CHANGING PERSPECTIVES ON ACCURACY
IN THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH
AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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A dissertation submitted according to the requirements of the Magister Artium degree in the Faculty of Arts at the University of the Orange Free State.

Date of submission: 30 May 1991

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NOTES ON THE TEXT AND TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

In all quotations, I have retained the spelling and punctuation of the original, including American spellings. Therefore, there may appear to be inconsistencies, for example in the different versions of the word 'Audiolingual', which I have spelt with a capital letter in each case in my own text, but which appears as 'audiolingual' and 'audio-lingual' in quotations. Likewise, 'dialogue' appears in excerpts from American books as 'dialog', and 'programme' as 'program'.

TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

- Turns are numbered 1, 2, 3 etc.

- Interactional dimensions:

IR_h	= teacher-class interaction
IR_{l-g}	= teacher-group interaction
IR_{l-s}	= teacher-pupil interaction
IR_g	= group interaction
IR_{s-s}	= pupil interaction

- Abbreviations:

T	= Teacher
P	= Pupil
Ps	= Pupils
P1	= Pupil 1
V	= Verbal
NV	= Non-verbal

- Signs:

( )	= Stage directions: Nv actions
∧	= Silent stress and falling intonation

Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1. Research Problem

Since the late 1950s, the burgeoning of 'new' language teaching methods aimed at facilitating second or foreign language acquisition has been almost overwhelming, and as Diller (1978:2) rather ironically and forthrightly states:

> ... the "new" methods for language teaching which are continually being invented are advertised as if they were patent medicines for some heretofore incurable ailment.

Maley (1984:81) in his humorous article, 'I Got Religion', mentions the simultaneous processes that are involved in the daunting task of acquiring a second language:

> ... the need to recognize and reproduce comprehensibly the phonemic, stress, and formal features of another system; to hold incomplete sequences in short-term memory for long enough to make sense of them, or to formulate chains of sound rapidly enough to 'interact' before the discourse has moved on; to co-ordinate phonetic, syntactic, and lexical systems simultaneously in what may be quite stressful circumstances; and to commit to long-term operational memory a multiplicity of rules and meanings.

There we have the elements of what Maley justifiably calls the 'Herculean' task of second language acquisition. Faced with teaching or facilitating this learning, very often teachers may embrace the latest methodological trend in much the same way as people seeking solutions to life's problems might 'get religion' (hence the title of Maley's article). Some of the more recent methods may seem somewhat bizarre, especially to the outsider. Maley (1984:80) quotes from a letter he received from a friend 'who is into psycho-something-or-other approaches':

"I had a fantastic success: out of a dozen participants, I had one woman burst into tears, one throwing up, and at least one virtually falling head over heels in love with me - raving mad - you see the type.   Well, I declare, teachers are an odd lot and I'd rather deal with 100 students than 10 teachers."

A far cry indeed from the traditional language teachers who would stand primly in front of a classroom, preferably behind a desk, talking for 95% of the lesson (if not more) using teaching methods that were based entirely on accuracy, both in what they themselves said and what they expected their students to do and say.   We have only to compare the following exchanges from a Grammar-Translation and Communicative Language Teaching lesson respectively.   The first excerpt comes from a Standard 8 English lesson during which one of the pupils asked why he had come across 'It is I' instead of 'It is me' in a book he was reading.   The second comes from a first-year English language tutorial at the University of the Orange Free State.

(1)

1	T:	It is incorrect to say 'It is me'.
2	P1:	Why, ma'am?
3	T:	After the copulative verb you need a complement which is always in the nominative case, because 'it' is the subject which is in the nominative and 'I' agrees with the subject. 'Me' is the accusative case. Clear?

(2)

1	T:	What would you like written on your gravestone?
2	P1:	I'd be happy with 'Here lies a good man'.
3	P2:	You lie.
4	P3:	No, he lies.
5	T:	Are you happy with the word 'lies' in your epitaph?

Kelly (1976:408) has this to say about language teaching ideas:

... one generation's heresy becomes the orthodoxy of the next.

(Note again the use of words with religious connotations - 'heresy' and 'orthodoxy'.)

Obviously there has been a paradigm shift away from the accuracy-based methods, such as Grammar-Translation and Audiolingualism, towards fluency-based approaches like Communicative Language Teaching and Strategic Interaction.   This research aims to outline (a) the changing perceptions of accuracy within the paradigm shift mentioned above and (b) the importance of accuracy in written and spoken texts.

In order to examine the extent to which there has been a shift in perceptions of accuracy, we need to arrive at a definition of accuracy in linguistic terms.   The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines 'accurate' as 'careful, precise; in exact conformity with a standard or with truth'.   What has changed over the years in language teaching has been the 'standard' with which the language in the second language classroom should conform.   Brumfit (1984:51) argues the case against conformity with certain standards:

> The emphasis in making the accuracy/fluency distinction is on the
> mental set of the learner.   If the language is being produced for
> display purposes, the learner is intended to produce examples of
> language according to the requirements of the teacher, who may be
> demanding phonological, syntactic, lexical, functional, or stylistic
> convergence on a norm which may or may not have been specified.
> Whatever the conditions, the learner is expected to demonstrate
> usage, not use (Widdowson, 1978a:3-4), and will adopt strategies
> accordingly.

When we look at the language of the second language classroom to determine the standards or paradigms against which accuracy is measured, we shall see that the sentence, which traditionally featured as the unit of language study, has, in more modern methods, been superseded by the connected text of discourse, and that standards of accuracy may be measured even beyond the text in the domain of register, tone, gesture, and social context.   These concerns of discourse are illustrated in the following examples, all directives for someone to

shut the door.

(3)   (i)   Shut the door!

        (ii)   Please can you shut the door.

        (iii)   I wonder if you could shut the door, please.

        (iv)   Put the wood in the hole.

        (v)   Ooh, it's cold in here.

Examples (i), (ii) and (iii) evince differences in degrees of politeness, while (iv), which occurs in the region around Nottingham in England, assumes pragmatic knowledge of the social context. Example (v), on the other hand, may be interpreted as a gentle hint for someone to shut the door, and not just as a comment on the temperature of the room, whereas its grammatical structure is that of a statement, not a request or command. In the words of Coulthard, Montgomery and Brazil (1981:9), 'some discourse categories ... cut right across traditional grammatical boundaries'.

The importance of discourse in language teaching is advanced by Widdowson (1979:89):

> ... there is a need to take discourse into account in our teaching of language, and to consider how far the attempts made by linguists and others to analyse discourse might help us to do this.

> ... I think it is time to say that, in general, language teachers have paid little attention to the way sentences are used in combination to form stretches of connected discourse. They have tended to take their cue from the grammarian and have concentrated on the teaching of sentences as self-contained units. It is true that these are often presented in 'contexts' and strung together in dialogues and reading passages, but these are essentially settings to make the formal properties of the sentences stand out more clearly - properties which are then established in the learner's mind by means of practice drills and exercises.

Gardner (1984:105) agrees with Widdowson's point of view when he writes that a 'truly communicative syllabus would need to take account of the discourse level, too'. Gardner's (1984:104) example illustrates this.

(4)   A: Do you know the way to Oxford Circus?
         B: My shoelace is undone.

In (4), B's statement is meaningless if one resorts to dictionary interpretations, but the context will supply an underlying message, in this case 'One moment, please, I just want to tie my shoelace, and then I'll answer your question.'

Sinclair and Coulthard (1975:1) also outline the lack of completeness in earlier linguistic enquiry in not going beyond the levels of phonology, syntax and semantics:

> American structuralists and transformational-ists alike had concentrated massively and very successfully on problems within phonology and the grammar of the clause, and put aside attempts to deal with paragraphing and meaning. Verbal and non-verbal context were ignored as having little bearing on grammatical or phonological description.

The shift in emphasis has been away from just linguistic competence to communicative competence (Canale, 1983; Riley, 1985; Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975:3), beyond purely accuracy-based to fluency-based competence, and this involves many more linguistic aspects than was traditionally the case in linguistic enquiry. Sinclair and Coulthard (1975:4) enumerate these aspects:

> ... how are successive utterances related; who controls the discourse; how does he do it; how, if at all, do other participants take control; how do the roles of speaker and listener pass from one participant to another; how are new topics introduced and old ones ended; what linguistic evidence is there for discourse units larger than the utterance?

Concomitant with the shift towards communicative, rather than simply linguistic competence, is the shift in emphasis away from the written to spoken language. However, Kelly (1976:407) points out that it is a misconception that everyone regards spoken language as the only real form of language:

> Thus, during the last twenty years it has been taken for granted that the written language, as an artificial construct, would be played down. But this was certainly not a universal opinion: Slama-Cazacu is quite clear that "... it is not justified to identify language solely with spoken expression."

When we consider that Rinvolucri (1984:1) tells us:

> The average teacher in Europe today notches up a score of about 60-70% teacher-talking time in his or her classes. Just 35% or less is left to the students!

we can begin to perceive the significance of classroom discourse and, more importantly perhaps for this research, the nature and prominence of accuracy in classroom discourse. The nature of the paradigm shift in accuracy in ESL teaching may be glimpsed in Rinvolucri's (1984:3) statement:

> Grammar is perhaps so serious and central in learning another language that all ways should be searched for which will focus student energy on the task of mastering it and internalising it.

This statement pinpoints the centrality of grammar and its mastery in the ESL classroom, but, although this is the case, different methodologies have different views of what constitutes the accuracy of language. Is it merely grammatical accuracy as seen in the traditional methods, or does it encompass the four aspects of what Canale (1983) discusses under the heading of 'communicative competence' ie grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence?

In the examination of how accuracy is dealt with in classroom discourse, it is

obvious that teacher feedback is crucial, ranging from the traditional classroom mentioned earlier such as Rinvolucri describes, as manifest in (1) where the teacher dominates the discourse in the classroom, to the type of activity described by him (1984:1) where the teacher's role:

> ... is to give silent feedback to individuals and to the class, but only when absolutely necessary.

The paradigm shift away from over-concentration on lingual objects to incorporate the psychological aspects of lingual subjects may also be seen in this assertion by Rinvolucri:

> Meeting and interiorising the grammar of a foreign language is not simply an intelligent, cognitive act. It is a highly affective one too.
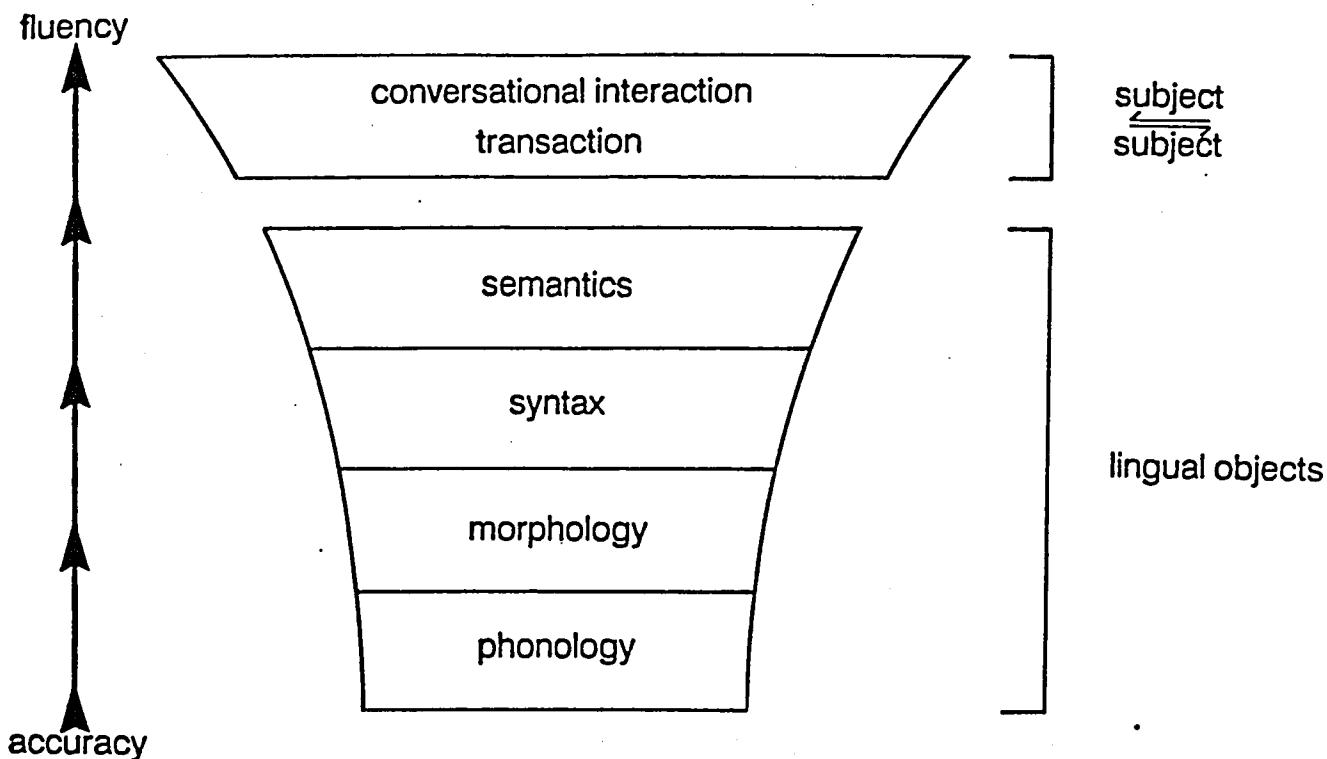
Therefore, this study will examine methods, approaches and techniques evident in five different ways of teaching English as a second or foreign language from the point of view of discourse analysis, which will look at their typical lingual features in order to establish how and to what extent accuracy features in the discourse and texts (see below). The terms, *method, approach* and *technique* are defined by Richards and Rodgers (1986:15) in accordance with Edward Anthony's model as follows:

> ... approach is the level at which assumptions and beliefs about language and language learning are specified; method is the level at which theory is put into practice and at which choices are made about the particular skills to be taught, the content to be taught, and the order in which the content will be presented; technique is the level at which classroom procedures are described.

This research will be conducted within the ambit of the above definitions, and will use as paradigm lingual objects on the levels of language i.e. the phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic and textual, and then the interaction between lingual subject and lingual subject on the level of conversational interaction in classroom context. Figure 1 illustrates the levels of language, arranged

hierarchically from the phonological level at the bottom, up through the other levels of lingual objects, which constitute the focus of traditional accuracy-based language classes such as Grammar-Translation, Direct Method and Audiolingualism, to the interactive level at the top, which comes to be included, in varying degrees, in the fluency-based approaches such as Communicative Language Teaching and Strategic Interaction. The arrows indicate the shift away from exclusively phonological, morphosyntactic and semantic accuracy to include transactional and interactive accuracy as well.

Figure 1
Paradigm of language levels used to determine accuracy

fluency

conversational interaction

transaction

subject

subject

semantics

syntax

morphology

phonology

lingual objects

accuracy

1.2. Research design and plan

Data collection: Data will be selected from existing corpuses, eg Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), Wells (1981), Sinclair and Brazil (1982), Richmond (1982), Stoll (1983), Svartvik and Quirk (1980), McHoul (1978) and others. In addition to selections from these corpuses of data, the researcher collected and analysed

some audio-recordings at school level, and others in tutorial context at University of the Orange Free State. The students involved were those registered for ENS 115 and 125, a one-year terminal course for students not intending to continue with English studies.

1.3. Research methods

Data analysis: The same method of analysis as that used by Stoll (1983) has been adopted; in other words, audio-recordings have been transcribed on a turn-by-turn basis, and the non-verbal dimension has been outlined in brackets after each turn.   However, in the actual analysis of data, the Birmingham School's method of analysis in terms of lingual acts, moves, exchanges and transactions is used.   Sinclair and Coulthard (1975:19-60) detail this system of analysis, which studies the underlying structure of teacher-pupil dialogue.   According to them (1975: 21), a typical classroom *exchange* consists of an *initiation* by the teacher, followed by a *response* from the pupil, followed by teacher *feedback* to the response - the traditional IRF (Initiation-Response-Feedback) pattern. For example, the teacher here is looking for an adjective as used in a sentence:

(5)   T: Now give me an example in a sentence. (I)
        P: That lady is old. (R)
        T: That lady is old. Good. What else? (F)

These *moves* of the *exchange* are further analysable into *acts*.   For example, in (5) the teacher's initiation consists of an elicitation act whereas in (6) below, there are a number of *acts:*

(6)   T: Right෴ (i)
               Today we are going to take a look at adjectives. (ii)
               What are the functions of adjectives? (iii)
               Norman. (iv)

Act (i) is a marker, which serves as a framing move, or an indicator of a boundary in a lesson; the act in (ii) is a metastatement (a statement about what will happen in the lesson) and acts as a focus; while (iii) is an act of elicitation and (iv) a

nomination.   These acts make up the initiation, or opening move.   Returning to example (5), the follow-up move by the teacher to the pupil's response consists of acceptance by repetition of what the pupil has said, an evaluation (Good) and another elicitation act (What else?).

The data is analysed against the background of a survey of the literature dealing with the various methods chosen for this study.   These various methods have been chosen because they evince the swing of the pendulum that the position of accuracy has held over the years, from absolute supremacy in the Grammar-Translation Method, through accuracy of speech in the Direct Method, which led on to the excesses of accuracy of Audiolingualism, to its almost total overthrow in Communicative Language Teaching and then back to an important, but not autocratic, position in Strategic Interaction.

1.4. Aims of this study

This study is not meant to be a quantitative analysis for proving or disproving the effectiveness of teaching methods, approaches or techniques; its primary aim is to a) explore the nature of changing perceptions of accuracy in ESL teaching, and b) examine the lingual manifestations of these perceptions in actual classroom interaction.

To this end, Chapter 2 examines the Grammar-Translation Method, Chapter 3 the Direct Method, and Chapter 4 Audiolingualism, to see how accuracy is manifest in the typical IRF pattern of discourse, where the teacher's initiation is followed by student response and typically by teacher feedback.   Chapter 5 examines the shift away from this typical pattern of discourse in Communicative Language Teaching, where the typical IRF pattern is superseded by Teacher Initiation, followed by extended pupil-pupil interaction, and then feedback by the teacher which focuses on the actual needs of the pupils.   Chapter 6 will look at two very different manifestations of classroom discourse in dealing with accuracy in two so-called 'fringe' methods, namely The Silent Way and Strategic Interaction.   In the former of these the teacher's initiation very often takes the form of silent, non-verbal gesturing and miming, and the feedback tacit acceptance, whereas in the latter the teacher structures the discourse and then

there is extensive pupil-pupil interaction before the feedback which takes place during a whole debriefing phase. Chapter 7, the Conclusion, will discuss the importance of accuracy in spoken and written texts. The historical development of each method or approach is dealt with in the background, which constitutes the first section of each chapter.

Chapter 2

The Grammar-Translation Method

2.1. Introduction

This chapter traces the development of the Grammar-Translation Method from Classical times, and shows the influence of Greek and Roman philologists and grammarians on the accuracy-dominated approaches to the English language and its teaching evident in 18th century England. It also uses excerpts from Grammar-Translation lesson transcripts to point up the pervasiveness of this concern for philological accuracy still evident today. How this concern for accuracy is manifest in the principles, method and approach to errors and error-correction is also examined by means of extracts from lesson transcripts. Finally, the conclusion of the chapter encapsulates these aspects as a manifestation of a concern for accuracy in terms of lingual objects, but not communicative competence.

2.2. Background

The Grammar-Translation Method derives from Classical times and so is called the Classical or Traditional method of language instruction. In the Classical Greek period, Plato investigated the connection between the Greek language and what he saw as universal truths or universal ideas that lay behind this language (Herndon, 1976:10). On this point it is interesting to note that the classical Greek word *logos* had the meaning of both *thought* or *idea,* and *word,* showing the relationship between the semantic and phonological characteristics the Greeks thought a word possessed. Aristotle (384-322 BC) developed his linguistic ideas from those held by Plato (Robins, 1968:15). Three centuries after Aristotle, an Alexandrian scholar, Dionysius Thrax, wrote *The Art of Grammar* in which he collated all the fragmented ideas about Greek grammar, and this work has influenced grammarians of virtually all the European languages for twenty centuries (Herndon, 1976:11; Robins, 1968:120). It is since this time that language has been divided into eight parts of speech, with their grammatical functions in sentences individually outlined. Also, Thrax and his contemporaries regarded language study as the study of written texts and standards of

correctness as those evinced in the work of great writers (Robins, 1968:22). Consequently, from this time dates the first metalanguage of terminology necessary for taxonomical linguistic analysis, and the idea that there is a universally correct and acceptable way, (just as there is a wrong way), of using language to express one's ideas (Herndon, 1976:11; Robins, 1968: 24-25). The Romans adopted the Greek example of prescribing grammatical rules for Latin, although some people, notably Julius Caesar and Quintilian, questioned the validity of establishing rules for what was, in real terms, an idealised language, quite far removed from the actual speech of most of the people using the language. Varro (116-27 BC), the earliest Latin writer on linguistic questions of whom we have records, 'recognized the possibilities open to the individual, particularly in poetic diction, of variations (anomalies) beyond those sanctioned by majority usage, a conception not remote from the Saussurean interpretation of *langue* and *parole*' (Robins, 1968:50).[1]

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1   This dichotomy has also informed major developments in modern-day linguistics. Robins (1968:200) elucidates De Saussure's interpretation of the difference between *langue* and *parole* thus:

> (de Saussure) distinguished the linguistic competence of the speaker and the actual phenomena or data of linguistics (utterances) as *langue* and *parole* (like so many others, these Saussurean terms have passed untranslated into international currency). While *parole* constitutes the immediately accessible data, the linguist's proper object is the *langue* of each community, the lexicon, grammar and phonology implanted in each individual by his upbringing in society and on the basis of which he speaks and understands his language.

The two concepts of an idealised universally acceptable language and the actual language that is in general use are termed by Chomsky, in his Transformational-Generative Grammar, *competence* and *performance*, the former being the lexico-syntactic knowledge of the ideal speaker while the latter is the actual speech of the real-life individual. Brumfit (1984:24), discussing the problem of precisely what is meant by *competence* and *performance* focuses on the difficulties presented by what may be termed *aberrant performance*:

> The problem is that, while 'competence' has been specified with some precision, 'performance' seems to include not merely the lapses in performances which

Thus in the Grammar-Translation Method, the ideal speaker's knowledge or *langue* rather than the actual speaker's output or *parole* forms the focus of the lessons as is apparent from the following excerpt from a Grammar-Translation lesson taken from Greyling (1987:345). Here the teacher supplies an explanation of the derivation of the word 'rusticate' from the Latin word 'rus' meaning country.

(1)

1	T:	Uhm, there's a verb which is applied in academic institutions for somebody who has done something wrong. Do you know what it is?
2	Ps:	(No bids: Silence: 4 seconds)
3	T:	By schools and universities.
4	Ps:	(No bids: Silence: 3 seconds)
5	T:	When someone has done something wrong, it is not quite as bad as expel. He can be rusticated -literally that means - and in the old days it used to mean at universities - sent to the country. In other words, if you've been a bad boy, at last you can reflect on your sins for a while in the country - it didn't mean that you were expelled or suspended from the institution entirely, but it did mean that you were denied the privileges of the institution and were sent away ...

In conveying information in turns 1, 3 and 5, the teacher dominates the classroom talk. The teacher's initiation in turn 1 elicits no response even though it consists of an informative act and an elicitation. As there is no answering move, there is no feedback either, and the teacher goes on for the whole of turn 5 with the transfer of information, so that the move contains only one type of act, and that is

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occur when knowledge is interfered with by fatigue or inattention, but also stylistic variation (Chomsky, 1965;27) and acceptability (Chomsky, 1965; 10-15). Performance thus seems to embrace both the failure to achieve competence which is found in the traditional psychological distinction between what is known and what is actually done, and also certain other kinds of knowledge which allow us to produce utterances which are appropriate as well as grammatical.

informative.   So this exchange consists of Initiation followed by a dispreferred non-response.

In the above we notice the academic interest in the semantics and philology of the word, as compared to a communicative methodology which emphasises, in Widdowson's terms, the *use* rather than *usage* of words (cf. Chapters 5 and the section on Strategic Interaction in Chapter 6).

The practice of establishing prescriptive rules for language spread through Europe during the Medieval Period even after the Romance language vernaculars superseded Latin as the language of literary texts and scholarship, and the rules that applied to Latin were simply moulded to fit the new languages, with no cognizance taken of individual systems of logic that had developed in each separate language (Herndon, 1976:12).   Kelly (1969:43) states that Latin was the language used for grammatical explanation and that:

> ... the cardinal preoccupation of teachers was correctness, not
> fluency of response.

In England in the eighteenth century, classical works were admired to such an extent that the age is called the Augustan Age, after Caesar Augustus, the Roman Emperor during Rome's Golden Age.   According to Baugh and Cable (1978:253), the eighteenth century was an age characterised by a:

> ... strong sense of order and the value of regulation.   Adventurous
> individualism and the spirit of independence characteristic of the
> previous era give way to a desire for system and regularity.   This
> involves conformity to a standard that the consensus recognizes as
> good.   It sets up correctness as an ideal and attempts to formulate
> rules or principles by which correctness may be defined and
> achieved.

The 'adventurous individualism' and 'spirit of independence' had influenced the way people spoke and wrote - we have only to count the number of ways that Shakespeare himself spelled his own name as an example of the lack of concern for conformity before the eighteenth century.   But grammarians were perturbed

when, as Baugh and Cable (1978:254) point out:

> ... it was discovered that English had no grammar. ... in English
> everything was uncertain. One learned to write as one learned to
> walk, and in many matters of grammatical usage there was much
> variation even among men of education.

Philologists naturally looked to classical grammar as a model for their own language. Self-appointed arbiters of style and acceptability, notably people like Swift, Harris, Campbell, Johnson and Lowth, objected to the introduction of new and voguish words into the English vocabulary. Howatt (1984:109) discusses the wider ramifications into the domain of societal morals that the correct use of language held for Swift:

> For Swift the correct use of language was a moral issue and
> the social health of the nation was reflected in its attitude to
> the language and its literary achievements.

Consequently, these men tried to fix the language and make it conform to absolute standards (very often dictated by their own personal whims and tastes) by authoritative decree. This strangely unrealistic blindness to the futility of trying to stem the tide of the natural development of the language is noted by Baugh and Cable (1978:260):

> It is curious that a number of men notable in various intellectual
> spheres in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries
> should have been blind to the testimony of history and believed that
> by taking thought it would be possible to suspend the processes of
> growth and decay that characterize a living language.

More important for the history of the English language, however, than the philosophically oriented philologists, were, according to Baugh and Cable (1978:274), the 'more practical and often less gifted grammarians' who were given to linguistic prescriptions. Although there was obviously a variety of concerns among these grammarians, there was a general prescriptive tendency that affected the teaching of English in the classroom in three predominant areas.

These areas were the codification and regulation of the principles of the language, the fixing and (to use Thomas Sheridan's term) the 'ascertainment' of the language in a bid to obviate divided usage, and the correction of what were considered to be common errors (Baugh and Cable, 1978:275). Consequently, the emphasis in dictionaries and school grammars of the period was very much on right and wrong use.

On the *ex cathedra* pronouncements of rightness and wrongness of language and bickering over trivialities one cannot but agree with the sentiments of weariness expressed by Baugh and Cable (1978:277). However, there were those, perhaps more humble people like Joseph Priestley, who believed that generally accepted usage was what should determine the norms of the language, in accordance with what Horace , seventeen hundred years before had called the *ius et norma loquendi* (the rule and norm of speech). In his *Theory of Language* lectures of 1762, Joseph Priestley wrote:

> In modern and living languages, it is absurd to pretend to set up the compositions of any person or persons whatsoever as the standard of writing, or their conversation as the invariable rule of speaking. With respect to custom, laws, and everything that is changeable, the body of a people, who in this respect, cannot but be free, will certainly assert their liberty, in making what innovations they judge to be expedient and useful. The general prevailing custom, whatever it happen to be, can be the only standard for the time that it prevails.
> (Quoted in Baugh and Cable, 1978:282 from his *Theological and Miscellaneous Works* (25 vols., n.p. n.d.) xxiii, 198)

The weakness of the prescriptive tendency of the eighteenth century grammarians can be seen in the fact that many of the words criticised as being voguish and unacceptable are still in common use, a fact which underscores the futility of their efforts. Despite this futility, however, linguistic conservatives of the eighteenth century were not the last of a dying breed. The nineteenth century did not suffer from a lack of their descendants, and even in the twentieth century they are still flourishing.

In modern linguistic scholarship, especially in the study of foreign languages, the Classical method became the Grammar-Translation method, which was the offspring of German scholarship as witnessed by the names of some of its leading exponents e.g. Johan Seidenstucker, Karl Plötz, H.S. Ollendorff and Johan Meidinger. In the United States the Grammar-Translation method was actually called the Prussian method. The disciplinary and analytical value of language study evident in Plötz's system is described by Kelly (1969:53):

> Language teaching drifted further from the languages taught by reason of the abandonment of authentic specimens of literature for synthetic passages that were built around rules, exceptions, and restricted vocabulary selected for its congruence with grammatical rules.

This analytical way of looking at grammar is apparent in the following classroom dialogue again taken from a Standard 8 Grammar-Translation lesson.

(2)

1	T:	Today, we're going to do prefixes. Does anyone know what the word 'prefix' means?
2	Ps:	(muffled) ... added on the front of the word.
3	T:	Yes, that's right. Did you notice that the word 'prefix' has a prefix itself? Where is the prefix?
4	P1:	Is it .. uh .. pre?
5	T:	Pre. Yes. Good. What does that mean, Stefan?

The traditional IRF pattern reveals the teacher's focusing move in turn 1 which introduces a deductive grammar lesson. The general elicitation contained in the initiation attracts a shared bid from the students in the answering move by way of response. Then follows the feedback in turn 3 of accept and evaluate, and two questions which initiate another exchange. This pattern is repeated again in turns 3 - 5, with the teacher asking known-information questions each time a question is asked.

This exchange also exhibits another characteristic of German grammar books,

namely the special value placed on morphological accuracy which provided suitable material for examinations. To quote Howatt (1984:137) in his discussion of the Rev. J. G. Tiarks's *Introductory Grammar:*

> Accuracy, the forelock-tugging link with the classics, the importance of 'endings' - it is all there and we know what to expect.

The prescriptive tendency of classical language studies is an integral part of the classical or traditional method of teaching English as a second language. It seems obvious that, if literary texts were held up as examples of how language should be used, the predominant language skills receiving attention would be reading and writing. However, Herndon (1976:54) points out one of the concomitant problems of this method in first language classes:

> Teaching Latin was simply a matter of presenting established, unchanging rules of a "dead" language....Teaching English was a matter of presenting rules for a language that the students themselves knew and used daily with a wide range of individual differences. *A living, changing language is much harder to pin down,...* (my italics).

Teaching English grammar according to the paradigms of Latin involves using the same terminology and word-grammar plan of attack, and English, which is Germanic in origin, is manipulated to fit the Latin paradigms regardless of the real differences between the languages. Inherent in the Classical or Grammar-Translation method of teaching English is the principle of social acceptability and arbitrary preference for certain forms of language which we have seen has been so prevalent since the eighteenth century. Again the 'living, changing language' that is in actual use poses a problem to pinning down accepted linguistic norms. Herndon (1976:54) comments:

> Certain usages were already recognised as socially acceptable and preferable to others. Putting these into text-books had the effect of freezing them into this designation while, in some cases, custom and usage continued to change.

The school texts used in traditional Grammar-Translation classes would tend to lay emphasis on what would be regarded as <u>correct</u> or <u>socially acceptable</u> usage among first language speakers. Learners of a foreign or second language would be regarded as speaking or writing the language inaccurately if they did not conform to the norms laid down in the grammar text-books.

