THE EFFECT OF DIFFERENT TEACHING METHODS ON THE ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH AS SECOND LANGUAGE BY BLACK PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

by
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Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

PHILOSOPHIA DOCTOR

in the faculty of

Education

(Department of Didactics)

at the University of the Orange Free State,

Republic of South Africa

May 1997

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted to the following people, whom I wish to acknowledge and thank for all their help, kindness, support, and friendship:

All the primary school pupils who wrote my tests with such eagerness;

All their teachers who tolerated my comings and goings for five years;

The Department of Linguistics, University of Stellenbosch, for all they taught me and for their continued interest and help, especially that of Cecile le Roux;

The Department of Linguistics, University of the Orange Free State, for the interest they showed in my work and their encouragement, especially that of Professor Lubbe;

The Department of Didactics, University of the Orange Free State, for all they taught me about didactics and the writing of a thesis. I sincerely want to thank my promotor, Dr. J.J.E. Messerschmidt, for all her wisdom, tolerance, guidance and love;

All the friends who encouraged me, especially Connie de Klerk, and my late friend, Dr. Lorraine Hofmeyr and her husband, for all their keen interest. Also Dr. Irene Strydom of the faculty of Education, Unisa, for the library lists she sent me;

Our sister and brother-in-law for all their help with the English: Dr. and Mrs. J.J. Buitendag.

My sons and daughter-in-law who helped me much, especially with the computer:

Izak and Erika, Gerhard, Estienne and Pierre-André.

A special word of thanks to Estienne for taking chapters and library books to and fro.

A sincere word of thanks to my husband, Johan Cronjé, for his patience and support. But for him, this work would not have been commenced or completed.

Above all I want to thank my heavenly Father, for it was all His work.

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Chapter 1

BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

The title of this thesis refers to the effect of different teaching methods on the acquisition of English as second language by primary school pupils. It is assumed that different teaching methods may have different effects on pupils. This study was undertaken in the hope of finding indications that better results in acquiring English as second language can be achieved with one teaching method than with another. The teaching methods to be compared do not only differ in respect of *how* learning material is taught, but also in respect of *what* is taught and *why*. Therefore they are more than methods (Yule 1979:1), and actually represent different approaches to the teaching of a second language. What the two approaches are and where they derive from, will be discussed in chapter 2. In this chapter a survey of the situation in which the specific teaching takes place, will first be given. Yule (1979:2) says that the didactic situation is more complex than only an interaction between the teacher, the pupil and the learning material. Indeed, many factors contribute to what happens between the teacher, the pupil and the learning material in the classroom.

In the situation under discussion, the teaching concerns English as a second language (L2), as taught in black primary schools. Implicit in the situation are black pupils who come to the task with certain abilities and restrictions, their teachers who are individuals but have certain cultural characteristics, and the enormous task of acquiring an L2. Factors external to the classroom, mainly social and political factors, contribute to the importance of the task black pupils in South Africa have in acquiring a second language: they must use an L2 as medium of instruction during most of their school careers. As will be shown below, for the time being it seems that it should be accepted that English is the medium of instruction for most black pupils in South Africa. In chapter 2 the issue of medium of instruction will be discussed in depth.

Stone (1981:31) sees as the main function of the school the planned, accelerated, and organised development of the child. This development is caused by instruction, or as Castelyn and Söhnge (1985:95) see it, by the learning material, and the laws and norms made available to the pupil by the learning material. It is, however, possible that schools fail to carry out this main function.

This thesis proposes to contribute to curriculum development in black primary schools, regarding both the approach to teaching English as L2, and the use of English as medium of instruction. Therefore analyses of the relevant society, children, and science are needed (Söhnge 1989:1). A situational analysis will firstly focus on the black child, the society to which he belongs, and the schools within that society. An indication of some educational problems in the relevant South African schools will first be given.

The objectives of and research questions for this study, an explanation of the research methods used, as well as an outlay of the chapters of the thesis are also included in chapter 1.

1.2 **Posing the problem**

Before the advent of the new South Africa, there was a separate department of education for black pupils, the Department of Education and Training (DET). This department had poor academic results, indicating a number of interrelated problems. The fact that the relevant schools no longer belong to a separate department, does not mean that all their problems have vanished. Since the results of these schools will not be published separately again, it may be important to remember the poor results of the past, so that the necessary steps will be taken to ensure that all the specific problems of these schools will be addressed. These schools are still attended by the majority of the country's pupils. The intention of this study is to investigate the possibility that a method of teaching English as L2 was partly responsible for the poor results.

1.2.1 **Academic achievement of pupils passing through DET schools**

For many years the pass rate for matriculants of the DET was around 40 %, while the pass rate of some other educational departments was above 95 %. For example, the DET pass rate was 42 % in 1989, 36 % in 1990 (Keyter 1992:171-172), and 37 % in 1991 (Keyter 1993:227). The problem is not only indicated by matriculation results. Van Rensburg (1996:12) gives the following statistics: For every 10 000 black children in S.A. that started school in the eighties, only 1 400 reached Gr. 12. Of those, only 27 obtained a university pass and only one was able to study Science or Mathematics at a university. *Die Volksblad* of 18/2/97 reports that in a study undertaken in 1996 to test the ability of Gr. 7 and 8 pupils in Science and Mathematics, South Africa came last of 42 countries. The reference is to black pupils: "Engels pootjie swart leerlinge."

1.2.2 **A possible main cause of the poor results**

Various reasons may be given for the poor performance of black students, which are not the concern of this thesis. However, the fact that the medium of instruction for most of these pupils is English as an L2, allows for the possibility that a poor knowledge of the medium of instruction may be one of the main causes of the poor results. The possibility is highlighted by a 1981 report from an HSRC Investigation into Education Committee, saying that teacher trainees do not have the necessary proficiency in the target language although they have passed matric (Leschinsky 1985:208). In an M.Ed. study done in the Free State, White (1992:31) says that black Gr. 8 pupils are three years behind regarding competence in English as an L2. However, she does not substantiate her statement.

Leschinsky (1985:208) says the teaching of English as second language in the primary school forms the basis of further instruction and learning, and if the basis is not sound, problems will multiply. Brand (1991:374) did a Ph.D. thesis on the influence an L2 as medium of instruction has on the ability of primary school children to conceptualise and learn in a meaningful way. She reaches the conclusion that black pupils find it extremely difficult to conceptualise through the medium of English, and that they do not have the same advantages as pupils learning through their mother tongue (L1). Since meaningful learning can only occur if new concepts are linked to existing relevant ones in the cognitive structure, a sufficient understanding of the medium of instruction is a prerequisite for conceptualisation. Therefore a child's cognitive development is directly related to his language development (Brand 1991:363).

1.2.3 **Problems stemming from the home environment of black pupils**

The above figures indicating the academic achievement of black pupils, are not given without an understanding of and sympathy for the plight of the black child. Most black pupils still come from an oral culture and do not encounter many books at home (Macdonald 1990a:49). In a poverty-stricken environment, where the parent or parents work long hours, there is little time for communication with the child. Neglect allows little possibility for language, perceptual and cognitive development in the pre-school years. That means underdevelopment of the basic learning modes: representational learning and concept formation. Through these learning modes a

child learns that objects, actions and relations have names, and that a name can represent a concept (Ausubel 1968:41-43).

An impoverished environment leads not only to insufficient concept formation but also to an underdeveloped L1. In urban areas where many different vernaculars are spoken, the L1 may remain underdeveloped, especially if impoverished mixtures are used as lingua franca. Research done by the HSRC in 1975 indicated that 25 % of Blacks spoke more than one language at home, and that they mainly used African languages for social intercourse. Thirty per cent of the respondents acknowledged language mixing (Prinsloo 1987:26-27). The result is that black children come to school with a very frail cognitive structure on which to build meaningful receptive learning. The De Lange Report (1981:21) stated that few black children were ready for education on entering primary school. Brand (1991:49) pleads that during the first school years black pupils be prepared for formal education by programs developing their L1 and compensating for their milieu retardation.

To the two problems mentioned above, insufficient language (L1) and cognitive development in the pre-school years, is added a third: having to use an L2, English, as medium of instruction despite little contact with English out of school. Pupils living in a black township have little opportunity of acquiring English in a natural way by interaction with Europeans, and most of them come to school without any knowledge of English. It seems that the Blacks who speak English fairly well, still do not use it for interpersonal communication. Sarinjeive (1994:299) says of black students that they use their own languages when speaking to each other, even in the classroom, and at home prefer African radio stations and television channels. Some parents do give attention to the English of their children, but it is a practice that may be counter productive, as will be explained in chapter 2.

At present black pupils start with English medium education very early, as will be shown below. It cannot be expected of a child to progress to higher modes of learning in an L2 if a basic learning mode such as concept formation was done insufficiently in the L1 and hardly if at all in the L2. McKeon (1994:23) sees the language learning that takes place in early childhood as the foundation for later language learning. Brand (1991:82-83) pleads for the use of the home language as medium of instruction in the primary school, saying that internationally mother tongue education is seen as high priority, even in countries with multilingual minorities, the African states

being the exception. Corson (1995:50) gives credence to Brand, stating that there is strong evidence to confirm that L1 maintenance of some kind in the early years of schooling is necessary, and that immediate exposure to the L2 on school entry actually seems to impair academic progress and general linguistic development. In an HSRC Bulletin, Kamwangamulu (1996:1) writes: "We know only too well that education in foreign languages has failed to promote literacy, not only in South Africa, but throughout the African continent."

1.2.4 **Policy and time allocation for English as second language in black schools**

Brand (1991:211) acknowledges that a transition to the L1 as medium of instruction will probably not occur in the near future. She refers to Feitelson (1979) who remarked that in developing countries there are often ambivalent motives regarding language policy, so that certain "growing pains" must be undergone before the best interests of the children are considered. Reasons why most Blacks prefer English as medium of instruction will be discussed in par. 2.9.6. It seems that English will be the medium of instruction for most black pupils in S.A. for some years to come (D'Oliveira 1997, personal communication).

The fact that little or no English is learnt in the pre-school years means the task of the lower primary school to help pupils acquire English is all the more important. This paragraph deals with what has been and is done in the primary school to help pupils acquire English so that it can be used as medium of instruction. The research for this thesis was begun in 1992 and deals only with regulations that held for the DET era. However, as will be shown, the implementation of new policies only complicated the issue of acquiring English for it to be used as medium of instruction. This research is therefore even more relevant today than it was in the DET era.

The policy of the former DET concerning the teaching of English as first official language was that it commenced in the second school year, Gr. 2. For three years, Gr. 2 - 4, English language instruction ('English lessons') was only one of the subjects, and all other subjects were given through medium of the L1. From Gr. 5 upwards, English was the medium of instruction for nearly all subjects. When the DET became part of a larger whole in the new South Africa, called the Department of Education and Culture, the above policy was still in effect and school time tables were unchanged up to the end of 1995. The parents then had to vote regarding the medium of

instruction for their school. At the Welkom schools, which have no multi-lingual classes, parents voted for English rather than for the L1 (Vumendlini 1996, personal communication).

According to the official Free State *Guidelines ... for the junior primary school phase* (DEC 1996:4-5), all schools where English was chosen have to start with English as medium of instruction in Gr. 1, with a minimum of 17 periods per week for English, the "Approved language of instruction and writing" (LOI), and two periods per week optional for the "Other approved language." The Welkom schools interpret the *Guidelines* as follows: for Grades 1 and 2 the LOI is taken to be the L1, and from Gr. 3 onwards the LOI is English. The allocation of periods to languages correlates with what is indicated in the *Guidelines*, except for the switch in LOI from the L1 to English, a switch not mentioned as possible in the *Guidelines*.

In the schools which have been investigated, the program for 1996 and 1997 is as follows:

Gr. 1: no English or a little English during the last three months of 1996;

Gr. 2: officially one hour (2 periods) of English lessons per week, but in practice mostly more;

Gr. 3: eight hours (16 periods) of English lessons, with Mathematics and Environment Studies *presented through the medium of English.*

Gr. 4 - 7: most subjects, Mathematics, General Science, History, Geography and Health Education, *presented through the medium of English.*

Whether the earlier start with English as medium of instruction is advisable or not, will be discussed in chapter 2. Quotations from another official document, *Towards a language policy in education* issued in Nov. 1995, indicate that the earlier start is actually a mistake. The "Discussion Document" comprises 41 pages of difficult reading. In response to questions, it appears that Welkom principals had not read it at all, or only partly. Page 9 of the Document reads: "The FPC Report placed strong emphasis on one language in the Junior Primary Phase ... The explicit intention of this recommendation ... was to build a strong foundation for cognitive development *in learners' home languages* (emphasis added) as far as possible. However, there is informal evidence that many schools are already selecting and implementing a straight-for-English policy, with the home languages relegated to only one or two periods a week, thus undermining the intent of the single-language policy. Moreover, there is ample research evidence which suggests that an additive bilingual approach with equal and sustained emphasis on two languages generates the very benefits intended by the Phase Committee." The next paragraph explains that the

recommendation that subjects such as Science be included in the Gr. 4 timetable "has been widely misinterpreted to mean that these subjects now have to be taught through the medium of English."

The above extracts indicate that it was never the official policy that English should be chosen as language of instruction (LOI), as happened at the Welkom schools and at the "many schools" referred to above. The following extract from p. 18 seems to contradict what was quoted from p. 9 above: "Where it is ... feasible, schools should be strongly encouraged to offer at least two languages of learning and instruction from Grade One, at least one of which should be a home language among significant numbers of learners in the school." It is explained that the reference is to schools in which the language of learning is not the home language, and on p. 19 is added that both languages should be accorded equal emphasis, including timetabling provision in Gr. 1 - 3.

1.2.5 **Meeting prerequisites before switching to the L2 as medium of instruction**

Corson (1995:50-51) states that for most children it takes four to six years to acquire an L2 to a level of proficiency adequate for dealing with ordinary classroom activities. In South Africa black pupils were allowed three years of English lessons before switching to English medium instruction before 1996, but less since 1996.

In a paper on the readiness of black pupils to learn in the L2, Lanham (1986:3-4) says evidence of an adequate state of readiness would be: successful problem solving using words and structures of the second language; competence in descriptive or expository writing; and an ability to read with understanding. However, Lanham adds that a deeper level, cognition, underlies the conceptual and concerns the ability to apply cognitive processes. He also warns that the presence or absence of cognitive foundations may not be immediately obvious.

During 1986 - 1988 the HSRC did an investigation, the Threshold Project, which saw as main problem the language and learning difficulties which Gr. 5 children experienced when they changed from the L1 to English as medium of instruction. In her main report on the Project, Macdonald (1990a:132) mentions as necessary for the adequate explanation of any concept in a content subject: a rich vocabulary, complex syntax, and the ability to link ideas logically. Some of the factors hampering the use of English in subject classes, mentioned by Macdonald (1990a:141) are: the paucity of the children's English, specifically in relation to giving a reasoned account of new concepts; and the relative remoteness of the concepts from the child's experience. These were

the findings about Gr. 5 pupils in the DET era. An earlier switch to English medium instruction can only cause more problems.

Indications from research done in South Africa and elsewhere are that a certain minimum knowledge of the L2 is necessary before the L2 can be used as medium of instruction in the kind of circumstances we have in South Africa. This issue will be discussed in depth in chapter 2. The goal of the investigation undertaken for this thesis concerns evaluating teaching methods with regard to their success in imparting to pupils the L2 knowledge they need.

1.3 **The goals and objectives of this thesis**

The main goal of the thesis is to provide insights that may result in the implementation of teaching methods that will help black pupils to acquire the second language sufficiently for it to be used as medium of instruction. A secondary goal is to gain insights regarding the issue of a second language as medium of instruction. It is assumed that English will be retained as medium of instruction in most of the formerly DET schools for the time being. Therefore the main question the thesis attempts to answer is: What contribution can second language acquisition (SLA) theory and research make to black pupils' acquisition of English as second language? If school practice can be influenced by insights gained from SLA theory and research, the goal of helping black pupils to acquire English may be attained.

As a means of attaining the above goals, the principal objectives pursued were:

* To investigate what current SLA theory and research have to say about how children acquire a second language, and when and how an L2 should be used as medium of instruction;
* To investigate how English as a second language is taught in the schools under discussion;
* To find if an alternative method can lead to better acquisition of English in primary schools;
* To investigate what the effects of using a poorly acquired L2 as medium of instruction are.

To attain the above objectives the following plan of action was followed:

Firstly a literature study into the phenomenon of second language acquisition and related issues was undertaken to gather information on the following:

* How a second language is acquired by children;
* How teaching methods are influenced by tradition and/or theoretical viewpoints;

* What contribution SLA theory and research can make to teaching methods;

* When and how an L2 may be used as medium of instruction.

In this study two theoretical points of view are compared as they culminate in different methodologies of teaching a second language. The issue is whether *instruction with the focus on form* (the grammatical code) or *instruction with the focus on meaning* is more beneficial for SLA at primary school level. (See par. 1.4 for an explanation of concepts).

A further theoretical objective was to find, if possible, supporting evidence as far as children are concerned, for a controversial hypothesis by Krashen (1982:83-84), stating that knowledge gained by conscious language *learning* does not turn into *acquired* knowledge. The debate on Krashen's hypothesis has been recurring in linguistic circles for more than a decade (e.g. Gregg 1984:81; White 1987:95; Le Roux 1994:26; Zobl 1995:35), because it is an issue of great importance for school practice. It attempts to answer the question if and when conscious language learning can be beneficial. In this thesis some new insights are brought to the debate on Krashen's hypothesis, viz. that there is a vast difference between SLA by adults and SLA by children, so that teaching methods which are effective with one group need not be effective with the other. Therefore supporting evidence for Krashen's hypothesis is sought concerning children only. In accordance with SLA literature, the term 'adult' in this thesis refers to people past puberty.

Secondly investigation was undertaken to find out what happened in the English classrooms of black primary schools. Although a number of schools were visited, two particular schools, which used two different methods to teach English as L2, were selected. The English instruction received over three years by a particular group of pupils at each school was investigated. The objective was to see how the instruction provided at these two schools fits in with theoretical viewpoints. (See chapter 3).

Thirdly it was necessary to investigate the resultant language acquisition at the two schools, to see if the difference in instruction led to a significant difference in acquisition of English as L2. A large number of tests were used. This investigation was also extended to other schools in the same township, to make sure that the school labelled as 'traditional' is really a typical black primary school in the city of Welkom in the Free State. (See chapter 4).

Fourthly the effect of the level of English, acquired during the first three years, on the use of English as medium of instruction in subsequent years, was investigated by attending Gr. 5 classes

at both schools, and by taking some tests. The objective was to investigate the possibility that a poor knowledge of the medium of instruction is leading to the poor academic results of pupils passing through the schools under discussion. (See chapter 5).

1.4 **Explanation of concepts**

Teaching method. As mentioned above, two approaches to L2 teaching are compared in this study. However, in practice the two approaches can only be compared as they are exemplified in specific teaching methods. The extent to which each of the methods investigated at two schools corresponds to what is prescribed by the two approaches, will be indicated. For the purpose of this study, the term 'teaching method' will indicate more than the *how* of teaching, it will include the *what* and *why*, as does the term 'approach'.

Form-focused instruction. Traditionally form-focused instruction is formal grammar teaching, with its focus on the grammatical code (Stern 1983:127). As will be explained in chapter 2, language drilling in the behaviouristic tradition is also form-focused instruction. In typical form-focused instruction, a sentence does not convey the meaning of its content, but is used to illustrate some grammatical quality. Form-focused instruction is marked by disjointed words or sentences not related to context, by the absence of meaningful messages and comprehension checks, and by repetition in which any initial meaning becomes lost.

Meaning-focused instruction. Meaning-focused input is termed 'natural input' or 'exposure' when referring to input received in typical naturalistic contexts, outside school, but it can also be obtained at school. Krashen (1985:2) holds that humans acquire language in only one way: by understanding messages or by receiving "comprehensible input", and he explains that we are able to understand language containing unacquired features with the help of context, our knowledge of the world, and previously acquired linguistic competence. Meaning-focused instruction can be seen as providing comprehensible input in Krashen's sense. For the purpose of this thesis 'meaning-focused instruction' is defined operationally as indicated by comprehension checks or by genuine communication. By 'genuine communication' is meant that there is an information gap: one party does not know beforehand what the other party wants to communicate. The reason for equating *genuine communication* and *meaning-focused instruction* is that the information gap of genuine communication ensures a focus on meaning, ensuring that the message is conveyed.

We can think of form-focused and meaning-focused instruction as being the two end points of a continuum. The instruction provided at an institution over some time will usually contain both form-focused and meaning-focused features, but can mostly be typified as lying nearer or near to one of the ends rather than the other.

Learning. For the purpose of this thesis 'learning' is defined as *gaining language knowledge through teaching methods where the focus is on form*, e.g. where there are no comprehension checks nor genuine communication.

Acquisition. 'Acquisition' is typically seen as the process whereby an L1 or L2 is "picked up" in naturalistic settings. For the purpose of this thesis 'acquisition' is defined operationally as *gaining language knowledge that does not fade or disappear with time*. Another possible definition of acquisition, used by Pienemann (par. 2.8.2), is gaining language knowledge that can be applied.

Instruction medium. The medium of instruction is operationally defined as the language in which tests and examinations are written in a subject.

1.5 **The hypotheses for this study**

To guide the investigation, the following hypotheses are posed.

H1: During the first years of L2 instruction at primary school, children benefit more in SLA from teaching methods with the focus on meaning than from methods with the focus on form.

H2: Language knowledge gained by children only through conscious *learning* (without meaningful usage) does not become *acquired* knowledge.

H3: If the focus of second language instruction is on grammatical form and other formal aspects, the SLA of primary school children will not proceed sufficiently for the children to benefit from education through medium of the second language.

Hypothesis H2 is taken from a hypothesis of Krashen (1982:83-84), and supporting evidence for the hypothesis is sought in this study. Hypothesis H1 states the weak version of the case concerning form-focused instruction, implying that children do not benefit much from it, while Hypothesis H2 puts it more strongly, implying that children do not acquire an L2 at all from form-focused instruction. Proving such a strong version of a hypothesis is not attempted in this study, only supporting evidence is sought. Some empirical evidence for Krashen's hypothesis is

also cited from the literature, and a discussion of a role for form-focused instruction apart from *acquisition* is included.

Hypothesis H3 is derived from the first two which imply that form-focused instruction will not lead to sufficient SLA. Hypothesis H3 serves to qualify what is meant by insufficient SLA in the case of black primary school children: they will not be able to benefit from instruction through medium of the second language when their SLA has been insufficient.

1.6 **Research methods**

The research comprises a literature study and empirical research.

1.6.1 **The literature study: its scope and limits**

As regards SLA and the use of an L2 as medium of instruction, the following were studied in the literature:

The ideas of acknowledged educational theorists;

The ideas of acknowledged theorists on SLA;

Results obtained from research in the field of SLA.

This thesis concerns only the SLA of children in the classroom. Therefore research done in naturalistic environments as well as research done on adults is mentioned only where conclusions are relevant to SLA by school children, e.g. where the L2 knowledge of adults who acquired the L2 as children is compared to the L2 knowledge of groups who acquired the L2 as adults. The situation in the all-black DET schools is very different from the situation of a small number of immigrant children who have as L2 the L1 of most of their class mates. SLA in the latter situation is at least partly naturalistic. Reference will be made to only one European study on immigrant children, that of Pienemann, because of the findings accredited to Pienemann. The issue of using a second language as medium of instruction is discussed in some detail, with reference to Canadian Immersion and some hypotheses regarding bilingual instruction.

1.6.2 **The empirical research: its scope and limits**

Empirical research was carried out at a number of black primary schools in the township Thabong at Welkom in the Free State. Since Welkom is a city, its schools are comparable to other city

schools. However, since Afrikaans is the predominant language of the Europeans in the Free State, black pupils may have very little opportunity of hearing English out of school.

At two schools on different programs, referred to as School A and School B, specific groups of pupils were followed over three years, with two additional years as follow-up to the study.

1.6.2.1 **The objectives of empirical research on SLA**

Nunan (1991:250) sees as the aim of SLA research to identify and describe, and "ultimately to explain and predict," the stages through which learners pass in acquiring an L2. As a subset of the above, classroom-oriented research "is aimed at identifying those pedagogic variables that may facilitate or impede acquisition. The variables may relate to the learner, the teacher, the instructional treatment/environment, or some form of interaction among these."

The variable investigated for this thesis relates to the "instructional treatment," or teaching content and method. None of the three components of education, the teacher, the learner and instructional treatment, functions apart from the other two. Therefore investigation of teaching methods would ideally only be possible if the same sets of teachers and learners could use different methods, or if the different sets of teachers and learners are as nearly identical as possible. As will be explained in par. 1.6.2.3, such a set-up leading to a true experiment was not possible for this investigation, so that equality between groups of teachers and pupils is only assumed. To compensate for the drawbacks of such an assumption, results obtained from the test groups were compared to results obtained from samples of similar groups.

1.6.2.2 **A description of the research**

The research done for this thesis is classroom-oriented and, unlike classroom-oriented research done in the laboratory or in simulated circumstances, the research is also classroom-based, being carried out in actual classrooms. The research aims at identifying pedagogic variables that may facilitate or impede SLA, especially as they relate to teaching methods. The variables concern a teaching method where the focus is on *form* versus a teaching method where the focus is on *meaning*, as explained in par. 1.4.

The research method is what Nunan (1992:106) calls process-product research, which attempts to establish causal links between classroom processes and learning outcomes. The objective of

investigating how classroom processes influence learning outcomes in a second language, requires two distinct phases of investigation. Firstly it is necessary to attend lessons and to observe not only a great variety of factors pertaining the L2 input provided, but also a great number of other didactic factors that could have an influence on learning outcomes, e.g. factors such as teacher-pupil relationships. The second phase of the investigation is to test what was learnt or acquired in the second language. The two phases of the empirical investigation done for this thesis were carried out as follows:

Firstly observation without interfering was done by one investigator during three years of occasional classroom visits at two selected schools, Schools A and B. The objective was to find what English input the pupils received at the two schools, how it was presented, and how it was learned or used. At each school a group of pupils was followed year by year, viz. the pupils who were in Gr. 2 in 1992, in two classes at School A and three classes at School B. Pupils who failed or left the school dropped out of the groups, but others were not admitted. Since the pass rate at the two schools, as at similar nearby schools, was only about 80 %, the defined groups quickly became smaller and became part of other class groups. The reason for studying specific groups of children was to obtain information on specific pupils over a period of time.

The observation can rather be called unfocused than focused (Nunan 1991:256). It was a rather small range of specific aspects of language and behaviour that was looked for (whether the focus in language teaching was on meaning or on form), but a great number of didactic factors could have influenced learning outcomes. Therefore it was necessary to record "everything that happened" as far as possible, without using a tape recorder. However, it was impossible for one observer to attend to everything that happened in any number from five to eight classes at the two schools over three years, but pupils' books, tasks, test answers, etc. were collected in order to arrive at a fuller picture of the classroom processes. Eventually this information and a transcript analysis of notes made during class visits, made an interpretative analysis possible.

For the second phase of the research, assessing the product, elicitation was used as data collection method, meaning that all data was obtained by means of a stimulus such as a test. A variety of tests was taken from the groups defined above, and from other groups when more information was deemed necessary. The first tests were taken in November 1992, and the last in 1996. There were tests of productive ability such as elicited speech and written compositions;

tests of comprehending ability such as listening and reading comprehension tests; and grammar tests. No comments on the tests were given to subjects or teachers, but the tests were analysed and results computed for comparison. Two types of data analysis were employed: linguistic analysis and interpretative analysis, the latter mainly for the history and other compositions. The study under discussion is both *qualitative* and *quantitative*. The descriptions of classroom procedures are qualitative and do not include numerical data. The presentations of test results are quantitative and include numerous comparisons, mostly as percentages (Nunan 1991:253).

1.6.2.3 **The research design and method**

Nunan (1991:255) distinguishes between experimental and nonexperimental studies, and states that in a true experiment one or more variables are manipulated while the others are held constant. True experiments derive their rationale from the logic of inferential statistics, and require two particular conditions to be fulfilled. These are:

* The existence of an experimental as well as at least one control group;
* The random assignment of subjects to groups.

It has also been suggested that pretreatment tests be administered to subjects in order to ensure comparability between groups, or that subjects are paired on some variables and then assigned to groups at random. These conditions are meant to ensure that individual differences are randomised across groups. For all practical purposes the groups are meant to be identical in all respects except for the experimental treatment, whatever that might be.

Nunan (1991:255) holds that the term 'experiment' can also be interpreted broadly to include true experiments and quasi-experiments. A quasi-experiment is one in which not all the conditions for a true experiment have been met, e.g. when intact classes rather than randomised subjects are used for experimental and control groups. The investigation under discussion is quasi-experimental since two groups are compared, but without random assignment of pupils to groups. Two intact groups of pupils were used, viz. the pupils enrolled for Gr. 2 at two particular schools in 1992. Since for most of them, the non-repeaters, it was their first year of English instruction, a pre-test of ability in English was not possible. Clearly it cannot be claimed that the two groups were identical regarding IQ, linguistic ability in their L1, aptitude for acquiring an L2, or knowledge of English gained out of school. However, most of the tests were taken in 1995 -

1996, when the pupils were in Grades 5 and 6 and could be expected to do comprehension tests because of learning to do such tests at school. Therefore, for the bulk of the results, the potential of the initial groups is less important than the potential of the groups tested in 1995 - 1996. A factor that might have served to make the pupils who were eventually tested more equal, was that at the school that eventually attained lower scores, the pass rate was lower and more weak pupils dropped out of the initial test group by failing, thus not affecting the bulk of results.

Measures were taken to arrive at an indication that the two test groups were not very different.

* Tests were taken at Schools A and B from the two grades ahead of the actual test groups.
* Tests were also taken at comparable schools in the neighbourhood of Schools A and B. How the results of these measures can serve their purpose, is discussed in chapter 5.

In this research variables were not manipulated, as happens when an investigator prescribes treatment for one group and not for the other. There were variables because of the different programs of L2 teaching followed at the two schools, but teaching at the schools was investigated as it existed. An attempt was made to influence as little as possible what would have happened without an investigator. However, it is never possible to eliminate 'Hawthorn effects,' i.e. effects such as motivation for both pupils and teacher because of being chosen for an investigation. In the present investigation, the Hawthorn effects must have been the same at the two schools since they were treated alike; one was not even regarded as test group and the other as control.

1.7 **Outlay of the thesis**

Chapter 1 serves as background to the thesis.

Chapter 2 is a literature study, surveying methods of teaching an L2, as well as SLA theory and research. The issue of using an L2 as medium of instruction is also discussed.

Chapters 3 and 4 contain the reports from empirical investigation, with findings from classroom observation in chapter 3 and test results in chapter 4. Both chapters 3 and 4 contain explanations of how and why aspects of the empirical investigation were undertaken.

Chapter 5 presents the results obtained by two different methods of teaching English, both the results in English acquired and the results when using English as medium of instruction.

Chapter 6 presents an evaluation of the research and some recommendations.

Appendixes A - N are part of the thesis. They contain test results, comparisons and graphs.

Chapter 2

A LITERATURE SURVEY

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter the determinants of the curriculum will be discussed, to serve as a frame of reference for understanding teaching practice. Furthermore a short historical survey of second language teaching will be given, with reference to some hypotheses that contributed to theories of second language acquisition (SLA). Reference to a number of relevant studies will also be made. The objectives of the literature study are firstly to see where the traditional approach to second language instruction derived from; to understand the basic differences between the traditional and a modern approach to second language instruction; and to explain theoretically the better results achieved with the modern approach. A second objective with the literature study is to find incentives in SLA theory for changing the practice of second language (L2) instruction where necessary. A third objective with the literature study is to gain insights regarding the issue of using a second language as medium of instruction.

Relevant issues that will be discussed are:

* An explanation of the differences between child and adult SLA, serving to explain the informal hypothesis that children cannot acquire an L2 from form-focused instruction;
* The differences between form-focused and meaning-focused instruction, and indications of a role for each;
* What current SLA theory prescribes for classroom practice at primary level, including principles derived from both SLA research and general Didactics;
* A second language as medium of instruction: conditions for it to be beneficial to pupils.

(In accordance with SLA literature, the term 'adult' refers here to people past puberty).

2.2 The determinants of the curriculum

When surveying education, present or past, the question arises as to what caused the instruction to be what it is or was. Zais (1976:101) mentions as determinants of the curriculum: society or culture, the individual, epistemology (the nature of knowledge), and learning theories. He says that ideas, attitudes and beliefs in each of these four areas constitute the primary forces that

influence and control the content and organisation of the curriculum. The view of Söhnge (1989:1) is that the curriculum has three determinants: society, the child and science. For the purpose of this thesis, the curriculum models of Zais and Söhnge are preferred to those of other theorists, because they differentiate between the determinants of the curriculum and the curriculum itself, the components of which will be mentioned below. The model of Zais (1976:96) is not concerned with processes such as curriculum construction or development, but indicates the relationships of principal curriculum variables. In discussing various approaches to L2 instruction in this chapter, reference will be made to curriculum determinants.

Firstly the curriculum is determined by society. Every society has its ideas of what should be achieved with the education of its children, and these ideas will shape the schools of that society. Broadly speaking, it is the perceptions of society that determine the objectives of education, and the choice of learning material and of media for attaining the objectives (Söhnge 1989:8). Fundamentally the value judgements of a society are driven by philosophical assumptions. For example, anthropological assumptions about what man or the child is, have an influence on what is seen as the future role of the child, and what is expected from him. Furthermore, economic and political circumstances, as well as occupational possibilities, all add to the idea of what should be achieved educationally (Söhnge 1989:7).

Stone (1981:22-26) mentions that the school as social structure is culturally founded, having its origin and being in the family. The school as we know it started developing when the cultural level became too complex for parents to prepare their children themselves for the demands of adulthood. Society therefore has a right to expect that the school hands over to the pupils the cultural heritage in a way that is open to the future. A society should also have the right to determine that its own language and culture will not be handed over to its children, as it seems the black community in S.A. is doing at present. The motive of parents is surely to seek the best interests of their children, but they do not know the value of an own culture.

Secondly the curriculum is determined by the child. The needs, potential and abilities, as well as the interests and preferences of pupils, as indicated by an analysis of the situation, should determine the objectives, the content and the learning activities of a curriculum (Söhnge 1989: 8). Where the necessary attention is not given to the child's needs, abilities, etc., a failure to achieve desired ends may eventually cause curriculum change.

Thirdly the curriculum is determined by what Söhnge (1989:4) calls science. He refers to Tyler, who extended the perception of what determines the curriculum in 1949. According to Tyler, scientific experts have the greatest influence on the curriculum. The influence of the teacher on the curriculum is seen as that of the subject matter specialist. This view of the teacher may apply to secondary school subject teachers, but it does not in the least apply to the lower primary school teacher. The characteristics and influence of the black teacher will be discussed in chapter 3. Tyler's statement that scientific experts have the greatest influence on the curriculum may also apply to secondary school subject teaching. However, concerning the teaching of English as L2 and the use of English as medium of instruction in black primary schools, it does not seem as if "scientific experts" have any influence at all (cf. the discrepancy between the departmental "Discussion Document" cited in par. 1.2.4, and what actually happens in schools).

As third determinant of the curriculum we may for the purpose of this thesis consider both the determinants Zais (1976:97) calls *the nature of knowledge* and *learning theory*. As will be shown in a historical survey of L2 teaching, the conception of what language is, as well as learning theories regarding SLA, had to change to arrive at modern approaches to L2 teaching.

Söhnge's choice of the word *science* as third determinant of the curriculum, needs attention. In his discussion of subjects, Söhnge (1989:13-14) differentiates between natural and normative sciences and mentions the analysis of subject content. When one thinks of English as L2 being a subject in the above sense, it is natural that the language be analysed in its constituent parts and those parts be taught to the learner, as with any other subject. That is exactly how second languages used to be taught traditionally. The short history of L2 instruction presented in the next paragraph will indicate that SLA does not take place in children when the constituent parts of the L2 are "taught", precisely because of a mistaken-for-the-purpose view of what a (second) language is. Acquiring an L2 for the purpose of using it, is not the same as studying a language or subject scientifically. The latter is the work of a linguist.

The models of Söhnge and Zais will be used to indicate how changing perceptions of the child, and changing perceptions of what language is, determined curricula by causing changes in methods of L2 instruction. When a curriculum changes, the change may affect only some or all of its components. For evaluating the profoundness of curriculum change, the model of Zais (1976:

96) will be used, considering in each case which of the four curriculum components were affected. The components are: educational aims; content; learning activities; and evaluation.

In a short historical survey of Didactics, Söhnge (1989:5) says that during the sixties *content* was most important in curriculum planning. From what was seen as the structure of a subject, guidelines were taken for the teaching of that subject. In the seventies more attention was given to society. It was mainly students who reacted against the intellectualism of the structural approach, requesting more attention for themselves. It resulted in unstructured, open schools and the notion of *child*-centredness. As will be seen when discussing the history of SLA theory, it was theorising about the child's language that led to a major innovation. Söhnge's reference is to the macro-level of educational change in the Western world. The new notions slowly worked through to the micro-level, but whether they had reached black classrooms will be seen in chapter 3.

2.3 **The traditional approach to L2 teaching**

The discipline studying SLA is relatively young. Extra (1993:364) states that empirical research on SLA has its roots in the early seventies. How was L2 teaching done before the seventies?

2.3.1 **Traditional Formal Grammar**

The Western world inherited a tradition of L2 teaching from a time when adults, people past puberty, had to learn the dead language Latin for various scholastic reasons. It was learnt in a deductive way, learning grammar rules and applying them, with the paradigmatic aspect emphasised (Stern 1983:127). Up to modern times traditional formal grammar has been used for SLA, e.g. by missionaries. The linguist Bley-Vroman (1990:11) says that a whole industry is built on the consensus that instruction matters to foreign language learning: "the survival of the industry amid selective economic pressures suggests that it has some utility."

As it happened that younger children started learning an L2 at school, they had to use the same methods used by adults. When the didactic climate started changing, some people noticed that children did not cope. Bley-Vroman (1990:11) says of children that they "clearly do not require organized formal classes", and Felix (1987:156) states that attempts to teach 6- or 7-year-olds a second language in a traditional L2 classroom "have proved to be uniformly unsuccessful."

When applying the curriculum model of par. 2.2 to what was found in traditional L2 classrooms for children, it seems that the first problem was that the nature of the learner was not taken into consideration. That is why the teaching/learning material for children remained the same as that for adults, and it was bound to remain the same as long as the general didactic climate was such that attention was given to content only.

2.3.2 **Audiolingualism**

In the first half of the twentieth century behaviourism, a psychological movement, came up with audiolingualism as method of second language teaching, especially for young children. Its basic premise was that language is nothing but a habit that can be learnt in a stimulus-response fashion. Spolsky (1984:158) writes: "One aim of the audio-lingual method, with its emphasis on practice to establish automatic habits, was to get away form the grammar methods of the grammar-translation approach ..." Since, according to Piaget (1962:127), children do not have an ability for formal operations before puberty, audiolingualism made classroom practice much easier for young children than was the case with formal grammar (Stern 1983:167). Audiolingualism mostly expects from a child to do what he finds easy, e.g. repeating sentences spoken by a model, adding different words to a slot in a given sentence, supplying correct responses to stimuli. Yet audiolingualism did not bring the expected results with children.

When applying the curriculum model of par. 2.2 to audiolingualism, we see that the innovation was mainly caused by a new learning theory. It seems that the nature of the learner was taken more into consideration, but along incorrect, behaviouristic lines. Basically behaviourism advocated a mistaken conception of man/the child, seeing him as something like an animal or a machine. Ellis (1990:30) says the "failure of audiolingualism" led to growth in SLA theory: to the recognition that SLA is a developmental process, and that the contribution of the learner, as opposed to the environment, should be given attention.

Eventually growth in SLA theory also awaited a new conception of the learning material of L2 instruction, a new conception of what language is. The two methods, audiolingualism and formal grammar, stem from the same structural approach to language, therefore they do not differ fundamentally from each other. The structural view is that language is a system of structurally related elements for the coding of meaning, and that the goal of language learning is the mastery

of the elements of the system (Richards & Rodgers 1986:16). The emphasis of the structural approach is always on the grammatical code, and methods derived from this approach will focus on *form* rather than on *meaning*. In practice there is also not a clear-cut difference between the methodologies of audiolingualism and formal grammar. With younger children the mechanical drills of the former method will be preferred, with older learners the rule statement of formal grammar. In this thesis the term 'traditional approach' will refer to any combination of these two methods. Some characteristics of audiolingualism will be given in paragraph 2.7.4.

2.4 **A contribution by Generative Grammar: Universal Grammar**

During the nineteen seventies new insights on SLA came from the application of a new model of first language acquisition to SLA. Chomsky, the protagonist of Generative Grammar, opposed the behaviourist account of language development as set out in *Verbal behavior* by B.F. Skinner in 1957. Chomsky (1980:239) rejected the notion that language is acquired as a form of conditioning dependent on reinforcement, saying that "from a functional point of view, human language is a system for free expression of thought, essentially independent of stimulus control, need-satisfaction, or instrumental purpose."

Chomsky holds that a child is born with a specific language faculty. The language faculty includes at least a set of fundamental linguistic principles, e.g. the property of "structure dependence" (Chomsky 1977:65). This set of principles was termed 'Universal Grammar' (UG). The grammatical competence of a language user has two components that can be distinguished analytically: a component contributed by UG and a component that is specific to that user's language. The former constitutes what is "inherited" and the latter what is "learned" (Chomsky 1986:26). UG leads to a core grammar, which can be distinguished from the "periphery" containing exceptions learnt through specific language experience (Chomsky 1986:147). The nature of the core grammar is of fundamental significance: Chomsky (1986:150) says that what we "know innately" are the principles of the various subsystems of a fixed initial state, the manner of their interaction, and the parameters associated with these principles. What we "learn" are the values of the parameters for our specific language, and the peripheral elements.

The reason for the assumption that language acquisition is mediated by UG, is that the complex system of rules and principles that constitute language is under-determined by the input children

receive. It can be shown that, for every set of utterances directed to a child, there is an infinite number of grammars which could account for that input. Considering them all would make language acquisition impossible. The infinite number of possibilities seem to be constrained so that the child considers only those that are natural for human languages (Johnson & Newport 1991: 218). One way in which the number of possibilities are constrained is by "parameter setting." Parameters account for clusters of properties. The input data in language acquisition triggers a choice between the various built-in settings. An example of a parameter is the ordering relationship of heads and their complements. On the whole, languages fall into two types: head-initial and head-final. In a head-initial language like English the complements of the verb (e.g. the direct object) will occur after the verb, and the complements of the noun, preposition and adjective will occur after them. In head-final languages complements will all precede their heads. If a child learning a head-initial language like English has set the head position parameter appropriately for verbs, it does not need to be reset for the other categories (White 1989:29-30).

The relevance of UG to this thesis is that the notion of UG was eventually applied to SLA also. Seliger (1987:17) says that no theory has so deeply affected our views of how language, first and second, is processed and acquired as Chomsky's. SLA is no longer seen as habit formation, but viewed in terms of a set of abstract rules that are internalised in an unconscious manner. This new insight into the way an L2 is acquired, had to effect teaching methodology eventually.

