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Developing a Communicative
Task-based ESP Program

Hannelore Walther

A Thesis

in

The Centre

for

Teaching English as a Second Language

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts at
Concordia University
Montréal, Québec, Canada

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ABSTRACT

Developing a Communicative Task-based ESP Program

Hannelore Walther

A number of businesses and industries in Canada have undertaken language training for their employees in order to prepare them to perform their job tasks competently in a second language. However, in contrast to more general education-oriented language training, job-oriented language training is a fairly recent development. For this reason and because many of these specific types of language training programs are carried out in-house, very little published material is available to provide a guide for the development of job-oriented programs for experienced employees.

In this thesis, one approach to the development of core job-oriented language training programs for experienced employees is explored. The major differences between general purpose English and English for specific purposes are discussed. Also examined are some of the current theoretical principles underlying the four main parts of the program presented: designing a needs analysis; converting the data obtained in the needs analysis into a syllabus; implementing the syllabus; and evaluating the

students' ability to perform the objectives of the syllabus. The procedures for developing this type of program are illustrated through a description of the process employed in developing a core program for the Montreal Agency of the Bank of Canada.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

GENERAL BACKGROUND

Changing economic and political circumstances in the world have made language training crucial. Second language training has become increasingly necessary in business and industry as a result of immigration, guest workers, the growth of multi-national companies and, in Canada, the Federal Government's commitment to bilingualism. Providing language courses which address specific employment needs, especially those of learners who are familiar with their jobs, has not been the traditional role of business organizations or educational institutions, but such institutions must now face this task.

Teachers and course designers are faced with the problem that few programs for experienced employees are readily available to provide a guide for program development. This is often because many such courses are undertaken in-house and are not published. Some of the programs which are available are not readily transferrable as they either do

¹Jupp and Hodlin: 1975, Industrial English for Asian immigrants; Ministry of Education for the Province of British Columbia: 1983, English for Work, and Friedenbergl and Bradley: 1984, The Vocational ESL Handbook.

not address employees currently working in a specific occupational field who require the second language to perform their particular jobs, or address only one type of learner at a time rather than learners whose occupations may be different.

Course developers who are preparing programs for students working in different job categories who are sharing classes are, therefore, at a loss as to what material to present, which is relevant to each job category and which will ensure that these employees can later perform their job tasks. Moreover, they are at a loss as to how to present this material without discouraging at least some of the students in the class. While the programs which are currently available could be adapted to suit a particular situation in which classes are shared by experienced employees, this would involve a major reworking by course developers on an individual basis and would not provide a comprehensive guide for others wanting to develop programs for experienced employees in other fields.

Another problem which has arisen is that teachers and course designers often attempt to develop programs without knowing, or being given time to discover, what the needs of the employees are and how to address them. The resultant programs which are developed may not be as efficient or as

effective² as they might be and, indeed, may even be inappropriate.

With employees from different job categories sharing classes and job-specific needs, often being unclear, the language required to fulfill these needs may not be receiving the amount and type of attention it requires. Some programs (e.g. Via Rail, Public Service Commission, Bank of Canada French Unit in Ottawa) have addressed the problem of teaching heterogeneous groups with vaguely-defined or even unknown employment needs by teaching general English and introducing job-specific vocabulary. Others (e.g. Bank of Canada English Unit in Ottawa and formerly in Montreal) have limited classes to smaller homogeneous groups and have taught on an ad hoc basis, addressing specific job-related language problems as they arise.

The goal of this thesis is to describe how one might design a core communicative job-oriented second language program which is efficient and effective and which meets the needs

²For the purpose of this paper, efficient means that the required language skills are learned in the minimum amount of time and at the least cost to the employer. Effective means that the training which is provided will enable the employee to perform his job quickly and accurately using appropriate language. It also means that the language skills that he has learned are retained and used comfortably, if not necessarily automatically.

of experienced employees working in different, but related jobs. Such a program could be used by the private sector for courses offered in-house, or by various educational institutions.

This paper will endeavour to show that the proposed program is solidly based on the current principles of: needs analysis design, syllabus design, method choice, and student evaluation. Procedures for developing the program will be illustrated through a concrete example; namely, a description of the process employed in developing a core program for the Montreal Agency of the Bank of Canada.

This chapter will discuss the reasons why a specific job-oriented program is necessary by comparing and contrasting the goals of general-purpose and specific-purpose programs, and how they are achieved. In examining these two types of programs, it will be argued that specific-purpose programs mainly differ from general programs in their focus and order of presentation, and that it is these differences which make specific-purpose programs more efficient and effective. It will also be argued that there are many types of specific purpose programs and that the type of program developed depends upon the job tasks of the employees and how well these tasks can be identified and described.

Chapter 2 will suggest a procedure for identifying and describing the learner's second language job tasks. It will be argued that producing a detailed, comprehensive needs analysis is necessary in order to (1) establish the competency level required by employees to perform their job tasks successfully, (2) determine a core program which can be used by employees working in different job categories; and (3) determine objectives which focus on the job requirements of employees in each job category.

Chapter 3 will describe how the data taken from the needs analysis can be manipulated in order to both determine and organize the objectives of the syllabus.

Chapter 4 will examine some of the concepts which should be considered in the implementation of a job-oriented task-based syllabus. Examined will be the concepts of method, approach, and techniques. Also discussed will be the implications of research into language learning and language teaching on the development of a communicative method. Finally, a method of implementation for the suggested syllabus will be proposed.

Chapter 5 will examine the need for a system of evaluation which measures the ability of the learners to perform their

job tasks competently. Discussed will be the concept of criterion-referenced testing and why this type of measurement is more appropriate for the program outlined in this paper than norm-referenced testing. Also discussed will be the steps involved in preparing criterion-referenced tests, and two types of tests will be proposed: formative and summative. The problems involved in scoring these types of tests will also be examined. Finally, factors which should be included in a student evaluation form will also be discussed.

TYPES OF FRAMEWORKS

GPE: Goal, Means, Implications

The approach to second language training in many companies has been to offer general purpose English (GPE) programs to employees. In order to understand why such programs have not been totally successful, it is necessary to look more closely at what GPE programs attempt to do and the means they use.

Goal

The goal of many GPE programs is to develop the linguistic and communicative capacity of the learner to handle all of the situations in which he might eventually want to use the second language. There are two principal reasons for such a broad aim. First, students in GPE programs are often

learning the language as part of general education or out of interest³ so that it is often unknown how, when, or even if the language will eventually be used. Even in those programs which have identified learner interests and activities (e.g. Ministry of Education of Quebec: 1984, secondary program), eventual use of the second language can often only be guessed at, since these programs reflect activities which the student practises in his native language and not necessarily those which he does or will have an opportunity to practise in the second language.

A second reason why GPE courses develop the capacity to handle a wide variety of situations is that these courses are rarely homogeneous, particularly where there are large classes (as in entire school systems), so that the needs of students to perform specific tasks at specific times rarely coincide.

Developing linguistic and communicative competence for vague or for diverse interests or for possible future situations has implications for the selection of the language, for the manner in which the learners will be taught, and for the length of the course. It also has implications for the ability of the learner to use the language, appropriately, when it is needed.

³e.g. many learners taking language courses in continuing adult education programs at Concordia University, the YM/YWCA, the Protestant and Catholic school boards in Montreal.

Means

Corder states that it is an impossible aim to teach the whole of a language and that the course designer's

...task is to make a selection out of such descriptions of the language as he can make, or has available...which will most usefully fill the time that is at his disposal for teaching. (Corder 1975:201,102)

Indeed, most language courses are specific, in that

syllabus designers and textbook writers have customarily worked to quite exact specifications, drawn up with reference to inventories of language items of one sort or another and directed at purposes represented by different stages of achievement, themselves defined by a reference to some notion of eventual aims. (Widdowson 1983:5)

However, because many GPE courses address such a broad spectrum of wants or needs, course developers often attempt to cover a large portion of the language system. In so doing, they often arbitrarily choose which language objectives to teach and when to teach them. In most cases, the objectives do not reach a level where they can be performed effectively, until the end of the course, often only after several years.

While some GPE programs (e.g. the Quebec secondary program (Ministry of Education of Quebec:1984)) set increasingly complex integrated objectives which are based on student activities; that is, objectives which not only practise the traditional four skills of speaking, listening, reading,

and writing, but which are interrelated and which build specific language skills, many other GPE programs (e.g. YM/YWCA English language programs) simply expose the learner to a variety of language activities in the hope that he will develop, on his own, the language skills which he might need. Often, in this latter type of program integrated objectives are not set and unless a grammatical syllabus is used, the language to which the learner is exposed follows no formal system other than moving from simple to complex. Topics may be discussed and games played on an ad hoc basis simply because they provide opportunities for communication. Further, the introduction of certain structures which the learner may find useful immediately may be delayed, because these structures are deemed too complex.

In both types of GPE courses, little consideration is being given to the building of specific skills for immediate use. Indeed, learners in both types of GPE courses may never actually practise specific tasks that they might need, as it may be assumed that they will be able, from the general activities presented, to analyze the language system and synthesize its various parts, when needed, in order to create the necessary dialogues.

Although few of these programs have been formally evaluated, in 1975, the Federal Government published the Report of the Independent Study on the Language Training Programmes in the Public Service of Canada (Bibeau et al: 1975) which found that the general-purpose programs of the Public Service were not as efficient or as effective as they ought to be. The Study (Bibeau et al., Vol. 1:228) indicated that only 20% of the population taking language training achieved levels which approach the threshold of bilingualism. When one considers that language training in the Public Service can take up to 52 weeks, these results were, Bibeau et al reported, alarmingly poor and cast doubts on the efficiency of the programs.

The Study also showed that the specific job needs of the students (public servants) were not taken into consideration so that it was not possible to predict from a student's results on the Government's language knowledge examination (LKE) whether he had acquired the ability to function on the job. Indeed, because of the lack of any focus on the language needs of the students

many departments inveigh against the ineffectiveness of the language training offered by the Language Bureau and against the inadequacy of the language standards. The standard of language knowledge forced on all too many categories of public servants is too low for them to work effectively in their second language. (Bibeau et al. 1975, Vol. 12:40)

Implications

While GPE courses may eventually bring the learner to a level where he can do whatever he would like in the second language, such a broad, arbitrary and, often, slow exposure to the language system has two major implications. First, the learner must often achieve advanced levels in all language skills, whether or not he requires or wants them, in order to be able to analyze and synthesize enough of the language system to perform specific tasks. Even then, because specific tasks may not be practised, it is uncertain if the learner will be able to engage the appropriate parts of the language system in order to perform specific tasks at a specific time. Corder states that

one hears frequent complaints from teachers that learners seem to be able to cope with the language while in the classroom but, fail to make use of it satisfactorily outside. This suggests that the learners have acquired special functions appropriate to the classroom or the role of 'language learner', but no other. (Corder 1975:48,49)

A second implication of this type of exposure is, that courses may extend over a long period of time. For learners who are studying the language out of interest, the length of time it takes to learn the language system may not be an important consideration; however, for learners who want to use the language immediately to perform specific tasks, time is often a very important factor. Inappropriate or long-term courses may cause learners to

stop taking GPE courses as these courses may not be fulfilling the learners' needs.

To summarize, GPE programs attempt to develop the linguistic and communicative capacity of the learner to handle most types of future situations which he might encounter. To do this, these programs often develop general language skills, at increasingly advanced levels, by addressing a large portion of the language system through language activities which are sometimes based on the learner's interests. Specific language skills for specific immediate needs are rarely practised, as either the groups are heterogeneous and do not readily lend themselves to specific instruction, or the needs are unknown or may not even exist. As a result, courses are often long and there is no guarantee that the learner will be able to do with the language what he needs or wants to do, when he needs to do it.

It is reports and findings such as these that have led program designers to assess the goals of their language training. In September 1985, the Public Service Commission introduced a new English program. One of the features of this program is that the focus of the training has changed from general English to a consideration of the job needs of the learners in an effort to "...promote efficient and

effective learning". (Doherty 1986:62). In fact, many business organizations are now recommending specific-purpose courses since they feel that these types of courses provide benefits which would otherwise be lost. It is, therefore, useful to examine how English for specific purposes (ESP) differs from GPE in order to see what makes ESP courses more appropriate.

ESP: Goal, Means, Implications

Goal

Like GPE, the goal of ESP is to develop the linguistic and communicative capacity of the learner to deal with different types of situations in the second language. However, unlike GPE programs, which often aim at developing the same degree of capacity for all learners, ESP programs attempt to develop, as quickly as possible, different degrees of capacity to meet the different immediate needs of the learners.

There are two principal reasons why the aims of an ESP course are different from those of a GPE course. First, where language courses are for experienced employees, language training often costs the employer time (in the case of in-house courses) and money, so that employers would like the training to produce effective results as quickly as possible. Even in situations where learners are

taking language training on their own, these learners would like to be able to begin using the language right away - and not some time in the future - to perform specific tasks.

Second, since learners require the language for different purposes, which have different linguistic demands, not all learners need to be able to analyze and synthesize great parts of the language system. Indeed, since many of the situations in which ESP learners require the second language can be clearly identified, only the linguistic and communicative capacity required to handle these situations need to be provided. This would affect the choice of which language objectives to teach, and when to teach them. It would also affect how much of the language system to teach. Ultimately, this would affect the length of the course and the learner's ability to perform effectively.

Means

Unlike GPE instruction, the language objectives which are selected for ESP courses are restricted mainly to those parts of the language system (structures, functions, vocabulary, strategies, etc.) which provide the tools to accomplish specific, known tasks. Those parts of the language system which are unrelated to providing this ability; for example, skills required for survival and

social interaction outside the working environment, are not primary considerations, and are dealt with only incidentally. Robinson, quoting Strevens, states that in an ESP course

...the learner and teacher should be constantly aware of the (language-using) purposes (of the learner) and not introduce irrelevant materials into the course. (Robinson 1980:10)

Robinson goes on to say that

...a feature of an ESP syllabus will be the absence of certain items found in a general course, or a focus of attention on certain things. (Robinson 1980:32)

This focus of attention, in most cases, suggests that the type of practice and the order of presentation would be different for an ESP course than for most GPE courses. It also suggests that there cannot be only one type of ESP course but, rather, many courses which range from very restricted to very broad.

While GPE courses often cannot practise the language of specific tasks, as these are seldom known; ESP courses set integrated objectives which practise not only the language required to perform specific types of known tasks but, also, where applicable, the actual tasks of the learner's job. For example, in job-oriented training for experienced employees, the actual tasks of the learners job can be used in order to ensure that the learner can effect them.

In addition, the order of presentation of ESP objectives is predetermined. ESP courses set integrated objectives which reflect the frequency and complexity of the tasks. Whenever possible, the language of high-frequency tasks is dealt with first. Moreover, the language objectives increase in complexity and, occasionally, more objectives are added as the tasks themselves increase in complexity.

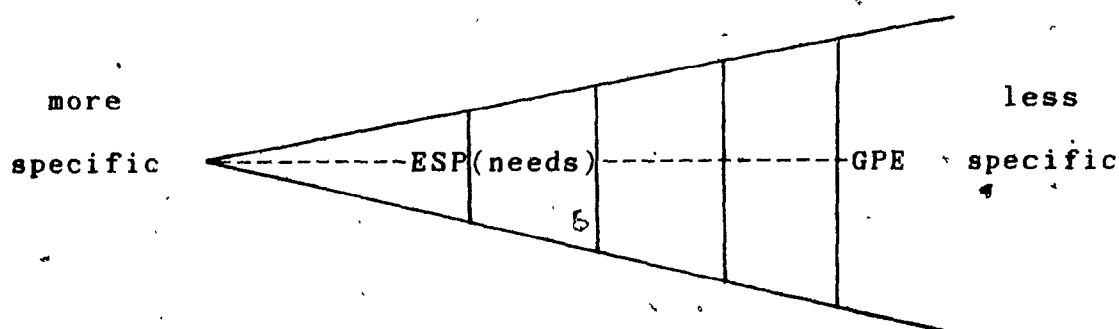
Unlike GPE, however, the complexity of the objectives do not increase to advanced levels in all cases. Instead, they increase only to the point where the learners can perform their tasks effectively. In some cases this might be at a relatively low level; in other cases, more advanced levels are required. How restricted an ESP course may be depends upon the degree of linguistic and communicative capacity required by ESP learners to perform their specific functions. Designing an ESP course, therefore, is not limited to designing a course which develops a restricted competence; that is, a relatively restricted ability of the learner to use the language system. Rather, ESP courses should reflect a range of capacity from relatively restricted to very broad.

Degree of Capacity

Widdowson (1983) presents a theoretical framework for ESP (Figure 1) in which he places narrowly-defined ESP and GPE

at opposite poles of an axis with the connection between the two being the degree of specificity required. ESP courses can fall anywhere along the specificity axis, from relatively restricted to approaching GPE. Where a course falls depends upon the precision with which the learner's uses for the language can be predicted.

Figure 1



Unfortunately, to date, too many courses have clustered around either one or the other end of the specificity axis, either restricting competence too much and thereby sacrificing the capacity of the learner to manipulate certain parts of the language system, or putting too much emphasis on the entire language system and sacrificing time, cost-effectiveness, and appropriateness. It is necessary, therefore, to understand what is involved at each end of the continuum in order to appreciate where a particular ESP course might fall. Furthermore,

the problem for any ESP course design is to find its place on the continuum. (Widdowson 1983:11)

Courses at the extreme-left end of the ESP axis are associated with restricted competence. These are courses for highly predictable situations, such as the bond receiving teller of the Montreal Agency of the Bank of Canada (hereafter referred to as the Montreal Agency), which have a limited set of specifically-identified tasks with specifically-identified problems.⁴ In situations at this end of the specificity axis, the learner and his interlocutor share the same schemata (Widdowson 1983:37,42,43). These consist of frames of reference, that is, a common knowledge of what is wanted; and rhetorical routines and patterns, a common way of expressing information.

Since both the learner and the interlocutor know their exact functions, the learner's knowledge of and ability to use the language system can be limited. In other words, the learner requires only those rhetorical routines and patterns which allow him to recognize all of his responsibilities and any related problems, and then apply his knowledge of the language system to them. It should be noted that this also includes being able to refer to someone else situations which do not apply to him. Because the learner is not memorizing expressions, he is able to

⁴e.g. giving directions, requesting name, address, telephone number, signature, identification; advising someone he requires a signature, identification, etc. before a bond can be processed.

manipulate those parts of the language system with which he is familiar even in situations which are similar in nature, but which are unrelated to his job tasks.

What we are teaching is a generative system... 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 behave in many ways other than those specified by a limited selection. (Brumfit 1980:2)

Courses at the GPE end of the spectrum are intended to provide extensive knowledge of the language system so that the learner will have

the ability to exploit knowledge of the conventions of a language and its use for the creation of linguistic behaviour which does not conform to type. (Widdowson 1983:11)

At this end of the specificity axis, the tasks are more complex and, possibly, more numerous. There is less likelihood of the learner and interlocutor always sharing frames of reference and rhetorical routines. As a result, the learner must be able to manipulate the language system using a variety of strategies and skills⁵ (Brumfit 1980:2,3) until a frame of reference can be established and rhetorical routines can find a context. This requires more extensive linguistic and communicative capacity.

Such situations, which involve not simply the application but the exploitation of knowledge, call for the engagement of (extensive) capacity. Increased flexibility to account for unpredictable

⁵Widdowson (1983:42,43) calls these procedures for negotiation.

eventualities...seeks to develop capacity beyond the confines of limited competence. (Widdowson 1983: 13)

Jobs such as that of an assistant accountant of the Montreal Agency require a more thorough understanding of and ability to use the language system because there can be innumerable variations between the problems this person will encounter and the language which would be required to solve them. In addition to technical language

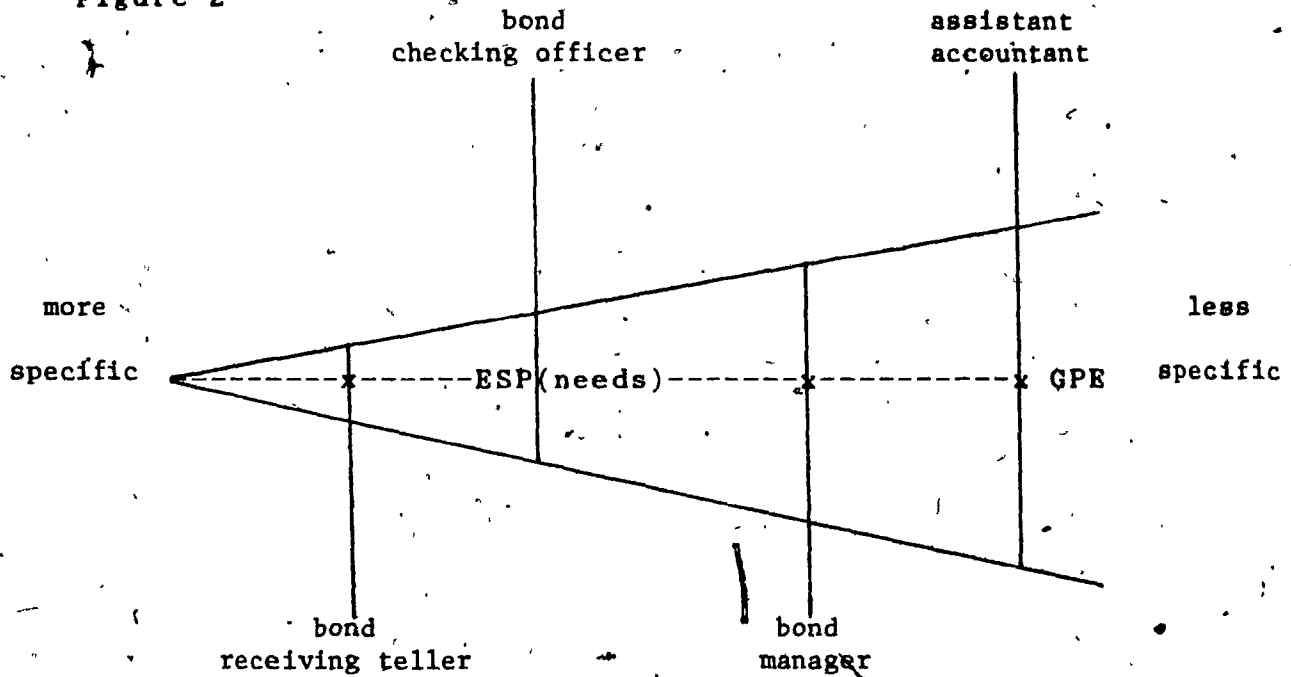
technical professionals need to know enough general (non-technical) English to understand (non-technical) accounts of organizational problems (expressed indirectly in briefings or impromptu meetings, in conversation, over the telephone, or in informal written memos or notes), even when they are presented in colloquial or highly elliptical language. (Huckin and Olsen: 1984:28)

At this end of the continuum, then, the capacity required by ESP learners approaches that of GPE learners. Both types of students require an extensive knowledge of and ability to use the language system in order to be able to exploit it and manipulate it effectively for their specific purposes. The difference is in the linguistic and non-linguistic (e.g. tasks, strategies, skills) content of the courses and in the order in which the objectives may be presented.