2.3. Principles

Kelly (1969:52) asserts that one of the principles that underlay the Grammar-Translation Method was a transfer of grammatical training between the classical languages and the vernacular. Richards and Rodgers (1986:3) enumerate the basic principles of the method as follows:

1. The basic goal of studying a foreign language is for the student to be able to read the literature, particularly selections from the 'best authors' (Howatt, 1984:135), and to gain mental discipline in the learning of the grammatical rules of the foreign language. Larsen-Freeman (1986:9) asserts, 'If students can translate from one language into another, they are considered successful language learners'. Language learning is consequently not seen as the acquisition of the functional language of the man-in-the-street, but as a memorisation of rules and facts with a view to understanding the morphology and syntax of the foreign language. In other words, the levels of language employed for assessment of accuracy are only those of morphosyntax and semantics, phonology not being considered of prime importance as it came to be in the Direct Method, and the components of 'communicative competence' as discussed by Canale (1983) on the transactional and interactive levels receiving no attention whatsoever.

2. The major focus is on reading and writing with little attention paid to speaking and listening. Howatt (1984:135) points out that 'spoken language was, at best, irrelevant'.

3. The reading texts provide the source of vocabulary which is taught through bilingual word lists, dictionary study and memorisation. Grammar rules are presented and illustrated, a list of vocabulary items are presented with their

translation equivalents, and translation exercises are prescribed (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:4; Howatt, 1984:136).

4. The sentence is the basic unit of study with translation in and out of the target language revolving around sentences. These sentences very often lacked meaning or sense because of their lack of contextualisation, but as the purpose of learning the foreign language was not communicating meaningfully in order to 'get the message across', this was not regarded as a defect in the method. In fact, as Howatt (1984:132) notes, the 'practical' type of Grammar-Translation course involved practice, for which purpose exercises, mainly specially devised sentences, were regarded as the most useful or desirable means.

5. It is to be expected that in a method such as Grammar-Translation, accuracy would be emphasised. Students would be expected to attain high standards in translation because of what Howatt (1984:132) describes as:

> ... the high priority attached to meticulous standards of accuracy
> which, as well as having an intrinsic moral value, was a prerequisite
> for passing the increasing number of formal written examinations
> that grew up during the century.

6. Grammar is taught deductively i.e. the rules are presented first and then applied to translation exercises. Grammar points are sequenced in an organised and systematic way. See also Howatt (1984:136) and Kelly (1969:49-50) who gives the dialogue of a seventeenth century 'disputation' which was the standard practice advocated by Brinsley in the systematic teaching of grammar.

7. The medium of instruction is the students' native language, which is used for comparison with the target language. Howatt (1984:135) mentions that the central principle of the Reform Movement, namely a monolingual approach (see Chapter 3), is a reaction to this use of the mother tongue instead of the target language as the normal means of communication in the foreign language classroom. The following dialogue comes from a Standard 8 lesson in which the pupils have read a passage in English about Ulysses, and are doing oral comprehension.

(3)

1	T:	Maar wanneer - en hoekom - was hulle kwaad dat hierdie sak vir - Ulysses gegee is?
2	Ps:	(No bids)
3	T:	Kyk daar in die tweede paragraaf (T reads) 'Meanwhile my companions were hatching a conspiracy.' Because Ulysses is rich.
4	Ps:	(No bids)
5	T:	Hulle het gedink Ulysses het genoeg geld.

Here the traditional IRF pattern is absent because the teacher's initiation in turn 1, in the pupils' mother tongue, elicits a dispreferred response in turn 2 and again in turn 4 in spite of the clue in turn 3. Finally, in turn 5 she herself conveys the information that she wanted as a response, and there is no response to this. So the pattern, I-I-R (her own response) shows no exchange at all.

2.4. Method

These underlying principles of the Grammar-Translation method would necessarily have concomitant implications for the method of teaching. As the goal of the method is to be able to read the literature of the target language, the content of the lesson will naturally come from literary texts graded according to the language competence level of the students (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:9; Richards and Rodgers, 1986:4). Inherent in this method is the idea that literary language is superior to spoken language, which brings us back to the centuries-old dichotomy discussed in the background to this chapter. The excerpts of classroom dialogue above, where the teacher dominates the classroom talk and refers to the written language, illustrate the neglect of the students' spoken language. Students are given very little opportunity to practise the language in use, but they do learn (sometimes a great deal) about the language on the levels of morphosyntax and lexicon (semantics) as indicated in Figure 1 (Chapter 1).

The foreign culture that students study is limited to literature and fine arts and thus excludes popular culture such as the man-in-the street would be familiar with. The students are expected to read with accuracy in order to be able to recognise what is good writing according to the received notion of 'the great tradition.' The

notion of accuracy harks back to concepts of what is right and wrong, acceptable or not. George Kitteredge and F.E. Farley (*Advanced English Grammar*, 1913) quoted by Jewell Friend (1974:x) express ideas concerning the superiority of literary language that were popular in the early part of this century:

> ... in such a [cultivated] language usage is so well settled in almost every particular as to enable the grammarian to say positively what is right and wrong. Even in matters of divided usage, it is seldom difficult to determine which of the two forms or constructions is preferred *by careful writers* (my italics).

The film *Good Morning, Vietnam* provides a good example of popular culture as manifest in language use but totally absent from a traditional Grammar-Translation class. Robin Williams takes over a traditional English class being given to some Vietnamese and then proceeds to teach them expressions like:

(4)   Slip me some skin, brother,
instead of the traditional English greeting of
(5)   How do you do?

His rationale in doing so was that (4) is encountered in the streets of New York and means something like 'Slide your hand over mine'. Of course, the non-verbals accompanying this lesson gave meaning to the expression.

This leads on to the second principle of stressing the skills of reading and writing in preference to speaking and listening, and the third principle of vocabulary exercises emanating from the texts, and the methodologies that both these principles engender. By 1971, when Ralph B. Long and Dorothy R. Long wrote *The System of English Grammar* (quoted by Jewell Friend, 1974:xi), we can see the shift away from regarding only written language as a model, and an acknowledgement of the existence of 'nonstandard' or 'bad' sentences in the English language. However, although the distinction between the different styles of written and spoken English as being formal or informal is stressed, the function of grammar and grammatical studies is still seen as encouraging careful and accurate writing:

Grammar should not be used insensitively as a club with which to beat those whose English is, to whatever degree, nonstandard. At some points *problems of divided usage must be faced* (my italics). Styles are of many kinds, but they can be said to fall roughly into two main categories: careful styles and informal styles. ...[Careful styles] are usual for newspaper writing in general, however rapidly it must be done. Informal styles are most clearly appropriate for conversation and for letters to friends.

In a typical Grammar-Translation lesson the students are required to develop their reading skills using either literary texts or suitably adapted literary texts, e.g. novels, plays and poetry in the second language. The students' accuracy in reading is evaluated very largely by written answers and exercises based on the literary text. For example, students might be expected to summarise the contents of a chapter of a novel, very often not in the target language, but in their mother tongue. The texts are also used for translation exercises into their mother tongue and for further study of vocabulary or grammatical structures which may form the focus of subsequent grammar lessons. Comprehension questions might be set on the reading passage, either in the target language or the mother tongue. Obviously, individual teacher preferences will dictate the range of questions and the choice of the language. Howatt (1984:136) evaluates the method as follows:

> ... the method is so ordinary that it is sometimes difficult to see what all the fuss was about. Each new lesson had one or two new grammar rules, a short vocabulary list, and some practice examples to translate. Boring, maybe, but hardly the horror story we are sometimes asked to believe. However, it also contained seeds which eventually grew into a jungle of obscure rules, endless lists of gender classes and gender-class exceptions, self-conscious 'literary' archaisms, snippets of philology, and *a total loss of genuine feeling for living language* (my italics).

If we examine the aims and objectives of the method of acquiring a second language, we can evaluate the method according to the level of accuracy of the

students.   A student who can comprehend a literary text, who can offer a written translation in his mother tongue of literary passages with as few grammatical mistakes as possible, and who can possibly identify 'right' or 'wrong' usages according to the prescriptions laid down in the grammar book would be regarded as successful.   However, if we were to look at the aims and objectives of a communicative approach, by comparison, a student who could conceivably achieve 100% in translation and grammar might not be able to communicate a simple message in the target language, whereas he could accurately write something like 'The pen of my aunt is on the table of my uncle', with due grammatical explanations of subjects, possessives, prepositions and so forth.

Howatt (1984:144) has the following to say about the type of textbook that concentrates on this kind of 'meaningless' sentence exercise:

> It is typical of such grammars (i.e. Ollendorf's) that they concentrate their attention on the characteristics of word-classes and neglect the syntactic relationships between them. ... An approach of this kind encourages the construction of sentences on a word-by-word basis, each word 'arithmetically' added to the one before.   Henry Sweet christened this the 'arithmetical fallacy', it is the main cause of the strangeness of grammar-translation examples like the infamous *pen of my aunt.   Pen* is correct English, so is *my aunt* and so is *of*.   So what is wrong with *pen of my aunt*? There is no way in which grammar-translation writers could distinguish between sentences that were 'grammatical' but at the same time unacceptable to a native speaker.

Brumfit (1984:51) discusses this basic polarity between accuracy and fluency:

> ... the demand to produce work for display to the teacher in order that evaluation and feedback could be supplied conflicted with the demand to perform adequately in the kind of natural circumstances for which teaching was presumably a preparation.   Language display for evaluation tended to lead to a concern for accuracy, monitoring, reference rules, possibly explicit knowledge, problem

solving and evidence of skill-getting. In contrast, language use requires fluency, expression rules, a reliance on implicit knowledge and automatic performance. If the language is being produced for display purposes, the learner is intended to produce examples of language *according to the requirements of the teacher* (my italics), who may be demanding phonological, syntactic, lexical, functional, or stylistic convergence on a norm which may or may not have been specified.

Witness a typical grammar lesson:

(6)

1	T:	Form adjectives from the following nouns: home. Alex.
2	P1:	Uh .. Homeward
3	T:	Can you say 'a homeward person'?
4	P1:	No.
5	T:	What do you say? A .. what .. type of person.
6	P1:	A homely person.
7	T:	Homely. Use it in a sentence now.

When we come to an examination of the fourth principle mentioned by Richards and Rodgers, namely that the sentence is the basic unit of study, we have only to look at any grammar teaching handbook to see just how prominently the sentence features as an element of the method of teaching English as a first language. For example, Friend (1976:4) contains the following rubric for exercise 1:

> Underline the entire predicate in each of the following sentences. If a sentence contains more than one clause, underline the predicate of each clause. Then, circle the simple subject of each clause.

Then follow thirty discrete sentences, some of which are related to each other, others not. The instructions for exercise 2 are these:

> Indicate with a check in the space provided which of the

following sequences is a sentence.   (Treat items enclosed by braces as question-and-answer.)

The two bracketed sequences are:

12.}   What now?
13.}   Strawberry pop dribbling down his chin.

and

19.}   When is Bastille Day?
20.}   July fourteenth.

and the student is asked to provide the omitted segments in the ellipsis.   For example, in the above, the student might provide something like:

What's happening now?
There's strawberry pop dribbling down his chin.
and

When is Bastille Day?
It is on July fourteenth.

This emphasis on the sentence as the basic unit of teaching was carried over from first language teaching into second language teaching, only, of course, with the additional exercise of translating out of the target language into the mother tongue or vice versa.   Friend (1976:7) describes how the meaning of the sentence was seen by the traditional grammarian:

> Meaning was seen by the traditional grammarian as either lexical or grammatical.   Lexical meaning is the essential meaning of words classed as substantives (nouns and other nominals), verbs (including modals, auxiliaries and verbals), and their modifiers (adjectives and adverbs, respectively). Grammatical meaning is the property of the words (and affixes) which signal relationships between the words that

> have lexical meaning. ... we alter our placement of words
> and their grammatical arrangement within sentences in order
> to emphasize certain ones or get certain rhythmic effects.

By contrast, Howatt (1984;141) points out the silliness of using disconnected sentences - a silliness which he finds in both the Grammar-Translation and Audiolingual methods:

> The disconnected sentences of the grammar-translation
> approach are no sillier than the 'scientific' drills of the
> audiolingual method with which they share many features.
> Both are the inevitable outcome of two basic principles. The
> first is that a language teaching course can be based on a
> sequence of linguistic categories, and the second that these
> categories can be exemplified in sample sentences for
> intensive practice.

Sentences for translation or grammar lessons would not be required to have any meaning other than lexical or grammatical, and an accurate translation would be one that accurately used a word in the target language irrespective of a larger context which might call for a different word or phrase to capture the essence of meaning. For example, the Afrikaans sentence, *My vriendin is op pad skool toe omgery* could be translated, quite accurately, as *My girlfriend was run over on her way to school*, but if the speaker were female then English idiom would require that we translate 'vriendin' as 'friend' not 'girl-friend' as the latter implies a male-female relationship. Thus seen in the larger context which would demand the translation 'friend', 'girl-friend' is actually inaccurate, whereas seen just in the sentence it would be regarded as an accurate translation.

When we look at error-correction, we shall see that the principles underlying the method have the effect of shifting the perspective of what is accurate and what is not. The 'meticulous standards of accuracy' mentioned by Howatt (1984:32) would demand correction of errors by the teacher in the sort of contexts mentioned above. The parameters for acceptability would be what the grammars demanded, such as is evident in Weisse's Preface to his *A Complete Practical*

Grammar of the German Language of 1885 which is examined by Howatt (1984:138). Weisse warns us:

> ... teachers and examiners of schools will find in the
> examples here supplied the most efficient means for testing
> the student's knowledge of any grammatical point.

This type of approach contrasts markedly with the functional approach of methods which have developed since the early sixties.

Written exercises practising discrete grammatical points in the target language are a feature of the deductive method of teaching grammar. Very often the rules are given in the native language, then applied to the exercises in the target language and then marked as right or wrong, a right answer being regarded as accurate. The application of these discrete grammar points to a language that is used in real-life communication is not given any attention. In other words, the appropriateness of words, sentences or other utterances to a situation does not play a role in the notions of accuracy in the Grammar-Translation method - provided the sentence is grammatically correct it is accurate, earning the student full marks in a test or examination. Howatt (1984:135) has the following to say with regard to what he describes as the 'excesses of [the method's] later stages - the stress on accuracy, for example, the obsession with 'completeness', and the neglect of the spoken language:

> In practical terms, the fear of being labelled a 'soft option'
> forced modern language teachers and textbook writers to
> ape the methods of the classics. ...Textbooks had to be
> 'thorough' (i.e. exhaustive in their listing of exceptions and
> peculiarities) and based on selections from the 'best
> authors'. Spoken language was, at best, irrelevant and
> *accuracy was elevated to the status of a moral imperative*
> (my italics).

Littlewood (1984:90) comments upon the conscious element that predominates in traditional language teaching activities, such as those mentioned above, in which the focus is on accuracy of the language on the levels of morphosyntax and

lexicon, rather than the accuracy of the message that is being communicated. It was only after Hymes coined the term 'communicative competence' that the interactive and transactional levels of language came to play a part in language teaching. In the Grammar-Translation method there is very little attention, if any, paid to the:

> ... spontaneous subconscious mechanisms, which are
> activated when learners are involved in communication with
> the second language.

He goes on to discuss the implications of the welter of research into this aspect of second language acquisition, rather than learning about the language, as happens in the traditional Grammar-Translation class:

> The subconscious element demands a new range of
> activities where learners are focussed *not on the language
> itself, but on the communication of meanings* (my italics).

2.5. Errors and error correction

It seems clear that, if we are focusing on accuracy, we shall have to establish the paradigms, which the various methods, either explicitly or implicitly, assume for determining errors, and how they view error correction. As mentioned above, the notion of correctness, of something being either right or wrong, is deeply ingrained in the traditional method. The prescriptions for what constitutes an error are usually unequivocally laid down in the grammar textbooks. Regarding errors on a phonological level, Littlewood (1984:22) remarks on the attitudinal shifts that have occurred:

> Until the late 1960s, most people probably regarded [second
> language learners' speech] as a faulty version of the target
> language.

Corder (1981:1), who has devoted a great deal of attention to error analysis, points out the predominant view held until the late sixties:

... the prevailing theory concerning the problem of second language learning was behaviouristic and held that learning was largely a question of acquiring a set of new language habits. Errors were therefore predicted to be the result of persistence of existing mother tongue habits. ... In any case, as far as teaching was concerned, all errors whatever their origin were dealt with by essentially the same technique of further drilling and exercise.

As absolute standards for written grammatical or translation exercises were laid down, errors on the morphological and syntactical levels received priority and were regarded as learning failure and not to be willingly tolerated. As Larsen-Freeman (1986:10) observes, the teacher is the authority for what is right or wrong, and getting the right answer is very important. Self-correction or student-student correction is not a feature of the traditional method.

As the Grammar-Translation method stresses reading and writing skills, correction of errors takes the form of the teacher correcting morphological or syntactical errors very often by picking out each and every error with a red pen. An accurate translation or grammar exercise would be one with no, or very few, red marks. Pragmatic accuracy in the larger context of the whole text would receive less attention than morphological or syntactical accuracy and in many cases, the correct meanings of individual words or sentences might be regarded as accurate, whereas the paragraph or whole passage has been translated meaninglessly. Wolkomir (1983:91) cites some amusing cases of technically (or lexically) accurate, but contextually inaccurate translations (just the type of mistranslation that might occur in a test or examination):

Frenchmen had a good chuckle a few years ago on reading claims that Pepsi-Cola threw cold water on friendship. Chagrined company officials - who had intended the message to be "Pepsi is the refreshment of friendship" - promptly yanked the ads.

Cars with interiors marked "Body by Fisher" were advertised in Belgium with this unintentionally ghoulish translation: "Corpse by

Fisher."

In cases such as these where one could easily say, 'Yes, the student has translated the words and phrases accurately into the target language, but *what does the whole passage mean*?', the student could conceivably have no correction of errors, whereas one who captured the gist or the spirit of the passage, but made grammatical mistakes, could lose many marks.

This negative attitude to errors in the traditional system is evident in Littlewood (1984:95):

> Errors have traditionally been regarded as signs of failure on
> the part of both the teacher and the learner, and have
> frequently led to a sense of demoralisation on both sides.

2.6. Conclusion

The Traditional, Classical, or in second-language classes particularly, the Grammar-Translation method relies heavily on the traditions of the past two millennia, rather than on a theoretical base. Since the Reform Movement of the nineteenth century in Europe, and more particularly since the upsurge in linguistic, psychological and educational research of the latter part of this century, this method has been challenged as an effective and efficient way of teaching and learning a second language, especially as the aims and objectives of second language acquisition have shifted. However, this is not to say that the method is not still used, either completely or partially.

Inherent in the method are strong notions of right and wrong, and so accuracy, according to standards prescribed by grammarians, or the teacher relying on the grammars, features very strongly. The concept of accuracy applies to the interaction between the learner (subject) and lingual objects, that is, texts, on the phonological, morphological, syntactic, and in a limited sense, the semantic levels. (See Chapter 6 on Strategic Interaction for Vygotsky's term - *object-regulated*.) The element of conversational interaction on a transactional level is almost completely lacking.

Because this method uses literary or quasi-literary texts as a basis, the emphasis falls predominantly on reading and writing skills, with listening and speaking skills largely confined to structured, unspontaneous drills. Language study concentrates on correct grammar or learning about the language, rather than on how to use the language functionally in real-life, meaningful discourse. The sentence is the unit of language study, with correct syntax or sentential structure forming the focus of attention. In this language study, accuracy is very prominent, with the teacher providing the criteria for this accuracy. The medium of instruction is very often the mother tongue, with explanations being given in the mother tongue first, and then students having to apply the rules that have been explained to grammatical exercises in the target language. Accurate translation between the mother tongue and the target language is central to this method, but the notions of accuracy do not include appropriateness of register, knowledge of the world or non-verbal elements necessary in real-life conversational situations.

In conclusion, then, grammatical and syntactic accuracy is crucial to this method, but the widening base of linguistic levels which includes transactional, functional language, with student-student interaction, and which is very much a feature of the communicative method of second language acquisition, is absent. The typical classroom talk is teacher-dominated and largely follows an IRF pattern, sometimes, as seen in (3), with few or no answering moves by the students. So, what would be regarded as accurate language work in a Grammar-Translation class, might be seen as totally inappropriate, or even inaccurate when evaluated in terms of the paradigms established for later methods.

Chapter 3

The Direct Method

3.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the development of the Direct Method from the Reform Movement initiated in 1882 by Viëtor's pamphlet 'Language Teaching Must Start Afresh!.' It examines the paradigm shift away from accuracy as conceived by the Grammar-Translation Method, ie mainly written accuracy of grammatical knowledge and translation based on literary texts or contrived sentences, towards accuracy of spoken language based on pictures and other realia in a monolingual approach. Once again excerpts from lesson transcripts are used to evaluate the levels of language used as paradigm for accuracy, as a manifestation of the principles, method and attitude towards errors and error-correction in the IRF pattern of classroom talk.

3.2. Background

It is not very often in history that the beginnings of a revolution can be fixed at an exact date, but this was the case with the so-called Reform Movement in foreign language teaching that took place in Europe after the publication of Viëtor's pamphlet, *Der Sprachunterricht muss Umkehren!* (Language Teaching Must Start Afresh!) in 1882. This pamphlet has now been translated into English by APR Howatt and David Abercrombie and appears as an appendix in Howatt (1984:343-363). It seems apposite to quote the following extract from Howatt's translation (1984:347), which, with its oratorically invective tone, gets to the heart of the problem of traditional teaching methods:

> When it comes to foreign language teaching, the generally
> accepted view is that the same mistaken approach based on
> the written language, the same kind of school grammars, will
> be able to work miracles and teach a new language. They
> never have, and they never will. And even if you actually
> succeeded in stuffing the pupils' heads with the best
> grammars and the most comprehensive dictionaries, they still

> would not know the language!   As the well-known philologist
> Sayce (1879) says: 'Language consists of sounds, not of
> letters, and until this fact is thoroughly impressed upon the
> mind, it is useless to expect that languages will ever be
> studied aright. Language, moreover, is formed and moulded
> by the unconscious action of the community as a whole, and
> like the life of the community is in a constant state of change
> and development.'
>
> ...
>
> We shall never be able to speak a foreign tongue by simply
> committing to memory long lists of isolated words.   Even if
> we further know all the rules of the grammarians, we shall
> find ourselves unable in actual practice to get very far in
> stringing our words together or in understanding what is ‚said
> to us in return.

The fundamental shift to be seen in this document was from the written to the
spoken language, from 'letters' to 'sounds', from an academic study , to a use of
the language.   What is extremely interesting to note in this extract, is Viëtor's
observation and acknowledgement of the effect the community has on language
acquisition, a fact which has only comparatively recently been given its full
credence, especially in Ashworth (1985).

Howatt (1984:171) outlines the three basic principles on which the Reform
Movement was founded:

> ... the primacy of speech, the centrality of the connected text
> as the kernel of the teaching-learning process, and the
> absolute priority of an oral methodology in the classroom.

As was pointed out in Chapter 2, the dichotomy between a study of an idealised
grammatical language and acquiring the language for every-day use has been
around for thousands of years, and Richards and Rodgers (1986:9), as well as
others, state that so-called natural methods of second language acquisition, or
methods that presume second language acquisition occurs in the same way as a
child acquires its mother tongue, have been around for a long time:

... at various times throughout the history of language teaching, attempts have been made to make second language learning more like first language learning.

As early as the sixteenth century, Montaigne described his successful natural acquisition of a second language, which in this case was Latin, by listening to and speaking nothing else but Latin (Howatt, 1984:192).

Diverse labels have been used for these ideas - the Natural Method, the Conversation Method, the Direct Method and more lately, the Communicative Approach - all of which imply a natural method of second language acquisition approximating as closely as possible the natural way a child acquires its mother tongue, which is through imitation of speech sounds, use of the language and inductive acquisition of grammar rules. Diller (1978:146) groups all these methods in the same category because in them 'language is seen to be a symbol system for use in expressing our thoughts' and 'there is no call for mechanical drill.' For example, this Std 2 lesson (Greyling, 1987:288) involves the use of pictures and the target language for the teacher to try to encourage the pupils to express their thoughts in English.

(1)

1	T:	What do you see in this picture? (NV: T nominates pupil by pointing at her.) Yes.
2	P:	The baby is eating.
3	T:	But I want you to describe something about the baby.
4	Ps:	(pause - no bids.)
5	T:	Is the baby young or is the baby old, or is the baby a boy or is the baby a girl, do you think? Or is the baby tall? Or - actually you can't see here. Is the baby fat or is the baby thin? Tell me something. Describe the baby for me in a sentence.

The teacher's initiation of this exchange consists of a traditional elicitation in the question, followed by a combined non-verbal and verbal nomination (Yes). In the response the pupil formulates a perfectly grammatical sentence, but the teacher's rejection in turn 3 acts as covert negative feedback. This pattern

indicates that the target language is used for sentence construction emanating from a picture stimulus, but not in what could be called a really natural way. The exchanges of the classroom discourse do not follow the pattern of real-life conversational discourse, where known-information questions are comparatively rare.

One of the earliest advocates of direct teaching methods was J.S. Blackie, a Scots professor of Latin and Greek, who wrote an article for the *Foreign Quarterly Review* in 1845. Howatt (1984:195) enumerates the criticisms that Blackie levelled at language teaching methods existing at the time in England and Scotland which lacked a sound methodological base and which had as their perpetrators, 'superficial quacks and empirics of all kinds ... big with their own praises and fertile every one in his own infallible method to master the most difficult language of Europe in six weeks, or it may be six days'. Blackie's ideas, however, were not seized upon by educators and remained in relative obscurity, only to raise their heads later, under other people's names. Howatt (1984:197) makes the point that methodologies are all very well but the art of teaching, which emanates from the inherent genius of the teacher himself, is more fundamental to natural language teaching than organised pedagogy, psychology or even linguistics.

One teacher of such natural genius was Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827) who made use of his famous 'object' lessons in which language was related to concrete objects from the real world. As Howatt (1984:198) points out, however, the chief limitation of what came to be called the 'Pestalozzi method' is that, for more advanced students, the concrete objects cease to provide sufficient stimulus after a certain level, like the Direct Method, which itself lacks an organised methodology, has the same drawback of 'peter(ing) out in a fog somewhere around the intermediate level'. Perhaps that is because the concern is still for phonological, morphosyntactic and semantic accuracy only, and conversation *per se* does not feature as part of the method. Witness the following exchange in a Direct Method section of one of my adult English second language conversational classes. The teacher holds up a picture of an African lady who has been given the name of Cecilia by the class.

(2)

1	T:	(Holds up picture of Cecilia and pictures of objects representing the tasks she has to perform every day.) Every day Cecilia comes to work and she ... (points to wastepaper basket)
2	Ps:	Cleans the .. what do you call that thing?
3	T:	Wastepaper basket.
4	Ps:	The wastepaper basket.
5	T:	Then she ... (points to dirty ashtray)
6	Ps:	Cleans the ashtray.
7	T:	Every day she ... (points to the telephone)
8	Ps:	Answers the telephone.

The initiation in this exchange consists of the beginning of a statement. Rising intonation on 'she', coupled with the non-verbal clue of pointing to the picture of a wastepaper basket, is a general elicitation to the students. Their response evinces the correct form of the verb (in this case, the simple present tense), but in not remembering the word 'wastepaper basket' they ask the teacher a question which extends the exchange to turn 4. It is interesting to note that the information-gap question in turn 2 is the only piece of this exchange that resembles real-life conversation, and what is even more significant, in my opinion, is that a few minutes later in the same lesson, the students were simulating a telephonic interview in order to conduct a survey for which they had compiled a list of ten questions. The same students who filled in the present simple tense in the 'object lesson' produced utterances like:

(3)

1	P1:	Good morning, madam. My name is Hettie Zietsman and I am working for the SABC. May I ask you some questions?
2	P2:	Yes, certainly.
3	P1:	Are your children listening to Radio Oranje every day?

In both of P1's turns, she uses the present continuous tense where she should have used the present simple, which she had practised a few minutes earlier, but could not transfer to simulated real-life conversation. In (2) above, the teacher's feedback is covert as she merely indicates acceptance of the response by

initiating the next exchange. This type of exchange reveals the monolingual approach of the Direct Method and the use of objects to elicit responses, but in comparison with Communicative Language Teaching and Strategic Interaction (see Chapters 5 and 6), the concern for morphosyntactic accuracy in the dialogue does not resemble real-life conversation. Another interesting observation on this lesson was that the students voluntarily proffered the feedback that the telephonic interview was really enjoyable and confidence-building.

Another development towards the Direct Method occurred in 1869, when one of Pestalozzi's disciples, Gottlieb Heness, together with Lambert Sauveur (1826-1907) established the School of Modern Languages in Boston, USA. The Sauveur approach was known as the Natural Method, and was regarded in the late nineteenth century as one of the most significant new developments in language teaching in America. However, there were elements of his method that did not gain complete acceptance. In reviewing Sauveur's work, Kroeh (1887) points out that, just as Pestalozzi's 'object' lessons hinged on basic referential language and were limited in the amount of stimulus and stimulation they could offer more advanced students, so the conversation practised in the Sauveur school, of necessity had to be somewhat trivial (Howatt 1984:202). (See also Kelly, 1969:313.)

The term, Direct Method, which incorporates the adjective 'direct' used by Blackie in his ideas on language teaching, is usually associated with Maximilian D. Berlitz (1852-1891), perhaps one of the best known founders of a language school in America, who opened his first school in Rhode Island in 1878, only nine years after Sauveur had opened his. Berlitz himself, however, preferred to call his method the Berlitz Method (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:9). The Berlitz Schools were enormously successful because the market was ready and waiting for just such a phenomenon, as there were many adult European immigrants to the United States at this time who needed to be able to survive in their new environment, and this provided ample motivation. However, in the secondary school environment, where the motivation levels were not so high, there were certain problems. (See also Howatt, 1984:206-207.)

Henry Sweet and other notable linguists felt, just as Blackie had before them, that the Direct Method lacked a sound methodological base on which to build

teaching techniques, so in the 1920s and 1930s, the principles proposed earlier by the Reform Movement were systematised and they became the foundations of the British approach to teaching English as a Foreign Language. Audiolingualism in the United States, and the Oral Approach and Situational Language Learning, approaches that developed in Britain between the 1930s and 1960s, were built on these foundations. (See Chapter 4 on Audiolingualism.)

3.3. Principles

One of the basic principles of the Reform Movement was the adoption of a monolingual teaching methodology through the use of the target language as the normal means of communication in the classroom (Howatt, 1984:135). This was the most significant difference between the Grammar-Translation Method and the so-called Natural methods of language acquisition. Whereas the target language played a minor role in the language of teacher-talk in the Grammar-Translation classrooms, it is central to the methodology of post-Reform Movement approaches. Not only is it essential that the teacher should use the target language as the language of instruction, but the students are encouraged to use the spoken language as well. Speech was of the utmost importance, so speaking and listening skills were practised. With this radical shift it seems logical that notions of accuracy would also shift. What would be regarded as accurate language skills? Whereas those teachers who followed the Traditional Method might succeed, as Viëtor said, 'in stuffing the pupils' heads with the best grammars and the most comprehensive dictionaries' (Howatt 1984:347) and assess their pupils' knowledge in tests and examinations designed to measure the accuracy of their knowledge of these grammars and dictionaries, now accurate pronunciation headed the list of desiderata. Viëtor had railed against the often faulty and sometimes downright incorrect pronunciation of teachers of second languages who were passing on the knowledge they themselves had acquired from textbooks, not actual language use:

> What is more, these dreadful methods are made even worse
> through errors and mistakes of detail. ... the average author('s) ...
> sources are no better (than the 'guides to pronunciation' given in
> the grammar book). ... It is really incredible that all the scientific
> findings in the study of speech during the past few decades seem to

have been completely disregarded in most school grammars and dictionaries. We make do with a pronunciation manual such as Walker's, originally published in 1791(!) in order to study a language like English which has developed with all the energy of its native steam engines. But for hair-raising mistakes such as the *o* in *go* slides from *a* to *o*; *ai* sounds like *eh* in *gain* and *ai* in *lay* (I am quoting from the second edition of a so-called 'textbook'), there is no other authority than the author's own ignorance.'

Strong invective indeed, but as Howatt (1984:172) asserts:

> To writers like Viëtor and Sweet, it was essential that the learners' pronunciation should be correct before moving on to texts, and that these texts should be printed in a scientifically accurate notation, not in the faulty traditional orthography, particularly for languages like English and French where the standard spelling is extremely misleading. ... Nevertheless, in many teachers' minds, modern methods of language teaching were synonymous with 'using phonetics', and 'phonetics' in turn meant learning a notation system.

