learners appear to be actively involved in a process of rule-construction, through hypothesis-testing, and whether this is seen as due to a Language Acquisition Device (LAD) in the Chomskyan sense or not, it becomes clear that, as Littlewood (op.cit.: 16) argues

> "...imitation plays a secondary, consolidating role, with the primary role being played by more creative, rule-forming processes."

The fact that habit-formation cannot explain the acquisition process is not, however, the only issue at stake here. More importantly, the fact that behaviourism views language as a response to a stimulus means that the acquisition process is largely seen as an unconscious one and this is deemed to be equally true in the foreign language context. Lado, it is true, does suggest that the L2 learner is initially more conscious than the L1 child but argues that such consciousness is applied only to the process of repetition and not to the understanding of the language itself which only emerges through mechanical drills becoming related to the extra-linguistic context.[6]

Of course, to speak a language efficiently, one must acquire some automatic responses and it would be foolish to reject totally the idea of intensive practice to acquire some lower-level (habitual) skills in order to free the higher level processing devices (McLaughlin, 1987)[7]. As Belyayev (1963:28) argued, however, evidence has shown that even lower level skills are "more firmly assimilated when the process of acquiring them under the influence of practice is a sufficiently conscious one" and, he adds, in an L2 context, such consciousness would seem to be unavoidable.

1.2.1.2 Meaning

Teaching, Lado (ibid.:121) stresses, must be directly through the target language to the exclusion of the mother tongue in order to avoid 'interference'. The use of the target language should be retained even at the expense of meaning for, he argues, it is better "to let the class go without grasping the meaning of a word they have learned to pronounce rather than resort to translation."

The scant attention paid to meaning in audio-lingual theory was, again, a fairly faithful reflection of Skinner's views that L1 acquisition is largely an unconscious process. As Rivers (1968:63) argues, however, in her critique of audio-lingualism, using language as a response to "formal cues rather than as an expression of personal meaning" can result in a language classified, as Hawkins (1981:210) puts it, as 'non-serious' and detrimental to the drive to learn. This view is echoed by Wilkins (1974:39) who stresses that, while there may indeed be a need at times to focus on the formal aspects of language, these are "more readily acquired when they occur in a meaningful context."

The importance of meaning in language learning has been forcefully argued in Speech Act Theory but Stevick (1976:25 & 26) expands the notion when suggesting that it is not only meaningfulness that helps the language to be retained but the active involvement

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and 'personal investment' of effort by the learner.[8] Students' memory, he argues quoting a study by Bower and Winzenz, "... benefits from actively searching out, discovering and depicting" as contrasted with the staple diet of audio-lingual lessons, that is, "rote repetition, sentence reading, or even generation of their own relatively unimaginative sentences." One of the reasons why greater depth leads to better memory retention for recognition and recall, he argues (ibid.:30), "may be that the meaningful context permits more complex processing."

The psychological and cognitive criticisms of the audio-lingual treatment of 'meaning' are reflected at the pedagogic level. Insistence on sole use of the target language even when meaning is obscured simply fails, as Hawkins (1981:175) points out, to take advantage of the "the vast amount of semanticising that the pupil has accumulated already via the mother tongue." Hawkins is not arguing for frequent use of the mother tongue but is simply suggesting that the L2 child has already conceptualised the world and that L2 pedagogy has to make use of that knowledge when there is simply insufficient time to "reconceptualise his [i.e. the learner's] whole 'world view'". Rivers (1964:123) makes the same point when she suggests that relying on L1 conceptual knowledge to convey meaning increases memory retention, and that it is 'unrealistic' (Rivers 1964:20) to expect to re-create L1 learning conditions in a classroom with L2 learners with well established habits in L1.

1.2.1.3 Difference and Difficulty. On the basis of contrastive analysis, Lado argues, potential 'problem areas' in the target language should be pinpointed, i.e. patterns should be isolated which will need additional practice and reinforcement if they are to result in new habits.

The view behind this, as Ellis (1985:22) suggests, is that 'positive transfer' between L1 and L2 will occur at points of similarity and 'negative transfer' at points of difference. Errors are, in this sense, seen as being caused by interference of the mother tongue and this is to be combatted by maximum use of the target language and by a syllabus design, based on contrastive analysis, which permits 'saturation drilling' at the problem areas.[9]

Contrastive analysis has come under criticism for a range of assumptions. It has been claimed by Ellis (1985:25), among others, that structural linguistics simply lacked the framework for comparisons to be made and that such comparisons lacked cultural validity as no common categories could embrace all languages.[10] There are, however, two more important points that need to be made. In the first instance, as Ellis (ibid.:26) argues, it is premised on the rather naive view "that the degree of linguistic difference corresponds to the degree of learning difficulty." Such a view tends to assume that what is an artefact of the linguistic system has psychological reality, as Littlewood (1984:19) points out:

> "...'difference' and 'difficulty' are not identical concepts. The former derives from linguistic description and the latter from psychological processes, and there is no reason to believe that they should correlate with each other in a reliable way."

Studies by Larsen-Freeman & Long (1991:53-56) would seem to indicate the opposite and, as McLaughlin (1987:66) argues, contrastive analysis

> "... overpredicted because it identified difficulties that in fact did not arise, and it underpredicted because learners made errors that could not be explained on the basis of transfer between languages...".

In the second place, and clearly related to the above, it was unable to grasp that errors may be systematic but may not simply be due to transference but depend upon context, age and stage of linguistic and cognitive development.

The notion of transfer has, indeed, been subject to considerable criticism in error analysis and interlanguage studies. While there are differences, it is clear that -- as the earlier

studies of Dulay and Burt (1973:249) or Baetens-Beardsmore (1986) found -- transference errors are limited in their contribution and can often be less significant than developmental errors, e.g. those of over-simplification and overgeneralization.[11] As Corder (1978:85) comments:

> "... we cannot immediately distinguish those erroneous mother tongue features which are a result of restructuring from those which are borrowings resulting from a guessing strategy of communication, but which do not derive from (are not generated by) the current state of the speaker's interlanguage grammar."

A comprehensive analysis of the weaknesses of audio-lingualism can be found in Rivers (1968), Belyayev (1963), Hawkins (1981). The aim of this brief review was mainly to highlight those of its features which assumed that the L1 acquisition process could be applied to the L2 learning process without taking into account the different socio-cognitive variables of each.

1.2.2 Mentalism

Behaviourist views of language acquisition came under serious criticism in the 1960s mainly, as already indicated, as a result of Chomsky's critique of Skinner's <u>Verbal Behavior</u>. The central thrust of Chomsky's critique was that mimicry, memorization and generalization by analogy were simply insufficient as mechanisms to explain the child's ability to master the adult language system. As Chomsky (1979:180) was to put it:

> "...language acquisition is not a step-by-step process of generalization, association and abstraction, going from linguistic data to the grammar, and the subtlety of our understanding transcends by far what is presented in experience."

Chomsky's polemic against Skinner was, of course, part of a wider critique of empirically-based learning theories but it is hardly accidental that he should choose to focus upon language acquisition. On the contrary, it was precisely here, he argued, that behaviourist stimulus-response models showed their weaknesses in three specific areas:

- First, he pointed out (1979:94), the data to which the child is exposed is "very limited and often imperfect" and is characterized by deviations, false starts, pauses and changes in direction. The fact that the child, in acquiring his mother tongue, manages to correctly separate the underlying rules of the language from those aspects of performance which are inessential or even misleading indicates that imitation cannot play a major role.[12]

- Second, he stressed, in seeking to identify and use those rules underlying performance, the child actually 'constructs' many which he could not possibly have heard. And indeed, the fact that a child can produce a tag such as 'bettern't he?', incorrectly generalizing English interrogative forms with 'should' or 'could', shows that he is not just repeating what he has heard but that he is actively seeking to discover the rule system of the language. As Wilkins (1974:27) comments:

> "... a good deal of his language production is not imitative at all. Not only does he have the ability to take words and phrases that he has heard and use them in new combinations, he also actually produces pieces of language that he could not have heard from the other people in his environment."

- Third, Chomsky argued (1979:98), as children construct the rule system of their language, they seem to go through identical stages en route and arrive at "... comparable grammars, indeed almost identical ones" as they reach adult competence. If, he went on, children's language development was based mainly on a response to the data to which they were exposed, differences in this data should lead to differences in both the rate and route of the child's language development for which there exists no evidence.[13]

It was precisely the inability of behaviourist learning models to explain such points which led Chomsky to posit the existence of an (innate) Language Acquisition Device. Over the years, Chomsky's nativist position has become more extreme but, originally, the LAD was hypothesized as an answer to a simple question: how is it that all children are capable, in such a short period of time and despite limitations in the data to which they are

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exposed, of reaching a comparable degree of linguistic competence?[14] The answer Chomsky gave (1979:98) was that they must be preset with "the same internal constraints which characterize narrowly the grammar they are going to construct" and which operate, to a large degree, independently of external stimuli. To the extent that children are capable of learning any language with equal ease, these constraints must underlie all languages as common base structures which can be turned into the language-specific surface structures via transformation rules.

Chomsky's model was a mirror image of behaviourist learning theories in that it tended to see the LAD acting almost independently of the environment once it had been activated by it. Research conducted within the new paradigm, however, seemed to confirm the 'Universal Hypothesis'. Writers such as Ervin-Tripp (1973:196) had already shown how children tended to over-generalize past tense rules, saying 'he goed' for 'he went' or 'he comed' for 'he came' (ibid.:235). The fact that children seemed to actively construct the rule system was apparently confirmed by researchers such as Brown (1973:403-404) who suggested that the route by which such a system is created is largely invariant.[15] Moreover, much of the research conducted in L1 was gradually extended, via such figures as Dulay and Burt (1973) into the area of L2 acquisition where morpheme studies supposedly revealed a similar invariant acquisition route. As Dulay and Burt were to report it, Ellis (1985:55) notes, the acquisition order for both children and adults learning English as a Second Language "...remained the same, irrespective of their L1s or of the methods used to score the accuracy of the use of morphemes". The assumption in such models was that learning cannot alter the natural route of language acquisition and that what went on in the classroom should, as far as possible, mirror what Corder (1978:77) calls the child's 'built-in syllabus'.

While Chomsky's views tended to set the paradigm for first (and second) language research in the 1970s, however, it was in turn soon subjected to criticism. The major problem was, as Romaine (1984:258) argues, that Chomsky tends to see language "largely in terms of formal syntactic structures" and to ignore its socio-psychological aspect as a tool for communication. Indeed, many writers have found in Chomsky's separation of form from function almost a perverse vantage point in seeking to explain the process of language acquisition. Wardhaugh (1986:10), for instance, has criticized his "explicit rejection of any concern with the social uses of language" and Dore (1978:107) has underlined the fact that his work fails to explain "how to use sentences for purpose of communication". Chomsky's grammatical competence is, indeed, totally divorced from actual language use and communication with its richness, intricacies and cultural refinement.[16]

It is not merely a question, however, as Romaine (1984:258) argues, that Chomsky is "narrowing the conception of 'language'" but that many of the pillars on which his model was based have been empirically challenged. The view that children are exposed to random and imperfect data, for example, has been revealed by a range of studies of caretaker speech to be inaccurate. Romaine (1984:161) claims that, according to Labov, 75% of sentences addressed to young children are correct and that Newport found that "only one out of 1500 of observed utterances used by mothers to their children was disfluent". Moreover, while it is certainly true that children often overgeneralize the rules that they hypothesize, the evidence that the acquisition of such rules is invariant -- i.e. is based upon a LAD operating at its own maturational speed-- seems increasingly untenable. Writers such as Donaldson (1978) have shown the major differences in competence among pre-school children and, while Ellis (1985) suggests that this concerns the rate rather than the route of acquisition, such assertions have been strongly criticized by writers such as Littlewood (1984:12) among others[17]. As Widdowson (1990:18) points out, the morpheme studies of

figures such as Brown may reflect an accuracy rather than acquisition order:

"Accuracy has to do with behaviour, acquisition has to do with knowledge. One cannot directly infer one from the other."

Finally, and closely related with the last point, the idea that children reach comparable degrees of grammatical competence by age five is, as Romaine (1984:78 & 79) indicates, no longer tenable. This is not only true at the level of discourse grammar but even at the level of sentence grammar where, as Bruner (1978:18) points out, the rules are not learnt 'immediately and perfectly'.

While Chomsky's nativist views have increasingly been criticized in the area of L1 acquisition, however, their impact upon second/foreign language learning has persisted particularly in the work of writers such as Krashen whose Natural Approach is a relatively faithful reflection of Chomsky's views in a pedagogical setting. In a way which is similar to Lado, Krashen (1981) sets out eight points which underpin what he refers to as a 'principled' approach to foreign language teaching. In one sense, these points are subject to the same critique directed against nativist views at the L1 level but they also, again like Lado's views, are doubly problematic in that they fail to take into account obvious differences between the L1 and L2 process. It is for this reason that the three most salient points are worth considering:

1.2.2.1 Learning and Acquisition.

Krashen (1981:1) distinguishes between acquisition and learning and maintains that, even in the formal constraints of the classroom, it is only by "meaningful interaction in the target language", in which learners focus on the message rather than the medium, that language can be acquired. This viewpoint, which sees conscious attention to language form as hardly affecting the natural route of acquisition, clearly mirrors Chomsky's nativist

hypothesis. The assumption is that, as in the L1 context, the learner's LAD will automatically seek to induce the rule system from the linguistic data to which it is exposed and that any attempt to bypass this by consciously making the learner aware of the rule system will be counterproductive. Such an assumption underpins the inductive conclusions of a range of applied linguists, such as Newmark and Reibel (1970:239), who argue that all that is required is to present the learner with "instances of meaningful use" which he can "store, segment and eventually recombine" to create personal meaning.

While such assumptions are quite common today, Krashen's emphasis upon the unconscious nature of L2 learning is probably as difficult to sustain as was Lado's. It may be that the child's acquisition of his mother tongue is largely an unconscious process, in which attention is focused on what language 'does' rather than what it 'is', but whether this can be reproduced in the formal constraints of a classroom is quite a different matter. In the first place, it is possible that since the LAD begins to fossilize in early adolescence and is replaced by -- what Ellis (1985:49) refers to as -- the 'cognitive organizer', the second/foreign language learner has to rely upon more general cognitive strategies. In the second place, as Mclaughlin (1987:46) argues, there is no reason to believe that more conscious strategies of this kind are not as valuable as unconscious ones and, in many ways, more suited to a context in which there are few opportunities for genuine communicative interaction in which language form can be acquired as a by-product of functional use.[18]

1.2.2.2 Comprehensible Input.

Krashen argues that, if the 'Universal Hypothesis' applies to the classroom, and if L2 learners acquire the language along an invariant route, then the data to which they are exposed should not 'contradict' their 'built-in syllabus'. This view has emphasized the importance of reducing selection and sequencing of material to a minimum and insisting

that what the L2 learner has access to is the same sort of 'roughly-tuned' input as the L1 child (i.e. 'motherese') or what Krashen & Terrell (1988:33) refer to as the level of 'i + 1'. The sole criterion of such input is that it should be understandable by the learners since it is comprehension above all that leads to acquisition (ibid.:32).

There is no doubt that Krashen's views on 'roughly-tuned' input have had a major influence on the current interest in 'authentic' materials in the second/foreign language classroom. As McLaughlin (1987:37) has pointed out, however, the argument is flawed in several respects above and beyond the self-evident point that it "...seems to be an uneconomical model for language acquisition" in a classroom where limited time is available. In the first place, as McLaughlin observes, there seems to be a contradiction between Krashen's view on the value of 'caretaker-speech', based on simpler codes, and his assertion that older learners progress quicker than younger learners. In the second place, however, and somewhat more importantly as McLaughlin (1987:38) continues,

> *"Comprehensible input (made meaningful through extra-linguistic information) cannot, in and of itself, account for the development of the learner's grammatical system. Understanding messages is not enough. How does the learner progress from understanding to acquisition? Here the theory is silent."*

Krashen's view of the importance of 'comprehensible input' -- and the importance of allowing the learner, as the L1 child, to speak the target language only when ready -- seems, as McLaughlin (1987:36) puts it, to see speech as "a result of acquisition and not its cause". There are problems with this, however, since, he adds (ibid.:50) "Unless learners try out the language, they are unlikely to get the kind of feedback they need to analyze the structure of the language" and thereby learn to use it correctly. Indeed, the information that has emerged from immersion programmes in Canada shows, according to Swain (1986b:132), that it is only by encouraging the learners to use the target language that they are forced "to move from semantic processing to syntactic processing".

1.2.2.3 Invariant Route

Accepting as they do the concept of the invariant route, Krashen and Terrell see

errors made by the learners not as transference errors but largely as inevitable stages that

the learner passes through in testing out and correcting his hypotheses of the language.

Since this is the case, they argue (1988:27), citing the fact that parents usually restrict

themselves to correcting L1 children's semantic rather than syntactic mistakes, "error

correction in particular does not seem to help".

Again, the tendency to see errors as evidence of the learner's attempts to construct

the rule system of the target language is widespread in communicative circles. It has been

subject, however, to growing criticism. In the first place, there is no reason for believing

that the invariant route hypothesis in the L2 context is tenable. The scanty evidence based

on morpheme studies by Dulay and Burt may be, as Ellis (1985:69) admits, an 'artefact of

the Bilingual Syntax Measure' used, that is, it might not correspond to any real-life

acquisition order and it may not take into account the fact that L2 learners from different

L1 backgrounds might process L2 differently (ibid.:63).

Equally important, as Skinner (1985:375) argues, one cannot simply infer that the

process is similar even if the order were to be the same:

> *"Even if the sequence of acquisition for L2 were precisely identical to the sequence of acquisition for L1 that does not mean, necessarily, that the ways in which those sequences may be acquired are identical. Clearly, the process of acquisition cannot be identical."*

As he continues, there are obvious differences in the context of learning and in the cognitive

level of the learner which cannot be ignored. Krashen's assumption that the L2 learner will

acquire the second language in the same ways as the L1 child is, in this sense, unproven. It

hardly seems sensible, then, in the limited time available to allow an L2 learner to pass

through the same prolonged interlanguage stages rather than seeking consciously to help

him avoid them.

1.2.3 Summary

In many ways, behaviourist and mentalist views would appear to contain quite different implications for the foreign language classroom. The first appears to give the priority in the learning process to environmental factors and the child's growth is measured simply as a response to the stimuli from that environment. It is no accident that such an approach prioritizes teaching rather than learning since, within this framework, it is the teacher who is responsible for selecting, preparing and inputting the data which the pupils are expected to respond to. The second approach, on the other hand, appears to see environmental factors as relatively unimportant in the development of the child whose linguistic competence is pictured primarily as a maturational process. Unlike behaviourism, therefore, mentalism would seem to favour a much more child-centred approach in which the role of the teacher is seen as that of a facilitator, that is, as providing the data on which the child's LAD gets to work[19].

While such approaches are based upon divergent foundations, however, their effect upon foreign language pedagogy has been equally problematical because both models are non-developmental, i.e. they assume that the findings from L1 (or SLA) research can be transposed to the foreign language classroom without taking into account the quite different socio-cognitive variables involved. This somewhat simplistic assumption means that, despite their divergent starting points, they have tended to encourage procedures which are often similar in practice. Both audio-lingualism and current communicative orthodoxy tend, for example, to downplay the importance of developing in the learner a conscious understanding of the form-meaning relationship in favour of an unconscious (i.e. unreflective) memorization of context-related phrases.[20]

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1.3   COGNITIVE MODELS.

As indicated, behaviourist and mentalist views of language acquisition are mono-dimensional in that they seek to reduce a complex process to either repetitive imitation or maturational growth. What is common to both is the idea that this process is largely discrete and that intervening variables can, at most, exert only a secondary influence in terms of delaying or accelerating it. In exactly the same way as behaviourism proved to be inadequate in explaining such factors as linguistic creativity, however, so the nativist hypothesis was soon to be criticized by writers such as Bruner (1978:43) as "plainly insufficient." As the latter was to argue, there may be no need to posit the existence of a Language Acquisition Device (LAD) since language acquisition must be "... enormously aided by the child's pre-linguistic grasp of concepts and meanings that make it easier for him to penetrate grammatical rules."(ibid.43).[21]

Bruner's point is an important one in that it seeks to root language acquisition in the child's pre-linguistic cognitive development. The same point was to be made by Cromer (1979:102), among others, who, when advancing what may be called the 'cognitive hypothesis', argued that "... both the pace of acquisition and the types of linguistic forms and even lexical items which are used by the child are constrained by the cognitive processes which determine what the child is capable of understanding". As Cromer (1974:222-224) was to suggest, as an illustration, children do not master the English perfect tense until they have gained the ability to understand and internalize the underlying concept of 'present relevance' so that, he concluded, (1988:228) "particular aspects of language acquisition depended on prior cognitive development". The cognitive hypothesis represents an important advance over earlier models in that it at least poses language acquisition/learning as a dynamic process - developmental (rather than static) - which cannot be separated from the child's evolving cognitive structures. In particular, to the

extent that they seek to relate language development to a prior degree of cognitive growth, such models can be helpful in explaining the different reaction among learners to new linguistic demands placed upon them, particularly those related to second and foreign language learning.

1.3.1   Language in the Piagetian model

The dependency of language upon cognition finds its clearest expression in Piaget's model of the incremental development of the child's intellectual growth and in research carried out within this framework. Piaget strongly opposes Chomsky's view of an innate acquisition device[22] and, as Harris (1982:31) points out, proposes the development of thought as the commanding element in language development. Two well-known main themes underpin Piaget's model: the *constructive* adaptation of the child to the environment and the *developmental* aspect of the resulting intellectual growth.

For Piaget, "all behaviour is adaptive"[23] and central to his theory of adaptation is the notion of 'equilibration', that is, the ongoing attempts by the child to regulate his own behaviour in relation to the environment. Equilibration, he argues, is achieved through trial and error, through a complex alternation of 'assimilation' of new experience and 'accommodation'[24], the modification of existing behaviour in the light of this experience to better fit environmental constraints. Such incremental development incorporates the assumption that once a child has reached a certain level, as Skinner (1985: 373) points out, he never returns to a "previous level of equilibration". During this process of control of -- through adaptation to -- the environment, the child's intellectual faculties develop. It is interesting to note, in terms of Piaget's model, that cognitive development emerges as an ever more sophisticated and nuanced way of regulating behaviour in relation to the environment. As Boden (1982:9) puts it:

"...the failure of the system in its earlier form to make appropriate (assimilatory and/or accommodatory) adjustments initiates a self-development such that in its later form its powers are adequate to meet new situational demands."

Initially, the 'schemas' that are internalized as a result of the child's interaction with the environment are what Hawkins (1981:178) refers to as "structures of activity/ thought" but they become increasingly more complex and abstract as the child moves from the sensori-motor period, via the pre-operational and the logico-deductive, to the hypothetico-deductive period. Greater decentration in action is accompanied by a similar process in thought evolution, and the child's initial egocentricity -- resulting from, Hickmann (1986:26) remarks, "his lack of decentering"[25] -- gradually gives way to a greater objectivity in thought and action. The child learns to generalize, systematize and conceptualize at higher levels of abstraction and so to operate in more decontextualized settings which are less linked to the 'here and now' and to his personal relationships. Only in the final stage of 'formal operations', i.e. at about the age of 11, can the child manipulate abstract concepts with reasonable ease.

For Piaget, the role of language in this process is quite precise. As a "system of representation like any other", as Walkerdine and Sinha (1978:153) put it, it only emerges at a given stage when thought processes have been engaged through action. In other words, as Cromer (1988:229) confirms, "nonlinguistic representation is a precursor of representational language" and the latter follows and reflects, rather than influences, the cognitive development and logical structures of the child:

> "Bref, le *langage* est subordonné à la *pensée*, c'est-à-dire à l'*intelligence intériorisée*, s'appuyant non plus sur l'action directe, mais sur l'évocation symbolique." (Legendre-Bergeron 1980:127).

What is important about this view is the implication it has for language acquisition in general. If language is viewed as stemming from the given cognitive processes of the child,

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then the gradual decontextualization of speech, the ability for example, Hickmann (1986:17) points out, "to speak of displaced entities, events and relations among them which are not part of the here-and-now and/or to take into account the perspectives of their listeners", is dependent upon a prior cognitive decentering. Language develops from 'egocentric' to socialized speech, including the ability to think logically, as a result of a process of decentration from concrete situations.

The view of language as stemming from, and reflecting, a maturational process of cognitive development has important implications for the child's mastery of new language skills, particularly in a school context. The ability of the child to master literacy skill development, that is, his ability to handle disembedded language or language that has become its own context, depends very much upon the whether or not he has reached the stage of 'disembedded' thinking. Morever, since Piaget tends to see cognitive development as a maturational process which can only marginally be affected by social factors, there would be no point in seeking to provide the child with activities -- such as reading or writing -- for which he is not cognitively ready. As Legendre-Bergeron (1980:33) was to put it:

"Les *opérations* de l'*intelligence* ne s'apprennent pas, elles se construisent".[26]

It is the maturational process of cognitive growth that provides the child with the ability to manipulate and control his language at an ever greater level of abstraction in a decontextualized context.

While Piaget's model of child development has been criticized as being too abstract and "obscure" (Boden 1982:11), its merit lies in its insight into the relation between language and thought. The flexibility of a developmental model in which thought passes through certain stages, and lays the foundation at each stage for developments in the use of

language from context-embedded to context-reduced situations, is much more sophisticated than either behaviourist or nativist alternatives. If it has a weakness, it is, as Donaldson (1978) points out, in its tendency to see the cognitive -- and therefore linguistic -- development of the child as being maturational in nature and relatively independent of social factors. As Walkerdine and Sinha (1978:152) remark, Piaget's 'dialectic' "maximizes the macro (or bio-physical) features of the environment while minimizing the micro (or culturally-determined ones)".[27] For Donaldson, this tends to simplify the relationship between language and thought which is seen as one-sided rather than reciprocal. As she points out (1978:89), the fact that parents can successfully help their children to deal with abstract thinking by talking about language to them -- making them more aware of its symbolic capacity -- shows the inter-relation of thought and language.

1.3.2   Context-embedded and context-reduced language

While Donaldson is critical of aspects of Piaget's model, however, she accepts -- and enlarges upon -- its developmental aspects particularly in relation to context-embedded and context-reduced use of language. The central point made by Donaldson is that the child's early use of the spoken word requires little cognitive effort compared with that needed in the use of the written word. As she argues, the oral word is embedded in a context in which there are many extra-linguistic clues which the child can use to access meaning -- from paralanguage (facial and bodily clues) to expectations based on a knowledge of the situation and/or the speaker-hearer relation. It is because of the richness of these contextual clues, she continues (1978:88), that the child "... does not interpret words in isolation -- he interprets situations". Hawkins (1981:51), Wells (1981: 243) and Romaine (1984) have drawn attention to this feature of early child language use, i.e. that his ability to make sense of what is said by use of extra-linguistic clues does not require him to

pay attention to the way language itself, as a symbolic system, encodes meaning. As Romaine (1984:172-173) puts it:

"In spontaneous speech speakers rely less heavily on syntax to articulate semantic relations between referents or propositions."

While the young child may rely heavily on contextual clues in 'making sense' of language, however, this process changes dramatically on entry to school. The young child at school is involved in a process of extending his linguistic repertoire, of developing new language skills (particularly reading and writing) where contextual clues are considerably reduced and where accessing meaning depends much more upon understanding and manipulating the symbolic system itself. As Romaine (1984:168) puts it, the young child at school must become aware that the "meaning is in the text and not in the context" or, as Cummins (1979:238) otherwise suggests, that "the written language is different from speech". He must, Cummins (1979:239) explains, learn to deal with the "ideational" function of language which "... specifies the semantic and logical relations between subject and predicate of a sentence", in other words, which stresses the importance of grammatical accuracy and precise linguistic formulation in exchanging meaning.[28]

Bruner (1975b:72) was to express this movement from context-embedded to context-reduced use of language as the move from communicative competence developed through every-day linguistic interaction to "analytic competence" based upon "metalinguistic" awareness. Bruner's description is valuable in that it focuses upon the change in cognition that is involved in this process. The success of the child in the education system, he suggests, depends upon his ability to abstract and decontextualize, to be able, as Donaldson (1978:139) puts it, to "... reason on the basis of verbal statements" without the support of contextual clues. This is because continued reliance on these clues, Skinner (1985:114) also argues, "... limits both cognitive functions and the language/learning

growth of the student". Bialystok's graph (figure 1),
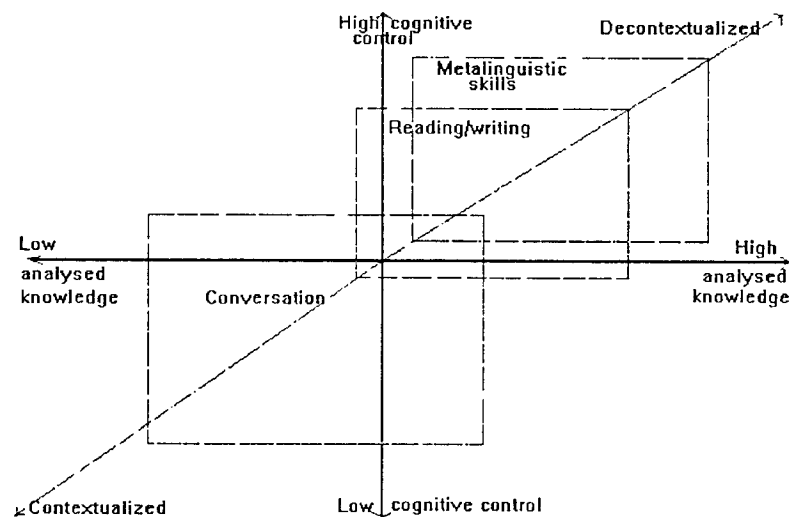
Figure 1: Bialystok & Ryan as adapted from Hamers & Blanc (1989:69).

to which Hamers and Blanc refer (1989:69), is a good illustration of the different cognitive

demands placed upon a child at school. In everyday conversation, the levels of analysis and

cognition needed are low and contextualization is high. In contrast, literacy skills require a

certain ability to decontextualize whilst metalinguistic skills figure at the highest point of

decontextualization where most academic skills reside.

It should be noted that the transition from spontaneous spoken to analytic written

language is neither easy nor fast and, as Donaldson (1978:123) suggests, it "... does not

happen spontaneously". Children have to be helped to make the transition since, as Hamers

and Blanc (1989:66) stress, "the mere mastery of a language for everyday communication is

not sufficient to guarantee that it will be used in the organization of knowledge".

1.3.3 Relation of first and second language

The difference between context-embedded and context-reduced uses of language

has featured prominently in the work of Cummins (1986b:153) who usefully differentiates between them as follows:

> "In general, context-embedded communication derives from interpersonal involvement in a shared reality which obviates the need for explicit linguistic elaboration of the message. Context-reduced communication, on the other hand, derives from the fact that this shared reality cannot be assumed, and thus linguistic messages must be elaborated precisely and explicitly so that the risk of misinterpretation is minimized".

Such a definition mirrors the earlier distinction in the work of Donaldson between oral and written language, the latter being more explicit and cognitively demanding. His representation of cognition along a continuum (figure 2) clearly indicates the increasing level of cognitive skills required as the child progresses through school. The skills the child has to master range from basic to highly analytic literacy skills where advanced texts are to be processed by the older student in tasks where, as Cummins (ibid.:154) puts it, "the communicative tools have not become automatized".
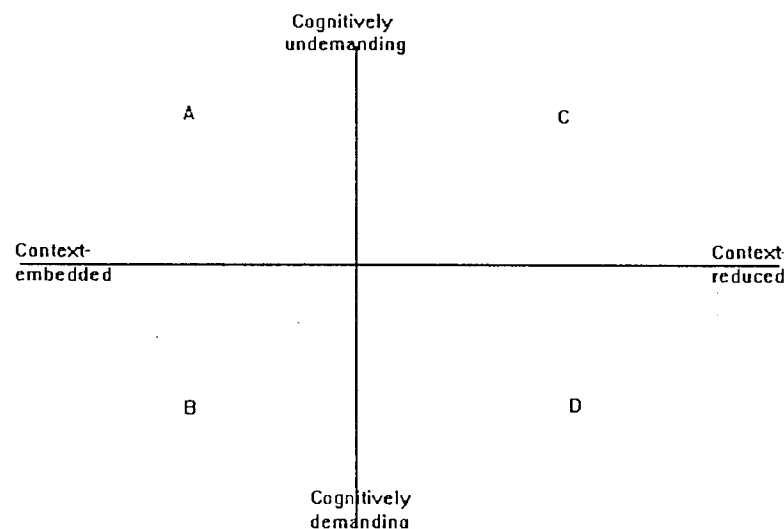
Figure 2: as adapted from Cummins (1986b:153).

What is interesting about Cummins' work is not simply that, like Donaldson, he sees

language development as a continuum but that he extends this process from the L1 to the L2 context[29], in particular in relation to his analysis of immigrants' poor academic attainments in the United States.

1.3.3.1 Surface fluency and academic proficiency.

In the light of the evidence in the U.S.A., Cummins argues for the need to make a distinction between two types of language proficiency, surface fluency and academic proficiency. The former he refers to as the basic inter-personal communicative skills (BICS), and the latter as the cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) i.e. when linguistic demands require a high level of cognitive development.

Cummins (1984a:4) criticizes the view in the USA, that students who had "attained apparently fluent English face-to-face communicative skills" were considered "capable of surviving in an all-English classroom". On the contrary, he points out, the surface fluency in L2 of immigrants is often just a 'linguistic facade' (Cummins 1979:231) and, more often than not, they are unable to deal with formal demands in the L2 for the very reason that they lack the appropriate level of cognitive competence required to deal with the more abstract and disembedded language of a context-reduced academic setting. Such cognitive skills, Cummins argues, can only be developed through L1 and it is only on this basis that immigrants can be expected to cope with cognitively demanding tasks in L2. This is because, as Hamers and Blanc (1982:36) put it, some aspects and functions of language acquired in L1 can be transferred to the same aspects and functions of language needed when acquiring L2. A sound level of cognitive skills in L1 is all the more important in handling context-reduced language in the L2 where cross-lingual transfers are essential. This view, i.e. that a certain level of cognitive development is needed in L1 if the learner is to operate effectively in a more academic L2 context, underpins Cummins' 'Common

Underlying Proficiency Theory'. It can be summed up in his view (1979:233) that "... the initially high level of L1 development makes possible the development of similar levels of competence in L2".

Skinner (1985:380) negatively endorses this approach when he suggests that:

> "...the lower the proficiency in L1--the greater the reliance on surface features as a means for communication-- the less potential there is for transfer".

He graphically shows the outcome when a child is confronted with academic requirements in his L2 well above his level of cognitive development and 'contextual freedom'. A 'cognitive gap' is created which places the learner in "a 'no-win' situation where academic failure is the inevitable result" (ibid.378). This is exactly what happens, he and Cummins maintain, to immigrants placed in classes with L2 native speakers whose literacy skills and cognitive level are already sufficiently developed for them to deal with decontextualized, academic language (Cf figure 3).
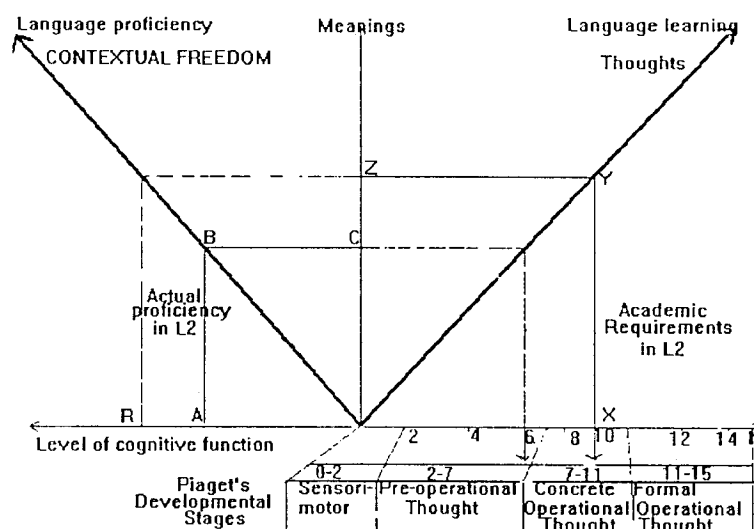
Figure 3: as adapted from Skinner (1985:379).

The line C, Z represents "the deficiency gap in language proficiency" (ibid.:378) of a child who has a level of cognitive function at point A but who is expected to cope with

academic requirements which assume a concept development level at point Y. To be able

to cope with high academic requirements in L2, the child must have acquired a

correspondingly high level of 'contextual freedom' in L1, enabling him to transfer to L2 the

cognitive skills needed to deal with decontextualized tasks.

Cummins's work is of particular interest because he extends the relation between

cognition and language into the L2 context. His central argument is that successful and

effective acquisition of L2, particularly in terms of context-reduced academic skills,

depends upon the level of cognition built up through L1. In other words, a L2 learner can

be expected to reach a high level of proficiency in his second language only if a high

cognitive level has been reached in L1 first -- a view fully supported by Swain (1986a:101)

who invokes the principle of "first things first". Cummins' model could be represented as in

figure 4:
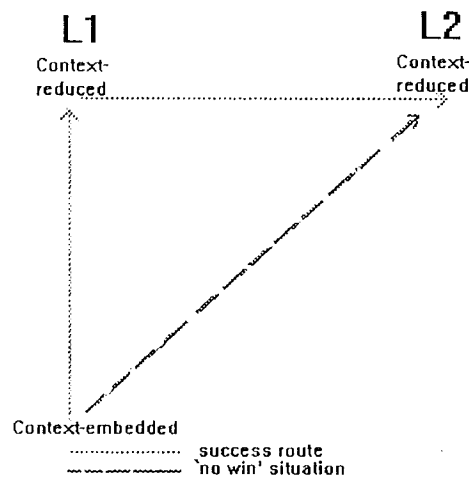
Figure 4: academic success in L2 possible only if cognitive skills are developed through L1 first

As a corollary of this, any intensive exposure to L2 before an adequate level of cognitive

development is attained in L1 can actually have, Cummins (1979:233) claims, adverse

effects:

"...for children whose L1 skills are less well developed in certain respects, intensive exposure to L2 in the initial grades is likely to impede the continued development of L1. This will, in turn, exert a limiting effect on the development of L2."

Cummins proposes that a first threshold, at the minimum level of cognitive development relative to basic literacy skills, must be attained in L1 before L2 can be introduced academically. Below such level, negative cognitive effects resulting in semi-bilingualism, as it occurred in the USA, are to be expected.[30]

1.3.3.2 Empirical evidence

Cummins draws upon empirical evidence from a wide range of sources to back up his assertion that the development of cognitive skills in L1 is essential for attaining academic proficiency in L2. These include:

(a) successful programmes in an L2 environment where initial instruction through L1, and the continued use of L1 at home, does not have a detrimental effect on L2. One useful example of this is the Bradford Punjabi mother tongue project where, as Cummins and Swain report (1986:85) there were "... no detrimental consequences for English language development as a result of using L1 as an initial medium of instruction". Another is the situation in San Francisco where, they suggest, ".. the more exposure to and emphasis on Chinese outside the home (e.g. closeness of home to Chinatown, attendance at Chinese school), the better students performed on the English WISC". (ibid.:94) Cummins's assertion (1979:246) that "...time spent through the medium of L1 appears to have no detrimental effects on the development of L2 skills" is backed up, interestingly enough, by Hamers and Blanc (1989:207) who, referring to the 1976 Franco-Manitoban experiment[31], point out that:

"... those who had 20% English and 80% French schooling were as good in English and had superior results in French skills than those children who received 80% of their instruction in English and 20% in French."

By contrast, Hamers and Blanc continue, Navajo children in the ESL program were "two years behind the American norms for reading skills in English at the end of Grade 6, despite an extensive teaching program of ESL". (ibid.:207)[32] The latter case shows, as Cummins (1979:236) suggested, that "a loss in L1 did not result in any gains in L2 despite the increased interaction through L2" whereas the former demonstrates the benefits, for L1, of promoting L1 (French) "at no cost to achievement in L2", (English).

(b) the age of arrival of immigrants where, Cummins points out (1984a:3) "... older immigrant students (10-12 years old), whose academic proficiency (e.g. literacy skills) in L1 was well-established, developed L2 academic proficiency more rapidly than younger immigrant students". An example of this is the case of Finnish children who migrated to Sweden at the age of ten and who, Cummins (1979:234) adds, "maintained a level of Finnish close to Finnish students in Finland and achieved Swedish language skills comparable to those of Swedes". Those whose age of arrival was only 7 or 8, however, experienced a number of difficulties, thereby suggesting that younger children, placed in an L2 medium of instruction, lack the necessary cognitive skills in L1 to enable them, through cross-lingual transfers, to cope with L2 at an academic level. In other words, as Hamers and Blanc (1989:51) put it, "competence in the mother tongue had to be sufficiently established before the child could successfully acquire a second language".

Based on the evidence in (a) and (b) above, the case for L1 mastery as a pre-requisite for successfully dealing with academic tasks in an L2 would appear overwhelming. L1 mastery first makes even more sense when, as Hamers and Blanc (1982:32) point out, it is remembered that academic skills cannot be developed adequately through a language not

yet mastered to a minimal extent at the informal level:

> "...whereas there is some evidence that the communicative functions of language can develop without a full development of the cognitive functions, there is no known evidence that cognitive functions of language can develop in the absence of the communicative function. Whenever the communicative function is for some reason prevented from developing, then no language function will be able to develop."

In L1, such criteria are generally fulfilled, thus setting the framework for a progressive de-contextualization in the use of that language. In L2 however, as Cummins suggests (1979:238) for many immigrants "it appears likely that the semantic prerequisites for literacy skills can be developed more easily through L1 than through L2". Cummins therefore strongly criticizes the situation of immigrants facing totally unrealistic demands at school in (a) a language they have not yet mastered fully at the informal level, and at (b) a level of cognition they have not even reached in their own language. He refutes (ibid.:223) any suggestion that 'academic retardation' should be attributed to 'linguistic mismatch *per se*' or to cognitive deficiency per se (ibid.:240).

To summarize, in an L2 environment, extensive exposure to L1 can help to develop skills in L1 and, through cross-lingual transfers, aid in the mastery of the L2 at an academic level. Conversely, greater exposure to L2 does not help L2 proficiency if L1 is not developed at a high level of cognition first and it can cause L1 to deteriorate through lack of 'maintenance'. This means, as Cummins (1979:232) puts it, that "in minority language situations a prerequisite for attaining a higher threshold level of bilingual competence is maintenance of L1 skills". In an L1 environment, however, where L1 is well-developed and where the question of L1 loss is not posed, "intensive exposure to L2 is likely to result in high levels of L2 competence at no cost to L1 competence".(ibid.:233) Even in such a context, however, Swain (1986a:104-105) reports that the scores on tests of French

language skills in Ontario by English-speaking pupils "remained below average until a marked improvement was noted in their English achievement scores" with considerable improvement thereafter. Such data tend to support the claim, by Swain (ibid.:105), of "the crucial role played by the first language in second language development".

1.3.4 Implications for foreign language learning

The main point argued by Cummins, within the framework of cognitive models of language acquisition, is that the ability of the learner to master decontextualized skills in the second language depends upon the level of cognition established through the first. This argument has been explored with even more urgency in relation to the even more context-reduced foreign language classroom by writers such as Hawkins.

Hawkins (1981) argues that foreign language learning within an L1 monolingual context involves the learner in a highly decontextualized process and the ability of the learner to make sense of this process depends, even more than in a SLA context, upon the cognitive skills --including metalinguistic awareness -- that they have built up through their L1. As he was to put it (1984:181):

> "... Learning to read is thus 'parasitic' upon 'awareness', that is, insight into the structure of the primary activity. In its turn, learning the foreign language under school conditions is also parasitic upon the learned skills of reading and writing and of matching sounds to symbols..."

Hawkins claims (1984:3) that the reason many children find foreign language learning difficult is that, quite simply, many "who begin French at 11 or older are ill-prepared and lack the essential learning tools". Such children, Doughty, Pearce and Thornton point out (1971:10), are often unable in their L1 to "handle the language which the processes of explicit analysis and impersonal comment require" and they thereby cannot transfer such skills to the foreign language classroom. Among the necessary 'learning tools' which

Hawkins (1984:36) sees as lacking in such pupils are good aural discrimination skills, "insight into patterns in language; confidence in disembedding phonological patterns; practice in matching written to spoken symbols; relish for what is new and strange in language". These are, of course, precisely the sort of skills which Skehan (1988:52) indicates as being "implicated in the decontextualized component of language aptitude tests". Insight into pattern has, as Hawkins (1984:4) himself notes, long "been shown to be a key element in aptitude for foreign language acquisition".

1.3.5 Conclusion

Cognitive models have undoubtedly provided a valuable contribution in explaining language acquisition/learning. Because they view the ability of the child to access new language skills as being related to, and dependent upon, a prior level of cognitive growth, they have a much greater capacity to explain differences within child language proficiency. In particular, in so far as the ability of the child to handle decontextualized language depends upon high cognitive skills achieved through their prior language experience, they help explain differences in achievement in L2. To access a second language, the learner requires a minimum of cognitive skills corresponding to the degree of decontextualization of the learning process which can vary across a spectrum of settings, from a non-instructed SLA to an instructed FL context. Clearly, however, the higher the level of cognition developed through L1, the greater the efficiency of the L2 acquisition/learning process in any of these contexts.

While cognitive models represent a step forward over behaviourist and nativist ones, however, they still tend to be over-simplistic in several respects. In particular, the fact that they are largely maturational in nature, that is, that they tend to see language development as following on set stages in cognitive growth, means that they underestimate

the importance of social factors in language acquisition/learning.

1.4 INTERACTIVE MODELS

Cognitive models of language acquisition/learning are valuable in that they explain children's use of language as a function of the different demands placed on them in a continuum of context-embedded to context-reduced settings. Piaget's model is somewhat rigid, however, as are those of others writing in his tradition,[33] in that language is seen as playing a quite subordinate role in this process, i.e. it reflects, rather than initiates, cognitive processes. As Walkerdine and Sinha (1978:153) observe, "... systems of representation do not for Piaget develop from the structures of *language* but from the structures of action", that is, from the schema internalized as a result of the child's ongoing interaction with his environment. Cognitively determinist views fail, in particular, to explain a number of aspects of language acquisition/learning, most notably the fact that children's linguistic competence often appears to be in advance of, rather than follow on from, their conceptual level.[34] As Cromer (1988:236) remarks:

> "... although the cognitive hypothesis may go some way in explaining why children in the course of language acquisition encode some concepts before others, it is certainly not sufficient on its own to describe the entire process of language acquisition."

In other words, cognitive models are oversimplistic as they can reduce language acquisition to its "cognitive underpinnings" (ibid.:245) or, as Romaine (1984:165) was to suggest, cognition may be a "pace-setter for the syntactic categories available to the learner" but this does not mean that "cognition and syntax/semantics are order-isomorphic".

It is probably due to the above limitations of cognitive models that growing attention has been paid in recent years to the role of the social context in language acquisition/learning. Newer 'interactional' models tend to be more comprehensive than

cognitive ones in that they view language development as a result of a complex inter-

relationship between context and cognition rather than as simply the result of the influence

of the latter. An example of such a model is that of the Russian psychologist Vygotsky

which, while sharing many features in common with that of Piaget, differs from the latter's

in several crucial respects.

1.4.1 Social roots of language

Vygotsky's view of language as a "social means of thought" has become

increasingly influential in recent years.[35] An examination of his model, in relation to that of

Piaget, should help to clarify the differences between the two and to promote a deeper

understanding of the acquisition/learning process. As indicated earlier, according to Piaget,

language acquisition tends to follow the gradual decentering of the child's cognitive

structures. This decentering allows the child to move from egocentric to social forms of

behaviour and from context-embedded to context-reduced uses of language, that is, to

language employed in dealing with, as Hickmann (1986:17) put it, "displaced entities,

events and relations". The basic difference between Piaget and Vygotsky occurs at precisely

this point since, for the latter, the relationship between language and thought is reversed.

Language is not seen as simply a function of cognitive growth but as a tool of social

interaction which, as it is internalized by the child, becomes a powerful stimulant in its own

right to his intellectual development. In other words, it is not thought that gives rise to

language but language to thought or, as Vygotsky (1986:36) argued, "... the true direction

of the development of thinking is not from the individual to the social but from the social to

the individual".

Vygotsky does not in any way deny the considerable contribution made by Piaget in

the area of the child's cognitive growth. Indeed, he agrees with his developmental approach

in so far as the child's ability to use language as an abstract, decontextualized system of signs (e.g. as in logical reasoning) is seen as the end point of a series of interim stages.[36] While agreeing with Piaget on the need to adopt a development approach, however, he sees the child's growing ability to decentre as stemming not from a purely maturational process, but from his internalization of "the social means of thought, that is, language"[37]. He therefore disagrees with Piaget in three main areas which are worth outlining since they have important implications for second language acquisition/learning: the relation between the social and individual, between language and thought and between the cultural and the biological.

1.4.1.1 The individual and the social.

The primary function of language, Vygotsky (1986:34) argues, is "communication, social contact" and it is acquired by young children as a function of social interaction. The young child acquires the language of his speech community via the "ready-made generalizations" (ibid.:123) that are implicit in adult speech but which have the potential of transforming language into "an instrument of individual thought" (ibid.:236). Much of Vygotsky's work is essentially an analysis of the process whereby what starts for the child as a communicative tool, a means of interacting with others and bestowing meaning on such interaction, gradually becomes an internal cognitive organizer.