To summarize, ESP can be seen to fall on a continuum with restricted ESP at one end and extensive ESP/GPE at the other so that it is not a choice of either narrowly-defined

ESP or GPE but rather which degree of ESP is appropriate for the purposes of the learner. The more definable the learner's requirements and the closer the correspondence between rhetorical routines and patterns and problems to be solved, the narrower the focus and the more restricted the training can be. As the tasks gain in flexibility, that is, in the ways they can be interpreted and redefined before they can fit a rhetorical routine or pattern, or the ways in which the rhetorical routines and patterns need to be modified to account for an unforeseen problem, the more the training must shift along the axis towards the GPE end. In so doing, ESP takes on an increasing educational role in developing the linguistic and communicative capacity required to deal with virtually any variation of the task. This shift may be illustrated using the Montreal Agency employees cited above (Figure 2). While the bond receiving teller requires a relatively restricted competence and the assistant accountant a fairly extensive capacity, other Montreal Agency employees fall somewhere between the two extremes with a bond checking officer requiring more capacity than a teller and a bond manager less than the assistant accountant.

Figure 2



Implications

From the discussion above, it can be concluded that ESP is different from GPE in the variety and specificity of language courses which can be designed to meet the needs of the learners, and in the manner in which these courses are taught. It is these features which make ESP courses more appropriate than GPE in situations where the requirements of the learners are known since time is spent where it is most needed and, consequently, less time will be needed to prepare the learners to function. Further, since actual job tasks can often be practised, the learners' ability to perform these specific tasks are, in principle, assured.

ESP courses, then, are more efficient and more effective in these circumstances. This is particularly important for language training for experienced employees. Since this paper concerns itself with this type of learner (i.e. experienced employees), it is necessary to identify and define the job tasks in order to develop an appropriate ESP course.

Chapter 2

THE NEEDS ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

The decision as to which degree of ESP is the most appropriate for the purposes of the learner is based on the ability of the course developer to identify both the specific tasks which will be performed in the second language by employees in each job category, and the degree of linguistic and communicative capacity required by the learner to perform these tasks competently. It is necessary, therefore, for the course developer to attempt to identify the job tasks of the employees as precisely as possible and to analyze those tasks in order to determine (1) how restricted or how extensive the course should be, and (2) whether there are enough common denominators in the types of tasks performed to warrant the development of a core syllabus.

Rinke quotes Gale and Pole in defining competence as

...the quality of being functionally adequate in performing the tasks and assuming the role of a specified occupation... (Rinke 1980:248)

The degree of capacity required by employees in each job category to perform job tasks in the second language can, therefore, be said to equal the minimum competency levels required to function in their jobs. The establishment of

these competency levels would determine the scope of the language training.

Determining minimum competency levels for homogeneous groups whose occupations vary little from job situation to job situation (e.g. waiters, airline attendants, hairdressers, nurses, etc.) would not pose any major problems since each employee within the same occupational group requires the same competency level. Once this level is determined, the same objectives can be set for all the students. This situation does not exist for heterogeneous groups of learners; that is, employees from different job categories, whose job tasks require different minimum competency levels.

In an effort to train as many employees as possible who are in different occupations and train them as quickly as possible, course developers preparing programs for business organizations which provide in-house courses must not only establish the minimum competency level required by each job category, but must also determine if there are any common denominators. This is necessary in order to develop a core syllabus which will enable employees from different job categories who are at the same language level to share training - up to a certain point.

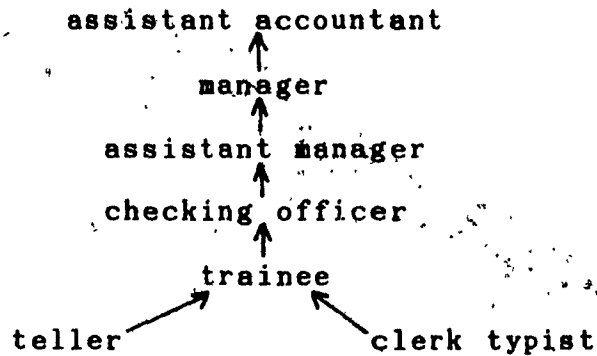
A core syllabus is essential for efficiency and flexibility of scheduling. Many business organizations have a limited number of resources, so that teaching different classes to students in a number of different job categories takes a long time. In addition, because courses are often given during business hours, work demands often prevent large numbers of employees from the same job category from being absent from their jobs simultaneously, with the result that certain employees may have to wait a long time for their turn. Even if several employees from the same job category are available to take the training at the same time, this may not be possible since these employees may not be at the same language level.

Employees from different job categories sharing ESP classes is viable in many companies since many business organizations are hierarchical and employees are promoted through the ranks. Employees within a specific job category are often expected to have a knowledge of the job tasks and, hence, the language of the jobs in the hierarchy below them. This suggests that the minimum competency level of a particular job requires an addition to the minimum competency of the level below. A core syllabus could, therefore, be developed and classes could be shared to the point where minimum competency levels were attained by the various employees.

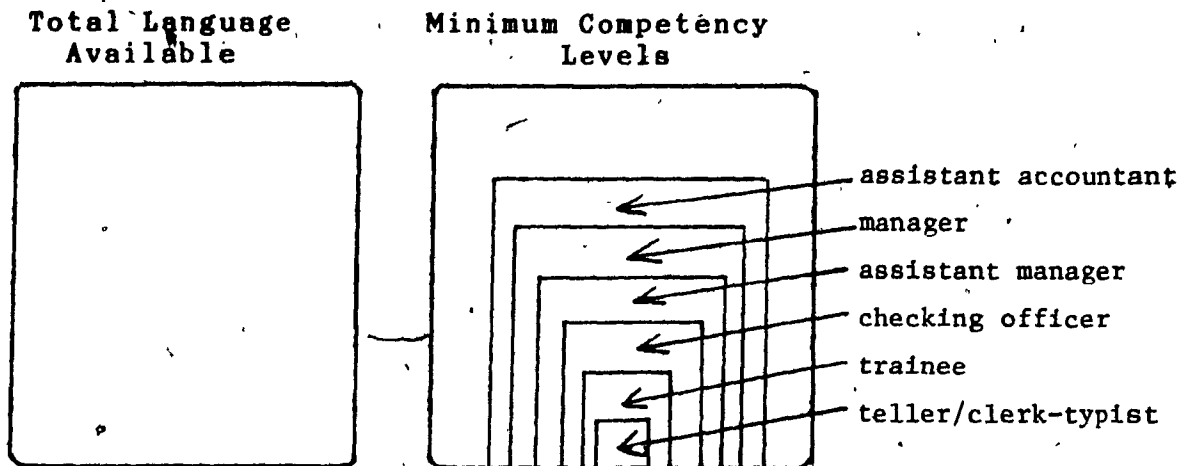
The Montreal Agency is an example of an organization which has different job categories which have different minimum competency levels but whose job tasks are related. As a Federal Agency, the Bank of Canada is committed to serving the public in both official languages. It is also committed to creating an environment in which employees can work in the language of their choice. This means that employees who deal with the public must be prepared to do so in either French or English and that, further, they must be able to receive any type of instruction or services in their preferred language. In Montreal, the vast majority of employees are francophones and the language of work is French. English, then, is required by employees in the performance of those tasks which involve dealing with the public and by supervisors in the performance of those tasks which involve dealing with the minority English-speaking employees. This means that not everyone requires language training; indeed, approximately 50 per cent of employees perform job tasks which do not involve the use of English.

Within the Montreal Agency, candidates for language training are mainly drawn from seven job categories from two departments: the Cash Department which handles inter-bank transactions, and the Bond Department which handles Government of Canada securities. These job categories are: teller, clerk-typist, trainee, checking

officer, assistant manager, manager, and assistant accountant. Promotion usually progresses in the following manner:



Thus the assistant accountant needs to be familiar with the job of the manager, the manager with that of the assistant manager, and so on. As a result, employees from each job category need only have the minimum competency levels of their own jobs plus those of the jobs below them. This may be represented as follows:



The goal of this type of needs analysis, therefore, is to determine which tasks within each job category involve the use of the target language and what language is involved in accomplishing these tasks in order to (1) determine the minimum competency levels required by employees of each job category and (2) develop a core syllabus which can be used to teach employees in these different job categories. Learners from different job categories would share classes and remain together until they attained their required competency level.

DESIGNING THE NEEDS ANALYSIS INSTRUMENT

In order to determine the competency levels required to perform each job, one must decide what kind of information is necessary. In the next section, using the Montreal Agency as an example, I will postulate the characteristics

of a needs analysis which is designed to determine second language use on the job. I will also outline the manner in which information might be collected. In so doing, I will discuss variables drawn from other needs analysis designs which were used in developing this model:

Units of Analysis

Language Items as Categories

Some analyses (e.g. Munby 1978) require the teacher or course designer to collect information on a long list of characteristics which identify features of language use. However, these characteristics may not provide details about specific tasks, or may be difficult to translate into a syllabus. As a result, program developers who are unfamiliar with other options may decide against doing a needs analysis altogether. Long (1985) suggests that extensive data collection is extremely time-consuming and program developers simply may not have the time to carry it out adequately. This is especially true if a wide variety of ESP courses are being developed in educational institutions but may also be true for part-time teachers who hold small contracts with an assortment of businesses or industries. Even if course developers have the time, they may not have the expertise to undertake complex analyses and subsequently translate the information into a usable syllabus. Widdowson (1983), for example,

criticizes Munby's (1978) design for providing an extensive list of language items which both inexperienced teachers and teachers with time constraints would find difficult to implement in any meaningful way. In deciding what information is relevant, therefore, it is necessary to remember that more is not always better and that a judicious selection of characteristics will often yield more pertinent data.

Tasks as Categories

In an attempt to overcome the problem of gathering too much or, possibly, irrelevant data, some course developers and linguists¹ have suggested a needs analysis model which centres around the actual job tasks performed by the learners. Using job tasks as the unit of analysis is advantageous, since a detailed description of job tasks is relatively easy to analyze for both linguistic and non-linguistic components. This facilitates the conversion process to syllabus because the course developer can readily set objectives and levels.

¹Needs analysis models have been either prepared (e.g. Jupp and Hodlin 1975, Friedenberg and Bradley 1984) or proposed (Long 1985) for professional or vocational second language courses (as well as for non-language vocational courses (e.g. Centre for Continuing Education, University of British Columbia 1980).

Long suggests that the concept of a task is

...a meaningful and viable unit of analysis in... (i) identifying learner needs (ii) defining syllabus content (iii) organizing language acquisition opportunities (iv) measuring student achievement. (Long 1985:89)

These four qualities are particularly important in a competency-oriented program where the emphasis is on the exit requirements (Rinke 1980:248); that is, on ensuring that learners have achieved their minimum competency levels and can perform their jobs as required.

Long defines tasks as

...the hundred and one things people "do" in everyday life, at work, at play, and in between. "Tasks" are the things people will tell you they do if you ask them and they are not applied linguists. (So that tasks include)...taking [sic] a hotel reservation, writing a cheque, finding a street destination... (Long 1985:92)

Long (1985) further suggests that using tasks as the organizing unit for this type of needs analysis has one major advantage over using linguistic units: because tasks are concrete, they have more reality for non-linguists; therefore, it is easier to identify and obtain a description of them than to enquire about the linguistic functions which are involved in performing them. In addition, it is easier to identify other relevant

characteristics which might be investigated as these would relate directly to the job tasks.

In preparing the needs analysis for the Montreal Agency, the following characteristics of the job tasks were considered:

1. the frequency of the interaction. This influenced the order of the presentation in the syllabus as high frequency tasks were dealt with first.
2. the channel of the interaction. Telephone tasks, because of the absence of visual clues and because of sound distortion, are more difficult and require more strategies and skills than face-to-face tasks.
3. the instrumentality; that is, whether the tasks were spoken or written. Written receptive and productive tasks were analyzed for the degree of comprehension actually required; for example, reading tasks were examined for the skills involved such as scanning, skimming, general comprehension, or detailed comprehension.
4. the type of interlocutors. Tasks which involve people who do not share the same frames of reference and rhetorical routines require more strategies and skills than tasks which do.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Once the decision to identify and analyze job tasks and the variables which relate to them has been made, it is necessary to decide how the analysis will be carried out. There are two ways such an analysis can be performed: by examining available job descriptions or by speaking to key employees. The choice will depend upon the amount of time, resources, and information available to the teacher or course designer.

Using Available/Standard Job Descriptions

In cases which involve standard jobs (e.g. nurses) or where descriptions of non-standard jobs (e.g. bond receiving teller at the Montreal Agency), are available, a conventional task analysis format can be used. This format has been available for many years for non-language vocational courses (e.g. University of British Columbia 1978) and, recently, for job-oriented second language programs (e.g. Long 1985, Friedenber^g and Bradley 1984).

The first step is to determine the job titles or categories in order to establish the scope of each occupation. A list may usually be obtained from the personnel department of the business organization in question.

The second step is to identify the tasks performed in each job category. The Ministry of Education of British

Columbia (1978), Friedenbergr and Bradley (1984) and Long (1985) suggest that a good reference for identifying tasks is a skills profile chart. Both Friedenbergr and Bradley, and Long suggest going to the Dictionary of Occupational Titles published by the U.S. Department of Labor for ready-made job descriptions in task format.

The job description helps promote a job-oriented point of view that guides selection of only the most relevant subject matter and learning activities for the course. (Friedenbergr and Bradley 1984:20)

Labour Canada also has a Dictionary of Occupational Titles and the Research and Curriculum Development Branch of the Ministry of Education of British Columbia (1978) has printed skills profile charts for a variety of vocational occupations - some of which include course outlines. It is important, however, that job descriptions be task-based so that the course developer knows what the employee must be able to do.² Job descriptions which list duties such as "have a knowledge of bonds" are not very useful since they give no information about the behaviour involved. Where applicable, then, tasks may be obtained from published skills profile charts.

Another source for a description of job tasks, particularly for non-standard occupations, is the training and

²A task for a bond receiving teller, for example, may be listed as "be able to process bonds" with sub-tasks such as "must be able to receive bonds, pay bonds, count bonds, and enter totals into account books".

development department of many companies. In order to plan for their training needs, many training and development departments produce job analysis charts which outline the tasks which must be performed by employees in each job category. Because these job descriptions are company-specific, they often provide more valuable information than standard job descriptions. For example, a job description for a bank teller would not be helpful in preparing a course for tellers at the Montreal Agency, since tellers for the central Bank of Canada perform totally different tasks than do tellers in chartered banks. Training and development departments also often have procedures manuals which list the procedures and, hence, tasks involved in performing specific types of jobs.

Long (1985:91) suggests that in most cases the needs analysis is complete after the tasks have been identified from the job descriptions. Indeed, he feels that identifying tasks from job descriptions is all that is necessary and

...can circumvent the necessity to conduct needs analyses altogether... (Long 1985:91)

In some cases this is true. A time-consuming and extensive needs analysis may not be necessary since job analysis charts, in particular, list not only major job tasks but often list the sub-tasks which are required. In other

cases, however, the job descriptions may be inadequate. Since many skills profile charts or job descriptions are meant for vocational trainers or employees, tasks are not always listed or described in a manner in which language program designers can readily employ them³. In addition, the course developer does not always know how much or what type of language is required, as in the example of the Montreal Agency, where many tasks require only the use of the first language. Furthermore, the charts or job descriptions do not always provide information on channel, interlocutor, and frequency, or other types of information which a language course developer may deem useful.

Certainly if time or circumstances do not permit the preparation of a detailed needs analysis, a list of general tasks is useful to the course developer to some extent in determining the learner's needs. If, however, job descriptions are not available or are not in a useful format, another manner of determining which job tasks are performed in English must be developed.

³Taking the example of the tasks performed by the bond receiving teller described above, the course developer may not know which of these tasks involve language, for example, counting bonds and entering totals into account books do not.

Gathering Relevant Information From Key Employees

If job descriptions of the type recounted are not available or are inadequate, a description of the job tasks should be obtained from key employee from each job category. Key employees are those who have the greatest knowledge of the job tasks performed in the job category in which they are working.⁴ This is advantageous for two reasons. First, it is less time-consuming and less disruptive to the employees' work to interview a small number of people than to interview a large group. Second, since key employees are familiar with all aspects of their job, they should be able to provide complete information about all of the job tasks which require the use of the second language. Long suggests that

...the fact that tasks have psychological reality for the people who are experts in the fields being analyzed means that their specialist knowledge can be accessed directly and reliably. (Long 1985:90)

In doing the analysis of the Montreal Agency, the supervisors were asked to identify key people from each job category from the Cash and Bond Departments.

There are several ways to obtain information from key employees. Mackay and Bosquet (1981) discuss the

⁴Prospective language students may or may not be key employees; often, they require language training because they are placed in a new job. As such, they are generally not as familiar with the job tasks as someone who has been thoroughly trained.

advantages and disadvantages of three types of data-gathering instruments: the questionnaire, the structured interview, and the checklist. A questionnaire presented as a structured interview was chosen for the Montreal Agency. This type of instrument has the advantages of ensuring that all the questions will be answered and gives the interviewer the opportunity to clarify any misunderstandings which might arise in the interpretation of the questions. Obtaining all of the data on the first run is important since management usually does not want their employees' work to be interrupted more than is absolutely necessary. A checklist may be used in cases where the information on tasks is already available and the course developer only requires information on which employees from which job categories perform which tasks.

An Example of Using Key Employees at the Montreal Agency

For the Montreal Agency, job descriptions did not list specific tasks. It was decided, therefore, to interview key employees from the third highest job category, assistant managers, in order to determine the tasks and sub-tasks. This group was chosen because they oversee most other job categories⁵ and because they handle problems with which employees in the lower job categories have

⁵Managers and the assistant accountant have different supervisory duties.

difficulties. It was felt that the information provided by this group could be used as a checklist for the tasks and sub-tasks performed by the other job categories, requiring the course developer to either add or delete tasks during future interviews. Initially, the assistant managers were required to identify general tasks in each skill area from a summary sheet (Appendix A).⁶ Specific tasks were then identified by asking the interviewees to list the tasks involved in each section identified within a skill area.

When a task was identified, it was immediately detailed. Detailing a task involves listing each step required to perform the task and the behaviour required to perform each step (Friedenberg and Bradley 1984:20) so that what is actually done on the job under typical work conditions is described. The course developer would, therefore, ask: "What are the steps involved in performing each task?/Describe each task." The Montreal Agency needs assessment worksheets (Appendix B) detailed tasks by including a section for the actions involved in performing each task. Many of the actions were simply checked off. However, it was found, after the pilot run, that these

⁶The summary sheet used at the Montreal Agency was based on the course developer's knowledge of the tasks performed; however, where the course developer does not have job descriptions or background knowledge to create a summary sheet, he may simply ask: "What tasks do you perform (in English)?" and, later, organize the information by skill area.

sections were not really helpful and that a general action section which detailed the chronological steps of the tasks was more useful. The description in this section is closer to what is meant by listing the sub-tasks. In addition to the sub-tasks, information as to channel, frequency, and interlocutor was also collected.

Once the tasks for the assistant managers were listed and the sub-tasks detailed, they were used as a checklist to interview key employees from all the other job categories. The questions then became: "Do you perform these tasks and sub-tasks?" and "What other tasks do you perform?/What are the steps involved in performing these tasks? (Describe these tasks.)"

Because both the tasks and the steps involved in accomplishing them, the sub-tasks, are behaviours, they should be measurable. To make this easier, the tasks and sub-tasks are usually described by a verb plus noun phrase (NP) and, possibly, adverb of place. For example, a task for the Agency was listed as: (a learner should be able to) process bonds at the wicket. Describing tasks in this manner facilitates measurement of the learners' performance as it can be seen if employees can 'do' the tasks.

If it is not possible to visualize how a learner's performance might be evaluated, then the skill statement should be made more explicit. (Centre for Continuing Education, University of British Columbia 1980, Vol. 1:10)

USING THE NEEDS ANALYSIS INSTRUMENT

Whether enough information to produce a checklist is already available from job descriptions or job analysis charts, or whether this information must first be gathered, it is useful to perform a trial run for two reasons. First, it allows the course developer to see how the employees will react to the questions. Second, it indicates whether the questions yield the type of information the course developer requires. The pilot run should be carried out at a fairly high job category level in order to yield the most tasks and sub-tasks to form a checklist for the other job categories.