With the rise of science in this era, it is to be expected that a scientific method of distinguishing the written letters (or traditional orthography) and a notation system for the spoken sounds should come into being - hence the development of the science of phonetics. The IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet) owes its origins to the International Phonetic Association which was founded in 1886 (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:7).

Just how important correct pronunciation was socially at this time, and how phonetics dominated the language scene, can be seen in Bernard Shaw's play *Pygmalion* (1912), in which Eliza Doolittle gains access to the upper echelons of society by virtue of her 'correct' speech, which Professor Higgins had drilled into her while at the same time coaching out her 'bad', that is Cockney, accent and speech habits. Just as Eliza had to learn to speak correctly (or accurately), so pupils now had to practise pronunciation while teachers were under the impression, rightly or wrongly, that they had to use phonetics. Sauveur likewise in

his school did not permit his students to start his coursebook until they had completed a month of intensive oral work (Howatt 1984:199).   The more recent trend, however, is not to insist on a 'correct' accent, provided the pronunciation makes the words intelligible.   Intonation too, as a means of expressing communicative function, also receives priority (Brazil, 1981).

In (4) below we see an example of the emphasis placed on phonological accuracy.

(4)

1	T:	(Pointing to a picture of a bald man) Does the man have hair, or is he bald?
2	Ps:	No, he is bald (pronounced bold).
3	T:	Is he bold or bald?
4	Ps:	He is bald.

The correct pronunciation is not drilled into the students to the extent that we find in Audiolingualism (see Chapter 4), but instead the teacher asks a questionto elicit the correct pronunciation of the word 'bald'.   The question as an eliciting act is a feature of the Direct Method (see Richards and Rodgers, 1986:10).

Of course, the monolingual approach would require accuracy of spoken utterances in the target language, while accuracy of written translation between the target language and the mother tongue would no longer be of importance.   A great deal of research since the 1960s has gone into mother tongue speech habits which might hinder second language acquisition, with terms like *interference* and *interlanguage* (Selinker, 1969 & 1972) entering the linguistic glossary, but to the linguists of the Reform Movement, phonetic training to encourage good pronunciation habits was of top priority (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:7).   To use the terminology that has entered the linguistic lexis since the 50s, accuracy of *form*, including phonological accuracy, was emphasised, while *function* received somewhat less attention.   (See Figure 1 for levels of language for which accuracy is required.)

The second principle of the Reform Movement, which also differed substantially from the Grammar-Translation method, was the use of conversation texts and

dialogues to introduce conversational phrases and idioms (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:7). No longer was the literary language of the 'great' writers the material that was to be studied with a view to cultivating the aesthetic tastes of the second language learners and providing models for translation, and no longer was the sentence to be the basic unit of study. Psychology provided a rationale for the use of cohesive texts rather than discrete sentences that sometimes had very little, or no meaning, other than what Friend (1974:7) refers to as grammatical or lexical meaning. As Howatt (1984:172) mentions, psychology stressed the value of associationism in the education process which in the sphere of language was beginning to be seen as far greater than the mere product of accurate grammatical knowledge or translation.

> Disconnected words and sentences infringed the basic tenets of associationism, and they had to be replaced by texts in which the linguistic elements were correctly assembled so that the learner could make the necessary associations between one element and another.

The issue of the creative processes that come into play to assist second language acquisition has received much attention more recently with Krashen's Monitor Model that distinguishes between unconscious 'acquisition' and conscious 'learning' (Krashen and Terrell, 1983). Learners' rule systems for processing second language elements are discussed by Ellis (1985:267) who distinguishes, with reference to Bialystok (1982), between automatic and non-automatic, analytic and unanalytic knowledge. However, in the early days of the Reform Movement, the proponents of using texts instead of discrete, disconnected sentences were aware of the general educational and psychological advantages, without having the benefit of later psycho-linguistic research. The reformers challenged the validity of being able to render an accurate translation of a sentence, or accurately being able to parse, analyse and further explicate sometimes rather abstruse grammatical points relating to a sentence, while not being able to comprehend or accurately string together a connected text. Howatt (1984:173) describes how the text was used:

> ... the text provided the starting point for question-and-answer work,
> retells, and so on, *which required the learners to use the new*

language (my italics*)*.

The learners use the new language, but they do not generate their own discourse. Initiation always, or nearly always, comes from the teacher and the discourse follows the typical IRF pattern. For example, in the following extract from *English the Active Way: Std 6* by Hopwood and Stander (p.10), the pupils are asked to dramatise this dialogue in order to practise the present continuous tense:

(5)

1	*Mum:*	What are you doing in the pantry, children?
2	*Ria:*	Ann is looking for something to eat, Mother. I am putting my shoes in the bedroom, Mother.
3	*Mum:*	You are not doing anything you should not do, are you?

The differences between this discourse and real-life discourse are vast. This is stilted and follows an unnatural series of questions and answers between a mother and her children and is not generated by the students themselves. The simulated dialogue bears little resemblance to the type of dialogue that Di Pietro hopes to elicit from students by using Strategic Interaction where the students interact naturally according to roles (see Chapter 6). However, the rationale behind this type of dramatisation is that it abandons the texts of 'great literature' for conversational dialogue, albeit stilted, in an attempt to encourage communication. We notice that the notion of accuracy purports to include conversational dialogues, but real student-student or teacher-student interaction is still absent.

Again we see that, if the aims and objectives of acquiring a second language are to be able to converse accurately, write accurately, or use the target language accurately ie in real-life communication, rather than to study the usage of the language (see Widdowson (1979) for the distinction between usage and use), the principles will be entirely different from those encountered in the Grammar-Translation method.

Connected texts would serve to 'relate the words of the new language to their referents in the outside world' but at this early stage the actual content of the texts did not receive as much attention as it did later when linguists like Henry Sweet

became interested in the controversial subject of how best to teach foreign languages (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:7).

The third principle is that students practise what they have learnt. Obviously if students were expected to practise, they were expected to attain an accurate standard of performance, but now the notion of accuracy had shifted primarily to oral performance, although written accuracy was still important. It was this principle of practising that led to some of the excesses (as so often intrinsically worthwhile concepts do) of pattern practice drill and Audiolingualism (which is discussed in chapter 4).

Two further principles of the Reform Movement enumerated by Richards and Rodgers (1986:8), are that grammar should be taught inductively i.e. the rules should be taught only after the students have practised them in context, and that translation should be avoided except for purposes of explanation or checking comprehension. This last point was modified in the Direct Method as used in the Berlitz Schools where translation was avoided at all costs, sometimes to the detriment of the efficacy of the lesson where a simple translation could have avoided much time-consuming 'verbal gymnastics' (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:11).

Richards and Rodgers (1986:10) state that 'correct pronunciation and grammar were emphasized' by the proponents of the Direct Method, Sauveur and Berlitz among them. The students were required to acquire the grammar of the language so that they could encode messages accurately in the target language, but the phonological accuracy centred upon form more than function. As Ellis (1985:85) observes, learners are not aware of all the functions of the linguistic items when they internalize them, so although the students might master the grammar and pronunciation accurately, that would not necessarily assume an accurate knowledge or ability to use the form in all its various functions. Inductive teaching or learning of grammar was thought to be the most effective means of encouraging grammatically accurate utterances or written texts. However, we need to look at what criteria were used by the teacher for judging the accuracy of the grammar of the students. This will be done when we examine the techniques employed in teaching according to the Direct Method.

The final principle of avoiding translation was to prevent first language interference or transfer. Ellis (1986:19) mentions that the popular opinion of the process of second language acquisition is that of:

> ... overcoming the effects of L1, of slowly replacing the features of the L1 that intrude into the L2 with those of the target language and so of approximating ever closer to native-speaker speech.

However, he points out the totally divergent views of L1 and L2 that are currently held, and quotes Marton (1981:150) as saying:

> ... there is never peaceful co-existence between two language systems in the learner, but rather constant warfare...

whereas Felix (1980b:107) asserts that:

> ... our data on L2 acquisition of syntactic structures in a natural environment suggest that interference does not constitute a major strategy in this area ... it seems necessary to me to abandon the notion of interference as a natural and inevitable phenomenon in L2 acquisition.

3.4. Method

As mentioned earlier, the central principle of the Direct Method is a monolingual approach, the very term 'Direct' not actually being coined but emerging rather like the contemporary 'Communicative Approach' as a 'useful generic label to refer to all methods of language teaching which adopted the monolingual principle as a cornerstone of their beliefs' (Howatt, 1984:207). Since translation is, to a very large degree, if not totally, taboo, the teacher makes use of realia, pictures or pantomime to convey meanings of words and phrases (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:24). Berlitz's views, particularly his stringent approach to monolingualism, are set out by Howatt (1984:205) who, however, points out his lack of theoretical linguistic methodology:

> Berlitz was not an academic methodologist, but he was an excellent

systematizer of basic language teaching materials organised on 'direct method' lines.

Howatt then goes on to say that Berlitz insisted that there be:

> ... no translation under any circumstances ('teachers are cautioned against the slightest compromise on this point' (Berlitz, 1907:7)), a strong emphasis on oral work, avoidance of grammatical explanations until late in the course, and the maximum use of question-and-answer techniques.

However, we should observe that Berlitz's methods did not meet with universal approval and his schools were criticised by Pakscher in 1895 in an article he wrote for *Englische Studien* for being 'mechanical and superficial' and by Kroeh in his 1887 survey for the 'trivialization' of content.

The lesson Diane Larsen-Freeman observed was entitled 'Looking at a Map' and is typical of a lesson taught by means of the Direct Method. The students each read a sentence about a map of the USA, after each of which the teacher points to the relevant place on the map. After reading, the students are given an opportunity to ask questions. When asked what a mountain range is, by way of explanation the teacher draws one on the board, rather than use the native language of the pupils. The question-and answer session continues with the class asking, as well as answering, questions in the target language. The rationale behind this technique is that of encouraging students to practise the function of asking, rather than always answering teacher-initiated questions. The accuracy of the formulation of the question form receives high priority, although the questions are largely known-information, and not information-gap questions. The goal of this technique, as Diller (1978:72) states, is that:

> ... communication is built up in a step by step progression through a question and answer dialog between the teacher and the student.

When incorrect pronunciation is heard, in this case the name *Appalachian*, the teacher practises the correct pronunciation with the whole class until they have all got it right. Only then does the teacher continue the lesson. The lockstep nature

of the Direct Method is evident in the typical IRF pattern manifest in the following pronunciation practice again taken from a Std 2 English class (Greyling, 1987:291). Here the initiation takes the form of questions in the statement form with the complement omitted and rising intonation to elicit a response, and in turn 3 the incomplete word, again with rising intonation, indicates covert feedback conveying rejection of the response in turn 2 while simultaneously forming another elicitation. In turn 5 the teacher's repetition of the word, correctly pronounced, again functions as covert negative feedback and elicitation for the correct pronunciation. When the pupil pronounces 'lightest' with the correct sound but the wrong emphasis in turn 6, the teacher's informative move in turn 7 is again covert negative feedback, followed by a check and a directive. Only when the pupil pronounces it correctly in turn 8 does the teacher offer overt feedback of acceptance.

(6)

1	T:	(NV: T takes out a set of pictures.)
		These colours - we said that this colour waas (pause) light. (NV: T writes word on board.) the next colour waas ...? (pause) lighter (NV: T writes on board.) and the last colour was ...?
2	P:	(Hebrew girl, without bid or being nominated.)
		Lightest
3	T:	Light...?
4	P:	Light ... ast.
5	T:	Lightest.
6	P:	(P repeats.) Lightést.
7	T:	We're going to add e-s-t. Right? So say it: lightest.
8	P:	Lightest.
9	T:	Good. Lightest.

Here we see the emphasis on accurate pronunciation mentioned in the section on principles. This is an example of what Littlewood (1984:74) describes as 'part-skill' practice:

> When a skill is being learned, component parts of the target performance may be isolated and practised separately. In language learning, for example, a learner may practise using a

grammatical structure such as the negative, expressing a communicative function such as asking for permission, or producing a phonetic distinction such as that between *ship* and *sheep*. These are instances of 'part-skill practice'. At other times, the total skill may be practised, requiring the component parts to be integrated during performance.

The principle of monolingualism in the classroom underlies all the aspects of the Direct Method, for example, the students' reading of the sentences aloud. Here, although the skill of reading, prominent in the Grammar-Translation method, is practised, the processes are different in that it is not passive recognition of words and phrases, but active production of speech sounds. Once again phonological accuracy is required, coupled with semantic accuracy, because in order to be able to read with meaning, the students must comprehend what they are reading. Here we can see that, although the Direct Method purports to encourage natural language use, <u>pupil-pupil conversational interaction</u> is still lacking.

Larsen-Freeman (1986:24) states that 'students need to associate meaning and the target language directly' and while they read a sentence the teacher assists their comprehension by pointing to the map. Of course, there are critics who are sceptical of the monolingual approach, but Diller (1978:73) feels that such critics have failed to grasp the rudiments of the method:

> The skepticism is usually due to a lack of understanding - in most cases it is accompanied by some such misconception as that the teacher just starts jabbering away in his language and lets the students catch on as soon as they can.

Diller (1978:84-85) stresses the value of the monolingual approach, while reminding us of the reason why people study languages other then their own:

> Exclusive use of the foreign language also gives the maximum amount of practice in thinking and communicating in the foreign language - *and that , after all, is the goal of the language classroom* (my italics).

In the Direct Method as advocated by Berlitz, de Sauzé and others, monolingualism is essential to the accuracy of communication and it provides opportunities for using the target language that would be lost if the student were to use his mother tongue to come to an understanding of a certain concept. But compare this with Di Pietro's attitude in Chapter 6 on Strategic Interaction.

Although the Direct Method is based on an oral approach, (that is it concentrates on the spoken language in a functional rather than an academic context), it is not exclusively oral. On the contrary, it could rather be thought of as an approach that integrates the four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking. Diller (1978:80) points out de Sauzé's attitude to accurate language learning:

> De Sauzé was convinced that the simultaneous learning of listening, speaking, writing, and reading is very important in language learning.

If we look at the methodological approach advocated in *New English the Easy Way (for Afrikaans-speaking pupils) Std 8* (Terblanche, Nel & Wratten, 1974:3), we see a very highly structured approach which integrates the four skills along the Direct Method lines of de Sauzé, and one where the authors even suggest the allocation of time to the various language activities.

Of particular importance is the point which stresses the role of the teacher "as a speaker of the living language who leads his pupils in the speaking of it." The aims and objectives of the direct approach in this book are to encourage accuracy of speech in the students, an accuracy that reflects the language as it is spoken and used by, especially, the mother tongue users of that language. However, the situations in which the pupils are expected to use the target language are predetermined and controlled, not open-ended as subsequent methods, such as the Communicative Approach, advocate.

If the students' pronunciation and active use of the language are to be as accurate as possible, it follows that the teacher's role as the pronunciation and usage model is crucial. Here, point number 8.1.3. (Terblanche et al. 1974:4) is apposite, and, in fact, the authors think it so crucial that they have placed it in capitals:

THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY OF LEARNING A LANGUAGE IS THROUGH LISTENING AND SPEAKING. FOR IT IS MAINLY BY THESE MEANS THAT THE LISTENER'S EAR AND TONGUE BECOME ATTUNED TO, AND PRACTISED IN, THE CORRECT SOUNDS AND FORMS OF THE LANGUAGE .

The standard of accuracy that de Sauzé required of his students was unequivocal. We see in Diller (1978:80) that:

> De Sauzé would not tolerate "vagueness and 'à peu prés'" in a
> · student's understanding of the reading (1929:91). If a student
> wants real reading power, he must have active control over what he
> reads. ... the only effective way to attain the goal of a "reading
> knowledge" of a language is to gain active mastery of the productive
> aspects of that language.

The importance of the 'active mastery of the productive aspects' of the language is valid for spoken and written language.

In the Direct Method, particularly as practised by people like de Sauzé, who are uncompromising about the standards they demand, we might witness the polarity between 'accuracy' and 'fluency' as seen by Brumfit (1984:51):

> ... the learner is intended to produce examples of language
> according to requirements of the teacher, who may be demanding
> phonological, syntactic, lexical, functional or stylistic convergence
> on a norm which may or may not have been specified.

The accuracy on the levels mentioned by Brumfit above rests largely with the teacher in the Direct Method, and point 8.1.4. in Terblanche *et al* (1974:4) highlights the teacher's role:

> The teacher should therefore set an example by speaking English
> clearly and naturally.

It seems strange, therefore, that there are still teachers in our schools in South Africa who, having themselves not mastered English as a second language, try to teach it for functional not academic purposes, through the medium of their mother tongue, Afrikaans. Terblanche *et al.* (1974:4) explicitly state that translation is not approved.

The second principle on which the Direct Method differs from the Grammar-Translation method is the type of texts to be used in the classroom. No longer are 'the best authors' the starting point for linguistic examination, but now texts of conversation, local culture, geography of the country of the target language, and others provide the basis for 'learning how the speakers of that language live' (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:24). Typical examples of conversation texts and pictures are to be found in Terblanche *et al.* (1974). We need to observe, however, that the conversation texts seem to have been specially written and graded with a view to practising specially predetermined language aspects, in this case, the present, past and future indefinite tenses. Consequently, although the Direct Method injunction of using cohesive texts rather than discrete sentences is applied, there is still a heavy emphasis on the accuracy of <u>what</u> is to be learned from the text, viz. vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, prepositions, spelling and pronunciation. See also Larsen-Freeman (1986:21).

This leads us to the next principle of practice for the acquisition of language skills. The Direct Method stresses skill acquisition that produces accurate language, but it is very much teacher-centred, teacher-controlled, and as we see in Terblanche *et al.* (1974) and Hopwood and Stander (n.d.), very highly structured. Brumfit (1984:51) would probably regard this type of practice for skill acquisition as encouraging students to adopt strategies to demonstrate what Widdowson (1978a:3-4) distinguishes as <u>usage</u> rather than <u>use</u>. As Brumfit says:

> If such strategies are inappropriate for some or all of the activities involving natural language use, their encouragement in the classroom needs careful justification.

However, he does go on to say that activities that involve natural language use also require careful examination.

So we can see that accuracy, admittedly now of target language production rather than of grammatical explications and translation as evinced in the Grammar-Translation method, either in writing or speaking, underlies the methodology of the Direct Method. Diller (1978:80) describes de Sauzé's attitude to the accuracy of language production thus:

> De Sauzé was convinced that the simultaneous learning of listening, speaking, writing, and reading is very important in language learning. But particularly it is the productive aspects of language - speaking and writing - that are essential in mastering the receptive aspects of listening and reading. A student cannot have a clear idea of a sentence he hears or reads unless it is a sentence for which he has the grammatical competence which underlies its production.

The last principle under discussion is that of inductive grammar teaching. As seen in the examples from Terblanche *et al.* (1974:12-13) and Larsen-Freeman (1986:21 & 23):

> Grammar should be taught inductively. There may never be an explicit grammar rule given.

Grammar does play a crucial role in the accuracy of the language, but the method demands that students induce the grammatical rules from the text or the lesson component. This may be seen in (7) below, which precedes the section of the lesson in (6).

(7)

1   T: Right‸ We have three colours here. Right? (NV: T puts them next to one another.) The green colour is dark. The blue colour is darker, but the brown or black is the darkest of the three. Right‸
We are comparing. Now we are comparing these describing

words, how they compare with each other.   Right - two or three.
Uh - is this a light colour or is it a dark colour?

Nowhere in this whole initiation does the teacher mention the rule of adding -er
and -est to form the comparative and superlative degrees of comparison.   The
important issue is the <u>function</u> of comparing, not the technical terms.

Berlitz was happy if students just <u>used</u> a rule accurately, but de Sauzé was of the
opinion that students achieved a greater degree of accuracy if they employed
conscious reasoning.   Diller (1978:78) quotes de Sauzé (1953:5):

> We found ... in our experiment that the practical results, such as
> reading, writing, speaking and understanding, were achieved in
> greater proportion and in less time when the technique involved a
> maximum amount of conscious reasoning.

When discussing the Direct Method as used by Berlitz, Diller (1978:75) points out
the methodological step-by-step progression of vocabulary or grammar control.
As he says:

> It shows remarkable restraint to wait for lesson five before
> introducing any verb forms besides the neuter of the third person
> singular, <u>it is</u>.   But it is precisely this kind of restraint that allows the
> direct method to work.   First things must come first. ... The trend is
> obvious by now.   Thirty words a lesson are learned, and the
> grammar is built up slowly but surely, one point at a time.

The fact that this method, in Diller's opinion, works, would suggest that students
have gained an accurate knowledge of the basic functional language, enough
(after 37 lessons) to '"get along" in English, to conduct intelligent conversations,
to travel and go shopping' (Diller, 1978:76).

Certainly at the elementary levels the Direct Method seems to live up to Diller's
claims, but whether (7), again from the same lesson (Greyling, 1987:292), can be
considered 'intelligent conversation' is debatable.

(8)

1	T:	How would you describe that? Would you describe that as hard? How would you describe it?
2	Ps:	(Various bids)
3	T:	(NV: T nominates by pointing at pupil.) Yes.
4	P:	Soft.

Thus we can see that, on a basic level especially, the notion of accuracy in the Direct Method has shifted away from the type of accuracy required in the Grammar-Translation method. Instead of the teacher requiring accurate translations and knowledge about grammar, now the teacher stresses accurate use of the grammar of the language on the phonological, morphological syntactic and semantic levels. See Figure 1. Obviously, however, the semantic content will, in most cases, be limited to the basic functional use of the language as required by whatever texts are used and what the teacher requires. On the eschewing of grammar teaching, Kelly (1976:221) observes that there were Direct Methodists 'who had kept their sense of proportion' and who felt as Morris (1951) did that 'we ought to concede that there is a stage in language learning beyond which only formal grammar is conducive to language mastery'.

The Direct Method is very teacher-centred with the choice of lingual objects for classwork devolving largely upon his shoulders. Because of the reaction against the literary texts advocated by the traditionalists, there were Direct Methodists who, as Kelly (1976:261) indicates:

> ... inherited this cautious attitude towards the use of books as teaching aids, in the main, the idea of Sauveur that the book could be introduced into teaching at a certain point in the cycle.

Kelly goes on to say:

> During the 1950's, the textbook fell out of favor in the elementary levels, and was linked to the teaching of formal grammar and used as reading material after the basic skills had been formed.

So, although accurate use of the grammar of the language is a desired objective of the Direct Method, proponents of the method will not teach it deductively.

3.5. Errors and Error Correction

Diller (1978:79) describes de Sauzé's method of error correction as follows:

> If a mistake is made, de Sauzé does not correct the student directly. If the student has pronounced a silent final -e, for example, de Sauzé would ask whether the final -e was pronounced or silent. The student would then reason out the proper pronunciation and would correct himself. ...(this is) much more effective than merely having the student mimic the correct form without thinking.

He then compares this type of error correction with that of the empiricist-behaviourists who regard mistakes as the beginning of bad habits and to be eradicated immediately. (See Chapter 4 for this attitude to errors in Audiolingualism.)

Inherent in the Direct Method is the accuracy of pronunciation and for this the teacher (or sometimes a voice recording) is the yardstick. Therefore, it is very important that the students are given accurate examples to copy. Larsen-Freeman (1986:23) says that in the Direct Method pronunciation should be worked on right from the beginning of language instruction. So, when it comes to phonological accuracy there might be de Sauzé's type of guided self-correction, or the more direct kind of self-correction as evinced in Larsen-Freeman. However, the principle of self-correction in encouraged by the use of question-and-answer or various other techniques (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:20-21). An example of this is to be found in (6) above.

It can be seen that, although the student is encouraged to self-correct wherever possible, there is still great emphasis on the correct, or accurate use of the language in the controlled classroom context. The students are expected to practise the correct form and a high level of accuracy is desired according to the

patterns of 'Standard English'.[1]

In the earlier part of this century, gramophone records were an additional source of 'correct' English for practitioners of the Direct Method although not always with overwhelming success (Kelly, 1976:241) In the oral phase the notions of 'right' and 'wrong' are still seen as diametric opposites with, of course, none of the benefit of Corder's research into errors which proposed hypotheses on the basis of Selinker's concepts of 'language continua' and 'interlanguage' phenomena which occurred along these language continua (Corder, 1981:87). Accordingly, correction, although it is self-correction under the teacher's guidance, is still determined by fairly stringent notions of accuracy.

For written exercises students do sentence completion exercises and dictation, the latter of which students check themselves (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:27). Presumably, written structural drill exercises can be corrected either by the student or the teacher, but in either case the recognition of the error will normally emanate from the teacher.

3.6. Conclusion

The Direct Method evolved out of the Reform Movement, which was a reaction against the Traditionalist method of teaching languages viz. an academic study of the literature and grammar of the language through translation and grammatical explication.   The Reform Movement of the latter part of the nineteenth century which began with Viëtor's publication *Der Sprachunterricht muss Umkehren!* advocated a monolingual, oral approach as the means of encouraging language

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1 Tony Crowley (1978:199) remarks on the shift that had taken place in the time lapse between AJ Ellis's statement that, 'at present there is no standard of pronunciation' (Ellis, 1869-89:630) and Joseph and Elizabeth Wright's observation some thirty years later that, "In the earlier New English period there was no such thing as a standard pronunciation in the precise sense that we now apply that term to the pronunciation of educated and careful speakers of the present day." In evaluating the work of the early twentieth century British linguists, Daniel Jones and Henry Wyld, Crowley asserts in his article that, despite their intention of being descriptive, they tend rather to be prescriptive, and quotes a piece of Jones's Preface to his *Phonetic Readings in English* (1912:iii) as saying that the text, "is designed primarily for foreigners desirous of acquiring the correct pronunciation of the English Language".   Crowley comes to the conclusion that, "The uses of them (sic) 'standard English' as traced in this article demonstrate clear lines of preference and prejudice that link these uses to the most prescriptive forms of linguistic theorising that had been produced in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries."

acquisition for functional use. Viëtor argued that it was useless stuffing pupils' heads full of knowledge <u>about</u> a language, no matter how accurate, when these same students were dismally incapable of using that same language for communication purposes. This pamphlet heralded a major shift away from methods that rewarded pupils for accuracy of grammatical knowledge and translation to the natural methods of language acquisition which rewarded pupils who could speak and write the language, albeit in a controlled classroom context. Although the Direct Method itself did not rest on a solid theoretical base, but drew rather on principles and methods suggested by teachers and the then infant science of psychology, it was, nevertheless, methodologically systematised.

The primacy of speech in the Direct Method would, of necessity, require a change in paradigm for determining accuracy. The very systematisation, which is such a predominant characteristic of the Direct Method, lends itself to progressive, step-by-step evaluation of the degree of accuracy attained by the students on the phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic levels, with great weight being placed on phonological accuracy, especially in the initial phases . Coupled with phonological accuracy is the accuracy of structure required in the Direct Method. Roberts (1982:96), in discussing traditional approaches, ie those that were employed before communicative methodology became popular, writes:

> By and large, for example, it is an approach which is structure dominated, that is, it encompasses methods which, whether they seem as different as Grammar Translation on the one hand and Audiolingualism on the other with regard to their precise workings, essentially rest on the assumption that the major problem in learning a foreign language is to master the structure of that language and this problem requires almost exclusive attention.

The typical pattern of the classroom discourse in a Direct Method lesson is an Initiation by the teacher, followed by pupil Response and the Feedback given by the teacher. So although proponents of the Direct Method very often state that <u>communication</u> in the target language is their aim, the nature of that communication is not real-life, open-ended discourse, but rather teacher-pupil controlled talk. Although 'natural' conversation purports to be the aim of this predominantly oral approach, the traditional IRF pattern of classroom dialogue

encountered in Direct Method classrooms suggests that students are not given the opportunity to generate their own natural dialogue, and their conversation is largely limited to responding to teacher's questions or asking known-information questions of the class. Roberts (1982:99) points out that, in comparison with this type of classroom talk, Savignon (1972) thought that students should be allowed the freedom to learn to say what they wanted, and not what the teacher wanted.

Typical, too, of the authority relationship between teacher and pupil in the Direct Method, is the question-and-answer sequence where the teacher formulates known-information questions, particularly in the initiation moves of the verbal exchanges, whereas the formulation of information-gap questions on the part of the students in an associational relationship, so crucial to conversational discourse, receives minimal attention. Therefore, the paradigms of accuracy for this use are fixed and systematised according to predetermined goals with respect to the linguistic functions and forms the students are expected to know. The interaction is again between teacher and student, or student and text, while the transactional element between subject and subject of open-ended conversational interaction is still absent. The lockstep nature of the teacher-centred classes means that all the students are expected to achieve the same degree of accuracy on the lower levels of phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics, but the interactive levels of conversational discourse are largely ignored.

In conclusion, then, the major change brought about by the Reform Movement in encouraging students to speak in the target language was an enormous step forward. However, one of the limitations of the Direct Method is that, although it is very successful at the elementary levels because it allows students the fun of speaking a new language right from the very beginning, and the sense of achievement of building up knowledge of vocabulary and structure in a systematised manner, it does not take cognizance of the fact that, at the more advanced levels, the notion of accuracy needs to encompass the student's ability to use the language in open-ended, spontaneous contexts, whether these are structured by the teacher or not. With the welter of linguistic research since the fifties have come notions of accuracy regarding register, intonation, sub-textual interpretation, gesture and other means of communicating, but these are not present in the Direct Method.

Chapter 4

Audiolingualism

4.1. Introduction

This chapter traces the development of Audiolingualism from the scientific, empiricist approach of the Structural linguists coupled with the influence of the notion of Stimulus-Organism-Response of Behaviourist psychology. It shows that this approach focuses attention on the observable facts of language, and that this preoccupation with the structure of the language engendered a concern for accuracy of <u>form</u> incorporating phonology, morphology, semantics and syntax, but the paradigm for accuracy does not include communicative interactive or transactional accuracy. Whereas the method purports to have accurate communication as its goal, accuracy, in terms of Audiolingualism, means primarily having the correct <u>form</u> for communicating a message. The method presumes that correctness of form results from correct speech habits in which the students are coached by repetition of pattern-practice sentences. Analyses of passages of discourse from Audiolingual lessons are used to show that, according to the levels of language use illustrated in Figure 1, this type of lesson heavily stresses phonological, morphological and syntactic accuracy in a teacher-centred environment, which the IRF pattern, peculiar to this type of lesson, reveals, but the language of the classroom does not incorporate interactive or transactional skills.

4.2. Background

Between the two World Wars American and British approaches to English Second Language Teaching followed different paths. Whereas in Britain the applied linguists like Palmer and Hornby were advocating a systematisation of language content, in America there was neither standardisation of vocabulary or grammar, nor selection of the most suitable grammar, sentence patterns or vocabulary for different levels of learner (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:44). However, America's entry into World War 11 necessitated the development of foreign language learning programmes to enable military personnel to speak,

interpret or translate a variety of languages including German, French, Italian, Chinese, Japanese and Malay. Hence the development of the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP), which was established in 1942, and which adopted the system developed by Leonard Bloomfield at Yale.

Bloomfield's system was known as the 'informant' system since it used a native speaker of the target language as an 'informant' in conjunction with a linguist, who did not necessarily know the language, but was trained in eliciting the basic structure of the language from the 'informant' (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:45). Howatt (1984:266) elucidates the classes as follows:

> Both the senior instructors and the informants acted as classroom teachers. The former introduced the new material with any necessary explanations and then left the native speakers to drill the patterns by a simple method of imitation and repetition. This became known as the 'mim-mem' method (mimicry and memorization), and is the obvious forerunner of the audiolingual approach and the early language laboratory techniques.

The 'structural approach' of the American applied linguists in the forties and fifties was based 'more by accident than by design' (Howatt, 1984:183) on Bloomfield's influential pamphlet of 1942, *An Outline Guide for the Practical Study of Foreign Languages.* Like the Direct Method, the ASTP relied on innovative procedures and intensive oral contact with the target language for its success, rather than on an underlying theoretical methodology as such, but applied linguists were made aware of the efficacy of the concentrated, oral-based approach to foreign language learning (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:45). Strevens (1977:9), however, observes that this approach was successful 'in the circumstances for which it was designed', which were 'basically favourable to successful learning.'