This is not to suggest, of course, that the child can simply internalize the concepts implicit in language since, as Vygotsky stresses, "the adult cannot pass on to the child his way of thinking" (ibid.:120). In the early stages of child acquisition there are distinct "divergence(s) in meaning" between child and adult and it is only the "identity of referent" that allows a minimum of understanding to occur (ibid.:131). Nonetheless, it is during social interaction between child and adult that verbal meanings gradually become more

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elaborated and, as they are internalized by the child, become the basis of the latter's intellectual development. The role of egocentric speech plays an important role in the process and is explained by Vygotsky quite differently from Piaget. Whereas, for the latter, egocentric speech is seen as a reflection of the child's cognitive decentering, that is, a transitional stage from the individual to the social, for Vygotsky, it is seen as a transitional stage[38] "... from the social, collective activity of the child to his more individualized activity" (ibid.:228). In other words, egocentric speech is portrayed as a step forward from social speech towards 'inner speech', that is, towards conceptual thought whose development originates at the beginning of schooling and which is the basis of the child's more differentiated and individualized[39] use of language (both spoken and written). This difference between Piaget and Vygotsky in terms of this process can be seen in the following diagram.

```
Inner  ----- Egocentric  ---- Social
speech       speech           speech


Piaget ----------------------------->

<---------------------------- Vygotsky
```
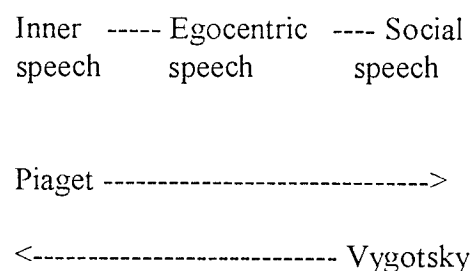
Figure 5: Language development as seen by Piaget and Vygotsky.

For Vygotsky, therefore, the development of language skills represents a process in which there is a shift from inter-personal activities to intra-personal (i.e. mental) activities. In the process of the internalization of inter-personal activities, the child learns both to express individual, rather than social, thought and to refine the tool (language) through which this thought is expressed.

1.4.1.2 Language and thought

As indicated above, the acquisition of language does not mean that the child simply internalizes the concepts embedded in adult speech. In the early stages, as Vygotsky stresses, language exists at a pre-intellectual level just as thought exists at a pre-verbal level, and it is only towards the age of two that the two interact and form the basis of verbal thought.[40] The process is hardly completed at this point, however, and the child has to pass through a complex series of stages before full concept formation is reached. What is important about this process is, once more in contradistinction to Piaget, the "decisive role" (ibid.:139) played by language (or, more precisely, the 'word') and its "guiding function in the formation of genuine concepts" (ibid.:145). It is, Vygotsky argues, only by the child beginning to understand the arbitrary and categorizing function of the word that he can begin to disembed his thinking, to "view the abstracted elements apart from the totality of the concrete experience in which they are embedded" (ibid.:135).

At first, Vygotsky suggests, the child sees a word simply as an attribute of things in such a way that it "... is a property rather than the symbol of an object" (ibid.:92). This is the cause of the over-generalization of word applications widely recorded in the literature in relation to early child language.[41] Gradually, however, as speech operates more as "a mediator in purposeful activity and in planning complex actions" (ibid.:39), he learns to disassociate the word from concrete objects and becomes more aware of it as an arbitrary sign referring to a class of objects. This has a number of important cognitive functions since it helps develop his powers of selective attention, improve long and short-term memory and categorize his experience.[42] Most important of all, however, the fact that the child becomes ever more aware of the symbolic power of words means that he is able to disembed his thinking from the 'here and now' and think in conceptual terms. As Vygotsky (ibid.:107) was to put it, "...real concepts are impossible without words, and thinking in concepts does

not exist without verbal thinking".

It is through language, therefore, that the thought process of the child develops because the word is a means of "...focusing one's attention, selecting distinctive features and analyzing and synthesizing them" (ibid.:106). Word meanings, which are initially linked to the personal needs of the child in the 'here and now', evolve through primitive and complex generalizations to reach genuine abstract thought divorced from concrete experience. In the ever more complex inter-relation between language and thought[43], language itself initiates the process which leads to concept formation, and it is the ability of the child to reflect back upon language[44] -- to use it ever more consciously and deliberately to carry out his intentions -- that enables him to operate effectively in more context-reduced settings.

1.4.1.3 Biological and cultural

For Vygotsky, the fact that the child's cognitive growth is rooted in linguistic interaction means that, as Hickmann (1986:12 & 14) points out, it is a socio-cultural rather than biological process. Indeed, one of the main criticisms levelled by Vygotsky (op.cit.:175) against Piaget was the biological determinism of his viewpoint, i.e. that "... learning depends on development, but the course of development is not affected by learning". On the contrary, he was to argue, the fact that the origins and stimulus of our intellectual growth are social means that, even if there are points when instruction is more 'fruitful' (ibid.:189) than at others, "... by and large, instruction precedes development". (ibid.:185)

The role of instruction plays an important point in Vygotsky's thinking and its relation with development can be seen most clearly in the distinction he draws between spontaneous concepts, i.e. those embedded in the child's everyday personal experience, and scientific concepts, i.e. those of a more decontextualized and abstract nature. In order to

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access the latter, he argues, a certain degree of development in the former is required:

"The development of a spontaneous concept must have reached a certain level for the child to be able to absorb a related scientific concept. For example, historical concepts can begin to develop only when the child's everyday concept of the past is sufficiently differentiated" (ibid.:194).

Children, in other words, need to possess a minimum conceptual basis in order to access a scientific concept since, otherwise, they "would have nothing to systematize" (ibid.:172). To illustrate the point, Vygotsky provides evidence regarding children's ability to complete sentences using the conjunctions 'because' or 'although'. A child of eight who can correctly use 'because' in spontaneous speech can successfully learn to use it in more academic (i.e. conscious and deliberate) discourse whereas results with 'although', he claims, are quite different: because the same child cannot deal with 'although' in spontaneous speech, on account of the fact that "adversative relations appear later than causal relations in the child's spontaneous thinking" (ibid.:191), he cannot transfer it to his scientific thinking.[45] While scientific concepts are dependent on a certain level of development in spontaneous concepts, however, the process is by no means one way. On the contrary, as Vygotsky stresses, the former play an equally crucial role in that they allow the child to become more conscious of what was unconsciously acquired and, thereby, to bring it under greater control. An example he gives of this is the relation between spoken and written language in the mother tongue or that between first and foreign language at school. To succeed in what Hawkins (1984:181) termed the 'parasitic' language skills (i.e. reading/writing and foreign language study), the child needs to have developed, Vygotsky argues (op.cit.:195), a "certain degree of maturity" in the L1. If this maturity allows him to access more easily the decontextualized linguistic skills required in a school environment, the latter in turn allow the child to reconsider his spoken use of the language, to situate it within a wider and more systematic understanding of the structure and function of language and to use it more

deliberately and with greater precision.[46]

For Vygotsky, the central task of instruction is to develop in the child greater metacognitive and metalinguistic skills, to make him "... conscious of his own mental processes" and to enable him to control them more efficiently. (ibid.:171) Admittedly, such control cannot be applied to a conceptual or linguistic vacuum since "In order to subject a function to intellectual and volitional control we must first possess it". (ibid.:168) If spontaneous concepts are an important starting point, however, it is their inter-relation with scientific concepts which is crucial to the child's overall cognitive growth. Indeed, for the higher mental processes, only the assistance of formal education can develop the ability in the child to deal with more demanding academic skills where extra-linguistic clues to meaning do not exist and language becomes its own context.

1.4.2   Cognitive and Affective Implications

As indicated, Vygotsky does not disagree with Piaget that the child is involved in a process of language use which moves from the context-embedded to the context-reduced and which requires a corresponding ability to extract meaning from linguistic form rather than from the extra-linguistic features of a given setting. Where Vygotsky disagrees with Piaget is in the idea that this process is a maturational one rather than one which will depend upon the "sociocultural experience of the child" (ibid.:94) and which can, thereby, lead to quite differentiated results. Indeed, the fact that Vygotsky (ibid.:189) sees this process as socio-cultural in nature has two important implications for the child's development. It can influence:

(a) the forms of language to which he is exposed and, as a result, his ability to handle the increasingly decontextualized uses of language in an academic setting; and

(b) the valorization accorded to various forms of language and, as a result, his attitude towards the increasingly academic use of language at school, including the development of reading/writing skills and second/foreign language acquisition and learning. Both points will be explored in more detail since they create a much richer framework within which second/foreign language acquisition and learning can be understood.

1.4.2.1 Cognitive factors

Language, for Vygotsky, is rooted in social inter-action and thought is promoted "not from within but from without, by the social milieu". (ibid.:108) As a result, any given child's development will depend uniquely upon the linguistic experience to which he has been subjected and Vygotsky is highly critical of Piaget for generalizing from the experience of a particular group of children in Geneva since, he points out, the conclusions drawn are "valid only for the social milieu in which his subjects live" (ibid.:56). As he was to stress, the ability of the child to develop at maximum potential depends upon the correct degree of linguistic stimulation:

> *"If the milieu presents no such tasks to the adolescent, makes no new demands on him, and does not stimulate his intellect by providing a sequence of new goals, his thinking fails to reach the highest stages, or reaches them with great delay."* *(ibid.:108).*

Conceptual thought depends upon mastery of the appropriate linguistic skills but they, in turn, depend upon the kind of conceptual and linguistic stimulation the child is exposed to. In other words, as Romaine (1984:260) points out, we have to recognize "... the variable aspects of linguistic development which are socially and culturally conditioned". The significance of such "qualitative differences in children's language skills", to which Romaine refers (ibid.:260), is indeed highlighted by Donaldson when analyzing the difficulties many children have with development of literacy skills. As Donaldson (1978:91) points out, the

fact that some parents talk to children "*about*", as well as "*with*", language helps them to disembed their thinking and prepares them for the linguistic demands placed upon them by reading and writing. Since the latter skills are crucial for accessing the wider curriculum, these children thereby start school with an "enormous initial advantage". (ibid.:89)

Donaldson's view that children's prior linguistic experience equips them differentially for context-reduced school tasks received a more overt, and controversial formulation, of course, in Bernstein's earlier writings[47] on class and linguistic codes. As Wardhaugh (1986:318-320) points out, Bernstein's central argument was that the child internalizes, through social interaction, the values of his given speech community and that these may, or may not, correspond to those valorized at school. The important aspect of Bernstein's model was the way in which it sought to use linguistic usage to explain class-related academic success rates. Middle-class children's academic success was described as due to the possession of an 'elaborated code' which stems from the fact that their parents were "more likely to encourage verbal interaction" (ibid.:320) and favour the use of "explicit rather than implicit definitions". (ibid.:318) Working-class children's poorer rate of success was, on the other hand, explained as due mainly to the possession of a 'restricted' code, which depends more upon the implicit meaning of shared experience and which thereby "limits the intellectual horizons of its speakers". (ibid.:320)

Whereas Bernstein's views have been subject to considerable criticism[48], as Wells (1986:139/140 & 144/145) argues, it would seem to be the case that children's socio-cultural background does prepare then differentially to cope with the increasingly decontextualized use of language at school[49]. This has important implications, whether it be in learning to read and write at one end of the spectrum or -- at the other end -- learning a foreign language which, as Vygotsky (op.cit.:195) put it, is "conscious and deliberate from the start". Hawkins (1984) and Skehan (1988) have tended to confirm this suggestion that

there does seem to be a correlation between problems encountered in learning to read/write in the mother tongue and those encountered in learning a second/foreign language which pivot around an inability to recognize that meaning is encoded in linguistic form and not in the extra-linguistic clues of the context.

1.4.2.2 Affective factors

As Wardhaugh (op.cit.:321) and Wells (1986:144) argue, the fact that the child acquires a given linguistic experience in his speech community has not only a cognitive but an affective dimension. That experience may, or may not, equip him to deal with the decontextualized use of language required in an academic context. Equally important, however, it may determine his attitude towards such new functional uses and help to define his motivation in learning them depending on the degree of valorization they are seen to possess. As Hamers and Blanc (1982:33) suggest:

> "For the child to develop overall language competence he must valorise language, i.e. attribute a certain positive value to language as a functional tool, that is, as an instrument which will facilitate the fulfilment of social and cognition functioning".

The willingness of the child to accept new language functions at school -- the transfer, for example, from non-standard to standard or from spoken to written forms -- will depend essentially upon whether or not the new function is "valorised first in his community and then by the child himself." (ibid.:35) Only then, through the potential success that emerges through use, will valorization be maintained and continued.

Considerable research has been undertaken into the status and role of literacy skills in relation to given social groupings, particularly by writers such as Cook-Gumperz (1972, 1986), but the question of valorization emerges most clearly in relation to second language development in an untutored or tutored context. This has been most consistently explored

in the work of Lambert (and later Gardner and Lambert) who sought to show, as early as his 1967 study of French-American adolescents, that it is "... the learner's ethnocentric tendencies and his attitudes towards the other group (which) are believed to determine his success in learning the new language" (Lambert 1967:102). For Lambert, of course, social valorization of the L2 was reflected in the learners' motivation patterns which he divided into 'integrative' and 'instrumental'. Considerable debate has occurred as to which of these two motivation patterns correlates most closely with performance rates, Lambert (ibid.:103) tending to favour integrative patterns and his co-researcher Gardner (1985:55) tending to argue that "... instrumentally oriented individuals will demonstrate high levels of motivation" and, thereby, correspondingly high performance rates. While there may be differences on this issue[50], however, what emerges clearly through the work of Gardner and Lambert is the understanding that success in L2 is dependent to some degree on attitudinal and motivational factors developed through L1 and that, as Hamers and Blanc (1989:235) point out, the latter are the "second most important set of variables for predicting achievement in L2 after aptitude".

Lambert's socio-cultural model is richer than that of Cummins in that it seeks to explain successful L2 acquisition as the function of affective as well as cognitive variables. What is most interesting about the model, however, is the extent to which this valorization of the L1 is seen as being as important as that of the L2 in developing L2 proficiency. Lambert (1967:108) had already made this point in his early study of French-American adolescents when suggesting that those who were most successful as L2 learners were those who expressed an "... open-minded, non-ethnocentric view of people in general"[51]. The reason for this is self-evident and has been stated most cogently, perhaps, by Hamers and Blanc (1989:79 & 127): success in an L2 may require the transfer of cognitive skills from L1 but the learner's ability to develop these skills depends, in turn, upon his

valorization of the L1. If, they continue, the learner's L1 is not valorized in comparison with

a prestigious L2, and if the learner is demotivated from developing skills through it that he

can transfer to the L2, he may find himself in an impossible situation when placed alongside

native speakers of the L2 with already developed cognitive skills. Not only will this

undermine his use of L2 as a "cognitive tool" (ibid.1982:45) but can create severe problems

of anomie:

> *"If the child's twofold cultural heritage is not valorized, he may either align his identity on one culture at the expense of the other or he may refuse to align himself on either culture, in which case he is likely to develop anomie".*
> *(ibid.:1989:122-123)*

Such is the case, of course, of the young immigrants in the USA analyzed by Cummins as

well as those in Lambert's earlier study. Lambert (op.cit.:108) reported that those who

expressed a "definite preference" for American over French culture were "more proficient

in English" and vice versa for those who identified more with French culture[52]. Those

unable to resolve the "conflict of cultural allegiances", however, were "retarded in their

command of both languages when compared to the other groups", that is, they were most

likely to experience fear of assimilation or loss of identity and feelings of "social uncertainty

or dissatisfaction" (ibid.:102).

The "adverse sociocultural and educational context" described by Hamers & Blanc

(1989:82) in the above contexts can be extended. A similar situation existed, for example,

in Wales where the devalorization of the Welsh language (L1) and the exclusive use of

English (L2) as "the sole medium of instruction in Welsh schools" led, as Dodson suggests

(1985:342), to the gradual extinction of the former with poor mastery in the latter. Such

cases are referred to by Hamers and Blanc (1989:80) as those of 'subtractive' bilingualism,

that is, those where devalorization of the L1 mean that cognitive skills are not built up

through it for easy transfer to the L2 and/or where skills developed through the L2 are not

transferred back to the L1. Hamers and Blanc contrast such a syndrome with that of 'additive' bilingualism where both L1 and L2 are valorized so that the cognitive skills acquired through L1 may be transferred to the L2 or so that skills acquired through the L2 may be transferred to the L1 because the latter is still valorized. The relations between affective and cognitive factors are outlined in the following diagram in which one extreme (additive bilingualism) represents a state where both languages are valorized and encourage cognitive growth and another (subtractive bilingualism) represents a state where the L1 is not valorized and which undermines cognitive growth.

High valorization   Additive

III
[- +]   I
                         [+ +]

Low   High
cognitive   cognitive
functioning   functioning

IV   II
[- -]   [+ -]

Subtractive   Low valorization
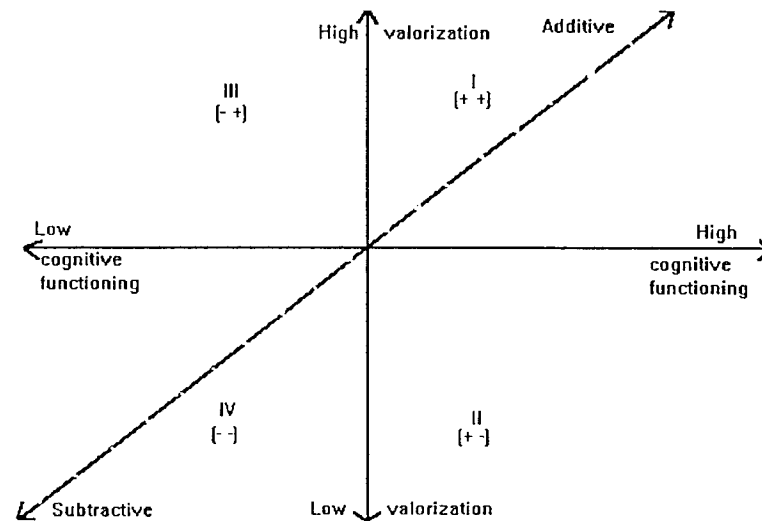
Figure 6: Hamers & Blanc as adapted from (Hamers & Blanc 1989:81).

Socio-cultural models of L2 acquisition/learning have, of course, been developed further in Schumann's 'acculturation' model and Giles and Byrne's 'intergroup' model, both of which focus particularly on situations where one language is deemed to have lower status than the other. It might be pointed out, however, that while these would seem to confirm the argument of Hamers and Blanc, they do not always pose uniform results.[53]

1.4.3 Summary

Interactive models are more complex than earlier cognitive ones in that they show that language does not, as Bowerman (1988:44) suggests, "(map) onto meanings that are formulated independently of language". On the contrary, far from being "a mere *reflector* of a level of cognitive development", as Walkerdine and Sinha (1978:171) point out, "... it becomes part of the process of cognitive development itself". It is through language that children develop the tools of verbal thought and, since such thought is socio-cultural in nature, a set of values which can play an important role in determining attitudes towards, and motivation to learn, other language functions.

1.5   CONCLUSION

In this first chapter, we have sought to review the main models accounting for language acquisition and learning. Early behaviourist or nativist models, it was maintained, are over-simplistic in that they seek to explain language development in non-developmental terms as either a process of imitation or maturational growth. Precisely because they downplay the range of variables involved, they tend to facilitate a process whereby findings from L1 were simply transferred to L2 with little, or no, recognition of the socio-cognitive differences involved.

Cognitive models of language development are more sophisticated in that they accept a developmental view of language acquisition in which the ability to handle new, decontextualized uses of language -- whether this be the development of literacy skills or learning a foreign language -- depend upon the stage of cognitive growth reached by the child. While these models help to explain the child's ability to develop new linguistic skills as a function of his cognitive growth, however, this process is portrayed very much as a maturational one in which language plays an entirely passive role. As Skehan (1988:51) has

pointed out, therefore, these models are not necessarily more helpful than earlier ones in explaining performance variables among learners in the course of extending their linguistic repertoire and developing new language skills. Perhaps the main value of interactional models is that they offer a framework in which such variables are explicable.

The main feature of interactional models, such as that of Vygotsky, is the central role they give to language in the child's development. It is by internalizing the language of his speech community, he argues, that the child develops both cognitively (i.e. in terms of concepts) and affectively (in terms of values). It is precisely because language is seen as having a dynamic role in the child's development, of helping to develop in him conceptual thought and socio-psychological attitudes, that differences in the type of language to which he has been exposed is bound to produce differential results in terms of the child's linguistic development. In particular, the ability of the child to handle new, decontextualized uses of language will depend not only upon the level of 'verbal thought' that has been built up but upon the extent to which he valorizes the new language functions in terms of their relevance to his social grouping. Such a model therefore is developmental but, at the same time, has an advantage over the Piagetian one in that it is better able to explain differences in the context of learning and differences between the learners themselves.

Notes (chapter one)

1. Bruner (1975a:2).

2. Cf also Walkerdine & Sinha (1978:172) and Vygosky (1986)

3. Cf Ellis (1985:20-21) and Cromer (1974:190) with reference to Watson and his behaviourist views. For more details on W. Stern see Vygotsky (1986:58-67) who criticizes him for his 'personalistic' view : "Stern greatly overrated the role of the internal organismic factors." (ibid.:67).

4. Cf Ellis (ibid.:47) and Larsen-Freeman & Long (1991:60 & 74) for the various definitions and greater details on interlanguage usually referred to as the various stages of the learning process.

5. Larsen-Freeman & Long (ibid.:52) note in particular the influence of the contrastive analysis methods between the 1940s and 1960s.

6. Cf Lado (1964:67-68 & 95).

7. Cf McLaughlin (1987:134-135).

8. Cf Stevick (1976:25/26 & 38/39) and Belyayev (1963:189/190) who emphasize the vital role played by the active and independent reproduction and production of language. See also Dodson's studies (1967:31-33) in relation to differences in memory retention between children and adults.

9. Lado (op.cit.:52, 55, 95 & 105)

10. Hawkins (1981:79) comments: "In fact the problem turned out to be more complex than the early enthusiasts suspected. What exactly was to be compared? ..."

11. For further details on errors see Littlewood (1984:22-36), Baetens-Beardsmore (1986:122), Ellis (op.cit. 24-29), Mougeon et Al. (1978:53), Larsen-Freeman & Long (1991).

12. See Lyons (1970:84) with regards to Chomsky's criticisms of Behaviourism.

13. Lyons (op.cit.:97-98) notes that Chomsky, unlike the Empiricists, views language and mind as 'undetermined (though not necessarily unaffected) by external stimuli in the environment.'

14. Chomsky (1979:63).

15. Cf also McLaughlin (1987:31 & 32).

16. Wardhaugh (1986:5 & 241).

17. Cf similar criticisms by Hawkins (1984:67 & 69) and Romaine (1984:90). Morton (1971:5) dismisses the mentalist view more cogently by arguing that the "claims that language is innate in man seem to be based on a few facts, a number of suppositions and a great deal of faith".

18. Cf McLaughlin (1987) for a more detailed critical analysis on Krashen and the 'Natural Approach'. The limitations on time and the need for a more conscious approach to learning in an L2 context will be further discussed in chapter 2.

19. Whereas Behaviourists favour the intensive use of mechanical drills selected and controlled by teachers, Mentalists such as Dulay and Burt (1973:257) clearly recommend that "we should leave the learning to the children and redirect our teaching effort to other aspects of language".

20. The communicative approach is, in the final analysis, no more communicative than audio-lingual methods for the very reason that it relies too much on repetitive drills, however "authentic" and/or "meaningful" they may claim to be. Cf Widdowson (1990:117-125 & 157-161) and his criticism of the communicative approach on similar lines.

21. Cf also Bruner (1966:37) & (1975b:83).

22. Cf Piaget/Chomsky' confrontation in Harris (1982:31).

23. See notes in Vygotsky (1986:262).

24. Cf Hickmann (1986:12).

25. Cf also Rommetveit (1978:124).

26. Donaldson (1978:145) also notes that for Piaget learning is 'subordinate' to development . See also Vygotsky (op.cit. 206-207) with regards to Piaget's view of instruction as conflicting with the child's own thinking.

27. Cf also Hickmann (op.cit.:17 & 18).

28. Cf also Wells (1981:252).

29. Cf Wald (1984:65) who objected that the order of acquisition or of difficulty cannot be assumed to be the same in L2 and Cummins (1984c:75) who suggested: "The fact that the framework is equally applicable to L1 and L2 acquisition does not imply that the processes and developmental sequence of L1 and L2 acquisition are identical". Cummins (1984a:15) clearly recognizes that cognitively-demanding tasks in L2 may be less so in L1 and vice versa.

30. Cf Cummins (1979:227-233) for examples of semi-lingualism in minority groups. See also chapter 2.

31. The experiment was with "Franco-Manitoban children in Grades 3,6, and 9 who received bilingual education in French and English" (Hamers & Blanc 1989:207). They made "similar progress in English, regardless of the amount of time spent on English" (ibid.:207). Cummins (1979:235) also refers to this 1976 study of "minority francophone children in Manitoba" and comments that it was found that " the percentage of instruction received in French (L1), had no influence on English achievement but was strongly related to French achievement". It should be stressed, however, that it was in an English environment.

32. ESL programmes may make matters worse by stigmatizing children who already feel rejected or who do not want to be integrated, particularly if ESL teachers are not bilinguals and cannot, therefore, understand the children's communicative and emotional difficulties.

33. Cf Sinclair-De-Zwart (1969:325) for instance who argues that "language is not the source of logic, but is on the contrary structured by logic".

34. Cromer 1988 (241-245).

35. Vygotsky (1986:94). Cf also Hickmann (1986:14, 27 & 29).

36. Cf Vygotsky (op.cit.:106, 120, 140, 153 etc.)

37. Vygotsky (ibid.:94); Hickmann (1986).

38. Cf Hickmann (op.cit.:26).

39. Vygotsky (op.cit.:228).

40. Vygotsky (ibid.:80-83).

41. It is interesting to note, however, that Carey (1988:109) considers as a "truism" the fact that children are "fundamentally different thinkers and learners from adults". She further argues (ibid.:115) that there is "no compelling evidence that the child's basic representation format differs from the adult's in type of concepts, capacity to represent class-inclusion hierarchies..." and that the differences are not as clear-cut as was originally thought. She claims therefore that "the most important source of variance is in domain-specific knowledge" (ibid.:135), i.e. the child knows less than the adult but his ability to know is probably similar.

42. Cf Luria & Yudovich (1956:23 & 27)

43. Vygotsky (op.cit.:218 & 219). Bowerman (1988:32 & 44) and NcNeill (1978:193) also place a great emphasis on the role of language which structures rather than simply reflects thought.

44. Cf Vygotsky (op.cit.:106, 108 etc.), Hickmann (op.cit.:12 & 13), Luria & Yudovich (op.cit.:27, 105 & 107).

45. See diagram in Vygotsky (op.cit.: 147).

46. See Vygotsky (1986), chapter 6, regarding the development of scientific concepts especially pp. 147/8, 172/3.

47. Cf Bernstein (1972:167/8, 173 & 176).

48. Cf Wardhaugh (1986:321) who considers that Bernstein's views were "far too readily" dismissed & Giglioli (1972:155) who indicates that Bernstein's arguments were misinterpreted as putting forward theories of class-related linguistic deprivation. Cf also Wells' comments (1986:139-141).

49. Cf Hawkins (1984:3, 36 & 87) regarding the value of 'adult time' to help children's linguistic development.

50. Cf Hamers & Blanc (1989:235), Gardner (1985:50) and Pierson (1987:63).

51. Cummins (1979:243) similarly comments: "a child who identified closely with both cultures is more likely to achieve high levels of competence in both languages than a child who identified with neither".

52. Gardner (1985:89) refers to Turner who claims that, in the United States, "negative attitudes towards immigrants, American feelings of superiority, and the American melting-pot ideology which favours integration into the English speaking community" place the L2 learners in a dilemma as these attitudes "negate the importance of second language acquisition".

53. Cf Gardner (1985) for further discussions. Suffice here to add that 'fear of assimilation' into a majority group -- or the desire to 'maintain dominance' on the part of some Anglophones learning French for example -- may occur but is not entirely inevitable. Hamers and Blanc (1989:120-121) refer to Schneidmann's findings of a study of learners in Ontario showing a favourable out-group attitude and preference towards the majority language, English, whilst expressing close identification with the francophone culture through preference for French dolls (i.e. positive in-group attitudes). This indicates that "... preference for the majority language does not necessarily mean rejection of one's own cultural identity and that there is no one-to-one correspondence between linguistic assimilation and acculturation".

CHAPTER TWO. SOCIO-COGNITIVE VARIABLES WITHIN THE L2 CONTINUUM.

2.1   INTRODUCTION

Walkerdine and Sinha (1978:172) suggest that, the child's language performance inevitably reflects "... the dynamic character of the relationship between cognition, language and context". The crucial word here is, of course,'dynamic' and an important aspect of second language acquisition/learning research is to determine how the relationship between these variables changes as the child's linguistic repertoire expands. As was indicated in Chapter 1, certain models of language development -- particularly behaviourist and nativist ones -- are limited in this respect since they assume that such a relationship is constant (i.e. static) and that the findings from one context are equally applicable to another. The value of social-interactional models, on the other hand, as Hamers and Blanc (1989:63 & 64) suggest, is that they set a framework in which it is possible to both describe and explain changes in the inter-relationship of the socio-cognitive variables involved. Vygotsky, in particular, sees language development as a dynamic process of functional differentiation in which the child is constantly modifying and enriching his linguistic repertoire.

Being able to define the precise inter-relation of socio-cognitive variables at given stages in the child's linguistic development has important pedagogic implications. As Donaldson (1978:115) stresses, it is only by being aware of what the learner brings to a given context, cognitively and affectively, that it is possible to develop a pedagogy that will help him to cope with the linguistic demands that context makes on him. The aim of the current chapter is, therefore, twofold:

a)   to examine in more detail the notion of language development as a process of functional differentiation, particularly in terms of the transfer from pre-school (context-embedded) to school (context-reduced) settings; and

b)   to use such a framework to evaluate the different relationship of socio-cognitive variables involved at three different stages of the second language acquisition/learning continuum and to critically re-assess the implications for policy and practice.

2.2   FUNCTIONAL DIFFERENTIATION

As indicated in Chapter 1, language development can be seen as a social process in which the child's linguistic competence emerges through mastery of new functional uses of language. Such differentiation includes not only the divergence between social and inner speech but, in terms of the former, that between non-standard and standard, spoken and written and non-literary and literary forms. What is particularly interesting about Vygotsky's view of this process is that each of these changes is not seen as discrete but, as is implicit in Bruner's writings (1966, 1975a, 1975b), as a link in a chain in which the child's mastery of any new functional skill provides the conditions for the next stage and is itself conditioned by the preceding ones.

Crucial to Vygotsky's view of this process was the shifting relation between social and cognitive factors in the exchange of meaning. This has two distinct, but related, aspects. In the first place, the extension of the child's linguistic repertoire, his mastery of new skills, depends upon his ability to extract meaning from language itself rather than from the contextual setting. This implies, as Donaldson (1978) and Wells (1981) point out, a certain degree of metalinguistic awareness, an ability to conceptualize language as an

(arbitrary) system for the conveying of meaning in contexts where non-linguistic clues are greatly reduced.[1] In the second place, and closely related to the first, it depends upon his ability to valorize the new language skill in a situation where its relevance and purpose may be indirect rather than direct. Metalinguistic awareness is important, therefore, not only to master decontextualized uses of language, particularly in a school setting, but also to develop the motivation necessary to sustain an activity where, as Roberts (1992:22) puts it, the 'pay-off' is long-term rather than immediate.

2.2.1   Oral and written language

A concrete example of the role played by metalinguistic awareness, in terms of the ability to master a new linguistic form whose relevance for the child is difficult to determine, is the transfer between the spoken and written forms. It is tempting, as Vygotsky (1986:180 & 181) argues, to see the written word as simply a transcription of the spoken language but, he adds, the two have radically different functions in the child's development and the relation between them is quite complex.

Oral speech is embedded in context and relies heavily on contextual clues for the exchange of meaning: i.e. on the expectations the participants bring to social inter-action, the 'shared knowledge' of the topic in question, the physical situation and the interlocutor's paralanguage (i.e. facial expressions, tone of voice etc). The fact that there are so many non-linguistic clues in the exchange of meaning has two implications. In the first place, it means that language does not have to be so explicit or, as Vygotsky (ibid.:238) points out, the shared knowledge of the participants means that the number of words necessary to communicate is "greatly reduced", the syntax "simplified" and speech generally condensed. The emphasis is on the 'message' underpinned by contextual clues rather than on syntactic accuracy so that speech is often abbreviated and includes broken or even unfinished

sentences. In the second place, the fact that speech is supported by a variety of contextual clues means that the child, when acquiring it, pays more attention to the message than to the medium. As Vygotsky (ibid.:183) suggests, the internalization of rules through social interaction is, as a rule, "spontaneous, involuntary and nonconscious". "In speaking", he (ibid.:182) argues, "(the child) is hardly conscious of the sounds he pronounces and quite unconscious of the mental operations he performs". In other words, the development of communicative skills in L1 is context-embedded and cognitively undemanding.

The fact that learning to speak is, as Hawkins (1981:51) argues, a "primary activity" dependent on context-embedded activities and requiring a minimal level of cognitive development has its implications in the area of motivation. As indicated in Chapter 1, such an activity is rapidly valorized because it allows the child to satisfy immediately his social/cognitive needs -- that is, to act upon and make sense of his environment. As Vygotsky (1986:181) was to put it, "... in conversation, every sentence is prompted by a motive" and it is the satisfaction of these motives through interaction with others which explains the rapid acquisition of the language of the child's speech community. Dore (1978:89) echoes this viewpoint when referring to the relevance of 'speech act' theory for understanding early language acquisition. The child is initially concerned more with the illocutionary power of speech, i.e. its capacity to act upon the world, than with its propositional power, i.e. its capacity to make statements about the world.[2]

The relation between context, cognition and motivation in L1 speech acquisition cannot be replicated in the learning of the written word. As Vygotsky (op.cit.:180-181) suggests, the latter has a "separate linguistic function differing from oral speech in both structure and mode of functioning". The key factor that distinguishes the two -- and which has corresponding implications for the relation between cognition and motivation -- is the degree of context-embeddedness for each skill.

If oral speech emerges out of direct social interaction, the principal characteristic of written speech is that there is no "interlocutor", that is, it is "addressed to an absent or imaginary person or to no one in particular". (ibid.:181) This degree of abstraction implicit in written speech means that understanding is dependent upon decoding/encoding messages in language without the support of contextual or other extra-linguistic clues. Since meaning in written texts depends upon the "formal meaning of words" (ibid.:239), the language of such texts must be "maximally detailed" and must "explain the situation fully in order to be intelligible" (ibid.:182). Whereas spoken language can rely upon shared knowledge to reduce words or simplify syntax, written language requires "a much greater number of words" and "syntactic differentiation is at its maximum". (ibid.:239 & 240)

The fact that extracting the meaning from written texts depends more upon an understanding of the structural properties of language than upon extra-linguistic clues has its implications. It means principally that it is "considerably more conscious, and it is produced more deliberately than oral speech". (ibid.:182) The child's ability to convey meaning through (or extract it from) the written word implies a much higher degree of "consciousness and volitional control" (ibid.:183) than in the spoken word. As Meadows (1988:300) has pointed out, the fact that some children have difficulty with mastering this new linguistic function is due, to a large extent, to the fact that they may have insufficient metacognitive and metalinguistic awareness, that is "... an inexperience in reflecting on language and how it is used" related to their social background.[3] This is also, as was indicated in Chapter 1, the conclusion drawn by writers such as Donaldson (1978) or Romaine (1984:167) who suggests that:

> *"Strategies for interpreting, using and learning language at home may turn out to be ineffective and even unproductive at school."*

Unless children are aided to reflect upon, and not just use language, they will find it difficult to make the transition from the unconscious, spontaneous and unplanned use of speech in a context-embedded setting to the conscious, deliberate and planned use of the written word in a more context-reduced setting.

The fact that the child needs to have greater metalinguistic and metacognitive skills in accessing written texts also has its implications in the area of motivation. If, as indicated, the motives for acquiring L1 speech are relatively immediate, those for writing, Vygotsky (op.cit.:181) argues, "... are more abstract, more intellectualized, further removed from immediate needs". As Romaine (1984:167) has pointed out, this tends to be true generally of language at school where "classroom talk is largely teacher-initiated" as opposed to that at home which is often "initiated by the child". It is a particular function of the written as opposed to the spoken word, however, which, as Goody & Watt (1972:343) suggests, may be "fundamentally at odds with that of daily life and common experience". In such a situation, the fact that the child's milieu does not valorize literacy means not only that it may not equip him with the metalinguistic skills needed to access written texts but, at the same time, with the motivation needed to pursue an activity with little immediate reward. Indeed, as Romaine (1984:182-195) argues, the abrupt shift to academic (written) language may trigger resentment, particularly if the child "has only a vague idea of its usefulness" (Vygotsky 1986:181) and his home language is rejected.

2.2.2 L1 and FL

A second major example of the process of functional differentiation, as indicated by Vygotsky, is the transition between L1 and FL in an instructed context. If the move from spoken to written word requires a given level of metalinguistic awareness, both to access texts and to valorize the activity, this is even more true regarding the move from L1 to L2.

As Hawkins (1981:53 & 207) points out, learning a foreign language in an instructed context is much more dependent, in the early stages, upon analytic than communicative skills. This is because in the foreign language classroom, the learner has no genuine communicative needs and cannot rely upon contextual clues to structure his interaction with others. Moreover, whatever contextual clues do exist may be culture-specific and hinder, rather than help, his attempts to make sense of the target language.[4] The fact that the FL learner cannot, at least in the early stages, rely upon extra-linguistic clues to access meaning suggests that he is compelled to focus upon the linguistic formulation of the message which -- as in reading and writing in the L1 -- requires a high degree of metalinguistic awareness, a recognition that language is systematic and that meaning depends upon manipulation of that system.

This need to pay attention to the linguistic form in order to access meaning explains Vygotsky's comment (op.cit.:161) that the FL process, unlike that of L1, is a "nonspontaneous process", that is, as indicated in chapter one, one that is "conscious and deliberate from the start". (ibid.:195) Vygotsky expands upon the difference between the two by comparing them to that between spontaneous and scientific concepts which, he argues, obey the general law that "... analogous systems develop in reverse directions at the higher and the lower levels, each system influencing the other...". (ibid.:196) L1 is acquired largely as a by-product of social interaction and the young child is, as Halliday (1975) reminds us, far more concerned with what language *does* than with what it *is*.[5] It is only gradually that he learns to disembed it from its context and become aware of it as a symbolic system in its own right. In the foreign language classroom, on the other hand, the fact that the learner has no opportunities to use the target language for genuine communicative means that he does not, as Vygotsky (op.cit.:161) points out "... return to the immediate world of objects and does not repeat past linguistic developments".

(ibid.:161) On the contrary, as Vygotsky continues, the fact that his prior experience of L1

helps him to be, in a foreign language context, "conscious of grammatical forms from the

beginning" (ibid:195), means that the relation between 'knowing' and 'doing' is reversed,

that the strong points of L1 become the weak ones of L2 and vice versa.[6] As Vygotsky was

to put it, in a foreign language context, "higher forms develop before spontaneous, fluent

speech" and it is only gradually that conscious attention to the language system (i.e. to its

'grammar') becomes unconscious skill.

Vygotsky's notion that L1 acquisition and FL learning proceed in reverse directions

has most recently been taken up by Widdowson (1990) in his analysis of the changing

relation between 'schematic' (i.e. real world) and 'systemic' (i.e. linguistic) knowledge. In

L1, he (1990:110) argues, the two forms of knowledge are symbiotically related in the

sense that

> "... the child, growing up through involvement in naturally recurring events, learns
> about the world through language and concomitantly learns language through an
> engagement with the world ... Thus systemic and schematic knowledge develop
> concurrently, each supportive of the other".

It is precisely the symbiotic nature of this relation which, he continues (ibid.:158), explains

why, for the young child, 'knowing about' language remains 'subservient' to 'doing' things

with it. The fact that language develops as a function of his interaction with, and

understanding of, the world means that systemic knowledge is, in the early stages, both

action-oriented and heavily dependent upon schematic knowledge. Donaldson (1978:38)

was to put this another way, of course, when suggesting that, for the child, understanding

language is dependent upon, and subordinate to, understanding context: "It is the child's

ability to interpret situations which makes it possible for him, through active processes of

hypothesis-testing and inference, to arrive at a knowledge of language".[7]

The dynamics of this process cannot, Widdowson (op.cit.:112) observes, be repeated in the foreign language classroom for the simple reason that the relation between schematic and systemic knowledge has changed. Unlike the L1 child, the FL learner has already developed a conceptual map of the world and, in learning the FL, is no longer involved in the "... recurrent association of new schematic knowledge with new systemic knowledge" prompted by a desire to explore his environment. On the contrary, his main task is to link the new linguistic system with his existing conceptual knowledge and this requires, at least in the early stages, a conscious focus on form rather than (as in L1) an unconscious use of function. Put another way, whereas in L1 'doing' things with language precedes 'knowing' about language, in L2 it is the learner's prior knowledge which allows him to access the linguistic form and to lay the groundwork for future communicative use. As Roberts (1992:24) suggests, echoing Widdowson, this "... reversal between knowledge and skill is an inevitable function of a *learning*, as opposed to an *acquisition*, process and applies to all areas of the curriculum".

An interesting aspect of Widdowson's discussion of the difference between L1 and FL acquisition/learning is that of the relative efficiency of each. Widdowson argues that models which seek to reproduce the L1 process in the foreign language classroom not only fail to take into account changes in the relation between schematic and systemic knowledge but ignore the inefficiency of the L1 process. As he stresses (op.cit.:162), the fact that systemic knowledge is subordinate to schematic knowledge means that L1 acquisition is a "long and rather inefficient business" and that it is erroneous to seek to replicate it in the FL classroom on the grounds that what is natural is "intrinsically good and desirable" (ibid.:151)[8]. On the contrary, he argues, by helping the learner to focus systematically on key aspects of language form, the learning process can "... remedy by artifice the deficiencies of natural processes" (ibid.:152). Grammar, within this perspective, should not

be viewed as a "constraining imposition" (ibid.:86) but rather as a useful device which "provides for communicative economy" (ibid.:87), as a "construct for the mediation of meaning" (ibid.:95) in the most efficient way.

The fact that L1 and FL acquisition/learning develop in reverse directions can be illustrated in a series of dichotomies as follows:

Medium/Message

In L1, the child only gradually becomes aware of what he spontaneously uses. This initial focus on 'message-oriented speech' is hardly accidental in that extra-linguistic clues to meaning are so rich that he has little need to focus on how linguistic form encodes messages to understand/convey messages. This process is reversed in the foreign language classroom because greatly reduced contextual clues mean that the learner can only access meaning by focusing on language form and it is only gradually, as a result of controlled practice, that attention can be switched from the 'medium' to the 'message'.

This reversal in process is captured by Dodson (1985:332) who stresses that FL beginners "resort in far greater measure to medium-orientated communication" than do native speakers and that it is only through increased proficiency that "the amount of necessary medium-orientated communication decreases" and more attention is paid to semantics.[9] Dodson, interestingly enough, even suggests that bilinguals identify more with strategies whereby they are "... initially satisfying a *linguistic* need in order to satisfy a subsequent *non*-linguistic need, the former being a bilingual medium-orientated and the latter a monolingual message orientated activity in his second language" (ibid.:337).

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* System/Function

In L1, the child develops a mastery of the language system as a by-product of functional use, that is, 'propositional' meaning encoded in that system is accessed via 'illocutionary' meaning in achieving interpersonal aims. Such a process is reversed in the foreign language classroom because the opportunities for communicative interaction simply do not exist. In a situation where there is little genuine 'intention to mean', the learner is constrained to focus more upon the propositional meaning encoded in the language system which only gradually, through a range of controlled activities, can assume illocutionary force.[10]

* Accuracy/Fluency

In L1, the use of language is largely unplanned and contextual clues to meaning often overcome distortions in the message caused by 'linguistic' errors. It is largely because communication is not impaired that adults focus more on the correction of semantic rather than systemic mistakes. In a foreign language classroom, however, where extra-linguistic clues to meaning are reduced and language often becomes its own context, such errors assume a different role.[11] If meaning is more dependent upon accurate use of the language system, errors in that system may have more potential for distorting meaning and may inevitably require greater attention.

The fact that the FL process runs in a reverse direction to that of L1 does not mean, of course, that systemic knowledge is capable on its own of leading to an intuitive use of the target language. As Belyayev (1963:25) argues, "... theoretical knowledge of a language does not necessarily lead to practical knowledge" and practice is the indispensable link in the process that bridges the two. As he (ibid.:221) was to continue:

"There is not and cannot be any direct transition from the study of a language to the mastery of it; the second is not and cannot be a necessary and direct consequence of the first. Practical mastery of language is always the result only of previous linguistic practice."

It is important to stress the importance of 'practice' since the main danger for the FL learner, who approaches the FL consciously and deliberately, is to assume that *knowing about* the language will automatically lead to *knowing* it, i.e. that conscious knowledge will lead to intuitive use. As Falvey (1987:170) points out, however, the "gap between *knowing* and *using* the language is ... a wide one ..." and, if the learner is to be helped to move from one to the other, pedagogic strategies will be required which recognize the importance of both. A failure to consider the contribution of both medium and message-orientated communication to the learning process will lead, Dodson (op.cit.:333) warns, "... at best to mediocre performance and at worst to outright failure".

While Dodson (among others) is correct in stressing the value of practice in linking the learner's initial knowledge of language to its later intuitive use, this does not invalidate the importance of such knowledge in the initial stages. On the contrary, as previously indicated, it is only the learner's awareness of the systemic nature of language which allows him to make sense of what he hears/sees in a decontextualized environment where few extra-linguistic clues to meaning exist. Metalinguistic awareness is as important, therefore, in accessing this new functional use of language as it was in accessing literacy skills in the L1 and Hawkins (1981:53) is not alone in seeking explicitly to link the two.[12] But, as Widdowson (op.cit.:112) reminds us, language learning is "dependent on purpose" and the learner needs to see that it is "worth the processing effort" (ibid.: 107). In a foreign language context, this is a particular problem because -- as we have seen -- there are few opportunities for communicative interaction within the classroom and the immediate relevance of it to the learner, in terms of 'acting upon' the world or making sense of it, is

extremely limited. This is even more true in the case of those learners, particularly in a monolingual setting, who come from backgrounds where the target language is not valorized and who have no (or very few) opportunities outside the classroom to come into contact with speakers of that language and/or manifestations of its culture. In these circumstances, the role of metalinguistic awareness can play a valuable motivating role by helping the learner to move beyond his immediate interests/needs and, as Roberts (1992:22) argues, "'conceptualise' the long-term validity of the goal". This might even include the benefits for L1, i.e. increased metalinguistic awareness generally[13], the same way as writing skills help further higher mental processes in L1.[14] This is not to suggest that those learners who have developed a degree of metalinguistic awareness in L1 will automatically be motivated in the FL but it is to say that those who do not possess such awareness are more likely to find the cognitively demanding nature of the process demotivating.

2.2.3   Conclusion

As indicated earlier, the child's language development can be seen as a continuum in which there is a shifting relation between the socio-cognitive variables involved. At one end of this continuum lies the acquisition of oral communication skills and, at the other, the learning of a foreign language. Between these two extremes lies a wide range of new language functions in which the less context-embedded the setting, the more the learner needs to rely upon metalinguistic awareness both to deal with the cognitive demands placed upon him and to sustain interest and motivation in a skill whose relevance may not always be immediately obvious.

2.3   FUNCTIONAL DIFFERENTIATION WITHIN SLA

To a large extent, the transfer from the spoken to the written language, or from first to foreign language, has received considerable attention in terms of the child's developing linguistic repertoire.[15] Much less attention has been paid to differences within the second language acquisition/learning process itself and to the ways in which the shifting inter-relation of socio-cognitive variables can give rise to quite different learning contexts. In many ways, the ongoing and often confused debates in the area of second language acquisition/learning -- such as the relevance of Canadian immersion programmes for Europe -- stem from attempts to apply findings from one context to another where the pattern of socio-cognitive variables is significantly different.[16] In order to be able to show the importance for teaching strategies of taking into account the precise socio-cognitive factors involved, it is proposed to briefly examine three second language learning contexts at different points of the continuum between context-embedded and context-reduced and to evaluate these contexts in terms of the pedagogic strategies they imply. These contexts will be:

a) a second language acquisition (SLA) context;

b) an early immersion context using specifically the Canadian experience; and

c) a foreign language learning context.

2.3.1   Second language acquisition

Second, as opposed to foreign, language acquisition refers to the acquisition of another language in an L2 environment in which there exists a high level of exposure both in and out of school. As Littlewood (1984:2) remarks "... a 'second language' has social functions within the community where it is learnt (e.g. as a lingua franca or as the language of another social group)...". The principal implications of this are twofold: first, that the

acquisition of the language takes place in a highly contextualised setting that favours the development of communicative skills (i.e. Cummins' 'surface fluency'); and, second, that the need to develop these skills to satisfy basic needs will usually result in high valorization of the L2 and a resultant motivation to learn it. Even in a situation where, as Gardner (1985) points out, second language learners may lack integrative reasons to acquire the L2, its importance in terms of their day-to-day interaction in the host community will normally provide strong instrumental reasons.

The evidence would seem to suggest that most SLA learners do succeed in 'picking up' a high level of communicative competence through daily interaction with speakers of the host language. Some do so more rapidly than others, of course, and age seems to play a factor here. As John-Steiner (1985:352) points out, young children in particular seem very "resourceful in maximizing their communicative means" because they focus their interest on "shared activities" (ibid.:360) and tend to "limit their talk to the activities at hand" (ibid.:353). Even though the young SLA learner may not achieve the same level of proficiency as a native speaker of the L2, which remains a 'secondary' rather than a 'primary' skill, the high level of contextualization and correspondingly low cognitive demands placed upon them ensures that second language acquisition shares many features in common with first language acquisition.

2.3.1.1 Transfer to school

A differentiation in terms of young learners' proficiency in the L2 (and L1) tends to emerge, however, on entry to school and pivots around the transfer from communicative to analytic competence. For many students, who have already developed literacy skills in the L1, or who are encouraged to develop literacy skills in the L1 as part of the school curriculum, this transition usually occurs without difficulty. Such children are able to

transfer both the linguistic and cognitive skills developed through the L1 to the L2 and, thereby, to meet more easily the academic demands placed upon them across the curriculum. As Goodhand *et al* (1985:20) argue :

> *"Literacy is essentially a matter of associating symbols alone or in groups with sounds and meanings. Bilingual pupils who have not begun to get to grips with this process in their first language will understandably have commensurably greater difficulty in developing those skills in what is .... their second (or third) language".*

Notable examples of positive transfer are those schools that explicitly valorize the child's first language, that is, those schools -- such as the European schools -- which seek to develop competence in the L1 at the same time as in the L2. It is also worth noting that, as Magiste (1986:117) or McLaughlin (1987:113) suggest, even adult learners' linguistic competence is seen to benefit from maintaining contact with mother tongue speakers.