The results should then be tabulated in a form which renders it easy to analyze. First, the tabulation should allow the course developer to compare job categories to determine which tasks and sub-tasks occur in more than one job. This is necessary in order to justify the development of a core training program (Centre for Continuing Education, University of British Columbia 1980). Second, tasks should be organized into high, medium, and low frequency to help to determine priority objectives in the syllabus. Finally, the tabulation should present the tasks

and sub-tasks in clear, behavioural terms which can be analyzed for their linguistic content, and which are easy to measure.

For the Montreal Agency, it was decided to take the individual needs assessment worksheets and collate the information in three ways (Appendix C)⁷:

1. by the frequency with which the tasks are performed;
2. by the range of job categories which perform the tasks; and
3. by the job tasks

A section on language functions was also included which did not prove very helpful and which was later discarded, since it was found that more relevant and detailed information on functions could be obtained by simulating the job tasks or by tape recording employees actually

⁷In the Agency tabulation, it can be seen that the tasks are not listed in the common manner of verb plus.NP. This was due to problems encountered in designing a suitable format for obtaining information on tasks. While this was not a serious problem, it did cause extra steps in translating the data into a usable syllabus - steps which were quite time-consuming. Instead of using the heading "Bonds in General" (Appendix C), for example, it would have been more useful to have the heading "Provide Information on Bonds" and then listing the various tasks such as:

- 1) explain the difference between bonds
- 2) explain the income tax procedures as they relate to bonds
- 3) explain what to do in the case of lost or stolen bonds, and so on.

performing the tasks. This will be discussed more fully in the next chapter.

As a final step in the analysis, the collated results from all the job categories should be reviewed with the employees who provide the information for their job categories in order to verify the accuracy of the information. This step also allows the employees to compare the information which they provide with other information on the chart and to add any tasks which they may have forgotten.

While the steps, listed above outline procedures for preparing a needs analysis which investigates the job tasks of experienced employees, it is important to the motivation of the learners to investigate their background and interests and to include these interests in the development of objectives in the syllabus. A sample personal information analysis form has been included (Appendix D) which enables the course developer to elicit this type of information. This should be given to learners to complete before the commencement of classes.

Chapter 3

SYLLABUS

INTRODUCTION

As discussed in Chapter 2, an ESP course for experienced employees in business organizations has two aims: (1) to address the common needs of employees in a number of different job categories in the interest of saving time and money, and (2) to address the specific needs of employees within each job category. To develop such a course, the teacher or course designer must first perform a needs and/or task analysis and determine the job tasks and sub-tasks which are carried out by the employees in each job category. This information, however, only constitutes the raw data of the syllabus and must be translated into linguistic items and strategies, and then organized in order to develop a core syllabus which is usable in the classroom. This chapter explores one manner in which the raw data may be manipulated to develop such a syllabus.

STEPS IN DEVELOPING THE SYLLABUS

The job tasks identified through a needs analysis represent broad descriptions of what an employee within a specific job category does. The sub-tasks detail the steps involved in performing these tasks. There are several stages

involved in translating these sub-tasks into language objectives in the syllabus.

Divide Tasks and Sub-tasks into Groups

The first stage is to organize the tasks and sub-tasks into two groups: those which are performed by employees in all job categories, and those which, on the surface, do not appear to overlap.¹ In addition to allowing the course developer to investigate what language is involved in the performance of the sub-tasks, dividing the tasks and sub-tasks in this manner allows the course developer to determine the common elements of those which are seemingly unique. Ultimately, it allows the course developer to determine language objectives and to organize these objectives in the syllabus.

Investigate the Language of the Sub-tasks

The next stage is to investigate the language required to perform the sub-tasks. If the original needs analysis

¹In the Montreal Agency, for example, it was found that almost all employees are required to travel on Bank of Canada business (Appendix E). In performing this task, they must all be able to, perform the sub-tasks of: making and confirming hotel and flight, train, or bus reservations; going to restaurants, and going shopping (for magazines and personal items, etc.). On the other hand, it was found that there were a number of tasks which appeared to be unique to employees within a department or certain job categories within a department (e.g. explaining how to transfer bonds, explaining how to obtain unclaimed bank accounts from the Bank of Canada).

divided tasks and sub-tasks into the traditional four skills, language data may be collected on this basis.

Speaking and Listening

Perhaps the fastest and easiest way to obtain information on speaking and listening sub-tasks is to collect tape-recorded dialogues. This may be done in two ways depending upon how much access the course developer has to the work environment and to key native-speaker employees in each job category.²

Where permitted, recordings may be obtained of employees performing each of the identified sub-tasks, both in face-to-face and in telephone situations. Where taping is not permitted, such as in matters involving security or confidentiality, dialogues may be simulated. Simulations can be fairly authentic; for example, with sub-tasks available from the Montreal Agency needs analysis, it was possible for the course designer to take the role of client, asking questions as a client would. Once tape recordings of either actual dialogues or of simulations have been collected, they are then transcribed. (Sample

²It is preferable to use native speakers or bilingual employees in order to eliminate the possibility of non-native speaker errors and also to obtain a clear indication of what the sub-tasks should look like. In some cases, however, it may be necessary to carry out simulations with non-native employees and to make corrections to faulty language, organization, etc.

dialogues derived from simulations carried out at the Montreal Agency are included in Appendix F.)

Reading and Writing

In jobs which deal with processing specific types of information, such as processing bonds or bank notes in the Montreal Agency, there is usually little variation in incoming and outgoing written material and so linguistic data may be collected about reading and writing sub-tasks by obtaining samples of reading material sent to and produced by employees from each job category.

Data Analysis

The next stage is to analyze the transcripts and sample reading and writing texts of the sub-tasks for each category of employees for linguistic components and strategies. For the Montreal Agency, transcripts and texts were analyzed, according to Yalden's (1983:87) suggestions, for grammatical and lexical content, functions, and discourse and rhetorical skills. The transcripts and texts were also analyzed for the communication strategies employed and the types of tasks they represented (i.e. one-way or two-way tasks). Doing such an analysis is necessary in order to establish language objectives and to organize the syllabus. Since the exponents contained in these linguistic components and strategies form the content

of the syllabus, a list of these exponents should be included in the syllabus in order to ensure that they will receive the major focus of attention of the teacher or material designer. (See Appendix E for an inventory of exponents from each of these categories for Level 1 of the syllabus³. Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) suggest that competence in using each of these components is essential to overall communicative competence. Once the linguistic analysis of the data is complete, this information may be organized into objectives in the syllabus.

ORGANIZING THE SYLLABUS⁴

Language objectives in the syllabus can be organized into three categories once the sub-tasks have been analyzed for their linguistic content: into notions, into functions, and into simplified versions of the sub-tasks which are common to employees in all job categories. After the organization of the objectives is complete, language levels may be set which reflect the complexity of these

³A section called procedural competence is also included which suggests the type of problem-solving activities which should be included when materials are prepared.

⁴It should be noted that the Montreal Agency syllabus is a tentative and evolving syllabus which is included to illustrate the content of this type of communicative task-based approach. In any event, a syllabus is rarely a finished product and should be flexible to provide for new developments and insights.

objectives. This is done by building up the objectives in the syllabus, making them more complex with successive language levels.

In the Montreal Agency syllabus, examples of texts for each of the three types of objectives were included to indicate the degree of complexity expected at each level. Although the Montreal Agency syllabus has not been completed, it is anticipated that there will be six to ten language levels in which language objectives will be built up. It is further anticipated that the objectives required to perform the full complexity of the sub-tasks for the lower job categories will be achieved at Levels 3 or 4 while employees in those categories which require more flexibility will achieve the full complexity of their sub-tasks at Levels 5 or 6, or Levels 8 or 9.

Notions

For the Montreal Agency, it was found that the notions extracted from the analysis of the sub-tasks performed by employees in both higher and lower job categories formed the basis of almost all of the sub-tasks; in other words, the same notions recurred in almost all sub-tasks regardless of which employees performed them. Their mastery, therefore, is a prerequisite to the mastery of all the job tasks. As a result, language objectives were set in the syllabus (Appendix E) under the heading of "Notions

Common To All Tasks" which isolate notions to permit intensive discrete-point practice. As will be discussed in the next chapter, this type of practice is essential to ongoing language development.

Group I Objectives (Based on Tasks Common to All Employees)

Language objectives may be set for job tasks and sub-tasks which are common to all job categories by establishing pedagogical tasks. Long (1985:91) defines pedagogical tasks as simplified versions of sub-tasks. These pedagogical tasks are built up through the language levels by adding variables until the entire complexity of the sub-tasks is achieved. Language objectives for Level 1, for example, would require the learner to be able to perform the simplest version of the final sub-tasks.

Taking the example of the Montreal Agency task: (the learner must be able to) travel on Bank of Canada business, described earlier, the final version of the sub-tasks requires the learner to be able, with a minimum amount of information, to make and confirm hotel, flight, train, and bus reservations; obtain/understand information about local transportation, check into and out of hotels, order in restaurants, and make transactions in stores. This requires the learner to be able to manipulate the language system, to some extent, in order to establish a common frame of reference with the interlocutor.

Obtaining information about hotel prices might involve the following dialogue:

Reservation Clerk: Sleepy-time Hotel, Linda speaking. For what city, please?

Employee: For Ottawa, please.

Reservation Clerk: Yes, may I help you?

Employee: Yes...I'd like to go to Ottawa sometime in June. What are your rates for a single room?

Reservation Clerk: That depends on whether you'll be travelling during the week or on the weekend.

Employee: What's the difference?

Reservation Clerk: The rate during the week is \$98.00 for a single room; but, if you travel on a weekend, we have a special of \$90.00 single or double occupancy.

Employee: Is \$98.00 the corporate rate?

Reservation Clerk: No, that's the regular rate. What company do you work for?

Employee: The Bank of Canada.

Reservation Clerk: Is that Federal Government?

Employee: Yes, it is. Does that make a difference?

Reservation Clerk: No, the corporate rate and the Government rate are the same. It's \$67.00 per night. Would you like to make your reservation now?

Employee: Well...I'm not sure of the exact date, but I can always change it if I have to.

Reservation Clerk: Ok...your name?

Employee: Lucie McDuff. That's M-C-D-U-F-F.

Reservation Clerk: And how many nights?

Employee: Two nights, June 1 and 2.

Reservation Clerk: Your company credit card number?

Employee: I need a company credit card?

Reservation Clerk: Yes, we need the number in order to give you the Government rate.

Employee: Well, I'll have to get it from the secretary.

Reservation Clerk: Well...I'll make your reservation right now, but when you get the number, call us back to confirm the Government rate. Your reservation number is XY123.

Employee: XY123?

Reservation Clerk: Yes, that's right. So, that's a single room for two nights, June 1 and 2, guaranteed late arrival for L. McDuff.

Employee: Guaranteed late arrival?

Reservation Clerk: Yes, your room is guaranteed for you if you arrive after 6:00 p.m.

Employee: Ok...thank you.

Reservation Clerk: You're welcome...oh, and since your room is guaranteed, don't forget to call us if you would like to cancel.

Employee: Right.. Thanks again. Bye.

In its simplest versions, the learner is only required to supply or obtain information where a frame of reference and rhetorical routines are already established so that making a hotel reservation might involve the following dialogue:

Reservation Clerk: Sleepy-time Hotel, Linda speaking. For what city, please?

Employee: For Ottawa, please.

Reservation Clerk: Yes, may I help you?

Employee: Yes...I'd like to make a hotel reservation for a single room for two nights, June 1 and 2.

Reservation Clerk: Your name, please?

Employee: Lucie McDuff.

Reservation Clerk: Could you spell that, please?

Employee: Yes, it's M-C-D-U-F-F.

Reservation Clerk: That's a single room for two nights, June 1 and 2 for L. McDuff. The rate is \$98.00 per night.

Employee: \$98.00?

Reservation Clerk: Yes. Your reservation number is XY123.

Employee: XY123?

Reservation Clerk: Yes, that's right.

Employee: Thank you.

Reservation Clerk: You're welcome.

Learners progress with these pedagogical tasks through the language levels until they have achieved the minimum level required to function in their jobs; in other words, until they can accomplish the final versions of the sub-tasks described for their job categories. Furthermore, employees in the lowest job category must have the competence to accomplish the most complex version of the sub-tasks which

compose the tasks common to all job categories⁵; that is to say, tasks common to all job categories must be able to be accomplished at the minimum level required by the lowest job category. These sub-tasks must then be integrated into objectives set for higher levels to ensure that they receive continual practice, and can be performed when required.

Group II Objectives (Based on Tasks which are Unique to Some Employees)

Since one of the aims of this type of ESP course is to accommodate employees from several job categories, setting language objectives for tasks and sub-tasks which appear to be unique to employees within a particular department or unique to particular job categories within a department requires more manipulation than breaking the sub-tasks into pedagogical tasks. Practising many simplified versions of other employees' job tasks, in addition to their own, can be a disincentive to learners; and practising only notions in a variety of contexts does not ensure that the learners will ultimately be able to perform their jobs. Other types of objectives must be found which enable employees from

⁵e.g. answering the telephone, processing items at the wicket, travelling on Bank of Canada business

different job categories to practise the skills required to perform their job tasks.

Long (1985:91) suggests that sub-tasks whose members share common characteristics, although differing in detail, may be classified by establishing superordinate categories. These superordinate categories would form the basis of a third type of language objective; that is, in addition to objectives included under notions and tasks common to all job categories. For the Montreal Agency, these superordinate categories were based on the communicative functions which were performed in carrying out the sub-tasks.

Sub-tasks were classified by finding their common denominators. For example, the Montreal Agency needs analysis revealed that employees in two job categories within the Cash Department⁶ performed the task "provide information on money" (Appendix C). Under this heading is the sub-task "explain how to send mutilated bank notes to the Bank of Canada". This sub-task suggests that learners need to be able to give instructions. Employees in job categories in the Bond Department⁷ perform the task "provide information on bonds" (Appendix C). Under this

⁶tellers and checking officers

⁷checking officers/assistant manager/manager

heading is the sub-task "explain what to do in the case of lost or stolen bonds". This sub-task also indicates that the learners must be able to give instructions. Many other sub-tasks were classified in the same way into super-ordinate functional categories. Through this type of classification, then, it is possible to collect an inventory of functions which can form the basis of language objectives.

Language objectives which are based on functions can then be divided into pedagogical tasks in much the same way as they were for Group I objectives; however, activities for these pedagogical tasks should be set in two stages: the first stage would use contexts which are drawn from the learner's personal interests, as identified by a personal interest analysis such as the one for the Montreal Agency (Appendix D) and by teacher/student interaction. For example, objective 10 of Level 1 of the Montreal Agency syllabus requires the learner to be able to describe and understand a simple process. The learners might describe the processes involved in performing various hobbies. The text example cited in the syllabus is for sewing: "I like to sew. First, I put the pattern on the material. Then, I cut out the pattern," and so on.

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The second stage would practise the same function of describing a process but using work-related pedagogical tasks; that is, one or more sub-tasks from the learner's job. This activity would be similar to activities for Group I objectives with the difference that since these job tasks are not of interest to the entire group, not all of the sub-tasks for each job category would be practised at each level. For example, at each level students could describe a different process from their job to another student(s). In this way, students would not be practising job tasks which may not be of interest to them to the point where they would become bored.

Practising pedagogical tasks using personal interests ensures that material will be developed for the learners which will provide them with many opportunities to practise a particular function without becoming bored. This is especially important for employees in job categories who perform a limited number of sub-tasks. Practising simplified and, eventually, final versions of their own job tasks ensures that the learners will be able to transfer the function to their jobs.

Pedagogical tasks for both Group I and Group II sub-tasks are developed by breaking down the sub-tasks which are performed by employees in the highest job categories.

Doing this ensures that the groundwork is laid for all tasks at the early stages. Once the minimum competency level is achieved by a particular job category; more objectives in the form of more complex pedagogical tasks are set for the next highest level. For example, at the lower language and job-levels, pedagogical tasks, while integrating the four skills, emphasize mainly speaking and listening; reading and writing address mainly scanning, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer activities and are not treated separately. As the pedagogical tasks progress through the levels, however, higher level speaking and listening objectives are set and objectives are added for reading and writing which address skimming, main idea, context clues, deriving implicit information, etc.

Format of the Syllabus

Since each of the objectives for Level I of the Montreal Agency syllabus involves all four skills to varying extents, they were set under the headings of "Oral/Written" signifying that learners are required to produce and understand oral and written utterances and texts.⁸ The objectives are outlined under each of the sections entitled: Notions Common To All Tasks, Functions, and Tasks Common to All Positions. The exponents listed after

⁸It may be necessary to separate some objectives into speaking and listening, reading, and writing at the higher levels.

the objectives in each language level under the headings: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence⁹ are intended to form much of the content of the objectives from each of the three sections. Where extra practice is needed, these exponents may also be practised individually. It should be understood that while this is a task-based syllabus in that it is grounded in the job tasks and sub-tasks of the learners, it is also a multi-dimensional syllabus since the objectives are organized into different categories and are intended to be practised in a variety of ways.

⁹These categories were suggested by Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983).

Chapter 4

METHODS OF IMPLEMENTATION

INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter outlined the steps involved in preparing a task-based syllabus for experienced employees who are working in different job categories and who, therefore, require different competency levels. It also discussed the components which should be minimally included in such a syllabus and gave an example of a syllabus based on the principles which were discussed. The contents of a task-based syllabus are now available; however, a taxonomy of language objectives and exponents requires a method or methods for implementation and an answer to how this taxonomy can be realized in the second language classroom.

There has been some controversy in recent years concerning how syllabus and method relate. Munby (1978) has suggested that syllabus designers too often look at methodology and overlook learner needs and purpose. Widdowson (1983), on the other hand, suggests that there has been an overemphasis on what to teach in ESP courses with little regard to how to teach it. Indeed, Widdowson (1983) believes that the capacity to communicate is often sacrificed when objectives are too specific. For Munby and Widdowson, it would seem that the focus should be either on

the syllabus or on the method and that that part which is not emphasized, either method or syllabus, will somehow fall naturally into place.

Long (1985) feels that all too often this is not the case. He suggests that, in many cases, syllabuses and teaching methods are chosen independently of each other, which may result in incompatibility. He, therefore, stresses the importance of selecting or developing a method which considers the objectives of the syllabus. Since the task-based syllabus for experienced employees described in Chapter 3 organizes language objectives into notions, functions, and tasks, any method which is selected or developed must consider how the objectives from each of these units might be implemented. Further, since this ESP program aims not only at providing learners with the tools to communicate in their own jobs as soon as possible, but also with a solid basis on which to build for possibly higher-level jobs in the hierarchy in the future, the method should provide both relevant communicative interaction and a solid grammatical base. However, before considering which method might best achieve these goals, it may first be useful to examine the concept of 'method' and what it entails.

THE CONCEPT OF METHOD

In most cases, method is part of a triad which includes (1) a theory of language, learning and teaching (2) an outline of the types of activities to be used together with an explanation of the sequencing of these activities; and (3) an explanation and/or examples of classroom techniques for presenting activities. This triad has been presented in different ways by Anthony (1963) and, more recently, by Richards and Rodgers (1982) and Clarke (1983).

Anthony's (1963) concept of 'method' presupposes that the language material to be presented has already been determined. He, therefore, sees method as the middle step between approach.

...a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of languages and the nature of language teaching and learning (1963:64).

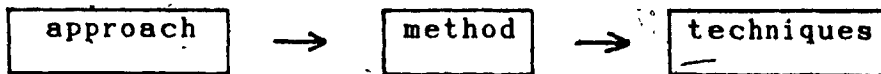
and technique

...that which takes place in the classroom. (1963:64)

Method, for Anthony is

...an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material, no part of which contradicts, and all of which is based upon, the selected approach...a method is procedural. (1963:64)

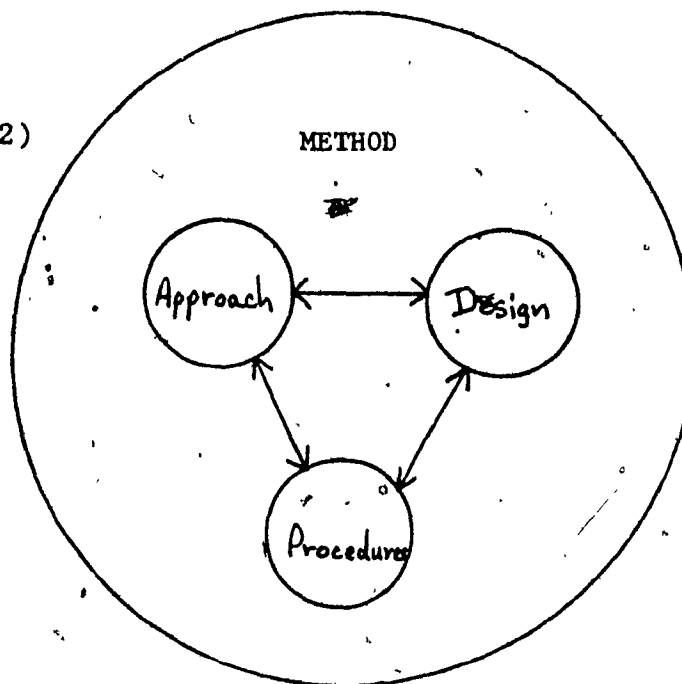
For Anthony, then, there is a linear progression from approach to method to technique.



Rather than using the term 'method' as the step between approach and classroom techniques, Richards and Rodgers (1982) use method as the rubric under which they list the concepts of approach, design, and procedure so that method is not simply one exponent of the triad but is the organizing principle for the other concepts. While their concept of design includes a syllabus, in addition to a plan for implementing the syllabus, their use of the terms approach, design, and procedure includes many of the same elements as Anthony's model.

