

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE COMMUNICATIVE POTENTIAL
OF TEACHERS' TARGET LANGUAGE USE IN THE FOREIGN
LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT

This thesis describes an investigation into the capacity of foreign language (FL) teachers in Scottish secondary schools to make the target foreign language the sole or main means of communication with their pupils in the formal setting of the FL lesson.

In the first part of the thesis, the reasons why FL teachers should behave in this way are explored. Relevant sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic theories are first discussed, together with their implications for FL teaching methodology. Contextual factors thought likely to influence the extent to which British FL teachers would be either willing or able to make the target language the medium of classroom communication are then reviewed. These have to do with a) the nature of the classroom as a social and sociolinguistic setting, and b) FL teachers' linguistic competence and beliefs about the nature of teaching and learning. Existing research on FL classroom interaction, and in particular on structural and functional characteristics of teacher FL talk, is also reviewed.

The second part of the thesis reports an empirical study of the classroom talk of a group of teachers committed to the 'communicative approach' to FL teaching. These teachers' classroom use of French (the target FL) and English is described at several levels of detail, notably that of the teaching/ learning activity and of the pedagogic move. Structural characteristics of teacher talk are also studied. Special attention is given to teachers' classroom management talk, and it is argued that the choice of French for this purpose is critical for enhancing pupils' experience of message-oriented target language use. A comparison is made between the language use patterns of teachers characterised as 'High' and 'Low FL Users'; and an account is given of the discourse strategies which appear necessary to sustain high levels of FL use.

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CHAPTER 1

CLASSROOM PROCESSES AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

1.1 Introduction

This thesis describes an investigation into the capacity of foreign language (FL) teachers in Scottish secondary schools to make the target foreign language the sole or main means of communication with their pupils in the formal setting of the FL lesson. In the first part of the thesis, the rationale for FL teachers attempting to behave in this way is explored. In Chapter 1, this methodological procedure is presented as one strand within the currently-fashionable 'communicative approach' to language teaching. Present understandings of what it means to be a competent user of a foreign language, and prevailing psycholinguistic theories concerning the process of language acquisition, which together provide the theoretical foundation for the attempt to promote 'communicative' target language use in classroom settings, are reviewed.

Chapter 2 reviews contextual factors thought likely to influence the extent to which British FL teachers would be either willing or able to make the target language the medium of classroom communication. In the first part of the chapter,

the nature of the classroom setting is considered from a social psychological perspective, in order to identify general features of the teacher-student relationship which might promote or inhibit target language use. In the second part of the chapter, an interview study conducted by the author with a group of teachers generally committed to the 'communicative approach' is summarised. This interview material is reviewed in order to shed light on the general beliefs of FL teachers regarding the nature of the L2 learning process, the range of classroom experiences which may best promote it, and the feasibility and desirability of involving pupils extensively in 'communicative' FL use. (It was considered that beliefs in these matters would have a crucial influence on the extent of 'communicative' FL experience actually provided; and that it could not be assumed that teachers would necessarily share the beliefs of methodologists of the 'communicative approach' on such matters, however strong their general commitment.)

In Chapter 3, previous research on FL classroom interaction, and in particular on teacher FL talk, is reviewed.

The second part of the thesis (Chapters 4-7) reports an empirical study of the classroom talk of a group of teachers committed to the 'communicative approach' to FL teaching. These teachers' classroom use of French (the target FL) and of English (the shared mother tongue of teachers and pupils in most classrooms, and a common language in all) is described, and the extent of functional differentiation between the uses

made of the two languages is explored. The teachers' French is then described in more detail, with reference to both structural and functional aspects. Special attention is given to selected distinctive purposes of teacher talk in the FL classroom (such as introducing new activities, or giving grammatical explanations), and to the relative frequency of use of French and English for these. Lastly, a set of hypotheses are advanced, which may explain the observed patterns of FL and L1 use; and an account is given of some of the discourse strategies which appear necessary to sustain high levels of FL use (particularly those pertaining to the solving of comprehension problems and to conversational repair).

1.2 'Communicative' FL Teaching

The quality of teachers' classroom talk is a well established topic, in both linguistic and 'generalist' educational research, which has been studied from a range of perspectives, using a wide variety of research techniques. (Major British studies include, from a linguistic perspective, the work of Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975, and from a 'generalist' perspective, many of the systematic observation schedules listed in Galton, 1978, as well as later studies such as the ORACLE investigation of classroom processes in the primary school, which includes specific attention to teacher talk at least as one aspect of wider explorations of classroom

interaction: Galton et al, 1980.) But as the review in Chapter 3 will show, relatively little research attention has been paid in Britain until very recently to FL teacher talk.

Why should FL teacher talk in the classroom, and more particularly teachers' target language talk, now become a focus of research attention? The new interest must stem in part from the general concern in FL teaching research to enter the "black box" of classroom processes (Long, 1980) and study teaching and learning at first hand. But a major motivation has been the development of the recent movement to renew FL teaching and learning in schools, which is generally known as the 'communicative approach'.

'Communicative' FL teaching is a broad church. It has many advocates, initially from among British professionals concerned with the teaching of English as a foreign language (e.g. Breen and Candlin, 1980, Brumfit, 1980a and 1984, Brumfit and Johnson (eds), 1979, Widdowson, 1978, and Wilkins, 1974), and from an international group working within the framework of the Council of Europe 1971 - 1981 Modern Languages Project (summarised in Council of Europe, 1981). Recently, the 'communicative' movement has gained adherents among those concerned with FL teaching in British schools (e.g. Clark, 1981; Dunning, 1982; Harding, Page and Rowell, 1980; Johnstone, 1979; and Mitchell and Johnstone, 1981).

What is this 'communicative approach' to FL teaching? While writing from diverse perspectives, and for different contexts, its proponents share a general commitment to certain

broad principles:

- a broadening of the stated goals of FL teaching and learning to encompass not merely linguistic knowledge, but communicative proficiency
- the analysis of learners' presumed FL 'needs', and the specification of language learning objectives compatible with these, in behavioural terms
- organisation of the FL syllabus at least partly on functional-notional rather than structural principles
- a concern for a degree of individualisation of the FL syllabus, and for 'learner autonomy'
- a commitment to open-ended, message-oriented use of the target language in the classroom (through the use of instructional activities such as games, problemsolving, and role play, as well as through the use of the target FL for classroom communication).

As Howatt (1984) points out, the contemporary 'communicative' movement is in fact

"the most recent manifestation of ideas that have appealed to the imagination of teachers for a very long time ... the underlying philosophy has remained constant. Learning how to speak a new language, it is held, is not a rational process which can be organised in a step-by-step manner... It is an intuitive process for which human beings have a natural capacity that can be awakened provided only that the proper conditions exist. Put simply, there are three such conditions: someone to talk to, something to talk about, and a desire to understand and to make yourself understood..." (Howatt, 1984, p 192).

Howatt cites Sauveur, 1874, and Pakscher, 1895, in claiming the Direct Method as a precursor of these ideas. This movement was initiated in the United States in the later nineteenth century by Sauveur, and systematized and developed by Berlitz. These ideas found favour, however, almost entirely outside the

public school system; for example, the Berlitz organisation ran its own schools, aiming at a population of adult, part-time learners. In contrast, the contemporary movement for a 'communicative approach' encompasses both FL teaching aimed at vocationally-motivated adults, and that within the school system which contributes to the general education of children. This thesis is concerned with teachers attempting to implement a 'communicative approach' in this latter setting.

1.3 Rationales for the Communicative Approach

What are the theoretical underpinnings for the present revival of interest in what Howatt calls "intuitive" approaches to FL teaching and learning, which constitutes the 'communicative approach'? What rationale or rationales underlie the series of procedures listed above, identifiable as characteristic common ground in the writings of methodologists advocating this approach? As has been pointed out by several commentators, including Mitchell and Johnstone (1981), Yalden (1983: Ch 4), and Lightbown (1985), the 'communicative approach' derives legitimacy from at least two different theoretical perspectives, one primarily sociolinguistic, and the other psycholinguistic.

1.3.1 A sociolinguistic rationale: 'communicative competence'

The sociolinguistic rationale for the 'communicative approach' derives largely from the work of Dell Hymes, one of the first exponents of the notion of 'communicative competence'. (The clearest exposition of Hymes' ideas is to be found in Hymes, 1971. Hymes' main publications were however predated by Campbell and Wales, 1970, who also advance the notion in discussing the nature of children's L1 competence.) Theories of 'communicative competence' expand the definition of what it means to be competent in a language (whether first or foreign), to include not only knowledge of the linguistic system, but the ability to make appropriate use of it in real life interaction. As one 'communicative' methodologist puts it:

"Under the heading of communicative competence two sorts of knowledge can be included. The first, the traditional competence, is the knowledge of the structure and formal properties of language, including referential meaning, while the second includes all types of knowledge necessary for the use of the language effectively in the real world". (Brumfit, 1980a, p. 113)

What these other "types of knowledge" may be, is discussed by a number of theorists whose work is reviewed by Canale and Swain (1980). It is clear from this review that no consensus exists on the number and nature of these additional dimensions of language competence, nor on the relationships of these additional dimensions to each other, nor between them and grammatical knowledge. For example, as Canale and Swain point

out, it is unclear from the work of Hymes, Halliday et al how the 'rules' of language use (unlike the rules of e.g. syntax) might be expressed formally even at the level of the individual utterance (p 18); and work attempting the analysis of the structure of discourse at a level beyond that of the individual utterance is still essentially at an embryonic stage (p 21). On the basis of their review, however, Canale and Swain themselves propose a theoretical framework for communicative competence with special reference to second language teaching. A version of this framework, further developed by Canale (1983), is presented below to illustrate one of the ways in which sociolinguists are attempting to expand the notion of language competence beyond the core of lexical-grammatical knowledge. Canale's framework has four principal components:

1. Grammatical competence (including phonology, orthography, vocabulary, word formation, sentence formation)

(This single component corresponds to traditional, narrower notions of language competence)

2. Sociolinguistic competence (expression and understanding of social meanings appropriate to different sociolinguistic contexts, and of grammatical forms appropriate to their expression)

3. Discourse competence (knowledge of different linguistic genres, together with their related devices for cohesion and coherence)

4. Strategic competence (ways of coping with grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and performance difficulties).

This particular attempt to explicate the notion of

'communicative competence' is most notable for Canale's attempt to integrate the final element (strategic competence) into an overarching model. The strategies used by both fluent and less fluent speakers to solve communication difficulties in interaction between speakers of unequal competence have recently become a focus for research, but have generally been studied as a semi-autonomous element of language competence (see for example the collection of papers edited by Faerch and Kasper, 1983); Canale argues that they should be identified as one component within a more generalised view of communicative (L2) competence. However, Canale's framework shares several of the problems identified by Canale and Swain in their earlier paper: most notably, lack of rigour in demarcation of the different dimensions of the framework, and (as Canale himself recognises), lack of articulation between them.

In spite of the lack of conceptual clarity attending the theoretical notion of 'communicative competence', however, it has proved a very powerful concept in the world of FL teaching, making a major impact both on syllabus design and on thinking about classroom methods.

1.3.1.1 Syllabus design

The question of syllabus design is of peripheral concern to the research study reported in this thesis. However, in considering the overall impact on FL teaching of the notion of 'communicative competence', developments in syllabus design

must briefly be discussed, as this was the first area in which the idea made its impact. Firstly, it has provided the language teaching profession with a mode of response to the general movement in education towards greater explicitness in the definition of objectives, and in particular to their specification in behavioural terms. Secondly, it has generated an alternative model for detailed syllabus planning to the traditional FL syllabus organised on lexico-syntactic principles: the so-called 'notional' or 'notional-functional' syllabus.

1.3.1.2 Specification of objectives and 'needs analysis'

The notion of 'communicative competence' has provided a theoretical basis for behavioural definitions of target FL competence at different levels of proficiency and for different types of learner. Thus for example, the well-known "Threshold Level" syllabus proposed for English within the framework of the Council of Europe's 1971 - 1981 Modern Languages Project defines, in global behavioural terms, the minimum language competence supposedly required of an adult EFL learner if he or she is to cope on a short visit to an English speaking speech community, primarily for tourist purposes (van Ek, 1975). Such behavioural specifications have increasingly come to be generated not arbitrarily, but through a process of so-called 'needs analysis', in which the special language performance requirements of particular groups of

learners are identified (Richterich, 1973; Munby, 1978; Richterich and Chancerel, 1978; Yalden, 1983).

Perhaps surprisingly, these linked ideas of the behavioural specification of language learning objectives, and their identification through the process of needs analysis, have not been confined to those catering for the adult learner, with his/her more or less salient instrumental language learning needs. Considerable interest has also been shown in these ideas, by those concerned with language learning in schools. Within the framework of the Council of Europe Modern Languages Project, this is evidenced by the production of school versions of both the English "Threshold Level" (van Ek, 1976) and the French "Un niveau-seuil" (Porcher et al, 1980) - in spite of some reservations concerning the applicability of precise needs analysis within general education expressed by Porcher in another Council of Europe publication (1980). In British education, these ideas have been popularised by the so-called 'graded objectives in modern languages' (GOML) movement, which has oriented much elementary and intermediate FL instruction in schools towards behavioural objectives in the areas of short-stay tourism and other adolescent social contacts with the FL speech community such as school exchanges (see Harding, Page and Rowell, 1980, for an account by some of the initiators of this movement).

1.3.1.3 Notional syllabuses

In addition to supporting the specification of global, integrative behavioural objectives in the area of L2 learning, theories of communicative competence have given an impetus to the development of syllabus models which define in new ways the basic units of language which must be mastered by the learner. Pedagogic syllabuses in FL teaching have traditionally been organised on lexical -structural principles, introducing the learner to selected morphological and/or syntactic aspects of the target language system in turn and rehearsing these more or less systematically, using a restricted vocabulary in which new items are only gradually introduced. In addition, the sequencing of grammatical structures has depended at least in part on some notion of grammatical complexity: thus for example, declarative sentence patterns would tend traditionally to be taught before negative or interrogative patterns, present tense forms before conditional forms. (See Howatt, 1984, for a historical account of the development of pedagogic grammars.)

The Council of Europe 1971 - 1981 Modern Languages Project, with its commitment to making the needs of the L2 learner its main starting point, was responsible for stimulating the application of certain new principles in syllabus design. The meanings which the learner needed to express, and the things he/she wished to accomplish through language, were to be taken as primary, and the choice of

actual language items to be taught (or language 'exponents') would be such as to provide the linguistic means to realise these semantic and functional goals, regardless of traditional notions of 'coverage' of structural patterns or of grammatical complexity. Thus for example, if the asking of polite questions in a particular target language required the use of modal verbs and/or selected conditional tense forms, these appropriate forms should be taught if it was felt that learners wanted or needed to be able to ask such questions, regardless of whether they had studied less 'complex' tenses in full. Also, only so much of the conditional tense paradigm as was felt essential for the purpose specified was taught.

This alternative model of syllabus design was developed within the Council of Europe Project framework by Wilkins and van Ek. In his most influential publication (1976), Wilkins argued for a so-called 'notional' syllabus, encompassing three different categories of language: the conceptual, modal, and functional. These three categories express three different types of meaning. The conceptual category expresses semantico-grammatical (that is, ideational or propositional) meaning; the modal category expresses the attitude of the speaker to the interaction in which he/she is engaged; and the functional category expresses communicative purpose, i.e. what the speaker is doing with his/her utterance. This last category of 'communicative function' has clear parallels with the 'speech act' theory developed by philosophers of language

a little earlier (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969). With this additional theoretical support, the idea that in producing an utterance a speaker was not merely expressing a proposition but was also doing something greatly influenced FL syllabus writers, and the terms 'functional/notional' or even simply 'functional' have become current to describe syllabuses in which any functional dimension is present. Van Ek's "Threshold Level" syllabus for English (1975) downgrades the term 'notional' to cover just one of his several categories, that equivalent to Wilkins' category of conceptual meaning. (The remaining categories in "Threshold Level" are those of situation, language activities, and language functions, as well as lists of linguistic items which are the suggested exponents for the functional and notional categories).

The authors of functional syllabuses have not been without their critics. It is claimed that the application of their work in the production of actual teaching materials tends to produce phrasebook lists for rote learning, and is unhelpful to the pupil's development of a generative FL system. Critics argue that the relationship between language structure and language function is complex, with no simple one-to-one equivalences between form and function. (Thus for example, commands may be realised in other ways than through use of imperative forms, and imperative forms may have other functions besides the expression of commands.) This point is clearly argued, for example, by Allen (1977), quoted in Yalden (1983).

However, the theorists of notional/ functional syllabuses have been unable to offer incisive guidance as to the exact relationship to be adopted between structural and functional organising principles in designing practical language teaching materials. The necessary central role of grammar as an organiser in the FL syllabus is reasserted, among others, by Canale and Swain (1980) and Brumfit (1981). Other commentators on the functional /notional approach to syllabus design, notably Candlin (1976), Brumfit (1980a), and Widdowson (1979), have criticised it for presenting language as an inventory of isolated units, albeit units of a different character from those found in traditional structural syllabuses. As Widdowson puts it:

"What such a syllabus does not do - or has not done to date (an important proviso) - is to represent language as discourse, and since it does not it cannot possibly in its present form account for communicative competence - because communicative competence is not a compilation of items in memory, but a set of strategies of creative procedures for realizing the value of linguistic elements in contexts of use, an ability to make sense as a participant in discourse, whether spoken or written, by the skilful deployment of shared knowledge of code resources and rules of language use. The notional syllabus leaves the learner to develop these creative strategies on his own; it deals with the components of discourse, not with discourse itself." (Widdowson, 1979, p 248)

Brumfit (1980b) makes a similar argument:

"There is no question that behavioural specifications have a value in testing - that is, they indicate a relationship between the syllabus and the real world, they tell us when we can stop teaching - but it is by no means clear that they have any direct relation to our teaching procedures... The major reason is that a system for the production of utterances cannot be identified with the output of the system. What we are teaching is a

generative system which all human beings have a capacity to acquire. We are not teaching a limited set of behaviours, but a capacity to produce those behaviours - a capacity which cannot help enabling its user to do many other behaviours than those specified by any limited set." (Brumfit, 1980b, p 7)

Ultimately the prime significance of the functional/notional syllabus movement may be seen as having drawn the attention of the FL teaching profession to yet another level on which language operates and of which they need to take account, rather than as establishing completely new principles of syllabus design. It is certainly true that while considerable interest has been shown in functional/notional syllabus models by those concerned with foreign language teaching in British schools, there is little evidence so far of any wholehearted adoption of these principles. The Council of Europe's own French functional/notional syllabus for schools ("Adaptation de 'Un niveau-seuil' pour des contextes scolaires": Porcher et al, 1980) has had almost no detectable impact on French syllabuses and courses in Britain. Many defined syllabuses produced within the GOML movement turn out upon inspection to be essentially 'situational' in character (i.e., they group together words and phrases thought useful for specific speech situations, such as ordering a restaurant meal, but do not pay systematic attention to the generalisability of functions and notions - or their exponents - across a range of situations). This is true for the first version of the Oxfordshire Modern Languages Achievement Certificate (OMLAC) syllabus, for example, which

was one of the earliest syllabuses to be published within the GOML movement (Oxfordshire MLs Advisory Committee, 1978), and had a marked influence on the development of several others. In spite of some use of functional/notional terminology, the language material within the syllabus for OMLAC levels 1 and 2 is situationally organised. The Graded Levels of Achievement in Foreign Language Learning (GLAFLL) project in Lothian Region produced several FL syllabuses for use in schools which reflect fairly closely the Council of Europe's "Threshold Level" model, but these remain exceptional in a British school context (Clark, 1980; Clark and Hamilton, 1984). Fairly typical of the degree to which functional/notional principles have influenced recent published materials for FL teaching in British schools is the "Tour de France" French course produced by a working party of the Scottish Central Committee on Modern Languages (SCCML 1982a, 1982b, 1983, and 1984). An evaluation study of the piloting of the first part of the course concluded that the predominant organising principles of the pilot syllabus were those of lexis and structure, although functional-communicative ideas had influenced the manner of presentation (Parkinson et al, 1982).

1.3.1.4 'Communicative competence' and FL teaching methodology

As the foregoing paragraphs show, theories of communicative competence, and the concern arising from these with the functional aspects of language behaviour, have had

considerable impact on the specification of general FL learning objectives and on the detail of syllabus design. They have also considerably influenced thinking about classroom methods, from an applied linguistic perspective (see e.g. Breen and Candlin, 1980; Brumfit, 1980b and 1984; various papers in Sections 3 and 4 of Brumfit and Johnson, eds, 1979; various papers in Johnson and Morrow, 1981; and Widdowson, 1978).

The central claim of applied linguistics to take a hand in the affairs of L2 teaching is expressed by Widdowson:

"Language teaching is a theoretical as well as a practical activity, (and) effective teaching materials and classroom procedures depend on principles deriving from an understanding of what language is and how it is used".
(Widdowson, 1978, p 75)

Thus if sociolinguists such as Hymes have expanded the "understanding of what language is" to encompass communicative as well as narrowly linguistic abilities, and if philosophers such as Austin and Searle have expanded the understanding of how language is used to encompass the performance of speech acts as well as the expression of propositional meaning, it follows from Widdowson's claim that these new understandings should be reflected in some way in classroom procedures as well as in syllabus and materials.

Recognition of the limitations of notional syllabuses, considered as the means of meeting the communicative needs of the FL learner (as expressed in Widdowson's previously-quoted (1979) comment), also spurred an interest in classroom

methodology. This is clearly expressed by Morrow:

"The mere adoption of a notional (or, more specifically, functional) syllabus does not guarantee that we are going to teach our students to communicate. Functions are expressed through elements of the language system; in other words a functional course is ultimately concerned with language forms - just as a grammatically-based course is. The difference may lie simply in the way the forms are organised. But communication involves much more than simply a knowledge of forms; it depends crucially on the ability to use forms in appropriate ways...". (Morrow, 1981, p 60)

For Morrow, as for many other applied linguists, the way to develop this desired ability is unproblematic.

Communication skills are to be developed directly, through "practising communication" in the classroom:

"...Thus a crucial feature of a communicative method will be that it operates with stretches of language above the sentence level, and operates with real language in real situations... A method which aims to develop the ability of students to communicate in a foreign language will aim to replicate as far as possible the processes of communication". (Morrow, 1981, pp 61 - 62)

This essentially behavioural claim is generally made by applied linguists in a common-sense way, without for example any significant appeal to psychological theories of language learning, as Lightbown (1985) has pointed out. A subsidiary motivational claim is advanced in a similar manner: it is argued (e.g. by van Ek, 1976) that communicative practice in the classroom, accompanying the use of functional syllabuses, will be more motivating for the learner, who will see what he/she learns at once put to use in social interaction. The claim is that this will be more encouraging for the learner

than a traditional course in which a long apprenticeship is required before those elements of the language which enable him/her to participate in real life communicative interaction have been mastered.

1.3.2 Psycholinguistic rationales for maximising TL use in the classroom

Another, perhaps more cogent, set of reasons for concern with classroom process, and in particular for maximising the use of the target language in the classroom for communicative purposes, has a psycholinguistic basis.

1.3.2.1 Research on L1 and L2 acquisition

It is a matter of commonsense observation that virtually all children acquire their first language rapidly and virtually completely during the first few years of life, without any formal instruction at all, through a process of interaction with other speakers, and in particular with adult caretakers. It is also a matter of commonsense observation that many people, both children and adults, acquire further languages successfully through similar experiences of informal contact, often entirely unsupported by classroom learning. On the other hand, many students receiving formal instruction in a second language fail to develop any significant competence in

the language. On the basis of such observations, it has been advocated from time to time that classroom procedures should be based more closely on naturalistic language learning environments (this case is elegantly argued, for example, by Macnamara, 1975).

It is not the case, however, that the processes by which the first language is acquired are fully understood. These processes have been the object of extensive research since the 1960s, and a variety of different approaches have been followed. Under the influence of Chomsky's mentalist model of the Language Acquisition Device (which claims the brain has an innate language faculty, triggered by exposure to language: e.g. Chomsky, 1965), the main initial thrust of research was to study the development of syntax in young children's speech (as in e.g. Brown, Cazden and Bellugi, 1969, and Brown, 1973).

However, increasing dissatisfaction with Chomsky's view of language as nothing more than a syntactically organised formal system led to a renewed interest in the role of environmental factors (linguistic and non-linguistic) in child language development. Emphasis later shifted to the study of children's semantic intentions (e.g. Bloom 1970), elucidated by studying the linguistic and non-linguistic context of utterances, as well as the child's speech itself. This willingness to take contextual factors into account has led to more extended study of pragmatic meanings in children's utterances. In a diary study of his own child's first language development, Halliday was one of the first researchers to adopt a functional

approach, concluding that the child's earliest proto-language utterances have primary interpersonal functions, to do with the initiation and maintenance of interaction: propositionally oriented utterances emerge at a later stage (Halliday, 1975). This shift of interest to the growth of childrens' discourse competence led to a concomitant increased interest being shown in linguistic and discorsal features of the language addressed to young children by their caretakers (see for example the papers in Snow and Ferguson, eds, 1977). A recent review of research into first language acquisition stresses the centrality of interpersonal communication in promoting language development:

"From frequently repeated experiences of combining linguistic and nonlinguistic strategies in communicating about objects and events that come within the field of intersubjective attention, the child gradually masters the linguistic system and its relation to the interpersonal and ideational meanings it serves to encode". (Wells, 1981, p 108)

The research of Wells and others into first language development, within the framework of the large-scale, longitudinal Bristol Language Development Study (Wells, 1981; Wells, 1985), has included a limited exploration of the relationships between children's language development and the quality of the linguistic interaction in which they engage. The claim is made that certain linguistic and functional characteristics of caretaker talk (detailed in Wells, 1985, chapter 9) correlate positively with the overall rate of first language development. It is unclear how strong a claim Wells is making for the existence of a causal relationship between

features of adult input and progress in language learning;
while he claims that

"the evidence supports a belief in the potentially
facilitating effect of the adult input",

he recognises that

"this facilitating input itself is the product of
interaction to which both child and adult contribute to
varying degrees" (Wells 1985, p 394).

Wells' ultimate concern is to stress the interactive character
of L1 acquisition:

"If we now return to the question of the relative
contribution of child and adult to the process of language
learning, it is clear that the answer must be stated in
terms of an interaction. Interaction, first, between the
child's predisposition to learn to communicate and the
model of language provided by those who communicate with
him. Interaction, also, in the form of the specific
conversations that provide the evidence from which the
child learns and feedback on how his own communications
are interpreted by others". (Wells, 1985, p 415)

His conclusions regarding effective caretaker behaviour also
reflect this concern with interaction:

"Those whose children were most successful were not
concerned to give systematic linguistic instruction but
rather to ensure that conversations with their children
were mutually rewarding. They assumed that, when their
child spoke, he or she had something to communicate, so
they tried to work out what it was and, whenever possible,
to provide a response that was meaningful and relevant to
the child and that invited a further contribution. By
employing strategies that enabled their children to
participate more fully and successfully in conversation,
these parents sustained their children's motivation to
communicate and this, in turn, increased their
opportunities to discover the means for realizing their
communicative intentions more effectively". (Wells, 1985,
pp 415 - 416)

Current understandings of the process of first language acquisition, and of the part played in it by interaction with fluent speakers (in the shape of adult caretakers), are relevant to promoting the optimal conditions for second language learning only insofar as the two processes can be shown to resemble one another. The commonsense presumption of resemblance suggested by Macnamara (1975) is of course appealing. However, second language teaching has traditionally proceeded, with few exceptions, as if second language learning had little in common with first language acquisition, but was instead a more or less conscious process, involving the systematic analysis, study and rehearsal of the target language system (whether specified in structural or functional terms). What research evidence is there, to clarify this question?

Research into second language learning is currently in a state of some confusion. Lightbown (1984) lists the diverse perspectives from which it has been undertaken: linguistic, social psychological, sociolinguistic, neurological, and psychological. The dominant trend in the study of learners' second language development has however been linguistic, and has tended to follow a similar course to that of first language development, but with something of a time lag. In the 1970s, there was considerable interest in the course of learners' syntactic development, with a number of studies concentrating on the order of acquisition by second language

learners of selected morphemes of a particular target language, usually English (e.g. Bailey, Madden and Krashen, 1974; Dulay and Burt, 1974). The methods and findings of these studies have aroused considerable controversy (for a summary see Lightbown, 1984), but they do appear to show significant regularities in the order of acquisition of particular language items, among learners of differing ages, first language and instructional backgrounds, leading some researchers to posit the existence of universal principles of L2 syntactic development. Later researches have additionally studied pragmatic, discorsal and interactive characteristics of L2 learner language, or 'interlanguage', as it has come to be called. (The term was first coined by Selinker, 1972. For a recent overview of interlanguage studies, see Davies et al., eds, 1984.)

1.3.2.2 Krashen's 'Monitor' theory: an integrated theory of L2 acquisition?

The principal attempt to integrate the different research perspectives listed by Lightbown into a single, comprehensive theory of second language acquisition is the so-called 'Monitor Theory' advanced by Stephen Krashen (and summarised in Krashen, 1981 and 1982). This theory consists in five main interlinked hypotheses:

1. The Acquisition/learning Distinction

This hypothesis states that adults have "two distinct and independent ways of developing competence in a second language" (Krashen, 1982, p 10): language acquisition, and language learning. Krashen uses the term 'acquisition' to

refer to a subconscious process of "picking up" a language, and the term 'learning' to refer to "conscious knowledge of a second language, knowing the rules, being aware of them, and being able to talk about them" (Krashen, 1982, p 10). What is new in Krashen's first hypothesis is the claim that the two processes are autonomous: that a consciously learned language rule remains just that, and does not subsequently blend with 'acquired' competence.

2. The Natural Order Hypothesis

The second of Krashen's hypotheses is based on the morpheme acquisition studies mentioned earlier. It consists in the claim that the acquisition of grammatical structures in a given second language proceeds in a predictable order, whatever the first language of the acquirer. "This uniformity is thought to reflect the operation of the natural language acquisition process that is part of all of us" (Krashen, 1982, p 15).

3. The Monitor Hypothesis

The third hypothesis makes claims about the ways in which 'acquired' and 'learned' L2 competence are used in actual L2 performance. The claim is that acquired, unconscious competence generates most L2 performance, and that learned competence can be used only with an editing (or "Monitoring") function, to autocorrect utterances generated through the acquired system. Monitoring is possible only under certain conditions: a) when enough time is available, b) when the performer is thinking about correctness, and c) when the performer knows the relevant grammatical rule. Thus Krashen suggests, there are very few settings where "Monitoring" will actually take place - he suggests the taking of an L2 grammar test as one!

4. The Input Hypothesis

Krashen's fourth hypothesis attempts to answer the question of how a second language is 'acquired' (rather than 'learned'):

"More generally, how do we move from stage i , where i represents current competence, to $i + 1$, the next level? The input hypothesis makes the following claim: a necessary (but not sufficient) condition to move from stage i to stage $i + 1$ is that the acquirer understand input that contains $i + 1$, where 'understand' means that the acquirer is focussed on the meaning and not the form of the message". (Krashen, 1982, pp 20 - 21)

In his most formal statement of the hypothesis, Krashen strengthens this claim to the unqualified one that "we acquire by understanding language that contains structure a bit beyond our current level of competence" (Krashen, 1982, p 21).

Further aspects of the hypothesis include the claim that input must contain $i + 1$ to be useful for language acquisition, but need not contain only $i + 1$; indeed, the inclusion of $i + 1$ need not be consciously planned for, but will automatically be provided where communication is successful. Lastly, the input hypothesis claims that speaking fluency cannot be taught, but will ultimately emerge after longer or shorter periods of exposure to comprehensible input.

5. The Affective Filter Hypothesis

The last part of Krashen's theory tries to explain how it is that L2 learners exposed to similar input do not all progress in the same way. The argument is that

"Those whose attitudes are not optimal for L2 acquisition will not only tend to seek less input, they will also have a high or strong Affective Filter - even if they understand the message, the input will not reach that part of the brain responsible for language acquisition, or the language acquisition device. Those with attitudes more conducive to second language acquisition will not only seek and obtain more input, they will also have a lower or weaker filter. They will be more open to the input, and it will strike 'deeper'". (Krashen, 1982, p 31)

1.3.2.3 Criticisms of monitor theory

The scope and ambition of Krashen's claims to explain second language acquisition have by now attracted many critics (e.g. McLaughlin, 1978a; James, 1980; Sharwood Smith, 1981; Bibeau, 1983; Brumfit, 1983a; and Gregg, 1984). The criticisms most relevant to our present concerns have to do with a) the 'acquisition' / 'learning' distinction; and b) the 'input' hypothesis.

1.3.2.3.1 'Acquisition' versus 'learning'

No one (pace Krashen, 1982, p 10) has ever seriously claimed that there are learners who develop L2 competence entirely

through a conscious process of 'learning', in Krashen's sense.

Nor is it controversial that much of any speaker's attained language competence, whether in L1 or L2, is unconscious.

What is interesting in Krashen's 'acquisition' / 'learning' distinction is the claim that 'learned' L2 knowledge cannot pass into unconscious competence: cannot merge, in other words, with the competence developed through the unconscious acquisition process, but is available only as a 'monitor', to edit utterances first produced more or less automatically.

Unfortunately this idea is difficult to sustain, as several critics have shown (e.g. Brumfit, 1983a). The claim that consciously learned material is available only as a conscious monitor is unfalsifiable in principle (as McLaughlin, 1978a, shows), and runs counter to the experience of many learners.

For example, Gregg (1984) reports himself to be a skilled and automatic user of L2 knowledge originally learned through conscious study of the rules; other successful L2 learners are reported to make systematic use of conscious learning strategies, and to believe them ultimately to contribute to fluency (e.g. Naiman et al, 1978; and personal reports by Rivers, 1979 and Savignon, 1981). The significance of this argument for L2 teaching of course concerns the place to be given in classroom instruction to conscious learning activities in which attention is focused on language forms. Were Krashen correct, it would clearly make sense to reduce such activities to a very marginal status. (Only insofar as it was felt learners needed a capacity to monitor their own

production, e.g. in writing L2 prose at leisure, could conscious learning activities be justified.) It is however striking that while Krashen's critics refuse to accept such a marginalisation of conscious learning, claiming it can contribute to subconscious competence and thus to L2 fluency, they do not quarrel with the notion that learners are likely also to benefit significantly from extensive involvement in message-oriented target language use. For example, Brumfit argues an extended case for building both 'accuracy' (form-oriented) and 'fluency' (message-oriented) work into classroom instruction (Brumfit, 1984). However, what the optimal balance may be between these different types of teaching/learning strategy remains unclear (though with some suggestion that different types of learner may benefit from different combinations of learning strategies: Naiman et al, 1978).

1.3.2.3.2 Problems of the 'input' hypothesis

In support of the 'input' hypothesis, Krashen invokes research evidence regarding the nature of caretaker speech with first language acquirers (see preceding section), and also that regarding the nature of 'foreigner talk' (fluent speakers' talk as modified in interaction with L2 learners under natural conditions: see Chapter 3). As we have seen when discussing current understandings of first language acquisition, the fact

that caretaker speech is usually modified in particular ways during interaction with L1 learners does not constitute direct evidence that such modifications are essential for acquisition, or even that they promote it; and Krashen himself does appear to recognise this ("There is no direct evidence showing that caretaker speech is indeed more effective than unmodified input": 1982, p 23). It is therefore surprising to find him listing descriptive accounts of caretaker speech and of foreigner talk as "evidence supporting the (input) hypothesis" (op cit, p 22). As Gregg rather caustically comments:

"The only evidence that Caretaker Speech provides for the Input Hypothesis is evidence that children receive input, scarcely earth-shaking news". (Gregg, 1984, p 90)

Even accepting that Krashen's input hypothesis remains just that, a hypothesis rather than a proven state of affairs, further criticisms can be made of it. The most significant consists in the view that Krashen lays a one-sided emphasis on the role of caretaker/ foreigner talk as 'input' to a vaguely-defined mentalist Language Acquisition Device, and takes too passive a view of the learner as a mere receiver of this input (thus Krashen sees the learner as benefiting from listening but not from speaking, at least in the early stages).

Firstly, there is the commonly made observation that the most successful L2 learners are those who seek out opportunities not only to hear the target language, but to

interact in it: Rivers, for example, describes herself as finding it a productive strategy to go round talking to anyone who would listen! (Rivers, 1979). Several researchers into first and second language acquisition have also stressed the importance of interaction, in which the learner and the caretaker or fluent speaker cooperate to produce conversations. For example, the whole thrust of Wells' first language acquisition research leads to

"a view of the development of communication as fundamentally interactional. At each stage, the child endeavours to communicate using the resources currently available to him. The adult with whom he is interacting interprets his behaviour in terms of her own cultural and linguistic framework and responds in a way that both reflects to the child the perceived significance of his behaviour and in the form and content of that response provides information about the communication system and its relation to the world that enables the child to supplement and modify his communicative resources". (Wells, 1985, p 397)

A similar view has been adopted by a group of researchers into L2 learning (e.g. Allwright, 1984a, 1984b; Ellis, 1984a; and Long, 1981, 1983a). Ellis in particular criticises Krashen's view that production ability 'emerges' from attending to input, and is not a factor in second language development:

"First, the learner's own contribution to a conversation provides the native speaker with information about how effectively he is making himself understood. The native-speaker needs feedback on how successful his speech adaptations have been. Secondly, the learner's output also serves as input to his language processing mechanisms. This may be a particularly valuable type of input if it enables the learner to work on it in some way by attending to the kind of response it elicits from the native-speaker". (Ellis, 1984a, p 94)

Supporting Ellis's first argument, Long (1983a) reports an

investigation into a series of conversational strategies used by native speakers in talking to non-native speakers, in order to make their own speech maximally comprehensible and to sustain conversation. While the focus of Long's study concerns the interactional strategies of the fluent speaker, it is clear that these strategies operate responsively, taking continuous account of the contributions of the non-native speaker to the conversation, and that comprehensibility is therefore a cooperative construct and not something that the fluent speaker achieves alone.

Allwright argues a similar case for classroom contexts: that it is through involvement in classroom interaction that the learner regulates the target language input available to him or her as data from which learning is possible (1984a). He also outlines research plans to investigate the avowedly speculative, stronger hypothesis that

"perhaps the process of classroom interaction is the learning process (or acquisition process, if that term is preferred)... This strong form of the interaction hypothesis suggests that it may be the interactive process of making input comprehensible that benefits the learner. This entails that learners will learn best that which was not comprehensible until they had done some interactive work to make it so. It is a highly active view of the learners' role, and one that puts the emphasis less on interaction in general than on those specific episodes of interaction that focus on the negotiation of meaning."
(Allwright, 1984b, pp 9 - 10)

Krashen's arguments concerning the importance of 'comprehensible input' are thus seen as too limited by his critics, rather than rejected. The hypothesis is particularly important for this investigation, which argues that the extent

and quality of the L2 input received by the learner must somehow be critical for learning, although it is accepted that the precise mechanisms by which learning is thereby promoted are at present not understood. This study aims therefore to clarify in a limited area our understanding of how these mechanisms work, by adding to the small number of existing descriptions of the input available to classroom learners through their teachers' target language talk.

1.3.2.3.3 The 'natural order' hypothesis and its implications

The status of the 'natural order' hypothesis, dependent as it is on the admittedly limited basis of the L2 morpheme acquisition studies, cannot be regarded as secure. Morphemes such as Past tense, Progressive -ing etc. have been selected for study because they are easy to study, rather than because representative of any developmental theory; and as Gregg says,

"In the absence of a rich enough linguistic theory, there is no a priori reason to assume that, say, progressive -ing and third person -s are comparable...; that is, there is no reason to assume that there is significance to the acquisition of the one before the other" (Gregg, 1984, p 85).

However, in spite of arguing on the basis of these studies for the existence of a natural order of acquisition for the elements of a second language, Krashen does not now go on to argue what might have seemed a common sense practical outcome: that language learning syllabuses should be modelled on this natural order, once known, sequencing language material according to the sequences of acquisition observed in learners

under informal conditions (an idea speculatively advanced by some others, e.g. Corder, 1967, and advanced at one time by Krashen himself: Krashen 1982, p 70). Krashen's current position is that the provision of any structured grammatical syllabus in the language class (whether modelled on natural acquisition orders or not), and the organisation of teaching/learning activities to rehearse it, is unlikely to promote acquisition, and may inhibit it. He argues firstly that grammatical syllabuses are unnecessary in principle, because message-oriented communication between a fluent speaker and the learner will inevitably include the $i + 1$ relevant to the constantly changing needs of the individual learner. (He comments also that in classrooms, the precise nature of $i + 1$ must usually differ between class members, and consequently that any attempt to work to a precisely focused grammatical syllabus, even one based on natural order studies, will fail to provide the exact input needs of most of them at any given moment.) Secondly, Krashen argues that too precisely specified a syllabus will result in the neglect of the need to review and consolidate previously acquired competence, through the recycling of familiar material (which he argues will naturally occur in message-oriented comprehensible input). Thirdly he argues that the existence of a syllabus will be constraining on communication and the provision of comprehensible input (because teachers will feel obliged to model structures rather than talk about what interests them and their pupils), with negative consequences

for learners' motivation to attend.

These arguments have found practical expression in some current teaching approaches, such as Terrell's "Natural Approach" (Krashen and Terrell, 1983) and that adopted in the Bangalore Project in South India (see Brumfit 1984, pp 101 - 109). The argument that a language syllabus (whether specified in grammatical or functional terms) might be redundant in the L2 classroom is not one which British FL teachers appear ready to accept; they are virtually unanimous in supporting the view that 'skill-getting' must precede 'skill-using' (see for example Mitchell, 1985a, Chapter 3). However, in Krashen's support, brief reference may be made to research studies which have attempted to detect in classroom learners' interlanguage the impact of structured syllabuses and of the learner's participation in intensive rehearsal activities which teachers typically organise around them. (Krashen himself merely cites research aiming to show the existence of a 'natural acquisition order' among all L2 learners, without distinguishing between those who had received instruction and those who had not.)

Lightbown studied the development of English as a second language among French L1 adolescents in Quebec, whose main contact with English was in a classroom setting. She documented the classroom linguistic setting within which their learning was taking place, and investigated the relationship between the instructional sequence (the official language syllabus and its implementation in rehearsal activities) and

the learners' developmental sequence (Lightbown, 1983a, 1983b). For the most obvious possibility, that frequency of occurrence of particular forms of the target language in classroom teacher talk would correlate positively with frequency and accuracy in learner language, Lightbown could find no direct support (1983a). More generally, she concludes that

"...Acquisition is not simply linear or cumulative, and having practised a particular form or pattern does not mean that the form or pattern is permanently established. Learners appear to forget forms and structures which they had seemed previously to master and which they had extensively practised... In the case of my own research, with learners who had little or no contact with English outside the ESL class, the explanation lay in part in the instructional practices. Learners were for months at a time presented with one or a small number of forms to learn and practise, and they learned them in absence of related contrasting forms. When they did encounter new forms, it was not a matter of simply adding them on. Instead, the new forms seemed to cause a restructuring of the whole system." (Lightbown, 1985, p 177)

In a study of school age ESL learners in London, Ellis concluded that classroom instruction may be effective in promoting holophrastic learning (Ellis 1983, quoted in Ellis 1984b). However, in a study of ESL learners' development of mastery of WH question forms (Ellis, 1984b), instruction did not appear to alter the 'natural order' of development, and seemed to speed up the rate of development for some learners only. Frequency of production of the target forms by individual learners during classroom drills actually correlated negatively with their mastery as shown in later tests. Allwright concludes from a discussion of these and

other studies, that

"we are in the strange position of having to account for ... the apparent powerlessness of classroom discourse to subvert the natural course of morpheme development" (Allwright, 1984c, p 214).

However, the narrow focus of all the formal studies makes it very difficult to generalise from them.

1.3.2.4 Psycholinguistics: conclusion

As the foregoing discussion has made clear, we are very far from having any convincing, comprehensive theory to account for the processes of second language learning, whether in naturalistic or instructional settings. The most ambitious attempt to propose a comprehensive theory, Krashen's Monitor theory, cannot be accepted as it stands, though it draws together many disparate phenomena in thoughtprovoking ways and proposes many interesting hypotheses for investigation in further research. The best conclusion that can be drawn from recent research investigations into second language learning is that no major challenge has developed to the view expressed by McLaughlin in a major review of the field in the late 70s:

"The evidence to date favours the hypothesis that there is a unity of process that characterizes all language acquisition, whether first or second language, and that this unity of process reflects the use of similar strategies of language acquisition" (McLaughlin 1978b, p 206).

This of course begs the question as to the nature of these actual strategies, which have not been fully clarified in either an L1 or an L2 context. However, it provides a research-based justification for the common-sense position with which we began: that it would be sensible to model at least some second language teaching and learning experiences, in the classroom as elsewhere, on experiences which appear to promote first language acquisition. The key experiences, in second as well as in first language development, seem likely to turn out to be active involvement in message-oriented language use, and principally in conversational interaction with a fluent speaker skilled in maximising comprehensibility and sustaining conversational flow. It is this expectation which leads to the concern of this thesis with FL classroom interaction, and in particular with teacher talk and teacher communication skills.

This leaves unsolved, however, the question of the special role of conscious learning and the analytic study and rehearsal of the target language system, in the development of foreign language competence. It must be seen as one of the disappointments of research to date, that so little headway has been made in teasing out their contribution. At present we have on the one hand the arguments of psycholinguists such as Krashen, that form-oriented instruction contributes only very marginally to monitoring ability, and may in other respects hinder L2 development; and on the other hand the well documented belief of generations of teachers, and of many

successful L2 learners, that analytic syllabuses, conscious study of grammar rules, drills, exercises and all the rest, do accelerate the learning process for at least some types of learner. These views appear in unresolved contradiction. (The recent but already much quoted attempt by Long to answer the question, "Does second language instruction make a difference?", by means of a research review (1983b), which might have been expected to elucidate this question, is unfortunately weakened by Long's failure to clarify what he means by "instruction". His conclusion is a qualified 'yes': but unless we know that "instruction" did in fact mean rule-giving etc. (and not for example, a Krashenite or Bangalore-type naturalistic exposure in a classroom setting), this conclusion does little to clarify the 'acquisition'/'learning' debate.)

1.4 Conclusion

This chapter has examined arguments from sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic perspectives, favouring the general notion that classroom L2 learners will benefit from involvement in message-oriented target language use, both as hearers and as collaborators in the negotiation/ construction of coherent conversation. While it must be concluded that the effectiveness of such experience in promoting L2 development is as yet unproven, the arguments are generally sufficiently

interesting to warrant further explorations of classroom discourse, and the prospects for promoting experience of this sort in this formal setting. Indeed the rationale for the present study largely depends on the theoretical sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic 'case' which has just been reviewed. The following key working assumptions, derived from these theories, underlie the present study:

- that extensive involvement in message-oriented L2 use is beneficial to classroom learners;

- that teacher talk is potentially the main source of communicative FL experience for the British classroom learner, and that teachers should consequently try to maximise their own use of FL, extending it to cover as many areas of classroom talk as possible;

- that both 'comprehensibility' and motivation to attend are critical for learners to benefit from exposure to extensive target language use. Consequently those linguistic and interactional adjustments on the part of the fluent speaker (the teacher, in the classroom case) which maximise both comprehension and involvement are critical dimensions of the fluent speaker's FL talk;

- that active participation in task-oriented, instrumental interaction is the most effective route to L2 development (rather than, say, consistently attending to 'input' without any immediate instrumental focus);

- but that no classroom FL talk of any kind can be ruled out as a possible source for 'intake' and associated development of L2 competence.

These assumptions underlie the specific questions asked in the empirical study described in later chapters, concerning the extent and purposes of teachers' FL classroom talk, the modifications they make to render it more 'comprehensible' to their pupils, and the meaning-negotiation strategies they employ. But first, in Chapter 2, the nature of the classroom as a learning environment will be considered, together with

what is known about the particular characteristics of classroom talk in general, so as to identify background contextual factors both favourable and unfavourable to the promotion of message-oriented target language use in the FL classroom.

CHAPTER 2

COMMUNICATIVE FL-MEDIUM INTERACTION IN THE CLASSROOM:
POTENTIAL AND CONSTRAINTS

2.1 Introduction

As we have seen in Chapter 1, there is a growing consensus among L2 teaching methodologists, based on current sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic thinking, that involvement in message-orientated use of the target language is likely to make a significant contribution to the development of the learner's communicative competence in L2, and that it is therefore desirable that such involvement should form a significant part of his/her L2 classroom experience.

This chapter provides a preliminary discussion of the potential offered by the L2 classroom as a locus for message-orientated target language use. The extent to which it may be easier or more difficult to provide such experience in different cultural and linguistic settings is considered, and existing descriptions of the British L2 classroom are reviewed to establish the currency of message-orientated target language use in this particular cultural setting. A number of factors inherent in the classroom situation which are likely to promote or inhibit it are then identified. These

factors include some which are common to classrooms of all kinds, and others which are specific to the L2 classroom. In order to identify the more general factors, both the pattern of social relations and the distinctive discourse characteristics which the L2 classroom shares with other 'content' classrooms are analysed. In identifying factors specific to the L2 classroom, special attention is paid a) to the traditional content of L2 instruction (what gets talked about in L2 classrooms), and b) to the role of the teacher, and the likely influence of his/her ideology, knowledge and skills on the extent of message-orientated L2 use. As a contribution to this last point, an interview survey conducted with a sample of Scottish secondary foreign language teachers as a preliminary to the collection of the classroom data discussed in this thesis is briefly considered.

2.2 Defining 'Communicative' FL Use

First, however, it is necessary to define somewhat more closely what is meant by 'communicative' or 'message-oriented' target language use in the FL classroom.

In many respects the L2 classroom resembles other, 'content' classrooms - for instance, in the role relations which obtain between participants (teacher and pupils), and in some characteristics of classroom discourse. However, the L2 curriculum differs significantly from that of say, the history

or science classroom, in terms of the nature of what is to be taught. In other 'content' classrooms, such as those concerned with history or mathematics, a consensus normally obtains regarding some significant body of knowledge to be transmitted, cognitive concepts to be developed, and/or practical skills to be taught. In such classrooms, language performs a vital function, but it is as the means through which these informational, cognitive and practical ends are achieved.

In the L2 classroom, on the other hand, the ultimate aims are linguistic: the development of the learners' mastery of the system of L2. The 'content' of the L2 classroom (i.e. knowledge and skills to be developed) are the new language code itself, and facility in using it. One must talk about something; but decisions regarding what gets talked (read, written) about in the L2 classroom are inevitably governed by judgements about how best to bring about the effective development of language skills.

Traditionally in many language classrooms, the target language system has itself been a conscious object of study, and thus formed an important part of the overt 'content' of L2 lessons. Explicit rules for the generation of target language sentences were supplied, along with model sentences to illustrate these rules, and the rules were rehearsed through the generation of further sentences. Thus much of the target language material which formed part of the totality of classroom discourse in traditional L2 teaching had no function

other than to model or rehearse formal aspects of the target language code. (The significant exception in traditional L2 teaching was the study of literature, where after the initial stages, language became a means of conveying significant intellectual and aesthetic content, at least in parallel with continued explicit study of the target language system.)

After the Second World War, under the influence of behaviourist learning theories, the nature of L2 classroom discourse changed substantially in certain respects. In the 'audiolingual' methodology developed by Fries, Lado and others (e.g. Lado, 1964), the primacy of the oral skills (speaking and listening) was asserted, and the conscious study of grammar rules was downgraded. Oral interaction in the target language increased enormously in quantity, by comparison with the practices of the 'grammar-translation' era. However, these changes did not mean any significant shift of emphasis from form to meaning, in classroom target language use. The target language system was now presented inductively rather than deductively; model utterances were provided, and the learner was expected to master these through a process of 'mimicry-memorisation'. A creative mastery of the structures of the language was to be developed through 'pattern drilling' - a process in which the various permutations of the structures were systematically rehearsed.

Thus although the quantity of spoken FL greatly increased in the 'audiolingual' classroom, the modelling and rehearsal of forms remained the sole significant purpose of most target

language use. (Indeed, this tendency was strengthened by the marginalisation of the study of literature, considered to be a minority interest whose pursuit led to a one-sided emphasis on literacy skills. The effect of this marginalisation was to remove from the curriculum of the L2 classroom the one significant component in which content was traditionally emphasised over linguistic form.)

Historically, therefore, there has been a strong bias in target language use in the classroom towards the modelling and rehearsal of elements of the L2 code, with concomitant constant monitoring by the teacher of the students' target language output, for evidence of their formal mastery of the language system, and a corresponding limitation on use of the target language for the expression of content significant for participants. Under the influence of the 'communicative approach', teachers are now being encouraged to promote the latter in the classroom setting. By what criteria may we judge the degree of success they are having, and how are we to recognise the occurrence of 'communicative', message-oriented target language use in their classrooms?

It seems on the face of it unlikely that we can ever confidently argue that any FL interaction in the classroom is unambiguously message-oriented. It is known that even in non-classroom settings, the good L2 learner attends to formal aspects of the language to which he/she is exposed at least intermittently (e.g. identifying new words as such, attending to unfamiliar phonetic contrasts, or recognising new

variations in a partly familiar syntactic pattern), as well as monitoring formal aspects of his/her own speech (Naiman et al, 1978). It is highly likely that such a tendency to attend to form will be intensified in the classroom setting, even during less formal teaching/learning episodes; after all, the agreed purpose of all concerned in classroom work (at least at elementary level) is the development of language competence, and it seems implausible that interaction could take place to a significant extent as if this were not the case.

It is frequently possible to identify in L2 classroom talk explicit evidence of shifts in attention from content to form (as where a student checks with the teacher the correct form of a word or structure he/she is trying to use). Many more such incidents must however go completely unmarked. At any given moment in the course of an L2 lesson, it is probably unsafe to assume that no participant is attending to some formal aspect of ongoing talk.

This case is considerably strengthened in settings such as that with which we are dealing, the FL classroom in the British secondary school. Here, the teacher is normally not a native speaker of the target FL, but shares with his/her pupils the same first language - English. Even where this is not the case (because the teacher IS exceptionally a native speaker, and/or because the pupils come from linguistic minority groups), English will almost certainly be the participants' strongest shared language. In such a setting, were effective communication of significant content the sole

consideration, it would seem extraordinary to insist on using as the medium of communication a language which was not the teacher's strongest, and which was hardly known at all to the pupils. The target language is of course used, however 'realistically', only because of the ultimate linguistic objective which is the rationale for the group's existence.