While some second language learners make the transition from communicative to analytic competence in the L2, thereby being able to deal with cognitively demanding tasks, many more do not. The reasons for this are usually related to the host community's lack of valorization of the child's first language which has negative cognitive consequences for the SLA child. As John-Steiner (op.cit.:352) argues, this may not always be a problem with very young children who, while they may be "slow" in their "formal linguistic development", are capable of catching up their L2 native counterparts who may themselves be in the early stages of literacy skill development. It is a problem which increases with age, however, in so far as learners may be expected to access the curriculum in L2 when   (a) they have not developed the requisite level of proficiency in the L2; and/or when (b) they have not, probably because of the school's lack of valorization of their L1, been allowed to develop the linguistic/cognitive skills in the latter which can then be transferred to the L2 to facilitate their dealing with academic demands.

John-Steiner (ibid.:353) suggests that the latter problem is particularly marked for children in the 8-10 age range who are often at a considerable disadvantage compared with native speakers of the L2 of the same age. Such children, she argues, are often posed with tasks which involve a disembedded and abstract use of language which they are simply not capable of meeting. Encouraged to neglect their L1 in order to develop skills in L2, lack of sufficient tuition in the latter can often result in them developing communicative at the expense of analytic competence. Such children can therefore end up semi-lingual in both L1 and L2 or, as the Hargreaves Report Improving Secondary Schools (1984:46) puts it in reference to bilingual pupils in the London area, "inadequately rooted in two languages" for the following reasons:

> ".... a restrictive form of English may have partially ousted their original mother tongue from their homes, and when their studies reach the more sophisticated level of post-16 courses, they lack the verbal competence to express abstract concepts or arguments in both their languages".

The problem pinpointed by Hargreaves echoes, of course, that of immigrant minority groups in the USA, as described by Cummins (1979), or of Finnish immigrants in Sweden, as described by John-Steiner (1985). Moreover, as Troike (1984:49) and Genesee (1984:22) point out, the problem such pupils encounter in handling context-reduced (i.e. academic) tasks may not only be a function of their lack of analytic skills but also of the culture-specific nature of such tasks: i.e. of the fact that the latter are related to the culture of the dominant language which may be at variance with the cultural background of the pupils concerned. Young SLA learners may, in this sense, lack not only the linguistic tools but a cultural framework in which to handle academic tasks.

The lack of valorization that is often extended by the host community school system to the SLA learner's mother tongue can have social as well as cognitive results,

leading either to a fear of learning L2 and a rejection of its culture or to a lack of motivation

to maintain and learn the L1. On the one hand, as John-Steiner (1985:354) points out, the

SLA child who may be denied the opportunity to use his first language in the classroom

may "... suffer from the pressure of unmet communicative needs" and may, as Cohen &

Swain (1976:55) suggest, have a sense of "insecurity or even one of failure in the presence

of the native speakers of that language". Feelings of alienation, anxiety and even shame may

make him reluctant to continue learning the language of the host community and if, as

Grosjean (1982) suggests, the school system shows overt antagonism towards his language

and culture, he may shy away from opportunities for contact and use of the L2 and retreat

into his own community. On the other hand, the lack of valorization of his mother tongue

may make him ashamed of, and reluctant to use, his mother tongue which, as Broadbent

(1989:119) points out, is often the case with immigrant children in the UK:

> "...negative attitudes to the use for educational purposes of any language other
> than English (or possibly French and German) are so deep-seated that even where
> the possibilities of actually using the target language are high, inhibiting
> psychological factors inevitably come into play."

Grosjean (op.cit.:119), commenting on the research conducted by Lambert into attitudes of

minority language speakers in Canada, goes somewhat further. He argues that the negative

attitudes of the majority language group towards a linguistic minority can often be adopted

by members of that minority group to such an extent that members of the latter "...

downgrade themselves even more than they are downgraded by the dominant group". It is

quite clear that low valorization of the SLA learner's mother tongue can have long-term

negative consequences in terms of both the cognitive and social development of the SLA

child. Moreover, in many countries, the SLA child's poor performance has traditionally

been explained away not as a result of such low valorization but of bilingualism per se

which is portrayed not as an asset but a liability causing what Cummins (1984b) refers to as "cognitive confusion". This, in turn has led to, and justified, teachers' low expectations of children from linguistic minority backgrounds.

2.3.1.2 Subtractive bilingualism

The negative experience suffered by many SLA children in the host community school system has led to the syndrome that Cummins (op. cit.) refers to as that of 'subtractive bilingualism'. Central to this syndrome is the refusal to recognize the importance of mother tongue maintenance in the ongoing development of these children in three key areas:

* Linguistic

The SLA child's rapid acquisition of L2 depends to a large extent on his realisation that the skills he has already built up in L1 are cross-lingual, that is, that they can be transferred to the L2. As Kent (1989:101) suggests, this means encouraging young SLA learners to use their L1 since:

> "... the urge to communicate something from their background in which others had shown interest provided a strong motivation towards acquisition of English, particularly when they realised that the language skills they already had were being valued".

This is true at the general level but is particularly important in the area of literacy skill development. Developing literacy skills in the L2 -- which is crucial for accessing the wider school curriculum -- is likely to be much more rapid if the child has been allowed to develop them in his L1 and encouraged to transfer them to the L2.

* Cognitive

Conceptual development is closely related with L1 acquisition and to allow the SLA child to achieve the level of cognitive growth necessary to cope with context-reduced tasks across the curriculum requires a mother tongue maintenance programme. "Suppressing a first language in an attempt to replace it" with the majority language of the host community is likely to develop communicative as opposed to analytic competence and, as Brumfit (1989:27) argues, "is liable to stunt cognitive development". Cummins (1984b:108), when summarizing the research findings in the USA, suggests that they strongly refute the notion that bilingualism is a source of minority students' academic difficulties and argues that it is "... the failure to develop students' L1 for conceptual and analytic thought that contributes to 'cognitive confusion'".

* Cultural

The ability of the child to value the culture of the host community depends in large measure on the extent to which that host community valorizes his own language and culture. Where majority language groups look down upon or stigmatize minority language groups, this can often lead members of the latter to feel ashamed of their own language and cultural background without fully embracing that of the majority group. As Cummins (ibid.:101) was to argue in reference to the experience of minority language children in the USA, the latter were "... made to feel that it was necessary to reject the home culture in order to belong to the majority culture and often ended up unable to identify fully with either cultural group". This is, of course, the classic syndrome of 'anomie'[17].

Problems of a linguistic, cognitive and cultural nature in the development of SLA children can be found in detail in the studies made by Troike, Genesee and Wald (1984).

What is clear is that, as Swain (1978:248) stresses, to "convert substractive forms of bilingualism into additive ones" requires the structuring of school settings[18] in such a way that what the SLA learner brings with him -- his language and culture[19] -- is seen as an asset rather than as a threat in the acquisition of the language of the host community. How this should be achieved -- i.e. the question of 'when and how much' of the mother tongue should be maintained before the switch to the second language occurs -- depends upon the concrete situation at hand. The key factor in determining school policy should be, however, a recognition that surface fluency in the L2 is not enough to deal with cognitively demanding tasks and that SLA learners need -- mainly through an L1 maintenance programme -- to develop the linguistic/cognitive skills to transfer to the L2. As Dodson (1985:344) points out, in relation to L2 immersion programmes in the USA, "low standards are inevitable not *despite* the existence of these programmes but because of their very nature".

Of course, developing L1 maintenance alongside the development of competence in the L2 means a rejection of assimilationist strategies and a recognition that bilingualism is, as Brumfit (op.cit.:27) suggests[20], a "... a resource rather than a handicap ... and that schools have a duty to ensure that children whose first language is not English do in fact become bilingual". This is a wider issue and implies, as Appel (1989:183) argues, ending the imposition of monolingual criteria on schools and the treatment of bilingualism as a 'scapegoat' for low educational performance.

2.3.2   Immersion programmes

As opposed to programmes where children are taught exclusively through L2 in a L2 environment, 'immersion' programmes refer to those where the child learning the L2

usually does so in an L1 environment (such as Canada or Hong Kong) and normally uses his L1 outside the school to meet the everyday needs of social interaction. Unlike in a foreign language context, however, when contact with the target language is limited and treated as an object of study, in immersion programmes the learner is 'immersed' for a considerable part of curriculum time in the L2 from an early age and the L2 is treated as a medium of study. In French immersion programmes in Canada, for example, children at the kindergarten stage are exposed to 100% French and this is only reduced to 80% in the first grade and to 40% in the sixth grade.[21] The L1 (English) is usually phased in gradually from the second grade and expanded thereafter although, it might be noted, literacy skills are introduced in French before English.

Success rates in immersion programmes are high and attributed, as Swain and Lapkin (1982:5) suggest, to the fact that the school provides a "naturalistic setting for second language acquisition: that is, the second language is acquired in much the same manner as children acquire their first language, by interacting with speakers of the language in authentic and meaningful communicative situations". There would seem to be considerable truth in this in the sense that the child is expected to acquire the L2 in a context-embedded setting where cognitive demands are initially low and where the learner can focus, as in L1, upon the 'message' rather than the 'medium'. As Swain (1985:12) puts it:

> *"In the early total immersion program, a threshold level is attained rapidly, in part, because the second language threshold level is relatively low given the young age of the learners and the relative simplicity of the content initially taught."*

Rapid internalization of the L2, including the transfer to literacy skills, is also made possible by a range of favourable socio-psychological factors. Not only can the learners see the value of the L2 as a communicative tool -- as the L1 -- but they are aware of its high

valorization by the school, the community in general and parents in particular. Moreover, the motivation stemming from the latter is reinforced by the fact that all students start from a similar level of competence so that the likelihood of being ridiculed or feeling at a disadvantage in comparison with their peers in the class is virtually non-existent[22]. The low 'affective filter' most children possess is commented upon by Cohen and Swain (1976:58) who suggest that, while the teacher may only speak in the L2 during lessons, the fact that students can use their L1 if their competence in L2 is insufficient in any given task explains the lack of anxiety or frustration recorded in communicative interaction.

As indicated, the emphasis in immersion programmes in Canada (or Australia) is upon replicating the natural route of L1 acquisition, that is, one in which the learner 'picks up' the L2 as a by-product of communicative interaction. Such an approach does not seek to utilize the cognitive skills built up through L1 but, on the contrary, tends to treat L2 as a separate process in which the learner 'explores' and 'categorizes' the world all over again. This is why he is allowed to make the transition from oral to written skills in L2 before L1 although, as Cummins (1979:246) notes, this does not seem to have any detrimental effect upon L1: "...in immersion programs for majority language children the grade level at which L1 reading instruction is introduced makes very little difference to L1 reading achievement". There is a growing amount of evidence, however, that the competence achieved in L2 has a number of shortcomings.

2.3.2.1 Nature of competence

While early studies of the French immersion programmes in Canada focused on the high level of competence achieved,[23] more recent studies have highlighted a range of problems. These tend to focus particularly around the productive use of the L2. Whereas

immersion students tend to reach near-native competence in receptive skills, this is by no means the case in productive skills where numerous inaccuracies persist. Swain (1986b:129) for example, remarks that, despite seven years of "comprehensible input" in the L2, "the target system has not been fully acquired" and Connors *et al.* (1978:70) underlines the "deviant and painfully simple nature of their output". This includes, as Swain and Lapkin (1982:50) point out, basic errors, "inappropriate grammatical form(s)", avoidance of complicated structures such as the conditional tense and a general tendency to use simpler language. Explanation of the nature of immersion students' productive skills, and the disparity between them and receptive skills, has been the source of a range of studies and centre on two main areas: inadequate input and insufficient opportunities and incentives for output.

To take the first, Connors *et al.* (op.cit.:70) argue that inadequate input can include the absence of certain forms of language "in their ordinary social circumstances", the use of "unusually artificial" or even "French-as-a-second-language" materials, the "more conservative and stylistically underdifferentiated grammar" of non-native teachers together with the "restricted non-peer code they are exposed to in school", that is, as Swain (1978:247) otherwise put it, the code of "non-native French-speaking classmates in interaction with the teacher or with each other". As an example of the problems caused by the input, Swain (1986b:128) points to immersion students underuse of "*vous* as a polite marker in formal contexts" because it is mainly used as a plural form and teachers "address the students as *tu*, and students address each other as *tu*".

To take the second source, as Swain and Lapkin (1982:6) state, it is assumed that the L2, as the L1, can be "... acquired incidentally ... to learning about the content of what (is) communicated". The fact that the focus is therefore initially upon "... developing French

language comprehension skills" can be problematic in that the latter require less "syntactic analysis"[24] than productive skills, the emphasis being on "correcting content rather than form".(ibid.:8) Although some instruction about the L2 "both implicitly and explicitly" (ibid.:8) is incorporated in the programme, the emphasis on 'message' to the detriment of 'medium' may be an important factor in accounting for poor grammatical competence. After all, accurate (i.e. conscious and deliberate) use in a language does not emerge spontaneously from communicative use in a situation where the learner has no incentive to be accurate. Littlewood (1984:34) argues that fossilization is

> "... most likely to occur when a learner realises (subconsciously) that the error does not hinder him in satisfying his communicative needs (at the functional or social level)".

This would seem to be the case with immersion students: the fact that they reach a 'plateau' (i.e. fossilize), reflects what Swain (1986b:133) calls the minimal "cognitive pressure" that they feel to produce accurate forms as "their current output appears to succeed in conveying their intended message". This would be in line with Stevick's (1982:26) view that "... people acquire as much of a language as they *really* need for what they *really* want, but only that much".

Connors *et al.* (1978:69) argue that immersion students' poor productive competence may not only be a function of fossilization and poor quality input but also of "... the sort of language their extremely limited tasks require them to produce". While the emphasis in immersion programmes is on learning the L2 in a naturalistic way, it should not be forgotten that it occurs in a formal classroom and the results, as Swain (1986b:135) suggests, reflect an approach which "... emphasizes written rather than spoken language" and which may therefore explain what Connors *et al.* (op.cit.:69) go on to describe as the "dramatic inadequacy" of many immersion students "in situations less structured than

classroom recitation". Swain and Lapkin (1982:76) likewise ascribe poor oral competence among immersion students to the lack of "sustained contact" with Francophones and Swain (1978:247) is even more specific in attributing it to "the lack of interaction with native French-speaking peers" which, in turn, can result in the lack of a "social stimulus, for the immersion children to develop completely native-like speech patterns".

2.3.2.2 Adequate Policy?

If we examine the explanations offered above to explain away problems in immersion students' productive competence, they may appear to be contradictory. On the one hand, the programme is criticized for not recognizing the constraints of the classroom situation and for not using the learners' cognitive skills developed through L1 to focus more on form in the L2. On the other hand, the programme is criticized for not being naturalistic enough and for not providing learners with the range of informal contacts outside the classroom needed to develop adequate communicative skills. In reality, of course, both criticisms tend to be complementary rather than contradictory and point to the inadvisability of seeing immersion programmes as a process which seeks to emulate L1.

Even though the target language (in the case of Canadian immersion programmes, French) may be introduced at kindergarten level, it would be a mistake to believe that the limited contact time immersion students have with it -- and the types of interaction they can become involved in -- are sufficient to replicate an L1 process. On the contrary, the only way of ensuring grammatical accuracy in productive skills is by "short-circuiting", as Widdowson (1990:162) points out, the "slow process of natural discovery" and helping immersion students to place greater emphasis on form or, as Swain (1986b:133) puts it, to "pay attention to the means of expression needed in order to successfully convey his or her

own intended meaning". Recognizing the greater importance of an emphasis on form rather than function would, at the same time, help to demonstrate that the process cannot simply replicate that of L1 and thereby offset the invidious comparison of immersion students at the end of the day with Francophones of the same age. When it is remembered that immersion students have only limited contact time with the L2, the fact that, as Bibeau (1984:45) himself points out, their "language skills are much more developed than those of students in traditional second-language classes" should not be underestimated.

The view that a greater emphasis upon form in immersion programmes would make more efficient use of the time available would seem to be supported by the suggestion that late immersion students (i.e. those capable of a more systematic processing of data) quickly catch up with early immersion students. In the study carried out in 1983 by Swain (1985:9), the performance of a group of 16 year old students who had only two years late immersion "totalling approximately 1400 hours of instructional time in French" seemed to compare favourably with that of a group of 14 year old early immersion students with "4000 hours in which French was used as the language of instruction" over a nine year span. The results should be treated with some caution, however, in the sense that, as Swain and Lapkin (1982:47) comment:

> "Such a comparison across age levels may be invalid because of the different levels of cognitive maturity and general world knowledge possessed by the older and younger students which might affect their performance on the test independent of their linguistic proficiency".

Swain and Lapkin (ibid.:46) also recall that beyond grade 4, early immersion students receive only 40% of their time in French which might be "inadequate to maintain and foster further second language development" whereas "the late immersion group may benefit from the more intense exposure to French (over 80% at grades 7 and 8) in the recent past".

Questions surrounding the value of a later start can also be found in the immersion programme in Hong Kong. In the latter, Cantonese is the language used in society at large and the main language of instruction at primary level. English is introduced as a subject at the primary level but becomes a medium of instruction at secondary level, thereby benefitting from the fact that pupils have already developed literary skills in their L1. Despite the fact that students have a later start, however, and are strongly motivated to learn English which, as So (1987:260) reports, is associated with "prestige, quality, mobility", results are not overly impressive. Fu (1987:35) expresses concern over the results whereby "students in Hong Kong can use neither English nor Chinese well" and So (op.cit.:266) blames this on the "abrupt linguistic shift" in secondary school which is caused not by "too much English too soon" but by "too little too late" (ibid.:268). He (ibid.:267) advocates, on the contrary, "the implementation of a *concurrent* bilingual education strategy preferably starting from the primary level" in place of the "two monolingual tracks" (ibid.:266) based on a "sequential" linguistic basis. This may well be the case but, as Swain (1985:5-8) points out, another cause might simply be the limited time spent using English at secondary level and/or the fact that, as Johnson and Lee (1987:105) suggest, English is the language "representing formal, impersonal instructional language, with any movement away from that point tending to trigger a switch into Cantonese".[25]

The debate around the value of an early or a later start in immersion programmes continues but this does not essentially bring into question the fact that pupils, at whatever age, would benefit from a greater emphasis upon form since it is impossible, in an L1 environment, for L2 to emerge simply out of communicative interaction.

2.3.3 Foreign Languages

Like immersion programmes, a foreign language is taught in an L1 environment where there are few, if any, opportunities for L2 interactive exchanges outside the classroom. As

Littlewood (1984:2) puts it, it is learnt "primarily for contact outside one's own community". Unlike immersion programmes, however, where a considerable part of the student's curriculum is taught through the L2 as a *medium* of study, a foreign language usually occupies a limited amount of curriculum time and is taught as an *object* of study. The limited amount of exposure to the foreign language, and the lack of opportunities for natural communicative interaction have two important implications.

In the first place, it means that learners are even less likely than in an immersion programme to 'pick up' the language as a by-product of functional use. On the contrary, in order to make use of limited time they need to focus in the early stages more on the form than function and this, in turn, requires a greater degree of metalinguistic awareness, a recognition that meaning stems from the linguistic formulation of the message rather than from extra-linguistic clues. As Widdowson (1990:45) put it, the learner must initially "... focus on form as a necessary condition for the subsequent focus on meaning". In the second place, and closely related to the above, the absence of any natural 'communicative intent' on the part of the learner in the classroom means that motivation inevitably becomes less a function of the activity than of valorization of its long-term goal, i.e. is dependent to a considerable degree on cognitive factors.

The fact that, traditionally, there has been much greater differentiation in performance rates among foreign language than, for example, immersion students is clearly a function of the socio-cognitive variables involved. Foreign language students require much greater cognitive skills to cope with the highly decontextualized nature of the learning process, as Skehan (1988:55) recently argues, and in order to persevere with an activity which has "so little immediate 'pay-off'"[26]. This is particularly true in a monolingual country such as the UK where, as Hawkins (1984:3) suggests, many students starting the study of a foreign language at the age of 11 simply do not possess the skills or attitudes necessary to achieve success in it.

2.3.3.1 Communicative methodology

The attempt to resolve the problems posed by a decontextualized learning process has, historically, given rise to a range of methodological innovations which have generally inclined towards an 'inductive' approach. The latest of these is the 'communicative' approach which, as Widdowson (1990:112) observes, tends to assume that "... the natural conditions of language learning through use ... can be directly replicated in foreign language classrooms". Initially, the focus tended to centre on syllabus design where the traditional grammatical inventory of items gave way to a task-based approach based on functional progression. After all, it was assumed, if language is used functionally, then the goals of language learning should be defined in functional terms, i.e. those of 'warning', 'doubting' and 'denying' as suggested by Wilkins (1976) in his notional-functional syllabus.

It soon became apparent, however, that this approach was not as successful as originally thought. After all, as Roberts (1993:25) argues:

> *"... the fact that a learner practises a range of 'communicative' tasks, as defined in a syllabus, is no guarantee that s/he will become communicatively competent ... On the contrary, since a syllabus is merely an 'inert' category of items ... the likelihood is that s/he will merely end up learning a shopping list of set expressions which s/he cannot adopt to convey personal meaning".*

Hawkins (1984:94) put this somewhat differently when suggesting that functional goals could easily degenerate into mechanical drills "devoid of any communicative intent" and Widdowson (1990:161) echoed the point when arguing that the learner could easily develop "a fairly patchy and imperfect repertoire of performance which is not supported by an underlying competence" (i.e. without the ability to generate new utterances which is important to convey personal meaning).

More recently, the problems stemming from the confusion between a (second language) acquisition and a learning process have led to a shift from the area of syllabus

design to that of classroom procedures. If learners end up rote-learning set phrases without any generative capacity, as Widdowson implies, then this has been seen more as a function of classroom procedures which are not communicative enough. The remedy lies, therefore, in seeking to make the foreign language learning process as much like an acquisition (or immersion) process as possible by creating a framework in which the learners' "self-generated communicative needs"[27] are placed at the centre of classroom practice. Evidence of this can be seen in the National Curriculum Modern Foreign Languages report (1990). If pupils are to be given opportunities for purposeful use, the report suggests, this means turning the classroom into a "real world" where "many of the functional, notional, grammatical and lexical content areas will automatically be covered" (ibid.:38). Three main themes, among others, underpin the communicative approach, namely[28]:

* "Legitimacy of tasks and activities", i.e. learners should learn by being involved

    in 'genuine' activities which have 'motivational force';

* "Intention to mean", i.e. learners should be given opportunities to use language

    purposefully in a way which emphasises the 'message' rather than 'medium';

* "Authenticity of language", i.e. learners should be exposed to authentic

    materials related, as far as possible, to their interests and needs[29].

These three features pivot around the notion that, as Ellis (1993:7) says in relation to Prabhu (1987), "... providing one can offer opportunities for meaningful communication in the classroom, grammar will be learned naturally and automatically", that is, when the learner's attention is focused on meaning. In this 'pupil-centred' approach, whose aim is primarily to engage the learners in authentic and meaningful communicative tasks, the teacher's role seems to be, as Roberts (1993:25) puts it, "that of a 'facilitator' since attempts to impose a structured (i.e. selective) use of language can run counter to the learner's own interests".

2.3.3.2 Contextual constraints

The notion underpinning communicative methodology is that -- as in an SLA or even immersion context -- the learner will internalize form as a by-product of meaningful use. Such a notion is seriously flawed, however, simply because it does not recognize the specific constraints of the foreign language learning context which differentiate it from an SLA or (to a lesser degree) from an immersion context and thereby confuses aims and means. Two constraints, as already indicated, stand out:

* Constraints of interaction

While the task of learning the language in a SLA context corresponds to the learner's communicative needs, this is hardly the case in a foreign language classroom. On the contrary, to the extent that the language is the object rather than medium of study, the learner is only too aware that the exchanges he is involved in -- at least in the early stages of the learning process -- represent simulated rather than genuine speech acts and are entered into to learn/practise the language rather than to achieve a communicative purpose. As Roberts (1994:3) was to put it, in the foreign language as opposed to an SLA context "the same opportunities for communicative interaction do not exist" and to the extent that the learner is not involved in activities which have 'motivational force', it is unrealistic to expect him to infer the underlying rule system through communicative interaction.

* Constraints on exposure

Similarly, while it is true that a child in an SLA or immersion programme can internalize an L2 by extensive exposure to it, this is simply not true in a foreign language

context. The learner, as Hawkins (1984:178) points out, not only has limited opportunities

to practise/use the target language -- possibly only "two and a half minutes each week" --

but is involved in a process where "the mother tongue actively erodes the new skills

between one lesson and the next" (Hawkins 1981:4). The effect of the latter process is, he

(ibid.:98) continues, only too predictable:

> *"... the foreign language teacher finds yesterday's tender seedlings of French, German or Spanish lying blighted and flattened by the gale of English"*

The notion of 'authentic' language in the classroom can, in this framework, appear perverse.

Authentic language means random language and it would seem self- defeating if learners

with such little contact time were not aided to make sense of the data by a careful selection

and sequencing of items. As Hornsey (1994:7) suggests, authentic language use is more an

aim than a means since "authentic materials are not necessarily the medium through which a

learner can progress most effectively towards eventual authentic use of the target

language".

The combined effect of restricted time and lack of opportunities for communicative

interaction mean that seeking to replicate an SLA or immersion programme in the foreign

language context can be both inappropriate and inefficient. As Widdowson (op.cit.:161)

points out in his review of communicative methodology, "Their (i.e. the learners') doing

does not seem to lead naturally to knowing, as had been optimistically assumed" and they

often end up, therefore, learning the language which enables them to carry out a given task

without *learning from* the language those rules which will enable them to carry out further

tasks in different contexts. As Cammish (1975:226) was to put it, the fact that they are

often limited to 'set expressions' can leave them little better than their "... speechless

predecessors of the grammar-grind era".

In the foreign language classroom, even more than in an immersion classroom, the fact that 'systemic' knowledge cannot and does not arise spontaneously from use means that, as Widdowson (op.cit.:112) continues, there will need to be an initial focus on form and that "... this focusing on form ... will usually have to be artificially induced by some contrivance or other in a foreign language situation". The fact that learners' attention will need to be directed to language form rather than function in the early stages means 'tapping' the cognitive skills already developed through L1, in particular the ability to detect patterns in the data to which they are exposed and to apply these patterns in other contexts. More precisely, it means drawing upon what Widdowson (ibid.:45) refers to as the learners' "capability of analysis" or what Vygotsky (op.cit.:195) earlier called a "certain degree of maturity in the native language", i.e. the analytic competence developed specifically through L1 literacy skills. This does not mean that this will be sufficient in and of itself to learn the L2. On the contrary, as Dodson (1985) or Hawkins (1984) have stressed, this is only the first stage[30] in a process in which conscious attention to form becomes spontaneous use via a series of problem-solving activities in which the emphasis shifts to ever more extra-linguistic goals. It is important to recognize however that, while only the first stage in the learning process, what Roberts (1992:27) refers to as the "structural means of teaching" are the 'pre-requisite' for the "communicative ends of learning".

The learner's cognitive skills developed through L1 are not only vital for effective language learning but they are also crucial to sustain motivation. As Widdowson (op.cit.:152) was to suggest, if the learning process is to be effective, it has to be "consistent with their (i.e. the learners') cognitive and affective dispositions. Artifice, like art, has to carry conviction". As already argued however, the decontextualized and artificial nature of the process can make it appear remote from, and unrelated to, learners' interests and needs. The latter may lose sight of the eventual aim when the 'investment' is too long-

term and when there are few opportunities for practice and use. In such a situation, the willingness of the learner to persevere with the activity depends above all, as Roberts (1992:22) argued, upon his "metacognitive and metalinguistic awareness".

Of course, the ability of the child to understand the long-term goal might not be enough, in itself, to valorize the language. This is particularly true in a country such as the UK where, as Cortese (1990) points out, the international role of English as a lingua franca makes it difficult to awaken either instrumental or integrative motivation in secondary school pupils. Even though, she argues (ibid.:59), it may be possible to justify foreign language study in terms of national need, the fact that it is impossible to predict which language any student may require means that there is often little (or no) match between national and individual needs:

> "... a utilitarian approach may appear to be more 'motivational' than others but, since it does not relate to the needs and interests of the learners but rather to those of industry, its longer-term success is doubtful".

While motivation stems from the wider social valorization of the L2, however, the ability of the learner to conceptualize the nature of the learning process is crucial in avoiding negative reaction to its decontextualized nature.

2.4   CONCLUSION

It has been argued in this chapter that the child's language development should be viewed as a process of functional differentiation in which the mastery of new skills depends upon his ability to extract meaning more from the linguistic as opposed to extra-linguistic context. This includes the transfer between L1 and L2 and, within L2, various categories of acquisition/learning such as second language acquisition, immersion and foreign language programmes. It is suggested that the principal difference between the latter is the extent of

'systemic' knowledge (developed through L1) that the learner needs to bring to the learning process in order to deal with its increasingly decontextualized nature, i.e. one in which language is more and more, so to speak, its own context.

It should be pointed out that, in all three categories analyzed, the aim of the acquisition/learning process is identical, that is, to enable the learner to use the L2 spontaneously and accurately in formal and informal situations. Helping the learner to achieve this goal must depend, however, upon the inter-relation of socio-cognitive variables in any specific case. In the context-embedded SLA situation, communicative skills develop naturally out of social interaction and the importance of mother tongue maintenance is mainly to foster those analytic skills which will facilitate the transfer from communicative to analytic competence in the L2. In the less context-embedded immersion programmes, where interaction in the L2 is limited to the school, the transfer of analytic skills from the L1 to the L2 is important in making the learning process more efficient and overcoming problems in the competence achieved. In the least context-embedded process, that of foreign language learning, a higher degree of metalinguistic awareness is required both to access the target language and valorize the learning experience.

It should be borne in mind that the above categories are not meant to be exhaustive and represent merely points on the second language acquisition/learning continuum. Even within the given categories, there are considerable variations and the differences between immersion programmes in Canada and Hong Kong, or between learning an internationally valorized foreign language like English[31] in Italy or a less-internationally valorized one like Italian in the UK, should not be minimized. Their value lies in illustrating the different ways in which socio-cognitive variables inter-relate and the implications of this for effective language teaching policy and practice. As Falvey (1987:169) points out, many programmes "... concentrate on use to the exclusion of usage (knowledge of the system) while others

concentrate on usage to the exclusion of use, and objectives are often totally neglected."

Being able to make decisions on the balance between the two depends upon an appreciation of what the learner brings to the learning process and the constraints of that process.

An interesting -- and quite unique -- example of the complexity of the inter-relation between these two variables can be seen at the European Schools. The latter offer a range of language courses which combine aspects of both second and foreign language learning. In the following chapter, we will seek to describe the principles underlying the school policy and practice and to evaluate how far it corresponds pedagogically to the needs of the learners.

Notes (chapter 2).

1. See Wells (1981:252), Halliday (1975:142-143), Donaldson (1978:89).

2. For further details on Speech Acts see Austin (1962:108 & 120), Searle (1972: 137 & 141), Hawkins (1981:207-210), Hawkins (1984:92 & 156), Romaine (1984:274-277) etc.

3. See also Wells (1986: 132, 134-135, 140, 145 etc.), Donaldson (1978), Bernstein (1972).

4. Cf Halliday (1975:143, 144-145), Troike (1984:47 & 49), Rivers (1968:262). Cf also Widdowson (1990:170-171) who comments that "pictorial and diagrammatical devices are based on cultural convention just as linguistic devices are."

5. Cf Halliday (1975:3, 9-11 & 33-35).

6. Vygotsky (1986:195) considers phonology and syntax as the strong points in L1 but grammar and spelling as the weak points at least in so far as "the child is unconscious of the sounds he pronounces, and in learning to spell, he has great difficulty in dividing a word into its constituent sounds". By contrast, in L2 the strong points are grammar, writing and spelling but the weak points are "pronunciation" and "spontaneous speech".

7. Cf also Halliday (1975:7, 34-36 & 142-143) in relation to the gradual move from context to language, from phase I to phase III.

8. This is based on the Rousseauist view that man is basically good but society corrupts.

9. Cf studies quoted by McLaughlin (1987:142-143 & 147) showing that L2 beginners tend to focus more on form than advanced L2 learners or native speakers who tend to pay greater attention to changes in meaning rather than to changes in syntax. This is because the former have not yet achieved the degree of automaticity required to process form. See also Lambert's (1986:88 & 95) conclusion on communication mode experiments: the need to place a greater stress on the form depends on the level of language proficiency reached in L2.

10. In other words, as Oliver (1994:18) puts it, "(it) is only when the learner has internalized the language pattern underlying functional use that s/he can, at a later stage, use the items for more personal communicative purposes".

11. In the L2 context of a classroom where there are no extra-linguistic clues, meaning emerges entirely from the text. Such a text must be accurate to provide all the clues for correct understanding.

12. Cf also Skehan (1988:52-55).

13. Vygotsky (1986:196) for instance points out that " ... a foreign language facilitates mastering the higher forms of the native language." This seems to be confirmed by studies in Sweden where the early introduction of a foreign language led to better performances in L1 (Hamers & Blanc 1989:54). In a similar vein Swain & Lapkin (1982:41) report that early total immersion students in Canada performed "as well as, or better than," monolingual control groups despite suffering "temporary lags" initially.

14. See Perera (1986:518) who considers writing in L1 as a "potent agent" which promotes the development of higher mental functions.

15. Cf Wells (1981), Donaldson (1978), Vygotsky (1986), Ellis (1985), Hawkins (1984), McLaughlin (1987) etc.

16. Contradictory statements concerning the early introduction of L2 in the Canadian immersion programmes and those in the USA for instance can be resolved only when differences in the level of cognitive skills in L1, and of the valorization of both L1 skills and L1 culture, are taken into account for each context.

17. Cf chapter 1 for definition from Hamers & Blanc (1989:121-123).

18. Cf Cummins (1979:245 & 246) who examines four types of "educational treatments" -- namely submersion, immersion, transitional and maintenance programmes -- and who compares "the value of different approaches for different children".

19. As Kershook (1989:107) remarks, minority group pupils "should not be expected to leave at the school gates essential components of their personalities and experience in terms of the language and culture of their homes." However, whilst stressing the need to valorize the linguistic and cultural asset of the mother tongue, he also underlines the vital importance of access to the language of "influence and power". In a similar way Widdowson (1990:152) recognizes the individual's right to rebel against the standard language in a L1 situation, but he warns that such individual will remain "powerless" unless he acquires the linguistic ability to put forward his point of view.

20. Di Pietro (1978:106) & Merchant (1989:133) also suggest that the view that bilingualism has negative effects is totally unfounded. They argue that bilingualism should be seen as an asset rather than a handicap.

21. Cf Swain & Lapkin (1982:49) who provide a table which indicates the percentage of French allocated in various immersion programmes.

22. Cohen & Swain (1976:57).

23. The issue of greater metalinguistic awareness linked to bilingualism is not being considered here but further reference can be found in Cummins (1978:137 and 1986a:31&32, Bild & Swain (1989), Doyle *et al.* (1978:18)) and Saunders (1982) for comparative comments between monolinguals and bilinguals.

24.   Swain (1986b:132).

25.   Cf also Pierson (1987:54, 55 & 73).

26.   Roberts (1992:22).

27.   Grenfell (1991:8).

28.   CILT Ready Reference Sheet 152, London January 1985: 1 & 2.

29.   National Curriculum Modern Foreign Languages for ages 11 to 16, DES, October 1990: 6, 9, 34 & 37.

30.   Cf Widdowson (1978:15, 17, 67 etc.) who stresses the need to develop both 'use' and 'usage'.

31.   The motivation to learn English in Holland and Sweden will differ from that of learning English in Italy or France. This is because Dutch and Swedish are, to some extent, internationally less widely spoken than Italian or French.

CHAPTER THREE. LANGUAGE EDUCATION AT THE EUROPEAN SCHOOLS.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter sought to demonstrate that second language acquisition/learning is a complex process and that the proficiency reached will depend upon the complex inter-relation between the contextual conditions and what the individual brings to that context, both cognitively and affectively. As indicated, it is possible to see the inter-relation of the context and the learner as part of a continuum which moves from natural language acquisition at one extreme to instructed foreign language learning at the other. Within this continuum, each context has to be examined in terms of its own specific characteristics. The European Schools are a pertinent example. In one sense, they represent a context which has many points of similarity with the immersion programmes in Canada, particularly in so far as an L2 is introduced at an early stage and is eventually used as the medium of instruction for given subjects at the secondary level.[1] On the other hand, however, the fact that there are differences in the amount of exposure to the L2, the precise way in which it is introduced and its relation with L1 and L3 would seem to warrant classifying the European Schools as a separate and distinct category.

My aim in this chapter is to examine in some detail the history and nature of language provision in the European Schools in order to set a framework for posing two research questions based upon the model outlined in the previous chapter. These are:

(1) To what extent does the development of analytic competence in the study of a foreign language assume greater significance than in a second language context?

(2) To what extent can affective factors partly offset poor analytic skills in the

mastery of a second and/or foreign language or prevent progress despite good analytical skills?

It is assumed that the complex language provision that exists at the European Schools, the fact that all pupils are required to study a range of languages (L1, L2 and L3) at varying degrees of contextualization, will permit an in-depth study of the above.

In the current chapter, I will give a general outline of the organization and objectives common to all European schools in order to bring out their specific characteristics. I will then analyze in some detail those factors concerning the provision of L1, L2 and L3 -- the latter two as either second or foreign languages -- at the European School at Culham (UK). I will finally, within this framework, outline the aims of my research and justify the procedures undertaken.

3.2   BACKGROUND TO THE EUROPEAN SCHOOLS

The first European School was set up in October 1953 in Luxembourg and was officially recognized in April 1957. It was soon to be followed by the establishment of eight other such schools in Europe, namely 3 in Belgium (one located at Mol, the other two in Brussels), 2 in Germany (in Munich and Karlsruhe), 1 in Italy (Varese), 1 in the Netherlands (Bergen) and finally 1, in 1978, in the United Kingdom (at Culham, Oxfordshire).[2] While the European Schools are "jointly financed by Member States and the European Community", they are not as such "institutions of the European Community".[3] They are controlled by a Board of Governors which includes representatives from each member state. They were, as the House of Lords' Report No 48 (1990:5) puts it, originally set up to "provide education for the children of employees of the European Community" and they must, therefore, cater for the linguistic and educational needs of children coming

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from quite different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.[4] The children, referred to as 'entitlement children', have the right to enter such schools and to receive free education[5] from nursery to university entrance level. Every effort is made to ensure the least possible disruption to the child's education and decisions as to which language section may be most suitable for a given child are taken on the basis of consultation between the headteacher and parents. It might be added that many schools also admit a limited number of local, fee-paying children, i.e. non-entitled children[6].

Acceptance by the school is not, Baetens-Beardsmore & Kohls (1988a:67) argues, "dependent on elitist financial considerations". While it may be true, however, that in principle "all social classes are present in the schools, from the children of porters or other manual workers to those of directors general and other cabinet officials"[7], it should also be pointed out that the former are in a distinct minority. Indeed, as Baetens-Beardsmore & Swain (1985:4) themselves admit, there exists a "preponderance of higher economic bracket children, given the mainly bureaucratic nature of the majority of parents' occupations". While fees[8] are relatively small compared with those charged in private schools, they may well be seen as an excluding factor for 'non-entitled' pupils and this may explain the House of Lords' (1990:31 [sub-committee c]) comment that European schools "cater in the main for the more academically gifted pupils".

3.3   OBJECTIVES

The primary aim of the European Schools is to guarantee educational continuity[9], particularly in terms of mother tongue maintenance, for the children whose parents are often highly mobile; this includes ensuring their successful reintegration back into the national school system on their return to the home country. The European Schools'

Prospectus (1992:9) talks, for example, of the importance of giving "pupils confidence in their own cultural identity" as "the bedrock for their development as European citizens". What is interesting about this view of the educational process is the fact that valorization of the mother tongue is not seen as counterpoised to embracing the wider European ideal but as fully compatible with it. This is reflected in the specific policy towards languages where the aims are two-fold: (a) to ensure the development of "high standards in speaking and writing both the mother tongue and two or more foreign languages" and (b) to "foster tolerance, co-operation, communication and concern for others throughout the school community" (ibid.:9).

3.4   LANGUAGE STRUCTURE

To meet the mother tongue requirements of its pupils, each school consists of several language sections whose main medium of instruction is, for example, German, French, English etc. All sections and all European schools follow the same basic curriculum[10] and, consequently, aims and objectives in respect of L1/L2/L3 apply to all sections regardless of whether L1/L2/L3 is the language of the host country or not.

3.4.1   Mother Tongue (L1)

With twelve states[11] currently members of the European Community, basic instruction in the mother tongue/first language (L1) of the pupils covers a range of nine official languages i.e. Danish, Dutch, English, French, German, Greek, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish. However, whilst the larger schools may be able to offer up to 8 or 9 language sections, in other schools the relatively low number of pupils in a particular language may not warrant the provision of that particular language section. Since L1 maintenance is

considered as a basic requirement for cultural self-identity and academic success, however, schools make every effort to provide at least the mother tongue subject for children for whom there is no language section available. For the other subjects, these children usually join the section whose main medium of instruction is that of the host country and select the language as their L2, but should they enrol, for 'well-founded reasons' in a section other than English, French or German, they must chose English, French or German as their L2[12].

An example might be the case of a Danish pupil in England joining the English section with Danish as his first language and English as his second.

Specific cases will be given when necessary in my presentation of data with reference to the European School at Culham (UK). In all cases, L1 is compulsory from the beginning of the primary to the end of the secondary phase.

3.4.2 Second and third languages (L2 and L3)

The provision of the second language (L2) has to comply with three provisos. First, it is compulsory for all pupils from the first year of the primary phase right through until the end of the secondary phase. Second, the choice is limited to those languages often referred to as the 'vehicular' or 'working' languages of the EC, English, French or German[13]. Consequently, in England, Belgium and Germany, students other than those in the language section of the host country may, and as a rule tend to, choose the language of the host community as their L2 so that it is effectively a second (rather than foreign) language.[14] In Italy and in Holland, on the other hand, L2 is for most students a foreign rather than a second language. Third, from the third year onwards of the secondary phase, students are expected to have reached a level of proficiency sufficient to allow them to cope with a subject such as Human Sciences through L2 as the medium of instruction for both receptive and productive tasks.

The third language (L3) is introduced from the second year of the secondary phase and remains compulsory until the fifth year, after which the student may either discontinue it or retain it as an option until the final year. In the latter case, the level of motivation is inevitably fairly high. The range of languages pupils can choose from usually includes all nine official languages, other than L1 and L2 of course, although the availability of any depends on a sufficient number of students choosing it. In Italy and Holland, students may choose the language of their host country as their L3 so that it is, in reality, a second rather than a foreign language. In the other countries, and for students in the language section of the host country, L3 will generally be a foreign language, unless they had prior exposure to L3 in a SLA context.

Continuity in language learning, particularly that between the primary and secondary phases in the case of L2, is seen as vital. This is why, once they have made a particular choice, pupils are not allowed to change their L2 and opt for a different second/foreign language, except in special circumstances.[15] Moreover, when children tend to transfer somewhat later in the primary cycle from various national schools to the European school, additional tuition[16] is provided for those without a previous second/foreign language base. This is to enable them to catch up with other children who have had L2 from the first year. This also applies to children without a primary background in a L2 and who join the first, second or third year of the secondary cycle.

Teachers at the European schools are native speakers of the foreign language they teach, usually the class teachers in the language section of the foreign language in question, but they are also expected to be experienced in the teaching of their mother tongue as a foreign language. Consequently, they must be able to refer to a common language -- usually L1 for L2 students, the common L2 for L3 students with various L1 backgrounds -- when the need arises for the purpose of effective understanding.

3.5   COURSE STRUCTURE

Pupils' time at the school is structured on the following basis:

(a) nursery level: age 4 - 6;

(b) primary level: age 6 - 11; and

(c) secondary level for a further seven years leading to the Baccalaureate (usually at age 18).

3.5.1   Nursery Level

The main emphasis at this level is to lay "the foundation for the primary school by concentrating on the development of their [i.e. the pupils'] mother tongue and their social skills".[17]

3.5.2   Primary Level

As opposed to immersion schools in Canada, which use 100 per cent target language and which teach reading and writing skills through the L2 initially, European Schools place considerable emphasis on developing a sound base in reading and writing in L1 before L2 is introduced. The context is of course very different: in Canada, immersion children are motivated by very specific bicultural needs and when they attend French immersion schools they live in an L1 environment (English) so that there is absolutely no risk of L1 loss.[18] By contrast, such a risk does exist for many European School children who live in a country whose language is other than their first language. Nevertheless, even for children in the language section whose first language is that of the host country, and who are thus not faced with a danger of L1 loss, priority is still given to the development of literacy skills through the mother tongue first. As a rule, the L2 is not introduced until November of the first year of primary school so as to allow the child to 'settle down' in his

first language. For the first two years, the number of hours allocated to the L2 is 2 1/2 hours (5 periods of 30 minutes)[19] compared to 8 hours (16 periods of 30 minutes) to L1 -- i.e. less than one third the time in a total school week of 22 hours excluding recreation (cf table a).

<u>PRIMARY LEVEL</u>

YEAR	1	2	3	4	5
age	6/7	7/8	8/9	9/10	10/11
L1 periods	16x30	16x30	9x45	9x45	9x45
hours	8	8	6h45	6h45	6h45
L2 periods	5x30	5x30	5x45	5x45	5x45
hours	2h30	2h30	3h45	3h45	3h45
European periods			3x45	3x45	3x45
hours			2h15	2h15	2h15
TOTAL hours	22	22	24h45	24h45	24h45

Table a: Course structure at primary level

The first and second years of primary school are, therefore, seen as a period of initiation during which the child becomes aware of foreign languages and focuses on identifying and practising the sound system of the language in question. It is limited to 'activités d'éveil'[20] which encourage him to participate in very basic oral activities, albeit mostly imitative, through games and songs:

> "... *l'enfant emmagasine certaines notions de deuxième langue et apprend à écouter et à répondre sans nécessairement employer une réponse verbale.*"[21]

In years 3, 4 and 5, the time allocated to L2 increases to 5 periods of 45 minutes a week (i.e. 3h 45) whilst L1 is reduced to 9 periods of 45 minutes (6h 45). Reading and writing in L2 start gradually in year 3 and it is only in years 4 and 5, when the approach to L2 becomes more formal, that they are more systematically introduced. The child at this stage is required to learn not only how to use the L2 for purposes of communication (both oral and written) but also to analyze its structure. However, since the child has already developed literacy skills through his L1, he is not expected to learn all over again how to read and write. As Lappara (1993:39) puts it:

> *"Théoriquement... nous n'apprenons pas à lire à nos élèves de langue II. Nous leur apprenons une transcription, sans toucher au mécanisme cognitif."*

Cummins and Swain's (1986:97) principle of 'first things first', which emphasizes the need to develop a good literacy base in L1 before introducing L2, is thus very much in evidence. The skills the child builds up through reading and writing in L1 -- the ability to handle decontextualized language, to anticipate and encode/decode at speed -- are expected to be transferred to the L2:

> *"Un enfant qui a suffisamment d'expérience d'écoute d'une deuxième langue et qui peut déjà lire couramment dans une langue, peut généralement lire une deuxième langue sans trop de difficultés."*[22]

While the child is expected to recognize different styles of writing -- with books using the French, as opposed to English, writing style -- he is not expected to change the way he writes in an L1 when he writes in the L2.[23]

After 5 years of primary tuition in the second/foreign language (L2), the child is expected to have reached a suitable level to enter the secondary cycle. One reservation, however, needs to be expressed with regards to bilinguals who, as Baetens-Beardsmore & Kohls (1988b:5) point out, receive "no adequate stimulation".[24] Finally, it might be noted that, from the third year of primary school, 'European hours' totalling three 45 minute

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periods are introduced. These consist of social and cultural activities which do not follow a strictly controlled programme but which allow children from the different sections, but of the same age group, to work together. The 'lingua franca' is mostly used but children are free to communicate in whatever language they choose and no specific formal linguistic tuition is imposed.[26]

3.5.3 Secondary Level

A child usually embarks upon his secondary education at the age of 11 or 12. The number of hours allocated to the L1 is further reduced to 6 periods (4 1/2 hrs) a week for the first year, 5 periods (3h 45) for the second year and 4 periods (3hrs) thereafter -- these figures being out of a total of 32 periods a week the first 2 years and 31 to 33 periods maximum a week for the third year (cf table b).

L2 is also reduced to 4 periods of 45 minutes a week (i.e. 3hrs) for the first three years but, from Year 3 onwards, Human Sciences (covering history and geography) are taught through the L2 as opposed to L1. Since the Human Sciences are allocated 3 periods a week (2 1/4 hrs) in Year 3, this means that pupils are exposed to the L2 for a total of 5 1/4 hours per week in that year. Thereafter, in Years 4 and 5, the total amount of time in which pupils are exposed to the L2 remains the same -- 5 1/4 hours -- but the ratio between the amount of time teaching the language, and the amount of time teaching through the language, is in reverse proportion to that of year 3. Whereas the teaching of the L2 is reduced to 3 periods (2 1/4 hrs) a week, the teaching of history and geography increases to a total of 4 periods (3 hours). L3 is usually introduced on the basis of 3 periods a week (i.e. 2 1/4 hours) from Year 2 onwards. An optional fourth language, which is allocated 4 periods, may be chosen from Year 4 onwards.

SECONDARY LEVEL.