Richards and Rodgers' model differs significantly from Anthony's, however, in that any one of the three concepts of approach, design, or procedure can be the starting point for the evolution or development of a method so that, for example, a set of procedures (techniques) may lead to a design and subsequently to a statement about language learning and teaching all of which would culminate in a method. This model is represented in a circular fashion.

Richards and Rodgers (1982)



Clarke's (1983) concept of 'method' is less definite than either Anthony's or Richards' and Rodgers'. Clarke suggests that the terms method and technique contain the elements purported by Anthony, and Richards and Rodgers, but that these terms should be much more broadly defined - if they are to be defined at all - than what either Anthony or Richards and Rodgers include in their definitions. For Clarke, method and technique can mean different things in different circumstances and he, therefore, does not provide a definition. In addition, he feels that defining approach, because it consists of assumptions about language learning and teaching, is too limiting in that

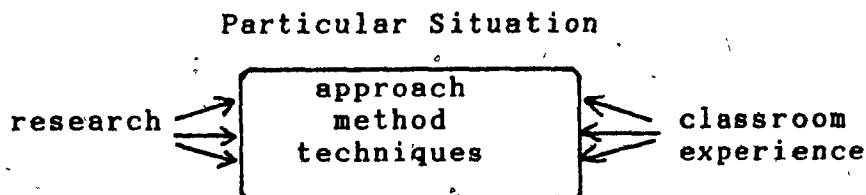
...one considers only that portion of the data which falls within one's theoretical perspective (so that) rather than providing us with a framework which permits us to examine all the possibilities open-mindedly, approach reduces the scope of our world view. It helps us to understand and explain experiences by limiting our options, by recommending

certain practices, condemning some, ignoring others. (1983:111)

Clarke's objection to defining approach, method, and technique, then, is that if a certain approach is adopted, theoretically, only the methods and techniques which support it are used to the exclusion of methods and techniques which seem to work but which are not necessarily consistent with current theories of language learning and teaching. He, therefore, recommends that these concepts be used as a flexible framework.

...in which information and insight from each level prompt modification of the other levels. (1983:111)

His model is presented as an image and a frame where only that which is happening in any given language learning/teaching situation is examined and defined.



The points which can be summarized from all of these theories are (1) that a method is a plan for the presentation of language material which may or may not include a syllabus; (2) that a method of implementation cannot be viewed in isolation - whatever method is being

used in a particular circumstance is either influenced by or influences the approach and techniques; and (3) that a method is not a static concept and should be evaluated and modified on an ongoing basis as a result of classroom experience and research into language learning and teaching.

Since the selection or development of a method is influenced by and, possibly, influences assumptions about the nature of language learning and language teaching, it is necessary to look at some of the theories which are gaining wider acceptance and which have been considered in selecting the method of implementation for the proposed syllabus. It should be noted, however, that not enough is known at present about how people learn or about the effects of second language instruction on acquisition to determine the most effective method of presentation. As a result, as Lightbown (1985a) notes, it is only possible to postulate about what might be an effective way of conveying the contents of a task-based syllabus and about what might be ineffective.

THEORIES OF LANGUAGE LEARNING

Information Processing

Research into language acquisition deals mainly with how information is processed. Klauer (1985) suggests that

learners acquire new information by listening, reading, and discovering. He (1985:10) states that learning of any type is influenced by the learner's readiness to receive new information which is, in turn, contingent upon the learner's ability to break down this new information and to compare the components with each other as well as with old information.

...the learner should be able to analyze the new body of information into smaller units and to synthesize these units thus reconstructing the original body of information (further)...the learner should get insight into the structure of the new information by comparing the smaller units to one another, that is, by uncovering the aspects they share and differ in...Some of the information must be stored and made retrievable for later use. This is achieved...by linking the already stored information with new information. (Klauer 1985:10)

In terms of language acquisition, Lightbown (1985a:101) concurs with Klauer (1985) and cites Corder, Braine, and Krashen as having claimed that a learner cannot be taught what he is not ready to learn. Moreover, Krashen (1982) suggests that new information is processed when it is presented at one level above the learner's current level (what he calls $i+1$). It is this level of language, he feels, which promotes acquisition. Corder (1967) suggests that the learner is constantly testing hypotheses on the comprehensible input which he receives, getting feedback from the linguistic environment in which he finds himself, and correcting any false hypotheses, thereby self-

correcting his linguistic production. While research into how information is processed is important to understanding how students learn, how well they learn often depends upon how motivated they are.

The Role of Motivation

Research on learning by Knowles (1984:96) suggests that a minimum amount of motivation must be present for learning to take place. To encourage motivation, the learner's needs and interests should be taken into consideration and a variety of language should be provided in meaningful and motivating contexts (Lightbown 1985a). Affective factors should also be considered. Krashen suggests that

...learners will not be able to 'use' comprehensible input at $i+1$ if they are for some reason not receptive to the language learning opportunity;
(Krashen 1982:34)

in other words, if their 'affective filter' is up. It may be postulated that since the language objectives of the task-based syllabus are directly derived from the job needs and personal interests of the learners, these objectives should provide meaningful and motivating contexts for language activities. It is up to the teacher and/or material developer to present these objectives in interesting and motivating ways.

THEORIES OF LANGUAGE TEACHING

While it is important to the development of a useful method of implementation to understand the current theories of how information is processed and the role of motivation in learning, it is also necessary to understand some of the current theories of the effects of instruction on language acquisition.

Focused Grammatical Instruction

When second language learners think of language courses, they often immediately think of focused grammatical instruction - usually explicit grammatical rules or mechanical, audio-lingual pattern drills. While many theorists¹ generally consider grammatical competence an important component of communicative competence, opinion is divided on how much emphasis should be placed on explicit grammatical instruction and whether grammar-focused discrete-point instruction actually facilitates acquisition or has any effect on accuracy.

Lightbown (1985b), in surveying second language research gives focused instruction mixed reviews. She (1985b:181) states that the research does not support the theory that

¹e.g. Lightbown 1985a and b, Canale 1983, Harmer 1983, Higgs and Clifford 1982, Littlewood 1981, Brumfit 1980, Canale and Swain 1980.

step-by-step explicit grammatical instruction is effective. There are two major reasons for this. First, although there are predictable sequences in the acquisition of certain structures, not enough have been adequately described to determine an optimal sequence of presentation. Moreover, even if such a description were available, it may not be useful since the research suggests that

...acquisition is not simply linear or cumulative, and having practised a particular form or pattern does not mean that that form or pattern is permanently established. (Lightbown 1985b:177)

Indeed, the research suggests that while learners may be taught the rules of grammar, knowing a rule does not mean that learners will be able to use it in communicative interaction (Lightbown 1985b:177). Learners continue to make interlanguage errors which seem to be impervious to correction. It is postulated that one of the reasons for this is that errors are part of a system which the learner is acquiring and may be due to the hypothesis-testing process which the learner goes through in assessing new information. Lightbown states that the teacher

...can expect a student to make errors on something he or she seemed to know last week, understanding that the error may reflect growth in another domain and the restructuring of the learner's system. (Lightbown 1985b:182)

Despite these suggestions that the explicit teaching of grammar is ineffective, Lightbown concedes that focused

instruction may have a positive effect on language acquisition.

...Instruction may (aid acquisition in that it provides learners opportunities to focus on particular elements of language, to recognize and tag them, even practice them using them in a deliberate (controlled) manner (which may have the effect that it)...makes it possible for learners later to recognize (and thus understand) these elements in the L2 input they encounter. (Lightbown 1985b:185)

Higgs and Clifford (1982) make an even stronger case for focused grammatical instruction. They propound that the lack of accuracy-oriented instruction at the early stages of language development leads to terminal language behaviour (fossilization) at a 'survival' level. In a study conducted to ascertain the causes of terminal language behaviour in highly motivated U.S. Government employees, they determined that most of the learners who appeared to fossilize at a survival level rated high on vocabulary and low on grammatical accuracy. There appeared to be two principal reasons for this. First, most lower language-level learning, either in the classroom or 'on the street' was directed at survival activities. Learners were encouraged to communicate - often at a level beyond their productive competence - with whatever means at their disposal. As a result, they were forced to adopt or invent communication strategies and were rewarded for incorrect as well as correct usage. In addition, in cases where the students had learned the second language in an academic

environment, it was found that either the instructors themselves were not grammatically proficient in the target language and could, therefore, not guide their students in correct usage, or the instructors had chosen not to correct their students' mistakes for philosophical, methodological, or personal reasons.

Higgs and Clifford suggest that this combination of rewarding successful though grammatically inaccurate communication caused lexical and grammatical structures to fossilize. Once fossilization takes place, it is generally agreed among theorists (e.g. Higgs and Clifford 1982, Lightbown 1985b, Long 1985) that remediation either in the classroom or in the target language environment is seldom successful.

As a result of these findings, Higgs and Clifford suggest that teachers and program directors look beyond immediate considerations such as student motivation and satisfaction and, hence, student enrollment, to the ultimate goals of the students and/or the organizations providing language training. They suggest that if the goal of language training is to provide students with survival-level proficiency; that is, with a relatively large vocabulary and a high degree of fluency² in a fairly short period of

²as measured by the delivery rate in words per minute

time, then considerations of grammatical accuracy can be minimized or excluded entirely. In such cases, however, teachers/program directors, and students should be aware of the limitations. However, if the goal is to encourage the acquisition of communication strategies that are not only successful at the survival level, but are also linguistically and culturally adequate for more serious and complex tasks, then accuracy-oriented instruction must be included in the program.

These conclusions are supported by several other theorists. For example, Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) suggest that a focus on form is particularly important at the beginner levels where learners require basic tools in order to communicate. Littlewood (1981:89) also suggests that a learner must have knowledge of the forms before he can subordinate them to meaning. Further, he agrees with Higgs and Clifford (1982) that survival strategies are often totally inadequate for higher-level tasks. He stresses that a focus on form should not be restricted to only those situations where a lack of appropriate forms interferes with communication. Instead, he suggests that a focus on form is also important where social interaction requires socially appropriate and often grammatically more demanding forms. This is particularly true in business situations. An employee who can get a

message across' but does so inappropriately risks alienating co-workers and customers. Non-native speaker employees at the Montreal Agency, for example, have had complaints levelled against them by clients for 'being rude'. On investigation what was found to be missing were socially appropriate forms in the second language.

Although the theories cited above argue strongly in favour of focused grammatical instruction, two factors need to be considered: (1) how the forms are presented, and (2) the effects of error correction. Lightbown (1985b) suggests that focused instruction may only have a positive effect on acquisition if such instruction is provided in meaningful contexts. This hypothesis is supported by several theorists and studies. For instance, Brumfit (1979:186) suggests that through meaningful, grammatical practice, the learner "...receives a system with semantic potential." Canale and Swain summarize Oller and Obrecht's findings stating that,

...the effectiveness of pattern drills is significantly increased when the language in the drill is related to communication. (Canale and Swain 1980:14)

and conclude that

...from the very beginning of a second language programme, aspects of grammatical competence should be taught in the context of meaningful communication. (Canale and Swain 1980:14)

Harley (1986), in a study involving children in a French immersion program in Ontario, concluded tentatively that meaningful focused instruction made a difference to acquisition. Because of the lack of sufficient 'natural' exposure in the classroom, the learners were unable to master the use of the 'imparfait' verb tense; however, through the use of meaningful focused instruction, the level of correct use of the 'imparfait' increased.

The research done by Pica (1984) also suggests that meaningful instruction has a positive effect in the area of morpheme acquisition. Pica concluded that (1) explicit instruction of certain simple morphemes accelerates acquisition, and (2) heavy exposure to complex morphemes which are bound by situation also facilitates acquisition.

In addition to considering what form grammatical instruction should take, the effects of error correction also need to be considered. Lightbown (1985b:177) maintains that error correction is often ineffective because it is unreliable; that is, the learner may not be corrected in all instances or may be corrected out of context, with the result that he cannot form hypotheses about the error. Higgs and Clifford (1982), however, postulate, and Lightbown (1985b) concurs, that error correction may be useful when the focus is on

grammatical instruction and when the error interferes with communication. Because of the nature of information processing, however, the teacher should be careful not to overcorrect.

Studies and findings such as these are particularly useful in the implementation of a program for experienced employees. It is assumed that employees hope to move up through the ranks and will, therefore, require higher-level communication strategies regardless of their present competency needs. Consequently, accuracy through meaningful focused instruction should be an important consideration. On the other hand, there will be students who will enter the language training program with already fossilized communication strategies. In such cases, both teachers and learners can be made aware of the language learning limitations of the students; that is, that the language behaviour is probably fossilized in certain skill areas. With this knowledge, those areas (e.g. vocabulary, overall fluency) in which the learners are likely to make some progress can be emphasized.

In order to ensure that the factors discussed above are included in the development of a communicative method of implementation for the task-based syllabus, it may be

useful to consider how they have been used in various other communicative methodologies.

COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

Communicative language teaching has developed out of the current theories, discussed above, of how people learn a language and the purposes to which they want to put that language. Although some communicative methods³ sidestep the issue of the need for a formal syllabus, many theorists (e.g. Brumfit 1979, 1980, Littlewood 1981, Harmer 1983) accept the necessity of teachers or course designers selecting what to present. As Brumfit points out

...the limitations in time and place provide the major differences between formal and informal learning: there is an implicit promise in the act of setting up an educational institution to use procedures that will in some sense be more efficient than the more or less random ones of informal learning in the world outside...only if we view the learning process as totally random can we avoid the responsibility of organizing our syllabuses...
(Brumfit 1980:3)

Although their models for presentation differ somewhat, Brumfit (1979), Littlewood (1981), and Harmer (1983) agree on what should minimally be included in a communicative teaching method which presents and practises the language objectives of the syllabus. They outline three types of activities: - (1) activities (e.g. role plays, simulations,

³e.g. Silent Way, Community Language Learning, Suggestopedia

problem-solving activities) which allow the learner to communicate with the resources available to him (2) activities which present the language items which are required for effective communication, and (3) activities in which the learner practises the language items in an effort to reproduce them accurately (e.g. drills, question and answer practice). Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) suggest that a fourth type of activity should also be included; namely, activities which focus on different types of strategies (e.g. coping strategies at the lower levels such as echoing, paraphrasing; and enhancing strategies at the higher levels).

Types of Activities

While Brumfit (1979) includes only the minimum three types of activities in his model, Littlewood (1981) and Harmer (1983) break down these activities into more steps. Littlewood calls role plays, etc. communicative activities and breaks these activities down into two types: functional communicative activities which are similar to Brumfit's in that the learner performs a task with whatever resources he has available; and, social interaction activities in which the learner is encouraged to take account of the social context in which communication takes place. Littlewood suggests that activities included in this latter type of activity may first include a focus on

greater grammatical accuracy and, later, a focus on producing socially appropriate speech. He includes activities which present and practise language items in what he calls pre-communicative activities and also breaks these down into two types: structural activities which include different types of drills or question and answer practice; and, quasi-communicative activities which involve meaningful practice.

Harmer (1983) breaks down communicative activities into three stages: a lead-in stage in which the context is introduced and the new language is demonstrated, an elicitation stage in which the teacher determines if the learners can produce the new language; and, an immediate creativity stage, if necessary, in which the learners try to produce the new language following a practice stage. Harmer's pre-communicative activities are similar to Brumfit's, involving an explanation stage in which the teacher shows how the new language is formed and an accurate reproduction stage in which the learner practises a number of models.

Activities Which Focus On Form

The activities which are included in pre-communicative activities clearly have a preparatory function

...the teacher isolates specific elements of knowledge or skill which compose communicative

ability, and provides the learners with opportunities to practise them separately. The learners are thus being trained in the part-skills of communication rather than practising the total skill to be acquired. (Littlewood 1981:85)

While these elements may be practised individually, they may, nevertheless, be presented and practised in meaningful/communicative contexts which allow the learner to analyze and synthesize the data for himself as suggested by current theories on information processing. Once the part-skills of communication have been practised, they may be included in the practice of the total skills which need to be acquired.

Activities Which Focus on Communication

While it has been suggested that a focus on form is important to effective and socially acceptable communication, a focus on fluency is equally important.

Not to allow the learner some freedom to use the newly developed skills in unpredictable directions will be to frustrate the very abilities which will be necessary for the most effective response to the predicted needs. Language uses which do not require improvisation are really demanding language-like behaviour rather than true linguistic behaviour, for improvisation is a characteristic of any human interaction. (Brumfit 1979:186)

Situations should, therefore, be presented to learners which allow them to communicate with their available resources; that is, which match their performance levels (Higgs and Clifford, 1982). In such situations, learners

...develop their innate ability to use language for their own purposes in interaction with the purposes of other users. They do this through the acquisition of a set of strategies which they manipulate constantly negotiating and renegotiating their linguistic relationships. (Brumfit 1980:3)

It may be postulated, then, that learners should be exposed to language in much the same way that they would be in the outside world, with the exception that the language used in the classroom is at a level which is comprehensible to them. Further, they should be allowed to improvise with the linguistic forms to which they have been exposed, but they should not be encouraged to adopt or invent communication strategies far beyond their linguistic capabilities..

Brumfit also suggests, and Widdowson (1968,1975) concurs, that students learn more effectively when they are using the language to learn something new rather than simply discussing things with which they are familiar.

It is...frequently maintained by educational philosophers that the development of new ideas and concepts is to a great extent the development of a new language, but this position may also be inverted to suggest that the development of a new language should be associated with the development of new ideas and concepts. (Brumfit 1984:68)

Widdowson (1983) urges that communicative activities involve problem-solving. Problem-solving activities can include one-way tasks; for example, where one person asks all the questions and one person answers all the questions;

and two-way tasks; for example, where both people need to ask and answer questions in order to solve the task. Whether one-way or two-way tasks are used would depend upon the level of the learners.

Brumfit (1979), Littlewood (1981), and Harmer (1983) suggest that the combination of pre-communicative and communicative activities prepares learners for communication outside of the classroom. They also imply that real-life communicative practice; that is, communicative practice in the actual situations in which the learners might find themselves, is available only outside of the classroom and, therefore, outside of the control of the teacher. However, in many business situations, and often in regular classroom situations, it is possible to set up real-life practice situations as part of classroom activities. To make these activities comprehensible to learners, they may be presented and practised in the form of pedagogical tasks (Long 1985) and may include telephone activities to various businesses as well as excursions to various establishments such as restaurants, stores, museums, exhibitions, tours, etc. If a communicative teaching method aims not only at providing language in meaningful and motivating contexts but also at providing possibilities for real-life communication, then this fourth type of real-life communicative activity

should be included. As Popham states

...if you wish to have students become truly skilled at giving impromptu speeches (for example), then you'd certainly better supply a ton of practice for them in giving impromptu speeches (since)...the important thing is to get the student to practice the intellectual operations called for in the...domain of behaviours. (Popham 1979:221)

To summarize, communicative language teaching methods often include three types of activities: activities which present language, activities which practise language, with varying degrees of emphasis on language forms, and activities which practise language with emphasis on communication. It has been suggested in this discussion that two more types of activities should be included; first, within the area of pre-communicative activities, activities should also be included which focus on the strategies which assist communication; and, second, within the area of communicative activities, real-life communicative activities should be included. These are graded for complexity and allow the learners to actually use what they have practised in the classroom. The order in which these activities should be presented in order to facilitate acquisition and encourage motivation is another question which needs to be addressed.

Sequencing Language Activities

Brumfit (1979:1,2), Littlewood (1981:85,86), and Harmer (1983:57) suggest that different sequences can be followed. If the teacher wishes, he can begin with communicative activities, move on to activities which present and practise language items, as needed (when the communicative activity cannot be successfully completed) and return to communicative activities if necessary. Beginning with communicative activities demonstrates to both the teacher and the learner what the learner is capable of. Subsequent activities could, therefore, avoid giving undue attention to what a learner knows.

Following this sequence, however, presupposes that learners have some basic linguistic tools with which to communicate. Conducting communicative activities with low-level beginners would be very limiting and, as discussed above, would have a negative effect on future development. In such circumstances, Littlewood (1981) suggests reversing the order of the activities and beginning with pre-communicative activities. As the learners build their base of knowledge, the focus can be shifted more and more to beginning with communicative

activities and following with pre-communicative activities.⁴

Another consideration in beginning with communicative activities is the degree to which they represent real-life situations. The communicative activities suggested by these theorists, while they may be authentic, are often only practice for real-life situations; however, as indicated earlier, it is possible to set up real-life situations as part of classroom activities. In such cases, communicative activities such as role plays, simulations, etc. should be prerequisites for real-life activities so that the learner is not set up for failure. For example, if the real-life communicative activity is to telephone the train station and to obtain information on fares and schedules, the learner should be adequately rehearsed before making the actual telephone call. If the teacher uses the telephone call as a diagnostic communicative activity, the learner may fail and may, therefore, be reluctant to try again.

The order of activities, then, is determined by the knowledge base available to the learners: learners whose

⁴Littlewood (1981) suggests that activities which focus on language forms can still be pre-communicative even if they follow diagnostic communicative activities since they will again be followed by communicative activities.

knowledge of forms is very limited would begin with pre-communicative activities in the majority of cases and move on to the prerequisite and real-life communicative activities; learners who have a linguistic base could begin with the prerequisite communicative activities and, if necessary, move on to pre-communicative activities, returning later to more prerequisite communicative activities followed by real-life communicative activities. How these activities can be presented in a method for implementing the units of a task-based syllabus for experienced employees will be discussed in the next section.