2.5 **The question of availability of UG for SLA by adults**

A much debated issue resulting from the acceptance by most linguists of the notion of UG, is whether the UG is also available for SLA, particularly in adults.

2.5.1 **The critical period hypothesis**

Penfield (1959) and Lenneberg (1967) came up with the critical period hypothesis, according to which a child has UG available (for the L1) only up to puberty. During the sixties the critical period hypothesis was accepted and it was reasoned that this period had to be utilised for effective SLA by children (Nijsse 1982:8). However, the method by which children were expected to acquire a second language in the classroom was the form-focused audiolingualism, that only later was realised to be unsuitable. When young children did not make the progress expected, the

critical period hypothesis was questioned. For example, McLaughlin (1987:29) states that early adolescence is the best age for language learning - both in terms of rate of learning and ultimate attainment. More resent research gives a more complete picture, e.g. Slavoff & Johnson (1995:2) find that older learners are only faster during early acquisition, for they seem to take a different route to competence that is not as successful in the long run. They say the initial slowness of young learners seems to be important, causing them to be eventually more successful.

In South Africa it was stated in an HSRC report by Nijsse (1982:9): "Experimental research comparing children with adults with regard to second language acquisition consistently reveal the inferiority of the child under controlled circumstances, even when methods of instruction more suitable for young children were used." Most likely the reference was to audiolingual methods. Nijsse (1982:14-16) gives incomplete descriptions of two research projects concerning the question of the most suitable age to begin with second language instruction. The two projects arrived at contradicting results. Although the methods of language teaching are not mentioned by Nijsse, a possible explanation of the results can be deduced from information he gives, indicating that theoretically more sound principles of second language instruction were followed in the project showing the younger children to be better at SLA. (These principles will be discussed in par. 2.7.3). If only Nijsse had known which methods of instruction are more suitable for young children, he would not have arrived at the conclusion quoted above.

It seems as if, up to the eighties in South Africa, children's lack of success in the classroom was taken to indicate less ability for SLA. The insight came later that the lack of success was due to the wrong form-focused approach to second language teaching.

2.5.2 **Theoretical views on the availability of UG for adults and children**

The well-known ease with which a small child can "pick up" a second language in a short time in *naturalistic* environments, lead linguists like Felix (1987) and Bley-Vroman (1990) to seek an explanation for the differences between SLA by adults and language acquisition by children. Bley-Vroman (1990:6-12) discusses ten characteristics of adult SLA and shows in each case that adult SLA differs fundamentally from language development in children, but is quite akin to the manner in which adults acquire other skills. As the most striking, he mentions that children are always successful in acquiring the first language, but success with language learning cannot be

guaranteed for adults, complete success being perhaps non-existent. Another characteristic is that even under the same conditions of learning the L2, there is great variation in the degree of success obtained by adults, who usually fossilise somewhere. The term 'fossilisation' indicates the phenomenon that L2 learners stabilise at a stage short of success, from which even serious efforts cannot move them except for a short period. Furthermore adults seem to need instruction, practice and negative feedback, but children not. It also seems that environment and personality influence the SLA of adults greatly, but not the language acquisition of children. Bley-Vroman (1990:13) concludes that "the domain-specific language acquisition system" [or UG] that children have, "ceases to operate in adults." He holds that adults find "a kind of surrogate UG" in their knowledge of a first language together with their general problem-solving system.

Eubank (1991:35-36) comments favourably on the above "Fundamental Difference Hypothesis" of Bley-Vroman. She adds that since the motivation for postulating UG involves explaining the inexorable and highly uniform character of L1 learning, the failure to learn an L2 seems much more consistent with the view that UG does not assist L2 acquisition in adults. However, Felix (1987:160) gives a different answer, saying that UG is still available to adults but is overridden by the adult's general problem-solving system. White (1989:53-54) also reaches a conclusion different from Bley-Vroman's. She argues that if UG is not available to an L2 learner, he will only be able to tap aspects of UG exemplified in his L1. He will neither be able to acquire a parameter value which is different from that of his L1, nor to activate a principle which was not operative in his L1. Thus she feels that there is a role for UG even in adult SLA.

However, White (1995:65) reports a study done by herself and Trahey (1993) in which a flood of positive L2 input (but no negative input), could not trigger in learners a parameter resetting and the loss of a 'common error', i.e. an error common to L2 learners having the same L1.

2.5.3 **Some empirical evidence that age is an important factor in SLA**

As shown above, the question of availability of UG for adult SLA was quite controversial. Eubank (1991:42) concludes, in her introduction to a volume of papers arguing this debate, that a satisfactory answer will only come about through further investigation. Some relevant studies will be discussed below. Evidence about the availability of UG to adults will have implications for the type of instruction deemed beneficial to child and adult learners respectively.

A study by Patkowski (1980)

Patkowski showed that for immigrants who had lived in the USA for at least five years, the age of arrival (before or after age 15) was the only factor that correlated positively with their syntactic accuracy in English. The study was conducted on 67 immigrants, with 15 native Americans as control group. Patkowski made a written transcript of a half-hour-long interview which was conducted with each subject in English. In the transcripts were no phonological indications of the subjects' background. The transcripts were given to two English teachers, and they judged the degree of English proficiency for each subject on a Foreign Service Institute-type scale. The subjects were graded and the results analysed statistically. Patkowski found that factors like length of stay in the USA, formal education in English, and amount of informal contact in English did not correlate with the subjects' results. Only age on arrival showed a positive correlation with accuracy in English, showing that maturational constraints operate on L2 morphology and syntax (Information from Long 1990:269).

Scovel (1988:168) says that Patkowski's study was well designed and statistically sophisticated. His results are consistent with the notion of an age limitation on the acquisition of syntax in an L2.

A study by Johnson and Newport (1989)

Johnson and Newport (1989:68-97) investigated the influence of starting age on grammatical structure in SLA. They used as test groups 46 adult Chinese and Korean students and faculty personnel who had used English in America for at least five years. Half of the 46 had arrived in America before the age of 15 and the other half after the age of 15. A group of 23 native speakers also did the test. They were tested on 276 spoken sentences of which they had to judge the grammaticality. Twelve different grammar rules were tested by the sentences. High scores were obtained by the 23 native speakers of English who did the test, but not by the foreigners, although they were using English every day. The results showed a strong positive correlation between age of arrival in America and SLA achievement: there is a linear regression for starting age 7 to 15 years, and overall low achievement for starting age above 15 years. In the group that started learning English after the age of 15, there is no correlation between starting age and achievement, a fact that points to a sensitive period and not just an age effect. Johnson and Newport (1989: 96) conclude that there is a small but significant decline in ability for SLA before puberty, but that

a great change in ability comes with puberty. This study gives credence to the critical period hypothesis, although it tested peripheral language structures that are specific to a particular language, not part of an innate endowment (UG).

The two studies discussed show that concerning competence in L2 English, there is a systematic relationship between age of exposure and performance many years later. An important by-product of both studies is the finding that there was no significant correlation between age of starting formal English instruction (in country of origin), and test score. The implication is that if UG mediates the SLA of children, it only happens during social intercourse, not in formal classrooms.

A study by Johnson and Newport (1991)

A thorough study on the availability of UG principles in children and adults was undertaken by Johnson and Newport (1991:224-236). They used two groups of Chinese speakers of English. One group of 23 subjects had arrived in America as adults, the other group had arrived at ages 4 - 16, but were tested as adults. Subjects were recruited from university population to ensure comparable social backgrounds, and they had been in America for at least five years. Native speakers were also tested. The Chinese subjects were tested on their knowledge of 'subjacency', a universal syntactic principle. Subjacency was chosen for the study because it was relatively well understood, and studies of mother tongue speakers of English suggested that children observe subjacency as soon as they acquire the relevant structures to which it applies. Subjacency is a UG property that is not applied to wh- questions in Chinese. This means the Chinese learners could know this principle as applied to wh- questions only through their L2, English.

The test was as follows. Subjects listened to 180 aurally presented sentences and had to judge of each if it was grammatical or not. The sentences included four types:

1. Declarative: The declarative form of the other structures was included in the test to make sure that subjects found these structures grammatical.

2. Subjacency violation: This sentence type was a wh- question violating the subjacency principle and was therefore ungrammatical.

3. Control: A control sentence was included that paralleled the structure involving the subjacency violations, but was grammatical. If subjects correctly rejected the subjacency violations but also incorrectly rejected the control sentences, they were not credited with obeying subjacency.

4. No subject-auxiliary inversion. This sentence type was included to compare the subjacency (UG) results to results on language specific structures (Johnson & Newport 1991:231).

Examples: 1. The teacher knew the fact that Janet liked mathematics.

2. * What did the teacher know the fact that Janet liked?

3. What did the teacher know that Janet liked?

4. * What the teacher did know that Janet liked? (Johnson & Newport 1991:232).

The results of the studies show that the group that arrived in America between ages 4 and 7 had less knowledge of subjacency than native speakers, and every later group had even less. From arriving age 13, knowledge of subjacency declined sharply, and the adult learners scored above chance only on one of three types of subjacency, but they also scored above chance on the three as a whole. (See Johnson & Newport 1991:238 on subjacency types). Johnson and Newport (1991:237) conclude that adults have only partial access to the UG principle of subjacency.

2.5.4 **Implications of the evidence that age is important to SLA**

The work of Johnson and Newport seems to indicate that adults and children mainly use different cognitive systems for acquiring languages, as proposed by Bley-Vroman. This implies that teaching methods found effective for teaching one group, would not necessarily be effective for teaching the other group. The studies also indicate that although it seems that "younger is better" holds for SLA, the approach to L2 teaching (form- or meaning focused), is even more important. Probably children can only use their UG advantage in naturalistic circumstances, or in instruction approximating naturalistic circumstances like 'immersion', which will be discussed in par. 2.9.

2.5.5 **Piaget's work and form-focused instruction for children**

Piaget did not work on SLA. However, his work on the cognitive abilities of children of various age groups may answer the question why children do not benefit from teaching methods effective for adults. Piaget (1962:120-128) found Swiss children to be in the pre-operational stage at about ages 4 - 7; in the stage of concrete operations at about 7 - 11; with the final stage of formal operations beginning at about 12. Piaget (1976:264) acknowledges that all children do not arrive at the different stages at the same age. Children of a city like Teheran tested equal to children in Geneva, but rural children of the same tribe did not, while the children of Martinique were four

years behind. It seems that primary school children are likely to be in the stage of concrete operations, even those who repeated. What are the cognitive abilities of these children?

Concrete operational children can think logically and coherently about objects that exist, and about actions that are possible, e.g. these children are successful with conservation problems on number and continuous quantity (Ginsburg & Opper 1979:149). However, the fact that a child can conserve number and quantity does not imply that he can conserve substance, weight and volume. One test for the latter conservations is with two balls of clay. When a child has agreed that the two balls are equal, one is made into a sausage. If a child then maintains that the sausage has less substance, will weigh less or replace less water, he has not attained the final stage for these conservations. According to Ginsburg and Opper (1979:149-152) it has been well substantiated that if children of a certain group master the conservation of continuous quantity and substance at about age 6 or 7, they do not master the conservation of weight until age 9 or 10, nor the conservation of volume before age 11 or 12. Even though the concrete operational child can think logically about objects having real properties, he cannot deal efficiently with complex problems of reasoning. For example, he cannot imagine the many possibilities inherent in a situation, and cannot deal coherently with hypothetical entities (Ginsburg & Opper 1979:178).

Even though Piaget did not work on SLA, he showed that the primary school child does not have the same cognitive abilities as adolescents and adults. In discussing the implications for education of Piaget's work, Ginsburg and Opper (1979:223) warn that though the educator may feel that a given idea is simple and self-evident, the child may find it difficult. Adults should also not believe that once a child has learned the linguistic label for an object, he has available the underlying concept. This warning can probably be extended to concepts like grammatical classifications used in form-focused instruction.

2.6 **A new approach to SLA: the communicative approach**

Paragraph 2.3 dealt with traditional L2 teaching and with audiolingualism. Subsequent paragraphs dealt with theories initiated by observation of child L1 and L2 acquisition. Such observations, rather than evidence about the theories, lead to new ideas on classroom methodology being tried out (Lightbown 1985:181-182). Basic to the new ideas on methods to teach an L2 was the

assumption that SLA should correspond to the way an L1 is acquired, including the idea that when listening comprehension is established, speech comes naturally.

2.6.1 **A historical and linguistic perspective on the communicative approach**

From the late nineteen sixties a number of new schools for second language teaching sprang up, e.g. the *Natural Approach* of Terrel and Krashen (Krashen 1991:410). Collectively these schools and approaches are called the 'communicative approach'. In contrast to the former structural view of language, they advocated a functional view of language that sees language as "a vehicle for the expression of functional meaning" (Richards & Rodgers 1986:16). From this point of view the semantic and communicative dimensions of language, getting messages across, are deemed most important. Therefore they place the emphasis in language teaching on meaning, not on form. Prescriptions for a teacher of the *Natural Approach* were for example to use pictures and objects when at first providing input; not to expect from learners to speak until they feel ready, but to expect other responses like acting on commands as indication of comprehension. Later she had to use "acquisition activities" focusing on meaningful communication rather than on language form. She was instructed never to use drills, structural grading, grammatical and vocabulary explanations or error correction (Richards & Rodgers 1986:129; 136). Another well known program was Asher's *Total Physical Response* program. Basic to it was the use of directives, at first only directives to act, later also to speak (Richards & Rodgers 1986:97).

Ellis (1990:187) explains that in meaning-focused instruction the learner is engaged in interaction where the primary effort involves the exchange of meaning. There is no conscious effort to achieve grammatical correctness, so that incorrect peer-language may be part of the input. Negotiation of meaning often takes place in this effort of getting a message across. 'Natural input' includes regular language use by native speakers, but also the modified versions of the L2 typically addressed to language learners, e.g. foreigner talk and teacher talk, versions simplified with the purpose of getting the message across (Larsen-Freeman & Long 1991:119). The difference between 'teacher talk' and 'form-focused input' is that the former is modified to make the *meaning* more comprehensible, while the latter is modified for its *grammatical* value.

The communicative approach led to experiments with 'immersion', where the child receives normal academic instruction through medium of the L2, as a method of providing meaning-

focused L2 input. The focus is on subject content, not on the L2 language. The success of Canadian Immersion became one of the first and best indications that the communicative approach was the best one and that Krashen's idea of *acquisition* versus *learning* was correct (Anderson 1984:77). Canadian Immersion will be discussed in par. 2.9.

2.6.2 **Some of Krashen's hypotheses**

Krashen became the best known proponent of communicative language teaching, and had a great influence on teaching practice in America (Huizenga 1990:142). In contrast to the often meaningless drills of audiolingualism, Krashen's input hypothesis emphasises that input must be comprehensible to make SLA possible. Gregg (1984:90) remarks that anyone would agree with this statement, but complains that Krashen says more than that comprehensible input is *necessary* for SLA, he says comprehensible input is *the sole cause* of SLA.

With his input hypothesis Krashen (1985:2) tries to explain acquisition: we progress along the "natural order for acquisition" by understanding input that contains structures at our next "stage" - structures a bit beyond our current level of competence. We move from i, our current level, to $i + 1$, the next level, by understanding input containing $i + 1$. A learner can understand input containing unacquired structures by means of a) contextual cues, b) his knowledge of the world, and c) all the linguistic knowledge he already has in the L1 and L2. Krashen (1991:411) holds that if input is understood, and there is enough of it, the necessary grammar is automatically provided. To teach the next structure is not necessary, in fact, form-focused instruction never is.

A consequence of this view of the cause of acquisition is Krashen's differentiation between conscious *learning* and unconscious *acquisition*, and his hypothesis that *learning* cannot become *acquisition*, that is, language knowledge gained by conscious learning is not added to the body of acquired knowledge *per se*. If this is true one may ask: Does knowledge gained by conscious learning have any function? To answer this question, Krashen uses a metaphor to postulate his monitor hypothesis: what is consciously learnt can only enable the "Monitor" to edit or monitor the output created by the acquired system. This "monitoring" only takes place when one knows the rule and has enough time for monitoring the output. This is why written L2 production is often better than spoken L2 production (Krashen 1982:83-84). If *meaningful usage* of learnt language knowledge eventually leads to the *acquisition* of that knowledge, it is a new process.

2.6.3 **Evaluations of Krashen's hypotheses**

Krashen drew very severe criticism, not all of which was fair. For example, White (1987:95-98) proposes that Krashen's input hypothesis should be "tightened up", and explains what might happen to a learner who has not yet acquired a passive rule and hears the sentence *John was hit* without a clear context. If the learner knows the verb *hit*, it means that he knows it should have an object, and since *John* is the only noun phrase in the sentence, *John* must be the object and not the agent. White concludes that a learner can acquire a new rule by purely formal means, without extra-linguistic cues. However, White's hypothetical example adds nothing to Krashen's hypothesis: it was receiving the input *John was hit*, and understanding it, that led to the acquisition of a new rule. Krashen (1985:2) did mention previously acquired linguistic competence as one of three possible aids to understanding unacquired language: c) in par. 2.6.2.

Much criticism on Krashen was warranted, however. McLaughlin (1987:19-21) criticises him for being unscientific, explaining that Krashen "fails to meet the criteria ... for good theory." Amongst others, Krashen fails to define fundamental concepts, e.g. the concepts 'learning' and 'acquisition'. It means one of the central claims of Krashen's theory, the claim that *learning* cannot become *acquisition*, cannot be tested, unless acceptable definitions be found. In this thesis operational definitions for the concepts 'learning' and 'acquisition' are proposed, in par. 1.4.

Gregg (1984:81) mentions examples of *learning* becoming *acquisition* when adults undertake formal language study, and says that learnt grammar rules can be applied fairly error-free after a couple of days. Gregg cannot be disputed on what he observed with *adults*, but for the purpose of this thesis a different operational definition of acquisition is used, and only investigation concerning *children* is considered.

Zobl (1995:35) mentions that Krashen's epistemological distinction between learning and acquisition was made twenty years ago, in 1977, and that the claim that the two knowledge systems do not interface drew such criticism that the distinction should by now have "slipped into oblivion." However, Zobl (1995:37-51) presents both logical and empirical evidence bearing on the validity and empirical testability of the distinction and the non-interface claim. Zobl cites neurolinguistic evidence from bilingual aphasia, and a number of empirical studies, and concludes that Krashen's theory "deserves a more sympathetic assessment." In his 1990 book on SLA, Ellis (1990:184-

185) also agrees with Krashen, saying that explicit (learnt) knowledge and implicit (acquired) knowledge are held to be different in kind and to be stored separately in the brain.

Le Roux (1994:26) says Krashen's claim that consciously *learnt* knowledge remains distinct from unconsciously *acquired* knowledge is "consonant with the modular view of the mind." According to this view, the brain comprises various autonomous cognitive modules, of which language knowledge is one. It means that knowledge of a language constitutes a separate cognitive module that is organised in terms of principles unique to it, so that it can only process information suitable to it. The latter property means that the language module, even if it can pass on information to other cognitive systems, cannot itself make use of any information which it is not designed to process. What is *consciously* learnt *about* language cannot be processed by the language module, but is processed by a "central processor" used for all kinds of information.

2.6.4 **Empirical evidence for Krashen's point of view**

It may be possible to investigate, with research projects running over several years, the long term effects of form-focused learning. If it can be shown that learners know what they have learnt for some time, and then back slide on those structures or sentences, it may indicate that what was consciously learnt was not acquired. As said in par. 1.4, 'acquisition' is operationally defined as 'gaining language knowledge that does not fade or disappear with time', since language acquisition should be impossible if language knowledge gained is not retained. The following studies may be supporting evidence for the notion that as far as it concerns children, *learnt* knowledge does not become *acquired* knowledge:

a) Long (1987:125) reports a study by Lightbown, Spada and Wallace (1980). They found that instruction given to an experimental group on the copula, locative prepositions and some -s morphology resulted in an average 11% improvement in accuracy on those items in a grammaticality judgement test, compared to a control group's 3 % improvement. But the gain was temporary, with the experimental group's scores "declining to the norm" on a readministration of the same test half a year later.

b) Ellis (1990:137-138) reports a study by Lightbown (1983) on French learners of English, aged 11 - 17 years, who had virtually no contact with the second language except for the form-focused instruction at school. Among other things she tested their accuracy on six morphemes

over a period of two years. Because of over-learning the *verb + -ing* construction in Gr. 6, in the weeks just prior to the first test, the Gr. 6 pupils scored 69 % on *-ing*. Yet the same pupils dropped to 39 % on the same morpheme the next year in Gr. 7. Only the Gr. 11 pupils also had a score above 60 %. The high occurrence of the *-ing* form with the Gr. 6 pupils represents a language construct learnt but not acquired. Ellis (1990:166) quotes a 1985 summary by Lightbown: "the learners heard and practised certain language items ... In class, and for a period of time outside of class, they appeared to 'know' these forms in the sense that they used them correctly in appropriate contexts. Later, however, some of these 'correct' forms disappeared from the learners' language and were replaced by simpler or developmentally 'earlier' forms."

c) White (1991:152) found similar results with her investigation into the effectiveness of formal language teaching for French learners of English, aged 11 and 12. One group was specifically instructed not to place an adverb between a verb and its direct object in English sentences, and only this group could avoid this error after the instruction. However, they also over generalised and rejected as incorrect sentences like *She ran eagerly to the door*. And one year later the experimental group placed the adverb wrongly between the verb and its direct object just as often as the control group. What they had learnt, they had not acquired.

With the present study similar evidence is sought, which will be discussed in chapter 5. A further discussion of evidence/counter evidence for Krashen's hypothesis is done in par. 2.8.2.

2.7 **The best methods to teach children a second language**

The research indicating that children and adults acquire language in different ways, together with Piaget's work indicating that children cannot handle formal operations, suggests that methods of SLA found effective with adults may not be effective with children. The following paragraphs entail a discussion of the L2 teaching methods that seems best suited for SLA by children.

2.7.1 **Meaning-focused rather than form-focused instruction**

Theoretical considerations as well as empirical findings indicate that a focus on meaning is essential for child SLA. Children are able to acquire language subconsciously with the language acquisition device or UG, but are not mentally equipped to acquire a language solely with the help of form-focused instruction. SLA theory and research both suggest the best approach to L2

language teaching at primary school to be the communicative methods with their focus on meaning. Cummins (1994:53) sees communicative interaction, which includes input and output, as more useful for SLA than comprehensible input in isolation. Interaction leads to input being made comprehensible by the mutuality of understanding between interactants, called negotiation of meaning (Ellis 1985:82). Even for acquiring the L1, abilities that allow the child to establish joint reference with an interactant are important: the use of pointing, and the ability of joint visual reference - looking where another is looking (Harris 1993:128).

Theoretical explanations account for the indications that form-focused instruction does not benefit children, but it does not explain why children are able to acquire an L2 if enough meaning-focused input is provided. The explanation is probably as elusive as an explanation for first language acquisition. As shown in par. 2.4, it was precisely the inability to explain how a child can possibly acquire a first language in a few years' time that led to the postulation of UG. Indications that children acquire an L2 in much the same way as an L1 (McKeon 1994:17), allow principles for classroom SLA to be inferred from naturalistic child L1 and L2 acquisition.

The new approach to L2 teaching is not merely a superficial method. In the Western world the whole curriculum for L2 instruction was changed profoundly by it, as will be shown. What determined the change historically? In retrospect one can indicate changes in all four of the interrelated foundations of the curriculum identified by Zais (1976:97, see par. 2.2). Society opened up and became less authoritarian, allowing child-centred notions; new insights on the child's abilities dawned; the structural view of language made way for a functional view; and new learning theories were tried out. Probably the catalyst was the new view of what language is. The functional view of language as something to be used for conveying meaning, had to affect the conceived educational aims with language teaching. Seeing the objective of language teaching as preparing the pupil for language use in the real world, affected the whole curriculum. The teaching content changed from language structures to meaningful language; learning activities changed from drills and repetition to genuine communication; and evaluation methods changed from discrete point tests to communication based tests. In par. 2.7.4 a comparison between audiolingualism and communicative language teaching will be given, to indicate the profoundness of the change brought about in L2 teaching. However, this change occurred in Western *thinking* about L2 teaching, which does not mean that it was quickly applied in all classrooms.

2.7.2 **Didactic principles as means of evaluating teaching methods**

Since this thesis deals with two teaching methods, derived from different approaches to L2 teaching, didactic principles for evaluating the teaching practice will be discussed. Cawood et al. (1986:2) say that didactic principles have two cardinal functions:

* They form a bridge between theory and practice;
* They can be used to evaluate practice.

Educationists do not all attach equal importance to the same didactic principles, but do agree on basic ones. Yule (1979:21-31) compares the principles of four educationists and extracts the principles listed below. Two principles of Duminy (1977:23-26), not included by Yule, are also relevant to this study: the principle of keeping up the connection with the home, and the principle of mother-tongue instruction. The latter issue was referred to in chapter one.

Yule's didactic principles are discussed below, with emphasis added for later reference.

D1. Totality. Each of the three components of the didactic situation should be seen in totality. The child goes to school as a unity, his physical, intellectual and spiritual abilities developing simultaneously. The teacher is also a unity and his/her influence on the child will be a total influence. *The subject matter must form a unity for the child, and not remain separate fragments.*

D2. Development. Every child develops constantly. *In order to know the child, attention must be given to the developmental level he has reached at every stage*, and educational objectives must be chosen accordingly. Teaching material must also be developed according to basic principles:

* From what is known to what is unknown;
* *From the concrete to the abstract*;
* From the whole to the parts and back to the whole;
* From the simple to the complex.

D3. Individualisation. Every child and teacher is an individual. When seen as such, there can be improved relations between teacher and child, more opportunities for individual help, more successful assignment of tasks, and eventually more *responsibility on the part of pupils.*

The principle of Duminy (1977:26) that the link with the home must be upheld, may be seen as an instance of principle D3. The child's link with his own home, family, pets, etc. is special to him.

D4. Socialisation. Man is a social being. Some advantages of working in groups are: the ability to discuss problems is improved; pupils learn to take part in productive and even creative ways,

being less afraid because of the joint responsibility; *pupils learn to help each other* and to respect each others' point of view; and eventually pupils' ability to think and to debate clearly is improved.

D5. Motivation. Extrinsic motivation comes from outside and comprises reward and punishment. Intrinsic motivation is far better, but less easy to attain at school. Some methods of motivating pupils mentioned by Yule are: be enthusiastic; *challenge pupils so that they want to know*; get pupils to marvel at what they learn and to enjoy hard work; *use every positive contribution of pupils and build on it*; lead the child, do not push him; acknowledge the child's freedom.

D6. Activity. Learning is only possible if the learner actively takes part in learning. Learning can take place overtly, when some action indicates that the child is learning. But learning can also take place covertly, e.g. when *the child listens, understands and takes in*. De Corte (1979:7) explains that in order to induce learning in the child, one has to influence the child's actions, for learning comes through action that opens up possibilities for the child.

D7. Visualisation. Visualisation means that the senses are used, e.g. the child sees, feels, smells. However, the child only learns when such experiences lead to organised thinking, eventually from the concrete to the abstract. A multitude of unrelated teaching aids is not desirable. Castelyn & Söhnge (1985:116) explain that the child's ability to order numerous things into categories, enables him to get meaningful images. The authors propose that the mind may be seen as consisting of different layers, the bottom one consisting of the concrete and visible, the next of what is schematically constructed from the concrete, the third layer even more abstract, etc. *If the bottom layer is not filled sufficiently, instruction can become meaningless talk (*emphasis added*)*. Therefore visualisation is a very important principle.

D8. Discipline and freedom. A balance between these two is necessary, for they supplement each other. The discipline initially exerted by the teacher, must eventually become self-discipline.

In traditional language teaching not much could be made of some of the above general didactic principles, e.g. the principles of socialisation and activity. In par. 2.7.3 the principles of communicative language teaching will be evaluated against the above general didactic principles.

Regarding instruction through an L2, Principle D2 above seems to be too wide. It may be practical to deduce a ninth principle from *In order to know the child, attention must be given to the developmental level he has reached at every stage*. Where on the macro-level of curriculum design it is always necessary to start with a situation analysis (Söhnge 1989:6), on the micro-level

it is necessary to start L2 subject lessons with an analysis of the L2 proficiency of pupils. On the micro-level the principle of *situation analysis* can be called *diagnosis*, after the first component of instruction mentioned by De Corte (1979:10). The diagnosis should be carried out continually as concerns the vocabulary and structural level of the L2 that pupils have acquired in specific fields:
D9. Diagnosis. It is necessary to diagnose continually the level of the second language acquired by a class before giving them sentences to learn. Pupils should not be required to memorise sentences in the L2 much longer or more complex than what they can formulate themselves.

2.7.3 **The principles of communicative language teaching**

How does communicative language teaching (CLT) compare to the didactic principles mentioned above? Communicative language teaching is synonymous with applying sound didactic principles, for the approach is learner-centred. Amongst others CLT expects that a child should listen with understanding (D6) in order to respond appropriately. He cannot listen absentmindedly merely to repeat. Thus the child perceives a challenge (D5) and takes responsibility for giving attention (D3). But pupils also learn to help each other (D4) when they practise what they have learnt in pairs and groups, and through such practice the language they use can form "a unity for the child" (D1). The demand that pupils must communicate about what they learn, requires that content be organised from the concrete to the abstract (D2), ensuring sufficient visualisation (D7).

When linguists become concerned about groups experiencing "disproportionate failure" because of being educated through an L2, they call on teachers to observe the didactic principles listed above. Genesee (1994:3-6) complains that educational programs for L2 pupils in America often focus on teaching language to the exclusion of other aspects of the pupils' development. He says research indicates that language acquisition does not take place in isolation, and reminds that effective instruction is child-centered and developmental. It builds in developmentally meaningful ways on what a child has brought to school, while individualising instruction and providing a reassuring context for learning new skills and concepts. Genesee (1994:10) states, "Everything we know about language learning indicates that success is likely if it serves social and cognitive goals." Thus Genesee emphasises the didactic principles.

As mentioned, CLT is learner-centred. That learners should take part in communicative activities (in pairs, groups or with the teacher) is of prime importance. Learner-centredness

implies that the communicative needs of learners, inside and out of school, must receive attention (Kilfoil 1989:29), and that learners must have a choice as to what they want to say. All language use must be meaningful to the learner, so that it can be used creatively in real situations. Repetition of a fixed set of sentences is not communication. Grammatical structure is still important, for conveying meaning in a language is impossible without adhering to the grammatical structure of that language to some extent. But the main objective of CLT is that the content and the social interaction flowing from it must prepare the learner to use the L2 where ever necessary. Therefore the four skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing, should all be fostered (Lätti & Gouws 1993: xiv - xv).

Within the broad framework of the communicative approach many different teaching methods may be used, as long as *the focus is on meaning and not on form*. Yet it is important that certain principles be adhered to. Some principles of classroom SLA are listed below.

Genesee (1987:184) mentions the following features of tasks leading to real discourse.

* There must be a communicative purpose, not merely a pedagogic one, e.g. when a child wants to tell something about his own pets, toys, family or friends (cf. D3).
* There must be a focus on the meaning of the message, not on how the message is conveyed.
* There must be an information gap - one speaker must not know what the other is going to say, as in the predetermined "dialogues" of audiolingualism which pupils take turns to read or say.
* Learners should be allowed to use any resources they wish, verbal or non-verbal (cf. D8).

Ellis (1990:126-7) sees as an optimal environment for SLA the following.

* In the early stages input is rich in directives, and repetitive lesson formats are used.
* There is a clear separation between the L1 and L2, so that the child feels a need to communicate in the L2. Learner production is not forced in early stages, however (see Principle 2 below).
* In the initial stages the teacher provides scaffolding for the production of answers, e.g. the question *How many trees..?* provides the answer's plural -s, in contrast to *one tree, two..?*
* Efforts are made by teacher and pupil to be understood, e.g. by using comprehension checks and negotiation of meaning, which on the teacher's part means making input comprehensible.
* Pupils are involved and interested in what is being talked about, to which end they are allowed initiative and are given opportunities to control the topic of conversation.

* Pupils participate in discourse corresponding to their communicative needs out of school. In later stages pupils have adequate access to planned discourse rich in marked linguistic features.
* The child is encouraged with clarification requests and varied questions to produce utterances taxing his linguistic resources, called *pushed language use*. Thus a child is forced from the *semantic* processing of reception to the *syntactic* processing production requires (Ellis 1991:8).

Nunan (1992:105) says empirical investigation rather than speculation is becoming the norm in education, showing that research can give positive direction to practice. Nunan lists some principles that have emerged from a wide range of research:

* In early stages: the 'here and now' principle, for which objects and pictures are used, as well as input rich in directives which have non-verbal results, pupils merely listening and obeying;
* Performance of a range of speech acts - pupils both initiating and responding to speech acts;
* A need to communicate in the L2, and a choice over what is said;
* Uninhibited practice: the child must have the right to use and repeat utterances at will (cf. D8);
* Input rich in 'extending' utterances, where a teacher elaborates on a child's utterance;
* The quantity of 'intake' must be sufficient. 'Intake' is that part of input to which learners attend.

Lightbown & Spada (1993:73) mention as characteristics of communicative language teaching:

* In early stages there is more emphasis on comprehension than on production;
* Input is simplified and made comprehensible by using contextual cues, props and gestures;
* A variety of discourse types are used, e.g. stories, role-playing, newspapers;
* There is little pressure to perform at high levels of accuracy.

Lightbown & Spada (1993:80) remark that supporters of CLT believe that errors are a natural and valuable part of the language learning process, and that insistence on correctness only stifles the motivation and spontaneity of learners.

Most of the above principles of L2 teaching are also stressed in a recent volume concerning the education of L2 children in American schools. According to Johnson (1994:186) extensive research shows that a broad and functional range of classroom discourse is necessary for SLA. Met (1994:170) holds that continued L2 growth depends on extended opportunities for interaction in the L2, for which teachers should provide appropriate activities, especially pair and group work activities. Met (1994:164) also remarks that the challenge for teachers of L2 pupils is to

meet the cognitive demands of the curriculum by providing context-embedded instruction, e.g. to design teaching methods that make the abstract concrete. "By enabling students to match what they hear with what they see and experience, teachers can ensure that students have access to meaning. Experiential, hands-on activities make input comprehensible."

To summarise the cited principles of classroom SLA given by various linguists and educationists, principles will be numbered for easy reference, and their importance explained:

1. The 'here and now' principle. It ensures comprehensible input and sound conceptualisation by giving the L2 a context embedded foundation. It is similar to the visualisation principle (D7).

2. Reception must precede production. This principle is derived from L1 acquisition, and means that listening comes before speaking and reading before writing, moving from easier to more difficult work (D2). This principle will be explained in par. 2.8.1, where it is shown that "production" that is mere repetition, not a product of analysis and synthesis, does not benefit SLA.

3. There must be genuine communication. There must be an information gap. Only in genuine communication the focus is really on meaning. The principle of individualisation (D3) is at work, for a child has to take responsibility for what he knows. He cannot simply copy or repeat others, as may happen in large-group work but not in pair work. The principle of socialising (D4) is also at work where pupils interact with each other and with the teacher.

4. There must be innovative use of the L2. Innovative language use causes pupils to be mentally active (D6), for they have to attend to what they hear and say. Mere repetition causes passivity.

5. There must be appropriate challenges to use the L2. Intrinsic motivation (D5) is caused by appropriate challenges. Challenges in reception supply motivation when pupils want to get the meaning; challenges in production, "pushed language use", lead to syntactic processing (cf. Ellis).

6. There must be a clear separation between the L1 and L2. It causes a need to acquire the L2. If one does not fall back on the L1 to circumvent problems, using the L2 is more challenging.

7. The quantity of usable input must be sufficient. It means the child must acquire the necessary vocabulary and structures he may need in various circumstances, for which taking part in different kinds of oral and written interaction is necessary. Principle 7 serves the principle of totality (D1), since sufficient knowledge of the L2 is necessary or the L2 will remain "separate fragments."

8. Errors should be condoned. There should be little pressure to perform at high levels of correctness, so as not to stifle spontaneity. Error correction may be done on a regular basis, as long as it

is perceived as part of the communication, e.g. as rephrasals or extending utterances. Positive contributions of pupils should be used and built on, in a motivating, uncritical way (D5).

To a certain extent the subject principles are a specific set of the general didactic principles of par. 2.7.2. Extracting specific principles for L2 teaching from theoretical insights will enable us:

to evaluate the classroom practice observed at specific schools (see chapter 3); and

to make recommendations for classroom practice (see chapter 6).

2.7.4 **A comparison between audiolingualism and the communicative method**

The following comparison of classroom practice typical of the two methods juxtaposed in this study is adapted from Richards and Rodgers (1986:67). In chapter 3 the classroom practice observed at two schools will be compared to features a) and b), and to the principles listed above.

The audiolingual method	Communicative language teaching
a) The goal is linguistic competence.	a) The goal is communicative competence.
It attends primarily to structure and form.	Meaning is paramount.
Central techniques: drilling and memorisation.	Central is creative language use and interaction.
The sequence of units is determined by principles of linguistic complexity.	For sequencing, content is considered, or meaning which maintains interest.
Language learning is sounds, words, structures.	What is important is learning to communicate.
Native-speaker-like pronunciation is sought.	Comprehensible pronunciation is sought.
Communication comes after drills etc.	Communication is encouraged from the start.
Language items are not always contextualized.	Contextualization is a basic premise.
The L2 is learnt from overt teaching of patterns	The L2 is learnt by struggling to communicate.
Errors are prevented at all costs.	Trial and error is the method of L2 learning
The teacher controls the learning.	Pupils use language innovatively.
Mastery/ over-learning is sought.	Effective communication is sought.
b) The L1 is forbidden.	b) The L1 is used judiciously where feasible.
Reading and writing come after speaking.	Older learners may start reading on day one.
Grammatical explanation is avoided.	Any device is accepted if it can help.

2.8 The role of chunks and of form-focused instruction in child SLA

With both form-focused instruction and the learning of chunks, *conscious learning* takes place. Is there a role for conscious learning in classroom SLA? If so, what should the role be?

2.8.1 The role of learnt chunks in SLA

Chunks ultimately broken down because of being used in communication

Even in naturalistic L2 contexts children learn chunks of speech as 'unanalysed wholes', e.g. *I don't know*, and according to Ellis (1986:152) children can keep control of topics by the adroit use of such formulae. Krashen (1981:90-96) agrees with Ellis in a review of a number of studies of naturalistic child SLA. He says the second language performer relies far more on formulae than the L1 acquirer, who does rely on chunks, as shown by Messerschmidt (1986:98). Krashen (1981: 91) remarks that older children have greater memory capacity than toddlers, and quotes from a study by Hatch: "[the L2 acquirer] ... is capable of storing, repeating, and remembering large chunks of language via imitation. He can repeat them for use in an appropriate situation. While he is still at the two-word stage in rule formation, he can recall and use longer imitated sentences." Krashen mentions the exhaustive examination by Fillmore of the routines and patterns in the speech of five Spanish children in an English kindergarten. Fillmore (1976:640) writes, "All five quickly acquired repertoires of expression which they knew how to use more or less appropriately." Including only the clearest cases of formulaic expressions, Fillmore calculated that their use ranged from 52 % to 100 % of the total number of utterances at the early stages, down to 37 % in the most advanced performer at the end of the year. However, two children remained almost completely dependent on formulae even at the end of the year. Fillmore also explains how two of the first formulae of her fastest learner were broken down: *I wanna play wi' dese* and *I don' wanna do dese* soon became interchangeable, and later became patterns to be used with different nouns (Fillmore 1976:641-645).

For understanding and breaking down chunks, two processes are needed:

* Analysis. To analyse speech chunks, the learner's first task, according to Klein (1986:59), is to segment the stream of acoustic signals into constituent units, since in spoken language there are no pauses between words as we perceive to be. Reading the L2 may assist in this task. Secondly a learner must bring the identified units into line with parallel information - the complex of

concurrent, chiefly visual signals that exist in a situational context. Trying to tackle these two analysing tasks, the learner may rely on all the knowledge available to him, e.g. his L1, the L2, contextual information, and the structural properties of the input. Klein (1986:63) says all the available knowledge of the L2 can be used by the learner to "crack the input." Familiarity of some words will indicate the boundaries of some other words, and so a few familiar words in a sentence become the "props on which the learner leans in his analysis of an utterance" (cf. Krashen's $i + 1$, par. 2.6.2). To analyse chunks is quite a formidable task and it can be expected that some pupils will not do it if they do not have to, as happens in audiolingual classrooms with their effortless drills. With the communicative approach a learner is expected to react to input in a meaningful way, so that he is forced to attend to the input, first to memorise it and eventually to analyse it. In all kinds of instruction some amount of rote learning is inevitable, but the communicative approach demands that what was learnt must also be used in meaningful ways. Fillmore (1976:640) also holds that naturalistic SLA takes place by means of the analysis of learnt formulae.

* Synthesis. An utterance by an L2 learner may be the result of rote-learning, like an unanalysed chunk or sentence learnt by heart, or it may be an utterance put together by the learner himself from elementary entities. Attempts to synthesise, called innovative language use, will initially lead to more errors than mere repetition of rote-learnt utterances (Klein 1986:108). The speaker will form utterances on the basis of a limited repertoire not conforming to the standards of the L2. But as Klein says (1986:79): "These early attempts at synthesis are indispensable if the learner is to gain broader access to the target language and thus perform more and more advanced analyses."

Chunks repeated without a need for analysis

At school pupils learn routines, like greetings, and patterns like *This is a - (table etc.)*. To these formulae can be added any number of learnt sentences and responses. School pupils can be taught to produce learnt chunks before receiving sufficient input by which to understand the chunks, contrary to the notion of some, mentioned by Ringbom (1993:48), that comprehension always precedes production. (See chapter 3 for examples). Everyone knowing children knows that with enough repetition one can teach children correct responses to stimuli, e.g. answers to a limited set of questions, without the children understanding the questions and answers at all. Or they may vaguely know the meaning of a chunk as a whole, while it remains inert knowledge that cannot be

applied. If chunks do not get analysed, they may be forgotten before the constituent parts are acquired, and before they can contribute to concept formation.

In L2 classrooms where the pupils and teacher share the same L1, something is possible that does not happen in naturalistic SLA where the native speaker does not know the L1 of the L2 learner. In such typical naturalistic situations the native speaker cannot explain the L2 by using the L1 of the learner, so that the learner is challenged to exploit all his L2 knowledge for negotiating meaning. Where pupils and teacher have the same L1, the teacher can explain the L2 by translating into the L1 (see chapter 3 for examples). This is known as codeswitching, which will be discussed in par. 2.9.7. Codeswitching leaves the learner with no challenge at all. He does not need to analyse the L2, for the meaning is given to him and he experiences that he understands. However, the understanding is vague. What was learnt remains an unanalysed chunk or inert knowledge. Codeswitching by the teacher is worse than the old grammar-translation method, where the learner had to do the translation. When a learner never needs to analyse the L2, and never needs to produce something he has not learnt as a chunk, he also never needs to synthesise in the L2. By memorising L2 chunks, it is possible that L2 learners advance at school without using the processes of analysis and synthesis. The presence of these two processes in communicative language teaching may be the main reason for children acquiring an L2 through communicative methods but not through traditional methods.