Shortly before the war, in 1939, the University of Michigan had developed the first English Language Institute in the United States. Charles Fries, the director of the Institute, was a structural linguist, and he applied the principles of structural linguistics to language teaching. As Howatt (1984:268) notes:

Fries's great achievement in applied linguistics was the elaboration of a new approach to pedagogical grammar, not a new language teaching method.

In Fries's own words (1957:v):

> The materials of the English Language Institute rest upon the view that learning a foreign language consists not in learning about the language but in developing a new set of habits. One may have a great deal of information about a language without being able to use the language at all. The "grammar" lessons here set forth, therefore, consist basically of exercises to develop habits, not explanations or talk about the language.

So, as in the Direct Method, speaking the target language is all-important, and consequently, grammar is taught inductively. Howatt (1984:313) then goes on to evaluate the Structural Approach in the following terms :

> Although the Structural Approach, as the Fries-Lado model is normally called, was rather unenterprising methodologically, the new rigour that Fries brought to the linguistic content of teaching materials carried the art of writing pedagogical grammars to an altogether different level of professional expertise from anything it had attained before.

The Structural Approach concentrated to such a degree on morphosyntactic structure, that the sentence assumed excessive importance as the unit of study. Howatt (1984:225), in examining the origins of Audiolingualism, points out that this emphasis precluded going beyond the sentence to the text.

> ... the American audiolingual method derived from the structural approach developed by Fries at Michigan. ... It followed the orthodox 'four skills' model (listening, speaking, reading, writing) ... but more rigorously than other methods, and required a considerable amount of aural-oral drill work based on structures

selected from a graded syllabus. There was usually a minimal context (for example a short dialogue) but it was unimportant. ...
The all-important connected text inherited from the Reform Movement was missing, ... (my italics).

The absence of the all-important connected text is indicative of the concentration of the Structural Approach on absolute formal accuracy regardless of context, unlike the Direct Method, which advocated formal accuracy within contextualised settings. So, although the development of these intensive aural-oral programmes seemed to be a scientific advance, according to a paradigm of accuracy which would include interactive and transactional skills, accuracy in the Structuralist approach is rather limited, and does not go beyond the levels of phonology, morphology, semantics and syntax. The following extracts are from one Audiolingual lesson (Greyling, 1987:308-326). This first excerpt reveals the exaggerated concentration on the sentence of the structural approach.

(1)

1	T:	Today we are going to finish these pattern sentences. We have done the first five. I want to revise the first five quickly. Is everyone ready? Look at the picture and do with me together: "My father showed me the various activities."
2	Ps:	(Unison.) My father showed me the various activities.
3	T:	Again.
4	Ps:	(Unison.) My father showed me the various activities.
5	T:	That group over there.
6	IRg:	My father showed me the various activities.

The paramount importance of the sentence is highlighted in the teacher's initiation which includes a meta-statement indicating what he is going to do at the beginning of the lesson, namely that the students are going to repeat the pattern sentence, 'My father showed me the various activities.' Then to start the actual lesson, the teacher asks if everyone is ready. (It is interesting to note that during the course of this lesson, this is the only question from turn 1 until turn 364. In toto, there are only four questions, all emanating from the teacher, and only two of them receive an answer.) As the teacher does not

expect an answer, this first part of question-and-answer adjacency pair acts as a directive rather than a check, because the teacher assumes that the students are ready.

The importance of the sentence is again evident in the directive, 'Look at the picture and do with me together: "My father showed me the various activities." This elicits the pupils' response, in lockstep, which is merely a repetition of the sentence exactly as the teacher has said it.   The only variety in these exchanges is the selection of different groups, but the sentence that they repeat remains exactly the same.   In fact, the pattern-practice sentence is repeated eleven times in twenty-two turns, which include the framing and focusing moves, and the selection of different groups.   Certainly, repetition to a certain degree is important in language learning for the acquisition of vocabulary and stock phrases that can be incorporated into real-life discourse, but in the context of this lesson the students do not have to think about what they are saying.   The elicitations do not contain any clues or prompts in order to obtain a response which they have to work out for themselves.   Also, the only feedback is covert acceptance when another group is nominated, or rejection when the teacher says 'Again', and then the sentence is repeated yet again.

After the establishment of the Michigan Institute, increased linguistic activity in the USA was conducive to several programmes similar to that of the Institute being developed.   In 1950 the US State Department commissioned the American Council of Learned Societies to design textbooks for foreign learners of English.   The linguists compiling the textbooks used what was known as the 'general form' for the lessons, which according to Richards and Rodgers (1986:46) began with work on pronunciation, morphology, and grammar, followed by drills and exercises.   For the history of pattern-practice drills, see Kelly (1969:101-112).

The well-known *Spoken Language* series used this format together with the material contained in the American Council of Learned Societies' publication, *Structural Notes and Corpus: A Basis for the Preparation of Materials to Teach English as a Foreign Language* as the basis for their language courses (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:46).

The Structural Approach (also known as the Oral Approach and the Aural-Oral Approach) had a strong influence on language teaching during the fifties, especially as the University of Michigan's own journal *Language Learning* obviously promoted such an approach. However, teaching methodology was not the primary concern of the structural linguists, who directed their attention to linguistic analysis, which was thought to be the most advanced scientific approach to language learning.

Like the Direct Method, structural linguistics came about as a reaction to the traditional grammar of the philosophical and mentalist approach. The essential difference between these two approaches, however, is that structural linguistics was a new approach to pedagogical grammar (Howatt, 1984:268), whereas the Direct Method was a methodology, which lacked the linguistic studies to support it. Structural linguistics also supported the primacy of speech, but the approach was one of logical positivism and empiricism. It is a scientific approach to the study of languages which called for the collection and analysis of utterances according to structural paradigms (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:49). The then prevalent reverence for science and scientific method engendered a new interest in phonetics, phonology, morphology and syntax: all aspects of language that can be analysed and described from an empirical standpoint. This linguistic analysis dealt, in an empiricist manner, with the observable phenomena of language form, and did not take cognizance of other factors, such as the psychological, affective or sociological, that might influence linguistic performance. The yardstick for accuracy did not presume the effective communication of a message, but accuracy of the form of the encoding of the meaning. Diller (1978:49) asserts that the drills of Audiolingualism, which developed out of Structuralism, did not presume to do anything more than inculcate accuracy of form:

> These drills involve nothing more than the manipulation of structures. There is no pretense that they do anything else; they are not intended to resemble real communication.

Richards and Rodgers (1986:49) describe the structuralist attitude to language thus:

Language was viewed as a system of structurally related elements for the encoding of meaning, the elements being phonemes, morphemes, words, structures, and sentence types.

Here we see what Rivers and Temperley (1978:6) refer to as the 'progressive development view' of acquiring speaking skill, where:

> ... it is assumed that accuracy in expressing oneself orally is dependent on prior study of language forms through reading and written exercises; ... where oral imitation, memorization and drilling techniques precede attempts to speak spontaneously.

Herndon (1976:69) simplifies the methods of structural linguists as:

> ... breaking the flow of spoken language into the smallest possible units, sorting them out, and then studying the various ways in which these units are joined in meaningful combination. Structural grammarians often refer to **levels of analysis.** ...The levels are these: **phonology, morphology** and **syntax.**

These levels of analysis are hierarchical, ie starting at the bottom with phonemes as illustrated in Figure 2.

<u>Figure 2</u>

syntax (sentences)

↑

structures

↑

words

↑

morphemes

↑
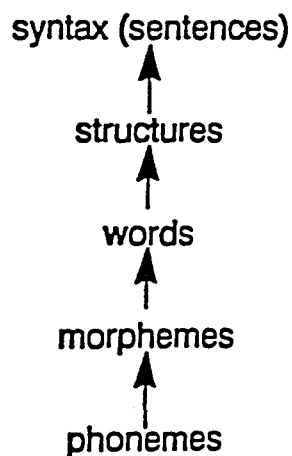
phonemes

Language learning in the Structuralist way, according to Richards and Rodgers

(1986:49):

> ... entails mastering the elements or building blocks of the language and learning the rules by which these elements are combined, from phoneme to morpheme to word to phrase to sentence.

Moreover, language, according to the structuralists, is produced linearly in a rule-governed or structured way. Early practice in the language involved mastery of structure, not vocabulary. This is clearly evident in the following excerpt from the same lesson as (1), only this time another sentence is being practised.

(2)

1	T:	(NV - cue to repeat sentence.)
2	Ps:	(Unison.) He dabbed some cement on the trowel.
3	T:	Say trowel.
4	Ps:	(Unison.) Trowel.
5	T:	Whole class. Trowel.
6	Ps:	(Unison.) Trowel.
7	T:	Trowel.
8	Ps:	(Unison.) Trowel.

The initiation in turn 1 is so attenuated that it is merely a non-verbal directive to repeat the sentence 'He dabbed some cement on the trowel' and it elicits the lockstep response of the repeated sentence. The feedback to this response is also an attenuated directive to pronounce the word 'trowel', as is again evident in turns 5 and 7. This staccato, attenuated IRF pattern sounds like someone programming automata with codes to convey commands to perform and, just as automata do not require feedback on their performance, so the teacher merely issues another directive if the students perform adequately, without indicating acceptance, or even rejection. The word 'trowel' was pronounced incorrectly. Focusing on the word in subsequent elicitations the teacher negotiates a barrier (or 'short-circuit') in the interaction. The important aim is for the students to acquire accurate morphosyntax and pronunciation. Generating their own discourse is irrelevant.

It seems clear that this scientific, empiricist approach to language will have very clearly defined notions of accuracy for each of the levels mentioned above, and very definite notions of **right** and **wrong**. Language is regarded as a set of habits, and accurate usage of the language would demand the inculcation of the **right** habits. Robert Lado and Charles Fries together have compiled a whole book on sentence patterns entitled *English Sentence Patterns* (1957), which illustrates the exclusive attention paid to accurate structure up to sentence level, irrespective of communicative efficacy.

Although the Michigan Oral Approach was often accredited with having applied behaviourist psychology to its teaching, Howatt (1985:267) rather doubts the validity of this claim, as Fries does not mention psychology, while Bloomfield's approach was strictly one of common sense - 'practise everything until it becomes second nature' and 'language learning is overlearning: anything else is of no use.' But when the Structural Approach was combined with learning theory based on behaviourist psychology, the Audiolingual Method was created. The basic tenet of behaviourism as applied to language learning is that the student is an organism who responds to a stimulus and produces a verbal response ie Stimulus-Organism-Response. We may compare the following three excerpts, (3) which comes from an Audiolingual lesson, and (4) and (5), which come from Communicative lessons to see the Stimulus-Organism-Response nature of Audiolingualism.

(3)

1	T:	No. 5. The glazier put in the window panes.
2	Ps:	(Unison.) The glazier put in the window panes.
3	T:	Again.
4	Ps:	(Unison.) The glazier put in the window panes.
5	T:	Nie panes - not panes; panes.
6	Ps:	(Unison.) Panes.

(4)

| 1 | T: | Now∧ |
| | | What I want you to do is listen very, very carefully to what I say to you. Alright? I'm going to tell you a story and it is going |

> to be in the form of a song, and I want to see if any of you can catch the story ...

(5)

1   T: Alright_∧

> I think let's - let's wrap it up there. Most of the games seem to me ... you are either on the brink of winning or on the brink of reversing the trend ...

The initiation in (4) and the feedback in (5) are very different from those evident in (3).   The initiation in (4) contains a marker, a directive, a check, a meta-statement and then another directive which is phrased in the form of an indirect request rather than an imperative, whereas the initiations in (3) are either non-verbal cues, the single word 'Again', or an elicitation .   The evaluation contained in (5) conveys the teacher's acceptance as compared to the lack of overt evaluation in (3).

Audiolingualism was developed to fill the need for America not to lag behind Russia in the space race. When Sputnik was launched in 1957, the US government realised that Americans would need to keep right in the vanguard of scientific knowledge and not be overtaken by Russia, or for that matter, other nations that were developing spacecraft.   Patently they would need access to the scientific literature written in any language to find out what was going on, and the funding provided through the US Defense Education Act of 1958 enabled the development of the Audiolingual Method (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:47 and Howatt, 1984:269).

At this time, ie from the mid-fifties, science and technology's pervasive influence on all walks of life was manifest in language teaching, and Richards and Rodgers (1986:47-48) even point out that:

> Audiolingualism (the term was coined by Professor Nelson Brooks in 1964) claimed to have transformed language teaching from an art to a science...

This scientific rigour was inclined to engender what Rivers (1983:5) calls:

> ... tedious, mechanistic processes to which the student was not
> expected to make any spontaneous, personal contribution.

This is amply evident in (1), (2) and (3) above. The influence of science and technology is also to be seen in the field of behaviourist psychology where human beings came to be regarded as automata which functioned on a stimulus-response basis. Machan (1974:14) points out that scientific methods of study were applied to all fields of study whether strictly scientific or not, and students of intrinsically non-scientific disciplines:

> By an eager adoption of these methods ... have aimed at
> success and, most of all, respectability. The motto has become,
> for practically any field of study: "to be scientific is to mimic the
> hard sciences, whatever our subject matter."

The ideas of BF Skinner concerning human behaviour reflect this 'scientific' approach to the world and revolve around such concepts as 'conditioning', 'stimulus', 'response',   'reinforcement', 'operant' and 'control' (Machan, 1974:16-17).   In Skinner's own words (Smith and Moore, 1962:19): 'our techniques permit us to shape up the behavior of an organism almost at will.' Skinner applied his ideas of 'reinforcement' for correct behaviour, which he tested on pigeons, to the human learning process.   Fine (1963:47) has this to say about Skinner and programmed learning:

> The way the pigeons were taught - in very small steps and with
> immediate rewards after each correct move - enabled them to
> learn while making few or no errors.

It is beyond the ambit of this dissertation to offer a detailed study of Skinner or the ideas contained in his *Verbal Behavior* (1957), but the very concept of programmed learning and teaching machines accords very closely with his ideas of 'shaping' behaviour, be it verbal or otherwise.   However, any concept, intrinsically worthwhile though it may be, can have its value undermined by extremism and excess.   The same applies to teaching

machines or rather, to use the term preferred by Smith and Moore (1962:vi), 'self-instructional devices.' However, these authors counsel against negative over-reaction to some of the wild visions that such extremism may engender:

> A casual perusal by a humanist of the rapidly growing literature on self-instructional devices and programmed material would probably give rise to either the fantasies of *Alice in Wonderland* and the *Wizard of Oz* or a vision of *Brave New World*, *Walden Two* and *1984*. These views of the field, however, are quite inaccurate, as one can discover by critical reading of those articles prepared within a scholarly tradition rather than of those prepared within the frame-of-reference of technology and commercialism.

Skinner's central idea, that man does not act or choose to act, but merely 'exhibits behavior' in response to stimuli, has been applied to Audiolingualism by suggesting that language is a behavioural response to stimuli and as such can be conditioned, reinforced and controlled.

Today, with so many social forces ranked in favour of individual freedom and a repersonalisation of machine-age man to allow for such notions as cognition, creativity, intuition, inspiration, and, above all else, the freedom to choose, the mechanistic approach of Skinner has fallen into disfavour, although elements of programmed instruction and Audiolingualism are still to be found in second language classrooms. Since the sixties, the paradigm for accuracy has shifted to include the accurate choice of language with regard to how successfully it accomplishes the intentions of the speaker, even if the form is, strictly speaking, inaccurate. Consequently, language teaching methods have tended to alter to encompass the vital notion of effective communication, of encouraging students to know how to choose <u>what</u> to say, as well as how to say it.

4.3. Principles

As stated earlier, Audiolingualism derived from a combination of structural

linguistics and behaviourist psychology, and so its principles reflect this scientific, empiricist approach discussed in 4.2. What follows is a paraphrase of what Richards and Rodgers (1986:51) see as four of its more important principles.

1.   Foreign language learning is a process of mechanical habit formation. If the student responds correctly, good habits are inculcated.   Memorisation of dialogues and pattern practice drills minimize the chances of making mistakes.   Students should produce and comprehend utterances automatically.   (See examples (1), (2) and (3) above.)

2.   Language should be heard first before being seen in the written form. Aural-oral training is the basis of all the language skills.

3.   Grammar, as in the Direct Method, is taught inductively by analogy of patterns in a variety of contexts provided by drills.

4.   Semantics is handled within linguistic and cultural contexts. Therefore, as in the Direct Method, the cultural system of the speakers of the target language is studied.

Diane Larsen-Freeman (1986:39-42) separates these four principles into seventeen different divisions, which include, in addition to the above: a) the importance of a monolingual approach to avoid first language interference in second language acquisition; b) the teacher's role as a model of the target language for the students to mimic, as well as controller of the students' behaviour in the target language (excerpts (1), (2) and (3) illustrate this well); c) communication as the purpose of learning how to use the language (The phonological and structural patterns that are apparent in (1), (2) and (3) above were thought to provide the building blocks of the language - in one Audiolingual lesson, the students learn to utter five sentences in response to directives from the teacher.   Later linguists, language teachers and psychologists questioned whether this was conducive to communication.); d) the role of positive reinforcement in inculcating correct speech habits; e) the acquisition of structural patterns as the major objective of language teaching, with vocabulary coming later; and f) contrastive analysis as a predictive

diagnostic measure to anticipate and so obviate possible areas of difficulty for the students.

4.4. Method

If we examine a typical Audiolingual lesson, we see that oral practice in the form of dialogues and drills is the cornerstone of the method. As Diller (1978:51) observes:

> The doctrine that "language is a set of habits," then, dictates that one should avoid *any real communication* until after the set of habits is established correctly (my italics).

Diller (1978:51-52) goes on to quote a first-year German text-book which distinguishes the pattern-practice exercises and drills from the oral approach of the Direct Method:

> This oral practice is very different from a "direct method" or "conversational" approach. ... What is needed for the course is *oral accuracy*, the ability to pronounce correctly and with the proper grammar ...

The accomplishments of students taught by means of the Audiolingual method, noted by Terrell (1982:269) point to the very high standards of accuracy the method teaches them:

> Students in an audiolingual approach usually have excellent pronunciation, can repeat dialogues and use memorized prefabricated patterns in conversation. They can do pattern drills, making substitutions and changing morphemes using various sorts of agreement rules. What they cannot very often do is participate in a normal conversation with a native speaker.

Why are such students unable to converse with a native speaker? It would seem that the contact students have with the target language, which takes the form of pattern-practice drills and dialogue memorisation, is not sufficiently

akin to real-life communication to allow spontaneous speech with native speakers. The following drills, cited by Richards and Rodgers (1986:54), are used for practice by Brooks (1964:156-161); they more than adequately exemplify the sentences, rather than utterances, that students are expected to practise. Brooks does not draw a distinction between sentence and utterance as Widdowson (1979) does about fifteen years later, but these examples show that, although the students obtain practice in text-book sentences they do not gain the same exposure to real-life utterances. The distinction between these is elucidated by Gardner (1984:102) :

> ... *sentences* occur in the abstract, and can be defined with the help of a grammar and a dictionary alone. *Utterances*, on the other hand, occur between individuals, who bring their experience and knowledge of the world, their expectations resulting from their respective statuses, their knowledge of the topic; utterances occur in particular places, for example in a school playground or a church, and they are used to achieve particular purposes, more or less conscious, and are subject to certain sociocultural norms (see Hymes, 1972).

1.   *Repetition.* the student repeats an utterance aloud as soon as he has heard it. He does this without looking at a printed text. The utterance must be brief enough to be retained by the ear. Sound is as important as form and order.

EXAMPLE.
This is the seventh month. - This is the seventh month.
After a student has repeated an utterance, he may repeat it again and add a few words, then repeat that whole utterance and add more words.

EXAMPLES.
I used to know him. - I used to know him.
I used to know him *years ago.* - I used to know him *years ago when we were in school....*

2. *Inflection.* One word in an utterance appears in another form when repeated.

EXAMPLES.

I bought the *ticket.* - I bought the *tickets.*

He bought the candy. - *She* bought the candy.

I called the young *man.*- I called the young *men*....

3 *Replacement.* One word in an utterance is replaced by another.

EXAMPLES.

He bought this *house* cheap. - He bought *it* cheap.

Helen left early. - *She* left early.

They gave their *boss* a watch. - They gave *him* a watch..

4 *Restatement.* The student rephrases an utterance and addresses it to someone else, according to instructions.

EXAMPLES.

Tell him to wait for you. - Wait for me.

Ask her how old she is. - How old are you?

Ask John when he began. - John, when did you begin?

5 *Completion.* The student hears an utterance that is complete except for one word, then repeats the utterance in completed form.

EXAMPLES.

I'll go my way and you go ....- I'll go my way and you go *yours.*

We all have ... own troubles. - We all have *our* own troubles ...

6 *Transposition.* A change in word order is necessary when a word is added.

EXAMPLES.

I'm hungry. (so). - So *am* I.

I'll never do it again. (neither). - Neither *will* I...

7. *Expansion.* When a word is added it takes a certain place in the sequence.

   EXAMPLES.
   I know him. (hardly). - I *hardly* know him.
   I know him. (well). - I know him *well*...

8. *Contraction.* A single word stands for a phrase or clause.

   EXAMPLES.
   Put your hand *on the table*. - Put your hand *there*.
   They believe *that the earth is flat*. - They believe *it*....

9 *Transformation.* A sentence is transformed by being made negative or interrogative or through changes in tense, mood, voice, aspect, or modality.

   EXAMPLES.
   He knows my address.
   He doesn't know my address.
   Does he know my address?
   He used to know my address.
   If he had known my address.

10 *Integration.* Two separate utterances are integrated into one.

   EXAMPLES.
   They must be honest. This is important. - It is important that they be honest.
   I know that man. He is looking for you. - I know the man who is looking for you...

11. *Rejoinder.* The student makes an appropriate rejoinder to a given utterance. He is told in advance to respond in one of the following ways:

Be polite.
Answer the question.
Agree.
Agree emphatically.
Disagree.
Disagree emphatically.
Question what is said.
Fail to understand.

BE POLITE. EXAMPLES.
Thank you. - You're welcome.
May I take one? - Certainly.

ANSWER THE QUESTION. EXAMPLES.
What is your name? - My name is Smith.
Where did it happen? - In the middle of the street.

AGREE. EXAMPLES.
He's following us. - I think you're right.
This is good coffee. - It's very good.

12.   *Restoration.*   The student is given a sequence of words that have been culled from a sentence but still bear its basic meaning.   He uses these words with a minimum of changes and additions to restore the sentence to its original form.   He may be told whether the time is present, past, or future.

EXAMPLES.
    students/waiting/bus - The students are waiting for the bus.
    boys/build/house/tree - The boys built a house in a tree...

These examples amply illustrate the excessive concern for phonological and morphosyntactic accuracy at sentence level inherent in Audiolingualism. Figure 2 illustrates the components of language that received attention in this method.   However, we notice that notions of accuracy do not begin to include

any practice at communication itself. This is thought to follow on naturally after the structural foundations have been laid, but this does not generally occur. All of these exercises engender the typical IRF pattern encountered in an Audiolingual lesson as illustrated in (1), (2) and (3) above.

In a very interesting article, Lamendella (1979) argues the case against pattern-practice drills as an effective method of enabling students to automatically access Target Language grammatical knowledge in communicative interactions. His reasoning is that the speech-processing circuit is functionally autonomous from higher-level language processing, and during mechanical pattern-practice drills there may be a functional dissociation of the speech-copying circuit from higher level language processing systems (and from the language acquisition process) which enables students to efficiently perform a repetitious cognitive task not related to communicative interactions.

Howatt (1984:295-296) also mentions the deleterious effects of learning idealized speech patterns:

> However, by equating natural speech-habits with idealized sentence patterns, the structuralist approach destroyed the spontaneity it was seeking by divorcing language from its use in social communication.

Example 4 of the exercises involves changing indirect commands and questions into the direct form. Here, the student needs to know accurately the structure (ie syntax) of different language functions. However, no indication is given in the exercise of the differences in social function between the direct and indirect forms. We see in this instance that the social functions of commands are ignored. In other words, the student response to the initial stimulus requires accuracy on the levels of phonology, morphology and syntax, but no real-life utterance in response to an open-ended initiation is evident. Therefore, in terms of discourse analysis, there is *text* but not *discourse*. Gardner (1984:103) cites Widdowson's distinction between the two, where *text* is a stretch of language that can be analysed and is akin to

sentences, whereas *discourse* occurs in the context of the world, like *utterances*. Students are not placed in simulated real-life situations such as role-plays in order to be encouraged to generate an utterance in a meaningful context as a response to the demands of the situation. Instead, because of the behaviourist orientations of Audiolingualism, they must give a correct response to the stimulus provided by the teacher. Students are therefore regarded as having an accurate knowledge of the language when they can respond automatically to a verbal stimulus. However, in a real-life situation, where there is no correct response to a fixed stimulus, they are unable to perform accurately, nor are they able to engage in interactions. (See Lamendella, 1979:17.)

Examples 5-10 of the exercises are similar to the aforegoing in nature. In exercise 9 we see how meaningless some of the sentences (or clauses) are when they are learned off by heart in a vacuum. (If he had known my address - what then?) Only when we come to exercise 11, where the student has to give a rejoinder to a statement or question, are the functions rather than exclusively the forms of the language given some, if rather scanty, attention. Here students are required to express politeness, agreement or disagreement, surprise and regret, to question what is said or fail to understand.

An element of theoretical interaction is evident in that there are verbal exchanges, but the interaction is scripted and must be practised as automatic responses to express politeness. What is lacking in the exchange *Thank you - You're welcome*, for example, are the elements of degrees of politeness of real-life discourse that one would expect to encounter in Communicative Language Teaching, where choices of interactional strategy are open to language learners (see Chapters 5 and 6).

Levinson (1983:273-274), in discussing politeness strategies, for example, asks why speakers might prefer:

(110) I don't suppose that you would by any chance be able to lend me some cash, would you?

to

(109) Please lend me some cash.

and explains it by referring to the concept of illocution. Gardner (1984:104) cites Austin's (1975) distinction between the *locution* or what is said, and the *illocution* or what is intended by what is said. Thus, accurate repetition of pattern-practice drills, sentence completion and substitution as encountered in the Audiolingual method, presume the accurate form or structure of what is said (the *locution*), but no attention is paid to the illocutionary force of any utterance or sentence.

So much for typical Audiolingual lessons. However, at this stage I should like to examine the decidedly atypical Audiolingual method instituted by Professor Rassias at Dartmouth College. Wolkomir (1980:89-100) describes Rassias's highly unusual methods which are the basis for the 'Dartmouth intensive language model' as performed by an 'apprentice teacher' trained to conduct drills.

> ... she erupts into action, leading the class in choral renditions of sentences to be learned, zigzagging among the desks.
>
> Looking one way, she points at someone across the room, snapping her fingers for a recitation. If the student answers correctly, she blows a kiss. If incorrectly, she stabs the offender with an imaginary stiletto, snaps at another student for an answer, then snaps again at the student who got it wrong.
>
> Her finger-snapping gives the class a jivey beat as she paces the room, now standing, now stooping to eye level with the students. When a girl has trouble squeezing out an answer, Marty drops to her knees, smiling encouragement, trying to pull out the answer with her hands.

After a lesson like this, the professors give new material, explain grammatical points and clarify the lesson. Finally, the students go to a language laboratory

for further practice.

Rassias himself has broken eggs over students' heads during his lessons, and a fairly general reaction from the students is that it 'is an intense loving experience' (Oller and Richard-Amato, 1983:100).

Certainly these drills are Audiolingual in origin, requiring absolute accuracy in the responses, but if we compare the lingual and non-verbal dimensions of the method with those of a typical Auiolingual class, we see that the instructor initiates the student responses by leading them in choral renditions of sentences in a novel, human way, instead of mechanically. The teacher's snapping of the fingers constitutes non-verbal nomination moves, and the 'stabbing' and blowing of kisses are rather interesting forms of evaluation. This form of the mim-mem method, which applies a selective eclecticism, avoids the 'Valium Valley' syndrome (as Rassias so graphically describes the absolute tedium of so many language classes). Allen (1986:3) advocates this type of eclecticism, which will 'lead the learner towards the achievement of greater communicative efficiency without losing the benefits of a systematic and well-designed syllabus.'

The difference between Rassias's lessons and the more conventional type of Audiolingual lesson may be seen in this observation about Audiolingualism by Howatt (1984:267):

> The authority of the approach resided in the materials themselves not in the lessons given by the teacher using them, a philosophy which paved the way for the replacement of teachers by machines such as language laboratories.

> This cult of materials was not balanced by an equally serious concern for teaching method.

As he says earlier (1984:225):

> ... much of the work, though worthy in intention was very dull.

Rassias's classes could certainly not fall into this category! By contrast, Rassias himself (1980:98) says that what they are doing is:

> ... giving people the desire to communicate with others, to understand others, to be sensitive ...

However, his method relies on personality and a decidedly innovative application of Audiolingual principles, and its success probably lies in breaking down initial barriers to learning the structure and grammar of a second language, which will then lead to a desire to communicate in that language. For true communication in a second language to occur, the interactive element mentioned by Rassias ('to understand others, to be sensitive') needs to be incorporated into the lessons in meaningful discourse. What sort of understanding or sensitivity could possibly emerge from the following lesson?

(6)
1.   T: Right,
              Morning class.
2.   Ps: Morning mister.
3.   T: Everyone, open on page 36.
4.   Ps: (NV - Ps turn to page 36.)
5.   T: My father showed me the various activities.
              The group over here.
6.   IRg: My father showed me the various activities.
7.   T: That group.
8.   IRg: My father showed me the various activities.
9.   T: Again.
10.   IRg: My father showed me the various activities.
11.   T: Say, "My father showed me the various activities."
12.   IRg: My father showed me the various activities.
13.   T: This group over here.
14.   IRg: My father showed me the various activities.
15.   T: The whole class.
16.   Ps: My father showed me the various activities.

The teacher indicates that he is going to start the class by using the framing

move 'Right' with silent stress and falling intonation. Only then does he greet the class. After the class has greeted him in return he starts the main body of the lesson with the directive to open to page 36. This adjacency pair of greeting-greeting is the only real-life exchange in the whole lesson, and the only example of an adjacency pair as well. As an example of the English language in use then, this lesson, which is typical of Audiolingual lessons, falls short when we consider this dearth of adjacency pairs. Just how important adjacency pairs are in discourse may be seen in Levinson (1983:304):

> Adjacency pairs seem to be a fundamental unit of conversational organisation - indeed it has been suggested that they are *the* fundamental unit (see e.g. Goffman, 1976; Coulthard, 1977;70).

The mindless repetition, so characteristic of Audiolingualism, encourages accuracy of pronunciation and structure, but as meaningful discourse it is sadly lacking. The pupils learn to repeat a sentence over and over again, engaging in a pattern of discourse that is highly unlikely to occur in real-life conversational context. Burton (1981:61) maintains that it is generally accepted that classroom talk is 'odd', and because of this, she (1981:62) suggests that:

> ... a method for analysing all styles of talk must be expected to demonstrate the oddities of classroom talk and its linguistic structural choices in contrast with a different set of stylistic choices evident in other kinds of talk.

Be that as it may, the classroom talk encountered in the extracts above appears to be very 'odd' indeed. Conspicuous by their absence are any forms of interaction or transaction where meanings have to be negotiated between teacher and pupils, or among pupils, or where pupils have the opportunity to ask questions and so practise the formulation of questions in meaningful discourse. These questions, formulated by pupils to other pupils, tend to be information-gap questions, the replies to which are not generally known by the students engaged in talk, and which generate real-life discourse.

On this point, White and Lightbown (1984:228) report that the findings of their

analysis of question and answer exchanges between teachers and students reveal that teachers asked almost all the questions and students asked hardly any. In this Audiolingual lesson, even the teacher asks hardly any. White and Lightbown also point out that the questions teachers ask 'are not intended to sustain conversation or to elicit new information, but rather to permit the teacher to evaluate the students' understanding of subject matter (Mehan, 1978).' In other words, they are known-information questions, the use of which in real-life discourse is extremely limited, unless people are playing quiz games, testing their interlocuters' knowledge, or showing off their own!