IMPLEMENTING THE TASK-BASED SYLLABUS

The task-based syllabus outlined in Chapter 3 divided the linguistic skills required by experienced employees into three units: notions, functions, and tasks common to all job categories. It also provided a list of linguistic exponents⁵ which are minimally to be considered in the development and presentation of materials. The method which would be used for implementing the syllabus would depend upon the level at which learners entered the language training program. Zero-level learners and false beginners would start with pre-communicative activities in the

⁵grammatical structures, lexical items, functional gambits, cohesive devices, and strategies

majority of situations in order to gain mastery of the notions which are the basis of all the job tasks which are performed by employees. These learners would subsequently move on to practice communicative activities followed by real-life communicative activities.

Learners at higher language levels may begin with prerequisite communicative activities; practising the objectives which are listed in the units on functions and tasks common to all job categories, and either move on to pre-communicative activities followed by more prerequisite communicative activities and then real-life communicative activities; or, if they are able to perform the practice activity, move directly to real-life activities.⁶

These activities should focus on both one-way and two-way problem-solving tasks. Since they are graded for complexity in the syllabus (that is, each level represents a more complex version of the final job task or process which accomplishes a job task), they should provide comprehensible input to learners. Communicative activities should also reflect the interests of the learners as well

⁶The amount of real-life practice which can be included depends, of course, upon the facilities which are available to the teacher, and the leeway the institution gives the teacher to leave the classroom. However, most business organizations will have fairly easy access to telephones, for example.

as their job needs; and, real-life practice of these skills may be carried out on the telephone, in a variety of establishments, and at the employees' work stations. If it is found that learners are having difficulties with certain linguistic items, these may be practised in pre-communicative activities before returning to the communicative activities. It should be noted that this framework is intended to be flexible, and that the teacher can begin with the type of activity which seems most appropriate for any given situation.⁷

Although pre-communicative and communicative activities are discussed here as separate activities, a number of factors should be considered for both types of activities. First, the list of linguistic exponents provided in the syllabus should be considered in the development of any materials for both pre-communicative and communicative activities.

Second, although activities involving notions, functions, and tasks common to all job categories are intended to be complete activities on their own, once a notion or a function has been practised, it should be incorporated into other activities whenever it is appropriate. In other

⁷This would be determined by the teacher's knowledge of how a student(s) within a particular class appears to learn best, on the teacher's knowledge of the learner's linguistic base, and on the size of the teacher's class.

words, the teacher should take every opportunity to use and encourage the students to use the newly-learned skill. (An example of how these elements may be practised and integrated is included in Appendix G.)

Third, although the objectives listed under the headings of notions, functions, and tasks are presented in a linear fashion in each level of the syllabus, the teacher is free to present activities which fulfill them at any time.⁸ For beginners, however, the teacher should consider the steps which are required to complete the communicative activity; that is to say, that the teacher should break the activity down into its constituent parts, in advance of presentation in class, and work on the part-skills which are required. For example, if the learner is practising activities in which he gives instructions on how to perform his job tasks, which may include instructions on how to complete a particular form, the teacher should ensure that the learner has previously performed activities which focused on using prepositions to describe where to put things on a page.

Learners may also express a desire to learn a notion or function which has only been identified at the next higher

⁸Ideally, this will be either when the learner asks for them or when the learner's interests or curiosity about certain subjects present an opportunity.

level. If it does not constitute too big a leap from the learner's language base, the teacher should present the objective. For example, "making simple comparisons and contrasts" is an objective from the Level 2 Montreal Agency syllabus; however, learners can be given simple activities at Level 1 if they request them or an opportunity arises to present them. Any objectives which have been covered from higher levels should be incorporated, when appropriate, into lower-level activities.

Fourth, activities should be chosen because they relate to a specific objective. For example, games are often used as a communicative activity to practise notions and functions and many teachers use them as 'fillers' at the end of a class or as 'light' or 'fun' activities because learners are tired. Games should, however, be selected to complement the focus of the day's other activities or to review previously practised material. If they are used in this way, they provide additional opportunities for the learner to engage in more of the same type of communication, thereby acting as reinforcement.⁹ For example, at the beginner level, a short game of cribbage, where learners must add numbers may be an enjoyable communicative activity as practice or as a follow-up to a

⁹If they are not used this way, they may encourage the development of incorrect communication strategies which may later fossilize.

lesson which focused on numbers (prices, amounts, etc.) particularly if the learner is having problems with numbers. 'Spill and Spell', or similar spelling games could be used as a game to follow-up or precede telephone activities involving the spelling of names and addresses. A computer adventure game such as 'Tower of Mystery' (IBM) which involves the student in finding his way through a factory to find a copy of a computer program may be used to reinforce notions (directions (north, south, east, west, up, down)), functions (giving instructions (on how to use the computer, how to play the game), suggesting), and office vocabulary while engaging the learners in a problem-solving activity (finding the computer program).

Fifth, as much as possible, tasks should be presented in a way which is consistent with the learner's learning style¹⁰. Although language acquisition studies suggest that learners go through a process of hypothesis testing (Corder, 1967), there are learners who request grammatical rules and this should not be denied. However, as discussed above, grammatical rules should never be given in isolation but should be presented in relation to something with which the learner is familiar in order to set up a heuristic. The teacher need not necessarily begin with the rule but

¹⁰identified in Appendix D and through classroom interaction with learners

may first provide examples from which the learner may, through negotiation with other learners, derive a rule for himself. In such a way, the activity of finding a grammatical rule can become communicative. If this does not seem to be happening or the learner specifically requests it, the teacher should provide a rule. Learners may want rules only some of the time and different learners may want rules for different things.

Although the types of activities and how they are presented form the basis of a method of implementation, Richards and Rodgers (1982) suggest that the role of the teachers and the role of materials also need to be considered.

The Role of Teachers

For in-house courses being given in business and industry, classes are generally quite small, ranging from one-on-one to small groups of up to eight. In a one-on-one situation, the teacher must be both facilitator and the major contact for second language interaction. As a result, he has a great deal of flexibility in tailoring the course to the learner's interests, learning style, rate of learning, problems, etc. and can add as much supplementary material as he feels is necessary to help the learner achieve the language goals of the course. The teacher has some flexibility as well when dealing with groups; however, he

cannot spend as much class time on any one individual's problems if these problems are not shared by the other learners in the group. In such cases, the teacher should provide supplementary exercises as well as any other help outside of class which he feels may be useful. In a group situation as well, the teacher plays more of a facilitator role than he does in a one-on-one situation.

The Role of Materials

The purpose of teaching materials is to facilitate the presentation of activities which will enable the learner to perform his job tasks. As much as possible, materials should be authentic or modified with a view to complexity. Teacher-created materials should also consider the level of complexity and should be personalized to the learners in question as well as to their situations. For example, as previously discussed, learners in the Montreal Agency need to be able to make hotel reservations. Before making an actual reservation, the teacher may create a dialogue or, if possible, record a dialogue of himself making a reservation. When learners practise the dialogues before making the actual reservation, the practice dialogues should use the learner's name(s) and the name and dates, etc. of the person for whom the reservation is intended. Actual reservations can be made for employees whose names and travel details may be obtained from a person who

usually performs this job task in the second language. Since so much of the material is geared to the job needs and personal interests of the learners, it should be understood that this type of program will require either a set of specially developed materials or a great deal of teacher-created materials.

Materials should also be selected for their relevance to the learner's job. This means that materials should include anything for which the employee may need the second language on the job (e.g. computer programs, forms, documents, etc.) as well as anything which contains subject matter related to the job. For example, readings, videos, audio-cassettes, computer programs, etc. of job situations should be available or should contain job-related subject matter. Following van Naerssen's (1985) suggestion of using job-related contexts as the basis of materials to capture the learner's interests, job-related subject matter for bank employees might include stories, videos, audio-cassettes, etc. about personal finance, robberies, legal processes, detective stories with various crimes, all of which use vocabulary and structures etc. which occur frequently in the learner's job. It should be noted that learners in business situations are often not interested in materials which are prepared for other types of learners

(e.g. foreign students) because they see no relevance to their own situations.

To summarize this chapter, although the method of implementation of any syllabus should be regarded as a flexible framework, current theories of language learning and language teaching have implications on how to implement a task-based syllabus for experienced employees. A method of implementation should take into account the readiness of the learner to receive new information and the manner in which this new information is processed. Language objectives should be presented in contexts which are meaningful and motivating and which allow the learner to analyze and synthesize the new information. Further, language objectives should be sequenced from simple to complex in terms of structural complexity and other factors¹¹. Focused grammatical instruction and error correction appear to play important roles in language acquisition, particularly if they are carried out in meaningful contexts; however, the teacher or course designer should bear in mind that learners may not be integrating what is being taught at any given moment but,

¹¹e.g. Factors to be considered might include the number of variables, the degree of familiarity and background knowledge required, the degree of abstractness, the degree of predictability, the degree of inferencing required, the amount of extra-textual information/autonomy, the type of organization, inter alia.

rather, may be storing this information until more information becomes available which will allow them to process it.

Chapter 5

STUDENT EVALUATION

INTRODUCTION

The previous chapters discussed the need for specific, systematic second-language courses for experienced employees and outlined the steps for both developing and implementing a competency-oriented program for employees working in different but related job categories. However, if a teacher or course designer develops a second-language program based on employee job tasks, he also needs to know whether and when the employees have gained enough mastery of the language to perform these tasks competently on the job. It is, therefore, necessary to develop a method of student evaluation which will demonstrate what the employee can do with the language and to what extent. There are two types of measurements currently available for student evaluation: norm-referenced measurement and criterion-referenced measurement.

This chapter suggests that criterion-referenced measurement is more suitable for evaluating an employee's competency to perform his job tasks in the target language than norm-referenced measurement. Two types of evaluation which are used for different purposes are also examined as are the steps involved in creating, scoring, and reporting test items. However, before discussing criterion-referenced

measurement and what it entails, it may be helpful to first briefly discuss norm-referenced measurement and to point out why it is felt that this type of measurement is inadequate in assessing the extent to which the student is able to perform precise work-related tasks in the target language.

Norm-Referenced Measurement

Language learners are tested for a variety of reasons: to be distributed to various course levels, to pass from one grade/level to the next, to determine university entrance eligibility, and to assess their ability to perform competently in the second language on the job. Many of the standardized tests (e.g. MTELP, CELT, TOEFL, the Federal Government's Language Knowledge Examination (LKE)) which are available to teachers and school authorities are norm-referenced. These tests consist of discrete-point items which make up samples of language usage and not language use. Examinees' answers are marked either correct or incorrect and the results of these tests; that is, the total scores, are often only used to compare learners to each other. There are several drawbacks, however, to using this type of test to assess language ability.

Popham (1979:92) suggests that these tests are excessively general and can lead to mismatches between what is tested

and what is taught.

If the test isn't congruent with the objectives, then the whole assessment endeavour will surely be feckless at best and misleading at worst. (Popham 1978:16)

Further, such tests often consider only the student's knowledge of discrete elements of the language and say little, if anything, about what the learner can do with the second language in any particular situation.¹ As a result, it is often difficult to determine whether he has the ability to perform competently and, if not, where his ability to use the language is lacking so that the situation may be rectified with more instruction. These tests also provide little information about the program itself and how it may be ineffective in preparing employees to perform necessary tasks.

Although some programs still use norm-referenced tests, many teachers in business institutions have recognized that these types of tests do not measure an employee's ability to perform specific job tasks competently and, therefore,

¹This mismatch between teaching and testing was evident in the Federal Government's second language classes prior to September 1985 when the new job-oriented English program was introduced. Because of the popularity of communicative language teaching and the current belief in the positive effects of such instruction, Federal Government programs were oriented in this direction. However, the LKE tested only the learner's knowledge of the language and it was unknown whether he could perform his job tasks at the end of the course. Indeed, because the programs were not based on the learner's job tasks, this type of testing was not even valid.

often either dispense with tests altogether, preferring to rely on their own skilled intuitions about what students can do with the language, or prepare tests which are based on what they feel should be included. However, there are two major problems with these types of informal assessment. First, it is not certain that these forms of evaluation are reliable in the sense that different teachers may assess the same students differently based on their own personal criteria. Consequently, students may be graded higher or lower than they should be on their ability to perform their job tasks in the second language or they may even be graded inappropriately.

Second, it is not certain whether these teacher assessments are valid. If a program is not based on the language tasks of the learner, the teacher's assessment is often based on what the student can do in the classroom. Unfortunately, this does not necessarily reflect the learner's ability to perform competently on the job. Even when the language program is based on employee tasks, a test of the learner's competency should follow definite and clearly-defined criteria so that anyone interpreting the test results will have a fairly clear picture of what the employees can do in the second language on the job.

Criterion-referenced Measurement²

Criterion-referenced tests are being developed in various fields in order to measure, more precisely, what students can do with regard to specified objectives in their domain. Popham defines criterion-referenced tests as tests

...used to ascertain an individual's status with respect to a well-defined behavioural domain. (Popham 1978:110)

For the purpose of this paper, criterion will refer to the behaviour or skill which needs to be mastered in the second language by the employee in order to perform his job competently.

Clearly-defined tests are important to the teacher for two reasons. First, he would like to be able to determine the pre-instruction status of the learners to ascertain whether language training is necessary and, if so, in what areas and to what extent. As discussed in Chapter 4, it is

²It should be noted that the entire field of criterion-referenced measurement is relatively new, with suggestions for methodology first being outlined in the mid to late 1970s (e.g. Mager 1974, Popham 1978). Criterion-referenced measurement in the field of second language instruction is even more recent and while attempts have been made to set up suitable methodology (e.g. Cziko 1982, Hudson and Lynch 1984, DeLamere 1985, Swain 1984), because of the newness of the field the 'bugs' have not as yet been worked out. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the methodology is not useful. When judging criterion-referenced tests, it must be remembered that this type of measurement is in its infancy and that what is presently available is a starting point to be taken up by specialists in the language testing field.

desirable to determine what language ability students have before beginning language training so that the focus of instruction is on what learners are lacking and not on what they already know. Testing in this instance, has a diagnostic purpose.

Second, the teacher would like to be able to determine the status of the students both at intervals during the course (formative evaluation) and at the end of the course (summative evaluation). Formative evaluation is necessary at periodic intervals to ascertain which skills, of those which have received focused attention, the learner is able to use appropriately and consistently, and which of those skills, if any, require remedial work. Like pre-instruction evaluation, formative evaluation is also diagnostic, allowing the teacher/tester to determine problem areas and to take appropriate remedial action; however, this type of evaluation also allows the teacher/tester to determine problems with the course objectives and the method of instruction.

Summative evaluation is necessary at the end of the course to determine whether the student has attained all of the objectives set out for him at a particular level, and whether he is able to synthesize the skills he has learned and not simply perform the skills as discrete items; in

other words, this type of evaluation is used to determine the learner's ability to function competently at a particular level so that he can move to a higher proficiency level and, ultimately, so that he can leave the language training program and perform competently on the job. As with formative evaluation, summative evaluation strategies should also determine where the language program has been ineffective so that course objectives as described in the syllabus, the method of instruction, materials, or other components may be modified or refined.

Having a clear picture of what employees can do on the job is also important to the employer since he would like to know what it is an employee at a certain competency level can do in the second language. In some cases, competency in the second language makes a difference in job performance appraisals (e.g. Bank of Canada) or salary (e.g. the bilingualism bonus offered to Federal public servants).

STEPS TO DEVELOPING CRITERION-REFERENCED LANGUAGE TESTS IN BUSINESS

Many of the steps which will be suggested here for developing criterion-referenced tests have been adapted from Popham (1978), Mager (1984) and Swain (1984). Mager (1984:3) suggests that where objectives are derived from

task analyses, developing test items should be a relatively simple matter since any test item will require the learner to perform the objective. However, criterion-referenced tests can differ depending upon the type of objectives they are intended to measure; that is, whether the evaluation is formative or summative.

In the program outlined in this paper, the language objectives for each level of the syllabus are listed under the headings of notions, functions, and tasks common to all job categories. The core exponents which are to be considered in each of these components are also listed for each level of the syllabus under the headings of: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, strategic competence, and procedural competence. Clearly, any tests which would determine the learner's ability to function at a particular language level would need to be devised with a view to the objectives and the exponents of each of the competencies at that level. In the following section, I will propose one possibility for setting formative and summative tests. This proposition, however, is meant only as a starting point.

Formative Evaluation

For each language level, the exponents included in each of the competencies as well as the objectives listed under the notions and functions constitute the part-skills of communication and their mastery is important to the mastery of all the job tasks. It would be reasonable, then, to suggest that tests should periodically be set to determine mastery of these exponents as well as mastery of the individual notions and functions contained in a level before continuing in the course. The question, of course, is what is the best method for testing mastery of these elements?

- Popham (1978:117,118) suggests that a major consideration in developing criterion-referenced tests is determining the level of generality which is desired. He states that if we were trying to develop diagnostic tests that allowed us to pinpoint the en-route skills a learner had mastered or failed to master, then clearly we would have to devise tests that measure teenier chunks of behaviour. (Popham 1978:118)

Formative tests, then, could be set periodically which test the student's ability to perform the part-skills for each level. Popham suggests that the advantage of testing smaller segments of examinee behaviours is that

...key dimensions of the behaviour measured can be more satisfactorily isolated and described. (Popham 1978:117)

The result is that learner problems may be more easily and accurately identified for subsequent remedial help.

However, Popham also points out that

...there are limits to the utility of numerous criterion-referenced tests. People can tolerate only so much information. Plus the amount of examinee testing time required would be enormous. (Popham 1978:117)

To avoid numerous test items, Popham (Popham:120) suggests using a limited-focus strategy. Test items are prepared which consider individual objectives; however, the test items subsume the more elementary behaviours and skills. Test items, therefore, could be developed which focus on the notional and functional objectives and which subsume such things as verb tenses, comparatives, and conjunctions. For example, a Level 1 objective requires learners to be able to state and understand obligations (e.g. You have to initial all transfer sheets). A test item may be set which requires learners to state the steps necessary to perform a particular job task which they performed the day before, which they habitually perform and which they will have to perform tomorrow thereby subsuming the past, present, and future tenses as well as job vocabulary. Such test items would determine the learner's ability to use the language both at the higher level of the notion or function and at the lower level of the, for example, grammatical exponent.

Popham (1978:122) points out that while it is more difficult to isolate and attempt to define with sufficient specificity a small number of high import behaviours which subsume the more elementary behaviours, preparing these types of limited focus tests is more reflective of the student's overall ability to perform tasks. A limited focus strategy is even more appropriate in preparing tests for summative evaluation.

Summative Evaluation

In summative evaluation, a learner's ability to perform all of the objectives designated for a particular language level, and the competencies they represent, are measured in order to determine whether he is ready to either proceed to the next higher level or to discontinue language training. However, the goal of summative evaluation in a job-oriented program is not only to determine whether the learner can perform each of the objectives, but also whether he has the ability to synthesize the skills and competencies they represent in order to perform the job tasks.

Integrative test items must, therefore, be prepared which test the student's ability to perform the job tasks at the level to which he has been trained; that is, either a pedagogical version of the tasks at the end of a particular course or the target tasks at the end of language

training. These test items should reflect the exponents of the competencies as outlined in each level of the syllabus, and the skills which are required to perform the tasks such as speaking and listening, reading and writing, all four, or various combinations.

An example of this type of summative test is a test which has been devised for the Level 2 Montreal Agency objective of employees being able to travel on Bank business (Appendix H). This test requires the examinee to make actual travel arrangements for himself or someone else, thereby integrating several skills and competencies. The test is in the form of a letter requesting the examinee to make the travel arrangements and stipulating certain conditions. The examinee is required to read the letter and telephone airlines and hotels to determine prices and make reservations. The examinee is subsequently required to write a letter advising what arrangements have been made

Such a test satisfies Swain's (1984) criteria for the content requirements of a communicative test; namely, (1) the content is motivating, being drawn from the examinee's job; (2) the content is substantive, providing new information through an informational gap; (3) the content is integrative, dealing with one theme around which all information activities are centred. This integration also

ensures that many of the part-skills of communication, such as verb tenses, comparatives, superlatives, functions, etc. are subsumed; and (4) the content is interactive, requiring the examinee to telephone various individuals to obtain information and make reservations and then write to the person who requested the travel arrangements.

Creating Test Items

Whether the tests are formative or summative, there are a number of factors which apply to devising test items for both. First, items should test what the learner must be able to do. It is not good enough to hope that the employee will transfer the skills he has learned in class to on the job tasks. If, for example, it matters whether an employee is able to politely provide the procedure to clients over the telephone of how to claim an old bank account from the Bank of Canada, then, Mager (1984:93) suggests, the test should find out, if that skill can be performed. In addition, he suggests that the teacher/ tester should

use as many items as are needed to sample the range of givens (i.e. the things students will have to work with) and the range of conditions. But make certain that each and every item used, matches the objective. (Mager 1984:94)

Second, test items, and objectives, should be clearly stated. Popham (1978:176) suggests that one of the most

important steps in developing criterion-referenced tests is developing an unambiguous descriptive scheme of the examinee's performance on the test. He further suggests that it is necessary to

...start off by explicitly defining a desired post-instruction learner behaviour. (Popham 1978:12)

Mager suggests that the teacher/tester

write or select items that will ask students to do what the objective says they are to be able to do.³ (Mager 1984:51)

Writing clear objectives includes defining any terminology. For example, it is not helpful to include an objective/test item such as 'a Level 1 learner should be able to answer the telephone appropriately' without defining what 'appropriately' means in this context; for example, expressing regret that the person is unavailable, offering an explanation and time, politely asking the person's name and telephone number using one of the courtesy gambits practised in the course or any other courtesy gambit from the learner's repertoire. Mager (1984:51) also suggests that it may be useful to provide an illustration of the type of performance expected. In the example cited above

³In a task-based program, test items should mirror the objectives. If they don't, either the test item or the objective or both should be revised or rejected. However; objectives for second language instruction need to be more detailed than for other fields since in order to be able to perform the objective the learner needs to be able to master the linguistic elements they contain.

this might be:

I'm sorry, the manager isn't here at the moment.
May I take your name and telephone number?