2.8.2 **A possible role for form-focused instruction in communicative language teaching**

A modern term used for form-focused input is 'enhanced input', which means that input is modified to make some grammatical feature more salient for the learner (Smith 1991:120). The term 'input enhancement' is not synonymous with form-focused instruction, for 'enhanced input' ranges from marking a grammatical form in context, e.g. underlining the plural -s in a passage, to drilling/explanation of a form without regard to content, e.g. one boy - two boys. When marking a grammatical form in a passage, the focus may still be on the meaning rather than on the marked form, provided there are comprehension checks on the content of the passage.

Studies indicating that form-focused instruction accelerates SLA for *adults* abound. Sometimes the abstract of such a study does not even indicate that the study was done on adults. As was mentioned before, the term 'adult' refers to people past puberty, so that secondary school pupils

should mostly also be seen as adults when it concerns SLA. It seems to be widely accepted that a successful combination of a focus on meaning and a focus on form is most advantageous for SLA (Ellis 1990:132). But in what way does it hold for children? As was shown in par. 2.6.4, there is some evidence for Krashen's hypothesis that learning cannot turn into acquisition. The investigator did not find a study clearly indicating *acquisition* by children due to form-focused instruction. One problem is that studies indicating benefits from a focus on form, often have no follow-up results to indicate acquisition. Another problem is that authors commenting on form-focused studies do not differentiate between studies on adults and studies on children, e.g. Smith (1993:178) who says that "the modest successes and failures logged by people pioneering research into the area of input enhancement," provide us with a challenge. He does not indicate where the successes and failures were encountered.

In a 1995 volume on SLA theory and pedagogy, Larsen-Freeman (1995:38) lists a number of studies that have confirmed the value of form-focused instruction (not differentiating between studies on adults and children), but adds "admittedly some of these endorsements are weakened because they could not demonstrate a long-term effect for instruction." Van der Walt (1996:79) lists four studies that "show positive effects for explicit grammar instruction." However, one of the four is a study done on *adults* by Doughty (1991:441), indicating that Van der Walt also did not differentiate between studies on adults and children. Another of Van der Walt's four studies is by Pienemann, discussed below in par. d).

The following is a search for indications that child *learning* can turn into *acquisition*.

a) White (1987:103-105) explains that form-focused instruction is deemed necessary in French immersion programs, for it is the most effective way of losing non-target intermediate forms or common errors. White refers to the common error of French learners of English, to put an adverb between the verb and direct object (**John drank slowly his coffee*). Information that such a sentence is ungrammatical cannot be gained from positive input alone, for the form is non-existent. However, as shown in par. 2.6.4 c) above, White did not find lasting results with instruction on this feature. White et al. (1991:416) also hold that there is no doubt that L2 learners can achieve considerable success in contexts where they are simply exposed to meaning-ful, naturalistic input, but that such input alone does not always lead to high degrees of accuracy in the L2. In a study on four classes of beginner French learners of English (aged 10 - 12), White

et al. (1991:416) found that the pupils exposed to a variety of input enhancement activities on question formation, outperformed other pupils in syntactic accuracy. However, since this experiment lasted only five weeks and there were no follow-up tests, acquisition was not proved.

b) Harley (1993:249) refers to three experiments intended to add a form-focused approach to the meaning-focused one of Canadian content teaching. However, some of the experiments referred to did not last long enough to make any conclusions about acquisition. In Harley's own experiment, it seems the experimental classes did initially benefit from a focus on form, but Harley admits that "comparison classes eventually caught up."

c) Lightbown and Spada (1990:431-443) report about Canadian Immersion that although the children learn to speak the L2 fluently and confidently, their grammatical accuracy is far from satisfactory so that it might be advisable to add some form-focused instruction to the programs. They investigated the inclusion of form-focused instruction in a communicative program for children (aged 10 - 12), where instruction focused on meaning-based activities and was rich in comprehensible input. They found that in Class 1, where the most form-focused instruction was provided, the learners reached higher levels of linguistic knowledge and performance. In Class 4, where the teacher virtually never focused on grammar, the pupils had the lowest accuracy on all the features examined, although they spoke and understood English well. However, there were no follow-up tests to compare long-term results indicating acquisition, and we may not exclude the possibility that the pupils whose output was more grammatical only used more conscious rule application (Krashen's Monitor). Zobl (1995:50) quotes a footnote from Lightbown that the teacher of Class 1 said she "drummed" the structure into the students' heads.

d) Pienemann (1984) conducted a study to measure the effect of a period of specific instruction on ten Italian children (aged 7 - 9) acquiring German as L2 in Germany. It should be noted that this was naturalistic SLA, since these pupils acquired the L2 mainly from their class mates. Data were collected before and after the instruction by means of interviews and hidden recorders in the playground. The stages when learning German word order are: The canonical word order (SVO); Adverb Fronting; Particle shift (Particle); and Subject-verb Inversion (Inversion). The ten pupils were instructed only on Inversion. Some results were as follows: Teresa, who had not acquired Particle prior to the instruction, did not benefit at all from the instruction. In contrast, Giovanni acquired Inversion. The pre-test showed that he had acquired Particle, but not Inversion. After the

instruction he applied Inversion in four out of five possible structural contexts, which suggests more than normal progress. As Pienemann (1987:153) puts it: "we know from several longitudinal studies ... that the acquisition of Inversion is a protracted process which takes months before the relative frequency of rule application develops from around 0.2 to 0.7. With Giovanni this process has taken only a few days." More or less the same happened to one other learner from the group of ten. For these two pupils instruction led to accelerated SLA, because it came at the right time. Yet the same instruction was counterproductive for two other learners, who, like Teresa, had not advanced far prior to the instruction. As a result of the instruction on Inversion, the use of Adverb Fronting fell away for these two learners because they presumably discovered that when they used Adverb Fronting, they should also apply Inversion, which they could not do. So they withdrew the use of Adverb Fronting in order not to produce incorrect sentences.

As a result of his research, Pienemann put forward the teachability hypothesis. It states that instruction can only promote language acquisition if the learner's interlanguage (his particular, changing version of the L2) is close to the point when the structure to be taught is acquired in the natural setting. Pienemann (1984:162) points out the differences between his hypothesis and Krashen's input hypothesis with its notion of $i + 1$. One point of difference is that Krashen deals with natural input but Pienemann with formal instruction, added to naturalistic SLA. Ellis (1990: 158) states that the teachability hypothesis is a powerful account of how formal instruction relates to learning, but cautions that we should recognise the limitations of the model and of the small amount of research that supports it. He says that Pienemann does not set quantitative nor qualitative criteria by which to judge if a processing operation has been acquired.

According to the definition set for acquisition in this thesis, it is possible that the two children who benefited from the L2 instruction were only using conscious rule application when tested. In 1997 it seems strange that no report of a replication of Pienemann's 1984 study can be found. However, a researcher like Doughty (1991:465), referring to Pienemann, selected subjects for experiments after tests indicating that the subjects have reached a certain stage in L2 development. Pienemann's hypothesis also underscores the importance of Principle D9 of par. 2.7.2, that the level of the L2 acquired by learners should be diagnosed continually, so that instruction can be appropriate. However, Principle D9 rather concerns meaning-focused instruction than form-focused instruction. Robinson (1994:164) mentions some problems with sequencing a syllabus

according to structural considerations, e.g. that there are variations in rate of progress, so that groups of pupils cannot be treated homogeneously. A spiral syllabus in which items are recycled more than once, is called by Robinson "still a hit-or-miss affair." Robinson (1994:164) warns that proposals for pedagogy based on existing empirical research in the area of distinctions between implicit and explicit knowledge are probably premature, saying more studies are needed, e.g. about learnability. As Pienemann's study shows, form-focused instruction can be counter-productive, a finding that should lead to caution.

It seems as if counter-evidence for Krashen's hypothesis that *learning* cannot turn into *acquisition*, may still be lacking as far as children are concerned. In defending Krashen's hypothesis, Zobl (1995:43-46) uses the standard deviation in the scores of test groups, after findings by Van Patten, to show that some studies by Lightbown, Spada and others indicate the difference between learning and acquisition. Discussing some of the very studies mentioned in a) - c) above, Zobl reaches the same conclusion about Krashen's hypothesis as the present investigator, and that without using *time* to indicate acquisition. Zobl (1995:49) also refers to other researchers who suggest that *learned* rules are incapable of handling complex relationships and operate instead "with simple dichotomies that can be supplied mechanically." *Acquired* rules have quite different properties, rule generation "typically proceeding in terms of subcategories."

2.8.3 **Concluding the issue of a role for form-focused instruction**

It will be wrong to conclude that a focus on form cannot help primary school children in any way. It will probably be advantageous to add some form-focused instruction to meaning-focused programs to combat common errors before they become fossilised. However, it seems such instruction should be continued for some years. White (1991:159) says that a number of studies have reported that effects of form-focused instruction and negative evidence are more lasting if there is continuous feedback, and Spada and Lightbown (1993:218) believe that a context-embedded focus on form, made available over an extended time period, is beneficial. Thus the advantages of continued *learning* can be used in conjunction with the *acquisition* resulting from a meaning-focused program. In Krashen's terms, such learning enables the "Monitor" to edit the language produced by the acquired system, a conscious process which can lead to self-correction, even self-correction before production. Chaudron (1991:61) declares that using communicative,

task-based language teaching materials, which incorporate a built-in focus on accuracy, is not a step backwards into more traditional grammar teaching. He warns, however, that more classroom-based research is necessary to determine how such materials are assimilated by learners during teaching.

It still needs to be shown from what age children can really use form-focused instruction to upgrade their language proficiency. Schachter (1991:96) reports that psychologists using tests like Piaget's found that children between the ages of 5 and 9 develop to the point where they can and do make use of corrective feedback for *general problem solving*. However, she also says linguists claim that children do not use negative data for *language acquisition*.

Regarding circumstances in South Africa, it is most important before advocating that a form-focused ingredient be added to meaning-focused teaching, to make sure that we have advanced to meaning-focused teaching and are no longer stuck with traditional form-focused methods.

2.9 Using a second language as medium of instruction

One way of providing meaning-focused L2 instruction is by using the L2 as medium of instruction. This method was and is used with great success in the Canadian Immersion programs (Cummins 1987:151). An in depth study of Canadian Immersion and other bilingual education programs is necessary to discuss issues such as when and how to switch to the L2 as medium of instruction. On the issue of codeswitching, or language alternation, guidance may also be found from the Canadian experience.

However, a program that worked well under certain circumstances in Canada cannot simply be applied to totally different circumstances in South Africa. It is necessary that the totality of the situation pertaining the use of English as medium of instruction in black S.A. schools be examined. Analyses of the two situations show the following great difference: initial Canadian Immersion was undertaken with English pupils who spoke the prestigious majority language of the country as L1, while bilingual education for Blacks in S.A. means using prestigious L2 English as instruction medium for pupils who see their own L1 as inferior. For a discussion of the issue of instruction medium it is therefore of prime importance that the situation be kept in mind constantly. Information by Fillmore (1976:12-13) underscores the importance of social factors to the SLA of

children. In a study at a *bilingual* pre-primary school, situated in an *English* community, it was found that the Spanish pupils learnt English while the English pupils learnt very little Spanish.

2.9.1 **The Canadian Immersion programs and similar projects**

Canadian Immersion, the result of parental concern, was initially (1965) an experiment with meaning-focused language teaching. According to Cummins & Swain (1986:7), immersion means that children from the same linguistic and cultural background are put together in a classroom setting in which the second language is used as medium of instruction. In the Canadian Immersion classes English children, whose parents had chosen that option, did their last year of pre-primary school as well as the first two years of primary school in French. They believed that their French teacher could not speak English. In total immersion classes, all instruction was in the L2, even initial reading. In such circumstances, great amounts of meaning-focused input must be received. After three years of such immersion in an L2, these pupils achieved "noteworthy levels of target language proficiency," at no expense to their native language development or academic achievements (Genesee 1987:17). They were even comparable to L1 French pupils, though not as good (Cummins 1987:151). The documented effectiveness of the immersion programs indicates that integrating L2 instruction with academic instruction is an effective way to teach an L2.

Anderson (1984:70) mentions as the common goal of immersion programs the following:

> Students will achieve functional proficiency in the L2;
>
> Students will maintain and continue to develop skills in their L1;
>
> Students will master subject content at their appropriate grade level; and
>
> Students will acquire an understanding and appreciation of another language and culture without detracting in any way from their appreciation of their home culture.

Later the experiment was extended to what is called delayed and late immersion. Children are not put in delayed and late immersion programs before they have acquired sufficient knowledge of the L2 in L2 language classes (Anderson 1984:75). Comparisons between alternative forms of immersion have tended to find, with exceptions, that early total immersion was the best, better than partial immersion and superior or equivalent to delayed and late immersion (Genesee 1987: 61). Partial immersion means that children receive lessons in the L2 from a mother tongue speaker

of that language for part of the day, and L1 lessons from a teacher speaking their own language for the rest of the day. The same teacher does not use two languages (Anderson 1984:72).

In America there are also enrichment programs for English children whose parents want them to acquire an L2, e.g. the Culver City Immersion Program, where children can learn Spanish. Although pupils who were tested did not attain the level of mother tongue speakers, they did much better than pupils on the regular Spanish L2 program, at no cost to their native language development or academic progress (Anderson 1984:73). However, immersion for minority groups is cautioned against in America, because the socio-political, sociolinguistic and educational conditions of minority groups are so different that an enrichment program effective for majority groups cannot simply be applied to minority groups (Genesee 1987:172). The conditions for success with immersion programs will be discussed below.

Canadian Immersion indicates that classroom SLA can be successful if it is meaning-focused.

2.9.2 **Insights from Canadian Immersion relevant to the issue of L2 medium instruction**

A study of Canadian Immersion can present useful insights for the South African situation. Most important is the insight that certain prerequisites should be met.

2.9.2.1 **A good foundation in the L1 is necessary**

Feeling positively about their own language seems to be important for pupils' acquisition of an L2. This was the case in Canada where the first pupils and parents attached such importance to their L1 that keeping up the L1 was of greater concern than acquiring native-like ability in the L2 (Cummins & Swain 1986:37). Genesee (1987:143) mentions that in California it was found over a twenty year period that Asian minority groups were far more successful at school than Mexican groups. The explanation proposed was that the difference was caused by group feelings towards the L1 and the L2. Negative feelings towards their own language and culture may influence parent-child interaction and the development of proficiency in the L1, especially if parents attempt to use the L2 at home. Cummins & Swain (1986:203) warn that advice to non-English parents to use English in the home can have disastrous results if parents use broken English or a mixture with the L1. Such attempts may lead to a home language that is relatively restricted and will not prepare a child for what is required at school. Cummins & Swain (1986:97) believe the

development and maintenance of a child's L1 to be critically important to his or her psychological, linguistic and cognitive well-being. Fillmore (1991:343) studied language use practices in the homes of over 300 children of immigrants, and found pre-school children enrolled in English-only programs to be particularly vulnerable to the loss of their L1. Where parents did not understand English, communication between parents and children was impaired. Fillmore (1991:343) writes, "When parents are unable to talk to their children, they cannot easily convey to them their values ... When parents lose the means for socialising and influencing their children, rifts develop and families lose the intimacy that comes from shared beliefs and understandings."

In a 1995 volume of *Education Canada*, Corson (1995:48) applauds the educational policy of the State of Victoria, Australia. This policy directs schools to ensure that non-English speaking students are able to develop their communicative competence in English *and* to consolidate their knowledge and understanding of their L1, using it in a range of situations, including the school community. The policy states that this twofold provision is essential if students are to have access to all areas of the curriculum and to know that their cultural background is respected and valued.

2.9.2.2 **The principles of communicative L2 instruction should be adhered to**

Baker (1988:111) mentions as a condition for success with immersion that progressive practices of language teaching be followed, and Anderson (1984:77) reports that no formal grammar is given in early immersion. The practice of starting immersion in pre-primary school ensures that the 'here-and-now' principle is observed, so that children can acquire context-embedded L2 proficiency to build on. Genesee (1987:141) says effective pedagogy that seeks to promote language skills for context-reduced, cognitively demanding academic situations, will initially provide L2 instruction that is context-embedded "from the learner's point of view." The later use of the L2 as instruction medium for some subjects at higher grades, ensures observance of Principles 3 to 8 of par. 2.7.3, e.g. that there must be genuine communication, innovative language use and appropriate challenges. If L2 medium instruction is approached correctly, it provides ideal circumstances for applying the above principles. McKeon (1994:28) holds that content-based L2 instruction offers an integrated model for language and academic skills development.

The fact that the teachers in Canadian Immersion are not mother tongue speakers of the pupils' L1, ensures that the L2 is used for interaction. The two languages are not mixed (cf. Principle 6).

2.9.2.3 **Language instruction and content instruction should be combined**

The meaning-focused advantage of content instruction in an L2 was used for SLA in Canadian Immersion since 1965. Genesee (1994:8-10) states that major shifts in thinking about the nature of language learning and its relationship to academic achievement has occurred in America since the late seventies. Formerly non-English pupils in English schools were pulled out for special language instruction, at the expense of instruction in other areas of the curriculum. The special L2 instruction did not always provide the academic language skills pupils needed. Partially due to findings in immersion programs, Genesee says it is now generally recognised that integrating language learning with meaningful content provides motivation for language learning. It is also a method of ensuring that the L2 learner is taught *useful* language skills. Johnson (1994:190) applauds the special L2 teachers who use pull-out sessions for asking L2 pupils to explain what they have learned in a previous content lesson. Special L2 teachers should also co-ordinate with content teachers so that they can prepare pupils for upcoming lessons. Johnson says that conceptual and language development is promoted when pupils are encouraged "to link language and content across contexts." This implies an "English across the curriculum" approach.

Met (1994:177-178) holds that language objectives are most appropriate when tied to the linguistic demands of content objectives, and adds, "Planning for language growth means the teacher must be continuously assessing where students are in relation to where they ought to be." She recommends conferences with groups of non-English pupils in English schools as a source of data on pupils' ability to *understand* and to *produce* content related language (cf. Principle D9 of par. 2.7.2). She remarks that the integration of language assessment with content assessment helps teachers "engage in a constant formative/diagnostic feedback loop". Met (1994:175) also warns that verbalisation is often not the best way of assessing what was learnt. Pupils may rather be given physical objects with which to demonstrate understanding, e.g. in geography they should demonstrate the movement of the earth around the sun with a globe.

2.9.3 **Types of L2 medium education**

The above references to L2 medium education imply that different types of L2 medium education exist. If the first language is not the medium of instruction, what are the educational possibilities?

a) Submersion education

The first language can be totally ignored, as in *submersion education*. There are many possibilities with submersion education, the difference being made by the number of L1 friends a pupil has at school. A group of pupils having the same L1 may speak that in the playground and even in class. Tabors and Snow (1994:114) refer to pre-school children in an L2 setting seeking out playmates with the same L1. A child who is compelled to use the L2 for making friends, will acquire communicative competence in the L2 in a natural way. The two end possibilities of *submersion* are:

* None of the pupils have the school language as L1;
* Most pupils have the school language as first language but the *submerged* pupils not.

The latter is often found with the children of immigrants, and is happening more and more in South Africa since the nineties when black children attend open schools together with whites and blacks speaking one or more African languages, without the school attending to all the different languages. In America submersion was found to give very poor results (Genesee 1987:137), and (Cummins 1994:35) also refers to the much higher drop-out rate of non-English-speaking pupils.

b) Different bilingual programs

In bilingual programs the first language is incorporated in some way in the program. According to Baker (1988:46-47), different types of bilingual education can be discerned.

i) Transitional bilingual education, where the child's first language is only an interim medium of instruction, to be phased out as soon as the L2 is known sufficiently to be used for instruction. This method was in predominant use in America when the overall policy was assimilation: to have one nation speaking one language (Baker 1988:80).

ii) Maintenance bilingual education, where both languages are used to some extent at school and kept throughout all or most of schooling. One variety is called *folk bilingualism*, indicating some necessity or compulsion, e.g. when one must become bilingual to survive (Baker 1988:47). This may be found where the home language is not an official or predominant language.

iii) Enrichment bilingual education, which is a variety of ii) because both languages are maintained throughout schooling. It serves the interest of the dominant power group or upper class. A knowledge of two languages may have high cultural or economic value, allowing access to privileged groups or status positions. Canadian Immersion is the best known example of this

type of education (Baker 1988:47). In this thesis the term 'immersion' will be used to refer to enrichment bilingual education as it is practised in Canada and elsewhere.

The above classification rests on the underlying purpose of the bilingual education, so that some types may appear superficially alike. For example, both in submersion and total immersion the L2 is the only language used at school, only for a few years in the latter case. It may also be used with pupils who do not know the L2 at all, e.g. in early immersion programs or with a child of any age being sent to a school intended for a group other than his own. (In the latter case it sometimes happens that no provision is made for the child to catch up with his peers). In immersion classes all the pupils have the same L1 and more or less the same level of proficiency in the L2, so that the teacher can shape the instruction to the needs of the pupils and thus provide "comprehensible input." Furthermore, in early total immersion the pupils are allowed to use their L1 for the first 18 months to answer some questions.

The real difference between submersion and immersion is that with the latter the intention is that the children should not lose their L1 and that for the greater part of their school life they will receive at least 50 % of their schooling in the L1 (Baker 1988:99). In both submersion and transitional education, the L2 is the only medium of instruction used at later stages, e.g. in higher primary and secondary school. A comparison will show similarities and differences.

Submersion	Early total immersion
May be used with children knowing no L2.	May be used with children knowing no L2.
Help with understanding the L2 may be given.	Help with understanding the L2 will be given.
The L2 is always the only language.	The L2 is the only language for 2/3 years only.
There is no provision for the child's L1.	Keeping up the L1 is of greatest importance.

2.9.4 **Research findings on bilingual education**

In a large number of investigations in America and elsewhere, comparing monolingual and bilingual children, it was found that children sometimes benefit from bilingual education and sometimes not. Cummins and Swain (1986:7-17) review some of these studies and mention the factors differentiating positive and negative results.

* Positive findings are mostly associated with learners from majority language groups and negative findings with minority groups, that is, with groups not speaking a prestigious language.
* The perceived value and prestige of the L1 and L2 in the home and community has an influence. Positive results tend to be found where both the L1 and L2 have social and economic value.
* Bilingual children whose parents have high socio-economic status tend to perform better than monolinguals from the same background, while it is not necessarily the case when children of lower socio-economic status are compared.
* School programs are important, for positive results were found in immersion programs and negative results in submersion programs.

2.9.5 **Theories connected with bilingual education**

The above findings are explained by a number of theories.

2.9.5.1 **The thresholds hypothesis**

Cummins and Swain (1986:6) came up with the thresholds hypothesis to explain the conflicting results. The thresholds hypothesis proposes that there may be threshold levels of linguistic competence that a child must attain in both his L1 and L2 in order to avoid cognitive disadvantages, and to allow the potentially beneficial aspects of becoming bilingual to influence cognitive functioning. In other words, two thresholds are hypothesised:

* There is a threshold in the L1 below which cognitive growth would suffer, causing *subtractive bilingualism*; and
* There is a threshold in the L2 above which cognitive growth can be enhanced, causing *additive bilingualism*. Accepting the thresholds hypothesis means that educational programs should aim to foster high levels of proficiency in both languages, and it is particularly crucial that school programs aim towards development of the L1, since it will support L2 development as well. It is also important that parents be encouraged to maintain the L1 (Tabors & Snow 1994:104).

2.9.5.2 **Two distinguishable linguistic abilities**

Swain (1981:4-5) reports on a distinction between two dimensions of linguistic proficiency made by Cummins, a distinction important for educational purposes. It concerns BICS or basic inter-

personal communicative skills, and CALP or cognitive academic linguistic proficiency. BICS refers to cognitively undemanding language proficiency in interpersonal situations, such as oral fluency and some aspects of socio-linguistic competence. CALP refers to aspects of proficiency related to the development of cognitive and literacy skills in school contexts. These aspects underlie the ability to meet academic demands at school. Language that is used to explain, to classify, to generalise, to abstract, and to manipulate ideas, (eventually in decontextualised circumstances) constitutes essential aspects of the cognitive demands made at school. According to Cummins (1994:39), research indicates that non-English children submerged in English schools need about two years to attain peer-appropriate levels in BICS skills, but five to seven or more years to attain the same in CALP skills. A model constructed by two intersecting continua indicates the two kinds of proficiency:

	Cognitively undemanding	Cognitively demanding
Context - embedded	I BICS	II
Context - reduced	III	IV CALP

FIG. 1: Parameters for analysing language skills.

The BICS / CALP distinction is important to the issue of instruction through medium of the L2, for there are indications that CALP is cross-lingual. That means that for a child who is bilingual, learning CALP-related aspects in one language does not limit that knowledge to the language in which it was learned. It is applicable to both languages (Swain 1981:5). Evidence that CALP is cross-lingual is supplied by a number of studies.

a) Brand (1991:213) refers to an experiment in West-Nigeria done in the seventies and early eighties. Bamgbose (1984:12) reports that West-Nigerian pupils educated in their L1 in the lower primary school outperformed other pupils. Brand (1991:213) also quotes the Zambian Ministry of Education (1975), which reports that "academic achievement is lower among children who have learned through a language which is not their mother tongue." Brand (1991:213) also mentions an

experiment carried out in KwaZulu from 1974 to 1983. It was found that an earlier switch to English medium instruction did not improve matriculation results.

b) Cummins (1987:154) reports a study done in 1981 in Australia. It compared aboriginal students who had a bilingual education, spending about 50 % of their time in L1-medium instruction from pre-primary school to Gr. 6, to similar students receiving monolingual English instruction. The first group not only learnt to read and write in their L1, but also learnt knowledge of and respect for their own culture. They also achieved better academic results in oral English, reading, English composition and Mathematics. The students had in no way suffered in English as a result of spending far less time in English-medium instruction.

c) Swain (1981:3) cites the following concerning early and late immersion groups in Canada. The early group who was tested when in Gr. 8, had had 100 % instruction in French for the first two years, 80% for the next four years, and 50 % for the last three years, totalling 4 000 hours of French. The late group who was in Gr. 10 when tested, had had only 1 400 hours of French over four years. Yet the latter group was superior to the former on a French reading comprehension test and similar on another test, though behind on listening comprehension. The results suggest that in school settings older learners are more efficient in some aspects of L2 learning than younger learners, probably because the older learners are more cognitively mature and better able to generalise, abstract, formulate, etc. Spolsky (1984:171) mentions that Swain was surprised to find that late immersion learners had many better results than early immersion learners. He explains, "There are certain aspects of SLA, especially the more school-related tasks (and the areas that Krashen ascribes to the monitor), that older learners have more success with."

d) Swain (1981:8) also mentions a study by Hebert (1976) on French students who had received different percentages of instruction in French and English. At each grade level the pupils who had more French (L1) instruction did better in French than the other group. However, those who had more instruction in English, the L2, did not obtain higher English scores.

These examples illustrate the point that, given time for the cumulative benefits of mother tongue instruction to accrue in terms of cognitive/academic development, these benefits will serve well the future development of second language CALP by providing the base from which it starts. The examples also deny the assumption that maximum exposure to the L2 is beneficial.

2.9.5.3 **The common underlying proficiency generalisation**

Cummins and Swain (1986:80-82) state that there are only two possible models regarding the use of two languages at school: the SUP or Separate Underlying Proficiency model, and the CUP or Common Underlying Proficiency model. The CUP model claims that experience with either language can promote development of the proficiency underlying both languages, which is involved in cognitively demanding tasks. Cummins (1994:38) says there is considerable evidence of interdependence of academic skills across languages, such that the better developed children's L1 conceptual foundation, the more likely they are to develop similarly high levels of conceptual abilities in the L2. The CUP model accounts for research findings such as that in bilingual programs, either for minority or majority students, instruction through a minority language results in no academic loss in the majority language. For example, when the first groups of immersion children were tested with standardised tests for mathematics and science, their L1 was used for the tests although they had been instructed in an L2. It was expected that the use of the L1 would handicap them, but they did as well as their peers (Cummins & Swain 1986:39). Cummins (1994: 39) reports that for minority students an inverse relationship between amount of instruction in English and English academic achievement is often observed. Acceptance of the CUP model leads to the following common underlying proficiency generalisation: "To the extent that instruction in L*x* is effective in promoting proficiency in L*x*, transfer of this proficiency to L*y* will occur provided there is adequate exposure to L*y* and adequate motivation to learn L*y*" (Cummins 1987: 156). This generalisation implies that when the L2 is important for progress in life, like an official or a world language, the necessary motivation will exist to transfer any worthwhile instruction in the L1 to proficiency in the L2. This generalisation also contradicts a statement by Macdonald (1990b:51) that it does not matter in which language black pupils first learn to read. It does matter. Learning to read first in L2 English in S.A. is not the same as learning to read in the L2 in Canadian Immersion, where the L1 has prestige value.

Cummins and Swain (1986:80) acknowledge that it sounds counter-intuitive to remedy English language deficiencies through instruction in the learner's L1, but say that "considerable research evidence refutes the simplistic assumption" that the development of L2 academic skills is directly related to amount of exposure to the L2. Of more importance is the extent to which learners are capable of *understanding the academic input* to which they are exposed. Where the L2 is the

medium of instruction, understanding academic input is related not only to the level attained in the L2, but also to the conceptual attributes which have developed through the L1.

Corson (1995:50-51) agrees with the above, saying there is strong evidence to confirm that L1 maintenance in the early years of schooling is necessary. He adds that other things being equal, a later introduction of the L2 will improve results. He refers to studies in Sweden which led to the recommendation that the child's first language be given maximum attention up to middle school. It is for the development of skill in using the L1 to manipulate abstractions, and using it to perform the cognitive operations necessary for acquiring the L2.

Helm (1979:323) also agrees with the above when he refers to a symposium concerning English in black schools. There Hartshorne (1975) said that more exposure does not necessarily improve the learner's standard of English, for after twelve years of a "more English" policy in Transkei its pupils did not do as well as other black pupils.

2.9.6 **Using African languages as medium of instruction in S.A. schools**

From the previous paragraph it is clear that SLA theory and research indicate a maintenance bilingual program to be most advantageous for black pupils in South Africa. It means that the L1 of the pupils should be used as medium of instruction until they have acquired enough English to benefit from English medium instruction. If Corson's indication of 4 to 6 years is accepted, it means that at least in the greater half of the primary school, the L1 should be used as medium of instruction. However, indications are that most black people prefer an earlier switch to English medium instruction. Various reasons have been given for the preference.

2.9.6.1 **Reasons why Blacks prefer English medium instruction**

a) Edmunds (1988:15) mentions a number of reasons why Blacks prefer English as medium of instruction. One is that up to the late seventies black pupils were compelled to use the L1 as medium of instruction for the first six years, so that L1 education was associated with oppression and tribalism. She also mentions the following: English is not associated with oppression in S.A.; English is a world language and is seen in many African countries as the language of education; and none of the African languages dominates sufficiently to be a lingua franca.

b) Helm (1979:321-329) also discusses some reasons why Blacks prefer an early switch to English as medium of instruction. One is the assumption that more exposure to English is beneficial, but as shown in the previous paragraphs this assumption is unfounded. Another reason is the notion that black languages do not have sufficient scientific and technological terms at their disposal. Blacks are divided on this issue, but Helm (1979:329) refers to Thembela (1974). Thembela feels that to develop black languages "would end up in an absurd condition of creating a new *non-language* used for school purposes only." This view is answered below.

c) Zulu (1996:107) answers an opinion mentioned by Kgomoeswana that there is no "mother tongue equivalent to explain [an English] technical concept", by saying that technical terms do not "exist" in a language before one uses them. He explains how Afrikaans and other languages were developed to technological languages mainly by borrowing, and says this can be done with any language. Zulu seems to feel that using the L1 as medium of instruction is possible and desirable for expanding the African languages.

d) In the editorial comment of an HSRC Bulletin, Kamwangamulu (1996:1) pleads for mother-tongue education to be cleansed of the stigma it carries, so that it can become an alternative to English medium education. Kamwangamulu says that we know too well that L2 education has failed to promote literacy, not only in S.A. but throughout the African continent. He states that in Anglophone Africa only a thin layer of 5 - 20 % of people have a "passable measure of proficiency in English." Kamwangamulu (1996:1) sees the use of an L2 as medium of instruction as a covert move to ensure that only "a small elite" be advantaged, while the majority is disadvantaged. This is the case in S.A. where the vast majority of black children get little benefit from schooling. They do not benefit in terms of acquiring the necessary language proficiency, nor in terms of subject content. Kamwangamulu (1996:5) argues for "a meaningful co-existence of African and European languages," with "incentives to stimulate the learning of African languages."

e) An article by Mndende published by the Open Schools Association (1994) shows that some Blacks do not want black pupils to lose their own language and culture, while some parents do not care about it. Mndende writes: "Often, the Xhosa children are instructed not to speak Xhosa at school ... It seems that they are to be assimilated so as to become English speakers who happen to be black. In this way they perceive English as a superior language and Xhosa as an inferior one, with the danger that they could lose interest in it. Some start despising it, and are even

encouraged by parents to do so. One Xhosa parent said: '... I don't want my child to learn Xhosa because there's nothing he is going to do with it.' This is an internalised inferiority complex ..."

f) D'Oliveira (1997, personal communication) says that one reason for the very early present start with English medium instruction, in Gr. 3, is that Blacks want to send their children to 'open schools,' where English is the medium of instruction. Teachers whose own children are in schools having white teachers, say their children make much better progress than the pupils at the schools where they teach themselves.

2.9.6.2 **A solution that may satisfy all concerned**

The question of when to switch to English medium instruction should crucially be decided by didactic considerations and not by politics or social prejudice. However, at present decisions about black education are not taken by academics (cf. the "Discussion Document" mentioned in par. 1.2.4). Discussing the history of black education in S.A., Hartshorne (1987:77) advises that it is best to adopt a flexible approach to the issue of languages at school, together with recognition of the rights of parents to choose from the options available. However, at present parents seem to see open schools as the only solution. Open schools and a small number of white teachers cannot be the solution to the problem of educating multitudes of black pupils. Since open schools are far more expensive than the former DET schools, the good impression they make at present may be due to the fact that their pupils are a selected group, having parents who can pay high school fees. As said in par. 2.9.3, submersion programs gave very poor results in America.

Hartshorne (1987:78) mentions three issues as a solution to the problems of black education.

* English in the education and training of the black teacher, both pre-service and in-service, needs serious attention.
* The teaching of English in the first four years of the primary school should be improved. It cannot be just another subject; it is the working tool for the remainder of the pupil's education.
* English should be used "across the curriculum."

In 1987 Hartshorne complained that these issues were not seen to be of critical importance to the development of quality in African education, particularly not by senior DET officials.

The idea of "English across the curriculum", already mentioned in par. 2.9.2.3, can be a solution to the most pressing two-fold problem of black education today: parents demand that their

children learn English as soon as possible, while pupils cannot benefit from L2 medium instruction unless certain prerequisites are met. With "English across the curriculum" is meant that the L1 remains the official medium of instruction in which examinations are written, but each L1 subject lesson is also used as topic of discussion in the L2, with sentences to be learnt and L2 tests added to satisfy the demands of parents and all concerned.

The meaning-focused advantage of content instruction in an L2 was used for SLA in Canadian Immersion. In South Africa this advantage was recognised by the founders of the Molteno Project, to be discussed in chapter 3. Rodseth (1987:37) writes that the development of satisfactory mental readiness for across-the-curriculum work is seen as a major challenge, and that the Molteno Project is extensively involved in preparing pupils for English medium education. Brown (1987:41) states that the idea of cross-curricular language work is not new, for it was the focus of much attention in the years following the publication of the Bullock Report in Britain in 1975.

2.9.6.3 **Deciding the use of L2 English for content subjects**

The best time for switching to L2 medium instruction is not after a fixed number of years of English L2 instruction. The best time is when pupils have acquired the necessary L2 knowledge *as well as* the necessary conceptual background to benefit from L2 medium instruction in a particular subject. Brown (1987:46) refers to Krashen's proposals on subject teaching in an L2, saying the demand that the message be comprehensible implies that the current level of linguistic competence of pupils must be taken into account (cf. Principle D9 of par. 2.7.2). Brown continues that if the input of content subjects is pitched at a linguistic level which is too much beyond pupils' current levels, little comprehension, little learning and little SLA will take place. Genesee (1994:9) believes that language varies across academic domains, and McKeon (1994:24) says language-sensitive content teaching is required, for students need to master different language varieties.

The use of English for content subjects can best be decided according to situation analyses. With 'situation' is implied both what the parents prefer, and what is best for the pupils. To know the latter, Principle D9, Diagnosis, should be applied, because information on pupils' readiness for L2 medium instruction cannot be found from official tables. For each subject and each class it should be diagnosed when "English across the curriculum" may go over into English medium instruction. Suggestions for classroom practice concerning Principle D9 will be given in chapter 6.

2.9.7 **Codeswitching or language alternation**

Codeswitching or language alternation is the practice of switching from the L2 to the L1, so that the pupils can understand what is being said. Brown (1987:44), who did a project in black S.A. schools, found that although tests, examinations and written work in content subjects were conducted in English, much and often most of the actual teaching was done in the L1. The teachers explained it to be the only means to cope, since the pupils did not have the English skills to keep up with subject content in English. Brown (1987:46) sees the fact that teachers regularly resort to L1 instruction as indication that much of the English input is not comprehended by pupils.

In a study on bilingual instruction, Fillmore (1983, as recorded in Cummins 1987:160) found that codeswitching may communicate academic content but deprive learners of language learning opportunities. With videotape recordings it was shown that students turned off as soon as the teacher used the L2, paying attention again when the content was translated into the L1. It was observed that in classes where teachers frequently alternated languages, learners acquired very little of the L2. Fillmore wrote: "Language alternation can ... facilitate student comprehension of the subject matter, and from the teacher's point of view may be the easiest way to communicate information to learners who lack sufficient control of the L2. But such practices clearly hinder the development of English language skills needed for effective participation in the life of the classroom. In order for second language learners to learn a L2 effectively, they must have access to language which is shaped to their needs and which at the same time makes specific kinds of cognitive demands on them."

Ellis (1991:9) reports that there has been little research which addressed the switch to the L1 and its effect on acquisition. He quotes only the work of Fillmore and a study by Kaneko, who found the same results. Ellis adds that there may be legitimate uses of the L1 in L2 classrooms, such as translating unknown lexical items in the absence of another reference.

Zulu (1996:105) takes codeswitching to include also intrasentential switches, where codeswitched discourse can even have two languages forming part of the same speech act. Zulu (1996: 104-108) contributes to the debate on codeswitching in multicultural classrooms by remarking that in such classrooms there are pupils from different L1 backgrounds, so that the range of the learners' mother tongues is a factor limiting codeswitching, "however desirable it may be." From the quoted phrase it seems as if Zulu is content that codeswitching is desirable in classrooms

where all the pupils do know the same vernacular but have to learn through an L2. However, Zulu's comments on the arguments of Faleni for codeswitching and of Kgomoeswana against codeswitching indicate that he sees some of the drawbacks of codeswitching. He remarks, for example, that there is not yet a research conclusion about the assumption that if certain key concepts were difficult in the pupils' L2 they become easy in their L1. Zulu thinks that code-switching is sometimes used simply because it is popular, "part of [teachers'] normal speech", of which the "educational value remains doubtful." Zulu mentions that codeswitching can gradually get out of hand, to the extent where the entire English lesson can be taught in the mother tongue. Another problem is an obsession with literal equivalent meanings, which is often seen where the teacher wants to pose as some sort of "walking bilingual dictionary." Consequently the English competence of some black pupils does not go beyond mere literal translation from the L1.

Probably the basic reason for codeswitching, not mentioned by Zulu, is that switches are made when it becomes difficult to express or understand something in the L2. Thus the habit of code-switching deprives teachers and pupils of opportunities to meet the L2 challenge.

In an article on the "medium of instruction in formerly black secondary schools", Meyer (1995: 243-259) seems to confuse codeswitching and medium of instruction. Meyer got more than 800 responses from matric pupils to questions such as *Which language is used by teachers when writing notes on the board / by pupils when writing notes in exercise books / for writing tests?* The *English* answer to these questions averaged more than 95 %, indicating that the medium of instruction was in practice what it was officially: English. However, from the answers Meyer received about the languages used for oral communication in English medium classes, he concludes that 27 % of teachers used a mixture of English and the vernacular. On this latter finding Meyer (1995:258) comments "One of the main findings of this survey has been the fact that about one-third of the matric teachers and students surveyed appear to have been following a policy of *additive bilingualism*." Meyer's notion that codeswitching is the same as additive bilingualism is mistaken (cf. par. 2.9.5.1). According to the thresholds hypothesis, prerequisites for additive bilingualism are high levels of proficiency in both languages. Codeswitching is just an easy way out and cannot lead to high levels of proficiency in any language.

As long as a teacher uses translation to convey the content of a subject like history, pupils will not feel a need to analyse the sentences they learn as chunks. They will be satisfied that they know

the meaning of a sentence if they know it globally, that is, if they can translate it. However, for a sentence to add to the assimilated knowledge of an L2, it must be analysed and each part must be understood (cf. par. 2.8.1).

2.9.8 **Concluding the issue of L2 medium instruction**

The above considerations seem to imply that there are three domains in which pupils should benefit before bilingual education can be beneficial:

* Pride and proficiency in the L1 should be fostered;
* Pupils should understand the L2 sufficiently to advance in the subjects taught;
* The acquisition of the L2 should be promoted by the instruction through the L2, for which it is necessary that pupils understand the L2, and that the L1 and L2 be kept separate.

If instruction through medium of the L2 is nothing but memorising unanalysed chunks to be written down in tests, the child is going to be disadvantaged in all three of the above domains. He will lose an opportunity of developing proficiency in his mother tongue; he will not understand the subject matter that he learns in a language he does not know sufficiently; and he will not make much progress in the L2 by repeating unanalysed and poorly understood chunks.

2.10 **Conclusion**

The literature survey of this chapter provided an overview of the history and theory of L2 teaching, indicating where the two teaching methods compared in this study derive from. The review of some research indicated that SLA by children is completely different from SLA by adults. Research seems to imply that children do not acquire an L2 from teaching methods with a focus on form, while the success of Canadian Immersion indicates that in certain circumstances meaning-focused content teaching in an L2 can lead to high levels of SLA.

The didactic and linguistic principles gleaned from the literature should enable us to reach an informed assessment of the teaching provided to black pupils at two specific primary schools, to be described in the next chapter. Furthermore, the insights gained on the issue of an L2 as medium of instruction should enable us to make recommendations on the *how* and *when* of L2 medium instruction in South Africa. The idea of "English across the curriculum" was found as possible solution to the problem of satisfying parents' demands while providing what pupils need.

Chapter 3

THE EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION: THE TWO TEACHING METHODS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter comprises the first part of the empirical investigation, describing how English as L2 was instructed at two schools which were on different programs for teaching English. The end objective of the empirical investigation is to see if any difference in English acquired could be measured at the two schools.

Since instruction does not take place in a void, this chapter will commence with a situation analysis regarding the teaching of English to black primary school pupils. Firstly some information on departmental policy regarding the relevant teaching will be given. The main part of the analysis presented in this chapter will focus on the black teacher and her teaching style. The objective is to investigate the possibility that school practices hamper the acquisition of English as L2.