We see in this lesson why students taught a language by the Audiolingual method often fail to converse with native speakers - because the language to which they are exposed, while encouraging absolute accuracy of form, does not simulate real-life discourse. Page (1983:304), in summing up the Graded Objectives approach, calls for an approach 'that recognises the unpredictability of communicative situations, and therefore calls for the ability to generate original sentences and not simply the ability to repeat rehearsed phrases.' The Audiolingual approach as evinced in this lesson never goes beyond the level of sentence structure, nor is the semantic component of the sentence ever discussed or the sentence placed in context. We noted earlier that the all-important connected text of the Reform Movement is missing from the Audiolingual approach, and that is manifest in this lesson.

Is it any wonder that students taught exclusively by this method fail to communicate with native speakers? What native speaker is going to want to hear a sentence repeated eleven or more times, even if it is beautifully articulated? The language to which the students are exposed and which they practise in Audiolingual lessons is highly artificial and severely attenuated, and does not represent a pattern of language in use. Perhaps only parrots (or pigeons, if we are to follow BF Skinner) need to learn to repeat sentences in this mindless way in order to learn a language. However, the developments of humanistic as opposed to behaviourist psychology have mercifully contributed to the demise of Audiolingualism. If anything represents Rassias's 'Valium Valley' a lesson like this does, and the accuracy the students acquire in phonology, morphology and syntax is probably gained at the expense of communicative fluency.

4.5. Errors and error correction

Audiolingualism, perhaps more than any other method, stresses the avoidance of errors. Errors are seen as bad speech habits which are to be eradicated, or are not to be inculcated. As Diane Larsen-Freeman (1986:45) observes:

> Student errors are to be avoided if at all possible through the teacher's awareness of where the students will have difficulty and restriction of what they are taught to say.

Diller (1978:51) quoting Twaddell, supports this assertion:

> Premature practice of selection would lead to mistakes or at best
> to hesitation or fumbling, which are directly contrary to the goal
> of forming correct firmly-established habits ...

Evidence of 'hesitation' and 'fumbling' appear in (7) below, where the teacher's rejection of the pupils' response in his feedback (turns 2, 4, 6 and 8) is immediate and unequivocally negative.

(7)

1	IRg:	(Unison.) The tiler hooked the roof tiles on wooden ...
2	T:	Start all over. Start all over. Look in the book and read the sentence.
3	Ps:	(Unison.) The tiler hooked the roof tiles onto the wooden beams.
4	T:	It's not orn, it is on. Say on.
5	Ps:	(Unison.) On.
6	T:	Whole sentence again. This group.
7	IRg:	(Unison. Ps are hesitant.) The tiler hooked the roof tiles onto the wooden beams - woods.
8	T:	on the wood ... on the wooden beams. Whole class.

This discourse resembles what might happen if a machine were to undergo a short-circuit which caused a temporary disturbance in the unremitting functions that it is programmed to perform. When the students hesitate in turn 7, they appear to be entirely lost since they have no stimulus to which to respond. This faulty response presumes that they need to have heard the stimulus (initiation) recently in order to produce the correct utterance. It also suggests that without a stimulus, students will not be able to generate correct forms. This is what Lamendella (1979) argues - that pattern-practice drills actually preclude independent generation of meaningful utterances in the target language.

Even when using teaching machines, instead of relying on the teacher, the student should recognise and eradicate errors immediately. Stolurow (1961:55) observes how this can be done.

> A long program should include reviews to provide for retention differences. This can be done by using a branching program in which wrong alternatives are deliberately included to reveal the need for review. When wrong alternatives are selected, the learner should go over the review material before going ahead.

Krashen and Terrell (1983:19) point out, though, that excessive concern with correctness in communicative situations can result in hesitancy and difficulty in participating in conversation. The recognition and correction of errors as described by Stolurow above, highlights the distinction made by Krashen and Terrell (1983:18) between language learning (knowing the rules) and acquisition (developing ability in a language by using it in natural, communicative situations).

The whole concept of control, ie not allowing students to make errors in the process of discovery about the language, is expressed by Stolurow (1961:145).

> [The teaching machine] can maintain the optimum conditions of communication and control considered essential in modern

learning theory. Although mass media communicate effectively, they do not control; they are "open loop" systems. This means that for rapid modification of the learner's behavior systems they lack the critical feedback ingredient. The teaching machine, on the other hand, is a closed loop system which does provide feedback.

Stolurow is right to emphasise the crucial nature of feedback in the teaching situation, but we see here how 'communication' was controlled under 'optimum conditions'. It is fallacious to consider that errors of phonology and structure constitute errors of communication, or that accurate phonology and structure constitute communication.

It is interesting to note that even notions of feedback have undergone a shift. Excerpts (8), (9) and (10) below are the only type of feedback provided in an entire Audiolingual lesson, where we notice a glaring lack of constructive criticism. Both (8) and (9) are negative evaluations and (10) is positive. In all three cases, the feedback is contained in the initiation.

(8)
T: Start all over.

(9)
T: Again.

(10)
T: Right,
        We go over everything together.

Compare with this the attitude expressed by Corder (1981:45-46) on the analysis of errors:

> In general we can say that remedial action becomes necessary
> when we detect a *mismatch* or disparity between the knowledge,
> skill, or ability of someone and the demands that are made on
> him by the situation he finds himself in. ...[Those responsible for

decisions concerning remedial action] must firstly decide whether, in any particular case, remedial treatment is called for.

Diane Larsen-Freeman (1986:36) repeats the type of transformation drill students go through in order to practise changing the surface structure of sentences.

> In this class, the teacher uses a substitution drill that requires the students to change a statement into a yes/no question. The teacher offers an example, "I say, 'she is going to the post office.' You make a question by saying, 'Is she going to the post office?'"

The artificial nature of the students having to ask a question to which they have already been given the answer as a cue does not seem to deter the teacher or the students who know how they have to respond, and do so correctly. Their response is regarded as absolutely correct and accurate, and is considered as not containing any errors, and yet, if a student were to say something like, 'Well, of course she's going to post office; you've already said so, haven't you?' it would probably be regarded as a severe error and earn the student the teacher's disapproval, whereas in a real-life situation, that might be a very accurate observation. So what constitutes an error in the Audiolingual method would not be regarded as such by teachers using the open-ended approach of Communicative Language Teaching (see Chapter 5). As Richards and Rodgers (1986:56) express it:

> Learners play a reactive role by responding to stimuli, and thus have little control over the content, pace or style of learning. They are not encouraged to initiate interaction, because this may lead to mistakes.

Corder (1981:5-6) notes that in the Audiolingual approach:

> ... the occurrence of errors is merely a sign of the present inadequacy of our teaching techniques ... and ... errors will always occur in spite of our best efforts.

The *processes* involved in learning a second language are totally ignored in error analysis and correction in the Audiolingual method, whereas the incorrect *product* is regarded as undesirable and to be eradicated by the teacher immediately. If the students fail to learn, the blame is placed on the teacher for not providing sufficient practice or on the students for not memorizing essential patterns and structures, but the method is not to blame (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:56).

Perhaps the best description of the Structuralists' fear of error and their absolutely rigid paradigms of accuracy is to be found in Diller (1978:49):

> Palmer expresses this fear of error as "The principle of accuracy: Do not allow the student to have opportunities for inaccurate work until he has arrived at the stage at which accurate work is to be reasonably expected" (Palmer 1921, 110). ... Palmer retorted [to Jesperson] that "In opposition to the principle of accuracy, we are frequently told that 'It is only by making mistakes that we learn not to make them, and that 'Only by going into the water can we learn to swim.' These are cheap proverbs, and we may easily coin others such as: 'It is by making mistakes that we form the habit of making them'; or, 'He who has not learnt to swim will drown when thrown into deep water'" (Palmer, 110-111).

The inherent lapse in logic seems to have escaped Palmer that no-one ever learnt to swim by not getting into the water, but certainly they would start in the shallow end or use water-wings or other such assisting devices. At a basic level some Audiolingual pattern-practice may have some merit. Allen (1986:3) points out that there is not a simple dichotomy between 'skill getting' and experiential 'skill using' (or to use Rivers' terms, 'micro-language learning' and 'macro-language use'), but that:

> ... we need to develop a more comprehensive, trifocal curriculum model in which the principle components will correspond to a structure-analytic, a functional-analytic, and a non-analytic or

experiential view of language.

Also, a point made by Allen (1986:6), too often overlooked by advocates or even devotees of certain methods:

> There is no doubt that there are compelling arguments for distinguishing an intermediate, functional level of communicative ability, as distinct from the more elementary level of basic structural practice.

When we look at the method of error-correction in Audiolingualism, we see that it is very teacher-centred.

The typical Initiation, Response and Feedback pattern shows the teacher in an authority relationship with the students. There is no associational relationship of students at talk. In this kind of authority relationship, the teacher is the source of control of the discourse, whereas in an associational relationship the participants are equals-at-talk. Gardner (1984) points out that discourse of equals-at-talk often develops unpredictably and the participants 'bring their own meanings to bear and their own interpretations' (Gardner, 1984:103). In the authority relationship characteristic of Audiolingualism, however, the whole class works in lockstep trying to achieve what the teacher wants, so student-student correction or self-correction is a totally foreign concept to this set-up. The feedback on incorrect responses is immediate, as this is thought to prevent the inculcation of bad habits. (See examples above.) The primary focus on errors in Audiolingualism was originally on phonological and morphosyntactic syntactic accuracy as the method underplayed the importance of meaning. Once this limitation was identified, however, Audiolingualists began to adjust their materials so that these would focus more on meanings and so the concept of errors altered accordingly.

4.6. Conclusion

Audiolingualism developed out of the Structural approach advocated by empiricist linguists like Palmer and Bloomfield. America's entry into the Second World War and the subsequent 'space race' necessitated quick

language courses and, with government funding, scientific language courses were devised, relying heavily on the behaviourist psychological principle of stimulus, organism, response. By the mid-fifties, this American approach had become Audiolingualism. This approach advocated a thorough learning of the structures of the target language in an authority relationship between teacher and students.

The methods for learning the structures of the target language stress the primacy of speech, but contrary to the Direct Method, 'natural' language acquisition is not the primary objective. Students are expected to communicate accurately, but the paradigms for accuracy addressed in the method do not go beyond the phonological, morphological, syntactic and, to a lesser extent, semantic levels of language. If a student can say something properly, as the teacher wants him to, then he is regarded as being accurate in his <u>usage</u> of the language, even if he doesn't know how to <u>use</u> it in communicative context. The fact that students cannot communicate with native speakers of the language is not taken into account. The result of this is that students taught by the Audiolingual method might feel something like this 13-year old Turkish boy who visited England:

> I was quite happy before I came because we did English lessons
> at school. But I think our teacher must have been making it all
> up because when I tried some of it out on my father when I came
> he just laughed and laughed.

The method includes intensive pattern-practice drills, as well as substitution and completion exercises in the 'mim-mem' mould. The basis for these drills is dialogues, which are to be memorized and repeated. The all-important connected text is absent, so contextualisation is not the order of the day. Grammar is taught inductively as it occurs in the dialogues. At a later stage written work is included, but always in the form of pattern-practice drills. No student-generated dialogue is used for fear of students making mistakes, which are seen as conducive to bad speech habits. Errors are not tolerated and are corrected by the teacher immediately. No form of self-discovery is evident in this method.

The IRF pattern of classroom discourse, which typically shows the initiations acting as covert feedback to the pupils' responses, reveals the absolutely teacher-centred nature of the classroom where the teacher initiates any spoken discourse. The discourse is highly artificial and it has to de drummed in until students can access it like automata in response to given cues. The disadvantage of this is that, when faced with stimuli other than those to which they have been trained to respond, they have difficulty in doing so. Therefore they find it difficult to generate their own discourse or participate in real-life conversation with all its unpredictability.

Student-student interaction is not encouraged; the talk in the classroom is always teacher-generated and occurs in an authority relationship between teacher and students. If we look at Figure 1 in Chapter 1, we see that Audiolingualism never goes above the levels of phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic accuracy. Fluency is totally disregarded, and no discourse is open-ended, nor does it involve problem-solving. The discourse of the dialogues is completely left-brain dominated and evinces no creative thinking on the part of the students. Communicative effectiveness is not an outcome of this type of teaching, although at a basic level, pronunciation and morphology are normally very thoroughly learnt.

In the sixties, the popularity of Audiolingualism declined because it was found wanting as an effective method of encouraging students in the acquisition of a second language (rather than the learning of the structures of the language) , and because in 1966 Noam Chomsky rejected the empiricism of the structuralist and behaviourist approach in that it took no cognizance of the properties of mind in language acquisition. Assumptions about language teaching and learning were stood on their head, and all the 'new' methods, like Total Physical Response, Silent Way, Counselling-Learning, The Natural Approach and Communicative Language Teaching (to mention only a few) evolved as a response to fill the gap left by the demise of Audiolingualism. Other influences on the development of these new methods, such as humanistic psychology, and Hymes's notion of 'communicative competence' (ie the sociological influence) will be mentioned in the next chapter.

Chapter 5

Communicative Language Teaching

5.1. Introduction

This chapter shows that Audiolingualism in America, with its rigid, empiricist approach, and Situational Teaching in England, were found to be wanting in achieving the objective of teaching people to communicate in a second or foreign language. Developments in humanistic psychology, sociology, anthropology and linguistics led to an approach that no longer centred on accuracy but on fluency. In other words learning structures out of context gave way to using language functionally in simulated situations so as to acquire language for real-life communication. According to the paradigm of accuracy illustrated in Figure 1, Chapter 1, language acquisition, which is defined by Krashen and Terrell (1983:26) as 'using language for real communication' and 'the "natural" way to develop linguistic ability' so that 'we are not generally "aware" of the rules of the languages' but we 'have a "feel" for correctness', now precedes accuracy-based language learning. Language learning, by comparison, Krashen and Terrell (1983:26) define as '"knowing about" language or "formal knowledge" of a language' or having an "explicit" knowledge of rules.' Thus Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) proceeds from language acquisition, or fluency, to accuracy (with or without language learning) in a manner 'which is as close as possible to our understanding of the nature of language and language acquisition' (Brumfit, 1984:52). The language teaching methods discussed in the previous chapters have all proceeded upwards (according to the paradigm in Figure 1) from formal accuracy, in the hope of learners developing fluency. The term 'accuracy' is defined in Chapter 2, but the term 'fluency', as Brumfit (1984:53) asserts, 'raises more difficulties.' However, he eventually (1984:57) arrives at this explanation:

> Fluency, then, can be seen as the maximally effective operation
> of the language system so far acquired by the student.

With a view to showing the effects of this inversion of the accuracy-fluency

paradigm, passages of discourse from CLT classrooms are analysed according to the IRF pattern as set out in Chapter 1, to exemplify the differences in discourse encountered in CLT classrooms as opposed to accuracy-based classes.

5.2. Background

In Britain during the late sixties, the theoretical assumptions underlying Situational Language Teaching were called into question, just as in the mid-sixties Audiolingualism had been rejected in America. Although Situational Language Teaching provided meaningful situations for students to practise their language learning, it was still a structure-based approach. Noam Chomsky's book *Syntactic Structures* (1957) had led linguists to question the validity of the Structural approach in Linguistics. As Richards and Rodgers (1986:64) observe:

> Chomsky had demonstrated that the current standard structural
> theories of language were incapable of accounting for the
> fundamental characteristic of language - the creativity and
> uniqueness of individual sentences.

The functional and communicative potential of language, hitherto largely ignored, even though Structural linguists and Audiolingual methodologists purported to have communication as the goal of second language learning, now received prominence. (See Allen and Widdowson, 1974; Wilkins, 1976; Strevens, 1977; Littlewood, 1981; Walkerdine and Sinha, 1981; Wells, 1981c; Rivers, 1983; and Brumfit, 1984.) Language in its social context, as a tool of social interaction, came to be seen as the desired objective of second language learning. This trend may be attributed to the initiatives and influence of people like British functional linguists, John Firth and Michael Halliday, American sociolinguists Dell Hymes, John Gumperz and William Labov, and philosophers John Austin and John Searle. (See also Brumfit and Johnson, 1979.) This shift in focus may be seen in excerpt (1) below, from a CLT lesson involving games (Greyling, 1987:242).

(1)

1		(Pupils have been left entirely on their own to figure out the rules of certain games. Although pupil-pupil interaction occurs, it is too muffled.)
2	T:	Morning.
3	Ps:	Morning.
4	T:	Yes?
5	P:	No.
6	Ps:	(laughter from class.)
7	T:	What ...what ... what's the problem?
8	P:	What's not?
9	Ps:	(Various verbal bids)
10	P:	(A pupil gains the floor) These pink cards. Are they (muffled)?
11	T:	No! No! No! These pink ones are trend cards.
12	P:	Yeah.

Here, the teacher's opening move contains the first half of a greeting-greeting adjacency pair (see Levinson, 1983:303-308), and elicits the expected response of a greeting in return by the pupils. Then in turn 4, the teacher's single-word interrogative 'Yes?' acts as a response to one of the pupils' disgruntlement with his lack of progress in working out the rules of the game. This disgruntlement on the part of the student acts as a non-verbal initiating move and as such is highly unconventional in terms of the traditional IRF pattern as encountered in Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), where the initiation comes from the teacher. Deviations such as this from the typical IRF pattern of discourse found in traditional classrooms, as seen in the preceding chapters, exemplify the paradigm shift of the language in CLT classrooms away from the traditional Teacher- Initiation, Student-Response, Teacher-Feedback.

The pupil's negative response in turn 5 leads to an extended exchange between the pupil and teacher in Turns 4 to 11, in which the pupil asks two questions himself. We noticed the dearth of questions generally in the Audiolingual lesson, but particularly as elicits on the part of the pupils. (See Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975:52.) In CLT, however, and particularly in this lesson, we see how often the pupils ask the teacher questions, thereby

initiating exchanges themselves and not always responding to teacher initiations. They do not merely have to change the form of a statement into a question e.g. *She is going to the post office - Is she going to the post office?* What is important here is that the questions that the pupils ask are all task-related, and the reply is necessary for them to continue with their problem-solving. Language, therefore, is being <u>used</u> for the specific function of seeking factual information (Van Ek, 1975:113). Another feature of this discourse is the negotiation of meaning that takes place. For example, in Turn 11 , the teacher says that the pink cards are 'trend' cards. No recourse to a dictionary will give the precise meaning of 'trend' in this context. It will certainly help to give the basic semantic environment of the word, but the specific meaning in this context has to be negotiated.

In Europe, the interdependence of the countries and, consequently, the major languages of the European Common Market, led to the Council of Europe sponsoring conferences of language teaching, as well as promoting the formation of the International Association of Applied Linguistics. Among the outcomes of this were a preliminary document by DA Wilkins (1972) which proposed a functional/communicative definition of language that would enable the development of syllabuses along communicative, instead of along structural, lines, and the contribution of Van Ek (1975) to adult language research and development. Littlewood (1981:x) points out that communicative ability as the goal of foreign language learning has been evident for some time:

> There is nothing new, of course, about the basic idea that communicative ability is the goal of foreign language learning. This is the assumption that underlies such widely used approaches as situational language teaching or the audio-lingual method.

What is new about the communicative approach is the design of syllabuses and materials in order to realize this goal. Wilkins expanded his original document into a book *Notional Syllabuses* (1976), in which he points out (1976:2) what Brumfit (1984) calls the 'basic polarity', and Diller (1978) goes as

far as identifying as *The Language Teaching Controversy.* Diller (1978:8) identifies the two streams of language teaching which have been in existence as long as language teaching itself, and which pinpoint the basic dichotomy between language acquisition, or learning to use the language, and language learning, or learning about the rules of the language, mentioned on page 29, Chapter 2 (The Grammar-Translation Method):

> We have two major traditions of language teaching, based on two different views of language and language acquisition. Decisions on language teaching methodology have not been primarily the result of practical and disinterested experimentation; they have been decisions based instead on differing theories of language.

Communicative Language Teaching, then, is a development in the rationalist, as opposed to the empiricist, approach to teaching, going right back to Quintilian in the first century, who advocated, *'Rem tene, verba sequentur'* (Take hold of the idea and the words will follow). What is interesting to note here is the order of language acquisition - notion or idea first, and then the vocabulary and structures, rather than the other way around (see Krashen and Terrell, 1983:26). Although all of the methods of second language acquisition claim - with the exception of the Grammar-Translation Method, perhaps, which was primarily concerned with academic purposes, and originally at least did not purport to have natural language acquisition as its objective - that communication is their objective, as we saw in Chapter 4, Audiolingualism enabled students to speak and pronounce accurately, but not to communicate with native speakers in real-life situations. This problem has led to a welter of research into the interrelatedness of language and communication. Widdowson (1978) distinguishes between usage and use, while Brumfit (1984:41) cites Allwright (1977:167-168) who asks:

> Are we teaching *language* (for communication)? *or* Are we teaching *communication* (via language)?

In other words, if we teach accuracy, we are not necessarily teaching people to communicate. This is similar to what Viëtor had to say (see Chapter 3 on the Direct Method), especially when he recognised that language was a product of the social process within the community (Howatt, 1984:347). (See also Curran, 1976; La Forge, 1983 and Ashworth, 1985.) However, it seems that Viëtor was well before his time in perceiving the importance of the sociological aspects (ie the interactive nature) of language for language teaching, something which empiricist linguists ignored or disregarded. Thus it has been left to modern linguists and second language teaching methodologists since the sixties, like *i.a.* Brumfit, Johnson, Krashen, Littlewood, Morrow, Rivers, Strevens, Terrell, Widdowson and Wilkins, to rediscover (and, of course, to develop extensively along a theoretical base) the notion of <u>communication</u> in language teaching. Excerpt (2) below, from Riley (1985:8), illustrates such language, by incorporating social functions, shared information and what Riley calls 'negotiation of personal knowledge'.

(2)

1	A:	24, rue Marie-Odile. Got it?
2	B:	That's Nancy?
3	A:	Yeah.
4	B:	I don't -
5	A:	Look, you know Laxou?
6	B:	Yeah.
7	A:	You know the road to Toul, where it starts by the Renault garage one side?
8	B:	Right ...
9	A:	and the Peugeot on the other?
10	B:	Right ... Yeah right.
11	A:	So if you're coming from the middle of town, up the Avenue de Boufflers, it's off on the left. Just before you get there there's a big service station, you turn left just before.
12	B:	Yeah, I know.

Here, A wishes to share his knowledge of the whereabouts of 24, rue Marie-Odile, and B's ignorance (That's Nancy?) provides the starting point for the negotiation.

The gamut of economic and egalitarian sociological forces which influenced this change in approach are discussed by Howatt (1984:273-275). (Cf. also Stubbs, 1976.) In Britain, the influence of these forces led to the development of the Schools Council project course of English for immigrant primary school children. Of the resulting course, called *Scope*, Howatt (1984:275) has this to say:

> *Scope* broke new ground in English language teaching by bringing together the EFL tradition of the linguistically organized syllabus (structural patterns, controlled vocabulary, etc.) and the primary school tradition of activity methods which required the children to use the new language co-operatively to make puppets, charts, models of various kinds, and so on. By tying the language work closely into activities and small projects with an educational value in their own right, as well as taking into account the children's needs for English both in and out of school, *Scope* created a new philosophy for English as a second language which has since matured into a branch of the profession with a distinctive voice.

The shift away from solely accuracy-based teaching towards an integration of language usage and use (see Widdowson, 1978) is evident, although the extent to which accuracy still continues to feature in a CLT approach remains variable because, as Richards and Rodgers (1986:66) point out, the Communicative approach is not based on any single text, authority or model, and consequently, means different things to different people. Richards and Rodgers (1986:66) quote Littlewood (1981:1) as saying that the distinctive feature of the Communicative Approach is the integration of function and structure (function and form), whereas others regard the procedures of problem-solving in pairs or small groups as the salient aspect of the approach. The interesting point is that when linguists and methodologists discuss the Communicative Approach - it is called an approach and not a method because it is not underpinned by any one single method - they contrast it with structural, accuracy-based methods, particularly Audiolingualism, against which it was a reaction, by means of opposite polarities like *form* and *function*

(Di Pietro:1982), *signification* and *value* (Brumfit and Johnson:1979), *usage* and *use* (Widdowson), *learning* and *acquisition* (Krashen, 1976, 1981a), *micro-language learning* and *macro-language use* (Rivers, 1983:108), *accuracy* and *fluency* (Brumfit, 1984). Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983:91-93) have tabulated the comparisons between Audiolingualism and the Communicative approach. Widdowson (1979:253) expresses this shift away from focusing only on accuracy towards a focus on notions and functions thus:

> ... it is proposed that the content of language teaching courses should be defined in terms not of the formal elements of syntax and lexis, as is customary in structural syllabuses, but of the concepts and functions these elements are used to realize.

Widdowson then goes on to question whether Wilkins's *Notional Syllabus* (1976), which realizes these concepts and functions as 'notions', really does account for what people want to do through language. Widdowson (1979:253) continues:

> But to what extent does an inventory of notions of the kind proposed [by Wilkins] take the communicative facts of language into account? ... There is one rather crucial fact that such an inventory does not, and cannot of its nature, take into account, which is that communication does not take place through the linguistic exponence of concepts and functions as self-contained units of meaning. *It takes place as discourse, whereby meanings are negotiated through interaction* (my italics).

Here we see the emergence of the importance of the interactive nature of discourse as a focal point in CLT. The shift has been from structural accuracy through the meanings of concepts, or notions (to use Wilkins's term) towards interactive discourse. Strevens (1977:5) discusses cognitive-code learning and succinctly sums up the dichotomy between accuracy- and fluency-based approaches, between a process and product view of language learning:

> There is no doubt that this approach, concentrating as it does on

the learner's processes of knowing rather than on mechanistic
procedures imposed upon him by the teacher, is in keeping with
the anti-authoritarian, learner-centred educational outlook which
is sweeping much of the world ...

Strevens (1977:121) discusses the full spectrum of the 'lifelong and continual process of verbal interaction with others' which enables a human being to maintain or change his personal or social identity, and so:

> Throughout his life he will be involved - passively, actively,
> interactively - in communication through language, and he learns
> at an early age that 'communicative competence' requires him to
> master the *proper selection and accurate use* of the many
> alternative variations of language that are open to him (my
> italics).

The notion of accuracy clearly goes beyond the phonological, morphological, semantic and syntactic levels, to include an interactive and transactional component. Canale (1983), for example, posits the idea that there are four major components in 'communicative competence': 1) grammatical competence; 2) sociolinguistic competence; 3) discourse competence and 4) strategic competence. It is thus these components of communicative competence that Communicative Language Teaching seeks to teach or facilitate. (See Figure 1.) Excerpt (3) below (Greyling, 1987:242-243), which continues the lesson started in excerpt (1), is an example of such use of verbal strategies for transactional and interactive purposes.

(3)

1	T:	Right‸
		One ...two questions per table will be allowed.
2	P:	(to himself/group.) If you wonder what's going on?
3	Ps:	(in IRg: Laughter.)
4	P:	(Bid: puts hand up.)
5		(Pupil-pupil interaction; teacher moves from group to group. Muffled pupil-initiation.)
6	T:	Right‸

Here's a question, if you want to listen to it. What's the idea of Public Support? (pause)

The only way that you can stop wasting Ergs. Right?

Because you waste two ergs every time the system mover moves. Right? Two or one (NV - T shows P). It moves on this system chart. The only way that you can stop wasting ergs is by - uh - reversing the system, by altering the system. Right? In other words, to play these cards onto the system chart.

7   P2:   What are those cards called?

8   T: These are research and development cards. Right? These white ones.

Here again we see a departure from teacher-initiated discourse as the pupils initiate exchanges in the muffled discourse in turn 5. The teacher's response to this initiation in turn 6 is an informing move to help the pupils, so the pupils strategic interaction achieves its goal of finding out what they need to know. This is the case with the pupil's eliciting question in turn 7 as well. We notice here that feedback on the teacher's part is lacking as it is not necessary at this point, and obviously the pupils are not going to evaluate the teacher's response to their questions. So the pattern here is Pupil-Initiation followed by Teacher-Response. The teacher's feedback comes at the end of the lesson after the student-student and student-teacher interaction has protracted the exchanges of the lesson.

Howatt (1984:278-279) notes this shift away from the concrete facts of language towards the user, and the effectiveness of the communication, which Canale (1983) refers to as strategic competence. (Cf. also Riley, 1985.) As Howatt says:

> ... the heart of the language lesson is the communicative activity
> itself.

However, he does acknowledge the problematical nature of designing a course syllabus round interactive communication. The importance of this sociological dimension of language can be credited to John Firth, the linguist

colleague of anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski; both Halliday and Hymes acknowledge their debt to these men (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:68-69).

By now it should be evident that Communicative Language Teaching developed in the rationalist tradition of the Reform Movement, while related fields of study such as psychology, sociology and anthropology have made significant contributions to the underlying methodological principles of the approach. Indeed, new ideas of methodology have proliferated in almost alarming proportions. Howatt's (1984:260) title of his chapter dealing with these developments, 'Old Patterns and New Directions', is certainly apposite here.

5.3. Principles

The basic principle underlying the Communicative Language Teaching Approach is that of developing not phonological and morphosyntactic accuracy, but what Hymes (1972) called 'communicative competence' (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:69). (See above for Canale's (1983) four components of communicative competence.) This communicative competence is different from Chomsky's concept of competence. For Chomsky (1965:3), competence deals with the abstract grammatical knowledge of an ideal speaker:

> ... linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker-listener in a completely homogeneous speech community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitation, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance.

But Hymes goes beyond this level of abstract grammatical knowledge, to incorporate feasibility of implementation, contextual appropriateness and the successful performance of a real, not ideal speaker (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:70). (See Brumfit and Johnson, 1979; Littlewood, 1981 and Rivers,

1983.) This principle of 'communicative competence' found in Communicative Language Teaching is also supported by Halliday's functional account of language in use since for him, as Richards and Rodgers (1986:70) quote:

> ... only through the study of language in use are all the functions
> of language, and therefore all components of meaning, brought
> into focus.

Parallels are drawn between second language acquisition and a child's natural acquisition of its mother tongue. Children use their first language for seven basic functions that are described by Halliday (1975:11-17) as: a) instrumental (to get things); b) regulatory (to control others); c) interactional (to create interaction with others); d) personal (to express feelings and meanings); e) heuristic (to learn to discover); f) imaginative (to create a world of fantasy or imagination); and g) representational (to communicate information).

Advocates of Communicative Language Teaching similarly regard second language acquisition as learning how to perform the various functions of language that one does in one's mother tongue, rather than how to repeat certain linguistic forms. Therefore, accuracy no longer means merely formal (phonological, morphological, semantic and syntactic) accuracy, but the principle of communicative competence now requires a paradigm that will include functional accuracy as well. In other words, it is no longer sufficient for a second language learner to be able to pronounce words as closely as possible to a mother-tongue speaker's pronunciation, or to be able to manipulate tense, mood, number, gender or case morphemes in sentence context, or to know decontextualised dictionary definitions. The question now is, how accurately does the language learner perform the interactive and expressive functions for which language is used, ie what is his level of accuracy in terms of Canale's four components of communicative competence? Excerpt (4) below (Greyling, 1987:244) shows the pupils again eliciting responses from the teacher, even though the teacher initiates the exchange with the check, the word 'Questions', in turn 1 which also then acts as an eliciting move.

(4)

1	T:	Right

1   T: Right⌃
               Questions.

2   P: Where should the waste area be?

3   T: The waste area is covered. You have to decide where it
               should be.
               (T moves on to next group.)
               You are alright?

4   P: No. What is a mission?

5   T: A mission? A mission is ... you are playing a short game.
               Right? You have decided on a short game. Right? Uh -
               what you do is then you have to take only ten mission tokens
               (T puts tokens in place.) 8, 9, 10, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2 (pause)
               Where's 1?

Although we see here that the teacher-student authority relationship allows the teacher to structure the exchanges initially, the discourse does not reflect the type of authority relationship evinced in the Audiolingual class in Chapter 4. On the contrary, in turn 5 the teacher asks an information-gap question revealing that he doesn't know the answer, and he is not expecting a 'right' answer to his question as is typical of the traditional IRF pattern.