Mager (1984:38) also suggests other factors which should be considered when developing a descriptive scheme for an objective/test item:

The examinee performance required should be stated as the main intent or an indicator. For example, the performance required to demonstrate the employee's ability to make train reservations at Level 1 may be stated as follows:

Main intent: Given a short letter or memo stating the name of the person travelling, the time of departure and return, and the type of ticket, the examinee should be able to politely make travel arrangements with VIA Rail using one or more of the courtesy gambits practised.

Indicator: Given a short letter or memo stating the name of the person travelling, the time of departure and return, and the type of ticket, the examinee should be able to telephone VIA Rail and politely make a reservation, obtain departure and arrival times, and politely request the price of the ticket using one or more of the courtesy gambits practised.

If the performance is stated as the main intent, it should be noted whether it is overt or covert. The performance of the main intent given in the example above is covert since it is unknown what exactly is involved in making travel

arrangements. An indicator behaviour would, therefore, need to be added. In this example, the objective might be restated as:

Given a letter or memo stating the name of the person travelling, the desired date and time of departure and return, and the type of ticket, the examinee should be able to make travel arrangements by telephoning VIA Rail, politely making a reservation, obtaining departure and arrival times, and politely requesting the price of the ticket using one or more of the courtesy gambits practised.

Mager (1984:38) also states that the indicator should be the simplest and most direct, one that the teacher/tester could find and should be well within the repertoire of the student. If either the main intent or the indicator is unclear, it should be revised. If it is not possible to tell what the required performance is, the objective should be revised or rejected.

A third factor which applies to devising tests for summative evaluation, and which may apply to formative evaluation, is that it is important that the conditions under which the learner is tested are the same as the objectives; that is, both the objective and the test item ask the student to do what he would be asked to do in normal working circumstances. For example, if an employee has to make train reservations on the telephone, at the level to which he has been trained, he should make real

reservations, under normal conditions, if possible, and not role-play with a teacher in a quiet classroom or using a teletrainer.

Swain (1984:16), however, suggests that the test should be biased to elicit the learner's best performance. Factors which she suggests should be considered include:

1. recognizing that individuals work at varying paces and providing adequate time to complete the task (1984:17). This, of course depends on the type of task being evaluated. Examinees cannot, for example, take an overly-long time to complete a telephone task as the listener's tolerance is limited.
2. providing access to reference materials such as dictionaries and explicitly encouraging examinees to use them (1984:17). In any type of letter, memo, report writing, for example, employees would have access to such reference materials on the job.
3. providing an opportunity for examinees to review and revise their work (1984:17). If, for example, the examinee is required to obtain three pieces of information on the telephone and upon rereading the request discovers that he has only obtained two, he should be allowed to telephone again to obtain the third piece of information.

In preparing test items for formative evaluation, an additional factor might be considered. Swain (1984:18) suggests that the teacher/tester check that everyone is following the task instructions correctly while the task is being done. This may include giving additional instructions or making useful suggestions as to what and how to respond. For example, the teacher/tester might state: "Since this is a business letter, it should be written in a formal style with an opening and closing sentence."

Although it is preferable that test items be authentic, there are situations in which testing in real conditions is not possible. Mager (1984:83) suggests that in such circumstances, conditions, but never performance, may be simulated.

Always ask your students to do that which the objective asks them to do, even though you must provide simulated conditions. (Mager 1984:83)

Mager points out that when the conditions are simulated or approximated, the tester will have to make inferences about whether the students will be able to do the 'real thing' asked for by the objective. As the simulation increases, of course, so too does the size of the inference.

A fourth factor which should be considered in the creation of test items is timeliness. Mager (1984:97) suggests that

perform with respect to the behaviour in question. Even if we possess a splendid description of the extent to which a pupil can perform a given skill, there are often cases in which we must ask, "Is this performance good enough?" (Popham 1978:184)

Swain suggests that

the scoring procedure developed should reflect...the theoretical framework which initially guides the tests' construction. (1984:16)

For the program outlined in this paper, the objectives reflect part-skills as well as the job tasks at various stages. A learner's overall ability to perform the objectives/tasks is scored on whether or not he can do what the objective/task requires. How well he does this is determined by how well he performs the various competencies at the level tested.

Swain (1984:19) proposes that each task be scored for the grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic aspects of communicative language performance. What is included in these competencies at each language level should, therefore, be explicitly stated. She (1984:18) gives examples of what these competencies might include:

1. grammatical competence:

-prepositional errors, verb morphology
errors, word order errors

2. discourse competence:

- incorrect shifts of tense sequencing,
- incorrect use of pronouns

3. sociolinguistic competence:

- appropriateness of the language used.
- This would include the use of certain courtesy gambits.

4. strategic competence:

- attempts made to understand. This would include requests for clarification; for example, 'Could you repeat that, please?'
- attempts made to get messages across. This would include such strategies as paraphrasing.

Despite the use of such a framework, the question still arises: Should learners be allowed to continue if they can perform the objectives using perhaps three of the competencies, as designated for the level in question but with grammatical errors? If the errors interfered with communication, the answer would, of course, be "No", since it would not be possible to complete the objectives satisfactorily; however, if the errors were of a developmental nature or were fossilized, the decision would not be as easy. Because of the nature of language learning, the evaluation of language objectives,

unfortunately, is not as clearcut as it might be in, for example, auto mechanics. It is, therefore, more difficult to determine what performance is 'good enough' to continue to the next level or to leave the course.

Popham (1978:183) suggests that teachers/testers gather comparative data in field trials in order to ascertain how other examinees performed on the test. Obtaining such comparative data, however, is more easily managed in larger and more numerous classes, such as those which are available in educational institutions. Because of the small number of students at any particular level at any particular time in business institutions, it is much more difficult to obtain comparative data. Certainly standards need to be set which describe the level of performance which is acceptable or not acceptable in carrying out a set of objectives. Until more research is done, it may be suggested that if the learners can successfully perform the objectives which constitute the part-skills of communication and the pedagogical tasks at each level, then the performances would have to be deemed good enough. If not, remedial help would have to be offered or learners would have to be designated terminal and would have to be discontinued. (See Appendix H for an example of scoring a Level 2 summative test).

Frequency of Evaluations

Not only is it important to determine what should be included in formative and summative evaluations, and what level of performance is acceptable or unacceptable, but it is also necessary to determine when these evaluations should take place. The frequency of evaluations is closely linked with the length of language training, particularly in business institutions where language training implies the release of an employee from regular duties and the hiring of a teacher.

Although the ideal situation would be to let learners continue in the program until they have achieved the objectives for each level, this is not always practical since the objectives cannot always be attained. For example, learners may not be motivated, may have learning disabilities, or may be terminal. It is, therefore, necessary to set a limit on the number of hours it should take to achieve the objectives for each level. This time limit should include any remedial help which may be necessary.

Even though no empirical studies have been done in the Montreal Agency to determine how long it takes learners to achieve the objectives of each level, from observation, using the former ad hoc program, it has taken on average

between 90 and 120 Hours.⁵ The outside limit for achieving the language objectives of one level is, therefore, currently set at approximately 120 hours. With classes averaging 3 hours per week, it takes approximately 10 months to achieve one language level.⁶ Since this is a long interval for both the employer and the student to wait for any formal signs of progress, evaluations have usually taken place on a more frequent basis - usually after 50-60 hours. At this point, learners have not achieved all of the objectives so that evaluation is formative; however, both the employer and the student can see whether and what type of progress has been achieved. Formative evaluation may be carried out on an even more frequent basis if the teacher would like to check for the necessity of remedial help more often. Summative evaluation takes place after the 120 hours of the course. The issuance of more than two evaluation sheets per course would not, however, be useful, since significant progress could not be demonstrated after 30 hours, for example, and since the time which the employer has to review such evaluations is often limited.

⁵Assuming 10 levels; that is, false beginner to level 9, it should take no more than 1200 hours for learners to achieve the highest level of competence required for the jobs in question. It is hoped that the new program will allow the students to achieve their required competency levels in significantly less time.

⁶Immersion are periodically included for high priority learners so that several levels may be achieved in one year.

Evaluation Sheet

As mentioned above, employers would like to know exactly what it means when an employee has achieved one language level and, ultimately, when the employee has achieved the language level required to perform the job competently. Popham (1978) and Mager (1984) also suggest that the students would like to know in advance as well as at the end of a course exactly what it is that they should be capable of doing in the target language. Mager suggests that

a more meaningful reporting system is one that identifies the competencies accomplished by individual students; this way one knows what specific students are able to do. (Mager 1984:100)

Any learner evaluation form should, therefore, include the following⁷:

1. the level at which the learner entered language training and, hence, the objectives which he has mastered. This is desirable in order to demonstrate at the end of individual courses and at the end of language training how much progress has/has not been made overall.

⁷An example of what such an evaluation form might look like has been included in Appendix I.

2. the level at which the learner entered a particular course and the objectives which would have been mastered. This may or may not be the same as the level at which he entered language training. For example, a learner may have entered language training at Level 1 but may have had several training sessions and is entering a new training session at Level 3.

3. the desired level of competency at which the learner should complete his training. This would also include the objectives which this level represents so that both the learner and the employer are aware of the goal.

Although objectives should be listed for each level, a technical problem arises in deciding how many objectives should be included. Should only the tasks be included which the employee can perform at a given level or should objectives for the part-skills also be included and, if so, in what detail? As suggested above, formative evaluation would include the part-skills and summative evaluation would describe larger objectives. While the teacher and student may be interested in knowing which part-skills can be performed and to what extent, this may be less important to the employer. Nevertheless, it may be more useful to include more rather than fewer objectives, since doing so

would provide a record for the teacher and learner. The employer can choose to look solely at the overall rating but has the option of referring to the objectives to see how the level translates into individual language skills. A separate sheet detailing each of the objectives and what they represent at each language level could also be provided, as a reference, to the employer and to the learners.

To summarize, criterion-referenced measurement is considered more useful in determining an employee's ability to perform his job tasks competently than norm-referenced measurement because the former type of evaluation directly tests the learner's ability to perform specific tasks. It was proposed that formative evaluation be used to measure the student's ability to perform the part-skills of communication, and summative evaluation be used to measure the student's ability to synthesize these part-skills to perform job-related tasks. It was also suggested that a limited-focus strategy be employed for both types of evaluation in order to limit the number of tests. Test items should consider several factors: (1) they should test that which the employee must be able to do; (2) they should be clearly stated; (3) they should recreate the actual conditions under which the tasks would be performed; (4) they should be timely; and (5) they should be reliable.

Criterion-referenced tests should also be scored in such a way as to allow the teacher/tester to draw conclusions about whether the performance is good enough for the learner to continue or complete the training. Formative evaluations should take place on a regular basis to provide feedback on remedial requirements, and an interim report should be issued to the students and employer to provide information on progress. Summative evaluations should be carried out and reported at the end of each course.

Chapter 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.

The purpose of this thesis was to develop a task-based communicative ESP program for experienced employees working in different job categories in business and industry. It was suggested that such an ESP program is preferable to a GPE program because it saves the employer time and money by quickly preparing the employee to use the language system in the performance of specific types of job tasks.

An ESP program accomplishes this goal by (1) determining and analyzing the job tasks which are performed by the employees in the second language; (2) establishing minimum competency levels for each job category; (3) developing common as well as job-specific pedagogical objectives based on the analysis and organizing these into various levels in a syllabus; and (4) setting a maximum time limit, which includes remedial help, for accomplishing each level.

Developing language objectives based on the job tasks allows the course developer to determine a core which can be used to teach different job categories. The objectives in the sample syllabus were categorized into notions, functions, and tasks common to all job categories. Further, it allows the material developer to focus principally and systematically on those skills which the

employees require to perform these tasks rather than on the entire language system. This also ensures that the language of high frequency tasks is dealt with as soon as possible even though it may be complex.

Learners from different job categories move through the language levels together until they have achieved the minimum competency required to perform their jobs. This may be accomplished at a fairly low level where the learner and the interlocutor share the same schemata, or at an advanced level where the learner requires an extensive knowledge of and capacity to use the language system in order to establish common frames of reference and rhetorical routines.

How such a syllabus may effectively be implemented was also discussed. It was suggested that the objectives be presented in meaningful and motivating contexts based on both the learner's interests and job tasks. It was further suggested that activities be of two major types: pre-communicative activities which practise the part-skills of communication; that is, the exponents included in grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence, and communicative activities which encourage the learner to improvise with the language, synthesizing the part-skills to accomplish different types of tasks.

These tasks are to be practised not only as simulations in the classroom but also in real-life situations. It was also proposed that careful attention be paid to accuracy and that learners not be encouraged to develop communicative strategies far beyond their productive ability as this may lead to fossilization early on.

A system of learner evaluation was also proposed which determines what the learners are able to do in the second language, and when they are ready to advance in or leave the course. It was suggested that criterion-referenced testing is the most appropriate type of measurement for this type of learner assessment, and that a limited focus strategy be employed for both formative and summative evaluation. It was also suggested that formative evaluation test the learners' ability to perform the part-skills of communication; and, summative evaluation test the learners' ability to synthesize these skills. It was proposed that the summative test consist of one comprehensive task which integrates the traditional skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing required by the learner and assesses the learner's ability in the various competencies; that is, grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence. Finally, it was suggested that formative evaluation take place at regular intervals to provide the teacher with

information about remedial requirements; and summative evaluation take place at the end of the time limit set for accomplishing a language level.

The Montreal Agency program was used as an example to demonstrate what this type of ESP program might look like. The program has not, as yet, been completed and only the first two levels have been formally set down in syllabus format and have accompanying workbooks. Nevertheless, it is possible to make some tentative conclusions on the usefulness of the program.

First, the needs analysis might have been completed more rapidly and effectively had task-based job descriptions been available. These could then have been used as the basis of a checklist. When possible, it may be helpful to suggest that training and development departments include questions of language use when preparing task analyses for other types of training. In addition, it was not necessary to analyze the job tasks at this point beyond breaking them down into sub-tasks, since the simulations provided all the language information necessary to develop objectives for the syllabus.

The materials for Levels 1 and 2 have been in use for approximately one year now and observations at work stations

has shown that lower-level learners are able to use the language immediately to perform their job tasks. Moreover, they are receiving immediate feedback from their interlocutors on their communication. In addition, these lower-level learners are successfully performing real-life tasks after 120 hours of ESP instruction, starting from a false beginner level, which an informal survey of teachers has indicated would not even be attempted until after between 240 and 300 hours of GPE instruction and, if then, only as simulations or rolé plays.

There are, of course, problems with the program. First, it is not yet known how accurately the minimum competency levels reflect the employees' real language requirements, nor is it known how effective the syllabus objectives will be at the higher levels. Further, much work needs to be done in the area of criterion-referenced testing, where clear and unambiguous standards need to be established. It is hoped, however, that research in this field, as well as research into language acquisition, classroom experience, and the development of innovative and interesting new teaching techniques will assist in the evolution of the Montreal Agency program as well as in the evolution of this type of program in general.

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Job Profile - Employee-Identified Needs

Name of Job _____

1. Which of your job tasks require the use of English?

- speaking and listening
- making and answering telephone calls
 - providing information at the wicket
 - providing information to auditors
 - providing information to non-francophone employees (includes language for social contact)
 - attending meetings
 - public relations both in- and outside the Bank (includes language for social contact)
 - other
specify _____

- reading
- telexes
 - correspondence (letters and memos)
 - reports
 - procedures
 - Canada Savings Bonds (CSBs)
 - Government of Canada Bonds (new loan)
 - Bond Auction
 - Reissuable and unissuable notes
 - Government deposit
 - Government redemption
 - Advances (loans to class B banks)
 - CIAP (computer project)
 - Other
specify _____
 - Wills
 - other
specify _____

- writing
- telexes
 - forms, letters, memos
 - other

X indicates primary responsibility

x indicates not the responsibility of this job group but performed nonetheless

Needs Assessment: Bonds

Identification of Tasks which require the use of English

I SPEAKING AND LISTENING, (majority of contact is by telephone)

Frequency	Contact		Job Categories				Job Tasks	Action	Language Functions
	Ott/Spec.	Pub/lic	Ass Acc.	Man Man	C.O. Typ	CI ler			
High (daily, weekly)	x	x	x	x	x	x	<p>PROVIDE INFORMATION ON BONDS</p> <p>Bonds in General</p> <p>1. how to buy or sell: a) CSBs (also how to register and pay)</p> <p>b) Gov't of Canada Bonds</p>	<p>-express regret</p> <p>-advise that Bank does not deal with public</p> <p>-refer to financial institution or broker</p> <p>-express regret</p> <p>-refer to another dept. (client asks if he should sell)</p>	<p>express regret</p> <p>advise</p> <p>refer</p>
	x	x	x	x	x	x	<p>2. how to transfer or redeem: a) CSBs for estates</p> <p>b) Gov't of Canada Bonds</p>	<p>-advise which documents are required:</p> <p>1. declaration of transmission</p> <p>2. succession duty release</p> <p>3. death certificate</p> <p>4. guarantees</p> <p>-request additional documents</p> <p>-request the name of the person bond is transferred to</p> <p>-request that bonds be returned</p> <p>-send memo</p> <p>-explain procedure</p>	<p>request</p> <p>advise</p> <p>explain, clarify</p> <p>verify</p>
	x	x	x	x	x	x	<p>3. interest: a) provide current interest rate, changes in the rate, accumulated interest</p> <p>b) explain how to calculate compound interest</p> <p>c) provide info on non-receipt of interest cheques</p> <p>d) explain bonus at maturity of coupon bonds</p>	<p>-explain how interest is calculated</p> <p>-refer to Ottawa</p> <p>-request if client moved</p> <p>-obtain bond numbers, new/old address, SIN</p> <p>-call Ottawa and provide this information/request search</p> <p>-call back client and explain what happened</p>	<p>request</p> <p>obtain/provide numbers</p> <p>explain, clarify</p> <p>refer</p> <p>initiate call</p>

Identification of Tasks which require the use of English

I SPEAKING AND LISTENING (majority of contact is by telephone)

Frequency	Contact		Job Categories			Job Tasks	Action	Language Functions
	Ott/Spec.	Pub/lic	Ass	Man	Typ			
High (daily, weekly)						<p><u>Bonds in General</u></p> <p>4 differences in bonds:</p> <p>a) between CSBs, Gov't of Canada Bonds, T-Bills</p> <p>b) CSBs: difference between "R" and "C" bonds</p> <p>c) Gov't of Canada Bonds: difference between "bearer" and "fully"</p>	<p>provide information</p> <p>provide info about the coupons</p>	<p>explain, clarify</p>
		X	X	X	X	<p>5 CSBs and income taxes:</p> <p>a) how the new law on income tax declaration works</p> <p>b) how to obtain a T-5 (income tax form)</p>	<p>refer to Income Tax Dept.</p> <p>provide booklets: "Information to Bondholders" and "Supplement of February"</p> <p>request name, address</p>	<p>explain, clarify</p> <p>refer</p>
			X	X	X	<p>6. CSBs:</p> <p>what to do in the case of lost or stolen CSBs</p>	<p>refer to Ottawa, provide address</p>	<p>request</p> <p>obtain numbers</p> <p>refer</p>
Nov.-Mar.			X	X	X	<p>7. CSBs:</p> <p>a) how to make a change of address</p> <p>b) provide CSB series-number</p> <p>c) verify estate or transfer documents and errors in documents (for suspense)</p>	<p>refer to Ottawa, provide address</p> <p>call to confirm bonds are on list</p> <p>call to advise of error, request more documents</p> <p>return documents for changes with short explanatory note</p>	<p>refer</p> <p>explain, clarify</p> <p>provide numbers</p> <p>initiate call</p>
		X	X	X	X			

Needs Assessment: Bonds

Identification of Tasks which require the use of English

SPEAKING AND LISTENING (majority of contact is by telephone)

Frequency	Contact		Job Categories				Job Tasks	Action	Language Functions	
	Opt/Spec.	Pub/lic	Ass Acc	Man	Ass C.O.	Cl Typ				
High (daily, weekly)	X	X	X	X	X	X	8. bond receipts: a) provide info for a bond receipt or cheque b) advise of the length of time required to prepare the bond(s) c) advise where to go to process bond, obtain receipt d) explain that bond receipt is or is not ready and give the receipt e) ask when the bond will be picked up f) ask for a signature or 2nd signature if over the limit ii) confirm signature for bonds	-provide bond numbers amounts, time, wicket numbers -give directions -advise that bond is not ready -explain why bond is not ready, how long it will take -provide amount of overlimit	provide information advise provide numbers explain, clarify request	
	X		X	X	X	X	9. Gov't of Canada Bonds & T-Bills: provide/obtain split	-provide/obtain amounts and denominations	provide/obtain numbers	
	X		X	X	X	X	10. Social purposes associated with work: a) talk with English teacher(s) b) take messages, transfer calls c) provide - banking hours d) greet messengers	-discuss classes, schedules, attendance, excursions, progress -advise that individual is not available/ when he/she will return, take name -obtain phone number provide time -offer assistance	explain, clarify obtain/provide numbers, time offer assistance	
	X		X	X	X	X				
	X		X	X	X	X				
	X		X	X	X	X				

Identification of Tasks which require the use of English

I SPEAKING AND LISTENING (majority of contact is by telephone)