The situation analysis will be followed by mentioning the two approaches leading to the two distinct methods followed at specific schools. An overview of the Molteno Project as an example of the communicative approach will be included. Furthermore the two specific schools, referred to as Schools A and B, will be described, as well as the reasons for their selection.

In the second part of the chapter it will be attempted to give an overview of the English instruction received by a specific group of pupils at Schools A and B respectively, over a period of three years. The instruction will be compared and evaluated against the background of the theoretical viewpoints discussed in the previous chapter. Reference to neighbouring schools will be made where necessary. The last part of the chapter discusses in-service teacher training.

3.2 A situational analysis: teaching English to black primary school pupils

The word 'situation' indicates the complete range of circumstances pertaining to an issue. When speaking of an issue such as teaching English to black pupils in S.A., it should be noticed that for Blacks English is so important that they want it to be used as medium of instruction from very early in the school career. The importance attached to English by the own community is a great motivating factor to the child to learn English. While the main objective with the investigation is to compare the results two teaching methods had on two groups of pupils, it need not be feared

that one group was more motivated than the other to learn English. Both groups were fully motivated, far more than Afrikaans pupils seem to be.

In chapter 1 reference was made to low standards in black education, indicated inter alia by a pass rate for black matriculants of around 40 %. It is possible that a poor knowledge of English as the medium of instruction may be one of the main causes of the poor results. A number of factors may contribute to black pupils' problems with acquiring English:

* There are vast differences between African and European languages.

* Black children growing up in typical black townships in S.A., or in other all-black communities, mostly do not have opportunities of learning English out of school, especially not from L1 speakers of English

* As mentioned in chapter 1, milieu retardation leads to impoverished conceptualisation and an underdeveloped L1, which leaves some pupils with a poor foundation to build L2 skills on. Most black pupils still come from an oral culture and do not encounter much reading at home.

* Most black teachers have acquired their English competence in the DET system, so that they are not well versed in English and also lack some other competencies. Macdonald (1990a:3) feels that students have been produced who are capable only of going back into education to perpetuate the cycle of producing people poorly equipped to meet the demands of a rapidly changing society.

* There is also the possibility that rectifiable school practices hamper the acquisition of English as L2. This chapter describes investigation into the latter possibility.

Learning English is of utmost importance in the education of black pupils, for up to 1997 no higher primary or secondary education is available to them in languages other than English or Afrikaans. It is doubtful if secondary education will ever be available in all the different black languages, because of the prejudice mentioned in par. 2.9.6, and also because it is impractical. Should pupils receive their secondary education in an African language, they may find it difficult to find work after school, or to adapt to the language of tertiary institutions. Another practical consideration was mentioned by a departmental official (D'Oliveira 1997, personal communication): text books should be written in nine African languages before L1 medium instruction may be officially introduced, even in the higher primary. He says at present it cannot be afforded. It is therefore a priority that early in the primary school English be acquired sufficiently, so that the necessary educational progress is possible once the switch to L2 medium instruction is made.

3.2.1 **The availability of time for teaching English**

Despite the urgency with regard to the acquisition of English, it was not reflected in the English teaching policy in the schools that belonged to the former DET. Neither is it reflected in the present policy. The policy of both the DET and the new Department of Education and Culture regarding English teaching was indicated in par. 1.2.4. The time allocation per week for English lessons and the use of English as medium of instruction was/is as follows:

Before 1996

	Eng. lessons	Instruction medium
Gr. 1	nothing	
Gr. 2	10 periods	
Gr. 3	8 periods	
Gr. 4	8 periods	
Gr. 5	7 periods	Eng.-medium instruction
Gr. 6	7 periods	Eng.-medium instruction
Gr. 7	7 periods	Eng.-medium instruction

Since 1996

	Eng. lessons	Instruction medium
Gr. 1	2 periods	(optional)
Gr. 2	2 periods	
Gr. 3	16 periods	Eng.-medium instruction
Gr. 4	10 periods	Eng.-medium instruction
Gr. 5	10 periods	Eng.-medium instruction
Gr. 6	10 periods	Eng.-medium instruction
Gr. 7	10 periods	Eng.-medium instruction

The use of English as medium of instruction for Environment Studies in Gr. 3 is seen as a transitional phase, and each school has its own rules. In chapter 5 a short report of Environment Studies in Gr. 3 through medium English will be given, as investigated at one school.

Not only does the timetable provide little time for the teaching of English, but time is often lost for reasons such as the following: the absence of pupils and teachers; staff meetings causing the loss of a period or more; cleaning up on Fridays that often takes half a day or even the whole day, especially at the end of the month, or when sport teams are expected on the Saturday; and occasions that are seen as a reason for a feast, e.g. the Friday before Mother's Day.

3.2.2 **The availability of teaching aids**

Modern teaching aids such as the radio, television, or tape recorder were never seen used in these schools during the investigation done for this thesis. During the 1970's the DET supplied radios to schools and special programs were broadcast, but they fall outside this investigation. The only teaching aids seen used during the investigation were pictures, objects and the written word. Reference will be made to the use of these teaching aids in the description of classroom practice.

Methods of teaching reading are discussed in par. 3.2.4, since written English is worth nothing as input to one who cannot read. Furthermore, to obtain comprehensible input from written English, a pupil should be able to read it with understanding. And to obtain comprehensible input from L2 subject matter, it is necessary to understand English in context reduced circumstances. Macdonald (1990d:57) sees the transition from narrative to expository text as the main challenge for the child in the primary school. It is far more difficult to learn the textual schema for expository text, and this is something pupils learn relatively late. Yet competence with expository text should be considered as an endstate that the primary school child is working towards, according to Macdonald. It means pupils should be able to extract propositional content from a text, and through deletion and generalisation to construct the gist of the passage.

Text books for the lower primary consist of readers and sometimes also a "Language Book," or a combined "Pupil's Book." Since one of the main goals of English instruction in the lower primary phase should be to prepare pupils for English medium instruction, one would expect the English texts used to attain a certain level in structure and vocabulary. But the HSRC found in the Threshold Project (1986 - 1988) that there is great disparity between the English lessons given in Grades 2 - 4, and the abilities and concepts the child needs from Gr. 5 onwards for using English as medium of education (Van Rooyen 1990:98-101). Macdonald (1990a:139) says that a comparison of the two most comprehensible science text books, to the language pupils should have encountered had they done *all* the work in the *Day by Day* or *MacMillan* courses, shows that the pupils would not have encountered more than half the vocabulary used in the textbooks.

Regarding the availability of teaching aids, a finding of Brand (1991:360) must be mentioned. She found that in higher primary schools, teaching aids such as maps and the globe were not used in geography classes, although available at the schools she investigated. Brand (1991:289) feels that even if all facilities deemed beneficial to education were to be provided in black education, but the medium of instruction remains poorly understood by the pupil and teacher, this language drawback will hamper transmission of knowledge. It seems as if Thembela (1985:35) refers to more than language problems when he says, "even if you removed the socio-political problems immediately, even if you provided all children of this country with equal facilities and equal access to these facilities, you would still remain with serious problems of a socio-cultural nature."

3.2.3 **Black teachers and pupils**

The previous paragraphs mainly concerned one component of the didactic situation, viz. the teaching of subject matter, especially the *why* and *when* of teaching English as L2. However, the last paragraph which mentions that availability of teaching aids does not necessarily mean they will be used, highlights the importance of the other two components of the didactic situation: the teacher and the pupil. Black education has certain cultural characteristics.

The pupil

Macdonald (1990a:112) finds that, for black children, schooling is a foreign form of socialisation, and much of their earlier spontaneity and initiative may be inhibited by it. In chapter one some information was given about what the black pupil brings (and does not bring) to school. After entering school, the child's perceptions and feelings are mainly cultivated by what his teachers do and say. Like Macdonald (1990a:128), the present investigator found pupils relatively passive and docile. To the investigator it seems that children want to please their teachers by doing exactly what they are told, if possible, e.g. repeating lines and chanting rhymes if that is what obliges the teacher. Later the quest for marks becomes important. For example, it will make children find strategies for "doing comprehension tests" even when they do not understand the passages at all (cf. par. 4.6.4). The overriding motive is to survive, not to lose face by failing for example. Since the pass rate for black primary schools used to be about 80 %, and for secondary schools about 60 - 70 %, fear of failing is a reality for many black pupils, something that influences attitudes.

The teacher

The greatest influence on the didactic situation is exercised by the teacher, especially in the traditional teacher-centred school. Duminy (1977:16-21) differentiates between the 'old' and 'new' school. The school typified as 'old' twenty years ago was characterised by the following.

* Learning material was regarded as of primary importance. The teacher also had some importance, but the child was reckoned of very little importance.
* Self-activity, creativity and positive motivation of pupils were virtually unknown.
* Pupils were mostly passive. They only had to repeat and memorise, often without understanding and insight. Due to regular tests, the accent was on competition rather than on co-operativeness.

* There was little freedom, and little attention to individual differences.

* Life inside the school was far removed from what happened outside it.

The traditional black school in S.A. is still characterised by the above, but has some additional characteristics of its own. Macdonald (1990d:2) refers to the work of Hawes (1979) on the African primary curriculum, in which Hawes identifies five historical sources of influence on black education. Here only the first of the five is mentioned: influences from indigenous patterns of learning, e.g. submissive attitudes towards authority and the preference for oral explanations and discussions rather than written work. Indigenous influences may account for phenomena such as the uncritical acceptance of printed text, and for the preference of certain teaching and learning styles. How teachers are bound by written prescriptions is indicated by such facts as that they use an Afrikaans Gr. 3 reader in Gr. 3, even though the reader is the second in the series and was intended for Gr. 3 being the third year of instruction in Afrikaans, not the first (cf. par. 3.2.4 c). It is also the rule to start with a new reader every year, the one written for that grade, even if half or more of the reader of the previous year was not dealt with.

Since it may be assumed that a teacher's behaviour is guided by his thoughts, judgements and decisions (Shavelson & Stern 1981:459), we need to probe the ideas of black teachers. Macdonald (1990d:30) found, for example, the following ideas expressed by teachers: that rote learning helps children to understand, and that "drilling is better" because some children cannot read and they mix Afrikaans and English. Like Macdonald, Brand (1991:262) found that the rote learning model is generally used. This observation, combined with questionnaires completed by teachers, led her to conclude that teachers believe rote learning to be "good" notwithstanding their teacher's training. As regards teaching style, Macdonald (1990d:33) finds that teachers are in general not able to cover their program of work per year for reasons such as their laissez-faire attitude to time, and the low expectations they have of the pupils, who in turn produce at a very slow rate because of the low expectations.

The ignorant Western mind tends to look with scorn on certain inabilities of people from other cultures. Macdonald (1990a:69) reminds us that in times of rapid social change, such as Blacks are passing through at present, new goals cause conventional patterns of behaviour to become "devalued, inappropriate or even impossible." For example, traditional tasks are displaced, such as animal husbandry and clay pot making. The real loss is not the tasks themselves, but rather "the

opportunities for learning which these tasks embody." The culture has to make a paradigm shift, and "in the grey land between paradigms there may be a loss of cognitive efficacy." Macdonald (1990a:69) says, "We would assume that while making the paradigm shift, the social actors might necessarily experience being disempowered ... For children, this would not only be loss, but emptiness."

According to Macdonald (1990a:78-90), analyses of the indigenous origins of the traditional teaching style is reinforced by work done by Kok (1986) on problem-solving pairs. Kok's study comprised pre-school Zulu children and their mothers or teachers. The children had to construct a copy of a jigsaw-like model, with the adult's aid. The pairs did not, in Western terms, function very efficiently as problem solvers. Kok reconstructed what the mothers /teachers intended in the execution of tasks, taking in account *their* rules for being. She then constructed six strategies which the mothers/teachers followed. Macdonald (1990a:88-90) compares Kok's descriptions to what is observed in the classrooms of black schools, and finds great agreement. The child is taught to solve problems *with* people rather than independently. The role of teacher and learner are mutually exclusive: the teacher is the "one who knows", the learner the "one who does." The teacher does not impart knowledge which falls within the realm of her exclusive role as the one who knows, but rather creates opportunities for trial-and-error behaviour on the part of the child. In many cases the teacher only gives piecemeal instructions and has the child waiting for the next part instruction, unable to finish the task by himself. When verbal instructions fail to elicit the appropriate action response, the teacher resorts to demonstration and example.

Observation and imitation are the parallel learning modes of the child. The child must subordinate individual intentions and become responsive to outer-directed instruction. The teacher prefers getting the child to act in synchrony with her, in response to minimal verbal and non-verbal cues. Immediate responses are more valued than exactly correct ones, and the teacher frequently reinforces the child's reaction to instruction regardless of whether the reaction is correct or appropriate. Thus a warm climate of co-operative interdependence is created.

Macdonald (1990a:82-83) finds this "in synchrony" teaching style back in the classroom in the demand that children should appear to be paying attention to the teacher, even if they do not understand what is being said. An indicator of this attention is the repetition of words and phrases the teacher has just uttered. It seems as if teachers do not know that pupils can repeat from short

term memory, without really paying attention. Teachers do not look or care for evidence of independent thought by a child. As will be shown in par. 3.5 to par. 3.7, teachers tend to accept answers only when correct by their own standards. Macdonald (1990a:83) remarks that this teaching style does not lead children to become autonomous problem solvers. They are not expected to participate in the gathering of appropriate information; they do not have the essential features of the task conveyed to them, and cannot pursue the inherent structure of the task. Like the present investigator, Macdonald (1990a:83) finds that children are sometimes given rather dubious feedback about the effectiveness of their understanding of concepts or procedures.

In the teacher-centred classroom there is little opportunity for initiative on the pupil's part, and spontaneous speech is rare. Macdonald (1990a:134) reports that her testing of oral skills gave the impression that the children were not used to speaking English spontaneously. To the investigator it seems that teachers assume reciting of rote learnt sentences to be sufficient *speaking* ability. They also assume that English learnt is indicated by the ability to read with acceptable pronunciation, and that to prepare pupils for a written examination in English at the end of Gr. 2, they should start teaching English reading and writing within weeks of the first English lessons. What is most disturbing, is that Macdonald (1990d:56) found that when a Gr. 2 class on a computer program had made formidable progress in English, the Gr. 3 teacher of the next year was not able to build on it. Macdonald (1990d:56) fears that the advantage pupils have gained in one grade might be lost later as a result of the poor English proficiency of teachers accustomed to teaching English at a very low, structural level.

What is said above regarding primary school teachers is not any different from what is found in the literature regarding black secondary school teachers. Ziskovsky (1986:73) did a study on black teachers of Grades 8 - 10, and writes that most black classroom teaching was teacher-oriented, with students passively absorbing knowledge from an "all-knowing" authority figure. There was heavy use of rote responses and memorisation by pupils, and teachers told Ziskovsky (1986:38) that their pupils hardly ever spoke English at all.

Summary of the characteristics of black teachers:

They prefer having full control;

They expect pupils to repeat what they say, as an indication that attention is being given;

They are more concerned about form than about meaning;

They withhold information which can lead to full understanding;

They work slowly and accept that children produce at a slow rate;

They have certain assumptions, e.g. that rote learning is "good"; that English learnt is indicated by the ability to read and recite with acceptable pronunciation; and that a reader written for a grade should be read in that grade, without consideration of the level previously attained.

These remarks on teacher's characteristics and assumptions serve to indicate that although the intention in this chapter is to differentiate between two methods of English teaching, the differences cannot be as great in practice as they are theoretically.

3.2.4 **Traditional teaching of reading skills in black schools**

Pupils' reading ability has a great influence on their learning an L2 at school. How do they learn to read the L1 and the L2? How are they taught to derive meaning from what they read?

a) A phonic approach

It is traditional in black schools to learn reading the vernacular in Gr. 1 in the phonic way, which is not difficult with an African language since the spelling is phonetic. At first single sounds and words are learnt, and one teacher explained that she wrote three new words below each other on the board and taught them to the class. When individuals could "read" any of the three, she was satisfied, not considering the possibility that the pupils simply knew the positions of the words. Most teachers have flash cards written by themselves, from which they can ask the whole class, or individuals, to read. It seems that the number of such flash cards is small and that they are only used at the beginning of the year. Teachers prefer big posters on which they write a number of sentences, to be put up somewhere in class and read regularly. It is not considered as a problem that pupils learn the sentences of such posters by heart.

Mostly reading lessons consist of the teacher or a pupil reading as a model, and the whole class then repeating every line. If the teacher is not satisfied with the pronunciation of a word or line, it may be repeated many times. Some teachers tell the pupils to follow the reading in their books, and reprimand those seen to be looking about. But in some classes the pupils happily repeat all sentences while just looking anywhere. Thus the same lesson is repeated many times on many days, and certain words of the lesson are then copied and learnt for spelling tests. That is the

program with the vernacular for the whole of the Gr. 1 year, and in the Gr. 2 year the same program is followed for reading and writing English, with regular spelling tests. At one school much trouble was taken to teach the pupils to say the alphabet in English, which does not mean that they used the English alphabet when learning the spelling of English words. At another school some Gr. 2 pupils still found it difficult at the end of 1995 to read English words without saying syllables as if in their L1.

Macdonald (1990a:76) did not do any research on the *process* of teaching reading skills in either the first or second language, but only evaluated the products of these enterprises. In general she found that reading skills are very poorly developed in both languages.

b) The relevance of program versus dedication

An investigation carried out in Gr. 1 classes at the end of 1995 indicates that the single most important factor regarding learning to read, besides the ability of individual pupils, is the amount of effort put in by the teacher. This was more important than the reading program the pupils were on, as found when testing the reading ability of Gr. 1 pupils at three schools. At all the schools near to Schools A and B the pupils had done their reading in 1995 using *Breakthrough to Literacy* of the Molteno Project, therefore a wide search was necessary to find a Welkom school still on the old program. One was found in a new township. A reading lesson was attended and the pupils tested. Only 11 % of them could not read, and on the whole it was surprising how well they read. At School A (then on the Molteno Project) the same results were found, but at School B (long on the Molteno Project) it was found that 66 % of the Gr. 1A class could not read. Even the best pupils performed poorly. Probably a lazy teacher and poor discipline or control were to blame.

c) Reading without comprehension

It seems as if comprehension of what is read in the reader is never tested in black schools. Only at School B, when on the Molteno Project, the investigator witnessed comprehension checking. Besides the questions and other checks built into the lessons, the teacher of one Gr. 3 class also showed how her pupils translated an English lesson into the L1 "so that I can see if they understand it." However, the other two Gr. 3 teachers of 1993 did not use the translation method.

In all other reading lessons the investigator found the only focus to be on the mechanical task of practising decoding skills and word sounds, even when reading the L1. It seems as if teachers

assume that decoding the written text is all that is needed for comprehension, and that correct pronunciation indicates comprehension. Such mechanical reading cannot lead to growth in concept formation. Ausubel (1968:41) says an essential condition for conceptualisation is that symbolically expressed ideas are related nonarbitrarily to what the learner already knows. That means ideas should be related to some *specifically relevant existing aspect* of a learner's cognitive structure, e.g. an already meaningful symbol. However, if pupils read without the intention to understand, what they read will not be added to their body of existing knowledge.

In the second term of 1994, investigating whether the sound principles of the Molteno Project were applied to the teaching of Afrikaans at School B, the investigator was deeply disappointed. The pupils were reading Afrikaans within a few weeks of starting to learn it. They were reading from a reader written for Gr. 3 at a time when the teaching of Afrikaans started in Gr. 1, therefore a reader that was far too advanced for them. The most discouraging finding was that they read the Afrikaans without any comprehension. One of the best pupils read about a boy brushing a donkey's back, neck and head, and the reason for the donkey's name being Ears. When the child was asked repeatedly to show the donkey's ears, head, etc. in the picture of the reader, she could not. Neither could any of her classmates. However, when the familiar chunk was used: *Wys my jou ore* (Show me your ears), she showed her ears and then, with much joy, the donkey's ears, head, etc. while calling out the words. After having taught the pupils how to react to Afrikaans imperatives such as *Wys my jou ore / nek* (Show me your ears / neck), the teacher took for granted that they understood what they read about the donkey, but they did not. Both teacher and pupils were only concerned about pronouncing the words nearly correctly.

This anecdote concludes the situational analysis of L2 teaching at black schools. It underscores the fundamental problem: *communication* about what is available, e.g. learning material, is lacking completely, so that meaning-focused input is scarce.

3.3 **Two approaches to second language teaching**

The three components of the didactic situation are the learner, the teacher and the learning material, which in the case being considered is English as an L2. As shown in par 2.6.1, it is the different points of view concerning what *language* is that led to different approaches to language teaching: the traditional approach came from a *structural* view of language while the communica-

tive approach originated later from a *functional* view of language. Not only do the two approaches stem from different views of what language is, but they also see the final goal of L2 instruction differently. The goal with traditional methods tends to be that the learner should be able to handle the structural parts of the language correctly, while the goal with communicative methods is ability to use the L2 in practical situations.

These goals differentiated in theory should lead to different points of view about what should be instructed as learning material in the classroom, and how it should be done. Therefore the two approaches should lead to different programs given to teachers according to which they should teach. However, the way in which the program is presented to the teacher may or may not change the teacher's original views of what language is, or how and why it should be instructed. The teacher made such views her own during years at school and college. We should therefore differentiate, for the purpose of this investigation, between what the two approaches are in theory and what they are in practice, as observed at particular schools.

3.3.1 **Traditional methods of second language teaching**

As mentioned in par. 2.3.2, the term 'traditional approach' in language teaching is used for any combination of formal grammar teaching and audiolingual teaching. These two methods of language teaching were explained in chapter 2. In par. 3.5 to par 3.7 some characteristics of the traditional approach will be described, as observed in the English teaching at particular schools.

3.3.2 **Communicative methods of second language teaching**

In chapter 1 the terms 'meaning-focused instruction' and 'communication' were explained. The two terms will be used more or less as synonyms. 'Communication' implies that there is an information gap, meaning that one party does not know beforehand what the other party wants to communicate. The reason for equating *communication* and *meaning-focused instruction* is that the information gap of genuine communication ensures a focus on meaning, so as to get the message. Communication can take place without language (when it cannot be seen as L2 instruction), or with only one of the parties speaking.

The table below contrasts (genuine) communication and non-communication.

(Genuine) communication	Non-communication
* Directives/commands given in random order and acted on.	* The repetition of commands given in fixed order, so that the recipient knows what to expect.
* The giving of messages or any unknown information, which is understood.	* Repetition of information already known. Receiving information which is not understood.
* Questions, especially referential questions (explanation below).	*Answers to questions learnt without understanding or repeated until they are produced automatically.

Ellis (1991:5-6) distinguishes between *display* questions, which have predetermined answers, e.g. test questions, and *referential* questions, which permit open answers.

The term 'communicative approach' implies that the L2 is taught by communicating in the L2 about *anything*, without even thinking of formal matters. However, teachers prefer to have a program giving them something to talk about. The danger is that the program can be seen as fixed rules on what to teach, while using traditional methods of teaching it, especially methods like repetition and rote learning. Writing materials for a communicative program, and training teachers to use it correctly, are two different things. Zais (1976:11) differentiates between the *curriculum document* and *the functioning or operative curriculum*. In the next paragraph some background information about a communicative program will be given and some mention of its characteristics, but how it was implemented at a particular school will be described in par. 3.5 to par 3.7. Mention will also be made on how it was seen to operate when teachers were trained less well than the first group of teachers at School B.

3.3.3 **The Molteno Project, an example of communicative language teaching**

a) Origin and objectives of the Molteno Project

In 1975 the *Institute for the Study of English in Africa* of Rhodes University, directed by Prof. Lanham, started the Molteno Project with the specific aim of improving the standard of English in black S.A. schools. The Project is an ongoing research program in curriculum development for language teaching in primary schools where the mother tongue is an African language. They moved away from the traditional approach in language teaching, with its focus on the grammatical code, to the more modern communicative approach with its focus on meaning (Molteno Project

1994:1-4). The Project has other divisions also, e.g. a first reading course in several black languages, called *Breakthrough to Literacy.*

The courses compiled for the Molteno Project were not issued to schools by the DET, as other textbooks and readers were, and in the new S.A. it is still the case. Individual schools must buy the materials. In 1993 it cost about R18 for a Gr. 2 reader, while the school fee was R20 per year. Some Welkom schools are sponsored by mining houses to buy the Molteno materials. Teachers must also attend a training course before they may use the materials.

b) The first English course of the Molteno Project

The Gr. 2 *Bridge to English* course, written by Rodseth and Lanham (1985), has three parts.

* Part One is an oral course, that should be completed in 12 weeks time, before starting to read. The objective is to establish orally a basic vocabulary and essential sentence structures, by using a communicative approach. Interaction between the teacher and pupils is of prime importance, but pupils should also get opportunities to practise what was learnt in pairs and small groups. Most of the principles for teaching a second language, discussed in par. 2.7.3, are present in the oral course. However, it does not follow that all the teachers trained for the *Bridge* course have grasped its main objectives and know how to conduct teaching that is really communicative.

* Part Two is a first English reader, consisting of 18 lessons or "Steps" on 90 big pages. Most lessons consist of four main parts or "Drills," in each of which comprehension is checked.

* Part Three, *Write On,* was added later as additional practice in writing, with different kinds of exercises to be done after completing each lesson or "Step."

All three parts of this course are intended to be completed in the Gr. 2 year. For the Gr. 3 year there is another "Pupil's Book" and Teacher's Manual, *Bridge Plus One*, for the following year it is *Bridge Plus Two*. Unlike old-fashioned readers, the "Pupil's Books" are big and thick and have a variety of activities to be done, as explained in the Teacher's Manuals.

c) Some characteristics of the *Bridge to English* reader for Gr. 2

The *Bridge* reader differs from other English readers in use at black schools mainly in two ways:

Comprehension is tested constantly;

A special spelling system is used.

Both these features will be discussed briefly.

Comprehension testing

The main principle of the *Bridge to English* reader is that the child should understand what he reads. Not only the illustrations serve that purpose, but comprehension is checked constantly.

The first ten lessons each has the same four parts or "drills", each testing comprehension in a specific way. In lesson 1 for example drill a) has nine pictures, each with three words next to it, e.g. *arm, eggs, a cart.* Pupils must read the three words and indicate the one corresponding to the picture, showing that they understand the word. It also means pupils cannot simply "say the picture", for some words are without pictures. In the process the first 12 words can be mastered. Drills b), c) and d) have sentences built from the nouns already learnt, e.g. for lesson one: *The hen is on the bed; The men are in the car.* In drill b) sentences must be matched to pictures having a different order. In drill c) a number of sentences must be marked True or False according to their correspondence to a bigger picture. Drill d) is a writing exercise, e.g. pupils have to fill in the underlined words to match a given picture: *The eggs are in the nest.*

The *Bridge* spelling system

Rodseth (1987:35) explains why a phonic approach to teaching reading was adopted, saying the "pronunciation spelling" contains the capacity to help pupils develop phonic skills. English reading and writing can be improved if teachers and pupils are assisted in the difficult task of learning English pronunciation. The *Bridge to English* Teacher's Manual explains the difficulties with English pronunciation and spelling, e.g. problems caused by the fact that Zulu has five simple vowel sounds and Sotho seven, but English twenty. Acknowledging that "English spelling is crazy", four problem areas of English pronunciation and spelling are discussed on pages 90 to 96 of the Teacher's Manual, with a description of how the problems are tackled by the "Bridge method". Only the first of the four is explained below:

Grouping and diacritics or "sound-help marks"

To help with pronunciation there are explanations for the teacher. For the child words with similar vowels are grouped together, the sounds being indicated by diacritics. For example, the first group of words to be read is: *car, cart, arm, farm,* with a line under ar to indicate the sound. The second group is: *hen, pen, men, bed, leg, egg/s, nest,* with a sign under the e. Twenty different English vowels and diphthongs are differentiated in Bridge Spelling, and this spelling is used throughout the first book. Teachers should write groups of words on the board to "Compare

and Contrast," e.g. on page 82 of the Teacher's Manual the following is given under C & C:

i /i /	i */schwa /*
a fish	a ship
a pig	a tin
the pigs kiss	the pigs sit

Rodseth (1987:35) explains that the aim of Bridge Spelling is to provide learners with a close sound- symbol correspondence without using a new alphabet. The only indication that the *Bridge* reader was written specifically for black pupils, is in the Teacher's Manual. English sounds are explained by comparing them where possible to sounds in both the Sotho and Nguni languages. The *Bridge* reader as such has no ethnic markings.

d) Comments on the first *Bridge* course as a communicative course

Initially the Teacher's Manual fails to train teachers and pupils in genuine communication. Instead, pupils are taught to recite, in chorus and alone. The first lesson plan gives 7 commands to be given to pupils, in fixed order so that pupils can join the teacher in reciting the commands. Pupils are then required to recite these commands to each other in pairs and also to learn a rhyme. For the second lesson the same and three more commands are repeated by teacher and class "until fluent," and the vocabulary is extended by five words. On the third day greetings should be practised and also *You are Thabo. Yes, I am Thabo*, meaning that *Yes* is not learnt as reaction to a question. On the fourth day it is expected of pupils to answer *Who are you?* with *I am Thabo*, and *How are you?* with *I am well thank you*. The last is a long sentence for a small child, and the differentiation between the vowel sounds of *Who* and *How* is difficult.

The lessons for the first two weeks must be criticised. Although the Teacher's Manual says on p. 3 that the mind of the learner needs time to "take in and work on" a new structure and its meaning (cf. Principle 2 of par. 2.7.3), the *Bridge* course does not really allow pupils first to learn by listening and understanding, before speaking. In L1 acquisition a child understands much before he can say it. Therefore a "silent period" is advocated, e.g. by Kilfoil (1989:30) who says most writers agree that learners should not be pressurised into speaking in the L2, as this causes anxiety. Not only does the *Bridge* course pressurise pupils to speak from the first day, but it encourages rote learning of a sequence of commands and sentences, thus excluding real

communication. Furthermore, understanding is not cultivated. Pupils cannot be expected to understand *I am well thank you*, but have to give this response on the cue *How*, which they have to differentiate from *Who*. The focus is not at all on meaning, but on form. The two questions *Who are you?* and *How are you?* are used for the first game. This game, as well as greetings repeated to practise pronunciation, are not genuine communication. Such an early emphasis on pronunciation is also likely to violate Principle 8, that errors be condoned, since teachers usually expect high standards of pronunciation from their pupils from the beginning.

As an amendment to the first lessons of the *Bridge* course, suggestions will be given in par. 6.6.2 for first lessons in an L2 where there is genuine and varied communication between teacher and class. No more is expected from the class than actions and *Yes/ No* answers. The recommendation is that a first English course be introduced during the last two terms of Gr. 1, so that Part 1 of *Bridge to English* for Gr. 2 can be completed in the prescribed time.

The criticism on the first lessons of the *Bridge* course does not mean that genuine communication cannot take place during the first lessons, and much genuine communication is built into the course as a whole. As shown, in the first *Bridge* reader there is continual comprehension checking, one prerequisite for meaning-focused instruction. Other features of all the courses are games and tasks, some to be done by groups, which allow for much genuine communication. Yet the courses are not wholly task-based, and are teacher-centred in the sense that the teacher is absolutely in control. However, for pupils who still have to learn to read in an L2 it is probably the best way, as will be explained in par. 3.5.3 with reference to Huizenga (1990:144).

If we think of meaning-focused versus form-focused instruction as a continuum, traditional L2 instruction is near the form-focus end but the Gr. 2 *Bridge* course is not very near the meaning-focused end, but somewhere in-between, since it has many elements of form-focused instruction.

e) Work on the he/she distinction

As is well known, African languages do not have a he/she distinction, and many Blacks find the distinction difficult to master even in adulthood. Thus one would expect a course written for black pupils, like the *Bridge* course, to give sufficient attention to this distinction. The Gr. 2 Teacher's Manual says that he/she should be introduced on Day 3 of Week 1, and his/her on Day 4 of Week 2. In the sentences used with the big pictures in Gr. 2, reference is made to a girl waving *her* hand

and a policeman putting up *his* hand, but on the whole not much work appears on the he/she distinction. The Teacher's Manual (p. 82) says on lesson 8: *Teach the he/she difference and test the understanding of this difference frequently* (Teachers teach it with questions like: *What is Thabo? He is a boy.*) The following table shows the frequency of use of pronouns in the reader following the note on lesson 8:

Lesson	**She**	**Her**		**He**	**His**	**Him**
8	3			2		
9	2			3	3	
11				18	15	2
12			for dog and man:	7	6	
13	2					
14				5		
15	4	2				
16	3			6	2	1
17	(8,	10, for cow and mouse)				
18				17		1
Total:	**22**	**12**		**58**	**26**	**4**

The above totals are the total number of these pronouns in the *Bridge to English* reader. For pupils who do not have the he/she distinction in their own language, the number is probably too small. There are places in the reader where more pronouns could have been used: In lesson 14 two groups of sentences like the following are found: *Simon is not crying. Simon is smiling. He is happy.* The drill on p. 87 has seven sentences to be matched to pictures, all starting with *The man.*

f) The *Bridge* course and the early use of written material

The *Bridge* course has been criticised for starting with formal aspects such as reading and writing too soon (Rosseel 1996, personal communication). Such criticism may be warranted, but loses sight of some realities of the S.A. situation. The *Bridge* Teacher's Manual (p. 1) gives the following reasons for an early start with reading:

"The spoken word disappears as soon as it is uttered; the printed word is there to 'hold on to' and return to as often as one wishes. This is important when:

Classes are big and few opportunities exist for one-to-one contact between teacher and pupil;

Many children drop out of school. "Reading has, in later years, 'cashable value'; imperfectly acquired oral skills disappear with time."

The teacher is not confident of her English. This leads to excessive use of the mother tongue and poor models of English being provided for the children."

Another consideration is that teachers and parents have certain assumptions which cannot be overlooked, e.g. that the requirements of the syllabus be met. If the syllabus says that a written examination must be done at the end of Gr. 2, expectations are that pupils should be prepared for it. Another assumption seems to be that pupils only know English if they can read and write it.

g) A didactic evaluation of the *Bridge* courses

Questions that arise concerning the *Bridge* courses are whether they really exemplify the communicative approach, and if they differ markedly from traditional teaching methods.

As said in par. 2.7.3, many different methods comprise the communicative approach, but they have certain principles in common. As mentioned above, Principles 2 and 8 do not feature as they should in the first lessons of the *Bridge to English* Teacher's Manual. The other principles are in the *Bridge* courses, the most important being that there should be genuine communication comprising communication gaps and comprehension checks. The fact that comprehension checks are built into the first reader makes the course a little "teacher proof". Even if a teacher did not attend a training course, or did not grasp the basic principles of communicative teaching, her pupils can learn to read with understanding. To evaluate the adherence to some of the principles, e.g. Principle 6 that the L1 and L2 should be kept separate, a description of what actually happens in classrooms is needed. A final answer to the question above will therefore only be possible at the end of this chapter.

As mentioned in par. 2.2, the profoundness of a curriculum change can be measured by considering change in every component of the curriculum: educational aims, content, learning activities, and evaluation. Fundamental changes in the first three components are built into the learning material of the *Bridge* courses, which will also be discussed in par. 3.9.

3.4 **The schools where the teaching of English was observed**

The first part of the empirical research done for this thesis was to investigate what happened in the English classrooms of black schools. Although a number of schools were visited, a special attempt was made to keep track of the English instruction received by two particular groups of

pupils at two schools, the pupils who were in Gr. 2 in 1992, respectively at schools referred to as Schools A and B. Where reference is made to other schools, it is with the objective of showing that School A is a typical primary school in a black township of Welkom in the Free State.

The English instruction given at the two schools was investigated by attending some English classes during 1992 - 1994, as follows: Gr. 2 classes in 1992; Gr. 3 classes in 1993; and Gr. 4 classes in 1994. Since a great number of didactic factors could have influenced learning outcomes, it was necessary to record "everything that happened" as far as it was possible without using a tape recorder. However, the intention was to disturb classroom practice as little as possible. With some teachers it took some time before they accepted that the investigator turned up without an appointment. Later they became quite used to having an investigator about. In the first term of 1994, about ten lessons were attended at each school, some lessons running over two or more periods. Where necessary, teachers were also asked about certain procedures followed, or how many pages they had done in specific books. They were never asked about their intentions, beliefs, or reasons for doing things, nor were comments passed on what they did, except for vague approval. To arrive at a fuller picture of the classroom processes, pupils' exercise books, tasks, tests, examination papers and answers were collected. Eventually this information and an analysis of notes made during class visits, made an interpretative analysis possible. (See par. 3.5 to par. 3.7).

The objective of classroom investigation was to see if the instruction provided at these two schools can be typified as *instruction with the emphasis on form* versus *instruction with the emphasis on meaning*, as explained in chapter 2.

3.4.1 **The reasons for selecting Schools A and B**

Schools A and B are in the oldest part of Welkom's black township, School B being one of the oldest schools in the area. As far as could be established, there are no marked differences between them regarding the socio-economic status of the parents, since they belong to the same residential area. They are about 2,5 km apart. For the years 1992 - 1995 the school fees at School A were R21 per year, and at School B the more common R20, which is not a real difference and does not indicate School B to be the better of the two. At both schools the only vernacular used is Southern Sotho. Both schools belonged to the DET, therefore the same syllabi had to be followed. The

vernacular was used as medium of instruction for the first four years, and each class had only one teacher for the year. The size of the Gr. 2 classes was about equal in 1992 with about 49 pupils per class, but at School B one of the three teachers was on maternity leave for three months and also absent on other occasions. Her pupils then attended the other two classes, so that there were about 70 pupils per class for a great deal of the year. School B is a bigger school, e.g. it had a total of 1048 pupils in 1993, against 940 at School A, a difference of 108.

School B was chosen because it was the first school in Welkom to be on the Molteno Project. In 1992 it was on the Molteno Project for its fourth year. Its principal was sent to the University of Leeds in England for three months to be trained as a trainer in the Molteno Project, a privilege not given to every principal. Furthermore, where in later years Molteno teachers are trained in Welkom for four mornings only, the teachers of School B were taken to Bloemfontein for their first training, and were well assisted by their principal during the first years. When the teachers of any grade had a problem, the principal would speak to them one morning for up to two hours. Unfortunately it seems to the investigator that the initial good results obtained with the various training sessions wore off with time, something to be discussed in par. 3.4.2.

School A was chosen among many on similar programs because of the good impression made by an enthusiastic Gr. 2 teacher. Throughout the first three years the teachers of School A kept up this impression. For example, School A won the trophies for the best choir and for the best soccer team in Welkom in 1994. On the whole there were no great differences between the teachers of Schools A and B up to 1994, except for the in-service training teachers received at School B as part of the Molteno Project.

This investigator's evaluation of the teachers at the schools rests on observing the following: teachers being absent from school, or at school but absent from class; the degree to which teachers were prepared for English lessons; errors made by teachers in spoken and written English; and evaluations of teachers' attitudes towards their pupils. Both the best and worst teachers of the two groups were found at School B. (More about the latter in par. 4.10). The best teacher was also the oldest, having taught for 42 years when she retired in 1994. She was the teacher of Gr. 2A in 1992. Her qualifications were only Gr. 10 and a teacher's diploma. The teacher of Gr. 2B at School B had only Gr. 8 and the diploma. The Gr. 2 teachers of School A were younger and further educated.

3.4.2 **Non-linguistic factors that might have influenced results**

Some facts were mentioned in the previous paragraph that might reflect negatively on School B: it had lower school fees, its Gr. 2 classes were overcrowded for a great deal of the year, and its Gr. 2 teachers were less educated than the teachers of School A. However, it cannot be said that any of these factors had a negative effect. The following non-linguistic factors could also have affected teaching outcomes or test results.

a) Although the size of Gr. 2 classes was about equal in 1992, except when one teacher was absent, the classes at School A were bigger than at School B in 1993 and 1994. In 1994 School A had an average of 42 pupils in three Gr. 4 classes, and School B had an average of 36 pupils in five Gr. 4 classes. This factor might have benefited School B more than School A.

b) The pupils of the test group who attended School B in their Gr. 1 year(s), learnt reading the L1 in the holistic way prescribed by the Molteno Project, with the course *Breakthrough to Literacy*. The pupils of School A learnt reading in the traditional, phonic way. It is quite possible that the pupils of School B had the advantage of better mastering the art of reading, or of learning better reading skills. However, it was not necessarily the case, as was indicated by some findings in 1995, already discussed in par. 3.2.4 b).

Pupils of the test groups at Schools A and B were tested by the investigator for reading ability at the beginning of 1992. The method was to take pupils one by one, letting each read some single lines in a Sotho reader, by closing the rest of the page. Some pupils confidently said any line from the lesson, not necessarily the line open to view. At School A about 15 % of the Gr. 2 pupils could not read, and at School B about 10 %. However, pupils who were unable to read on entering Gr. 2 would not have influenced the bulk of the results obtained for this investigation, as they were sure to fail soon and thus to drop out of the investigation groups.

c) During 1994, and especially in 1995 - 1996, the investigator became aware of a lack of discipline at School B. According to a learning facilitator with whom the issue was discussed, it was caused by a poor relationship between the principal and his staff, and not by the greater freedom for pupils built into the Molteno Project. Further evidence of a lack of concord between principal and staff was found at the beginning of 1996, when the principal of School B asked the investigator to inform his staff about the merits of the Molteno Project. They were questioning the merits of features such as story telling.

To the investigator it is doubtful whether the greater amount of communication, in the L1, or the greater freedom that went with the lack of discipline, could in any way help the pupils of School B to acquire more English, as was conjectured by Dr. Rosseel of Belgium (1996, personal communication when visiting School B). What the investigator did observe was that an exceptionally high proportion of the Gr. 1A pupils did not learn to read during 1995 (par. 3.2.4 b), and the English input provided to Gr. 2 pupils in 1996 was inferior to that provided in 1992, in amount and kind. Also, a comprehension test taken from the test group at the end of 1996 when in Gr. 6, and from a similar Gr. 5 group, showed the Gr. 5 group to be far behind.

At School A relationships and discipline always seemed to be sound, and the teachers apparently believed that their school was the better of the two compared for the investigation. At the end of 1995 the investigator showed the English teacher some test results and he asked in surprise: *"But aren't our pupils ahead?"*

d) Since it was expected that School B would have better results than School A, being on a more modern and theoretically sound program, School A was favoured on purpose, e.g. in the marking of their work. When subjective decisions had to be taken, e.g. if a sentence was incomprehensible or if only the spelling was very bad, some School B sentences were marked incomprehensible even though the investigator could work out the meaning quite well. The reason for this is that the investigator does not want to be accused of favouring School B to find desired results.

e) A further discrimination against School B is caused by its higher overall pass rate of 82 % against 78 % at School A. A comparison of the two test groups will illustrate the point.

School A. Of the 99 pupils in Gr. 2 during 1992, only 56 % were in Gr. 4 in 1994, and only 32% passed Gr. 4. (Most of those that dropped out failed, but some left the school).

School B. Of the 143 pupils in Gr. 2 during 1992, 69 % reached Gr. 4 in 1994, and 50 % passed Gr. 4.

If we assume that the groups who started at each school had the same potential, then sifting out more of the weak pupils at School A left School B with a higher percentage of weak candidates.