We are all aware of the humorous incidents that occur when non-native speakers (and sometimes mother-tongue speakers as well) use formally accurate, but functionally inaccurate language, and indeed, this is the stuff of much comedy, for example some of the work of comedian Gerard Hoffnung. If we look at the following excuses for absenteeism given by parents in the United States of America, we shall see this type of unintentional humour as well.

John was absent yesterday because he had two teeth taken out of his face.

and

My daughter was absent yesterday because she was tired. She spent the weekend with the Marines.

Formally, these examples are 100 per cent accurate, but they do not reflect the user's intentions. (See Levinson, 1983:13-15.) It is this principle of facilitating the realization of one's intentions through language that is at the heart of Communicative Language Teaching. (For an explanation of illocutionary and perlocutionary acts, see Levinson, 1983:236-237.)

Rivers and Temperley (1978:3) encapsulate the dichotomy between learning a language structurally only, and learning it communicatively:

> ... being able to speak a language without understanding what is being said by native speakers is of limited use, while being able to understand a language but not speak it can have specialized utility ... but is very frustrating in normal communication situations.

Examples (1), (2), (3), and (6) of discourse in Chapter 4 are evidence of the former type of language skill-getting, but it does not encompass skill-using (Rivers and Temperley, 1978:4). It is thus the bridging of this gap between skill-getting and skill-using that underpins the Communicative Language Teaching Approach. As Rivers and Temperley (1978:5) observe:

> Knowledge and intensive practice (skill-getting) are not enough to ensure confident interaction. The latter requires practice in *actual, purposeful conversational exchange with others* (my italics).

Therefore, of crucial importance in the Communicative Language Teaching approach is the fact that the target language is a vehicle for classroom communication, not simply the object of study (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:128). Thus the talk in the classroom should actually be, or should simulate, real-life communication. (Cf. Stubbs, 1976; Stoll, 1983.)

If the language is to be practised for communicative purposes, it is an essential principle that students should work with language at the discourse or supra-sentential level. (See Brumfit and Johnson, 1979; Johnson and Morrow, 1981

and Gardner, 1986.) As Larsen-Freeman (1986:129) rightly asserts:

> They must learn about cohesion and coherence, those
> properties of language which bind the sentences together.

This principle of discourse competence in Communicative Language Teaching requires that accurate use of the target language encompasses more than accurate sentence repetition. (Cf. Widdowson, 1978; Canale, 1983.) As Holec (1985:347) affirms:

> The micro-linguistic approach simply does not correspond to the
> needs of language learners who are not interested in becoming
> linguists but in communicating in a foreign language.

Success in the target language now demands that speakers/learners are fluent as well as accurate. To this end, it is a principle of Communicative Language Teaching to engage students in games because they have certain similarities with communicative events, namely that there is a purpose to the exchange (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:129). Purposes of exchanges can also be realised in situations that promote communication, and the structuring of these situations, in which language learners may communicate or simulate real-life communication, is another principle of Communicative Language Teaching (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:129). Holec (1985:347) describes the linguistic analysis that underpins this principle of situational and functional purpose of language thus:

> ... the new analysis must also define the function of the utterance
> in the verbal exchange in which it is produced, by relating it to
> other factors relevant to that exchange, such as context,
> situation, speakers and non-verbal signals in order to determine
> whether it is a reply to a request for information, an excuse, a
> reproach and so on.

Although these situations are structured by the teacher in the language classroom, the students are expected to express their own ideas and opinions, thus practising what Halliday (1975:11-17) calls the personal function of

language. Students are also encouraged to negotiate meaning in co-operative relationships, and to use, not only the correct language form, but the appropriate register (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:130). We notice here the student-centredness of the approach, which is one of its very important principles.

These principles are very different from those encountered in Audiolingualism, where students are expected to 'overlearn' language forms by seemingly endless repetition, never initiating any exchanges, expressing their own opinions or feelings, negotiating meaning or going beyond the sentence to discourse in a situational context. We witness pupils expressing their own opinions and feelings in excerpt (5) below (Greyling, 1987:245) when they feel that their time with the teacher is running out and they desperately need to ask some more questions.

(5)

1		(A muffled teacher-pupil exchange: Pupils see that the teacher is about to leave.)
2	T:	I'll give you time for questions later.
3	P:	(sounds desperate) What happens if ... We need only one more question!
4		(T leaves. Pupil-pupil interaction occurs. There are definite yet muffled verbal exchanges. After several minutes the teacher returns.)
5	T:	Are you ready?
6	Ps/ IRh:	Yes.
7	Ps/ IRl-g:	We have nearly started.
8	Ps/ IRl-g:	We have started.
9	T:	Alright. You have just started. Right_ Let's leave everything as it is and let's go and have some refreshments (T and Ps leave the classroom. End of lesson.)

If the principles of Communicative Language Teaching are so very different from those of Audiolingualism, it follows that the paradigm for determining accuracy will also be different. Accuracy must certainly still mean accurate morphosyntax, lexis (semantic vocabulary) and phonology, (something that is sometimes overlooked in Communicative Language Teaching classrooms where fluency is so all-important that teachers forget that effective communication also requires accuracy of form), but the paradigm goes beyond these levels to include the accuracy of the communicative act.

Brumfit (1984:130) cites the five principles that Morrow (1981:60-5) adduces for Communicative methodology as:

1   Know what you are doing;

2   The whole is more than the sum of the parts;

3   The processes are as important as the forms;

4   To learn it, do it;

5   Mistakes are not always a mistake [*sic*].

Brumfit (1984:131) then mentions the roles of both accuracy <u>and</u> fluency in these principles:

> Accuracy will tend to be closely related to the syllabus, will tend to be teacher-dominated, and will tend to be form-based. Fluency must be student-dominated, meaning-based, and relatively unpredictable towards the syllabus. By giving the latter prominence, *without completely rejecting the former*, motivation is provided for the selection of process activities (Morrow, no. 3), for deciding what are 'mistakes' and when a mistake is a mistake (no. 5), for concentrating on the whole rather than the parts (no. 2) and for the nature of doing (nos. 1 and 4) (my italics).

According to figure 1 (in Chapter 1), application of these principles will encourage interactive use of language on the levels above those of morphosyntax, lexis and phonology, without ignoring these levels.

5.4. Method

With such broad, far-reaching principles, it is clear that no one particular method will satisfy the requirements of Communicative Language Teaching, unlike the more structured and rigid accuracy-based methods such as Audiolingualism.

There are numerous proponents of new 'methods'. In fact, there is a welter of new material on second language teaching under the umbrella heading of Communicative Language Teaching, so much so that confusion can easily reign. This is the thrust of Maley's article (1984:79-86), namely that second language teachers, faced with the sheer complexity of their task, look for convenient solutions such as avoidance behaviour (simply refusing to recognise that there is a problem), over-reliance on one particular textbook as a source of teaching material, eclectic decisions which lack a sound methodological base, or mindlessly following a 'guru' who 'seems to offer a way to the Promised Land.'

Be that as it may, there are numerous source books and teaching methodologies to assist teachers in their implementation of a Communicative approach, be it a weak or strong version of the approach. Howatt (1984:279) distinguishes between these two forms of Communicative Language Teaching. The 'weak' form incorporates situational communicative practice for students into the structurally oriented programme of language teaching, whereas the 'strong' form develops from the principle that language learning takes place by means of the communicative experience and not through learning language *per se*. (Allen (1986) also advocates treading a middle course between the extreme structural and experiential points of view.) The idea is that language acquisition will take place through learning how to adjust to other interlocutors' needs and expectations, in other words, using the language to learn it, not learning the language to use it. Moreover, since each individual's language differs slightly, there will always be slight adjustments according to the situation.

To what extent accuracy features, if at all, in the communicative language

classroom varies from teacher to teacher. Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983:96) outline three methodological approaches to accuracy, ranging from the stance adopted by Rivers (1972), where formal teaching has a definite place but improvisation should be given more prominence, through Brumfit's (1979, 1980) position that accuracy should be accorded some concern, but improvisation and invention should occupy centre-stage from the very beginning, to the view that use of the language, either for teaching other subjects (Widdowson and Brumfit, 1981) or problem-solving tasks, is sufficient for effective language learning and/or acquisition.

Central to any methodology based on a communicative view of language acquisition, therefore, are the multifarious fluency activities that teachers traditionally used to regard as peripheral. Whereas accuracy is viewed as the *raison d'etre* for audiolingual language lessons and is at the very core of the method, its position has been usurped by fluency in the Communicative Language Teaching approach. Quite what position accuracy does occupy varies. It would seem to me that every language teacher would want his students to encode messages both fluently <u>and</u> accurately, but precisely how one achieves this desideratum is the subject of much debate. One frequently hears one's colleagues lamenting the appalling standard of English Second Language in secondary and tertiary institutions, a standard that reflects highly inaccurate use of language. The question that arises is whether such inaccurate language can be regarded as fluent communication. How does a teacher bridge the gap between merely using the language, albeit badly, and using it well? Fluency activities will certainly encourage the use of the language, but how much accuracy work needs to be done to increase the efficacy of the communication? It is in answer to questions such as these that Allen (1986:3) advocates a 'variable focus curriculum' which steers a selectively eclectic course between totally accuracy- and totally fluency-based activities, because he believes that:

> ... the appropriate use of language in context is not an impenetrable mystery, but something that can be analysed, understood, and systematically taught.

Thus Allen (1986) believes that fluency of discourse can be taught along

accuracy lines .   Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983:97) posit the idea that teachers can shift the focus of exercises between accuracy and fluency depending on where the emphasis lies.

> Thus exercises in listening, speaking, reading, or writing can be either accuracy exercises, in which formal features are being concentrated on, or fluency exercises, when the activity is natural.

It is crucial to note here the caveat that Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983:98) issue about the place of accuracy in the Communicative Language Teaching classroom, something which in this researcher's opinion cannot be stressed enough:

> For fluency work to be successful, the teacher should explain to students why it is being encouraged and why they will benefit from not being corrected all the time.   At the same time, teachers should provide specific sessions when correction of widely occurring errors (perhaps by very traditional procedures) will be made, and - above all - teachers must ensure that good spoken and written models of English are provided.   *Without such models and opportunities for correction, fluency practice runs the risk of producing nothing but a fluent classroom pidgin.* While this risk may be worth taking in preference to the inhibiting effect of entirely accuracy-based teaching, there is no reason to encourage weak English, for fluency-based procedures should, over a long-term course, lead to just as accurate English as an accuracy-based one.   The argument is over means, not ends (my italics).

As the goal of fluency-based activities is successful communication of a message, learners need to have as much time using the language as possible to achieve their goal.   It is for this reason that the type of lockstep class we encountered in Chapter 4 on Audiolingualism is not encouraged in Communicative Language Teaching.   For students to have as much time as possible speaking, one of the salient features of CLT methodology is the use

of pair and small-group work. Walz (1986:952) comments on the waste of student-talk time brought about by teachers' monopolisation of on-task activities and inefficient methods of encouraging student participation, and he goes on to make twenty very valuable suggestions for increasing student-talk time without sacrificing quality for quantity. What is of interest in this article is that student-talk includes drilling and repetition, and translation is not discouraged. In other words, teachers must maximise the time students practise the language, be it in fluency or accuracy exercises.

One of the most effective ways of maximising student-talk time, is by the use of pair or small group work. An obvious question that arises concerning accuracy during such activities is, how the teacher can maintain accurate standards of discourse since patently he cannot listen to, or correct, all the pairs or small groups simultaneously. This is a flagrant example of how perspectives on accuracy in the CLT approach are diametrically opposite to those of Audiolingualism, where no student ever says, or is supposed to say, anything that the teacher does not hear and correct immediately if wrong. In pair or small group work there will obviously be inaccuracies, but the rationale behind encouraging this sort of activity is to induce students to detect their own, or other students' errors, and motivate them to work on correcting these errors themselves. (See excerpt (6) below, which comes from the transcript of a class that I 'borrowed' from one of my colleagues in 1988, for an example of pair work.)

Another prominent feature of CLT methodology as a way of applying the principle of engaging students in task-oriented activities is the use of games. Omaggio (1982:517) notes that:

> Many skilled and dedicated teachers are ... supplementing their
> current textbooks with handouts, communication activities, and
> classroom games. This last type of activity can be very effective
> as a supplement to a given text *if* the games are used
> *judiciously*.

She then qualifies her use of the word *judiciously* by stating that such use will enhance the attainment of specific learning objectives. These objectives she

taxonomises (1982:519) into the two broad areas of knowledge of specifics, including specific facts about a country or its culture and discrete-linguistic features. These discrete-linguistic features are vocabulary and grammatical forms, and structure. In her summary, Omaggio (1982:545) states that 'all the games in this article have been designed to fulfill the task demands described in the two uppermost levels of the taxonomy of objectives.' We can observe, therefore, that games, as Omaggio describes them, are designed to encourage an accurate use of the language in communicative exchanges. Accurate morphosyntax, phonology and semantics are not ignored, but are incorporated into the larger function of communicative language use. *Usage* and *use* (Widdowson, 1978) are both integral parts of the paradigm for accuracy.

One might express the place of accurate grammar in language learning in Rinvolucri's (1984:3) terms which are quoted in Chapter 1. He advocates the use of games, as does Omaggio, for the attainment of accuracy:

> The point is that the fun generates energy *for the achievement of the serious goal* (my italics).

When we perceive how Rinvolucri (1984:3) employs games in his teaching programme, we notice his emphasis on the students' attainment of accurate structure and grammar. As he asserts:

> I do not use grammar games as a Friday afternoon 'reward' activity - I use them as a central part of the students' learning process.

Excerpt (6) below furnishes an example of pair-work and the use of games as it is taken from a vocabulary lesson where the students are working in pairs doing crosswords.

(6)

1   P1:   OK, let's see if we can do 3 down, now.
                     What've we got?

2	P2:	M something, N something, something, something.
3	P1:	How many letters we gotta have?
4	P2:	Um .. six.
5	P1:	What's the clue again?
6	P2:	It says, 'Done with the hands' or 'Instructions'.
7	P1:	What the hell does that mean? I can't do these things, man.
8	P2:	Hang on, what do you call that thing .. um.. an instruction book?
9	P1:	A guide?
10	P2:	No, man, it's gotta begin with a M, you (muffled).
11	P1:	OK, man, OK.
12	P2:	Hey (NV: turns to another pair.) What do you call that instruction book thing?
13	P3:	What's the clue?
14	P2:	'Done with the hands' or 'Instructions'.
15	P3:	Ag, that's easy man. Manual.
16	P1:	How do you spell that?
17	P3:	M-A-N-U-A-L
18	P2:	Ja, that fits. Thanks, hey.

Here we see the learners adopting a metacommunicative focus, as they are talking <u>about</u> language, but there is also a communicative focus in that they are <u>talking</u> about language.   Grammar games obviously involve both these dimensions of the learning process.   This type of problem-solving, experiential learning of vocabulary, as evinced in the classroom discourse, is diametrically opposite to the teacher-dominated vocabulary lessons evident in the preceding chapters.

Opinions vary as to what extent language should be controlled in games. Palmer and Rodgers (1983:9) compare the view of Byrne and Rixon that Communicative Language Teaching Games (CLTGs) are:

> ... pair or small group co-operative activities with well defined tasks but undefined language

with that of Wright, Betteridge and Buckby, which is Palmer and Rodgers' own

view too, that:

> ... games can be still be communicative in important senses, even if language form is controlled or guided rather than free.

Accuracy plays a variable role then, according to how individual teachers implement the principles of CLT. In the 'weak' form, accuracy, even in the implementation of pair or small group work and games, will occupy a more prominent position, whereas in the 'strong' form of CLT accuracy will probably be very low on the list of priorities of realisable goals. If we look at Figure 3 below as a paradigm for accuracy in the 'weak' form of CLT, we see that accuracy and fluency are interdependent, with each aspect enjoying equal prominence, whereas Figure 4 below as a paradigm for accuracy in the 'strong' form of CLT starts at the top with fluency activities involving communicative interaction and from that position hopes to 'reach' down to the accuracy levels of structure, syntax and phonology.

The means whereby 'learner interaction and communicative skills are realized' (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:75) are still the subject of ongoing discussion, but as Richards and Rodgers (1986:76) note, the type of exercise and activities that can be used in a CLT approach are unlimited:

> ... provided that such exercises enable learners to obtain the communicative objectives of the curriculum, engage learners in communication, and require the use of such communicative processes as information sharing, negotiation of meaning, and interaction.

Figure 3

A paradigm of the 'weak' form of CLT

fluency

conversational interaction
transaction

subject ⇌ subject

semantics

syntax

morphology

phonology

lingual objects
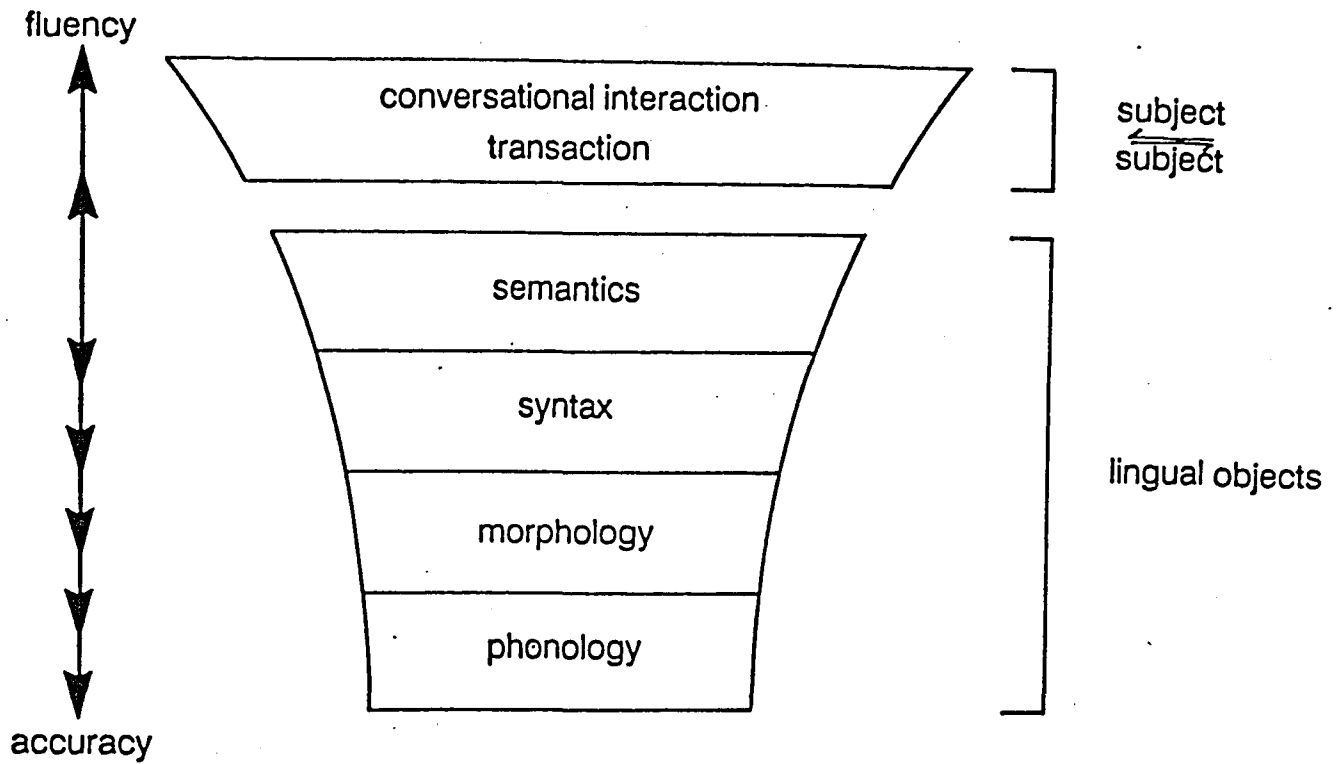
accuracy

Figure 4

A paradigm of the 'strong' form of CLT

fluency

conversational interaction
transaction

subject ⇌ subject

semantics

syntax

morphology

phonology

lingual objects
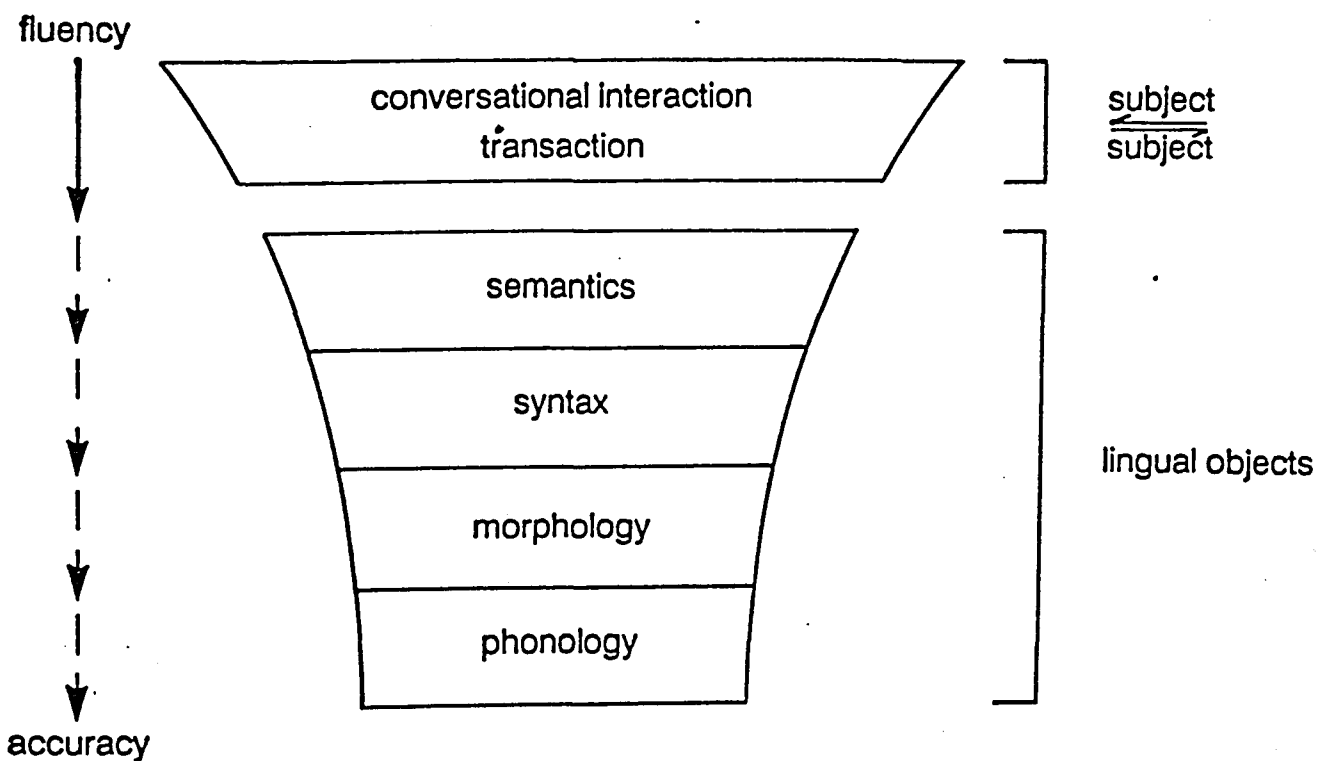
accuracy

It is obviously going to be a great deal more difficult for teachers to establish paradigms for accuracy when using a CLT approach, as one has to take cognizance of so many factors. A formally accurate product, which is easy to assess in terms of correctness or incorrectness, is no longer the sole desideratum of language classes. Nor is it easy when the syllabus of CLT is as vast as life itself, and incorporates all the 'functional communication activities' and 'social interaction activities' (Littlewood, 1981) for which language is used.

Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983:98-101) give a detailed list of what teachers in a CLT situation must do, including the individualising of student needs and assessment of competence levels, and the broadening of student experience with realia and authentic materials and the normal unarticulated sounds of real-life conversation. How does one assess a student's linguistic success if levels higher than absolute morphosyntactic, semantic or phonological correctness come into play, or if one needs to assess how effectively an individual student has realized his particular communicative goal seen from the point of view of his particular communicative needs rather than the teacher's imposition of an external communicative need? The method of teaching must take these factors into consideration. Obviously the ideal is to teach in such a way as to encourage perfectly <u>fluent</u> communication which rests firmly on a base of formal <u>accuracy</u> so that the message has both functional and aesthetic value. It seems to me that standards of accuracy should refer not only to formal correctness of the message, but also to the effectiveness of that message. In other words, an accurate message is one which achieves its communicative goal in an accurate way. If the communication achieves its goal, is it not an accurate communication, despite a few formal inaccuracies?

For example, the teacher's informative move in excerpt (7) below, (Greyling, 1987:244) contains incomplete sentences which show hesitation, and a conditional clause without a main clause, which has to be filled in by ellipsis, but it would not be regarded as inaccurate discourse.

(7)

1	T:	Right˄
		Question?
2	P:	How do you move?

3   T: How do you move? You move either ... Right? ... There are two ways - there are two ways of moving. One is with the dice. Right? If you roll the dice. If, however, you use two dollars, you may go to wherever you like in the sequence - in South Africa; in Mozambique or Botswana. Right?

This discourse shows the teacher taking the floor and attempting to help the group by answering their question.   The teacher's explanations are punctuated by checks which take the form of 'Right?', each time indicating that the explanation is going to go one step further if the pupils are keeping up with her. In this, and example (3) above, the pupils' questions elicit a response from the teacher which incorporates the concepts of 'research and development' and 'Public Support' amongst others. So, although vocabulary is not dealt with as a discrete language feature to be learned in the lesson, it is hoped that the pupils will acquire the vocabulary for these concepts in a meaningful, experiential way.   This is not an accuracy-based method of teaching vocabulary, but students should be able to use the words they acquire accurately.

Throughout the whole of this lesson from which the excerpts come, the class is never exposed to meaningless repetition of sentences which are totally uncontextualised.   Everything that is said is interactive in nature, whether between the pupils and the teacher, or amongst the pupils themselves. The pupils learn to use the language and concepts experientially. There is no linguistic structural focus to the lesson, in other words there is no formal accuracy component, but the pupils have learned a great deal, even if it is unconsciously, about how language works in context for problem-solving, negotiating, acquiring assistance and learning about new concepts. The discourse of this lesson embodies items like the 'hesitation words, the exclamations and the appropriate, unarticulated sounds which are authentic and typical of normal communication' which Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983:99) suggest must constitute part of the lessons in CLT. As far as accuracy is concerned, however, it is non-existent *per se* in this lesson, and can only be discerned in an indirect way in the learning of vocabulary and concepts.

When we come to the section on Strategic Interaction in Chapter 6, we shall see how the students are encouraged to script and rehearse in order to acquire the correct form of the necessary language for their interactive communication, rather than just use the language without rehearsing it in the hope of acquiring the right language for the interactive functions they perform.

5.5. Errors and error correction

Again in the area of what constitute errors, and how, if at all they should be corrected, CLT differs radically from accuracy-based methods. If we refer back to Chapter 4, we see that errors were regarded as undesirable and to be avoided at all costs, as they were thought to induce bad speech habits. It was also felt that only accurate forms of the language should be evident in the pupils' speech, whereas in CLT, errors are regarded as inevitable in the quest for the correct language to use in a communicative situation. Littlewood (1981:32), for example, has this to say about grammatical errors when students are developing their communicative skills and strategies for getting their meanings across:

> ... they will sometimes select forms that are not grammatically
> perfect. The teacher, may, of course, use these errors as useful
> indicators of what still needs to be learnt. However, he should
> also recognise them as a natural and acceptable phenomenon in
> any situation where learners have an urgent need to
> communicate.

How very different from the attitude expressed by Palmer (quoted in Chapter 4 from Diller, 1978:49). Corder (1981:10) differentiates between a learner's *mistakes*, which are merely slips of the tongue, and learner *error*, which refers to systematic errors from which the learner's knowledge of the language, that is what he has learnt, may be reconstructed. He stresses that the learner 'is using some system, although it is not yet the right system.' (See also Selinker, 1972.) Corder (1981:11) then goes on to point out that perhaps the most important aspect of errors is that:

> ... they are indispensable to the learner himself, because we can

regard the making of errors as a device the learner uses in order to learn.

It is important to quote Corder (1981:12-13) at some length to illustrate the rationale that underlies the CLT approach to errors and error correction, which is, as is to be expected, student-centred and not at all accuracy-based.

> We have been reminded recently of von Humboldt's statement that we cannot really teach language, we can only create conditions in which it will develop spontaneously in the mind in its own way. We shall never improve our ability to create such favourable conditions until we learn more about the way a learner learns and what his built-in syllabus is. When we do know this (and the learner's errors will, if systematically studied, tell us something about this) we may begin to be more critical of our cherished notions. We may be able to allow the learner's innate strategies to dictate our practice and determine our syllabus; we may learn to adapt ourselves to *his* needs rather than impose upon him *our* preconceptions of *how* he ought to learn, *what* he ought to learn and *when* he ought to learn it.

This pinpoints the dichotomy between teaching and learning and/or acquisition. Language has to be acquired, but this acquisition can be assisted if certain accuracy-based aspects of language are taught (see Allen, 1986). Analysis of students' errors in order to discover which aspects these are, inarguably seems the best way to determine what the student needs to learn (cf. also Di Pietro, 1987.) Sometimes, too, it is necessary to create a structure for students by determining *what* they should learn and *when* they should learn it, and within these parameters student errors can be detected, analysed and used as a basis for further learning. Be that as it may, Corder's approach to errors reflects the type of attitude an extreme or very 'strong' form of CLT (to use Howatt's description) would be likely to adopt. In this form, accuracy would most certainly not be regarded as a prerequisite for functional language use, although, of course, there is the suggestion in the excerpt from Corder, that accuracy might be treated as an adjunct to communicative language use once the student errors have indicated where there is a need for greater

accuracy.

There appear to be divergent opinions on errors and error correction even amongst followers of the CLT approach.[1] Beretta (1989:285) recounts differing views amongst participants at a seminar held at the Regional Institute of English in Bangalore in 1980, on the nature of a certain lesson conducted under the auspices of the Bangalore Project. The differences of opinion centred on whether the recordings of the lesson revealed that it was structural or communicative in approach. The problem was that, for the participants, the transcripts reflected the teacher's intention to teach language form, whereas for Prabhu (the Project Leader), they reflected the teacher's intention to teach meaning. The point is that, if teachers focused on form, they would correct structural, or accuracy-based errors, whereas if they focused on meaning, they would correct content rather than form, which is the type of error correction that Prabhu (1982) , the head of the Bangalore/Madras Communicational Teaching Project (CTP) prescribes.

Beretta's (1989:301) analysis of the linguistic data of the Bangalore Project, ie the transcripts of 21 lessons, shows that many more errors of meaning and content were corrected than errors of form or accuracy errors, but his findings make the further suggestion that, in order for teachers to be able to concentrate on meaning rather than form, 'there appears to have been an unacknowledged move to eliminate the *possibility* of a focus on form.'

Thus in the Bangalore Project, at least, a deliberate injunction to move away from accuracy-based error correction seems to have side-stepped the problem of correction of linguistic error. Beretta (1989:300) remarks:

> The descriptive analysis revealed that the majority of treatments
> for linguistic error involved minimal intervention or none at all.
> Content errors, by contrast, were treated in a wide variety of
> ways, indicating that more sustained attempts were made to
> secure the correct answers to problems. *The descriptive*

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1   Krashen and Terrell (1983:177) refer to a study conducted by Cardelle and Corno in 1981 which found that '"constructive critical feedback" correction which included both criticism and praise, produced greater results than criticism alone, praise alone, or no feedback.'

analysis thus broadly supported the stated CTP approaches to error correction (my italics).