For the purposes of the research reported in this thesis, therefore, it is assumed that all target language use in the setting of the L2 classroom has an inescapable modelling/rehearsal (or 'practice FL') function. Target language use will nonetheless be recognised as 'communicative' or message-oriented, provided some substantive purpose of concern to the participants can be identified by a third-party observer in addition to that of the rehearsal of forms. This purpose may be informational, expressive, instrumental etc.; and the same definition may be applied to any linguistic channel (speaking, listening, reading, writing). The definition is also neutral as to length; a single, one-word target language utterance may be recognised as 'communicative' in this sense, as may an entire teaching/ learning episode.

2.3 Accounts of Contemporary Practice

Observationally-based descriptions of teaching and learning in British L2 classrooms relevant to our current concern with the extent of message-oriented L2 use are few in number. The main evidence comes from a group of studies of foreign

language classrooms conducted by researchers in the Department of Education at the University of Stirling, including the present author (Mitchell et al., 1981; Parkinson et al., 1981 and 1982; Kilborn et al., 1984a and 1984b; Mitchell, 1985a; Mitchell and Johnstone, forthcoming). Other systematic observational studies have recently been conducted by Sanderson (1982) and Lees (1983a and 1983b). Some further evidence can be gleaned from two evaluation studies: the study by Burstall et al., evaluating primary French (1974) (which includes an observational component conducted by the inspectorate on behalf of the researchers), and that by the inspectorate themselves evaluating the OMLAC graded objectives scheme (DES, 1983). In addition, Partington (1981) conducted an indirect survey by questionnaire, asking FL teachers about their instructional practices.

The Stirling researchers have tried to identify the sequences of teaching/learning activities from which FL lessons are typically constructed, and to identify those FL-medium activities which have some substantive purpose (whether real or simulated) other than, or at least additional to, the practice of target language forms. (Examples are: playing a game - where the 'purpose' is at least partly to win; personal conversation - where for example, personal details or individual opinions are exchanged; or unscripted role play conversation - where participants enact non-classroom scenes such as shopping.)

The various Stirling studies which have investigated the

occurrence of message-oriented FL-medium teaching/ learning activities have revealed a fairly consistent pattern, in which such activities occupy only a minority place in the Scottish secondary school FL classroom. 'Practice FL' activities (those which have no substantive purpose other than the modelling/ rehearsal of target language forms) have been the commonest type, in virtually all the classrooms observed by the Stirling group since the late seventies. Some upward trend in the occurrence of message-oriented FL activities has been detectable, reflecting the impact in the classroom of the ideas of the 'communicative approach'. Thus while in the first major Stirling study, message-oriented FL activities were less than 2 per cent of all activities observed (Mitchell et al, 1981), the most recent comparable study found such activities had risen to 10 per cent (Kilborn et al, 1984a). However, this figure remains very low by comparison with the expectations of methodologists adhering to the 'communicative approach' (Brumfit advocates 50% at the end of year one, for example: Brumfit, 1984, p 119).

Secondly, the Stirling group has collected some evidence at a finer level of detail, concerning the extent to which the target FL is used in the classroom for purposes of management and organisation (setting up and monitoring teaching and learning activities, managing the physical environment, maintaining order etc). Evidence is also available on this issue from the other British studies.

There has been some controversy regarding the

'communicative' status of such classroom management talk: a group of French researchers (Dalgalian, 1981; Weiss, 1982 and 1984) have argued that this is the least 'communicative' component of classroom language, and that it is consequently of little theoretical interest. The Stirling researchers have taken the view expressed by another French researcher in opposition to Dalgalian etc:

"Pourquoi la 'langue usitée' d'un enseignant manquerait-elle particulièrement d'authenticité lors de l'organisation du travail? N'est-ce pas le moment où le professeur a le plus le souci d'être efficace communicativement, et où il se soucie le moins d'apporter des informations sur la langue?" (Bouchard, 1984, p 34)

For both teacher and pupils, the effective communication of messages about classroom management is critical if teaching/ learning is to take place in an orderly way; thus even when expressed through the target language, managerial utterances of all kinds retain a substantive communicative purpose. (In a study of primary school age ESL learners, Ellis also asserts that classroom management language provides significant 'communication opportunities' for the learner, and argues in particular that it provides him/her with exceptionally favourable opportunities to initiate L2 talk: Ellis, 1980.)

The two Stirling studies which have looked at this issue reveal wide variation in the extent of FL use for classroom management. In each case, the measure used consisted in observer ratings of complete lessons, for the overall extent

of FL use for management purposes. The first study to collect such data was the independent evaluation of the "Tour de France" French course (Parkinson et al., 1982). In this study, 38 per cent of observed lessons were judged to have 'moderate' or 'substantial' use of the target language for management purposes, while in 17 per cent of the lessons, all recorded management utterances were in English. In a later study, Kilborn et al. (1984a) found that just over a quarter of observed S3 French, German and Spanish lessons were conducted "almost totally" in the target language, while a similar proportion was managed entirely in English.

Some further data on this issue are available from other British studies. Sanderson (1982) observed a number of teachers judged 'good practitioners' by the school inspectorate. The teachers were rated on a number of dimensions including 'Uses FL for classroom instruction'; ratings given to individuals on this dimension ranged between 55 per cent and 15 per cent, with a mean of just over 30 per cent. The inspectorate report on OMLAC includes the following comment:

"The majority of teachers spoke English for the majority of the time, at most asking questions in French about a text or pictures. Use of the FL for routine classroom communication was rare. All too many pupils were therefore learning the false lesson that English is the only usable language if one has anything significant to say". (DES, 1983, p 12)

However, in a minority of lessons the inspectors observed "use of the FL for most if not all of the lesson".

On the basis of his questionnaire survey, Partington

(1981) similarly identifies a range of "teaching styles", one in which "the major language of communication in the classroom, both in speech and in writing, is likely to be English" (p 76), and two other styles in which teachers work "largely through the medium of the FL" (p 77).

Taken together, these research studies reveal considerable variation in the extent of FL use for classroom management. It is a central part of the study reported in this thesis to explore and attempt to account for such variation.

2.4 The Classroom Context: A Social Psychological Perspective

Classrooms and classroom interaction have been studied from many different perspectives. To gain some insights into the principal structural characteristics of the classroom, seen as the context within which the L2 teacher operates and (perhaps) attempts to bring about maximal message-oriented target language use, two distinct research perspectives will briefly be considered. In this section, a social psychological perspective on interpersonal relations in the classroom will be presented, and its implications for the scope for communicative FL use in the classroom discussed. In the following section, a similar discussion will consider what can be learned from sociolinguistic research into general patterns of classroom discourse, regardless of subject area.

In his influential 1972 book "Interpersonal Relations and Education", the social psychologist David Hargreaves adopts a symbolic interactionist perspective on classroom life. His account of teacher-pupil relations is particularly relevant for this study because of its interactional focus. Hargreaves starts from the recognition of a basic asymmetry in these relations: pupils are present in the classroom not by free choice, but because society compels them to be there (Hargreaves, 1972, pp 113 - 114). Ultimately, therefore, they interact with the teacher because they are required to, and not because they want to. There is an exceptionally great power differential between the teacher and his/her pupils. Hargreaves illustrates the asymmetrical rights possessed by the teacher using the example of privacy:

"A child in school can have no legitimate privacy and no legitimate secrets. 'Show me what you have in your desk' or 'Empty out your pockets onto the table' are permissible requests from teachers - even though they may be resented by the pupils. On the other hand, the child must learn to respect the teacher's privacy, for the teacher cannot be intruded on at the child's whim...". (Hargreaves, 1972, p 115)

It is thus the teacher who determines his/her own definition of the classroom situation, and has the power to enforce this on the pupils. (For example, it is only the teacher's jokes that are funny: p 119.)

How then do teachers typically define the classroom situation? Hargreaves identifies two principal roles for the teacher: 'instructor', and 'disciplinarian' (p 117). As instructor, the teacher "must get the pupils to learn AND show

evidence of their learning" (p 118). In pursuance of these goals, teachers try to ensure that classroom interaction is highly task-related; notably,

"Teachers tend to be suspicious of talk between pupils during lessons, because they are aware the pupils are likely to engage in talk which is not instrumental to learning". (p 119)

The teachers' claimed concern not only with learning, but with the elicitation of evidence for it, is used to account for teachers' addiction to the 'right answer'. Hargreaves argues that much of the teacher's behaviour, in his/her instructional role, consists in looking for evidence that his/her instruction is indeed promoting learning (p 155). (This in turn means that for the pupil, much behaviour is 'answer-centred'. They know the teacher already knows the answer required, and it is their task to hunt around until they find it.)

As disciplinarian, the teacher must establish and maintain discipline and order in the classroom:

"It is the task of who shall do what, when and how. It is the creation of rules of conduct and rules of procedure. This includes the teacher's task in organizing the grouping of the pupils, the distribution of equipment, the timing, form and extent of movements by pupils within or in and out of the classroom... Also included... are the means of maintaining the rules, including the fixing of rewards and punishments for adherence to or deviance from the rules". (p 117)

Who is the teacher aiming to please? While the pupils are the principal 'role partners' of the teacher in the classroom,

and while it is with them that he/she must negotiate his/her role, the most significant others, whose good opinion the teacher seeks, are claimed by Hargreaves to be the teacher's colleagues and professional superiors:

"The teacher enters into negotiation with the pupils with a predetermined intention of living up to the expectations of his colleagues". (p 120)

As these colleagues are not routinely present during the teacher's performance of his/her classroom role, indirect evidence of 'success' must therefore be provided. Hargreaves argues that in secondary school contexts, this leads on the one hand to a preoccupation with examination success, and on the other to a concern that the classroom appear both orderly and quiet, to the external observer (pp 121 - 122). In Hargreaves' opinion,

"This reliance of teachers on the estimations of their colleagues... represents the greatest conservative force, the greatest inhibitor of educational change and experiment in our secondary schools". (p 122)

As far as the pupils are concerned, Hargreaves concludes that as part of his/her overall initiative in defining the classroom situation, the teacher assigns both roles and goals to them which are congruent with his/her own (p 129). On the whole, pupils appear to accept the teacher's definition of the situation, and even to like it (p 130). This is part of a general tolerance of school as a natural and inescapable part of their lives. Pupils nonetheless have some rights of veto on classroom experience; a 'working consensus' exists between

teacher and pupils, and is continually being renegotiated.

The main task of pupils is that of pleasing the teacher. Hargreaves argues this case at some length (pp 144 - 161), accounting for a whole range of classroom phenomena as subordinate to this general goal. These include the tension between competition and cooperation among pupils, pupil's use of strategies such as guessing and cheating, and their concern to find the 'right answers' to which teachers are so addicted.

2.4.1 Implications for target language use

Hargreaves' research-based account of interpersonal relations in the classroom has been quoted at some length, highlighting points with potential implications for the specific concerns of message-oriented target language use in the FL classroom.

If this analysis of the classroom situation is accepted in broad outline, how optimistic can one feel about the prospects for communicative FL use in the L2 classroom? The answer will depend on the view taken of the role relations appropriate for FL-medium interaction. Taking a more conservative view, which does not challenge the legitimacy of the asymmetrical power relations of the classroom, there seems to be no reason of principle why the teacher's general roles of instructor and disciplinarian, and the reciprocal roles of the pupil, should not be performed through the medium of the target language (except - significantly - insofar as the teacher's confidence

in his/her capacity to maintain order etc is thereby reduced). Some specific features of the teacher-dominated classroom described by Hargreaves do appear to militate against communicative target language use. Thus the teachers' claimed concerns for lack of noise, and suspicion of pupil-pupil talk, would seem to limit certain types of opportunity for communicative FL interaction. More significantly, teachers' claimed need for immediate evidence of instructional success, through the constant provision of 'right answers', suggest a potential continuing tug a) towards FL production by the pupils, and b) an emphasis on formal accuracy. (There is some evidence supporting this idea, in the observational study of Mitchell et al, 1981. These researchers commented on the relative lack of opportunities provided for learners either simply to listen to the target language, or to read it extensively rather than intensively. They noted a continual emphasis in classroom activities on pupil FL production, spoken or written, and speculated that "Teachers rely on pupil product of some kind as the most reliable indicators of pupil involvement in the ongoing activity" (p 31).) However, many methodologists of the 'communicative approach' to FL teaching would take the more radical view, that the asymmetrical power relations of the typical content classroom are hostile to the promotion of communicative FL interaction in the L2 classroom, and that these relations must themselves be modified if such interaction is to be maximised. This view is argued explicitly by many people, including Allwright

(1977), Breen and Candlin (1980), Dalgalian et al (1981), and is implicit in the concerns of the Council of Europe Modern Languages Project group with 'learner autonomy' (Holec, 1980). The argument is that for communicative interaction to take place, teachers' and pupils' concern for 'right answers' (which in the L2 classroom usually means formally correct utterances in accordance with teacher models or teacher-proposed patterns) must be abandoned, in favour of interaction between participants on a more equal footing, involving the exchange of genuinely held opinions and feelings, as well as 'personal' information.

The constraints imposed by asymmetrical power relations between teachers and pupils on classroom interaction in certain topic areas identified as important by methodologists of the 'communicative' approach are undeniable. To take a small example from the area of 'personal relations': it is among the common currency of elementary FL teaching, whatever methodological school is being followed, to talk about pupils' ages ('Quel âge as-tu?' 'J'ai douze ans', etc etc). But the age of the teacher is definitely not a legitimate topic for classroom discourse, and any pupil who raised it (in anything other than a joking manner, precariously tolerated at the best of times) would normally be sanctioned for 'impertinence'.

While asymmetrical relations of power remain among the participants in classroom interaction, it is difficult to see how a topic area such as that of personal relations could be entered upon in a non-superficial manner. There are ethical

problems involved, if nothing else, in raising topics of deep personal concern (father's unemployment? Parental separation?) in a context where the pupil does not have the right to remain silent, and can be required by the teacher to interact. Yet even apparently innocuous enquiries in the personal relations area (e.g. 'what does your daddy do?') can touch inadvertently on such deep concerns. (See Brumfit, 1982, for a critical discussion of this issue.)

Methodologists of the communicative approach are thus in some cases making demands of teachers which amount to a total rejection of their existing definitions of the classroom situation, and of the reciprocal roles of teacher and pupil within it. It is difficult to reconcile the teacher roles of either instructor or disciplinarian with a view of the learner as an autonomous, self-motivated actor, interacting on equal terms with the teacher about topics chosen by the learner, or at least freely negotiated between teacher and learner. And there is much more or less explicit rhetoric in writings about the communicative approach, concerning a new role for the teacher, where he/she is seen as a facilitator of learning, as an organiser and manager of resources etc (Allwright, 1977; Moskowitz, 1978). To say the least of it, it seems unlikely that teachers in ordinary British secondary schools will respond significantly to such ideas, unless much else changes in the wider context of the school and of the teaching profession within which individual language teachers operate. At best, their interaction with pupils may be influenced at

the margin by such thinking, and there may be some directional shift from more to less authoritarian interpretations of the basic roles of disciplinarian and instructor. But the likelihood of these roles being abandoned under the influence of subject-specific methodological proposals seems remote.

2.5 Sociolinguistic Perspectives on Classroom Interaction and their Implications for Communicative FL Use

Another 'generalist' educational research tradition relevant to understanding the classroom context within which message-oriented target language use must take place is that which analyses the language of the classroom, seeking functional rather than narrowly linguistic patterning in the ways teachers and pupils interact with one another by means of language. Researchers in this tradition study language as discourse, and apply in differing degrees the insights of the linguistic tradition of discourse analysis within a classroom setting. (Discourse analysis is that branch of linguistics which seeks patterns and structure in the flow of language above the level of the individual sentence, the unit which is the traditional central concern of linguistics proper.)

Important studies in this tradition include those by Bellack et al. (1966), Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), and Mehan (1979). All these researchers identify a basic cycle in classroom discourse, called the 'teaching cycle' by Bellack et

al. Bellack and his colleagues identified four basic types of 'pedagogic move' in classroom talk, which go to make up the teaching cycle in a range of combinations: 'structuring', 'soliciting', 'responding', and 'reacting' moves. The commonest variant of the teaching cycle identified by Bellack et al. was a three-phase one, composed of soliciting, responding, and reacting moves in sequence. This three-phase cycle is recognised in other studies also. (For example, Mehan uses the labels 'initiation', 'reply' and 'evaluation' for essentially the same phenomenon: Mehan, 1979. Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975, call their equivalent units 'opening', 'answering', and 'follow-up' moves.)

All studies of this type concur that the teacher plays a dominant role in initiating the cycles of the "language game of teaching" (Bellack et al, p 237). Bellack et al found that teachers initiated almost 85 per cent of the cycles identified in their data (p 200), Mehan that teachers initiated 81 per cent (Mehan, 1979, p 80). The core pattern is thus that of a teacher initiation, a pupil response, and a teacher reaction or evaluation. To take a typical FL classroom example:

T: Quelle heure est-il?
 P: Il est huit heures et demie
 T: Très bien, very good.

Researchers in this tradition thus concur with the social psychological tradition represented by Hargreaves, in recognising a generally preeminent role for the teacher in the classroom:

"The teacher dominates the talk in quantity, range, and degree of control... If it is desired to enhance the opportunities for the pupils, a fundamental restructuring of the discourse is required. It is not enough to adopt a more informal manner, and to disguise vested authority... As long as the teacher and class are in the same sociolinguistic relationship, the same rules apply". (Sinclair and Brazil, 1982, p 7)

The most elaborate scheme proposed for the analysis of classroom discourse in this tradition of research is that of Sinclair and Coulthard. Basing their work on an analysis of language in primary school L1-medium classrooms, they argue that a hierarchically organised series of discourse units can be identified in classroom talk, ranging from the 'lesson' (the largest unit, equivalent to everyone's commonsense notion) to the 'speech act' (the smallest functionally-differentiated part of an utterance, typically consisting of one free clause plus related dependent clauses). In between come the 'transaction' (equivalent to the commonsense notion of the teaching/learning activity), the 'exchange' (equivalent to the teaching cycle of Bellack et al.), and the discourse 'move'; units at each level are composed of units from lower levels. As well as opening, answering and follow-up moves, Sinclair and Coulthard identify special types of discourse move as occurring at the boundaries of discourse 'transactions'; these are the 'framing' move (realised by a small set of lexical items such as 'right', 'well now', etc) and the 'focusing' move (which consists in metastatements about what has happened/is going to happen). Many other

classroom researchers have used analysis schemes similar to all or part of that outlined above. In science classrooms, for example, Brown and McIntyre (n.d.) have identified 'lesson segments' equivalent to the transaction of Sinclair and Coulthard. In classroom ethnography also, the unit of analysis christened the 'participant structure' by Philips (1972), and subsequently adopted by Mehan (1979), resembles the 'transaction' unit. Many researchers in L2 classrooms have found similar units useful. Genishi (1981), Mitchell et al (1981), Allen et al (1984), Bouchard (1984), and Soule-Susbielles (1984) have all used units of analysis equivalent to the transaction; the ethnographic equivalent, the 'participant structure', is used in L2 classrooms by Van Ness (1981) and by Mohatt and Erickson (1981). The 'interaction' unit of Schinke-Llano (1983) is equivalent to the 'exchange' of Sinclair and Coulthard. Units similar to their 'moves' and 'acts' can also be found in several of these studies, while Riley (1977 and 1980) and Enright et al (1982) borrow their complete set of speech act categories to incorporate in other systems. Finally a few researchers, such as Lorsch (1983), have adopted the Sinclair and Coulthard system wholesale for the analysis of L2 classroom discourse.

If the language of the classroom, including L2 lessons, is typically structured as these researches suggest, what are the implications for the viability in classroom contexts of message-oriented target language use? It would seem that the identification in classroom discourse of hierarchically

ordered units from which individual lessons are composed has no particular implications one way or another, for communicative FL use. In the L2 classroom, in any given sequence of FL-medium transactions or segments (to use the terminology of the present research study), some may have a general orientation towards content, others may have a general orientation towards form. Such a general orientation can persist even when within the transaction itself, individual exchanges or pedagogic moves may be oriented the other way. (Thus during a message-oriented role play activity, for example, a teacher may correct an isolated formal error without shifting the balance of the whole segment towards concentration on language form.) For the teacher to become more aware of the ways in which lessons are structured may be helpful to the promotion of communicative FL use, in that it may help him/her to build this into lesson planning somewhat more systematically (e.g. by planning to include more complete message-oriented FL-medium segments, or to use the target language when making the message-oriented framing and focusing moves which initiate each segment). But the fact that the language of most lessons can be analysed into segments etc. of itself appears neither to hinder nor help the promotion of communicative FL use. It is what teachers choose to do within this given structure that appears to count.

The centrality of the three-part initiate-respond-react cycle in classroom discourse, regardless of subject matter, does however appear to have some negative implications for the

possibility of communicative FL use. This is, of course, the linguistic manifestation of the mutual concern shared by teachers and pupils for the 'right answer', commented on by Hargreaves from a social psychological perspective. In the L2 classroom, the 'right answer' has traditionally consisted in the formally correct production of some FL utterance, and teachers have reacted to pupil responses positively or negatively, depending on formal rather than substantive features of the response. Consider again the three-part French example given earlier:

T(Initiate): Quelle heure est-il?
 P(Respond): Il est huit heures et demie
 T(React): Très bien, very good

In a Scottish secondary school classroom, where the school day goes from around nine a.m. to four p.m., and where the pupils are twelve or older, several possible interpretations of this exchange can be ruled out. The teacher does not REALLY need to know the time; it is not REALLY eight-thirty; and the pupils already know how to tell the time. What is being jointly rehearsed, is the ability to tell the time IN FRENCH; and the formal accuracy of the pupil's FL utterance is rewarded with a positive evaluation. (To clarify these points, compare the previous example with a message-oriented variant:

T: What time is it?
 P: It is one o'clock, miss
 T: Thanks, in that case, pack up please...

Here the pupil contribution is acknowledged and made the basis for action, but NOT evaluated, positively or negatively.)

It would therefore seem that teachers' and pupils' familiarity with the three-part cycle, and reliance on it for evidence of both attention and learning, will act as strong pressures attracting attention onto formal matters, during episodes of target language use. In message-oriented target language use, it would seem that this cycle must either be abandoned (as in the second example above), or else its focus of attention shifted from matters of form to matters of content. This would be the case, for example, were the teacher REALLY teaching the pupils to tell the time, and assessing their answers as evidence of mastery/ nonmastery of the mysteries of the clockface (and only incidentally, accomplishing this interaction through FL). It would also be the case, were pupils being taught 'content' subjects through L2, as of course happens in many countries other than Britain (see e.g. Allen & Swain eds, 1984), and as some L2 methodologists have advocated (e.g. Widdowson, 1968). Either proposal involves a radical shift in current styles of L2 classroom interaction at the move level, and also a radical shift in perceptions of what content is appropriate; thus in practice, the existence of the three part cycle must currently be accepted as a potentially significant constraint on the message orientation of target language use at the 'move' level.

2.6 The L2 Teacher: Knowledge and Beliefs

In preceding sections we have reviewed factors arising from the social relations of the classroom which appear likely to promote or inhibit 'communicative' target language use. This section will consider special characteristics of L2 teachers, insofar as these are known, and their likely influence. The characteristics to be taken into account are a) L2 teachers' knowledge, and b) their beliefs about the process of L2 development, and what, accordingly, they believe the most effective language teaching strategy to be.

2.6.1 Teacher target language proficiency

One of the clearest potential constraints on the promotion of communicative target language use in the FL classroom is the level of competence teachers have attained in that language. If teachers are not reasonably fluent target language speakers, they are unlikely to be able to meet the unpredictable demands which communicative interaction will make on their competence. This problem of course is unlikely to arise where teachers are native speakers of the target language. However, in Britain only a small minority of foreign language teachers are native speakers; the vast majority are speakers of English who have learned the target language as a foreign language.

Very little is known about the actual levels of FL competence existing in this British teaching force. In the absence of competency testing of teachers in post, the only information publicly available relates to qualifications held. In Scotland, all modern language teachers are graduates, who must have studied the language(s) they are teaching at degree level, and also must have worked in a target language speech community for a minimum period of several months. However, it is difficult to establish what possession of a modern languages degree means in terms of personal target language fluency. Different university courses can still place very different emphases on the development of oral target language competence; no public information is available on the general standards being achieved.

In the complete absence of published research-based information on such competence it is necessary to fall back on anecdote and impression. As a relatively experienced classroom researcher, who has observed some dozens of modern language teachers in secondary schools in Central Scotland over several years, the author of this study has gained an impression of considerable variation in teacher fluency. A few teachers speak the target language with native-speaker proficiency, while some at the other extreme appear very dependent on textbook models. However, teacher fluency levels appear to this writer to be generally adequate for fairly extensive communicative FL use in the classroom, at least at elementary/intermediate levels. And of course, teacher competence is

itself not a static entity: if message-oriented target language use in the classroom contributes to developing learner fluency, presumably the same will apply also to the competence of the teacher.

2.6.2 Teacher beliefs about learning and effective teaching

Assuming the teachers' personal level of target language fluency is not an obstacle to message-oriented FL use in the classroom, one of the most significant remaining influences on the frequency of such use is likely to be teachers' own ideologies: their beliefs about the nature of the language learning process, and the kinds of classroom experience which can best facilitate the learner's L2 development. Clearly, given their dominant initiating role in classroom interaction, which we have considered in preceding sections, teachers have considerable scope to determine what activities will be undertaken during the FL lesson, and which language (native or target) will be spoken for which purposes. It can be taken as a basic assumption that teachers' decisionmaking, while motivated in part by subsidiary concerns such as those for classroom order and for a manageable workload for themselves, will mainly be motivated by a wish to promote learning, and that their choice of materials, activities etc. will be determined by their current beliefs about what will be effective for that purpose.

Even where teachers have been provided with a comprehensive package, it is known that they will regularly

select, modify and supplement elements of the package in accordance with their personal beliefs. Mitchell et al., 1981, have documented this process of modification in their study of teachers using an 'audiovisual' French course highly popular in British schools in the 1970s. Most striking in this case was the teachers' supplementation of the recommended methodology through the provision - in English - of explicit metalinguistic 'explanations' and statements of rules of grammar. It is also this inevitable process of teacher modification which is now recognised to have led in large part to the downfall of the large scale process-product research investigations seeking to identify the most effective global teaching strategies (Long, 1980). The research design of studies such as the Pennsylvania Project (Smith, 1970) assumed that ordinary teachers would implement in exact detail the different methodologies whose outcomes were to be compared. This they did not do, and the teaching strategies merged sufficiently to obscure any differential impact on learning outcomes.

2.6.3 A survey of teacher beliefs

The beliefs of British FL teachers regarding the processes of L2 learning and effective teaching have been little studied. The only large scale study in this area conducted in Scotland was an interview survey conducted by the present author with secondary school modern language teachers as a preliminary to

the collection of classroom recordings which form the data base for this thesis. This interview survey is reported in full in Mitchell 1985a, Chapter 3; a summary account follows, with supplementary information from a briefer interview survey reported by Kilborn et al (1984b), which collected some relevant information incidentally to an exploration of teachers' views on assessment.

The first survey was conducted in the summer and autumn of 1981. Its general purpose was to explore the beliefs and motives of FL teachers who identified in some sense with the 'communicative approach'. An exploration of teachers' understandings of the notion of 'communicative competence' was to be followed up by an investigation of its implications, as teachers perceived them, for syllabus design and for classroom practices. A non-random sample of teachers having some opportunity to experiment with 'communicative' ideas was therefore required. To locate such teachers, 20 modern language departments in secondary schools in Central Scotland were selected, from among those participating in one (or more) of three major ongoing FL curriculum development initiatives sharing a commitment to the 'communicative approach'. These curriculum development initiatives were:

- a) The "Tour de France" project. This was a French curriculum development project sponsored by the Scottish Central Committee for Modern Languages (SCCML) between 1975 and 1984, and carried out by a working party convened by Richard Johnstone of the University of Stirling. The working party's original remit was to produce beginners' French materials for use with 12 - 14 year olds in the school years Secondary 1 and Secondary 2 (S1/ S2), though in the event their materials formed the basis for a five

year French course now being published by Heinemann (SCCML, 1982 - 1984). (In Scotland FL study is part of the core curriculum for all pupils during S1 and S2 only; French is by far the commonest language studied.) From 1979 to 1981 the S1/S2 materials were piloted in about 40 secondary schools.

b) The GLAFLL project. Lothian Region's Graded Levels of Achievement in Foreign Language Learning project, directed by the regional Adviser John Clark, provided schools in the Edinburgh area with functional-notional syllabuses in several languages, a scheme of graded proficiency tests and certificates, and methodological advice (Clark, 1980, 1981, 1984; Clark and Hamilton, 1984).

c) The Strathclyde "Eclair" initiative. In the late 1970s the modern languages Advisers of Strathclyde region made the "Eclair" French course produced by the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA, 1975) the basis for a curriculum development initiative in S1 and S2. Teacher working groups produced a range of ancillary materials (e.g. lists of functional objectives, assessment materials, and teachers' notes) designed to support use of the course (originally seen as suitable for the 'less able') with all pupils. These materials were distributed to Strathclyde schools, and made the basis of inservice work; by 1980 the course was widely used in Strathclyde schools.

Seven schools piloting "Tour de France", seven GLAFLL schools, and six "Eclair"-using schools in Strathclyde were visited for the purposes of the survey, and a total of 59 teachers of French, German, Spanish and Italian, with current involvement in at least one of the three developmental initiatives at S1/S2 level, were interviewed individually. A semi-structured interviewing strategy was followed (i.e. a predetermined list of topics to be explored was used to guide the interview, but exact-word questions were not asked). The interviews generally lasted between 40 and 60 minutes; they were audiorecorded and transcribed, and an analysis of the teachers' views was conducted from the transcripts.

2.6.3.1 Teachers' understandings of 'communicative competence'

There was an overwhelming consensus among the teachers interviewed that 'communicative competence' was the ability to join in oral face to face interaction in the target language: "understanding what is said to you and being able to make yourself understood", as many teachers put it. Kilborn et al. found similarly that an "overwhelming majority" of the S3/S4 teachers interviewed in 1984, when explaining what 'communicative competence' meant to them, "were referring exclusively to face-to-face oral interaction" (Kilborn et al., 1984b, p 17).

What was striking about this view was, firstly, that skills other than the oral ones were mentioned only rarely as components of communicative competence. Secondly, the teachers' definitions of communicative competence could not readily be related to an analytical model such as that proposed by Canale and Swain (1980). As we have seen in Chapter 1, these theorists break the concept down into three major components: generative linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence. Only a small minority of teachers included clear identification of any of these components in their accounts of communicative competence, and only one teacher (a GLAFLL founder member) identified all three.

In particular, the key question of whether the teachers

understood communicative competence to encompass a generative linguistic competence was not capable of complete resolution from the interview data. A substantial group clearly understood the term in a very restricted sense (approximating to what Canale and Swain call the 'basic skills' interpretation of communicative competence). For these teachers 'communicative competence' was a limited survival competence, mainly involving mastery of a set of unanalysed holophrases suitable to express the basic instrumental needs of tourists. It followed that for this group, the development of generative competence was a stage quite beyond the acquisition of 'communicative competence'.

For most of the teachers, however, 'communicative competence' was less restricted. A substantial minority did say that in "making oneself understood", grammatical precision was not necessary. But it seemed in many cases that teachers were referring here to minor points of morphology (such as gender agreement), and were not ruling out all need for mastery of syntax as a constituent element of communicative competence.

It thus seemed that the teachers fell into three broad groups in their interpretations of 'communicative competence'. A very small group clearly adhered to an 'expanded' interpretation approximating to that of Canale and Swain: that 'communicative competence' consists of linguistic competence plus sociolinguistic and/or strategic competence. Another

group clearly held a restricted, 'basic skills' view of communicative competence as a survival, phrasebook competence. But the majority could not be allocated to either of these groups. While they made it clear that for them, oral interactive competence was at the core of communicative competence, they were not specific about its component elements. These differing views clearly have differing implications for methodology, as was reflected in later phases of the interview. However, with the possible exception of the 'basic skills' interpretation, the various interpretations of communicative competence, conceived as it was by most teachers as the main goal of classroom L2 teaching, may be seen as likely to promote message-oriented classroom target language use, and certainly as unlikely to obstruct it.

2.6.3.2 Teachers' views on syllabus content

Two aspects of the possible L2 syllabus are likely to facilitate or inhibit message-oriented use of the target language in the L2 classroom: a) what may be called the 'topical' syllabus (i.e. content areas which it is felt appropriate to talk about), and b) the prescribed language syllabus itself (if any).

Decisions about the topical syllabus will create better or worse conditions for communicative target language use, depending on whether a) there is anything on the agenda which participants feel motivated to communicate about, and b) whether the proposed content is considered appropriate or

inappropriate to be dealt with via the medium of the target language. As far as the language syllabus is concerned, a syllabus organised on structural principles seems likely to create most difficulties for the extensive message-oriented use of the target language. A functional-notional syllabus allows more possibilities for communicative FL use; at a minimum, such organisation potentially facilitates the contextualisation of practice FL activities. The decision to do without any specified language syllabus (as Krashen suggests, and as happens in the Bangalore Project) provides more opportunities still.

There was considerable agreement among the S1/S2 teachers interviewed for this study concerning the appropriate core elements of the 'topical' syllabus. Two-thirds of them argued that the syllabus should cover 'personal' topics: language pertinent to personal details, family, likes and dislikes etc. For many, language chosen to express such personal topics was emphatically the central component of a 'communicative' syllabus for preadolescent beginners.

A substantial group of teachers felt the syllabus should also contain the language necessary for survival in 'tourist' type situations (although a minority expressed reservations about this, arguing that for some pupils such material was too remote from personal experience, actual or potential).

These suggestions as to topics were elicited by direct questioning regarding the most appropriate choice of syllabus to underpin the development of learners' communicative

competence. Both areas seem potentially facilitative of communicative FL use in the classroom, whether through personal discussions or through role play (of various tourist scenarios). However, substantial minorities of teachers made it clear that they felt other content areas should also be dealt with in the L2 classroom, which seemed more problematic from the perspective of promoting communicative FL use.

Most notably, over a quarter of the teachers mentioned that it was their aim to develop a conscious understanding of the linguistic system of the target language, at least for more advanced learners; and a fifth mentioned the development of cross-cultural knowledge and understanding. Observation during previous research studies had shown that these two content areas were overwhelmingly associated with the use of English by both teacher and pupils (e.g. Mitchell et al., 1981). The teachers interviewed on this occasion reinforced this view. When asked to suggest classroom topics and activities for which it might be appropriate to use the target language on the one hand, and English on the other, not a single individual advocated the use of the target language when teaching in either of these areas. On the contrary, a majority argued explicitly that metalinguistic talk should take place through the medium of English, and over a third argued similarly for teaching 'background'.

As far as the choice of syllabus topic was concerned, therefore, the teachers generally favoured a mix of personal and transactional topics, which it was generally felt could be

coped with via the target language, and of more abstract, informationally denser topics which were generally felt to be inappropriate for FL-medium instruction. As far as the nature and extent of the language syllabus was concerned, it was generally taken for granted that a specified syllabus of some sort was necessary for classroom instruction. The radical view that a predetermined syllabus actually obstructs 'naturalistic' acquisition was not suggested by anyone. The teachers argued generally that the language items specified in the syllabus should be such as to enable pupils to function in the suggested topic areas (exchange of personal information, etc). It could be inferred from the way topics were discussed that many teachers assumed that the language material would be organised at least partly on functional principles, but surprisingly few said so explicitly. Another small group argued that syllabuses must remain at least partly organised on structural principles; but the question of the optimal relationship between the different principles was referred to explicitly by only one teacher.

The area of the language syllabus in general seems to be one in which teachers do not have detailed proposals to make, but are willing to be consumers of proposals produced by others. Thus the teachers using the language courses which formed the focus of two out of the three curriculum development initiatives ("Tour de France" and "Eclair") appeared content with the language syllabuses of these courses, in spite of the fact that the two are significantly

different. ("Tour de France" has an extensive syllabus organised mainly on structural lines, though with some functionally-organised sections, and extensive functional presentation, while "Eclair" has a much more limited, functionally organised syllabus.) This tolerance of variation may reflect a fairly relaxed attitude which leads most teachers to modify any given syllabus at least in detail, of which there was some evidence in the interview responses. On various grounds it is therefore less easy to posit any clear, expected relationship between teachers' choice of language syllabus and the extent of communicative target language use in the classroom, than it is to identify expected influences of their choices of topics to talk about.

2.6.3.3 Teachers' general views on methodology

The teachers were next asked to talk about those aspects of their teaching which they felt contributed most to the development of pupils' FL communicative ability. A few argued that everything they did had some contribution to make, including activities (such as drills and grammar explanations) which were clearly recognised not to provide any direct experience of communicative FL use, but were seen as contributing to communicative ability in the longer term. Most however did not attempt to describe their overall teaching strategy at this point, but talked instead about a particular group of activities which they felt had some distinctive contribution to make.

The activities talked about were overwhelmingly oral; only five teachers made any reference to reading/writing activities, in this connection. Many teachers mentioned activities relating to the topic areas discussed in the previous section; three-quarters mentioned role play activities in which pupils were expected to enact tourist survival situations (such as asking the way, cafe scenes etc), and one-third mentioned conversation on 'personal' topics (family, likes and dislikes etc). Smaller numbers mentioned a range of other activities such as games and competitions, interaction with FL speaking visitors, class polls, songs, and going on trips. (There was thus a striking bias in the activities mentioned towards expressive and instrumental uses of the target language, and a scarcity of informational uses.)

The range of activities mentioned clearly had in common the provision for pupils of experience of oral, FL interaction. The extent to which communicative FL experience was intended was less clear, however. In discussing such activities, many teachers seemed to equate oral interaction with communicative interaction; they seemed to feel no need to distinguish different degrees of open-endedness, unpredictability etc. within the general area of oral work.

2.6.3.4 Role play

This tendency to equate oral interaction with communicative interaction emerged more clearly, when teachers were

questioned specifically about the conduct of role play activities. Two-thirds of the teachers gave fairly detailed accounts of these activities, most with enthusiasm. Most associated role play with non-whole-class patterns of organisation (pair or group work); typical examples given included cafe scenes, other shopping activities, mealtime conversation, or finding the way.

The frequency with which teachers reported undertaking role play activities varied, but most said it was an occasional event (and for a few, it was strictly an end-of-unit event). There was a consensus that prior development of an appropriate language resource was necessary; not only were topics generally selected so as to allow reuse of familiar language material, but some teachers spoke of preparatory sessions in which language needs were discussed and gaps in linguistic knowledge filled. Role play was thus seen as an occasion for consolidating and displaying already-acquired and specifically identified L2 competence, rather than one for encountering (and hopefully, acquiring) new L2 material.

When describing procedures for carrying out the role play activity itself, the teachers fell into two groups: those who saw the point of role play being to give pupils an opportunity for improvisation and for creative FL use, and those who saw it as a playlet, with pre-scripted FL 'lines'. (No less than 15 teachers mentioned some degree of FL scripting, usually involving pupils composing and memorising their own script in

advance of performing the role play proper.)

No clear single function could thus be attributed to role play as a teaching/learning activity. For some teachers, it provided an opportunity for creative, message-oriented FL use, while for others, it functioned as an enjoyable and motivating form of language practice. And even for the former group, what was said about role play provided some evidence regarding the teachers' adherence to a 'stages' theory of L2 development, in which 'skill-getting' precedes 'skill-using' (Rivers, 1972), rather than to any strong 'acquisitionist' theory of L2 development.

2.6.3.5 The place of grammar explanations

Further evidence of the teachers' stance in relation to Krashenite theories of L2 development came from their responses to questions about quite another type of teaching/learning activity: the provision of 'grammar explanations', and their place in a communicative approach to FL teaching.

The overall commitment of this group of teachers to talking in some form about the structure of the target language was striking. Only a very small minority said without qualification that grammar explanations had no part to play in the teaching of S1/S2 classes (because they were incomprehensible to pupils, and/or because they made no difference to the development of pupils' practical competence).

However, only a minority claimed to discuss 'grammar' regularly and systematically; most claimed to do so occasionally, and a few that they did so only when pupils requested explanations. The examples cited by teachers to illustrate the type of 'grammar point' they would discuss with S1/S2 pupils suggested that coverage of the language system actually being taught was by no means comprehensive, but that there was some 'trouble-shooting' bias in the explanations given, towards points in the FL system which contrast most clearly with that of English. (The commonest points cited, each by about a third of the teachers, were gender agreement in the article system, and the presentation and explanation of verb paradigms.)

Various rationales for the provision of grammar explanations were advanced. Over a third of all the teachers felt that conscious understanding of the rules helps 'internalisation' of the language system in some way, whether by helping pupils to move from holophrastic knowledge to an ability to recombine the elements of the language into new and original utterances, or by helping them attend to their own speech and correct or avoid possible errors as they spoke.

Other rationales for the provision of grammar explanations were less directly linked to the development of (oral) communicative proficiency. Thus, over a third of the teachers also argued that at least some pupils wanted explanations, and even asked for them, whether out of sheer interest, or wanting the security that 'knowing the rules' was felt to offer.

Smaller groups argued that the study of grammar helped develop reading and/or writing skills, developed pupils' 'language awareness', and/or laid a foundation for later, more advanced L2 study.

The minority who saw little merit in the provision of grammar explanations at S1/S2 level argued that such explanations were not necessary to develop FL competence, and/or that they had no detectable influence on subsequent performance. A small group argued a middle position - that while under informal 'immersion' conditions, advanced L2 competence could be developed by unconscious, 'acquisition' processes, under classroom conditions systematic instruction including rule-giving was necessary. This last group was the only one to use 'natural' acquisition as an explicit reference point. (Of course, others may have shared this view but taken it for granted as too obvious to require expression.)

These teachers' continuing general commitment to provide grammar explanations, in spite of their involvement with the 'communicative approach', reflects the belief, implicit or explicit, that conscious learning contributes positively to the development of a generative FL competence, and a rejection of the view that L2 competence develops primarily by exposure to 'comprehensible input', and/or involvement in message-oriented interaction. What value is to be placed on such practitioners' beliefs, by comparison with the opposing research evidence of the kind reviewed by Allwright (1984c), is unknown. But it seems likely that teachers who value the

provision of such explanations will correspondingly place somewhat less importance on the provision of communicative FL experience in the classroom. A commitment to grammar explanations must be seen as a simple, pragmatic constraint on the expansion of message-oriented target language use in the classroom, given the accompanying general consensus that English is the appropriate medium for the presentation and discussion of such content.

2.6.3.6 The language of classroom management

The two preceding sections have looked at teachers' views regarding particular types of teaching/ learning activity, to consider a) what can be learned regarding teachers' beliefs about L2 development, and b) what the implications are for the promotion of message-oriented target language use in the classroom. The interview also elicited teachers' views concerning the implications of a commitment to 'communicative' teaching for the character of classroom discourse, and in particular for communicative FL use, at a finer level of detail. One issue covered in this part of the interview was of special relevance to this thesis: the choice of language for purposes of classroom management.

Arguments in favour of making the target language the medium of classroom management predate the 'communicative' movement in FL teaching, although they have been given a renewed impetus by it. The teachers interviewed showed an awareness of this, a few mentioning a longstanding commitment

to FL use, others mentioning FL use having been advocated in training college. The teachers generally supported the idea in principle, though with qualifications, and although their perceptions of the extent to which this was practically possible varied widely.

FL use for classroom management appeared a highly charged issue for the teachers, with almost a third of the sample appearing to feel they were making an admission of unprofessional conduct, in 'confessing' to low levels of FL use. (This group tended to shoulder the 'blame' personally, attributing their failure to make FL the communicative norm to their own personality, and/or relative lack of fluency in the target language, and most commonly, to 'laziness', and lack of willpower and perseverance.)

Other teachers agreed that both personal fluency in the FL, and considerable perseverance, were indeed necessary if FL use was to be the norm, and that maintaining it could be stressful. The nature of the classes being dealt with was also seen as a governing factor by some teachers: a few argued that the norm of FL use was too much for lower sets on 'ability' grounds, a few that the general liveliness of contemporary mixed ability classes ruled it out, as 'control' would be impossible. The importance of departmental rather than individual commitment, was mentioned especially by principal teachers, and accounts of efforts to promote this were given. Several teachers said that it was very difficult to establish the norm of FL use at any time other than the start of the

school year, with new S1 classes (some declared the intention of 'really making an effort' with their next intake); on the other hand, a few said establishing the norm was a slow developmental business for pupils as well as teachers, and extensive FL use could not be expected until S2 or later. As for teachers' perceptions of what was practically possible: only a very small number of teachers suggested that the target language could or should be used exclusively. Equally small however was the group who clearly indicated that the only FL use in their classrooms was that necessarily incurred in presenting and practising the coursebook language syllabus.

Much the largest number took the view that some 'mix' of English and FL was appropriate in classroom communication. However, when asked in more detail about the respective roles of the two languages, it became clear that the only area in which teachers generally felt use of the FL to be appropriate was that of organisational instructions (to do with seating, handing out/ collection of materials etc.). Managerial functions such as the disciplining of pupils, discussing instructional objectives, or giving 'activity instructions' (explaining the nature of the next teaching/ learning task) were all mentioned by substantial minorities as purposes for which it would not be appropriate to use the target language.

A small group of teachers did not link the use of either language with particular managerial purposes, but spoke in more general terms. Regardless of activity, if the pupils

appeared to be 'losing touch' with what was being said, this was a signal to switch to English. This group associated the presentation of abstract ideas, and/or dense new information, with the use of English; it was also associated with any discussion to which pupils were expected to make a substantial contribution. Conversely, they argued that simpler, more routine interaction could and should take place through the FL, again regardless of activity or pedagogic function.

A wide range of arguments was advanced by the teachers, both for and against an FL norm in classroom management. The arguments most commonly advanced for managing the classroom in L1 were the saving of time, and gains in efficiency in running teaching/ learning activities. Other arguments mentioned were a lack of confidence that pupils could keep up with extensive FL use by the teacher; a view that extensive FL use was worrying for the pupils; and the 'artificiality' of ignoring one's shared native language, in favour of the struggle to communicate through one which was imperfectly known.

The arguments advanced in favour of extensive FL use to do with L2 development, were more restricted than might have been expected from teachers involved in developmental projects with a 'communicative' orientation, all of which explicitly advocate this. Just a dozen teachers suggested ways in which the norm of classroom FL use might aid acquisition, as well as build pupils' confidence in listening and speaking: that most commonly suggested was the development of receptive strategies for coping with imperfectly-understood material (gist

extraction skills). A similar number advanced arguments to do with attitudes and motivation. Ten teachers argued that classroom FL use impressed on the pupils that the target language was indeed a real means of communication, and a weaker version of this argument, that FL use contributed positively to classroom 'atmosphere', was advanced by a smaller number.

The zone of classroom management was thus one where teachers' thinking appeared to diverge significantly from that of most theorists of the 'communicative' approach. As we have seen, writers such as Ellis (1980), Bouchard (1984), and Johnstone (1979), view it as a highly significant area for the promotion of message-oriented target language use. A few teachers in this interview sample were strongly committed to making the target language the communicative norm, and were confident both that pupils could cope and that they would benefit. Most, however, while accepting that FL use is appropriate and feasible for the simpler organisational matters, saw a substantial continuing role for English in classroom management; and a few had effectively dismissed the use of L2, as a timewasting intrusion into the 'real' work. This area was thus a problematic one, and considerable attention is paid to it later in this thesis (see especially Chapter 5).

2.6.4 Teachers' beliefs and classroom practice

The interview data reviewed above yield only a partial picture of teachers' beliefs about L2 development, and the classroom procedures which will best promote it. However, they clearly suggest that Scottish FL teachers do not generally adhere to the psycholinguistic rationale which at least partly underpins the case advanced by methodologists of the 'communicative approach'. The notion that the target language system is largely acquired rather than consciously learned, from message-oriented experience of its use, seemed to have little support among this group, as evidenced by their clear continuing commitments to syllabus specification, the provision of grammar explanations, and the correction of pupils' formal errors. The teachers' undoubted enthusiasm for 'communicative' teaching seemed to have more to do with their view of pupils' likely language needs, and with motivation, than with the adoption of new theories about the language learning process; i.e. they seemed much more convinced by the sociolinguistic arguments for a 'communicative' approach, than by the psycholinguistic arguments.

If this interpretation of the teachers' beliefs about L2 learning is correct, then it is unsurprising that their methodological prescriptions for the development of FL communicative competence did not focus at all clearly on the provision of message-oriented target language experience. As

we have seen, the teachers generally emphasised the use of oral, interactive FL-medium activities as main components of any 'communicative' teaching strategy, but also generally failed to make clear distinctions between creative and structurally- controlled oral work. With some striking exceptions, they also held that only restricted FL use was possible, for management purposes. The general impression, therefore, was that whatever the potential for message-oriented target language use within the FL classroom allowed by other structural constraints may be, this was unlikely to be being fully exploited by these teachers, and that their beliefs about what was desirable and feasible were acting to some degree as constraints on its provision.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed a range of contextual factors which appeared likely to influence the willingness and/or ability of teachers to promote communicative target language use within the L2 classroom. This review provided a basis for the elaboration of a series of questions to which answers might be sought, in the empirical study of classroom data reported in the second part of this thesis. These questions concerned the following set of issues:

1. The interpersonal relations obtaining between teachers and

students

(Did the relations obtaining between the group of teachers under study, with their 'commitment' to the 'communicative approach', and their pupils, differ in any substantial respect from those known to prevail in other classrooms? In particular, was the relationship such as to allow for any substantial degree of 'learner autonomy', including pupil choice of either syllabus material or of topics for discussion? Were 'personal' topics, and/or matters of opinion, marginal or central to lesson content? And in what sort of depth was any such content handled?)

2. The substantive content of L2 lessons, and participants' language choices for handling different kinds of topic

(What range of topics was talked about in the lessons under study, and through which language? In particular, was the commonly-expressed teachers' view that cognitively undemanding, 'personal' and 'tourist' topics were particularly appropriate for FL-medium communication, put into practice? To what extent were more abstract or informationally-dense topics (such as grammar or the target language culture) on the classroom agenda, and was their previously-observed (and teacher-approved) association with English sustained?)

3. The range of activities provided in L2 lessons, and the balance of use of the different language skills

(What was the balance in the FL-medium components of the lessons analysed, between 'practice FL' activities in which teachers and students focused their attention primarily on matters of formal correctness, and 'real FL' activities in which attention was focused on the message? How task-oriented, and how interactive, was target language use? What was the balance between oral work, and that involving reading and/or writing? To what extent was immediate FL product (written or spoken) required of students, and to what extent were extensive receptive experiences provided?)

4. The range of functions associated with the use of the target language and of English

(At a general level, to what extent was the target language used for purposes of classroom management and organisation, both within and between substantive teaching

activities? Were any specific managerial functions identified with one language rather than the other? Within substantive teaching activities also, could any significant functional differentiation between the use of the two languages be detected? For example, was the target language associated with primarily transactional/instrumental functions, the L1 with primarily informational functions, as teachers' views might suggest?)

As well as suggesting the above range of specific questions to be followed up in the empirical study, the review of contextual factors presented in this chapter suggested a number of possible explanations for the patterns of language behaviour which were found. These will be taken up again for further discussion in the final chapter of the thesis.

CHAPTER 3

PREVIOUS EMPIRICAL STUDIES OF FL CLASSROOM TEACHER TALK

3.1 Introduction

In the main part of the last chapter, a range of contextual factors expected to influence the extent of message-oriented use in the FL classroom was reviewed, and from this review a number of research questions concerning the general character of classroom language use were derived.

The last chapter also included (in Section 2.3) a review of a small number of observational studies of teaching and learning in British FL classrooms. These studies provided general descriptions of the range of activities taking place in these classrooms, and several produced overall judgements regarding the extent to which the target language was used for classroom management purposes. However none of the British FL studies discussed produced any detailed analytic accounts of the language use patterns of teachers or pupils. These empirical studies are consequently of little help in trying to formulate research questions relating to the linguistic detail of FL classroom interaction.

A major aspect of the empirical study reported in Chapters 4 - 7 of this thesis involves the analysis and description of

both structural and functional aspects of teachers' target language talk, at a more detailed level than has been analysed in any British study of FL classrooms (at least so far as the author is aware). In this chapter, therefore, a further review will be undertaken of previous empirical studies, almost all non-British, which do take account of more detailed aspects of teacher L2 talk. The purpose of this final review element is to establish what is known about teacher target language talk in other contexts, as an aid in formulating the research questions to be asked here regarding more detailed linguistic aspects of the classroom talk of the group of Scottish FL teachers being studied.

3.2 The Notion of 'Simplification'

The studies considered here are all germane to the concern of this thesis with the quality and nature of teacher L2 talk, considered as 'input' data for language acquisition by the classroom learner. Those discussed can broadly be divided into two groups, one concerned with the description of structural aspects of L2 teacher talk, the other with discourse/ interactional aspects. These two groups of studies are reviewed in separate sections below.

Researchers studying both aspects have been concerned with one central notion, that of 'simplification'. That is, in what precise ways does the teacher modify his/her speech, in order

to render it more comprehensible to the learner, and by what yardstick can such modifications be described as 'simplifying'? Researchers' interest in teacher talk as a possibly distinctive, simplified linguistic register arose by analogy with the study of 'foreigner', 'mother' and 'baby talk' (i.e. studies of the speech of other kinds of fluent speaker with L1 and L2 learners). Most of the studies undertaken have been descriptive in nature; speech samples obtained in non-classroom settings are frequently used in these descriptive studies as a basis for comparison with classroom talk. There is also a limited number of process-product studies, which have sought to correlate aspects of teacher talk with the development of the learner's L2 competence, though so far with limited success.

3.3 Structural Characteristics of Teachers' L2 Classroom Talk

One of the earlier descriptive studies concentrating on structural aspects of L2 teachers' speech was that by Gaies (1977, 1978), who devised procedures for measuring the 'syntactic complexity' of teachers' classroom speech, and compared it with discussions between teachers out of class. He found that classroom teachers in a formal language learning setting did adjust their syntax in ways similar to other adults interacting with non-fluent speakers, e.g. speaking in shorter clauses and using fewer subordinate clauses per T-unit

than when talking with their peers. Furthermore, the study showed that these adjustments diminished, so as to move progressively closer to the full adult target language norm, with students at progressively more advanced levels.