3.4.3 **Other schools and classes compared to the test groups**

Other schools were included in the investigation in 1994 - 1996, to see how Schools A and B compared to neighbouring schools. The six schools, A - F, are all near to each other, Schools B

and E at the farthest ends, less than four kilometres apart. In all these schools Southern Sotho is the only vernacular, except for School D which has Tswana classes also. Although not much classroom observation was done at the other schools, it was ascertained that the same form-focused teaching methods were used as at School A.

The pass rate at these schools was investigated as far as records existed, and seems to average about 80 %. The following are the pass rates for the years 1991 - 1994: School A: 78 %; School B: 82 %; School C: 82 %; School D: 67 %; School E: 81 %; School F: 85 %. Because of the low pass rate at School D it was left out of the 1996 tests.

In 1995 tests were also taken from the two grades ahead of the actual investigation groups at Schools A and B, to see if the results obtained with Gr. 5 pupils were also obtained with Gr. 6 and 7 pupils. In 1996 some tests were also taken at a black secondary school, and at three Afrikaans schools from pupils in the same grade as the test groups (Gr. 6). The reason for this was to see if a particular test was not too difficult for the test groups.

3.5 **Instruction received by Grade 2 pupils**

The following paragraphs contain what was observed at schools, mostly during 1992. For the description of teaching at Schools A and B, reference will be made to the four components of the curriculum (cf. par. 2.2), as well as to the principles of classroom SLA, as given in par. 2.7.3.

3.5.1. **English lessons for Grade 2 pupils at School A in 1992**

a) Educational aims

Although Gr. 2 marked the pupils' first acquaintance with English, the first concern of the teachers was with writing and spelling. They would have said that the aim was to teach the pupils English, but they assumed that knowledge of English is indicated by the ability to read and write it.

Each pupil had three small exercise books for English written work: Book 1 for copying work to be learnt; Book 2 for weekly tests and a book for monthly tests. In Book 1 of Gr. 2A appear at date 29/1 four drawings with the words: *table, chair, duster, pencil.* On 4/2 four more words and drawings were added, and on 12/2 twelve more. The spelling of these words had to be learnt. The first spelling test in Book 2 was on 31/1, with the first four words of Book 1 given in a different order. Gr. 2B did more written work and wrote longer spelling tests than Gr. 2A, e.g.

ten words on 13/2 when Gr. 2A still had only four words. Gr. 2B also did a greater number of tests, sometimes more than one per week.

The contents of spelling lists was partly prescribed by the reader, and much attention was given to a small number of words, for some words appeared often in the tests. Spelling tests were written outside, children sitting one by one to make copying impossible. Words were shouted out by the teacher, probably without showing the referent of a word. Afterwards corrections were copied from the board. The teacher of Gr. 2B, after the example of the white teachers of her own child's private school, sent the parents letters asking them to help children prepare for spelling tests. In a second batch of letters she asked some parents to come to school. While the investigator was in her class on 8/6/92, two parents came to see her.

Although much effort was put into spelling, the average of Gr. 2B in the final examination for the spelling of *table, dog, dress, father, food, black, hut, roof, kraal, fire,* was just 50 %.

This concern with the formal aspects of writing deprived pupils from opportunities for English acquisition in two ways: much of the available time for English lessons was consumed by it, and pupils learnt to deal with words without in any way attending to the meaning of the words. One more formal aspect received much attention: acceptable pronunciation.

b) Teaching content

Disconnected nouns were taught, rather than verbs and sentences in context. The words learnt for the spelling tests mostly referred to objects in the classroom, common household objects, and words from the reader, e.g. *hut, kraal.*

When sentences were introduced in writing, they were disconnected. In Gr. 2B the test of 26 /2 had five sentences to be completed: *This is a spoon / plate / dog / hand / broom.* The nouns did not even belong to a specific theme. Among the many words written for spelling tests during the year, mostly ten per week, there were only six verbs in the books of Gr. 2B: *am, has* (30/3), *sitting, writing* (14/8), *stand, see* (10/9). The verbs did not even appear next to each other among the nouns. In Gr. 2A the teaching content was more or less the same.

Although the syllabus (p. 7) says that simple stories should be read or told to the pupils, it does not seem that any kind of story was ever done during the year. Gr. 2B copied in Book I five lessons from the reader, with sentences at least centring around a theme. (Simple example from

elsewhere: *This is a ball. This is a big ball. Can you see the ball? Can you see the big ball? Yes I can see the big ball.)* The five lessons from the reader were longer (average 10 sentences), but were not learnt for tests. Probably the nearest these pupils came to stories or work with literature content, was copying work to keep them busy. This overview of content means that the formal class work made no provision for meaning-focused instruction. Comprehensible input was limited to single words, for extending the vocabulary rather than for getting any messages across.

c) Learning activities: oral work

Oral work was repetition of what the teacher or another model said. Pupils mostly spoke in chorus as a whole class, but sometimes three groups of pupils took turns. Attention was given to the pronunciation of the class, groups and individuals. Attention was also given to understanding, e.g. before any words were copied to be learnt, pupils had to label orally the objects or pictures referred to. Thus the 'here and now' principle was adhered to when the names of objects were learnt, and oral work served as preparation for written work. It seems as if the same method was exploited when pupils had to "learn" lessons in the reader: oral work served as preparation for reading . When the investigator attended the following lesson on 1/6/92, she was expected. The teacher had the necessary objects, e.g. a bucket and fire wood, to let pupils role-play the sentences. In chorus the whole class repeated each line after the teacher:

What is the girl doing? The girl is fetching water.

What is the woman doing? The woman is making fire. (The teacher played this role.)

What is the girl doing? The girl is sweeping.

What is the boy doing? The boy is sitting.

What is the teacher doing? The teacher is writing. (A child was role-playing the teacher)

What is the boy doing? The boy is reading.

After the teacher had taken the lead, five pupils took turns to take the lead with the whole class repeating each line. They knew the sentences too well for it to be a first lesson on them. It was later found that these lines were already written in Book 1 on 14/5, and also appear on p. 4 of the English reader. Although there are good pictures in the reader, the teacher might have thought to make the meaning more clear by the pupils' role-playing. However, she only made it easier for the pupils to memorise and "say the pictures" of the reader instead of reading the words.

The fact that this "oral lesson" was prescribed by a lesson in the reader, underscores the statement that reading and writing was the first concern. Genuine communication in English never took place. The six lines above consist of questions and answers, but they were not experienced even as simulated communication, for the same person read both question and answer. What was acquired from the above lesson as indicated by tests, is discussed in par. 3.5.5.

Since the first single words and short sentences referred to objects or pictures, they could be understood, but some chunks were learnt that probably remained unanalysed. The following non-stop way in which the investigator was often greeted at School A, indicates a lack of comprehension: *Good morning, Mam. How are you? Very well thank you and how are you?*

The method of repetition in chorus means that much English *speaking* was done, but without any communication. The *speaking* was quite unlike what is meant by the word *speaking* when it is said, *One can only learn a language by speaking it.*

Learning activities: using the reader

The English reader used was a small and very old one, written by Barnes. It was not used in the way prescribed by the syllabus. On the last page, p. 8 of the syllabus, instructions i) - iii) regarding reading are to be found.

i) In the third quarter the pupils should start with a suitable approved reader. However, the reader was used much earlier. In most schools the reader is introduced in the first quarter, perhaps because page 1 of the syllabus starts with allocating 3 periods per week to reading.

ii) Care should be taken to see that the pupils are reading and not memorising the material in the class reading book. As shown above, preparation for a reading lesson fosters memorising rather than genuine reading. With classes of 50 pupils individual testing is difficult.

iii) *Understanding of what has been read is of prime importance, and from the beginning pupils should be asked questions to establish that they have grasped the meaning of what is being read.* At School A the testing of understanding was never witnessed, only the method described above of showing pupils the thing read about, so that understanding could be assumed.

Learning activities: learning grammar

Formal aspects of grammar like plural-s received much attention. On 9/4/92 the test in Book 2 was on the plural of *boy, girl, dog, broom, cow, book, mug, hat, blanket, tree, plate, spoon.* A

lesson was attended on 2/11 when plurals were drilled. The ten pairs of words were written on the chalkboard one by one, the teacher making sure that everything was understood, e.g. she said, *Give me a book. Very good, you know what a book is. How many books now?* Below the words one two, the lists were written. The pupils knew this kind of exercise for they started bringing more chairs before asked to. The lists of words grew to: *boy, window, door, table, book, chair, eye, arm, hand, ear,* and their plurals. When the class had repeated the lists after the teacher several times, different pupils took the stick, pointing to words as they read them, e.g. one on top, *eye* below, two on top, *eyes* below, etc. The pointing was not always correct, and *ear* was twice read for *eye* or vice versa, but the whole class was happily repeating each pair in chorus, at least twenty times. The pupils knew what was expected of them and enjoyed the lesson.

The important thing to notice about this lesson on plurals given on 2/11 is that no new vocabulary was introduced. When the focus is on form, it seems teachers stick to vocabulary the pupils already know, so that the grammar can be learnt.

d) The principles of classroom SLA

As is clear from the previous paragraphs, the principles of par. 2.7.3, prescribed by SLA theory, were not adhered to at School A, especially Principles 3, 4 and 5 that there must be genuine communication, innovative language use and appropriate challenges. Only Principle 1, the 'here and now', was observed to some extent. Furthermore, according to Principle 6, there should be a clear separation between the L1 and L2. At School A the L1, Sotho, was often used during English lessons. On 8/6/92 the Gr. 2B teacher first explained in the L1 to the pupils that they should show the visitor what they knew, before starting the English lesson. Later in the lesson she told them in the L1 that she wanted two boys and four girls. After putting up a poster with five sentences like *This is Betty. Betty is a girl,* the teacher explained the sentences in the L1 before teaching the class to read them. In a reading lesson she used the L1 to say *Next line; words at top,* etc. Even when late in the year a child misspelled the word *duster* as *dustar* on the chalkboard, she was told in the L1 how to correct it. During a visit to Gr. 2A the teacher said to the investigator, *Now they must transcribe in their books.* But the class was told in the L1 to get their books and copy from the board. In the investigator's notes is often written: *(Much) Sotho.* All messages were given in the L1, and even most common commands, e.g. to stop making noise.

Principle 7: a sufficient quantity of usable input

The amount of English done at School A was very limited. On the investigator's last visits in November, when revision for the examination was done, most of the oral work was still the vocabulary usually started with: *Stand up! Sit down! What are you doing? We are standing up. What is this? That is a door / wall / floor / ruler / a girl / father*, etc. They said the names of parts of the body and they gave the plurals of given words. Lastly the teacher put questions like *Are you a boy ?* and got answers like *No, I am not a boy.* Pupils also knew three rhymes.

The amount of reading done was very little. At the end of the year the Gr. 2B teacher said they had read up to page 18, of 42 pages, but for the examination pupils read from pages 16 and 17. The verbs covered in these lessons, apart from the six given above in c), are: *eating, drinking, milking, washing, running, jumping, standing, holding, doing, is, has*, meaning 17 verbs in all. Most of these verbs were never tested, and probably not learnt. If the small number of verbs used orally for instructions are added, the total number of verbs encountered was probably about 30.

e) Evaluation

In June only a written examination was done, but in November oral marks were also given, viz. for the recitation of one of the three rhymes, for reading sentences indicated by the teacher on pages 16 and 17 of the reader, and for reactions to the following: *What is your name? How old are you? Show me the roof. Show me a tree. Go to the door. Sit down. Are you a boy?* The written examination for November consisted of ten words as a spelling test; the plurals of *book, leg, ear, mouth, hand, finger*; drawings asking for words: *chair, window, wall, door, table*, and words asking for drawings: *tree, house, gate, fence, church.*

This examination may indicate progress in an L2 if it is an unprepared test, that is, if from his accumulated knowledge of English a child is able to pass the above examination without being prepared for the specific questions. However, it is the assumption in black schools that children must be "prepared for examinations", meaning that they must be drilled to answer the specific questions of the examination, with a few extra examples. Whether such steps were taken to "prepare" the pupils for the above examination was not investigated, but some of the examination questions formed part of the last lesson attended by the investigator. It is also hardly imaginable that small children will know how to draw a gate, a fence and a church without prior practice.

Brand (1991:360) found in her investigation that drilling of examination questions and answers took place in Grades 5 - 7 before the final examination.

3.5.2 **English lessons for Grade 2 pupils at other Welkom schools**

At other Welkom schools the same kind of form-focused instruction was given, the main objective apparently being to teach formal aspects such as acceptable pronunciation, the ability to read and write English, spelling it correctly, and some grammatical features.

English in Grade 2 classes in 1992

In 1992 the investigator observed a number of classes at two other schools in Welkom. The instruction was much the same as at School A: written English was introduced mostly in the second week of Gr. 2, and not later than week five by some teachers. Spelling tests were also written quite early in most classes. In retrospect it seems that at School A the teachers were more bent on getting pupils to learn English spelling, that they took more trouble to get parents to help, and that they worked harder at correcting books, getting pupils to do corrections and to master reading lessons, even if "mastering" only meant repeating with acceptable pronunciation. However, this extra dedication might have been due to hawthorn effects. Less attention might have been given to spelling in the absence of an investigator, and more to other aspects of English.

English in Grade 2 classes in 1995 and 1997

At School E the first dated written work in Gr. 2 for 1995 was on 27/2/95. On 7/3 under He she lists of masculine and feminine were written: *boy - girl, father - mother, brother - sister, grandfather - grandmother.* On 11/5 and again on 19/7 lists of singular and plural were written. On 25/7 the following was written: *Opposites: big - small; tall - short; long - short; fat - slender; clean - dirty.* As class work was also done: *Bees / pigs / cows / dogs live in a ...* Much attention was also given to the prepositions: *in, on, under, between, behind.* Fewer spelling tests were done than at School A in 1992, but some learning work, like the "opposites" above, was given in Gr. 2 but was left for higher grades at School A.

In Gr. 2A of School E, the investigator could not find one pupil on 4/9/95 who was able to read the first English lesson, on Benny and Betty. The teacher called out some of the best pupils, and those who did not just stand mumbling a bit, read *girl* for *boy,* etc. In Gr. 2B there were at

least five or six pupils who could read well. Each had turns to stand in front and they read the first four lessons, each line being repeated by the class in chorus.

In 1997 it was found at Schools D, E and F that written labels for nouns were introduced during the first few weeks. At none of these schools English was instructed in Gr. 1 in 1996.

It is clear that in all these schools the focus was on form and formal matters, not on meaning. What pupils said and read was mostly repetitions, and even if it was comprehensible, much attention to meaning was not required. Since the teachers did not have a teacher's manual for oral work, like the one provided by the Molteno Project, they did not know more than a few simple programs to do orally. The syllabus gives five pages of structures for oral lessons, but it does not provide a method of presenting them, and it does not even mention pair or group work.

3.5.3 **English lessons for Grade 2 pupils at School B in 1992**

Besides investigating whether the focus of teaching was on meaning or form, the extent to which a school on the Molteno Project adhered to the principles of classroom SLA (cf. par 2.7.3) was also investigated at School B.

a) Educational aims

The educational aims implicit in the first *Bridge* course of the Molteno Project include that pupils should gain knowledge of English initially by listening and speaking, later by reading and writing. At School B spoken English was the first concern. The *Bridge* Teacher's Manual has 36 pages, with two columns each, of instructions to the teacher on presenting oral English classes. The emphasis is on listening, speaking and understanding, but as said in par. 3.3.3, there is initially not enough emphasis on first listening. In the day-by-day plans the following are given for each lesson: vocabulary, structures, notes on pronunciation and preparation, and methods of presenting and consolidating the lesson. Some form-focused instruction is included, e.g. for Week 4 Day 1 is prescribed: *The choice of am / is / are with pronouns: I ( ) a teacher; You ( ) a girl; We ( ) here;* etc. (The teacher must pause and snap the fingers, for pupils to supply the copula.)

The prescribed oral work is divided into 12 weeks, but in 1992 as in previous years the teachers of School B took nearly three times as long to do these lessons. Their principal advised them rather to take longer and do the work thoroughly. For most of the first three terms the only

written work was done as occupational tasks, with the main objective of keeping some pupils busy while the teacher was working with a rotating *Teaching Group*.

The fact that some oral work had to be done before formal attention could be given to reading and writing introduced a focus on meaning from the beginning. Pupils had to attend to and obey oral commands, they did not merely repeat sentences in an effortless way.

b) Teaching content

Teaching content was prescribed by the Molteno materials, so that learning material was contextualised. However, the instructions of the Molteno Project were not strictly adhered to, so that far less was covered than prescribed.

* Part One of the Teacher's Manual, which deals with spoken English only, should be completed in three months, but it took the teachers nine months to complete. Consequently the pupils started reading in the reader towards the end of term 3. They finished only 4 lessons in Gr. 2.

* The reader used in 1992 has a part *Write On* added to the previous edition. *Write On* comprises pages 91 to 139 at the back of the book, and has additional written exercises to be done after every lesson. Although the teacher is instructed on pp. 61 and 63 on when these exercises should be done, some teachers did not use *Write On* as intended.

* The instructions on lessons were not all carried out, e.g. the instructions on p. 38 of the Teacher's Manual are the following: "Put a picture of a shop and a school on the board. Draw lines on the floor in front of the board and tell the class that this is the street... A bright child acts as policeman in the street. Tell a child to imitate driving a bus coming down the street. Another is a bicycle, a car, etc. Tell the group: *Here comes a car / bus* ... The policeman waves the cars etc. past. Bring a child to the side of the street and ask questions: *Where are you going?* Child: *I am going to the shop / school. I want to cross the road...* Teacher: *Wait here, don't cross.* (Teacher tells the policeman to stop the traffic.) *Cross now. Look left / right. Thank you policeman.* "

In comparison, the lesson done by Gr. 2B on 26/10/92 was quite limited in scope. After speaking about the picture of a town, pupils mentioning the shop, bus, bicycle, robot, policeman, etc., the street-activity was done. Examples of what was said are given below.

Teacher: *This is a street. I am walking in the street.* Class: *Teacher is walking in the street.* Teacher: *Now I want to cross the street. I am standing here. I want to cross the street. Look at*

me. I have crossed the street. Who can come and cross? (A child came.*) No, not walking in the street! Cross the street!* (The teacher explained crossing again, and told pupils to cross.) One pupil: *I am cross (!) the street.* Another: *I am crossed (!) the street.* (The teacher helped again.) Nearly half the pupils got a chance to "cross", saying: *I am crossing the street.* Then the teacher told one: *Walk in the street.* The first one said correctly: *I am walking in the street,* and many more received one of the two commands, and were helped if they made mistakes, even when the pronunciation was wrong. Although there was much confusion with the two sentences, e.g. three pupils in a row said, *I am crossing in the street,* most got it right towards the end.

This lesson was typical of work at School B, and illustrates the following:

* The pupils were not at a level of SLA where they could do dramatisation of a scene at the level proposed in the Teacher's Manual;
* The lesson was teacher centred with many of the characteristics of form-focused instruction, e.g. the correction of mistakes, the attention to pronunciation, the many repetitions;
* Very little was done in a long period of time.

c) Learning activities: doing occupational tasks

For most of the first three terms the only written work was done as occupational tasks, to keep some pupils busy while the teacher was working with a rotating *Teaching Group.* Examples of occupational tasks: The best groups in Gr. 2A wrote on 27/2 words such as *mouse, hen, pen, cat, lion, pig, fish; hat, log, pot, leg, nose, arm, foot,* each accompanied by a drawing, and *one ... ten.* On 23/4 pupils made two drawings each of *trees, pigs,* etc. with plural labels.

The disconnected lists seem no different from those found in the books of School A, but these words were not learnt for spelling tests, and the exercises served as kind of reading preparation, for some of the words appear on the first pages of the reader.

Learning activities: telling stories

The Molteno Project incorporates a literary approach where pupils read or learn stories. In the reader, the first 10 lessons consist of disjointed sentences, the first story appearing on p. 39. Since they read only up to p. 13 in Gr. 2, the pupils were taught stories which are not part of the Molteno Project, e.g. in Gr. 2A the pupils learnt two stories and the best ones could tell or recite the lengthy stories quite well. Both stories had much dialogue: one was about two boys visiting

each other, the other was about a jackal in a well cheating a goat. They also learnt more rhymes and songs than the pupils at School A. The learning work was meant to extend their vocabulary.

Learning activities: using the reader

The teachers did give occasional attention to written English from quite early on, e.g. when the teacher of Gr. 2A taught the word *girl*, she wrote it on the board, emphasising the *g* which has a different sound in the L1. For teaching the parts of the body she used a chart with names written next to pictures. As shown above, some occupational tasks involved copying words and pictures, which does not mean that the pupils could really read what they wrote. They started reading from the reader *Bridge to English* in the third term. It was actual reading which was understood.

This reader differs in two important ways from other available readers, as explained in par. 3.3.3.

* Grouping and diacritics are used to bring order in English vowel sounds.

* In the *Bridge* reader understanding is constantly checked. As mentioned in par. 3.3.3, the first lessons each have four parts or "drills," each testing comprehension in a different way. Drill d) is a writing exercise, e.g. pupils have to fill in words to match a given picture. In 1992 the first Drill d) work was done on 14/10/92 in Gr. 2A and C, and later in Gr. 2B.

Considering the reader's contribution to the acquisition of English, the emphasis on understanding may be the most important feature.

d) The principles of classroom SLA

As mentioned in par. 3.3.3 d), Principles 2 and 8 are not written into the materials of the *Bridge* course. Other SLA principles (par. 2.7.3) were observed, e.g. Principle 1, the 'here and now' principle, was present in most of the interactions between teacher and pupils: *Open / close the book / cupboard / window. Clean the board. Show me the door. Bring the duster. Give me ...* However, not all lessons adhered to Principle 1, which is also the principle of visualisation. In Gr. 2A a revision lesson on the names of things was given on 14/5/92. For teaching the parts of the body the teacher used a chart with pictures that were very small and vague, too small for all the pupils to see. The same happened with names of clothes. In both cases the pupils used single words to reply, not sentences. In the whole lesson this otherwise excellent teacher referred to only three real objects: her own dress, a boy's kaki shorts, and a pupil's chin.

Principle 3: Genuine communication

One of the first commands prescribed by the Molteno Project is: *In pairs.* Then pupils have to give each other commands like *Look up, look here, etc.* Single pairs of bright pupils should first be used to give a "pupil demonstration," then the whole class should divide into pairs, all pairs commanding each other at the same time. However, teachers say pupils cannot do pair work. The investigator saw "pupil demonstrations", but never a whole class working in pairs. It may be that teachers do not like the idea of relinquishing control, or that they fear pupils will make mistakes which cannot be corrected. It does not seem as if teachers ever tried out the method. The teacher of Gr. 2A let pairs stand in a row, giving each an opportunity to ask or answer: *What are you? I am a boy/girl.* A child was told to take his turn with *Ask her what she is.*

Pupils did not repeat sentences in chorus after the teacher, though sometimes two spoke together, e.g. *We are standing up.* That means pupils spoke less than at School A, but probably gave more attention to the input for they had to react on many commands. Though there was less speaking, there was more interaction and communication. It did not mean less attention to pronunciation, for chorusing to practise pronunciation is allowed (Teacher's Manual: 3). Pupils often worked in small groups, while a rotating *Teaching group* was with the teacher, having "time and place for real communication between teacher and children" (Teacher's Manual: 9).

It should be stressed that the lessons were teacher-centred and provided much listening input. Huizenga (1990:144) refers to research done in the so-called "progressive", open classes, in which pupils were spending most of their class time working together in small groups, with only occasional intervention by the teacher. It was found that pupils were largely unsuccessful in acquiring English after a year. The lack of success was related to the lack of good teacher input combined with the "junky peer input that was substituted for it." The Molteno approach seems to be better. Teachers are given a great amount of specific instructions on what to do and say.

Principle 4: Innovative language use

Pupils were free to use language innovatively, or at least according to choice. The Molteno kit includes four big pictures depicting different scenes, to contextualise oral work. As instructed by the Teacher's Manual (p. 26), the School B teachers used the *Teaching Group* opportunities amongst others for teaching pupils sentences about one of the big pictures. Instructions read that

pupils may not repeat each sentence after the teacher, but should first only listen and then repeat some words with attention to pronunciation. Individuals should then get opportunities to say anything they want about the picture. In practice pupils only repeat in random order the sentences as given by the teacher. The only freedom is that each pupil may say the sentence of his choice. Actually a child's sentence should be reacted on by the teacher, as in genuine communication, but some teachers have been observed to advance little beyond traditional teaching of a set of sentences when using the pictures. They do not extend attention to pupils' own lives, e.g. with questions about their own dogs, mothers, etc.

The 1992 teacher of Gr. 2A did use some extending utterances and created some interaction with her pupils, although not nearly as advanced communication was ever observed as prescribed by the Manual (e.g. *Tell us about the people/ animals in the picture. Where are the men?).* On 9/3/92 the Gr. 2A teacher worked with the whole class and the picture of *The Home*. Pupils put up hands to get turns for saying sentences. The first child said, *The boy is sitting under a tree,* and was told, *Show me the boy sitting under a tree.* With a stick he showed him, indicating comprehension. Likewise the following was said and shown about the picture, the parts in brackets only by the bright pupils. (Probably these were extending utterances at an earlier date).

> The man is sitting on a chair (smoking a pipe). The boy is sitting under a tree (reading a book). The girl is carrying a bag. The cat is sleeping. The dog is running (with a bone in its mouth). The boy is digging (with a spade in the garden). The woman is cooking. The fire is burning under the pot. The girl is waving her hand. The boy is running. The man is driving a bus. Father is standing at the gate. The car is moving. (The English was incorrect in that the definite article was used for three different boys and two girls).

Principles 5 and 6: providing challenges and keeping the L1 and L2 separate

Challenges were mostly provided by keeping the L1 and L2 separate. The vernacular was never used in an English lesson in the investigator's hearing. When the investigator visited School B for the first time, the teacher of Gr. 2A spoke to her outside, then entered the classroom and said, *Bring me that chair.* She stood with the outstretched arm until the chair was brought, for the visitor. On 9/12/92 this teacher used English to send a Gr. 2 pupil to another teacher to fetch something. The child reported back in English again. Even at secondary schools this kind of communication is mostly done in the L1.

In Gr. 2B it was witnessed on 9/3/92 that the teacher stuck to English even though an explanation in the L1 could have ended some confusion quickly. (The presence of an investigator might have had an influence). The teacher said: *My name is Mrs Nkwadipo. What is your name?* The first four pupils answered wrongly: *Your name is* ... The teacher kept asking other pupils until the fifth answered correctly and was cheered by the teacher and class, clapping hands. The correct form was practised with a number of pupils. On the same day pupils were confused with *What is Brenda?* and *What is Brenda doing?* The problem was not solved.

Principle 7: providing sufficient usable input

The pupils at School B learnt far more nouns and commands than pupils at School A, because the Manual provides lists. The basic vocabulary about commonly available objects was extended constantly, for which were used: pictures, stories, geometric shapes, money, play, and telling the time. As indicated above, one picture was used to talk about many things and actions. Other pictures of the Molteno kit used in Gr. 2 are *In Town* and *On the Farm*. The first picture allows sentences such as: *The woman is carrying a bag. She is waiting for the car to pass. She is wanting to cross the road. The policeman is raising up his hand. Why? He stops the car. The man is standing at the bus stop. This man is riding a bicycle*. The other picture allows sentences like: *The donkey is pulling a cart. The bird is flying. The cows are in the kraal.* Some of this work served as preparation for the first reading lessons, which include words like *car, cart, farm.*

Amongst others the children played shop, using empty containers and home-made "money". One was the shopkeeper, the others made lists of three things they wanted to buy. Since they could not really spell in English, they wrote *Rama* rather than margarine, etc. One wrote *mollo* (Sotho for matches), but was quite able to say, *I want a box of matches.*

e) Evaluation

Since during the first two terms no written work that could be tested was done, the June examination was oral only. In November half of the examination was oral, consisting of:

a) A recitation; b) Any five sentences on the picture of The Home; c) The commands: *Sit down; Stand up; Turn to the right; Draw a straight line on the chalkboard; Put the square at the bottom of the triangle; Show me your right hand; touch your head; close your eyes; touch your nose; stand with (!) one leg;* and d) questions: *What is this?* (A circle) *How is the circle?*

What is this? x 2 (A chair, a cup) *Where is number 6?* (On a chart.)

The written examination consisted of a spelling test of *car, pen, bed, farm, men,* and an exercise like each of the four "drills" done in every reading lesson. Pupils found the questions so easy that the average of the three classes for the written part was 92 %. Since both parts of the examination were taken from the Molteno materials, the examination did fit in with the aims stated on p. 98.

A comparison of the oral examinations of Schools A and B shows the following:

* At School A they had to do some reading for the examination, but not at School B;
* At School B questions and commands were far more (20 compared to 7) and far more difficult.

3.5.4 A comparison of Grade 2 teaching at Schools A and B

School A	School B
The main focus was on form.	Teaching was mostly meaning-focused.
English was not used for communication.	There was communication in English.
Oral work was whole-class drill work.	Chorusing was not allowed, only single answers.
Pupils only had to memorise and repeat.	Pupils also had to react, think and choose.
Pupils never worked in pairs and groups.	They worked in groups and *Teaching groups.*
Nouns were taught apart from context.	Pictures etc. were used for extending vocabulary.
The first concern was writing and spelling.	English was spoken more than read or written.
A very limited amount of English was done, for much time was used for spelling tests, etc.	There was time for stories, drawing, playing shop, etc. Much more English was done.
A little of the reader was read or memorised.	A little of the reader was read and understood.

3.5.5 A comparison of two specific early lessons

A comparison of two specific early lessons will illustrate the main differences between the methods followed at the two schools. As explained in par. 3.5.1 c), six sentences were drilled at School A, e.g.: *What is the girl doing? The girl is fetching water / The girl is sweeping.*

What is the boy doing? The boy is sitting / The boy is reading, etc.

The order was fixed, the questions and answers were never separated, the sentences never seen as communication. At the end of the year most of the pupils who were tested with the very picture of the boy that appears in their reader with the sentences, could not say *The boy is sitting / reading.*

At School B individual pupils said what they wanted about a picture, The Home, extending the communication with the teacher by indicating with a stick what he was speaking about. More sentences were used than at School A, but each child did not even say a sentence per day. The differences are summarised below.

School A	School B
It was memory work repeated many days.	It was memory work repeated many days.
Only six questions and answers were used.	Many more commands and sentences were used.
The six appeared only in fixed order.	The order was free.
There was no real communication.	There was some extended interaction.
There was no comprehension checking.	There was some comprehension checking.
In chorus every child spoke many times.	Some children spoke once, others not at all.

If acquiring English depends on the number of times English sentences are repeated aloud, the School A pupils had a great advantage. However, if acquiring English means hearing and understanding communication, perhaps without even speaking yourself, that is what was provided at School B and not at School A.

Some results of the two methods of teaching English, as indicated by tests to be discussed in chapter 4, are presented below. Sixteen pupils at each of the schools were tested in November 1992, using pictures corresponding to some of the sentences drilled at School A, e.g. a picture of a girl with a bucket on her head. Only one pupil at School A said *She is fetching water*, and two more used the verb *fetch*, while four pupils gave answers such as *The girl is water; The girl is bucket.* For other pictures, answers such as *The boy is book; The boy is school* were given. Such answers were not given at School B. Though the verb *fetch* was used by only one pupil at School B, six of the 16 used the verb *carrying*, and one said *She is going to milking*. The extent of work covered at School B is apparent. When in 1995 the pupils had to write a story about a woman going to fetch water with a bucket, only two of 30 School A pupils used the verb *fetch* or something appropriate, while 16 at School B used it.

3.6 **Instruction received by Grade 3 pupils**

At each school there were differences between the English classes of Gr. 2 in 1992 and Gr. 3 in 1993, differences mainly caused by the books that were used.

3.6.1 **English lessons for Grade 3 pupils at School A in 1993**

a) Educational aims

It seems as if the main objective of the teachers was to teach the lessons prescribed by their text books, as far as the pupils could learn the work. They mostly worked from the Language Book of the *New Day by Day English Course*, a course used at many schools. The reader, *Benny and Betty* from the same series, was not popular, and pupils read only the lessons up to page 26, as well as the rhyme on page 35. The reader has 94 pages. From the Language Book with 82 pages, everything was done up to p. 38, and some work on five later pages was done.

The reasons for preferring the Language Book to the reader may be found in the fact that S.A. teaching is characterised by an examination model. In primary schools two examinations are written per year. That may cause teachers to ask: how can this work be tested in an examination? Teachers are likely to regard what Gr. 3 pupils read in a traditional reader like *Benny and Betty* as something that cannot be tested in an examination, for Gr. 3 pupils are not taught to write compositions, summaries or even comprehension tests. So teachers may prefer form-focused instruction just because it is something that can easily be tested, e.g. pairs of contrasted words. Another objective was that pupils should read and recite with acceptable pronunciation

b) Teaching content

Examples of work done in the Language Book:

p.3 *this / these; it / they*; p.5 *that / those;*
p.7 *up / down*; p.11 asks the plurals of *hill, hen, hat, road, snake, egg* etc.;
p.16 *fat / thin; short / tall*; p.17 again: *up / down*;
p.18 *Yes I do / No I don't*; p.21 *hot / cold*; p.22 *is / are*;
p.23 has four sentences to be changed into questions: *Mother is on the box :> Is Mother ..?*;
p.25 *a / an ; big / small*; p.27 *all / some*;
p.30 *man / men, woman / women*; p.31 *quickly / slowly*;
p.32 - 33 has prepositions; p.36 *is / are / was / were*;
p.39 *good / bad*; p.40 *can / can't; right / left*;
p.44 *heavy / light*; p.50 eleven opposites, e.g. *dry / wet; good / bad;*
p.56 *Yes he did / No, he didn't.*

Spelling tests were written once a week, pupils sitting one by one outside on the grass, so that they could not help each other. Lists of words in the reader were mostly used for these tests.

Teachers often inserted some well-known practice on form-focused work, e.g. on 12/3, after finishing some work in the Language Book, a teacher started with: *One book but many _* ?

In chorus the answer was supplied. She also asked about *boy, month, eye, ear, mother, teacher.*

c) Learning activities: classroom interaction

Classroom interaction was quite one-sided. The teachers talked much, the pupils mostly supplying one word answers or guesses. In a lesson on some contrasted pairs, where pupils had to answer *up* or *down*, one said *Down*, but on the teacher's *No!* it was quickly changed to *Up.*

The investigator attended a revision lesson on 13/9/93. The teacher started with page 16, where the words *fat, thin, tall, short* are taught, with the emphasis only on the opposites. Three of the six pictures present a giraffe, a hippopotamus and a snake, but the book only asks: *Is this animal fat or thin?* etc. The teacher asked the class about the giraffe and the snake, but not the hippopotamus. Only *snake* was known. The teacher added: *A snake is not an animal, it is a reptile. You will learn it in Gr. 5.* On p. 17 there are five short picture series with the question: *What is the boy doing?* The teacher answered all these questions by herself, thus explaining 19 pictures in rapid succession, using some Sotho also. The pupils became bored but remained polite.

Learning activities: using the reader

Lessons were read as follows: when beginning a new lesson, the teacher read about three lines, then the whole class repeated them, then the teacher again, etc. to the end. Then they started again, sometimes a good pupil taking the lead and the whole class repeating. Each lesson was repeated a number of times. On 12/11/93 the Gr. 3A class read known lessons to the investigator, first from p. 22. They started off all together, slowly but clearly, slower and less clear later. The teacher stopped them to repeat a line, but never asked a question. The lesson has 29 sentences, illustrated with four pictures, and on p. 25 there are five questions on this story, but on 12/11 there were no comprehension checks on this lesson, nor on the lesson read from p. 26. The lesson on p. 23 was also read. It consists of much repetition, like a rhyme, and the pupils knew it by heart, many looking about while "reading", but obviously enjoying it more than the other lessons. On p. 24 there is an exercise on the last lesson, consisting of parts of sentences to be matched. The pupils knew the answers by heart. On p. 2 there is a lesson on a shop, yet the pupils never played shop. No indication was found that they played anything in the English class.

Two disturbing observations were made by the investigator: Pupils did not seem to enjoy the reading lessons, except for the rhymes, and it did not seem as if the lessons provided much

"comprehensible input", especially for pupils used to reading without understanding, as shown in par 3.2.4 c). Probably pupils who really wanted to, could understand the lessons and profit from them, but since there were no comprehension checks and some lessons are long, it is possible that most pupils did not follow much of what was read. Pupils' complete lack of interest was obvious when they were reading the "stories" or descriptions. Pieces about school, home, children, etc. may be of little interest to pupils aged 8 to 10. For example, the story on p. 26 is about a baby sister being picked up by Father. *Mary is up and looking down. Benny and Betty are down and looking up ...Mary's small. Betty's big.* The main concern is not the story, in which nothing really happens, but the contrasting words also done in the Language Book. The literature content of the course was indeed poor.

When comparing the reading done at School A to that done at school B, there are three profound differences, indicating possible causes of the lack of interest perceived at School A.

* The type of story might have caused pupils' lack of interest. At School B the themes were much more interesting and they extended pupils' knowledge (see par. 3.6.3 b).
* At School A there were no comprehension checks or other incentives for pupils to try to understand what they read. At School B cartoon strip pictures and many questions helped and forced the pupils to understand.
* At School A the whole class repeated in chorus after a model many times, at School B there was no chorusing and more discussions than repetitions.

Whatever the reasons for the lack of interest in the reading material, the pupils of School A thereby lost a great source of input that ought to have been comprehensible.

d) The principles of classroom SLA

Principle 1, the 'here and now', was sometimes observed in commands like *Come here; Stand in a row*; etc. More of this kind of interaction took place than in Gr. 2, and pupils learnt more common verbs, e.g. from rhymes accompanied by actions.

However, Principles 3, 4 and 5 were not observed, as will be shown. On p. 18 of the Language Book pupils had to answer questions like *Do you like jam / snakes?* with either *Yes, I do* or *No, I don't.* The teacher added to the questions in the book some of her own, and received some answers indicating a complete lack of comprehension:

Do you like laughing? - No I don't. - But you are still laughing.

Do you drink water? - No I don't. - You don't drink water every day?

Can you drive a car? - Yes. - You have a licence?

From the teacher's reactions it does not seem as if she took the pupils' answers seriously.

The above accounts indicate that though the Language Book provided material from which discussions could be started, and the structures needed for such discussions, the teacher was only concerned about teaching the structures. There was no real communication (Principle 3) about what was available. Even what could have been communication was hampered by a lack of understanding or knowledge on the part of the pupils. Furthermore, pupils were not expected to give long answers or to contribute to lessons. Appropriate challenges (Principle 5) were completely absent. The following examples illustrate how little was expected from pupils.

In a lesson on p. 22 the teacher started with: *Look at the picture. What do you see?* In response to the only answer *Two cups and two saucers,* she started making the question easier: *The cat is sitting where? The cat is sitting on the ... ? The boxes are under the ... ?* To answer the questions printed on p. 22, the pupils were told: *Answer like this: Yes it is / Yes they are / No it is not / No they are not.* She also wrote on the board: *Is - one; Are - many.* Later the teacher read the sentences of an exercise on p. 22, with *mm* for the blank space, the class answering: *There is ..* or *There are.* In a lesson on p. 26 the teacher asked: *What is happening there, in that picture?* She accepted as answers: *The tree; the sister; the umbrella.* On a next picture she asked: *What is happening? The boys are doing what? The boys and girls are ... ?* (playing).

Not only does it seem that pupils were not really expected to give long answers or to contribute to lessons, but no innovation on the part of pupils seems to have been possible (Principle 4). On page 3 of the Language Book, the sentences *What is this? What are these?* appear seven times, together with one or more drawings in each case. On 12/3/93 a child answered the first question with *That is a teapot.* On the teacher's *No,* he changed it to *This is a teapot.* Likewise when they worked on p. 5 and a pupil answered the question *What are those?* with *Those are clouds,* he was corrected with *They are clouds.*

The above does not exclude some innovation on the part of teachers, though. The teacher referred to above once had a very lively lesson with pupils in a row, calling out for each if he was the first, second, etc., or the last. This teacher was always warm, friendly and lively. The fact that

pupils' answers were not accepted, unless correct by the teacher's standards, perhaps caused an unnecessary breakdown in real communication between her and her class.

However, there were a few pupils from whom much was expected, but not in the sense of innovation. One pupil in the Gr. 3B class, later numbered Pupil 1, had a great role to play. Whenever the class read a lesson or said a rhyme, he took the lead and carried all the rest. He was told by the teacher to show the investigator how well he could put random prepositions in their correct places in sentences, and other such tasks. Due to this one pupil, it was possible to pretend that the class had good competence in English.

Principles 6 and 7

Principle 6, keeping the L1 and L2 separate, was as usually not obeyed. Neither was Principle 7, sufficient comprehensible input. As said above, only 27 of the 94 pages of the reader were read. That was not found strange by any teacher. (By 12/3/93 the pupils had read only two pages, one lesson, from their L1 reader.) The lessons of the reader were not compiled to do much in the field of extending pupils' vocabulary and general knowledge. Recurring phrases like *going round and round / going up and down* were learnt, but it is doubtful if the pupils understood much of some lengthy prose. Pupils' vocabulary and general knowledge remained quite restricted.

e) Conclusion

The main focus of the teaching method was on form. There was very little meaningful interaction in the L2, even in between lessons, for the L1 was used for giving messages. Since pupils were mostly expected to supply one-word answers, the interaction was quite one-sided and probably boring. Allowing a book to prescribe the interaction is very far removed from real communication about the 'here and now', or about topics chosen by the pupils. Pupils were not allowed any kind of innovation and their answers were not accepted, unless correct by the teacher's standards. The pupils accepted all without question, but learnt to get by with good guess work, while relying on a few pupils to keep up what was expected from the class in terms of interaction with the teacher. The pupils' vocabulary and general knowledge remained quite restricted, partly because the reader was not interesting. Since comprehension checks were lacking when using the reader, much effort was perhaps not made to understand. Even in the Language Book the pictures were mostly of things already learnt in Gr. 2. On the whole, very little meaning-focused instruction was available.

3.6.2 **English lessons for Grade 3 pupils at other Welkom schools**

In 1993 the Gr. 3 pupils at School C read from Barnes' outdated reader up to lesson 7, thus reading only 11 of about 45 pages for the year. They also did some grammar exercises from the book Plain Sailing, e.g. fill in: *he, she* or *it;* fill in: *a* or *an.* They learnt animal sounds, etc.

At School D much more work was done, as explained by a very enthusiastic teacher. They read from Benny and Betty, reading all lessons up to page 43, of 94 pages. The teacher also did a lot with her one copy of Junior English. Examples of grammar done: *I sleep late / I slept late; I am ill / he is ill; I was ill / we were ill; I play games / he plays / we play* etc. In other lessons the following were contrasted: *am / is / are; was / were; has / have, e.g. I have a bed / pillow, a dog has a tail, a sheep has* ...Ten sentences each of the following were done: *The butcher sells meat; the baker sells ... The king lives in a palace,* etc.