Year		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Age		11/ 12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18
L1	period	6 ↓	5 ↓	4 ↓	4	4	4	4
	hour	4h30↓	3h45↓	3h ↓	3h	3h	3h	3h
Adv.L1*	period						3	3
	hour						2h15	2h15
L2	period	4	4	4	3 ↓	3	3	3
	hour	3h	3h	3h	2h15↓	2h15	2h15	2h15
Adv.L2*	period						3	3
	hour						2h15	2h15
Hist/Geo	period			3	4 ↑	4	4	4
	hour			2h15	3h↑	3h	3h	3h
Adv Hist*	period						2	2
	hour						1h30	1h30
Adv Geo*	period						2	2
	hour						1h30	1h30
L3	period		3	3	3	3	4↑ *	4 *
	hour		2h15	2h15	2h15	2h15	3↑ *	3 *
L4 *	period				4	4	4	4
	hour				3h	3h	3h	3h

P.E. (compulsory with 3 periods of 45 minutes for years 1,2 and 3 down to 2 periods of 45 minutes year 6 and 7) and Economics (optional from year 4 with 4 periods of 45 minutes) are taught in the language of the host country[27].

* = optional   ↑= increases   ↓= decreases

All periods are of 45 minutes duration.

Table b: Course structure, secondary level

It should be noted that, in Years 6 and 7, L1 and L2 remain unchanged in terms of their provision but both, or either, can be taken to an advanced level with three additional periods being allocated to them. Similarly, both or either history or geography, still taught through the L2, can be taken to an advanced level with an additional two periods being allocated to either. If L3 and L4 are chosen as options, they are allocated four periods each. Consequently, a student may choose a language-oriented programme in year 6 and 7, in which 14 periods or more are devoted to L2 if the study of history, geography and/or

economics are included, rather than select scientific options.

3.5.4 The European Baccalaureate

The European baccalaureate is at present the only final examination taken in the European Schools and it is held at the end of the seventh year of secondary. Students awarded this certificate have the right "to seek admission to any university or institution of higher education in the European Community".[26]

The assessment is based on an overall average with a minimum passmark of 6 out of 10. Grades are worked out on the basis of preliminary marks and written and oral examinations. A system of coefficients allows weighting to be given to subjects regarded as important. This includes languages since both the first (L1) and second language (L2) are compulsory and are among the subjects with a 100% weighting. The preliminary mark refers to class marks which include coursework, diagnostic tests and pupil participation, and accounts for 15% of the total mark (7.5% at Christmas and 7.5 % at Easter); written examinations account for 25% (12.5% at Christmas and 12.5% at Easter). The final year examinations account for the remaining 60%, with 36% allocated to the written part of the examination and 24% to the oral part. The third language, optional anyway, follows the same pattern at Christmas and Easter but for the final year examination, the pupil must choose between oral and written assessment.

Candidates for the baccalaureate at the end of the secondary cycle have to take four oral examinations and five written examinations as a minimum. L1 and L2 are compulsory subjects in both written and oral so that, quite conceivably, the candidate may have to, rather than choose to, take his L3 as an oral or a written option.

Oral examinations last 20 minutes with a further 20 minutes allowed for preparation of the text to be examined. The written examination consists of three sections:

a) a series of questions testing comprehension (40% of the marks);

b) a question where the student is required to give his personal response to the text (20% of the marks); and

c) an essay (40% of the marks).

Reading comprehension and writing abilities (grammatical and analytical) are all tested. Both written and oral examinations consequently require a good level of analytic and metalinguistic awareness on the part of the pupil if he is to succeed. All students from the European Schools are entered for the same final examination: French as L2, for instance, is the same in Brussels, Culham or Varese etc. However, a student may pass the baccalaureate without attaining the passmark for his L2 if the marks in his other subjects are good enough to compensate, although it should be pointed out that he can fail only 2 subjects overall. This outline is limited given the complexity of the regulations which includes minor changes from year to year. (cf appendix 1 for examples of past papers)

3.5.5 Conclusion

As Baetens-Beardsmore & Swain (1985:5) point out:

"The European School bilingual model is primarily designed as a language maintenance programme, concentrating on fostering the dominant language in a complex multilingual setting."

Whatever the language of the school environment, the mother tongue (L1) is never devalued nor ridiculed and the question of assimilation into the host community, and the acculturation problems that this can provoke, never arises. The model of language provision represented by the European School is not, therefore, comparable in any way to any 'submersion' model in so far as maintenance of the L1 is always a prime concern.

In general, the European Schools are recognized as very successful and examination results in July 1994 would certainly seem to vindicate such a reputation: 906

out of 957 candidates (94.7%, a slight decrease over 1993 with 96.3%) passed the baccalaureate, including 52 out of the 53 candidates at Culham, U.K. Specific details with regards to L1, L2 and L3 results will be provided in the next chapter. Suffice here to note that Baetens-Beardsmore & Kohls (1988b:5) echo a general opinion when stating that the level of knowledge of languages in European Schools is high, and the House of Lords Report (1990:20) comments, in relation to European Schools:

> *"...they excel in their provision for language teaching and in promoting cultural understanding amongst their pupils."*

The reasons why European Schools are expected to help pupils to achieve high levels of L2 proficiency, whether as a foreign or a second language, may be summarized as follows:

1)   parental involvement and expectations are very high and attendance at these schools is on a voluntary basis;

2)   the schools themselves, at all levels from the headteacher to the students, value and promote languages, L1, L2 and L3, and encourage school trips and pupil exchanges between European schools[28];

3)   L1 receives very high priority in the initial stages of schooling and it is maintained and continually refined through formal instruction. Reading and writing in L2 are introduced only in the 3rd year of primary when it is expected that the child has acquired such skills in L1 that their transfer from L1 to L2 can take place. Consequently, it would appear that L2 teaching is always kept in step with the level of cognitive development in L1.[29]

4)   The multilingual environment of the schools themselves creates a linguistic and cultural milieu which not only fosters high levels of valorization but which also lowers the affective filter, i.e. reduces anxiety and fear, since all children are in the

same predicament: all have to use a language in which they are less fluent at some stage or other, whether formally or informally, in the school. As Baetens-Beardsmore & Kohls (1988b:10) point out, since they all share a similar experience, "no feelings of superiority or inferiority are generated over linguistic inadequacies". For learners whose L2 is the language of the environment outside school, i.e. those for whom it plays effectively the role of a second language, opportunities for interactive use in the informal context and 'immediate pertinence' are an added bonus likely to increase motivation for learning in the formal context;

5)   L2 is introduced early at primary school level with the specific aim of initiating the child to a language other than his mother tongue and of developing a sufficient level of proficiency for the instruction of history and geography through the L2 from Year 3.

3.6   THE EUROPEAN SCHOOL AT CULHAM (UK)

The European School at Culham was set up in 1978 to provide education for the employees of the JET (Joint European Taurus) nuclear fusion project at Culham (Oxfordshire, U.K.). The total number of students in 1993-1994 was 841: 98 in nursery, 303 in primary and 440 in secondary. However, the proportion of the number of 'entitled children' has gone down over the years to 33% in 1993-1994.[30]

There are at present 5 language sections, namely Dutch, English, French, German and Italian, although at the nursery level there is no Italian section. Nevertheless, children of nationalities for which there is no section are given exposure to L1 even at the nursery level: Italian and Danish pupils, for example, receive 5 periods a week of mother tongue tuition given by L1 teachers.

3.6.1 Language provision at Culham

English as an L2 at Culham is in a second language context, as opposed to French or German which are in a foreign language context. Consequently both linguistic contexts need to be considered separately.

(a) English is the 'lingua franca' of the European School at Culham and the language of the wider social environment. Pupils and teachers alike generally speak English among themselves if their mother tongue is not the mother tongue of the interlocutor. Only if they are more fluent and more at ease with another language will they resort to a common language spoken and understood by both. The motivation to learn English, given its relevance in the immediate environmental context and the use/exposure in and out of school, is extremely high. L2 learners of English thus inevitably tend to progress very rapidly at the informal level, which operates as a base for, and sustains motivation in, their formal studies of English. Initially, the level of interactive use and contextualization is high. As demands become increasingly decontextualized, however, those with good cognitive levels in their L1 can be expected to perform better in academic tasks in the L2 whereas those with weaker cognitive levels may fossilize or improve only at the communicative level of spontaneous use, i.e. attain good oral skills but fail to perform well in written tasks.

(b) On the other hand, in the English section at Culham, students with English as their L1 must opt for French or German as their L2 (since, as already indicated, L2 selection is limited to English, German or French). Irish pupils[31], who usually have English as their mother tongue anyway, can take Irish as an additional subject, usually as L3 or as an option for L4. As there is no Danish section at Culham, Danish students also generally join the English section, but the number of Danish pupils is nevertheless sufficiently high to warrant the availability of Danish as a subject taught as L1. Thus they receive most of their instruction in English but they can select Danish as their first language subject and English

as L2, although Danish is not offered at an advanced level at the later stages of their schooling, i.e. years 6 and 7 at secondary level. There are also some Swedish students, many of whom are bilingual in both Swedish and English, who usually join the English section with English as their first language subject and most of whom choose German as their L2. Consequently, the majority of the students who decide to opt for French or German as their L2 are in the English section, most of them being English native speakers. A few students from other sections do decide to take French rather than English as their L2 because, prior to joining the school at Culham, they may have acquired a good knowledge of French/German and reached a level superior to that of their English. Alternatively, it may simply be a question of personal choice[32], in which case the level of motivation is generally high.

L3 learners of French (or German) come from the various sections, the majority having English as L2 and students from the English section having German (or French) as L2. Most L3 learners at Culham (U.K.) are therefore learning L3 as a foreign language unless they are bilinguals with L3 as part of their bilingual upbringing. Specific details will be provided in chapter four.

3.6.2 Second and foreign languages at Culham

At the European school at Culham, French or German whether as L2 or L3 is thus learnt as a foreign language, in contrast to English as L2 which is acquired/learnt more as a second language. This is an important point to stress in so far as comments relating to the mother tongue may suggest otherwise. The House of Lords' report (1990:10), for instance, claims that the 1989 results provide "no evidence" for the assumption that mother tongue results are "directly influenced by the geographical site of the school". The reasons for this, with regards to L1, are obvious. Most students have to choose the language section of their

native language, i.e. their L1 is their mother tongue. L1 is, therefore, highly maintained informally, through parental support and through peers and teachers of the language section, as well as formally through the use of the language as a subject of study and as a medium of instruction for many basic subjects.

This observation concerning the lack of influence of the 'geographical site' on language proficiency in the case of L1 should not, however, lead to the assumption that the same applies to L2 or any other linguistic context. On the contrary, the results in L2 do not validate such supposition, as the data in the following chapter reveals, and the significance of the context is very much at the centre of Baetens-Beardsmore & Swain's study (1985:1) conducted at the European School in Brussels where they identify "the role of the environment and the opportunity to use the target language as decisive factors in determining the nature of the model and the amount of target language input required at school."

By comparing the level of French of thirteen-year- old students in Brussels with the level of French of students of similar age in the Immersion Schools in Canada, Baetens-Beardsmore & Swain (ibid.:14) showed that "similar levels of target language proficiency have been achieved from approximately 1,300 hours of classroom contact compared with approximately 4,500 hours", in other words, despite less "in-school contact time with the target language" at the European School in Brussels. This is because, they explain, in Brussels French "tends to be the lingua franca" (ibid.:13) thus enjoying more "immediate pertinence" as the Belgian environmental context provides greater opportunities of use: "French is used spontaneously outside the classroom in Brussels, rarely in Canada" (ibid.:14). The availability of French reading material and of French T.V also increases the input to which the learner is exposed as indeed does the linguistic background of the parents:

"... 63% of the fathers and 57% of the mothers in Brussels were said to be fluent in French, which is far less the case for Canadian immersion parents, so that parental linguistic knowledge might play some role in its promotion among the children." (ibid.:12).

It should be noted, however, that the standardized tests (cloze test, listening and reading comprehension) used in the comparative study tend to emphasize receptive as opposed to productive skills and may fail to pick up the superiority of the European schools pupils at the productive competence level. In reality, these tests may actually tend to penalize the Brussels pupils in comparison with their equals in Canada since, as Swain & Lapkin (1982) pointed out, the Canadian immersion programmes are weakest in terms of developing productive skills due to the paucity of 'sustained contact' and interactive use, i.e. of opportunities to practise as well as listen to the language. In Brussels, on the other hand, higher levels of interaction outside school, combined with lessons which tend to focus more on what Baetens-Beardsmore & Kohls term (1988b:9) language as an 'object of study' inside school, may well produce a superiority in productive skills which is simply not reflected in the statistics and the "individual scores on standardised tests and examinations" (ibid.: 8).

The advantage of the environmental context is substantiated in another study by Baetens-Beardsmore & Kohls (ibid.:8) when comparing the level of French as L2 of thirteen-year-old pupils, who had started the language at primary level, with that of French as L3 of fourteen-year-old pupils who had not started the language until the second year of secondary school. After only 250 hours of French as L3, compared to 1300 as L2, results were not significantly lower. While Baetens-Beardsmore & Kohls (ibid.:8) recognize that it is "not easy to find simple explanations for the relatively high scores obtained for French as an L3", the important factor is undoubtedly the environmental context. During activities such as physical education, drama etc.., in mixed groups, the vehicular language, in this

case French the 'lingua franca' is mostly used for communication so that L3 learners of French at Brussels are exposed to a high level of the target language. Similarly, the high level of immediate pertinence and high interactive use outside school is equally applicable to L3 and L2 learners of French, in the Belgian context, which seems to override the time factor in classroom learning. It might also be noted that L3 students of French benefit from greater linguistic tolerance, flexibility and awareness developed through L2: less inhibited, they can transfer their skills from L2 to L3.

At Culham, it is English as L2 which enjoys the advantageous environmental context comparable to that of French as L2 in Brussels. By contrast, French and German are restricted to the context of a classroom and subject to the same constraints of foreign language learning which include limited practice and contact, i.e. where, as Baetens-Beardsmore & Swain (op.cit.:14) put it "... the out of school opportunity to use the target language is not present." Such lack of "immediate pertinence", of the relevance of learning skills for out of school activities, may not only affect motivation but may result in an inadequate development of productive competence, particularly of spontaneous use.

3.6.3　L2 in a foreign language context

Given the significance of opportunities for interactive use -- increasing not only receptive but more importantly productive skills -- the contextual differences applicable to many L2 students in the language section of the host country are therefore not really specifically addressed. No additional time is allocated to compensate for the lack of out-of-school contextual support in the case of L2 in a foreign language learning context. The objectives[33] given for the teaching of L2 in all European Schools at primary level, whilst recognizing the wide variety of L2 linguistic competence ranging from the beginner to the bilingual, appear to be more applicable to learners in an L2 environment. This is because, in

the latter case, the child is more likely to have acquired a linguistic framework in L2 within which to transfer his cognitive skills developed through L1. One might then reasonably expect such a child to understand a short story, to talk about it in his own words and even to write short sentences to summarize it. However, it may be less realistic to expect L2 learners of French in the English section of the school at Culham (U.K.) to attain such high objectives when the environment is non-French speaking and opportunities for practice are virtually nil, whether it be out of school or among peers at school. More often than not, use and exposure are limited to the daily lesson with no support at home.

It is important to emphasize the differences between the acquisition/learning of English (L2) as a second language at Culham and the learning of French and German (L2/L3) as a foreign language since it helps us to form hypotheses about the shifting relation between communicative/analytic competence in each and the increasing problems that arise. According to the model outlined in chapter 2, it may be hypothesized that:

- in the case of English as L2, the wide opportunities for interactive use both in and outside school would ensure the rapid development of communicative skills. The ability of the learner to supplement these with analytic skills needed to handle context-reduced tasks depends, of course upon the degree of proficiency reached in the L1. Considering the valorization of L1 in the European School curriculum, this is likely to be quite high, unlike the situation described by Cummins in relation to minority groups in the USA.

- in the case of French or German as L2, the multilingual context will encourage some communicative skills but to a lesser extent than in the case of English as a second language. Greater emphasis will be placed upon the development of analytic skills to handle the context-reduced tasks of the classroom and, once again, this will depend upon proficiency levels in L1. Poor proficiency levels may undermine successful L2 learning or, on the other hand, reduced opportunities for communicative interaction may undermine

motivation to learn the L2 despite the fact that proficiency levels in L1 may be high.

- in the case of French or German as L3, the lack of almost all opportunities for interactive use mean that analytic skills inevitably take precedence over communicative ones. Success in learning an L3 depends very much, therefore, upon the transfer of cognitive skills from the L1 (and possibly the L2) and upon the ability to valorize an activity where the goal, unlike in English or French/German as L2, is long-term. This may result in even more differentiated results than for English as L2 or French/German as L2.

3.7   SOURCES OF DATA

As can be seen, the above hypotheses see language learning as a result of the interaction between context and cognition with affective factors being a function of the inter-relation of the former two. As European School students come from very heterogeneous and complex linguistic and educational backgrounds, the assessment of these factors will be based upon four sets of data: that arising from academic performance, questionnaires, classroom observation and informal interviews. The motivation for these follows.

3.7.1   Formal tests

It should be recalled that, in L1, formal/academic results may, as Romaine (1984:235) puts it "misdiagnose" real abilities and full potential if children feel intimidated or do not value formal learning. Partly to overcome this, the results of formal tests in L1 over a period of time rather than at one specific point in time will be used as measure of their analytic skills. Second language (i.e. L2/L3) results over the same period of time will be used to ascertain the proficiency reached by the student in the target language. The aim of the comparison between the two will be to establish a link between L1 analytic skills and

proficiency in the L2/L3 and, where such a link is not established, to seek to explain the mismatch in terms of affective factors. As indicated, marked differences are expected in terms of the relation between L1 analytic competence and success in L2 as second/foreign language.

3.7.2 Questionnaires

Questionnaires (see appendix 2) were distributed to pupils in year 5 of primary and years 2, 3, 5 and 6 of secondary level studying French as L2 and as L3. The questionnaires sought to elicit information about:

- students' educational background in order to distinguish between those students studying French purely in a foreign language context and those who may have spent some years abroad in a French environment (i.e. in a second language context) and between those starting French at primary level and those who did not;

- students' social background in so far as it would indicate whether the students benefitted from parental and/or contextual support for their French;

- students' own perception of their level of oral as opposed to written French;

- students' perception of their level in L3 compared to their level in L2, in classes where they were studying a third language;

- students' reactions to their being taught history and geography through the medium of L2, in particular in so far as it may, or may not, help improve their level of L2.

- students' assessment of their main skills i.e. reading, writing, understanding and speaking, together with that of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation for L2 and L3 when applicable.

The questionnaires were administered during the last term of the academic year 1992-93.

3.7.3 Classroom observation

The aim of classroom observation was to appraise both the quantity and quality of target language use and the demands it placed upon the learners' analytic competence as well as to provide additional support for the attitudinal and motivational profiles emerging from the questionnaires, e.g. students' behaviour as they interacted with their teachers and peers.

Taking into account the 'observer's paradox' which Romaine (1984:18) draws attention to, my classroom observation was designed to be the least intrusive possible. The lessons attended were also chosen as a suitably representative sample in terms of age and context-related factors. At the primary level, I observed pupils studying French as L2 in year 3 and 5. At the secondary level, I observed classes in years 2, 3, 5 and 6 where French as L2 was taught as an object of study and classes in years 3, 5 & 6 where French as L2 was the medium of instruction (i.e. in history and geography classes) but in both instances French had been introduced from primary except for pupils in special circumstances.

I also observed classes where French as L3 had been introduced from year 2 at secondary level and was taught as an object of study only, i.e. L3 not used as a medium of instruction for another subject. I taped the lessons as discreetly as possible so as to get the maximum 'natural' feedback with the minimum interference.

3.7.4 Informal interviews

The aim of informal interviews in English was to focus on and explore any anomalies arising from the questionnaires. The aim of those conducted in French was to confirm, or not as the case may be, the level of oral proficiency in French as indicated in questionnaires.

Notes (chapter 3):

1.　　Schola Europaea Pedagogical Bulletin No 118, IX (1993:XXVI & XXVII).

2.　　House of Lords report (April 1990:5 & 7).

3.　　House of Lords report (ibid.:5).

4.　　Schools are therefore organized in several language sections. Cf House of Lords' report (ibid.:7).

5.　　Baetens-Beardsmore & Kohls (1988a:68).

6.　　House of Lords report (op.cit.:8). Cf also Baetens-Beardsmore & Kohls (op.cit.:68).

7.　　Baetens-Beardsmore & Swain (1985:4).

8.　　Fees for 1993-94 at Culham (UK) were as follows: nursery £416, primary £588 and secondary £798 per child with special rates applicable for additional children.

9.　　Baetens-Beardsmore & Kohls (op.cit.:69).

10.　　Baetens-Beardsmore & Swain (op.cit.:5).

11.　　Since I conducted my research in 1992-1993, three countries, namely Finland, Sweden and Austria have joined the European community and other countries may take a similar decision to join.

12.　　Schola Europaea (op.cit.1993:XXVIII).

13.　　Schola Europaea (ibid.: XXVI). Cf also Baetens-Beardsmore & Kohls (op.cit.:72).

14.　　In the 1993-1994 academic year, the percentage of final year students (i.e. 7th year secondary) who opted for the language of the host country as their L2 was generally high although English was chosen as a second favourite in French speaking countries. At Culham, 31 out of the 34 students not in the English section (i.e. 91.17%) chose English as L2. At Karlsruhe, 42 out the 49 students not in the German section (i.e. 85.7%) chose German as L2 and at Munich 33 out of 48 (i.e. 68.75%) did so. However, in Luxembourg only 71 out of the 136 students not in the French section (i.e. 52.20%) chose French as L2. The figures for Brussels 1 & 2 and for Mol (Belgium) are as follows: 52.91%, 68.14% and 45.16%. Figures were worked out from data provided by the European school at Brussels.

15.　　Ecoles Européennes (1992a:9), point 7.1. Cf also Schola Europaea (op. cit.:XXVII).

16. Ecoles Européennes (op.cit.:10). Cf also Baetens-Beardsmore & Kohls (op.cit.:74).

17. The European Schools' prospectus (1992:13).

18. Cf Swain & Lapkin (1982) and chapter 2 (immersion programmes section).

19. Ecoles Européennes (op.cit.:10).

20. Ecoles Européennes (ibid.:5).

21. Ecoles Européennes (ibid.: 2-3).

22. Ecoles Européennes (ibid.:6).

23. Ecoles Européennes (ibid.:7).

24. This would apply particularly for L2 in a foreign, as opposed to a second, language context, i.e. with no opportunities for use. It is equally worth noting, however, that even in a second language context "inter-pupil contacts" at primary level, Baetens-Beardsmore & Swain (1985:6) suggest, are practically non-existent.

25. Schola Europaea (op.cit.:XXVII) and Baetens-Beardsmore & Kohls (op. cit.:72).

26. The European Schools' prospectus (op. cit.:20). Cf also Baetens-Beardsmore & Swain (1985:7).

27. Out of the 31 periods minimum (35 maximum) required, a student must have 3 periods of maths, 2 of physical education, 1 of religion/ethics, 4 of L1, 3 of L2, 2 of philosophy, 2 of history, 2 of geography and 2 of natural sciences, unless one or more of physics, chemistry or biology is chosen. The remainder consists of various options.

28. Ecoles Européennes (op.cit.:11). Cf also Baetens-Beardsmore & Kohls (op.cit.:70 & 71).

29. Ecoles Européennes (ibid.:3 & 9).

30. Figures obtained from the School's Secretary.

31. Baetens-Beardsmore & Kohls (op.cit.:69).

32. See specific cases in chapter IV and appendix 3 (for instance, L2, yr 6, student No 6).

33. Ecoles Européennes (op.cit.:2).

CHAPTER FOUR   EUROPEAN SCHOOL: CULHAM.

4.1   INTRODUCTION

The aim of the analysis of data collected at the European School at Culham (U.K.), based on the four criteria defined in the previous chapter -- namely, classroom observation, formal tests, questionnaires and case-study interviews -- is to assess to what extent findings corroborate the basis of a socio-cognitive model dependent upon the environmental context as the most useful in explaining and predicting results in a wide variety of contexts.

At Culham, English taught as L2 is in a second language context because of the geographical site. French as L2 is, however, in a more decontextualized setting except for learners who, prior to joining the school, have acquired it in a SLA context. Even though French is more decontextualized than English, however, the fact that it is introduced at primary level and that history and geography are taught through it from year 3 of secondary school makes it more 'pertinent' than a normal foreign language. French as L3 on the other hand is for most students -- again with the exception of those with prior SLA contact -- restricted to classroom learning and therefore remains at a relatively high decontextualized level.

Given the complexity of the situation at Culham (U.K), the hypotheses underpinning the current study are twofold:

(a) the more decontextualized the second language context is, the more students will require high levels of analytic skills to access the language. This should be reflected in proficiency levels in the L2 tending to correlate with proficiency levels in the L1 in an academic context, except in those cases where high proficiency in the L2 is reflected mainly in oral/aural skills as a result of an SLA background;

(b) the more decontextualized the context, the more motivation will play a role as a

variable in determining the level of competence achieved. This should be verified by instances where L2 results which do not correlate with L1 results can be explained on the basis of motivational/attitudinal factors.

In the first section, I shall briefly analyze the foreign language syllabus used at Culham in relation to classroom practice based upon lesson observation in order to establish the extent of decontextualization ranging across the L2 and L3 processes. In the second section, I shall seek to correlate the degree of analytic competence gained in L1 with proficiency rates across L2 and L3 and, in the third section, I will discuss any anomalies and consider whether affective factors might be considered as a valid explanation for them. The fourth and final section will seek to assess to what extent, if any, the trends emerging from the above analysis confirm the above hypotheses. A detailed record of each student is provided in Appendix 3 under the heading 'Individual Case Histories'.

4.2   CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

In the primary school at Culham, the L2 is usually introduced as an object of use in a relatively context-embedded environment. However, context-reduced tasks are gradually phased in with the aim of both preparing students to cope with more academic activities across the curriculum at secondary level and to provide an adequate linguistic base for the learning of subjects such as history or geography through the L2[1]. What is important is the fact that the increasing use of context-reduced tasks -- that is, tasks which involve a more conscious and deliberate use of language -- is based explicitly upon the requisite analytic skills being transferred from the L1. The L2 learner is not expected, for example, to re-learn how to read and write but, on the contrary, to transfer skills needed to carry out these activities from the L1 to the L2.

The classroom observation that was undertaken sought, therefore, to analyze the increasing shift from context-embedded to context-free uses of languages in the general progression from primary to secondary school levels. This could most easily be carried out by viewing a sample range of L2 classes in the primary sector (namely years 1, 3 and 5) and in the secondary sector (years 2, 3, 5 and 6, including history and geography in years 3, 5 and 6) and a sample range of L3 classes in the secondary sector (years 2, 3, 5 and 6). Lesson observation was therefore undertaken on a systematic basis to examine:

(a) the nature of the language input, and

(b) the demands made upon pupils at each of the levels mentioned above in

terms of the activities they were requested to carry out.

4.2.1 Primary level

According to the Ecoles européennes (1992a:10), as indicated in their <u>principes directeurs pour l'enseignement de la deuxième langue à l'école primaire</u>, L2 lessons in the primary school should last 30 minutes daily for the first two years and increase to 45 minutes daily for the last three years. Teachers should be native speakers trained to teach their language as a foreign language (ibid.:11) and L2 lessons should take place "*dans un local spécialement aménagé pour la deuxième langue ou bien dans un local où la langue maternelle correspond à la deuxième langue enseignée*" so that it can benefit from the cultural environment, including books and posters/pictures (ibid.:10). The child is thus supposed to be made 'aware' of a fundamental change taking place insofar as his other subject lessons take place in one and the same classroom with one teacher.

Year 1: As indicated in Chapter Three, little or no written work is involved initially and activities are limited to games and songs which accustom the child to the sounds of the L2, i.e. which train the ear. The Ecoles européennes' directives (ibid.:4) specifically stress

initial emphasis on aural activities not only to build up a greater awareness in the L2 learner of the phonology of the target language but also to allow him to consolidate literacy skills in the L1 without interference from the L2. The intensive but "repetitive" use of the L2, as the Ecoles européennes' directives (ibid.:3) put it, should be achieved through a focus upon games and mimes and the learning of songs and poems by heart (ibid.:4) whose meaning is clearly understood. The aim is apparently to motivate the young learner to develop an awareness and a sensitivity to another language and to enjoy listening to it and using it (ibid.:3).

The general recommendations on the nature of the language pupils should be exposed to, and the range of activities they should be involved in, were reflected in the sample lessons observed. During one lesson (14-6-1993), for example, new language items were introduced and practised through a combination of games and songs which injected a sense of novelty into the lesson while allowing reiteration of given patterns. Pupils were asked to mime such commands as *asseyez-vous! écoutez! levez-vous! etc.* and, in a song referring to dancing, they were required to point to the various parts of the body referred to in French. In yet another song introduced in a previous lesson to practise numbers in the target language, pupils were requested to mime out the numbers referred to by taking one step, two steps ... one leap, two leaps ... etc. It was clear that, while the activities in these lessons presupposed cognitive skills, such as knowledge of numbers, built up through L1, the use of French was accompanied by numerous contextual clues including direct physical responses on the part of the pupils. It is probably for this reason that the latter appeared to be tolerant of, and uninhibited in the use of the target language, responding enthusiastically and without any signs of boredom.

Year 3: Developing listening skills in the L2 is the main aim of the first two years in primary school but, increasingly, receptive skills are accompanied by productive skills in which the emphasis shifts towards the perception and mastery of language structures (ibid.:3). This tendency to focus more on linguistic form than function at this stage is accompanied, in year 3, by the systematic introduction of reading/writing activities (ibid.:3). No great difficulties are expected with reading in the target language since the learner is required by this age to be highly competent in the L1 (ibid.:3) and to be in a position to transfer these skills from the L1 to the L2 (ibid.:6). All that is requested, the directives suggest, is that the texts available be of a suitable level so that the pupils can focus on "la compréhension du message" (ibid.:7).

Accompanying reading activities are writing ones in which the learner is expected to be able to rewrite simple sentences by changing the word order, answering a questionnaire or completing a crossword puzzle etc. Writing skills, as Mme Lappara suggests (1993:41), are considered essential because they help the development of memory as well as the child's capacity for linguistic analysis which would otherwise remain limited. As she puts it, *"la chaîne orale est fugitive"* and in the foreign language classroom *"l'entrée communicative y trouve rapidement sa limite. L'enfant ne progresse donc plus".* (ibid.:42) Reading and writing activities alone can remedy the situation since *"en situation d'absence de bain linguistique, l'écrit permet d'en créer un".* (ibid.:41) It might be noted, however, that pupils are allowed to continue using the writing style developed through L1 (Ecoles européennes op.cit.:7) and that familiarization with the L2 writing style is seen as part of a gradual cultural awareness process.

The general tendency in Year 3 to focus more on linguistic form, as reflected in the shift from receptive to productive and oral/aural to written uses of the language, was reflected in the lessons observed. In one 45-minute lesson (17/6/93), for example, mainly

English mother-tongue learners, were requested to look at a video and to repeat, chorally and individually, the structures that had appeared on it such as *Qu'est-ce qui ne va pas? J'ai mal au dos, aux dents etc.* These patterns were then utilized in pairwork activities, where learners were asked to act out a controlled role-play between doctor and patient, before being used for simple written activities, as in the following example:

> Teacher prompted pupil: *Bonjour docteur.*
>
> Further prompt: *Qu'est-ce qui n'va pas?*, repeat...
>
> Pupil: *Qu'est-ce qui n'va pas?*
>
> Further prompt to repeat: *J'ai mal au dos, docteur.*

No response, the pupils had not settled down and the teacher commented "you are not ready". They started again:

> Pupil: *Prenez ceci.*
>
> Other pupil: *Merci docteur, au revoir docteur.*
>
> Teacher prompts pupil to say "*au suivant*".
>
> Pupil repeats: *Au suivant.*
>
> New set of pupils:
>
> first pupil: *Qu'est-ce qui n'va pas?*
>
> second pupil, play acting, dragging his voice: *J'ai mal à la tête.*
>
> first pupil: *Prenez ceci.*
>
> second pupil: *Merci docteur.*
>
> first pupil: *Au suivant.*

A similar pattern was observable in another lesson (18/6/93) where pupils were once again requested to observe a video introducing days of the week and to combine this with structures such as *Je joue au football, Je fais du patin, Je vais à la piscine etc.*:

> Pupil: *le mercredi, je fais du tennis; le jeudi, je vais à la piscine et le vendredi, je fais du cheval.*

Teacher (instructs other pupil): *tu répètes?*

Pupil: *je ...au piscine.*

Teacher: *ah non!*

Pupil (tries again): *je vais à piscine.*

Teacher (insists on *'la'*): *à la piscine.*

Pupil: *je fais cheval.*

Teacher: *je fais du cheval.*

As some pupils tended to confuse *'je vais'* with *'je fais'*, the teacher explained: *'je vais'* means I am going to... *'Je fais du tennis'* means I play tennis. Listening to new vocabulary items/structures, practising them in a controlled way in various activities seem to characterize lessons at this stage.

What is noticeable in such lessons is the way in which the teacher, unlike in the Canadian immersion programme, consciously seeks to focus the attention of the learner upon form[2]. Not only is the selection of language items designed to allow learners at this age to perceive patterns but the teacher clearly seeks to elucidate meaning by comparison, where necessary, with English and also with other items in the target language system. Both of these could be seen in another lesson (16/6/1993). After briefly revising the time with pupils, through oral question and answer work, the latter were requested to read out aloud a number of sentences which combined the time with a variety of daily activities (e.g. *Il est dix heures. Il se réveille.* Or, *Il est onze heures, Il se lave* etc.). Understanding was ensured, where necessary, by translation into English before the pupils were asked to write the phrases under the relevant pictures. Moreover, important distinctions in terms of sound and spelling, such as that between *se lève* and *se lave*, were also signalled by the teacher when the pupils were next requested to re-write the following phrases in chronological order:

1.   *Mr lion se réveille.*

2.   *Mr lion se peigne.*

3.   *Mr lion se brosse les dents* (the teacher also pointed out that one
        can say *'se lave les dents')*.

4.   *Mr lion prend son petit déjeuner.*

5.   *Mr lion s'habille.*

6.   *Mr lion se lave.*

7.   *Mr lion se lève.*

8.   *Mr lion attend l'autobus*

It should be noted, however, that while the emphasis here is more on linguistic form than in

the earlier stages, there is no attempt to give complex grammatical explanations. As the

classroom teacher pointed out, the aim at this stage is to provide the learner with an

average vocabulary of about 100 words and a practical command of some simple sentence

patterns based on everyday activities.

Year 5: The use of the target language at level 5 continues the gradual shift begun

at the earlier stage from receptive to productive and oral/aural to written skills. This is

reflected in the Ecoles européennes' directives (ibid.:3) which recommends greater use of

the written language as a *"base de communication"* and a generally more formal approach

in terms of developing in the learners an appreciation and use of language structures.

While the level of target language is still inevitably limited, on account of limited

exposure time, it is clear that pupils are indeed more capable of handling complex structures

in the L2 albeit mainly at the receptive level. This is largely because, having developed a

minimum competence in the target language, the teacher is able to exploit this knowledge

to introduce new structures, that is, to use existing language as the context for

introducing/clarifying new language. This does not entirely take over from use of the

mother tongue to clarify meaning but assumes growing importance. An example of it can be seen in one lesson delivered almost entirely in French (18/6/93), where the teacher sought to introduce the new item *concurrents* in connection with two restaurant owners. Using known vocabulary (and cultural referents), he first gave an example (*Je vends des voitures Rover et toi, tu vends des Ford*), then proceded to relate it to the topic in question (*Moi, j'ai un restaurant et toi, aussi*) and finally, only when he had elicited from pupils that they had understood the concept, did he proceed to introduce the vocabulary item in a statement (*Tricotel, le propriétaire du restaurant, est son concurrent*) and give the English word 'rival'.

It is noticeable that even in lessons at this level, the correction of grammatical or pronunciation errors is based on individual cases as opposed to the description of a general rule. As the class teacher explained, this is largely because the children are still not considered mature enough to grasp such rules and because the competence levels in any class are quite varied.

Conclusion

In general, while the L2 is introduced at Culham through context-embedded activities, it is clear that the language input is carefully controlled (i.e. not random) since it is limited to the artificial constraints of the classroom. This means that the movement from what the Ecoles Européennes refer to as "*de situations concrètes fermées vers des situations ouvertes plus complexes*" (1992a:6) takes place relatively rapidly. Pupils are, therefore, relatively early expected to pay attention to the medium as much as to the message and this is reflected in the assessment procedures which cover "*le double aspect communicatif et linguistique de la langue* (ibid.:8). This emphasis upon a relatively rapid focus upon the language means that the programme of L2 teaching at Culham from an early

age differs from immersion programmes in a number of significant ways:

(1) First, it is not assumed that the learner is acquiring the language like the L1 but that, on the contrary, he will be transferring to the L2 those cognitive skills already built up through the L1. This is particularly true in relation to reading/writing skills;

(2) Second, the language input is carefully controlled from an early stage in order to help the learner to induce the patterns underlying its use. While these are initially introduced in highly context-embedded situations, pupils are quite rapidly expected to be able to focus upon formal aspects of the L2, even if the latter arises out of given situations.

(3) Thirdly, although lessons are conducted almost entirely in L2, the mother tongue is not banished from the classroom[3] but is used by the teacher as a means of ensuring comprehension of new language patterns and comparison between the L1 and L2 often occurs. Moreover, peer interaction in the L1 is permitted in the classroom.

The L2 experience of children of primary age at Culham is, in this sense, quite different from that of children following a classic immersion programme as analyzed in Chapter Two. In the latter case, it is assumed that learners will acquire communicative skills in a relatively unconscious fashion by focusing on the message (rather than medium) as in the L1. In Culham, on the other hand, as Junker (1993:43) stresses, it is assumed that learners will not repeat the L1 process but will operate "*en fonction ... des notions connues ou en phase d'acquisition de la langue maternelle*". It is precisely because the learners are presupposed to have developed certain cognitive skills that can be transferred to the L2 that they are exposed to context-reduced tasks which require them to focus consciously on the medium rather than the message. It might be noted, however, that the introduction of reading/writing in French as L2 at Culham, while expected to benefit from literacy skills developed in L1, is introduced on a much more gradual basis than is the case for French in Brussels, that is, in a French-speaking environment, for self-evident reasons.

4.2.2 Secondary level (French as L2)

Secondary school represents inevitably a new stage in the educational life of the child and school organization and curriculum design is usually based on the expectancy of more mature behaviour on his part. As opposed to primary school, for example, pupils change classes for different subjects and are usually expected to accept greater differentiation (i.e. subject specificity) in the acquiring of knowledge/skills. While this is also the case at Culham, however, considerable emphasis is placed upon ensuring continuity between primary and secondary schools not least in the area of foreign languages. As the Ecoles européennes (op.cit.:12) stress, *"le lien entre le primaire et le secondaire doit être fermement établi. L'apprentissage d'une deuxième langue est un processus continu ...".*

Maintaining continuity in the area of foreign languages is assured both by encouraging consultation between teachers in the two sectors and by recommendations in the area of methodology. As the Ecoles européennes (1973:19/1)[4] continue, there is *"(une) nécessité de maintenir une continuité de méthode entre la 5ème primaire et le début de l'enseignement secondaire"*. While it is recognized that the transition from primary to secondary will inevitably involve a greater emphasis on reading/writing activities than in the past, the directives stress that such a transition should be as smooth as possible: *"Il faudra donc assurer une transition souple de l'oral vers l'écrit en évitant un virage brutal"* (ibid.:19/1). Moreover, the greater analysis of linguistic form (i.e. grammar) that inevitably accompanies a focus on the written word is treated cautiously and it is recommended that grammar stem from concrete examples rather than being treated in a *"cadre rigide et abstrait"*.

Years 2/3: Syllabus recommendations for French as L2 in Years 2/3 of the secondary school are more detailed than in the primary sector. It is recommended, for example, in Year 2 that the teacher should build upon the pupils' knowledge of simple relative clauses using *qui* and *que* to introduce more complex variants such as *dont, duquel* etc and to extend the range of tenses by introducing, among others, the *passé simple*. While it is stated that the latter should only be introduced for receptive purposes (except in the third person singular and plural forms when productive use is also included), the fact that such a tense should be introduced at this stage is clear evidence of the increasing emphasis upon written as opposed to oral skills. It is accompanied in the syllabus by a range of further recommendations which favour a focus upon the analysis of written language and which, indeed, can give rise to explicitly grammar-based exercises partly in contradiction to the advice quoted earlier (ibid.:19/1).

Certainly, in the lessons observed in these years, the emphasis was very firmly on linguistic analysis of written texts and upon relatively decontextualized grammatical activities aimed at clarifying and practising new structures/functions. One 45-minute lesson observed in Year 2 (15/6/1993) illustrates the pattern. The lesson began with the correction of a short test conducted during a preceding lesson which required pupils to transfer statements from direct to indirect speech. The test was as follows:

Direct form :   Indirect form:

1) Il dit: "Elle vient"   *Il dit qu'elle vient*

2) Ils disent: "Nous venons"   *... qu'ils viennent*

3) Elle me dit: "Rentre"   *.. de rentrer*

4) Il m'a dit: "Je viens"   *.. qu'il venait*

Correction of the test was followed by the reading of small written texts about *La première surprise-partie* and *Les Parisiens à Paris* which served as the basis for a series of oral and

written activities. In these, the teacher sought to explore the different ways in which it is possible to complain or exaggerate contained within the texts, and pupils were allowed to ask for clarification of words they were unsure of. For instance, a pupil asked for the meaning of '*défendu*' to which the teacher replied '*quelque chose qui n'est pas permis, par exemple, il est défendu de bavarder en classe*' -- which provoked some amusement. The exercise was reinforced by the introduction of a taped conversation between various people complaining. This led to the practice of a range of causal structures involving *parce que*, such as *Les provinciaux se plaignent parce que les Parisiens viennent chez eux; un monsieur dans une voiture se plaint parce que les voitures devant ne vont pas assez vite; une jeune fille devant une armoire ouverte se plaint parce qu'elle n'a pas assez d'habits.* etc. These activities were carried out almost exclusively in the target language although references to English were made when necessary for rapid comprehension or to underline differences, as when the teacher drew attention to the difference in spelling between *brillant* and the English word 'brilliant', between *roue* (a wheel) and *route* (a road) or when he asked "*comment dit-on en français* 'steering wheel'?. This was essentially a vocabulary-building exercise in which learners were introduced implicitly to the notion of register since the examples ranged from the formal to the more familiar such as '*j'en ai ras-le-bol*' classified as '*de l'argot*'. The lesson terminated with a small revision exercise on the use of the imperative which involved a range of standard phrases such as *faites moins de bruit, ne faites pas trop de bruit, taisez-vous/tais-toi etc.*, but which also sought to retain the theme of the activities, e.g. *arrêtez-vous de vous plaindre etc.*

It is clear, both from lesson observation and analysis of the syllabus in Years 2/3, that the focal point of the lessons is the introduction and practice of grammatical structures in which accuracy has priority. Although lessons may occasionally revolve around a theme, as in the one described above, many more simply encompass a series of activities around

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unrelated grammatical points and this, possibly inevitably, has implications for pupil attitudes. One teacher did, indeed, point out the negative attitudes he had observed among pupils in Year 2. Many pupils from years 2 and 3 expressed to me their dissatisfaction about the over-emphasis on grammatical assessment.

Year 3 (Humanities): As indicated earlier, it is in Year 3 that L2 (French in this instance) is used not only as an object of study but also as a medium for the study of history and geography. Interestingly enough, syllabus recommendations in the latter subjects are focused mainly upon the content areas, stressing that all pupils, including those with weaker linguistic levels, should be given the opportunity to show their knowledge of the content. Whilst it recommends a clear and precise approach in the written work, it also suggest that grammatical accuracy and style should be paid less rigorous attention[5]. It is assumed that pupils will by this stage have reached a level of competence which permits them to cope with the academic demands of these subject areas and there would appear little doubt that the emphasis in L2 lessons both on the written form and the practice of grammatical structures is designed with this aim in mind.

What became clear, from the range of lessons observed in Year 3 was that teachers tended to take a pragmatic view on the emphasis they should place upon the lesson content and the linguistic form in which it was communicated. Clearly, their main aim was the communication of given facts/concepts and they sought to overcome some of the pupils' limited linguistic competence for the tasks by employing four strategems: first, an emphasis on receptive rather than productive skills -- replies tend to be, as Bulwer (1992:179) notes, "monosyllabic and it is rare that a pupil attempts to form a complex sentence"; second, linguistic simplification involving the reiteration of key vocabulary items; thirdly, the exploitation of an idea orally/aurally preceding written treatment; and, fourthly, recourse to

English translation. Such strategems seek to compensate for pupils' limited competence and, at the same time, involve adding to that competence by the teaching of new target language items. Both aspects can be seen in a history lesson, observed on 9/6/1993, which involved question-and-answer work around a map depicting Rome's various trading partners and the type of goods traded. The lesson eased pupils' access to written tasks and extended their vocabulary considerably in a way which was often quite specific. For instance, the teacher ensured that the pupils understood the difference between '*minerai*' and '*métal*' with the following comment "*ce qu'on trouve dans la mine, c'est le minerai. On extrait le minerai et il faut séparer la terre du métal*". In a similar way, the teacher proceeded to talk about Rome itself in greater details and made reference to its name 'l'Urbs'. This enabled the teacher to exploit both vocabulary and content:

> Teacher: *est-ce que vous pouvez me donner un mot moderne qui vient de ce mot romain?*
> Pupil: *urbain*
> Teacher: *oui, la population urbaine, une population qui vit dans...*
> Pupil: *la ville.*
> Teacher: *oui, et l'urbanisme c'est l'art de bien aménager la ville pour qu'il soit agréable d'y vivre. Les Romains vont développer à travers tout l'empire une civilisation basée sur la vie urbaine.*

In another small text entitled *Les embarras de Rome* and defined as '*les difficultés de la circulation dans Rome*', the teacher invited the pupils to carefully study the sentence: '*il ne manquera pas de gens pour te dépouiller*':

> Teacher: *Donnez-moi un synonyme de dépouiller ici.* Further prompt: *Si vous avez de l'argent sur vous, quelqu'un va vous dépouiller -- vous attaquer et vous voler votre argent. Alors, vous connaissez le verbe manquer?*

Pupil: *beaucoup de gens*

Teacher: *Oui, ici, c'est cela, il y aura beaucoup de gens qui seront prêts à vous voler votre argent. Les villes sont dangereuses la nuit, il y a des voleurs. On peut être attaqué par quelqu'un, par qui? avec quelle arme?*

Pupil: *un couteau*

Teacher: *oui, et quel autre mot utilise-t-on pour décrire un criminel?*

Pupil: *un bandit*

Teacher: *alors pourquoi viennent-ils à Rome?*

Further prompt: *pourquoi considèrent-ils Rome comme une 'proie', a prey?*

Pupil: *parce qu'il y a beaucoup de gens riches.*

In a similar way, the simplified nature of the questions asked, and the recourse to English when necessary, both eased pupil access to the content of the text and enriched their vocabulary in another lesson observed on 16/6/93. The word *'les bâtisseurs'* was linked to the verb *'bâtir'*, to *'bâtiment'* which pupils recognized as 'building' and the word *'réseau'* defined as applicable not only to roads, as in the text studied, but also to railways etc... The teacher then proceeded to extrapolate the content from the text, stressing the Roman influence on buildings and road constructions and the point that Roman roads were *'droites, rectilignes'* :

Teacher: *alors les routes construites par les Romains sont construites pour quelles raisons?*

Further prompt: *pourquoi est-ce que les Romains ont construit ce grand réseau routier?... Regardez dans le texte.*

Pupil: *pour relier Rome aux grandes villes et au port.*

Teacher: *oui, et quoi encore? La raison principale?*

Pupil: *pour les militaires.*

Teacher: *pour le déplacement des légions, des militaires. Qu'est-ce que cela veut dire 'se déplacer'?*

Pupil: *to move.*

While teachers do, therefore, make efforts to ease pupils' access to the subjects, it is still evident that the former require a sound level of analytic skills in the L2 if they are to analyze and extract the relevant information from texts and draw relevant conclusions.

Years 5/6:

The syllabus for French as a foreign language at the advanced level[6] clearly indicates a greater emphasis on written skills and recommends a theme so as to study "*l'évolution d'un même problème selon les époques*"[7] and suggested literary works. However, the syllabus for French as L2 at an ordinary level for years 4, 5, 6, and 7 is limited to the following lines: "*Lecture et explications de textes choisis en fonction de leur valeur littéraire, les explications étant faites selon un plan destiné à donner aux enfants une vue de la littérature de la langue étudiée*".[8] The syllabus for English as a foreign language[9] stresses that "... the first emphasis will continue to be on the ability to listen and to speak", but the trend in Years 5 and 6 is clearly upon the development of written skills. Texts in years 6 and 7, it is argued, should become more complex, include a "variety of styles and registers" and greater emphasis placed on "reading and writing skills".[10] Four books are recommended for "private reading" on the basis of their literary value, with a fifth one being prescribed for classroom study. While this is merely suggested in Year 5, it is forcibly argued in the optional advanced level from Year 6 since learners should have access "to the various forms of the literature of the country concerned".[11] This is clearly with a view to preparing students for their final examination in Year 7 which assesses both "knowledge of the language and of the civilization".[12]

Widening the range of texts to which students have access is therefore accompanied by an extension in the range of productive skills they are expected to develop. In Year 5, the major written activity students have to undertake is summary of texts although, the written exam at the end of the year makes clear, "linguistic accuracy **and** quality of expression" are considered to be of 'slightly' more importance than "performance as regards content" (Schola Europaea 1993:XIV). By Year 6, advanced students are expected to have developed a range of skills which include not only summary but comparative study of texts, commentaries and stylistic analysis. Emphasis is increasingly placed upon metalinguistic awareness as a tool for understanding and analyzing the language and cultural content of texts.

Evidence of this extension in repertoire can be seen in one 45-minute lesson observed in Year 6 (16/6/1993) in which students were expected to analyze a written text entitled *L'Araignée* (cf. Appendix 4). The lesson was largely oral and developed in four stages in which students were required to approach the text from an increasingly precise viewpoint. In the first stage, they were asked simply to consider the genre of the text, that is, whether it was more polemical than descriptive in nature, defending a specific thesis as a solution to a particular problem. A consensus was reached that it contained features of both and discussion ensued as to how such a conclusion was reached, summarized as:

> Teacher: *donc c'est un texte descriptif mais en même temps qui développe une idée....une idée à travers un portrait, à travers une situation. C'est un texte littéraire avec un problème posé.*

Students were then invited to ask for clarifications of difficult words. One student for example queried the meaning of *'les cheveux en épi'*:

Teacher: *qu'est-ce que c'est normalement un épi? On dit un épi de quoi?...*
Un épi de plante, par exemple on dit un épi de blé, c'est la tête du
blé.....ici, c'est dans un autre sens, essayez de retrouver l'image ....des
cheveux qui se redressent, tout raides...