Frequency	Contact Spec. Lic	Job Categories				Job Tasks	Action	Language Functions
		Ass Acc	Man	C.O. Cl Man	Tel- Typ ltr			
Medium (1-3 mos)	X	X	X			social purposes associated with work: exchanges with non-francophone employees: new procedures job appraisal		explain, clarify
	X	X	X	X		2 Bonds in General a) explain mistakes for bond deliveries b) receive requests to find bond interest for direct deposits	-provide bond numbers, amounts -obtain bond numbers -obtain name -call back and provide info	explain, clarify provide/obtain numbers initiate call
Low (6 mos- 1 yr)	X	X	X	X		1. social purposes associated with work: a) explain internal systems and procedures; locations; chat b) meetings: internal procedures, new systems, equipment	-explain how the job is done -give directions and locations of materials -listen to explanations of new procedures -explain why useful/not useful -make suggestions	explain, clarify give directions suggest
	X	X	X			Bonds In General a) payments: i) amount of Gov't of Canada bonds ii) amounts of new loan: PD-5 b) receive request to find bond	-ask name, address -verify bond numbers, amounts -obtain bond numbers, amounts	provide/obtain/verify numbers request

Needs Assessment: Bonds

Identification of Tasks which require the Use of English

II READING

Frequency	Degree of Comprehension	Internal	External	Job Categories				Job Tasks	Action	Language Functions
				Ass Man	Acc	Man	Typ ler			
High (daily, weekly)	Specific Terms		X	X	X	X	X	Bonds in Estates: Documents a) Wills/declaration of transmission	-verify legatees, executor, if all necessary information is available -if information is missing, call notary and request clarification or send a note explaining what is missing (note is prepared by Agency secretaries)	verify initiate call request explain, clarify refer
	General Meaning		X	X	X	X	X	b) Notarial declaration of transmission	-compare with information if Will -if information is missing, call notary and request clarification or write note requesting documents and/or clarifications -refer to Ottawa or ask for clarification from Ottawa.	
	General Meaning		X	X	X	X	X	CSBs: Letters and Telexes a) requesting redemption or transfer of CSBs in estates/procedures on how to do this	-call client and explain procedure or send letter (prepared by Agency secretaries)	initiate call explain, clarify
	General Meaning		X	X	X	X	X	b) requesting information on interest cheques	-refer letter to Ottawa	
	Specific Terms	X				X	X	c) providing information about bond suspension	-suspend bonds, inform CO -check bond number, company or individual's name)	
	Specific Terms	X				X	X	Gov't of Canada Bonds: Telexes a) verify telex to deliver "bearer" or "fully" bonds (and T-bills)	-check name of Agency, company, shipment number, amount, series of loan, interest date, maturity date, delivery destination, name on registration, if fully -write receipt of telex in book	
		X				X	X	b) request to pay bond to same company in another city	-check name of Agency, shipment number, amount	

Needs Assessment: Bonds

Identification of Tasks which require the Use of English

II. READING

Frequency	Degree of Comprehension	Internal	External	Job Categories			Job Tasks	Action	Language Functions
				Ass Man	Acc Man	Cl Typ ler			
High (daily, weekly)	Specific Terms		X	X	X	X	Letters and Telexes requesting various forms connected with bonds and estates	-send out forms	
Medium (1 mo - 6 mos)	General Meaning	X		X	X	X	Bonds in General: Letters & Telexes a) receive notice of changes in procedures of bonds: CSBs, Gov't of Canada Bonds, Bond Auction b) advising delivery of Gov't of Canada Bonds via Brinks	-discuss with managers and assistant managers -call Ottawa and request clarification if necessary; -implement -refer to CO	initiate call request explain, clarify
	Specific Terms		X		X	X	c) advising that receipt was lost	-refer to CO	
	"		X		X	X	d) authorizing person to pick up receipt	-refer to CO	
	"						CSBs: Letters requesting what to do in the case of lost of stolen CSBs	-call client, if possible -advise that client must inform Ottawa or refer letter to Ottawa -send letter to client advising of procedure (prepared by Agency secretaries)	initiate call express regret explain, clarify
Low (6 mos - 1 yr)	General Meaning	X			X		Telexes providing information to another department	-refer to correct dept.	
	Specific Terms					X	a) reports on job duties b) communiqués on CSBs: rate, income tax c) press releases on CSBs d) requests for reports on CSBs	-verify information and correct any errors -inform employees, implement -inform employees, implement -send telex providing quantities and amounts	

Needs Assessment: Bonds

Identification of Tasks which require the use of English

III WRITING

Frequency	Contact		Job Categories			Job Tasks	Change standard Correspondence	Action	Slot in	Language Functions
	Occ/Spec.	Pub/lic	Ass Man Acc	C.O. Man	Cl Typ ler					
High (daily, weekly)	X	X	X	X	X	1. Instructions: letters, telexes a) procedures for CSBs in estates b) procedures for the redemption or transfer of Gov't of Canada bonds, CSBs	-using standard phrases -using standard phrases			give inst
	X	X	X	X	X	2. Provide Information: telexes, notes a) advise that bonds were not in the Agency on a given date b) advise which documents are missing for estates c) advise of errors in fully registered bonds d) advise that bonds are being sent	-using standard phrases -using standard phrases -using standard phrases			advise
Medium (1-3 mos)	X	X				3. Forms complete transfer form 351				initiate call
	X		X	X		CSBs: telexes I. statistical reports				-name, address, bond series, call when form is ready -quantities, amounts
Low (6 mos - 1 yr)	X		X			1) Prepare job descriptions 2) make corrections to descriptions of job duties	-using standard phrases -using standard phrases			
	X		X	X		send note on accrued interest for CSBs	-using standard phrases			

Identification of Tasks which Require the Use of English

I SPEAKING AND LISTENING (majority of contact is by telephone)

Frequency	Contact		Job Categories				Job Tasks	Action	Language Functions
	Occ/Spec	Pub-lic	Ass Man Acc	Ass Man OFF	Man UN/OFF	C.O. EN/UN/OFF			
HIGH (daily, weekly)	X	X	X	X	X	X	<p>Provide Information on Currency:</p> <p>a) coins & notes</p> <p>b) how to send mutilated notes to the Bank of Canada</p>	<p>- refer to money collector or Royal Canadian Mint (provide phone number), explain pamphlet from Mint</p> <p>i) for financial institutions: advise that notes for evaluation must be sent separately from mutilated notes</p> <p>ii) - request client to either come to Bank or send by mail;</p> <p>- request letter of explanation;</p> <p>- advise client of waiting period;</p> <p>- call to advise arrival of evaluation cheques; request pick up cheque; request client bring receipt;</p> <p>- request time & date of closing; amount</p>	<p>refer, explain clarify, request/ receive request/ initiate phone call provide/ obtain numbers</p>
	X	X	X	X	X	X	<p>c) request weekly money order from Ottawa</p> <p>d) receive request to change foreign currency/traveller's cheques</p>	<p>- refer to chartered Bank; explain that Bank of Canada doesn't do this</p>	
	X	X	X	X	X	X	<p>Information on:</p> <p>a) Canada Deposit Insurance</p> <p>b) unclaimed balance: accounts transferred from chartered bank to B. of C. after 10 yrs</p> <p>c) name of best bank</p>	<p>- advise who is in charge of insurance; who decides amount of coverage & why</p> <p>- provide list of banks; if covered by provincial insurance also covered by federal</p> <p>- explain procedure: how to write letter including acc't number, address, name of person etc; refer to Ottawa</p> <p>- advise that info is not available</p>	<p>explain, clarify provide numbers refer</p>

- c. Previous Language Training:
- High School
specify number of years _____
 - CEGEP, University
specify number of years _____
 - Bank of Canada
specify when training commenced and ended (if not
on training at present) _____
 - Other
specify type _____
- d. Describe, generally, your previous training either in school or
other (do not include Bank of Canada training if you have it)
- grammar
 - translation,
 - reading/writing
 - conversation
 - T.V., movies
 - radio
 - other:
specify _____

If Learning Style

1. Think of something else that you learned. How did you learn it?
 - alone
 - from someone else
 - from a book
 - other,
specify _____

2. How would you describe the way that you learn?
(check all applicable answers)
 - structured, step by step,

 - informally (pick it up)
 - by watching someone else
 - by listening to explanations.
 - by doing
 - other:
specify _____

3. Think of something that you might teach to someone else (a new
job, a sport, etc.). How would you teach it?
 - give explanations only
 - give explanations and let the person do it
 - demonstrate and then let the person do it
 - demonstrate, give explanations, and then let the person do it
 - other:
specify _____

4. How do you prefer to be corrected?

interrupted and corrected immediately

after you have finished.

other

specify _____

III Interest Areas

1. When I think about the future, I...

2. When I get up in the morning and think about the day ahead, I...

3a When I'm sitting at home with my spouse, I like to talk about...

b When I'm with my child(ren), I like to...

c When I participate in discussions with my friends, I like to talk about...

4. After work or on weekends, I like to...

5. When I go on vacation, I like to...

3. Check (✓) your preferences within each category listed:

comedy adventure mystery horror romance biography history science fiction documentaries politics sports animals other

Reading

T.V.

Movies

Plays

Prompters for question 4: What types of activities do you enjoy doing after work or on weekends? (check all applicable answers and name your regular or favourite(s))

- reading: Examples
- newspapers _____
 - magazines _____
 - short stories _____
 - books _____
 - other (specify _____)

When I open a newspaper, magazine, book, etc. I like to read about...

- T.V.
- movies
- plays

When I turn on the T.V., go to a movie or play, I like to see...

- music
- listening
 - playing
- going out for dinner
- sports (specify _____)
- handicrafts (specify _____)
- shopping
- cooking
- decorating
- gardening
- photography
- travelling:

Where have you travelled?

Where would you like to travel?

4. Do you participate in any of these activities in Montreal?

Yes No

If yes, which ones?

If no, why not?

5. Do you participate in the same type of activities in English?

Yes No

a.1 If yes, which activities do you participate in and how often?

a.2 Do you participate in these activities

alone

with your spouse or family

with friends:

French-speaking friends who know English

English-speaking friends

with other English students in activities arranged by the Bank

b. If no, why not?

IV Contact with English

1. Are there any English-speaking people in your family?

Yes No

If yes, how often do you speak with them in English?

regularly

often

occasionally

seldom

2. How many English-speaking people do you know? _____

How often do you speak with them?

- regularly
- often
- occasionally
- seldom

V Student Interest in Courses

1. In general, do you like going on courses?

- Yes No

If no, why not?

2. Have you ever gone on any courses for the Bank? (other than English)

- Yes No

If yes, what courses have you attended, where were they held and how long were they?

3. How did you find out about the English course?

4. What would you be able to do if your English were better?

1. Do you feel that you get enough practice with English on your job to maintain your level?

- Yes No

If no, why not?

b. What do you think you could do to get more practice in English?

PROCEDURES

Bond Department: checking officer
assistant manager
manager

Provide instructions for transferring Canada savings bonds after a death

Receptionist : Good morning, Bond Department.

Client : Hello, I'd like to transfer some bonds into my name.

Receptionist , : One moment please, I'll transfer you to someone who can help you.

Client : Thank you.

C.O. : Lyne Mongeau.

Client : Hello, I'd like some information about bonds. My father died and I'd like to transfer the bonds to my name.

C.O. : In order for us to transfer the bonds to your name, we need proof of death and a true copy of the will, that is, a copy signed by a notary. In addition, we need a declaration of transmission which can be obtained from a notary or the Bank of Canada; however, it must be witnessed by a notary or a commissioner for oaths.

Client : A commissioner for what?

C.O. : For oaths. I'm sorry, I have problems pronouncing this word. It's spelled o-a-t-h-s.

Client : OK, what's that?

C.O. : It's someone who can officially witness a signature, usually a bank manager. If your father died before May 27, 1986, we will also need a release from the Quebec Government authorizing us to transfer the bonds.

Client : How can I get a release?

C.O. : I'm not sure of the procedure; however, you can obtain a release from the Quebec Revenue Department located at Complexe Desjardins. I suggest that you call before you go.

Client : Thanks very much.

C.O. : You're welcome.

PROCEDURES

Cash Department: checking officer
assistant manager

Provide instructions for obtaining unclaimed bank accounts from the Bank of Canada

Receptionist : Good afternoon, Cash Department.

Client : Hello. I just discovered an old bank account from the Royal Bank. I called them and they referred me to you.

Receptionist : One moment, please... I'll transfer you to a checking officer.

C.O. : Diane Albert, speaking.

Client : Hello... I'd like to find an old bank account that I had with the Royal Bank. They sent me to you.

C.O. : Yes, the Bank of Canada has the names of all of the unclaimed accounts across Canada on microfiche. I'll explain the procedure to you for finding your account. You may want to write this down.

Client : Just a minute. I'll get a pen. OK.

C.O. : OK. First, you may come to our office and confirm that this account is on the microfiche. There is no charge for this. We are located at 901 Victoria Square near St. Antoine Street...metro Victoria. You can come any time between 9:00 and 3:00 p.m. Once you have found your account on the microfiche, you have to write to the Bank of Canada in Ottawa. The address is:

Comptroller's Department
Bank of Canada
245 Sparks Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0G9

Include all of the information for your account which is on the microfiche. Ottawa will send you instructions on how to recover your money.

Client : Could you look up my account for me?

C.O. : I'm sorry but we don't offer that service; you can either come to the Bank in Montreal or write directly to the Bank in Ottawa and they will search the microfiche for you.

Client : OK, thanks.

C.O. : You're welcome.

PROCEDURES

Cash Department: cash teller
checking officer
assistant manager

Provide instructions for how to have mutilated notes evaluated

Receptionist : Good morning, Cash Department, Diane Leduc speaking.

Client : Hello, my dog ate \$20.00 and I'd like to know if I can get any money for the pieces I've got left.

Receptionist : One moment please, I'll transfer you to the person who's responsible for mutilated notes.

C.O. : Louise Chevalier speaking.

Client : Hello, my dog destroyed some money and I'd like to know if I can get it replaced.

C.O. : I'm sorry, I can't help you with that on the phone. We have to see the bills in order to be able to evaluate them. If we can't evaluate them here, we'll send them to Ottawa. Could you either bring your money to the Bank or, if that isn't possible, could you send the bills to us by mail?

Client : When are you open?

C.O. : Banking hours are from 9 to 3.

Client : Oh...it's difficult for me to come at that time. I'll send the bills by mail.

C.O. : That's fine, but it'll take a little longer. If you do send the notes by mail, we require a letter explaining the circumstances.

Client : OK... what's your address?

C.O. : It's 901 Victoria Square
Montréal (Québec)
H2Z 1R2

If you decide to come to the Bank yourself, the person who takes care of evaluations is at wicket number 3.

Client : OK, thanks.

C.O. : You're welcome.

CLASSIFYING

Cash Department: checking officer
assistant manager

Explain the difference between pledge forms

Receptionist : Good afternoon, Cash Department.

Client : Hi, I'm calling from the Royal Bank, may I speak to a checking officer or the assistant manager please?

Receptionist : The assistant manager is available, I'll transfer you to her, one moment please.

Client : Thank you.

C.O. : Lucie Prévost, may I help you?

Client : Yes. This is the Royal, could you explain the different pledge forms to me, please?

C.O. : Certainly. There are two kinds of pledge forms: one for advances and one for notes. The advance pledge form is used when the chartered banks want to borrow money. The pledge form for the notes is used because chartered banks have to put bonds in guarantee in order to make note withdrawals. In other words, if a bank wants to withdraw new or reissuable notes, they have to give some bonds as collateral for their daily withdrawals.

Client : I'm not sure I understand about the form for notes.

C.O. : Let me give you an example. Say that your bank has a limit of \$X million and they want to withdraw more on a particular day, the bank has to get authorization from its Head Office to do so. If that over limit is repeated on a regular basis, we will ask that a new pledge form be submitted with more bonds in collateral. Does that help?

Client : Yes, thanks.

C.O. : You're welcome.

Client : Bye.

C.O. : Bye.

COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE REQUIRED BY AGENCY EMPLOYEES

Communicative Competence Required by Agency Employees

1.1: the learner should be able to:

NOTIONS COMMON TO ALL JOB TASKS

Oral	Written	Examples of Text
<p>Discuss/provide information about common items:</p> <p>a. Identify common items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. bank and office items 2. food 3. shopping 4. house <p>b. Provide/understand information about items in relation to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. location: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) in the office, store, restaurant, bus/train station, airport ii) on a page 2. cost <p>c. Request/understand request for items</p> <p>Give/understand time:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. correct time 2. hours of work 3. hours of operation 4. personal schedule <p>Give/ask/understand directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. in a building 2. on the street 	<p>supermarket flyers, menu items clothes: flyers, catalogues flyers, catalogues</p> <p>The washroom is on the left. The file is in the top drawer.</p> <p>The bond number is in the top left-hand corner.</p> <p>How much does it cost?/How much is it?</p> <p>Could I have a tax form, please? Could you get me a receipt? I'd like a receipt. Would you mind giving me some envelopes?</p> <p>What time is it? When do you start/finish work? What time does the bank open/close? When is your class?/When do you go to bed?</p> <p>Go downstairs and turn left. The Post Office is across the street from the Bank.</p> <p>Could you tell/give me...? Would you mind telling/giving me...?</p>	

Communicative Competence Required by Agency Employees

Level 1: the learner should be able to:

NOTIONS COMMON TO ALL JOB TASKS

No.	Oral	Written	Examples of Text
4	<p>Give information about himself, family, co-workers, clients</p> <p>Ask others about themselves</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. identify occupations within the Bank and common ones outside 2. give personal information 3. describe person using one or more descriptive terms 4. describe family relationships 5. describe state of health 6. give likes and dislikes 	<p>I'm a clerk-typist.</p> <p>simplified job application form: name, address, date of birth, age, marital status, occupation, height, weight</p> <p>My name is Suzie. I live at 5040 St. Pierre Street. I was born on December 19, 1963. I'm married.</p> <p>The man is tall.</p> <p>The woman with the red dress is waiting for her bond.</p> <p>She's my sister-in-law.</p> <p>I have a cold. I have a headache.</p> <p>My arm hurts. My muscles are sore.</p> <p>I like this sweater. Me too.</p> <p>I don't like liver. He neither.</p> <p>I can ski. I can change my oil.</p> <p>I can type 60 wpm.</p> <p>Can/May/Could I smoke, use the telephone, cash a bond, take a break?</p> <p>Do you mind if I smoke, change my class?</p>	
5	<p>Describe/understand description of abilities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. personal abilities 2. work-related abilities <p>Give/request permission to do something</p>		

Communicative Competence Required by Agency Employees

Level 1: the learner should be able to:

FUNCTIONS COMMON TO ALL JOB TASKS

No.	Oral	Written	Examples of Text
7	Give/understand simple obligations: 1. personal interests 2. work-related		I <u>have</u> to pay my phone bill. We <u>have</u> to sign-in every morning.
8	Express/understand necessity: 1. personal interests 2. work-related		I <u>need</u> a haircut. I'm very busy right now. I <u>need</u> help.
9	Describe/understand description of a routine: 1. personal interests 2. work routine		I eat lunch in the cafeteria at 11:30. I arrive at work at 8:30. Then, I type some letters.
10	Describe/understand description of a process: 1. personal interests 2. work-related		I like to sew. First, I put the pattern on the material. Then, I cut out the pattern. First, I open the bags. Then, I sort the mail.
11	Give/understand simple explanations: 1. personal interests 2. work-related		I went home <u>because</u> I was sick. You have to go to wicket 12 <u>because</u> you need a signature.
12	Give/understand simple contrasts 1. personal interests 2. work-related		I want to go to the North <u>but</u> I don't have a car. I'd like to work at the wicket <u>but</u> I don't speak enough English.
13	Describe/understand description of activities in the present, past, future 1. personal interests 2. work-related		I went cross-country skiing on the weekend. I often work overtime. Yesterday I worked overtime and I will work overtime tomorrow.