At School G they at first did not use any reader, but worked from the grammar book Plain Sailing up to page 20 (of 129 pages). Then readers from *MacMillan* arrived, and they worked from them. They worked up to page 17 (of 64 pages). Work done included distinctions such as *in front of/behind; on/in.* Although they read a story about a shop, they did not play shop.

The information gathered on 22/11/93 shows that other schools had the same kinds of books and programs as School A, focusing on form rather than on meaning. It seems that at School D more was put into English lessons than at School A, but less at Schools C and G, as far as book-bound, form-focused instruction is concerned. However, it cannot be said that meaning-focused instruction was not provided at these schools. It is possible that less book-bound instruction meant more English communication on matters of interest, something not as easy to give account of as of form-focused instruction. However, it was seen in the classes attended at School A that English is not used for any kind of discussion in Gr. 3 classes, and the fact that at both Schools A and G the opportunity to play shop was not used, indicates similarity.

3.6.3 **English lessons for Grade 3 pupils at School B in 1993**

a) Educational aims

Work from the Gr. 2 *Bridge* reader was continued, since only the first four lessons of the reader, up to page 13, were done in Gr. 2. It is possible that the teachers, like the School A teachers, saw the aims of their teaching as nothing but teaching the book they had to teach. However, sound

educational principles are built into the *Bridge* reader, as explained in par. 3.3.3 f). That pupils should produce acceptable pronunciation, was also an explicit objective of the teachers.

b) Teaching content

The *Bridge* reader has four "drills" in most lessons, each testing comprehension as already explained. The first ten lessons consist of disjointed sentences, as do the writing exercises. However, from lesson 11 (p.39) to the end (p.90), there are also ten stories, accompanied by cartoon-strip pictures. The themes of the stories are interesting: hunting; a big fish taking a man's rod; someone chased by a bull; a boy on horseback jumping over a fence, while Mother fears they will fall; a mouse and her friends destroying a cow's house in revenge; etc. If words were the main concern of a story, such as the one about a *nurse*, treating a *burn* that was *hurting*, they were nouns extending the pupils' vocabulary, chosen in this case to teach the *-ur-* sound. After finishing the *Bridge* reader, stories were also read from the Molteno Book Box.

c) Learning activities: using the reader

Reading in class was never done in chorus, but by the teacher or individual pupils. Pupils were sometimes forced to follow in their books by a teacher who gave single sentences of a story to random pupils to read. Pupils were graded in ability groups which did different assignments at times, assignments that served as comprehension checks. There are twelve main activities in the lesson plans, which are mainly reading and writing activities. Speaking opportunities arose mainly from the discussion of exercises done, such as matching pictures with sentences. The teachers had in their Manuals the instructions for the oral lessons the pupils had done in Gr. 2, but they considered the work done and did not repeat some of the lessons, except right at the beginning of the year as revision. Thus structured oral sessions were not on the program, but whole class discussions arose from many activities. For example on 13/9/93, when the teacher asked about a picture how many men it had, some friendly controversy arose about figures being men or boys.

Much of the work now in a way resembled form-focused instruction, e.g. on page 83 of the Teacher's Manual the teacher is instructed: "Teach the -s for forming plural nouns and show it as a separate 'piece' that can be joined to many nouns." Where in the first drills verbs like *is* and *are* are given, they must be supplied by the pupils in later drills. Attention was also given to spelling. Dictation tests are given in the Teacher's Manual for every lesson after lesson 4, but the tests

consist of novel sentences built from the same words as learnt in a particular lesson. There were no lists of unrelated words taken home to be "learnt" for spelling tests.

Learning activities: using stories to learn

The *Bridge* reader has ten stories with cartoon-strip pictures. The stories have an average of 7 to 8 pictures, with at first 2 or 3 short sentences per picture, later 4 or more sentences, and still later less but longer sentences. Most of the stories are followed by questions, 5,5 on average. The questions include *Why* and *How* questions, as well as Yes/No questions. In addition the teacher of Gr. 3A checked comprehension by asking individual pupils to translate the stories into the mother tongue, each child doing only the sentences next to one picture. A child would silently read the English and then give the translation. No fuss was made over correct translation; the teacher only wanted to see if the English was understood. Since a child could satisfy her by just explaining the picture, it was not necessarily a test of English comprehension, but the investigator saw children reading the English and translating without looking at the picture. The teachers of the other two Gr. 3 classes did not use this method, but tested comprehension sufficiently with many of their own questions, e.g. *Why do you say that?* Since the reading could be stopped easily at any picture, questions like *Do you think he will catch a fish?* could be asked.

Additional story reading was done from the Molteno Book Box by individuals, and by ability groups who worked on one of four booklets as a group. Instead of all pupils working on a booklet at the appropriate stage, e.g. after lesson 7 for *The Cat in the Dam* (Teacher's Manual: 10), the work on the booklets was done towards the end of Gr. 3. *David and Joe are Hunters* was done by all pupils together, to teach them what was expected of them. Then groups had to work on their own and the slow groups did not do all the booklets. To test pupils' comprehension of the stories, each child had to draw four pictures on a page, with suitable sentences under each picture. The variety of work produced by the pupils showed that they did not merely copy from each other. The sentences of Gr. 3A were mostly correct, perhaps indicating copied work, but there were mistakes indicating that some pupils had enough self assurance to try writing English by themselves: *The cat is looking the fish into the dam; Dawid sees Joe kget a rop poll me aut,* corrected as *David says: Joe get a rope and pull me out.* In the work of Gr. 3B there were far more mistakes, e.g. *David and Joe has a sticks,* as if the sentences were added from memory.

Learning activities: work from *Write On*

As mentioned in par. 3.3.3, the appropriate exercise from *Write On* should be done after every lesson. It was done in Gr. 3B, but not in Gr. 3A. That means that after reading more advanced lessons, the pupils of Gr. 3A started doing work on the level of lesson 1 again. In a way it served as revision, but it also meant that certain types of exercises could become boring, if done too often, and then omitted. For example, for each of the first group of lessons pupils have to draw "silly scenes". On 20/7 the pupils of Gr. 3A drew pictures for: *The car is on the bed; The nest is on the man; The men are on the pen; The pens are in the nest.* These pictures were put up at the back of the class. Probably no more exercises of this kind were done, for when the teacher wanted to show this kind of work to the investigator on 13/9, she gave the same sentences as above for the pupils to depict on the board. Other activities from *Write On* include: filling in blanks according to pictures; memory games, where the names of objects in a picture must be written down; and writing sentences for pictures.

d) The principles of classroom SLA

Since teaching was book-bound, the principles of SLA were adhered to only as far as they were written into the materials. Pupils were not restricted to the 'here and now' of the classroom; their horizons were expanded. Whether the drawings succeeded in bringing concepts like hunting, fishing, etc. to every black city child, is difficult to tell. The pupils who answered questions seemed to be understanding the lessons, therefore Principle 1 was probably observed for most pupils. Principles 3, 4 and 5 were also observed: pupils partook in discussions and worked on projects as mentioned above. The drawing of scenes from stories and the "silly scenes" were also challenges to be innovative. Principles 6 and 7 were also obeyed, for the L1 and L2 were kept separate and many suitable stories were read, providing sufficient comprehensible input.

e) Evaluation

The November examination consisted mainly of exercises to be done with the pictures of the reader, mostly the easiest of a series. The examination was very easy compared to examinations in schools where the focus is mainly on form. There was also a comprehension test with the following questions asked on a passage of 43 words:

Who is walking? (Answer: The man.)
What is the man doing?
What does he wants (!) to catch?
What does he wants (!) a fish to do?
The man is .... (happy, crossed (!), sad).

Mistakes like the ones above are often found in the written work of the teachers of School B, who are not really different from teachers at other schools.

3.6.4 **A comparison of Grade 3 teaching at Schools A and B**

The difference in amount of form-focused instruction given at the two schools was smaller than in the Gr. 2 year. One reason is that at both schools no structured oral course was followed.

School A	School B
"Oral work" was repetition of models.	There was meaningful interaction in English.
Pupils' often guessed between 2 alternatives.	Comprehension checks did not allow much guessing
Pupils never worked in pairs and groups.	They worked in four groups on the booklets, etc.
New vocabulary was mostly contrasting pairs.	New vocabulary came through stories and pictures.
A very limited amount of English was done.	Much more English was done.
The reader was not enjoyed, perhaps not understood.	Reading lessons were enjoyed and understood.

3.7 **Instruction received by Grade 4 pupils**

In 1994 the L1 was still the medium of instruction, and each Gr. 4 class had only one teacher.

3.7.1 **English lessons for Grade 4 pupils at School A in 1994**

a) Educational aims

As in previous years, the teachers probably did not have a clear conception of the aims they should have pursued. This time they also did not have an acceptable text book, for the Language Book of the series used in Gr. 3 was said to have "too long sentences". They rather worked from *Junior English for Gr. 3*, of which they did not have copies for the pupils. The teaching program for the year was drawn up by the teacher of Gr. 4C, and all three teachers of Gr. 4 followed it. It seems that they were satisfied that pupils would learn what was needed, although their program was taken from a Gr. 3 text book. Every week a grammatical feature of English was taught and

tested, and they did not notice that some features were omitted. Furthermore the objectives were that pupils should learn to read with acceptable pronunciation, and to write learnt sentences.

b) Teaching content

The written program included a grammatical feature for every week, the pages to be read in the reader, the "new words" for every week, and a composition for every term. The program follows below, copied from the lesson plans of the Gr. 4 A teacher, kindly presented to the investigator. It is copied with only a few omissions, e.g. of some of her "Conclusions".

Term 1 (Composition: *Our School*)

a/ an: a duster/ classroom/ house/ boy/ car/ packet of ..; an eye / orange / egg / old man / easy sum

singular/ plural: of classroom, boy, girl, teacher. "Conclusion: Drillwork of words on the board."

Present / past tense: I am / was hungry; we ploughed; he walked; he planted.

Past T: The book is/was on ..; the girls are/were playing; I walk/walked; I go/went/ fetched / took

Future T: He goes ../ he will go; Father paints ../ will paint; We are going to have ../ We shall ..(!)

Future T: I am painting ../I shall be..; He is going to ../ he will going ..(!); D. is building / will be..

Is / am / are: James is weeding..; I am sewing ..; Mary and J. are laying ..; the fruit on the trees is..

Term 2 (Composition: *My Dog.*)

Degrees of comparison: of: *good, fast, bad, pretty.* "Conclusion: pupils fill in missing words."

Degrees of comparison: of: *big, small, good.* "Conclusion: pupils fill in missing words."

Possessives: this is my hat / the hat is mine; that is your pen / the pen is yours; .. his shirt / is his.

Pronouns: J helps the girl / *he* h. *her*; this cow belongs to ../ *it* b. to *him*; I saw M & T / saw *them*.

Have and has: Have you any milk? Yes I have / No, I haven't; Has M any sweets? Yes M has / No

Much / many: "Those thing that we cannot count takes much" : many fields /sheep; much porridge

Term 3 (Composition: *My Cat.*)

Degrees of comparison: of: big, long, soft, old. "Conclusion: Drillwork of words on the board."

Animal sounds: a horse neighs / dog barks / pig grunts / frog croaks.

Feminine /masculine: girl/boy; A man + woman have a child; ram + ewe > lamb; stallion + mare..

Gender: ram + ewe > lamb; pig + sow > piglet; drake + duck > duckling; lion + lioness > cub.

Do / does: Does he go to town? Do they get up early? Do they sell groceries? Does he put ...

Negatives: I am tired /am not..; sister is on /is not..; dog caught a hare / did not..; I know / do not

Opposites: If it is not black, it is w.; if it's not my father, it's..; poor/ rich; lazy/ willing; wild/ tame.

Future T: He/she goes to church / will go; We / I go to church /shall go. "Conclusion: Drillwork."

Term 4 (Comp: Each child gets opportunity to read part in a dialogue from Plain Sailing.)

Places: I go to the post office to..; to church to pray; to (!) market to buy ..; to the cafe to buy ..

Animal babies: cow > lamb; cat > kitten; dog > puppy; mare > foal.

Collective nouns: A bunch of flowers; swarm of bees; bundle of sticks; flock of sheep.

Containers: A tin of jam; box of matches; plate of soup; glass of water.

Gender: Husband, wife, child; ram, ewe, lamb; cock, hen, chicken; pig, sow, piglet.

Revision: Past tense: is - was; are - were; has - had; sweeps - swept; says - said.

Nouns: A bag of.../ plate of .. / box of ..; A bunch of .. / crowd .. / fleet of cars.

Note: The above program makes no provision for teaching questions, prepositions, adverbs, the possessive 's, punctuation, shortened forms like *It's, isn't,* etc.

The above are all the examples in the teacher's lesson plans, but in class she used other and more examples, e.g. in the first lesson on plurals *men, women, children, boxes, churches, teeth* etc. were included. Pupils were allowed to give wrong answers like *childs* and *mans*, and were then corrected. According to Tomasello and Herron (1988:237), this is the best method of treating exceptions to a rule. The other teachers used their own examples, and in Gr. 4C the formal rule on *a / an* was copied by the pupils and explained by the teacher, mostly in the L1.

c) Learning activities: learning grammar

Grammar lessons were never linked to a context, nor were they associated with the reading lesson or the "new words" of the week. Examples never centred round a theme, but consisted of disjointed sentences. Association of words was much used as learning strategy. When the teacher of Gr. 4A wanted to teach the future tense and wrote *Today*, the eager pupils called out: *Yesterday*. On her "No" they tried the Afrikaans *Gister*. In this lesson on the future tense the teacher taught the pupils *You shall,* and even had an explanation why *I, we* and *you* take *shall.* The investigator interfered here. After writing *Father paints the fence - Father will paint ..; The girl sweeps the floor - The girl will sweep..* the teacher said, "Can you see, we have -s on this side, *paints, sweeps*, but when we come to this side, to Tomorrow, we have only *paint* ..."

The teacher drew attention to the question *one or many?* in deciding if it should be *go* or *goes.*

Sentences were sometimes taught as paradigms, e.g. on 28/2: *I go to school; you go to school; she goes to school; he goes ..; they go* ...In the class-work books were written on 10/5: I am ill / He is ill / They are ill, etc. (See also the last work of Term 3 above).

Examples of grammar were drilled extensively. When the sentences of a lesson had been written on the board, after much explanation and many questions, they were read by the teacher with the class repeating every one. When the teacher was satisfied with the pronunciation, the pupils of the different groups had to stand in front, the leader reading and the rest repeating. The six sentences written for the lesson on the future tense were repeated at least ten times. Furthermore any new words were repeated, e.g. after the introduction *We are doing a new lesson now, on the past tense,* the class repeated four times: *past tense.* When they were to be introduced, the words *Collective Nouns* were repeated three times. On Fridays a test was done on the week's grammar.

Learning activities: learning to understand

Comprehension was mostly regarded as unimportant and was seldom checked. In the first lesson examples like *an oak, an owl* were copied. When, on the investigator's request, the pupils were later asked what these words meant, one only said at home they had a wall unit with an oak finish. However, the teacher of Gr. 4B took a lot of trouble (on expecting the investigator) to prepare a lesson on the past tense where everything could be understood. She put up pictures to illustrate the written strips she had brought: *I sleep - I slept; I sing - I sang; I stand - I stood; I sit - I sat; I see a bird - I saw...* Added in writing: *Mother bakes a cake now - Mother ...; Now I kick a ball - In the past I ...; Now I eat a pear - In the past ...* From the beginning the indications *Now* and *In the past* accompanied the exposition, and in-between the teacher gave commands to the pupils like *Sing for me, please,* to show the meaning. Afterwards all the pupils had to stand and perform the verbs, and had fun pretending to kick, etc. The teacher distinguished between present and past forms by saying the latter in a lower voice, and later by letting the girls read the present sentences, the boys the past sentences. In Gr. 4C more irregular verbs were done in the same week, e.g. *went, drank, took, ran, did, got, said, wrote.*

In chapter 4 a report will be given of investigation specifically intended to test the results of this focus on the past tense, viz. a composition on *Noah* and some grammar tests. In par. 5.3.2 the acquisition by the test groups of past tense forms will be summarised.

Learning activities: writing compositions

Only three pieces of writing (compositions) were done for the year. Every week of a whole term some work was done on a certain theme. For the first term it was *Our School*, and the lesson plans for the first weeks read: *What is the name of your school? Is it a big school? When do you start at your school?* This was oral work. The answers were then written on the board and copied. The following was added: *There are many boys and girls. They play on the playgrounds.* Later pupils had to fill in missing words, and to write the composition in their books.

In term 2 the composition was *My Dog* and in term 3 it was *My Cat*. Again pupils discussed the topic first and also wrote their own sentences in a jotter. Later they copied the teacher's short examples and learnt them for the examinations. Although the own work of some pupils included sentences on their dogs guarding their homes etc., the investigator found very little mention of anything not in the teacher's examples when the pupils wrote unprepared compositions on *My Dog* and *My Cat* in the third term. These composition tests are discussed in chapter 4.

Learning activities: using the reader

The Gr. 4 pupils of the previous year had read up to p. 42 (of 110 pages). A teacher explained that they had to use two weeks per lesson, because the pupils "cannot pronounce." On 17/10 the 1994 group started reading from p. 35, according to schedule. Reading was again done in chorus after a model, without any comprehension checks. The reader has long stories divided into parts, with questions at the end of each part. However, it was witnessed that the teacher of Gr. 4B continued with part 2, skipping the printed questions on part 1. In reading lessons, as in all lessons, pronunciation received much attention. In her lesson plan for Term 1 Week 3, the teacher of Gr. 4A wrote: *Emphasis on good pronunciation.*

d) The principles of classroom SLA

As seen above, the principles of par. 2.7.3 were mostly not observed, because the focus of teaching was mostly on grammatical form. There was some communication about the three themes done as compositions, and some innovative sentences were even written in jotters. But pupils were not encouraged to be innovative since they might make mistakes, and Principle 8, that errors be condoned, has not dawned on black education.

Principles 6 and 7: keeping the L1 and L2 separate and supplying sufficient input

The L1 and L2 were not kept separate. At the beginning of 1994, contrary to her policy of observation without interfering, the investigator asked one Gr. 4 teacher to at least use English when telling pupils to take out their books, to copy work, etc. She was using the L1 for nearly half a lesson, saying that she had to use it so that the pupils could understand her explanations.

The English input was not sufficient. Very little was done to extend pupils' vocabulary and knowledge of the world. The only groups of nouns learnt were the containers and collective nouns.

e) Conclusion

The instruction provided was form-focused because it was dominated by grammatical features and was not contextualised. Features associated with meaning-focused instruction such as communication gaps, comprehension checks and activities for groups were almost completely lacking. A limited amount of English was done and the vocabulary not much expanded.

3.7.2 **English lessons for Grade 4 pupils at School B in 1994**

a) Educational aims

As at other schools, it seems as if the only objective of the teachers was to teach the lessons prescribed by their text book, as far as they could. The Gr. 4 year is the last year before commencing with English medium instruction in all subjects, something for which pupils should be prepared. The teachers did a little preparation for Mathematics in English, but not enough. Page 1 of the Teacher's Manual (for Gr. 3) says that a start is made on the vocabulary and expressions the pupils would need in higher grades. On 8/8/94 the pupils did a task on p. 8: *The triangle is above the square and the circle is below* ..., etc. That was followed by more work on prepositions. One feels that for Gr. 4 pupils more advanced work should have been given in Term 3. One reason for the insufficient preparation is that only half the book was done. The rest of it was never used. Another reason is that they worked from the Gr. 3 *Bridge* reader, not from the Gr. 4 reader. The Gr. 4 reader was bought and used at School B in 1995. The investigator feels that motivated teachers could have completed more of a Gr. 3 reader in Gr. 4.

b) Teaching content

The pupils did just more than half of the 108 pages of *Bridge Plus One*, a book intended for Gr. 3. The book also has additional "occupation tasks" on pp. 110 to 166, which were not done. *Bridge Plus One*, like *Bridge to English* used in Grades 2 and 3, contains stories, pictures and tasks, with a Teacher's Manual for guidance. The work centres around themes, e.g. going to the supermarket, meaning that structures and new vocabulary are learnt in context.

c) Learning activities which lead to interaction

Much activity is prescribed in the Pupil's Book, e.g. for learning new vocabulary and structures.

* Structures are presented in interesting ways. For example, p. 22 has four pictures to teach degrees of comparison, e.g. a group of animals with questions like: Which one is the biggest? Which one is smaller than the dog? With pictures of children appear the questions: Who is the tallest? Who is next? etc. There are also pictures of a group of numbers and one of slow animals.

* Pages 11 to 13 of the Pupil's Book have pictures for which the pupils must write stories.

* On 21/10 Gr. 4C worked (not for the first time) from a picture on p. 28, consisting of numbered objects to be found in the home, but all drawn in the same room: a bath, stove, armchair etc. The pupils already new the names of most of the 17 objects, but had to write them on the board and had to say in which room in the house that object can be found.

* As prescribed by the Manual, some games were played. On 31/1/94 the pupils closed their eyes while the teacher or a pupil hid something away. The pupils then guessed: *in/ under the bag; "behind of the duster."* The teacher helped them to use shortened forms: *I think it's ..; No, it isn't.* To practise the English names of letters, they played a game in pairs. One pupil of a pair was told to draw a number of boxes, and then had to write the name his friend was thinking of in the boxes by asking for information, e.g. *Do I write J in box no. 1? Yes you do / No, you don't.*

* As prescribed by the Manual, events of interest were used for activities. The greatest event was the first democratic election. The pupils of Gr. 4 A had class and group discussions on *The New South Africa,* and on what they saw on television during the President's inauguration. Afterwards they wrote compositions on the events. The compositions with drawings were put up on the wall.

Learning activities with a focus on form

Form-focused attention was firstly on the writing code, then on tenses.

* Punctuation received attention.

* On 7/2 pupils were taught to write *Here's the table; There's the window; I'm; He's; They're;* etc. "You call it an apostrophe", was said once. Revision on pronouns was done simultaneously.

* On 14/2 pupils learnt to write the possessive: *My partner's name / teacher's name is...*

* Pupils had to learn using the English names of the letters of the alphabet for spelling aloud.

* They used tenses in sentences like*: Today is Monday. What will tomorrow be? What was yesterday? Today we do Task 36. Tomorrow we will (!) do Task 37.* The teacher wrote on the board: *I eat bread,* and asked*: Now what about yesterday? What about tomorrow?*

The pupils had a list of 56 pairs of strong verbs, present and past, inside the back page of their Pupil's Book, and often looked up answers there.

It seems as if teachers liked the same kind of exercises as those done at School A, e.g. a list of opposites with pictures on p. 46. On 14/3 Gr. 4E completed the following, after discussing which things had a door, what would happen if one sits on a train, etc. *I ride _ a bicycle; I get _ the car; You are riding _ the horse; He is _ the aeroplane.* (They were told*: You just use in or on.)*

Learning activities: story reading

Stories were read from the Pupil's Book and from the booklets of the Molteno Book Box. The way in which the stories of the Pupil's Book are presented does not differ much from that of other Readers. There are no cartoon-strips as in the book they had used the previous year. When reading the stories, individual pupils read the dialogue parts, which some knew by heart, especially the repeaters. The pupils of Gr. 4B twice conducted an English lesson by themselves in the absence of their teacher, for the benefit of the investigator. The investigator was much impressed the first time, but realised with shock on the second occasion that during two terms virtually nothing new had been done which the pupils could present by themselves. The leaders could also not retain the attention of the class as before. It seems as if a small number of lessons were repeated again and again for most of the year, e.g. the work on p. 8 done on 8/8/94.

On 14/2/94 a teacher read to his class a booklet on a visit to the zoo, and asked them questions. They could not answer most of the questions, and it seemed as if most of them did not follow the story. However, that teacher had not prepared for an English lesson that day, or for one a week later, despite two appointments. Possible effects on his pupils will be mentioned in par. 4.10.

d) The principles of classroom SLA

As indicated by the examples cited, most of the principles of par. 2.7.3 were observed. Pupils communicated in pairs and groups, even about what they saw on television. That presented challenges and opportunities for innovative language use. The L1 and L2 were kept separate, and the quantity of English done was more than at School A, but not sufficient for Gr. 4 pupils.

e) Evaluation

The examination was not easier than at other schools, as it had been in the previous two years. As prescribed, half of the marks went for oral work. Question 6 of the written examination was:

How many times does three go into twelve?

Take 10 away from 50 four times. How many is (!) left?

How many two's are there in twelve?

This was preparation for English medium instruction, but only as concerns Mathematics. The following wrong question was in the comprehension test: *How many cattles does Mr. N. has?*

3.7.3 **A comparison of Grade 4 teaching at Schools A and B**

School A	School B
Learning material was not contextualised.	Work centred around themes.
Grammatical features dominated the course.	Grammatical features were part of the course.
English was rarely used for communication.	There was regular interaction in English.
"Group work" was only speaking in chorus.	There were activities for pairs and groups.
Comprehension checks were rarely used.	Comprehension checking was a habit.
Not much was done to expand vocabulary.	There were activities for expanding vocabulary.
No preparation for English-medium instruction.	No preparation for English-medium instruction.

3.8 **A comparison of the teaching at Schools A and B over the years 1992 to 1994**

Comparing the English teaching given at Schools A and B to the features of audiolingualism and communicative language teaching given in par. 2.7.4, it is seen that the teaching at School A

mainly corresponds to the a) features of audiolingual teaching, and the teaching at School B to the a) features of communicative language teaching.

3.8.1 **Characterisation of teaching at School A**

At School A most of the features of audiolingual teaching (par. 2.7.4) were found. The focus was primarily on form: sounds, words, structures. Pattern teaching, drilling and memorisation were central techniques and language items were not contextualised. Genuine communication virtually never took place, so that innovative language use was impossible. However, there are marked differences between the teaching method at School A and the b) features of audiolingual teaching, which state that the L1 is forbidden and that reading and writing should come after speaking. Since these two features were not found at School A, its teaching is rather called *traditional*.

3.8.2 **Characterisation of teaching at School B**

Comparing the teaching at School B to the principles of SLA (par. 2.7.3), and to the features of CLT (par. 2.7.4), much resemblance is found, so that the teaching can be called a type of communicative language teaching. Meaning was important and language items were contextualised. Interaction between teacher and class took place, but there was not much communication in pairs and groups, limiting the possibility of innovative language use. Input was rich in directives, allowing pupils to respond to speech acts, but pupils had only limited choice over what was said. A difference between the teaching methods observed and the b) features listed in par. 2.7.4 is that it seems as if teachers were instructed not to use the L1 at all. This is a clear indication that the Molteno Project is based on proper insights in the S.A. situation, in this case concerning the "habit" of black teachers to explain in the L1 everything said in English. Such a habit makes a prescription for the "judicious" use of the L1 very difficult.

3.8.3 **Reasons for the differences in teaching methods**

The differences in teaching methods were basically due to the difference in approach to language teaching implicit in the teaching materials used, together with the traditional training and conventions the teachers of School A received, versus the extra training of the School B teachers in the Molteno Project. The teachers of School A were not capable of following anything but an analytic

teaching strategy. This method targets specific skills like reading and spelling, and certain features of the L2 code, such as pronunciation and some easy syntactic structures. The teachers of School B had available the prescriptions and the teaching material to let their pupils experience authentic language use with a focus on meaning. Even if the School B teachers did not understand underlying differences, e.g. between numerous repetitions and authentic language use, they were able to provide input with a focus on meaning by following the Teacher's Manual and abiding by instructions such as not to use the L1, not to allow chorusing, etc.

3.9 **The merits of the *Bridge* courses as communicative courses**

In par. 3.3.3 g) questions were asked concerning the *Bridge* courses: whether they really exemplify the communicative approach, and if they differ profoundly from traditional teaching methods. It was shown that the written course does not provide for Principle 2, and puts Principle 8 at stake. The description of classroom practice further indicates that the communicative principles did not always feature as they were intended. Especially the important Principle 4, that the L2 should be used innovatively, was not witnessed often, and the quantity of usable input (Principle 7) could have been more. However, Principles 1, 3, 5 and 6 featured well at School B, and on the whole all principles were adhered to more than at the traditional schools. The fact that the L1 and L2 were kept separate helped to provide challenges and led to genuine communication in the L2.

Investigation in Gr. 2 classes at School B and other schools during 1996 indicated that even less use was made of the potential built into the *Bridge* materials than was witnessed earlier at School B. For example, when using the big pictures mentioned in par. 3.5.3, teachers did not exploit the opportunities for genuine communication. In practice pupils only repeated in random order the sentences as given by the teacher, sentences not necessarily understood. In a Gr. 2 class on the Molteno Project a visitor asked questions such as *Do you have a garden at home?* As answer was given the learnt sentence: *The boy is digging in the garden.*

Comparing the *Bridge* courses to traditional methods of teaching an L2, it seems that the *Bridge* courses constitute profound changes in all the components of the curriculum. The *educational aims* are no longer to drill grammar structures, but to use language in genuine communication, as preparation for using the L2 in the real outside world. The *content* is not random chunks, but meaningful language at least centring round a theme. The predominant

learning activity is not repetition but varied interaction, even if only some instructions are followed by the teacher. As mentioned in par. 3.3.3, the fact that comprehension checks are built into the first reader ensures some focus on meaning. In the Gr. 2 year methods of *evaluation* were also very different: at School A the Gr. 2 examination in June was only a written examination, while at School B it was only an oral examination. Later most of the School A examinations were very difficult, while School B's were easy, including some preparation for English medium instruction.

3.10 Comparing Welkom schools such as School A to other black schools

Indications are that what was observed at School A is typical of black schools in S.A. As mentioned in par. 3.2, Macdonald also reports on classroom practice in black lower primary schools. Her observation focuses more on general didactic issues than on specific linguistic aspects of L2 teaching, but indicates that the same approach to L2 teaching was followed as at School A.

3.10.1 Information rendered by an HSRC investigation

The empirical investigation of Kroes and Walker (1988:22-23) had a larger scope than the present study. Two researchers visited urban and rural schools which were on different programs, e.g. four schools on *Bridge,* three schools on *Day by Day, and* four schools on *MacMillan.* The sole objective of the investigation was to rate a number of teaching courses, more than the three mentioned above. However, these three seem to be the only ones in use at Welkom schools.

The schools were visited for one year only, but then one class each of Grades 2 - 4 was visited. Each observer completed forms with 31 items, mostly concerned with the principles of CLT. *Bridge* was rated far better than the other courses on all items. In total, *Bridge* received 15 rank orderings better than *Day by Day,* which received 15 rank orderings better than *MacMillan* (Kroes & Walker 1988:71). Yet, *MacMillan* pupils did significantly better than *Day by Day* pupils in a test taken at the beginning of Gr. 5 (Kroes & Walker 1988:109). An explanation for this finding is not given. Pupils on the *Bridge* course were not tested, because the *Bridge* materials for Gr. 4 were not available at the time so that the pupils continued using the Gr. 3 materials in Gr. 4. Some extracts from the relevant HSRC report are given below, showing that many features common to black teaching surfaced in all classes, though different teaching materials were used.

Comments on the *Day by Day* course, as used at 3 schools (Grades 2 - 4)

Typically, the teacher repeated questions and teaching points three times, pupils then chanting replies. There was extensive use of traditional drilling and a tremendous amount of chanted repetition. The orientation of the lessons was behaviouristic. The teacher would monotonously read aloud from the reader or language book, then require pupils to reread the passage aloud one by one. Both activities were protracted and extremely boring for the pupils. Lessons had overtly grammatical objectives. Overly simple and formulaic identification exercises were used. Lessons had a sameness that made them hardly distinguishable from one day to the next. Lessons at all three levels began with the same greeting ritual and asking of pupils, by name, to say what their names were. There was lack of progress for the time of the year, e.g. pupils worked from p. 2 of the reader and p. 7 of the language book at the end of May (Kroes & Walker 1988:74-76).

Comments on the *MacMillan* course, as used at 4 schools (Grades 2 - 4)

There was a mindless repetition of questions, answers, and instructions, which was mechanical and did not engage the pupils cognitively. At times it was clear that pupils chanted without any understanding of what they were saying. Chorusing was the norm, and only occasionally was an individual pupil nominated to reply to a question. During chorused answers there was much error. There was little communication between pupils and few, if any, natural exchanges of ideas. One teacher used chorusing and drilling despite her perception that it is not approved of by the designers of the course (Kroes & Walker 1988:77-78).

Comments on the *Bridge* course, as used at 4 schools (Grades 2 - 4)

(For the purpose of this study, only negative aspects are quoted from the report, which also has a good number of positive remarks on the *Bridge* course).

Every question posed to the class was repeated three times. One pupil would first answer the question, then the whole class would chorus the answer, if correct. All teaching points, questions and some corrections were repeated three times by the teacher. The repeated use of the same occupational tasks, albeit at three levels of difficulty, caused boredom among pupils. Impressive, conceptually developmental tasks were gone through in a mechanical way. Opportunities to develop cognitive skills in the pupils were missed. One teacher seemed to be unaware of the

potential of the materials for interaction, for exploring and solving. Consequently the pupils did not go beyond simple identifying, remembering, reproducing (Kroes & Walker 1988:72-73).

When comparing the information on the three groups of schools, it seems as if the teachers merely used different materials for following traditional methods. A complete picture of the use of the *Bridge* course will indicate, however, why it was praised far above the other courses in the report. To the present investigator it seems strange that Kroes and Walker report chorusing, and three repetitions per question, at the *Bridge* schools. These were not found at School B, but chorusing was found at other Molteno schools.

The teachers using both the *Day by Day* and *MacMillan* materials had not received any training to use it, but most had, and used, the teacher's manuals. *Bridge* teachers were trained, but some of the observations reported by Kroes and Walker indicate that the training did not always succeed in changing teachers' styles of teaching.

3.10.2 **Insights gained on black schools by the present study**

Certain characteristics of traditional L2 teaching are revealed by the present study which did not receive much attention by either Macdonald or Kroes and Walker, for example:

* A preoccupation with nouns rather than with verbs and sentences, especially in the Gr. 2 year;
* The use of codeswitching as method of explaining the L2;
* An absence of checks on pupils' comprehension.

Discussion of the above issues is to be found elsewhere in the literature, e.g. the issue of code-switching as shown in par. 2.9.7. It also seems as if the habit of taking understanding for granted comes from far. McGregor (1971:19-20) wrote in a Unesco Source Book *English in Africa*:

> "There are a number of things that the primary school teacher of the past fifty years needed to know about himself and his pupils, and probably did not know. Once again we stress that we do not blame him for this; we blame ... his Teacher's College. He did not know that in almost every lesson he talked too much... He did not know that he was probably talking too fast; ... that he should have been asking his pupils questions very often and very carefully; that all his teaching was too closely related to words alone and not related nearly enough to pictures, objects and experiences... He probably never noticed that whenever he asked them that question, 'Now do you all understand?' they nearly always said, 'Yes' because it was both easier and more polite ...

they did not know what it was like to completely understand and *therefore they never really expected to.*"

It seems as if little has changed in African education over the past 26 years. The three issues mentioned above will be discussed in par. 6.7.

3.11 Changing the teaching style of black teachers

The above reference to in-service training of teachers not necessarily being successful, begs the question: how can the teaching style of black teachers be changed? Ziskovsky (1986:53-58) reports on the Butterworth project, in which workshops were given to Gr. 8 - 10 teachers in the Transkei. Teachers had to use the communicative approach with their own pupils. They were surprised that the pupils spoke English to strangers because formerly they did not speak it in class. A frequent comment of teachers was: "My students cannot play that game because they are not able or willing to speak English." Yet the students played the game with evident enjoyment, even though they were observed by a large group of unfamiliar people.

The broad aims of the materials used were to move the teachers towards regarding themselves not as mere knowledge-givers, but as resource persons, available to working groups. In the groups the focus was on the learner who had many opportunities to experiment and to make faulty attempts to manipulate the L2, with the possibility of self- or peer-correction rather than teacher correction in front of the class. The context-embedded communicative activities made possible a reassessment of the role of both teacher and learner (Ziskovsky 1986:34).

What were the results of the project? Ziskovsky (1986:74) reports that observations in the classrooms of teachers who had attended the Butterworth workshops revealed some shift away from teacher-centred approaches, but the differences largely concerned externals rather than an internalisation of the innovatory pedagogic principles. "Teachers had grasped the form rather than the substance." Classes were carefully grouped, but the advantages of group work, e.g. peer learning, were not always exploited. There was still over-correction, though there was positive reinforcement of student effort. Teacher talk was cut down well, but pre-structured responses came to fill up most of the pupil-talk time, rather than the desired genuine communication.

Ziskovsky (1986:76) explains her findings by referring to the four stage teaching model of Beeby. She says that in general black teachers are still at the second stage of *formalism*, where

teachers are trained but poorly educated. This stage is characterised by the highly organised state of the classroom, a rigid syllabus, fixed textbook, and much emphasis on inspection.

At the third stage of *transition*, teachers still lack full professional competence. The aims are little different from those of stage 2, but the syllabus and textbooks are less restrictive. Teaching is still 'formal' and there is little in the classroom to cater for the emotional and creative life of the child.

At the fourth stage of *meaning*, teachers are both well trained and well educated. Meaning and understanding are stressed, individual differences are catered for and the teacher is involved in the assessment of his pupils. He may be so confident as to reject any curriculum but his own.

Ziskovsky (1986:76) explains that since black teachers are mostly still at stage 2, they should first be moved to stage 3. Ziskovsky refers to Griffiths and Hobson (1974) who, in their consideration of Beeby's four stage model, say that attempts were made to hustle teachers of developing countries from stage 2 to 4, omitting stage 3 en route, but such attempts were unsuccessful.

The above report indicates that fundamental changes in the teaching styles of black teachers will not be achieved quickly or easily, but the findings of Ziskovsky, and findings at School B, indicate that progress is possible.

3.12 **Conclusion**

In this chapter the traditional black teacher was depicted, both by citing from the literature and by the descriptions of teaching at primary schools in Welkom. It was indicated that the teachers at Schools A and B did not differ greatly. The differences in teaching methods perceived at the two schools should rather be attributed to differences in teaching material used than to superiority of some teachers. The teaching methods used at Schools A and B over three years can be contrasted to a great extent as *instruction with the focus on form* versus *instruction with the focus on meaning*. The School A instruction was almost wholly form-focused, while the instruction given at School B was more meaning-focused, with a good amount of form-focus also.

The teaching observed at School A seems to be typical of teaching at black primary schools in S.A., but the *Bridge* courses used at School B seem to have brought about profound changes in all the components of the curriculum.

In the next chapter investigation will focus on the resultant language acquisition at the schools that were investigated.

Chapter 4

THE EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION: TEST RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter a report of the English acquired at Schools A and B is to be found, in the form of the results of various tests. About each test the following is given: the test itself and the circumstances of its taking; the results of the test; and an evaluation of the success of the test in supplying information on the English acquired by a specific group of pupils. Some tests were taken at other schools also, to get a larger perspective on the results obtained at Schools A and B. Firstly will be explained which pupils were taken for tests. When tests were taken at other schools, attempts were made to test similar pupils.

4.2 The test groups at Schools A and B

At each school the test groups consisted theoretically of all the pupils who were in Gr. 2 in 1992. However, some of those pupils were never tested. Others were tested but dropped out of the test groups soon, mostly because of failing. Since the test groups did not remain stable, the pupils who were tested are differentiated in the following groups.

Group 1. (Used only for the 1992 test).

Group 1 consisted of 16 pupils, randomly selected at the end of 1992 at each of Schools A and B. When later the pupils were numbered according to their 1994 school results, it was found that none of the best pupils of School A were in Group 1. To be fair to School A, the scores of its Pupil 50 and of Pupil 1 of School B were removed from the totals of the 1992 test, leaving 15 pupils in each group to be compared. Those of the 16 of each school who were still in the test group in 1994 are indicated in the list of pupils appearing in Appendix A.

Group 2. Group 2 at each school consisted of the pupils who were in Gr. 2 in that school in 1992 and also in Gr. 4 in 1994. Their numbers can be found in Appendix A, together with their 1994 and 1995 school results. Since the pupils were numbered according to school results, a small number indicates good scholastic achievement.

Pupils who did the oral tests in 1992 and 1993, but failed or left the school, were not in Group 2 and are indicated with different numbers in the 1992 and 1993 tests, e.g. L4 in Appendix B. At

School A, of the 99 Gr. 2 pupils of 1992, only 55 (56%) were in Gr. 4 in that school in 1994. At the bigger School B, of the 143 Gr. 2 pupils of 1992, 99 (69%) reached Gr. 4 in 1994. Since the necessary records existed at School B, 14 pupils who were repeaters of Gr. 2 in 1992 were kept separate and numbered 86 - 99, since repeating meant an extra year of learning English. They were not excluded from the 1994 tests, but were excluded from some later tests. The other 85 pupils of School B, and the 55 of School A, were numbered according to their big total in the November 1994 examinations. Every third pupil of School B was then screened out (indicated with * in Appendix A) to leave a group comparable to the 55 of School A. Pupils belonging to Group 1 were not screened out. As a discriminative measure pupils 2, 3, 4 and 5 of School B were also screened out. The reason for discriminating against School B is mentioned in par 3.4.2.

Group 3. Group 3 at each school consisted of pupils from Group 2 who did not fail Gr. 4 or leave the school. At School A, 23 of the 55 failed Gr. 4 and one left, leaving 31 in Group 3. At School B there were again too many pupils in Group 3, and every fourth pupil was screened out.

Group 4. At each school the pupils of Group 3 who passed on to Gr. 6 belonged to Group 4. Groups 3 and 4 are simply subgroups of Groups 2. At Schools C, E and F similar pupils were tested: pupils who were in that school in Gr. 2 in 1992 and in Gr. 6 in 1996, that is, pupils who had not repeated from 1992 to 1995. At School B all the Group 4 pupils did the 1996 tests.

4.3 **Types of tests used for investigating English acquired**

Kroes and Walker (1988:25) remark that they could find no suitable test of English proficiency for very young pupils. Macdonald (1990a:22) also did not use standardised tests, but says she gained valuable information from non-standardised "paper and pencil" class tests. Likewise Mitchell (1992:111) used compositions, one on a series of pictures, and elicited speech to test the L2 ability of Gr. 4 and Gr. 7 pupils in England.

For the present investigation "paper and pencil" class tests were also used, mostly composition writing and comprehension tests. These test types were selected because they are communicative tests, they are not unfamiliar to Gr. 5 pupils, and between them they test both productive and receptive language skills. However, since the first tests were taken before Gr. 5, oral/aural variations of composition and comprehension tests were used at first: elicited speech and listening comprehension tests. The last two kinds of tests were less familiar to the pupils and less reliable.

As evaluative criteria for tests are mentioned (Macdonald 1990b:10):

Relevance: how relevant is the behaviour tested to the meeting of communication needs?

Acceptability: will the content and format be acceptable to the pupils?

Comparability: can test scores obtained at different times from different groups be compared?

Economy: do the tests provide the required information with the minimum expenditure of time, effort and resources?

Productive tests do not meet the last criterion. Even the short compositions written by Gr. 4 pupils for this investigation were analysed in numerous categories, which is time consuming for an investigator. For that reason, the number of pupils from whom compositions were taken was kept low. From even fewer pupils tape recordings of elicited speech were made. Davies (1990:32) says that communicative testing is too impractical to be realistic with large numbers of pupils.