After checking whether any student present had a hairstyle corresponding to the description, the teacher then sought to verify whether students understood other key words such as *'sauterelle'*:

Pupil: *un cricket*

Teacher: *oui, un genre de cricket, qui saute comme son nom l'indique.*

Teacher: *Alors attention au mot philo car c'est aussi une question de culture. On ne disait pas alors je suis en 7ème (année), on disait philo, une abréviation de 'philosophie'.* The teacher proceeded to explain the differences between *'collège'*, *'lycée'* etc.

At the second stage, the question of the viewpoint of the author (the autobiographical use of the pronoun *je*) was explored in relation to the implications for the treatment of the given theme and alternatives examined. At the third stage, the text was analyzed by students -- in response to teacher-led questions -- in terms of its structure and the development of the argument. It was agreed that the central theme was that of *'la laideur'* and that the text could be divided into 3 parts. This was followed by further probing of the text, the teacher asking the pupils, for example, to justify the title of the text and why the child was named *'l'araignée'*:

Pupil: *pas très belle.*

Teacher: *oui, vous regardez le texte. C'est un portrait de caricature, qu'est-ce que c'est une caricature?*

Pupil: *on exagère.*

Other pupil: *c'est le portrait comique.*

Teacher: *oui, c'est exagérer les lignes. Si vous aviez à faire un dessin, je pense que ce serait assez facile.*

At this point, the teacher invited a student to come to the blackboard and required him to draw, from some of the details given in the text, an outline of such *'caricature'*. She then drew attention to the fact that people tend to react more favourably to some animals than others, which would explain why the child would not have minded being called names like *sauterelle* but that he very much resented being referred to as the spider. Finally, students were asked to consider the style, the tone of the text i.e. whether the text conveyed optimism, resignation or criticism, whether it was comic or tragic etc. Throughout the discussion the teacher repeatedly requested the students to look at the text so as to provide convincing examples to support any comment made or conclusion drawn.

There can be no doubt that the lesson stretched students' knowledge of the target language. The teacher sought to overcome problems with vocabulary both by paraphrase within the L2 and, where necessary, by recourse to the English equivalent. Where possible, however, she sought to encourage students to extrapolate the meaning of difficult words by referring them to the text itself and to the evidence of contextual clues.

Years 5/6 (Humanities): It is clear that, in the study of the Humanities, students by this level require a sound factual knowledge and a range of cognitive skills ranging from map interpretation to the comparative study of social and political systems. In history, it might mean, among other skills, "to identify bias and compare interpretations", "to compare ideas and attitudes in the past with those of the present"[13] and in geography, among a wide

list of skills and concepts, the use for instance of "factual information to draw conclusions and formulate ideas about recurring patterns in the areas being studied'.[14] In order to be able to cope with such demands, a relatively high linguistic competence in the L2 is required, particularly in terms of literacy skills. To a large extent, the type of activities undertaken in L2 classes where French is the object of study help prepare students for such activities although, as indicated earlier, such activities themselves help to develop linguistic competence, particularly in the area of vocabulary acquisition and communicative confidence. This is clear in the case of a lesson observed by Bulwer (1992:184 & 185) at the European school in Holland.

An example of this can be seen in the history lesson observed in Year 5 (15/6/1993) which focused around an analysis of the social, economic and political causes that led to the 1789 revolution and the demise of the *ancien régime*. The lesson first started with the teacher ensuring that pupils had clearly understood the differences between 6 main political systems they had been discussed in a previous lesson. This was an opportunity to revise and define a variety of socio-political categories ranging from *dictature* to *monarchie absolue*, as well as to situate the new kind of regime after the revolution:

> Teacher: *Quelle était la date de la première constitution en France?*
> Pupil: *1791.*
> Teacher: *Quel était le type de suffrage que nous avions à ce moment-là?* (prompt:) *universel ou censitaire?*
> Pupil: *censitaire*
> Teacher: *c'est-à-dire ceux qui ont le droit de vote, ceux qui paient le cens.*
> Pupil: *qu'est-ce que c'est le cens?*
> Teacher: *le cens, c'est un impôt qui donne le droit d'élire des représentants. Dans cette constitution de 1791, quels sont 'les droits de l'homme' qui sont respectés?*
> Pupil: *la séparation des pouvoirs.*

Teacher: *quels sont ceux qui ne sont pas respectés?*

Pupil: *tout le monde peut voter.*

Teacher: *non justement tout le monde ne peut pas voter.*

Pupil: *ils ne respectent pas....hum*

Teacher: *... l'égalité au niveau du suffrage universel etc...*

The discussion then proceeded to check which of the six political systems defined earlier might describe best the 1791 constitution. After clarification of key distinctions between various political systems and voting procedures, a text on the French revolution was read. The teacher's decision to separate out the *causes immédiates* from the *causes profondes* of the revolution allowed her to exploit a more concrete category of vocabulary prior to a more abstract one which, in turn, facilitated the introduction and clarification of new terms:

> Teacher: *donc la France connaît de graves difficultés. Sur les causes, pas toutes les causes, retenez la mauvaise récolte en 1788 à la veille de la Révolution française. Quelle va être la conséquence? eh bien, le prix du pain va doubler, les récoltes étant nettement insuffisantes; les caisses de l'Etat sont vides donc crise financière.*

This led to comments regarding both the profound injustice at the time in terms of the taxation of the poor and to the tension building between the two privileged ruling orders, *'la noblesse'* and the *'clergé'* on the one hand and *'le tiers-état'* on the other:

> Teacher: *la cause profonde, oui l'injustice mais qu'est-ce qui va déclencher la Révolution? ... les causes immédiates, car ça fait des siècles qu'il y a de l'injustice. Donc plusieurs raisons: caisses de l'Etat vides, le tiers-état veut des réformes et le roi convoque pour la première fois les Etats Généraux etc.*

Demands for change, were then placed in a wider context by making reference to the *'Siècle des lumières'* and to the philosophers who were demanding greater justice and

equality. The text covered many facts, ranging from the *'prise de la Bastille'* to events after

the revolution and the deep political and economic instability that prevailed, which enabled

the teacher to extract further information from the students. For example, she asked why

the prison *La Bastille* was seen as a symbol of injustice. The lesson therefore had covered

and analyzed in great detail events and their significance at the social, economic and

political level.

4.2.3 Secondary Level (French as L3)

As indicated in Chapter 3, French as the second foreign language (i.e. as L3) is

introduced from Year 2 of the secondary school. It does not, therefore, benefit from the

emphasis on the development of oral-aural skills in a context-embedded environment that

characterizes the introduction of French as L2 at primary level. The even more

decontextualized nature of the learning process is reflected both in the syllabus and in

classroom practice where reading/writing skills are introduced simultaneously with

oral/aural ones and where the emphasis is upon the formal aspects of the language from the

beginning.

Years 2/3: In general the syllabus for French as L3 differs little from that for

French as L2 particularly since the same books are used starting from those corresponding

to Year 1 secondary. Because learners are assumed to be able to transfer skills from the L2

to the L3, they are expected to cover the syllabus much more rapidly and this doubtless

leads to a greater emphasis upon form in the classroom. This emphasis upon form is also

reflected in the extent to which a grammatical metalanguage is used in lessons.

Furthermore, unlike French as L2 students who came mainly from the English section,

French as L3 students came from a variety of sections and although classes were conducted

almost entirely in French, English (the 'lingua franca' of the school at Culham) was used to aid understanding. This was a clear illustration of the inevitable artificiality of the learning process as was the fact that pupils were allowed to interact among themselves in English (or their L1 language) during the lessons. Such artificiality can be seen in a 45 minute lesson observed in Year 2 (18/6/1993) which focused around the introduction of the seasons. The lesson started with correction of a homework exercise based on the time which raised the question of the difference between *Il est* and *C'est* in French, and the differences between the 12 hours or the 24 hours clock. This was followed by the teacher introducing the four seasons, as in the phrases *en été, en hiver, en automne* and *au printemps*. What was interesting about the presentation was not only the fact that it was carried out in the written form, with pupils' attention being drawn to the exception of *au* (in *au printemps*) but also that the teacher felt confident in using a metalanguage when talking about the language. The word *printemps*, she pointed out, was singular even though it ended in an *s*. The introduction of the seasons was followed by a question-and-answer session around such questions as *Quels sont les mois de l'hiver, du printemps etc. Que fait-on en hiver etc.* Although useful practice, it was noticeable that the emphasis was upon accuracy in pronunciation and grammar and the third person singular form widely used added to the decontextualized nature of the process. For instance at one stage the teacher asked:

Teacher: *Quels sont les mois du printemps?*
Pupil: *avril, mai, juin.*
Teacher: *j'ai remarqué des élèves qui n'écrivent pas juin correctement....*
Teacher: *en hiver, est-ce qu'il fait chaud?*
Pupil: *non, il est froid.*
Teacher: *il FAIT* (the teacher stresses *fait) froid. En été, est-ce qu'il fait chaud?*
Pupil: *non...euh... oui, il fait chaud.*
Teacher: *il ne fait pas froid. Retenez ces expressions il fait froid, il fait chaud.*

This was followed by an exercise based on vocabulary introduced at the beginning of the lesson:

Teacher: *dans une année, il y a combien de jours?*

Pupil: *365.*

Teacher: *bien ou 366 pour une année bissextile* (the word had been used and explained at the beginning of the lesson) *et dans une année il y a combien de mois?*

Pupil: *douze.*

and so on, with weeks and days. Pupils were then requested to write down short sentences and the use of the verb *'faire'* was stressed once more as the equivalent in English of 'it is' as in 'it is hot': *il fait chaud* and expressions such as *'il pleut'*, *'il neige'* etc. were added to the list. Pupils were invited to re-read the sentences, the teacher correcting any mispronunciation after which they repeated chorally the seasons and expressions. Finally, students were given a short text to study in preparation for a dictation in the following lesson and they were asked to revise the verb *choisir* (learnt and rehearsed in exercises in previous lessons 8/6 and 11/6/1993) and other *-ir* verbs for a short test.

Years 5/6: By the time students have reached Year 5/6 -- particularly Year 6 where the number of periods increases from three to four a week -- they are expected to have achieved a degree of competence which enables them to access a range of written texts. While some emphasis is also ostensibly on oral/aural skills, the syllabus demands -- as in L2 -- a growing focus on the study of texts of varying styles, including literary ones. This was reflected in the lessons observed, such as that (8/6/93) devoted to the study of passages drawn from <u>Vendredi ou la Vie Sauvage</u> by Michel Tournier (see Appendix 4), one of the books which pupils had been studying all year. The lesson was a typical *explication de texte*. After being requested to read the passages out loud, they were asked by the teacher

to explain certain words (vocabulary-building) which acted as a prelude to more general questions testing comprehension.

The lesson started by a question-and-answer session in which the teacher sought to 'situate' the passage e.g. had Robinson intended to stay on the island for a long time, how had he protected himself from unwelcome visitors, was he comfortable etc.? Once the text had been situated, the teacher then proceeded to explore it through a further range of questions in which the emphasis was on clarifying the meaning of given phrases and vocabulary items (such as 'ride' and 'sillonner'):

Teacher: *Donc voilà où nous en sommes... Robinson un jour cherche des objets dans un coffre. Quel objet trouve-t-il?*

Pupil: *Un miroir.*

Teacher: *Est-ce qu'il avait l'habitude de se regarder dans un miroir?*

Pupil: *Non.*

Teacher: ... *Quand il voit son visage, qu'est-ce qu'il remarque?* (further prompt:) *quelles observations fait-il?*

Pupil: *Il avait la barbe plus longue.*

Teacher: *Oui, quel autre changement a-t-il pu remarquer sur son visage? ... Il y a un autre détail... Il a remarqué que sur son visage il y a des rides. Alors, qui est-ce qui peut m'expliquer ce que c'est qu'une ride?*

Pupil: *Une ligne dans la peau.*

Teacher: *C'est ça, alors quelles personnes...*

Pupil (answers before completion of the sentence): *Les vieux.*

Teacher: *Oui, les personnes âgées ont des rides. Et le verbe sillonner? un mot que l'on utilise dans l'agriculture lorsqu'on prépare les champs avec une charrue; on fait des sillons, 'furrows'. Ici, ce sont des lignes creuses sur le visage. Voici donc les différences physiques qu'il peut observer. Il y a aussi quelque chose qui l'étonne. Quelle expression peut-il lire sur son visage?*

Pupil: *Il a l'air sérieux.*

Teacher: *Alors il se voit, il se regarde mais qu'est-ce qu'il aimerait faire?*

Pupil: *Sourire.*

Teacher: *Il essaie de sourire mais il ne peut pas...* (further prompt:) *Quels sont les détails qui vous montrent qu'il ne peut pas sourire?* (further prompt:) *quand on sourit, quels mouvements fait la bouche?*

Once the teacher was reassured that the pupils had grasped the narrative flow, and that new vocabulary and phrasal items had been explained, she proceeded to ask a range of questions which prompted students to use the clues from the text to form suppositions, e.g. that the presence of the dog would play an important role in Robinson's rediscovery of the act of smiling.

Teacher: *Est-ce que la conclusion est claire: Qu'est-ce que la présence du chien va apporter à Robinson?* (further prompt:) *est-ce que la présence du chien est importante pour Robinson?*

Pupil: *Oui.*

Teacher: *Alors, qu'est-ce qu'il va se passer?*

Pupil: *sourire.*

Teacher: *Oui, le sourire, c'est une forme de quoi? ...c'est une forme de communication; on sourit aux gens qu'on aime bien, donc c'est un apprentissage très important pour Robinson.*

Such questions were quite searching, because the text was complex in part, and were complemented by others in which the teacher sought to discover individual pupils' points of view on what they had been reading. Finally, pupils were asked to summarize the text in about four or five lines, using simple sentences, and the collected scripts were presented to me as part of the evidence of their written proficiency in French.

Conclusion

In this section, we have sought to analyze syllabus recommendations in relation to classroom practice from primary to secondary level at Culham. The aim was to examine the extent to which the learning of a first (or second) foreign language relied upon cognitive/linguistic skills transferred from the L1. Evidence would seem to suggest that the European School at Culham differs considerably, in this respect, from immersion programmes elsewhere. While French as L2 is initially introduced in a context-embedded framework, the nature of the input and the range of medium-centred activities to which the learners are exposed increasingly rely upon analytic skills transferred from L1. Indeed, it became apparent during lesson observation that the ability of the learners to cope with the increasingly decontextualized nature of the L2 (and L3) learning process depended very much upon them having developed these analytic skills in their previous language experience. In the second section (4.3), this hypothesis is examined in more detail.

4.3 LEARNER PERFORMANCE

As indicated earlier, it is suggested that the ability of the learners at Culham to deal with the linguistic demands placed upon them in French as L2/L3 will reflect the degree of analytic competence that they bring to that process. While some learners who have previously acquired French as a second language in a natural context may be an exception to this trend, their limited number should not seriously undermine it. The degree of analytic competence required should, of course, increase both within L2 as the activities become ever more context-reduced and in the transfer from L2 to L3. In general, as Skehan (1988) and Wells (1981) argue, the learner's degree of analytic competence can most usefully be measured in terms of literacy skill development in L1. To the extent that literacy skill development in L1 involves an ability both to conceptualize language, and to realize that

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meaning is embodied as much in the linguistic formation of the message as in extra-linguistic clues, it is a useful predictor of the learner's ability to cope with the context-reduced activities of L2/L3 learning. It is therefore hypothesized that the degree of literacy skill development among learners at Culham will have a marked relation to their performance in both French as L2 and L3 and that the more context-reduced the activities, particularly in terms of the difference between French as L2 and French as L3, the higher the analytic skills required to achieve success. The fact that a requisite level of analytic skill is *necessary* to achieve success in L2/L3 should not be assumed to mean, however, that it is *sufficient*. Affective factors, which also contribute to outcomes, will be examined in the following section.

Measuring learners' proficiency in L1 and L2/L3 and seeking to correlate results might most usefully be undertaken via researcher-administered tests[16]. Partly because the study involved a wide range of pupils across both primary and secondary sectors, however, and partly because some individual teachers in the school were not receptive to extensive external observation, this was not a viable option, although, it should be noted, other teachers did allow the implementation of specific test for specific purposes within given lessons. The most useful procedure in obtaining relevant data therefore seemed to be the school's own internal assessment system which is based upon general guidelines laid down for all European schools[17]. The assessment system at Culham is rigorous and involves for all years beyond Year 1 of secondary a combination of formative tests throughout the year in all subjects and summative tests, one at the end of each term with a general grade awarded at the end of each academic year. From year 4 of secondary, written exams at the end of each semester (i.e. twice a year) represent the more formal aspect of the assessment referred to as the 'B' mark, while the 'A' mark, also awarded at the end of each semester represent participation, application, oral assessment, homework and formative tests given

throughout each semester[18]. The final grade awarded at the end of the academic year takes into account the '*Notes de classe*' 'A' and the formal exams 'B' from each semester but is not necessarily the arithmetic mean as '*(la note finale) devra être le reflet de toutes les observations et des résultats dont dispose le professeur de la discipline concernée*'.[19] In the area of language, testing in L1 remains relatively uniform in the emphasis upon written skills from Year 1 of the secondary sector onwards. The written examinations (leading to 'B' marks) are to evaluate "the receptive and the productive abilities of the candidate" with regards to "Accuracy of grammar and spelling", "Range and quality of expression", "Quality of structure and planning", "Quality and coherence of thought" (Schola Europaea 1993:XI). Exams are in two parts, with equal weighting allocated to each of the four abilities cited but the second part is to take "special account of the fourth one", i.e. quality and coherence of thought.

Oral work, in class, included in the 'A' mark, assumes greater importance from year 6 as it is to prepare students for the final oral examination at the end of year 7 (Baccalaureate) as indicated in chapter 3. In the assessment of French as L2, oral skills are also tested in the final baccalaureate, but during the academic year, they are included with homework, classroom participation etc. as part of the 'A' mark. Consequently there is a tendency for written skills to assume greater importance in relation to oral/aural skills with the 'B' mark being awarded for written examinations only as in the case of L1. From year 5, the marking for the 'B' mark follows very much the same pattern as the year 7 final examination with 40% for decoding (part I), 20% for interpretation (part II) and 40% for extrapolation (part III), the latter being 'either personal evaluation of the text(s) or creative text production' in which coherence of both 'form and content' are being tested. (cf Schola Europaea 1993:XIII). The differences in the weighting of skills assessed in L2, and between L2 and L3, is itself a reflection of the increased amount of analytic competence

needed by learners to access such activities as commentary, summary and stylistic analysis.

At primary level, assessment in the first two years is based on an overall appreciation and comments from the class teacher but from year 3 these general comments are accompanied by letters indicating the level attained by the pupil in L1, L2, Maths and *'activités d'éveil'*. Letters range from A to E, 'A' representing very good results, 'B' good results, 'C' satisfactory results, 'D' & 'E' unsatisfactory[20].

At secondary level, grades range from 0 to 10, with 6 out of 10 representing the average required to pass the year.[21] Final grades of secondary level awarded for each subject are to be expressed in full numbers for the first 3 years and with half marks for years 4 to 7.[22]

In the following section, tables are provided for each of the stages analyzed earlier from primary to secondary based upon formative/summative results in L1 and L2/L3, apart from Year 1 of primary where no assessment was recorded. The tables indicate the overall grade achieved in L1 with the overall grade in L2 and L3 with a break-down into self-assessed sub-skills provided in Appendix 5. Correlation of results between L1 and L2, and between L1/L2 and L3, are discussed in the summary to determine the overall trends. While anomalies to these trends will form the basis of the questionnaire analysis and case studies in section 3, it was considered useful to indicate (with an *) those pupils who had benefitted from contact with French in an SLA context prior to arriving at Culham and to indicate (with an **) those pupils who were bilingual/near bilingual[23] although not in French. This will help locate easily second language learners in contrast to foreign language learners.

4.3.1 Primary level

According to the Ecoles européennes' directives (op.cit.:8), the principal aim of assessment at primary level is diagnostic, that is, *"une sorte de diagnostic pour diriger*

l'enseignement et l'apprentissage futurs", with teacher's comments given twice yearly in a 'carnet scolaire' (ibid.:9). Largely as a consequence of this, pupil performance is measured and recorded through a process of continuous assessment rather than summative tests which, in the case of L2, for example, includes observation of pupil response to questions, participation in group discussions and written work etc.: " *Les compétences pourront être notées au cours de la leçon et l'appréciation significative pourra être inscrite dans le carnet du maître*". (ibid.:8).

Years 1/3: As indicated, no informal or formal tests were administered in Year 1 and it may be assumed that, considering the context-embedded nature of the oral tasks undertaken in L2, that there would be little correlation between performance in L1 and L2. In Year 3, however, while no summative end of term or year tests were administered, pupils' progress was monitored by the teacher on an ongoing basis (*'évaluation continue'* ibid.:8).

Yr 3 primary	L1 (English)	L2 (French)
1	A	A*
2	A	A
3	A	A
4	A	A
5	A	A
6	B	A*
7	B	B
8	B	B
9	B	B
10	B	C
11	B	C
12	B	C
13	B	C
14	B	C
15	C	C

Table 1: L1 and L2 (French) results in year 3, primary.

Evidence of proficiency in L1 and L2 is based, therefore, upon teacher records and impressions of pupil performance in the classroom which are inevitably subjective. Discussion with the teacher, on the basis of the above sources, allowed me to establish a range of pupil categories in terms of the correlation between L1 and L2 proficiency.

As can be seen, out of 15 pupils, 14 were considered to have good literacy skills in L1, 5 of which obtained very high grades. 2 of these were identified as achieving high proficiency in French as L2 partly because of a prior SLA background and, of the remaining 12, 4 were described as achieving high proficiency in L2, i.e. very good, 3 were good and 5 satisfactory. The latter, generally inattentive, were experiencing difficulties in the area of written tasks. The remaining student, who barely attained satisfactory results in L1 and L2, was generally weak in all other subjects.

Year 5: Class 5 in the primary school at Culham had a total of 15 students: measurement of the L1 and L2 proficiency was based upon continual teacher assessment throughout the year combined with small formative tests. As I had spent little time with year 5, I rejoined the group the following academic year at year 1 of secondary level. This enabled me to work out a more precise correlation pattern in line with tables provided for other secondary classes.

The results (Table 2, overleaf) confirmed that 6 pupils with a high level of literacy skills in L1 (i.e. with a grade of 8/9) obtained similar results in L2 in both oral/aural and written skills. Of 4 pupils who attained only an average proficiency in L1 literacy skills, 3 obtained a similar level in L2 and the other scored somewhat higher in L2, particularly in the area of oral skills, mainly because of an SLA background.

Pupils	End of Yr 5 primary		Term 1, yr 1 secondary	
	L1(English)	L2(French)	L1 (English)	L2 (French)
1	A	A	8	9
2	A	A	8	9
3	A	A	9	8
4	A	B	9	9
5	A	B	8	8
6	B	B	8	8
7	B	B	7	9
8	C	B*	7	7*
9	B	B	7	6
10	A	B	7	6
11	B	B	7	6
12	B	B	8	6
13	B	B	8	6
14	C	B	6	5
15	C	C	6	6

Table 2: L1 and L2 (French) results in year 5, primary.

	L1	L2
mean	7.60	7.20
standard deviation	0.88	1.38

Correlation between L1 and L2 results: 0.73
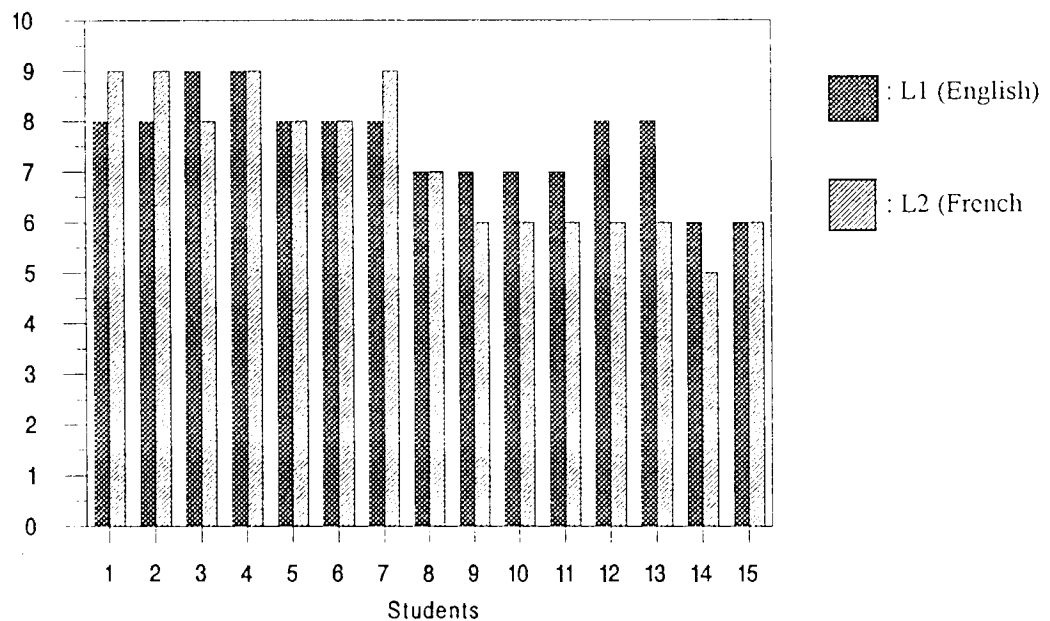
Bar chart corresponding to Table 2 results above.

Two pupils who were described as weak in L1 literacy skills were also weak in L2, particularly in the areas of reading/writing. Exceptions to the general pattern appeared to be pupils 12 and 13 whose high level of literacy skills were not replicated in the L2 and pupil 7 who, conversely, obtained a high result in L2 (both oral and written tasks) despite developing only average proficiency in L1. It was also interesting to note that out of the 11 pupils who obtained a 'B' for their L2 at primary level, 6 failed to sustain their grade at secondary level despite results of 7 or 8 for 5 of them. It should also be noted that at the secondary level, 3 new pupils had recently joined the school and had not previously studied French. For this reason they were omitted from the study as their grades inevitably reflected their special circumstances.

4.3.2   Secondary level (French as L2)

In the secondary school, formal exams supplement the ongoing assessment of pupils via coursework evaluation. From Year 4 onwards, pupils obtain two marks: 'A' for participation, classwork and formative tests and 'B' for summative end-of-semester tests, although these are subsumed into one overall grade at the end of each academic year. It should also be recalled that the greater emphasis upon written as opposed to oral skills in French as L2 is reflected in a shifting weighting of the skills for assessment purposes and for a differentiation in the range of written skills assessed. For the purpose of exploring the correlation between proficiency in L1 literacy skills and proficiency in French as L2, emphasis is placed on summative tests (i.e. 'B'marks) for year 5 & 6 when both 'A' and 'B' marks are provided with reference, where necessary, to other evidence to corroborate assertions.

Year 2: Year 2 of the secondary school at Culham had a total of 18 students 17 of whom had English as their L1 and 1 (no. 13) who had Danish as her L1. Although none of the pupils were English-French bilinguals, one (no 1) had benefitted from a previous SLA context and two others (no 7 and no 13) were near bilinguals in other languages but did not study French at primary school. Both the latter two and another pupil (no. 18) were receiving additional classes to help them catch up.

Yr 2	L1	L2 (French)	L2 skills	L3
1	9	9*	w>o	8 (It)
2	9	8	w>o	10 (Ir)
3	8	8	w=o	8 (De)
4	7	8	w≤o	7 (It)
5	9	7	w>o	9 (Ir)
6	9	7	w<o	9 (Ir)
7**	9	7	w>o	8 (De)
8**	8	6	w<o	8 (It)
9**	8	6	w<o	9 (It)
10	9	6	w<o	6 (It)
11	8	6	w<o	9 (Es)
12	7	6	w=o	7 (It)
13**	7	6	w=o	8 (De)
14	7	6	w>o	6 (It)
15	7	5	w<o	6 (It)
16	7	5	w<o	6 (De)
17	6	5	w<o	7 (Es)
18	5	4	w=o	5 (De)

w=written

o=oral

> means superior to

< means inferior to

It=Italian

Ir=Irish

De=German

Es=Spanish

* = some prior exposure in SLA context

** = bilingual (not in French)

L1 is English for all the pupils except for no 13 who was studying Danish as L1.

Table 3: L1, L2 (French) and L3 results for year 2, secondary.

	L1	L2	L3
mean	7.72	6.39	7.56
standard deviation	1.15	1.25	1.34
correlation:	L1/L2	L2/L3	L1/L3
	0.69	0.60	0.68
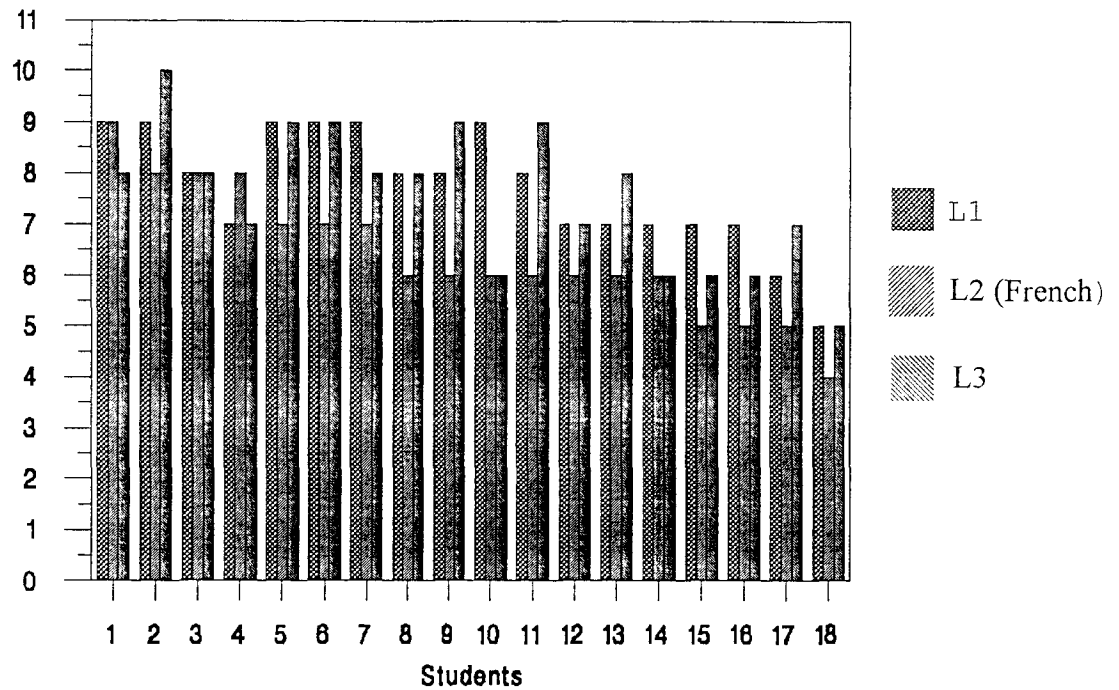
Bar chart corresponding to table 3 results.

Certain correlations in the results stand out. 7 pupils with high levels of L1 literacy skills obtained corresponding grades in L2, i.e. between 7 and 9, across both oral and written skills. Similarly, 3 pupils with average results in L1 attained identical grades in L2 as, indeed, did two pupils whose weak results in L1 were mirrored in a failure at L2. Exceptions to this pattern were 4 students whose high L1 analytic skills were reflected in reasonable L2 oral grades but only average L2 written grades, and 2 other students whose average L1 grades resulted in failure at L2.

Year 3: Out of the 19 students in this Year 3 class, all with English as their L1, all but 3 had studied French for at least one year at primary level in Culham. The remaining three students had had no primary French although two of these had had an experience of another language (no. 3 of Italian and no. 8 of Serbo-Croat).

Yr 3	L1 (English)	L2 (French)	L2 Skills	L3
1	10	10*	w=o	De=10
2	7	9*	w<o	Es=8
3**	8	9	w<o	It=9
4	8	8	w>o	It=8
5	8	8	w=o	Es=9
6	9	7	w=o	Es=8
7	8	7	w=o	Es=8
8**	7	7	w>o	It=8
9	9	6	w=o	Es=6
10	8	6*	w<o	Es=6
11	8	6	w=o	It=6
12	8	6*	w=o	De=7
13	8	6	w>o	De=6
14	7	6*	w<o	It=8
15	7	6*	w<o	De=6
16	7	6	w<o	De=7
17	7	5	w=o	It=5
18	6	5	w=o	Es=6
19	6	5	w=o	De=6

w=written   o=oral   > means superior to   < means inferior to
De=German   Es=Spanish   It=Italian

Table 4: L1, L2 (French) and L3 results for year 3, secondary

	L1	L2	L3
mean	7.68	6.74	7.21
standard deviation	0.98	1.41	1.32

	L1/L2	L2/L3	L1/L3
Correlation:	0.55	0.88	0.46
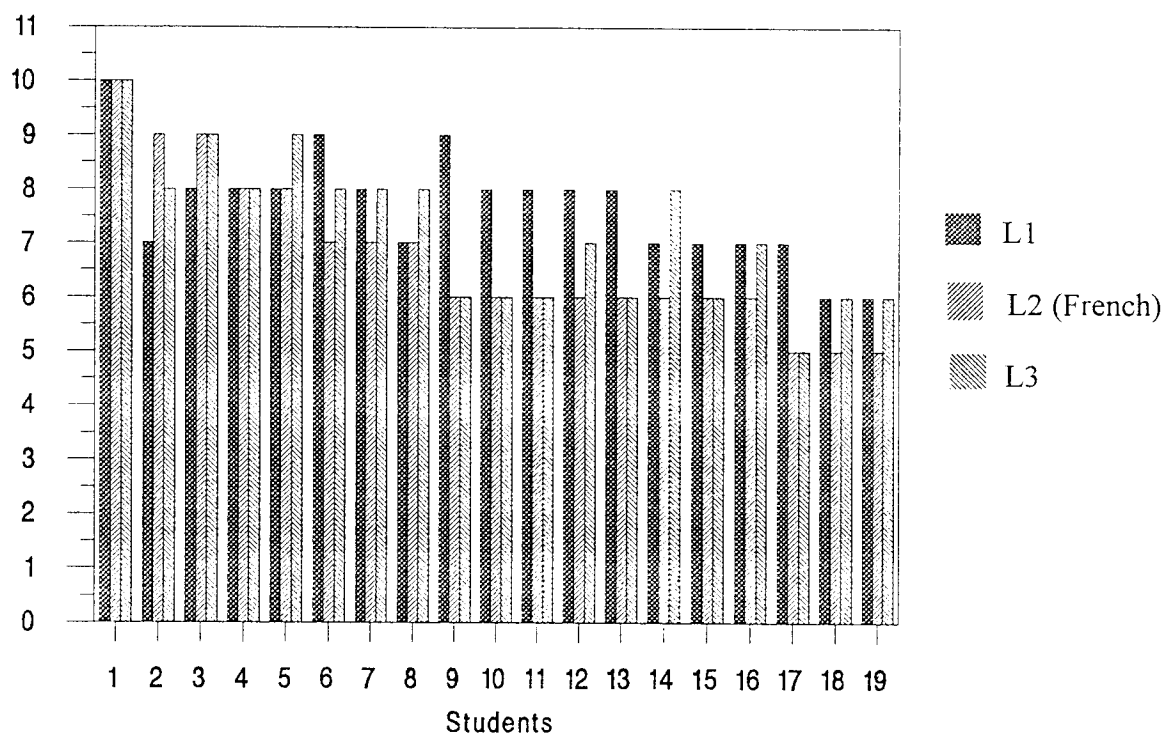
Bar chart corresponding to table 4 results.

It would appear that there was a relatively strong correlation between analytic skills in L1 and proficiency levels in French as L2. What is interesting, however, is the relation of this to the results obtained in History and Geography which, by this stage, are studied through French. Most students obtained high grades in these subjects and even two of the three weakest students in French (nos. 17 and 18) performed respectably. While it is true that pupils are assessed more on content than accurate use of language in these subjects, this would seem to indicate that French does not act as a barrier to achievement in them.

Year 5: Out of 13 students in the Year 5 class, 12 were in the English section with English as their L1 and one (no.4) was in the Dutch section with Dutch as his L1. Two students (nos.10 and 11) had received no French at primary level although one of these (no.10) had had prior experience of another language, Irish.

Yr 5	L1		L2 (French)		L2 skills	L3		L2 / L3	L4		
	A	B	A	B		A	B		A	B	
1	10	8.5	9	9.5*	w = o	9.5	9.5 Es	L2>L3			
2	8.5	8	8.5	8.5*	w = o	9	9.5 It	L2=L3	9	8	De
3	9	8.5	8.5	8*	w > o	8.5	9 Es	L2>L3			
4	7.5	7 Nl	7	7.5	w < o	8	8.5 De	Wr: L2>L3	8.5	8	It
5	8.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	w = o	7.5	7.5 It	L2>L3	9	8.5	Latin
6	7.5	7	8	7	w < o	7	8 De	L2>L3	9	9	Irish
7	7.5	7	7.5	7	w = o	6	6 De	L2>L3	8.5	8	Latin
8	7	6.5	6.5	7*	w < o	6	6.5 It	L2>L3			
9	8	6.5	8	6*	w = o	7.5	7.5 Es	L2>L3			
10	9	7	7	5.5	w = o	9	9 Ir	L2>L3			
11	7	7	7	5.5	w = o	9	9 It	L2<L3	8	8	De
12	7	7	7	5.5	w > o	7.5	7 It	L2>L3			
13	6.5	6	6.5	5.5	w < o	8.5	8 It	L2<L3	6	7	De

*= some prior exposure in a SLA context.
L1 is English except where indicated otherwise.

w=written	o=oral	>=superior to	<=inferior to
De=German	Es=Spanish	It=Italian	Nl=Dutch	Ir=Irish

Table 5: L1, L2 (French), L3 and L4 results for year 5, secondary.

	L1	L2	L3
mean	7.19	6.92	8.08
standard deviation	0.72	1.24	1.09

Correlation:	L1/L2	L2/L3	L1/L3
	0.79	0.34	0.56
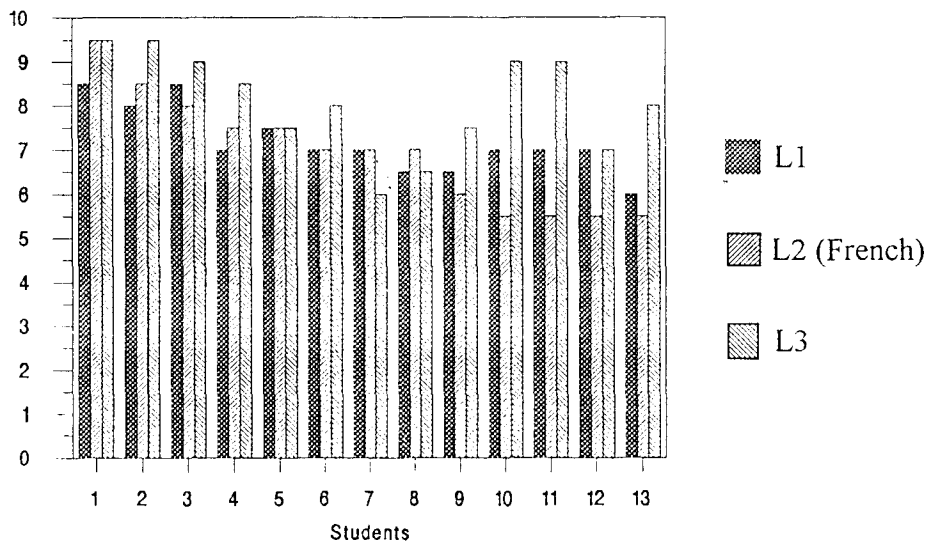
Bar chart corresponding to table 5 results.

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The results confirm the pattern for the earlier year. Three students with high levels of L1 literacy skills achieved similar levels in L2 although, admittedly, two had benefitted from high SLA exposure to French earlier and performed correspondingly well on both oral/written tasks. Students with average to good results in L1 tended to achieve similar results in L2 (2 somewhat more so in oral tasks) and those with weak to average skills in L1 obtained identical results in L2. Some anomalies stand out without undermining the general trend: 3 students with average to good results in L1 performed poorly in L2 and one with only average results in L1 achieved high levels of competence in L2, particularly in oral skills.

Year 6: It should be recalled that, from year 6, some students select a programme strongly orientated towards languages, with advanced history or advanced geography and advanced French totalling up to 6 periods of French language and 6 periods of history and geography in French, i.e. 12 out of 31/35 periods.

Out of 17 students in the class observed, 13 were in the English section with English as their L1, 3 in the German section (no 1, 2 & 6) with German as L1 and one (no 12) in the Dutch section with Dutch as L1. 'B' marks, which represent the more formal results in L2, i.e. strictly written tests, were generally slightly inferior to A marks.

The results show that students with good academic skills in L1 achieved very high standards in L2, although the 2 students with the highest marks also benefitted from high SLA exposure to French and were in fact bilingual in German and French. Students with fair or weak results in L1 also obtained correspondingly fair or weak results in L2. There were only 3 exceptions to the trend: 2 with high results in L1 performed poorly in L2 and one with average grades in L1 achieved high results in L2 for both oral and written skills.

Yr 6	L1 A	L1 B	L2 A	L2 B	L2 skills	L3 A	L3 B	L2 L3	L4 A	L4 B
1 **	9	7.5 De	9.5 / 9.5	9* / 9.5^A	w = o				Adv. Geo.	
2 **	8.5	8.5 De	9 / 9.5	8.5* / 9.5^A	w < o				7 6.5 (Es)	
3 **	6 / 6	6.5 / 5.5^A	8 / 9	8.5* / 9^A	w < o				Adv. Geo.	
4	7.5	8	9	8.5	w = o					
5	7.5	8.5	8.5	7.5	w < o					
6 **	9	8 De	9	7.5	w > o				Latin:9	
7	7	7	8.5	7.5*	w > o	8 It	7.5	L2>L3		
8	7	7.5	8	7.5	w = o	8 It	8.5	L2>L3	8 8.5 Irish	
9	7	8	8	7.5	w > o	7.5 De	7.5	L2>L3	8 6.5 Latin	
10	7	6.5	7.5	7.5	w > o					
11	7	6.5	8 / 8	7 / 7^A	w < o	7.5 It	7.5	L2>L3	Adv. Geo.	
12**	7	6.5 Nl	7.5	6.5	w>o					
13	6.5	7	6.5 / 7.5	6.5 / 8^A	w=o	8.5 It	9*		6 8 Es	
14	8. / 8.5	8.5 / 8.5^A	7	6.5	w<o					
15	8.5	9	7	6.5	w£o					
16	6	6	7	6.5	w=o				9 8.5 Irish	
17	6.	6	6.5	5.5	w<o				Adv. Geo.	

A= option at advanced level

De=German Es=Spanish It=Italian Nl=Dutch

Adv.Geo=advanced geography in L2

*= some prior exposure in a SLA context.

** = bilingual (see individual case histories in appendix 3)

Table 6: L1, L2 (French), L3 and L4 results for year 6 secondary.

	L1	L2	L3
mean	7.38	7.32	8.00
standard deviation	0.93	0.91	0.63
Correlation	L1/L2 = 0.29		
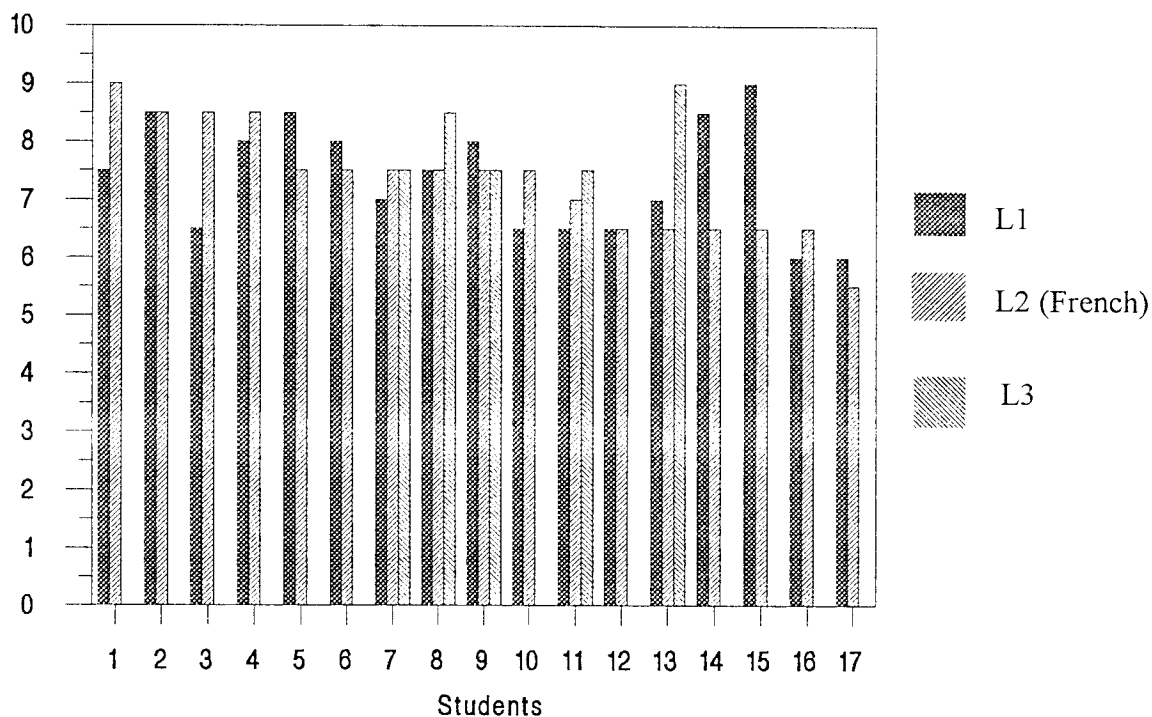
Bar chart corresponding to table 6 results.

4.3.3 Secondary Level (French as L3)

French taught at Culham as L3 is introduced in Year 2 and is assessed via a combination of formative and summative tests which focus upon vocabulary acquisition and grammatical knowledge. To the extent that they test language in a more decontextualized framework, it is to be expected that there would be a strong correlation between analytic skills developed in L1 and L2 and proficiency rates in L3, apart from the case of learners who had prior experience of the language in an SLA context or who were bilingual in French/English.

Year 2: Out of 20 students in the class, which was quite heterogeneous, 18 had English as their L2 (i.e. essentially as a second language because of the geographical position of the school) and 2 were in the English section with English as their L1 and

German as their L2, although both were Swedish in origin.

Yr 2	Bilingual in	L1		L2		L3 (French)
1	trilingual	8	It	9	En	10
2	Nl/En	8	Nl	9	En	10
3	-	8	It	6	En	10
4	De/En	9	De	8	En	9
5	Swedish/En	8	En	9	De	9
6	De/En	8	De	10	En	9
7	-	7	It	6	En	9
8	De/En	8	De	9	En	8
9	De/En	8	De	9	En	8
10	De/En	8	De	9	En	8
11	De/En	7	De	8	En	9
12	De/En	8	De	8	En	8
13	Nl/En	8	Nl	9	En	7
14	Nl/En	7	Nl	9	En	7
15	-	8	De	7	En	7
16	Swedish/En	7	En	6	De	7
17	De/En	7	De	8	En	7
18	-	7	De	8	En	7
19	-	6	Nl	6	En	6
20	De/En	6	De	8	En	4

De=German   En=English   Es=Spanish   It=Italian   Nl=Dutch

Table 7: L1, L2 and L3 (French) results for year 2 secondary.

	L1	L2	L3
mean	7.55	8.00	7.95
standard deviation	0.74	1.18	1.47
correlation	*L1/L2*	*L2/L3*	*L1/L3*
	0.40	0.17	0.67

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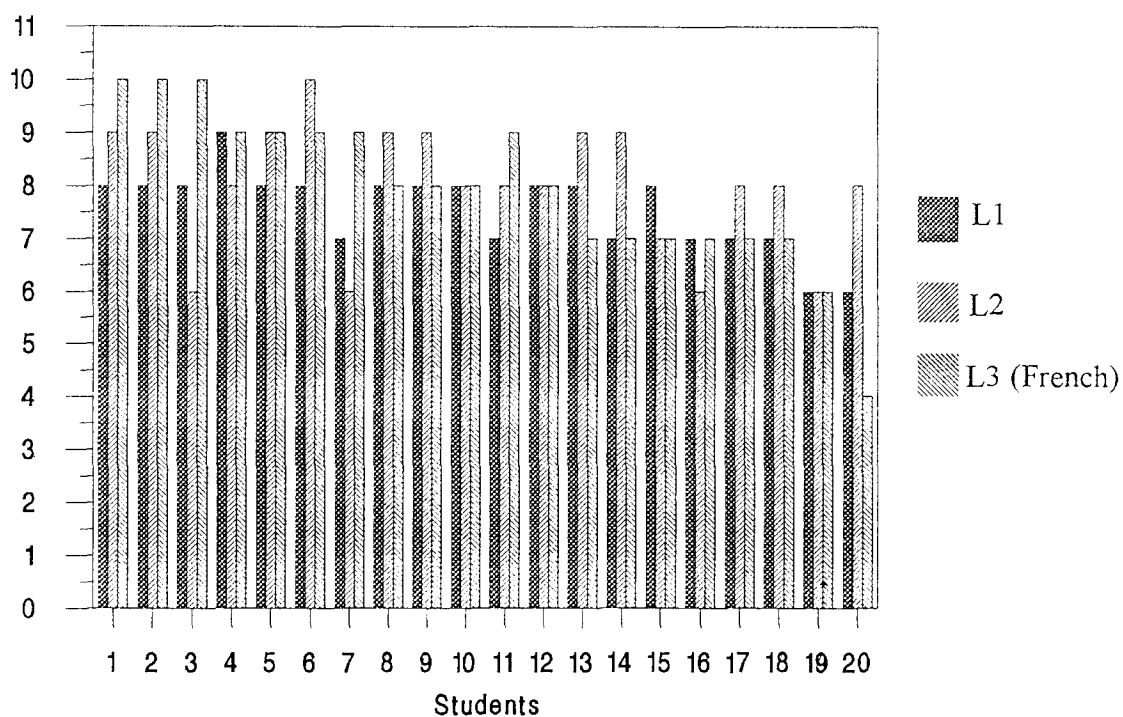
Bar chart corresponding to table 7 results

Inevitably, considering the complexity of the background of the students involved, the results are not as easily accessible as those for French as L2 but a similar pattern does emerge. Those pupils who obtain high literacy rates in L1 tend to achieve similar results in French as L3 regardless of their performance in L2 which can vary considerably. For those students for whom L2 was a second language, and who had achieved bilingual or near-bilingual competence in it after years of primary school study, there was a clear correlation of results across L1, L2 and L3. For non-bilingual students, however, who had only had one year's study of English at secondary level (nos. 3, 7 and 15), there tended to be a closer correlation between grades in L1 and L3 since those in L2, in which they were undoubtedly more proficient, were inevitably lower than those of their bilingual classmates.