Communicative Competence Required by Agency Employees

Level 1: the learner should be able to:

TASKS COMMON TO ALL POSITIONS

	Oral	Written	Examples of Text
1	<p>Answer the telephone:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. politely transfer a call 2. politely advise that a person is unavailable. 3. Politely advise when a person will return. 4. politely request/understand the caller's name and telephone number 		<p>One moment, please. I'll transfer you. I'm sorry, she's in a meeting at the moment. She'll be back at 3:00./I'm sorry, I don't know. Can/May I take your name and telephone number?</p>
2	<p>Process items at the wicket:</p> <p>bonds, cheques, forms, envelopes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. engage in simple social exchanges <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. describe/ask personal state of being b. ask/give information about the weather, seasons, months, days, dates 2. scan for basic information on forms, wills, etc. 3. politely advise client of necessity or obligation to do something/refer client to other areas, people 4. politely advise that a client will have to wait and how long 5. offer/respond to choices 6. make polite offers 		<p>Good morning. Have a nice day!/You too! This is Sylvie./Pleased to meet you. please, thank you, you're welcome I'm sorry (I don't know/I don't speak English) I'm busy at the moment. I'm tired Is it still raining? The weather is beautiful in the summer. We're very busy in November. We're open on Monday./We're closed on December 25. You can pick up the bonds on Tuesday. You have to go to wicket #12. You need a signature. It'll be a few minutes. It won't be long. Would you like to pick up the bonds or would you like us to send them? Would you like to wait over there?</p>

Communicative Competence Required by Agency Employees

Level 1: the learner should be able to:

TASKS COMMON TO ALL POSITIONS

	Oral	Written	Examples of Text
2	<p>Process items at the wicket (cont'd):</p> <p>7. politely advise that the bonds, receipts, etc. are ready</p> <p>8. politely request/understand personal information</p> <p>9. make/respond to polite requests for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> help, objects, a favour signatures identification paycheques, bonds, receipts, envelopes <p>10. handle Canadian currency and know the name of each coin and bill</p>	<p>The bonds are ready for the messenger from the Royal Bank.</p> <p>May I have your name, address, postal code, telephone number, please?</p> <p>Could you hand me that book, please?</p> <p>Could you sign here please?/Would you mind signing here, please?</p> <p>May I see your I.D. card, please?</p> <p>Would you cash my cheque, please?</p> <p>I'd like two fives and a ten, please.. Could I have a quarter, a dime, a nickel, and a penny please?</p> <p>Do you have change for a quarter?</p> <p>Could I have change for a fifty?</p>	
3	<p>Travel on Bank business:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> go to a restaurant/caféteria for a meal: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> order food request additional items go shopping: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> advise that she's just looking request specific items/understand simple response ask to try on an item/say if the item fits advise that she will take item 	<p>I'd like two eggs over easy. I'll have a coffee.</p> <p>Could I have some water, the bill, a receipt, please?</p> <p>Can I help you?/No thanks, I'm just looking.</p> <p>Do you have a size 7?/ I'm sorry, we only have size 9 and up.</p> <p>Do you have this sweater in blue?/I'm sorry, it only comes in red.</p> <p>I'd like to]- try on this skirt(?) Could I It's too tight./It's too big. I'll take it.</p>	

Communicative Competence Required by Agency Employees

11: the learner should be able to:

TASKS COMMON TO AIRL POSITIONS

Oral	Written	Examples of Text
<p>Travel on Bank business (cont'd):</p> <p>c. obtain/provide basic travel information</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. dates, prices, times: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) hotels ii) transportation (airlines, trains, buses, taxis) 2. confirmation: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) hotel reservations ii) transportation reservations (airlines, trains, buses, taxis) 	<p>I'd like some information, please.</p> <p>How much is a single room for one night?</p> <p>How much is a return ticket Montreal - Toronto?</p> <p>What time does the train leave for Ottawa in the afternoon?</p> <p>When does the seat sale begin?/On May 15.</p> <p>I'd like to confirm a hotel reservation for Suzie Leduc. The confirmation number is PQ123YZ.</p> <p>I'd like to confirm a flight reservation to Toronto.</p>	

EVEL 1: GRAMMATICAL COMPETENCE

Grammatical Exponents: Structures

1. Verb Tenses

- a. imperatives
- b. present/past tense of verb: to be
- c. simple present/present continuous
- d. simple past
- e. future: will

2. Question Words

who, whose, what, when/what time
 where, why/how come, how much/how many
 how old/tall, how long/how many times

3. Singular/Plural Nouns

common objects at home, in the office,
 food, clothes

4. Demonstrative Adjectives

this/that
 these/those

5. There is/There are

There was/There were

6. Possessives

adjectives- my, his, her, our, your, their
 pronouns - mine, his, hers, ours, yours, theirs
 nouns - Suzie's, Mr. Smith's
 verbs - to own, to belong to

7. Pronouns

nominative - I, you, he, she, it, we, they
 objective - me, you, him, her, it, us, them

8. Alphabet

say/write letters of the alphabet correctly.

9. Numbers

- age
- telephone numbers
- street numbers
- telling time (using clock and schedule)
- counting money/different types of money (coins, bills)
- ordinal/cardinal numbers (with dates, etc.)

10. Prepositions

a. with addresses: at 77 Peel Street
 on Peel Street
 in Montreal, Quebec, Canada

b. with dates, days, months, seasons:

- on October 31
- on Saturday
- in June
- in the Spring

c. with locations:

- office: in, on, beside, behind, in front of,
 on the front, on the back, on the reverse side,
 on the top, on the bottom, over, under, between
- page: at the top/bottom, in the left-hand corner,
 in the middle, above, below, etc.

11. Colours/Shapes

- a. basic colours (also: buff)
- c. basic shapes: circle, square, rectangle, triangle

VEL 1: GRAMMATICAL COMPETENCE

Lexical Exponents

Verbs

HAVE TO GET
MUST NEED
CAN
WILL

Technical/Semi-Technical

to lend
to borrow
to use
to call
to phone
to receive
to send
to obtain
to sign
to transfer
to exchange
to redeem
to cash
to pick up
to deliver
to mail
to look for/to find
to look forward to
to hire (someone)
to fire (someone)
to burn (money)
to explain
to initial
to enter (an amount)
to evaluate

Other

to give
to stay
to work
to do
to make
to eat
to drink
to have (food)
to like
to want
to sleep
to smoke
to watch
to wash
to stamp
to verify
to check
to arrive
to happen
to afford

either...or
neither...nor

me too/me neither

someone
anyone
no one
else

something
anything
nothing
else

somewhere
anywhere
nowhere
else

Expressions

that's right/that's wrong
just a moment
right away/immediately
it doesn't matter
I don't mind
I don't care
It's up to you
It's worth...
It's worthwhile
I'm not sure
Is that clear?
by mail
pick up
to call (someone) back
(the telex is) on the way
it will take longer
to do (something) on purpose
Have a nice day!/You too.
I hope so/I hope not

right/wrong
correct
both
together
other/another

per
a
day/month/person

(to send) directly
(to send) together
(to send) separately

until (5 o'clock)

enough

LEVEL 1: GRAMMATICAL COMPETENCE

Lexical Exponents

A Bank and Office Items	2.A Occupations
receipt	doctor
form	nurse
bond	dentist
envelope	policeman(woman)
paperclip	lawyer
stapler	notary
staple	judge
staple remover	thief/robber
scissors	client/customer
	messenger
	teacher
	student
	guard
	fireman
	ambulance driver
	bus driver
	taxi driver
	mailman
	balance
	fully (registered bond)
	bearer (bond)
	(regular) "R" (bond)
	(compound) "C" (bond)
	piece (of something)
	procedure
	instruction
	explanation
	period (of time)
	minimum/maximum
	(short) letter
	document
	transaction
	evaluation
	(dotted) line
	(red) line
	(no) charge
	overtime
B Bank Terms	
(chartered) bank	
(unclaimed) (bank) account	
(cash over) account	
(bank) branch	
amount	
total	
copy	
(bank) rate	
(interest) rate	
(authorized) signature	
(today's) date	
(maturity) date	
(due) date	
money/capital	
payment	
transfer	
exchange	
redemption	
	civil servant
	manager
	assistant manager
	supervisor
	clerk
	typist
	telephone/switchboard operator
	maintenance man
	janitor
	plumber
	electrician
	mechanic
	accountant
	computer programmer
	waiter/waitress
	salesman/saleslady/salesperson

EVEL 1: GRAMMATICAL COMPETENCE

Lexical Exponents

1.A Food

Main Meals

meal,
breakfast
cereal
oatmeal
pancakes
French toast
English muffin
bread
dinner roll
eggs - scrambled
fried: (sunny-side) up
over (easy)
boiled: soft-boiled
hard-boiled
poached
steak - well-done
medium-well
medium
medium-rare
rare

chicken - dark meat
light meat
breast
leg
roast-beef, pork
potatoes - mashed/whipped
boiled
roast
baked
scalloped
home fries/hash browns
vegetables (common ones)

Sandwiches

ham
cheese
cold cuts

Fruit

lemon
grapefruit
strawberry
raspberry
blueberry
cherry
plum
peach
pear
pineapple
grape/raisin

Dessert

doughnut
ice cream (cone)
cookie
pie
cake
candy

Drinks

water
soft drink
milk
juice
wine

4.A. Dishes and Utensils

cup/mug
glass
saucer
plate
bowl
pot
pan
skillet
knife
fork
spoon

5.A Household Articles

soap
detergent
towel
napkin/serviette
table cloth
vacuum cleaner
iron
dishwasher
washer
dryer
hairdryer
curling iron
stove
refrigerator
lawn mower
record player (stereo)
record
tape recorder
cassette
bed
dresser
curtain
blind
carpet/rug
sofa/couch

6.A Home

kitchen
living room
bedroom
dining room
bathroom
basement
attic
counter
bathtub
toilet
sink
shower
tap/faucet
pipe
cupboard
closet
floor
wall
ceiling
lock
yard
grass
lawn
hose

LEVEL 1: GRAMMATICAL COMPETENCE

Lexical Exponents

.A Entertainment	9.A Public Places	11.A Clothing	shoe boot watch necklace earring bracelet wallet purse umbrella
movie play television (program) book magazine newspaper puzzle	hospital corner store (convenience store) post office train station airport beach grocery store drugstore hairdresser/beauty salon	hat scarf blouse shirt jacket tie belt pants skirt dress suit outfit underwear slipper bra socks pantyhose sweater nightgown slippers	
.A Games			
cards board game chess checkers			
.A Activities	10.A Parts of the Body		
cross-country skiing downhill skiing skating swimming boardsailing/windsurfing water-skiing bowling reading knitting crocheting	neck shoulder arm hand finger thumb pinky leg thigh calf foot toe elbow wrist ankle back body head hair face eye eyelash eyebrow nose mouth cheek chin beard mustache teeth gums chest waist bottom/butt hip stomach abdomen		

EL 1: SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE

<p>appropriate social meanings</p> <p>communicative functions, attitudes: politeness, formality</p> <p>polite requests: g. courtesy: please thank you you're welcome</p> <p>could I...? could you...? would you mind...? I'd like...</p> <p>permission: h. apologies, excuses: I'm sorry excuse me</p> <p>can/may I...? Do you mind if I...?</p> <p>obligations: i. offers: would you like...?</p> <p>I have to pay my phone bill.</p> <p>necessity: I need a signature..</p> <p>greetings: How are you? How's it going? Good morning.</p> <p>leave-takings: bye so long see you later have a nice day</p>	<p>Use appropriate grammatical forms for different communicative functions</p> <p>1. basic grammatical forms 2. patterns 3. routines 4. gambits</p>
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LEVEL 1: DISCOURSE COMPETENCE

Grammatical Cohesion Devices	Coherence
<p>sentences are simple or compound:</p> <p>1. logical connectors:</p> <p>a. addition: I'm very busy right now <u>and</u> I can't come to my class.</p> <p>b. explanations: I went home <u>because</u> I was sick.</p> <p>c. contrasts: I'd like to work at the wicket <u>but</u> I don't speak enough English.</p>	<p>the normal progress of literal meanings:</p> <p>a. standard word order: subject/adverb of frequency/verb/object (person or thing)/place/time I always take my car to work in the morning.</p> <p>b. structured organization: chronological order topic sentence</p>

EVEL 1: STRATEGIC COMPETENCE

For Grammatical Difficulties* For Sociolinguistic Difficulties For Performance Factors

- use of reference sources (e.g. dictionary; grammar book)
- 1. simple requests for repetition or slower speech:
Could you repeat that slowly, please?/Pardon?/I'm sorry?
- 2. explain problem:
I'm sorry, I don't speak English very well.
- 3. ask for/give paraphrase:
Could you explain another way?
Train station: It's a place where you take the train.
- 4. echo:
spellings (names, addresses)
numbers (phone numbers, addresses, amounts)
That's John Smith?

- 1. use a single grammatical form for different communicative functions:
"Your name is John Smith" can be used as a statement or a question depending on the context.
- 2. use of the most sociolinguistically neutral grammatical form when uncertain about appropriateness of other forms in a given communicative situation:
"Good morning" instead of "hi"

- 1. coping with background noises, interruptions and other distractions
- 2. use of pause fillers to maintain conversation while searching for grammatical forms

*examples 2 through 5 were suggested by strategies for telephone conversations prepared by Jaime MacKinnon (Bank of Canada, Ottawa)

Communicative Competence Required by Agency Employees

LEVEL 1: PROCEDURAL COMPETENCE

Problem-solving

Information Gap:

- a. engage in one-way tasks
- b. engage in specific two-way tasks

INTEGRATING OBJECTIVES

Sample Lessons for the Montreal Agency Syllabus: Level 1

I NOTIONS.

OBJECTIVE: Identify common food items

ACTIVITIES: Students identify different foods from pictures.

If the students have previously identified locations on a page, they may play a game which involves telling other students where to place the food items on a page (e.g. put the oranges in the top-left-hand corner). At the end of the activity, students compare their pictures.

Students play cross-word and/or other puzzles using food items.

OBJECTIVE: State likes and dislikes
State prices
me too/me neither

ACTIVITIES: Using supermarket flyers, the teacher goes through the flyers asking students if they like various foods and how much these foods cost (e.g. Do you like milk? How much does it cost - a litre?). The teacher also invites the students to ask her/him about her/his likes and dislikes. This activity may also be done in pair or group work.

II FUNCTIONS

OBJECTIVE: Make simple comparisons.

ACTIVITIES: Student interest:

The teacher explains that s/he and the learners will cook a meal. (This activity requires access to cooking facilities.)

The teacher lists the ingredients required for her/his dish. The teacher then explains that the students will make a grocery list for the ingredients and find as many ingredients as possible in the supermarket flyers. The students are required to complete a chart:

e.g.

Ingredient	Provigo	Metro	IGA	Stein
milk	.85	.82	.75	.83
eggs	1.59	1.75	1.62	1.79
butter	2.19	2.25	1.99	2.22

Once the grocery list is complete, the students make a comparison of the prices at different stores (e.g. milk is more expensive at Provigo than at Steinberg. Eggs are less expensive at IGA than at Metro). Not all items, of course, will be on special at every store and the teacher should choose a dish which uses the week's specials.

The teacher divides the students into pairs or groups and each group provides a list of the ingredients and their prices, using the week's specials, for their part of the meal (e.g. soup, appetizer, salad, dessert).

The teacher and/or students buy the groceries for the next class.

OBJECTIVE: Describe a process/give instructions
enumeration
imperative

ACTIVITIES: Student Interest:

The teacher gives instructions on how to prepare her/his dish and demonstrates where necessary.

The students prepare the dish following the teacher's instructions.

The students who supplied the recipes give instructions and the other students in each group prepare the dishes.

Job-related:

The teacher explains that the students will learn how to use simple functions on Wordperfect (a wordprocessing program) to type instructions for one of their job tasks.

The teacher asks the students to choose one of their job tasks and write instructions for it. The teacher helps the learners with these tasks individually or, if there are learners from the same job category, in groups.

The teacher identifies the basic parts of the computer (e.g. IBM PC) and explains their functions.

The teacher gives instructions on how to insert the diskette, type something, save information, print information, and exit the computer.

The students type their instructions using the computer.

After the instructions are typed, the students exchange instructions and perform the job tasks. The students who prepared the instructions will be able to correct their instructions based on how they are carried out.

III TASKS COMMON TO ALL JOB CATEGORIES

OBJECTIVE: Order food in a restaurant

ACTIVITIES: The teacher discusses his/her favourite foods, restaurants, and asks students about theirs.

The teacher asks the students about the different kinds of foods which are commonly available for breakfast, lunch, and supper, and how these foods are prepared. The teacher supplies the expressions where needed (e.g. two eggs fried sunny-side up, steak medium-rare, mashed potatoes).

The teacher supplies a menu from a restaurant and discusses the different items with the students.

The teacher plays a video of a family ordering in a restaurant (each person orders a different dish) and later provides copies of the dialogues.

The students role-play ordering breakfast, lunch, and supper in a restaurant.

The teacher and the students go to a restaurant for a meal and periodically go out for coffee, etc. during the course.

5040 Langevin
Pierrefonds, Quebec
H8Z 2B9

February 15, 1987

English Students
English Language Training
Second Floor
Bank of Canada
901 Victoria Square
Montreal, Quebec

Dear Student:

Re: Travel Arrangements

I would like to go on a trip to Switzerland for three weeks from September 8 to September 29. Unfortunately, I don't have a lot of money, so I would like to have the cheapest trip possible. I would like to fly to Geneva, Switzerland and stay at the Hilton Hotel or the Hyatt Hotel in Geneva from September 8 to September 10 inclusive (three nights).

I would like you to call three different airlines: Swiss Air, Air Canada, and Lufthansa and get the cheapest return airfare for the dates I mentioned. (If you cannot get the exact dates, try for one day earlier or one day later). I would also like you to call the Hilton Hotel and the Hyatt Hotel in order to get the cheapest hotel rate.

When you have obtained the price of the cheapest flight and the cheapest hotel, please make reservations for me. Don't forget to obtain the flight reservation number and the hotel confirmation number. When you have finished, please write a letter to me telling me the cheapest flight and cheapest hotel. Also include the reservation and confirmation numbers, as well as the dates and times of the flight and the flight numbers.

Sincerely yours,

Hannelore Walther
English Coordinator

CORRECTION SHEET RATING SCALES

1. NO COMPETENCE
2. LOW COMPETENCE
3. MODERATE COMPETENCE
4. HIGH COMPETENCE

COMPETENCIES	PRESENT LEVEL	COMMENTS
<p><u>TEAKING</u> <u>IRT ONE - FLUENCY</u></p> <p><u>SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE</u></p> <p>1. can get message across at speed tolerable to the listener</p>		
<p>2. requests/provides information politely using:</p> <p>a. courtesy expressions _____</p> <p>b. polite requests _____</p> <p>c. greetings _____</p> <p>d. leave-takings _____</p> <p>e. apologies _____</p>		
<p>3. requests information appropriately expressing:</p> <p>a. obligation _____</p> <p>b. necessity _____</p> <p>c. ability _____</p> <p>d. permission _____</p>		
<p><u>b. STRATEGIC COMPETENCE</u></p> <p>1. can get message across using coping strategies:</p> <p>a. requests repetition or slower speech _____</p> <p>b. paraphrases _____</p> <p>c. defines _____</p> <p>d. echoes _____</p>		

CORRECTION SHEET RATING SCALES

- 1. NO COMPETENCE
- 2. LOW COMPETENCE
- 3. MODERATE COMPETENCE
- 4. HIGH COMPETENCE

COMPETENCIES	PRESENT LEVEL	COMMENTS
<p><u>PEAKING</u> <u>ART TWO - ACCURACY</u></p> <p><u>GRAMMATICAL COMPETENCE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. uses appropriate verb tenses 2. uses appropriate question words 3. uses appropriate possessive adjectives 4. uses appropriate pronouns 5. uses appropriate prepositions with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) addresses ii) dates 6. uses appropriate numbers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) cardinal ii) ordinal 7. uses correct terminology 	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p><u>DISCOURSE COMPETENCE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. uses appropriate word order 2. uses logical connectors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. addition b. explanation c. contrasts d. result e. purpose 	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

- 1. NO COMPETENCE
- 2. LOW COMPETENCE
- 3. MODERATE COMPETENCE
- 4. HIGH COMPETENCE

COMPETENCIES	PRESENT LEVEL	COMMENTS
<p><u>WRITING</u> <u>PART ONE - CONTENT</u></p>		
<p><u>a. SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE</u></p>		
<p>1. information provided is complete</p>		
<p>2. information provided is accurate</p>		
<p>3. includes appropriate introduction:</p>		
<p>a. refers to request</p>		
<p>b. includes courtesy expressions</p>		
<p>4. includes appropriate closing:</p>		
<p>a. offers further assistance</p>		
<p>b. includes courtesy expressions</p>		
<p>5. provides information appropriately expressing:</p>		
<p>a. obligation</p>		
<p>b. necessity</p>		
<p>c. ability</p>		
<p><u>PART TWO - ACCURACY</u></p>		
<p><u>a. GRAMMATICAL COMPETENCE</u></p>		
<p>a. uses correct verb tenses</p>		
<p>b. uses correct possessive adjectives</p>		
<p>c. uses correct pronouns</p>		
<p>d. uses correct prepositions</p>		
<p>e. uses correct terminology</p>		

- 1. NO COMPETENCE
- 2. LOW COMPETENCE
- 3. MODERATE COMPETENCE
- 4. HIGH COMPETENCE

COMPETENCIES	PRESENT LEVEL	COMMENTS
<p><u>WRITING</u> <u>RT TWO - ACCURACY</u></p> <p><u>DISCOURSE COMPETENCE</u></p> <p>1. information provided is well organized:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. text is coherent b. text is cohesive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) uses logical connectors. 		
<p>2. format is appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. letter format b. memo format 		
<p>3. uses correct spelling</p>		
<p>4. uses correct punctuation</p>		
<p>5. uses appropriate word order</p>		

CORRECTION SHEET RATING SCALES

1. NO COMPETENCE
2. LOW COMPETENCE
3. MODERATE COMPETENCE
4. HIGH COMPETENCE

IMPTENCIES	LISTENING PRESENT LEVEL	COMMENTS	READING PRESENT LEVEL	COMMENTS
<p><u>ONE - CONTENT</u></p> <p>all tasks were completed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. all airlines were called b. all hotels were called c. all prices were obtained d. least expensive reservations were made e. reservations were made for dates requested 	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p><u>TWO - ACCURACY</u></p> <p>all information obtained was correct:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. prices: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. hotel 2. airlines b. dates c. times: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> flight departures flight arrivals d. reservation/confirmation numbers: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> hotel flight 	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

Student's Name: _____ Job Title: _____
 Section: _____
 Evaluation Period: Commenced _____ Ended _____

Total hours evaluated: _____ Total hours scheduled: _____
 Class hours: _____ Absence: _____ Work: _____
 Excursion hours: _____ Sick: _____
 Other: _____ Late: _____
 Other: _____

Started training: _____ Total hours to date: _____
 Previous immersions: _____
 Overnight excursion(s): _____
 Ottawa immersion(s): _____
 Work exchange(s): _____

Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced
FB - false beginner	4 - low intermediate	7 - low advanced
1 - low beginner	5 - mid intermediate	8 - mid advanced
2 - mid beginner	6 - high intermediate	9 - high advanced
3 - high beginner		

STUDENT COMPETENCE			
Level Entered Training	Present Level		Desired Level
	Start of Evaluation	End of Evaluation	
Units covered: _____			

Overall Evaluation:

Rate of Progress: very fast fast steady slow minimal

Motivation: very good good average low minimum

Instructor's Comments: _____

Instructor's Signature: _____