Hyltenstam (1983) also reports a quantitative study of structural aspects of the classroom talk of Swedish L2 teachers, from which he concluded similarly that "language teachers speak slowly in wellformed and short sentences with few embeddings." Hatch, Shapira and Gough (1978), and Henzl (1979) also studied linguistic aspects of the talk of teachers with L2 learners, and made similar findings, although their data were gathered in informal, non-classroom settings. As Long's review (1983c) shows, L2 teacher talk shares many of the particular linguistic characteristics of foreigner talk which have been considered to reflect 'simplification': e.g. shorter utterances, the use of speech which is syntactically and/or propositionally less complex, and a more restricted range of vocabulary, by comparison with speech between native speakers. However, although modified, teacher L2 talk appears normally to be well-formed, unlike other foreigner talk; few studies have found any significant use of ungrammatical or pidginised forms by teachers (Hatch, Shapira and Gough do report this, but from a non-classroom setting: 1978).

The relationship of linguistic features of teachers' classroom talk and the development of learners' L2 competence has been investigated in several studies, which most commonly have sought links between frequency of occurrence of

particular items in teachers' L2 speech, and their appearance in the interlanguage of the learner (Larsen-Freeman, 1976; Hamayan and Tucker, 1980; Lightbown, 1983a, 1983b; Long and Sato, 1983; Ellis, 1984b).

The findings of these studies are contradictory.

Larsen-Freeman and Hamayan and Tucker claim to have discovered a positive relationship between the frequency of selected grammatical items in teacher speech, and their accurate production by L2 learners. However, Larsen-Freeman related her teacher data to a putative student 'accuracy order' deriving from other studies, rather than to the language of the teachers' own pupils. Hamayan and Tucker did relate teacher talk to that of their own students, but found the positive relationship obtained only in some classroom contexts. Lightbown, Long and Sato, and Ellis, on the other hand, failed to discover any such relationship.

Like Larsen-Freeman, Long and Sato related frequencies of selected items in their teachers' speech to previously documented 'accuracy orders' rather than to the L2 proficiency of the learners in the classes they observed. Lightbown's longitudinal study did however relate teacher talk to direct measures of the proficiency of their students. This investigation revealed a pattern unstable over time, with pupils performing more accurately on structures they were currently studying intensively (and hearing with great frequency from their teachers), but subsequently 'disimproving' on these points as the focus of classroom

practice moved elsewhere. It is therefore necessary to accept the conclusion drawn by Allwright (1984c) in reviewing these studies: that no simple relationship between the frequency of a given L2 item in teacher talk and its acquisition by the learner has been established.

Chaudron (1985) has reviewed a small number of studies covering the relationship between teachers' use of selected linguistic simplifications (slower rate of speech, and reduced degree of subordination) and the more limited 'product' goal of learner comprehension. While he summarises several studies showing that teachers speak more slowly with L2 learners than with others (and that their rate of speech varied directly with their perceptions of learner level), Chaudron could locate only two studies relating teacher rate of speech and student comprehension. He cites an experiment by Kelch (1985) in which slower speech (on a dictation task) did seem to aid comprehension. In the other study by Dahl (1981), learners were reported as perceiving speech they found easier to understand as having been spoken more slowly; however these subjective judgements failed to correlate with objective measures of rate of teacher speech.

Regarding the extent of subordination used in teacher speech to L2 learners, Chaudron summarises a number of descriptive studies as having conflicting results:

"Several researchers found no difference between speech to NSs and NNSs, while others have obtained evidence to the contrary, suggesting less complex speech to lower level learners". (Chaudron, 1985, p222)

However he located only one study investigating the comprehensibility of syntactically less complex speech. Long (1985) compared the 'comprehensibility' of a lecture given in parallel forms (one syntactically simplified in various respects, including reduction in sentence-level subordination); the 'simplified' version appeared more comprehensible, as reflected in listeners' better retention of content.

Chaudron could locate no studies attempting to relate the 'comprehensibility' of teacher talk, whether measured by rate of speech or degree of syntactic simplification, to learners' L2 development. He consequently concludes generally that at present, "there is only an inkling of a relationship between comprehensibility or frequency and learners' progress" (Chaudron, 1985, p 226).

3.4 Discourse Characteristics of Teacher Talk: General Overviews

In several recent studies, interest has tended to shift from linguistic to discorsal features of teacher L2 talk, and to interactional adjustments in L2 teacher-learner conversation. (Here L2 researchers seem to be following the trend of those studying caretaker talk with L1 learners: see discussion in Chapter 1). Discorsal/ interactional adjustments have been found to occur in teacher talk where the linguistic 'simplifications' discussed in the previous section are few or absent. Thus for example, in their previously- mentioned study

comparing ESL teachers' classroom talk with that of native speakers in informal interaction with non-native speakers, Long and Sato (1983) found few linguistic differences. However they did find that questioning strategies differed significantly between the two groups, with e.g. the teachers using significantly more 'display' questions (to which the answers were known), and fewer 'referential' questions (to which answers were not known).

Chaudron and Long are among the researchers who have had most to say of a general nature on the issue of the potential importance of interactional adjustments in input to the L2 learner. Chaudron (1983) abstracts from several of his own research studies of 'content' (social studies) teaching to learners of English as a second language, in order to describe a range of discourse strategies used by the teachers and lecturers concerned, with the apparent motivation of rendering themselves more comprehensible to their students. These include particular strategies for handling 'specialist' vocabulary, anaphoric reference, questioning, topic development, and explanations, in ESL contexts. In some cases, Chaudron was able to compare these strategies with those used by the same teachers when teaching similar content to native speakers. Overall, Chaudron concludes that many of these learner-oriented strategies appeared of doubtful value; but this judgement depends on his own intuitions regarding the relative comprehensibility of different treatments of similar content, rather than on any direct measures of student

comprehension. Another article by Chaudron (1982) deals in more detail with just one of these learner-oriented discourse strategies, that of 'vocabulary elaboration'; this is dealt with in more detail in Section 3.4.2 below.

Long (1981, 1983c, 1983d) argues that modifications in the interactional structure of conversation (e.g. the use of devices such as repetition, rephrasing, various forms of discourse repair, and specialised questioning strategies) are more significant in rendering L2 input to learners comprehensible than linguistic simplifications, in both classroom and non-classroom settings. In support of this argument, he points out that these interactional modifications appear to be triggered by ongoing feedback received from the learner by the fluent speaker; in contexts where such feedback is not available, e.g. in storytelling experiments, fluent speakers typically fail to make these adjustments even where they know their potential audience will consist of learners (Steyaert, 1977, cited in Long, 1983c). However, Long also can find little direct evidence that such interactional adjustments, when made by teachers, actually lead to increased comprehensibility for their students; in support of the thesis he can cite just two experimental studies, and no 'naturalistic' observational studies. Long's own recent work on interactional modifications in L2 teachers' classroom talk has been limited to the level of description. As we have seen, together with another researcher, he has studied the questioning strategies employed by such teachers (Long and

Sato, 1983). The pattern found, involving much use of 'display' questions, differed substantially from that found in the talk of fluent speakers who were not teachers, with English L2 learners; 'display' questions were effectively absent from the interaction of the latter group. Long and Sato speculate that the questioning strategy employed by the teachers may constitute less 'effective' input for L2 learners, and advocate that teachers should model their interactional behaviour more closely on that of fluent speakers in non-classroom settings. However, their study again produced no direct evidence for this position.

In addition to these general considerations of the issue, there also exists a considerable range of more narrowly-focused studies concerning particular discourse/interactional aspects of L2 teachers' classroom talk. This field is surveyed overall in Mitchell, 1985b. Only selected topics which seem of particular relevance to the maximisation of teacher target language use in the British FL classroom will be considered further here. Following sections therefore review existing studies regarding the language of classroom management and organisation; the repair of communicative breakdowns in classroom communication; and L2 classroom metatalk.

(The most important omission, in terms of the existing quantity of studies of discursal aspects of teacher talk, is the area of teacher feedback on pupil performance, and in particular, of their reactions to formal errors in student L2

performance. This area is surveyed in Mitchell, 1985b. Its principal theoretical interest lies in the question (still unresolved) as to whether teacher strategies of active error correction have any impact on learner L2 development. The central concern of the present study was however with teacher rather than learner language. Given the time and resource constraints which meant the analysis of teacher language must necessarily itself be selective, the pragmatic decision was taken to concentrate on teachers' discourse strategies with an initiating rather than a responsive character. This choice was felt to be supported both by consideration of previous observational studies, and by the teacher interview data reported in Chapter 2; in neither case did variation in error feedback strategies emerge as a prominent potential influence on the extent of teachers' target language use. Having made this decision in regard to the present study, further consideration of the existing literature on this topic was felt to be unnecessary.)

3.4.1 Classroom Management Language and Managerial strategies

As we have already seen in Section 2.3, several 'global' British studies have produced general characterisations of teachers' language choices for management functions in FL classrooms at secondary level (Parkinson et al., 1982; Sanderson, 1982; Kilborn et al., 1984a). Overall, these studies found that the shared L1 of teachers and pupils was

preferred for this purpose; no detailed analysis of language choices for particular managerial functions was undertaken within them however, and the possible outcomes in terms of pupils' L2 development were not studied.

Others have also approached the L2 classroom management issue from a highly 'generalist' perspective. For example, Allwright (1984c) sees the cooperative management of classroom interaction by L2 teacher and pupils as the key to maximising learning opportunities. He proposes a high inference taxonomy of 'modes of participation' for use in the study of interaction management. He thus shifts the centre of attention from the language of classroom management, to strategies and patterns of management. This issue has also been of particular concern to researchers studying bilingual/ bicultural classrooms, who have attempted to describe and evaluate the use of different classroom management styles with different linguistic and cultural minority groups. Legarreta (1979) compared five different kindergarten programmes for Spanish L1 children (different patterns of bilingual schooling plus monolingual English medium schooling); among her findings was the claim that all bilingual treatments produced better gains in English. Fillmore's observational studies of limited English speaking children in kindergarten (1980, 1982) conclude that a highly teacher-centred managerial strategy contributes to the creation of more ESL learning opportunities than a more open ended one. Warren (1982) also documents a well-established and well regarded bilingual Spanish-English

programme in which classroom management enforces mainstream American norms (learner 'independence', individualism, and competitiveness). Several ethnographic studies of classrooms catering for children from minority cultures, however, claim greater effectiveness for teaching strategies which incorporate local cultural norms for interaction (Au and Jordan, 1981; Mohatt and Erickson, 1981; Van Ness, 1981; Erickson and Mohatt, 1982; Jordan, 1983; Enright, 1984).

More directly relevant to the concerns of the present study are a few investigations of the issue of L2 teachers' managerial language with a more detailed and analytic linguistic focus, which have also been conducted in bilingual settings in the US. Milk (1981) used a functional taxonomy based on that of Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) to analyse teacher talk in a bilingual secondary programme for Spanish L1 students (involving 12th grade civics teaching). He found that Spanish and English were used in a balanced way for 'informative' and 'expressive' purposes; English predominated, however, in teachers' managerial talk, categorised according to Milk's system as 'directives' and 'metastatements'. The former category covered both teacher utterances requiring a non-linguistic response, and disciplinary utterances; that is, it corresponded to the categories of 'Organising Instructions' and 'Disciplinary Interventions' used in the empirical study reported in this thesis (see Chapter 5). Milk's 'metastatements' category corresponds to the 'Activity Instructions' and 'Lesson Instructions' categories used in the

present study. Milk claims that the use of English for these purposes "may have been conveying, at an unconscious level, that the language of power and authority in the classroom was English" (p 184).

Another American study which analysed teacher talk in terms of the speech acts performed presents a clear contrast to the findings of Milk. In another case study, Guthrie (1984) found a minority L1 (Chinese) was occasionally used for managerial and disciplinary purposes (that is, for 'procedures and directions', and for 'good behaviour' appeals) even in English language arts instruction, in a bilingual primary setting. Guthrie interprets this pattern as favouring effective communication at key lesson moments, and thus promoting student academic involvement overall.

These fragmentary findings from very different settings than the British FL classroom do at least suggest that teachers' language choices for managerial purposes are not arbitrary, but are motivated by rational and discoverable considerations essentially to do with classroom control. However, they provide no evidence concerning the potential contribution of classroom management language to the development of learners' L2 competence.

In Chapter 2, a speculative controversy between various French researchers regarding this potential contribution was mentioned. One group (Dalgalian, 1981; Weiss, 1982 and 1984) was seen to argue that classroom management language is the least "communicative" component of classroom talk, and that which

will make the least contribution to L2 acquisition. On the other hand, Bouchard (1984) argues that managerial language must be seen as comprising some of the messages transmitted in the classroom of greatest importance for participants, and consequently likely to involve both teacher and pupils in contextualised and instrumentally motivated target language use. However, he provides no empirical evidence for this appealing view. This is done by one of the few British researchers to concern themselves with empirical investigations of the relationship between classroom language experience and L2 development. On the basis of an observational study of primary school age ESL learners, Ellis (1980) argues that classroom management language provides significant 'communication opportunities' for pupils, and not only in terms of input: he suggests that it provides the learner with exceptionally favourable opportunities to initiate L2 talk.

The studies reviewed above all fall short of any direct demonstration that target language use for managerial purposes promotes pupils' L2 development. Indeed, their fragmentary and sometimes contradictory nature suggests that we are as yet far from possessing descriptions of teachers' language choices which could form an adequate basis for process-product investigations.

3.4.2 Communication and Repair Strategies

There is by now a fairly extensive literature on communication problems in native speaker/ non-native speaker discourse, and their resolution. However in the main this literature deals with production problems experienced by the non-native speaker in trying to express him/herself through the medium of the target language, and the cooperative efforts of the fluent native speaker which are intended to help him/her resolve these problems. Such attempts by the non-native speaker to find means to express messages which take him/her beyond the limits of his/her existing target language competence have been christened 'communication strategies' by Tarone and others (see e.g. the collection of articles in Faerch and Kasper, eds, 1983). Studies of repair having this learner-language focus will not be discussed further here.

As we saw in Section 3.3, fluent speakers are well documented as 'simplifying' their choice of vocabulary proactively, as part of the attempt to render their talk more comprehensible to non-fluent listeners. Chaudron argues however that the adaptation of vocabulary to perceived learner comprehension needs is not only a matter of the mechanical selection of high-frequency items and the avoidance of specialist or idiomatic terms (1982). In a review of teacher talk to L2 learners in 'content' classrooms he approached the issue of vocabulary from a discursal perspective, studying

"all instances of use of terminology or expressions that the teachers in some way defined, qualified, questioned, repeated, paraphrased, exemplified, or expanded upon in the course of their lessons". (Chaudron, 1982, p 171)

In order to describe this 'vocabulary-elaborating' area of teachers' speech, Chaudron has produced a complex descriptive framework which takes account of phonological, morphological, syntactic and discourse structures, as well as of semantic-cognitive relationships (e.g. use of synonyms, opposites, or paraphrase). He points out that these features may interact in complex ways in the elaboration of a given vocabulary item, and warns that if inappropriately used, strategies such as apposition, parallelism and paraphrase may cause learners to 'tune out' rather than aid comprehension.

Chaudron's analysis scheme is illustrated with extracts from classroom talk, but not systematically applied to produce a comprehensive description of his data corpus. His conclusions about the relative comprehensibility of the extracts cited are again subjective, and not supported by direct evidence supplied by the learners observed. However, his paper provides a comprehensive setting-out of the logical possibilities for varying the presentation of vocabulary, and is a good source of suggestions for analytic procedures for the study of this topic in L2 classrooms as well as in 'content' classrooms.

Chaudron's 1982 study was concerned with the efforts of teachers to preempt the occurrence of comprehension difficulties for their students. However, specific

comprehension difficulties for the L2 learner may well survive in the talk of the fluent speaker, even after intended pre-emptive adaptations have been made through the application of structural and functional simplification strategies. The efforts of fluent speakers and learners to resolve these surviving comprehension difficulties have received much less research attention than have attempts to repair production problems in the learner's speech. However Tarone (1980) has proposed a taxonomy for the description of such efforts, when made by fluent speakers outside the classroom setting. Kasper (1985) has proposed a limited taxonomy for the description of teachers' efforts to repair 'trouble-sources' in their own speech, as part of a wider consideration of repair in classroom settings. After preliminary consideration of the Communicative Interaction Project data, the present author also proposed a tentative (though somewhat more detailed) taxonomy of teacher strategies (Mitchell, 1985a, Chapter 8). Both these taxonomies are observationally- rather than logically derived. However Mitchell attempted to distinguish FL-medium and non-verbal teacher strategies which sustained the teacher's role as a classroom target language speaker from those which were L1-dependent, arguing that use of the latter was likely to act as a 'trigger' for more general teacher language-switching to L1.

3.4.3 Metalinguistic teacher talk

Talk to do with the nature of language itself is the last distinctive feature of L2 classroom teacher talk to be dealt with here. This area is of concern for the present study a) because of teachers' apparent commitment to engaging in talk of this kind, and b) because of their apparent conviction that any such talk must take place through L1 (both points emerging from the interview survey reported in Chapter 2). However, this area has so far received only limited attention from researchers, mainly of a programmatic kind. Dabene (1984) proposes a taxonomy for the categorisation of all 'metacommunicative' operations in the FL classroom (which for this researcher include the management of interaction and commentary on pupil performance, as well as informational, explanatory and descriptive metadiscourse). Cicurel (1984) argues for study of the metalinguistic discourse of the learner (use of metalanguage, and strategies such as the formulation of metalinguistic questions) as well as that of the teacher (e.g. use of pedagogic grammar and of 'naive' metalinguistic discourse), with a view to an eventual application in teacher education. Faerch (1985) also argues for research into classroom 'meta talk', primarily on the grounds that teachers have a strong commitment to it. He claims that meta talk which helps students establish and try out hypotheses about the target L2 is likely to be productive, whereas 'scaffolding' (supplying missing linguistic items so

as cooperatively to complete the learner's L2 utterance) is unlikely to be so in terms of classroom learning. Lastly, Chaudron (1985) reviews evidence from a small number of large scale multifactor studies of L2 classrooms (including Ramirez and Stromquist, 1979, and Mitchell et al., 1981), and concludes that teacher use of metalinguistic talk may have some positive impact on the development of classroom learners' L2 competence. (The last-mentioned study in fact found only a correlational relationship between frequency of teacher metalinguistic talk and pupil FL achievement; the researchers themselves commented that it was equally likely that teachers found it more rewarding to talk about language with pupils who were already high achievers, as that metalinguistic talk actually caused accelerated L2 development.)

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed studies concerning a range of structural and discorsal aspects of L2 teachers' classroom talk. These studies come from a wide variety of contexts, few of them paralleling at all closely the British FL classroom. The provision of more and fuller descriptive accounts of teacher talk, in British contexts as in others, is clearly required, if the further steps of attempting to relate particular features of teacher talk firstly to increased levels of comprehension, and secondly to learner L2

development, are to be undertaken with confidence.

The empirical study reported in following chapters therefore includes descriptions of selected structural and discoursal aspects of Scottish FL teachers' target language talk.

(Structural aspects are dealt with in Chapter 6, discoursal aspects in Chapters 5 and 7.) The particular aspects chosen for study, and the analytic procedures used, have been substantially influenced by the research reviewed in this chapter. The decision to study teachers' choice of vocabulary, and the extent of subordination in sentence patterns in their speech, follows a mainstream trend in studies of structural 'simplification'. The selection of teacher discourse moves for investigation in Chapter 5 depended largely on prior understandings of likely associations of particular 'managerial' move types with L1 or FL, derived from the literature surveyed here as well as from earlier Stirling studies. Finally, the study of teacher strategies for resolving comprehension difficulties generated in their own speech draws on those wider studies of proactive simplification strategies and of repair, discussed in Section 3.4.2 above.

CHAPTER 4

TARGET LANGUAGE TALK IN SCOTTISH CLASSROOM SETTINGS

4.1 Introduction

The second part of this thesis consists in an empirical investigation of target language use by teachers of French, in a small number of Scottish secondary school classrooms. This chapter outlines the design of this investigation, and its underlying rationale. It also explains the relationship between the investigation reported here, and the funded research project within the framework of which the data was collected. In Chapter 5, the extent of functional differentiation between the use of French and of English (the mother tongue of an overwhelming majority of both pupils and teachers) is investigated. In Chapter 6, structural characteristics of the French spoken by this group of teachers are described. In Chapter 7, the English- and French-medium strategies used by teachers in negotiating comprehension and repairing breakdowns in classroom communication are given particular attention. In all three chapters, distinctive characteristics of the language use patterns of the most, and least, French-speaking teachers are highlighted. Chapter 8 uses evidence from these three preceding chapters to draw

conclusions regarding the potential and constraints of the classroom setting for learner exposure to/involvement in 'naturalistic' target language use. Conclusions are also drawn regarding the particular language skills required of teachers if a high level of target language use is to be sustained in the classroom.

4.2 Rationale for the Present Study

It was the general aim of the present study to explore the question: How can use by teachers of the target language as a medium of communication be maximised, in the British FL classroom? In Chapter 1, arguments in favour of maximising pupils' exposure to communicative target language use in the classroom were reviewed, and largely accepted. In Chapter 2, Section 2.3, a review of evidence from a number of classroom studies concluded that in British contexts at least, the routine use of the target language as the main medium of classroom communication remains exceptional. It was thus the aim of this study to try to explain the continuing existence of this 'gap' between what is considered desirable on theoretical grounds, and current classroom practice.

Given this overall concern of the study, the research strategy which seemed most appropriate was an intensive study of the existing, 'normal' classroom behaviour of teachers working under ordinary school conditions, but in contexts

where likely inhibiting contextual factors had been reduced as far as possible. The first main purpose of such a study would be to produce a detailed description of overall language use patterns by teachers in these classrooms, to determine the extent and character of target language use. The second purpose would be to examine any variation found in the extent of teacher target language use between the classrooms studied, and to try to explain such variation as was encountered. Lastly, it was hoped that a detailed study of the language behaviour of the teachers who were most successful in sustaining target language use would yield suggestions as to how teachers not currently successful might most productively adapt their behaviour (though it was beyond the scope of the study to test any such suggestions systematically).

As a preliminary step to the selection of lesson material suitable for the study, therefore, contextual factors believed likely to influence the extent and character of target language use were reviewed and evaluated (as reported in Chapter 2). It seemed that certain teacher-related factors were likely to be of most importance. Teachers' own existing levels of target language competence were not seen as likely to prove a significant inhibiting factor; however, their beliefs about the nature of the L2 learning process, and about the appropriacy and feasibility of target language use for a range of syllabus topics and classroom activities, both managerial and instructional, seemed likely to exert a powerful influence on their choice of language during

classroom interaction.

This latter conclusion deriving from Chapter 2 implied that the issue of the feasibility of extended target language use should be investigated in the classrooms of teachers sharing a commitment to the concept, rather than in the classrooms of a randomly selected group. On the one hand, where 'committed' teachers were succeeding in sustaining target language use, the relationship between this success and their choice of syllabus content, classroom activities, and managerial strategies could be explored. On the other hand, where 'committed' teachers were proving unsuccessful in establishing the target language as a routine medium of classroom communication, this failure could not simply be dismissed as due to lack of effort. Study of this second type of classroom could be expected therefore to yield more detailed insights into the nature of the factors which act to inhibit target language use, than could be produced in the necessarily somewhat speculative Chapter 2.

Having determined the type of lesson material to be studied, it was necessary to consider the most appropriate analytic strategy to be used. It was clear from previous studies of L2 classrooms and of teachers' beliefs (considered in Chapters 2 and 3), that a multilevel analysis of language use patterns was required.

Firstly, some quantitative measure of the overall extent of target language and L1 use was needed, to confirm the existence of the presumed 'problem', and to establish the

extent of variation between classrooms on this dimension. The procedure for 'Speech Turns Analysis' described in Section 5.2 of Chapter 5 was developed for this purpose. Secondly, earlier studies conducted at Stirling University strongly suggested that teachers' decisionmaking at the macro, lesson-planning level regarding topics to be talked about and activities to be pursued, was an important factor in determining the extent of pupils' exposure to 'communicative' target language use. It was therefore proposed to analyse the sequences of teaching/ learning activities found in the lesson data selected for this study, using a modified version of a procedure developed by the author and others in a previous study conducted at the University of Stirling (Mitchell et al., 1981). This procedure and its application to the present data are also described in Chapter 5, Section 5.3.

By comparison with the earlier Stirling studies, the main innovation in the present study is the complementing of this macro-level analysis with further systematic investigations of the same data at greater levels of detail. It had always been clear to the Stirling group that teachers' language choices at levels below that of the teaching/ learning activity were significant in determining the quality of pupils' target language experiences, and the Stirling studies have included various qualitative commentaries on this issue, as well as some limited quantitative analyses (the most extended being found in Mitchell, 1985a). However, in the present study the decision was taken to pay much greater attention to these

lower levels. In fact, work was undertaken at three further such levels, two relating to a functional perspective on teacher talk, and the third adopting a structural perspective.

As the review in Chapter 3 shows, other researchers besides the Stirling group had paid increasing attention to functional aspects of teachers' classroom talk at a detailed level. It seemed from this review that teachers' language choices for utterances relating to a range of classroom management purposes, as well as for more general 'foreigner talk' requirements such as repairing communicative breakdowns, might be expected to vary systematically, according to function. If such patterning could be shown to exist, this might be expected at least partially to explain teacher language switching, and consequent impact on overall levels of target language use.

The functional study of teachers' language choices was undertaken at two levels. Certain types of interactive 'episode' with distinctive functions were identified within teaching/ learning activities, and teachers' language choices within these 'episodes' were studied. (The two types selected were 'metalinguistic' talk, discussed in Section 5.5 of Chapter 5, and episodes with the purpose of resolving perceived student comprehension difficulties, discussed in Chapter 7. The former was judged important because of teachers' commitment to this kind of talk, and their doubts about the feasibility of conducting it in the target language, expressed in the interview material reviewed in Chapter 2. The

latter have been generally recognised in the literature as significant for the maintenance of target language medium interaction, regardless of context, as we saw in Chapter 3.)

The most detailed level at which teachers' functional language choices were studied was that of the individual pedagogic 'move'. Particular managerial 'moves' of critical importance for the smooth running of the lesson, and associated in some previous studies with language switching in the direction of L1, were selected for study. Those chosen were various types of directive to do with the setting up of teaching/ learning activities, as well as disciplinary interventions. This part of the analysis is described in Section 5.4 of Chapter 5.

Lastly, a selective study of structural aspects of teachers' speech was carried out, at the levels of lexis, morphology and syntax. This descriptive analysis followed in the tradition of a considerable number of studies (reviewed in Chapter 3). It was undertaken here partly because of the sheer lack of such descriptive accounts for British classroom settings, partly to permit explorations of associations between the overall extent of target language use, teachers' functional language choices, and the structural patterns to which pupils were exposed in their teachers' speech.

The outcome of the study was thus intended to be a rich description of classroom target language use by FL teachers predisposed towards it, together with an exploration of the factors determining its character. Such descriptive accounts

are necessary preliminaries to more ambitious (and more controlled) studies exploring the relationship between classroom experience of which target language is a part, and the course of pupils' FL development, and no attempt was made on this occasion to relate the description of teacher language behaviour to pupil progress.

The relative neglect of pupil language in this study at even a descriptive level requires some commentary, however. The only part of the study where pupil language was taken account of systematically was the 'Speech Turns Analysis'. This revealed much less variation in pupils' language use than in that of their teachers (pupils tended to speak a lot of French, regardless of how much or how little their teachers spoke); in particular, there was no clear evidence of a positive relationship between the amount of French spoken by the pupils and that spoken by the teachers. Furthermore, preliminary inspection of the data suggested that while the teachers identified as consistent target language speakers had a highly interactive communicative style (e.g. using comprehension checks with great frequency), their prime concern was to ensure student involvement and comprehension. Provided pupils participated in the interactive process, the language in which they did so did not appear to be a substantial influence on the teachers' own language choice. It was therefore not judged essential to study pupils' language choice as a main factor likely to affect the extent of target language use by teachers.

One aspect of pupils' use of French was seriously considered as a possible object of study. It was anticipated that their attempts to use the target language for communicative purposes would generate comprehension problems at times for the teacher; in order to study the teachers' strategies for 'repair' of such pupil-originated breakdowns, it would have been necessary to give a systematic account of the pupil contribution. However, inspection of the data revealed pupils' utterances in French to consist overwhelmingly of 'language rehearsal' rather than message-oriented, creative language use. Where pupils did engage in the latter type of FL use, the context was typically so strictly controlled that the teachers were virtually always in a position to predict the pupil's message without the need for clarification strategies. This proposed analysis was therefore abandoned.

The last aspect of the research design requiring general comment is the size of sample chosen. It was felt important to include a reasonable number of teachers in the study, such as to allow for the identification of two or three subgroups for comparative purposes. On the other hand, given the range of analytic procedures to be applied to the data, it was felt that one lesson per teacher constituted the maximum practicable sample of that individual's talk. This decision restricted the conclusions which could be drawn from the study in certain respects. There was of course the problem of the 'typicality' of the individual lesson chosen to represent each

teacher's communicative style. This problem was most acute for the macro-analysis of lesson activities; for each teacher, only a small sample of the total repertoire of activity types in regular use in that classroom might be seen. The analysis at this level is correspondingly cautious. However, it was thought that at more detailed levels of analysis this problem would be much less acute. That is, teachers would be likely to display much of their normal repertoire of managerial strategies, and of their usual linguistic level, within the framework of a single lesson. The main restriction imposed on the study overall by the decision to make individual lessons the sampling unit was that comparisons between individual teachers, as opposed to those between teacher subgroups, were inevitably of limited value.

4.3 Relationship of the Present Study and the 1980 - 1983 Communicative Interaction Research Project

The data analysed in the present study were collected within the framework of a research project located in the Department of Education at the University of Stirling, between October 1980 and September 1983. The full title of this research project was "Communicative Interaction in Elementary FL Teaching in Formal School Settings"; this title was commonly abbreviated to the "Communicative Interaction Project" (CI Project), and this name will be used here. The project was

funded by the Scottish Education Department, and co-directed by Richard Johnstone, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Education, and the present author. The latter was also employed on a full time basis, as the sole research worker on the project. She was sole author of the Final Report of this project, which is available from the Department of Education, University of Stirling (Mitchell, 1985a).

The Communicative Interaction Project involved four main phases of data collection. These were:

A) An interview survey investigating teachers' views regarding the 'communicative' movement in FL teaching. These interviews were fully analysed within the framework of the CI Project, and the findings from the survey are reported in detail in Chapter 3 of the 1985 Final Report; aspects relevant to the present study are summarised in Chapter 2 above.

B) An observational study, in which 13 teachers involved in developmental projects sharing a commitment to a 'communicative' approach were observed teaching French at S1 or S2 level, each over a period of two weeks. During these two weeks, the teachers were followed through the sequence of lessons taught to a single class, and extensive notes were taken on the spot regarding the sequence and character of activities making up each lesson, and the extent of target language and L1 use. A proportion of the lessons observed during the second week were audiorecorded.

The lessons observed during this phase of the project were reported on in summary form only, in the Final Report of the CI Project. The overall pattern of teaching activities was analysed on the basis of the observer's on-the-spot notes alone (in Chapter 4). These notes also provided the basis for the outline sketch given in Chapter 7 of that Report of structural characteristics of teachers' FL talk. The audiorecorded lessons were not systematically transcribed or analysed; the only use made of these recordings was as one source of exemplification, among others, in the chapters discussing functional aspects of classroom talk (Chapters 8 and 9).

C) An interventionist phase, in which the teachers observed during Phase B undertook a range of small scale action research studies, investigating some aspect of

'communicative' methodology (e.g. the use of role play, or the teaching of 'background' material through the target FL). These studies consisted in the planning, observation and evaluation of single lessons or lesson episodes, jointly by the researcher and the individual teachers concerned. The 'focus' lessons were audiorecorded and transcribed, and aspects relevant to the individual action research studies analysed; the studies were fully reported in the CI Project Final Report (Chapters 5 and 6).

D) A longitudinal case study, in which a single teacher was followed for a period of 30 weeks from the start of the school year, teaching French to a new S1 class. The purpose of the longitudinal study was to explore the effects on 'communicative' FL teaching, including extent of target language use, of 'routinisation' over a relatively extended period of time. The teacher was observed and audiorecorded once a week during this period; a proportion of the lessons was transcribed, and structural and functional aspects of the teacher's target language talk were systematically analysed using this sample of transcribed lessons. This longitudinal study was fully reported in the Final Report (Chapter 10).

The present study is linked in three main ways with the CI Project. Firstly, the data analysed here are drawn from those collected within the framework of the CI Project (lessons audiorecorded during Phase B, but not then transcribed or analysed, and a selection of lessons recorded during Phase C). Secondly, the analytic procedures applied here to the classroom audiorecordings are derived from those developed within the CI Project (notably from the procedures developed for the longitudinal case study.). Thirdly, several of the hypotheses investigated fully in the present study were first developed on the basis of limited qualitative analyses within the framework of the CI Project.

4.4 The Database for the Present Study

The main database for the present study thus consists in two sets of French lessons, audiorecorded in the classrooms of the teachers participating in Phases B and C of the CI Project.

4.4.1 The selection of teachers

The teachers involved in these phases of the CI Project had not been selected at random. The project was concerned with studying the practices of teachers having some degree of commitment to 'communicative' language teaching (e.g. actively trying to promote classroom use of the target FL), and not with sampling the classroom practices of the Scottish FL teaching profession at large. (Since the present investigation is also concerned with the potential for target language use of teachers working in typical conditions but with maximum personal potential, the criteria for selection used in the CI Project remained appropriate.)

The location of such a group of teachers involved several stages. As a preliminary 'screening' procedure, it was required that the teachers should be involved in at least one of three substantial developmental projects currently ongoing in Scottish secondary schools, with a shared commitment to a 'communicative' approach to FL teaching. (For summary accounts of these projects, see Chapter 2 above, and also Mitchell, 1985a, pp 3 - 4.)

As the first stage in the selection procedure, the leaders of the different development projects were each asked to nominate 12 schools whose modern languages departments were actively involved in their respective schemes. From among these 12 schools per project, seven schools per project were selected at random. During the first phase of the CI Project, staff in the modern languages departments of 20 of these schools took part in the interview survey summarised in Chapter 2 above. The interview survey generated important data in its own right, but was also used as a further screening mechanism, in order to identify the most active and 'committed' departments within the group of 20. Finally, four departments perceived on the basis of the interview data as generally highly committed to communicative FL teaching were invited to participate in the observational and action research phases of the CI Project. Within these departments, 14 teachers of French agreed to cooperate (in three out of the four departments, all teachers of French at S1/S2 level were involved). Thirteen of these teachers were available during Phase B; ten completed action research studies during Phase C.

4.4.2 The first set of lessons (non-interventionist)

The set of French lessons which forms the main database for this study is drawn from the lessons audiorecorded during Phase B. The set consists of 13 S1 and S2 lessons audiorecorded between October and December 1981. These

lessons (one per teacher) were audiorecorded during the second week of observation of the classes concerned; teacher and pupils had thus had some opportunity to become used to the presence of the researcher in the classroom. They were however in most cases the first lesson audiorecorded; the fact of audiorecording occasionally appeared to the observer to raise teachers' anxiety levels somewhat, at least initially. (For the purposes of the CI Project, and of the present study, however, this was not seen as a serious disadvantage. Both studies were concerned to investigate teachers' attempts to implement various aspects of 'communicative' pedagogy, as they interpreted it, in their classrooms. This concern of the researcher was known to the teachers, although during the observational phase all lesson planning etc. was solely the teachers' business. Thus the presence of the observer, and perhaps more so, of her tape recorder, might be expected to act as an extra stimulus to the teachers to heighten their attempts to implement whatever they perceived 'communicative' teaching to consist of. This of course limits the 'typicality' of the lessons observed, and the nature of the generalisations which can be based upon these observations. However, as it was the limited aim of the present study to establish the conditions under which extensive target language use for classroom communication might be feasible, given a clear commitment to it on the teacher's part, the probability that the teachers concerned in these studies were making special efforts to maximise target language use was if anything

helpful to the research.)

Details of this first set of lessons are shown in Table 4.1. The schools' names have been changed, and the teachers

Table 4.1

Details of Audiorecorded Lessons (Observational Study)

School	Teacher	Date of recording	Class	No.pupils	Timetabled minutes	No.words
Palmer High School	TA	6/10/81	S1	29	40	3358
	TB	5/10/81	S2	28	40	5497
	TC	5/10/81	S2	24	30	3453
	TD	7/10/81	S1	30	40	4591
Bloomfield High School	TE	28/10/81	S2	19	60	8120
	TF	27/10/81	S2	?	60	10010
	TG	22/10/81	S1	30	60	6809
	TH	27/10/81	S1	28	60	7626
Sweet Grammar School	TI	19/11/81	S2	21	80	8236
	TJ	20/11/81	S2	25	80	4870
	TK	19/11/81	S1	23	80	7819
Jespersen Academy	TL	7/12/81	S1	23	80	13135
	TM	7/12/81	S2	26	80	9690

are identified by letter only, here and throughout the rest of the thesis. The variation in lesson length shown (from a timetabled time of 30 minutes to 80 minutes) is due partly to variations in timetabling in individual schools; thus for example, the standard lesson in Palmer High School was 40 minutes long, that in Bloomfield High School was 60 minutes. Otherwise the variation is due to the chance factor of whether lessons observed were single periods (as were all those in Palmer), or double periods (as were all those in Jespersen Academy).

It was decided to make the individual lesson the basic sampling unit, rather than some standardised period of time, even though it was recognised that this would lead to the considerable variations in the length of observation of each class which indeed resulted. The principal reason for this was the researcher's concern with functional aspects of classroom talk. In which language were lessons begun, and in which language were they ended? Within the lesson itself, in which language were individual teaching/ learning activities of different types introduced, managed and concluded? In order satisfactorily to answer such questions, it was necessary to record and study complete lessons as planned, organic units with a pedagogically coherent internal structure.

Twin-track recordings had been made of the 13 lessons, using a radio-controlled lapel microphone to record the teacher's speech on one track, and a high quality omnidirectional microphone to record all whole-class interaction between teacher and pupils on the second track. This combination provided intelligible recordings of virtually all whole-class interaction, plus intelligible recordings of the teacher and his/her interlocutors during periods of non-whole-class interaction (such as pair or group work). Limitations to this procedure were two-fold: a) it was not possible to identify systematically the contributions of individual pupils to whole class discourse, and b) during non-whole-class activities, pupils not interacting directly with the teacher were not recorded. However, the procedure

provided a good record of all classroom talk involving the teacher.

These 13 lessons were transcribed by the researcher using standard orthographic conventions (except that clearly non-standard realisations of French, mostly but not exclusively produced by the pupils, were transcribed phonetically). A sample extract from one of these transcriptions is included as Appendix A to this thesis.

In addition to lesson length, Table 4.1 shows the approximate number of words per lesson, as counted automatically during the process of transcription, by the "Wordwise" word processing programme. (This counting mechanism is likely to have provided a systematic underestimate, as hyphenated words, or words linked by an apostrophe, are counted as single units by this programme. However, crude as the procedure is, it provides a reasonable guide to the relative quantities of talk generated in the different lessons.) The most striking feature of this word count is of course the great variation in the rate of speech prevailing in the different classrooms (from 60.9 words per minute in the classroom of Teacher J, to 166.8 words per minute in the classroom of Teacher F).

This first set of lessons provides the main data corpus for the present study. Functional aspects of target language and L1 use in these lessons are analysed in Chapter 5; structural aspects of target language use are analysed in Chapter 6; and teachers' strategies for the negotiation of

meaning and repair of breakdowns in classroom communication are analysed in Chapter 7.

4.4.3 The second set of lessons (interventionist)

The second set of lessons analysed here are a selection from among those which formed the focus of the range of action research investigations carried out during Phase C of the CI Project. Unlike the first group of lessons, which were planned by the teacher alone, the lessons in the second group were taught by the teachers after extensive consultation with the researcher, and negotiation of an agreed topic for study in an action research framework. These lessons were thus consciously planned to include activities judged significant and/or problematic for the promotion of message-oriented target language use in the classroom. They were audiorecorded in a similar manner to the first set of lessons, and similarly transcribed. Previously analysed within the framework of the CI Project in relation to the specific research questions asked in an action research framework, a selection of these transcripts was reanalysed for the purposes of the present study on one specific dimension, relevant to the concerns of Chapter 7 below: the strategies used by teachers in these lessons for the negotiation of meaning and the solving of comprehension difficulties posed for pupils in their speech. It was felt that while the 'bias' introduced into these lessons by the intervention of the researcher in lesson

planning made them unsuitable for the initial investigation of teachers' 'natural' patterns of FL and L1 use, reported in Chapters 5 and 6, the requirements imposed by the action research studies (generally calling on teachers to extend the scope of target language use in various ways) made them highly suitable for a supplement to the investigation of communication and repair strategies.

Lastly, the fact that the second series of lessons was recorded mainly in the classrooms of the same group of teachers, after an interval of some months had elapsed (though not with the same classes), provided some opportunity to look for development or change at least in the strategies being used by individual teachers to promote comprehension, and this issue is also commented on briefly in Chapter 7.

CHAPTER 5

FUNCTIONAL DIFFERENTIATION IN LANGUAGE USE

5.1 Introduction

This chapter considers the extent of functional differentiation between the use of French and that of English by the group of teachers being studied. As we saw in Chapter 4, this issue is tackled at a number of different levels. In Section 5.2 the teachers are divided into groups of high overall French users, mid French users, and low French users, on the basis of a simple quantitative measure (the number of speech turns in their lessons which were French-medium, English-medium, or mixed). Section 5.3 defines and outlines the range of teaching/ learning activities organised by the teachers in the set of recorded lessons, and provides an overall characterisation of the intended language medium of these activities. Further sections examine teachers' language choices for a range of types of talk interspersed within these activities: organising and directive talk, disciplinary interventions, and metastatements about the nature of language. The use of French and English for these various purposes by the groups of teachers characterised overall as 'High', 'Mid' and 'Low' French users is examined, in the

attempt to elucidate possible variational patterns: e.g. do low users of French make use of the language for a restricted set of functions only, or are they intermittent users of the language over the full range of functions?

5.2 Identifying 'High', 'Mid' and 'Low' French users

In order to make a preliminary characterisation of the overall extent to which teachers used French and English in their lessons, an analysis of the corpus of lessons was carried out in which each complete speech turn produced by teacher or pupil(s) was categorised by language.

The results of this analysis are shown in Table 5.1. 'FL' speech turns are those completed monolingually in French; 'L1' speech turns are those completed monolingually in English; and 'Mixed' speech turns are those in which both languages were used. 'Unintelligible' turns are those which were completely uninterpretable from the audiorecording, though they may have been intelligible to participants. (These were very rare in the teachers' speech, but constituted 5.1 per cent of the total number of pupil speech turns in the corpus.)

The table reflects considerable variation in the overall extent to which the two languages were used in the different classrooms. A small number of teachers, all from Palmer High School, spoke no, or virtually no, English at all (Teachers A, B, and C). At the other end of the scale, the two teachers

Table 5.1
Teacher and Pupil Speech Turns, Analysed by Language

Teacher		Teacher Speech Turns					Pupil Speech Turns				
		FL	L1	Mixed	Unint	Total	FL	L1	Mixed	Unint	Total
TB	n %	296 99.7	0 0.0	0 0.0	1 0.3	297 100.0	317 90.6	9 2.6	6 1.7	18 5.1	350 100.0
TC	n %	205 99.5	1 0.5	0 0.0	0 0.0	206 100.0	209 97.2	2 0.9	1 0.5	3 1.4	215 100.0
TA	n %	155 96.3	1 0.6	4 2.5	1 0.6	161 100.0	133 72.7	27 14.8	5 2.7	18 9.8	183 100.0
TJ	n %	266 89.3	9 3.0	23 7.7	0 0.0	298 100.0	137 47.4	107 37.0	9 3.1	36 12.5	289 100.0
TD	n %	254 86.7	8 2.7	31 10.6	0 0.0	293 100.0	250 77.2	26 8.0	3 0.9	45 13.9	324 100.0
TE	n %	397 79.7	18 3.6	83 16.7	0 0.0	498 100.0	413 83.1	51 10.3	17 3.4	16 3.2	497 100.0
TI	n %	281 57.9	47 9.7	157 32.4	0 0.0	485 100.0	284 55.4	144 28.1	25 4.9	60 11.7	513 100.0
TG	n %	181 53.4	58 17.1	100 29.5	0 0.0	339 100.0	259 71.3	77 21.2	4 1.1	23 6.3	363 100.0
TK	n %	100 34.0	92 31.3	102 34.7	0 0.0	294 100.0	162 50.2	103 31.9	20 6.2	38 11.8	323 100.0
TH	n %	63 21.2	80 26.9	154 51.9	0 0.0	297 100.0	178 55.1	105 32.5	16 5.0	24 7.4	323 100.0
TF	n %	56 18.1	157 50.8	96 31.1	0 0.0	309 100.0	95 33.0	128 44.4	3 1.0	62 21.5	288 100.0
TL	n %	44 12.9	94 27.5	204 59.6	0 0.0	342 100.0	178 52.4	98 28.8	21 6.2	43 12.6	340 100.0
TM	n %	28 12.7	94 42.7	98 44.5	0 0.0	220 100.0	99 45.6	77 35.5	3 1.4	38 17.5	217 100.0

from Jespersen Academy (Teachers L and M) produced very small proportions of French-only speech turns (12.9 per cent and 12.7 per cent respectively). However, Teacher F was the only person to produce a majority of English-only speech turns; mixed-language turns were the commonest type in the speech of Teachers K, H, L and M.

While the central concern of this thesis is with teachers' classroom talk, the relationship between the overall pattern of French and English usage in the speech turns of the teacher and those of the pupils (also shown in Table 5.1) merits brief comment. Only the two teachers who themselves used the very highest proportion of French (Teachers B and C) enforced a virtually French-only policy as far as their pupils' speech was concerned. However, over 80 per cent of intelligible pupil speech turns were also in French only, in the lessons of Teachers A, D and E. But Teacher J, also a relatively high-level French user as far as his own talk was concerned, tolerated substantial proportions of all-English speech turns from his pupils (over 40 per cent of intelligible pupil turns).

The teachers who used relatively less French in their own speech, however, by no means dropped the requirement that their pupils should use the target language to a considerable extent. In only one classroom (that of Teacher F) was the proportion of pupil L1 turns higher than the proportion of FL turns. This was also the only lesson in which all-English turns comprised an absolute majority of intelligible pupil

turns (56.6 per cent). Thus in several lessons, the proportion of all-FL turns in pupil speech was substantially higher than the proportion of such turns in teacher speech; for example, almost 60 per cent of the intelligible speech turns produced by the pupils of Teacher L were all-French, whereas in the teacher's own speech only 12.9 per cent of speech turns were entirely in French. Mixed-language turns were generally much scarcer in pupil speech (3.5 per cent of the grand total of intelligible pupil turns).

Different profiles of overall language use thus emerged for the different classrooms, with three-way variation among the teachers (differing proportions of FL, L1 and mixed-language turns) combining with two-way variation among the pupils (effectively, differing proportions of FL and L1 turns).

However, the prime concern of the present study was with teachers' ability to make the target language a consistent medium of classroom communication, and so provide their pupils with extensive exposure to message-oriented FL input. Of the various options arising from the initial analysis of speech turns, the proportion of FL-only turns in teacher talk was judged to be the most reliable indicator available of teachers' degree of commitment to establishing FL use as an effective medium of communication. The proportion of French in pupil talk could not be taken as a reliable indicator, as it was clearly possible that such talk might consist entirely of 'practice FL' - the structurally- constrained rehearsal of

language forms, without communicative effect. Without further analysis the proportion of mixed-language turns in teacher talk could also not be relied on as an indicator of the likely extent of communicative FL use by teachers. Again, within such turns, the possibility could not be discounted of the English element performing the main message-carrying functions, while the French element was restricted to the modelling of target language forms. On the other hand, the more consistently teachers used French alone, throughout complete speech turns, the greater the expectation that at least some of this FL talk would have a 'communicative' focus.

On the basis of this dimension of the speech turns analysis presented in Table 5.1 therefore, the teachers were divided into three unequally sized groups of 'High', 'Mid' and 'Low' French users.

The 'High FL User' group comprised six teachers: Teachers A, B, C, D, E and J. These teachers, four of whom came from one school (Palmer), used only French in two-thirds or more of their own speech turns. (In fact this criterion was considerably exceeded by all members of this group; the lowest percentage of FL turns occurred in the speech of Teacher E, who produced virtually 80 per cent of such turns.) In addition, no member of this 'High FL User' group produced more than four per cent of English-only turns. This group also made the lowest use of 'mixed-language' turns (never more than 17 per cent of the total).

The 'Low FL User' group comprises five teachers: Teachers

F, H, K, L and M. (Two of these teachers were colleagues at Jespersen Academy, and two others were among the four from Bloomfield High School.) One-third or less of these teachers' speech turns were French-only, and between a quarter and a half of their speech turns were English-only; they were thus also the most substantial users of 'mixed-language' turns (over 50 per cent in two cases).

Only two teachers could be categorised as 'Mid FL Users': Teachers I and G. Both these teachers produced between 50 and 60 per cent of their speech turns in French only; however, less than 20 per cent of their speech turns were English-only. They also consequently were in an intermediate position regarding the production of 'mixed-language' speech turns.

These groupings will be referred to later in this chapter and in Chapters 6 and 7, as an aid to the interpretation of analyses made at a greater level of detail of structural and functional aspects of teachers' language use.

5.3 The Overall Pattern of Teaching/ Learning Activities

The second task undertaken was an analysis of the sequence of teaching/ learning activities (TLAs) of which each individual lesson was composed. This activity-level analysis was undertaken as a first step in generating an overall description of these lessons, in terms of the range and character of the FL language experiences they provided. An

initial picture had already been obtained of the quantity of French and English spoken in these lessons. But the analysis of speech turns gave no information about how the use of the two languages was structured overall. Were they closely intermingled, without functional differentiation? Or, were French and English each identified with particular phases within the lesson, and used exclusively at particular times? What topics were talked about in the course of these lessons, planned or impromptu, and which language was chosen for talk about the different kinds of content which were found? Were the patterns found in previous studies, e.g. the association of the use of English with content areas such as culture/ background studies, or grammatical topics, repeated in these lessons? And where the target language was spoken, what was the balance in the range of experience provided, between receptive and interactive/ productive experience on the one hand, and between structurally- controlled rehearsal of target language forms through drills and exercises and message-oriented, structurally unconstrained target language use? Information on these issues was needed in order to evaluate the overall extent of involvement in communicative target language use being provided by these 'committed' teachers for their pupils; it was felt that such questions could legitimately be answered by an analysis of the lesson corpus at the level of the teaching/ learning activity.

An additional reason for undertaking a systematic analysis at this ^{level} was the recognition that it is at this level that

teachers typically plan their lessons, making conscious decisions concerning what topics will be talked about and what language experiences will be provided. Thus the sequence of teaching/ learning activities to be found in the lessons selected for study were seen as a consciously-planned organising framework for pupils' FL classroom language experience. This was a level of lesson structure at which it was envisaged that teachers could fairly easily be expected to change their behaviour, if it could ultimately be shown that this would significantly alter the extent of message-oriented target language experience provided overall for pupils.

5.3.1 Procedures for the study of lesson 'segments'

The analysis of teaching/ learning activities was conducted according to the general principles outlined in "The Foreign Language Classroom: An Observational Study" (Mitchell et al., 1981).

This monograph reports on a large-scale observational study of first year French lessons in randomly- selected Scottish secondary schools. The data were gathered during the 1977 - 78 school year, and consisted of 147 audiorecorded lessons taught by 17 teachers. These lessons were analysed directly from audiotape, using a specially-developed instrument designed a) to identify the sequence of teaching/ learning activities within each lesson, and b) to characterise these activities on a number of dimensions designed to

"reflect current theoretical insights concerning the optimal environment for FL learning in classrooms" (Mitchell et al., 1981, p 11). Most notably, the analysis scheme was designed to reflect the extent to which classroom TLAs were providing pupils with experience of open-ended, contextualised and creative target language use (as opposed to the provision of information about the language on the one hand, and that of opportunities for rehearsal of formal aspects of the language system on the other).

A slightly modified and simplified version of this instrument was considered suitable for the identification and summary description of TLAs in the lesson corpus under discussion in this thesis, for three reasons: 1) the theoretical concerns of the 1981 study were congruent with the focus of the present study on 'communicative' methodology (although the classrooms then described turned out to be highly UNcommunicative), 2) the reliability of the instrument was known (Mitchell et al., pp 96 - 100), and 3) as a co-developer of the system, the present author was thoroughly familiar with it.

A full account of the instrument is provided in Chapter 3 of the 1981 monograph. Except in respect of minor modifications mentioned below, the system was used here according to the procedures there described in full. Only a summary account of the system is therefore given here.

The basic unit of analysis in the system is the lesson 'segment' (roughly corresponding to the commonsense notion of

a teaching/ learning activity). The segment is defined as

"A stretch of lesson discourse, having a particular topic, and involving the participants (teacher and pupils) in a distinctive configuration of roles, linguistic and organisational". (Mitchell et al., 1981, p 12)

Segment boundaries are defined as changes in the PATTERN OF EXPECTATION of teacher and pupils as to what will count during some given episode as an appropriate contribution to the ongoing talk of the lesson (e.g. a change from repetition to copywriting, as the expected pupil response to teacher utterances in FL). In the 1981 instrument, a coding change on any one of the four major dimensions of the system (see next paragraph) entailed a segment boundary. In addition, the occurrence of 'focusing' and 'framing' discourse moves (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975) signalled the likelihood of a segment boundary, though their presence was not criterial for recognising one.

5.3.1.1 Four dimensions for analysis

The four dimensions on which lesson segments were coded in the final version of the 1981 instrument were:

1. The topic of discourse
2. The type of language activity
3. The mode of involvement of pupils in the discourse
4. The form of class organisation.

The 'Topic' dimension was designed to recover information regarding what was being talked about in individual lesson segments. The 'Language Activity' dimension was especially concerned with aspects of the linguistic experience provided for pupils which appeared on the basis of current theoretical understandings to be particularly important for FL learning. In particular this dimension was designed to capture a) the balance of FL activities of all kinds on the one hand, and those involving use of the native language on the other; b) the extent of FL use to any substantive 'communicative' purpose; and c) the popularity of various types of 'practice' FL activity. The 'Pupil Mode of Involvement' dimension conceptualised the ways in which teachers required pupils to involve themselves in individual segments in terms of a set of overt behavioural indicators. Six 'channels of communication', three receptive and three productive, were defined as binary categories; each segment was to receive positive or negative coding on all six categories. Lastly, the 'Class Organisation' dimension was intended to collect data on the pupil grouping patterns planned and implemented by the teacher.