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Year 3: Out of 20 pupils in the class, 16 had English as their L2 within an SLA context and 4 had German as their L2.

Yr 3	Bilingual in	L1	L2	L3 (French)
1	De/Fr	8 De	7 En	10
2	De/En	8 De	9 En	9
3	De/En	8 De	9 En	9
4	De/En	8 De	9 En	9
5	Dk/En	8 Dk	9 En	8
6	De/En	8 De	8 En	8
7	De/En	7 De	8 En	8
8	Nl/En	8 Nl	9 En	8
9	De/En	8 De	10 En	8
10	En/De	7 En	8 De	8
11	Nl/Swedish	7 Nl	6 En	8
12	-	6 It	6 En	7
13	It/En	5 It	8 En	7
14	De/En	7 De	7 En	7
15	-	8 En	7 De	7
16	En/Swedish	7 En	7 De	7
17	-	7 En	7 De	7
18	-	7 Nl	6 En	7
19	De/En	7 De	9 En	6
20	Nl/En	6 Nl	6 En	6

Table 8: L1, L2 and L3 (French) results in year 3 secondary.

	L1	L2	L3
mean	7.25	7.75	7.70
standard deviation	0.83	1.22	1.01
correlation	*L1/L2*	*L2/L3*	*L1/L3*
	0.51	0.39	0.63
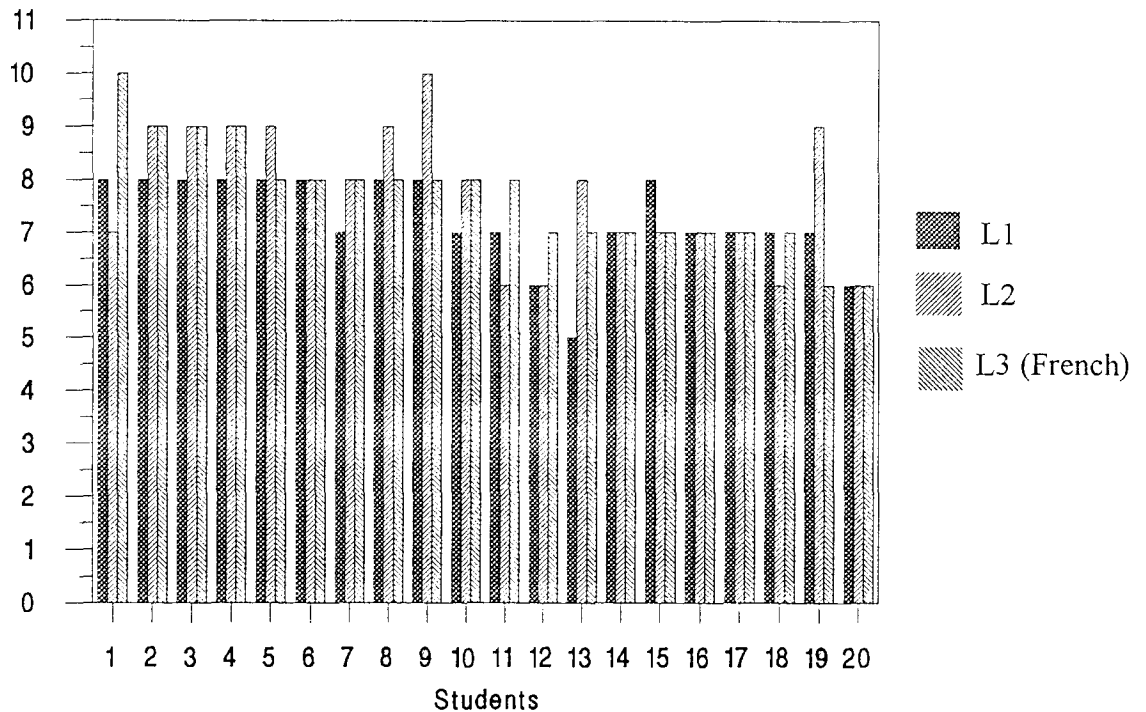
Bar chart corresponding to table 8 results.

A similar pattern was found in Year 3 as had been found in Year 2. In general, the grade obtained in literacy skills in L1 correlated closely with that in L3 with the grade in L2 acting as a variable. For those students for whom L2 was a foreign language, as in the case of those learners with English as L1 and German as L2 (i.e.nos 15, 16 and 17), a consistency of results was recorded across the three language areas. For those students for whom the L2 was a second language, that is, English, the results varied dramatically. For those who had studied it from primary school and benefitted from high exposure, there tended again to be a correlation across the three language processes, but for those who had not had such opportunity, their results in L3 were often considerably higher than those in L2. Although the *actual* standard of the latter in L2 was higher than in L3, reflecting a broad proficiency, the fact that L2 tests tended only to assess a narrow (grammatical) competence inevitably resulted in deceptively higher L3 grades.

Year 5: Out of 23 students in the class, 20 had English as their L2 (second language) and 3 had German as their L2 (i.e. foreign language). Of the latter, one student had English as his L1 and the other two were English/Swedish bilinguals who found the link between Swedish and German helpful for the study of German as L2.

Yr 5	Bilingual in	L1		L2		L3 (Fr)		L2	L4	
		A	B	A	B	A	B	L3	A	B
1	De/En	9 De	8.5	8	8	9.5	9	L2>L3		
2	It/En	9.5 It	9	9	9.5[A]	9	9	L2>L3	9	9
3	Swedish/ En	8.5 En	8	9 De	9[A]	8.5	9	L2>L3		
4	De/en	8.5 De	8	9	10	8.5	9	L2>L3	7.5 Latin	
5	De/En	8 De	7.5	9	9[A]	9	8.5	L2>L3		
6	De/En	7.5 De	7	8.5	9	8	9	L2>L3		
7	-	8 De	8.5	7.5	7.5	8	9	L2>L3	7 Latin	
8	De/En	8 De	8	8	8.5[A]	8.5	8.5	L2>L3		
9	Dk/en	8.5 Dk	8.5	8.5	9	9.5	8	L2>L3	9 De	9
10	Swedish/ En	8 En	7	7.5 De	8	9	8	L2>L3		
11	-	8 It	7.5	7	6.5	8	8	L2>L3		
12	Swedish/ En	7 De	6.5	8	8.5[A]	8 .	8	L2>L3		
13	De/En	8 De	8	7.5	8[A]	7.5	8.5	L2>L3		
14	Dk/En	8.5 Dk	8.5	8	8.5[A]	7.5	8	L2>L3	7.5 Es	7
15	It/En	6.5 It	6.5	8	7.5	8.5	7.5	L2<L3	8 De	8
16	Dk/En	8 Dk	7.5	8.5	9[A]	8	7.5	L2>L3		

Yr 5	Bilingual in	L1 A	L1 B	L2 A	L2 B	L3 (Fr) A	L3 (Fr) B	L2 L3	L4 A	L4 B
17	De/En	6.5 De	7	7.5	8^A	8	7.5	L2>L3	6.5 It	6
18	-	7.5 De	8	6	6.5	7	7.5	-		
19	Nl/En	6.5 Nl	6.5	5.5	7	7	7.5	L2>L3		
20	-	7.5 En	7	6 De	6.5	7	7	L2>L3		
21	-	6.5 It	6	6.5	5.5	6	7	L2>L3	6.5 Es	6
22	-	8 It	6.5	6.5	6	7	6.5	L2>L3		
23	-	7 De	7.5	7.5	7.5	7	6	L2>L3		

L2 was English unless otherwise indicated.
'A' indicates that the student intended to opt for an advanced level for that particular language from year 6. (Note no student intended to choose L1 at an advanced level although no 9 would have liked to but Danish (Dk) was not available at an advanced level).

Table 9: L1, L2 and L3 (French) results for year 5 secondary.

	L1	L2	L3
mean	7.50	7.93	7.98
standard deviation	0.78	1.15	0.84
correlation	*L1/L2*	*L2/L3*	*L1/L3*
	0.54	0.66	0.56

From the data, students with good to high results in L1 tend to obtain similar results in L2 and L3 although, once again, L2 appears as a variable in the process due to the complexity of its role as a second/foreign language. For some students (nos 6 and 12), who had lived in England for 4 years or more, who were bilingual and for whom English had become their dominant language in academic tasks, results were higher than for L1 and L3. For other students, however, who had lived in England for a shorter period, results in L2 again seemed disproportionately lower than for L1 and L3.
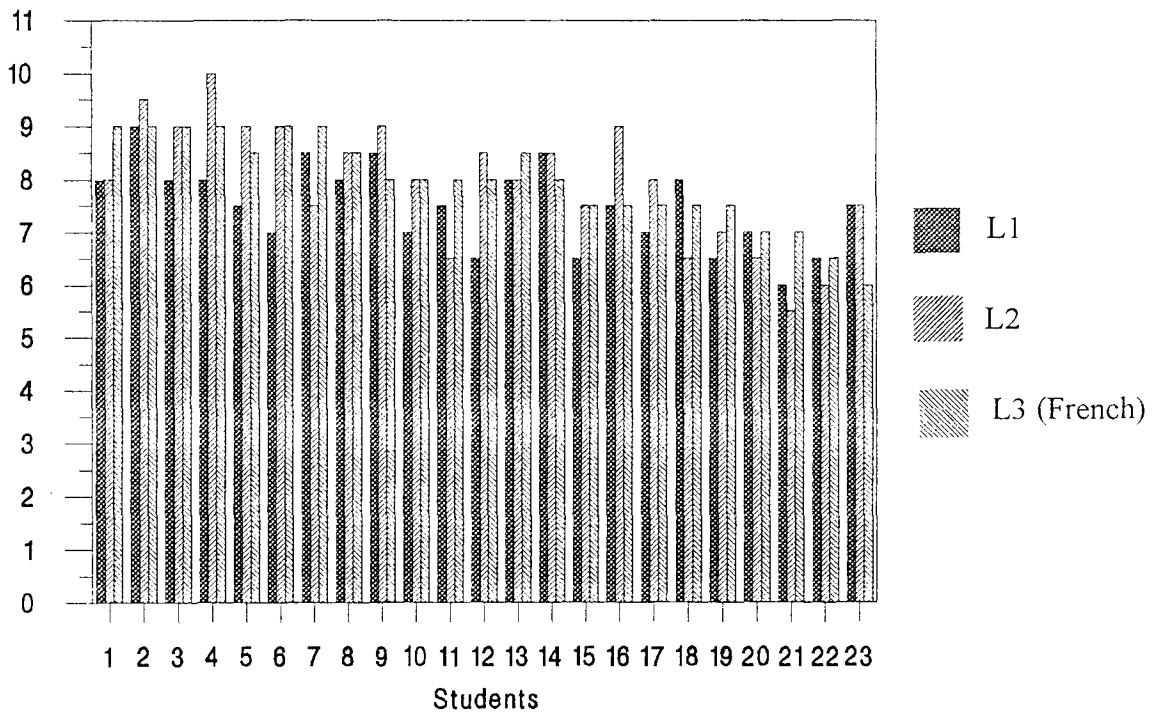
Bar chart corresponding to table 9 results.

Year 6: Out of the 7 students in the class, 6 studied English as L2 i.e. in a SLA context-- and one (No 1) in the English section studied German as L2, i.e. in a FL context but from primary.

Yr 6	Bilingual in	L1 A	L1 B	L2 A	L2 B	L3 A	L3 B	L2 / L3	L4 A	L4 B
1	En/It	8 En 7.5^A	8	5.5 De	5	8.5	8	L2<L3 & L3<L4	10 It	9.5
2	De/En	8.5 De	8.5	9 7.5	9.5 7.5^A	8	8	L2>L3		
3	It/En	8 It	7.5	8	7	8.5	7.5	L2>L3	8 Es	8.5
4	De/En	8.5 De	8	8.5 7.5	7.5 7.5^A	8.5	7.5	L2>L3		
5	-	9 De	9	8	6	8	7.5	L2>L3		
6	-	8 It	7	6 6	5.5 7^A	7.5	6.5	L2>L3	8 Es	8
7	De/En	8 De	8	9 9	8 8^A	7.5	6	L2>L3 L4>L3	8.5 It	8

Table 10: L1, L2, L3 (French) for year 6 secondary.

	L1	L2	L3
mean	8.00	6.93	7.29
standard deviation	0.60	1.45	0.70
Correlation	*L1/L2*	*L2/L3*	*L1/L2*
	0.29	0.02	0.43
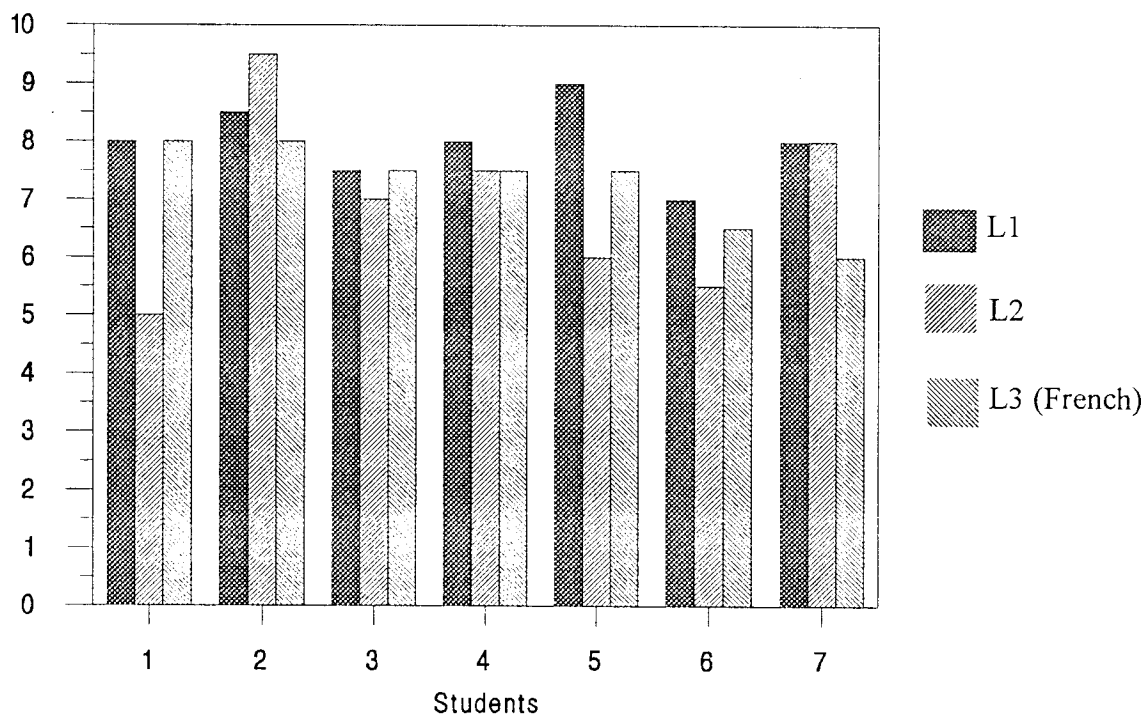
Bar chart corresponding to table 10 results.

As the class included such a small group, the correlation figures are inevitably less stable but yet again the trend appeared to be for a better correlation between L1 and L3.

Conclusion

In general, what stands out from the results across the three language areas is the high levels of proficiency achieved. It would appear that the obvious attention paid to the development of analytic skills in the L1 from primary school was, and is, an important factor in helping to achieve the high proficiency rates in language learning at Culham which are reflected in the Baccalaureate results. This is a general feature of the European School system. Within this general framework, it is not unusual therefore to find that there is a

relatively close correlation between literary skills measured in L1 and general proficiency rates in the L2 although, it might be noted, this correlation will be affected by three variables:

(a) whether or not the language is a second (i.e. English) or foreign (i.e. French) language;

(b) whether or not, in the case of it being a foreign language, the learner had experience of it as an SLA prior to entry to the school and

(c) whether or not, in the case of it being a foreign language, the learner had uninterrupted study of it from primary school upwards. Given the mobility of the children assessed and the heterogeneous nature of the classes, the correlating pattern is unstable. However, the above variables will tend to assume greater weight in line with the age of pupils and it is, therefore, not surprising that the correlation diminishes somewhat (except for students of French as L2 in year 5) in the secondary school, as the following table shows:

		Primary	Secondary:			
		Yr 5	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 5	Yr 6
Mean scores	L1+	7.53	7.72	7.68	7.19	7.38
	L2 (French)	7.60	6.39	6.74	6.92	7.32
Correlation	L1/L2(French)	0.62	0.69	0.55	0.79	0.29
Mean scores	L1++		7.55	7.25	7.50	8.00
	L2 (not French)		8.00	7.75	7.93	6.93
Correlation L1/L2(not French)			0.40	0.51	0.54	0.29

L1+: students with French as L2
L1++: students with French as L3, many of whom studied English as L2.

Table 11: L1 L2 correlations

In terms of the relationship between proficiency levels in L1, L2 and L3, the picture is somewhat more complex. In general, as indicated earlier, there would appear to be a discernible relationship between proficiency levels over the three areas and, if anything, that between L1 and L3 appears somewhat stronger than that between L1 and L2 (or L2 and L3) for reasons outlined above. L3 being a foreign language will in evitably be subject to less variables than L2 which can feature either as second or foreign language.

		Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 5	Yr 6
Mean scores	L1	7.72	7.68	7.19	7.38
	L2 (French)	6.39	6.74	6.92	7.32
	L3	7.56	7.21	8.08	8.00
Correlation:	L2/L3	0.60	0.88	0.34	
	L1/L3	0.68	0.46	0.56	
Mean scores	L1	7.55	7.25	7.50	8.00
	L2	8.00	7.75	7.93	6.93
	L3 (French)	7.95	7.70	7.98	7.29
Correlation:	L2/L3	0.17	0.39	0.66	0.02
	L1/L3	0.67	0.63	0.56	0.43

Table 12: L2/L3 and L1/L3 correlations

Although the above correlations are indicative of a definite trend, it should be noted however that they are not entirely consistent for two main reasons. Firstly, only a few L2 and L3 learners of French had prior experience of a SLA context (and indeed some were bilinguals with French as their first or second language) whereas most L2 learners of English benefitted of a SLA context for many years. Secondly, the Ecoles européennes (1994a:5) produced a report[24] where it was commented that "*dans toutes les épreuves de*

langue et dans toutes les épreuves passées en langue véhiculaire (sauf l'Economie), les

examinateurs francophones sont plus sévères que leurs homologues d'autres langues".

The notoriously harsh way of marking from French nationals[25] makes the comparison

between grades in French and grades in other languages inevitably less reliable.

What is interesting about the above data, however, is precisely the limitations in the

correlation between L1 and L3 when the latter is not subject to the same range of variables

as L2. The fact that there are a number of anomalies in terms of the grades achieved by

pupils in L1 and L3 may well be a function of affective factors, that is, of an awareness by

the pupils that L3 has less relevance to their needs than either L1 or L2. Analytic

competence may well be essential for accessing language in a decontextualized framework

but may only be one among a wider range of factors predicting success. It is to these other

factors that we now turn.

4.4   LEARNER VARIABLES

A salient feature of the European School at Culham is the complexity of the range

of languages involved and the possible combination of languages each child can study. In

addition to the mother tongue (L1), children have access to an L2 which can either operate

for them, as does English, as a second language or, as does French, as a foreign language

but with greater 'pertinence' than a traditional foreign language in the sense that it is studied

from primary school and becomes a medium (as well as object) of study from Year 3 of the

secondary school. Finally, in addition, children have to study a third (foreign) language.

As indicated in the previous section, the range of language processes tends to

operate in terms of greater context reduction and to the extent that this is the case, the less

exposure to, and interactive use of the target language, the higher the level of analytic

competence required for successful learning. Certainly, the difference between L2 as a

second and foreign language, and between L2 and L3, is marked by the extent to which the language permits possibilities of communicative interaction. In general, those students learning English as L2 at Culham are in a similar situation to those learning French as L2 in Luxembourg where, as Bernardet *et* al (1993:36) suggest, *"... L'environnement linguistique luxembourgeois, tant dans la rue, à l'école qu'à la maison par le biais de la télévision câblée, est favorable à une progression plus rapide de la maîtrise de la langue de communication ...".* Although the report continues to suggest that communicative fluency is not the same as formal accuracy, it is noticeable in the results analyzed in Section 2 that all students with some years of study in English as L2 at Culham obtained consistently good scores in that language despite some variation in their performance in L3 (and L1). This was particularly true with those who were able to combine high analytic skills from L1 with opportunities for communicative interaction in L2. It is tempting, of course, to suggest that better performance in L2 as a second language is mainly due to the issue of greater exposure to the L2 but motivation factors should not be downplayed. The fact that pupils perform better in situations of interactive use might not only reflect increased contact with native speakers of that language but higher levels of (instrumental and/or integrative) motivation stemming from its perceived relevance to their lives. Moreover, motivation factors might also play an important role in explaining anomalies in the data analyzed in Section 4.3 where, for example, learners with high scores in L1 achieved less high scores in L2 and/or L3, i.e. did not seem to transfer their analytic skills across the language processes. Troike (1984:49) suggests that affective factors play almost as important a role in determining second/foreign language success as cognitive factors. While the data would not suggest their contribution is as high as this, they do play a significant, if highly complex, role. In general, it would appear that anomalies in the results analyzed in Section 4.3 can be

grouped under three headings:

* those who obtained high analytic skills in L1 but whose average to poor results in L2 and/or L3 suggested non-transfer of such skills;

* those students who tended to achieve average to poor results in L1 and L3 but proportionately higher scores in L2; and

* those who obtained average to weak scores in L1 (English) but proportionately higher scores in L2 (French) and L3 despite the more decontextualized nature of the process;

Initially, the hypothesis was that motivation would feature increasingly as a variable alongside analytic competence in explaining success rates in context-reduced processes. Although, as will be examined in this section, there is evidence of this, the question of affective factors in learner success rates proved more complex than was anticipated. Evidence of motivational patterns was obtained in two ways to complement analysis of performance factors: (a) by a closed questionnaire designed to obtain attitudinal information from the pupils, and   (b) by a series of in-depth interviews designed to explore such attitudes in relation to the learner's broader psycho-sociological background. The two complement each other in terms of analysis and are, where relevant, related to classroom observation.

(a) Category 1

In general, motivation among students at Culham - recorded on the questionnaire - is high and most are aware of, and appreciate, the rich opportunities for language learning offered by the school (cf Appendix 7). This is undoubtedly a reflection of parental attitude and the high valorization placed upon linguistic proficiency in the home. While students

may value the multilingual context offered by the European School, however, this does not mean that they value all languages equally despite the fact that they may have the analytic skills to cope with them. The first category of students certainly comes within this framework, i.e. those whose high proficiency level in L1 seems not to be transferred to L2 (and/or L3).

For many pupils, high analytic skills were simply not accompanied by motivation to succeed in L2 and/or L3, as in the case of nos. 8, 9, 10, 11, 15 and 16 (Yr 2: L2); 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 (Yr 3: L2) or nos. 14 and 15 (Yr 6: L2). The reasons volunteered by students for their underachievement -- which, in most cases, was particularly evident in reading/writing tasks -- covered both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Some students, as no 1 (Yr 6: L3) whose result in German as L2 compared unfavourably with that of French as L3, attributed it to her personal preference but also to the fact that she started German as L2 at the European school in Varese so that effectively she was dealing with Italian as the language of the environment as well as with a foreign language. On the other hand, no 11 (Yr 2: L2) among others, whose mother was French, attributed it to the teaching mode indicating that she simply did not like French in class although she enjoyed using it with friends. Other students likewise cited intrinsic factors, particularly bilingual learners with high analytic competence in L1 and L2 who underachieve in L3. Other students, on the other hand, cited extrinsic factors including low self-esteem in language learning, such as nos 5 and 12 (Yr 5, L2), perceived lack of relevance of the language to their career/lives, i.e. lack of integrative/instrumental motivation, particularly among L3 learners who knew they could give up their L3 at the end of year 5 and not interfere with their final academic achievements at the end of year 7.

An interesting feature of this category was not only the extent to which motivational factors intervened to produce discrepancies between L1 and L2/3 but also

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between communicative/analytic skills within a given language area. A typical example of the latter was student 10 (Yr 3: L2) whose proficiency in oral French as L2 was not matched by similar skills at the written level despite high analytic competence in L1. To all intents and purposes, there appeared to be little objective reason for such a disparity since not only had the student obtained high literacy skills in L1 but had considerable contact with French: i.e. he had started his education in a bilingual French/English school and had, after entering Culham at the age of 6, had an opportunity to return to France for 7 months at the age of 10. What became apparent at interview, however, was that while he had built up impressive receptive skills in French, a parallel development had not occurred in productive skills, particularly at the written level because he had felt, in France, that French children were considerably ahead of him and he had lost the incentive to 'catch up'. Ironically, in this case, prolonged contact with French in a SLA context had undermined rather than increased the motivation to succeed in certain skill areas and this was being transferred to his L3 (Spanish) where, he recognized, he was experiencing difficulties in grammar. The fact that he was achieving better in German as his L4, in year 4, may be explained by his experiencing less pressure in a smaller class or it may simply be that it is less cognitively demanding as inevitably classes in the initial stages classes are limited to vocabulary building and pronunciation exercises and basic sentence structures.

(b) Category 2

The second category includes students who, despite average to low levels of achievement in L1 (and often L3) achieve comparably higher levels in L2 on account of its greater pertinence and motivational force. A representative example of this category might be student 8 (Year 5: L2) who attended a French school between the ages of 4 and 7 and therefore benefitted from an early SLA context. On transfer to England, however, he

entered an English school where he received no tuition in French before arriving at Culham at the age of 14. While this student has only average proficiency in English as his L1 (and a similar limited level in Italian as his L3), he has retained a high level of communicative (if not academic) skills in French as L2. At interview, while hesitant at times and experiencing occasional problems with vocabulary and syntax, his fluency was such that he pointed out that he was accepted as bilingual by his peers which became, partly at least, a powerful motivational force for improving his academic skills. Indeed, his desire to improve had prompted him to choose History as an option in Year 6 since it would allow him to deepen his knowledge of French as the medium of study[26]. Perhaps a similar set of circumstances explain the high performance in French as L2 of student no. 3 (Year 6: L2). French was the first language of this student and, prior to joining the French section of the primary school at Culham in the 5th year, he had attended a French school in France. Since English was spoken at home, and since his opportunity to use French outside the school context gradually decreased, his competence in English improved to the extent whereby he requested in Year 4 of the secondary school to be transferred to the English section. Inevitably, since the academic demands of English as L1 are greater than those of English as L2, his performance in English was lower than that for French where he retains near-native fluency. Once again, while the student appeared reticent about his performance in English and that in Spanish as his L3, which he abandoned in Year 5 of secondary school, he seemed to command high regard from his peers and demonstrated high proficiency in both French as L2 and Geography and that clearly had a powerful motivational effect upon him in deciding to pursue it as an option at the advanced level from year 6. In the above cases, the emphasis has been placed upon students for whom the L2 occupies almost a midway point between a second and foreign language. Such a pattern is equally discernible

among students for whom English occupies the role of L2, such as no. 20 (Year 2: L3) whose weaker level of analytic skills in L1 was reflected in a very low result in German as L3 but not in the more contextualized L2.

(c) Category 3

The third category includes students whose high level of motivation, contrary to those in the second category, allowed them to achieve better results in a (context-reduced) L2 and L3 than would appear to be warranted by their performance in L1. An example of this was student no. 2 (Yr 3: L2) whose proficiency in French as L2 certainly outstripped that in English as L1 and this was confirmed at interview where her spoken French appeared both accurate and spontaneous. There would appear to be no obvious reason to explain this disparity since the student herself admitted that she preferred oral to written activities and, indeed, encountered several problems in the latter area. The reason for her positive attitude and attentive participation in class, despite obstacles, became clear at interview when features of her home background were discussed. The fact that the student had a French national as a mother clearly encouraged her to valorize the language and to persevere with -- and succeed in -- academic activities which she might otherwise have found daunting. Whether in fact she will be able to persevere in the same way with her more decontextualized L3 (Spanish) remains to be seen.

Another useful example is that of student no 15 (Year 5: L3) who achieved higher results in the more decontextualized area of L3 than would be forecast by his proficiency in L1 and L2. Student 15 is an Italian/German bilingual who attended a German school in Italy until the age of 15 with Italian as his L1, German as his L2 and French as his L3 (introduced only at secondary level). On entry to Culham slightly over a year earlier, Italian remained his L1 and French his L3 while English became his L2. While his proficiency in

English rose greatly during the short period that he was at Culham, this was largely in a SLA context. More interesting was the fact that, despite only average results in Italian as an L1, the student achieved very high results in French, higher at the academic written level than in English as L2 and comparable with English at the oral communicative level. Again, explanation of such a pattern is difficult to explain in cognitive terms alone and it was only at interview that it was revealed that the student in question was extremely motivated to learn French. High integrative motivation, linked to his personality, and high instrumental motivation combined with well-developed oral/aural stratagems allowed him to succeed in the L3 classroom despite obvious difficulties encountered with academic tasks. His written work, for example, was disappointing in terms of basic errors made in syntax and morphology (*sourir* instead of *sourire, sourriet* instead of *souriait* or *il voyat* for *il voyait, couffres* for *coffres* etc).

The above cases suggest that those pupils who benefit from parental support, strongly valorize the L2 or L3 and/or have well-defined reasons for studying it (i.e. who can conceptualize the long-term goal of the activity) can partly offset weaknesses in terms of analytic skills, at least on a temporary basis.

Conclusion

Affective factors clearly play a complex role in foreign language learning and this is particularly true in terms of the complicated language biographies of students at Culham. Many of them come from backgrounds which involve them in constant travel and exchange of countries/schools with a corresponding change in the role of language in their life. What can be a foreign language at one point in their development can become a second language at another and, as we have seen, what can be a first language at one point in time can become a second language at another point.

Against this shifting and fluid linguistic background, the relation between cognitive and affective factors in each child's language development can be unique and generalisation tends to run the risk of imposing, rather than inducing, a pattern. The fact that the school tends, however, as Baetens-Beardsmore & Swain (op. cit.:1) suggest, to prioritise L1 maintenance means that, in general, learners develop high analytic skills which allow them to cope with the ever more formal demands made upon them in L2 and L3. Motivation variables appear to interact with this relation in conflicting ways. In general, they play a minimal role in relation to the development of L2 as a second language (e.g. English) largely on account of its immediate pertinence. Most students achieve high levels of proficiency in English as a second language and even those with weak analytic skills develop communicative (if not analytic) competence In the case of French as L2 and, increasingly, L3 as a foreign language, however, motivation variables tend to assume a more independent role, either undermining the transfer of analytic skills in those students who question the pertinence of the given language or sustaining performance in that language when analytic skills are not sufficiently developed.

4.5   DISCUSSION

As already indicated in the House of Lords Report (op.cit. 20), results in language learning at Culham are high and, like results at Baccalaureate level for other European Schools, reflect a clear progression from L1 to L4 (cf Appendix 6). This level of achievement is rooted, however, in three specific factors which clearly distinguish European Schools from immersion programmes elsewhere. The first is the social background of students where language learning is highly valorized as a function of parental occupation. Although the school claims to take pupils from a wide range of backgrounds, the evidence of Culham is that the majority are from a narrow professional stratum in which knowledge

of more than one language is an occupational necessity and this, inevitably, affects pupil attitudes. The second is, as Baetens-Beardsmore & Swain (op.cit.:5) stress, the priority given to the development of analytic skills through L1 which then can be transferred to other areas. Unlike in Canadian immersion programmes, L2 (and L3) are not intended to duplicate the L1 learning process but to benefit from the skills developed through it and the L2 and L3 syllabus are planned accordingly. The extent to which L3 benefits from L1/L2 can be seen in student responses to the researcher-distributed questionnaire where 64% answered affirmatively on this issue[27]. Students at European Schools such as Culham do not only start, however, with high analytic skills and positive attitudes towards language learning. They also benefit from the introduction of a second/foreign language at primary level which embodies the advantages of the 'early start' associated with immersion programmes without the disadvantages of a focus on message-oriented activity which neglects language form. Quite the reverse, European schools insist on the quality of output focusing more on L2/L3 as, as Baetens-Beardsmore & Kohls (1988b:9) put it, "objects of study". It is no doubt because of this balance that students are expected to be capable, by the second year of secondary school, of handling academically complex tasks in History and Geography through the medium of an L2. This, in turn, prepares the way for the introduction of a third foreign language where the level of decontextualization is even greater.

The success rate established by the above three factors is not, as indicated, unique to Culham but is a function of the European School system as a whole. It is not, however, without its failures. As we have seen, in Sections 4.3 and 4.4, students who fail to achieve the requisite analytic skills in L1 can find the activities in L2 and L3 daunting and even those who do develop the requisite analytical skills can still question the relevance of such academic (i.e. decontextualized) activities in the L2 and L3. Such pupils are usually in the

minority but it is an open question to what extent the programme would be successful with

a wider social intake, including students from backgrounds where valorization of linguistic

diversity and promotion of L1 literacy skills were not so much in evidence.

Notes (chapter 4)

1. Ecoles européennes (1992a:3).

2. Whereas in a L1 context, as De Villiers points out (1978:272-273), parents "do not systematically provide corrective feedback for their children's syntax but rather for the truth of their statements", in L2 errors are systematically corrected as meaning depends on accuracy. Furthermore, such an approach is vital for more effective learning given the time limitations of a classroom context.

3. Atkinson (1993:4) argues that "100% target language is neither feasible nor necessarily desirable in most classrooms". Indeed L1 is vital, at least initially, to avoid confusion and to ensure quick understanding. However, Swain (1985:7) argues that the 'separation approach' is preferable to the 'mixing approach' method. To support her argument, she cites a study by Legaretta of Spanish-English students which shows that "students learn to ignore the language they do not understand. If the same, or related, message is typically given in both languages, then there is no motivation to try to figure out what is being said in the second language." At Culham, the amount of L1 use is closer to Dodson's (1985:340-341) recommended average of 10% for L1 'medium-orientated' use as opposed to some 'immersion' programmes like in Hong Kong where Swain (op.cit.:5-6) reports: "... even at Form III only 53% of the talking-time recorded was in English. Teachers switched from one language to another on the average about every 18 seconds."

4. See Ecoles européennes ref. EE/1460/73F. n/ref.73-D-37, 1973.

5. See Les Ecoles européennes n/réf.94-D-19; Orig.:FR (1994b:78). See also Bulwer (1992:185) who comments that students with low levels of fluency and grammar can nevertheless succeed in "making real communication in the target language."

6. Cf table 2 in chapter 3 which indicates the number of additional hours for students opting to study a language at an advanced level.

7. Cf Ecoles européennes n/réf. 83-D-1810; EE/2309/83-FR (1983:2).

8. Cf Ecoles européennes n/réf. 73-D-37; EE/1460/73-F (1973:19).

9. Cf European Schools ref. 83-D-46; EE/1198/83-EN (1983:22).

10. Ibid.:22.

11. Ibid.:3.

12. Ibid.:3.

13. European schools ref. 90-D-24 (April 1990:1).

14. Ibid.:4.

15. In a lesson observed on 15/6/1993, when the teacher gave the following sentences to write down: "*Mr Dupont est le mari de Marianne Dupont et Mme Dupont est la femme d'Henri Dupont*", a pupil remarked, bemused, "if you say that *Mr Dupont* is the husband of *Mme Dupont*, you know that the woman is '*la femme*'!. To which the teacher clearly replied: "*c'est évident mais c'est pour apprendre ces deux mots*".

16. One should keep in mind however the points raised by Romaine (1984) and Wells (1986:126 & 127) in relation to the difficulties involved in formal assessments which may not reflect fully the true ability of a child.

17. Ecoles européennes n/réf.92-d-237; EE/574/92/fr (1992b).

18. Ecoles européennes n/réf. 95-D-148 Or. FR (1995:24).

19. Ibid.:6.

20. Ecoles européennes n.réf. 92-D-237; EE/574/92/fr (1992b:24).

21. Ibid.:24.

22. Ibid.:26.

23. Many students at the European schools are what Baetens-Beardsmore (1986:93) would term "balanced bilinguals" though they might be dominant in one language for some skills (Cf also Dodson's (1985) article on "preferred"/"dominant" languages). At Culham, when asked to name the language they felt most confident with, bilinguals often pointed out that their dominance in one language was not clear-cut. For instance, a student in a German section, with German as L1, might be very good in his written German. His command of English might be superior to his command of German, however, for oral activities because he would use English, the 'lingua franca', in and out of school. Such bilinguals felt at a disadvantage, at least initially, when mixing with German people in Germany. The situation became the reverse after a long stay in Germany. The language loss was not at the written level therefore, since the school did successfully maintain such a level, but at a higher level of spontaneity in oral skills, a more subtle difference difficult to detect through general academic assessment. The risk of language loss and the problem of maintenance affected students differently and depended on many factors such as parental use, length of residence etc.. I did not probe too deeply into the subject as it was well beyond the scope of my study.

24. Ecoles européennes n/réf. 94-D-910; Orig.:EN (1994a).

25. The 1994 failure rates (cf Appendix 6) very much confirm the French notoriously harsh way of marking recorded in the 1989 baccalaureate results. The House of Lords Report (1990:10) also comments on the "low average results in the written examinations of... Mother Tongue (that is French)..." and on overall results generally:

"Final results above 70 per cent are obtained by 66 per cent of the Danish section, by 62 per cent of the English language section, by 58 per cent of the German language section, but by only 40 per cent of the French language section."

26.   This particular student mentioned that he had friends who could speak French reasonably well but who gradually lost interest for lack of support at their local school: the level being too low, they got bored. This highlights the problem of children who come to live in the U.K. and who have no opportunities to maintain their language, if not at a native level given the lack of environmental context, at least at some minimum level of fluency.

27.   Cf Da Cunha (1994:29) and Appendix 7 (cf column L1/L2 help L3 of tables).

CHAPTER FIVE   CONCLUSION : IMPLICATIONS FOR 'EARLY START' PROGRAMMES

5.1   INTRODUCTION

Like immersion programmes in Canada or Australia, the European School offers another example of the early introduction of a foreign language and, as such, has inevitably contributed to the ongoing debate on the value of an 'early start'.[1] The high success rates in modern languages achieved in schools such as Culham have, in particular, been used to support the introduction of a foreign language as a compulsory part of the curriculum at Key Stage 2 (i.e. primary school level) despite earlier and more negative evidence stemming both from the FLES project in the USA and the Nuffield *French for All* project in the UK.[2] Both the model of the European School and that of the Canadian immersion programme share the fact that learners are, from a relatively young age, exposed to a second/foreign language which allows them not only to obtain a high degree of competence in it but to use it as a medium for the study of other subjects. While both models have been used to support an 'early start', however, the European School seems to offer a number of advantages over immersion programmes in terms of their relevance to the UK (and wider European) context where a range of pilot schemes have recently been undertaken.[3] Two in particular stand out:

(1) First, by seeking to replicate some of the conditions of first language acquisition, namely "a naturalistic setting for second language acquisition" and interaction "in authentic and meaningful communicative situations" [4], immersion programmes can be seen as relatively inefficient in that they require considerable contact time in order to facilitate interactive use. It is true that Australian variants have limited contact time to 8 hours per week but even writers such as Fernandez (1992) argue that this is the minimum

required in a process in which the emphasis is on comprehensible input which the learner internalizes at his own pace. The European School, on the other hand, appears to guarantee a similar outcome to immersion programmes in terms of proficiency but on a more efficient basis simply because it relies upon learners transferring skills developed through the L1 to the L2 rather than duplicating what Widdowson (1990:162) refers to as the "slow process of natural discovery", which is, he comments, "a long and rather inefficient business". This is, as indicated earlier, the key point made by Baetens-Beardsmore & Swain (1985) and it is hardly lost upon the state sector where the cost-effective use of teachers is necessarily a prime consideration.[5]

(2) Second, as has been pointed out by critical observers such as Bibeau (1984) among others, the reliance in the Canadian immersion programmes on replicating the conditions of L1 acquisition can result in serious deficiencies in the proficiency that is eventually obtained. This can include a tendency for receptive skills to be more advanced than productive ones (largely through implementation of Krashen's 'silent period stage') and, within this framework, for discourse competence to be more advanced than grammatical competence and for errors -- largely uncorrected -- to fossilize.[6] Such criticism should not be allowed to veil the success of the Canadian programmes, of course, since the competence eventually achieved by pupils is much higher than that achieved by students from non-immersion programmes. The efficacy of such programmes is, however, open to question, particularly in comparison with the European School. The latter, by treating the L2 (second or foreign language) not only, as Baetens-Beardsmore & Kohls (1988b:9) point out, as a medium but as an 'object of study', that is by focusing on language form as well as its functional use in the classroom, allows the learner to overcome many of these problems and to develop both analytic and communicative competence. Holliday (1993:15) emphasizes the need for "structured instructional activities" even at an early age and she

cautions not to "gloss over" the fact that at European schools, L2 learners do not easily pick up the language from contacts. While both the results of immersion programmes and the European School have been used to support an 'early start' for foreign language learning in the UK, therefore, it would appear that the latter has more relevant lessons to offer a state system which has to consider both pedagogic and cost effectiveness. To what extent, however, are the lessons from either process pertinent in the wider UK context, or more generally, to what extent is the application of findings from one pedagogical context to another ever valid? It has been argued in this thesis that many of the problems that have emerged in the history of foreign language teaching stem precisely from the misapplication of findings from one context to another and that what is required is a theoretical framework which allows pedagogy to be based on the socio-cognitive variables specific to any given process. The analysis of the European school was intended to examine the success of a given pedagogy in terms of the socio-cognitive variables specific to that model. To avoid any misconceived inference from such a model, it would seem appropriate, in conclusion, to examine the problems of applying the lessons from that process to another in an area which has long been highly controversial.

5.2 THE 'EARLY START' DEBATE

The debate over the most appropriate age at which to introduce a foreign language has historically been, and still is, polarized between the 'younger is better' (Krashen, 1988) and 'older is more efficient' (McLaughlin, 1987) viewpoints. The discussion inevitably tends to pivot around the different age-related qualities brought to the learning process which are used to advance the case of one group of learners as opposed to the other. Thus it is argued on the one hand, for example, that young learners have both affective advantages (i.e. they are less inhibited than older learners and less culturally fossilized) and cognitive ones (i.e.

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they are more adept at imitative tasks than older learners and more sensitive to the phonology of the target language).[7] The concept of a (cognitive/cultural) 'critical period' for L2 learning retains its power even today and Swain (1981:18) is certainly not alone in arguing that "... the prevailing belief that young children learn a second language easily and rapidly is difficult to lay aside". The very factors that the young child brings to the L2 process, that is, a more unconscious approach to learning, a greater receptivity to the target language culture and, as Cummins & Swain (1986:88) point out, an advantage in pronunciation are precisely the qualities that tend to disappear with age. In opposition to this viewpoint, it is argued that while younger learners may be more receptive than adolescents or adults, they are less efficient in that -- as reflected in the Canadian or Australian immersion programmes -- they are not yet efficient data-decoders and therefore tend to replicate the strategies used in acquiring L1. While this is seen as positive by writers such as Krashen (1981), who prioritize acquisition over learning strategies, other writers see it as negative.[8] McLaughlin (1987) points out, for example, that the fact that adolescents or adults have a greater capacity for analytic thought, improved memory, greater self-awareness and self-regulation strategies, and a capacity to conceptualize long-term goals make them more efficient learners. As Poole and Roberts (1995:2) suggest, "Such qualities enable older learners to make more effective use of restricted exposure time and limited models than can younger learners and, thereby, to progress faster".

One of the problems with the debate as it has unfolded is that the two positions are seen as diametrically opposed. It is, of course, inevitable that learners will bring different age-related qualities to the learning process at both the cognitive and affective level. Younger learners probably do suffer less from acculturation problems in learning an L2 than do older learners and, conversely, older learners probably do bring more efficient data-decoding strategies to bear which make it easier for them to discover what Jakobovits

(1970b:271) calls "grammatical relation(s)" in the input. The fact that learners do bring

different qualities to the learning process is not, in itself, however, a cause to prioritize one

group of learners over another or to suggest that one group will inevitably be more

successful than another. On the contrary, and most importantly, the degree of success of

any group of learners will depend not only upon what they bring to the learning process but

upon the extent to which these age-related qualities correspond with the needs of the

learning context (i.e. the conditions of learning). In relation to the question of an early start,

Carroll (1969:57-58) had already argued this in the 1960s:

> *"One of the most popular ideas is that young children learn a foreign language more readily and more easily than older children or adults.... What is often ignored is that the conditions are rather specialised and not always arranged or duplicated in schools, and that even under these specialized conditions not every child learns the second language as well as his mother tongue".*

It is, as Carroll infers, the interaction between the cognitive and affective qualities

that learners bring to the L2 process at any given age, and the contextual constraints of that

process, that will be crucial in determining the success of the outcome. To a large extent,

therefore, the debate on an 'early start' in the UK has tended to polarize unnecessarily and

this can partly be attributed to the Burstall Report (1968, 1970, 1974), and the response to

that report, which sought to evaluate the pilot scheme pioneered by the Schools Council to

introduce French at primary level in the 1960s.[9] Originally, the aim of the Schools Council

project (1966:3) was to discover "on what conditions" it would be appropriate to teach a

modern language in primary school since, it indicated, evidence had already shown that this

was possible.[10] The Burstall report, however, tended to ignore the teaching conditions and

to slant the aims of the study by placing emphasis on the third question in the set of five

questions which it posed as:

Question 3:

Is any substantial gain in mastery achieved by beginning to learn French at the age of eight?

The fact that the aim of the report had subtly shifted from discovering the optimum conditions for teaching French at primary school to whether there was any advantage to an 'early start' at all tended to unnecessarily polarize the discussion that ensued. The negative conclusions that it reached in response to question 3 (above) can be summarized as follows:

- pupils who had started earlier (i.e. at the age of 8) did not, in general, perform better at age 16 than those who had started at the traditional age of 11, although some of the former retained slightly better aural comprehension skills;

- pupil who had started earlier did seem, in general, to retain more positive attitudes to French and French culture[11] although there did not appear to be a link between these attitudes and proficiency levels and, in general, pupil attitude was more dependent on success in the learning process than on the starting age itself.[12]

Such negative conclusions did not, of course, go unchallenged and the fact that the report ignored the conditions that might promote a successful early start in favour of a dismissal of an early start per se ensured that the debate smouldered on for a decade. While most local authorities (LEAs) accepted its finding and abandoned the scheme, others did not and they were supported in the literature by a range of writers who sought to suggest that the poor results highlighted were explicable in terms of implementation factors. Bennett (1975:337) and Gamble and Smalley (1975:94) pointed to the fact that the test results were unreliable because the total number of pupils had declined sharply during the course of the experiment. Others, such as Buckby (1976:18 & 19), disputed the 'content validity' of the research administered tests and yet others, such as Kunkle (1976) and

Buckby (op.cit.:20), criticized the fact that there was confusion in the aims of the research between the advantages of teaching younger children and of teaching them in wide ability groups.[13]

Perhaps more serious criticism related to other 'conditions of learning', such as the linguistic competence of teachers, the extent of their training, the continuity between primary and secondary school and the methodology employed. Hawkins (1981:187-188), for example, highlighted the fact that 50% of primary school French teachers were less qualified in the target language than their secondary school peers and 75% of them had no training in language methodology, an assertion contested by Wringe (1976:43) who pointed out that "... general teaching competence is more closely linked with pupil attainment than the teacher's linguistic knowledge". Hawkins (op. cit.:189) continued his critique of the project's implementation by suggesting that there existed no "smooth transition" between primary and secondary in terms of syllabus or methodology and often pupils participating in the project were placed in secondary induction classes alongside pupils who had not had such experience, thereby becoming bored and demotivated. As Wringe (1976:39) concurred, considering the "...chaotic and disorganised manner" in which the project was often introduced, there is little wonder that any cultural or linguistic gains developed in the primary stage disappeared during the secondary years by the age of 16. Considered in retrospect, therefore, it would appear that the introduction of primary school French was not necessarily wrong per se but suffered in terms of the conditions of its implementation, a dimension that Burstall touched upon but which she certainly did not make the focus of her evaluation. In this sense, perhaps, the report was a step backwards from earlier reports which had indeed focused upon the conditions necessary for the successful learning of French at primary level rather than upon whether primary school foreign language learning was, in itself, a useful activity. The Plowden Report (1967:225) had, for example, deplored

the fact that "... far too many schools have introduced French without having a teacher who possesses even minimum qualifications, without consideration of what constitutes a satisfactory scheme and time-table and without any consultation with receiving secondary schools" and, only five years later in 1972, a DES report (1972:1) was to similarly argue that "clear conditions" need to be fulfilled if primary school French teaching is to be successful. "Without these minimum conditions", it sensibly concluded, "it seems better to leave the subject alone", echoing the Plowden report (op. cit.:225) who argued that:

> *"Without a teacher who is well qualified linguistically and in methods suitable for primary schools, it is better to have nothing to do with French."*

5.3   RELEVANT MODELS

In more recent years, the criticism of the Burstall Report for ignoring implementation factors has increased and, partly in response to the range of pilot 'early start' schemes under way in Europe, there is a growing interest in the introduction of a foreign language at primary school level[14]. In 1989, a Scottish 'National Pilot' scheme[15] was launched and within England and Wales both the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) and the Association of Language Learning (ALL) have argued that a foreign language should form a part of the National Curriculum at Key Stage 2. Moreover, the Dearing Report (1994:38) review of the National Curriculum, partly in response to such arguments, stated that "... the bulk of the time released during Key Stages 1 and 2 be used for extension work in the subject areas .... (but) should not preclude the introduction of, say, a foreign language in Key Stage 2 if the school has the expertise to do this".