Obviously the shift away from linguistic or accuracy-based error in CLT represents a shift away from the type of mechanistic view of a learner's language processing prevalent in behaviourist, empiricist methodology. Corder (1981:26) remarks that language learning is often couched in terms analogous to computer terminology, such as data processing, input, output, operations and so forth. However, as he says, we do not control a learner the way we do a computer. (If this were the case, what a relatively simple task language teaching would be.) On the contrary, Corder suggests we need to analyse learners' errors in order to discover the state of their grammar. He (1981:32) then comes to the conclusion 'that the concept of ungrammaticality or deviance is not applicable to the learner' and that (1981:34) what the learner speaks 'is not an inadequate or incorrect form of the target language but a peculiar transitional idiolect.' And so:

> ... the concept of *error* and *acceptability* have as little utility in the study of the learner's language as they do in the study of the infant's.

Krashen and Terrell (1983:20) express their approach, that is the Natural Approach, to correction of errors much more simply:

> ... speech errors which do not interfere with communication are not corrected.

One personal observation may be relevant here, based on this researcher's classroom experience. Student feedback has nearly always revealed that the students desire more direct, on-the-spot correction of errors so that they feel they have learned to say something correctly. Otherwise the feeling is that they are merely talking in the same way that they usually do and not improving at all. This seems to me to raise a slight dilemma. If we are to adopt a student-centred approach, based on an analysis of student needs, surely our attitude to errors and their correction needs to be a little more flexible and not

so dogmatically 'Communicative' in nature.   My personal opinion is that the teacher needs a great deal of sensitivity to distinguish between those occasions when an error of inaccuracy needs correction, and when inaccuracy is far less important than fluency, and the correction of such an inaccuracy would interrupt the flow of the communication of the message.

This less radically tolerant view of errors and their correction is also supported by writers including Rivers (1983:12).   Generally there seems to be a continuum of tolerance of errors in CLT with the underlying principle of far greater tolerance of structural or formal errors than in the traditional methods, as errors are seen as 'a natural outcome of the development of communication skills' (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:135).   (Cf. also Selinker, 1972 and Corder, 1981.)   As pointed out above, however, individual teachers will probably respond differently, ranging from correcting some errors along accuracy-lines to correction along content or meaning lines only as stipulated by Prabhu in the Bangalore Project.   What is significant, is that errors of inaccuracy, which do not adversely affect the communicative effectiveness of a text or discourse, are not held to be as important as the aspects such as style, content, interest, personality of the writer and so forth.   Green (1987:79-99) conducted a very interesting experiment in which he took three letters written in English by German students and asked a group of English-speaking pupils to evaluate them in terms of which would be the most desirable letter to receive from a pen friend.   As it turned out, the favourite letter also happened to be the most accurate.   So, in order to determine whether it was the accuracy or the communicative effectiveness that influenced the pupils' decision, the inaccuracies of the second and third letters were corrected so that the third letter became the least accurate.   A second set of English pupils, comparable to the first, also overwhelmingly chose the same letter as the first set had done, despite its now greater proportion of inaccuracies.   Green's (1987:82) interpretation of the results of this experiment particularly as they apply to written communication are worthy of recording as they illustrate the necessity for sensitivity and discrimination in the treatment of errors:

> Effective communication depends not only on a comprehensible
> message but on the ability of the partners to sustain each other's
> interest and sympathy.   This is particularly important in written

communication, where meaning cannot be directly negotiated and attitudes are interpreted directly from words without the help - and sometimes corrective - of intonation, voice quality, facial expression, gesture, etc. Error can obscure or obliterate the meaning of a message and it can both divert attention from meaning and alienate sympathy. Where, as in writing, there is no "second go,' accuracy might be seen as at a premium and indeed, it is a major element in most assessment of written production in a foreign language.

Green (1987:83) later observes that teachers tend to pass over the very types of error that evoke adverse reaction, namely errors of discourse, to which the pupils who acted as the judges were much more sensitive than the teachers had been.

Excerpt (8) below is the transcript of a lesson taken from Riley (1985:54-55) in which we can see how the teacher corrects errors in order to improve the flow of discourse. Here there is evidence of structural correction by means of questions, non-verbal clues and correct rephrasing of incorrect forms. This comes from a language class given by a native speaker of American English to a group of four learners.

(8)

1	T:	er, Mr P, er, what's the man doing ... he's sitting, but what's he doing with his hand?
2	Mr P:	She's pointing their hand.
3	T:	Pardon?
4	Mr P:	He is pointing his hand.
5	T:	OK, he's pointing his hand and what -
6	Mr P:	and he is showing the seat in front of him.
7	T:	OK, he's pointing his hand and what -
8	Mlle X:	the menu ... the menu ...
9	T:	The menu or (gesture) look at the picture, look at the picture ... he's pointing at his watch. Why is he pointing at his watch?
10	Mr P:	Because she's late.
11	Mr D (?)	She's she's late.

12	T:	OK, the girl is late and perhaps (gesture) he's been ... what? (drums hands on desk imitating impatience) he's been ...
13	Mlle X:	Wait wait ...
14	T:	Waiting.
15	Mlle X:	He has waited ...
16	T:	He's been waiting ...
17	Mlle X:	waiting many many times ...
18	T:	Many times? (French gesture for doubt) Many times?
19	Mlle X:	Some times ...
20	T:	Some times (gesture)
21	Mlle X:	No.
22	T:	No, he's been waiting for (gesture) for a (gesture - fisherman's tale = long) ...
23	?:) ?:)	A lot of time. A long time.
24	T:	A long time he's been waiting for a long time.

Beretta (1989) noticed in his research into error correction in the Bangalore Project, that there was a significantly greater incidence of treatment of content than linguistic error. The transcript above, however, reveals that linguistic error has to be corrected in order for the content of the student's response to be accurately expressed. In Turn 2, for example, the context of the picture and the teacher's previous question, 'What's he doing with his hand?' make the response, 'She's pointing their hand', intelligible but morphosyntactically inaccurate. So the teacher's feedback shows a negative evaluation of the answer by using the question, 'Pardon?', which acts as another initiation by encouraging Mr P to rephrase his response, this time accurately. Then the teacher gives overt feedback in turn 5 by means of the accept,'OK', which is followed by repetition of the student's answer and another elicitation in 'and what -'. We notice that Mr P has not been given a sentence to practise umpteen times in order to arrive at the correct form, but rather the interactive nature of the exchange between himself and the teacher brings him to a point where he arrives at a partial answer to the original question, and one which is accurately encoded. This exchange between Mr P and the teacher in turns 1 - 7 thus follows this type of IRF pattern until in turn 8 Mlle X takes the floor and initiates an exchange, or what Riley (1985:47-66) calls a 'return' which the

teacher closes when he addresses the whole group with the question elicit in Turn 9. (This transition was marked, as Riley (1985:59) explains, by non-verbal gestures.) Throughout the whole of this lesson we see a good example of interactive discourse as defined by Riley (1985:50):

> By interactive discourse we mean discourse which is the collaborative construct of two or more participants mutually engaged in other-directed communicative behaviour.

The 'other-directedness' evinced in the extract of discourse is the attempt to arrive at an answer, which is accurate in terms of both meaning and form. In turn 13 Mlle X struggles to find the correct form for the perfect continuous tense which the teacher tries to elicit by providing 'he's been ...'. Although the teacher completes the elicitation in turn 14, Mlle X still tries, in turn 15, to work out the complete verbal form, again incorrectly. In this exchange, consisting of turns 13 - 24, Mlle X volunteers answers without making a formal bid to contribute to the discourse, which represents a deviation from the pattern encountered in formal classrooms. In turn 18 the teacher uses repetition of the students' incorrect answer, reformulated as a question, together with a gesture expressing doubt, to elicit the correct answer from the student, while it also acts as covert feedback to convey rejection of the previous answer. The same occurs in turn 20 where the teacher encourages Mlle X to evaluate her own answer, which she does negatively in turn 21. Nowhere does the teacher emphasise the form, *per se,* with discrete linguistic focus; the management of the discourse instead, together with the joint negotiation of meaning and structures, forms the accuracy element of the lesson. Eventually in turn 24 the teacher provides the correct answer as acceptance of someone's correct response in turn 23.

So we see here quite a few formal errors which the teacher encourages the students to correct for themselves before she supplies the correct answer. The IRF pattern here then is somewhat different from the traditional, formal pattern in that the discourse includes student feedback on their own attempts in the extended exchange, while final teacher feedback of acceptance only comes in turn 24. As is consonant with the manner of error correction in the CLT approach, the teacher uses minimal intervention (as found also by Beretta

in the treatment of linguistic error) and no generalisations or grammatical rules are given by way of explanation of the error.

The CLT approach does not specifically 'teach' the skills of conversational management, a lack which Claire Kramsch (1981) has tried to rectify in her approach (Di Pietro, 1982:393), and which Di Pietro advocates in his use of what he calls 'strategic interaction' (see Chapter 6). However, by addressing errors and correcting them in the ways mentioned above (which constitute some, if not all of the possible ways of correction), teachers act as guides and facilitators to students in their quest for mastery of the language. Accuracy is not regarded as a separate element of language and something to be gained out of context as the method of error correction shows. (See Canale, 1983 and Widdowson, 1990:121.)

5.6. Conclusion

Developments in humanistic psychology, sociology, anthropology and linguistics led to a reaction against the mechanistic, behaviourist view of language as evinced in the Audiolingual Approach. Language was no longer seen, no longer as a set of speech habits which could be learned by drilling and repetition, but rather as the tool of communication. Accuracy yielded its position to fluency, and fluency activities in the classroom came to occupy pride of place, even if discrete language points did have a certain role to play. There is no one particular method for Communicative Language Teaching, as it is an approach not a method, and it allows for a great deal of individual interpretation. However, the approach presumes the application of certain principles, namely that the teaching is student-centred, the language syllabus is notional-functional in content rather than grammatical, and the interactive processes of communication receive priority.

Richards and Rodgers (1986:83) note that language teaching was ready for a paradigm shift and CLT represented an approach appropriate for the seventies and after. The main paradigm shift moved away from accuracy-based towards fluency-based syllabuses. The focus was now on language as it is used in real-life situations. As Brumfit (1984:118) expresses it:

Monitoring, resort to reference rules, accuracy work, and a concern for explicit knowledge are all essentially non-integrated activities, and consequently will not form the prime basis for normal language use.

Accuracy had now to be integrated into a larger whole that had real-life discourse as its objective. Through role-play, situations and games, for example, opportunities were provided in the classroom, for practising to communicate. The hope that students would naturally make the transition between accuracy work drilled in the classroom and real-life communication with native speakers, as proponents of accuracy-based methods believed, proved false.

Not all applications of CLT manifest the same proportions of accuracy and fluency work. The two forms of CLT distinguished by Howatt (1984), 'weak' and 'strong', embody different degrees of emphasis on accuracy work. The weak form embodies an approach that integrates a larger proportion of accuracy work into its syllabus than the strong form, which presumes that accuracy will follow fluency, that the act of practising communication will engender an accurate use of the language. Thus the paradigm for accuracy has shifted away from absolute phonological, semantic and morphosyntactic accuracy as witnessed in the Direct and Audiolingual Methods, to fluent and effective communication. However, Richards and Rodgers (1986:83) draw our attention to some of the issues that must be confronted now that the initial wave of enthusiasm for CLT has passed, such as teacher training and materials development, as well as testing and evaluation. Sometimes it seems that the lofty ideal that students will 'absorb' accuracy by practising their language in a functional context does not seem to be realised, and that some attention needs to be given to developing ways of teaching them to communicate accurately as well as fluently.

This problem is addressed by McKay (1988:17) who states:

> However, as Widdowson points out, while language classrooms should give attention to the communicative function of language,

it is important mot to minimise attention to the conceptual function of language (i.e. language which is used for thinking and formulating concepts).

Chick (1988:2) also asks the question, 'What is the role of grammar in communicative language teaching approaches to language teaching?' He adduces two reasons for asking this: first, that:

> ... neglect of grammar is the criticism most often directed against communicative language teaching approaches,

and secondly that:

> ... the role of grammar is currently being re-evaluated, with an increasing number of scholars arguing that, indeed, in the early enthusiasm for communicative approaches grammar teaching was neglected.

Widdowson himself, in his most recent publication (1990:161) highlights two problems of the communicative approach:

> It turns out that learners do not very readily infer knowledge of the language system from their communicative activities. ... So quite often ... learners acquire a fairly patchy and imperfect repertoire of performance which is not supported by an underlying competence.

And (1990:163-164):

> We do not want our learners to bypass language when they use it, as it is natural for native speakers to do, because they do not have the systemic knowledge as a back-up resource to rely on.

In the next chapter we shall look at two individual orientations that have developed out of the 'mainstream' teaching ideas, to determine the position that accuracy occupies in some of these 'fringe' approaches and methods.

Chapter 6

Two 'Fringe' Methods

6.1. Introduction

In the previous chapters we looked at various 'mainstream' methods and/or approaches to see to what extent accuracy featured in them and how the classroom discourse pattern typical in these methods and approaches reflected this attitude to accuracy. However, there have been many people, educationists, linguists and psychologists alike, who have proposed their own individual brands of second language teaching, which share some of the major attributes of other methods, but differ in certain respects. Howatt (1984:226) uses the term 'fringe' methods to cover a variety of these teacher/individual orientations in Second Language Teaching. The effect the emergence of these methods has on teachers is described by Maley (1984:82):

> Once named, they seem to take on an independent existence, which to some extent at any rate, removes them from the control of their creators and dispenses those who use the name from any but the simplest of referential relationships (for example, Einstein *is* Relativity, Freud *is* Psychoanalysis, Newton *is* Gravity, Gattegno *is* Silent Way, Curran *is* Community Language Learning, Lozanov *is* Suggestopaedia, Wilkins *is* Functions, Krashen *is* the Monitor Model).

Maley then goes on to say, rather pertinently, that:

> To survive, it is necessary to claim that the approach offers comprehensive answers to the problems, yet given the complexity of the variables involved, *it is clear that such answers do not exist* (my italics).

For example, Gattegno, the deviser of the Silent Way, (1983:85) claims:

... we have considerably assisted the learners in reaching the spirit of the language through its sociological and historical components.

But, although his method is based on humanistic psycholinguistic principles, nowhere does it deal with the language of interaction and transaction, with discourse, conversation mangagement and negotiation of meaning between equals-at-talk (See Canale, 1983).

The two methods or approaches that this chapter will look at to see their perspectives on accuracy are the Silent Way and Strategic Interaction, the name given by Robert Di Pietro to his particular method of encouraging real-life interaction by means of role-play. I have chosen the Silent Way because it is a very interesting notion to me that a method which focuses to the extent that it does on phonological accuracy should require the teacher to be silent as much and for as long as possible, while the students develop their own schemata for pronouncing the language as closely as possible to the way a cultured native speaker would. An analysis of the discourse in a Silent Way lesson would be interesting, to say the least, as most of the talk would come from the students, with numerous non-verbal moves on the part of the teacher. Certainly, the typical structure of classroom discourse that Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) find of Initiation, Response, Feedback would be absent, and instead one might find extensive non-verbal teacher initiation, then verbal student response and minimal feedback as Gattegno suggests.

Strategic Interaction is an interesting approach to functional discourse in that the students are required to script the dialogue of scenarios before they perform them. In other words, they can work on accurately encoding real-life interaction, while learning how to negotiate meaning and manage conversation. In other words, they develop communicative competence, which in Canale's (1983) view is:

> ... an essential part of actual communication but is reflected only indirectly, and sometimes imperfectly (e.g. in random and inadvertent slips of the tongue, mixing of registers).

Although both these approaches are similar in that learner autonomy is

encouraged, they are diametrically opposite in their treatment of accuracy. The Silent Way is concerned with the accurate expression of concepts, whereas Strategic Interaction focuses on accuracy of interactive conversation management. As I have never witnessed a Silent Way lesson, there is no actual classroom discourse to exemplify how the method focuses on accuracy. However, classroom discourse from the ENS 115 class at the University of the Orange Free State is used in the examination of Strategic Interaction. This class comprises students who are required to do one year of English for their degrees, and consequently, it is a one-year terminal course.

6.2. The Silent Way

6.2.1. Background

As Howatt (1984:226) observes, Caleb Gattegno first proposed the Silent Way in the early sixties. This was the time that the Audiolingual idea of learning a language by forming a set of habits was seriously challenged (Kelly, 1969:309; Strevens, 1977:4; Rivers, 1983:5; Larsen-Freeman, 1986:51). Rather, learners were seen as being far more actively involved in the learning process by using their own cognition or thought processes. (See Kelly, 1969:309-310 and Strevens, 1977:5 on *cognitive-code* learning and teaching.) The name, Silent Way, comes from Gattegno's premise that the teacher should remain as silent as possible in order for the students to work out for themselves the necessary language and pronunciation. In their introduction to Gattegno's method, Oller and Richard-Amato (1983:72) describe this silence in the following terms:

> After some manageable chunk of language has been presented, the teacher remains silent while the pressure for some one of the students to fill the silence grows to a crescendo level.

Gattegno also believed that students should be maximally engaged at the "greatest cognitive depth" (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:100 quoting Craik). In this way, his method is akin to the cognitive-code approach (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:51) although it did not develop out of it.

In order to assist students to learn, Gattegno used coloured rods (called

Cuisenaire rods after their deviser), and wall charts (called Fidel charts), as he maintained that learning is facilitated by physical (mediating) objects. These ideas emanated from Gattegno's previous experience as an educational designer of reading and mathematics programs (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:99). Although the Silent Way is not like Audiolingualism in its approach, in that parrot-like repetition and remembering are eschewed so that the student might assume autonomy for his learning, the actual lingual objects that the Silent Way presents to the students are very similar to those found in the Audiolingual method. For example, if we look at the levels of language presented in Figure 1, we see that in the Silent Way, accuracy of phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics is still a desideratum, but nowhere is accuracy of register, or the appropriateness of choice of conversational conventions in the interactive nature of discourse dealt with. Once again, this type of 'communicative competence' is thought to proceed of itself from a sound base of 'grammatical competence.' As Canale (1983) suggests, however, 'grammatical competence' is only one of the four components of communicative competence, the other three being sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence. (See Chapter 5.) It is this last component that Di Pietro emphasises in Strategic Interaction (see below in Section 6.3 of this chapter).

6.2.2. Principles

Richards and Rodgers (1986:99) succinctly encapsulate the learning hypotheses underlying the Silent Way as follows:

1. Learning is facilitated if the learner discovers or creates rather than remembers and repeats what is to be learned. (See Gattegno, 1983:73.)

2. Learning is facilitated by accompanying (mediating) physical objects. (See Gattegno, 1983: 73-76.)

3. Learning is facilitated by problem solving involving the material to be learned. (See Gattegno, 1983: 76-77.)

Gattegno himself (1983:73) discusses his approach thus:

My proposal is to replace a "natural" approach by one that is very

"artificial" and, for some purposes, strictly controlled, and to use all that there is to be tapped in every mind in every school.

By "natural" Gattegno means the type of approach that uses the natural conversation of the target language, and it includes the methods that followed the Reform Movement. The humanistic nature of these principles is evident in the shift in emphasis from the teacher to the active role of the learner (Larsen-Freeman, 1986:51-52), although as we see in the above quotation, the teacher exerts complete control over the linguistic situations.

We see in these principles that, while striving for lingual accuracy, the learning properties of the minds of the students are the most salient feature. But a look at the linguistic materials and situations will reveal that levels of language dealt with do not go beyond those of phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics to include an interactive or transactional component. If we compare Strategic Interaction below, we observe that Di Pietro (1987:18) believes that these components should be present right from the beginning stages of learning a foreign language. As he (1987:4) maintains:

> An important step to the required reorientation was taken when I
> realized how centrally language functions in creating the perception
> of a "self." My training as a linguist had led me to concentrate on
> language as an artifact built by its own set of rules.

It is 'language as an artifact built by its own set of rules' that Gattegno focuses on.

6.2.3. Method

The pertinent features of the Silent Way are described more fully by Gattegno (1983:78-86). What follows here is a summary. The teacher takes a coloured rod out of the box of rods that he has brought into the classroom with him and says in the target language 'a rod'. He repeats this seven or eight times and then mimes that he wants the students to repeat what he has said. This then continues with four or five different coloured rods. Here we note the similarity to the Direct Method, and Asher's Total Physical Response, in what the teacher wants the students to do; the main difference is that in the Silent Way, the teacher

does not repeat the words over and over again, but rather expects the students to work out how to say what is required of them after he has repeated the words in the beginning for the students to work out what the meaning of the word 'rod' is. Richards and Rodgers (1986:100) use the term 'grappling' and Oller and Richard-Amato (1983:72) 'cognitive wrestling match' to describe the rather stressful effort of the students to acquire language by this method.

After about four or five lessons, the students should have acquired about thirty words, but round this paucity of vocabulary Gattegno says they will have learned to use 'much language' (1983:75-76):

> But with [these words] we have heard and understood, and uttered and understood:
>
> > take a .... rod (six or seven colors)
> > give it to .... (him, her, me)

and their conjunctions:

> > take a .... and give it to ....
>
> or: take ..... rods and give them to .... .

Gattegno claims (1983:76) that:

> ... the students will gain what cannot be passed on by explanation but can be reached by intuition and the surrender to the traditions absorbed in the spirit of a particular language.

Gattegno's method concentrates on language as *symbol* which Widdowson (1990:101-102) describes thus:

> A knowledge of language will enable us to decipher strings of symbols as sentences ... (a knowledge) which it is ... the traditional business of language teachers to teach;

This he contrasts with language as an *index:*

> The sign in the utterance, therefore, does not function as a symbol
> but as an *index*: it indicates where we must look in the world we
> know or can perceive in order to discover meaning.

Widdowson draws the same distinction between sentence and utterance that we encounter in Gardner (1984). It would appear that the 'much language' that Gattegno claims students have learned, comprises language as symbol.

It is the tune or 'melody' (to use Gattegno's term) of the language that he wants the students to gain, and to this end they should be able to identify recorded speech as that of the target language without, obviously, being able to understand the meaning of what is said. Here we see the beginnings of an emergence of concern with how the language is used by native speakers in real-life situations, but it is only on the phonological level and involves recognition only. Gattegno (1983:86) stresses phonological accuracy, even to the extent of requiring :

> An accent as close as possible to that of the natives who are among
> really cultured members of the country whose language is being
> studied.

In the initial phases of learning a foreign language, when the student has no vocabulary of the target language at his disposal whatsoever, he needs to acquire words and phrases to express concepts in the target language otherwise he will have nothing with which to converse. Concepts like spatial relations (being between, above, next to, perpendicular to, parallel to, across, on top, in front, etc.) and comparisons (larger than, smaller than, equivalent to) are extremely important to be able to express, but when Gattegno (1983: 81) asserts:

> ...[the learners] will find in [each chart] a set of words that will permit
> them to talk and write about relationships that occur constantly in
> life;

and

These variations on the theme are an obvious source of much language but are based upon perception and describing with very few words *all that can be said within one situation* (my italics);

he ignores the socially contextualised aspect of language. Presumably, Gattegno hopes that, on a firm base of 'linguistic competence' (Widdowson, 1990) or 'grammatical competence' (Canale, 1983), the other competences - sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic - will follow. (See also Allen, 1986.) Just how important context and the instrumental nature of language have become in Linguistics, is evident in these very strong terms of Hartmann's (1980:73):

> Language is interaction in communicative situations. The disastrous neglect of context in linguistics has held back our understanding of the instrumental nature of language until the very recent recognition of *discourse analysis.*

Nor do we gain any idea of how the students are expected to intuit for themselves the 'shared conventions' of communication (Roberts, 1982:181).

The emphasis placed on formal accuracy in the Silent Way is manifest in the use of the Fidel charts as well. Gattegno (1983:83) elucidates their use for acquiring morphological accuracy thus:

> The way in which the charts are contructed will indicate that we have made use of the cumulative effect of learning. While in the beginning we give material that is to be used as units in their own right, later we present parts of words which can be involved in a number of words, perhaps with radically different meanings and certainly with varying meanings when connected with prefixes or suffixes.

We see here the concern for accurate word-formation, but not for <u>how</u> to use these words in conversation. Semantic accuracy is also highly stressed, as illustrated, for example, in this statement by Gattegno (1983:83) about how the charts can serve to test the logic acquired by the students:

> A statement may be grammatically correct but logically
> unacceptable: for example, "the largest of these rods are the
> smallest among them."

Roberts (1982:181) points out that language teaching has often incorporated activities that on the surface look as though they encourage fluency, but have 'actually given few opportunities for the cultivation of fluency which includes the negotiation of meaning, especially when teachers have been poised to intervene at the point of any departure from linguistic norms.' In the Silent Way, it is accurate acquisition of these linguistic norms that is taught, or rather learned, but Gattegno sees language teaching as more than just acquiring the language of another culture. For him it is 'education of the spiritual powers and of the sensitivity of the individual' (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:103). This heightened awareness of the individual, achieved by coming to grips with the language of other peoples, should enable students to accomplish what Gattegno (1983:86) desires from language teaching:

> ... we need to be absorbing others as they *are* in an enhanced and
> more open sensitivity.

It is unclear, however, just how beginning level students are going to acquire the near-native fluency that is the objective of the Silent Way, as the method is based on a grammatical, not functional syllabus, and vocabulary is selected according to the degree to which it can be manipulated within a classroom setting. As Richards and Rodgers (1986:103-104) note, however:

> An immediate objective is to provide the learner with the basic
> practical knowledge of the grammar of the language. This forms
> the basis for independent learning on the learner's part.

So, according to the paradigm illustrated in Figure 1 (Chapter 1), the method starts at the bottom levels of phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics, stressing accuracy on these levels. However, in comparison with methods where students are expected to repeat what the teacher says, perhaps much more often

than once, the learning on these levels of language takes place experientially rather than mindlessly, as is sometimes evident in pattern-practice and 'mim-mem' drills (see Lamendella, 1979). This experiential learning occurs because the students are actively guessing and hypothesising about the language system. There is no communicative element present in the classes nor are any real-life situations created where the students might get to practise language in a functional way, but the students are supposed to use the facts of language that they have acquired in order to acquire 'communicative competence' independently. Apparently, the cognitive processes that the students invoke so as to hypothesise about the language system, encourage a desire on their part to communicate. Having said that there is no communicative element in the lessons *per se*, there is, however, pupil-teacher and pupil-pupil interaction as discussed in the following section.

6.2.4. Errors and Error Correction

Since the students are required to gain their autonomy in the learning situation, the Silent Way approach to errors and their correction demands very little teacher interference. The students are given time to work on their standards of correctness and they are expected to correct their pronunciation themselves. Gattegno (1983:83) asserts that the 'immediate formation of inner criteria will be obvious' which will enable the students to have:

> ... a really good diction in the new language, with a clear pronunciation of each word (as close as possible to that of natives) and an easy flow in sentence making, observing the melodic line of that language ... (and they) ... will feel and think in the new language, as will be evident from the correctness of their speech.

Thus we can see that the teacher requires accuracy, but the students have to rely on themselves or fellow-students for correction. The co-operation that results from student-student correction is one instance we see of target language interaction in the class. Larsen-Freeman (1986:63-64), however, observes that in the student-teacher interaction the teacher is very active, even though he is silent:

... setting up situations to "force awareness," listening attentively to students' speech, and silently working with them on their production. ... Student-student verbal interaction is desirable (students can learn from one another) and is therefore encouraged. The teacher's silence is one way to do this.

Thus the role of the teacher in the Silent Way is unique in that, instead of the classes engendering traditional IRF discourse patterns, the initiation and feedback consist mainly of non-verbal gestures on the part of the teacher, while the responses come from the students. In this way, the talk is not dominated by the teacher and the students get to do most of the talking, offering assistance and feedback to their classmates. However, the students do not generate the talk themselves while the teacher's role is anything but passive. Quite the contrary, in fact.

6.2.5. Conclusion

The Silent Way is designed to encourage students to gain autonomy in the learning process. It is a highly unusual method, especially as one of its immediate objectives is phonological accuracy, including picking up the 'melody' of the language, and yet the teacher remains as silent as possible. The language levels of the classes are those of phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics, and although Gattegno himself says (1983:85) that:

> ... we have considerably assisted the learners in reaching the spirit
> of the language through its sociological and historical components

the method lacks the influence of people like Halliday, Firth, and Hymes, who really introduced the notion of language as a social tool into the area of language teaching. It was upon their work that communicative methodologists built by introducing the study of connected texts and discourse management as the language of communication, rather than the formulation of concepts in words and sentences. (See also Chapter 5.) The Silent Way is, therefore, a highly accuracy-based method, which concentrates largely on 'grammatical competence' but has the lofty ideals of inculcating all the components of communicative competence, without addressing the other components directly. (Again see Canale, 1983.) It

is, however, different from other highly accuracy-based methods like Audiolingualism, in that intrinsic learner motivation is a crucial feature of the Silent Way.

6.3. Strategic Interaction

6.3.1. Background

Strategic Interaction is the name of the method developed by Robert Di Pietro at the University of Delaware.   It builds on the salient principle of Communicative Language Teaching that second or foreign language learning should have a functional base, not a grammatical one.   Di Pietro (1983: 226) praises the functional-notional syllabus, as well as Curran's classroom technique based on group dynamics, as 'promising innovations' but maintains that:

> ... neither provides the background for understanding how language
> and culture are associated with the many roles which learners must
> play in real-life interaction.

Di Pietro (1987:vii) points out that his approach brings such real-life interaction into the classroom and builds a pedagogy around them. He is not the first or only language teacher to use role-play and drama in the classroom.   Indeed there have been many others, including Maley and Duff (1978), Holden (1981) and Sturtridge (1981), to mention but a few.   However, while teaching conversational Italian in the early seventies, and going through the dialogues presented in the text-book, Di Pietro realised that the students were bored, so he suggested that they write their own dialogues and perform them in class.   As he (1987:4) describes it, 'the turnabout was amazing.' So he:

> ... wondered how the use of dramatic dialogue could be reconciled
> with the need to acquire so much unfamiliar grammar.

The difficulty that confronted Di Pietro was how he could integrate dramatic activity into the exercises prescribed by the text and the syllabus.   This problem was overcome in the early eighties with the development of Strategic Interaction, which uses 'scenarios' for which the students script their own dialogue according

to the roles they assume. The initial structure comes from the teacher, who prepares these scenarios around the subject matter or topics contained in the students' textbooks, and not around the grammatical syllabus (Di Pietro, 1987:23). But then the students assume autonomy by scripting the discourse strategies the scenarios require. This 'handing over' to the students obviates the problem that often arises, even in communicative conversation classes, that Littlewood (1981:47-48) mentions:

> Teachers sometimes allow the teacher-learner relationship to dominate the conversation session so strongly that it produces a typical pedagogical form of interaction: the teacher always initiates, the learner only responds.

Excerpt (1) below from one of my ENS 115 tutorial classes at the University of the Orange Free State illustrates the teacher initiation which precedes the student-student interaction characteristic of Strategic Interaction.

(1)

1	T:	(To whole class) Today we're going to try a .. um .. a sort of experiment.
2	Ps:	(Muffled interaction.)
3	T:	Have you ever come across the word 'scenario'? (NV: Writes 'scenario' on board.) Does anyone know what it .. 'scenario' means?
4	P1:	Has it got something to do with .. um .. the way .. um .. things sort of everything all together?
5	T:	Yes, in a way. Look. (NV: points to word on board.) Can you see this word looks a bit like 'scene'? Well, a scenario is a situation where the scene has been set, OK? Now I have a real-life situation, or scenario here and you are going to write .. plan .. what you are going to say, and then act out the scene. It's rather like .. have you ever been in a tricky situation, like say for example, you have to phone your mom and tell her that you've just crashed your new car that she gave you for your birthday last month? And you wonder, and plan, how you're

going to tell her.   Well it's a bit like that.   You have to plan how
you are going to tell the other person in the scenario what you
have to say to him.

This rather long initiation is fairly typical of classrooms, as Littlewood observes
above.   It consists of a metastatement in turn 1, and two eliciting questions in turn
2.   Then, in response to P1's elicit in turn 3, the teacher starts conveying
information in turn 5, which is a lengthy turn.   This is all part of the teacher's
initiation, and there is very little evidence of student response at this stage.
However, once the students start scripting their dialogues, the teacher takes a
back seat, so to speak, and their interaction constitutes an extended response to
this initiation, as we shall see below.