The sets of categories used for each of the four dimensions are listed in Figure 5.1. Summary definitions for each category are listed in Appendix B.

Figure 5.1

Dimensions for the Coding of Lesson Segments

1. TOPIC OF DISCOURSE

1. Civilisation
2. General linguistic notions
3. Language point
4. Situation
5. Real life
6. Fragmented/ non-contextualised
7. Setting homework
8. Checking homework
9. Greetings
10. Attendance
11. Packing up
12. Organisation
13. Other

3. PUPIL MODE OF INVOLVEMENT

1. Listening
2. Looking
3. Reading
4. Speaking
5. Doing
6. Writing

2. LANGUAGE ACTIVITY

1. Translation
2. L1
3. Real FL
4. Transposition
5. Presentation
6. Imitation
7. Drill/exercise
8. Compound

4. CLASS ORGANISATION

1. Whole class
2. Pupil demonstration
3. Cooperative, same task
4. Cooperative, different task
5. Individual, same task
6. Individual, different task
7. Cooperative and individual.

5.3.1.2 Adaptations to the 1981 system

The thirteen lessons of the present corpus were coded according to the 1981 system outlined above, with some minor modifications intended to adapt it to the focus of the present study. These modifications were:

A. Abolition of the minimum time requirement. In the 1981 study where coding was undertaken directly from audiotape, any 'pattern of expectation' which failed to last for a minimum time period of 30 seconds was not awarded segment status, but conflated with a preceding or following segment. In the present study, coding was undertaken from lesson transcripts. Application of the minimum time requirement was impractical (because of known variation in the rate of talk in different classrooms), and in any case inappropriate given the concern of the present study with aspects of the internal structuring of TLAs. Thus in the present analysis, all identified segments were coded regardless of length (which was measured in terms of numbers of transcript lines, rather than time units).

B. Reduction in the number of dimensions on which change was considered criterial for identifying segment boundaries. In the 1981 study, a coding change on any of the four dimensions entailed recognition of a new segment. In the present study, changes on only two dimensions ('Topic' and 'Language Activity') were considered criterial; changes on the 'Pupil Mode of Involvement' and 'Class Organisation' dimensions, if unaccompanied by changes on either of the first two dimensions, were taken as marking subdivisions within an ongoing segment. Thus for example, if a TLA initially undertaken as a whole class activity was immediately repeated as a paired activity, the two episodes were coded as the first and second subsections of a single ongoing segment.

(The reason for this change was again the concern of the present study with the internal structure of lesson segments. The managerial/ communicational task of the teacher was considered likely to be qualitatively different, when initiating a new topic and/or language activity, from that of switching from one class grouping pattern to another. In the one case, options are infinitely varied, and the message to be communicated to pupils correspondingly more difficult to predict; in the other, options are very limited, and pupils familiar with their teachers are likely to have developed highly stereotyped expectations, making the communicational task for the teacher correspondingly easier. It therefore seemed appropriate that the analysis of 'Organising' and 'Activity Instructions' reported below in Section 5.4.3.1 should distinguish between occasions where new

topics/language activities were being introduced, and those where the only novel element was a change in the organisational pattern of instruction.)

C. Recognition of new segments depending on introduction of new language material. In the 1981 system, since a coding change on one or other major dimension was criterial for recognising a segment boundary, no such boundary could be recognised as long as a particular set of codings remained in force. Thus for example, where a series of structural drills or exercises rehearsing different language material followed one another, provided the 'Topic' and 'Language Activity' codings remained unchanged, the drill sequence was counted as a single segment.

For present purposes, however, it was considered more appropriate to allow recognition of a segment change in such circumstances. In terms of the original category definitions, this means that some subdivision of the 'Topic' categories 'Language Point' and 'Fragmented/Noncontextualised' was allowed; where changes in the language material being dealt with under these categorisations were identified, the start of a new segment was recognised. Again, the rationale for this change lay in the present concern with the internal structuring of segments, and in particular with teachers' language choices in introducing them. Changes in the language material being dealt with were judged likely to make communicational demands on the teacher of a similar order to those entailed in shifts between the already-established 'Topic' categories, and it was therefore felt appropriate to give them equivalent status.

D. Subdivision of 'Routine' Topic category. A further change involved the subdivision of this category into six new categories, with the intention of capturing teachers' global language choices for a range of non-TLA-specific managerial functions in greater detail. The new categories were defined as follows:

GREETINGS

The expression of initial greetings, at the start of the lesson

ATTENDANCE

All talk with the object of getting an accurate record of pupil attendance at the lesson (e.g. roll call)

PACKING UP

Talk at the end of the lesson, to do with tidying up, farewells, and pupils' exit from the room

ORGANISATION

All other routine topics, unrelated to the accomplishment of specific TLAs.

E. Abandonment of the 'coursebook'/'other' distinction. In the 1981 system, the researchers were concerned to discover the extent to which teachers followed, or deviated from, coursebook material; consequently on the 'Topic' dimension, separate categories were established for 'Situation (Coursebook)' and 'Situation (Other)', and for 'Language Point (Coursebook)' and 'Language Point (Other)'. This distinction was not considered important for the present study and these four categories were consequently collapsed into two.

F. Establishment of homework-oriented categories. Two categories were included on the 'Topic' dimension to take account of the setting and checking of homework. These were defined as follows:

SETTING HOMEWORK

Talk in which homework assignments are set

CHECKING HOMEWORK

Talk to do with the completion and evaluation of previously assigned homework tasks.

(The old 'Pupil Performance' category of the 1981 system was conflated with the latter new category.)

5.3.1.3 Limitations of the segmental analysis system

Even with these adaptations, all relatively minor in character, the system as applied to the present data shared some of the limitations of the original scheme, some of which

are relevant to the concerns of the present study.

Firstly, the system generates a picture of lesson structure as a sequence of autonomous TLAs, and does not reflect any higher organising or sequencing principle which may relate TLAs to one another. Thus thematic or structural relationships between TLAs are ignored by the system. This causes problems for e.g. the analysis of 'overview' talk, such as occasions where the teacher lays out the goals for a complete unit of work, or lists the activities to be carried out over the course of a lesson. (See Section 5.4.3.2 for a discussion of such talk in relation to the present data.)

Similarly, the system cannot handle the notion of embedding: thus for example, where one lesson segment occurs nested within another, this will be analysed as a sequence of three autonomous TLAs, where -apparently coincidentally - segments one and three have identical codings on all dimensions.

Secondly, even where it is being used for the analysis of lesson transcripts rather than for direct coding of audiotaped data, the system is relatively insensitive to detailed variation in the character of classroom talk. Within the boundaries of a given lesson segment there may be many exchanges and small episodes which do not fit the currently-prevailing 'pattern of expectation' (e.g. where a student is reprimanded for inattention, in the course of an activity such as a structural drill). As long as such incidents do not develop sufficiently to challenge and alter

the established 'pattern of expectation', however, their presence is ignored by the system. While the analysis of the lesson data in terms of this system will be useful in locating certain types of discourse move which have a clear role in structuring the individual TLA, therefore, there are other types of move (such as the just-mentioned disciplinary move) which have no clear relationship with TLA structure, and whose presence in the data must be discovered by alternative procedures (see Section 5.4.3.3 below).

Lastly, the segmental analysis system records only the nature of the 'core' tasks prescribed by the teacher during particular stretches of lesson discourse, and not that of the ancillary routines which may accompany it. This degree of idealisation is especially critical for the categorisation of segments on the 'Language Activity' dimension. Here, segments are categorised according to the teacher's apparent intentions for the substantive language through which the TLA will be performed. However, the teacher's own choice of language for the management of the activity, and teachers' and pupils' choice of language for such subroutines as the incidental checking of comprehension of necessary FL items, may substantially affect the balance of actual language behaviour within the segment. The most extreme example occurring in the present data is an episode in the lesson taught by Teacher K, in which the prescribed activity involved the drawing and labelling of fruit pictures. Copying a French-medium label for the picture was the only prescribed language task within the

segment, which was consequently coded as 'Imitation' (i.e. an FL category) on the 'Language Activity' dimension. However, all management talk, and all pupil-pupil talk, during this lengthy segment was English-medium. Thus the coding system operates at a level of abstraction which at times gives a misleading impression regarding the quality of the substantive language experience provided for the pupils. The system does not operate at a level of detail capable of catching such variation; again, the need for supplementation with a lower-level analysis e.g. of teacher management language is clear.

5.3.2 Findings of the segmental analysis

The findings of the segmental analysis are presented in Tables 5.2 - 5.8. A total of 167 segments was identified in the 13 lessons: 99 in the six S1 lessons, and 68 in the seven S2 lessons. There was thus a striking difference in the average number of segments per lesson, between the two year levels: this worked out at 16.5 segments per S1 lesson, and 9.7 segments per S2 lesson. Variation thus appears to have been of greater importance for the S1 teachers than for the S2 teachers, who were prepared to concentrate on particular activities for considerably longer stretches of talk. 'Teaching' segments tended to be longer than 'Routine' segments. The longest segment in the corpus (an activity involving the presentation in English of 'background'

Table 5.2

Segments Categorised by Topic: All Teachers

Topic	S1 Teachers						S2 Teachers							Total
	A	D	G	H	K	L	B	C	E	F	I	J	M	
Teaching Segments:														
Civilisation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	4	6
Gen. ling. notions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lang. points	-	1	1	6	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	12
Situation	-	3	11	-	2	2	2	-	1	-	2	-	3	26
Real Life	-	6	2	3	1	5	1	1	2	1	1	-	-	23
Frag/non-cont.	3	-	1	5	10	7	1	1	5	1	1	8	3	47
Setting h'work	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	5
Checking h'work	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	2
Routine Segments:														
Greetings	1	2	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	1	-	8
Attendance	2	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	1	-	7
Packing up	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11
Organisation	1	1	2	3	1	2	2	-	1	2	-	-	3	18
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Segments per lesson	8	14	19	20	16	21	9	3	13	9	7	11	16	166

Table 5.3

Segments Categorised by Language Activity: All Teachers

Activity	S1 Teachers						S2 Teachers							Total
	A	D	G	H	K	L	B	C	E	F	I	J	M	
Translation	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	4
L1	-	-	-	8	4	7	-	-	2	6	-	-	9	36
Real FL	5	4	6	1	2	-	7	2	2	1	7	7	3	47
Transposition	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	6
Presentation	-	1	2	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	7
Imitation	-	-	2	1	3	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	9
Drill/exercise	3	9	7	7	3	10	2	1	5	1	-	1	3	52
Compound	-	-	-	2	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	5
Total Segments per lesson	8	14	19	20	16	21	9	3	13	9	7	11	16	166

material, taught by Teacher F) lasted for 748 lines of transcript; such a length was however highly unusual even for teaching segments, which commonly lasted for less than 100 transcript lines. At the other extreme, some routine segments involving e.g. 'Greeting' or 'Packing Up' lasted for only a few lines.

Tables 5.2 and 5.3 show the breakdown of the individual lessons taught by each teacher, on the two major dimensions of the analysis scheme, 'Topic' and 'Language Activity'. On the 'Topic' dimension, Table 5.2 shows the commonest content in substantive teaching segments to have been 'Fragmented/ Noncontextualised' material, followed by 'Situations' and thirdly by 'Real Life'. Few differences were apparent between S1 and S2 lessons except that 'Civilisation' appeared at S2 level only, and - somewhat surprisingly - that metalinguistic discussion of 'Language Points' was somewhat more likely to occur at S1 level, though uncommon even there.

On the 'Language Activity' dimension, the 'Drill/ Exercise' category was that most frequently used, as was the case in the 1981 study. However, in marked contrast to the earlier findings, the second commonest category was 'Real FL', followed by 'L1'; together these three categories accounted for over 80 per cent of segment codings on this dimension. (Some of the apparent development in use of 'Real FL' may be accounted for by the recognition in the present study as independent segments of short, routine episodes which in the previous study were likely to have been conflated with major

teaching segments. However, the present pattern also seems to reflect some decline in the traditional activities of translation and repetition, or 'Imitation'.)

While no assumption can be made that individual teachers' choices of 'Topic' or 'Language Activity' on the particular occasion of recording was in any sense representative of their usual styles of teaching, some aspects of the considerable variation shown between different teacher subgroups are worth comment. It is clear that patterns of TLAs promoted by the 'High FL User' and 'Low FL User' groups overlapped to a considerable extent. On the 'Topic' dimension few differences emerged between the two groups. Though 'Low FL Users' talked somewhat more about 'Language Points' and about homework, these topics were rare for either group, compared with the generally popular 'Fragmented/ Noncontextualised' and 'Real Life' topics. However, there was a substantial difference between the two groups' use of two significant 'Language Activity' categories. Segments coded as 'Real FL' on this dimension (i.e. segments in which substantive messages are transmitted via the FL, and the focus of attention is on the meaning of what is being said) constituted 46.6 per cent of the total for 'High FL Users', and only 8.4 per cent for 'Low FL Users'. Conversely 41.0 per cent of segments taught by 'Low FL Users' were coded as 'L1', while only two segments taught by 'High FL Users' were so coded. (This particular difference unsurprisingly appears an important factor influencing the placing of individual teachers in either group.)

The association between high overall levels of FL use and frequent use of the 'Real FL' activity category was not perfect, however. Teachers D and E were members of the 'High FL User' group, although they initiated few 'Real FL' activities; on the other hand, Teacher I was not categorised as a 'High FL User', in spite of the fact that all activities in her lesson were meant to be 'Real FL'. This contrast indicates the importance of the teacher's linguistic decision-making at a finer level of detail than that of the teaching segment, for the extent of FL use in his/her classroom.

Table 5.4 presents a crosstabulation of the total number of segments taught by all teachers, by 'Topic' and 'Language Activity'. As was the case in the 1981 study, the cell combining the 'Fragmented/ Noncontextualised' and 'Drill/ Exercise' categories contains the largest absolute number of cases (23, or 13.8 per cent); traditional pattern drilling had thus by no means disappeared from these 'communicative' classrooms. However, 'Fragmented/ Noncontextualised' topics also appear in the greatest range of 'Language Activity' cells; only the 'L1' category never combined with this topic. Structurally controlled 'Drill/ Exercise' activities also took place with alternative, contextualised content. (For example, Q/A drills at S1 level on aspects of pupils' real identities accounted for most of the 16 cases in the 'Drill/ Exercise' - 'Real Life' cell.)

Table 5.4 also makes clear the extent of topical

Table 5.4

Crosstabulation of Topic and Activity Dimensions: All Teachers

Activity Topic	Pres- ent- ation	Trans- lation	L1	Real FL	Trans- pos- ition	Imit- ation	Drill/ exer- cise	Comp- ound	Total (%)
Teaching segments:									
Civilisation	-	-	5	-	-	-	1	-	6 (3.6)
Gen.ling.notions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	- (0.0)
Language points	1	2	7	-	1	1	-	1	13 (7.8)
Situation	5	-	-	7	1	1	11	-	25 (15.1)
Real life	-	1	1	3	-	2	16	-	23 (13.9)
Frag/noncont	1	1	-	8	4	5	23	4	46 (27.7)
Setting h'work	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	5 (3.0)
Checking h'work	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2 (1.2)
Routine segments:									
Greetings	-	-	-	7	-	-	1	-	8 (4.8)
Attendance	-	-	1	6	-	-	-	-	7 (4.2)
Packing up	-	-	4	9	-	-	-	-	13 (7.8)
Organisation	-	-	11	7	-	-	-	-	18 (10.8)
Total: (%)	7 (4.2)	4 (2.4)	36 (21.7)	47 (28.3)	6 (3.6)	9 (5.4)	52 (31.3)	5 (3.0)	166 (100.0)

differentiation in the use of 'Real FL' and 'L1'. As far as the substantive teaching segments are concerned, there was hardly any overlap in the use of the two languages for message-oriented purposes. Where 'Civilisation' was discussed in an open-ended way, this happened exclusively in L1; similarly, it seems that metalinguistic discussion (uncommon as it was at segmental level) happened only in L1. On the other hand, when coursebook and other fictional 'Situations' were open-endedly discussed, this happened through 'Real FL', not English; similarly, problem-solving activities and guessing games based on 'Fragmented/ Noncontextualised' content took place exclusively through French. (Such activities account for most entries in the 'Fragmented/ Noncontextualised' - 'Real FL' cell.)

During routine segments, however, the two languages were not allocated such clearly differentiated roles. Opening greetings were expressed in French if at all, but the other routine categories were realised through either language.

Tables 5.5 and 5.6 show similar crosstabulations of the 'Topic' and 'Language Activity' dimensions, for the S1 and S2 teachers as separate groups. The main differences are the higher proportion of 'Real FL' segments found in the S2 material (42.6 per cent as compared with 18.2 per cent in S1, with the clearest increase occurring among substantive teaching segments), and the corresponding drop in 'Drill/ Exercise' codings (19.1 per cent in S2, 39.4 per cent in S1).

Tables 5.7 and 5.8 present crosstabulations of the same

Table 5.5

Crosstabulation of Topic and Activity Dimensions: S1 Teachers

Activity Topic	Pres- ent- ation	Trans- lation	L1	Real FL	Trans- pos- ition	Imit- ation	Drill/ exer- cise	Comp- ound	Total (%)
Teaching segments:									
Civilisation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gen.ling.notions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Language points	1	2	6	-	-	1	-	1	11(11.2)
Situation	4	-	-	2	1	1	9	-	17(17.3)
Real life	-	-	1	-	-	2	14	-	17(17.3)
Frag/noncont	1	-	-	2	2	3	15	3	26(26.5)
Setting h'work	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2 (2.0)
Checking h'work	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1.0)
Routine segments:									
Greetings	-	-	-	3	-	-	1	-	4 (4.1)
Attendance	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	4 (4.1)
Packing up	-	-	2	4	-	-	-	-	6 (6.1)
Organisation	-	-	6	4	-	-	-	-	10(10.2)
Total: (%)	6 (6.1)	2 (2.0)	19 (19.4)	18 (18.4)	3 (3.1)	7 (7.1)	39 (39.8)	4 (4.1)	98(100.0)

Table 5.6

Crosstabulation of Topic and Activity Dimensions: S2 Teachers

Activity Topic	Pres- ent- ation	Trans- lation	L1	Real FL	Trans- pos- ition	Imit- ation	Drill/ exer- cise	Comp- ound	Total (%)
Teaching segments:									
Civilisation	-	-	5	-	-	-	1	-	6 (8.8)
Gen.ling.notions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Language points	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	2 (2.9)
Situation	1	-	-	5	-	-	2	-	8(11.8)
Real life	-	1	-	3	-	-	2	-	6 (8.8)
Frag/noncont	-	1	-	6	2	2	8	1	20(29.4)
Setting h'work	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	3 (4.4)
Checking h'work	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1.5)
Routine segments:									
Greetings	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	4 (5.9)
Attendance	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	3 (4.4)
Packing up	-	-	2	5	-	-	-	-	7(10.3)
Organisation	-	-	5	3	-	-	-	-	8(11.8)
Total: (%)	1 (1.5)	2 (2.9)	17 (25.0)	29 (42.6)	3 (4.4)	2 (2.9)	13 (19.1)	1 (1.5)	68(100.0)

Table 5.7

Crosstabulation of Topic and Activity Dimensions: High FL Users

Activity Topic	Pres- ent- ation	Trans- lation	L1	Real FL	Trans- pos- ition	Imit- ation	Drill/ exer- cise	Comp- ound	Total (%)
Teaching segments:									
Civilisation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gen.ling.notions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Language points	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2 (3.4)
Situation	-	-	-	1	-	-	5	-	6(10.3)
Real life	-	-	-	2	-	-	8	-	10(17.2)
Frag/noncont	-	1	-	4	2	2	8	1	18(31.0)
Setting h'work	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1.7)
Checking h'work	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1.7)
Routine segments:									
Greetings	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	5 (8.6)
Attendance	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	4 (6.9)
Packing up	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	6(10.3)
Organisation	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	5 (8.6)
Total: (%)	1 (1.7)	1 (1.7)	2 (3.4)	27 (46.6)	3 (5.2)	2 (3.4)	21 (36.2)	1 (1.7)	58(100.0)

Table 5.8

Crosstabulation of Topic and Activity Dimensions: Low FL Users

Activity Topic	Pres- ent- ation	Trans- lation	L1	Real FL	Trans- pos- ition	Imit- ation	Drill/ exer- cise	Comp- ound	Total (%)
Teaching segments:									
Civilisation	-	-	5	-	-	-	1	-	6 (7.3)
Gen.ling.notions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Language points	-	1	7	-	-	-	-	1	9(11.0)
Situation	3	-	-	3	-	-	1	-	7 (8.5)
Real life	-	1	1	-	-	2	6	-	10(12.2)
Frag/noncont	-	-	-	2	3	3	15	3	26(31.7)
Setting h'work	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	4 (4.9)
Checking h'work	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1.2)
Routine segments:									
Greetings	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	2 (2.4)
Attendance	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1.2)
Packing up	-	-	4	1	-	-	-	-	5 (6.1)
Organisation	-	-	11	-	-	-	-	-	11(13.4)
Total: (%)	3 (3.7)	2 (2.4)	34 (41.5)	7 (8.5)	3 (3.7)	5 (6.1)	24 (29.3)	4 (4.9)	82(100.0)

two dimensions for the lessons of the 'High' and 'Low FL Users'. These two groups of teachers were identified on the basis of their language use at the level of the individual speech turn, regardless of activity etc.; nonetheless, clear differences emerged at segmental level between the two groups in relation to the message-oriented use of English and French.

As far as substantive, teaching segments were concerned, the difference between the two groups consisted essentially in the fact that the 'Low FL User' group talked about 'Civilisation' and 'Language Points', in English; the 'High FL User' group did not talk about such topics at all. With such a small sample, this could clearly be a matter of chance; it is impossible to tell whether the 'High FL User' group was deliberately avoiding such topics, and if not, which language they might have used to discuss them had they arisen.

However, the language choices made by the two groups for the range of routine topics suggest that the observed pattern was not overall a matter of mere chance. All routine segments initiated by the 'High FL User' group were French-medium, whereas the bulk of such segments initiated by the 'Low FL User' group were English-medium. A clear difference seemed to emerge between the two groups, therefore, at least as far as the teachers' view of the appropriate choice of language for classroom management at the macro, activity level was concerned.

Tables 5.9 - 5.12 provide summary information on the breakdown of the lesson data on the dimensions of 'Class Organisation' and 'Pupil Mode of Involvement'. (Where previous tables dealing with the 'Activity' and 'Topic' dimensions took account of major segment divisions only, these tables take account also of the small number of subsegments identified within major segments in some lessons. It will be recalled that subsegments were recognised in the data where changes occurred in the ongoing 'pattern of expectation' only on the 'Class Organisation' or 'Pupil Mode' dimensions of the coding system, while expectations on the 'Topic' and 'Language Activity' dimensions remained the same. In addition to the previously-mentioned totals of 98 segments identified in the S1 lessons, and 68 in the S2 lessons, 16 subsegments were identified in the S1 corpus and 12 subsegments in the S2 corpus. This gave overall totals of 114 segments plus subsegments for S1, and of 80 segments plus subsegments for S2.)

Table 5.9 gives summary information about the breakdown of the overall total of lesson segments and subsegments on the 'Class Organisation' dimension of the coding scheme. The table shows the overwhelming dominance in the corpus of 'Whole Class' organisational patterns, at both S1 and S2 level. There was also limited paired and individual work. The former occurred in the lessons of five out of six S1 teachers, but only three out of seven S2 teachers. The latter occurred in

Table 5.9

Class Organisation (All Segments and Subsegments)

Teachers	Whole class	Pairs	Groups	Individual (same)	Individual (different)	Total
S1: TA	10	3	-	-	-	13
TD	13	2	-	-	-	15
TG	19	5	1	-	-	25
TH	20	1	-	-	-	21
TK	15	-	1	2	-	18
TL	18	1	-	3	-	22
Total:	95	12	2	5	-	114
(%)	83.3	10.5	1.8	4.4	-	100.0%
S2: TB	13	2	-	-	-	15
TC	4	-	-	-	-	4
TE	12	-	-	1	-	13
TF	9	-	-	-	-	9
TI	7	1	-	1	-	9
TJ	10	2	-	1	-	13
TM	16	-	-	1	-	17
Total:	71	5	-	4	-	80
(%)	88.8	6.3	-	5.0	-	100.0%
All teachers:	166	17	2	9	-	194
(%)	85.6	8.8	1.0	4.6	-	100.0%

four S2 lessons, and in two S1 lessons. In addition, two S1 teachers each organised a single group work activity; no other organisational pattern occurred in the corpus. Perhaps the most notable gap is the complete absence of any differentiation in the tasks assigned to different pupils; even where non-whole-class organisational patterns were in force, pupils were always engaged on identical work.

There were thus no major differences between the practices of S1 and S2 teachers on this 'Class Organisation' dimension;

similarly, no major differences emerged between 'High FL Users' and 'Low FL Users'. It seemed that teachers' personal commitment to speaking French rather than English had minimal consequences for class organisation; similar organisational patterns might be managed through either language.

Tables 5.10 - 5.12 summarise the main features of codings on the 'Pupil Mode of Involvement' dimension. It will be recalled that on this dimension, each segment and subsegment was coded positively or negatively, on each of six channels ('Listening', 'Speaking', 'Reading', 'Writing', 'Looking' and 'Doing'). Most segments were judged to entail positive pupil involvement on between two and four channels (a small number of segments entailed 'Listening' only, and a solitary S1 segment involved 'Reading' only). Table 5.10 shows the eight commonest combinations of positive codings found (those occurring five or more times each in the corpus as a whole), together with their frequencies in the S1 and S2 lessons considered separately. There were in fact few differences in the pattern of pupil involvement between the two year groups; in both cases, the strongly oral bias of these lessons again emerged clearly. For both year groups, the commonest single combination involved pupils in 'Listening' plus 'Speaking'; this combination, plus three others involving 'Listening', 'Speaking' and one other positive channel, accounted for over 75 per cent of the segment total for both S1 and S2 lessons.

Given this overall pattern, it was not surprising that 'Listening' and 'Speaking' were individually the most

Table 5.10Pupil Mode of Organisation: Commonest Overall Combinations

Teacher Group	L/S	L/S/R	L/S/LO	L/S/D	L	L/D	R/W	L/R	Other
All S1 teachers	48	27	10	6	3	3	4	4	
%	41.8	23.5	8.7	5.2	2.6	2.6	3.5	3.5	8.6
All S2 teachers	24	15	16	6	6	3	2	1	
%	30.0	18.8	20.0	7.5	7.5	3.8	2.5	1.3	8.6
All teachers	72	42	26	12	9	6	6	5	
%	36.9	21.5	13.3	6.2	4.6	3.1	3.1	2.6	8.7

Table 5.11Pupil Mode of Organisation: All +Reading Segments

Teacher Group	R	R/S	R/L	R/W	R/W/D	R/L/S	R/L/S/W	R/L/S/LO	Other
All S1 teachers	1	1	4	4	-	27	4	1	42
All S2 teachers	-	-	1	2	1	15	-	-	19
All teachers	1	1	5	6	1	42	4	1	61*

*31.3% of all segments

Table 5.12Pupil Mode of Organisation: All +Writing Segments

Teacher Group	W/L	W/R	W/D	W/L/S	W/R/D	W/L/S/R	Other
All S1 teachers	1	4	1	-	-	4	10
All S2 teachers	3	2	1	1	1	-	8
All teachers	4	6	2	1	1	4	18*

*9.2% of all segments

commonly-used channels. Pupils were involved in 'Listening' in 94.4 per cent of all segments and subsegments, and in 'Speaking' in 82.6 per cent of the total. All other channels were activated much less frequently: 'Reading' in 31.3 per cent of segments and subsegments, 'Looking' in 14.8 per cent, 'Doing' in 11.9 per cent, and 'Writing' in 9.2 per cent. Tables 5.11 and 5.12 show the combinations within which 'Reading' and 'Writing' occurred, and their frequencies at S1 and S2 level. 'Reading' occurred somewhat more frequently in the S1 lessons than in the S2 lessons; 'Writing' was equally unusual in both. Thus any expectation that work at S2 level would involve pupils in using a greater range of FL skills, and in particular in the development of literacy skills, was not borne out as far as this group of lessons was concerned. At S2 level just as much as at S1, pupils were involved predominantly in oral activities, whether with or without written or pictorial stimulus material; and strong emphasis was placed on pupils' active participation through productive language use (relatively few segments or subsegments entailed the use of receptive skills alone). Again, no substantial differences appeared between the ways 'High FL Users' and 'Low FL Users' involved their pupils in ongoing teaching/ learning activities. The overall commitment to productive, predominantly oral language use by pupils was common to both groups of teachers; the only detectable difference was a tendency on the part of 'Low FL Users' to set pupils somewhat more writing tasks than 'High FL Users' did. (The 'Low FL

Users' generated 14 segments or subsegments involving writing; the 'High FL Users' generated only four.)

5.3.2.1 Findings of the segmental analysis: concluding summary

The foregoing paragraphs have described the overall pattern of teaching/ learning activities in the 13 lessons, as reflected in the segmental analysis scheme. This gives a broadly similar picture of teaching at S1 and S2 levels, with pupils actively involved in predominantly FL-medium activities, commonly with the practice of formal aspects of French as their most obvious purpose. The work was mainly organised on a whole-class basis, with occasional use of paired or individual work, but a complete absence of differentiation in the nature of the tasks set to different pupils. This relatively simple pattern was sustained by 'High FL Users' and 'Low FL Users' alike. Following sections will examine in more detail the managerial language employed by the teachers to accomplish this.

5.4 Functional Differentiation in Classroom Management Language

5.4.1 Selection of language functions for study at subsegmental level

So far in this chapter, functional differentiation in the classroom use of French and English has been dealt with at a

very general level; whole stretches of classroom talk have been characterised on a small number of 'Language Activity' dimensions such as 'L1', 'Real FL' etc. As we have seen already, these characterisations reflect teachers' general plans for the prevailing 'pattern of expectation', and may or may not have been fully realised in the actual language behaviour of teacher and pupils.

In following sections of this chapter a somewhat closer look will be taken at selected details of the actual language behaviour of classroom participants. Firstly, in Sections 5.4.2 - 5.4.3, the language choices made by teachers in order to accomplish a range of 'pedagogic moves' necessary for the successful management and orderly conduct of teaching and learning will be examined. The pedagogic moves to be examined are a) a range of types of instruction used to launch new activities, and to brief pupils more generally about what to expect in a lesson or unit of work; and b), disciplinary interventions. Secondly, episodes involving the provision by the teacher of metalinguistic commentaries and explanations at subsegmental level will also be discussed, in Section 5.5.

These particular types of teacher talk at subsegmental level have been selected for study because in different ways they can be considered of special significance for the extent of communicative FL experience provided by teachers for their pupils. As was argued in Chapter 2, utterances used by teachers to express managerial and disciplinary moves are accepted here as clearly message-oriented. Indeed, the

messages they embody must be counted among those which teachers are most motivated to have immediately understood by their pupils. The teacher's use of the target language for such moves must therefore be considered a potentially significant extension of pupils' receptive experience of communicative target language use.

Metalinguistic episodes are similarly message-oriented, but qualitatively different in the type of message being transmitted. Whereas managerial and disciplinary moves typically involve getting pupils to do something (or to desist from doing something), metalinguistic comment is directed towards developing pupils' conceptual understanding of the target language system. It thus involves the presentation of relatively abstract content, and is not supported (as managerial talk commonly is) by non-linguistic aspects of the classroom environment. As we saw in Chapter 2, many teachers believe that messages of this type are distinctively resistant to FL-medium communication, at least at elementary levels. Metalinguistic talk at subsegmental level was therefore selected for particular study here, as an example of a type of content which most teachers valued but doubted the feasibility of transmitting through the medium of the target language.

5.4.2 A unit of analysis: the 'pedagogic move'

As a preliminary to more detailed discussion of these different aspects of teacher talk, the term 'pedagogic move'

requires some commentary. A variety of terminology has been used by different writers to describe functionally differentiated units in classroom talk (see review in Mitchell, 1985b). As discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.5, the term 'move' has been popularised most notably by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), and others influenced by them (see e.g. the collection of papers edited by Coulthard and Montgomery, 1981). For Sinclair and Coulthard, the 'move' is a unit at a particular level in a hierarchical model of classroom discourse, formally structured from certain permitted combinations of units at a lower level (that of speech 'acts'). In this system, 'moves' in turn combine in rule-governed ways to form higher-level units called 'exchanges'; 'exchanges' again combine to form units called 'transactions', which are units of a similar magnitude to the 'lesson segment' employed as a unit of analysis earlier in this chapter.

While the work of Sinclair and Coulthard has some superficial similarities to the work discussed in this chapter, however, the underlying motivation of their work is very different. They were interested in classroom discourse not for its own sake, but as a convenient starting point in the attempt to construct a generalised functional model of spoken interaction. A basic assumption underlying their work is that any sequence of talk can be analysed into a string of discrete speech acts - functionally differentiated units which are capable (at least in principle) of being mapped on to

formal syntactic units such as sentences and clauses. Their hierarchical scheme in effect constitutes an attempt to develop a functional 'syntax of conversation', on similar principles to those underlying more traditional, formal grammatical descriptions at sentence level and below. That is, they attempt to define finite classes of unit at various levels, and to discover sets of rules according to which their lower-level functional units may combine to form higher-level units (as for example, the formal grammar of a language might define a set of phonemes for that language, and prescribe the rules according to which certain combinations of phonemes may form morphemes and words within it). In the Sinclair and Coulthard scheme, therefore, 'moves' are constructed from certain permitted combinations of 'acts' (the lowest-level class of unit, of which 22 are defined, some formally, some functionally, and others according to the discourse context within which they occur). Five types of move are recognised: 'Framing', 'Focusing', 'Opening', 'Answering' and 'Follow-up' moves. These in turn combine to form 'Boundary' and 'Teaching' exchanges (the latter of various types).

The work of Sinclair and Coulthard, together with similar attempts to construct a 'grammar of conversation', has been the target of a number of fundamental criticisms, expressed with greatest cogency by Levinson (1983, Chapter 6). He argues firstly that the proposed basic units of analysis are a mirage: that there is no principled way of independently identifying a sequence of discrete speech acts within

discourse. Secondly, Levinson argues that the functional organisation of discourse differs in principle from the syntactic organisation of sentences. In the latter, clear rules may be discovered which permit certain combinations of words and morphemes, and forbid others; but in discourse, Levinson argues, any speech act may follow any other, and be understood given an appropriate context. Thirdly, Levinson argues that even could the problem of the independent identification of speech acts in discourse be solved, the problem of the relationship of these functional units with the formal units of grammar onto which they must be mapped (sentence or clause) would remain. Sinclair and Coulthard themselves merely exemplify a possible approach whereby they claim formal units such as 'declarative' or 'interrogative' sentences might regularly be interpreted as discourse units such as 'informative' or 'directive'. Levinson doubts the workability of such a scheme; and study of the coded transcripts provided by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975, pp 63 - 110) makes it clear that they themselves do not consistently follow any formal principles when coding successive chunks of speech as the realisation of a sequence of speech acts.

In the light of these difficulties, therefore, and in view of the more restricted concerns of the present study, no attempt will be made here to propose a comprehensive formal scheme for the analysis of the lesson data. Nor will the attempt be made to identify linguistic units above the level of the sentence (whether formally or functionally defined)

within teachers' speech. Instead, the term 'move' will be applied here to units of analysis at a level below that of the lesson segment, but also defined in terms of their content and pedagogic (rather than linguistic) function.

Attention will be paid here to four types of pedagogic move, defined in this sense: 'Organising Instructions', 'Activity Instructions', 'Lesson Instructions' and 'Disciplinary Interventions'. These proposed categories of move do not form a comprehensive set, and are not intended to include all aspects of teacher classroom talk. Most notably, teacher talk integral to the actual performance of teaching/learning activities, such as the provision of model utterances, stimulus questions and utterances in drills and exercises, or evaluative feedback on pupils' contributions to classroom talk, is excluded from consideration. Another important area of teacher talk, that with a primary function of ensuring pupil comprehension and repairing breakdowns in understanding and communication, is dealt with elsewhere in this thesis (in Chapter 7). The categories proposed at this point are intended to capture primarily managerial aspects of teacher talk, to do with the establishment of pupil understandings as to what is expected of them from moment to moment, and the maintenance of pupil involvement in the task on hand.

As pedagogic units, definitions for these various 'move' categories do not include any formal linguistic criteria. They consist in everything said by the teacher at a particular

moment in the lesson, with the content and purpose specified for the particular category. They may thus vary in length from a single word, to several consecutive sentences; they may constitute a complete speech turn, or an element within a speech turn, which may be composed of several distinctive pedagogic moves. Indeed, under certain limited circumstances, a particular pedagogic move may be spread over more than one teacher speech turn. This is judged to happen a) where pupils intervene to request clarification of the exact nature of the instructions being given, or b) where the meaning of FL-medium instructions is negotiated interactively between teacher and pupils. An exceptionally extended example of the former case follows, where an 'Activity Instruction' is negotiated over a sequence of nine speech turns:

T: What I am wanting you to do now is, *écrivez dans les cahiers...* ehh les dix images. The ten pictures there, and write underneath what they mean in French

PP: At the back?

T: At the back, yes

PP: (...)

T: Write - do the drawings, and write the captions underneath, okay? Just make an effort, eh? *Dessinez, hein?*

P: (...) *à droite?*

T: *A droite, oui*

P: Sir, are we doing the English as well?

T: *Oui - non, non, non. Dessinez, hein? Dessinez. Draw. Et puis, écrivez. (Teacher E, Segment 10)*

The interactive negotiation of the meaning of FL-medium

'Activity Instructions' was common in the lesson taught by Teacher J, and is exemplified in Chapter 7.

However, apart from these special circumstances, a pedagogic move will normally consist in a single speech turn or an element within it. (Pedagogic moves which are similarly categorised may of course occur disjunctively within individual speech turns; thus for example two 'Activity Instructions' relating to the same lesson segment might be separated by an 'Organising Instruction', all within one teacher speech turn. In such cases, the sequence will be considered as a string of independent pedagogic moves, since no attempt is being made here to construct a hierarchical model involving the embedding of moves within each other.)

5.4.2.1 Categories of 'pedagogic move'

The types of pedagogic move introduced above are defined more fully as follows:

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

All teacher utterances which specify the nature of the teaching/ learning task to be undertaken, and the pattern of linguistic and non-linguistic behaviour which will be considered appropriate during a particular lesson segment or subsegment are categorised as 'Activity Instructions'. These may specify the topic for the segment/ subsegment, the

language activity to be used (including which language is to be spoken), and/or the mode of pupil involvement (i.e. which channels of communication are to be used). They may occur at the start of a lesson segment or subsegment, in which case they are likely to be prospective, and to take a general form. For example:

"I am now going to ask you questions about yourselves. I want your real - real information about yourselves. Alors je vais vous poser des questions" (Teacher G, Segment 5).

"You are going to pretend now that I am ... a friend of yours, and I am visiting the classroom. Well I am not a friend, I am a stranger your age, visiting the classroom, and you want to find out all you can about me. So you are going to ask me the questions. Alors, posez les questions. Posez les questions. Qui?" (Teacher G, Segment 7).

However, activity instructions may also occur during the course of a lesson segment, either as general reminders of the nature of the current pattern of expectation for the segment, attempts to re-launch the activity, or as stimuli intended to elicit particular types of contribution from particular individuals or groups:

"Right, let's go back to the beginning of that again. Go back again, not to the very beginning, where you are Pascal. You are going to be Pascal for the moment. We'll begin from 'et toi, où habites-tu?' Got it? half way down? 'Et toi, où habites-tu?' You are Pascal" (Teacher G, Segment 11/3)

"Now you've to ask me the questions" (Teacher G, Segment 11/1)

This category thus includes the exhortations to individuals or groups to ask a question, to repeat something, to listen, etc.

etc., which are abundant in the data, with minor variations. Some sample realisations of such ongoing activity instructions may be quoted (all are taken from the lesson of Teacher H):

"Right Sharon, you are going to ask Martin there how he is"

"Any more questions, Michel?"

"Répète"

"Répétez la classe"

"Encore"

"Right, let's have that again"

"Choisis quelqu'un, choisis quelqu'un"

"Oui, regarde les images"

"Give me an example please Alec"

"So listen again, listen carefully"

"Now I want you to tell me if this next thing is masculine or feminine. Ecoute bien"

"Right, écrivez la date dans les cahiers, s'il vous plaît. Ecrivez la date".

Lastly, the 'Activity Instructions' category includes instructions for non-verbal behaviour which are integral to task performance (such as mime or gesture), e.g. where pupil actions serve as a stimulus in a drill or exercise:

T: Eh, lève-toi. Sors de la classe. Sors de la classe, eh? Et toi, lève-toi. Sors de la classe. (EXCHANGE OMITTED) Qu'est-ce qu'ils font? Oui?

P: Ils quittent le classe de français

T: Ils quittent la classe de français, très bien (Teacher E, Segment 9)

ORGANISING INSTRUCTIONS

The category of 'Organising Instructions' covers teacher utterances of two main types. Firstly, all teacher utterances to do with the general management of the physical environment in the classroom are counted as belonging to this category. This includes the specification of materials to be used/attended to at particular times, plus all talk about the distribution, handling and collection of materials (but excluding talk about the ways in which particular materials are to be used). Also covered is all talk regarding seating arrangements, and the constitution and rearrangement of working groups. For example:

T: Right Claire, tu tires les rideaux s'il te plaît.
Jacqueline, tu tires aussi les rideaux, vas-y... et
tournez-vous, tournez-vous tout le monde... Yes, Nicholas

P: Est-ce que je peux (...)

T: It is too late, Assumpta asked me already. Right,
Assumpta. Right, Colin, tu éteins les lumières (Teacher F,
Segment 4)

"Rangez vos affaires, faites passer les livres s'il vous
plaît... faites passer... bon, merci... Bon, alors, prenez
les tables, oui, à la salle de classe en face. Oui? Tu
prends la table s'il te plaît... Bon, les autres,
asseyez-vous... Oui... Asseyez-vous, s'il vous plaît. Non,
non, non, asseyez-vous... Vite, oui, et les chaises.
Right, as quick as you can, so that people can get out.
Pierre, vite... Asseyez-vous, ça veut dire, sit down"
(Teacher D, Segment 14)

"Tout le monde ouvrez les livres... et tournez à la page
à la page neuf, la feuille dix. Ah non, la feuille numéro
huit... à la page neuf..." (Teacher D, Segment 13)

"Alors ouvrez la pochette, sortez le livre, hein? Et
regardez... à la page - non, pas vous, seulement Henri -

regardez la page quatre... Hein? Regardez image numéro trois. 'Où sont les touristes?'... Alors sortez les feuilles Henri. Sortez les feuilles... les feuilles. Sortez les feuilles... Hein? Donne-moi ça... et regardez la feuille numéro quatre... regardez C" (Teacher C, Segment 2/1)

"Mets-toi là, à côté de Michel" (Teacher D, Segment 4)

"Travaillez avec votre partenaire. Travaillez bien et puis changez de rôle. Allez, trois minutes. Parlez". (Teacher B, Segment 7/2)

The other main area of talk to be categorised as 'Organising Instructions' is that concerned with non-task-specific aspects of the moment-to-moment management of classroom discourse. This includes requests for bids to speak, and the assignment of speech turns to individuals by any means more elaborate than simple nomination (but without any accompanying instructions as to the nature of the contribution to be made); instructions to do with the ongoing pace and quality of classroom work (waiting, hurrying up, making an effort, speaking up, keeping quiet); and instructions to do with the staging of ongoing segments (starting, continuing, specifying what item is to be done next, doing something again, and finishing). For example:

(ALLOCATING SPEECH TURNS)

"Right, who is going to go first then? Right, Zak" (Teacher K, Segment 2)

"Emm come on, somebody else for a change. Martin will be getting arm cramp. Right, Tom" (Teacher M, Segment 11)

"Frank, have you got a question to ask?" (Teacher I, Segment 4)

"Alors quelqu'un d'autre, someone else, quelqu'un d'autre.

Chris..." (Teacher K, Segment 2)

(PACE & QUALITY OF WORK)

"Attends un peu Derek" (Teacher I, Segment 5/1)

"How many have not finished? Qui n'a pas fini? John, come on, right, hurry up... Now don't be so slow, it shouldn't take so long to copy it down" (Teacher K, Segment 13)

"Bon, dépêche-toi" (Teacher A, Segment 3)

"Bon, il faut faire attention" (Teacher A, Segment 5)

"Will you listen please? We are not finished yet... We are not finished yet" (Teacher M, Segment 13)

"Tout le monde, écoutez. Silence, silence" (Teacher A, Segment 8)

"Plus fort.... parle plus fort. Je ne t'entends pas" (Teacher D, Segment 6)

(STAGING OF SEGMENTS)

"Okay? Allez-y, allez-y, au travail" (Teacher G, Segment 17)

"Le numéro un, ehh Pascale, tu commences s'il te plaît" (Teacher A, segment 6/1)

"Let's just look at that first question" (Teacher M, Segment 11)

"And the next question?" (Teacher G, Segment 10)

"Right, on you go" (Teacher I, Segment 5/2)

"Right, we'll try that again" (Teacher G, Segment 11/1)

"Bien la classe, ça suffit, ça suffit. Finish off your conversations, bien" (Teacher I, Segment 5/2)

"Okay, we will stop there". (Teacher K, Segment 4/2)

Like 'Activity Instructions', 'Organising Instructions' can be expected to occur at the beginnings of lesson segments and subsegments, as the teacher establishes the practical

conditions for the new configuration of topic and language activity. However, this is a matter of expectation rather than of rule; like 'Activity Instructions', 'Organising Instructions' are not essential in segment-initial position, nor are they confined to it.

LESSON INSTRUCTIONS

'Lesson Instructions' resemble 'Activity Instructions', insofar as they are concerned with the content and/or language activities involved in classroom teaching/ learning tasks. However, whereas 'Activity Instructions' relate specifically to the current lesson segment, and to that alone, 'Lesson Instructions' do not. Instead, they may be prospective, referring to content to be dealt with or activities to be undertaken at some later time (in the current lesson or in later ones); or they may have an 'overview' function, listing the range of tasks to be undertaken in the course of the entire lesson. They will tend to occur early on in a lesson sequence, but may occur at any point; they are not related to the internal structure of individual lesson segments, and may occur at transitional points between segments, or embedded within them. The following examples illustrate the range of possibilities:

"Right, this is a list of the things that we are going to be doing in the course of this unit, 'Circuit Touristique'" (Teacher E, Segment 3)

"On va - on va faire ça demain, la question, 'qu'est-ce qu'ils font?'" (Teacher B, Segment 9)

"What we will do today is, do a wee bit work, do some writing, and then we will also have time for our wee worksheets which you haven't really done an awful lot of today - ehh this week, rather. And we will also do some of the work at the back of the book... However, what we are going to be learning to do today is to describe our pets"
(Teacher L, Segment 4)

"Now, later on in this session, I will show you a few examples of different costumes and headdresses, okay?"
(Teacher F, Segment 4)

DISCIPLINARY INTERVENTIONS

Teacher utterances which seem intended to sanction deviant behaviour on the part of pupils are classified as 'Disciplinary Interventions'. It will be recalled that unelaborated general exhortations to try harder, to listen, to be silent etc. are classified as 'Organising Instructions'; 'Disciplinary Interventions' are more elaborate. They are likely to include the mention of some particular activity considered undesirable, and/or a positive instruction to desist from such an activity (whether mentioned or not). They may also include mention of disciplinary action, actual or threatened. For example:

"Now stop it Fraser, just stop it. Put it down, thankyou. Now don't be silly or I am afraid you will go out. Or you will go through next door and start copying out some things" (Teacher L, Segment 13)

"But please, I am going to go home first year, do you know that? Because you have been so badly behaved... Now please, last ten minutes, let's pull our socks up"
(Teacher L, Segment 18)

"There is an awful lot of noise which I don't really like"
(Teacher K, Segment 15)

"I really do not appreciate these silly sounds..."
(Teacher K, Segment 15)

"Mais qu'est-ce que tu fous là? Ca suffit, elegendment"
(Teacher B, Segment 7/1)

"Ne crie pas" (Teacher D, Segment 7)

"Gilbert... tu ne fais pas attention. Tu parles, tu n'écoutes pas" (Teacher D, Segment 12)

"Toi, il te faut faire attention, hein? Ecoute. Les jeunes filles, hein? Sont à la surprise-partie. Ne joue pas avec la pochette... et mets la main sur la table. Oui, c'est ça" (Teacher C, Segment 2/1)

"Toi, ne ris pas comme ça, ou tu sors... Ce n'est pas très amusant. Je ne trouve pas ça très amusant" (Teacher C, Segment 2/1)

"Tu manges du chewinggum? Tu manges un bonbon? Dans la poubelle" (Teacher J, Segment 5)

"Out" (PUPIL LEAVES ROOM) (Teacher J, Segment 6/2).

5.4.3 Teachers' language choices for managerial moves: the findings

On the basis of the definitions outlined in the previous section, all examples of the four proposed managerial 'move' categories were identified in the teachers' classroom talk, as recorded in the lesson transcripts. Following subsections report on the language choices made by the S1 and S2 teachers, and by the 'High FL User' and 'Low FL User' groups, for these different managerial purposes.

5.4.3.1 Language choices in 'Organising' and 'Activity Instructions'

Tables 5.13 - 5.17 show the overall frequencies of 'Organising Instructions' and 'Activity Instructions' in segment-initial

position, and teachers' language choices in performing them. That is to say, the tables deal only with OI and AI moves found right at the start of lesson segments and subsegments, following only the teacher's initial 'framing move' or 'marker' ("Right", "Well then", "Bon", "Okay" etc), if any. In this initial position, teachers may lead off with an organising instruction, with an activity instruction, or with both; or they may launch directly into the activity, without making any preliminary managerial move at all. The tables show teachers' language choice for the first OI and AI in the segment or subsegment, where these precede all other types of pedagogic move (except each other!).

(While managerial moves of both these types were identified throughout lesson segments of all kinds, it was considered reasonable to concentrate here on segment-initial OI and AI moves only, for two reasons. Firstly, the total corpus of such moves turned out to be unmanageably large; and secondly, it was felt in any case that those occurring at the start of lesson segments and subsegments rated special attention. Effective communication between teacher and pupils is at a premium at moments when a new 'pattern of expectation' is being established; the extent to which teachers managed to sustain FL use at these points was therefore of critical interest, in exploring the viability of the target language as a medium of classroom communication.)

Tables 5.14 - 5.17 show the extent to which teachers used organising and activity instructions to introduce individual

lesson segments and subsegments, and the language choices they made in implementing these managerial moves. In these tables, various types of segment have been grouped for convenience. The major division shown is between 'Routine' and 'Teaching' segments and subsegments. 'Routine' segments are those coded on the 'Topic' dimension as being concerned with 'Greetings', 'Pupil Attendance', 'Organisation', and 'Packing Up'. Segments and subsegments with any other topic are classed as 'Teaching' segments. These are subdivided in the tables into three groups, according to their coding on the 'Language Activity' dimension. Segments coded on this dimension as 'L1' or 'Real FL' are shown separately; segments coded using any other category on this dimension are grouped under the heading of 'Practice FL'. (This way of grouping the segments and subsegments identified in the data incidentally reemphasises the rarity of 'Real FL' segments with topics other than routine matters. A glance at any of Tables 5.14 - 5.17 will show that once all segments classified by topic under the four 'Routine' categories have been removed, only 20 'Real FL' segments remain in the entire corpus, to be classified as 'Teaching' segments.)

As a preliminary step, Table 5.13 shows the general pattern of occurrences of segment-initial 'Activity Instructions' and 'Organising Instructions' in teaching segments and subsegments. The table shows that at both S1 and S2 level, teaching segments were most commonly introduced by an AI alone, or by an AI plus an OI. Segments launched

Table 5.13

Organising Instructions and Activity Instructions in Teaching Segments:
Initial and Follow-on

Teacher	Initial segments				Follow-on subsegments				Total
	OI + AI	OI	AI	∅	OI + AI	OI	AI	∅	
TA	3	-	-	-	4	1	-	-	8
TD	4	2	2	2	-	-	1	-	11
TG	4	-	9	2	5	-	-	1	21
TM	7	1	5	2	-	-	1	-	16
TK	3	1	6	4	-	-	1	1	16
TL	5	-	11	-	1	-	-	-	17
Total S1:	26	4	33	10	10	1	3	2	89
TB	1	-	2	1	1	1	3	1	10
TC	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	3
TE	2	1	5	3	-	-	-	-	11
TF	4	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	5
TI	2	1	1	-	2	-	-	-	6
TJ	4	-	4	-	-	-	1	1	10
TM	4	-	7	1	-	-	1	-	13
Total S2:	18	2	19	7	3	1	6	2	58

directly, with no introductory managerial move, were not infrequent; the rarest case was the introduction of a new segment by an OI alone.

In teaching subsegments, it had been expected that the pattern would be different: in particular, given the fact that by definition the 'Topic' and 'Language Activity' codings remain unchanged in transitions from segment to subsegment, it was assumed that such subsegments would commonly be introduced by an OI alone. This expectation was not borne out, however. Teachers seemed to feel a clear need to produce (often, to repeat) appropriate AIs when moving from segment to

subsegment, sometimes accompanied by OIs, and sometimes without. The expected need to treat subsegments as distinctive, in terms of how teachers introduced them, was thus not fulfilled; teaching segments and subsegments are consequently dealt with together in following tables.

Tables 5.14 and 5.15 show in more detail the extent to which S1 and S2 teachers used segment-initial OIs and AIs, and their patterns of language choice for these purposes. A clear difference emerges in both tables between 'Routine' and 'Teaching' segments, insofar as the former were almost always started without preliminary managerial instructions of any kind. As Table 5.14 shows, over half of the 'Teaching' segments were also launched without any initial 'Organising Instruction'. Where OIs were used, there was a tendency for them to match the intended substantive language of the segment. Thus where 'Practice FL' segments had OIs in initial position, over two-thirds of them were expressed in French, and only a small number (all at S1 level) were expressed in English only. 'Real FL' and L1-medium teaching segments were few in number, and those having initial OIs were even fewer; nonetheless a similar tendency can be detected, for example with no L1-medium segment having French-only OIs.