In one sense, as has been suggested, the fact that the negative impact of the Burstall Report is now being challenged is welcome since the question has never been whether younger learners are, or are not, more suited to learn a foreign language but what exactly

are the conditions which can ensure their success and can they be successfully implemented in the UK context. As Poole and Roberts (op. cit.:3) argue, however, while the recent debate is stimulating, there is the converse danger that an early start can be recommended *regardless* of the conditions necessary for its success on the basis of evidence from quite different socio-cultural contexts. The Scottish 'National Pilot' scheme, for example, seems to have drawn its support from the success of bilingual education and immersion programmes in Canada even if the House of Lords seems more circumspect in basing its recommendations for an early start on the success of European schools.[16] Indeed, the House of Lords report (1990:25) underlines the need to take into account the shortage of qualified teachers and, in fact, considers the expansion of European schools programmes as expensive and not practical. Enthusiasm for the concept of an 'early start' in some publications is strong, however, *regardless* of whether the issues raised two decades ago in the Plowden Report -- such as teacher competence/training, coherent syllabus, primary-secondary links and/or clarity in aims -- have been satisfactorily resolved.[17]

The problem stems from a refusal to recognize that the conditions operating in other socio-cultural contexts, including those in Europe, simply cannot be assumed to exist, as Poole & Roberts (1995:3) stress, in the UK and cannot therefore guarantee the same outcomes. If we examine the (relative) success of Canadian immersion programmes or the European schools, however, what becomes clear is that they are based -- whatever their differences -- upon a pedagogic model designed to meet the needs of a precise category of learners. In the case of the European school, for example, most learners enjoy not only high literacy skills in their L1 but a home environment which actively encourages them to value languages and language learning and in a school which successfully generates a positive attitude amongst its pupils. At Culham, 89% of the L2 learners of French who completed their questionnaire identified their attending the school as beneficial (cf Appendix 7). The

success of the school depends upon tapping these qualities both in the diversity of languages the learners are expected to cope with and in the increasingly context-reduced tasks to which they are exposed, initially in L2 and later in L3. If so few pupils fail to achieve in Culham it is largely because the teaching programme matches the socio-cognitive variables that the learners bring with them to the learning process. It would be utopian to think that learners in a different context could, if exposed to a similar pedagogy, achieve the same kind of outcome. As Jakobovits (1970a:74) had stressed long ago, ".. generalizations about the optimum age that fail to take context into account are almost certain to be false".

It is not the aim of this thesis to seek to establish the conditions that would create an effective learning environment for early foreign language teaching in the UK or, indeed, to suggest whether those conditions are capable of being met. It may be worth considering, however, through a comparison with existing 'early start' programmes, including those in Europe, some of the context-specific factors that would need to be taken into account and which are often simply overlooked. Such an analysis might add some methodological clarity to an increasingly important area of language policy and practice where findings from quite different contexts are inappropriately used to justify new policies.

5.3.1 Contextual variables

A traditional problem of foreign language learning in a country such as the UK, monolingual in an international language, is the extent of contextual support. Supporters of an 'early start' often advance their case by citing, as suggested, the success of immersion programmes in Canada or, indeed, of teaching programmes in Europe. The context is, however, quite different in a number of respects. At Culham, for example, learners of English as L2 have the equivalent of bilingual contact in the community outside the classroom as, indeed, do learners of French in Canada, albeit to a much lesser extent, with

the result that the degree of exposure and opportunities for interactive use are much greater than in the UK in the first instance and the bi-cultural setting exerts a motivating influence in the second. European pilot schemes would appear to be closer to the UK context in this respect but even here the international role of English as a world 'lingua franca' makes its pertinence to learners in Greece or Italy somewhat greater than that of Greek or Italian to young learners in the UK.[18]

5.3.2 Learner variables

The lack of contextual support for L2 learning in the UK can have two implications which may need to be considered in terms of what the learner brings to the learning process. In the first place, the fact that language learning will be more decontextualized than that in immersion programmes -- or even the L2 programme at European schools -- will make far more demands upon learners' analytic than communicative skills in the early stages. If the learner is to cope with L2 as an object rather than as a medium of study, he will need to have developed an ability to conceptualize language as a system in its own right. Considering the fact that an early start would involve not, as in immersion programmes, teaching children of high cognitive development but children across a range of abilities, this question will need to be seriously addressed. As Hawkins (1984:3) has argued, many children at age 11 lack the necessary metalinguistic awareness for foreign language study and it will require considerable thought in terms of the pedagogy required if an earlier start is implemented. Rapaport and Westgate (1974:25) argue the issue somewhat differently when they write:

> "In order to determine the appropriateness of French to a junior child's intellectual and general development, the demands it makes and the reward it brings must be matched with what one knows of the stage of development in question".

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In the second place, the fact that the learner will have few (if any) opportunities for interactive use of the language outside the classroom will place much greater demands upon his ability to valorize the long-term goals that emerge from foreign language learning. This is often difficult in the secondary but its implications for foreign language teaching at primary will certainly need to be taken on board. Perhaps the view expressed by the Scottish Project Assessor, Low *et al* (1993:1), that an early introduction of a foreign language may be justified if "... school leavers from the UK are to compete for jobs in Europe ..." may have to be rethought. Not only is it possible that young learners will not be able to conceptualize such long-term goals but that, as Poole and Roberts argue, they are inappropriate anyway in a context in which it is impossible to predict what language an eight year old might possibly need later in his career. As they (1995:3) state,

> *"If one cannot predict which language a learner will need, is it valid to introduce him/her to one at the early age of eight which will, inevitably, be arbitrary and when s/he may never use it again in later life?"*.

It might also be added that, unlike in Canadian immersion programmes in Canada or those of European Schools such as Culham, pupils will tend to come from backgrounds where other languages and cultures are not valorized to the same extent and where instrumental and/or integrative motivation cannot be relied upon.

5.3.3 Pedagogic Variables

Decisions regarding an effective pedagogy are inevitably a function of the interplay between contextual and learner variables. The fact that, as has been suggested, both sets of variables differ markedly from those in immersion programmes or, indeed, the European school would indicate that the question of pedagogy has to be carefully thought out and that attempts to merely transpose models from the earlier contexts are, from a

methodological point of view, simply unsound.

In order to develop an effective pedagogy, in light of the variables defined above, it would seem that the following points need to be addressed:

Aims

In a context where, as Poole & Roberts point out (op.cit.:4), "it is difficult to predict learners' future language needs", what might appropriately be the aim of an early introduction of a foreign language? Hawkins'(1984) suggestion of a general linguistic awareness development plan certainly springs to mind as an alternative to a single language and certainly worth investigating for possible implementation at primary level.

It should be noted that this is indeed the conclusion reached in France where it was proposed, in 1994, that a foreign language be introduced at primary level. The experimental scheme started at the beginning of the 1995-1996 academic year[19] with the recommendation that pupils from the age of 7 be exposed to a foreign language for 15 minutes on a daily basis (commonly referred to, Samson (1995:8) notes, as the *'quart d'heure de langue à l'école'*). The central aim of this programme is not so much the teaching of a foreign language per se as the "*sensibilisation à une langue vivante étrangère*"[20]. This may appear, as Samson (ibid.:9) remarks, to be "une véritable innovation pédagogique" in France but corresponds generally to the notion advanced in the 1980s by Hawkins of a pre-foreign language course designed explicitly to develop both awareness of, and sensitivity towards, other languages. It might be noted in passing, however, that the time allocated to such a programme in France is, on the one hand, considered inadequate to achieve its goal and, on the other, as reducing the time spent on other subjects. Moreover, as with the previously mentioned French from Eight Pilot

Scheme (Burstall, 1968) in the U.K., the question of qualified staff does not seem to be appropriately addressed nor technical material adequately provided for[21].

Methodology

In a context where the learner has little opportunity for interactive use of the target language, what implications does this have for pedagogy in terms of the wide ability range of pupils who would be involved? Should it even be considered with regard to pupils with reading and writing difficulties in L1? Given the importance of developing sound basic literacy skills in L1 first, should L2 be introduced later rather than earlier in the course of the primary level development and should written skills in L2 be introduced at the same time or after the development of basic oral skills, i.e. what would be the balance between context-embedded and context-reduced procedures in terms of pupils' L1 development?

Planning

As Poole & Roberts (1995:4) argue, the questions to be asked are "What amount of time should be allocated to foreign language learning", in the light of the above, and how should it be "integrated into the primary school's wider language curriculum?" "How would the programme be staffed" by teachers with an adequate degree of linguistic competence and how would the "continuity" between primary and secondary school be established, in terms of syllabus/methodology, while respecting current government's initiatives regarding language diversification?

While the above questions are not intended to exhaust the debate about the early introduction of a foreign language in the UK, they underline the crucial need to differentiate a specific context from other contexts so as to avoid, as Poole & Roberts (op.cit.:4) suggest, "glib comparisons with countries whose circumstances are radically different."

5.4   CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

The discussion in this chapter on the early introduction of foreign languages is not meant as an end in itself. On the contrary, it is intended merely as an illustration of the dangers involved in seeking to implement findings drawn from a given context in another context where the conditions of their validity simply do not apply. As indicated earlier, this has long been a hallmark of foreign language learning and has, inevitably, helped to create a range of unnecessary problems at the level of methodology. The success of the foreign language programme in the European School is based upon the extent to which it builds upon the cognitive and affective qualities which learners bring to that context. It is both impossible and highly unrealistic to expect that precise inter-relation between contextual and learner variables to be repeated elsewhere and if an early start to foreign language learning in the UK is to be successful, it will need to start with a concrete examination of those variables specific to itself and the elaboration of a pedagogy to meet these variables. As Adamson (1993:9) points out, teacher training at primary level has been a rather "hit and miss affair, with little research being done in the precise linguistic content of the course." It may even be, as he further claims, that "all the citizens of the new Europe will have to speak at least one and preferably two other European languages" but at present, as Adamson also remarks, the way in which greater linguistic diversity is to be achieved is "far from clear" (ibid.:9). It would be senseless, and even perverse, therefore to embark on any programme without careful consideration of the pupils' educational needs and abilities and the implications of changes without proper planning.

Notes (Chapter 5):

1. The 'early start' schemes in the 1960s developed specifically in response to new ideas in psycholinguistics and, as the Schools Council (1966:1) comments, to "the change in attitude towards the usefulness of language learning, and the growth of new techniques and of a technology of language learning".

2. For further details on the FLES experiments in the USA see Rivers (1968:358 & 359). Cf also Harding (1967:149) who comments that "FLES has a whole has hardly been much of a success". For details on the Pilot Scheme to introduce French at primary in the UK, see the Schools Council (1966:1-3) who worked in collaboration with the Nuffield Foundation. See also the Plowden report (1967:223-225).

3. In France, an experimental scheme is under way [see Samson (1995)] and, in Italy and Denmark, children start a foreign language at primary level [cf the House of Lords report (1990:15)]. See further detail in Poole (1994).

4. Swain & Lapkin (1982:5-9) clearly indicate that the early immersion programmes tend to replicate the conditions of first language acquisition, focusing on comprehensive skills and content rather than form.

5. It should be pointed out that both immersion programmes (Bibeau 1984:46) and European schools (House of Lords Report 1990:9 & 20) are noted to be expensive to run.

6. Cf Swain & Lapkin (1982:50) and Connors *et al.*(1978:70) and chapter two (section 2.3.2 on immersion in Canada).

7. For more details on the greater plasticity and better imitative skills, spontaneity and lack of inhibition in children, see Ellis (1985:107 & 108), Harding (1967:147), Stern (1963:17) etc. At the European school at Culham, a primary teacher commented that after the age of about 9 English learners of French found it difficult to make the distinction between the sounds 'u' and 'ou' as in 'tu' and 'tout'. However Lennon (1993:39) claims the problem is "more affective than biological in nature". Whilst recognizing children's assets for pronunciation, Burstall (1974:33) and Stern (op.cit.) actually take the argument further. They suggest that the evidence to support the belief that young children are better than adults in pronunciation needs to be examined with more caution [for greater details see Burstall (1974:121) and Stern (1963:22)].

8. Children lack the necessary qualities required in the more decontextualized setting of a classroom, i.e. analytical skills, metalinguistic awareness etc.

9. See The Schools Council (1966:1-3)

10. Ibid.:3. See also the Plowden report (1967:223) which states that there seems to be "no fundamental difficulty in teaching a second language to at least some children of primary age."

11. Swain & Lapkin (1982:73-79) and Lapkin & Swain (1984:52) similarly highlight the cultural openness of the immersion students, their non-ethnocentric tendencies and greater tolerance compared to non-immersion students.

12. Poole & Roberts (1995:2), Hawkins (1981:186) and Wringe (1976:42) stress the particular finding that positive attitudes did not seem to lead to better achievement in French. Indeed Burstall (1974:244) considers prior achievement, rather than attitudes, as a good predictor of success and comments that "nothing succeeds like success".

13. For greater details see Buckby (1976:20).

14. See note 3.

15. Cf Johnstone (1991:36) for details about the National Pilots Projects to introduce Foreign Languages in Primary Schools (FLPS) in Scotland "mainly to Primary 7 classes, i.e. the final year at primary school" although "the piloting (was to) cover Primary 6 as well as Primary 7".

16. The House of Lords report (1990:16) seems to favour the introduction of a foreign language at primary but is more circumspect. It stresses for instance that such schemes should be planned "several years in advance".

17. Plowden report (op.cit.:225)

18. Cf footnote 31, chapter 2: English is more pertinent, given its international use, for Italian learners than Italian would be for English students.

19. See Samson (1995:8 & 10) who refers to a French government measure which proposes the introduction of a foreign language for 15 minutes daily from the *cours élémentaire* , i.e. at the age of 7, using audio-visual methods.

20. It is reassuring that in France, despite the international supremacy of the English language, other languages are being taught at primary level (cf Samson 1995:9 & 10), the emphasis at this stage being more on cultural tolerance than on vocational/instrumental purposes.

21. Samson (ibid.:8) states that only 35% of the primary schools are properly equipped to use audio-visual material.

Appendix 1, PAGES 215-219 REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

Examples of past examination papers for the baccalaureate:

I. L2 written French

2. L3 written French

3. L2 advanced written French

3. L2 oral French

Appendix 2 : Questionnaire Papers

Questionnaires

Given the increased complexity of the course structure, supplementary questions were added to questionnaires designed for L2, year 2 (secondary) and L3, year 2 (secondary).

The following section provides full samples for:
1. L2, year 5 (primary)
2. L2 year 2 (secondary)
3. Additional questions for L2, years 3, 5, 6 when appropriate.
4. L3 year 2 (secondary)
5. Additional questions for years 3, 5 and 6 when appropriate.

1.   Questionnaire for SECOND language. Year 5 (primary)

NAME

AGE

SEX

NATIONALITY

SECTION

FATHER'S first language

MOTHER'S first language

1- What is your FIRST language at school?

2- What are the results in your FIRST language? (ring the correct answer)

VERY WEAK   WEAK   AVERAGE   GOOD   VERY GOOD

3- Indicate if the level in your SECOND language for each of the listed skills is: very weak, weak, average, good, very good:

understanding:

reading:

speaking:

writing:

4 -At school, indicate if you have the opportunity to use your second language (French) outside the classroom?
(ring the correct answer):

 never   sometimes   frequently

5 -Outside school, indicate in the following list whether you use second language (ring the correct answer)

with friends: never   sometimes   frequently

with parents: never   sometimes   frequently

with brothers & sisters: never   sometimes   frequently

2. Questionnaire for <u>SECOND</u> LANGUAGE. <u>Year 2 (secondary)</u>

NAME:

AGE:

SEX:

SECTION:

NATIONALITY:

Mother's first language (if bilingual, please indicate in which languages):

Father's first language (if bilingual, please indicate in which languages):

1- How long have you been at the European school in Culham?

2- If you attended other schools, please state

        a) in which country   ....
        b) whether the school was a bilingual school, a European school, a state school, a private school etc...

....
        c) whether you studied French

3- What result do you expect to get in your FIRST language at the end of the year?

4- Who chose French as a second language? Was it

a) your parents   yes   no

b) you   yes   no

5- Do you use French at home? Ring the appropriate answer:

never   almost never   sometimes   frequently

6- Do you ask for assistance from your family for your French homework, your revision etc.? Ring the appropriate answer:

never   almost never   sometimes   frequently

7- Is there any French reading material available to you at home? (ring the correct answer)   yes   no

If so, do you make use of it:
Never   Sometimes Only for French Homework   Frequently

8- Do you go to France or other French speaking countries?
never   sometimes   frequently

9- If you go to France or other French speaking countries, do you

        a) have as many contacts as possible with French people?
        yes   no

        b) speak French
           almost never   sometimes   frequently

NAME:

10- <u>At school, outside the classroom</u>, do you speak French with friends at school?

                  never   sometimes   frequently

11- <u>In the classroom</u>, do you

      a) participate willingly during the lessons
          yes   no

      b) feel shy to speak French and if so, why?

12- Do you feel that the level of your SECOND language is:

very weak   weak   average   good   very good

13- In the following list, please indicate if your SECOND language abilities are: very weak, weak, average, good, very good

understanding:
reading:
writing:
speaking:

vocabulary:
grammar:
pronunciation:

14- What result do you expect to get at the end of the year for your <u>SECOND</u> language?

15- Do you feel that your ORAL abilities in French are
(ring the correct answer)

a) <u>better</u> than your WRITTEN abilities in French
b) <u>the same</u> as your WRITTEN abilities in French
c) <u>not as good</u> as your WRITTEN abilities in French

16- Do you feel that your SECOND language benefits from attending a European school?

If so, explain how:

3. **From year 3 secondary, the following questions were added to L2 year 2 (secondary) questionnaires:**

HISTORY/GEOGRAPHY

1- When you first started learning history/geography in French, did you feel the level of your French was adequate to cope with the content?

2- Do you still feel that way now?

3- If you have any problems, is it because
(circle the correct answer)

      a) you find it difficult to express yourself even though you can understand the content in French

      b) you cannot understand the content in French

      c) both

4- Would you prefer to have history/geography taught in French but tested in your mother tongue/first language. If so,why?

5- What result do you expect to get in history/geography at the end of this year?

For year 5 secondary, the following questions were further added:

Do you feel that your <u>oral</u> abilities in your <u>second</u> language are: (ring the correct answer)

a) <u>better</u> than your oral abilities in your <u>third</u> language?
b) <u>the same</u> as your oral abilities in your third language?
c) <u>not as good</u> as your oral abilities in your third language?

Do you feel that your <u>written</u> abilities in your <u>second</u> language are: (ring the correct answer)

a) <u>better than</u> your written abilities in your <u>third</u> language?
b) <u>the same</u> as your written abilities in your third language?
c) <u>not as good</u> as your written abilities in your third language?

In your options, do you study a fourth language?
      if so, which one:

In your options for next year, did you choose a language at an advanced level?

If so, is it
a) first language   b) second language

<u>HISTORY/GEOGRAPHY</u>

The following question was also added to questionnaires designed for L2, year 3 (secondary):

Do you feel that history/geography taught in French helped improve your level of French generally?

For year 6, the variations to year 5 questionnaires were as follows:

In your options, did you choose

a) a third language? if so, indicate
 i) which one:
 ii) result expected:

b) a fourth language? if so, indicate:
 i) which one:
 ii) result expected:

In your options, did you choose a language at an advanced level?   If so, is it

a) first language   If so, indicate result expected
b) second language   If so, indicate result expected

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4. Questionnaire for __THIRD__ language. __Year 2 (secondary)__

NAME

AGE

SEX

NATIONALITY

SECTION

FATHER'S first language

MOTHER'S first language

1- How long have you been at the European school?

2- If you attended other schools, please indicate:

        a) the country and the year(s)

        b) the type of school (European, bilingual, private, state etc..)

3- What is your __FIRST__ language at school?

4- Are the results in your __FIRST__ language? (ring the correct answer)

VERY WEAK   WEAK   AVERAGE   GOOD   VERY GOOD

5- What did you choose as a __SECOND__ language ?

6- Indicate if you think that the level in your __SECOND__ language, for each of the listed skills, is: very weak, weak, average, good, very good.

understanding:
reading:
speaking:
writing:

vocabulary:
grammar:
pronunciation:

THIRD LANGUAGE: FRENCH.

7- Do you intend to continue with your __THIRD__ language after year 5 of secondary?

8- Do you feel that the knowledge of your first two languages helps you with your third language?

If the answer is yes, is it for: (ring the correct answer(s)

understanding   reading   speaking   writing

9- Do you feel that learning a third language helps you

a) with your second language?   yes   or   no

b) with your first language?   yes   or   no

If so, explain how.

10- Please indicate in the listed skills below whether your THIRD language is very weak, weak, average, good, very good:

understanding:
reading:
speaking:
writing:

vocabulary:
grammar:
pronunciation:

11-At school, indicate if you have the opportunity to use your third language outside the classroom? (ring the correct answer)

never   almost never   sometimes   frequently

12- In the classroom: do you

        a) participate willingly during French lessons?
                yes   no

        b) feel shy to speak French and if so, why?

13- Outside school: indicate in the following list whether you use your third language (ring the correct answer)

with friends: never   sometimes   frequently
with parents: never   sometimes   frequently
with brothers/sisters: never   sometimes   frequently
others: never   sometimes   frequently

5. To the above L3 questionnaires, the following sections were added to:

Year 5 secondary only:

Do you intend to take your <u>FIRST</u> language at an advanced level as an option for year 6 & year 7?

Do you intend to take your <u>SECOND</u> language at an advanced level for year 6 & year 7?

Are you studying a <u>FOURTH</u> language as part of your options?
If so, which one?

Do you intend to continue with your <u>THIRD</u> language after year 5 of secondary?

If the answer is no, are you giving up
a) because the level of your third language is weak
yes   no

b) because you already have enough options
yes   no

Years 5 and 6 secondary:

Do you feel that the knowledge of your first two languages helps you with your third language?

If so, is it for: (ring the correct answer(s)
understanding   reading   speaking   writing

Do you feel that learning a third language helps you
a) with your second language?   yes   or   no

b) with your first language?   yes   or   no

If so, explain how.

Do you feel that the <u>written</u> skills in your <u>THIRD</u> language are (ring the correct answer)

a) <u>better</u> than the written skills in your <u>second</u> language?

b) <u>the same</u> as the written skills in your second language?

c) <u>not as good</u> as the written skills in your second language?

Do you feel that your <u>oral</u> ability in your <u>THIRD</u> language is (ring the appropriate answer)

a) <u>better</u> than your oral ability in your <u>second</u> language?
b) <u>the same</u>?
c) <u>not as good</u> as your oral ability in your second language?

Section added to year 6 only:

Did you choose your <u>FIRST</u> language at an advanced level as an option?

If so, indicate your result at the advanced level:

Are you taking your <u>SECOND</u> language at an advanced level for year 6 & year 7?

If so, indicate your result(s):

Are you studying a FOURTH language as part of your options? if so, which one?

Appendix 3 : Case Histories

INDIVIDUAL CASE HISTORIES

1. Students of French as L2:

L2, year 5 primary/1st term year 1 secondary.

- No 1 possessed a naturally good elocution in L2 although he received no linguistic support at home (both parents were English and did not speak French) and had a fair level of understanding. He appeared very motivated, was most attentive in class and enjoyed his school trip to Brussels at the end of the 1992-93 academic year.

- No 2 was very confident and enthusiastic. Her father lived in Luxembourg and the family went regularly to France, which may explain her confidence and motivation for oral skills. She made many basic errors: she used the verb 'avoir' to express age in both the cloze test and the short essay she wrote for me, confused the conjunctions 'et', 'mais' and the preposition 'à' with the verb 'est', the possessive 'mes', and the verb 'a' in the essay but used correctly the preposition 'à' in the cloze test.

- No 3's mother was a French national and she practised French at home even though her report indicated that she needed to participate more in oral tasks. She used 'son' for 'sont', 'été' for 'était' in her short essay.

- No 4's parents had lived in Brussels for 3 years (her mother spoke good French though not fluently) and the family went to France regularly. Her aural/oral skills were good but had difficulties with grammatical structures. She used 'avoir' correctly to express age in the cloze test but not in the essay in which she also had errors like 'je va', 'je n'aime pas DE chasse'.

- No 5 spoke Greek at home with her mother, a Greek national. The family went frequently to France which no doubt explains the reasonably good level of oral skills resulting from exposure, confidence and motivation. Yet she used the wrong verb to express age in both essay and cloze test, 'et' instead of 'est', 'un' for 'en' Amérique, changed 'je vais' for 'je va' in the essay, used 'a' instead of 'à' l'école, 'pluie' for 'pleut' in the cloze test.

- No 6 was highly motivated, and attentive. Her L1 was excellent for reading and oral skills although her writing skills were inconsistent.

- No 7, inconsistent in his L1, was shy during oral tasks in L2 (likewise, his elder sister was shy and performed better on formal written tasks). His writing was of a good level and indeed his cloze test showed care but the very short essay was of a poor quality; he used 'é' for 'en ' Irlande, 'la devant' with the intended meaning of 'next week'.

- No 8 had a very good level of understanding and spoke very spontaneously and confidently with me. She joined the school at Culham for the 5th year of primary, prior to which she was at Brussels in the English section, studying French as L2, i.e. in a second language context. However her formal skills both in L1 and in L2 were average, her L1 spelling and reading in particular being weak though improving. There were some reasonable sentences in her L2 essay and one could sense her advantageous background but her over-confidence and carelessness resulted in many basic errors in her writing. Whether the change of school and environment at that age was temporarily disturbing should not be overlooked but whether lack of use and exposure might lead to demotivation at all levels, written and oral, cannot be dismissed either, particularly if her motivation for formal skills does not increase.

- No 9, weak in L1 for reading and vocabulary, was inconsistent in her L2; indeed, she wrote a very poor essay and had difficulties with written tasks even though she showed motivation and greater ability for spoken activities and attained the highest mark in her cloze test.

- No 10, with 'A' at primary level for L1, performed less well initially at the secondary level. Though participating willingly in L2, her carelessness resulted in many errors in her written work and during the game activities conducted by me in class, she repeatedly omitted verbs in her sentences. Her essay was very ambitious with a rich vocabulary but also many errors: *'j'ai né dans Oxford sur 12th may; ' ma maman c'est profeseur et ma papa c'est travaille dans une J.E.T'; 'mes favori ami ses...'*.

- No 11 had weaknesses in reading and writing skills in L1. His short L2 essay was very simple, yet partly incomprehensible. Although he used the correct verb to express age in the cloze test, he failed to do so in his essay.

- No 12 was careless in his written work e.g. in the essay, such errors occurred as *'mon famille allez a la plus Sud'*.

- No 13 was inconsistent in both L1 and L2 and extremely careless and inattentive in L2, using expressions such as: *'qu'est-ce qu'il a* + noun' instead of *'est-ce que c'est'* but he had a good elocution. He failed to distinguish the verb *'est'* from the preposition *'et'*, used the verb *'être'* to indicate age in his essay yet used the verb avoir correctly in *'elle a 8 ans'* in the cloze test.

- No 14 had very average skills in L1 and her reading and spelling indicated some weaknesses, which no doubt partly explains her weak writing level in L2. She was reluctant to respond to her mother's (a French national) attempts to practise her French more. Her cloze test indicated that she understood rather than guessed at the answers. Her errors were of gender and other areas i.e. of morphology such as *'je peu'*, *'je veux regardé'*. Her good understanding and spontaneous use might motivate her to change her attitude and practise willingly, thereby improving her productive skills at least at the oral level.

- No 15, whose L1 was weak for reading and writing skills, was weak generally in all subjects at primary level. Strangely enough, he gave the correct version of his age as *'j'ai onze ans'* in his essay but not in his cloze test which was weak and some answers seemed random. The poor level of his written work as a whole suggests that he may have used *'avoir'* correctly simply because he had stored it in his short-term memory when I used it in class prior to the exercise. On the other hand, he participated willingly, did not hesitate to have a go and his understanding was fair.

L2, year 2 secondary.

- No 1 arrived at Culham in September 1992, prior to which he attended the European school in Brussels with English as L1 and French as L2 but he did not mix with French peers in Brussels. When I spoke to him in French, he expressed himself correctly but slowly and reluctantly.

- No 2 was an Irish pupil who joined the school in the 5th year of primary but she caught up because she received special tuition in French in a group with only 6 pupils and with similar circumstances. She was very motivated and enjoyed mixing with French native speakers although she was too shy to engage conversation with them. I expect that, with age and maturity, she may overcome her shyness given the stimulating milieu.

- No 3 went occasionally to France for her holidays but found it difficult to express herself in French although her understanding was good. She was starting to find French more difficult and formal tests demotivating.

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- No 4 was at Culham only for a year. He was an English Canadian who had attended an immersion school in Canada with 100% French for the first 2 years in primary, reduced to 70% thereafter. His understanding was of a very good level for his age and his oral productive skills were also good. He argued that the standard of French in his school in Canada was higher, hardly surprisingly given that he received between 100% and 70% of his tuition in French as opposed to a mere 3 hours per week at Culham. Yet he also commented that, in Canada, he spoke more in English than in French and that the emphasis there was more on written work. I detected a fairly negative attitude towards the school, great keenness to go back to Canada and his friends and reluctance to respond to further probing in relation to his previous school. His mark of 6 for a short oral test compared favourably with 7 for No 1 and only 5.5 for No 3.

- No 5 was an Irish pupil who enjoyed mixing with French friends but only to listen, as opposed to her sister No 6.

- No 6, a year older than her sister no 5, enjoyed 'having a go' at speaking. Hence the former was better for oral skills than the latter.

- No 7 spoke Slovene at home. He went to an English school prior to joining the European School in year 2 of secondary so that he had no French at primary level.

- No 8 claimed to be bilingual in English and Greek although her dominant language was English. She frequently went to France with the family which had a positive attitude towards foreign languages.

- No 9 went to an American school till the age of 9. She then moved to Italy and attended the European school in Varese studying English as L1, French as L2 and German as L3 for one term and became near-bilingual in English/ Italian. She joined the Culham school in January 1993 studying English as L1, French as L2. She was very motivated and said to me that her Italian helped her with French. Her understanding and pronunciation were very good generally, but she made many basic errors at times although her fluency compared favourably with others with similar results, as examples of her answers to me show: *"les parents de ma maman, ils sont français et allemand; quand je suis arrivée, les autres ont pensé que je suis italienne"*.

- No 10 studied Irish as an additional language. His grammar was weak despite his high level in L1 and he lacked motivation in class. He was most inconsistent: he understood the use of the pronoun *'y'* and placed it correctly in his sentences and yet he was careless with the rest of the sentences, e.g. *'on y mange des bon choses'* ... *'dans un mal bus'*... *'a l'école'* etc.

- No 11 had a very poor level in her writing skills and her mark actually went down to '5' in the 3rd term; She clearly did not like French in class. When I spoke to her, her pronunciation was average to good and she understood me reasonably well but she had difficulties in expressing herself, as the following example illustrates: *'j'ai resté pour que je suis dans la 3ème jour'*.

- No 12 had good pronunciation but her grammar was weak.

- No 13 was a Danish pupil who came to England at the age of 7 and went to an English primary school. Her English was good both formally and informally but she chose Danish as her L1 so as not to lose it. However she became more at ease with English than Danish and her L3 (German) was better than her French because she went to Germany regularly and she could also see similarities between German and Danish. Consequently, she decided to change to English as L1, German as L2, and French as L3, with additional lessons in Danish as optional. As she already was in the English section, the change was not dramatic. However, this is possible only in special circumstances.

- No 14 was very shy. He told me his brother was also weak in L2 but that his sister was fairly good. He expressed himself with great difficulties ('*j'ai allé l'an prochain pour 2 semaines*') but could use simple sentences correctly, e.g. '*je serai aux Pays-Bas ...*'

- No 15 did not return his questionnaire, showed little interest in French and was not prepared to make the effort involved in written tasks although he recognized the benefits of foreign languages. His mark went up to '6' the 3rd term.

- No 16 did not like languages and preferred maths and sciences. Her mark went down to '4' the 3rd term.

- No 17 spoke Spanish with her mother, a Spanish national, but did not write it. She attended the European school in Luxembourg for 6 months and arrived at Culham at the age of 7. She started German as her L3 but was going to switch to Spanish. Her comprehension was good but her pronunciation weak and she said she confused French with Spanish. She also had problems with her written English. I felt she could do better but she had a rather negative attitude generally (Example of her spoken French.

- No 18 was weak in all subjects and was to repeat the year.

L2, year 3 secondary.

- No 1 attended a European school in Belgium with English as L1 and French as L2 i.e. in a second language context, prior to joining Culham from year 1 of secondary. His father spoke French fluently. He was a very high achiever in all subjects, extremely confident and highly motivated to retain his position.

- No 2: Cf section on learner variables, category 3.

- No 3 was an Italian/English bilingual who was initially in the Italian section at primary level, with Italian as L1 and English as L2. He then switched to the English section from secondary level and started French as L2. He was extremely motivated and took French lessons in France during the summer holidays of 1993. He was very confident, fairly fluent but not always correct in his spontaneous speech. In a role play interviewing his school friends, some questions were well-structured and clear but others were very inaccurate e.g. '*De combien ans étude le français?* or '*quand tu es petit*' (instead of '*quand tu étais..*'). His questionnaire also commented in French, for question 14, '*J'ésperais pour un 9 mais j'ai pris 7 dans le derniere test et je pense j'aurais 8*'. Although he spoke French with an Italian accent, I expect him to catch up with high achievers who started French at primary level and become proficient in French very rapidly: he showed great enthusiasm and indeed a preference for languages as opposed to scientific subjects and could see many links between Italian and French.

- No 4 whose father spoke Italian, hence the parental support for his L3, had more contact with the French language than with Italian.

- No 5 went to France on a exchange in the 1993 summer and used her French which she felt as both beneficial and motivating.

- No 6 liked to speak with French pupils. She reached a good level in oral skills (she obtained 8 for a short oral test) but she found her third language, Spanish, easier to cope with.

- No 7, whose father was Spanish, had a good accent but was very shy and felt more at ease with written tasks.

- No 8 was born in Yugoslavia but lived in Holland from the age of 3 to 5, returned to Yugoslavia and became fluent in Serbo-Croat. At the age of 10, she went back to Holland and attended a bilingual school with English as L1 and Dutch as L2 and one term of French. She spoke little English when she came to Culham at the age of 12 and felt at a disadvantage with her French at first but caught up at least in her written skills which were better than her oral skills (she was given 5 in a short oral test in class). She liked the school and was very motivated to improve her pronunciation and attain a standard comparable to that of her peers who had started at primary level.

- No 9 had been at the school for only two years but he had studied French for 4 years at primary level in a private school.

- No 10: cf section on learner variables, category 1.

- No 11 had been at the school for only one year and had no French at primary level so that she felt at a great disadvantage compared to her peers.

- No 12 lived in Belgium and went to a European school with English as L1, which she spoke at home, and French as L2, prior to joining Culham at the age of 6. Her understanding and pronunciation were fairly good but she claimed she did not really understand history and geography in French even though the results (8) in the latter did not appear to indicate such difficulty. She seemed very dismissive of the school system based on tests and exams and her initial response to the questionnaire appeared to indicate some resentment but immediate random answers were crossed out and replaced by more reflective comments.

- No 13 improved his mark in French the third term from 5 to 6 but he lacked confidence and underrated his marks both in L2 and in L1. His L1 level was good, however, and so was his Latin result of 8/9. Perhaps not so surprisingly, he only obtained a mark of 5 for a short oral test in French.

- No 14 lived in France for 6 months at the age of 8. Her accent and understanding were good but she had difficulties with writing tasks and made many basic errors. In her informal interview I felt limitations in her fluency and errors like *'quand j'étais 8 ans ... j'ai allé ...'* were frequent. Yet she could also form well-structured sentences such as *'j'ai une amie qui habite etc...'je fais bien l'oral mais quand il faut...'*. Her mark of 5 for a short oral test in class indicated her reluctance for classroom situations.

- No 15 lived in Belgium for 3 years and went to a European school in the English section with French as L2 prior to joining the European school at Culham at the age of 8. She would visit friends in France and improve each time. Accordingly her understanding and pronunciation were good to very good and she coped well with history and geography in French. Her mark for a short oral test (9.5) corroborated her self-assessment of better level for oral rather than written skills.

- No 16 attained good results of 8/9 in Irish as L4 but was shy.

- No 17 showed great enthusiasm in class but seemed to lack a more assiduous attitude towards formal tasks.

- No 18 was a Danish pupil who had been at Culham for 10 years. He rarely used his mother tongue and had opted for English, his more proficient language, as his first language. He appeared to have no motivation whatsoever to learn French, was equally weak in oral skills for which he obtained a 5 during a short class test, and preferred scientific subjects. When I spoke to him again in October 1994, however, he showed greater interest and confidence having been to France for 3 weeks and having used his French.

- No 19, with a good pronunciation but very weak in grammar and writing skills, appeared demotivated by the quantity of, and the focus on, formal tests. He could use correctly some basic sentences like '*j'ai 13 ans*' etc..but struggled to express himself with quasi incomprehensible sentences such as '*quand j'en ai... je lui déteste...*'.

L2, year 5 secondary.

- No 1 lived in Belgium and attended a European school there with English as L1 and French as L2 prior to joining the European school at Culham. Both parents spoke Hindi and the father spoke very good French. She did not speak French at home but maintained use/practice through regular visits to Belgium twice a year. Her pronunciation was excellent and she showed a most remarkable ease with her French during the geography lessons I attended, being fluent and accurate. She was extremely motivated and also obtained very high marks in history and geography.

- No 2 started primary school in an English school before joining the school at Culham from year 3 of primary, aged 7-8. At the age of 9, she went to live in Nice for 6 months and attended a French school there (she also lived in Italy at the age of 5 for 6 months and at the age of 7 for a further 6 months). She believed that her high standards in both French and Italian were due to the high level of exposure to those languages at a young age. She was slightly more confident with her French than her Italian because she practised it more through geography and history and she had a friend in Nice and went to France on regular visits during her holidays. Nevertheless she considered her French to be at a L2 level, i.e. less fluent than her L1. When I spoke to her in French her understanding was excellent, her French accurate, her pronunciation very good and the written work she showed me was of a high standard indeed although a few basic inaccuracies confirmed that she was not a native speaker. Her very high marks in L4, in Latin, in history and geography --and her decision to opt for both French and English at an advanced level from year 6-- re-affirmed her high motivation for languages generally.

- No 3 lived in Switzerland and went to a French primary school, French being effectively her first language at the time, prior to moving to England at the age of 7. She attended an English school for 2 years (age 7-9) before joining the European school at Culham from the 4th year of primary with English as L1 and French as L2. Her English did not suffer from acquiring her literacy skills in French first, as her high results in L1 indicated. Her L2, French, was better for written skills than for oral tasks --she considered her grammar as very good but her teacher's report commented however that she needed to read extensively to acquire a wider range of vocabulary and expressions. Although French was her first language originally, she lacked opportunities for practice to maintain it at a native-speaker level despite regular trips to Switzerland. However she went to France for one month in the summer of 1993 and felt it boosted her confidence in oral skills. Indeed when I spoke to her in French in October 1993, her comprehension was very good and her pronunciation good to very good. She was studying history and French at the advanced level for year 6 (1993-1994 academic year) so that she had 13 periods of contact with French which, she claimed, helped improve her French even more through written tasks in French on a regular basis. She preferred written work as she could have more time to think so as to find a word or alternative ways to express herself.

- No 4 lived in Belgium till the age of 8 but spoke Flemish. When she started at the European school in Culham, with Dutch as L1, she opted for English as L2. From the 5th year of primary she changed her L2 to French, taking additional classes to catch up. Her father spoke very good French and she enjoyed speaking French and intended to take it at advanced level from year 6. Her L3, German, was as good as her French for oral but not for written skills and she found that her knowledge of French helped with her L4 (Italian). Her pronunciation and understanding in French were very good. A 3 week exchange with Brussels, where she joined the French section, gave her extra confidence and her fluency improved since then. Her English was also very good for oral skills but she felt that she would lose her Dutch if she were not in the Dutch section. She was proud of speaking so many languages and was taking all possible measures to maintain them at a good level.

- No 5 underestimated herself generally. She considered her French as weak for all skills except her understanding which she rated as average although her results were fairly good (7.5). Her teacher's recommendation was indeed that she should improve her basic grammar. Her lack of use of French at home, her low opinion of her French, her unwilling participation during classes, her feeling of embarrassment when she spoke French in the classroom no doubt were factors which prevented her from progressing and reaching a high level of proficiency, particularly in oral skills.

- No 6 went to France for 2/3 week exchanges on five occasions and actually used her French, which no doubt explained why she felt that her oral skills were superior to her written skills. She intended to give up her L3, German, from year 6.

- No 7 whose father was Danish but whose mother was English (but with a very good knowledge of French) understood Danish a little (he had one lesson a week in primary) and commented that Danish helped him with his German as German sounds have similarities with Danish. As a result, his oral skills in German were as good as his oral skills in French but his written French was superior to his written German (the mark of 6 is for a L3 level). He used to go France 2 weeks each summer but avoided contact with French people whereas the summer of 1993 he mixed more with them and acquire greater confidence in his oral skills. When I spoke to him in French in October 1993, he said that he had no problems with studying history and geography in French and he considered that his oral skills were overtaking his written skills. I felt his comprehension was good, his pronunciation fairly good and his fluency also fairly good, although vocabulary and grammar remained his weakest points.

- No 8 mainly spoke English at home when he was in England, even with his mother who was a French national but he retained some of the native-like pronunciation he acquired in French such as *"j'suis pas allé...j'parle, comment dire,...j'écris comme je parle.."*. He preferred L2 at the advanced level because the class was smaller, offering more opportunities to participate, and because he enjoyed the books they were discussing and the focus was more literary than grammatical. (cf also category 2 in learner variable section).

- No 9 lived in Switzerland and went to an international school with English as L1 and French as L2 prior to joining the school at Culham at the age of 11/12. She was only 14, therefore younger than the other students of her class, which might explain why her formal skills were average in both L1 an L2. She went to Switzerland regularly in the summer and, although she found it useful for her understanding, she commented that it had little relevance with the type of formal work required at school. On interview, her understanding was very good and her pronunciation fairly good yet she rated her spoken skills as average and felt embarrassed sometimes when speaking to French people as she was scared of making mistakes, thereby showing lack of confidence. Her fluency, more average, was probably due to inhibition, lack of adequate vocabulary and of grammatical practice.

- No 10 had been at the school for only 3 years and studied French in Ireland but only at the secondary level. He felt greatly disadvantaged compared to his peers.

- No 11, whose mother spoke Italian, went to Italy regularly which explains her good proficiency level in Italian, her L3. She was taking additional private lessons in French as she felt her level was inadequate and she was making many grammatical errors. She expressed herself with difficulty in French but her comprehension was fair when I spoke to her. She felt at a disadvantage with most other students who started French at primary level. Her German was good as L4 because, she claimed, she started at the same time as the other students.

- No 12 had been at Culham from nursery but her French was and remained weak for all skills except for pronunciation and writing which she considered as average. She lacked confidence, hated making mistakes, felt embarrassed when she did make them and was more at ease with written skills. It took considerable persuasion and reassurance before I could succeed in interviewing her in French. She was indeed very weak: her pronunciation was fairly good but her understanding seemed limited to simple sentences and her fluency very limited.

- No 13 went to an English school in England prior to joining the European school in Varese (Italy) with English as L1 and French as L2 from the age of 9 to 13. In Italy she had to cope with a new country and a new language (although her father is of Italian descent) and French was effectively a third language with no immediate pertinence compared to Italian in which she became more proficient, given the environmental context, in both oral and written skills. During a history lesson I attended I noticed her great difficulty in reading in French and during a short interview, she proved to be very shy and not at all forthcoming. She was a good example of students with an average level in L1 who can perform well in a second but not in a foreign language context. It must be added that although her Italian results were good, they represented a L3 level which was less cognitively demanding than L2 (see Appendix 1 with past examination papers in L2 and L3 at the baccalaureate).

L2, year 6 secondary:

- No 1 had only been at the school for 9 months, prior to which she had been to a German school and a German/French school, both in Paris. Her parents were German but her mother spoke French and English and her sister of 13 was fluent in French. Her L1 was and still is German and she started French as L2 at school at primary level but in a second language environmental context. At the secondary level, she studied English as a third language. Both her communicative and formal skills in French were very good. The only indication that French was her L2 formally was in her answer to the history and geography question mentioning that 'at the beginning it was hard'.

- No 2, a German/French bilingual, was born in Germany (both parents were German) but from the age of two, she lived in Switzerland where she attended a French school though speaking German at home. From the age of 12, she went back to Germany where she attended a German school, prior to joining Culham at the age of 14.

- No 3 cf section 4.3: learner variables, category 2.

- No 4 went to the European School in Italy in the Italian section at nursery level. At primary level, he joined the English section with English as L1 and French as L2 before coming to the Culham school in England from year 2 of secondary. He considered himself equally proficient in Italian and French orally but performed better in his written French, which was of a good level in spite of some basic errors. I was impressed by his participation in class: his pronunciation and his fluency were very good. Although not as proficient in German, his L3, he obtained good results in that language (8) but gave it up from year 5 as he had enough options.

- No 5, a bilingual English/Greek, lived in Italy for a year at the age of 7. He kept Italian as L4 but gave up German his L3 for which he was getting marks of 7.5. He intended to do bio-chemistry at university so that scientific subjects were equally important for him. He went to Brussels for 6 months in the English section year 4 of primary, with French as L2, and stayed every summer with a French family, which explains his confidence and good level of oral French.

- No 6 was a bilingual German/English student from the German section but with French as L2, as her parents (the mother is German but the father English) felt that French would be useful. Her good results in L1, in L3 (9) when she did Spanish up to year 5 and in Latin (9) were an indication of her good level of cognition which, together with an early start from primary, motivation and hard-working attitude, combined most of the factors required for successful learning. However although both her oral and written skills were of a good level, she lacked spontaneity in oral tasks.

- No 7 had only been at Culham for one year prior to which she had attended a European school in Belgium, with English as L1, French as L2 but in a second language context and Italian as L3. Yet did not participate spontaneously possibly because she considered her level as good for most skills but as average for the pronunciation and speaking. She felt 'stupid if misunderstood' and yet on interview, she expressed herself with relative ease; she may see herself as average on some skills as compared to French-speaking people in Belgium.

- No 8 had only 2 terms of French at primary level but she was very motivated and eventually, with additional lessons and attempts to use the language on her visits to France, she caught up.

- No 9 attended a private school in England with French and German as foreign languages from year 2 to 5 of secondary, prior to rejoining the school at Culham from year 6 of secondary where she had previously started French at primary level (year 5). Her German was not as good as her French for written skills, though of a similar level for oral skills, because she argued there were only 8 pupils in the German class. As regards the benefits in attending the European school, she added to the three reasons generally given the comment 'In my own experience, the standards are much higher here than in an English school". She was shy because she felt 'not as good as other people' and also commented that too much emphasis was placed on listening rather than speaking.

- No 10 did not participate spontaneously in oral activities: he considered his pronunciation as weak and felt shy because he could not express himself well and kept 'having to stop to think of words'. His mother, English, had a very good knowledge of French but he never used French at home nor asked for assistance. Following his stay in France for 3 weeks during the 1993 summer, however, when he made the effort to use his French, he felt more confident and more motivated.

- No 11 lived in Belgium for 4 years prior to joining the European school at Culham from primary; her parents and sister had a very good knowledge of French. She was very motivated, went to Belgium on a regular basis and used her French, which no doubt explained her good level orally. She coped well with history and geography but had some difficulties in dealing with complex texts. On interview, she showed confidence and her understanding/pronunciation were very good although she admitted that the grammar was her weak point.

- No 12 was a Belgian student, bilingual in Dutch and English, in the Dutch section. His parents were Flemish and he chose French as L2 because of the importance of speaking French in Belgium. He obtained good results in his L3 (German: 8/8.5) but he gave it up as he has enough options. His report indicated a satisfactory level for oral but a lack of depth in his written answers.

- No 13 had been in a nursery school in Italy before joining the European school at Culham at primary, with Italian as L1 and French as L2. Both his parents were English and spoke English at home. As his competence in English improved, his Italian level deteriorated and he felt that demands at school for Italian as L1 became too excessive; he was granted permission to join the English section from year 5 of secondary with English as L1, French as L2 and Italian as L3. He reached a good level in oral skills in French but lacked concentration and would provide superficial answers. However, he claimed that he did not like school anyway.

- No 14 felt inhibited in class because he could speak French very well. His poor level of mastery of the language prevented him from expressing his ideas. He claimed that after 5 years of French at primary, he lost interest. He obtained good grades for his L3 (Italian:8) but gave it up because he had enough options. Whether demotivation would have also set in with Italian, had he carried on with it, cannot be ruled out.

- No 15 felt that he did not learn much at primary level apart from vocabulary. He argued that he could cope perfectly well with German introduced only from secondary level, suggesting that there was more intermixing at the secondary level. At interview he mentioned his teacher's criticism of his writing style which required greater care and conciseness. His trip to France in the summer of 1993 motivated him to make more effort in the way of practice.

- No 16 had attended a bilingual School in Ireland, with Irish as a second language, prior to joining the European school at Culham from year 3 at secondary level. He believed that his French would be of a better standard had he started at primary level, like he did in Irish. (He was getting 6.5 in German, his L3, which he dropped).