The comprehension tests used meet all the above mentioned criteria, and some of them were taken from large groups of pupils, e.g. Test 2 was taken from over a hundred Gr. 8 pupils. Short grammar tests were also taken although they do not meet criteria 1 and 2. They were not the only way of measuring structural aspects of the L2 acquired. Some other tests were designed to test the grammatical features focused on at School A, e.g. plural -s was tested in Composition D.

The English acquired by groups of pupils is therefore indicated by three types of tests:

Productive tests: elicited speech and written compositions;

Receptive tests: listening and reading comprehension tests, and a translation test; and

Grammar tests. The reasons for using specific tests are indicated where necessary.

4.4 **Productive tests: elicited speech**

Elicited speech was used as test type for pupils in Grades 2 - 4, since it is a way of testing knowledge of an L2 without using the written mode. The method of interlocation was to take a child alone in a classroom, eliciting speech with questions, pictures and objects. The child was always greeted in a friendly way, his/ her name asked and continual reassurance given.

4.4.1 **The tape recordings made in November 1992**

At each school sixteen Gr. 2 pupils were selected and tested, but eventually the scores of only 15 pupils were used for the comparison, as explained about Group 1 in par. 4.2.

The questions and commands

1) *Are you a boy or a girl*? (If necessary to elicit *I am,* the following was tried: *I ..?* or *Say I ..*)
2) *What is this*? (Pictures: a table, blue chair, tree, brown dog, yellow cat/hen, cup and car).
3) *What is he/she doing?* (The five pictures asked for: He is running; she is writing; he is eating; he is walking/going to school; she is fetching water / carrying a bucket).
4) *How many things do you see*? (Objects: spoons, books, pens, plates).
5) *What is wrong with the picture*? (Mistakes: A boy with three eyes, a girl with four arms, a rabbit with three ears, a dog with six legs and a cow with two heads).
6) Two pictures were shown, one at a time, asking for repetitions of the following sentences:
   a) Say the boy is sitting on a chair, reading his book.
   b) Say the woman/mother is smiling, holding her baby.
7) Pupils were shown a drawing called a *mack* and had to repeat the word. With the next picture they were asked *What do you see now?* They answered *Two mack/s*

Results. (The results of the test and a graph appear in Appendix B).

For every school the speeches of 16 pupils were analysed in the 19 categories found practical for this test. (For an explanation of categories used in the research, see par. 4.5.1). Only the first six categories of Appendix B indicate positive features of language knowledge, the other categories indicate negative features or mistakes. In positive categories the School B pupils are mostly well ahead, and in the negative ones their scores are far below that of the School A pupils, as can also be seen in the graph. As can be seen in Appendix B, the scores of Pupils A:50 and B:1 appear below the totals for each school, since they were removed from the totals.

Communicative differences. Wrong responses occurred far more at School A, e.g. the pupil repeated the investigator's whole command *Say, this is a table*. The School A pupils also gave more one-word answers, while School B pupils used nearly twice as many full sentences, and 29 sentences longer than five words, against only 2 such long sentences at School A.

Linguistic differences. At School A 78 ungrammatical sentences (lacking a main verb or object) were recorded, against only 17 at School B. School A pupils also inserted many articles like: *Is a sitting a standing; This is a two plate.* At School A 31 instances of incorrect use of the article is recorded, and 7 at School B. The School A pupils were 90 % unable to repeat the two given

sentences, against 43 % at School B, although the sentences were repeated more by the investigator at School A than at School B.

Evaluation of the test

Although the spoken English of only 16 pupils at each school was taped, the test gave information on the ability in English at that stage. The use of verbs was the most obvious difference between the two groups. While most of the School B pupils answered the five *What is ... doing*? questions correctly, the worst score being two out of five, the average of the School A pupils was 1,3. It seems as if most School A pupils could not use main verbs. Eight pupils used 15 sentences such as the following: *The boy is school; She is blanket; The boy is food; Three is spoon*. Some pupils gave only one-word responses. At School B only one sentence lacking a main verb was given.

4.4.2 **Speech elicited in June 1993**

A specific objective with the test was to see if pupils could supply the plural -s with multiple objects without supplying it with the singular also, since it was noticed that pupils, being much confused with the words *eye* and *ear*, used *eyes* and *ear* for both singular and plural. A further objective was to see if the pupils of School A had improved since the first test in ability to use verbs. Therefore the same pictures, from the series of readers used at School A, were used again for eliciting verbs. Since these were the only objectives, the test was short and limited in comparison to the previous one. Only 14 pupils were tested at each school, because of time limitations.

The questions and commands

1) *What is this?* (on showing one) *How many?* (on showing more.) Objects like eye, pen, cup.
2) *Tell me about the picture*. (The boy is sitting/eating; the mother is washing; the girl is writing; the boy is walking/going to school; she is fetching water; he is sitting/reading).

Results of the test. The pupils' speech was analysed in 18 categories. In most positive categories the School B pupils were well ahead and in the negative ones they mostly scored lowest. Appendix C indicates the 18 categories and includes a graph. Some results are:

	School A	School B		School A	School B
Verb correct:	79	99	Verb unknown:	17	9
Complex sentence:	2	21	Afrikaans:	37	9
Self correction:	7	12	Article wrong:	10	18

School B is higher on Article wrong than School A, a result often found in tests. This phenomenon will be discussed with the next test.

Apart from the original objectives with the test, unexpected information was gained about the effect it has on pupils to start with a third language at school when very little of the second language has been acquired. Especially the pupils of School A were very confused with English and Afrikaans, and instead of *ear* some spoke of *ore - two ores*, some spoke of *hande - two handes*, and of *voete - two voetes*. Most of the pupils were also quite unsure about the distinctions *shoe / foot / leg*, and even more about *hand* and *arm*. Sotho does not have the latter distinction.

Concerning the two objectives mentioned above the following information was gained:

Suppliance of the plural -s.	School A	School B
Plural -s supplied, even to Afrikaans words and to *foot*:	58 %	42 %
Plural -s not supplied:	42 %	85 %
-s wrongly supplied to singular:	30 %	20 %

These figures show that the 14 School A pupils used the -s suffix more than the School B pupils. Whether the construct learnt was also acquired, will be answered by later tests.

The use of verbs

Since the objective was to test if the pupils of School A knew more verbs than in the first test, and due to some practical problems, the full test was unfortunately taken from only half the School B pupils, the other seven being tested only on the nouns and plurals. Furthermore, at School A two of the 14 did not say more than a few single words with the pictures. Therefore the scores in some categories had to be computed. However, the results did not give a true picture of pupils' abilities, e.g. it is indicated that there were more ungrammatical sentences at School B than at School A. The actual wrong sentences should rather be compared:

School A	School B
The girl is water.	*This is a boy, is eating.*
The girl is bucket (x2).	*This is a girl, is washing.*
The girl is red.	*This is a boy, is reading a book*
The boy is the school (x2).	*The boy is his book his hand.*
Sipho is fork and knife.	*The girl is his hand is cup.*

All six the wrong sentences of School B were spoken by two pupils, the first trying to produce

four complex sentences, the second probably using *is* for *has*. In comparison the School A pupils made grave mistakes with simple sentences, e.g. omitting a main verb.

However, there were only 8 sentences like the above from the 12 School A pupils, fewer than the 15 (from 15 pupils) in the first test. There were also fewer one-word answers, fewer wrong responses, copula omissions and article mistakes than in the first test. The School A pupils knew more verbs than they did in 1992, and used them mostly correctly. It does seem that they made some progress in the first six months in Gr. 3, but they did not catch up with the School B pupils.

Evaluation of the test. Although the test was restricted in nature, it does render results compatible with the rest of the investigation, and is of value for the information it renders, e.g. on suppliance of the plural -s and on the use of Afrikaans words.

4.4.3 **The tape recordings made in November 1994**

Since the pupils had completed their three years of preparation for English medium instruction, the third test was broad in scope to get a general picture of pupils' ability in English just before embarking on English medium instruction. Since some preparation for English medium instruction was done at School B (cf. par. 3.7.2), but none at School A, the test was not devised along the lines of subject matter. Only knowledge of a general strain was tested.

Pupils were taken one by one. Mostly they were first asked a few plurals, then they were given four or five pictures to speak on, some being picture series that tell stories. Pupils could look at each picture as long as they wanted before starting to speak. Tape recordings were made.

Test results: the contents of answers

As indication of pupils' ability to speak on pictures, transcribed examples are given below of the work of pupils who did not fail Gr. 4, except for B:73. Examples of pupils who had been in Gr. 2A of School B are not used, to indicate that also the pupils who were not with the good Gr. 2A teacher knew much more English than the pupils of School A. The work of Pupil B:73 is included to show the ability even of a pupil who subsequently failed. Examples from the best School A pupils are used, as shown by their small numbers. (Investigator's words are in brackets).

* A picture of a girl who stands on her toes to stir a pot

B:73. To this picture I see a girl and I see a pot on the stove. And the girl want to cook and the girl is too short because the stove is too high and the girl is too short.

A:10. I see Betty. Betty is cooking some eat. I see a window and a tafel.

A:13. This is Benny to (stir) of pot. Op die stoof.

* A picture of a baby who is falling

B:36. I see the baby falling down. And Mother look. And this boy run to take the baby and this girl. (What is the girl doing?) This girl says, "Oh, baby falling down."

A:22. The boy, girl, mother and baby. (What is the baby doing?) The baby is sitting in the vloer. (What is the baby doing?) The boy is running. (Why?) The boy is ... walking a baby.

* Six pictures of a man having problems to get his donkey going

B:44. This is a boy and a donkey. The boy is pull the donkey. The boy is push the donkey. The donkey is kicking the boy. The boy is give a (carrot). The donkey is come when the boy give the donkey a carrot.

A:6. The boy is (calling) The boy is calling the donkey. The boys is push the donkey. The donkey is stopped. The boys is ...The donkey is skop, the donkey skop the boy. The boy is ... (carrot) The boy is ... (He gives the carrot to the d.) The boys is carrot, the carrots of the donkey. The boys is carrot the donkey.

A:5. This is a __ and horse. The boy and the horse. The boy push the horse. The horse sprang, the boy fell down. The boy food the horse eet. The horse running. The boy ...

* Six pictures: A mother sends her son to the shop. He loses her purse but his dog picks it up

B:52. I see a mother and I see a dog. A mother is talking to a boy, and a boy is running with a dog. The boy is ...(What is this?) A purse. And the dog is take the purse. And she go to the shop. And the boy, she wants to (buy) to buy things. And the man says, "Look at the purse." And the boy is taking a purse.

A:17. Mother, mankie [basket], boy, dog, mankie. boy, dog. (What is this?) Mother is keep the boy's purse. (Say again) Mother keep the boy purse. The boy is running. The mankie. The dog is keep this purse. The boy ... The dog keep this purse. The man is ... The boy is keep this purse. (The boy wants this purse) The boy wants this purse. The purse is for the boy. Keep the boy to the teeth. The boy is Thank you to the dog.

In each case above, better examples of School B work could have been given from pupils who had been in Gr. 2A, especially pupils with small numbers. As example, Pupil 39 on the last story:

B:39. Mother give the son a wallet. The wallet fall down. The dog was coming after the boy. The dog catch the wallet. The boy buy to (!) the shopkeeper. The wallet fall. He don't have a wallet because the wallet falls down when he was running. The dog give... He put ... The shopkeeper show the boy his wallet. The dog was catching it, and the boy take the wallet to [from] the dog.

As can be seen, only work of School B pupils who are scholastically low down is used, to be compared to work of some of the best School A pupils. The work of the School A pupils who

failed Gr. 4 is worse, e.g. Pupil 23 said *Boy is manki; Dog is purse. He is dog's purse*. The examples serve to show that most School A pupils did not have the English available for everyday communication. Pupil 34 of School A uses *you/your* for the third person, e.g. on the first picture: *Betty take your stick. You're running a pot.* On the picture of the baby: *Betty take your Mary. Benny jumping. You're running.* In the last story: *The dog you are take your purse and teeth.*

Test results: linguistic analysis of the elicited speech

From some School A pupils it was very difficult to elicit speech. The investigator sometimes supplied more words than she received, and then stopped struggling with the specific pupil. Since some School A pupils spoke very little, 22 pupils of School A are compared to 20 pupils of School B, both averages computed by dividing by 20. Thus the corpus of English elicited at the two schools is fairly equal, allowing comparison with the graph in Appendix D.

Once more the two schools differed in their use of verbs: on average each School A pupil used 8 different verbs, each School B pupil 14. The greatest difference, though, is in the use of pronouns: in total School A used 15 personal pronouns and School B 93.

A very interesting finding is that most School A pupils did not use the indefinite article at all, while each School B pupil used it 14 times on average. While in the 1992 test the article was used wrongly more than twice as often at School A as at School B, it was the other way round in 1994. Many of the School B mistakes were due to using the indefinite article with the first picture but not changing to the definite article when speaking of the dog again, for example. This mistake is avoided when the indefinite article is not used. Appendix D has more information.

4.5 **Productive tests: compositions as indication of language ability acquired**

Five composition tests were used for this study. Evaluating a child's ability in an L2 from a piece of written work done in a group, has a number of problems, some of which are discussed below.

* One cannot immediately ask a child what he wanted to say. Should you ask him later, he may have forgotten. Poor spelling ability may mar an otherwise good knowledge of the L2.

* When the pupils of different schools are given a topic to write on, it may be a topic to which some/much attention was given at one school and little/none at the other.

* The written work of young children is full of mistakes. A superficial evaluation will not indicate differences in the level of acquisition.

The investigator took some measures to circumvent the problems.

* In analysing the compositions, it was attempted to find the meaning and not to penalise unnecessarily for incomprehensibility due to poor spelling. It was easier when the investigator knew what the child wanted to say, e.g. when a story was written on a series of pictures.

* Pupils were first tested on the work they had done in class. However, that presented problems with comparisons. Later they were given pictures and picture series to write stories about, and the variety and number of the tests made it less possible that one school was always benefited.

* Compositions were carefully analysed in a great number of categories to enable the investigator to compute figures representing the English ability of groups.

4.5.1 **Grammatical analysis of the compositions**

Categories for the analyses of compositions.

Categories 1. and 2. were sometimes used for contents entries.

3. Words. The number of words written, only rarely counting two for one, e.g. *in to*, as *into*.

4. Sentences. Number of sentences written, even if no capital letter or full stop indicated a new sentence. Very rarely a long sentence strung together by *and* was counted as more than one.

5 a) Verbs. The number of *different* verbs used by a pupil, mostly not counting the verb *to be*.

b) Complex sentences. A sentence with more than one main verb, even if joined by *and*.

c) Aux. verb. The number of auxiliary verbs used. (Category not used with most compositions).

d) to + verb. A construct sometimes counted separately.

6 a) Present. Number of times a present tense verb was used, not counting 'is-statements,' that is, a statement with no other verb than the verb *to be*, e.g. *Mother is fat*.

b) Concord correct. Only the following counted: third person singular; and plural + *are/were*.

c) Concord wrong. All instances counted.

7 a) Continuous correct. All instances in present, past and future tense counted, also the correct use of the present participle, e.g. *I see a man sitting*.

b) Continuous wrong. When the copula or *-ing* of the Continuous is given, but the other not.

c) Copula omitted. All cases of copula omission, not only those connected with the Continuous.

d) -ing wrong. Mostly connected with the Continuous, counted under 7b); also *to eating* etc.

8 a) Past tense correct. When a story is started in the past tense and/or most verbs are past tense verbs, those verbs were entered in this category.

b) Past tense wrong. i) Use of the past form in an otherwise present narration.

ii) Use of the present form when the topic asks for a narration in the past.

c) Past form. Use of the past form in a context where it cannot be used, e.g. *to came; has ran.*

d) Future. A category sometimes used to enter all future tense verbs.

9 a) Plural correct. Only regular plurals ending in -s.

b) Plural wrong. Mistakes with regular plural -s.

c) Over suppliance of plural -s. For example to singulars and to irregular plurals, e.g. *children.*

10 a) Spelling Verb. Spelling mistakes with verbs, a specific verb counted only once.

b) Spelling. All English mistakes counted, the same more than once in all but very few cases.

c) Afrikaans. All seemingly Afrikaans words, even if also/rather Sotho, e.g. *pompo* for *tap.*

11 a) Preposition correct. All prepositions correctly used, except when *go to* is used very often.

b) Preposition omitted. When a preposition was omitted, it was recorded here.

c) Preposition wrong. When a wrong preposition was used, it was recorded here.

12 a) Article omitted. Something omitted which could be an article or possessive pronoun.

b) Article wrong. Mistakes like indefinite article used for the definite; *a* used with a plural, etc.

13 a) Pronoun 1. Number of personal and possessive pronouns (except *I, you, my*) used correctly.

b) Pronoun 2. Number of different pronouns used correctly, if counted for 13 a.

c) Pronoun wrong. Mostly mistakes with *he/she, his/her,* etc., but a few others also.

d) Sotho Pronoun. A pronoun used as typical in African languages, e.g. *John he reads ...*

14. Wrong Word. Mistakes not entered under 10 c), 11 c), 12 b) or 13 c & d). Mistakes with homophones and similar words were rather regarded as spelling mistakes.

15. Omission. Mistakes not entered under 11 b) or 12 a).

16. Sentence wrong. A sentence was counted as wrong only when it had no verb or subject, or when the verb should have an object which was missing.

17. Incomprehensible. A sentence was incomprehensible only when guessing what the child wanted to say was very difficult. Discrimination against School B was on purpose (cf. par. 3.4.2).

18. Repetition. A (near) repetition of a sentence, or part of it.

19. Full stop. Omission to indicate a break between sentences with a full stop or capital letter.

Categories 20 - 22 were sometimes used for Relative, Possessive and Passive.

Category 23 was used for specific words, e.g. have, am, because, There, When.

Some categories were used for positive features of language knowledge, others for mistakes. Decisions on what to count were taken for practical reasons, e.g. counting *I* and *my* with other pronouns would not have indicated emergence of the other pronouns. Some pupils used *You/Your* in ways that may indicate direct speech, but cannot be taken as such since they rather represent mistakes, as in the example of Pupil A:34 in par. 4.4.3 above: "Betty take your Mary."

Using the analyses for computing results

Where both the correct and wrong instances of a construct are entered, as in the case of Continuous correct and wrong, it is possible to compute the percentage *Continuous correct per total Continuous*, indicating correct suppliance of a construct in obligatory contexts. However, this figure does not indicate if the specific construct was often or rarely used by a group of pupils, and can be misleading, especially where pupils avoid certain grammatical constructs. The suppliance of constructs by groups equal in number must be comparable, and where the number of words written by two groups in a test is about equal, the totals of categories can be compared in graphs. But great differences in the category Words necessitated that percentages be computed:

Where totals were large, e.g. Spelling mistakes, mistakes were computed as percentage of words;

Where totals were small, e.g. Article wrong, mistakes were computed as percentage of sentences.

This method of computing results did not affect the comparison between the two schools.

4.5.2 **Test A. Compositions written towards the end of 1994 on work done in class**

Work done at School A

At School A the topics *My Dog* and *My Cat* were done in class in terms two and three and learnt by heart (cf. par. 3.7.1). The compositions were written on posters at the back of the class, to be copied. Prior to that, the pupils had had the opportunity to discuss their dogs, for example, and to write their own work in jotters. Some wrote sentences not used later in the teacher's example, e.g. about their dogs keeping watch. On 17/10/94 the pupils of Gr. 4B were asked to write the composition *My Dog* without prior warning. It seems as if learning the teacher's example by heart was restrictive, e.g. they did not write about their dogs keeping watch. At School B the pupils of

Gr. 4C wrote unprepared compositions on *My Dog*. They wrote compositions twice as long and gave more personal information. A comparison of the compositions *My Dog* shows:

	School A	School B		School A	School B
Average words per pupil:	12	24			
Total complex sentences:	3	9	Negative feature		
Correct pronouns per sentences:	8 %	26 %	Ungrammatical sentences:	16 %	7 %
Continuous used per sent.:	16 %	32 %			
Cont. correct per total Cont.:	13 %	61 %			

Comparing the two compositions written at School A, *My Dog* which was done in term two and *My Cat* which was done in term three, it does seem that the pupils remembered the latter work better. They wrote 16 words per pupil on *My Cat*, and wrote only 8 % ungrammatical sentences. However, it is a comparison between two classes with different teachers. The influence of a teacher is best seen in the amount of Afrikaans used by the Gr. 4A pupils of School A: in ten pieces on *My Cat* they wrote 19 words indicated by their spelling to be Afrikaans. It seems as if the teacher knows and likes Afrikaans better than English.

Work done at School B

At School B, the topic *The New South Africa* was discussed and written on just after the election of April 1994. About five months later the investigator suddenly asked the Gr. 4A pupils to write on the topic again, and some did very good work. However, a few pupils found it difficult and were allowed to write a story instead.

At School A the topic *The New South Africa* was also given as a choice, but pupils were allowed the 30 minutes of break time to think or talk about it. Although the teacher said that the topic was too difficult for the pupils, six pupils tried it and Pupil 1 wrote very well. His attempt appears in par. 4.10. Pupil 3 also showed innovative ability, saying that Mr. Mandela was going to visit their township.

Other work tested at School B concerned stories. As mentioned in chapter 3, stories were learnt and recited by individuals. It was mostly oral work, and the test compositions show that many pupils had not brought together what they knew orally and what they knew in writing. The example below serves to show how wrongly a pupil can render in writing what he knows orally:

B:77 *Mr Jakol his hunnting his hunnting are Rabbit* [Mr Jackal is hunting. He is hunting a Rabbit].

Fat little rabbit running in are road are he shuts the door fat little rabbit [Rabbit is running in a ...]
Wat Mr Jakol are am etting her food [Wait Mr Jackal, I am eating my food] *She not etting her food his dehing are hole in fol in are house* [She is not eating her food, she is digging a hole in the floor ...]
Fat little rabbit cam of said are hef said are hef safing fo you [Rabbit, come outside, I have said I have]

Pupil 77 was not the only one with many spelling mistakes, wrong words, pronouns and articles. In some cases it is doubtful if the pupils understood everything, for they wrote 7 % incomprehensible sentences. A quantified comparison between ten *Stories* from School B and ten pieces on *My Cat* from School A, shows that the School B pupils made more mistakes, e.g. 17 % of the words they used were misspelled, against 9 % at School A. They also used 19 wrong pronouns and 7 Sotho pronouns against 4 wrong pronouns at School A. But they wrote more advanced English, e.g. they used 21 % complex sentences against 16 % at School A.

Evaluation of Test A

The test did not really allow comparisons between the two schools, because the work done at the schools was too different. Only the work on *My Dog* was comparable, but the teacher's model restricted the School A pupils so that they wrote less than they knew. However, the test rendered information on the effects of teaching methods, indicating some reasons for the qualitative differences found at the schools. The School B pupils were able to write longer compositions because of learning long stories and not short models, and some could write innovatively because of holding discussions. On occasion, a few School A pupils could also write innovatively, though.

4.5.3 **Test B. Compositions written in 1994 and 1995: *My Mother***

At School A most of the 55 pupils wrote the composition *My Mother*, but some wrote only the compositions discussed in par. 4.5.2. At School B the pupils of Gr. 4A, the best pupils, did only the composition *The New S.A.* This means the best School B pupils were excluded from Test B. In this way it is possible to see the effect of the Molteno Project's approach to English teaching, apart from the effect caused by being in the best class and having the best teachers.

Most of the compositions were written in 1994 by Gr. 4 pupils, however the following were written early in 1995 by pupils then in Gr. 5: At School A, the compositions by pupils who had been in Gr. 4 B and a few others; at School B, the compositions by the Gr. 4 B and D classes, and all the compositions at Schools C, D and E. The latter were written up to 17/5/95.

The contents. Off-point work was not penalised. Names were counted, e.g. names of persons and places. Some pupils wrote little but names. Computed as a percentage of Words, School A wrote 3 % names, School B wrote 2 % and the combined schools 6 %.

As examples of the work of their respective schools, the following compositions are quoted.

A:7. It is a big mother. It is a smat (smart) mother. He small mother. He mother is reding. Mother cleen blackbot. (The use of school language shows how limited the English acquired).

A:31. Mother is clean washing. Mother is a clean my shoes. Mother is a clean my washing. Mother is beautiful. are [I] eet to Mother (?) Mother she was the Dog *(washes* or Afrikaans *was).*

B:50. My mother wash my clothes. She give me foot. cooked for me foot. She give me money for school. She clean the window. She wash the cups and spoons. Can she finesh his work.(?) She go to the work... evining he came back to home. She go to sleep with his baby.

Grammatical analysis of the compositions (See Appendix E)

Though the compositions were written by 35 pupils at each school, the total number of mistakes did not give a true picture of the pupils' work because of the great difference in total number of words. The pupils of School B made more mistakes in all categories except Afrikaans words, ungrammatical and incomprehensible sentences. However, when the mistakes were computed as a percentage of words or sentences, the School B pupils were ahead in every category but one, Article Wrong. And even on totals they were far ahead in every positive category. Since the pupils of Gr. 4A were not included in the group, the possibility that a few good pupils and teachers were responsible for better results is ruled out. Some important results follow.

Positive	School A	School B	**Negative**	School A	School B
Average words per pupil:	35	55	Ungrammatical sentences:	7 %	4 %
Average words per sentence:	5	7	Incomprehensible sentences:	18 %	6 %
Present tense / sentences:	21 %	43 %	Afrikaans per sentences:	17 %	5 %
Correct prepositions / sent.:	8 %	29 %	Verbs misspelled / verbs:	42 %	29 %
Correct pronouns / sentence:	8%	26 %	Article wrong / sentences:	8 %	12 %

Discussion of the results obtained from the compositions

The first obvious difference is that pupils at School B wrote longer compositions and used longer sentences. However, pupils at School A were restricted in two ways: the compositions *My Cat* and *My Dog,* written by the teachers, were very short, and might have caused the pupils to be

satisfied with only 6 or 7 sentences on *My Mother*. Furthermore, when the topic *My Mother* was given them, one teacher tried to help them with *What is your mother like? Say my mother is...* However, the other two teachers said nothing, and their pupils also used mostly *is*-statements, e.g. *My mother is short*. Furthermore, the same two restrictions need not have held at Schools C, D and E, and their results are nearly the same as that of School A, as can be seen below. As said in par. 4.1, tests were taken at other schools to get a larger perspective on Schools A and B.

Another possible explanation for the shorter compositions at School A is that the pupils did not have the English vocabulary to say much more, especially as regards verbs. The pupils of School B used nearly twice as many different verbs per pupil as the others. The same is found when we compare the use of tenses, either simple present, present continuous, or past:

	School A	Schools C - E	School B
Tenses used per sentences:	48 %	46 %	85 %
Average verbs per total words:	7 %	6 %	10 %
Total complex sentences used by 35 pupils:	6	23	55
Ungrammatical sentences (mostly lacking a verb):	7 %	9 %	4 %
Incomprehensible sentences:	18 %	16 %	6 %

The above figures for Schools C, D and E indicate no great differences between them and School A. The combined schools had the advantage over Schools A and B that none of their pupils who failed Gr. 4 wrote the compositions, and they all wrote them in 1995. Furthermore, at School A Pupil 1 did not write this composition, and at School B none of the best pupils did.

4.5.4 **Test C. Compositions written in Grade 5: *The Snake at the Tap***

The 30 pupils at each school were only given a series of three pictures and told to write the story of the pictures. They were asked to give the story a title, and 16 did it at School A, 20 at School B. Although the word *story* often appears in the titles at School A, many of them did not write a story at all but described the pictures, resulting in repetitions like *I see a tree* at each picture. At Schools A and B the test was done on 20/9/95, and at School F on 22/11/95.

Pupils' success with the contents

Marks were given for contents: 2 for successful work, 1 if it is difficult to decide, and 0 if the child failed to convey the story. To be successful, an indication had to be given that the snake was

the cause of the father coming with a stick, or at least the cause of the others running. Only 9 of the 30 stories at School A were rated as successful, against 24 at School B, whereas 15 pupils at School A completely failed to convey the story, and only 3 at School B. The following story by Pupil 52 of School B is a good example of the straightforward manner often found at School B.

B:52. a Father sit on the cheir out side. Mother work [walk] withe her children to fach some water. they saw a snake and ran away. Father came with her stick to kill that snake.

From School A is quoted the work of two of the "best" pupils according to school performance. Pupil 5 received one for contents, Pupil 2 received nought.

A:5. The house and trees the man sitting outside the house. The woman walk in to tep and two children. green grass. father is ran and mother and childern carry they see a snack the backet is down.

A:2. I see father inside the House and trees tap we see the door windows after I see father mother boy an gril it clous the door Mather boy and girl warlk with wait water mather has inside of the trees mathe is between thes two after She raning to fathe fathe ranning with waits.

The use of some nouns and verbs were counted: *tap, snake, stick, bucket; fetch, kill, want.* *Snake* and *bucket* were only counted for correct if spelled correctly, but *tep* for *tap* was taken as correct and variations of the Sotho *pompo* for *tap* as wrong. Verbs were counted even if wrongly spelled, but counted for wrong if the child couldn't find a verb to say what he had to say. For *fetch* was also accepted *get, take, pour, carry a bucket*; for *kill* was accepted words like *hit.*

The totals on these 7 words are:		School A	School B		School A	School B
Four nouns:	Correct	27	54	Wrong	35	21
Three verbs:	Correct	4	33	Wrong	5	4

As can be seen, the pupils of School A broke down on verbs completely. It seems as if they had not advanced beyond the basic verbs learnt in Grades 2 and 3, verbs like *see, sit, walk, run.* Many pupils were also confused with *bucket* and *basket,* or used words like *pomp* and *stok/stock,* which were counted as Afrikaans. The latter mistakes were also found at School B, but less often.

Linguistic analysis of 30 compositions from each school (See Appendix F)

Since the total number of words used by the groups is about equal, the graph in Appendix F compares the totals in nearly all cases. Only for the following the graph compares percentages: Copula omitted per Continuous Tense used; -ing omitted per Continuous Tense used; Verbs

misspelled per verbs counted; and Concord wrong per Present Tense used. School B had a higher percentage Concord mistakes than School A. Some other scores are:

Positive	School A	School F	School B
Different verbs per total words:	9 %	12 %	14 %
Complex sentences per total sentences:	16 %	24 %	42 %
to + verb per total sentences:	3 %	12 %	15 %
Correct prepositions per total sentences:	33 %	37 %	49 %
Correct pronoun per total sentences:	12 %	20 %	37 %
Negative			
Omissions (copula, article, other):	101	92	70
(Wrong word + article wrong + Afr.) /words:	9 %	9 %	4 %
Ungrammatical sentences / total sentences:	13 %	6 %	3 %
Incomprehensible sentences / total sentences:	11 %	4 %	5 %
Words misspelled per total words:	13 %	14 %	9 %

The reason for School F doing better than School A in some categories is that very poor work of School F pupils was not included. At Schools A and B there were specific test groups of numbered pupils. Where necessary School B pupils were screened out in an orderly way, and all other tests were marked. At other schools incomprehensible work was easily laid aside.

Evaluation of the test. Since the content of the compositions was greatly prescribed by the series of pictures, the test was more successful than the previous two in measuring what pupils had acquired rather than what they had learnt as chunks. The School B pupils scored significantly above the School A and F pupils in English vocabulary, and in the use of grammatical constructs.

4.5.5 **Test D. Compositions written in March 1996: *The Animals at Noah's Ark***

The main objectives with the test was to elicit the use of plural nouns and the past tense. A large picture was put up in front, showing Noah's Ark, pairs of animals, and six people consisting of three couples, said to be Noah's children. The pairs of animals were lions, elephants, giraffes, buck (kudu), snakes and pigs. Pupils were given the title *The story of Noah*, and were told to make their own story if they did not know the Bible story. The content of the compositions was there-

fore not considered. Although the intention was to see if pupils could use the plural -s, it was found that most of the School A pupils avoided plurals. They were given other papers three days later and asked to make a list of the animals they saw. If they wrote *I see a lion*, etc., it was counted as a mistake with plural, since the picture had pairs of animals.

As only 24 School A pupils turned up for the test, the answers of the best School B pupils were not considered, as a discriminative measure. As can be seen in Appendix G, the last five pupils of School B made a large number of mistakes, a fact making the results more significant.

Linguistic analysis of the 24 compositions of each school (See Appendix G)

Since Noah's story should be written in the past tense, present verbs were not counted as present tense but only as wrong cases of past tense. A present verb could still be counted as a correct or wrong instance of concord, though. Note that School B used 41 auxiliary verbs and School A 11.

Tenses. Of great significance is the use of the two tenses, the continuous and past, which can be used simultaneously, e.g. *He was calling them*. The School A pupils made a little more use of the continuous, but used it less correctly. They used exactly half the number of past tense verbs of the School B pupils, but just as many present verbs in past context. Some results are:

	School A	School B
Continuous used per sentences:	21 %	18 %
Continuous correct per total Continuous:	9 %	66 %
Past tense correct per sentences:	27 %	55 %

The plural. One objective with this 1996 test was to compare the acquisition of plural -s at the two schools, to be compared to the figures obtained in other tests:

	Spoken English 1993		Spoken English 1994		Written English 1996	
	Sch. A	Sch. B	Sch. A	Sch. B	Sch. A	Sch. B
Plural -s correct:	58 %	42 %	57 %	49 %	55 %	71 %
Plural -s omitted:	42 %	58 %	27 %	41 %	45 %	29 %
-s added wrongly:	30 %	20%	16 %	11 %	4,3 %	3,8 %

Other features. Since there is no great difference in the average number of words used by pupils, 78 as to 81, the graph in Appendix G gives an acceptable representation of the scores obtained. In most categories the pupils of School B outdid the School A pupils by far.

Evaluation of the test

Although the work of a large number of weak pupils from School B was considered for this test, they outdid the School A pupils in almost all categories. The test was designed to render important information on the use of tenses and plurals. Furthermore the following unexpected information was gained: At both Schools A and B a larger number of Sotho pronouns were used than in other tests, e.g. *Noah he said...* A possible reason is that the pupils were thinking more in their L1 than with other tests, since they do religious education in their L1.

4.5.6 **Test E. Compositions written in May 1996: *The Bicycle Story***

At School A only 20 pupils did the test, at School B 40 pupils, and at Schools C, E and F ten pupils each. Pupils were given a page with six numbered pictures about a boy proudly riding a bicycle, waving to a girl and boy, and letting go of the handles and pedals. Then he goes downhill, hits a stone and falls in some water while the two children seen earlier come running.

The pupils were given the title *The Bicycle*, and were merely told to write the story. At School C the pupils were told to write the story in Sotho first and then in English. Their work shows that pupils could interpret the pictures well: some pupils who used words like *stone, greet, fall* in Sotho avoided the words in English, showing that they did not know them.

The contents. A score for contents was entered for each child: 2 marks for enough information and an indication of why the boy fell down; 1 mark if the latter reason was lacking; no marks if the story could not be gathered by someone not knowing it. Scores were also entered for words as follows:

	2 marks	1 mark		2 marks	1 mark
1)	stone/brick:	misspelled	5)	ride	misspelled
2)	wave/greet/laugh/smile	misspelled	6)	hold/let go	leave
3)	cry/angry/afraid	misspelled	7)	hit	catch/touch
4)	get on	clim(b)	8)	fall/fell /fol	falled/felled

Results. The pupils of School B were best able to tell the story in English, and earned twice as many marks for contents as the School A pupils. The count of words indicates that the pupils of School B had far more of the necessary vocabulary at their disposal. The count of words used at the different schools is given below.

Words used. (as if for 20 pupils per school). Schools: A B C E F

The noun *stone*:	11	18	16	16	14
Verbs etc. indicating feelings, 2) and 3) above:	8	25	20	28	22
Verbs indicating action, 4) - 8) above:	35	53	22	30	14

Linguistic features. The School A pupils again wrote shorter compositions than the School B pupils, but the total number of words of the two groups are near enough to compare totals. The percentages and graph in Appendix H show that School B is again ahead in all positive categories and lower in the negative ones.

Evaluation. Again the best pupils of School B were screened out. Forty pupils ranging from Pupil 9 to Pupil 94 did the test. Nevertheless, they outdid the School A pupils by far.

When doing the test, the pupils already had had one and a half years of English medium instruction. The fact that only three School A pupils (Pupils 1, 12 and 26) were able to tell the above story successfully, while eleven out of 20 completely failed on the story, indicates that most pupils could not use English unless they had learnt specific sentences as chunks. The test was successful in indicating how little English pupils on a traditional program had acquired.

4.6 **Receptive tests: comprehension tests**

It is notoriously difficult to test understanding, especially to test what young children understand in a second language. In the case of listening comprehension tests, a wrong answer may be due to poor hearing or poor memory, rather than to inability in the L2. For reading comprehension tests the ability to read with understanding is necessary. In both cases general intelligence is a factor, as well as experience with answering questions orally and in writing. Compiling suitable comprehension tests is also more difficult than compiling other tests. Alderson (1992:165), commenting on the work of Palmer, remarks: "If those with long experience of test development have problems in designing their instruments, and not having the time or resources to validate them, what chance does the ordinary mortal have of doing the same?"

However, when comparing groups from schools on the same syllabus, the same drawbacks should hold for both. For this investigation three different types of comprehension tests were used in order to counteract some drawbacks. The tests mostly meet the evaluative criteria mentioned in par. 4.3. Two other types of tests which were not used for this investigation will first be discussed. The reasons why they were not used will be indicated.

Multiple choice tests. When tests are answered by choosing from given answers, guessing is a factor. The greater the number of choices, the smaller the influence of guessing on the results, but also the more difficult to find what the influence of guessing was. The investigator tried a specific test of this type at the end of 1994 and the middle of 1995. The pupils were given three short passages from Gr. 5 textbooks, followed by statements which they had to mark correct or wrong. With the second test more care was taken to explain that they had to see if a sentence said the same as the statement above, and an example was done on the board:

Anna is wearing a blue dress and Thabo a white shirt: a) Thabo is wearing a blue shirt.

b) Thabo is wearing a white shirt. c) Anna is wearing a white dress and Thabo a blue shirt.

On both occasions the test results at each school did not differ significantly from chance, 50 %. As explained in par 4.2, the pupils were numbered according to their school performance. In all other tests the first pupils had the best scores, especially at School B. The scores of this test indicated nothing but guessing. The zeal with which the pupils set about putting down their guesses, to arrive at a 50 % average, made the investigator abandon the method. The results may indicate that the English used in the textbooks was too difficult for the pupils to understand.

Cloze tests. A cloze test consists of a passage with some of its words deleted systematically. Cloze tests were not used for this investigation because they are very difficult to do. Macdonald (1990b:16) constructed a cloze test on a Health Education text and found Gr. 5 pupils almost completely unable to do the test. They did not even do well in an L1 version of it.

The results of six comprehension tests were included in this report. They are of three kinds.

4.6.1 **Two listening comprehension tests**

Before the pupils started "doing comprehension tests" in Gr. 5, listening tests were used to test their comprehension of English. Such a test must be very short and simple, to tax the memory as little as possible. However, the shorter the test, the easier it is to guess the right answer, as will be shown below. Since black pupils are not accustomed to European pronunciation, the two tests were read by the class teachers, both the passage and each question being read more than once. Factors like pupils' memory and how clearly the sentences were read, surely played a role.

Categories of answers: Correct; half correct (e.g. logical but wrong answers); wrong and irrelevant. Irrelevant answers are not appropriate for the question, e.g. a *Who*-answer for a *What*-question. Scores under half correct were never used.

A test taken at the end of 1994

Pupils were told that the story was about John and Maria. They had to repeat the names. The passage was read twice by a teacher, followed by the questions, also read twice.

John and Maria are good friends and they are in the same grade. John is always first in class but he does not even have school shoes. Maria often gets money to buy sweets at school.

Trial question: Who are good friends?

1) Who buys sweets at school? **Maria** 2) Who is always first in class? **John**

3) Who does not have school shoes? **John** 4) What does Maria buy at school? **Sweets**

5) Who is very poor? **John** 6) If John is in Gr. 5, in which grade is Maria?

Scores can be found in Appendix A, second last column.

Results	School A	School B	B above A
Total correct of 48 pupils:	34 %	53 %	19 %
Total irrelevant answers:	27 %	5 %	22 %

Evaluation of the test. As can be seen from the answers, guessing correctly was not very difficult. A child who knew the word *Who* had only to choose between two names. It is rather the 27 % irrelevant answers from School A pupils that indicate that many of them did not understand much.

A test taken in the middle of 1995

The following passage was read to the pupils by their teacher three times, each question twice:

Anna and Thabo are in the same class and always walk to school together, so that she can help him with his school work. She is always first in class, but she never gets money to buy food because her mother does not have a job. Thabo often buys fruit at school and always gives some to Anna to say thank you for her help.

1) Why do Anna and Thabo walk to school together? 2) Who needs help with school work?

3) Who is always first in class? 4) Whose mother does not have a job?

5) Who never gets money to buy food? 6) Who buys food at school?

7) What kind of food does he buy? 8) Who wants to say thank you to Anna?

9) Why does he want to say thank you? 10) How does he say thank you?

11) Does Anna sometimes get fruit to eat? 12) If Anna is in Gr. 6, in which grade is Thabo?

Scores for this test can also be found in Appendix A, last column.

Results	School A	School B	B above A
Total correct of 30 pupils:	35 %	49 %	14 %
Total wrong:	64 %	48 %	16 %
Total irrelevant answers:	30 %	15 %	15 %

Evaluation of the test

The test had twice as many questions as the previous one, and a greater variety of questions. School A scored about the same, School B a little lower, and the difference between the two schools was about 5 % smaller, still leaving School B with a lead of about 15 % above School A. In as far as the test results represent pupils' ability to understand the English they hear, it seems that the School B pupils understood significantly more at that stage.

4.6.2 **A translation test taken in the middle of 1995**

Translation is a difficult task even for people knowing both languages well. When evaluating a child's translation of English sentences in his L1, the purpose is testing the understanding of an L2, not the ability to write the L1. Despite the difficulties of translation as such, using this type of test with young children was found to have merits. It showed that some pupils understood only a few words of some sentences, and made up any meaning for themselves from that.

The sentences given to the pupils to translate into Sotho follow below. The work of 25 pupils per school was considered for the test. Each sentence is followed by the positive scores.

	School A	School B
Sipho has a dog that is a mother.	25 %	44 %
It loves him and helps him.	22 %	65 %
Sipho is always followed by his dog.	18 %	24 %
It does not take food from anyone but Sipho.	41 %	59 %

Sipho's dog has a puppy whose name is Spotty.	22 %	69 %
Does Spotty run after Sipho?	51 %	60 %
No, Spotty is small, it cannot run after Sipho.	67 %	72 %

Results of the test.	School A	School B		School A	School B
Total positive scores:	35 %	54 %	Total negative scores:	48 %	29 %
Meaning correct:	38 %	60 %	Meaning wrong:	67 %	41 %
Pronoun correct:	14 %	33 %	Pronoun wrong:	34 %	13 %
Possessive correct:	26 %	70 %	Possessive wrong:	60 %	12 %

Evaluation of the test. It was difficult to score the test, but it is clear that School B is well ahead. The test indicated that most of the Gr. 5 pupils did not understand the passive sentence, and that they had problems with the relative of sentence 1, which was perhaps too artificial. They also had problems with *from anyone but Sipho*, with *whose*, and with *cannot*. The translation of the question was quite difficult to score, for even when pupils did not use a written question indicator, it was still possible that their Sotho sentence could be said as a question by using the right intonation. Therefore no negative scores were given where question indicators were lacking.