Table 5.15 shows S1 and S2 teachers' language choice for initial 'Activity Instructions'. A comparison with the previous table shows how much more likely teachers were to use AIs than OIs, in introducing a new teaching segment; less than a fifth of such segments were introduced directly, without any

Table 5.14

S1 & S2 Teachers: Initiating Moves (Organising Instructions)

Teacher Group	Routine segments	Teaching segments & subsegments			All segments (%)
		L1	Practice FL	Real FL	
S1 Teachers:					
x FL	3	-	25	-	28 (24.8)
x FL/L1	-	1	4	1	6 (5.3)
x L1	-	2	8	1	11 (9.7)
x ∅	21	7	39	1	68 (60.2)
Total S1: (%)	24 (21.2)	10 (8.8)	76 (67.3)	3 (2.7)	113 (100.0)
S2 Teachers:					
x FL	-	-	9	3	12 (15.0)
x FL/L1	-	2	5	1	8 (10.0)
x L1	-	2	-	2	4 (5.0)
x ∅	22	7	16	11	56 (70.0)
Total S2: (%)	22 (27.5)	11 (13.8)	30 (37.5)	17 (21.3)	80 (100.0)
All Teachers:					
x FL	3	-	34	3	40 (20.7)
x FL/L1	-	3	9	2	14 (7.3)
x L1	-	4	8	3	15 (7.8)
x ∅	43	14	55	12	124 (64.2)
Total S1 & S2: (%)	46 (23.8)	21 (10.9)	106 (54.9)	20 (10.4)	193 (100.0)

Table 5.15

S1 & S2 Teachers: Initiating Moves (Activity Instructions)

Teacher Group	Routine segments	Teaching segments & subsegments			All segments (%)
		L1	Practice FL	Real FL	
S1 Teachers:					
x FL	-	1	13	-	14 (12.4)
x FL/L1	-	-	12	-	12 (10.6)
x L1	1	6	38	1	46 (40.7)
x ∅	23	3	13	2	41 (36.3)
Total S1: (%)	24 (21.2)	10 (8.8)	76 (67.3)	3 (2.7)	113 (100.0)
S2 Teachers:					
x FL	-	-	12	4	16 (20.0)
x FL/L1	-	1	5	7	13 (16.3)
x L1	-	8	6	3	17 (21.3)
x ∅	22	2	7	3	34 (42.5)
Total S2: (%)	22 (27.5)	11 (13.8)	30 (37.5)	17 (21.3)	80 (100.0)
All Teachers:					
x FL	-	1	25	4	30 (15.5)
x FL/L1	-	1	17	7	25 (13.0)
x L1	1	14	45	4	63 (32.6)
x ∅	45	5	21	5	75 (38.9)
Total S1 & S2: (%)	46 (23.8)	21 (10.9)	106 (54.9)	20 (10.4)	193 (100.0)

AI at all.

The most marked feature of teachers' language choice for initial AIs was a generally increased tendency to use English (by comparison with their language choice for initial OIs, at least). English was almost exclusively used for AIs introducing L1-medium teaching segments; at S1 level, English also predominated, for AIs introducing FL-medium segments. Only at S2 level was teachers' language choice more evenly divided between French, English and an FL/L1 mixture, for this purpose.

This apparent S1/S2 difference is of course complicated by the fact that S2 teachers predominate among the 'High FL User' group of teachers (four out of six), and S1 teachers predominate among the 'Low FL user' group (three out of five).

Tables 5.16 and 5.17 show the pattern of language choices made by these two teacher subgroups, for OIs and AIs.

Table 5.16 shows little difference between the 'High FL User' and 'Low FL User' groups, as far as the inclusion or omission of OIs from segment beginnings was concerned. Where OIs did occur, though, a consistent commitment by the 'High FL user' group to performing them through French did emerge. This group used OIs almost exclusively in introducing one particular type of teaching segment, however: those categorised as 'Practice FL'. 'Real FL' segments were mostly introduced directly, as were the odd L1-medium segments included by the 'High FL Users'.

The 'Low FL User' group included more L1 medium teaching

Table 5.16

High & Low FL using Teachers: Initiating Moves (Organising Instructions)

Teacher Group	Routine segments	Teaching segments & subsegments			All segments (%)
		L1	Practice FL	Real FL	
H Teachers:					
x FL	2	-	22	1	25 (34.2)
x FL/L1	-	-	2	-	2 (2.7)
x L1	-	-	-	-	-
x ∅	18	2	19	7	46 (63.0)
Total:	20	2	43	8	73(100.0)
L Teachers:					
x FL	1	-	6	-	7 (8.1)
x FL/L1	-	3	5	-	8 (9.3)
x L1	-	7	8	1	16 (18.6)
x ∅	18	9	24	4	55 (64.0)
Total:	19	19	43	5	86(100.0)

Table 5.17

High & Low FL using Teachers: Initiating Moves (Activity Instructions)

Teacher Group	Routine segments	Teaching segments & subsegments			All segments (%)
		L1	Practice FL	Real FL	
H Teachers:					
x FL	-	-	23	3	26 (35.6)
x FL/L1	-	-	5	3	8 (11.0)
x L1	-	2	3	-	5 (6.8)
x \emptyset	20	-	12	2	34 (46.6)
Total:	20	2	43	8	73(100.0)
L Teachers:					
x FL	-	1	1	1	3 (3.5)
x FL/L1	-	1	5	1	7 (8.1)
x L1	1	12	32	1	46 (53.5)
x \emptyset	18	5	5	2	30 (34.9)
Total:	19	19	43	5	86(100.0)

segments, and fewer 'Real FL' ones, in their lessons than did the 'High FL User' group. They introduced none of these segments with French-medium OIs; even for OIs preceding 'Practice FL' segments, French was used alone in only a minority of cases. Overall, therefore, there was a substantial difference in the language choices made by these two subgroups of teachers, for this particular managerial function.

A similar difference emerges even more clearly in the case of 'High' and 'Low FL Users' choice of language for segment-initial 'Activity Instructions', shown in Table 5.17. Both groups included such instructions in the launch of most teaching segments (though 'High FL Users' tended to use them somewhat less). The latter used French alone for two-thirds of their initial AI moves in teaching segments, and English alone only five times; in clear contrast, the 'Low FL Users' overwhelmingly preferred English for this function, regardless of the language medium intended for the following segment. This seems to indicate a substantial difference between the two groups, in terms of willingness to use French for the subset of classroom management messages which must be considered among the most critical for the smooth progress of teaching and learning.

5.4.3.2 Teachers' language choice for 'Lesson Instructions'

Table 5.18 shows all occurrences of 'Lesson Instructions' throughout the set of analysed lessons, together with the

Table 5.18

Language Use in Lesson Instructions

Teacher Group	Language Choice			Total
	FL	FL/L1	L1	
S1 teachers:				
TA	-	-	-	-
TD	-	-	-	-
TG	-	-	1	1
TH	1	1	3	5
TK	-	-	-	-
TL	-	-	2	2
Total S1:	1	1	6	8
S2 teachers:				
TB	1	-	-	1
TC	-	-	-	-
TE	-	1	3	4
TF	-	-	3	3
TI	-	-	-	-
TJ	-	-	-	-
TM	-	-	3	3
Total S2:	1	1	9	11
Total (HFL users):	1	1	3	5
Total (LFL users):	1	1	11	13
Total (all teachers):	2	2	15	19

language medium in which such moves were performed. This category was used infrequently overall, though seven out of the 13 teachers were judged to make such moves at least once.

English was the language clearly favoured, where teachers did produce any 'Lesson Instructions', at both S1 and S2 levels. However, it was also the case that most 'Lesson Instructions' were produced by teachers belonging to the 'Low FL User' group, and the 'High FL User' group produced only a small number. The overall number of such moves in the total corpus is so low, that it is impossible to determine whether this is a matter of coincidence, or the result of an avoidance strategy on the part of the 'High FL User' group. It is tempting to read into the picture given in Table 5.18, the notion that 'Lesson Instructions' are somehow inherently more difficult to perform in French, and are consequently avoided by the latter group; but given the scanty data available, this must remain speculation only.

5.4.3.3 Teachers' language choice for 'Disciplinary Interventions'

Table 5.19 shows the overall occurrence of teacher managerial moves categorised as 'Disciplinary Interventions'. Teachers varied considerably in the use they made of this type of move; however only two teachers (A and E) managed to do without them entirely. (This was something of a surprise to the present author, who had not perceived any significant disciplinary problems while observing any of the lessons. Notably, Teachers

Table 5.19Language Use in Disciplinary Interventions

Teacher Group	Language Choice			Total
	FL	FL/L1	L1	
S1 teachers:				
TA	-	-	-	-
TD	4	1	-	5
TG	5	-	-	5
TH	-	-	2	2
TK	-	-	13	13
TL	-	-	19	19
Total S1:	9	1	34	44
S2 teachers:				
TB	6	-	-	6
TC	16	-	-	16
TE	-	-	-	-
TF	3	1	5	9
TI	3	4	5	12
TJ	6	-	1	7
TM	-	-	2	2
Total S2:	34	5	13	52
Total (HFL users):	32	1	1	34
Total (LFL users):	3	1	41	45
Total (all teachers):	43	6	47	96

C and L, who appear in Table 5.19 as the heaviest users of 'Disciplinary Interventions', were both highly successful classroom managers with good rapport with their pupils. Both, however, seemed to find the business of being audiorecorded somewhat intrusive, and it is possible that this may have heightened their sensitivity to the possibility of pupil misbehaviour on this occasion.)

Some difference emerges from Table 5.19 between the language choices of S1 and S2 teachers on this dimension: that is to say, the S2 teachers were considerably more inclined to make moves with a DI function through French. However, a similar trend emerges even more clearly when the teachers are re-grouped by their overall commitment to FL use. The 'High FL Users' admonished their pupils almost always through French, while the 'Low FL Users' had a similarly clearcut commitment to making DIs through English only.

'Disciplinary Interventions' thus seem to be a type of managerial move which all teachers were willing to make, but for which teachers' overall level of commitment to FL use was critical in determining the language to be used.

5.5 Metalinguistic Talk

5.5.1 Why study metalinguistic talk?

The last aspect of teachers' classroom talk to be examined in this chapter is their metalinguistic talk: that is, all talk involving comment on the structure of French, discussion of grammatical categories, rule-giving, and/or comment on the appropriate contexts for use of particular language forms. Such talk may or may not involve the use of specialised grammatical terminology (and in fact, in the case of this group of teachers, very little such terminology was used); but it essentially involves the making of statements about the target language and its use, with an apparent motive of making the pupils conscious of the formal structure of the language, in contrast with talk which involves the pupils directly in using it.

Metalinguistic talk of this kind was of interest for a number of reasons. In the previously-discussed segment-level observational study (Mitchell et al., 1981), the present author and others had found a positive correlation between the occurrence of such talk in classroom teaching, and the achievement of pupils experiencing it. While this finding did not support any causal interpretation (it being equally likely that high-achieving pupils elicit certain types of talk from their teachers, as that those types of talk promote high achievement), it nonetheless did not fit well with current

beliefs that metalinguistic discussion is at best of marginal value in developing learners' L2 competence (see discussion in Chapter 1).

More directly relevant to the concerns of the present study were the findings of the interview survey discussed in Chapter 2, relevant to this topic. It was clear that the majority of teachers interviewed believed on the one hand that a conscious understanding of the formal structure of the target language was necessary to develop a generative competence in it; and on the other hand, that metalinguistic talk was one of the areas of classroom talk most particularly resistant to being conducted through the medium of the target language. Putting these two things together, it seemed that teachers believed in the necessity of a particular type of talk which they did not believe could practicably be conducted through the target language; this seemed a potentially serious obstacle to the development of target language use, as a routine medium for classroom communication.

One of the action research studies which constituted Phase C of the Communicative Interaction Project pursued this issue further. The teacher who appears as Teacher G in the present study undertook to teach a particular French 'grammar point' (the written forms of the present tense paradigm for ER verbs) to her S1 class through the medium of French, as the focus of a small scale action research study. This study is reported in Mitchell, 1985a (pp 148 - 153), and the strategies used by the teacher to solve her pupils' comprehension difficulties

are analysed further in Chapter 7 of this thesis. While most pupils were able by the end of the lesson to reproduce the desired forms with different verb stems, the teacher encountered various difficulties in carrying through the activity in French. Most notably, the only means she felt able to use in trying to develop the rather primitive concept of what a 'verb' was which the pupils brought to the lesson ('a verb is a doing word'), was that of extended exemplification - which did not appear to be very effective. Also, it seemed that considerable numbers of pupils relied on (English-medium) unofficial peer tuition, in order to master the spelling rules and produce the ultimately satisfactory results in terms of their performance in a written exercise. This study, small scale as it was, lent support to the notion that the conveyance of abstract and decontextualised information such as that pertaining to description of the target language code does present special problems for target language medium teaching.

It was therefore felt important to pay particular attention to such metalinguistic commentaries as were produced by the group of teachers concerned in the present study. In which language were they generally performed? Did the 'High FL User' group of teachers seem to avoid metalinguistic content, in the interests of sustaining their commitment to FL use? Or had they found particular ways of presenting such content, which were compatible with the maintenance of French as the medium of classroom communication? These were the main

questions of interest.

5.5.2 Analytic procedures for studying metalinguistic talk

It had been assumed initially that teachers' metalinguistic talk could be analysed in terms of individual pedagogic 'moves', as was done with 'Organising Instructions', 'Activity Instructions' etc. However, it turned out that unlike the more strictly managerial types of talk studied in this chapter, metalinguistic talk was routinely interactive, with information being negotiated with pupils rather than directly imparted. It therefore did not make sense to try to isolate individual teacher moves in this area, without taking account of related pupil utterances.

The analytic procedure adopted was therefore to identify within the data what were termed 'episodes' of metalinguistic talk, which ranged in length from an entire teaching/ learning segment to an individual teacher speech turn or part of a turn, but which normally consisted of a small number of teacher and pupil speech turns within a lesson segment. These 'episodes' were defined essentially in terms of their topic: they included all analytic comments, explanations and rule-giving concerned with matters of language form (including those to do with appropriate contexts of use for particular language forms), whether sought from pupils by the teacher, or given directly to them. The episodes were also defined to include the giving and seeking of examples directly related to

the language points under discussion.

Excluded from consideration as metalinguistic talk, however, was all talk concerned solely with the semantics of otherwise unanalysed language 'chunks': e.g.

"How do you say (word/ phrase/ sentence) in French?"

"What does (word/ phrase/ sentence) mean?"

(The use of this particular type of 'metacomment' is discussed further in Chapter 7.)

The definition used was thus more rigorous than that used in the segmental analysis reported in Section 5.3, which included regular sequences of this kind of talk under the 'Language Point' topic category. Under this more rigorous definition, only a small number of complete segments originally coded as 'Language Point' for topic were judged to consist entirely in metalinguistic talk.

5.5.3 Context, topic and language choice in metalinguistic talk

Altogether, 56 episodes of metalinguistic talk of segment length or less were identified in the six S1 lessons, and 53 such episodes were identified in the seven S2 lessons. These episodes were analysed on three different dimensions: the context of the episode, the nature of the linguistic topic addressed within it, and the language used by teacher and pupils within the episode. Findings on these three dimensions are presented in Tables 5.20 - 5.22.

Table 5.20

The Context of Metalinguistic Comments

Teacher Group	No. of incidents	Context				
		Teaching			Feedback	
		Seg.	Intraseg	Sum up	on error	correct form
S1 teachers:						
A	6	-	-	2	4	-
D	5	-	1	-	3	1
G	5	-	3	-	2	-
H	9	2	2	-	3	2
K	6	1	4	-	-	1
L	25	1	15	-	7	2
All S1:	56	4	25	2	19	6
S2 teachers:						
B	4	-	-	-	4	-
C	1	-	-	-	1	-
E	11	-	9	2	-	-
F	7	-	3	-	3	1
I	24	-	11	-	10	3
J	1	1	-	-	-	-
M	5	-	1	1	3	-
All S2:	53	1	24	3	21	4
All HFL:	28	1	10	4	12	1
All LFL:	52	4	25	1	16	6
All teachers:	109	5	49	5	40	10

The context of metalinguistic episodes was taken into consideration, because of the possibility that some relationship might exist between factors such as the degree of prior planning underlying these incidents and the apparent immediate stimulus for their occurrence, and the language used within them. Table 5.20 shows the breakdown of episodes by context. Episodes initiated by the teacher are shown as 'Teaching' episodes. These were divided into three groups: those consisting in a complete lesson segment, those

consisting in an apparently incidental teaching point made during the course of an ongoing segment having an alternative main topic, and those with an apparent 'summing up' purpose, typically occurring towards the end of a segment (and perhaps also of a lesson).

As the table shows, only five complete lesson segments were judged to consist entirely in metalinguistic comment. Two examples were to be found in the lesson taught by Teacher H; Segment 11, consisting in an explicit presentation of "the two ways of saying 'a' in French" (i.e. gender agreement in the indefinite article), and Segment 13 (explicit discussion of the use of intonation to signal certain types of question form, e.g.: "when you are asking a question which expects the answer yes or the answer no, you raise your voice at the end of the sentence").

Intrasegmental episodes were the commonest type of metalinguistic talk in the corpus. Examples may be quoted from the most frequent users:

(GENDER AGREEMENT: PRONOUNS)

T: This animal is feminine, it says, so don't forget to use the feminine form. I wonder how many people will say them properly. All right then, this time c'est - c'est -

P: Une souris

T: Well done, c'est une souris, uhhuh. This time my word isn't going to be 'il', because that is for boys, it is going to be 'elle', for that is for girls. 'Elle est' - right then

P: Elle est petite

T: Elle est petite, très bien (Teacher L, Segment 9)

T: Ici nous avons un homme, un gar - deux garçons, et une fille... la question, qu'est-ce que c'est? C'est une mélange, ehh c'est une mélange. C'est les garçons - c'est du masculin et du féminin

P: Qu'est-ce qu'ils font (Teacher E, Segment 6)

(PERSON AGREEMENT: PRONOUNS)

"You are talking about yourself Keith, so you say 'je'"
(Teacher I, Segment 5/2)

(RELATIONSHIP OF SPOKEN AND WRITTEN FORMS)

"Notice that E - N - T on there, making it plural, is not pronounced" (Teacher E, Segment 3)

(SPELLING)

P: How do you spell 'fraises'

T: (TO ANOTHER PUPIL) Ahh... non, non

P: Is there an I in it?

T: Mhm, F - R - A -

P: A?

T: I - S - E. And if you have 'un kilo de fraises', what do you expect at the end of the word 'fraises'?

P: S

T: Oui... Ca va Frank? Mhm, with an S...

End-of-segment, summing-up comments such as the following example were rare:

(SOCIAL APPROPRIACY)

T: Tout le monde comprend, 's'il te plaît', 's'il vous plaît'?

PP: S'il te plaît, s'il vous plaît

T: Non, écoutez. Tout le monde comprend? Tu comprends, 's'il te plaît', 's'il vous plaît'? Tu comprends la différence? 'S'il te plaît' et 's'il vous plaît'. Tu comprends? parce que tu étais absent. Tu comprends? Alors tu expliques en anglais, 's'il te plaît'

P: If you are talking to your friend

T: Oui, et 's'il vous plaît'?

P: If you are talking to your teacher

T: Bon, très bien (Teacher A, Segment 6/5)

(GENDER AGREEMENT: PRONOUNS)

T: Just to summarise in English, if it is a crowd of boys you are talking about, how do you ask what are they doing?

P: Ils (...)

T: No, come on. Laura

P: Qu'est-ce qu'ils font?

T: Qu'est-ce qu'ils font? And if it is girls you are talking about, what are they doing? Dorothy?

P: Qu'est-ce qu'elles font?

T: Qu'est-ce qu'elles font, and if it is a mixture of both?

P: Qu'est-ce qu'ils font?

T: Qu'est-ce qu'ils font, très bien, qu'est-ce qu'ils font? (Teacher E, Segment 6)

Episodes placed in these three 'Teaching' categories were considered to derive from some positive decision on the part of the teacher to provide certain information about language structure (even though some were formally pupil-initiated, as in the 'Spelling' example given above). However, episodes were also found fairly commonly, forming part of teachers' feedback on pupils' FL performance. Usually, such 'Feedback' comments

were triggered by a formal error on the part of a pupil; occasionally, however, they were produced as part of feedback on a correct utterance. These two types of 'Feedback' category are distinguished in Table 5.20. Some examples follow:

(GENDER AGREEMENT: PREPOSITION + ARTICLE)

P: Ils sont à la lac

T: Attention

PP: Madame

T: Ils sont - un mot. Un mot seulement...

P: One word

P: Ils sont lac?

T: Ils sont - ils sont au lac

P: Au lac, ils sont au lac (Teacher B, Segment 7)

(PERSON AGREEMENT: PRONOUNS)

P: Tu ne sais pas

T: Je ne sais pas

P: Je ne sais pas

T: Remember, you are talking about yourself, so you will say 'je'. Je ne sais pas (Teacher I, Segment 3)

T: Maman j'adore - what is he getting mixed up with? Did you hear that?

PP: Yes

T: Would someone like to -

P: He is talking about himself

T: That is right. You started off 'maman', and then you forgot about 'maman' when you said 'j'adore'. (Teacher L, Segment 15)

(APPROPRIACY)

P: Salut

T: Salut. Why would you say 'salut', and not 'bonjour'?

P: Because you are talking to your friend

T: You are talking to your friend, uhhuh (Teacher H, Segment 8)

Looking more closely at Table 5.20, it is clear that teachers' propensity to engage in metalinguistic talk varied considerably. The S1 teachers produced an average of 9.3 such episodes each, and the S2 teacher produced a somewhat lower average of 7.6. However, the extremes were widely separated. Two teachers (Teacher L and Teacher I) between them accounted for almost half the total number of episodes in the corpus, while two others (Teacher C and Teacher J) produced only one each.

Some tendency to avoid metalinguistic talk did appear among the 'High FL User' group of six teachers (who averaged only 4.7 metalinguistic episodes per lesson, while the five 'Low FL Users' averaged 10.4 episodes each). However, there was little evidence of variation in the contexts for such episodes as did occur, between the different groups of teachers. Overall, intrasegmental teacher-initiated episodes and those providing feedback on error predominated in the lessons of all groups.

Table 5.21 provides more detail regarding the content of metalinguistic episodes. The table makes it clear that

Table 5.21

Substance of Metalinguistic Episodes

Teacher Group	Topic						Total
	Pronun- ciation	Spelling	Morph- ology	Approp- riacy	Syntax	Other	
S1: A	-	-	1	5	-	-	6
D	-	-	1	4	-	-	5
G	-	-	5	-	-	-	5
H	3	-	5	1	-	-	9
K	1	1	4	-	-	-	6
L	2	9	11	-	3	-	25
All S1:	6	10	27	10	3	-	56
S2: B	-	-	4	-	-	-	4
C	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
E	3	-	7	-	-	1	11
F	3	2	1	-	1	-	7
I	2	11	10	-	1	-	24
J	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
M	-	-	2	-	3	-	5
All S2:	8	14	25	-	5	1	53
All HFL:	3	1	14	9	-	1	28
All LFL:	9	12	23	1	7	-	52
All teachers:	14	24	52	10	8	1	109

morphological matters were most commonly discussed overall. As shown in the examples quoted above, these mainly concerned matters of gender, number and person agreement, for items such as articles, pronouns and adjectives. (There was no qualitative difference between the types of morphological item discussed by 'High' and 'Low FL Users'.)

Matters of spelling come in second place due to the particular attention paid to this area by Teachers L and I. Some aspect of 'pronunciation' received comment from six teachers; however, 'appropriacy' figures in the table because

of the concern of Teachers A and D with establishing the appropriate use of T and V forms of address. The limited discussion of 'syntax' covered a scattering of points to do with sentence structure such as the role of 'dummy' verbs, or the use of conjunctions. The single episode characterised as 'other' dealt with meanings of the present tense in French (Teacher E).

The table shows some differences in the 'topic' profiles of 'High' and 'Low FL User' groups - e.g. the apparent avoidance of 'Spelling' by the former - to which it is tempting to attach significance. However, in this instance, the influence of the behaviour of individuals is too great to permit this.

Table 5.22 gives an overview of the language spoken by teachers and pupils during metalinguistic episodes. For both groups, talk is divided into 'explanation' (i.e. the core metalinguistic commentary) and 'exemplification' (the provision of examples by teacher or pupils). Under these headings three possible language choices, plus a 'zero' category, are shown.

As the table shows, metalinguistic episodes almost always included some 'explanation' produced by the teacher (the exceptions being three episodes concerned with spelling in the lesson of Teacher E). These explanations were given predominantly in French by the 'High FL User' group only; the 'Low FL User' group used English almost exclusively for this purpose. The examples given almost universally by both groups were however effectively all-French.

Table 5.22
Language of Metalinguistic Episodes

T's	Teacher								Pupil								Total Episodes
	Explanations				Examples				Explanations				Examples				
	FL	M	L1	∅	FL	M	L1	∅	FL	M	L1	∅	FL	M	L1	∅	
A	5	1	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	5	1	3	-	-	3	6
D	5	-	-	-	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	5	4	-	-	1	5
G	-	-	5	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	4	-	-	-	5
H	-	1	8	-	9	-	-	-	-	-	7	2	4	-	-	-	9
K	-	-	6	-	4	-	-	2	-	-	3	3	1	-	-	-	6
L	-	-	25	-	23	-	-	2	-	-	7	18	6	-	1	18	25
All S1:	10	2	44	-	51	1	-	4	-	-	24	32	22	-	1	33	56
B	4	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	-	1	3	4	-	-	-	4
C	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	1
E	1	5	5	-	9	-	-	2	-	-	4	7	3	-	1	7	11
F	-	-	7	-	5	-	-	2	-	-	1	6	3	-	1	3	7
I	-	-	21	3	23	-	-	1	-	-	11	13	6	-	1	17	24
J	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1
M	-	-	5	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	1	-	-	4	5
All S2:	6	6	38	3	46	-	-	7	-	-	19	34	18	-	3	32	53
HFL:	16	7	5	-	23	1	-	4	-	-	11	17	15	-	1	12	28
LFL:	-	1	51	-	46	-	-	6	-	-	19	33	15	-	2	35	52
All Ts:	16	8	82	3	97	1	-	11	-	-	43	66	40	-	4	65	109

Pupil 'explanations' were required much less often than teacher 'explanations' were given; where they were required, however, French was not expected by any group of teachers. Examples provided by pupils were, like those of all teachers, consistently in French.

The most clearcut distinctions emerging from this table are thus those between the extent to which 'High FL Users' and 'Low FL Users' provided metalinguistic 'explanations', and the language they used for the purpose. It does seem that 'High

FL Users' avoided the issue to some extent. For example even when reacting to errors of form (something these teachers did less overall than others), they tended to employ rather general signals that there was a difficulty, rather than any detailed indication of what it was:

P: Ils sont à la lac

T: Ah

P: Au lac (Teacher B, Segment 7/2)

P: les jeunes filles est -

T: Sont à la surprise-partie. Il faut faire attention, hein? (Teacher C, Segment 2)

However, 'High FL Users' did not always practise avoidance. Some of the general teacher strategies for resolving pupils' FL comprehension problems discussed in detail in Chapter 7 were brought into play within metalinguistic episodes. For example, one intermediate strategy was to rely on eliciting an English-medium explanation from a pupil to confirm the meaning of an FL explanation given by the teacher, or to substitute for it altogether:

T: Bon. Qui va expliquer - attends. Qui va expliquer 's'il vous plaît', 's'il te plaît', la différence? Qui va expliquer la différence? En anglais. Liliane

P: Miss, ehm, 'S'il te plaît' is if you are talking to your friend, 's'il vous plaît' is if you are talking to a teacher or someone you don't know

T: Très bien (Teacher A, Segment 5)
In the present corpus this strategy was recorded only for

Teacher A; however other 'High FL user' teachers in the same school were observed to use it on other occasions.

Another intermediate strategy was the use of language switching within explanations, as exemplified by Teacher E:

"Maintenant, nous avons un - deux garçons et une fille... la question, qu'est-ce que c'est, la question? Nous avons une mélange, a mixture, hmm? Deux garçons et une fille... La question, qu'est-ce que c'est, la question? Jacques... c'est 'qu'est-ce qu'ils font', ou 'qu'est-ce qu'elles font'?" (Teacher E, Segment 6)

Just a few full-blown attempts by the 'High FL Users' to give metalinguistic comments in French without the support of pupil L1 explanations were to be found in the corpus. Those which succeeded tended to be brief:

T: Non, pas 'et toi'. je suis le prof, on ne dit pas 'et toi' -

P: Et vous

T: Et vous, oui, c'est ça (Teacher D, Segment 3)

When such FL explanations were not immediately successful, continuing FL strategies were sometimes tried:

P: Tu as des soeurs?

T: Oui, mais on ne peut pas dire 'tu'. Je suis le prof... tu ne comprends pas?

P: Non

T: Non, alors ehh... ça va?

P: Oui, ça va merci, et vous?

T: Alors tu dis 'et vous', tu ne dis pas 'et toi', tu dis 'et vous', hein?... pas 'et toi'. Alors, vous ne pouvez pas poser la - les questions, 'où habites-tu?' 'Quel âge as-tu?' Et l'autre, 'comment t'appelles-tu?' -

P: Ohh -

T: Ah, tu comprends maintenant... (Teacher D, Segment 11)

In this case, the teacher succeeded in finding an analogous example which seemed to solve the problem. However, such cases were so rare in the data that no regularly successful means for taking metalinguistic talk through to its local conclusion via FL could be identified.

As a final step in the analysis of these metalinguistic episodes, associations were looked for between the three dimensions of context, content, and language choice. No such associations were found; thus for example, the belief that 'Feedback' episodes might differ in language used from 'Teaching' episodes (because of their supposedly spontaneous character) was not supported. It seems compatible with the evidence to suggest that all teachers dealt with fairly similar content, regardless of context: and that the prime determiner of language choice was extrinsic to the particular character of individual episodes, lying instead in teachers' overall levels of commitment to target language use.

5.6 Conclusion

What do the foregoing analyses of this corpus of 13 lessons, conducted at differing levels of detail, tell us about the uses to which French and English were put in the classrooms of

this group of teachers, sharing a common commitment to 'communicative' methodology?

Firstly it is clear that it is perfectly possible to run L2 lessons completely through the medium of the target language, or virtually so, under British classroom and cultural conditions. Teachers' general concerns for good discipline and the smooth running of their classes, while evident in these lessons, were not irreconcilable with target language-medium teaching. However even within this group of 'committed' teachers, there was considerable variation in the extent to which this was done (as the first, basic analysis of speech turns showed).

At the strategic level of lesson organisation revealed by the segmental analysis, however, these lessons had much in common. There was little difference between S1 and S2 lessons, or between those taught by 'High' and 'Low FL Users', as far as patterns of class organisation or pupils' mode or involvement were concerned. All teachers favoured simple, robust organisational patterns; whole class teaching was the preferred option, with pair work a usual, and group and individual work occasional, variants. At all times, identical tasks were set for all pupils. This organisational pattern was managed by some teachers through French and by others through English; whatever was inhibiting the use of more elaborate patterns (such as e.g. the use of differentiated work explicitly recommended by at least one of the curriculum development projects in which the teachers were variously

involved) seemed to apply equally to all teachers, and the use of French as a medium of instruction did not appear to act as an inhibiting factor.

Similarly, all teachers favoured modes of pupil involvement with a strong oral/aural interactive bias, regardless of year level or their degree of personal commitment to FL-medium teaching. Across the board, reading and writing played only a minor supporting role, and extended exposure to target language input without expectation of pupil responses, usually in the target language, were rare. These teachers seem generally to have overcome the possible inhibitions on classroom talk suggested by Hargreaves (who suggested, it will be recalled from Chapter 2, that noisy classrooms attracted the disapproval of secondary teachers' colleagues and superiors as evidence of inability to keep order), so as to run lively and conversational, though not rowdy, classrooms. Their motives for promoting this pattern remain somewhat unclear, however. There is some evidence from the interview survey reported in Chapter 2 that teachers of this type generally equate communicative FL teaching with an oral, interactive style; and it should not be forgotten that such a style also reflects some continuity with the previously fashionable 'audiolingual' approach. It seems unlikely (again, on the basis of the way these teachers and others spoke when interviewed) that Scottish teachers are aware of the finer details of the 'input' versus 'interaction' argument reviewed in Chapter 1; or that this particular group was consciously

aligning itself with Long et al, and against Krashen, in this debate. The teacher imperative to sustain pupil involvement, and to elicit ongoing evidence both of it and of the state of pupils' developing knowledge, suggested by Hargreaves, seems a more plausible (if partial) explanation of the phenomenon. But whatever the underlying reasons, the pattern of pupil involvement was largely unaffected by the teachers' choice of language as teaching medium.

When the core areas of 'Topic' and 'Language Activity' were considered at this same segmental level, however, the work patterns favoured by the different groups of teachers within the sample began to diverge. Segments with 'Routine' topics occurred in the lessons of all teachers, and formed over a quarter of the total corpus. In respect of these segments there was a clearcut division in the language choices made by 'High' and 'Low FL Users'. Very similar routine content was handled by the first group consistently in French, by the second consistently in English. This therefore was the first area identified, where teachers' personal beliefs about what was feasible, and/or their personal skills in making FL-medium messages understood, appeared likely factors influencing their language choice.

The picture was somewhat more complex in relation to 'Teaching' segments. In the corpus overall, segments with a fragmented or non-contextualised topic were the commonest type found, reflecting a continuing commitment on the part of all teachers to language structure as a prime 'organiser' for

their teaching, albeit on an inductive basis. This commitment was more singleminded for S2 teachers than for S1 teachers however; the latter paid relatively more attention to coherent content, whether imaginary or to do with 'real life' (the latter admittedly at a generally superficial level, mainly concerned with the rehearsal and consolidation of 'getting to know you' routines). It was however the S1 teachers (or rather, the 'Low FL Users' among them), who complemented inductive 'Fragmented/ non-contextualised' talk with segments having an explicit focus on 'Language Points'. The S2 'Low FL User' group were responsible for the remaining striking variation in what was talked about, with their discussions of cultural matters ('Civilisation').

As far as language activities were concerned, 'practice FL' tasks of various types predominated in the corpus overall, as well as in the lessons of all teacher subgroups. Structure drills and exercises were the commonest type of practice FL category for all groups, the S1 teachers having a particularly strong commitment to them. The most substantial variation arose in the distribution between teacher subgroups of the smaller numbers of English-medium and 'real' French-medium teaching segments. 'Real FL' teaching segments were strikingly rare in the S1 corpus (there were four altogether!). In S2 lessons however they were the commonest type of segment found, just outnumbering drills and exercises. Interestingly, 'High' and 'Low FL User' groups had virtually identical (lowish) numbers of 'Real FL' segments; a disproportionate contribution

to the corpus was made here by the two 'Mid FL User' teachers, G and I.

The occurrence of English-medium teaching segments was much more clearly linked to user group. The lessons of the 'High FL Users' produced none at all, while those of the 'Low FL User' group produced virtually all such segments. (Indeed teachers' initial chances of being categorised as 'High' or 'Low FL Users' were substantially dependent on the occurrence of such segments in their lessons, given the large number of L1 speech turns produced within them.)

As far as strategic language choices for teaching purposes are concerned then, the difference between the 'High' and 'Low FL User' groups consists most strikingly in a clear rejection by the former group of English as a component of segmental 'patterns of expectation', and its (partial) acceptance by the latter. French-medium activities, however, 'real' as well as 'practice', were attempted by all.

In contrast with 'Routine' segments, where teacher user group appeared to determine language choice for very similar purposes, distinctive purposes were associated with 'Real FL' and L1 use for teaching purposes. Confirming findings in earlier investigations, 'real' French was used for a limited range of purposes only. These were: structurally unconstrained talk about coursebook situations (normally involving role play); problem-solving activities and guessing games (which account for a majority of the S2 'Real FL' segments); and 'Real Life' interaction (of which the most ambitious example

was a discussion between Teacher B and her class of their respective weekend sporting activities). English was used (exclusively by 'Low FL Users') for the distinctive purposes of talk about the culture associated with French, and that concerning explicit metalinguistic material. Again this confirms both the findings of other studies, and expectations arising from teacher views expressed in interview, regarding the relative difficulty of dealing with dense, new or abstract content via French. The 'High FL Users' seemed to sustain their commitment to French, at least at segmental level, by avoidance of such topics rather than by extending the use of French to include them.

In the later part of the chapter attention shifted to teachers' language choices for a range of managerial purposes at a level below that of the segment. The reported analysis of various types of managerial 'move' ('Lesson Instructions', 'Disciplinary Interventions', 'Organising Instructions' and 'Activity Instructions') may generally be related to the reported pattern of language choices for 'Routine' segments. There was some variation in the frequency with which different groups of teachers used these categories of move. However, it seemed that most of these move types could be realised without undue problems (or significant variation in the quality of the message being conveyed) in either language. Clearcut differences nonetheless emerged between 'High' and 'Low FL User' teacher groups, most notably in respect of language choices for AIs and DIs. In both these cases the 'High FL

'User' group kept largely to French, the 'Low FL User' group to English. Again, these differences seemed best explained by teachers' personal preferences and/or language skills. Only for 'Lesson Instructions' did it seem likely that 'High FL Users' might be practising an avoidance strategy in order to escape potential difficulties of presentation (perceived or real).

The last topic covered in the chapter, teachers' choice of language for metalinguistic talk below segmental level, may also be related to the segmental analysis. Just as 'High FL Users' tended to avoid segments with 'Language Point' topics, so they made metalinguistic comments only half as frequently as the 'Low FL Users'. Such comments as they made were a little less likely to be independently initiated by the teacher, and more likely to occur as feedback, than those produced by the 'Low User' group. There was however little difference in the substantive nature of comments made by either group; for both, fairly minor points of morphology were most frequently at issue. ('Low Users'' attention to spelling, and 'High Users'' attention to appropriacy, were due to particular emphases by individuals.)

As far as language choices for this function were concerned, however, a fairly clearcut distinction did emerge. 'Low FL Users' employed English very consistently, while 'High FL users' sustained a fairly consistent commitment to French, in their own speech. Again, therefore, it seemed that teachers' personal predilections and abilities might be

determining pupils' language experience, rather than any element inherent in the nature of the task.

This chapter has reviewed the facts of functional differentiation in the use of English and French as teaching media by different groups of teachers. Only a small number of suggestions have been made here regarding the precise nature of the language tactics which enabled 'High FL Users' to carry out through French a range of macro and micro classroom functions which others performed through English. Aspects of this question are explored in more detail in Chapters 6 and 7.

CHAPTER 6

STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF TEACHERS' FL TALK

6.1 Introduction

In Chapter 3, Section 3.3, a small number of research studies describing foreign language teachers' talk in structural terms was briefly reviewed. These studies were comparative in nature; in one group, teachers' target language classroom talk was compared with talk in various non-classroom settings. In the other group of studies, teachers' classroom talk was compared with the interlanguage spoken by their pupils, with inconclusive results.

The concerns of this study lead to a different approach to the structural analysis of teachers' FL classroom talk from that adopted in either of these groups of previous studies. In this chapter, a descriptive account of the teachers' French will be provided, viewed as potential 'comprehensible input' for their pupils. The basic questions to which answers will be sought concern firstly the overall 'richness' of the diet of French to which these teachers were exposing their pupils in their own talk. Quantitative questions will therefore be asked, concerning the range, frequency and complexity of various types of item occurring in the teachers' FL talk.

Secondly, comparative questions will be asked, concerning structural characteristics of the French used by S1 and S2 teachers on the one hand, and by 'High' and 'Low FL User' groups on the other. Is it actually the case that 'S2 teacher French' is structurally richer than 'S1 teacher French', as commonsense would lead one to expect? And what is the relationship between the teacher's degree of commitment to using French, and the structural characteristics of the French used? Again, commonsense would suggest that the 'High FL User' group will of necessity produce French which is structurally richer, as they strive to perform the wider range of functions indicated in Chapter 5 through the medium of the target language. But it might also be the case that 'High FL Users' can sustain French usage, because they have learned to make more flexible use of extremely simple French. It was hoped that a comparison of the linguistic choices made by both teacher groups would shed more light on these possibilities.

In addition to these main descriptive and comparative purposes, a third group of questions is raised more tentatively in this chapter. The first of these concerns the issue of variation within the groups of lessons taught at S1 and S2 levels. Was there any evidence that different groups of teachers share common norms, in terms of the structural level of French which first or second year pupils could be expected to understand? Or, do individual S1 and S2 teachers appear to have very different expectations of their pupils? The one-lesson sample for each teacher was not sufficient to allow

such variation as existed to be attributed with confidence to a 'teacher expectations' variable (as opposed, for example, to choice of topic or language activities on the particular occasion of observation). However, the within-group variation found was in the event so striking, that some tentative comments concerning possible causes are made.

The second issue to be discussed in brief, is the relationship between the coursebook syllabuses being taught, and structural characteristics of teachers' speech. It is clearly of interest to establish the extent to which teachers are governed in their own lexical and structural choices by those made in the syllabus they are following. Advice given to teachers on this issue has changed in recent years. In 'audiolingual' methodology the positive recommendation was made that teachers should limit themselves to the prescribed FL forms in their own speech, whereas a more relaxed attitude is encouraged by 'communicative' methodologists. In particular, the practice of the 'High FL User' and 'Low User' groups might be expected to vary in this respect. Again, however, the smallness of the corpus (added to the fact that the teachers observed were following four different coursebooks) did not allow for anything more than partial and tentative comments to be made on this issue.

The last issue considered in brief is the relationship between the structural complexity of teachers' French, and that of the English they used in class. 'Complexity' is a relative concept; if it could be shown that the teachers'

French, though apparently in its own terms structurally 'simple', was no more so than the English used in parallel, then such 'simplicity' might be considered a general characteristic of public classroom talk, rather than a particular feature of target language talk. If on the other hand, the teachers' English turned out to be significantly richer and more complex than their French, the argument that teachers were indeed employing a range of 'simplification' strategies consistently when speaking the target language would be strengthened. However, the nature of the sample again precluded anything other than limited tentative comment on this question. In particular, teachers' choice of topic and language activity on the occasion of observation (e.g. Teacher F's concentration on 'background' topics, presented almost entirely through English) was clearly likely to have been a strong factor influencing the range and quality of English used, which given the limited database, could not be disentangled from teachers' personal styles of talk. For this reason no systematic analysis of the teachers' English comparable with that of their French was carried out; instead, some limited comments of a qualitative nature are made.

The main task undertaken in this chapter was thus to produce a structural description of aspects of the 13 teachers' talk in French. An exhaustive description was not attempted. Firstly, no attempt was made to produce a description of phonological aspects of the teachers' speech. All but two (Teachers I and F) were not native speakers of

French, and it was considered virtually impossible to distinguish phonological features in teachers' speech which were intended as adaptations to a learner audience from features arising from the teachers' own non-native-speaker status. However, studies were undertaken in the other two 'core' linguistic areas of lexis and syntax. It was decided to restrict the study of lexis to 'content' words only (since the incidence of 'function' words such as prepositions or conjunctions was assumed to be heavily interdependent with teachers' syntactic choices); indeed, for reasons outlined in Section 6.2 below, just one class of content words (verb lexemes) was studied. As far as syntax was concerned, two dimensions were selected for study, one representative of morphological structure, the other of sentence structure: a) the morphology of the verb system used by the teachers, and b) the use of clausal coordination and subordination.

The verb system merited particular attention for several reasons. It is well known as a 'problem' area in classroom language learning; while internalisation of a basic repertoire of verb forms is generally seen as a key minimum requirement for creative FL use at the most elementary level, there is substantial evidence that many British school pupils fail to achieve this (Dickson et al, 1983). In addition, many elementary coursebooks in current use (including those used in all classrooms observed for the present study) treat only limited aspects of the verb system systematically in their syllabuses (typically, only present tense forms are so

treated, with forms from other parts of the system occurring only holophrastically). It was thus thought of particular interest to study the extent of the model verb systems being provided by teachers for their pupils in their own speech.

Similarly, current beginners' coursebooks give little attention to sentence patterns of any complex kind. The study of the incidence of coordination and subordination was therefore chosen as a good indicator of teachers' willingness to move beyond prescribed syllabus material in response to the communicative requirements of FL use as a medium of classroom instruction.

One further aspect of teachers' classroom talk lying somewhat outside the 'core' area of language structure was selected for systematic analysis in this chapter. This was the range of so-called 'discourse markers' used by the teachers, as attention-getters and boundary signals marking different phases in the talk. Teachers in L1-medium content classrooms are known to use items such as 'right', 'well', and 'okay' systematically for these purposes (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975). It was decided to study the range of forms used for this purpose in the present lesson corpus, to discover whether such a pattern was reproduced in French-medium interaction, and if so, what FL items were used. (As the possibility clearly existed of L1 forms being used for this purpose even during French-medium talk, the study of this minor aspect of teacher talk was exceptionally extended to cover both languages.)

6.2 Lexical Range

The lexical range to be found in the teachers' French was not exhaustively investigated. It was decided that this area of language structure could adequately be sampled by concentrating on the verb system, which was also to be analysed in more detail from a morphological perspective (see Section 6.3 below). The nouns used by the teachers were the other possible candidate for analysis. However it was felt that while an analysis of nouns used would provide a useful indication of relative diversity in teachers' speech (e.g. through comparisons of the range of French nouns used by the different teachers), the corpus of data was too small to provide any useful information on item frequencies if nouns were used. (It has been clear, at least since various attempts were made to empirically determine what constitutes the 'common core' of a given language, that the chances of individual nouns, even ones which might be thought 'common' and 'familiar', being recorded in use on any particular occasion are very small, given the huge number available to speakers of any natural language, and given the context-dependence of much 'normal' conversation. For example, the researchers who recorded hundreds of hours of naturally-occurring conversation in French in order to draw up the frequency-based lists of "Le Français Fondamental" were

obliged to adopt supplementary elicitation procedures in order to include any substantial numbers of nouns in their vocabulary lists: Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, n.d.) Consequently, a study of nouns used was unlikely to shed light on the possible existence of any 'common core' vocabulary in teacher talk, even at this level of language teaching. An analysis of verbs used, on the other hand, could be expected to provide both an indication of relative diversity, and also some meaningful information on item frequencies and on the possible existence of some 'core' vocabulary.

6.2.1 Procedures for counting verb lexemes

For the purposes of this verb lexeme count, and also of the investigation of verb morphology described in the next section, all verb forms occurring in the 13 transcribed lessons were listed and their frequencies were tallied. In order to use these data as a basic indicator of lexical range, the recorded forms were grouped under traditional verb citation forms (infinitive forms), regardless of whether or not the infinitive was among the actually occurring forms. For simplicity's sake, and in particular to avoid the difficult theoretical problems of distinguishing between homonymy and polysemy (Lyons, 1981, pp 146 - 148), this grouping was done according to morphological rather than semantic or syntactic criteria. Thus for example, all inflectionally variable forms relatable to the infinitive citation form 'faire' were grouped

together (where e.g. Harrap's "New Shorter French and English Dictionary" suggests division into eight lexemes, while the Larousse "Dictionnaire Moderne Français-Anglais" suggests there are five, both on a mixture of syntactico-semantic grounds). Similarly, all forms relatable to the infinitive form 'sortir' were grouped, where the same dictionaries suggest division into two lexemes on syntactic grounds (grouping transitive and intransitive forms separately).

The only exception to this principle was made in the case of the verbs 'avoir' and 'être'. Following traditional descriptive practice, where forms of these verbs appeared in the role of verbal auxiliaries helping to realise inflectional variants of other verb lexemes, they were attributed to the latter (e.g. 'tu as fini' was subsumed under 'finir', not under 'avoir'). On the other hand, also following traditional practice, the 'futur proche' construction, in which the verb 'aller' may also be viewed as having an auxiliary function, was not treated in this way. For example, utterances such as 'on va commencer' were analysed as containing forms attributable to the two verb lexemes, 'aller' and 'commencer'.

6.2.2 Verb lexeme count: the findings

The set of verb lexemes thus arrived at is given in Table 6.1. This shows in summary form the total list of verbs occurring in the data, the number of S1 and S2 teachers using each one,

Table 6.1

Verb Lexemes Used by S1 and S2 Teachers (Summary Frequencies)

Citation form	Found in LFF	S1 teachers		S2 teachers		All teachers	
		No. teachers using form	Total times used	No. teachers using form	Total times used	No. Ts using form	Total times used
adorer	-	1	9	-	-	1	9
aider	+	1	4	1	1	2	5
aimer	+	1	45	3	20	4	65
aller	+	5	132	7	307	12	439
allumer	+	-	-	1	3	1	3
s'appeler	+	5	111	1	3	6	114
s'arrêter	+	-	-	2	3	2	3
arriver	+	-	-	1	20	1	20
s'asseoir	+	4	40	5	16	9	56
attendre	+	3	11	1	13	4	23
avoir	+	6	237	7	111	13	348
calculer	-	-	-	1	2	1	2
se casser	+	-	-	1	1	1	1
changer	+	1	1	3	8	4	9
chercher	+	1	1	2	27	3	28
choisir	+	2	25	1	2	3	27
commencer	+	2	9	4	9	6	18
comprendre	+	4	54	5	43	9	97
compter	+	-	-	1	1	1	1
connaître	+	-	-	4	5	4	5
continuer	+	2	2	5	15	7	17
corriger	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
courir	+	-	-	1	1	1	1
couvrir	+	-	-	1	1	1	1
crier	+	1	2	1	1	2	3
croire	+	1	1	3	6	4	7
danser	+	-	-	1	3	1	3
décider	+	-	-	1	1	1	1
demander	+	3	18	3	9	6	27
se dépêcher	+	3	9	4	13	7	22
dessiner	+	1	8	3	5	4	13
detester	-	1	9	-	-	1	9
deviner	-	-	-	2	4	2	4
devoir	+	-	-	3	5	3	5
dire	+	4	124	4	34	8	158
se disputer	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
distribuer	-	3	6	1	-	3	6
donner	+	4	7	3	7	7	14
dormir	+	-	-	1	1	1	1
doubler	-	-	-	1	2	1	2
durer	-	-	-	1	3	1	3
écouter	+	4	29	3	20	7	49
écrire	+	1	2	3	20	4	22
enlever	+	1	1	-	-	1	1
enregistrer	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
entendre	+	2	2	2	4	4	6

Table 6.1 (contd)

Citation form	Found in LFF	S1 teachers		S2 teachers		All teachers	
		No. teachers using form	Total times used	No. teachers using form	Total times used	No. teachers using form	Total times used
entrer	+	2	4	1	1	3	5
épeler	+	-	-	1	18	1	18
essayer	+	-	-	4	7	4	7
êteindre	+	-	-	2	4	2	4
être	+	6	758	7	1585	13	2343
étudier	+	-	-	1	2	1	2
examiner	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
s'excuser	+	1	1	1	2	2	3
expliquer	+	2	11	2	3	4	14
se facher	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
faire	+	4	36	7	438	11	474
falloir	+	2	6	4	12	6	18
fermer	+	3	14	3	4	6	18
finir	+	4	21	5	11	9	32
foutre	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
gagner	+	-	-	2	14	2	14
garder	+	-	-	1	1	1	1
geler	-	-	-	1	2	1	2
habiter	+	3	124	4	66	7	190
identifier	-	-	-	1	6	1	6
jeter	+	-	-	1	1	1	1
jouer	+	-	-	6	108	6	108
laisser	+	-	-	1	2	1	2
lancer	+	-	-	1	1	1	1
(se) lever	+	3	51	4	14	7	65
lire	+	1	3	3	6	4	9
louer	+	-	-	1	5	1	5
manger	+	-	-	4	46	4	46
manquer	+	1	3	-	-	1	3
marcher	+	-	-	4	28	4	28
marquer	-	-	-	1	2	1	2
(se) mettre	+	3	7	6	24	9	31
monter	+	-	-	1	9	1	9
montrer	+	-	-	2	2	2	2
mouiller	+	-	-	1	4	1	4
nager	+	-	-	1	9	1	9
neiger	+	-	-	3	10	3	10
nommer	+	-	-	1	1	1	1
offrir	+	1	12	-	-	1	12
ôter	-	-	-	1	2	1	2
oublier	+	3	8	3	3	6	11
ouvrir	+	4	7	6	26	10	33
parier	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
parler	+	3	16	6	24	9	40
partir	+	-	-	2	21	2	21
passer	+	3	11	6	34	9	45
perdre	+	1	3	1	5	2	8
photographier	+	-	-	2	24	2	24
plaire	+	5	98	6	58	11	156
pleuvoir	+	-	-	4	26	4	26
porter	+	-	-	1	3	1	3
poser	+	3	69	3	5	6	74
pouvoir	+	2	7	6	107	8	114

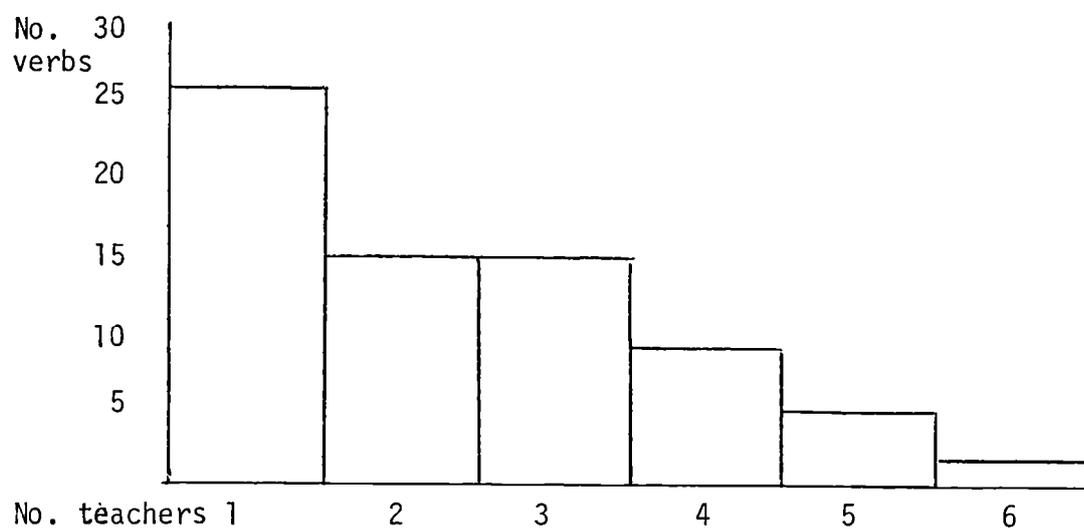
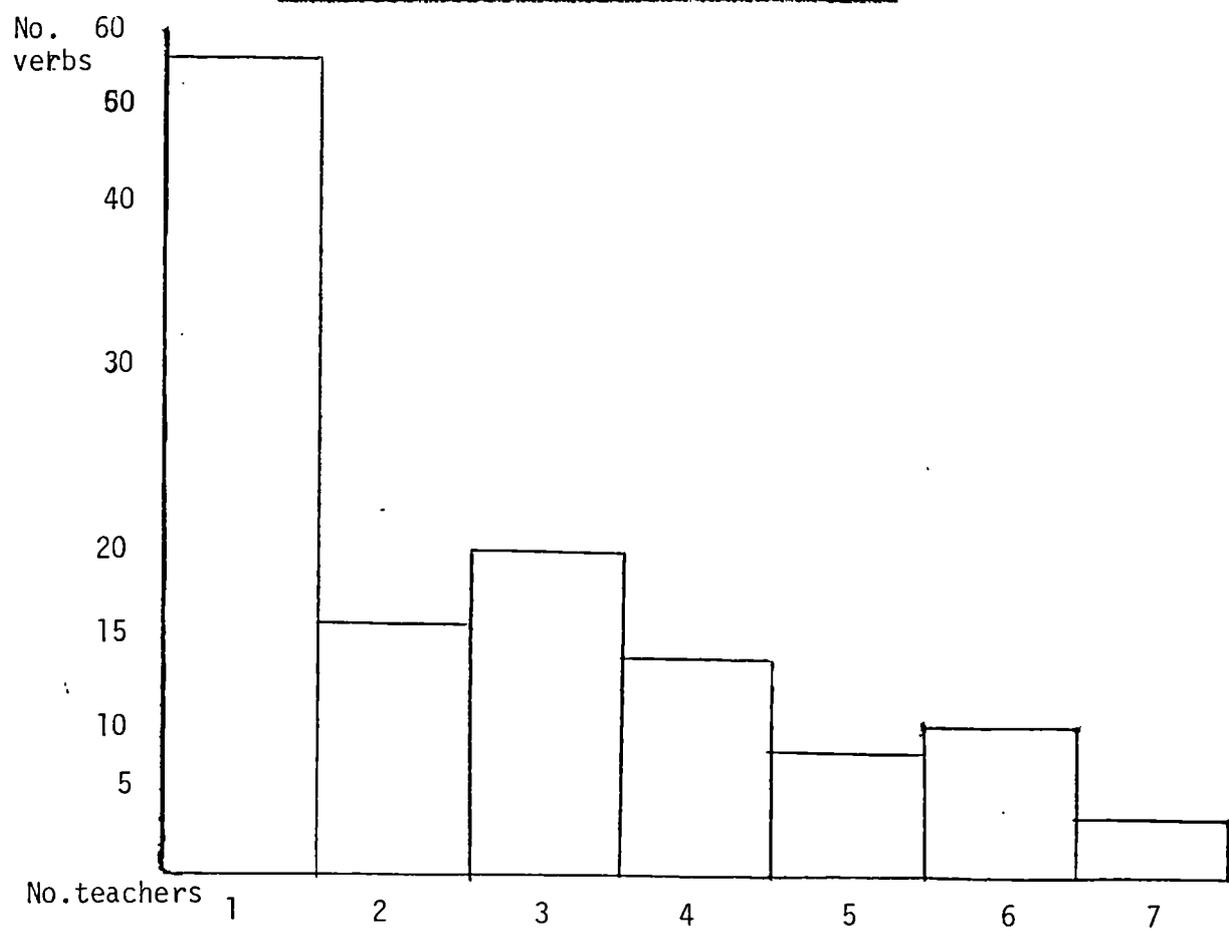
Table 6.1 (contd)

Citation form	Found in LFF	S1 teachers		S2 teachers		All teachers	
		No. teachers using form	Total times used	No. teachers using form	Total times used	No. teachers using form	Total times used
préférer	+	1	29	1	5	2	34
prendre	+	3	11	5	39	8	50
préparer	+	-	-	1	3	1	3
quitter	+	-	-	2	14	2	14
raconter	+	-	-	1	6	1	6
ramasser	+	-	-	1	1	1	1
ranger	+	3	8	4	5	7	13
recommencer	+	1	1	1	2	2	3
se redresser	-	-	-	2	2	2	2
refaire	-	-	-	1	3	1	3
refuser	-	2	4	-	-	2	4
regarder	+	2	13	6	107	8	120
répéter	+	5	74	6	70	11	144
répondre	+	1	3	3	5	4	8
reraconter	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
rester	+	1	1	2	8	3	9
retirer	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
(se) retourner	+	-	-	3	9	3	9
se réveiller	+	-	-	1	3	1	3
rever	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
réviser	-	1	11	-	-	1	11
rire	+	-	-	1	1	1	1
savoir	+	2	3	6	19	8	22
signifier	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
sortir	+	1	2	5	14	6	16
suffir	-	5	15	4	9	9	24
suivre	+	2	2	1	2	3	4
supposer	-	-	-	2	2	2	2
tailler	+	1	1	-	-	1	1
se taire	+	-	-	2	3	2	3
tenir	+	3	51	3	3	6	54
(se) tourner	+	2	2	5	13	7	15
travailler	+	2	9	4	17	6	26
tricher	-	1	3	2	6	3	9
(se) trouver	+	1	2	3	21	4	23
venir	+	2	29	3	5	5	34
vérifier	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
visiter	-	-	-	3	12	3	12
voir	+	1	1	3	9	4	10
vouloir	+	4	103	5	24	9	127
voyager	+	-	-	1	9	1	9

and the frequency with which forms of each verb lexeme occurred, at each level and overall. In addition, the table shows whether or not each given lexeme is to be found in "Le Français Fondamental, (Premier Degré)".