- No 17 lived in Switzerland till the age of 6 before coming to Culham in the English section with French as L2. As his French was superior to that of his English peers, it was decided that it would be best for him to join pupils doing French as L2 in the 5th year rather than follow the lessons of his class (4th year primary). In fact his level of French started to decrease from lack of contact/exposure and he had to repeat French 5th year primary which resulted in demotivation. The problem may have been more psychological than linguistic in the fact that, one primary teacher argued, children at that age do not mix with older pupils easily for just one lesson. At interview, his understanding in French was good and his pronunciation fairly good. I felt, however, that his great spontaneity and willingness to speak French were not matched by accuracy, which was so poor at times that it was difficult to interpret the message clearly. The teacher's comment of weak written skills, including vocabulary, but good efforts orally confirmed my first impression. Since his understanding was good, he coped well with geography (9) even at an advanced level (he showed great interest and participated enthusiastically during geography lessons). When I talked to him again after the summer holiday, I felt a notable improvement. Once again, he was most willing to talk to me in French -- whereas many of the weak students were reluctant or even unwilling to do so.

2. Students of French as L3:

L3, year 2 secondary.

- No 1 had been in England from year one of secondary, prior to which she had lived in Luxembourg for 9 years where she had attended the European school studying Italian as L1 and English as L2. She spoke English and Italian at home, but at school she had many French friends and spent most of her free time with them, thus maintaining her fluency in French. Her pronunciation was excellent.

- No 2 had a fairly good pronunciation for a beginner but she had lived in France for 6 months and used to go there regularly although she admitted that she was not really using her French.

- No 3 was an Italian pupil who had been in England for only 9 months and had no English (L2) at primary level. He left at the end of the year so that I could not assess him further.

- No 4 had been 2 years in an English school before joining the school at Culham 6 years previously. She spoke German at home and went to Germany regularly. She also went to France on two occasions.

- No 5 was Swedish and had lived in the U.K. for a year at the age of 6 and again from the age of 9. She claimed that she did not like the French language at all even though she obtained good results through assiduity for written tasks.

- No 6, whose mother was a German national, always lived in the U.K and commented that he felt more confident with his written than his oral German. He had a good base in French but had problems with understanding in oral activities.

- No 7 had been in England for only one year and commented that his level of English had improved tremendously after just 6 months in England and highlighted the difference between what he called 'school English' and English when living in the country. He was extremely motivated to learn French.

- No 8, whose parents were German with a very good knowledge of French, never lived in Germany and spoke English at home.

- No 9, whose parents were German, had good pronunciation but was most inattentive in class. The fact that she knew she was leaving the school to go and live abroad obviously did not help particularly as it was towards the end of the year.

- No 10, whose father was German, had attended a German school in Germany for 6 months prior to joining the Culham school from year 3 at primary level and spoke German at home. He had difficulties understanding simple questions in French.

- No 11, whose mother was a German national, spoke German at home. She had been at the Culham school for 8 years and commented that German came naturally to her as opposed to French which was much more formal and artificial.

- No 12 had lived 2 years in Germany before joining Culham 5 years previously.

- No 13 had been 7 years at Culham. She was most inattentive and unwilling to participate during lessons in French.

- No 14 had a good level of oral skills in French, although her assessment of very good for speaking skills was exaggerated. She enjoyed speaking French and claimed to use it 'frequently' at school, the only pupil together with No 17 to do so. Her pronunciation and confidence in class were impressive for a first year pupil.

- No 15 had been in England for only one year with no L2 at primary level.

- No 16 was a Swedish pupil who had been in the U.K. for only 3 years.

- No 17 had been at the school for only 3 years but studied German as L1 and English as L2 in Switzerland. He spoke French with his father on a regular basis and had good French communicative skills but was careless and made many errors in his written French.

- No 18 had been at the school for 3 years prior to which he had lived in Germany. Both parents were German.

- No 19 was totally unmotivated partly because he knew he was due to return to Holland.

- No 20 started his schooling in Germany, then went to an English school in England for a year, went back to Germany and did English as L2 in his first year of secondary before finally joining the European school at Culham year 2 of secondary; I expect he may need to settle down.

L3, year 3 of secondary.

- No 1 was born in Germany, lived in France for 11 years prior to coming to the school at Culham in year 3 of secondary. She participated willingly in class although she was starting to worry about the level of her French deteriorating for lack of general use in and out of school, except at home with her sister.

- No 2 went regularly to France on exchanges and was very motivated: she had a fairly good level of understanding in French and could communicate with basic sentences .

- No 3 was highly motivated for languages (maths and sciences were her weak subjects). Her motivation was reflected in her good participation and attention in class; she made no mistakes in a short dictation given in class. At interview, however, she frequently answered in English and her pronunciation was average.

- No 4 went back to Germany; she had a fair pronunciation and understanding but was very shy. Despite her good result of 9, she considered herself as weak in French except for writing and reading.

- No 5 went to Brussels on three occasions, for 2 weeks each time and was confident in his oral skills although he felt that his written French was better than his oral. I would expect him to become very proficient given his high motivation and high level of cognition.

- No 6 seemed to have the ability to do well in French but answered in English and was most self-conscious even though he went to France on holidays even if with German friends.

- No 8 only made minor errors in a short dictation but he was weak orally; this, he confirmed in his questionnaire, considering his speaking and pronunciation weak but his grammar and vocabulary good.

- No 10, whose mother was a German national, had been at the Culham school for only one year. He was slightly more confident in French than others with similar results possibly because he has studied French as L2 from primary in a private school in England.

- No 11 had been in England for only one year prior to which she had been to school in Belgium (in a Dutch-speaking area) but with no L2 at primary level. Her pronunciation in French was good but, although she considered her grammar good, she did not seem to understand the lesson explaining the difference in use of the relatives 'qui' and 'que'.

- No 12 had been at the school for only 2 years and had not studied English at primary level in Italy. He handled with ease the differences between 'qui' and 'que', involving understanding the concept of 'subject' versus 'direct object', and was comparing it to his Italian which he said helped him with his French.

- No 13 had Italian parents but had lived in England most of his life. Although his basic communicative skills in Italian (L1) were good, his written skills were weak compared to other peers as he had no formal Italian teaching at primary level because he had been at the European school for only 3 years. He saw the link between French and Italian for grammar and speaking, his pronunciation in class was fairly good and he understood the distinction between the relatives pronouns 'qui' and 'que'.

- No 14 was a German pupil who had been at the European school in Italy with German as L1, English as L2, then at Culham (U.K.) from year 5 of primary. He made no error in his short dictation in class. His pronunciation was fairly good and he commented that his knowledge of Italian helped him with vocabulary and pronunciation in French. However, his attitude to school seemed to lack some seriousness and he commented to me that German and English were acquired in 'natural contexts' so he could see the relevance whereas French was not.

- No 15, whose parents were English, started German as L2 from the 3rd year of primary at Culham and had lived in Germany for a year before going to an English school for one year from the age of 7 to 8.

-No 16 spoke Swedish more fluently than German although her written skills in German, which she considered generally sound, were higher than those for Swedish.

- No 17 considered both her oral and written skills in German as average and her grammar as weak although her German was far superior to her French.

- No 19 had always lived in the United Kingdom. He spoke German at home with his mother, a German national, so that German was for him a naturally acquired language as opposed to French which was in the context of a classroom and which he did not treat seriously.

- No 20 was average in written skills in English despite 8 years at Culham. He was unmotivated and did not participate in class in French because he did not want to.

L3, year 5 secondary.

- No 1 attended a German school in Germany prior to joining the European school at Culham from year 4 primary. His short summary in French was simple but correct.

- No 2 read in French in class with ease and her pronunciation was good. Her short summary showed care although sometimes she forgot the second part of the negative such as 'pas' or 'plus' and she consistently misused the 'imperfect' tense.

- No 3 had been to school in Sweden prior to joining, from year 2 at secondary, Culham where she took a crash course in German. She found that German and Swedish had many points of similarity.

- No 4 only had few basic errors in his short summary but was not confident at all with his oral skills.

- No 5 had attended an English school prior to joining the European school from year 1 of secondary but had lived in Germany for 6 months at the age of 9/10. There were many errors in her short summary but also some good passages.

- No 6 had been in a German school for years 1 & 2 primary, at the European School Culham (U.K.) for years 3 & 4 of primary, at a private school in Scotland from year 5 primary to year 4 secondary before returning to the European School from year 5 of secondary. Her English was superior to her German. She was very motivated in French and had good communicative skills in class but her written summary, though ambitious, indicated some weaknesses in syntax.

- No 7 had been at Culham for only 3 years, prior to which he lived in Germany.

- No 8 had always lived in the U.K. and had been at Culham for 6 years. He participated willingly and his short summary had a few grammatical errors but read well.

- No 9 spoke French with a strong English accent and she recognized that her oral skills were weak. She lived in Denmark prior to attending an English school in England from the age of 12 before joining the European school at Culham from year 4 of secondary. She spoke Danish at home and went regularly to Denmark. She was getting good marks for her L4 (German) but pointed out that there were only 6 students in the class.

- No 10 found that Swedish helped him with German as he saw some similarities.

- No 11 had only been in England for nearly 3 years. She was very motivated and was going to continue French as L3, but she was very shy and she was also finding written tasks, grammar activities in particular, the hardest. Yet her written summary was of a fair standard generally, despite some problems with the tenses . When I spoke to her in French, she started to feel very uneasy: her understanding was fairly good, but she spoke French with a strong Italian accent and with great reluctance.

- No 12 was a German national whose mother was Swedish. He lived most of his life in the U.K. and went to France on a regular basis so that he felt confident with oral activities skills in French.

- No 13 spoke German at home (both parents were German) but had lived most of her life in the U.K. She wrote a short summary with many basic errors of grammar and syntax.

- No 14 whose parents were both Danish nationals had lived in the U.K. all her life but went to Denmark on a regular basis. She felt more confident with Spanish, her L4, than with French, her L3, because she found it easier but she also commented that there are only 4 students in the Spanish class.

- No 15 (cf also section 4.4 on 'learner variables', chapter 4, category 3) was highly motivated, enjoyed using his French in Corsica where he spent one month during the summer vacation, and his level of participation in class during the French lessons I attended was impressive.

- No 16 whose mother was a Danish national spoke Danish at home. He had lived in England all his life. He expressed great motivation to reach a good standard in French; his summary showed care but was extremely short.

- No 17 whose mother was a German national spoke German at home. She had lived in the U.K. all her life. She was motivated and participated willingly in class but wrote an average summary.

- No 18 had only been one year in the U.K.

- No 19 lacked motivation and indicated that he was lazy. His very short summary with errors of syntax and morphology like 'son sourit'... 'le mirior'... 'il est seule et son seulement copain' indicated a careless attitude.

- No 20, an English national without any SLA/parental background for his German L2, coped reasonably well with history and geography in German and felt confident about his pronunciation in German. He commented that his level in German was far superior to that of his French although grades were similar.

- No 21 & 22 had studied English from the secondary level in Italy and had been at the school for 3 years. They lacked motivation and their written summary in French was, in both cases, very poor indeed.

- No 24 had lived in Germany prior to joining the school from year 2 of secondary. He was extremely reserved in class.

L3, year 6 secondary.

- No 1, whose father was Italian and mother American had, prior to coming to Culham from year 5 of secondary, attended the European School in Varese from nursery. Her 10 years in Italy explained her high level in Italian, her L4. English was her L1, German her L2 from the primary level and French her L3 from the secondary level. She never enjoyed her L2 and never reached a good level in German academically although it did not prevent her from coping with history and geography in German. She found that the Italian language helped her with her French.

- No 2, whose mother was a German national, spoke German at home. She had been at Culham for 10 years. She went to France on a regular basis for five years during holidays from the age of seven but she did not use her French, thereby demonstrating that a second/foreign language is not acquired miraculously by just going to the target language country. At interview, I felt some reluctance to communicate in French although her pronunciation was good and her understanding sound.

- No 3, whose parents were Italian nationals, received her first year of primary education in an Italian school prior to joining the Culham school from year 2 of primary. She was confident and highly motivated in languages as her good results in Spanish, her L4, also show . She intended to study French at university which explains her high participation and her search for opportunities to use her French at school and in France on holidays. Her teacher's comment was that her level was fairly good both for oral and written skills.

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- No 4 whose parents were German national had been 12 years at Culham. She was highly motivated, wanted to speak French better and intended to go to France for a year. She was to take the written exam for French because she had to, given the rules regarding options, but also by preference because her speaking skills were average.

- No 5 had only been at Culham for 3 years prior to which he went to a German school in Germany with English as L2 from the secondary level. He felt that his English had greatly improved since he lived in England. He also went to France once a year for 2 to 3 weeks and actually used his French.

- No 6 whose parents were Italian national had been at the European school at Culham for four years. Her L4 (Spanish) was good possibly because she attended a South American school during her first year of primary, and in fact learned to read and write in Spanish. She travelled extensively and went to school in Italy for the 3rd, 4th, 5th years of primary and the 1st year of secondary. She rated her English as better orally than formally and considered most of her skills in French as average except for understanding as good. She felt more confident with communicative activities but less so with the more academically-demanding tasks.

- No 7 had been to an English school for 2 years prior to joining the German section at Culham from year 4 of primary. His grades in L4 (Italian) were superior to those in L3 because, he argued, German helped him with his Italian and there were only 2 students in the class. Although there were only 7 students in the French class from year 6, the groups had been much bigger during the first years of French. He intended to take Italian and not French at the baccalaureate. The fact that L4 starts with 4 periods a week, as opposed to 3 periods in French (increasing to 4 from year 6 only), might also be a factor to be taken into consideration.

Appendix 4 : Examples of Class Text

The two texts studied in class in **L2, year 6** and **L3, year 5** were as follows:

1) L2, year 6 secondary: **L'ARAIGNEE**

J'étais n'importe quoi, sauf un "joli petit garçon". J'avais la bouche trop grande, le cou maigre, le nez long et les cheveux en épis. Malgré cela on m'aimait bien. Mon père me faisait sauter sur ses genoux en m'appelant "mon affreux bonhomme", très simplement. Ma mère n'aimait pas cela. Elle me serrait contre ses jupes, un peu vexée. "Ça s'arrangera!" disait-elle. Mes quatre aînés, eux, ne pouvaient pas me regarder sans se mettre à pouffer. Ce n'était pas grave. On me cachait un peu quand on prenait des photos. Une bourrade pudique de l'un ou de l'autre, au moment du déclic. Après, on disait: "Tiens, là, c'est le pantalon de Laurent, juste derrière Jérôme". Parfois, je me regardais dans une glace et je disais, comme ma mère: "Ça s'arrangera."

    | Cela ne s'est pas arrangé tout seul. Mes dents eurent beau changer, mes bras et mes jambes pousser, je restai moche. Un jour, je suis passé de la barboteuse à la culotte à bretelles et parti pour l'école. Ils ne m'ont pas raté. Dans la semaine, j'étais surnommé *l'araignée*. Alors je me suis mis en colère. J'aurais admis *girafe ou sauterelle,* mais les araignées me dégoûtaient. Ce fut bien inutile. Comme je ne changeai pas de collège, ce surnom me suivit jusqu'en philo. J'avais beau redoubler ma classe de temps en temps, espérant du même coup me débarrasser de cet animal qui me collait à l'identité, il y avait toujours un salaud qui s'arrangeait pour rater son examen de passage en même temps que moi et repiquer mon ridicule dans les rangs nouveaux.

    II faut ajouter, pour compléter le portrait, que j'étais maladroit, mais d'une maladresse superbe, dans tous les domaines.

<div align="center">

Genevieve DORMANN. <u>Le Chemin des dames</u>.
Editions du Seuil 1964.

</div>

2) L3, year 5 secondary: extract from <u>Vendredi ou la vie sauvage.</u>

Après un naufrage, Robinson se retrouve sur un (sic) *île deserte en la seule compagnie de son chien Tenn. Il organise sa vie matérielle en fonction des ressources de l'endroit mais...*

Robinson n'aimait pas particulièrement se regarder dans les glaces. Pourtant fut tout surpris un jour en sortant un miroir d'un des coffres de *La Virginie(*)* de revoir son propre visage. En somme il n'avait pas tellement changé, si ce n'est peut-être que sa barbe avait allongé et que de nombreuses rides nouvelles sillonnaient son visage. Ce qui l'inquiétait tout de même, c'était l'air sérieux qu'il avait, une sorte de tristesse qui ne le quittait jamais. Il essaya de sourire. Là, il éprouva comme un choc en s'apercevant qu'il n'y arrivait pas. Il avait beau se forcer, essayer à tout prix de plisser ses yeux et de relever les bords de sa bouche, impossible, il ne savait plus sourire. Il avait l'impression maintenant d'avoir une figure en bois, un masque immobile, figé dans une expression *maussade.* A force de réfléchir, il finit par comprendre ce qui lui arrivait. C'était parce qu'il était seul. Depuis trop longtemps il n'avait personne à qui sourire, et il ne savait plus; quand il voulait sourire, ses muscles ne lui obéissaient pas.

Et il continuait à se regarder d'un air dur et sévère dans la glace, et son coeur se serra de tristesse. Ainsi il avait tout ce qu'il lui fallait sur cette île, de quoi boire et manger, une maison, un lit pour dormir, mais pour sourire, personne. et son visage en était comme glacé.

C'est alors que ses yeux s'abaissèrent vers Tenn. Robinson rêvait-il? Le chien était en train de lui sourire! D'un seul côté de sa gueule, sa lèvre noire se soulevait et découvrait une double rangée de crocs. En même temps, il inclinait drôlement la tête sur le côté, et ses yeux couleur de noisette se plissaient d'*ironie*. Robinson saisit à deux mains la grosse tête velue, et ses paupières se mouillèrent d'émotion, cependant *qu'un tremblement imperceptible faisait bouger les commissures de ses lèvres.* Tenn faisait toujours sa grimace, et Robinson le regardait passionnément pour réapprendre à sourire.

Désormais, ce fut comme un jeu entre eux. Tout à coup, Robinson interrompait son travail, ou sa chasse, ou sa promenade sur la grève, et il fixait Tenn d'une certaine façon. Et le chien lui souriait à sa manière, cependant que le visage de Robinson redevenait souple, humain et souriait peu à peu à son tour.

<div align="center">

Michel Tournier
<u>Vendredi ou la vie sauvage.</u>

</div>

Appendix 5 : Self Assessment Skills

The following tables show the **self-assessment of French skills for:**

1) L2 for year 5 primary and years 2 to year 6 secondary
2) as L3 from years 2 to 6 secondary

VG = very good   G = good   AV = average   W = weak   VW = very weak

1)   **L2: French**

L2, yr 5 primary	understanding	reading	writing	speaking
1	G	G	G	G
2	AV	AV	AV	AV
3	AV	AV	AV	G
4	G	AV	AV	AV
5	AV	AV	AV	G
6	AV	AV	AV	AV
7	W	G	W	AV
8	G	W	AV	G
9	G	G	G	AV
10	AV	G	AV	G
11	AV	AV	AV	AV
12	AV	AV	AV	AV
13	AV	W	VW	W
14	G	AV	AV	AV
15	W	AV	VW	VW

L2, yr2	understanding	reading	writing	speaking	vocabulary	grammar	pronunciation
1	G	VG	VG	G	AV	G	G
2	AV	W	G	AV	AV	G	W
3	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV
4	VG	G	AV	AV	G	G	AV
5	G	AV	AV	W	AV	AV	AV
6	G	AV	AV	G	AV	W	AV
7	AV	AV	AV	W	AV	AV	W
8	G	G	AV	G	VG	G	VG
9	VG	VG	AV	G	AV	AV	VG
10	AV	G	AV	G	AV	W	AV
11	VG	AV	W	G	G	AV	G
12	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	W	G
13	W	AV	W	W	W	AV	G
14	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV
15*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	AV	AV	W	W	AV	W	AV
17	G	W	VW	AV	W	W	VW
18	W	W	W	AV	W	W	AV

* Did not complete the questionnaire.

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L2, yr 3	understanding	reading	writing	speaking	vocabulary	grammar	pronunciation
1	VG	VG	VG	G	G	VG	V
2	VG	G	AV	VG	G	AV	VG
3	VG	G	G	G	G	VG	VG
4	G	G	G	AV	AV	G	G
5	G	VG	G	AV	AV	G	G
6	AV	G	G	AV	G	AV	G
7	G	G	G	G	AV	AV	G
8	AV	AV	AV	W	AV	AV	AV
9	AV	AV	W	AV	AV	AV	W
10	VG	VG	W	VG	VG	W	VG
11	AV	AV	AV	AV	G	AV	AV
12	AV	W	AV	AV	AV	AV	G
13	G	AV	AV	G	AVV	AV	AV
14	VG	G	AV	AV	AV	AV	VG
15	G	G	AV	W	AV	W	AV
16	AV	AV	W	W	W	AV	W
17	AV	AV	W	W	AV	W	AV
18	AV	AV	VW	VW	VW	VW	AV
19	AV	AV	W	AV	AV	VW	AV

L2, Yr 5	understanding	reading	writing	speaking	vocabulary	grammar	pronunciation
1	VG	G	VG	G	G	VG	G
2	G	G	G	G	G	G	G
3	G	G	G	G	AV	VG	G
4	VG	G	AV	G	W	AV	VG
5	AV	W	W	W	W	VW	W
6	G	G	G	VG	G	AV	G
7	G	AV	AV	W	W	AV	AV
8	VG	G	AV	VG	VG	G	VG
9	G	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	G
10	G	W	AV	AV	W	AV	AV
11	G	W	VW	AV	AV	VW	G
12	W	W	AV	W	VW	W	AV
13	G	W	W	AV	W	W	W

L2, Yr 6	understanding	reading	writing	speaking	vocabulary	grammar	pronunciation
1	VG	VG	VG	VG	G	G	VG
2	VG	VG	G	VG	G	G	AV
3	VG	VG	G	VG	VG	G	VG
4	G	VG	G	G	AV	G	VG/
5	VG	G	G	G	AV	G	VG
6	G	G	G	G	AV	G	AV
7	G	G	G	AV	AV	G	AV
8	VG	G	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV
9	G	G	AV	W	AV	AV	W
10	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	G	W
11	G	W	G	G	G	W	VG
12	G	AV	AV	AV	W	AV	G
13	G	G	G	G	G	AV	G
14	G	AV	W	W	AV	W	AV
15	G	AV	W	G	AV	VW	G
16	AV	W	AV	W	W	G	AV
17	G	W	VW	AV	W	W	AV

No 5 did not complete his questionnaire but I obtained some of the answers through an informal interview.

2) L3: French

L3, Yr 2	understanding	reading	speaking	writing	vocabulary	grammar	pronunciation
1	VG	G	VG	VG	VG	G	VG
2	G	G	G	AV	G	G	G
3	G	G	G	G	G	G	G
4	AV	G	AV	G	G	VG	AV
5	W	G	W	G	W	G	AV
6	G	AV	G	AV	AV	AV	G
7	G	G	G	AV	G	AV	AV
8	AV	G	G	AV	AV	AV	AV
9	VG	W	AV	AV	G	W	AV
10	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV
11	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	W	G
12*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13	AV	AV	AV	AV	W	W	AV
14	AV	G	VG	AV	AV	AV	G
15	VG	AV	AV	AV	G	W	AV
16	W	AV	W	G	AV	AV	AV
17	VG	VG	VG	G	G	AV	G
18	W	W	W	W	W	VW	W
19	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV
20	W	W	W	W	W	W	W

* did not complete the questionnaire.

L3, yr 3	understanding	reading	speaking	writing	vocabulary	grammar	pronunciation
1	G	VG	VG	G	VG	G	VG
2	AV	AV	G	AV	G	AV	AV
3	G	G	AV	G	G	G	AV
4	W	AV	W	AV	W	W	W
5	AV	G	G	AV	AV	AV	G
6	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV
7	VW	AV	W	AV	W	VW	W
8	AV	AV	W	G	G	AV	W
9	AV	AV	W	W	W	W	W
10	G	AV	AV	AV	AV	W	G
11	G	W	AV	AV	AV	G	AV
12	G	AV	G	G	G	AV	G
13	VG	VG	VG	G	VG	G	G
14	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	G
15	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV
16	AV	G	AV	VW	W	VW	AV
17	AV	W	W	AV	W	AV	W
18	W	W	W	W	W	AV	AV
19	W	VW	VW	W	VW	VW	VW
20	W	AV	W	W	W	AV	W

L3, yr 5	understanding	reading	speaking	writing	vocabulary	grammar	pronunciation
1	G	AV	AV	AV	AV	G	G
2	G	G	AV	G	AV	G	AV
3	G	AV	W	W	W	AV	G
4	AV	AV	W	AV	W	W	G
5	G	G	G	G	G	G	G
6	G	AV	VG	G	VG	AV	G
7	G	G	AV	G	AV	AV	G
8	G	AV	W	AV	W	G	G
9	G	AV	W	AV	W	G	G
10	G	G	AV	AV	AV	AV	G
11	G	AV	W	AV	AV	W	W
12	G	AV	G	W	AV	VG	G
13	W	W	W	AV	W	W	AV
14	W	G	W	AV	W	AV	G
15	VG	G	VG	AV	AV	AV	VG
16	AV	G	W	W	G	G	G
17	AV	AV	AV	W	AV	AV	AV
18*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
19	G	AV	W	W	W	W	W
20	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	G
21*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
22	G	AV	W	W	G	G	AV
23	W	W	W	W	AV	W	W

* did not complete the questionnaire.

L3, yr 6	understanding	reading	speaking	writing	vocabulary	grammar	pronunciation
1	VG	VG	AV	G	AV	G	G
2	G	G	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV
3	VG	G	G	G	AV	AV	G
4	AV	AV	AV	AV	AV	G	AV
5	G	AV	G	AV	AV	AV	AV
6	G	AV	AV	W	AV	AV	AV
7	W	G	W	AV	VW	AV	G

Appendix 6 : 1994 Baccalaureate Results

Baccalaureate Results (1994) for all the European Schools:

		Pass	Fail
Number of candidates 957		906	51
%		94.7%	5.3%

Pass mark: 6 out of 10 (**60%**).

N.B.　　De=German　　　DK=Danish　　　EN=English
　　　　FR=French　　　　IT=Italian　　　　NL=Dutch

Failure %		Total	DE	DK	EN	FR	IT	NL
Adv. L1	written oral	12% 6%						
L1	written oral	23% 16%	31% 24%	6% 9%	7% 2%	40% 24%	16% 9%	23% 22%
Adv. L2	written oral	7% 5%						
L2	written oral	20% 12%	19% 12%		6% 5%	36% 19%		
L3	written oral	18% 9%	19%	ES 8%	11%	34%	12%	23%
L4	written oral	12%	10%	ES 6%	35%	29%	7%	31%
Economics	written	21%	26%		23%	18%		
History	written oral	22% 19%	25% 18%		18% 18%	36% 28%		
Geography	written oral	29% 18%	13% 13%		19% 17%	46% 22%		
Other subjects: written only	Maths Physics Chemistry Biology	47% (Maths 3 periods) 22% (Maths 5 periods) 22% 34% 29%						

The above table confirms that the results are lowest for French as L1, L2 and history and geography in French although not in Economics.

The external examiners report from the Ecoles européennes (1994a:10) also raised the point that French examiners may take into account the "milieu linguistique des candidats" (p.10) as opposed to their German or English counterparts, in view of the fact that the best oral results in English as L2 were at Culham, U.K., in German at Munich, Germany. However, this did not apply to French in Belgium or Luxembourg.

L1: Mother tongue All European Schools		Total*	DE	DK	EN	FR	IT	NL
Written	TOTAL No mean	860 6.74	168 **6.46**	32 **7.25**	126 **7.09**	187 **6.18**	130 **7.02**	124 **6.62**
	> 60% mean		119 6.99	30 7.35	117 7.22	111 6.97	109 7.30	95 7.10
	< 60% mean		49 5.17	2 5.65	9 5.38	76 5.02	21 5.54	29 5.06
Oral	TOTAL No mean	857 7.15	168 **6.79**	32 **7.70**	125 **7.89**	187 **6.72**	128 **7.37**	124 **6.67**
	> 60% mean		130 7.27	29 7.91	122 7.95	142 7.42	116 7.58	96 7.15
	< 60% mean		38 5.13	3 5.67	3 5.30	45 4.53	12 5.29	28 5.03
Adv. written	TOTAL No mean	100 7.08	7 **7.32**	6 **6.79**	31 **7.08**	13 *6.60*	16 **7.23**	5 **7.15**
	> 60% mean		6 7.58	6 6.79	25 7.50	10 6.94	16 7.23	5 7.15
	< 60 mean		1 5.75	nil	6 5.32	3 5.47	nil	nil
Adv. oral	TOTAL No mean	100 7.71	7 **7.89**	6 **7.42**	31 **7.84**	13 *6.56*	16 **8.09**	5 **7.50**
	> 60% mean		7 7.89	6 7.42	29 8.01	9 7.39	16 8.09	5 7.50
	< 60% mean		nil	nil	2 5.38	4 4.69	nil	nil

* Column 'Total' represents the total number of candidates and includes Greek, Spanish and Portuguese students.

No = number of candidates

The mean is out of 10, with 6 as the passmark so that > 60% indicates the number of candidates who passed and < 60% indicates the number of candidates who failed.

L2 results for all the European Schools: SLA in a second language environment, FL in a foreign language context, although some students may have benefitted from a SLA context prior to taking their examinations in a FL context.

L2 German	written		oral		adv. written		adv. oral	
	No	mean	No	mean	No	mean	No	mean
Total	135	7.08	135	7.30	19	7.99	19	7.66
>60%	109	7.50	119	7.56	18	8.11	18	7.76
<60%	26	5.33	16	5.33	1	5.80	1	5.75
Total SLA	62	7.41	62	7.55	13	8.27	13	7.84
FL	73	6.80	73	6.62	6	7.37	6	7.25
Fail		%		%		%		%
SLA	7	11 %	5	8 %	0	-	1	8 %
FL	19	26 %	11	15 %	1	17 %	0	-

L2 English	written		oral		adv. written		adv. oral	
	No	mean	No	mean	No	mean	No	mean
Total	370	7.44	370	7.70	82	7.62	82	8.32
>60%	347	7.58	352	7.82	80	8.66	81	8.36
<60%	23	5.35	18	5.33	2	5.85	1	5.75
Total SLA	24	7.95	24	8.05	7	8.17	7	9.30
FL	346	7.40	346	7.67	75	7.56	75	8.23
Fail		%		%		%		%
SLA	2	8 %	2	8 %	0	-	0	-
FL	21	6 %	16	5 %	2	3 %	1	1.3 %

L2 French	written		oral		adv. written		adv. oral	
	No	mean	No	mean	No	mean	No	mean
Total	309	6.32	309	7.03	31	7.06	31	7.64
>60%	197	7.04	249	7.72	25	7.46	27	8.04
<60%	112	5.06	60	5.01	6	5.36	4	4.94
Total SLA	252	6.36	252	7.00	25	7.07	25	7.38
FL	57	6.12	57	7.18	6	6.96	6	8.72
Fail		%		%		%		%
SLA	87	34.5%	49	19 %	5	20 %	4	16 %
FL	25	44 %	11	19 %	1	17 %	0	-

No = number of candidates

L3		DE	EN	ES	FR	IT	NL
WRITTEN	TOTAL no 468 mean 7.08	42 6.93	212 7.30	53 7.60	96 6.50	34 6.90	30 6.74
	No. of SLA FL	7 35	0 212	0 53	72 24	12 22	5 25
	> 60% mean	34 7.28	189 7.53	49 7.79	63 7.10	30 7.12	23 7.14
	< 60% mean	8 (FL) 5.44	23 (FL) 5.41	4 (FL) 5.33	23(SLA) 10(FL) 5.36	2(SLA) 2(FL) 5.25	7 (FL) 5.43
	fail % SLA FL	0 23 %	- 11%	- 7.5%	32 % 42 %	17 % 9 %	0 28%
ORAL	TOTAL no 86 mean 7.90	14 7.63	25 8.32	8 8.41	30 7.56	6 8.92	3 7.00
	No. of SLA FL	2 12	0 25	0 8	23 7	2 4	1 2
	> 60% mean	12 7.96	24 8.43	All pass	27 7.81	All pass	All pass
	< 60% mean fail % SLA FL	2 (FL) 5.63 0% 17%	1 (FL) 5.75 - 4%		2 (SLA) 1 FL 5.25 9% 14%		

L3 results in all schools. No= number of candidates.
The failure rate is generally higher for FL students except for written Italian.
N.B. Some FL students may have benefitted from a SLA context prior to taking their exam in the FL context.

L4	Total	DE	EN	ES	FR	IT	NL
WRITTEN	no 199 mean 7.43	30 7.44	14 6.64	98 7.58	14 6.91	30 7.73	13 7.05
	No. of SLA FL	0 30	0 14	0 98	11 3	8 22	1 12
	> 60% mean	27 7.66	9 7.30	92 7.68	10 7.54	28 7.91	9 8.13
	< 60% mean	3 (FL) 5.48	5 (FL) 5.44	6 (FL) 5.90	4 (SLA) 5.34	2 (FL) 5.25	4 (FL) 4.63
ORAL	no 20 mean 8.20	4 7.63	0	7 8.39	2 8.75	5 8.50	1 8.00
	No. of SLA FL	0 4		0 7	1 1	0 5	1 0
		All pass			·		·

L4 results for all the European schools.

Culham: 1994 baccalaureate results
53 candidates: 52 passed 1 failed

Note that although only 1 candidate failed in the overall results, a breakdown of the marks awarded indicates that no candidate failed the 'preliminary' examinations or the 'oral' but that 8 candidates failed their 'written' examinations. The total average at Culham was 71.47 with 75.61 for 'preliminary', 69.00 for written, 78.04 for oral -- and 72.62 for written with oral, taking into account weighting given to each part).

L1		Total	De	Dk	En	Fr	It	Nl
Written	total no	11	1	14	14	4	5
	mean	6.57	8.30	7.59	6.11	7.83	6.32
	> 60%	8		all	10	all	4
	mean	7.00	pass	pass	6.50	pass	6.45
	< 60%	3			4		1
	mean	5.43			5.15		5.80
Oral	total no	11	1	14	14	4	5
	mean	7.41	10.00	7.71	7.30	8.25	7.10
	> 60%	10	pass	all	all	all	all
	mean	7.57		pass	pass	pass	pass
	< 60%	1					
	mean	5.80					
Advanced Written	total no			4			
	mean			7.45			
	> 60%			all			
	mean			pass			
	< 60%						
	mean						
Advanced Oral	total no			4			
	mean			6.90			
	> 60%			31			
	mean			7.53			
	< 60%			1			
	mean			5.00			

L2 (Culham) DE, EN & FR	L2: 41 candidates.				Advanced L2: 12 candidates.			
	written: No mean		oral: No mean		written: No mean		oral: No mean	
L2 DE	5	5.34	5	6.70				
> 60%	2	6.15						
< 60%	3	4.80	all	pass				
fail FL		60%						
L2 EN	24	7.95	24	8.05	7	8.17	7	9.30
> 60%	22	8.16	22	8.78	all	pass	all	pass
< 60%	2	5.60	2	5.55				
fail SLA		8%		8%				
L2 FR	12	6.11	12	7.57	5	7.06	5	9.12
> 60%	7	6.91	11	7.73	4	7.55	all	pass
< 60%	5	4.98	1	5.80	1	5.10		
fail FL		42%		8%		20%		

L2 results according to the context, i.e. SLA or FL.

L2	written: No mean		oral: No mean		Adv. written No mean		Adv. oral No mean	
FL: DE+FR	17	5.88	17	7.31	5	7.06	5	9.12
SLA: EN	24	7.95	24	8.05	7	8.17	7	9.30
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Fail FL	8	47%	1	6%	1	20%	0	0
SLA	2	8%	2	8%	0	0	0	0

The 'L2' table for Culham shows that oral means are higher than written in both SLA and FL contexts but that SLA results are higher than FL in both written and oral tasks. The failure rate for FL is also much higher than for SLA written tasks.

Results for the advanced level are higher than for ordinary levels and the failure rate lower generally but caution should be given as 3 of the advanced level students in French were bilinguals.

L3 CULHAM: No candidate in English (SLA) but although all students are taking L3 in a FL context, some had prior SLA contacts.

L3: 21 candidates		DE	ES	FR	IT	NL
WRITTEN	TOTAL No 17 mean 6.50	5 6.50		6 5.90	5 6.84	1 6.00
	> 60% mean	4 6.75		3 6.47	4 7.43	pass
	< 60% mean	1 5.50		3 5.33	1 4.50	
Total fail written: 29 %						
ORAL	TOTAL No 4 mean 8.38	1 9.00	2 8.00		1 8.50	
	All pass	pass	both pass		pass	

Note 40 % of all students at Culham opted for a third language (32% written, 8% oral)

L4: CULHAM   No candidate in English (SLA)

L4: 14 candidates	Written: 13 mean: 7.46	SECTIONS:				
		DE	EN	FR	IT	NL
SPANISH Written	Total mean	11 7.38	2 8.00	1 5.90	3 6.17	4 8.35	1 7.40
	> 60% mean < 60% mean	8 7.95 3 5.80	both pass	0 1 5.90	1 6.80 2 5.85	all pass	all pass
ITALIAN Written	Total mean	2 7.90 both pass	1 6.80 pass	1 9.00 pass			
IRISH Oral	Total mean	1 9.00		1 9.00			

Note 26.4 % of the 1994 baccalaureate candidates at Culham opted for L4, only 1 chose oral.

Appendix 7 : Questionnaire Results

Results from questionnaires returned

Benefits from attending a European School:

Benefits L2 French	Total**	66	year 2	year 3	year 5	year 6
	Yes	59	15	16	13	15
	No		2	*	0	2
Reasons given	French contacts		9	7	10	12
	French teachers		7	7	7	8
	History/geography help L2 (years 5 & 6 only)		-	-	9	10

** total number of students with French as **L2**
* one did not know, two did not reply.
To the above reasons given for the benefits from attending the European school, some students added `better pronunciation', `higher level',`more French earlier', `closer friends' etc..

	L2 French				L3 French			
	Yr 2	**Yr 3**	**Yr 5**	**Yr 6**	**Yr 2**	**Y2 3**	**Yr 5**	**Yr 6**
Number of questionnaires returned	17	19	13	17	19	20	21	7
Use Home					*	*	*	*
Frequently	1	1	1	0	2	1	2	0
Sometimes	4	4	4	4	13	16	13	7
Never	12	14	8	12	4	2	6	0
Trips					-	-	-	-
Frequently	10	5	7	9				
Sometimes	7	13	4	8				
Never	0	1	2	0				
Trips:					-	-		-
1. Contacts	8	13	10	13			-	
2. Use:								
Frequently	6	9	6	11				
Sometimes	10	7	4	6				
Never	0	1	1	0				
Use School								
Frequently	1	3	3	4	1	0	3	1
Sometimes	5	6	4	11	9	11	9	6
Never	11	10	6	2	9	9	1	0
Participation	5	14	9	10	12	13	10	6
Shy	5	2	4	4	5	2	4	2

* Use outside school, including with friends, family or others.
- Trips not included as European school children would tend to travel to countries of their L1 or L2, though not exclusively.

The following charts give a break-down of each year quoted above:
N.B.:   Never=1   Sometimes=3   Frequently=5
Part.= participation   Ben.= benefits

L2 Yr2	Home: Use (1 3 5)	Help (1 3 5)	Material (1 3 5)	Trips (1 3 5)	Contact (N Y)	Use (1 3 5)	School use (1 3 5)	Part. (N Y)	Shy (N Y)	Ben. (N Y)
1	1	1		5	N		1		-	Y
2	3	1	3	5	N		3	Y	N	Y
3	1	1	3	5	N	3	1	Y	N	Y
4	1	1	5	5	N	3	1	Y	-	N
5	3	3	3	5	Y	5	3	Y	Y	Y
6	5	5	3	5	Y	5	5	Y	-	Y
7	1	3	1	3	N	3	1	Y	-	Y
8	3	3	3	5	Y	-	3	Y	N	Y
9	1	3	-	3	N	5	3	Y	N	Y
10	1	5	1	3	N	3	1	Y	N	Y
11	1	3	3	3	Y	5	3	Y	Y	Y
12	1	3	3	5	Y	5	1	Y	-	Y
13	1	1	1	5	Y	3	1	Y	-	Y
14	1	1	3	3	Y	3	1	N	Y	Y
15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	3	3	3	5	N	3	1	N	Y	Y
17	1	1	3	3	Y	5	1	Y	-	Y
18	1	3	3	3	N	3	1	Y	-	N
Total	12 / 4 / 1	7 / 8 / 2	3 / 12 / 1	0 / 7 / 10	9 / 8	0 / 10 / 6	11 / 5 / 1	2 / 15	4 / 5	2 / 15

No 15 did not return the questionnaire.

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L2, Yr3	Home Use 1	3	5	Help 1	3	5	Material 1	3	5	Trips 1	3	5	Contact N	Y	Use 1	3	5	School use 1	3	5	Part. N	Y	Shy N	Y	Ben. N	Y
1		3		1					5		3			Y		3				5		Y	N			Y
2			5		3				5			5		Y			5			5	N		-			Y
3	1			1				3			3			Y			5	3				Y	N			Y
4	1				3		1				3		N			3		1				Y	N			Y
5	1			1			1				3		-		-				3			Y	N			Y
6		3			3				5		3			Y			5			5		Y	N			Y
7	1				3			3			3			Y		3			3			Y		Y	-	
8	1			1			1				3			Y			5	3			N			Y		Y
9	1			1			1			1			-		-			1				Y	N			Y
10	1				3			3				5		Y			5	1				Y	N			Y
11	1			1				3				5		Y			5	1				Y	N			Y
12	1			1				3				5		Y			5	3				Y	-		-	
13	1			1				3			3			Y		3		3				Y	-			Y
14		3			3			3			3			Y			5	1			-		N			Y
15	1			1			1				3			Y		3		1				Y	N			Y
16	1				3			3				5	N			3		1			N		N			Y
17		3			3			3			3		N			3		1				Y	N			Y
18	1			1			1				3		N		1			1			N		-		-	
19	1			1				3			3			Y			5	1				Y	-			Y
Total	14 / 4 / 1			11 / 8 / 0			6 / 10 / 3			1 / 13 / 5			4 /	13	1 / 7 / 9			10 / 6 / 3			4 /	14	12 /	2	3 /	16

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L2 Yr 5	Home use 1	3	5	Help 1	3	5	Material 1	3	5	Trips 1	3	5	Contact N	Y	Use 1	3	5	School use 1	3	5	Part. N	Y	Shv N	Y	Ben. N	Y
1		3			3			3				5		Y		3				5		Y	N			Y
2	1			1				3			3			Y			5		3			Y	N			Y
3	1			1				3				5		Y		3			3			Y	N			Y
4		3		1				3				5		Y			5			5		Y	N			Y
5	1			1				-		1				-		-		1			N			Y		Y
6	1			1				3				5		Y			5	1				Y	N			Y
7	1				3			3			3		N			3		1				Y	N			Y
8			5		3			3				5		Y			5			5	N		N			Y
9	1					5		3				5		Y		3			3			Y		Y		Y
10	1			1				3			3			Y			5		3		N			Y		Y
11	1			1				3			3			Y			5	1				Y	N			Y
12		3		1			1			1				-		-		1			N			Y		Y
13		3		1				-				5		Y	1			1				Y	-			Y
Total	8 / 4 / 1			9 / 3 / 1			1 / 10 / 0			2 / 4 / 7			1 / 10		1/ 4 / 6			6 / 4 / 3			4 / 9		8 / 4		0 / 13	

L2 Yr 6	Home use 1 3 5	Help 1 3 5	Material 1 3 5	Trips 1 3 5	Contact N Y	Use 1 3 5	School use 1 3 5	Part. N Y	Shy N Y	Ben. N Y
1	3	1	5	5	Y	5	5	Y	N	Y
2	3	1	3	3	Y	5	5	Y	N	N
3	3	1	3	5	N	5	3	Y	N	Y
4	1	1	1	5	Y	5	5	Y	N	Y
5	-	-	-	5	Y	5	3	Y	N	Y
6	1	1	3	3	N	3	3	N	-	Y
7	1	1	3	5	Y	3	3	N	Y	Y
8	1	1	1	3	Y	5	3	Y	N	Y
9	1	1	1	5	Y	5	3	N	Y	Y
10	1	1	1	5	N	5	1	N	Y	Y
11	3	3	3	5	Y	5	3	N	N	Y
12	1	1	1	3	Y	3	3	Y	-	Y
13	1	1	3	3	Y	3	3	N	N	Y
14	1	1	3	3	Y	3	3	N	Y	Y
15	1	1	-	3	Y	5	5	Y	-	Y
16	1	1	3	5	Y	5		N	N	Y
17	1	1	1	3	N	3	3	Y	-	N
Total	12 / 4 / 0	15 / 1 / 0	6 / 8 / 1	0 / 8 / 9	4 / 13	0 / 6 / 11	2 / 11 / 4	7 / 10	9 / 4	2 / 15

No 5 did not complete his questionnaire but I obtained some of the answers through an informal interview.

L3, Yr 2	Bilingual in	School use 1	3	5	Part. N	Y	Shy N	Y	Outside use 1	3	5	L1/L2 help L3 N	Y	L3 helps L1/L2 N	Y
1	Tril. in It / En / Fr		3			Y	-				3		N		N	
2	Nl / En		3			Y	N				3			Y	N	
3	*	1				Y		Y	1					Y	N	
4	De / En		3			Y		Y			3			Y	-	
5	Swe / En	1				Y	-		1					Y		Y
6	De / En		3			Y	N				3			Y	N	
7			3			Y	-				3			Y	N	
8	De / En	1				Y	-				3			Y	N	
9	De / En		3		N		N				3			Y	N	
10	De / En	1				Y	-				3			Y	N	
11	De / En	1			-		-				3			Y	-	
12	De / En		-		-		-			-			-		-	
13	Nl / En		3		N		-				3			Y	N	
14	Nl / En		3			Y	N					5		Y	N	
15			3		N			Y			3			Y	N	
16	Swe / En	1				Y		Y			3			Y		Y
17	De / En			5	-		-					5		Y		Y
18	*	1				Y	N		1					Y	N	
19	*	1			N			Y	1				N		N	
20	De / En	1			N		-				3			Y	N	
Total		9 / 9 / 1			5	12	5	5	4 / 13 / 2			2	17	14	3	

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L3 Yr3	Bilingual in	School use			Part.		Shv		Outside use			L1/L2 help L3		L3 helps L1/L2		Keep L3	
		1	3	5	N	Y	N	Y	1	3	5	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y
1	De / Fr		3			Y	N				5		Y		Y		Y
2	De / En		3		-		-			3			Y	N		?	
3	De / En	1				Y	N			3			Y	N			Y
4	De / En		3			Y	-			3			Y	N			Y
5	Dk / En		3			Y	N			3			Y	N		?	
6	De / En		3		N			Y		3		-		N		?	
7	De/En	1			N		N		1			N		N			Y
8	Nl/En		3			Y	N			3		N		N			Y
9	De/En	1				Y	N			3			Y	N		N	
10	En/De	1			N		N			3			Y	N			Y
11	Nl/Swedish	1				Y	N			3			Y	N		?	
12	It *		3			Y	N			3			Y	N		?	
13	It/En		3			Y	N			3			Y		Y	?	
14	De/En		3			Y	N			-			Y		Y		Y
15	EN *	1				Y	N			3		-		N			Y
16	En / Swedish	1				Y		Y		3			Y	N		N	
17	En *	1			N		N			3		N		N		N	
18	Nl *		3			Y	N			3		-		N		N	
19	De / En		3		N		N			3		N		N		N	
20	Nl / En	1			N		N		1				Y	N		N	
Total		9 / 11 / 0			6 / 13		16/2		2 / 16 / 1			4 / 13		17 / 3		6 / 8	

No 18 & 21 did not return the questionnaire
* not bilingual   ? represents don't know

L3 Yr 5	Bilingual in	School use 1	3	5	Part. N	Y	Shy N	Y	Outside use 1	3	5	L1/2 help L3 N	Y	L3 helps L1/2 N	Y	Keep L3 N	Y	L3 weak N	Y	Enough option N	Y
1	De / En	1				Y	N				5		Y	-		N		N			Y
2	It / En		3			Y	-			3			Y	N			Y				
3	Sw / En		3			Y		Y		3		N		N		N			Y		Y
4	De / En	1			N		N		1				Y	N		N			Y		Y
5	De / En		3		N		-			3			Y	N			Y				
6	De / En			5		Y	N				5	N		N			Y				
7	*	1			N		N		1				Y	N		N		N			Y
8	De / En	1				Y	N			3			Y		Y	N		N			Y
9	Dk / En		3			Y		Y		3			Y		Y	N		N			Y
10	Sw / De	1				Y	N		1			N		N		N			Y		Y
11	*	1			-			Y		3			Y		Y		Y				
12	Sw / En		3		N		N		1			N		N		N		N			Y
13	De / En	1			N		N			3			Y	N		N			Y		Y
14	Dk / En			5	N		-			3			Y	N		N			Y		
15	It / De		3			Y	N			3			Y		Y		Y				
16	Dk / En	1				Y	-		1			N		N		N		N			Y
17	De / En		3			Y	N			3			Y	N			Y				
18	*	-			-		-		-			-		-		-		-		-	
19	Nl / En		3		N		N			3		N			Y	N			Y	N	
20	*		3		N		N			3		N		N		N			Y		Y
21	*	-			-		-		-			-		-		N		-		-	
22	*			5	N		N			3		N		N		N			Y		
23	*	1			N			Y	1			N		N		N			Y		Y
Total		9 /	9 /	3	10 /	10	13 /	4	6 /	13 /	2	9 /	12	15 /	5	16 /	6	6 /	9	1 /	12

* not bilingual
Sw = Swedish   Dk = Danish

L3, Yr 6	Bilingual in	School use			Part.		Shv		Outside use			L1/L2 help L3		L3 helps L1/L2	
		1	3	5	N	Y	N	Y	1	3	5	N	Y	N	Y
1	En / It		3			Y	N			3			Y		Y
2	De / En		3			Y		Y		3			Y	N	
3	It / En			5		Y	N			3			Y	N	
4	De / En		3			Y	N			3			Y		Y
5	De *		3			Y	N			3			Y	N	
6	It *		3			Y	N			3			Y	N	
7	De / En		3		-			Y		3			Y	N	
Total		0 /	6 /	1	0 /	6	4 /	2	0 /	7 /	0	0 /	7	5 /	2

* not bilingual.

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