Roberts (1982:174) ascribes significance to Di Pietro's work because it mediates
between the 'communicative' and the 'humanistic/psychological' approaches.
According to him,   in Britain the 'communicative approach' up to that time had
remained largely structuralist, and it still seemed:

> ... to be based on the assumption that there is some semi-
> algorithmic way of working from communicative needs to linguistic
> realisations.   In the end it is obsessed by language, and the learner,
> however closely identified in terms of provenance, educational
> achievements and occupational activities, still emerges as some sort
> ot stereotype, almost as colourless as the monolithic organisms
> occupying the booths of the audiolingual language laboratory.

On the other hand, the 'humanistic/psychological approach' cared for the learner
as a human individual, but had no structured way of dealing with language, nor
acknowledging the authority of the teacher or the syllabus.   It was just this
problem of allowing the students to individualise their language learning while
submitting to the teacher's authority that Gattegno also tried to address in
devising the Silent Way. However, as we witnessed above, the Silent Way is also
language- and structure-bound to an extent similar to that found in Audioligualism.

On the other hand, in the development of his approach, Di Pietro (1987:5-6)
recognises the importance of grammatical accuracy and accent for establishing

identities in the foreign language, but he says:

> Learners who are called upon to express personal desires or views and to negotiate with classmates will develop enough accuracy of pronunciation and grammar to be understood.

The quotation from Rubin and Thompson (1982:66) with which Di Pietro (1987:1) starts the first chapter of his book, is apposite in an examination of the perspective on accuracy evident in the Strategic Interaction approach:

> A spoken message at the time it is needed, no matter how imperfect, is worth many unspoken messages, no matter how perfect.

6.3.2. Principles

As stated above, Di Pietro felt the need to fill what he felt was a lack even in Communicative Language Teaching, namely that real-life discourse is what students should be learning how to use by negotiating meanings in transactional and interactive speech events.   In other words, they need to learn how to use the conventions of conversation management as well as know how to use the rules of grammar of the target language.   Di Pietro (1982:391) distinguishes between the essential natures of grammar and discourse by invoking Widdowson's distinction between 'rule-governed' and 'rule-referenced', where grammar is rule-governed behaviour and the use of language in discourse rule-referenced. Wells (1981:22) quotes a 4th century B.C. Chinese proverb which captures this dichotomy beautifully:

> 'Not to let a word get in the way of its sentence
> Nor to let a sentence get in the way of its intention,
> But to send your mind out to meet the intention as a guest
> THAT is understanding.'

The ideas of Lev Semenovich Vygotsky concerning the nexus between social interaction and the development of thought processes provide support for Di Pietro's work.   Society and the group are seen by Vygotsky as sources of

creativity, which in turn engenders new ideas and solutions to problems. According to Vygotsky, (Di Pietro, 1987:14) speakers undergo three types of regulation in their use of language, which he calls *object*-regulation, *other*-regulation and *self*-regulation. *Object*-regulation is an individual's concern to adhere to the rules and conventions of the language; *other*-regulation is being governed by the remarks and commentary of others (e.g. teachers in drills etc.); while *self*-regulation implies a willingness to express one's own thoughts and desires. The ideal is a balance between the three, as excess in any of the areas can lead to a lack of fluency.

Di Pietro (1987:6) incorporates the multiple concerns of language into his approach in the three distinct dimensions that he sees ought to be covered by scenarios:

1. *Information exchange* (with its grammatical orientation).
2. *Transaction* (with its focus on negotiation and the expression of speaker intentions). (This is what Gremmo, Holec and Riley (1985:39) distinguish, with reference to Searle (1969), Austin (1971) and Holec (1973), as *illocutionary* or communicative acts.)
3. *Interaction* (with an emphasis on how language works to portray roles and   speaker identities). (These Gremmo, Holec and Riley (1985:39) call *interactive* or discursive acts.)

There are six principles with which Di Pietro (1987:9-10) underpins the overall framework of Strategic Interaction. They may be summarised as a) the fulfilment of personal agendas in conversation; b) bringing real-life situations into the classroom for the students to carry out their personal agendas; c) grammatical explanation and/or drills emanating from the students' own work or given to them in order to expand their own original utterances; d) the basic subject matter to be taught being participatory discourse rather than decontextualized sentences based on grammar or vocabulary alone; e) evaluation based on language in all its dimensions rather than on discrete points; and f) the students' learning being under their own control and not teacher-dominated.

Not all of these principles are unique to Strategic Interaction. In fact,

Communicative Language Teaching shares many of them with Strategic Interaction. This may be seen in Morrow's (Johnson and Morrow, 1981:55) description of the interactive nature of Wilkins' notional-functional syllabus:

> ... they encourage the chaining together of individual functions in an interactive way - interactive between the functions themselves and between the participants in the conversation. Equally important, though, is the fact that such units allow the introduction of a (wide and variable) amount of language within a context of authentic language use.

It would appear that Di Pietro's perception of 'authentic language use' might differ from Morrow's because in Strategic Interaction students carry out their own 'personal agendas' and do not rely on functions and notions devised beforehand by the person responsible for drawing up the syllabus. The syllabus in Strategic Interaction comes from the students themselves. As Di Pietro (1987:95) says in connection with the grammar syllabus:

> Grammar ... becomes an output of the instructional process, rather than an input.

It is to be observed, however, that, although the students really devise their own curriculum of language, nowhere does Di Pietro say that accuracy is not important. Quite the contrary, in fact, (1987:92):

> Of course, accuracy in the use of the target language is as important as gaining fluency in it. However, it is within the matrix of fluent speech that accuracy eventually develops.

It follows then that the principles of Strategic Interaction presume a very important role for accuracy, but an accuracy that must be engendered by practising the target language in dramatic situations which have inherent in them dramatic tension. There is a different emphasis on accuracy *per se*, however, from that of CLT, as in Strategic Interaction the students script and rehearse their roles before playing them. In other words, the students work on the accuracy component of fluency before the fluency stage itself, rather than starting with the fluency phase.

(See excerpt (3) below.)

As roles are crucial to this approach, Di Pietro (1983:227-232) devotes considerable attention to the different types of role that we assume in real-life. Our task as teachers, according to Di Pietro (1983:229), is to provide our students with enough English to recognize the role intentions of others and to complement or counter these intentions with their own.. Gremmo, Holec and Riley (1985:41) discuss the connection between the realisation of speakers intentions' and roles thus:

> Sequences of illocutionary acts give us illocutionary structure, and,
> as we shall see, the distribution of such acts between different types
> of participant provides considerable insights into the nature of roles.

Long-standing role-relationships such as parent/child, husband/wife etc., Di Pietro terms -episodic, and short term interactions, +episodic. Obviously the different types of roles require different language use which reflects the nature of the interactive relationship of the participants. If we look at the following sample of discourse, taken from the same ENS 115 class at the University of the Orange Free State, we see that certain utterances are inappropriate between a father and son. The discourse emanated from a multiple role scenario, taken from Di Pietro (1987:51-52).

Scenario Title: A Parting of the Ways?

Role A: You have been offered a lucrative job in a foreign country. You must go there alone for three years, or, if you marry,your spouse may accompany you. You have a fiancé(e) (role C) and also an invalid parent (role B) who depends on you for help. What will you do? Discuss the offer with your parent and your fiancé(e).

Role B: You are a widow(er) who has a son/daughter (roleA). This son/daughter has been helping you get around. However, you have met a widowed person of the opposite sex who wants the two of you to live together and combine your pension checques. Marriage is not in the picture. Explain this situation to your son/daughter and ask for advice.

Role C: You have just been promoted. Your new position requires you to move

to another city. Will you accept the promotion? Discuss the matter with your fiancé(e) (roleA), who has an invalid parent as a responsibility.

(At this stage of the dialogue, the son has just spent some time outlining his plans to his father.)

(2)

1   B: Right, I think the whole ... the whole matter is concerning me so I have to .um ..

2   A: Dad, I've decided ... that um it's a very good offer and I can't, um, let it pass. So, um, I care very much for you and I've decided to put you in a day-care centre and

3   B: You what!

4   A: And, um, don't you worry, I'll pay the whole .. um, the whole story and .. um .. because it's a very difficult decision ..

The son has not used language that reveals any respect for his father's wishes at all. In fact, the son has clinically assumed the role of organiser, and there is no evidence of love, repect or caring, despite his protestations that he cares very much. As strategic language use then, this is inaccurate and ineffective, and what Di Pietro's method stresses, is the accurate use of strategy as well as form, or to use Canale's (1983) term, 'strategic competence.'

In Strategic Interaction the students play themselves in imaginary situations, rather than play imaginary people in imaginary situations (see Holden, 1981:131). Holden (1981:131-136) does not accord much significance to the difference between the students playing themselves or assuming another identity, but Piper and Piper (1983:83) would seem to share Di Pietro's views about not playing imaginary people in role-play. They question the value of having students assume the identity of another *persona,* rather than placing students as themselves in dramatic situations taken from everyday reality.

Is it not equally likely that fictional pretense will maximize rather than minimize the distance between actual language and the real needs of the students?

One of the differences between Di Pietro's approach and other approaches using simulated dialogues is that Di Pietro (1987:3) insists that dramatic tension is vital to the successful enactment of the scenario. Without it, despite the relevance of its theme to learners' functional needs, the scenario will not succeed.

Accuracy as evinced in the principles of Strategic Interaction now assumes a two-way symbiotic relationship, not just with fluency as manifest in the functional component of CLT, but with the particular type of conversational discourse that flows from native speakers of a language. Also, the accuracy underlying the principles of Strategic Interaction, is not predetermined according to a norm with which the teacher wants convergence, but emanates from the students themselves.

6.3.3. Method

It is in its methodology that Strategic Interaction differs most from CLT, in that it is a structured methodology rather than merely an approach. Excerpt (1) above partially reveals this structure. It is here too that we see the problem of accuracy, and the students' attitude to it, addressed. According to the following interesting observation by Di Pietro (1987:91), there is a fairly prevalent attitude among students of being accuracy-bound, or in Vygotskian terms, object-regulated:

> There is no real evidence that teaching grammar as a self-contained
> system representing vital knowledge of the target language has any
> effect on developing either accuracy or fluency in using the
> language. *Yet there is ample evidence to show that people believe*
> *this to be the case* (my italics).

I mentioned in Chapter 5 that this was my experience too, that students want to feel that they have learned something that they can objectify. The methodology of Strategic Interaction takes cognizance of this student need for accuracy acquisition, at the same time as encouraging them to manipulate language according to invisible concepts such as roles. Of course, students are not always aware that it is much more difficult being able to say something which is

appropriate on many levels of language competence than learning discrete points of grammar, but they like to feel that they have a mastery of grammatical form even if it does not help them say what they need to say. Di Pietro (1987:95) also makes the very valid point that in high school or college curricula that include subjects like mathematics and science:

> ... the language program that does not incorporate grammar work of some kind may suffer from a loss of status in the minds of the students.

How is formal accuracy in language dealt with in Strategic Interaction methodology so as to cater for these needs? Di Pietro (1987:23) suggests that teachers need to institute the approach by designing scenarios around the subject matter contained in the text-book so as to 'cover' the work in the syllabus, as mentioned earlier. Then reading selections should be made on the basis of the themes of the scenarios. (In Chapter 7 of his book, *Strategic Interaction (1987)*, Di Pietro gives some very interesting guidelines on how to incorporate role-play into the literature section of the course). Writing exercises are also derived from scenarios, for example, the dialogue arising out of a motor accident scene would form the basis for eye-witness accounts, in other words report writing. Students then move on to more personal control of writing (and reading). Teachers should also draw up a grammar log for the students to keep for the accuracy component of the course. This is an essential part of the method.

As Di Pietro (1982:394) points out, the key element of the approach is the scenario, and as mentioned in the section on the principles underlying Strategic Interaction, at the heart of the scenario is dramatic tension, created by the parties not all being cognizant of all the information that the other parties have. Students work together in groups jointly working out strategies and trying to anticipate what the other party will say during the performance phase, when one member of each group will role-play the part. The four phases of the scenario are scripting, rehearsal, performance and debriefing. The actual performance of the scenario usually turns out to be the shortest of these phases, so once again we see, in the time and attention devoted to finding the correct way of realizing their communicative intentions in the scripting and rehearsal phases, that accuracy is very important. Accuracy, however, does not entail only formal accuracy

(phonological, morphosyntactic and semantic) accuracy, as is evident in Di Pietro (1983:231):

> A certain part of the instructional period is then set aside for the teacher to coach the players before they enact the dialogue in class. The teacher's coaching includes *not only grammatical corrections but also the use of proper intonation and gestures* (my italics).

It is during the scripting phase that students can draw on the help of the teacher, dictionaries and any other available resources, including the existing knowledge of other group members. As Di Pietro (1982:394) says:

> Rather than saturate students with a vast array of grammar, vocabulary and rhetorical devices, we can try to place them in a position where they will take what they need from a pool of grammar and pragmatics in order to create a part in meaningful discourse.

The following discourse taken from the same lesson as (1) and (2) illustrates this point.

(3)
1	S:	Ma'am, what does this word 'lucrative' mean?
2	T:	What do you think the context suggests it means?
3	S:	Does it mean .. um .. getting a lot of money?
4	T:	Yes, it means well-paid.

Here in contrast to (1) above, where we observed the teacher's extended initiation, the initiation comes from a student, not from the teacher, as we witnessed in the typical IRF exchange structure of the Audiolingual lesson in chapter 4. (See Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975). The teacher's response, however, is also different from the traditional responding move a student might make in typical classroom dialogue, as it takes the form of a question, and thus functions ,also as a soliciting move (Stubbs, 1976:84); it thereby extends the sequence (see Mehan, 1985:122). Again the pupil's response is atypical of traditional classroom discourse as Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) present it, in that it too takes the form of a question. The teacher's feedback comes in move 4 as an evaluation of the

pupil's answer. The extended student-student interaction that occurs during the scripting and rehearsal phases may be seen as the response to the teacher's extended initiation encountered in excerpt (1). This represents a significant deviation from the typical IRF pattern, as the response is not an answer by one student or the whole class together to a known-information question, or the repetition of a pattern-practice sentence, but multiple student input in the form of initiation and response amongst themselves in their own small groups.

It is the scripting phase of the scenario, which takes place before the rehearsal and performance phases, that encourages accuracy of grammar as output from the students rather than input from the teacher. Although students work on finding the correct way of saying what they want to say, the element of spontaneity of real-life discourse, which Di Pietro (1987:66) emphasises, is still present, as they cannot predict what the other participants will say.

After the scripting phase, comes the rehearsal, when again the groups work together on practising how their elected representative should perform his role. This phase should include work on tone of voice, intonation and the non-verbals like gestures and facial expressions. The students are encouraged to seek help from each other and the teacher, who acts as a counsellor during this phase as well. This counselling function of the teacher's which is an element of the 'humanistic approach' and the salient feature of Community Language Learning, derives from Rogerian counselling. Richards and Rodgers (1986:113) cite Rogers' (1951) perception of how the counsellor operates :

> ... assuming insofar as he is able the internal frame of reference [of the client], perceiving the world as that person sees it and communicating something of this empathetic understanding.

During the scripting and rehearsal phases, the students often use their mother tongue. This is not seen as an undesirable practice as it is in the Direct Method, particularly in the Berlitz Schools (see Chapter 3), but, on the contrary, is seen as useful in helping the students discover <u>what</u> they want to say, so that they may then develop strategies in the target language to say them. Hartmann (1980:30) makes the point, which supports Di Pietro's views on translation that:

Boundaries between language systems are not fixed barriers to interlingual communication, but lines of contact and transition which can be crossed with more or less ease by bilingual speakers and language learners.

The classroom discourse during this phase reveals that it has a different function from that found in a formal classroom. Stubbs (1976:89) observes:

In formal classrooms, the talk may be primarily concerned with transmitting information. But in informal classrooms, the talk also has to sustain complex social relationships during intimate small group discussions or one-to-one teacher-pupil talk.

So translation or planning verbal strategies in the students' mother tongue is not seen as being conducive to lack of accuracy or bad speech habits by interfering with their use of the target language, but as helping the students achieve a higher degree of accuracy in their discourse management.

In the performance, however, the target language has to be used. During this phase, the teacher attends to the accuracy of the utterances by writing down the errors of form and discourse strategy for discussion in the debriefing session. Once again we may look at some discourse generated during the same scenario as mentioned earlier. This time the man playing role A confronts his fiancée (role C) with his plans.

(4)

1	A:	Right, um, Mary my dear, we have to talk about a very ... um...
2	?:	Sensitive
3	A:	... sensitive subject ... um... today I have ...
4	C:	And what might that be?
5	A:	Uh... I've had a .. uh .. very lucrative job offer ... from a company ... do you want to know ... um... there's two consequences. Do you want to know?
6	C:	Right. I'm listening.
7	A:	Right ... um ... It's in a foreign country it takes place, and, um, for three years I have to go overseas. Um ... but (pause; muffled

contribution from group) ... we can um ... All right ... um ... we can get married and ... um ... because everything's your decision, because ... um... if we get married it must be your parents (muffled) .. and either you can wait three years for me until I come back, and then we can get married.

8	C:	You've worked out everything quite well.
9	A:	Yes, I have.
		(laughter from class)
10	C:	And you didn't even once considered about how I'm feeling.
11	A:	Yes, well, I think (muffled) ...
12	IRg	Ja
13	A:	... you can make a decision. If you want to...
14	C:	No, no ...
15	A:	You wanna wait ...

This student-student interaction forms part of the response to the teacher's initial opening move which structured the scenario.   As a response it represents a major deviation from typical teacher-centred classrooms since it is not a single answer to a teacher initiation.   Rather all turns of the student-student interaction, in which they take the floor and exhibit other facets of conversation management, together constitute the student response to the teacher's initiation.

In the debriefing session, which is absolutely crucial to the success of this method, the teacher encourages the students to evaluate the role-play in both linguistic and strategic terms (Roberts, 1982:176).   Strategic Interaction allows students to learn the language according to what Di Pietro (1987:87) calls 'the idiosyncratic nature of acquisition' whereby (as revealed in a study undertaken in 1982) individual students remember the particular questions they ask and the replies given in each case.   Consequently, instead of a preordained grammar syllabus forming the basis of the accuracy component, students focus on their individual problem area, be it vocabulary, syntax, pronunciation or conversation management.   However, the first focus is on the scenario as a speech event (What was the outcome of the interaction? Did the participants realize their intentions?).   Excerpt (5) below is from the debriefing session after the scenario.

(5)

1	T:	What were your impressions of the scenario?
2	Ps:	(The group playing the fiancée) We didn't know we had to tell him .. our fiancé .. of our promotion as well because we didn't realise he had plans to go overseas.
3	T:	Why didn't you think your promotion was important as well?
4	P1:	No, when he's got a .. what was that word .. luc ..
5	T:	Lucrative
6	P1:	.. a lucrative job offer, he's not going to listen to my promotion .. and .. um .. me moving away to another city.

As evident in (5) above, the students involved in the scenario above were all aware that A had dominated the conversation and had not given his fiancée an opportunity to have her say.   They were not at all satisfied with the outcome of the interaction, as it was not sufficiently true to life in their opinion.   'Things just don't work out that easily,' said one of the students.   This feedback engendered an extremely interesting discussion of dual-career couples, together with sexually- and culturally-based stereotyping of women's and men's roles.

Only after the language of the interaction has been dealt with should the grammar points receive attention. The students all keep a grammar log which, as Di Pietro (1987:93) says:

> ... allows students to satisfy their desire for formal grammatical work while assuring that grammar will serve some real purpose in the learning process.

6.3.4. Errors and error correction

Where possible, students are encouraged to correct themselves by seeing how their inaccuracies contribute to interactive failure, or as Di Pietro (1987:93) says:

> ... let the students experience the results of their own errors in discourse.

An example of this is embodied in (6) below.   When I was talking to one of my

students before the actual class, he came to 'experience the results of his own errors in discourse' and corrected them himself. The student's wife had had an operation a few weeks before and I enquired after her health.

(6)

1	T:	How is your wife, Mr Scholtz?
2	S:	Oh, she's much better, she went back to work last week, thank you.
3	T:	It was a thyroid op, wasn't it?
4	S:	Yes, she had an inflation in her thyroid.
5	T:	Oh, was her thyroid very swollen?
6	S:	No, .. not very swollen, they only discovered the inflation .. oh no I mean infection .. when they did the operation.

The student suddenly realised that I was a bit confused as to whether he meant 'swollen' or 'infected' by the word 'inflation' and corrected himself. The significance of this mode of self-correction, is that the students learn to clear up misunderstandings caused by their discourse themselves, and so learn to use words with greater accuracy.

Of course, the very nature of the group work and the importance of the groups helping their 'spokesperson', as it were, implies a great deal of student-student correction. The discourse generated during the student-student interaction reveals patterns very different from the traditional or 'formal' classroom. Stubbs (1976:88-89) differentiates the types of language thus:

> One way of putting this is to say that in informal classrooms the talk
> is strongly context-bound. ... In formal classrooms, the talk may be
> primarily concerned with transmitting information.

Thus we can see that accuracy in a Strategic Interaction classroom develops out of self-correction and student-student correction, as is advocated in many other methods and approaches. The question remains: If accuracy is not dealt with from the teacher's perspective, who after all knows what is right or wrong far better than the students, do the students run the risk of never acquiring accuracy and ending up speaking what Brumfit refers to as a classroom pidgin (see

Chapter 5)? The answer to this would appear to be that accuracy is dealt with, very thoroughly in Strategic Interaction, but because the students contextualize their grammar and their errors, they become more, rather than less meaningful. Lantolf and Khanji (1982:457) have found that different sets of role relationships affect student discourse differently. According to them, the interactional dimension of tasks encourages changes in levels of accuracy in morphology, length of utterance, and syntactical phenomena such as nominal embedding and use of metaphorical language.

6.4. Conclusion

In this chapter we have seen how two very different 'fringe' methods view accuracy. The Silent Way deviates from the traditional classroom in its discourse pattern as the teacher does not dominate the talk. Instead the students are encouraged to use language to express spatial and comparative relationships in a way that maximises deep level cognition, and on this base of phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic accuracy, largely worked out by the students themselves, under the stringent guidance of the teacher, the objective is to encourage true understanding and a 'feel' for the target language.

Strategic Interaction, on the other hand, does not encourage teacher control of the content of the lessons, as students work on scripting their own dialogues, and the accuracy component emanates largely from them. The classroom discourse in Strategic Interaction is much more natural and shows a departure from the typical IRF pattern of discourse of traditional, formal classrooms. The modification evident is an extended teacher-dominated initiation, very extended student-student interaction as the response, and then feedback consisting of teacher-student interaction, with a great deal of student initiation.

In the time-span approximating twenty years between these two 'fringe' methods, we can see the shift in perspective away from formal accuracy, to 'communicative competence', which pays due regard to 'grammatical competence', while also embracing notions of teaching students the other components of 'strategic competence', 'discourse competence' and 'sociolinguistic competence'. (See Canale, 1983.) Strategic Interaction emphasises 'strategic competence' as the point of departure for all language work.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

We have seen in the preceding six chapters how perspectives of the notion of 'accuracy' have undergone radical shifts in language teaching methodologies, as a result of the influence of developments in the fields of linguistics, (particularly psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics), anthropology, psychology and sociology. These shifts are manifest in the classroom discourse engendered by different methods and approaches. The term 'accuracy' refers to accuracy as opposed to fluency, ie phonological, morphosyntactic, and semantic accuracy (formal) accuracy, as we see in Figure 1 (Chapter 1). However, in the development of the argument, the term comes to be seen, not as separate from, but as a desirable component of fluency as well. In other words, the 'basic polarity' that Brumfit (1984) mentions between accuracy and fluency, gives way to the idea of accuracy becoming a part of 'communicative competence' in the same way as Canale (1983) regards 'grammatical competence'. That is to say that 'formal accuracy' becomes a component of a larger accuracy that embraces the ability to use language functionally and strategically, to accomplish an intention in a speech event while using formally accurate language to do so.

Developments in language teaching, particularly in the last thirty or so years, have required that accuracy must include the processes involved in language acquisition, and that they must take cognizance of accuracy as embodied in the sociolinguistic factors of communication such as appropriateness of style, register, tone and conversational management. Notions of accuracy can no longer encompass only discrete words and sentences, but need to go beyond the sentence to the text, be it written or verbal. Hartmann (1980:21) recognises this:

> Dialectologists and comparative-historical linguists have long doubted the Universalist outlook of many Classical, Rationalist and Structuralist scholars (cf. Hans Kurath 1972), stressing diversity rather than uniformity.

> ... Just as different varieties within a language have 'fuzzy edges', language at its outer boundaries should be regarded as permeable, too. Or, as Mario Wandruszka (1971) has warned us, we should not assume that 'unilingual perfection' is the rule rather than 'imperfect multilingualism'.

Because of these moves away from a 'unilingual perfection', there have been shifts in perspectives on accuracy as evident in different second and foreign language teaching methodologies. Of the six methods and approaches examined in the preceding chapters, Grammar-Translation is the only one that does not always have as its objective the acquisition of the target language for communicative purposes. The classical origins of Grammar-Translation made it suitable for an academic study of language, and, to this end, written accuracy of knowledge about the language and its usage (Widdowson, 1978) was the goal of its teachers and students. That is to say that on the hierarchical levels of language as illustrated in Figure 1 (Chapter 1), notions of accuracy did not transcend the barrier from a concern with only lingual objects to include subject-subject interaction. Use (Widdowson, 1978) of the language is not evident in this method.

However, the limitations of the Grammar-Translation method in teaching students to speak a foreign language were apparent, as indeed they had been to many people for a good time. Indeed, the publication of Viëtor's pamphlet, 'Language Teaching Must Start Afresh!' in 1882, signalled the beginnings of the Reform Movement. The major departure of the Direct Method (which developed out of the Reform Movement) was the primacy of speech and a monolingual approach. Accordingly we witness a shift away from written translation and analysis of discrete language points to speaking the language itself. Although this is a momentous methodological shift, the levels of language used in the classes remain those of phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics, with phonology now coming to the fore and receiving prominence. Granted, the Direct Method uses connected texts instead of discrete sentences, but the approach, as manifest in typical classroom discourse, is still one of interacting with the language instead of using language to interact with people. Accuracy, therefore, is still judged

according to levels of lingual objects.

Even more concerned with lingual accuracy is Audiolingualism, which developed along the lines of the monolingual approach of the Direct Method. Accuracy of phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics is so crucial to this method, that the sentence once again assumes supremacy as the unit of study, and the all-important connected text of the Direct Method is ousted. This is evident in the classroom discourse where in the course of a whole lesson, a mere handful of sentences are repeated over and over again. This sometimes excessive concern for accuracy engenders volumes of pattern-practice drills and 'mim-mem' repetition of dialogues. Although dialogues are used, students have to memorise them, in the belief that they will then be equipped to speak the language.

In the sixties, developments on the fields of sociology, anthropology and psychology impinged on the field of linguistics and ushered in what might be regarded as a second Reform Movement. Just as the original Reform Movement effected the vital adjustment of using a monolingual, oral approach, so the introduction of the notion of <u>communication</u> shifted the emphasis away from the lower levels of language as illustrated in Figure 1 (Chapter 1), to the upper level of communicative interaction between lingual subjects. Accuracy of discrete lingual objects was no longer seen as the *sine qua non* of language classes because fluency became the order of the day. This radical shift in the position of accuracy can be perceived in the dramatic deviation from the traditional classroom discourse IRF pattern to one where students now initiate their own discourse and engage in interaction with fellow students and the teacher.

What we have observed in all these methods and approaches is that excessiveness, even in intrinsically worthwhile concepts, very often leads to lack of effectiveness. To varying degrees, accuracy was the means whereby language teachers sought to teach language until the emergence of Communicative Language Teaching, but as Widdowson (1990:18) points out:

> Accuracy has to do with behaviour, acquisition has to do with knowledge, ... there is a difference between knowledge of

language and the ability to access that language effectively in different contexts of use.

Communicative Language Teaching approaches have tried to encourage this ability in students to access the language by providing situations for functional use of language. However, and here's the rub, the tendency can sometimes be to throw out the baby with the bath water, and in eschewing accuracy altogether, the desired fluency has not been forthcoming either. Learners need to benefit from the kind of linguistic enquiry that Widdowson (1990:4) delineates:

> ... enquiry, without preconception and without privilege, into the ways in which participants negotiate their own conditions for achieving their purposes.

They also need, however, to have conceptual knowledge as the basis and means whereby they may achieve their purposes. And this is where accuracy is important. If students are going to manage their knowledge, as is desirable in student-centred education, it follows that they must have knowledge to manage. As Widdowson (1990:5) expresses it:

> To know is to have formulated experience in reference to given categories; to learn is to engage in the process of such formulation. To be sure, these categories are not inscribed immutably in the mind: they can be altered to accommodate new experience. *But they cannot be altered unless they are first apprehended* (my italics).

McKay (1988:15) also charts a mediating course between accurate and appropriate use and suggests:

> The key, perhaps, rests in the careful selection of techniques.

Since Chick (1988) calls his paper, in which he deals with a return to grammar, 'The Swing of the Pendulum', we again observe that lack of accuracy has been one of the main problems concomitant with a CLT approach. Di Pietro deals

with accuracy directly as he too feels that students desire correctness and need to feel that they have learned something concrete and objectifiable in language classes. In my opinion, Maley (1984) gets to the heart of the problem when he says:

> It will not be difficult to persuade someone who is consciously or unconsciously looking for the magic method that will turn his stuttering students into golden-tongued prodigies, that he has found it.

While teachers search for the perfect method, the accuracy of pupils has suffered, which is why Allen (1986), among others, recommends an integrated approach in which both medium and message-oriented practices receive their due attention. It is my contention that the importance of accuracy needs to occupy a much more definite position in second or foreign language teaching. The pendulum must certainly swing, but students must not suffer while methodologists and teachers veer between the two extremes of a perpetually swinging pendulum. It goes almost without saying that the pendulum can, and should, never swing back to its original position where the communicative concerns of language suffer at the expense of the attainment of meaningless, formal accuracy. Instead, a dynamic equilibrium between the two extreme positions of totally accuracy-based and totally fluency-based methodologies is the only means whereby, perhaps, with a great deal of perseverance and dedication, the functional and aesthetic aspects of language can be developed to their utmost.

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SUMMARY

In the introductory chapter a paradigm for determining accuracy in English Second Language teaching methodologies is proposed. This paradigm posits hierarchical levels of language, which proceed from purely lingual objects to interaction between lingual subjects, as the measures of accuracy. In the subsequent chapters, six methods and/or approaches in English Second Language Teaching are then examined according to how accuracy is manifest on these levels of language. Excerpts of classroom dialogue are used to exemplify changes in perspectives on accuracy occurring in these methods. Chapter 2, which deals with the Grammar-Translation Method, demonstrates that written accuracy on the lower levels of language, particularly morphosyntax and semantics, is the desideratum of the method. Grammar is taught deductively, the mother tongue is the medium of instruction, and translation into and out of the mother tongue, especially of decontextualised sentences, is customary. Communication in the target language occupies an insignificant position. This perspective is seen to change radically in the Direct Method, discussed in Chapter 3, when a monolingual, oral approach assumes prominence. However, the same levels of language continue to provide the basis of the lessons although connected texts dealing with everyday subjects supersede the sentence as the unit of study. Chapter 4 delineates the excessive concern for accuracy on the phonological, morphosyntactic and semantic levels of language evident in the pattern-practice and 'mim-mem' drills of Audiolingualism. Chapter 5 portrays the complete *volte face* apparent in Communicative Language Teaching, when accuracy on the lower levels of language becomes secondary to the notion of communication, and subject-subject interaction assumes prominence. The deviations from traditional IRF discourse patterns are evident in the classroom dialogue from CLT classes. Two 'Fringe' or non-mainstream methods, namely The Silent Way and Strategic Interaction, are investigated according to the same paradigm in Chapter 6. The former is shown to exhibit a concern with the lower levels of lingual objects, while simultaneously encouraging a desire in the students to communicate because of the engagement of their deep-level cognitive processes in hypothesising about the language. The latter stresses the notion of strategic competence in communication. Finally in the Conclusion, some suggestions are made concerning the desirable position of accuracy in English Second Language Teaching.