As the table shows, forms relating to a total of 72 verb lexemes occurred in the six S1 lessons, while the seven S2 lessons generated a total of 133. Sixty-three verbs occurred in both lists - i.e. the vast majority of the verbs current at S1 level were still in use with S2 classes. Of the nine verbs found at S1 level but not at S2, seven ('adorer', 'détester', 'enlever', 'manquer', 'offrir', 'réviser' and 'tailler') were used by only one S1 teacher. Of the same nine verbs, only 's'appeler' appeared with any substantial frequency (111 occurrences in S1 lessons), reflecting its common appearance in S1 language syllabuses. Even such preliminary observations thus suggest that there is little that is lexically distinctive about S1 teachers' French, as opposed to that of S2 teachers, at least as far as their choice of verbs is concerned; the S1 group already appear to be introducing a selection of verbal lexemes, which will be retained in active use and built on later on.

Figures 6.1 and 6.2 show by means of histograms the number of verbs used by one, two or more teachers within each year group. At S1 level, 36 per cent of verbs occurring in the corpus were used by one teacher only, out of six teachers; by S2 level, as many as 45 per cent were used by one teacher only (out of seven).

. Figure 6.1Number of Users per Verb (S1 Teachers)Figure 6.2Number of Users per Verb (S2 Teachers)

The very small number of verbs used by all teachers, at both levels, with very high absolute frequencies of occurrence, is notable. These verbs (at S1 level, 'avoir' and 'être'; at S2 level, 'avoir', 'être', 'aller' and 'faire') of course also top the frequency lists for verbs of "Le Français Fondamental", and might be expected to play a central role in any French conversational context. Following them, however, comes a group of verbs, most of which, when looked at from a semantic point of view, have in common some classroom or discourse management function. Thus the verbs used by all teachers but one at S2 level were: 'jouer' (108 occurrences at S2), 'se mettre' (24), 'ouvrir' (26), 'parler' (24), 'passer' (34), 'plaire' (58), 'pouvoir' (107), 'regarder' (107), 'répéter' (70), 'savoir' (19). Of these ten verbs, most owe their wide distribution to their usefulness for managerial purposes, in phrases such as:

"Je suppose qu'on peut jouer" (Teacher B, Segment 6/2)

"Tu te mets là-bas.... là" (Teacher A, Segment 3)

"Right, ouvre - ouvrez les cahiers, s'il vous plaît. Les cahiers, ouvrez les cahiers" (Teacher H, Segment 3)

"C'est Thierry, alors, quand on parle à Thierry, on dit, 'Comment vous appelez-vous?', ou 'Comment t'appelles-tu?'. ... Qu'est-ce qu'on dit?" (Teacher D, Segment 13)

"Bon alors, faites passer les livres" (Teacher G, Segment 19)

"Tu as regardé, tu as vu toutes les images?" (Teacher F, Segment 4)

"Tout le monde, répétez" (Teacher F, Segment 5)

(The absolute frequencies of some of these verbs are however affected by their appearance in addition as S2 syllabus items. Thus elements of the verbs 'jouer', 'pouvoir' and 'regarder' were intensively rehearsed in certain S2 classrooms, thus substantially raising their frequency of occurrence.)

Lastly, as Table 6.1 also shows, the teachers' speech in French at both S1 and S2 levels contains a proportion of verbs not occurring in "Le Français Fondamental (Premier Degré)". While a few of these may be accounted for due to their appearance in coursebook syllabuses (e.g. 'adorer', 'détester'), most seem to occur due to teachers' use of French for managerial purposes ('corriger', 'distribuer' 'tricher' etc).

Given the limited nature of the corpus (one lesson per teacher), it could not be assumed that variation in the range and frequencies of verb forms used by the teachers on these particular occasions represented their regular patterns of lexical choice. Variation in the types of lesson which happened to be taught, and most notably, variation in lesson content, might also be influential in producing the particular observed profiles of lexical choice. Nonetheless the variation between individual lessons was sufficiently striking to merit a descriptive account, even if it could not confidently be related to teacher rather than lesson-type characteristics.

Tables 6.2 and 6.3 give a more detailed breakdown of verb frequencies within the lessons taught by the S1 and S2 teachers. Table 6.2 shows the range and overall frequencies of

Table 6.2

Verbs Used by SI Teachers (Overall Frequency)

TOTAL SI verb list	SI Teachers						No. Ts using form	Total times used
	TA	TD	TG	TH	TK	TL		
adorer	-	-	-	-	-	9	1	9
aider	4	-	-	-	-	-	1	4
aimer	-	-	-	-	-	45	1	45
aller	67	6	34	24	1	-	5	132
s'appeler	3	72	25	4	-	7	5	111
s'asseoir	10	6	4	20	-	-	4	40
attendre	7	-	3	1	-	-	3	11
avoir	27	125	47	12	1	25	6	237
changer	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
chercher	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1
choisir	4	-	-	21	-	-	2	25
commencer	5	4	-	-	-	-	2	9
comprendre	33	13	4	4	-	-	4	54
continuer	1	1	-	-	-	-	2	2
crier	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	2
croire	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
demander	15	-	1	2	-	-	3	18
se dépêcher	2	-	6	-	1	-	3	9
dessiner	-	-	-	-	8	-	1	8
détester	-	-	-	-	-	9	1	9
dire	28	65	3	28	-	-	4	124
distribuer	1	1	4	-	-	-	3	6
donner	2	-	1	1	3	-	4	7
écouter	6	6	3	14	-	-	4	29
écrire	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	2
enlever	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	1
entendre	-	1	1	-	-	-	2	2
entrer	-	-	2	2	-	-	2	4
être	54	164	177	86	67	210	6	758
s'excuser	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1
expliquer	9	2	-	-	-	-	2	11
faire	10	3	2	-	21	-	4	36
falloir	5	1	-	-	-	-	2	6
fermer	1	-	12	-	1	-	3	14
finir	2	1	17	-	1	-	4	21
habiter	-	51	70	3	-	-	3	124
(se) lever	-	7	6	38	-	-	3	51
lire	3	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
manquer	3	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
(se) mettre	3	1	3	-	-	-	3	7
offrir	12	-	-	-	-	-	1	12
oublier	-	1	4	3	-	-	3	8
ouvrir	-	1	1	4	1	-	4	7
parler	7	8	1	-	-	-	3	16
passer	7	2	2	-	-	-	3	11
perdre	-	-	-	3	-	-	1	3

Table 6.2 (contd)

TOTAL SI verb list	SI Teachers						No.Ts using form	Total times used
	TA	TD	TG	TH	TK	TL		
plaire	58	3	5	31	-	1	5	98
poser	3	55	11	-	-	-	3	69
pouvoir	2	5	-	-	-	-	2	7
préférer	-	-	-	-	-	29	1	29
prendre	7	3	1	-	-	-	3	11
ranger	-	1	6	1	-	-	3	8
recommencer	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
refuser	1	-	-	3	-	-	2	4
regarder	10	3	-	-	-	-	2	13
répéter	3	8	18	19	26	-	5	74
répondre	-	3	-	-	-	-	1	3
rester	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
réviser	-	-	-	11	-	-	1	11
savoir	1	-	-	-	-	2	2	3
sortir	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	2
suffir	1	1	8	2	3	-	5	15
suiyre	1	-	1	-	-	-	2	2
tailler	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
tenir	39	3	-	9	-	-	3	51
tourner	-	1	-	1	-	-	2	2
travailler	3	-	6	-	-	-	2	9
tricher	-	-	3	-	-	-	1	3
trouver	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
venir	24	5	-	-	-	-	2	29
voir	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	1
vouloir	10	26	-	19	48	-	4	103
No. of verbs	45	40	37	28	15	9	X	
Verbs x no's of occurrences	498	664	496	368	184	337		
Average occurrences per verb	10.8	16.6	13.4	13.1	5.6	37.4		

verbs used by individual S1 teachers. Considerable differences appear within the group; thus while the average number of different verbs of which any form occurred was 29.0, the range extended from 45 for Teacher A, to a mere nine for Teacher L. Not surprisingly, the two 'High FL Users' among the S1 teachers (Teachers A and D) turned out also to be users of the widest range of verbs. However, the range used by one 'Mid FL User', Teacher G, approximated closely to that used by Teacher D, while the frequency with which she used the range of verb forms observed in her speech was virtually identical with that of Teacher A. These three teachers who drew on the widest range of verbs (Teachers A, D and G) also produced the highest verb frequency totals. Thus the average number of times a particular verb was used was not significantly reduced in their talk, in spite of the greater range of verbs used. As the table shows, it was the S1 teacher with the second smallest range who had much the lowest average figure for 'times of use' (Teacher K). The teacher with the smallest range, however, Teacher L, used this limited number of verbs with very high intensity (an average of 37.4 occurrences per verb).

The frequencies with which forms of individual verbs were used by the S1 teachers also varied considerably from one lesson to another. Some of this variation could be accounted for by the chance occurrence of particular forms as syllabus items, which were the object of intensive practice during the lessons observed. Thus for example, many of the 210

occurrences of forms of 'être' in the talk of Teacher L could be accounted for by her modelling the forms 'il/elle est', which were a focus of attention in the class's current unit of work. (The influence of coursebook syllabus on this teacher's French was particularly striking. Of the nine verbs she was recorded as using, a majority - 'adorer', 'aimer', 'détester', 'être' and 'préférer' - were the focus of attention in the current coursebook unit.) The relatively high frequencies of 'habiter' in the French of Teachers D and G, of 'vouloir' in the French of Teacher K, and of 'plaire' and of 'tenir' in the French of Teacher A, could be accounted for similarly. However, some variation in observed frequencies could best be accounted for in terms of individual preferences for certain phrases, often effectively holophrases. Thus for example, the predilection of Teachers A, D and H for the phrase 'qu'est-ce que ça veut dire?' accounted for most of the observed occurrences of 'dire', and a good proportion of those of 'vouloir'.

Table 6.3 provides equivalent information about the range and frequency of verb forms used by individual teachers at S2 level. The average number of verbs used by each S2 teacher shows a considerable increase over the S1 average (from 29.0 to 48.7). But the range in number used remains wide; the teacher with the biggest range (Teacher B, with 71 different recorded verbs) used almost three times as many as the teacher with the smallest (Teacher M, with 26). As with the S1 teachers, the relationship between range of verbs found and

Table 6.3

Verbs used by S2 Teachers (Overall Frequency)

TOTAL S2 verb list	S2 Teachers							No.Ts using form	Total times used
	TB	TC	TE	TF	TI	TJ	TM		
aider	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1
aimer	-	6	-	-	8	-	6	3	20
aller	22	11	3	6	133	66	66	7	307
allumer	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	1	3
s'appeler	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	1	3
s'arrêter	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	3
arriver	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	1	20
s'asseoir	-	-	3	3	3	6	1	5	16
attendre	-	-	-	-	13	-	-	1	13
avoir	24	17	16	6	7	26	15	7	111
calculer	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	2
se casser	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
changer	4	1	-	3	-	-	-	3	8
chercher	2	-	25	-	-	-	-	2	27
choisir	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	2
commencer	2	1	-	1	-	5	-	4	9
comprendre	20	2	1	-	4	16	-	5	43
compter	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
connaître	-	1	1	-	2	1	-	4	5
continuer	3	1	6	-	2	3	-	5	15
corriger	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1
courir	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
couvrir	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
crier	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	1
croire	3	2	-	-	-	1	-	3	6
danser	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
décider	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1
demander	7	1	-	-	-	1	-	3	9
se dépêcher	4	2	-	4	3	-	-	4	13
dessiner	-	-	3	-	1	1	-	3	5
deviner	-	2	-	-	-	2	-	2	4
devoir	3	-	-	-	1	1	-	3	5
dire	11	4	8	-	-	11	-	4	34
se disputer	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1
donner	-	1	-	-	-	1	5	3	7
dormir	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	1
doubler	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	2
durer	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	3
écouter	20	6	14	8	-	12	-	5	60
écrire	-	-	4	2	-	14	-	3	20
enregistrer	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
entendre	-	1	-	-	-	3	-	2	4
entrer	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
épeler	-	-	-	-	-	18	-	1	18
essayer	1	1	-	1	-	4	-	4	7
éteindre	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	1

Table 6.3 (contd)

TOTAL S2 verb list	S2 Teachers							No. Ts using form	Total times used
	TB	TC	TE	TF	TI	TJ	TM		
être	368	280	410	117	163	125	122	7	1585
étudier	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	2
examiner	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1
s'excuser	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	2
expliquer	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	3
se fâcher	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	1
faire	30	14	236	8	62	41	47	7	438
falloir	5	5	-	-	1	1	-	4	12
fermer	1	-	1	2	-	-	-	3	4
finir	3	1	1	-	5	1	-	5	11
foutre	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
gagner	11	3	-	-	-	-	-	2	14
garder	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
geler	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	2
habiter	-	-	44	17	3	-	2	4	66
identifier	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	1	6
jeter	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
jouer	15	5	79	-	4	1	4	6	108
laisser	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
lancer	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
(se) lever	-	1	6	6	-	1	-	4	14
lire	-	-	3	1	-	2	-	3	6
louer	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	1	5
manger	-	-	26	-	13	1	6	4	46
marcher	2	-	23	1	2	-	-	4	28
marquer	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
(se) mettre	8	3	2	9	1	1	-	6	24
monter	-	-	9	-	-	-	-	1	9
montrer	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	2
mouiller	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4
nager	-	-	-	-	9	-	-	1	9
neiger	-	-	-	-	3	3	4	3	10
nommer	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1
ôter	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
oublier	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	3	3
ouvrir	1	1	1	2	19	2	-	6	26
parier	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
parler	8	1	1	11	1	2	-	6	24
partir	-	-	-	-	1	-	20	2	21
passer	1	1	7	5	18	2	-	6	34
perdre	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5
photographier	1	-	23	-	-	-	-	2	24
plaire	23	1	3	25	4	2	-	6	58
pleuvoir	6	-	-	-	5	8	7	4	26
porter	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	1	3
poser	2	1	-	-	-	2	-	3	5
pouvoir	9	2	-	1	5	2	88	6	107
préferer	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	1	5
prendre	2	4	-	-	5	4	24	5	39

Table 6.3 (contd)

TOTAL S2 verb list	S2 Teachers							No.Ts using form	Total times used
	TB	TC	TE	TF	TI	TJ	TM		
préparer	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
quitter	-	-	12	-	-	-	2	2	14
raconter	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	6
ramasser	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1
ranger	1	-	2	1	1	-	-	4	5
se rappeler	3	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	4
recommencer	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
se redresser	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	2	2
refaire	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
regarder	5	33	30	7	19	13	-	6	107
répéter	5	14	38	7	1	5	-	6	70
répondre	3	1	-	-	-	1	-	3	5
reraconter	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
rester	-	-	-	-	6	2	-	2	8
retirer	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
(se) retourner	-	-	-	3	4	2	-	3	9
se réveiller	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	1	3
rêver	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	1
rire	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
savoir	1	1	1	1	13	2	-	6	19
signifier	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1
sortir	1	5	6	1	1	-	-	5	14
suffir	5	1	-	-	2	1	-	4	9
suivre	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	2
supposer	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	2
se taire	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	2	3
tenir	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	3	3
tirer	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	1	3
(se) tourner	1	-	6	3	2	1	-	5	13
travailler	5	3	-	-	4	5	-	4	17
tricher	-	5	-	-	-	1	-	2	6
(se) trouver	2	1	-	-	-	-	18	3	21
venir	1	3	-	1	-	-	-	3	5
vérifier	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1
visiter	2	-	-	-	4	-	6	3	12
voir	2	-	-	4	-	3	-	3	9
vouloir	6	-	3	2	-	4	9	5	24
voyager	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	1	9
No. of verbs	71	49	42	39	50	64	26	X	
Verbs × no's of occurrences	708	460	1067	279	578	459	492		
Average occurrences per verb	10.0	9.4	25.4	7.2	11.6	7.2	18.9		

frequency was not clearcut. For example, overall frequencies for all verb forms combined ranged from 1067 (Teacher E) to 279 (Teacher F), yet the range of verbs used by these two teachers was very similar in number (42 as compared with 39). Similarly, the intensity of use by teachers of the subset of verbs recorded in their speech varied substantially, from the highest average of 25.4 occurrences per verb (Teacher E) to the lowest of 7.2 (Teachers F and J), without any apparent relationship with the range of forms. This 'average occurrences per verb' figure did however correlate positively with overall verb frequencies, as might have been expected ($r = 0.78$).

As in the case of the S1 teachers, various 'bulges' in the frequencies recorded for particular verbs within the speech of individual S2 teachers are attributable to syllabus requirements. The focus of a particular unit of the "Tour de France" French course on the plural forms 'ils/elles sont' and 'ils/elles font' account in large part for the elevated frequencies of 'être' and 'faire' in the speech of Teachers B, C and E. Similarly, the strikingly high frequency for 'aller' in the French of Teacher I derives largely from her modelling of the 'futur proche' construction, e.g. 'qu'est-ce que tu vas faire...'; that for 'pouvoir' in the French of Teacher M, from modelling of the pattern '(qu'est-ce qu') on peut faire...'. A group of verbs with exceptional frequencies in the speech of Teacher E ('chercher', with 25 occurrences; 'jouer', with 79; 'manger', with 26; 'marcher', with 23; 'photographier', with

23, and 'regarder', with 30) are those selected on that day for drilling a particular target structure - the third person plural of the present tense (e.g. 'ils jouent du biniou', 'ils photographient les alignements', etc.). Some remaining variations in frequency can apparently be accounted for in terms of teachers' personal preferences and styles in classroom management. Thus the relatively elevated frequencies for 'plaire' for Teachers B and F reflect these teachers' tendency to moderate requests/ commands to their pupils with 's'il vous plaît' / 's'il te plaît'; those for 'comprendre' for Teachers B and J reflect these teachers' commitment to clarification of meaning through the medium of French; and Teacher E's frequent use of 'répéter' reflects his commitment to repetition as a learning/ consolidating strategy for new language forms.

6.3 Verb Morphology

The next group of tables (Tables 6.4 - 6.9) summarise the verb system actualised in the teachers' classroom talk in French. Tables 6.4 and 6.5 give a complete breakdown of verb forms used by the S1 and S2 teachers, analysed by tense, number, and person; impersonal forms are treated separately from personal forms in these tables. The verbs 'avoir' and 'être' are also treated separately (except when used as auxiliaries), because

of their dominant position in the corpus. Tables 6.6 and 6.7 show usage of the four modal verbs occurring in the corpus ('devoir', ' falloir', 'pouvoir' and 'vouloir'); Tables 6.8 and 6.9 show the use of 'aller' in the 'futur proche' construction.

As Table 6.4 makes clear, the verb system used by the S1 teachers was dominated by imperative and present tense forms, the latter most notably first and second person singular forms. These of course figure on all S1 syllabuses, and the frequencies recorded were in several cases boosted by intensive practice of particular forms. Thus for example, all occurrences of third person singular forms in the speech of Teacher L occurred in a range of exercises, using four verbs only: 'il/elle adore', 'il/elle aime', 'il/elle déteste', 'il/elle préfère'. However, much of the usage recorded for imperative and first and second person forms occurred in the course of classroom management talk. Classroom commands account not only for many of the imperatives used, but also for many of the second person forms. Utterances such as:

"Tu fermes la porte, s'il te plaît" (Teacher A, Segment 3)

"Tu te mets là-bas" (Teacher A, Segment 3)

"Alors Corinne, qu'est-ce que tu fais?... Alors maintenant tu demandes quelque chose - non, tu offres quelque chose à lui" (Teacher A, Segment 7)

were extremely common as realisations of such commands. Rarer plural forms could also be found, e.g.

"Bon, tout le monde, regardez. Vous prenez le papier et les cartes, et vous faites une enveloppe comme ça. Puis faites passer les livres, les enveloppes.... (Teacher A, Segment 8)

Table 6.4

I. Verb Morphology: S1 Teachers (excluding avoir, etre)							No. Ts using form	Total times used
	TA	TD	TG	TH	TK	TL		
Imperative:								
2 pers.sing.	97	30	38	84	6	-	5	255
1 pers.pl.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2 pers.pl.	41	34	77	39	17	-	5	208
Infinitive:	33	35	6	47	-	-	4	121
Pres.sing. personal:*								
je	1	53	50	6	8	32	6	150
tu	101	110	55	18	41	20	6	345
NP/qui/il/elle	24	29	3	20	21	42	6	139
on	12	35	1	2	-	-	4	50
Pres.pl. personal:								
nous	-	-	-	5	-	-	1	5
vous	8	33	1	2	-	-	4	44
NP/ils/elles	2	2	-	-	-	-	2	4
Pres.impersonal:								
ça va	13	4	2	8	1	-	5	28
il faut	5	1	-	-	-	-	2	6
il manque	3	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
il reste	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
ça suffit	1	1	8	2	3	-	5	15
s'il te plaît	42	1	5	30	-	1	5	79
s'il vous plaît	16	2	-	1	-	-	3	19
Perfect:								
je	-	1	4	3	-	-	3	8
tu	3	2	7	2	1	-	5	15
NP/il/elle	-	1**	-	1	-	-	2	2
vous	-	1	14	-	-	-	2	15
Imperfect:								
tu	1***	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Conditional:								
je	-	-	-	-	8****	-	1	8

*incl.aller in futur proche **'fini' ***'tu demandais' ****'je voudrais'

Table 6.4 (contd)

II. <u>Verb Morphology: S1 Teachers: avoir</u>							No.Ts using form	Total times used
	TA	TD	TG	TH	TK	TL		
Present:								
je	-	55	18	2	-	13	4	88
tu	7	53	25	3	-	3	5	91
NP/il/elle	8	-	-	-	-	7	2	15
vous	2	14	-	1	-	2	4	19
il y a	8	3	4	6	1	-	5	22
Imperfect:								
il y avait	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	2

III. <u>Verb Morphology: S1 Teachers: etre</u>							No.Ts using form	Total times used
	TA	TD	TG	TH	TK	TL		
être	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
je suis	-	35	73	2	-	-	3	110
tu es	1	9	44	7	-	-	4	61
il/elle/NP...est	11	8	7	6	2	153	6	187
vous êtes	-	1	2	-	3	-	3	6
ils/elles/NP...sont	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
c'est	16	63	40	27	21	25	6	192
ce sont	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1
qui est-ce	-	3	7	1	-	-	3	11
n'est-ce pas	-	-	3	-	-	-	1	3
est-ce que	-	1	-	-	-	30	2	31
qu'est-ce que	17	16	1	43	40	2	6	119
comment est-ce que	-	27	-	-	-	-	1	27
tu étais	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
NP/qui était	4	-	-	-	-	-	1	4
vous étiez	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1

Table 6.5

I. Verb Morphology: S2 Teachers (excluding avoir, être)								No. Ts using form	Total times used
	TB	TC	TE	TF	TI	TJ	TM		
Imperative:									
2 pers.sing.	16	34	44	21	38	25	-	6	178
1 pers.pl.	-	-	1	-	-	3	-	2	4
2 pers.pl.	38	50	53	43	27	54	6	7	269
Infinitive:	25	10	8	11	84	59	126	7	320
Pres. sing. personal:									
je	12	7	43	4	42	18	15	7	140
tu	47	24	53	17	139	19	-	6	299
NP/il/elle	10	4	20	17	6	43	106	7	206
on	28	4	2	2	2	6	73	7	117
Pres.pl. personal:									
nous	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	3
vous	26	3	3	-	5	29	4	6	70
NP/ils/elles	12	14	336	11	1	-	1	6	375
Passé composé:									
je	8	2	-	1	1	3	-	5	15
tu	23	5	-	2	2	3	-	5	35
NP/il/elle	3	-	-	-	3	-	-	2	6
vous	7	1	-	-	-	5	-	3	13
Past part.									
on	6	-	-	-	14	-	-	2	20
on	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
Future:	-	-	-	1*	-	-	-	1	1
Conditional:	-	-	-	-	-	-	9**	1	9
Imperfect:	1***	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Pres. subj.:	1****	-	-	1***	-	-	-	2	2
Impersonal:									
ça va	4	-	1	1	4	1	-	5	11
il fait + ADJ	6	-	-	-	22	32	6	4	66
il fait + NP	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	2
il faut + inf.	4	5	-	-	1	1	-	4	11
il faut que + subj.	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
il gèle	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	2
il neige	-	-	-	-	3	3	4	3	10
s'il te plaît	4	-	3	8	1	2	-	5	18
s'il vous plaît	19	1	-	17	3	-	-	4	40
il pleut	3	-	-	-	5	8	7	4	23
il pleuvait	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
ça suffit	5	1	-	-	2	1	-	4	9

*'tu verras' **'je voudrais' ***'on parlait' ****'que je couvre'
 ***'que je me mette'

Table 6.5 (contd)

II. <u>Verb Morphology: S2 Teachers: avoir</u>								No. Ts using form	Total times used
	TB	TC	TE	TF	TI	TJ	TM		
Present:									
je	3	3	3	-	3	1	-	5	13
tu	3	3	2	5	-	10	-	5	23
NP/il/elle	1	5	2	-	1	5	-	5	14
nous	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	1	5
vous	3	-	1	-	-	3	-	3	7
ils	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Infinitive:	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
Perfect:									
tu	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1
il y a	8	5	3	1	3	6	15	7	41
il y aura	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
il y avait	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1

III. <u>Verb Morphology: S2 Teachers: etre</u>								No. Ts using form	Total times used
	TB	TC	TE	TF	TI	TJ	TM		
être	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
sois	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1
je suis	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	2
tu es	3	2	2	3	-	5	-	5	15
il/elle/NP...est	7	-	4	6	4	-	1	5	22
nous sommes	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
vous êtes	5	1	-	-	2	3	-	4	11
ils/elles/NP...sont	194	148	6	-	-	-	-	3	348
c'est	87	37	101	65	102	80	27	7	499
ce sont	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	2	3
qui est-ce	-	-	-	4	-	3	-	2	7
n'est-ce pas	4	-	1	-	-	7	-	3	12
est-ce que	1	1	-	7	2	-	72	6	83
qu'est-ce que	13	14	290	32	50	12	22	7	433
comment est-ce que	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
ou est-ce que	40	63	3	-	-	-	-	3	106
tu as été	5	2	-	-	1	-	-	3	8
tu étais	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	2
ils/NP étaient	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4
c'était	-	1	-	-	-	8	-	2	9

Table 6.6

Modal Verbs: S1 Teachers

Modal forms	Teachers						No.Ts using form	Total times used
	TA	TD	TG	TH	TK	TL		
il faut	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
il faut + inf	5	-	-	-	-	-	1	5
je peux + inf	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
qui peut + inf	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
on peut + inf	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	2
vous pouvez + inf	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	2
tu veux	8	1	-	-	40	-	3	49
NP/qui veut + inf	2	24	-	19	-	-	3	45
vous voulez	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
je voudrais	-	-	-	-	8	-	1	8

Table 6.7

Modal Verbs: S2 Teachers

Modal forms	Teachers							No.Ts using form	Total times used
	TB	TC	TE	TF	TI	TJ	TM		
tu dois + inf	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
il dois + inf	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
on doit + inf	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	3
il faut + inf	4	5	-	-	1	1	-	4	11
il faut que + subj	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
je peux + inf	1	-	-	1	2	-	8	4	12
tu peux + inf	3	1	-	-	1	-	-	3	5
il peut + inf	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1
on peut + inf	3	1	-	-	2	1	73	4	80
nous pouvons + inf	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	3
vous pouvez + inf	1	-	-	-	-	-	4	2	5
NP peuvent + inf	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
tu veux	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	2	3
tu veux + inf	3	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	5
NP veut + inf	-	-	3	-	-	1	-	2	4
vous voulez	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
ils veulent	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1
je voudrais	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	1	9

Table 6.8
Futur Proche: S1 Teachers

Forms of 'aller'	Teachers						No.Ts using form	Total times used
	TA	TD	TG	TH	TK	TL		
je vais + inf	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	1
tu vas + inf	8	-	-	8	-	-	2	16
NP/qui va + inf	9	-	1	1	-	-	3	11
on va + inf	3	-	1	-	-	-	2	4
nous allons + inf	-	-	-	5	-	-	1	5
vous allez + inf	3	2	-	-	-	-	2	5
va + inf	1	-	1	-	-	-	2	2

Table 6.9
Futur Proche: S2 Teachers

Forms of 'aller'	Teachers							No.Ts using form	Total times used
	TB	TC	TE	TF	TI	TJ	TM		
va + inf	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	2
je vais + inf	2	-	-	1	7	13	-	4	23
tu vas + inf	2	-	-	-	50	3	-	3	55
il/NP/qui va + inf	-	-	-	-	2	4	27	3	33
on va + inf	4	1	-	2	-	4	-	4	11
vous allez + inf	4	-	-	-	-	10	-	2	14

It is obvious from the table that considerable variations occurred among the lessons taught by the group of S1 teachers, as far as the extent to which they put their knowledge of the French verb system to active use with S1 classes was concerned. This variation is apparent even for items which at some stage form the focus of attention in the S1 syllabus. Thus the rarity or absence of imperative forms in the speech of Teachers K and L was striking; this seemed to reflect the general lack of French use by these teachers for classroom management purposes. Teacher H on the other hand, the remaining member of the 'low FL use' subgroup at S1 level, was an active user of imperative forms, with a wide range of verbs. Inspection showed that in his case such forms occurred regularly in mixed FL/L1 (rather than all-FL) speech turns,

e.g.:

"Right Jacqueline, lève-toi s'il te plaît, lève-toi... Ehh who have we not heard today?... Hugh, have we heard you today? No, right, lève-toi Hugh" (Teacher H, Segment 9)

The verb system used by Teacher K and Teacher L appeared more restricted in various other ways than that of the other S1 teachers. Teachers A, D, G and H appeared willing to go beyond the conventional boundaries of the S1 French syllabus in certain directions, in their own classroom talk. Thus for example, all used infinitive forms quite extensively, in certain holophrases (such as 'qu'est-ce que ça veut dire?'), and in a limited range of productive contexts, such as the 'futur proche' or modal constructions (themselves not part of the 'official' first-term S1 syllabuses in any school):

"Alors cette fois Thérèse, tu vas offrir quelque chose à Hélène, tu vas dire 'non merci', et tu choisis autre chose" (Teacher A, Segment 7)

"Bon... Alors emm... I am now going to ask you questions about yourselves. I want your real - real information about yourselves. Alors je vais vous poser des questions" (Teacher G, Segment 5)

"Donc, demain pour vous, il y a une interrogation... mais aujourd'hui, nous allons réviser, réviser. Qu'est-ce que ça veut dire, réviser? Nous allons réviser... Catherine?" (Teacher H, Segment 4)

"Bon alors, maintenant, je suis M Garnier. Qui veut me poser les questions? Je suis M Garnier. Qui veut me poser les questions?" (Teacher D, Segment 12)

Similarly, these four teachers produced all uses of indefinite 'on', and all plural forms recorded. None of these forms figured on the S1 coursebook syllabuses; most were produced in managerial contexts, e.g.:

"Bon. Avec les cartes cette fois... On va offrir une banane, une poire, et on va dire 'non, merci'. Cette fois on dit 'non, merci', on refuse, et on demande autre chose. On demande une - une pomme, un gâteau, quelque chose d'autre. Tout le monde comprend?" (Teacher A, Segment 7/2)

"Bon alors, si vous avez une question, vous posez la question, 'comment est-ce qu'on dit - '. Bon alors, continuez" (Teacher D, Segment 9)

"Bon, vous travaillez en trois, hein? Vous avez oublié Christophe. You forgot about Christophe. Travaillez en trois... Bon, vous avez fini?" (Teacher G, Segment 11/2)

The same four teachers were also responsible for the small number of perfect tense forms produced (apart from a single 'tu as fini?' from Teacher K). Interestingly, such perfect tense forms as were produced came from a limited set of verbs ('comprendre', 'dire', 'finir', 'oublier', 'perdre', 'poser', 'répondre', 'trouver'), almost all of which seemed to share a common function of metacomment on the ongoing discourse or its context, rather than any reporting of more remote events:

P: J'ai oublié mon crayon

T: Ahh, tu as oublié ton crayon. Qui va donner un crayon à Julie?... (Teacher H, Segment 2)

T: Qu'est-ce que c'est?

P: C'est un tasse de thé

T: Non. Presque, presque. Il a dit, un tasse de thé. Qu'est-ce que c'est?

P: Une tasse de thé

T: Une tasse de thé, très bien (Teacher H, Segment 4)

Stray instances of the imperfect, and of the conditional

('je voudrais' was a syllabus item for Teacher K), complete the picture of tense usage by the S1 teachers for verbs other than 'avoir' and 'être'; thus no instances of the future or pluperfect tenses were noted in the corpus. (Futurity was occasionally expressed by Teachers A - H, normally in the course of assigning activity instructions, but in all cases the 'futur proche' construction was used for this, as Table 6.8 shows.)

Sections II and III of Table 6.4 show a) the limited range of impersonal forms current at S1 level (again, Teachers K and L stand out as virtual non-users of these forms); and b) the use made of forms of 'avoir' and 'être'. While these verbs were used with considerable frequency in all classes, partly because of syllabus commitments, the familiar bias towards present tense singular forms is apparent for these verbs as for the others previously discussed.

To complete the discussion of the S1 teachers' verb system, Table 6.6 shows the limited use made by this group of constructions involving three modal verbs ('falloir', 'pouvoir', and 'vouloir'). Here, Teachers A and D emerge as the only ones to make any productive use of such constructions in their classroom management talk. (Teacher H's entry under 'vouloir' is entirely accounted for by his repeated use of the holophrase 'qu'est-ce que ça veut dire?'. Teacher K's use of 'vouloir' is syllabus-derived.) Table 6.8 shows Teachers A and H as the only substantial users of the 'futur proche' construction, mainly in the context of activity instructions.

Overall therefore, this analysis of the verb system inherent in the S1 teachers' French supports a general impression of highly interactive, immediate, and context-dependent talk. Some limited excursions were made into discussion of third parties; these were usually coursebook-motivated, and restricted to present/timeless events ('Maman préfère les chats': Teacher L, Segment 16). But the discussion above clearly supports the view that the bulk of the coursebook-derived activities, and virtually all the teacher-initiated French-medium talk, were of this face-to-face, here-and-now type.

Tables 6.5, 6.7 and 6.9 provide similar information regarding the morphology of the verb system used by the S2 teachers.

The overall impression given by Table 6.5, compared with the parallel table for the S1 teachers (Table 6.4) is of consolidation and gradual extension of the teachers' active classroom verb system, rather than of any dramatic development. As the first section of the table shows, for verbs other than 'avoir' and 'être', the use of imperative and present tense forms still generally predominated (though here again, there is one 'Low FL User' - Teacher M - who made little use of imperative forms). Within the present tense, however, there was some extension of the range of forms used. 'Nous' forms were still extremely rare ('on' being used by all teachers, as both an indefinite, and a first person plural,

pronoun). However, third person plural verb forms were a focus of attention as teaching points in three lessons (those of Teachers B, C and E), and occurred in these teachers' talk with consequent increased frequency (greatly increased, in the case of Teacher E). Teachers B and J, two of the 'High FL User' group, also made increased use of 'vous' forms, mainly in the context of activity instructions:

"Shh, shh. Ecrivez dans votre cahier, en anglais, les mois que vous allez entendre. Par exemple, vous entendez 'janvier', et vous écrivez dans votre cahier, 'January'. Et puis vous entendez ehh 'mai', et vous écrivez dans votre cahier, 'May'. Etcetera. Tu comprends maintenant?" (Teacher J, Segment 3)

"Alors vous allez - allez travailler avec votre partenaire. Mlle Créach - un de vous est Mlle Créach, ou M Créach si vous voulez, et l'autre est vous-même. Oui? Alors par exemple - vous faites l'exemple. L'un de vous demande, l'autre est M ou Mlle Créach et répond. Alors Marcel et Antoine, vous faites l'exemple". (Teacher B, Segment 7)

Tenses other than the present were still generally infrequent in the S2 teachers' speech. The only exception was Teacher B, who made substantially more use of the perfect tense than anyone else in the sample, using all singular forms plus the 'vous' form. A substantial part of this perfect tense usage arose during the first activity of her lesson, in which participants told what they had done during the previous weekend:

T: Bon. Sylvestre, toi?

P: Moi joue au hockey

T: Toi tu as joué au hockey?

P: Oui

T: Tu as gagné?

P: Non

P: Moi aussi, j'ai -

T: Toi aussi, tu as joué. Moi aussi, j'ai joué au hockey.
Ohh, on a perdu (Teacher B, Segment 5)

This activity was exceptional in the entire corpus. The only other S2 teacher to discuss past events at any length (Teacher I) did so using the present tense:

T: Neil, l'année dernière, l'année dernière...

P: (...)

T: Last year, l'année dernière, où vas-tu passer les grandes vacances? (Teacher I, Segment 3)

This strategy, effectively violating the normal rules of tense agreement in French in order to talk about the past while staying more or less within the limits of the S2 coursebook syllabus, was equally exceptional. The rest of the teachers simply avoided substantive activities which would require the activation of past tense forms. As in S1, the remaining use of non-present forms thus largely involved metacomment on ongoing activities, as in the following examples:

"Alors Brigitte, vas-y... Non? Tu as changé d'avis?"
(Teacher C, Segment 2/2)

T: Tu as regardé, tu as vu toutes les images?

P: Look at the pictures

T: No, it is a question I am asking you

P: Have you finished them?

T: Have you looked at all of them, yes (Teacher F, Segment 5)

T: Par exemple, par exemple, moi je dis M-A-I. C'est quel mois?

F: May

T: May, voilà. Tu as identifié le mois qu j'ai épelé. Toi tu as identifié le mois - le mois qu j'ai épelé. Vous comprenez? (Teacher J, Segment 4)

Two S2 teachers (E and M) used no perfect tense forms at all during the recorded lessons.

The use of all moods and tenses other than imperative, and present and perfect indicative, with verbs other than 'avoir' and 'être', was as fragmentary at S2 level as it had been at S1. Apart from nine syllabus-motivated instances of 'je voudrais' produced by Teacher M, the complete list of such forms was as follows:

(IMPERFECT) "S'il vous plaît, écoutez bien... On parlait - vendredi on parlait des touristes, n'est-ce pas, et où ils étaient. Hein? Vous vous rappelez?" (Teacher B, Segment 6)

(FUTURE) "Jim, tu vois bien, ça va? Tu vois?... Change de place un peu. Mets ta table un peu plus à droite. Ou mets-toi là si tu veux. Jim, mets-toi là si tu veux. Tu verras bien" (Teacher F, Segment 5)

(PRES. SUBJUNCTIVE) "Jacqueline, tu te mets là-bas s'il te plaît, tu changes de place, merci, avant que je ne me mette en colère, mets-toi là-bas, au fond. toute seule. Geraldine, pardon, mets-toi là-bas, au fond" (Teacher F, Segment 4)

"Il faut que je couvre ça, hein?" (Teacher B, Segment 6/2)

The S2 teachers' use of impersonal forms, and of 'avoir' and 'être', is shown in following sections of Table 6.5. All

sections show a modest expansion in the range of forms used, by comparison with the S1 pattern. The inclusion of weather terms in the S2 syllabuses seems to account for much of the expansion in impersonal forms, however. 'Avoir' and 'être' show an expanded range of present tense forms, and of occasions of their use; the range of tenses used hardly changes between S1 and S2 however (except for a marginal increase in use of past tense forms of 'être').

Tables 6.7 and 6.9 show the S2 teachers' use of constructions involving modal verbs, and of the 'futur proche' with 'aller'. While some teachers made only very limited use of these forms (notably Teachers E and F), overall some degree of expansion was apparent, as compared with the general pattern obtaining in S1. 'Falloir' was used by a majority of the S2 teachers, though always rarely; an increased range of present tense forms of 'vouloir' was used. The most striking increase occurred in the case of 'pouvoir', where between them, the S2 teachers managed to produce the full present tense paradigm; the great increase in frequency recorded for this verb was however due to the efforts of Teacher M, who drilled intensively the question- and- answer exchange, 'qu'est-ce qu'on peut faire à (PLACE)?', 'on peut (VERB PHRASE)'.

The overall impression left by the analysis of this aspect of the S2 teachers' French is therefore one of a language system still primarily adapted to the most immediate and concrete concerns of the teacher as a classroom manager.

Ventures into the discussion of non-present people and events were being systematically undertaken, but they were in general coursebook-derived, and structurally controlled to a considerable degree. An unplanned throwaway comment, even as simple as the following, on a (just!) non-present situation, was striking because of the rarity of such episodes in the corpus:

(JANITOR HAS ENTERED CLASSROOM TO READ THERMOMETER)

P: Madame, qu'est-ce que c'est?

T: C'est - c'est pour le chauffage. Le chauffage ne marche pas à l'autre côté. Ici, ça marche. Il fait chaud ici. Mais là-bas il fait froid, alors il faut prendre la température (Teacher B, Segment 6)

6.4 Syntactic 'Complexity'

In order to explore the syntactic 'complexity' or otherwise of the French spoken by this group of teachers, two further formal aspects of their language were examined. Firstly, the extent of clause-level coordination and subordination in sentence structure was examined, through an exhaustive count of the range and frequency of grammatical items with a coordinating or subordinating function at clause level to be found in the teachers' French. As explained in the introduction to this chapter, this feature was selected for study mainly because it is generally excluded from consideration in elementary FL syllabuses. These typically concentrate on the most basic sentence patterns, such as

simple declarative, imperative, and interrogative structures. The analysis of verb morphology reported in Section 6.3 had already thrown some light on teachers' use of some of these 'core' patterns. Here, the aim was to study how far the teachers went beyond the use of the simplest sentence structures in their own FL speech, and in what contexts they appeared both willing to produce compound and complex sentence structures, and able to make these understood. Secondly, the extent to which a range of modifying adverbials was used was also briefly examined, with a similar motive. The adverbials studied fell into two main groups: temporal adjuncts on the one hand, and a group of modifying adverbials on the other (restrictive, attitudinal, additive and 'downtoner' adjuncts).

6.4.1 Coordination and subordination

As many commentators have remarked, spoken language typically contains rather little subordination (Ochs, 1979; Brown and Yule, 1983). Indeed, clauses and sentences in spoken discourse are often not linked by any overt syntactic markers; speakers and hearers rely heavily on inferences of different kinds to make sense of the relationships obtaining between them (see e.g. discussion in Levinson, 1983, Chapter 3; and cf. Ochs' principle of 'nextness': 1979). Where syntactic markers of intersentential and interclausal relationships are found in spoken language, these typically belong to a small group of so-called 'logical connectors': 'and', 'but', 'then' etc. We

would therefore not expect to find frequent or elaborate compound/ complex sentences in the spontaneous speech of this group of teachers, whether in French or English. Nonetheless, even the simplest type of clausal coordination and subordination would represent an 'advance' on typical syllabus content at this level. The actually-occurring patterns of coordination and subordination were therefore investigated.

Table 6.10 lists all coordinators and subordinators found in the 13 lesson transcripts, and gives their frequency of use by each individual teacher. (It should be noted that the table includes the utterance-initial use of items such as 'et' or 'mais', i.e. their use as 'sentence connectors'. On the other hand, the use of items such as 'et' and 'ou' to link items below the level of the clause was ignored. Thus for example, the connector in expressions such as 'mais dis donc' (Teacher G) was counted, but that in expressions such as 'il est grand et gris' (Teacher L) or 'boules anglaises ou boules françaises?' (Teacher G) were not counted. In addition the use of 'si' in the common holophrases 's'il te/vous plaît' was not counted.)

This table bears out the prior expectation of much greater frequency in the data of syntactic expressions for coordination than for subordination. However although (relatively) frequent, the range of coordinating conjunctions used was very small. Just three items accounted for virtually all instances of coordination in French: 'et', 'mais' and 'ou'. For example:

Table 6.10

Selected Function Words in S1 & S2 Teachers' Speech

Item	S1 Teachers						S2 Teachers						
	A	D	G	H	K	L	B	C	E	F	I	J	M
Coordinating conjunctions (& sentence connectors):													
et	7	4	6	1	3	4	19	6	10	9	25	12	3
mais	4	4	4	4	-	1	11	-	6	2	-	5	1
ou	1	2	-	-	-	1	4	1	5	1	1	3	-
Subordinating conjunctions:													
si	2	2	1	-	-	-	6	-	1	2	-	-	2
parce que	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
puisque	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
quand	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14
avant que	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
comme	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other subordinators:													
qui...	1	1	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	1	-	4	6
ce que...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
que...	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	1	8	-
ou...	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
quel...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-
Exclamatives:													
que...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-

(ET) "On va offrir une banane, une poire, et on va dire 'non, merci'. Cette fois on dit 'non, merci', on refuse, et on demande autre chose". (Teacher A, Segment 7/2)

"Vous prenez le papier et les cartes, et vous faites une enveloppe comme ça" (Teacher A, Segment 8)

(MAIS) "Alors tout le monde, vous allez faire ça. Vous demandez un gâteau, une pomme, une orange, mais il faut dire, 'tiens, voilà une orange', 'tiens, voilà une gâteau' (sic), et puis 'merci'" (Teacher A, Segment 6/4)

(OU) "Où habites-tu? Tu habites en Irlande, ou tu habites en Ecosse?" (Teacher E, Segment 11)

"Jean-Jacques, tu racontes une histoire des touristes, la même si tu veux, ou tu changes" (Teacher B, Segment 8/1).

Variation in the extent of use of coordination was apparent both between and within the S1 and S2 teacher groups. As might have been expected, the S2 teachers used coordination somewhat more frequently (three S2 teachers produced 20 or more instances, while the 11 instances produced by Teacher A was the highest total for any S1 teacher). However the S2 group included two teachers, strongly contrasting in their overall level of French usage (C and M), who seemed largely to avoid it.

By comparison with the use of coordination, the use of subordination (as reflected in the frequencies for the listed subordinating conjunctions and other subordinators) was marginal or non-existent for most teachers. Only three of the 'High FL Users' (A, B and J) used a range of four or more subordinators; other strong French users (such as Teacher C) managed virtually without any. If Teacher M's syllabus-induced frequency for 'quand' is ignored, only three items ('si', 'qui', and 'que') were used more than five times each in the entire corpus. Examples are given only for these items:

(S1) "Christophe, pose une question... On peut dire, 'comment t'appelles-tu?', si tu veux" (Teacher D, Segment 7)

"Très bien, oui, très bien, il faut bien écouter, hein? Et tu me dis si tu ne comprends pas, hein? Si tu ne comprends pas, tu me dis. Oui? Bien" (Teacher B, Segment 6)

(QUI) "Bon... Vous allez - ehh, écoutez... Vous allez donner la date à votre partenaire, qui va essayer de deviner quel jour de la semaine... est cette date"
(Teacher J, Segment 5)

"Oh, allez-y, hein?... C'est moi qui travaille ici, pas vous" (Teacher C, Segment 2/1)

"Alors Mlle Créach montre toujours ses diapos... Il y a quelqu'un qui ne voit pas très bien, qui demande où les gens sont" (Teacher B, Segment 7)

(QUE/QUEL) "Alors, vous comprenez qu'il y a une différence entre un, deux et trois, et quatre, cinq, six et sept? Oui? Vous comprenez?" (Teacher B, Segment 7)

T: Oui, moi je vais les épeler. C'est à vous d'identifier quel mois je vais épeler. Par exemple, par exemple, moi je dis M - A - I. C'est quel mois?

P: May

T: May, voilà. Tu as identifié le mois que j'ai épelé. Toi tu as identifié le mois - le mois que j'ai epele. Vous comprenez? (Teacher J, Segment 4)

Table 6.11

One Teacher's Use of Coordinators & Subordinators: French & English

Item	French		English	
Coordinating conjunctions:	et	25	and	21
	ou	1	or	6
	-	-	but	4
Subordinating conjunctions:	-	-	because	1
	-	-	when	1
Other subordinators:	-	-	whether	1
	-	-	where	4
	que	1	that	11
	-	-	what	3

No comprehensive count was done of the occurrence of similar coordinating and subordinating items in the teachers' English talk. General inspection of the English material suggests, however, that wherever English was spoken at all, subordination in particular occurred more frequently than in the French material. This was borne out by the comparative frequency count carried out for one lesson. Table 6.11 shows that Teacher I (for whom a comprehensive count of English coordinators and subordinators was carried out) produced similar absolute numbers of coordinators in English to those she produced in French. However, where in French she produced a single subordinator only, in English she produced 21 examples. There is also no equivalent in the English material to the pattern generated in French by Teacher C, who spoke only French throughout her recorded lesson, yet produced few examples of clause-level coordination and almost none of subordination. This study yields some indications, therefore, that even when the 'natural', less structured character of spoken language generally is taken into account, the syntax was somehow 'controlled', at least as far as complexity of sentence structure was concerned.

6.4.2 Use of adverbials

Table 6.12 shows the degree of use made by these teachers of a range of French adverbial forms. Of the entire list, only two

Table 6.12

French Adverbials in Teachers' Speech

Adverbial	S1 Teachers						S2 Teachers						
	A	D	G	H	K	L	B	C	E	F	I	J	M
Temporal adjuncts:													
d'abord	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
puis	2	-	-	-	1	-	3	-	-	-	-	2	-
enfin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
finaleme ⁿ t	-	-	-	-	1	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
toujours	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
maintenant*	1	7	5	1	-	-	9	9	33	1	1	2	-
demain	-	-	-	16	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
aujourd'hui	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
plus tard	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
ce matin	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
souvent	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
quelquefois	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-
encore (une fois)	-	4	-	-	-	-	7	3	-	-	1	3	-
Restrictive adjuncts:													
seulement	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
simpleme ⁿ t	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
justeme ⁿ t	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
exacteme ⁿ t	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-
Attitudinal adjunct:													
certaineme ⁿ t	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Downtoner adjunct:													
presque	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Additive adjuncts:													
aussi	4	1	3	-	-	-	3	1	-	2	3	-	3
non plus	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Conjunct:													
quand me ^m e	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-

*includes use as transitional conjunct (discourse marker)

('maintenant' and 'aussi') were used with reasonable frequency by a majority of the teachers. ^{Encore,} 'Puis' and 'd'abord' were used by ^{five,} four and three teachers respectively; the remainder were used marginally, by one or two teachers only on a small number of occasions. Table 6.13 again shows comparative data for one teacher only (Teacher I). In this case it appears that such forms were relatively rare in the teacher's English also; general inspection of the data suggests that teachers are variable in this respect, with extensive use of adverbial forms largely confined to the highest English-using group.

Table 6.13

French and English Adverbials in One Teacher's Speech

Adverbial	French		English	
Time adjuncts:	maintenant*	1	at the moment	1
	demain	1	-	-
	aujourd'hui	2	-	-
	plus tard	1	later	1
	quelquefois	4	-	-
	encore	1	-	-
	-	-	yesterday	1
	-	-	at the same time	1
	-	-	last year	1
	-	-	yet	1
Other forms:	certainement	1	-	-
	aussi	3	too	1
	-	-	actually	1
	-	-	slightly	2
	-	-	really	1
	-	-	then	2
	-	-	just	2
	-	-	anyway	1

*time adjunct use only

6.5 Use of Discourse Markers

In this section, the teachers' use of a range of French and English 'discourse markers' is considered. The term 'discourse marker' is used here to refer to a group of items with distinctive discourse functions, which are rather poorly described in traditional sentence-focused grammar, and which have been referred to alternatively as 'particles', 'interjections', 'initiators' or 'fillers'. Characteristic features of these items are that they make no syntactic predictions, nor (when not used in their literal meanings) do they have any propositional content. They may occur utterance-initially, or as complete utterances in their own right. They are essentially interactive, and are largely restricted to spoken language (hence, perhaps the lack of attention paid to them in traditional grammars). When utterance-initial, these 'markers' have two principal functions: to relate utterances to each other, or to mark a boundary of some sort in the discourse (account after Stubbs, 1983, pp 67 - 70).

In their analysis of the language of the primary school classroom, Sinclair and Coulthard propose the term 'marker' to refer to these items, and suggest that they form a closed class, consisting in English of: 'well', 'okay', 'now', 'good', 'right', and 'all right' (1975, p 38). For them, a marker "is an item whose sole function is to indicate a boundary in the discourse" (p 38). The particular significance

of these items for Sinclair and Coulthard lies in their use by teachers to signal stages in the progression of a lesson (and notably, in signalling 'transaction' boundaries). For the present study also, the clear signalling of boundaries between activities and of the types of discourse moves being made was also considered a necessary requirement in teachers' classroom management language (see Chapter 5). It was therefore decided to conclude the study of formal aspects of teachers' speech with an investigation of the range of forms used with a 'marker' function by this group of teachers, in either language.

6.5.1 Procedures for identifying 'discourse markers'

Several problems of definition had to be resolved, however, before an analysis of the occurrence of such items in the lesson data could be undertaken. Firstly: was it indeed the case, as Sinclair and Coulthard suggest, that these items form a closed class of exponents? Stubbs (1983) suggests at least two other members of the class additional to those listed by Sinclair and Coulthard ('so', and 'anyway'); and in the sample data presented by Sinclair and Coulthard themselves, other items than those listed as class members are in fact identified as markers ('fine', 'now then': Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975, pp 92 - 93).

Secondly, all the English items suggested by Stubbs and by Sinclair and Coulthard as exponents of this boundary-marking

function have a range of other uses in classroom talk. Items such as 'good', 'right', and 'okay' are commonly used by teachers with an assenting or evaluative function, in responding to pupil utterances. 'Now' can serve (and is most familiar to grammarians) as a time adjunct. 'So', which is excluded from the list of discourse markers by Sinclair and Coulthard but added by Stubbs, has a wide range of functions. In utterance-initial position, it is interpreted by Quirk et al. as a 'result conjunct' (1972, p 669) - an interpretation which would disqualify it from 'discourse marker status', were it not for their footnoted comment that "Sometimes 'so' seems to have lost all result force..." (op cit, loc cit). Lastly, (of course in addition to its adjectival and adverbial meanings illustrated in 'do you feel well?', and 'you did well'), 'well' has a response function in addition to its initiating function. This is ignored by Sinclair and Coulthard, but interpreted by Stubbs as follows:

"..If 'well' occurs utterance-initially after a question, it indicates an indirect answer, claiming relevance although admitting a shift in topic" (1983, p 69).

Thirdly, establishing the list of French discourse markers presented special difficulties. Standard grammars of French available to the writer provided no adequate discussion of candidate items; thus for example, the 1977 edition of the prescriptive "Grammaire Larousse du Français Contemporain" considers the item 'alors' solely as a temporal adjunct, and ignores the existence of e.g. 'okay' (Chevalier et al., 1977). Besides, whatever the range of discourse markers in common use

among native speakers of contemporary French, it seemed quite possible that the usage of this largely non-native-speaker group might diverge from the normal native speaker pattern - i.e. that they might select for use as discourse markers items not usually performing this function in contemporary French.

Given these difficulties, the solutions adopted were necessarily ad hoc. No closed class of items was decided in advance; instead, any item occurring in utterance-initial position, or as an isolated utterance, which was judged on that occasion of use a) to be semantically empty and b) to be performing a boundary-marking function was included. Items used by the teacher in response to a pupil utterance, which were judged to have an assenting or evaluative function, were excluded.

6.5.2 Teachers' use of discourse markers

The list of items judged to have been used as 'discourse markers', and their frequency of use by the different teachers, is given in Table 6.14. The table shows separately the English and French items used as markers, and also shows separately the language-neutral item 'okay' and a group of non-verbal vocalisations (variously transcribed as 'oh', 'ah', 'emm' etc).

As the table shows, four English items were extensively used, by a majority of the teachers: 'right', 'now', 'well', and 'so'. 'Okay' and a range of non-verbal vocalisations were

Table 6.14

Use of English and French Discourse Markers: All Teachers

Marker	S1 Teachers						S2 Teachers						
	A	D	G	H	K	L	B	C	E	F	I	J	M
English:													
right	1	6	12	72	34	66	-	-	10	56	31	-	67
right then	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
all right	-	-	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
all right then	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
now	-	-	-	71	27	53	-	-	3	39	9	6	52
well	-	-	3	10	28	17	-	-	4	8	3	-	20
so	3	-	5	18	14	3	-	-	4	30	6	3	24
anyway	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
good	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
okay then	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	1	-	-	-	3
Total:	4	6	20	171	104	160	-	-	22	134	49	9	178
Language neutral:													
okav	1	-	3	2	10	5	-	-	1	2	5	-	8
emm/ah/oh	5	1	12	14	12	4	14	-	9	-	5	-	23
Total:	6	1	15	16	22	9	14	-	10	2	10	-	31
French:													
bon	24	45	30	-	23	-	6	-	5	1	1	18	-
ben	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
bien	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	-	-	-	14	-	-
eh bien	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
très bien	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	4	-	-
alors	47	80	18	1	34	-	62	54	2	2	2	8	3
d'accord	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
donc	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
maintenant	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	1	-	-	-
Total:	72	129	51	3	57	-	85	56	10	6	21	26	3
Grand total:	82	136	86	190	183	169	99	56	42	142	80	35	212
% of total word count:	2.4	3.0	1.3	2.5	2.3	1.3	1.8	1.6	0.5	1.4	1.0	0.7	2.2

also used by most teachers, though with lesser frequency.

(This list corresponds fairly closely to the suggestions of Sinclair and Coulthard and of Stubbs, though their additional items 'good' and 'anyway' were rare.) The following examples show the use of these items as discourse markers:

T: Look boys. It would be a real disgrace if you were sent out, do you know that? Because I would have to report it wouldn't I?

P: Yes

T: Right then now, stop the carry on. Just get on with the lesson. (Teacher L, Segment 15)

T: From after today, you are sitting down here, and you are paying attention, sonny boy... Right now, what I would like you to do is, eight, nine, ten, eleven and twelve

P: (...) homework?

T: No, no. What you are going to do just now is, you are going to ask each other number eight. Now first of all - you are going to listen to me, first of all. Now, you are going to ask for something. For instance, you might be in the house at a meal, and you are wanting a coffee after it (Teacher H, Segment 13)

"And what form of transport is this person wanting to go by? Well, how is this person wanting to get across the channel? Alan?" (Teacher M, Segment 11)

T: Un kilo... Any other weight?

P: Un demi-kilo

T: Très bien, un demi-kilo... Well, I think that will do. We have got a fair list there. (Teacher K, Segment 11)

T: Now why did we mention earlier on that the old women dress in black, even in the summer? Why is it amazing that even in the summer they are dressed in black? Assumpta?

P: Because black attracts the heat

T: Because black attracts the heat, hmm? So even in the middle of the summer, they still wear their traditional costume. (Teacher F, Segment 4)

Two French items were widely used: 'bon' and, most strikingly, 'alors'. The following examples show their use:

"Eh bien, silence s'il vous plaît. Shh. Silence s'il vous plaît... Ca c'est mieux. Alors. Vous avez passé un bon weekend?" (Teacher B, Segment 5)

"Michael, Garry, ne regardez pas la page deux. Doublez la page, comme ça. Bon, à la page trois, vous avez des questions..." (Teacher J, Segment 6)

"Venez ici alors ehh Danielle, Corinne. Tout le monde regardez. Regardez. Viens ici. Toi aussi, viens ici... Avec Corinne. Non, venez ici. Alors Corinne, tu prends les cartes. Bon, tout le monde, regardez, écoutez... Alors Corinne, tu vas offrir quelque chose à Danielle..." (Teacher A, Segment 6/1)

T: Quel age as-tu?

P: J'ai douze ans

T: J'ai douze ans, bon. Alors regardez. Maintenant c'est à vous de poser des questions... Je suis Thierry Garnier, oui? Je suis Thierry Garnier. Et vous me posez les questions... Bon alors, levez la main. Vous me posez les questions. (Teacher D, Segment 7)

(Note in this example the additional use of 'bon' as an evaluation of a pupil utterance, and of 'maintenant' as a time adjunct.)

As the table also shows, the teachers varied considerably in the extent to which they used discourse markers in either language, and overall. Thus five out of the six 'High FL Users' (Teachers A, D, B, C and J) used fewer than ten English markers; another five (one 'High FL User' and four 'Low Users') used ten French markers or less (Teachers H, L, E, F

and M). As the figures showing the relationship of each teacher's 'discourse markers' total with their total word count indicate, however, teachers varied considerably in the overall extent to which they made use of these items in either language. Teacher D, the most frequent user of discourse markers, did so at a rate six times that of Teacher E, the least frequent user. There was no obvious link between the rate at which markers were used overall, and the language balance in their use; thus the Palmer teachers (A, B, C and D), who used hardly any English markers at all, nonetheless showed considerable variation in the frequency of French marker usage. It seemed that the 'need' to use this particular linguistic means to section up the lesson discourse was a matter of individual teaching style, not closely related to the choice of one language rather than the other as medium of instruction.

One striking finding was the extent to which some teachers were prepared to codeswitch, specifically for the 'discourse marker' function. Examples were to be found, both of English markers used as preliminaries to French-medium utterances, and vice versa. This was most marked in the lesson recorded with Teacher H, where French discourse markers were virtually absent though French was used to a significant extent for managerial purposes:

"C'est mardi ... le vingt-sept... octobre... Right, écrivez la date dans les cahiers, s'il vous plaît. Écrivez la date..." (Teacher H, Segment 3)

"Right, lève-toi Catherine, et Gillian, lève-toi... Right,

tu vois - tu vas choisir quelqu'un. Choisir quelqu'un. Tu vas choisir quelqu'un... Tu comprends? Hein? Anne-Louise, tu comprends?" (Teacher H, Segment 10)

A few other teachers also codeswitched in this way with some regularity:

"Now, numéro trois, qu'est-ce que c'est? Qu'est-ce que c'est, ça?" (Teacher F, Segment 5)

TAPE: Mlle Marie-France Créach is a French assistante in a secondary school in Scotland. Today she is talkig to her pupils about Brittany, which is the region of France she comes from

T: Right, est-ce qu'elle habite, est-ce qu'elle habite eh... en France, est-ce qu'elle habite en France, Mlle Créach? Est-ce qu'elle habite en France?...

(VISITOR INTERRUPTS LESSON WITH MESSAGE, THEN LEAVES)

T: So, est-ce qu'elle habite - Mlle Créach, (ou) est-ce qu'elle habite, hein? Elle habite en France? Elle habite en France, Claire? (Teacher F, Segment 7)

"Bon... Alors emm... I am now going to ask you questions about yourselves. I want your real - real information about yourselves. Alors je vais vous poser des questions. Comment t'appelles-tu?" (Teacher G, Segment 5)

"Alors, we are going to jumble them up then. Bon, qu'est-ce que tu veux? Oui?" (Teacher K, Segment 4)

"So, you may want to order a pound, which is emm... then going to be somewhere near half a kilo, is that right? Yeah, that sounds about right. So, alors, je voudrais une livre de pêches, une livre de pêches". (Teacher K, Segment 6)

6.6 Conclusion

This chapter set out to explore selected structural aspects of

teachers' classroom talk, viewed as potential 'comprehensible input' for their pupils. The overall picture which emerges is a complex one, in which a range of factors (class level, coursebook syllabuses and the imperatives of classroom management, teachers' personal levels of commitment to FL use and their individual teaching styles) all seem to play a part.

Overall, the teachers' French seemed well adapted to the comprehension abilities of their pupils. While almost always grammatically 'correct' (unless unwittingly), the teachers' French gave an overall impression of 'simplicity', which could be linked to several of the linguistic aspects studied in this chapter. Most of the teachers went beyond the bounds of the coursebook syllabus they were following as far as their choice of vocabulary was concerned (represented in the analysis of verb lexemes used), and some went considerably beyond. Nonetheless most items used were 'core', high-frequency vocabulary (as reflected by their occurrence in the lists of "Le Français Fondamental"); the more 'specialised' items found mainly fell within the general field of classroom management, and comprehension of them seemed facilitated by their relevance to immediate, instrumental communicative concerns of teachers and pupils.

As far as target language sentence structure was concerned, the evidence generated by the analyses of verb morphology, subordination and coordination, and adverbials, combines to give an impression of general use of simple sentence patterns, largely to express the face-to-face,

immediate interactive needs of classroom participants. For most teachers the FL verb system and range of sentence structures used went somewhat beyond the coursebook syllabus requirements; but third person and non-present forms were rare, and where they did occur, likely to be coursebook-derived. The most complex FL sentence structures occurred generally in instrumental classroom management contexts (notably for the expression of Activity and Organising Instructions), rather than for the expression of any substantive 'academic' content. Pupils' comprehension of these more 'difficult' sentence patterns was thus again supported both by immediate contextualisation and more general familiarity with (and consequent ability to predict the likely form of) classroom routines.

It thus seems reasonable to view the classroom French spoken by most of these teachers as substantively adapted to their students' still-elementary comprehension abilities, though clearly outdistancing both the students' own productive abilities and the structural prescriptions of coursebook syllabuses.

There was also some evidence of 'progression' to be found in the comparison of teacher talk in S1 and S2 lessons, with more lexemes and a wider range of verb forms both occurring overall in the latter. However, the study also reflected substantial variation within both S1 and S2 teacher groups, to a degree and of a quality which suggested that this was not merely an artifact of the small data sample.

One pole of this variation consisted in the disciplined 'syllabus speak' of Teachers L and M (highlighted by these teachers' effective rejection of French as a medium of classroom management). The other extreme was represented by Teacher J, whose exceptional use of more abstract vocabulary and greater willingness to use complex sentence patterns seemed to derive from his distinctive classroom management style. In between came other teachers strongly committed to target language use for management purposes, but mostly 'making do' with more basic vocabulary and with the simplest sentence structures to achieve this (the inductive, 'direct method' language of Teacher C, with her restricted use even of 'basic' FL discourse markers, is the clearest example). Because of their links with the 'management' area of classroom talk, these variations between and among 'High' and 'Low FL Users' at S1 and S2 level cannot be dismissed as chance artifacts of the particular choice of lesson content and activities on particular occasions. It appears more likely that they reflect a genuine lack of consensus among teachers, as to the level of target language 'input' which it is possible to make 'comprehensible' for S1 and S2 pupils.

Teachers' choices of vocabulary, structure etc. may be viewed as part of a proactive attempt to make themselves understood by their pupils. The next chapter complements the account given here of these attempts, with a discussion of the strategies brought into play, when teachers perceive themselves as having failed to 'get the message across'.

CHAPTER 7

TEACHERS' SOLUTIONS FOR CLASSROOM COMPREHENSION DIFFICULTIES

7.1 Introduction

As we saw in Chapter 5, even among a group of teachers exceptionally 'committed' to communicative FL teaching methodology, the extent to which target language use was sustained as a medium of classroom instruction varied considerably. In that chapter it was shown that this variation had, at least in part, a functional basis: that some teachers were unwilling or unable to perform through French the full range of pedagogic 'moves' necessary for the smooth running of any language class.

In this chapter, one of the major obstacles to consistent target language use, as perceived by teachers and reported by them in interview (see Chapter 2), is explored. This is the 'problem' of ensuring that pupils at an elementary stage of FL learning comprehend classroom target language talk sufficiently consistently and rapidly for instruction to proceed in an orderly and non-threatening way.

As many of the studies reviewed in Chapter 3 show, teachers are known to modify their classroom target language talk in various ways, both structurally and interactionally,

with the assumed intention of rendering this talk maximally comprehensible to their students. The structural peculiarities of the French spoken by the teachers who are the object of the present study, described in Chapter 6, have been similarly interpreted. However, even where teachers are making maximum efforts to modify their speech so as to be most easily understood, it remains likely that in S1 and S2 French classes comprehension difficulties will regularly arise, given the short time for which the pupils have been studying the language and the still-basic state of their FL knowledge. The teacher in the Scottish classroom then faces perhaps the biggest challenge to consistent target language use, in the availability of the shared mother tongue as what must be, in the short term, the most efficient means of resolving comprehension difficulties.

Some writers on L2 or FL teaching methodology in British or similar contexts indeed argue in favour of mother tongue use for this particular purpose (e.g. Buckby, 1985; Mohan, 1986). In a research study conducted in Californian elementary classrooms with Chinese-American children speaking Cantonese as their mother tongue, Guthrie concluded that the greater success of a bilingual teacher in running effective ESL lessons with children of low English proficiency was due in part to her use of Cantonese for solving comprehension difficulties, a strategy unavailable to the English monolingual teacher studied in parallel (1984). However, the teacher commended by Guthrie would have been counted according

to the criteria used for the present study as a 'High FL User'; she used Cantonese for only seven per cent of the 'speech act' units into which her talk was analysed. In other words, this teacher was able to restrict her use of Cantonese to certain very specific functions, and consistently to revert to target language use once these functions had been performed.

The problem created for the present author by British methodologists such as Buckby who argue that L1 use is appropriate for selected classroom purposes (and in particular for the resolution of comprehension difficulties), lies in the fact that in the British classroom setting, L1 'seepage' seems to occur. That is to say, L1 use is routinely found for a far wider range of functions than those recommended, to the extent that it seems unlikely that many classrooms provide pupils in them with anything like an adequate quantity of FL 'input'. This widespread use of the shared mother tongue is, as we have seen from the teacher interview data, commonly accompanied by feelings of guilt and unease on the teachers' part (even where the use of English for certain restricted purposes is defended).

It has seemed at least a possibility that moments of comprehension difficulty are critical for the extent of L1 'seepage' (i.e. the use of English by teachers for purposes beyond those which they would overtly justify). For at least some teachers, such incidents might act as triggers not only for L1 use to resolve the immediate problem, but for increased

levels of L1 use more generally thereafter. If this was the case, it seemed possible that an ability to resolve comprehension difficulties in the short term without resorting to L1 use might serve as a 'stabiliser' for FL use more generally, throughout the instructional process.

7.2 Overall Plan for Analysis

It was therefore decided to make a study of occasions in the present data where the teachers' FL talk appeared to present comprehension difficulties for at least some of their pupils, and of the ways in which these difficulties were resolved. Associations would be looked for between high and low overall levels of target language use, and the use of particular strategies for resolving comprehension problems.

It was also decided to extend the study on this particular issue to include some further data: the lessons taught by the same group of teachers as the special focus of action research studies conducted as part of the Communicative Interaction Research Project (and reported in Chapters 5 and 6 of Mitchell, 1985a). These studies each had their individual concerns, but shared a common commitment to experiment with the extension in various ways of the use of French as a medium of classroom communication. It was thus reasonable to expect these 'special' lessons to be characterised by more uniformly high levels of French than the 13 'ordinary' lessons which

were the main focus of this study. This meant little change for the group of teachers identified on the basis of their 'ordinary' lessons as 'High FL Users'. However, for the teachers identified as 'Low FL Users', the action research studies presented a particular challenge potentially involving considerable modification of their normal patterns of language use. It was therefore decided to include at least some of these 'special' lessons taught by the 'Low FL User' group in the data analysed for this chapter, to see a) whether in fact they were characterised by generally increased levels of French for classroom management, and b) whether this entailed any change in the strategies used by the teachers to resolve ensuing comprehension problems.

7.2.1 Identifying 'difficulty-resolving episodes'

Firstly, it was necessary to develop a procedure for identifying instances of 'comprehension difficulty' in the lesson data. Clearly, where a teacher is attempting to communicate in a whole-class organisational pattern with two dozen or more learners (as these teachers were for most of the time), identical patterns of comprehension cannot be assumed across the group. Pupils will vary in ability, existing FL competence, motivation, and attention, and at different times are likely to experience different aspects of the teacher's target language talk as 'difficult' or incomprehensible. It is also the case, that many comprehension difficulties

experienced by different pupils at different times will remain undetected by the teacher. Pupils are by no means always motivated to let the teacher know that they do not understand something, an admission which may involve loss of 'face' with their peers and/or a degree of (perhaps critical) attention from the teacher which may be unwelcome.

Such difficulties, unmarked by any behavioural or verbal signal, will also usually remain invisible to the classroom observer (unless elaborate strategies of interventionist or retrospective questioning are employed). In the present study, where pupils were not routinely asked to report on their 'private', internal learning experiences, no attempt was made to make a comprehensive identification of all communication difficulties experienced by individuals. Only those instances of communication difficulty were extracted for study, where overt behavioural or linguistic indicators of perceived difficulty existed.

For the purposes of this study, the relevant perceptions were of course those of the teacher. Teacher behaviours of several different kinds were taken as indications that some comprehension difficulty was perceived to exist, at least potentially. Firstly, the teachers were active in checking on pupils' ongoing comprehension of their talk in French, regularly seeking feedback on the state of pupils' understanding of particular utterances or items within them. These checks were taken to indicate teachers' awareness of at least potential comprehension difficulty at particular points.

They normally led directly to some resolution of the difficulty, if any was revealed. A pupil's correct interpretation of the teacher's meaning could serve as additional input for others, as well as giving the teacher the required feedback; or, pupils' non-response or indications of non-comprehension could trigger additional 'remedial' input from the teacher. For example:

T: Pourquoi? What does the question word 'pourquoi' mean?

P: Why? (Teacher M, Segment 5)

T: Vous allez - vous allez lire les questions, et écouter la bande, et vous allez écrire les réponses dans votre cahier. Vous comprenez?

PP: Oui

T: Tu comprends, Murray?

P: Non

T: Alors - shh, shh. c'est un jeu de memoire... c'est un jeu de memoire. Ecoutez les questions, lisez les questions, et puis écrivez les réponses dans votre cahier

P: We write down the answers

T: Oui (Teacher J, Segment 6)

T: C'est joli? C'est joli?... C'est joli?... Joli? beau? beau? Qu'est-ce que c'est, beau?

P: Ehh, is it nice?

T: Oui, beau, joli...

P: Beautiful

T: Oui, pretty

P: Very beautiful

T: Oui, c'est beau, c'est joli? Oui, très bien (Teacher I, Segment 3)

Secondly, some teachers commonly supplied FL-medium, L1 or non-verbal interpretations of their FL utterances, without waiting for indications of adequate or inadequate comprehension on the part of their pupils (though these might be sought in addition):

T: Hmm. C'est une église. Les - le Sacré-Coeur, ce n'est pas une cathédrale. C'est une église, vous comprenez le mot église? Alors une cathédrale, c'est très très grande (sic), hein?

P: Notre-Dame

T: Une église, c'est plus petit. Notre-Dame, c'est une cathédrale. Sacré-Coeur, c'est plus petit. Oui?

P: A church?

T: C'est une église, exactement. C'est une église (Teacher B, Segment 7)

"Geraldine, tu as un livre, do you have a book, yes..." (Teacher F, Segment 9)

"Dessinez, hein? Dessinez. Draw. Et puis écrivez" (Teacher E, Segment 10)

"Poisson rouge is a goldfish, did you know that? It is the French word for a goldfish" (Teacher L, Segment 5)

"Oh regardez ici, hein? (SHOWS FLASHCARD)... les lions, hein? Très très féroces, comme moi. Alors ça c'est le cirque, hein? Le cirque, répétez, le cirque" (Teacher C, Segment 2)

(It was of course necessary to distinguish these non-interactive, 'pre-emptive' moves on the teacher's part to resolve potential comprehension difficulties from extremely general tendencies on teachers' part to repeat and reformulate pedagogic moves such as e.g. Activity Instructions, whichever

language they happened to be speaking. Language switching and use of non-verbal clues to meaning, as in examples 2 - 5 above, were taken as clear indications of teacher awareness of some potential specific comprehension difficulty.

French-medium commentaries on, and reformulations of, a prior teacher utterance were taken as indicators of perceived specific difficulty (rather than as general reinforcement of a message not seen as hard to understand) only when they included some degree of analysis of some element or elements of the utterance. Such FL-medium analytic commentaries were in fact rare in the corpus.)

Lastly (and unsurprisingly), comprehension difficulties were recognised to exist where pupils explicitly admitted to them. This sometimes happened in response to teacher probing, sometimes as a spontaneous pupil initiative:

T: Tu as gagné? Hein? Tu as été le premier?... Hein?... Tu as gagné cette fois?

P: Je ne comprends pas

T: Huh? Tu as gagné? Tu as été le premier?... Oui? Tu as fini?...

P: Did I finish?

T: Oui, premier?

P: Emm, une

T: Premier, oui, bon, oh très bien (Teacher C, Segment 1)

T: Les cuisses de grenouilles

P: What is that?

T: That's frogs' legs (Teacher I, Segment 5/2)

P: Mr (H), what does 'j'ai perdu' mean?

T: 'J'ai perdu' means I have lost, I have lost, j'ai perdu mon crayon... j'ai perdu ma tête... (Teacher H, Segment 19)

P: See 'qu'est-ce que ça veut dire?', does that mean, what does that mean?

T: What does that mean, 'qu'est-ce que ça veut dire' (Teacher H, Segment 18)

Thus in the main, the resolution of comprehension difficulties involved interaction between teacher and pupils, whether initiated by one side or the other. This meant that the appropriate discourse unit to be considered was the 'episode', likely to consist of several speech turns, rather than attempting to isolate individual difficulty-resolving 'moves' in teacher talk. The study of the resolution of comprehension problems thus parallels most closely the discussion of metalinguistic classroom talk, in Section 5.5 of Chapter 5.

7.3 A Taxonomy of Difficulty-Resolving (DR) Strategies

The analytic procedure adopted was thus firstly to identify all episodes in each lesson involving the resolution of comprehension difficulties perceived by teachers in their own FL speech. The individual episodes were then studied in more detail, and the various strategies employed within them in order to resolve the perceived difficulty were categorised

according to a taxonomy based on that first proposed in Mitchell, 1985a (Chapter 8).

As we saw in Section 3.4.2 of Chapter 3, only a small number of analytic schemes have been proposed for the study of this particular type of repair strategy, in teacher talk. The 1985a Mitchell taxonomy was developed within the framework of the CI Project, i.e. in relation to similar data to that studied here, but never systematically applied to the analysis of a substantial data corpus. The taxonomy used here is a more developed version; it has some resemblances to, but remains considerably simpler than, Chaudron's 'vocabulary elaboration' taxonomy (1982: see Section 3.4.2). The set of difficulty-resolving strategies which comprise the taxonomy were defined as follows below. (Note that the examples given may include combinations of more than one category. Those parts of the quotations considered to exemplify the particular category are underlined.)

7.3.1 DR category definitions

1. REPETITION

The teacher repeats the FL item perceived as causing difficulty, e.g.:

T: Est-ce qu'on peut manger dans l'aeroglisseur? Est-ce qu'on peut manger dans l'aeroglisseur?

P: (...)

T: Right. What information am I asking? Est-ce qu'on peut manger, can you -

P: Eat

T: Right (Teacher M, Segment 9)

"Alors sortez les feuilles, Henri. Sortez les feuilles... les feuilles. Sortez les feuilles..." (Teacher C, Segment 2)

2. PARAPHRASE

The teacher substitutes (an)other lexical item(s) for, reformulates, and/or explains his/her problematic utterance via FL, e.g.:

T: Par exemple, où sont-ils, là? Claudine

P: Je joue aux boules

T: Où sont-ils, attention! Pas qu'est-ce qu'ils font? Ou sont-ils? Ils sont à Carnac, oui, et où a Carnac?... Marie-Odile, tu sais?

P: Ils jouer aux boules

T: Non -

FP: Madame

T: Je t'ai pas demandé, qu'est-ce qu'ils font?... Je t'ai demandé, où est-ce qu'ils sont? Où est-ce qu'ils sont? Colette, tu comprends? Où est-ce qu'ils sont?... Oui? Alors tu me dis (Teacher B, Segment 6)

T: Tu as gagné, hein? Tu as été le premier?...Hein? Tu as gagné cette fois?

P: Je ne comprends pas

T: Huh? Tu as gagné? Tu as été le premier?... Oui? Tu as fini?...

P: Did I finish?

T: Oui, premier?

P: Emm, une

T: Premier, oui, bon, oh très bien (Teacher C, Segment 1)

T: Qu'est-ce que c'est, la plage? La plage? you remember, la plage, au bord de la mer

P: The beach

T: The beach, oui (Teacher I, Segment 5/2)

3. CONTRAST

The teacher contrasts the item perceived as problematic with another FL item. This may be another member of a semantically linked set of items, or an 'opposite', e.g.:

"Alors mets la carte sous la pochette. Mets la carte sous la pochette. Non, pas sur, sous. Oui" (Teacher C, Segment 2)

T: Comprends? Quarante. Qui comprend?

P: Forty-one

T: Ah, ne crie pas. Lève la main

P: Forty-one

T: Pas forty-one, quarante. Quarante, simplement. Pas quarante et un, quarante

P: Forty

T: Forty, oui, c'est ça (Teacher D, Segment 12)

4. EXEMPLIFICATION

The teacher provides one or more FL-medium examples of the problematic item; these may be members of a semantically hyponymous set. Categorised here also are specimen contextualisations of problematic items, e.g.:

T: Plus fort

P: What does it mean?

T: Right, I'll give you an example then. Right eh you say to me, 'Une orange monsieur' (WHISPERS), I say to you, 'Plus fort, plus fort'

P: Speak up

T: Speak up, louder, uhhuh (Teacher H, Segment 18)

T: C'est à toi de dire la date. C'est à toi de dire la date... C'est toi qui va dire, ehh par exemple, le cinq juillet... Tu as la carte, oui?

p: Oui

T: Bon, c'est à toi de dire, par exemple, le cinq juillet, et c'est à lui de dire, ehh, jeudi... (Teacher J, Segment 5)

5. CLUE-GIVING

The teacher mentions one or more items which can be expected to have some looser association with the problematic FL item (i.e. which may be considered to form part of the same cognitive 'schema' for pupils: Widdowson, 1983, p 37), e.g.:

"Oh, regardez ici, hein? (SHOWS FLASHCARD) Les lions, hein? Très très féroces, comme moi. Alors ça c'est le cirque, hein? Le cirque. Répétez, le cirque" (Teacher C, Segment 2)

Or, he/she may mention some attribute of the problematic item, e.g.:

"What's les escargots? Something the French are famous for eating" (Teacher I, Segment 5/2)

6. NON-VERBAL MEANS

The teacher uses gesture, mime or non-verbal reference to classroom objects or pictures to convey the meaning of the

item:

T: Tu as gagné?

P: Je ne comprends pas

T: Ehh alors André, il ne comprend pas 'gagné'. Ehh tu as gagné, ou tu as - tu as gagné? (WAVES ARMS) Ou tu as perdu? (LOOKS MISERABLE) Tu as gagné?

P: (...)

T: Non, tu as perdu (Teacher B, Segment 5)

T: T: Alors Michael Brown, qui était en retard avec toi?... Là (SHOWS LATENESS RECORD), tu comprends? Qui était en retard? Toi et - toi aussi?

P: Oui (Teacher A, Segment 6/2)

7. TEACHER INTERPRETATION (FL-MEDIUM EPISODE)

The teacher translates the specific problematic item into English while sustaining FL use throughout the remainder of the episode, e.g.:

"Asseyez-vous, ça veut dire, 'sit down'" (Teacher D, Segment 14)

"Ils quittent la colonie, ça veut dire, they leave - they are leaving the holiday camp" (Teacher E, Segment 9)

(This category is distinguished from category 11, 'Teacher Language Switching', by the presence of FL metacomment such as the 'ça veut dire' used in both examples above.)

8. PUPIL INTERPRETATION (FL-MEDIUM EPISODE)

The teacher invites a pupil or pupils to supply a translation of the problematic item, within the context of an FL-medium episode, e.g.:

T: Qu'est-ce que c'est, un copain? Qu'est-ce que c'est?

P: Janitor

T: Copain, non, concierge, Sejanta. Copain, qu'est-ce que c'est Martin?

P: Ehh friend

T: Friend, good (Teacher H, Segment 8)

T: 'Les gars', qu'est-ce que ça veut dire? Les gars...
J'ai dit 'bonjour, les gars'. Qui sont les gars? Qu'est-ce que ça veut dire? En anglais, 'les gars'?

P: Miss, boys

T: The boys, oui, c'est ça, les gars (Teacher D, Segment 1)

9. TEACHER INTERPRETATION (L1-MEDIUM EPISODE)

The teacher translates the problem item into English in the context of an episode incorporating L1-medium metacomment, e.g.:

"Société Nationale des Chemins de Fer, it just means National Society of French Railways" (Teacher M, Segment 8)

"'Bleu' is blue, you could remember that one if you want" (Teacher L, Segment 6)

10. PUPIL INTERPRETATION (L1-MEDIUM EPISODE)

The teacher invites a pupil to translate the problematic item into English, in the context of a generally L1-medium episode, e.g.:

T: Bon alors, c'est un demi-kilo de pommes. Oui? What are we talking about? C'est un demi-kilo de pommes

P: Half a kilo

T: It is half a kilo of apples (Teacher K, Segment 3)

T: J'ai douze ans, what age is that?

P: Twelve

T: Twelve, that is right (Teacher G, Segment 9)

11. TEACHER LANGUAGE SWITCHING

The teacher speaks bilingually, immediately repeating in L1 'messages' first expressed in the FL. This category differs from categories 7 and 9 in the absence of any metastatement or commentary linking the two utterances, of the 'X means Y' type, e.g.:

"Combien de temps le voyage dure-t-il? How long does the voyage last?" (Teacher M, Segment 9)

"Dépêche-toi, hurry up" (Teacher K, Segment 2)

"Non, rangez les photos. Put the photos away. Rangez les photos pour le moment" (Teacher G, Segment 3)

12. PUPIL EXPANSION OF TEACHER MESSAGE

The teacher prompts a pupil to provide a message for other pupils via L1, which the teacher him/herself does not fully express, e.g.:

T: Qui va expliquer - attends. Qui va expliquer, 's'il te plaît', s'il vous plaît', la différence? Qui va expliquer la différence? En anglais. Liliane

P: Miss, ehm 's'il te plaît' is if you are talking to your friend, 's'il vous plaît' is if you are talking to a teacher or someone that you don't know

T: Très bien (Teacher A, Segment 5)

7.3.2 Rationale for DR categories

The rationale underlying this particular set of analytic categories was firstly, to identify teacher strategies not involving the use of English, and to distinguish different options among these. Categories 1 - 6 inclusive reflect this concern. Secondly, where strategies used to resolve comprehension difficulties involved the use of English, the aim was to distinguish strategies where English was used minimally (and perhaps, not at all by the teacher, thus conserving his/her role as a consistent FL- user in the classroom) from those where English predominated in the overall character of an episode. Categories 7, 8 and 12 are intended to capture strategies of the former type, and categories 9 - 11 those of the latter.

7.3.3 Coding procedures

As individual episodes resolving perceived comprehension difficulties were identified in the lessons, these were coded using the categories of the above taxonomy. Multiple coding was allowed, with no upper limit placed on the number of categories which could be used for individual episodes. The codings thus indicated the single strategy, or combinations of strategies, judged to have been used within particular episodes. However, each coding category was used once only per

episode; thus if for example, a strategy such as 'Repetition' was used several times in the course of a given episode, its presence was recorded only once. The codings thus give a qualitative account of the range of strategies used and the combinations in which they occurred rather than a detailed frequency count.

Double-coding of a different kind was allowed, to cope with the eventuality of mixed-language use as the vehicular medium of instruction of a particular episode. In episodes eliciting L1 translations from pupils, the 'mixed' character of teachers' language use was indicated by the joint use of categories 8 and 10. For example:

T: The last two. Well, what does that mean?

P: (...)

T: Hmm? Catherine, qu'est-ce que ça veut dire en anglais?

P: Taking a photo of the standing stones

T: Of - standing stones, right (Teacher E, Segment 7)

Similarly, joint use of categories 7 and 9 was allowed to record mixed-language use in episodes where teachers themselves were supplying translations. In the event, however, little use had to be made of these particular joint codings.

Four complete lesson segments taught by Teachers F, G, H and J, and previously coded as involving the language activity of 'Translation' could be viewed as episodes resolving perceived comprehension difficulty. They were coded here using categories 8, 9 or 10. Once identified, these segments were

excluded from further consideration and are omitted from the descriptive account given below of difficulty-resolving (DR) episodes at subsegmental level.

7.4 Analysis of Main Data Corpus

7.4.1 Identification of episodes and extent of multiple coding

Tables 7.1 and 7.2 show the number of DR episodes identified in the lessons of the S1 and S2 teacher groups, and also the overall number of codings made using the taxonomy outlined above. As the tables show, these episodes occurred in all lessons, ranging in frequency from 11 episodes in the lesson of Teacher J to 40 in that taught by Teacher I. The average number of codings per teacher per episode is also shown. Here the range is from 1.2 codings per episode for Teacher G, to 3.4 codings per episode for Teacher B. In their overall frequency of perception of difficulty, and in the number of different strategies employed to resolve these problems, the S2 teachers appear somewhat more active than the S1 group, but the differences are not great.

Somewhat increased differences appear when overall patterns for 'High FL User' and 'Low FL User' teacher groups are compared (see Tables 7.3 and 7.4). From these tables it appears that the 'Low FL Users' perceived more comprehension difficulties for pupils in their own FL use, but were more

Table 7.1Subsegmental 'Repair' Codings: S1 Teachers

	A	D	G	H	K	L	Total Average	
No. episodes	12	15	27	30	19	14	117	19.5
no. codings	28	33	33	47	30	21	192	32.0
codings per episode	2.3	2.2	1.2	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.6	

Table 7.2Subsegmental 'Repair' Codings: S2 Teachers

	B	C	E	F	I	J	M	Total Average	
No. episodes	8	15	32	15	40	11	39	160	22.9
no. codings	27	34	53	24	71	30	57	296	42.3
codings per episode	3.4	2.3	1.7	1.6	1.8	2.7	1.5	1.9	

Table 7.3Subsegmental 'Repair' Codings: High FL Users

	A	B	C	D	E	J	Total Average	
No. episodes	12	8	15	15	32	11	93	15.5
no. codings	28	27	34	33	53	30	205	34.2
codings per episode	2.3	3.4	2.3	2.2	1.7	2.7	2.2	

Table 7.4Subsegmental 'Repair' Codings: Low FL Users

	F	H	K	L	M	Total Average	
No. episodes	15	30	19	14	39	117	23.4
no. codings	24	47	30	21	57	179	35.8
codings per episode	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.5	

economical in the range of strategies used to resolve these. The 'High FL Users' identified fewer difficulties, but used more elaborate combinations of strategies to resolve those they did identify. Thus for example, Teacher B was judged on one occasion to have used no less than six different strategies in the course of a single episode:

T: (SHOWING FLASHCARD) Hmm, c'est une église. Les - le Sacré-Coeur, ce n'est pas une cathédrale. C'est une église. Vous comprenez le mot, 'église'? Alors une cathédrale, c'est très, très grande (sic), hein?

P: Notre-Dame

T: Une église, c'est plus petit. Notre-Dame, c'est une cathédrale. Sacré-Coeur, c'est plus petit. Oui?

P: A church?

T: C'est une église, exactement, c'est une église (Teacher B, Segment 7)

Here, the strategies of 'Repetition', 'Paraphrase', 'Contrast', 'Exemplification', 'Non-verbal Means' and 'Pupil Interpretation (FL Exchange)' can all be identified.

7.4.2 Teachers' strategic choices

Table 7.5 gives a more detailed breakdown of the range of codings made for DR episodes in the lessons of S1 and S2 teachers. This table shows all teachers as users of a reasonable range of strategies (the extremes being Teacher G, recorded as using four types of strategy, and Teacher E, with 11 types plus two 'mixed-language' strategies). It also shows that individual teachers varied considerably, as to their

Table 7.5
Subsegmental 'Repair' Codings: All Teachers

Coding	S1 Teachers							S2 Teachers							Total (All Teachers)	
	A	D	G	H	K	L	Total	B	C	E	F	I	J	M		Total
Repetition	10	13	6	11	8	6	54 (28.1%)	8	13	11	5	18	7	13	75 (25.3%)	129 (26.4%)
Paraphrase	4	1	-	1	-	1	6 (3.1)	3	1	2	-	7	6	1	20 (6.8)	26 (5.3)
Contrast	-	4	-	1	-	1	6 (3.1)	5	3	4	1	-	2	2	17 (5.7)	23 (4.7)
Exemplification	4	1	-	3	3	-	11 (5.7)	2	1	1	-	5	6	1	16 (5.4)	27 (5.5)
Clue-giving	-	-	-	-	-	1	1 (0.5)	-	4	1	1	2	-	1	9 (3.0)	10 (2.0)
Non-verbal	2	-	-	-	-	-	2 (1.0)	3	10	1	-	3	-	-	17 (5.7)	19 (3.9)
Teacher interp.(FL)	-	2	-	-	-	-	2 (1.0)	-	-	3	-	2	-	-	5 (1.7)	7 (1.4)
Pupil interp.(FL)	3	10	-	3	-	-	16 (8.3)	6	1	2	-	9	5	-	23 (7.8)	39 (8.0)
Teacher interp.(L \neq)	1	1	2	6	4	11	25 (13.0)	-	-	4	4	1	-	5	14 (4.7)	39 (8.0)
Pupil interp.(L1)	-	-	9	16	8	2	35 (18.2)	-	-	3	3	9	-	17	32 (10.8)	67 (13.7)
Teacher lg. switching	-	1	16	6	7	-	30 (15.6)	-	1	17	8	14	3	17	60 (20.3)	90 (18.4)
Pupil expansion	4	-	-	-	-	-	4 (2.1)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	- (0.0)	4 (0.8)
Joint coding (8+10)	-	-	-	-	-	-	- (0.0)	-	-	3	2	1	1	-	7 (2.4)	7 (1.4)
Joint coding (7+9)	-	-	-	-	-	-	- (0.0)	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1 (0.3)	1 (0.2)
Total	28	33	33	47	30	21	192 (100.0)	27	34	53	24	71	30	57	296 (100.0)	488 (100.0)

preferred profile of strategies used. Thus 'Teacher Language Switching' was the most popular single category for Teachers G, E, F and M; 'Pupil Interpretation (L1 Exchange)' was favoured by Teachers H and M, and 'Teacher Interpretation (L1 Exchange)' by Teacher L. (These were the only individuals for whom 'Repetition' was not the most used category.) However, no marked differences emerged between the two teacher groups.

The most commonly-used strategy overall was 'Repetition', used on 129 occasions (i.e. forming 26.6 per cent of the total corpus of 488 recorded applications of particular strategies).

The only other strategies forming more than ten per cent of the overall total were 'Pupil Interpretation (L1 Exchange)' and 'Teacher Language Switching'.

Table 7.6 gives a similarly detailed account of the DR strategies identified in the lessons taught by the 'High FL User' and 'Low FL User' groups. Here, some fairly striking differences emerged between the sets of strategies used by the two groups. For both, 'Repetition' was the commonest strategy. Indeed for the 'Low FL User' group, this was the only FL-medium strategy used with any frequency. Otherwise, the English-medium strategies 9, 10 and 11 predominated in their lessons (together totalling 63.7 per cent of all strategies used by the group).

In clear contrast, these three English-biassed strategies made up only 15.1 per cent of the total for the 'High FL User' group - and Teacher E's idiosyncratic preference for 'Teacher Language Switching' accounted for much of this. The all-French

Table 7.6

Subsegmental 'Repair' Codings: High & Low FL Users

Coding	High FL Users							Low FL Users					
	A	B	C	D	E	J	Total	H	K	L	F	M	Total
Repetition	10	8	13	13	11	7	62 (30.2%)	11	8	6	5	13	43 (24.0%)
Paraphrase	4	3	1	1	2	6	17 (8.3)	1	-	-	-	1	2 (1.1)
Contrast	-	5	3	4	4	2	18 (8.8)	1	-	1	1	2	5 (2.8)
Exemplification	4	2	1	1	1	6	15 (7.3)	3	3	-	-	1	7 (3.9)
Clue-giving	-	-	4	-	1	-	5 (2.4)	-	-	1	1	1	3 (1.7)
Non-verbal	2	3	10	-	1	-	16 (7.8)	-	-	-	-	-	- (0.0)
Teacher interp.(FL)	-	-	-	2	3	-	5 (2.4)	-	-	-	-	-	- (0.0)
Pupil interp.(FL)	3	6	1	10	2	5	27 (13.2)	3	-	-	-	-	3 (1.7)
Teacher interp.(L1)	1	-	-	1	4	-	6 (2.9)	6	4	11	4	5	30 (16.8)
Pupil interp.(L1)	-	-	-	-	3	-	3 (1.5)	16	8	2	3	17	46 (25.7)
Teacher lg. switching	-	-	1	1	17	3	22 (10.7)	6	7	-	8	17	38 (21.2)
Pupil expansion	4	-	-	-	-	-	4 (2.0)	-	-	-	-	-	- (0.0)
Joint coding(8+10)	-	-	-	-	3	-	4 (2.0)	-	-	-	2	-	2 (1.1)
Joint coding(7+9)	-	-	-	-	1	-	1 (0.5)	-	-	-	-	-	- (0.0)
Total	28	27	34	33	53	30	205 (100.0)	47	30	21	24	57	179 (100.0)

and non-verbal categories (1 - 6) together accounted for 64.8 per cent of all strategies used by this group, although no other single category in this subset came close to rivalling 'Repetition' in popularity. Categories 8 and 12 ('Pupil Interpretation (FL Exchange)', and 'Pupil Expansion (L1)'), which conserve the teacher's role as a consistent target language speaker although admitting the use of English on the part of the pupil, together account for a further 15.2 per cent. This analysis thus revealed another important dimension on which the language behaviour of these two teacher groups differed substantially.

7.4.3 Content of the episodes

Various possible reasons for this major difference may be proposed. It might have been the case that the two groups of teachers were trying to resolve qualitatively different kinds of comprehension difficulty, and most notably, that the 'Low FL Users' were trying to explain FL items which were somehow more resistant to FL-medium DR strategies than were the items problematic in the lessons of the 'High FL User' group. In order to explore these possible reasons, a limited qualitative analysis of the content and internal structure of the DR episodes was carried out. In particular, attention was paid a) to the type of FL item which was the focus of repair effort, and b) to the extent of metacomment (and the language used for it).

7.4.3.1 Content of episodes taught by 'High FL Users'

This analysis revealed some qualitative differences within the two teacher groups, as well as between them. Within the 'High FL User' group, the two most consistent French-speakers of all (Teachers B and C) were fairly similar in their handling of DR episodes. Both focused mainly on clarifying the meaning of substantive 'content' words and sentences which arose in the course of their teaching, some syllabus-derived, others not. Thus Teacher B felt obliged to clarify the meaning of the words 'mouillé', 'église', 'gagné', and - curiously - the numeral 'six', as well as that of the question forms 'où est-ce qu'ils sont' / 'où sont-ils'; Teacher C similarly tackled 'chevaux', 'gagné', 'discothèque', 'cinéma', 'surprise-partie', 'maison des jeunes', 'patinoire', 'parc d'attractions', 'concert', 'stade', 'cirque' and 'courses', as well as questions with 'où sont...'. In addition a few content and function words used in the course of classroom management talk seemed to cause problems which the teachers felt obliged to solve: 'côté deux' and 'histoire' for Teacher B, 'feuilles', 'premier' and 'sous' for Teacher C.

Just as these two teachers were sparing in their provision of Activity Instructions and metalinguistic talk (see Chapter 5), so they made little metacomment on the process of negotiating comprehension. They regularly checked explicitly but briefly for comprehension, Teacher B with 'tu comprends?'

'vous comprenez?', Teacher C usually with a more minimal 'hein?'; but otherwise their preferred DR strategies were generally used directly, without metacomment. Thus for example Teacher B elicited L1 interpretations from her pupils without explicitly asking for them:

T: Moi j'ai joué aussi au hockey, on a perdu six à zero

P: Nought to sixty

T: Six, non, six. Pas soixante, six (Teacher B, Segment 5)

Both these teachers produced a limited degree of metacomment when trying to establish the difference between two question forms:

T: Où sont les jeunes filles? Marcel

P: Les jeunes filles dansent

T: Où sont les jeunes filles alors? Pas qu'est-ce qu'elles font, hein? Je n'ai pas demandé, 'qu'est-ce qu'elles font?' Oui, bien sûr, elles dansent. Mais où sont les jeunes filles? (Teacher C, Segment 2)

In addition Teacher C on one occasion elaborated on her usual pattern (combining strategies 1 and 6) for conveying the meaning of new vocabulary items. In the example below, she added some metacomment (underlined) to the use of strategies 3, 4 and 6:

T: Alors regardez ici, hein? Ca c'est le Gaumont, hein?
Qu'est-ce que c'est?... C'est une discothèque?...
Qu'est-ce que c'est? Vous connaissez ce mot je crois,
hein?

P: C'est une cinéma

T: C'est un cinéma (Teacher C, Segment 2)

It is clear from these examples that these teachers could take for granted their pupils' comprehension of at least this limited degree of metacomment. Its absence overall thus seems to be the outcome of a general trend in these two teachers' lessons to minimise metatalk of all kinds, and rely on inductive procedures to ensure pupils' general grasp of what was going on.

Teachers A and D, also committed members of the 'High FL User' group, taught S1 classes in Palmer High School, alongside Teachers B and C. The range of FL items tackled by these two teachers in the course of DR episodes was actually somewhat wider than that tackled by their colleagues with more advanced classes. They each dealt with some content words and phrases, mainly syllabus-derived ('amie', 'non, merci', 'à toute à l'heure' for Teacher A: 'qui est-ce?' 'les gars', 'en Ecosse', 'en France', 'je suis', 'tu as des frères?' as well as selected numerals, for Teacher D). But in addition, they found it necessary to clarify the meaning of a range of managerial phrases, which occurred in Activity and Organising Instructions as well as the meaning of various metacomments, themselves typically occurring within DR episodes. Utterances of this type tackled by Teacher A included:

"Qui était absent?"

"Qui était en retard?"

"Tu demandes une orange" (as directive)

"Qu'est-ce que ça veut dire?", and

"Quelle est la différence?"

(The meanings of all these phrases except the last were conveyed by Teacher A without resorting to English.)

Teacher D tackled the phrases

"Quel est ton nom anglais?"

"Plus fort"

"Asseyez-vous", and

"Qu'est-ce que ça veut dire?"

The last phrase occurred as metacomment within several DR episodes in her lesson, giving rise at times to a complex 'nesting' of DR strategies, as in the following example:

"Sylvie, tu as des frères?... Tu as des frères?... Oui, ou non?... Sylvie, réponds. Oui? Tu comprends la question, tu as des frères?... Explique en anglais. Qu'est-ce que ça veut dire, la question?... Sylvie, parle... Right, what does the question mean?... Tu as des frères? What am I asking you, Sylvie?... Have you any brothers? Now, have you? Alors oui, combien?" (Teacher D, Segment 7)

Teacher D in particular was much readier than Teachers B and C to include explicit FL metacomment in DR episodes, for example regularly including (and as the above example shows, at times having to explain) the question 'qu'est-ce que ça veut dire en anglais?' to elicit category 8 type pupil 'interpretations'. She and Teacher A both had in addition a distinctive type of communication difficulty to resolve, due to their mutual concern with appropriacy in the use of T and V forms. It was when dealing with such metalinguistic topics that Teacher A (uniquely) resorted to Strategy 12, using pupils to express

(in English) messages which she herself did not fully articulate. For example:

T: Tout le monde comprend? Une orange, une pomme, une poire, une banane, mais un café, un gâteau. Okay? Yann, tu comprends la différence, là?

P: That's masculine and that's feminine

T: Bon, très bien. Au masculin, un café, un gâteau. Et là, une orange, une pomme, une poire, une banane (Teacher A, Segment 5)

Teacher D's most ambitious metacomment arose in a DR episode concerned with the 'appropriacy' issue:

T: Oui, mais on ne peut pas dire 'tu'. Je suis le prof... Tu ne comprends pas?

P: Non

T: Non, alors ehh... Ca va?

P: Oui, ça va merci, et vous?

T: Alors tu dis 'et vous', tu ne dis pas 'et toi', tu dis 'et vous', hein? Pas 'et toi'. Alors vous ne pouvez pas poser la - les questions, 'Où habites-tu?' 'Quel âge as-tu?' et l'autre, 'Comment t'appelles-tu?' -

P: Oh

T: Ah, tu comprends maintenant (Teacher D, Segment 11)

Given the exceptional extent of cooperation and explicit sharing of objectives and techniques which prevailed among the teachers at Palmer High School, it seems possible that the differences among the 'High FL User' teachers working there have to do mainly with differences in the age groups with which they were dealing. That is to say, the two teachers with S1 classes (A and D) were working to develop pupils' mastery

of a basic repertoire of classroom management language, which the teachers with S2 classes (B and C) could assume their pupils possessed. This would account for the greater attention being paid to comprehension of management language at S1 level. Nonetheless the fact that the extent of metacomment appeared to decrease between S1 and S2, at least within the context of DR episodes, is surprising. The analyst of these lessons is left wondering whether the S2 teachers at Palmer were building as fully as they might, at least on the particular occasion of observation, on the foundation laid for FL comprehension by activity such as that displayed by the S1 teachers.

The possibility of using structurally more complex and conceptually more abstract FL talk at S2 level, without running into insoluble comprehension difficulties (though at 'cost' of somewhat greater use of English in DR episodes), was realised most clearly in the lesson taught by Teacher J. The DR episodes in his lesson were few in number (11), but qualitatively different from those previously considered. Most usually, they focused on clarification of the elaborate FL-medium Activity Instructions used by this teacher to introduce new lesson segments. The activities explained were often complex (such as guessing games organised on a paired basis, with partners having to use different information in different ways); and the DR episodes necessary to ensure comprehension of the initial Activity Instructions for these activities themselves often ran to many speech turns, and

involved the use of several different problem-solving strategies. These were routinely applied to content words such as 'épeler', 'étudier', 'examiner', 'identifier', 'essayer', 'deviner' and 'jeu de mémoire'; such relatively abstract items themselves typically occurred embedded in fairly complex utterances, such as:

"Vous allez donner la date à votre partenaire, qui va essayer de deviner quel jour de la semaine... est cette date". (Teacher J, Segment 5)

As we have seen in Table 7.5, Teacher J relied mainly on combinations of the all-FL strategies 1 - 4 with (fairly extensive) pupil translation to resolve comprehension difficulties posed by such items. At times, however, he himself used English, to confirm or extend pupil L1 explanations; and his (fairly limited) use of metacomment was also sometimes in English, though predominantly in French. For example (metacomment underlined):

T: Tu comprends, Michael?

P: Oui

T: Tu comprends?

P: oui

T: Alors, tu veux... m'expliquer ce qu'il faut faire?

P: Emm you listen to the tape

T: Oui

P: And you write down what it says in English

T: Oui, and what is it going to say in English? Or, what is it going to say in French, that you have to write down in English?

P: Emm, the months of the year

T: Oui... So you have to listen to the tape, and write down in English the months that you hear (Teacher J, Segment 3)

Teacher J thus stands out among the 'High FL user' group as the teacher tackling what appear to be the most complex comprehension difficulties. The main 'price' paid seemed to be some increase in the use of English during DR episodes; his use of metacomment, however, remained relatively restricted, in either language.

Teacher E, the most marginal member of the 'High FL User' group, had over twice as many DR episodes in his lesson as any other member of the group, and was also much more likely to invoke English-using strategies to resolve comprehension problems than any other member. Most of this activity focused on the language material (words and sentences) being introduced in a new coursebook unit. However there were several clarifications of managerial utterances (usually through 'Teacher Language Switching'), e.g.:

"Gardez la feuille numéro un, keep sheet number one just now"

"Finissez plus tard, you can finish that off later"

"Deux fois pour demain. Twice for tomorrow"

"Dessinez, hein? Dessinez. Draw. Et puis écrivez"

Another striking difference between the behaviour of Teacher E and that of the other 'High FL Users', was a greatly increased use of metacomment, which occurred in over two-thirds of the DR episodes in his lesson. Both English and French were used for this purpose, and no clear pattern could be detected which explained his language choice on particular occasions. Very similar metacomments were sometimes expressed in French only (and apparently understood without difficulty by the pupils), sometimes expressed bilingually, and sometimes produced in English only. For example:

(FRENCH METACOMMENT)

T: Qu'est-ce que c'est, 'ils jouent aux billes - aux boules', en anglais?

P: Ehh bowls (Segment 6)

T: La question, ici. Pas 'qu'est-ce qu'ils font?', mais maintenant il y a deux femmes ici, oui?

P: Ils marchent dans l'eau

T: Ah pardon, hein? La question

P: Oh, elles - elles marchent -

T: Non, non, non, la question. Qu'est-ce que c'est la question? Oui?

P: Qu'est-ce qu'elles font?

T: Qu'est-ce qu'elles font? Oui, très bien (Segment 6)

(BILINGUAL METACOMMENT)

T: Well, what does that mean?

P: (...)

T: Hmm? Catherine, qu'est-ce que ça veut dire en anglais?

P: Taking a photo of the standing stones

T: Of - standing stones, right (Segment 7)

"La question, qu'est-ce que c'est, la question? Jacques... C'est 'qu'est-ce qu'ils font?', ou 'qu'est-ce qu'elles font?'. What is the question, qu'est-ce que c'est la question, la question?... Qui?" (Segment 6)

(ENGLISH METACOMMENT)

T: What is 'une coiffe'?

P: It is the hat, (...) that the girls wear

T: Right, okay, the Breton girls wear this sort of headdress, 'une coiffe', très bien (Segment 7)

This frequent use of metacomment within DR episodes, and associated instability of language choice, is closer to the practice of the 'Mid' and 'Low FL user' teacher groups than to that of the other 'High FL users'.

7.4.3.2 Content of episodes taught by 'Mid' and 'Low FL Users'

The behaviour of these remaining groups will be described more summarily. The two 'Mid FL Users' appeared to occupy genuinely intermediate positions, though somewhat different ones, as far as their behaviour in DR episodes was concerned. Teacher I concentrated mainly on clarifying the meaning of substantive 'content' words which arose in the course of the various discussion activities she organised on the theme of holidays (e.g. 'vélo', 'bateau', 'equitation'), though she also dealt

with a few managerial items. The latter were usually the subject of a 'Teacher Language Switch':

"Right, ouvrez vos cahiers, open your jotters"

"Robin, tu rêves. You are dreaming"

This teacher used metacomment fairly freely (in almost half her DR episodes); she was the only teacher outside the 'High FL User' group to make any significant use of French for this purpose. However, her French metacomments were limited to two phrases: 'qu'est-ce que c'est?' and 'vous comprenez?', used in simple exchanges such as:

T: Qu'est-ce que c'est, 'une île'?

P: An island

T: An island, oui (Segment 3)

Teacher G, the other 'Mid FL User', paid more attention to managerial phrases than to substantive 'syllabus' items in her DR episodes. The former were usually the subject of 'Teacher Language Switching':

"Vous avez oublié Christophe, you forgot about Christophe"

"Alors... travaillez avec votre partenaire. Now you are going to work with your partner"

This teacher was sparing in her use of metacomment (in this resembling the general practice of the 'High FL User' group), but (except for a solitary, mixed "Vous avez compris? Do you understand?") always used English for this purpose:

T: Quel âge as-tu? What are you being asked?

P: Your age

T: Oui, c'est ça (Segment 13/3)

The 'Low FL User' group were the most homogeneous in their behaviour regarding the aspects of DR episodes under consideration here. Substantive, 'content' words, mainly syllabus-derived, were the main focus of attention for the whole group. (The only apparent exception to this was Teacher H, who dealt with a number of managerial phrases: 'écoutez bien', 'nous allons réviser' etc. However, these were presented as decontextualised vocabulary items, and never in genuine use.) Teachers M and L dealt with two, and no, managerial items respectively; Teachers F and K dealt with a small number of such items only. This lack of perceived need to clarify the meaning of 'managerial' items could of course be linked to the limited extent to which French was used for managerial purposes by this group: see Chapter 5, Section 5.4.3.

Metacomment was frequent in the DR episodes of the 'Low FL User' group (occurring in half or more episodes for all group members). Apart from two French-medium comments produced by Teacher H, and a few mixed-language comments, English was used throughout for this purpose. As can be seen from the last set of examples given below, however, the nature of the metacomments made was not particularly complex:

T: What does the word 'avant' mean?... Angela? Nobody know? 'Avant'?

P: Past

P: Around

T: No, it means 'before' (Teacher M, Segment 11)

T: Can you remember from so long ago what 'le brouillard' is?

P: Fog

T: Fog, good (Teacher M, Segment 5)

T: Look at that one, 'le poisson rouge'. What - what did I say that one was?

P: A goldfish

T: A goldfish, yes, they call it a red fish, because goldfish usually are red, aren't they? (Teacher L, Segment 12)

T: You may for instance say, 'je voudrais trois pêches'. What would that be? 'Je voudrais trois pêches'

P: Three peaches

T: Oui (Teacher K, Segment 4/2)

T: What is the difference, 'le copain', 'la copine'?

P: (...)

T: Kirsteen...

P: Emm girls, if it is a girl, (...)

T: Good, girlfriend and boyfriend, right (Teacher H, Segment 8)

T: All right, regardez bien. Thomas, what am I asking you to do? Am I asking you to talk?

P: (...)

T: Good. 'Regardez bien' means -

P: Look...

T: Okay? (Teacher F, Segment 5)

7.4.3.3 Qualitative differences in DR episodes

It thus appears from this qualitative analysis of the DR episodes occurring in the lessons of the various groups, that there were few substantial differences between the types of item which 'High' and 'Low FL Users' tried to explain to their pupils. Teachers in both groups dealt mainly with 'content' items, whether syllabus-derived (all teachers dealt with material of this type) or less commonly, arising in the course of open-ended communicative interaction (selected individuals only, all 'High FL users' plus Teacher I). The most ambitious items (because the most abstract) occurred in the lesson of a 'High FL User' (Teacher J), and were interpreted to his pupils mainly in French; otherwise, there seemed little to choose in terms of ease of interpretation between the substantive 'content' items dealt with by 'High' and 'Low FL Users'.

Some 'High FL Users' (and one 'Mid' user) dealt also with substantial numbers of items arising from FL use for classroom management; and lastly, two 'High FL Users' (Teachers A and D) also dealt with comprehension difficulties arising from attempts to communicate metalinguistic points through French. The range of 'problem' items tackled by the 'High FL Users' thus turned out to be more, not less, ambitious than that dealt with by the 'Low FL Users'; their general commitment to French-medium (or non-verbal) DR strategies thus did not

appear to inhibit the type of item which they attempted to explain.

The other main difference between the different groups lay in the extent to which metacomment was used in DR episodes, and in the language selected for it. The 'High FL Users' seemed to have learned to do without metacomment, to a considerable extent (though they also demonstrated the possibility of accustoming pupils to hearing such comment in French: Teachers A and D were recorded at a time in their pupils' career when this ability was being actively developed). The 'Low FL Users' on the other hand showed a great fondness for English-medium metacomment of a low level kind. It seemed possible that learning to do without such comment might be a significant step in weaning teachers away from English as the vehicular language of classroom instruction.

7.5 Analysis of Action Research Lessons

As a final contribution to the study of the issue of how to solve comprehension difficulties arising in teacher target language talk, a limited further analysis was undertaken, of some of the lessons taught and audiorecorded in the 'action research' phase of the Communicative Interaction Project (Mitchell 1985a, Chapters 5 and 6). Most of the teachers whose 'ordinary' teaching is discussed in this thesis took

part in the action research phase (though Teacher K was not available, and the study conducted by Teacher I proved abortive). As we have seen, this phase consisted in a series of small scale studies of attempts by individual teachers to undertake particular types of teaching/learning activity thought significant for the promotion of communicative target language use in the classroom. In most cases the action research studies were conducted approximately a year after the original observational studies in which the material which forms the main database for this thesis was collected. The teachers were again working with S1 or S2 classes, but in most cases the pupils involved were not the same. The activity studied normally lasted for a single lesson or less (though the 'market day' role play organised by Teacher F ran over several periods, mainly occupied by the production by pupils of quasi-realistic materials). These 'focus' lessons were audiorecorded and transcribed for the purposes of the Communicative Interaction Project, but were not then analysed from the perspective of communication difficulties and their repair.

It was judged appropriate to include the analysis of a selection of these lessons from this perspective here, because of the 'communicational challenge' presented by the action research study topics to the teachers. The types of activity to be attempted in French (notably, 'open-ended' role play, the teaching of 'background', and the teaching of 'grammar') were all of types considered to be somehow 'problematic' by

most teachers (see Chapter 2). For most of the teachers concerned, the particular kind of task undertaken for the action research phase lay outside their normal repertoire of classroom activities. Thus it was hoped that analysis of some of these lessons might show teachers finding new solutions to what were for them qualitatively different communication problems, and provide some indication of the extent to which teachers could adapt their choice and use of DR strategies to new kinds of difficulty.

7.5.1 Choice of AR lessons for study

Five action research lessons, taught by four teachers (E, G, H and L) were selected for further study. The original aim was to concentrate on available lessons taught by 'Mid' and 'Low FL users'. However, no material was available for Teachers I and K, and the lessons taught by Teachers F and M were discarded, after an initial inspection had shown that these two teachers used English almost exclusively throughout (both were managing role play activities organised on a group and pair basis, and saw pupil FL talk as the exclusive concern of the action research studies). This left only Teachers G, H and L, of the original seven 'Mid' and 'Low FL users'. It was therefore decided to include the lesson taught by Teacher E, the most marginal member of the 'High FL user' group, whose behaviour in resolving pupil comprehension difficulties in particular had diverged substantially from that of other 'High

FL users'.

The four teachers whose action research lessons were selected for further study had tackled qualitatively different types of activity. Teacher E was recorded teaching a 'background' lesson about tourist Paris to an S2 class, with the help of slides. Teacher G was recorded teaching a 'grammar point' at S1 level - the morphology of the present tense of ER verbs, in written French. Teacher L was recorded teaching pupils how to convert kilometres to miles (a skill which was new for the majority of her S2 pupils, perhaps surprisingly). Lastly, Teacher H ran an identical, open-ended role play activity (meeting people in a French school) with two parallel S1 classes, thus generating two (part) lessons.

7.5.2 Teachers' overall language use in AR lessons

As a preliminary to the study of DR episodes within these additional lessons, an analysis of their overall linguistic character was carried out using the same speech-turns-based procedure as that employed for the main corpus (and described in Section 5.2 of Chapter 5). The results of this analysis are shown in Table 7.7.

As comparison with Table 5.1 will show, the general character of these four teachers' linguistic behaviour was considerably altered in the later group of lessons. Three out of the four teachers (G, H and L) are shown as producing much higher proportions of all-French speech turns; indeed, on the

original criteria, Teachers G and L would on this evidence be placed in the 'High FL user' category, and Teacher H would move up to the 'Mid' category. Teacher E appeared to move in the opposite direction however, with a substantially lower proportion of all-FL speech turns, and a higher proportion of turns coded as 'mixed language', than in his original lesson.

The simple speech-turn-based analysis of language use worked less well in generating a valid picture of teachers' language choices for these later lessons than for the main corpus, however. This was because of an unexpected difference which emerged between the two groups of lessons. With the exception of that taught by Teacher G, the action research lessons analysed here were far less 'interactive' than those in the main corpus. This appears from the much lower speech turn totals for the AR lessons (though in most cases the lesson time was the same as on the earlier occasion of recording). Teachers E and L adopted a 'lecturing' mode during their AR lessons, which led to the production of some extremely lengthy individual teacher speech turns (up to two transcript pages, in the case of Teacher L). According to the crude analysis scheme used, the inclusion of even one or two English words in such a speech turn meant it was coded in its entirety as a 'mixed language' turn (see Appendix B); in fact, most turns taught by Teachers E and L which are shown in Table 7.7 as 'mixed' were almost entirely French-medium. Teacher H on the other hand produced a combination of a smallish number of very long speech turns, all or mainly in English, and more

numerous, but much shorter, French-medium turns. (The former mainly consisted in managerial talk, the latter in his participation in substantive role play activity.) The speech turn analysis masks to some degree, therefore, the very substantial overall shifts to French use made by three out of the four teachers (E, G and L).

7.5.3 Frequency of DR episodes and teachers' choice of DR strategies (AR lessons)

Tables 7.8 and 7.9 show the number of DR episodes identified in these five lessons (the two lessons taught by Teacher H are combined), and provide details of the strategies used by the teachers to resolve these. Contrary to expectations, comparison of Table 7.8 with Tables 7.1 and 7.2 shows that the number of episodes identified in the AR lessons is substantially smaller than in the original data, dramatically so for Teachers H and L. However all four teachers used more complex combinations of strategies to resolve these difficulties than previously; and comparison between Tables 7.5 and 7.9 shows a substantial shift in the choice of strategies made.

On the previous occasion, the most popular DR strategy for each of these teachers was one or other of the most English-dependent: 'Teacher Language Switching' for Teachers E and G, 'Teacher Interpretation (L1 Exchange)' for Teacher L, and 'Pupil Interpretation (L1 Exchange)' for Teacher H. In the AR lessons, these categories had been abandoned almost

Table 7.7

Speech Turns Analysis: Action Research Study Lessons

Teacher	Teacher Speech Turns					Pupil Speech Turns					
	FL	L1	Mixed	Unint	Total	FL	L1	Mixed	Unint	Total	
E	n	20	4	19	-	43	1	26	-	24	51
	%	46.5	9.3	44.2	0.0	100.0	2.0	51.0	0.0	47.1	100.0
G	n	381	-	8	-	389	307	49	5	37	398
	%	97.9	0.0	2.1	0.0	100.0	77.1	12.3	1.3	9.3	100.0
H	n	31	5	12	-	48	59	9	1	4	73
(am)	%	64.6	10.4	25.0	0.0	100.0	80.8	12.3	1.4	5.5	100.0
H	n	49	6	9	-	64	45	13	-	4	62
(pm)	%	76.6	9.4	14.1	0.0	100.0	72.6	21.0	0.0	6.5	100.0
L	n	30	1	2	-	33	11	7	-	12	30
	%	90.9	3.0	6.1	0.0	100.0	36.7	23.3	0.0	40.0	100.0

Table 7.8

Subsegmental Repair Codings Summary: AR Lessons

	Teacher			
	E	G	H	L
No. episodes	20	15	2	4
no. codings	49	41	4	12
codings per episode	2.5	2.7	2.0	3.0

Table 7.9

Subsegmental Repair Codings: AR Lessons

Coding	Teacher			
	E	G	H	L
Repetition	17	9	1	4
Paraphrase	1	6	1	2
Contrast	1	2	-	2
Exemplification	1	6	-	-
Clue-giving	3	-	-	-
Non-verbal	2	4	-	1
Teacher interp. (FL)	4	1	-	-
Pupil interp. (FL)	15	13	1	2
Teacher interp. (L1)	-	-	-	1
Pupil interp. (L1)	-	-	-	-
Teacher Lg. switching	-	-	-	-
Joint	5	-	-	-
Total	49	41	4	12

entirely. For Teachers E and G, they were replaced in popularity by 'Repetition' and 'Pupil Interpretation (FL Exchange)', and other FL-medium and non-verbal strategies completed the repertoire used by these two teachers. The evidence on strategic choices was more fragmentary for Teachers H and L, but there were indications in their lessons also of a similar trend.

(Perhaps the most striking feature of these shifts in strategic choice is the effective abandonment of 'Teacher Language Switching'. In the original data this often appeared to be a semi-automatic move, made without any positive identification of pupil confusion or misunderstanding; when shown their own lesson transcripts, and questioned about their use of this strategy, some teachers appeared surprised, and unaware of the frequency with which they used it. However, the apparent deletion of this strategy from the repertoires of Teachers E and G appears to indicate that teachers' language choice can be made subject to conscious control even at a low level.)

7.5.4 Achieving comprehensibility in the AR lessons

The AR lessons of Teachers E, G and L merit some qualitative commentary, as far as their overall 'comprehensibility' to pupils was concerned, as well as in the uses made of DR strategies. The lessons of Teachers E and L resembled each other in their non-interactive, 'lecture' style. Teacher E

appeared to show more concern for pupil comprehension, at least in terms of the number of DR episodes he initiated in relation to his own speech. However, it was the impression of the researcher (who both observed and recorded these lessons, and also administered a brief comprehension test to pupils to check their grasp of lesson content) that the lesson of Teacher L was in fact the more accessible. This teacher made such abundant use of strategies such as repetition, paraphrase, exemplification, and reference to visual aids (maps, diagrams and formulae) in her initial French-medium presentation of content, that comprehension difficulties appeared to be preempted almost entirely. The lesson was thus lacking in DR episodes, because these did not seem to be needed. Certainly the pupils carried out the calculations and practical work required of them as evidence of understanding confidently and correctly, without apparent need to appeal to the teacher for clarification of either her managerial or her substantive messages. The following extract gives the flavour of Teacher L's instructional talk:

"Alors si vous voyagez, si vous... vous prenez la voiture, ou le train en Grande Bretagne, les distances, ce n'est pas difficile, parce que vous calculez les distances en milles. okay? Glasgow à (Jespersen), vingt-cinq milles, Glasg - ehh, (Jespersen) à Aberdeen, cent cinquante milles. Vous comprenez? Mais... si vous voyagez en Europe, si vous voyagez en France, en Italie, en Espagne, vous ne calculez pas les distances en milles. Il y a le système métrique. Vous calculez les distances en... kilometres, voilà. Alors un kilometre... Les distances en France sont calculées en kilometres. J'ai deux gros livres ici, hein? Ca s'appelle Book of the Road, c'est en anglais. Okay? Et vous avez, pour calculer les distances, vous avez une table... de distances, avec tous les... comme ça. Okay, ça c'est les distances entre les villes en grande Bretagne,

en milles. En milles. Mais en France, ça c'est la Guide de la Route, c'est les - les routes en France, en France. Vous avez la table des distances ici... mais cette fois... en kilomètres, okay? Alors comment changer, comment changer les kilomètres en milles? Comment changer?" (etc etc)

Teacher E was more active in identifying and trying to solve comprehension problems in his own speech. These all concerned substantive content items (some abstract in nature) arising from his 'tourism' theme: for example, 'la tombe du soldat inconnu', 'la première guerre mondiale', 'l'armistice', 'la rive gauche', 'pont', 'musée'. While the chosen items were all clarified eventually (mainly by elicitation of translation from the pupils), it seemed to the observer that comprehension of much else in Teacher E's FL talk could on this occasion not be assumed generally among the pupils. For example, the statement that

"L'Arc de Triomphe est au milieu de Paris, et c'était Napoléon qui a fait construire l'Arc de Triomphe, pour célébrer ses victoires, il y a beaucoup d'années. C'était Napoleon qui l'a fait construire pour célébrer ses victoires. Et c'est un monument très célèbre, l'Arc de Triomphe"

was unaccompanied by comprehension checks or preemptive clarificatory strategies (except for the element of repetition included in the quotation). It seems improbable that S2 pupils could be expected to take such material in their stride; and indeed, at a later point in the lesson, a reference to Napoleon uncovered continuing confusion as to the nature of his memorial. Teacher E's lesson thus perhaps overshot the

mark, viewed as an attempt to provide challenging but still-accessible input for his pupils (this was certainly the teacher's own evaluation of the lesson). However this teacher's behaviour reflected substantial adaptive ability at episodic level, both in terms of the kinds of item he succeeded in explaining to his pupils, and in terms of his clear shift to the use of FL-medium strategies to do so.

Teacher G's lesson appeared more 'normal' than those taught by Teachers E and L, because more interactive. Her striking shift to virtually all-French use in her own speech left much ^{of} the character of her previously-observed teaching unaltered. She relied entirely on familiar syllabus material in rehearsing and modelling the 'grammar point' which was the focus of attention in her AR lesson; thus few DR episodes were perceived as necessary in relation to syllabus items. However, Teacher G (as on the previous occasion) made managerial material the focus of a substantial number of DR episodes - the only teacher in this subgroup to do so.

Some of these episodes focusing on managerial items were exchanges of the same order of simplicity as those found in Teacher G's previous lesson (except that the teacher herself now spoke only French). For example:

T: Vite... alors, choisissez - choisissez trois sports, trois sports. Ecrivez

P: Are we to write three sports?

T: Oui, trois sports

Others were much more ambitious however, focusing on segment-

initial, French-medium Activity Instructions approaching the complexity of those tackled by Teacher J in his original lesson. In particular, instructions for a writing exercise rehearsing the spelling of verb endings proved difficult to convey in spite of the teacher's use of a range of FL-medium DR strategies (1, 2, 4 and 6) when explaining the task to the whole class. The teacher followed this up with equally elaborate attempts to convey the instructions to groups and individuals, mostly successful (though one chronic absentee was eventually told to seek an explanation from another pupil). The following extract from later on in this activity, including use of Strategies 1, 2, 4 and 8, exemplifies Teacher G's new persistence - and apparent success - in FL-medium problem-solving:

T: S'il vous plaît, vous allez aider les autres. Vous allez aider, vous allez contrôler, que les autres - vous allez... vous allez - non non non. Vous allez voir si c'est correct

P: Correct them?

T: Regardez les feuilles des autres, et regardez - trouvez si c'est correct

P: (...)

T: Les feuilles des autres dans la classe. Le papier -

P: (...)

T: Suzanne, regardez. Tu vas - si par exemple, la, elles ont des difficultés, c'est difficile -

P: (...)

T: Oui, allez-y - vas-y. Aide-les, aide-les. Tu as compris?

P: Help them?

T: Oui, aide-les. Alors tu vas voir s'il y a quelqu'un qui a des difficultés. Par exemple, là, ils ont des difficultés là. Les garçons. Vas-y, aide-les. Voilà

The above extract includes minimal teacher metacomment ("Tu as compris?"). However, Teachers E and G both remained fairly consistent users of metacomment, which occurred in more than half their DR episodes. In clear contrast with such metacomment in their earlier lessons, however, Teacher G used French consistently for this purpose, and Teacher E almost always did so. Teacher L, also a consistent user of L1 metacomment in her earlier lesson, used it once only in her AR lesson. Thus here also, the teachers showed themselves able to shift another language function from English to French (without any obvious reduction in the type of message communicated, or communicative efficiency).

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed teachers' behaviour in resolving comprehension difficulties which they were conscious of creating for their pupils in their own FL talk. It seems that very different patterns of language choice for this particular language function occur, linked in various ways to overall levels of target language use. However, two main conclusions emerge. Firstly, it is possible to run all-FL lessons even at the elementary S1 and S2 stage while ensuring pupils retain a

continuing grasp of what is going on, and without posing comprehension problems with such frequency as to affect the overall lesson structure or stimulate general demotivation. The upper limits of what is possible, in terms of the degree of sophistication of what is talked about and that of formal complexity of target language use, remain unclear however. There was no consensus here among the original group of 'High FL Users' (where for example, Teacher J seemed to aim at qualitatively different standards from the other S2 teachers). Similarly, Teacher G, in her later AR lesson, set new standards for 'communicable' messages at S1 level, at least as far as managerial talk was concerned. Teacher E on the other hand, in his AR lesson, seemed overambitious in his choice of content and language, and consequently provided an example of problem identification and problem-solving which was less than completely successful. But whether other teachers could more regularly match at least the standards set by Teachers J and G, remains an open question.

The second main point arising from the various analyses reported in this chapter concerns the apparent 'learnability' of strategies for resolving communication difficulties. We saw three teachers not only making a decisive shift in their language choice for classroom instruction overall, but in consequence adopting a range of FL-medium strategies with a DR function, and abandoning another set of English-dependent ones. This capacity displayed by teachers to alter their language behaviour at a fairly detailed level is one of the

most encouraging findings of this study, from a perspective which favours the extension of target language use in the classroom, and the related increase in involvement with message-oriented FL talk for pupils.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

8.1 Relating Findings to Theory

Concluding sections to the individual chapters describing the empirical study summarised the detailed findings regarding the nature of teachers' classroom talk in the lessons under scrutiny. In this final chapter, the findings of the empirical study will be related to the wider questions arising from theoretical discussion in earlier parts of the thesis.

8.2 The Quality of Classroom FL Experience

In the conclusion to Chapter 2, on the basis of the discussion of contextual factors judged likely to promote or inhibit classroom target language use, a series of questions was asked concerning the overall character of classroom FL experience provided in the classrooms of teachers sharing some commitment to the 'communicative approach'. The questions then raised will be reviewed here in turn.

The first general question raised concerned the interpersonal relations obtaining between teacher and students

in these classrooms. It can be answered simply: there was no evidence of any substantial alteration in the 'traditional' teacher-pupil relationship of asymmetrical power, described by Hargreaves. Teaching/ learning activities were generally teacher-planned and teacher-led, as witnessed by the frequency of teacher Activity Instructions and Organising Instructions, and the virtual absence of any such moves on the part of the pupils. (One FL-medium request by a pupil in Teacher B's class, that a structure drill be run as a competitive guessing game ("Madame, est-ce qu'on peut jouer?"), was immediately acceded to. One request in Teacher J's lesson, that pupils be allowed to "finish our drawings", was acceded to after a delay - but it was possible that Teacher J had always intended to finish the lesson in this way. These were the only explicit attempts made by pupils throughout the lesson corpus to influence the general pattern of teaching and learning; otherwise, the teacher proposed content, materials and activities, and the pupils acquiesced in these proposals.) It could thus not be argued that the teachers' relative degrees of success in making French the medium of classroom instruction were in any way related to, or dependent on, modifications in their traditional role as the central classroom authority figure.

Just as there was no apparent change in participants' understanding of whose responsibility it was to run the L2 lesson, so the treatment of 'personal' topics and matters of opinion mostly resembled that in more traditional classrooms.

Several of the S1 teachers were actively teaching syllabus content to do with personal identity (how to say one's name, age, nationality etc.), and to do with preferences (for pets, sport etc.). However, these topics were dealt with in a very limited manner (mostly involving the rehearsal of simple question/ answer exchanges). The teachers contributed similar 'real' information about themselves to that requested of the pupils in most respects (e.g. where they lived), but consistently returned joking answers to questions about the only issue of the slightest sensibility - their ages. (In one classroom the researcher was asked similar 'getting to know you' questions by the pupils; a question on age was stifled by the teacher's "I think we'll forget about that one"!)

At S2 level there was if anything less talk about 'personal' topics (the syllabuses now generally focused on third person events and situations). Teacher F produced a series of postcards from members of her family in Brittany for pupils to look at as a visual aid, with the 'reassurance' that she had checked the cards for absence of personal detail, and that in any case they would not be able to read the French handwriting! The only activities intended to promote 'personal' discussion occurred in the lessons of Teachers B and I. Pupils' apparent willingness to join in these discussions contrasted strongly in the two lessons.

Those of Teacher B bid competitively and interrupted each other to tell of their weekend sporting activities. However, a long drawn out attempt by Teacher I to get pupils to tell

her about recent or planned holidays lacked any pupil initiations and generated minimal, and frequently implausible, responses to the questions of the teacher. While this was an isolated incident, the possibility that pupils may resent and reject teacher attempts to extend the range of communicative FL experience in the classroom by 'opening up' personal topics was clearly indicated.

The second general issue raised in Chapter 2 was that of the substantive content which teachers felt it appropriate to talk about. 'Personal' topics have been considered in the previous paragraph. 'Tourist' topics figured strongly, with talk about holiday areas of France, holidays and/or school visits (real or imaginary), occurring in a majority of the lessons. In this respect the interview-generated expectations concerning topic were thus more clearly confirmed.

One other kind of coherent topic occurred across most classrooms: talk about fictional 'situations', usually coursebook based and involving French fictional characters. ('Authentic' fiction, not written with L2 learners in mind, was absent.) Whether handled via role play or as 'third party' material, this fictional content was always such as to facilitate rehearsal of the language material of current coursebook units.

Indeed, the evidence was strong that in all classrooms, the content of most concern to teachers, at least during French-medium teaching/ learning activities, was the language syllabus on which they were working. The most frequently-used

category on the 'Topic' dimension of the segmental analysis was the category reflecting the absence of any coherent topic: 'Fragmented/ noncontextualised'. For much of the time, where coherent topics were introduced, they seemed to have been selected primarily as facilitators for rehearsal of current language syllabus material; on the whole, topics were 'managed' so that conflict did not arise between the language requirements of the topic and those of the syllabus. (The exception to this was in the previously-mentioned 'holidays' discussion run by Teacher I: as we have seen, her 'solution' to this conflict was to persist with the situationally inappropriate use of material from within the language syllabus.) The only occasion where a topic was chosen for discussion in French without any apparent concern for language syllabus links was in the 'weekend sports' discussion run by Teacher B. With this exception, the paramount role of the language syllabus in choosing what to talk about in French held true at the 'activities' level, regardless of the extent to which teachers were using the target language as the overall medium of instruction.

The expected association of English with particular types of substantive content was found in these lessons, though on a limited number of occasions. 'Background' and 'grammar' were discussed rarely at activity level in the main data corpus, but where they were, their association with English was sustained. The attempts of individual teachers to break this pattern within the framework of the action research studies

are suggestive of some possible reasons. Notably, Teacher E's attempt to give a talk on tourist Paris through French was the one occasion on which a teacher seemed seriously to miscalculate the level of language with which his pupils could be expected to cope. Concepts such as 'the tomb of the Unknown Soldier', which it is reasonable to expect 13 year old pupils to grasp the significance of via their mother tongue, simply proved too abstract and lacking in context to be accessible through these pupils' very limited French resources; his attempts to explain them led the teacher into posing comprehension problems for his pupils at a density which made them impossible fully to resolve. Similarly, Teacher G found no way of expanding, through the medium of French, her S1 pupils' concept of what 'a verb' is; indeed, when observed a year later teaching similar material to a successive S1 class (in the context of Phase D of the CI Project), Teacher G reverted to English for precisely this topic.

It does appear therefore, that the commitment to make the target language the medium of instruction at this elementary level does involve real 'costs', in terms of the type of material which can be handled and the consequent cognitive demands which can be made of pupils. The absence of cognitively demanding, informationally dense content from the lessons taught most consistently through French must be seen as non-accidental, and indeed as the logical consequence of this 'commitment' on the teachers' part. Whether this price is worth paying, in the interests of optimising the environment

for developing pupils' L2 skills, is an ideological question beyond the scope of this study. What the study does appear to suggest is that it is a price which will be demanded.

The third general issue raised in Chapter 2 was that of the range of FL-medium activities provided in these lessons, and the balance of use of the different language skills. As expected, structurally- constrained rehearsal activities predominated in the corpus, as much in the lessons of 'High FL Users' as of others. In this general respect the lessons were similar to the pre-'communicative' lesson corpus described in Mitchell et al., 1981. In some respects the type of rehearsal activities undertaken had been modified. Repetition had virtually disappeared, at least at 'activity' level; drills and exercises were likely to be introduced with a functional rationale, and some degree of contextualisation; and several teachers regularly gave them a 'communicative' aspect by setting them up as competitive guessing games. But overall, the message-oriented and structurally unconstrained use of French remained rare at activity level.

Over the whole sample, the commitment of the teachers to oral work was very striking. Reading and writing occurred marginally, usually in a supporting role alongside oral activity; there was no evidence of any sustained attempt to develop these as autonomous communication skills. Thus the general belief expressed in teacher interviews that communication = oral activity, at least at an elementary level, seemed reflected in the teaching practice observed.

Also striking was the teachers' apparent commitment to interaction. Only in the abnormal setting of the action research studies did any teacher provide pupils with any extensive listening experience in French, without an expectation of pupil talk. In all the main corpus lessons, speech turns were short, and FL 'product' was constantly required of pupils. This FL-medium interactive requirement held true, within both 'practice' and 'real FL' activities. Outside these activity types, most teachers did not insist on consistent FL use by their pupils, but the 'interaction' requirement was sustained; in the lessons of 'High FL Users' this at times resulted in quite extended bilingual episodes. The functional necessity of this commitment to interaction was again demonstrated by the (negative) example of certain of the action research lessons, in which it was exceptionally abandoned. Whether or not the process of interaction is especially facilitative of L2 acquisition, as Long, Allwright and others have argued, it seems essential at least for the maintenance of pupil involvement and comprehension where extended FL input is being provided at this elementary level. The teachers' commitment to interaction thus seems based on a more specific L2 classroom requirement than merely the general classroom need to know pupils are involved, identified by Hargreaves.

On the other hand, it appears possible to separate the two notions of interaction and the requirement that pupils consistently speak French; several lessons in this sample

demonstrated that it is perfectly possible for the teacher to sustain personal FL use consistently without enforcing the latter requirement.

The last general issue raised in Chapter 2 concerned the range of functions associated with the use of the target language and of the mother tongue. At 'activity' level, these have already been considered. At levels below this (essentially, the classroom management level), an important finding was the rarity of functional differentiation between the languages, unmediated by the intervening variable of teachers' overall personal commitment to using French. There was some overall tendency for Lesson Instructions and Activity Instructions to be associated with English. Otherwise, the range of managerial move types studied in teacher talk seemed equally capable of being realised in either language. Organising Instructions, Disciplinary Interventions, and teacher contributions to Metalinguistic Episodes and to episodes in which communication difficulties were resolved, all patterned similarly. That is, teachers having a high general commitment to FL use seemed able to perform French-medium moves in all these areas, which were qualitatively very similar to those performed through English by the remaining teachers. (Some did at times use pupil translation as a meaning-reinforcing tactic in making these moves, but their own role as consistently French-medium classroom managers was conserved.) There were thus no obvious 'costs' to be paid for the commitment to French at this level,

in contrast to the impact of the same commitment at the 'activity' level.

8.2.1 Accounting for the quality of classroom experience

The overall pattern of FL experience provided for pupils in these classrooms thus conformed in some respects but by no means all, to the pattern which might be judged desirable according to the sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic considerations discussed in Chapter 1. Considerable quantities of FL input, and indeed of interaction, were being provided; but the proportion of this input and interaction which was message-oriented remained low. Where any substantial proportion was found, this appeared critically dependent not so much on the teacher's selection of a particular subset of teaching/ learning activities, as on his/her commitment to classroom management through the FL.

The observed pattern seemed due in part to general contextual considerations, including the maintenance of the teacher's traditional authority-figure status. Most notably, the absence of group or individualised work in all classrooms could most easily be explained by general teacher concerns to maintain fairly close control of pupil activities. On the other hand, all teachers ran lessons full of talk, and had to this extent apparently overcome the fears of peer disapproval mentioned by Hargreaves. The 'communicative' movement offers FL teachers a clear rationale for classroom talk, on which it

seemed they could capitalise when justifying themselves in the peer forum as 'good managers'.

Teachers' ideologies and beliefs seemed however the main determiners of the detailed pattern of experience provided for their pupils; the analysis of the lesson data very largely confirms expectations deriving from the prior teacher interviews, concerning the type of activities which teachers might be expected to engage in. For example, it cannot be expected that message-oriented activities will figure very much more centrally in teachers' lesson planning, while they remain committed to beliefs such as that 'skill-getting' precedes 'skill-using', and view a structural syllabus as the key organiser of the FL curriculum.

Where least consensus existed among teachers, however, as far as their beliefs were concerned, there was corresponding variation in their practice. Most notably, the disagreement among teachers expressed in interview regarding the desirability and feasibility of FL-medium classroom management can be linked to the substantial variation found in the lessons on this dimensions. It was clear for example that Teacher L, a fluent French speaker with an excellent relationship with her pupils, was at the time of the main study recordings consciously restricting herself to FL 'syllabus speak'. In interview she had expressed the belief that FL-medium classroom management made pupils feel insecure (and cited experience of teaching English in France to back this up). Given the availability of alternative rationales

and alternative models of practice, however, it seemed possible that this level of teacher behaviour could prove more easily adaptable to a pattern in conformity with 'communicative' theory than the apparently more plannable 'activity' level. (And so it turned out from analysis of several of the follow-up, 'action research' lessons.)

8.3 Sustaining Target Language Use

It has been argued in this study that a substantial distinction can be made between teachers who are 'High FL Users' and 'Low FL Users'. These groups differed not only on the quantitative measure of language use on which they were first identified (and which might, after all, have been an artifact of the teachers' choice of particular activity types on a given day). They also have been shown to differ qualitatively, in terms of the range of pedagogic functions they performed through French. Consequently, the lessons taught by either group were substantially different in terms of the amount of exposure to message-oriented FL use provided for their pupils.

How exactly did the 'High FL Users' sustain their commitment to the use of French? This critical question can be answered at least in part, on the basis of the present study.

Firstly, this group of teachers had completely abandoned any commitment to the discipline of 'syllabus speak', which

was still to be observed in some other classrooms. This emerges clearly from the analysis of structural aspects of teacher talk, given in Chapter 6. Items appearing on the coursebook language syllabus were frequent in all teachers' speech. But in that of the 'High FL Users', syllabus material was extensively complemented. This expansion of the FL data corpus to which pupils were exposed was not random, but consisted largely of lexical and syntactic items fulfilling the requirements of classroom management moves. It seems that the contextualised, instrumental and routine character of many of these moves make the additional lexical and syntactic load perfectly tolerable for pupils even at this elementary stage, at least at a receptive level.

The second critical consideration in analysing these teachers' success in sustaining FL use seems on the basis of the present study to be their mastery of a wide range of FL-medium and non-verbal strategies for the resolution of pupil comprehension difficulties. As was shown in Chapter 7, the teachers who were less successful in sustaining FL use adopted the short-cut of English-medium interpretation very one-sidedly for this purpose.

The secondary analysis of the action research study lessons lends some support to the view that this difference was of special significance, and may stand in a causal relationship to other observed differences between the two groups. Teachers G and L each adopted a wide range of FL-medium and non-verbal strategies in their action research

lessons for this purpose (Teacher G reactively, and Teacher L proactively), and seemed to be broadly successful in making their lesson content accessible to their pupils. Teacher E on the other hand seemed much less so, in conveying his (admittedly more difficult) content to his action research group. Unlike the other two, this teacher was much more restricted in the FL-medium repair strategies he used during his action research lesson; indeed, simple repetition was the only one to occur with any frequency. This comparative lack of flexibility could plausibly be interpreted as an important factor limiting comprehensibility in this lesson, though a claim made on the basis of three lessons must necessarily be a tentative one.

Lastly, there is some evidence that the 'High FL Users' achieved consistency of target language use, through the avoidance of particular types of content and pedagogic move which might prove especially problematic. For obvious reasons, an avoidance strategy is particularly difficult to document. However, this suggestion could be made with some confidence, as far as the present data were concerned, in relation to 'Civilisation' and 'Language Points' at the segmental level, and in relation to Lesson Instructions and Metalinguistic Comments at subsegmental level.

8.3.1 Developing towards consistent target language use

The identification made above of 'special' characteristics of

the French spoken by the group of 'High FL Users' makes it possible to generate a number of specific suggestions as to how other teachers interested in providing more experience of message-oriented target language use for their pupils might most easily begin to adapt their classroom teaching for this purpose.

Firstly, the notion of adhering to 'syllabus speak' must be abandoned. Syllabus speak is highly unlikely to suffice for the everyday communication needs of the classroom, and is in any case unnecessary, given the evidence that pupils can cope unproblematically with adequately contextualised extensions to the 'official syllabus'.

Secondly, classroom management talk is the area where change, through an increase in teachers' efforts to speak French, ^{is} likely to pay off most easily and substantially, in terms of significantly increasing pupils' exposure to message-oriented target language use. The introduction of new types of teaching/ learning activities, perhaps requiring the establishment of new kinds of relationships between teacher and pupil, seems on the evidence of this study to be a more difficult and long term enterprise.

The development of flexibility in conveying meaning, and in particular the adoption of a repertoire of non-L1-dependent strategies for this purpose, seems the single most important development in their own personal FL competence that teachers need to make if pupils' exposure to FL use is to be extended and sustained. That this development is possible in

principle, is evidenced here from the changes documented between the main study data and the action research study data. (Perhaps most encouraging of all for the notion that teachers can change their language behaviour at very detailed levels, is the complete elimination of 'Language Switching' from the speech of Teacher G between the two occasions.)

On the other hand, while consistent maintenance by the teacher of the role of an FL-only speaker seems both desirable and feasible, it seems that this can be done without a parallel insistence that pupils must do the same. What is apparently essential is that pupils remain 'in touch' with teachers' FL talk, by a continuing process of interaction and meaning negotiation, regardless of which language they themselves happen to be speaking.

The above list suggests a number of adaptations which it appears many teachers could make to their present patterns of teaching, without fundamental reexaminations of their belief systems regarding the nature of L2 teaching and learning. Significant adaptations in the kind of teaching/ learning activities teachers feel appropriate, however, must depend on the much clearer understanding and acceptance by teachers of psycholinguistic arguments such as those reviewed in Chapter 1; and this is a long way off, for 'High FL Users' as much as for the rest.

8.4 A Forward Look

This study thus provides muted encouragement, for those concerned to reduce the gap between ideal and actuality, as far as target language use for communicative ends in British classrooms is concerned. It shows essentially that target language use can be routine, without radical changes in classroom relationships or overall patterns of instruction, and has uncovered something of the particular set of teaching strategies which makes this possible. Many questions remain unanswered however, which further descriptive accounts of classroom practice might explore.

In particular we need further studies of the behaviours and language of 'High FL User' teachers, so as to clarify the nature of differences within this group which could only be glimpsed in a study on this scale, and establish with more confidence what the maximum end of the target language use continuum really looks like. Secondly, we need further studies of teachers in process of attempting change in their own classroom language behaviour, to discover more about what they need to learn, and how they best can learn it.

Beyond studies of this type, which would concern themselves essentially with describing current 'best practice' and discovering ways of spreading this more widely, lies a further set of issues. Considerations of social relations in the classroom, language syllabus design, and the place of elements other than language skill development in the overall

FL curriculum will enter into any fullscale attempt to reform the pattern of teaching/ learning activities, even where this is attempted with the apparently simple motivation of extending message-oriented FL use. The classroom researcher can play a role in this wider area, only in conjunction with the psycholinguist, the social psychologist, the curriculum designer, the teacher trainer and the educational philosopher. But collaborative research and development programmes with the aim of more radical reform in the FL classroom must suggest themselves to all concerned at the current depressed state of FL teaching and learning in British education.

APPENDIX A

EXTRACT FROM LESSON TRANSCRIPT (Teacher K, Segments 2(end)/3/4 (start))

T: Répète, qu'est-ce que tu -

P: Veux

T: Oui, bon

P: (...), qu'est-ce que tu veux

P: je voudrais un ananas, et avec ça un melon...

P: Voilà un ananas, et avec ça un melon

T: Très bien, oui

P: Qu'est-ce que tu veux?

P: Avec - ehm, je voudrais une kilo de raisins

T: Un kilo de raisins

P: (...)

T: Oui

PP: (laugh)

T: Oui, très bien, merci. One last person. Emm, Renée. Dépêche-toi, hurry up...

P: Qu'est-ce que tu veux, Michèle?

P: Emm je voudrais un kilo de fraises

P: Voilà un kilo de fraises

P: Merci

T: Bon, très bien. Alors ça suffit, merci. 3 Alors donnez-moi les cartes... Bon... Alors c'est tout?... Bon. Alors dessinez au tableau noir - dessinez un kilo de pêches. Dessinez un kilo de pêches, Gina. Dessinez un kilo de pêches... Tu comprends, do you understand?... Dessinez un kilo de pêches... Bon, merci. Alors voilà un kilo de pêches, oui? Bon, répétez

TPP: Voilà un kilo de pêches

T: Alors dessinez un kilo de pommes, un kilo de pommes, ehh Russell. Un kilo de pommes. Dessinez un kilo de pommes là, ici... Oui... Bon, très bien, merci, finalement dessinez un kilo de tomates. Un kilo de tomates, Carol... Un kilo de tomates... Ah non, excuse-moi, ehh ici, là. you might need to wet the chalk a wee bit, what there is of it... Bon, ça y est? Bon, très bien. Alors, voilà un kilo de tomates, oui? Ehh ça va, c'est un kilo de tomates, oui? Une tomate, c'est un kilo?... Une tomate, c'est un kilo de tomates, Hugh?

P: (...)

T: Un kilo, oui, un kilo de tomates... Oui, oui. Il y a une tomate, ce n'est pas un kilo, ce n'est pas un kilo. Emm John... Qu'est-ce que tu cherches, what are you looking for?

P: Ehh, red

T: Red, voilà. C'est très petit... Bon, très bien, tu as fini. Alors voilà un kilo de tomates. Répétez

TPP: Voilà un kilo de tomates

T: Alors, cette fois je voudrais un demi-kilo de pommes. Alors un kilo, un demi-kilo, un demi-kilo. Zak, un demi-kilo de pommes...

P: Where (...)

T: Ehh, là. Un demi-kilo de pommes... Oui... Très bien... Bon, voilà un demi-kilo de pommes. Merci. Bon. Alors c'est un demi-kilo de pommes. Oui? What are we talking about? C'est un demi-kilo de pommes

P: Half a kilo

T: It is half a kilo of apples. Because you may not want to buy a whole kilo. If you are living on your own, if there is just one or two of you perhaps, you don't want a whole kilo. You want un demi-kilo, perhaps. Alors, un demi-kilo de pommes. Répétez

TPP: Un demi-kilo de pommes

④ T: Qu'est-ce que tu veux?

P: Je voudrais un demi-kilo de pommes

T: Très bien, qu'est-ce que tu veux, Daniel?

P: (...)

T: Un demi-kilo de pommes

P: (...)

T: Hein? Un demi-kilo

P: Un demi-kilo

T: De pommes, très bien. Et qu'est-ce que tu veux, Jason?... Tu veux un kilo de pommes, ou un demi-kilo de pommes?

P: Un demi-kilo de pommes

T: Très bien. Et qu'est-ce que tu veux Suzie, Suzanne

APPENDIX B

DIMENSIONS FOR THE CODING OF LESSON SEGMENTS

I Topic of Discourse

1. Civilisation: The discourse concerns aspects of life and culture in the foreign country.
2. General linguistic notions: The discourse concerns the nature of language in general and possible ways of analysing it.
3. Language point: The discourse involves explicit, analytic discussion of particular grammatical structures, semantic notions, or functions of the FL being studied.
4. Situation: The discourse concerns a third party situation narrated or presented in course or other materials.
5. Real life: The discourse concerns aspects of the pupils' or teacher's actual life and interests, at home and at school.
6. Fragmented/non-contextualised: The discourse concerns no coherent, substantive topic (its unity and coherence rest in formal aspects of the language being practised).
7. Setting homework: Talk in which homework assignments are set.
8. Checking homework: Talk to do with the completion and evaluation of previously assigned homework tasks.
9. Greetings: The expression of initial greetings, at the start of the lesson.
10. Attendance: All talk with the object of getting an accurate record of pupils attendance at the lesson (e.g. roll call).
11. Packing up: Talk at the end of the lesson, to do with tidying up, farewells, and pupils' exit from the room
12. Organisation: All other routine topics, unrelated to the accomplishment of specific TLAs.
13. Other: The discourse concerns any other topic.

II Language Activity

1. Translation: Discourse in which lexical meanings of FL are made explicit through L1, or vice versa (e.g. translation exercises or the giving of 'vocabulary' notes).
2. L1: All discourse in the native language.
3. Real FL: FL discourse in which substantive messages are being transmitted, and the focus of attention is on the meaning of what is being said.
4. Transposition: FL practice discourse realised simultaneously in both written and spoken codes, where the focus of attention is on the relationship between them (e.g. reading aloud or dictation).

5. Presentation: FL practice discourse presenting text to pupils with the focus on global comprehension of lexical meaning (e.g. listening or reading comprehension).
6. Imitation: FL practice discourse where pupils utterances imitative of FL models are expected (e.g. repetition or copy writing)
7. Drill/exercise: FL practice discourse with an expected component of pupil utterances, with the focus of attention on syntactic form and/or the appropriacy of utterances to their discourse context (e.g. structural or question-and-answer drills).
8. Compound: All discourse involving brief occurrences of more than one of the above categories, in regular, structured, sequence.

III Pupil Mode of Involvement

1. Listening: Pupils are considered to be in a listening mode of involvement if required to attend to any auditory language source.
2. Looking: Looking involves attending to any non-linguistic stimulus, usually visual.
3. Reading: Reading involves attending to any written text or any other graphic code.
4. Speaking: Pupils are in the speaking mode of involvement if at that moment producing, or actively preparing to produce, spoken language.
5. Doing: Doing involves the carrying out of some non-linguistic overt physical activity in accordance with academic plans determined by the teacher.
6. Writing: Pupils are in the writing mode of involvement if producing any kind of graphic text or coding, or actively preparing to do so.

(These six channels might be activated singly or in a range of possible combinations. Thus a pupil might simply be '+Listening', or '+Listening, +Speaking', or '+Listening, +Speaking, +Reading, +Writing', etc.)

IV Class Organisation

1. Whole class: There is one central activity going on, dependent on the teacher or another source of stimulus, but not on a 'pupil demonstration'; the class functions as one group.
2. Pupil demonstration: There is one central activity going on, focused on a pupil demonstration (e.g. one pupil taking the role of teacher, or a group of pupils acting out a scene with the rest forming an audience).
3. Cooperative, same task: Pupils are assigned to work cooperatively in more than one group, but groups are assigned identical tasks.

4. Cooperative, different task: Pupils are assigned to work cooperatively in more than one group, and groups are assigned different tasks.
5. Individual, same task: Pupils are set to work alone, without cooperation, but the task set is identical for all.
6. Individual, different task: Pupils are set to work alone, without cooperation, and at least some individuals are set tasks different from those set for others.
7. Cooperative and individual: Some pupils are working cooperatively and the rest are working as individuals. Tasks may be the same or different.

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