4.6.3 **Reading comprehension tests**

At School A various "comprehension tests" were done in class since the beginning of Gr. 5, from the pupils' text book. The specific teacher saw such exercises as important. The way in which pupils find the answering of such exercises to "work," should greatly influence the way they will set about answering comprehension tests, especially if they do not understand much of the passage on which the test is set. For example, pupils may use a single word from the question as cue, and find a sentence in the passage with the same word, or they may look for a sentence with a number of words the same as those of the question, and simply copy the sentence. The latter strategy may lead to a 'right copy'. A 'right copy' is for the purpose of this thesis a sentence from the right place in the passage of a test, but not a correct answer, e.g. the answer *She is second* to the question *Who is second*? The strategy of finding a sentence with most of the same words as those in the question will lead to correct answers if a comprehension test is not carefully compiled. Some teachers may also take right copies as correct. Thus this strategy may prove very

useful in the quest for marks, and it may foster the habit of "doing comprehension tests" without even trying to understand the passage.

In each test pupils filled in the answers after every question. Their answers were analysed in the following categories: correct; half correct; wrong; right copy; irrelevant, wrong copy. Another category was for ungrammatical sentences. The categories following wrong are also wrong, the one following irrelevant is also irrelevant.

4.6.4 **Comprehension Test 1 written in March 1995**

Test 1 was given to thirty Gr. 5 pupils at each of Schools A and B, ten Gr. 5 and six Gr. 6 pupils at each of three other schools, and to groups of Gr. 6 and 7 pupils at Schools A and B. The test was given at other schools to see how Schools A and B compared to them, and it was given to higher standards at Schools A and B to see if the same difference found in Gr. 5 would be found with other groups of pupils. Only pupils who had not repeated did the tests.

Test 1 follows below. The questions are followed by their answers as well as by some typical wrong answers, and an indication of the category of each wrong answer.

Thabo's best friend is Sarah's brother Ben. She is always second in class and Thabo is first, but they have to help Ben. He does not find the Maths easy, but is still in the same class as his friend. Thabo never gets money to buy things, but Ben often gets money to buy food at school. Then he always gives some to Thabo. His sister often buys sweets but she never gives any away.

1) Who is always second in class? **Sarah** (She is always second in class - right copy)

2) Who help Ben with his school work? **Thabo and Sarah.** (Thabo - half correct)

3) Why must they help Ben? **He does not find the Maths easy**.

4) What does Sarah buy at school? **Sweets** (His sister often buys sweets - right copy)

5) What does Sarah give to her friends? **Nothing** (She never gives any away - right copy)

6) Who is Sarah's brother? **Ben** (Thabo's best friend is Sarah's brother Ben - right copy)

7) Who gives some of his food to Thabo? **Ben** (Ben often gets money to buy food - wrong copy)

8) Why doesn't Thabo buy his own food? **He never gets money to buy things**.

9) Who is the most clever of Ben, Sarah and Thabo? **Thabo** (They have to help Ben - wrong c.)

10) If Ben is in Gr. 7, in which grade is Thabo? **Gr. 7**. (Class - irrelevant)

Results. (Appendix I has scores and graphs).

As is shown by the graphs in Appendix I, School B did much better in all three grades. In Gr. 5 its lead over School A was 22 %, in Gr. 6 its lead over the combined schools was 18 % (for two groups of 30 pupils), and in Gr. 7 its lead over School A was 26 % (with 10 School A and 15 School B pupils). School B also had far less irrelevant answers and wrong copies. Indications are that the pupils of School B understood the passage significantly better than the others.

Discussion of the results

In as far as the inability to supply a correct answer indicated a pupil's lack of understanding, we should investigate the methods pupils use for answering a comprehension test without understanding the passage or the questions or both. Indications are that pupils often used a single word in the question as cue for finding the answer in the passage. For example in this test question 5), about what Sarah gave to her friends, was often answered by copying one of the two sentences containing the word *friend.* Of the 122 wrong copy answers given at School A, about half had at least one noun in common with the question. These included answers which repeated the question. The right-copy answers also had words in common with the question. Another method that seems to have been used by some is to copy the next sentence as an answer to the next question, so that the answers to successive questions formed part of the story.

4.6.5 **Comprehension Test 2, written by the test groups in November 1995**

At School A only 25 pupils turned up for the test, of which two did not belong to Group 3, meaning they had repeated some grades. Enough pupils were tested at School B, but they wrote the test immediately after their Mathematics examination, which started at about eleven-thirty, after a frustrating wait for the principal to turn up with a key. Some could not stay for the test, but those who did seem not to have been in a hurry for they made a very good job of the history compositions which they wrote after Test 2 (see par. 5.8 and 5.8.3). Yet a comparison with the results obtained later by the School B group one grade ahead, leaves the impression that the Gr. 5 pupils would have done better if they had not written Test 2 immediately after another examination. At School F 50 pupils were tested who had not repeated the previous three years.

The test is here followed by the questions and correct answer(s) in bold.

Yesterday John's big dog Bruno followed him to school. It was hungry. John's sister Anna was shown the dog by her friend Thabo, who was the first to see the dog. Anna asked permission to leave the class, and Thabo followed her. She went to John's classroom, but her friend went to the soccer field where all the Gr. 7 pupils were practising. Anna could not find her brother, so she ran after Bruno to the Gr. 1 classroom. She heard the Gr. 1 pupils screaming for fear of the dog. Just as Anna found Bruno, John came running from the soccer field. She put her arms round Bruno and tried to drag it away from the door of the classroom. But Bruno didn't move until John spoke to it. Then it followed John home.

1) Why did Bruno follow John to school? **It was hungry**
2) Who showed the dog to someone? **Thabo; Anna was shown the dog by her friend**
3) Who was the first to see the dog at school? **Thabo**
4) Who went to John's classroom to look for John? **Anna**
5) Where was Bruno when Anna found it? **At the Gr. 1 classroom**
6) Who were afraid of Bruno? **The Gr. 1 pupils**
7) Who told John about Bruno? **Thabo**
8) Who put her arms round Bruno? **Anna**
9) What made Bruno to come away from the Sub A classroom? **John spoke to it**
10) Are John, Anna and Thabo in the same grade? **No**.

Results.	School A	School B	School F
Correct:	20 %	36 %	15 %
Wrong:	79 %	61 %	82 %
Irrelevant answers:	50 %	16 %	49 %
Types of mistakes (as if for 50 pupils)			
Right copy (wrong answer):	58	12	18
Wrong copy:	221	60	115
Ungrammatical sentences:	96	36	53

Important information supplied by the comparison of Schools A and F is that they were about equal in percentage of irrelevant answers, despite the fact that the School A pupils wrote nearly twice as many wrong copies. It was thought that a solution to the problems of the School A

pupils would be to urge them to give one-word answers rather than to copy. That is exactly what the School F pupils did: they mostly gave one-word answers, 49 % irrelevant ones. The conclusion is that when pupils do not understand a passage, no advice or "strategies" are of any help. Indications are that the school exercise of "doing comprehension tests" was counter-productive for the School A pupils, for they learnt to rely on copies..

Further testing: higher grades, and white pupils in the same grade as the test groups

The overall poor results of the Gr. 5 pupils showed that the test was too difficult for them. So tests were taken at higher classes and at a secondary school early in 1996, when the test groups were in Gr. 6. The test was also taken from Gr. 6 pupils at two Afrikaans schools (the best an old school in Welkom, the other a farm school). At the latter schools repeaters were not screened out, only pupils who said that they speak English out of school with relatives or friends.

Results.	School A		School B		Secondary		Afrikaans (farm)
(percentages)	Gr. 6	Gr. 7	Gr. 6	Gr. 7	Gr. 8	Gr. 9	Gr. 6
Correct:	20	27	36	58	48	62	76
Wrong:	79	70	61	40	49	33	20
Irrelevant:	50	36	16	4	11	2	2

Correct answers.	School A		School B		Secondary		Afrikaans
(percentages)	Gr. 6	Gr. 7	Gr. 6	Gr. 7	Gr. 8	Gr. 9	Gr. 6
1)	56	40	52	85	82	97	96
2)	20	35	44	42	37	46	29
3)	40	38	52	73	67	87	82
4)	16	29	48	69	52	82	89
5)	12	33	32	73	62	87	89
6)	8	11	12	36	33	51	79
7)	20	18	32	31	32	46	57
8)	8	20	24	35	42	41	96
9)	4	7	4	35	13	26	50
10)	16	33	56	56	60	28	96

Pupils' answers as an indication of what they understood

The Gr. 6 pupils found question 9) most difficult, only 2 of them answering it correctly. They probably did not know past tense verbs like *tried* and *spoke*, nor perhaps the word *until*. Question 6) was second in difficulty, with only 7 correct answers, showing that pupils do not link the words *fear* and *afraid*. In an attempt to find what pupils understood of a passage, certain wrong answers were also counted. A surprising find is that the more pupils understand of a passage, the more specific mistakes may occur. With questions 2, 4, 6, 7 and 8 the test group of School B made more counted mistakes than the School A pupils. Yet on the same questions they also supplied more correct answers than the School A pupils. The reason for both more correct and more counted wrong answers from school B pupils, is that they gave less irrelevant answers.

Counted wrong answers.	School A	School B		Secondary		Afrikaans
(percentages)	Gr. 6	Gr. 6	Gr. 7	Gr. 8	Gr. 9	Gr. 6
1) Sentence one as answer to question 1	28	8	2	9	0	0
2) Mistake with passive: *Anna*	24	36	44	47	46	64
4) Answers as if *She* refers to a boy	20	40	16	29	15	0
6) Illogical answer: *Anna or John*	28	60	44	49	36	14
7) Wrong deduction: *Anna*	24	40	45	49	46	39
8) Answers as if *She* refers to a boy	28	56	55	43	59	4
10. Not a *Yes/No* answer	60	24	2	16	0	11

Question 2) on the passive sentence was answered wrongly with *Anna* more by the secondary school pupils than by the younger black pupils, but the Afrikaans pupils had most wrong answers here. On question 10) the pupils of School B outdid the School A pupils furthest, with only 24 % irrelevant answers compared to 60 % at School A and 80 % at School F. Irrelevant answers here indicate pupils who did not recognise a *Yes/No* question.

The he/she distinction

Questions 4) and 8) were answered wrongly with a boy's name by an average of 48 % of the test group of School B, and 36 % of the Gr. 8 pupils. If the passage above is translated directly into an African language, the *She* of *She went to John's classroom* would refer to *Thabo*, a boy. Question 8) posed the same kind of problem. The fact that 59 % of Gr. 9 pupils had the name

John for question 8), implies that the *her* of the question *Who put her arms round Bruno*? meant nothing to most of the pupils. The issue of the he/she distinction will be discussed in par. 4.8.

Evaluation of the test

The test highlights the understanding problems the he/she distinction in European languages can cause for Blacks. The fact is that Afrikaans speaking pupils in Gr. 6, who never had the benefit of English medium instruction, outdid in this test Black Gr. 9 pupils who had had four years of English medium instruction in all subjects. It can to some extent be explained by the fact that Afrikaans and English are related languages. However, indications are that more time and attention should be given to the teaching of English in primary schools attended by Blacks.

4.6.6 **Comprehension Test 3 written in May 1996**

In Schools A and B all the pupils belonging to the test groups were tested in two sessions, to include the ones absent the first time. At Schools C, E, F, J and N similar groups were identified: pupils who were in that school in Gr. 2 in 1992, and in Gr. 6 in 1996. The test follows.

John has a dog that is a mother. Her name is Mpho. John is always obeyed by her. John's sister does not like dogs as much as John does. She thinks dogs eat too much.

John's dog has a puppy whose name is Reki. When Reki was small, it could not follow John. Now Reki follows John everywhere if not locked up. John has nearly taught Reki not to take any food until John tells it to eat. Mpho already knows that lesson very well. John does not want his dogs to take food from anyone. The food may be poisoned.

1) Who has the name of Mpho? **(John's) dog.**
2) Who always obeys someone? **Mpho**
3) Does John like dogs? **Yes**
4) Who thinks dogs eat too much? **John's sister**
5) Did Reki follow John when it was small? **No, (it could not follow John)** Half without *No*
6) Where does Reki follow John nowadays? **Everywhere**
7) When doesn't Reki follow John? **When it is locked up** Half a mark for: *When it was small.*
8) Explain the lesson that John is teaching Reki. **Reki may only eat if John tells it to eat**
9) When does Reki take its food? **When John tells it to eat** No marks if *Until* is used.
10) Is Reki learning to be an obedient dog? **Yes**

11) Why does John not want his dogs to take food from anyone? **The food may be poisoned**

12) Are you told the name of Reki's mother in the story? **Yes** Full mark for *Mpho* only.

Results of the test per school. (percentages)						On Molteno Project	
Schools:	A	B	C	E	F	N	J
Correct:	**28**	**48**	**31**	**29**	**24**	**38**	**41**
Wrong:	63	44	63	64	69	56	50
Irrelevant:	37	16	35	36	37	24	29
Sentences ungrammatical:	8	3	3	9	5	5	4
Number of pupils in test:	26	56	61	45	43	32	17

Evaluation of the test. School B is again ahead of the other schools, and also the Sotho speaking pupils of Schools J and N, schools which also have Zulu speaking pupils. The Zulu pupils scored below the Sotho pupils, and teachers say they are always behind. It may indicate that they experienced subtractive bilingualism (cf. par. 2.9.5.1) by growing up with a home language different from the language predominant in the neighbourhood. Possible reasons for Schools J and N to be behind School B will be mentioned in par. 5.4.

In this test the he/she distinction was not crucial for understanding the passage. Only question 4) was intended to tempt pupils to answer with *John* instead of with *John's sister*, but few pupils made this mistake. A mistake here could not mar the understanding of the rest of the passage. The question why less he/she mistakes were made than in the previous tests will be discussed below.

This test was also given to Afrikaans pupils of yet another school, a small town school. They also obtained above 70 %, as did the Afrikaans pupils who took Test 2. Some wrong answers supplied by many pupils appear in Appendix J. Of significance are the following wrong answers to questions, given more often by School B pupils than by some other groups.

2) Half the School B pupils gave the wrong *John* answer - the passive was not understood.

4) School B pupils answered more than the combined group as if *She* refers to John.

7) School B pupils used the negative wrongly more than the School A pupils.

9) School B pupils used *until* for *when* more than the School A pupils. The wrong use of *until* strengthens the perception arrived at with Test 2 that the pupils did not know the word *until*.

4.7 **Discussion of various comprehension test results**

All the comprehension tests indicate that the School B pupils understood English better than pupils on traditional L2 teaching programs. However, even what was found at School B is insufficient for pupils who have to use English as medium of instruction. The fact that Afrikaans Gr. 6 pupils did better even than black Gr. 9 pupils, indicates that whatever else may be wrong about former DET schools, there is something wrong with pupils' ability to understand English.

The same kind of results were obtained by Macdonald (1990b:24). She found with her first test that Gr. 5 pupils could not answer low-level inference questions on a simple Gr. 4 text from *Day by Day*, neither more traditional factual questions on the same text. The score from DET children was 20 %. She devised another test and used a Legotown to consolidate the vocabulary and enact the story. Some pupils were even taken through a poster, the Legotown and the comprehension questions before they had to answer the questions on their own. Even after such mediation, the results were "disappointingly low": the best group of Gr. 5 pupils scored only 60 %, while Gr. 3 pupils at an open school scored 90 % without any mediation.

The remark of Macdonald (1990b:24) that there is always much copying of irrelevant bits of text (wrong copies), even when the exercise has been supported by rich pre-teaching, indicates a possibility that pupils may score lower than they would, had they not learnt the habit of writing down copies. But a conclusion that the pupils understand more of a text than what is indicated by their scores is not warranted. As said in par. 4.6.5, the School F pupils scored very poorly although they did not use many copies. Indications are rather that pupils do not understand the passages nor the questions. That pupils do not understand wh-questions is also indicated by Macdonald's (1990b:25) test on the Bonzo story from the Gr. 2 reader *Bridge to English:* although the tester read through the story and discussed the pictures, Gr. 5 pupils of five schools scored between 42 % and 73 %. The higher scores were not from DET schools.

4.8 **Findings regarding the acquisition of the he/she distinction**

The comprehension tests provide interesting results regarding the he/she distinction, something Black languages do not have. Tests were devised to investigate the acquisition of the he/she distinction. It was not easy to devise such tests, and the language sometimes seems forced. From

Test 1 the School B pupils made more he/she mistakes but also gave more correct answers. The five sentences and questions intended to induce mistakes follow below, and the School B scores.

Test 1. *Thabo's best friend is Sarah's brother Ben. She is always second in class and ...*

Who is always second in class? (Correct: 27 %; He/she mistake: 63 %; Copy: *She is* .. 7 %)

Test 2a. *Anna asked permission to leave the class and Thabo followed her. She went to ...*

Who went to John's classroom to look for John? (Correct: 48 %; Mistake: 40 %; Copy: 8 %)

Test 2b. *Just as Anna found Bruno, John came running from ... She put her arms round Bruno ...*

Who put her arms round the dog? (Correct: 24 %; He/she mistake: 56 %; Copy: 8 %)

Test 3. *John's sister does not like dogs as much as John does. She thinks dogs eat too much.*

Who thinks dogs eat too much? (Correct: 63 %; He/she mistake: 18 %; Copy: 7 %)

Test 4. *Anna was copying homework and Thabo helped her. She started crying on the accusation.* Who started crying? Why? (Correct: 63 %; Mistake: 4 %; Copy: 4 %)

The first explanation for the he/she mistake that came to mind after Test 1 was a structural one: pupils take the *she* to refer to the last person mentioned, as they do in their L1. But in Test 3 few he/she mistakes were made, and even less in Test 4. After Test 3 a structural explanation was still sought: pupils associate *she* with words like *girl* and *sister*, associations often made and drilled at traditional schools, but not drilled at School B. However, the latter explanation would have been evidence that *learning* (to associate *she* with *sister*) turned into *acquisition* in as far as it was applied to the task of comprehension. After the not recorded Test 4, the investigator abandoned both the above structural explanations in favour of a more functional explanation: the pupils who had not acquired the he/she distinction, or simply guessed correctly, used their knowledge of cultural roles to decide whether the answer should be a boy or a girl. The high percentage of mistakes with Test 2b, despite the *her* in the question, is due to the decision that a boy would rather put his arms round a big dog than would a girl. The same mistake was made by 43 % of 109 Gr. 8 pupils, and 59 % of 39 Gr. 9 pupils. The low percentage of similar mistakes in Tests 3 and 4 is due to the decisions that it is girls who supply food and who cry.

The last explanation is in accord with Krashen's hypothesis and has the advantage over the structural explanations that, together with the influence of the L1, all the examples can be explained by it. According to Krashen (1985:2) the pupils used their "knowledge of the world," *their* world with its own roles and customs, to work out whom the pronouns referred to. The fact that

so many pupils, even at secondary school, did not use the information supplied by the *her* of *Who put her arms around the dog?*, also implies that structural aspects of the L2 do not play an important role in the child's understanding of it.

On the question whether the pupils who gave correct answers had acquired the he/she distinction, the work of School B pupils who did the first three tests was investigated. Below an 0 indicates a he/she mistake, an x a right copy.

Pupils	**6**	**7**	**10**	**12**	**19**	**22**	**31**	**41**	**47**	**49**	**52**	**65**
Test 1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Test 2a	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	x	1	1	1
Test 2b	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
Test 3	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1

The following pupils also did the first two tests, but had nothing correct there: Pupils 23, 34, 43, 53, 55, 63, 69. In comparison to pupils who answered with right or wrong copies, the pupils in the table answered the specific questions very well. They at least knew how a pronoun functions as referent, even if they were unsure whether it referred to a boy or girl. However, as a group they were quite inconsistent with their answers. The only pupil that may be said to have acquired the he/she distinction is Pupil 31, and Pupils 6, 41 and 49 might have acquired it between Tests 1 and 2. But if they were given another question as difficult to Blacks as that of Test 2b, they might have made many mistakes again. It is also possible that the correct answers were merely the result of conscious rule application, following on form-focused attention to the he/she distinction. The latter explanation is strengthened by the fact that the scholastically stronger pupils performed better in the tests than those designated by higher numbers. The many instances of self-correction on these pronouns witnessed in the speech of black teachers, also indicate conscious rule application.

4.9 **Grammar tests**

Grammar tests are not regarded by the investigator as good indicators of primary school pupils' ability in an L2. One reason is that such tests may rather test children's ability to apply learnt grammar rules. Another reason is that primary school pupils are only capable of doing tests where they can choose between given answers, making guessing a factor. Three short tests of the latter

kind were given, though, to see if their results correlate with the results obtained in the other tests. Each test had a question on prepositions, with a picture according to which the given prepositions had to be used. (Test 1 had to be repeated by the School A and B pupils, since the instructions only read *Fill in words like **on; above;** etc.* Too many non-prepositions were used, and a list of prepositions was given for the second attempt). The tests were on the same pages as the three comprehension tests, thus done by the same numbers of pupils. The tests appear in Appendix K.

Grammar Test 1

The results per school, grade and category can be found in Appendix K, presented also in two graphs. In all cases School B is ahead of the other schools, as indicated by the number of scores above 50 %. In every part of the test guessing was possible. Except with the prepositions, the choice was one out of three. However, the totals of the categories indicate that it was not mere guessing that took place, for higher marks were obtained in some categories. All groups did best on *is / are* and worst on the third person singular -s. Blacks find the latter very difficult. In African languages words never end on -s, rarely on a consonant. Pupils have to cope with both the third person singular -s and the plural -s in English, and as shown in par. 4.5.5, they rather avoid plurals and often omit the -s when they do use plurals.

Grammar Test 2

The results of the various groups are also in Appendix K, with two graphs indicating that School B again performed better than the pupils of traditional schools. The two groups indicated as Gr. 7 were no longer in Gr. 7 at the time of the test, but in Gr. 8 quite at the beginning of the next year. The group of 90 Gr. 8 pupils represented twelve different primary schools in Welkom. The group from School B were only 19 Gr. 8 pupils who had been in School B since Gr. 2.

An interpretation of the graphs

The graphs show the following interesting feature: In three of the four graphs the Gr. 5 groups scored higher on Present (third person singular -s) than the Gr. 7 groups. It cannot imply that Gr. 5 pupils know better that an -s suffix is required. A possible explanation is that the younger pupils did not notice the -s suffixes and just chose at random, therefore showing, of all the groups, least variation in the different categories.

Concerning the test on prepositions, the Gr. 5 groups of both Schools A and B did much better in Test 2 than in Test I, as if they benefited from Test I or received similar picture tests from their teachers. The test groups of Schools A and B also outdid other groups on prepositions in Test 3.

Grammar Test 3 (done only by Gr. 6 pupils)

For this test only two marks are entered per pupil, and School B is again significantly ahead on both scores. There is a correlation between the higher scores for Grammar Test 3 and for Comprehension Test 3, but for pupils who have low scores no correlation can be expected.

Results per School. (percentages)

Schools:	**A**	**B**	**C**	**E**	**F**	**N** (On Molteno Project)
Verbs	48	63	47	36	39	52
Prepositions	42	51	32	31	34	42

4.10 **Insights gained from studying the work of individual pupils and small groups**

Since the study of specific pupils was done from 1992 to 1996, it allows long term insights. To understand this paragraph, it should be remembered that the numbers by which pupils are designated indicate their scholastic ability as measured in Gr. 4, the best pupils having small numbers.

Intercomparison of the work of some School A pupils

Investigation of the different scores of individual pupils, especially those that did some of the early oral tests (1992 - 1994), shows a certain pattern emerging for the School A pupils, though not for the School B pupils. The School A pupils can be divided into four types:

Type 1. Some School A pupils, Pupils 1 and 12, always scored above average, Pupil 13 mostly.

Type 2. Some pupils always scored below average, e.g. Pupils 38, 47 and 50 and some that dropped out of the group before Gr. 4. Pupils 38 and 47 scored below average on both Verb and Plural in 1992, but above average on Noun. Pupil 47 failed Gr. 4, but Pupil 38 passed. Her below average score on Verb increased as follows: in 1992: 0,5 below; in 1993: 0,4 below; in 1994: 1,5 below. In three comprehension tests she scored 2; 1,2 and 2,8 below average. She is one of the few who failed Gr. 5, when the policy was that all should pass.

Type 3. Pupils who scored above average on Verb and below average on Plural -s in oral tests. They are contrasted to the 'Obligers', as will be explained. More will be said about them below.

Type 4. Pupils who scored the other way round, above average on Plural and below on Verb. They are here called the Obligers because of their ability to satisfy their teachers, e.g. they scored above average on the Plural -s, a construct drilled much. Of the small groups of pupils who did the 1992, 1993 and 1994 oral tests, most of the Obligers were pupils who soon dropped out of the test group because of failing. Others, like Pupils 32, 40 and 49 failed Gr. 4. Pupils 17 and 22 did not fail, but they kept scoring mostly below average on Verb in five later tests, also mostly below average on ungrammatical and incomprehensible sentences. Another Obliger is Pupil 29, who only did the tests from 1994. She scored above average on Plural and Noun, and below on Verb in five tests. In Composition D she scored very high on Plural (cf. the table below).

Pupils who fit in with the definition as being non-obligers (Type 3), are Pupils 10, 18, 42 and 43. They scored below average on Plural and above on Verbs in the 1992 tests, and they continued scoring above average on Verbs. Pupil 10 scored 3 words above average and Pupil 18 two above average in the last history test (see par. 5.8), and Pupil 43 scored 4 words above average in Composition C. They mostly also scored above average on different tenses, complex sentences, and history facts, and had few ungrammatical and incomprehensible sentences. Pupil 42 failed Gr. 4 because of low marks for both Afrikaans and English. Pupil 43 had even lower marks for English, but his mark of 50 for Afrikaans saved him from failing. The example of his English given below causes one to marvel at his mark of 34 for English in 1994.

Examples of the work of two Obligers and one non-obliger

Two girls who were well able to oblige their teachers are Pupil 22, who scored twice average on Plural Correct in the 1992 test, and Pupil 2 whose number indicates second best ability of the test group in the 1994 examinations. (She did not do the oral tests). Her composition *The Snake at the Tap* appears in par. 4.5.4, but some sentences are also given below. Pupils 2 and 22 are compared to Pupil 43, a boy who scored best on Verbs in the 1992 test, but has the high number of 43.

A:2. I see father inside the House and trees tap we see the door windows Mather boy and girl warlk with wait water mather has inside of the trees She raning to fathe fathe ranning with waits.

A:22. ... The house and trees. The grass and pomp. The fathe is siet on the chiar. The house and the trees Mother The grass and boy and girl and the pomp ...

The use of *wait/s* by Pupil 2 makes no sense. In the composition *The Bicycle Story*, she used the word *waked/wak* five times, writing sentences such as *Is see these waked on a water*. The

investigator cannot understand how Pupil 2 could have 83 (59%) for English in 1995, when Pupil 43 had 75 marks. The English teacher even proposed Pupil 2 as leader of a discussion group.

A:43. The man was set on the chere and children and the mother they go to the water because They want the water and the sneic [snake] came out and sked [scared] the children and the mother sked tow [too] and the man came oud with a stalk and came help the mother and his children They rain [ran] and They crae because the sneic was [groot?] They rain to the house and They shout [shut] the house.

Surely this boy's poor spelling earned him low marks at school, but he knows more English than the girls. He says his mother speaks both Sotho and English with him.

The following table shows that Pupils 10, 12 and 43 did well in comprehension tests 1 - 3. Only the strong Pupil 12 was also good at plurals. Maximum marks for Compositions C and E: 2 each. The maximum for the three comprehension tests is 32, the first two counting out of ten.

Pupil	1992: Verb	- Plural	Comp. D: plural	Content Comp. C & E		Comprehension Tests
2	-	-	6	0	0	8
10	2	3	2	-	1	15
12	3	7	6	1	2	15
14	0	5	3	0	0	5
17	1	5	-	1	0	2
18	2	0	3	1	1	9
29	-	-	12	1	-	2
43	5	3	2	2	-	12
Average:	**1,5**	**4**	**3,7**	**0,8**	**0,6**	**7,5**

This comparison of a few pupils seems to indicate that when testing the ability of young pupils in an L2, the number of different verbs they use may be taken as indication of their ability. For example, Pupil 18 above did better on Verb than Pupils 14 and 17, and later did better with the content of two compositions and in three comprehension tests. A comparison of the 1992 oral work of the School A and B pupils indicates the same: the average on Verb correct is 1,3 for School A and 3,7 for School B. In the speech elicited in 1994 the School A pupils used an average of 8 different verbs per pupil, the School B pupils an average of 14. If the suggestion that only verbs need to be considered, is found to be correct in further research, it may reduce the amount of work necessary to evaluate the L2 ability of young beginners.

The importance of learning English out of school

As promised in par. 4.5.2, the composition *The New South Africa* of School A's Pupil 1 is given:

A:1. The president of the sout africa is Dr. Nelson Mandela. In the elections there were many obzevars (observers). The president of any party was wondering if the people wil vote for him. The people were voting on the 26th, 27th and the 28th of april. The people were voting for the national asembly and the palament. The people were voting for democracy. Any one was voting for the party of his / her choice. There was no one wil fost (force) you to vote for the party he / her is voting for. The obzevar were coming from many difrent countries.

The contents of this composition is quite unlike the others from School A. Not only does Pupil 1 write very well on events of six months earlier, but he has insight even in politicians' fears. He learnt English out of school, from his father he says. That gave him a great advantage at school, and made possible a lot of interaction between him and his teachers that other pupils missed, e.g. since he could do difficult exercises like putting random prepositions in place, he was called upon to show the investigator what "they" could do. He was also the one who carried the whole class when a teacher suddenly called upon them to recite a rhyme. In a Gr. 5 lesson on the Sand River Convention the history teacher once put the question, *What do you think was the cause of the border problems?* Pupil 1 answered, *They were fighting for their rights.* The teacher asked: *Which rights?*, and then explained about cattle thefts. In many such lessons, Pupil 1 was perhaps the only one following. However, the history compositions of Pupil 1 are shorter and show less insight and interest in history than many of the School B compositions. Lacking opportunities for group discussions in history classes may be part of the reason for his weaker performance.

It seems that pupils such as this one, with ability in English far exceeding that of most of the class mates, perform specific functions in black schools. They convey to the teacher the message: we understand, and they help their class mates to keep up by setting the example, or by translating or helping. Diamondidis (1996:60), who observed Gr. 5 - 7 Science and Mathematics classes at six schools in the Port Elizabeth area during 1996, writes "There seemed to be only one to two pupils per class who served as the English resource for the rest. When questions were posed by the researcher in English, all eyes seemed to turn to these pupils."

The two paragraphs above indicate pupils who were better than their class mates in English from early on, because of the English they learnt out of school, mostly from their fathers. This finding asks for a clarification of par. 2.9.2.1, where it is stated that it can be counter productive for parents to try teaching their children an L2. The issue there is that it will be counterproductive if

too little attention is given to the L1. Should the mother provide much communication and stories in the L1, the father or other relative may do a child a good turn by teaching him English.

A group of School B pupils who received little attention in Gr. 4

Of the 16 School B pupils who did the 1992 test, four were in the Gr. 4D class in 1994, viz. Pupils 23, 34, 65 and 69. Their teacher was the one most seen walking about outside, and he never corrected pupils' work himself - the pupils corrected it very poorly with red pens. Twice the investigator made appointments to attend his English lessons, and found him completely unprepared. While he was glancing over notes in the Teacher's Manual, he asked some pupils to tell stories. The pupils told stories which they knew from their Gr. 2 year.

The investigator found the pupils mentioned above, and others from their class, to be far behind in the later tests, and especially prone to making common errors like article and pronoun mistakes. Reading over the 1992 tests of these four pupils, it was thought that it should be possible to show that they were equal to the rest of the 16 in 1992, but behind later. However, it was only in a superficial reading of the transcriptions that these four made a good impression: an analysis showed that as a group they were far above average on Plural -s and below average on Verb. The insights gained above from the study of a group of School A pupils, do not allow the conclusion that these four School B pupils were equal to the rest in 1992.

4.11 **Conclusion**

This chapter dealt with fourteen communicative tests, as well as some grammar tests. All the tests were taken from an identified test group at each of Schools A and B, and from similar pupils at comparable primary schools. In all the tests, and nearly in all categories, the pupils of School B scored significantly above black pupils on other L2 programs, suggesting that the School B pupils had acquired significantly more English than pupils on other programs. However, when the comprehension test results of the School B pupils are compared to those of Afrikaans pupils, indications are that they may not understand enough English to benefit from L2 medium instruction. The investigation of such a possibility is part of chapter 5.

A discussion of possible reasons for School B's achievement, and an interpretation of the results, will also be given in chapter 5.

Chapter 5

RESULTS OF THE TWO DIFFERENT TEACHING METHODS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter the results of the empirical investigation will firstly be discussed against the hypotheses put forward in chapter 1, considering whether sufficient evidence could be found to accept the hypotheses. However, for a discussion of hypothesis H3 more information on the use of English as medium of instruction was needed. Therefore further investigation of both types, as reported in chapters 3 and 4, was carried out. The further investigation concerned the use of English as medium of instruction in Gr. 5 classrooms. At both Schools A and B lessons in various subjects were attended and in history two tests were taken. Both what was found by classroom observation and by the history tests, are seen as results of the two different methods of teaching English in Grades 2 - 4. Therefore conclusions regarding hypothesis H3 are possible.

The issue of the best time for starting with L2 medium instruction is also discussed, as well as the possibility of rectifying a poor foundation in English.

5.2 Conditions for upholding the three hypotheses

The hypotheses put forward in chapter one will be upheld in the following cases.

* Evidence that the pupils of School B advanced significantly further in their SLA than the pupils of School A and other traditional schools, will uphold the hypothesis that children benefit more in their SLA from a focus on meaning than from a focus on form.

* Evidence that the pupils of School A *learnt* certain constructs but lost them in the course of time, will supply supporting evidence for Krashen's hypothesis that *learnt* knowledge cannot become *acquired* knowledge per se, as far as children are concerned.

* Evidence that the pupils of School A did not understand what they learnt as rote learning in subjects taken through medium English, will uphold the hypothesis that an initial focus on form results in too little advance in a second language for it to be used as medium of instruction, so that pupils will not necessarily benefit from education through medium of the second language.

5.3 Indications that pupils have acquired more English at School B

As mentioned in the previous chapter, all tests indicate that the School B pupils are significantly ahead of the pupils of School A. In this paragraph an overview will be given of indications that the School B pupils have acquired more English. In par. 5.4 possible reasons for the achievement of the School B pupils will be discussed, to see if it is justified to accept hypothesis H1.

5.3.1 The acquisition of verbs

As often mentioned in chapter 4, the School B pupils were always far ahead in the number of different verbs used per pupil, in the oral tests as well as the compositions. For example, the average number of different verbs per pupil, computed as a percentage of words used, is 9 % for School A and 14 % for School B in Composition C. The School A pupils rarely used successfully other verbs than 10 to 20 basic verbs such as *sit, see, run*. When test pictures asked for specific verbs such as *fetch/carry, kill, ride, fall,* the School A pupils could rarely use appropriate verbs, even though *fetch* was one of the first verbs they learnt in a drill. The pupils tested at other schools also did not do as well as the School B pupils.

Whenever complex sentences were counted, or auxiliary verbs, or the *to* + verb construction, the School B pupils were also far ahead. The following results are totals per school.

The use of:		School A	Other schools	School B
Complex sentences.	Comp. B: *My Mother* (35 pupils)	6	23	51
	Comp. C: *Snake at Tap* (30 pupils)	33	46	75
to + verb.	1994 tape recordings (20 pupils)	5	-	40
	Comp. C: *Snake at Tap* (30 pupils)	6	22	33
Auxiliary verbs.	Comp. D: *Noah's Story* (24 pupils)	11	-	41

As far as verbs are concerned, and the ability to use verbs and auxiliary verbs in complex sentences, pupils acquired more English at School B than at School A and other schools.
(As mentioned in par. 4.5.2, all compositions were not analysed in all categories. Where information does not exist, it is indicated by -).

5.3.2 **Ability to use English tenses**

Two present tenses

The use of two present tenses, computed as a percentage of sentences, was as follows:

	Continuous		**Simple Present**	
	School A	School B	School A	School B
Composition B: *My Mother* (35 pupils)	26 %	46 %	21 %	41 %
Composition C: *Snake at Tap* (30 pupils)	33 %	54 %	31 %	50 %
Composition D: *Noah's Story* (24 pupils)	21 %	18 %	-	-
Composition E: *Bicycle Story* (avg. 30 pupils)	56 %	29 %	29 %	65 %

The School A pupils always made less use of the simple present tense and also used the continuous less at first, but later used it much more than the School B pupils, mostly not in the correct context of indicating ongoing action. As will be shown in par. 5.4, they also tended to leave out one of the elements of the construct more and more. Indications are that the School A pupils had not acquired any of the two above present tenses by Gr. 6. The School B pupils did much better, but as shown in par. 4.9 most of them have not acquired the third person singular -s.

The past tense

Only Composition D (*Noah's Story*) asked for the past tense to be used. School B used past tense verbs in 55 % of sentences, School A only in 27 %. Composition E (*Bicycle story*) could be written in any tense. Most pupils mixed the tenses, but computed as a percentage of sentences School B used 36 % past tense verbs, School A 15 %. In both cases School B is far ahead.

5.3.3 **The acquisition of nouns**

In all the composition tests the School B pupils wrote longer compositions, but where they had to write on a picture series the difference was slight, for they mostly wrote to the point while the School A pupils used more repetitions. In the compositions on *My Mother* the School B pupils wrote twenty words per pupil more, probably indicating that they could say more about their mothers. Where specific nouns needed for speaking about a series of pictures were counted, the School B pupils were always significantly ahead. It seems that many of the School A pupils did not have the following words available when needed: *tap, bucket, snake, stick, stone*.

5.3.4 **The acquisition of pronouns**

On the 1994 tapes the School A pupils used in total 15 pronouns, the School B pupils used 93. Figures for the compositions are as follows:

Number of pronouns used (computed as percentage of sentences)

	School A	Other schools	School B
Composition B: *My Mother* (35 pupils)	8 %	18 %	22 %
Composition C: *Snake at Tap* (30 pupils)	12 %	20 %	37 %
Composition E: *Bicycle Story* (avg. 30 pupils)	56 %	45 %	77 %

Number of *different* pronouns used per child

	School A	Other schools	School B
Composition B: *My Mother* (35 pupils)	6 %	7 %	10 %
Composition D: *Noah's Story* (24 pupils)	12 %	-	24 %
Composition E: *Bicycle Story* (avg. 30 pupils)	20 %	15 %	24 %

As can be seen, School B is significantly ahead of the other schools. School A was behind all the others at first, but overtook some schools later.

Mistakes with pronouns (actual numbers)

	WRONG PRONOUN			SOTHO PRONOUN		
	Sch. A	Other	Sch. B	Sch. A	Other	Sch. B
Composition B: (35 pupils)	22	33	39	8	24	26
Composition C: (30 pupils)	17	34	31	13	15	7
Composition D: (24 pupils)	32	-	22	25	-	17
Composition E (as if for 20 pupils)	18	35	14	4	7	3

School B did not always have fewer mistakes than the other schools, not in Compositions B and C. (For Composition B all but six weak pupils of the good Gr. 2A class were screened out). In the last two tests School B made fewer mistakes than the others.

5.3.5 **Getting meaning across**

Although the scores given for content in the two compositions *The snake at the Tap* and *The Bicycle* were subjective, indications are that the School B pupils were far better able to get the

stories across in English. The exercise of letting the School C pupils write a story in the L1 first and then in English, indicated that pupils were able to interpret the pictures and tell the story in the L1, but did not always have the necessary vocabulary to tell the story in English.

5.3.6 **Understanding English**

The results of the various comprehension tests all indicate that the School B pupils were significantly better able to understand spoken and written English than pupils from other black schools, e.g. for Comprehension Test 3 the scores were as follows:

School A	School B	School C	School E	School F
28 %	48 %	31 %	29 %	24 %

5.4 **Possible arguments against acceptance of hypothesis H1**

There are circumstances under which the conclusion that the School B pupils acquired more English than the School A pupils because of the different methods of teaching English, would not be valid. There might have been other reasons. Possible invalidating circumstances are the following:

a) If the School A pupils were an exceptionally weak group, the conclusion would be invalid. As mentioned in par. 1.6.2.3, this investigation was quasi-experimental, implying that two groups were compared but without measures to ensure that the groups were initially equal. The socio-economic status of the pupils was more or less equal, as indicated in par. 3.4. There was no way to test the ability of the two groups prior to the investigation. Reasons are that the pupils knew only Sotho at that stage, and that written IQ tests for young Sotho pupils do not exist. However, measures were taken afterwards to find an indication that the School A pupils compared well with similar groups of pupils. A number of tests were taken at schools other than Schools A and B. Since the results of the School A pupils do not differ much from results obtained at neighbouring schools, it may be assumed that the School A pupils were not significantly different from groups who obtained more or less similar results after more or less similar instruction.

b) If the School B pupils were an exceptionally bright group, the conclusion that their good results were due to teaching methods, would be invalid. To eliminate this possibility, two specific measures were taken.

* Comprehension Tests 1 and 2 were given to pupils in higher grades at Schools A and B and at some other schools. Comprehension Test 1 was given to two grades ahead of the test group, and the last test only to one higher grade, to 50 Gr. 7 pupils in each of Schools A and B. The results of these tests show that the School B pupils of these grades were also ahead of the pupils of School A, and of other schools. In Comprehension Tests 2, the 50 Gr. 7 pupils of School B even scored higher than 90 Gr. 8 pupils who had not been in School B. These findings to some extent rule out the possibility of an exceptionally bright group, since it is rare that three exceptionally bright groups are found in consecutive years at one school.

* Measures were taken to evaluate School B. The objective was to see if it was the *Bridge* courses used at School B that brought about good results, or some other variable. Therefore Comprehension Test 3 was taken at two other Welkom schools, Schools J and N, which had been on the Molteno Project for some time. The test was given only to Gr. 6 pupils who had been at that particular school in Gr. 2 in 1992. These schools were on the Molteno Project two or three years less than School B. Furthermore, the Molteno materials were used at these schools for only two years, not for three years as at School B. They used only the *Bridge* reader, but if they had the material for Gr. 3 they used that for Gr. 3 and did not finish the *Bridge* reader. Another difference was that at each of these schools two black languages were used, as mentioned in par. 4.6.6. Pupils who speak a language other than Sotho have to cope with more languages at an early age in the Free State, and on average they scored below the Sotho pupils in the investigator's tests. Results are given only for the Sotho speaking groups at these schools:

School A (26 pupils)	School B (56 pupils)	School J (17 pupils)	School N (32 pupils)
28 %	48 %	41 %	38 %

As can be seen, the two other Molteno Project schools did not obtain the same results as School B, but they did far better than School A. The difference between School B and the other Molteno Project schools may be due to the one year less usage of Molteno materials, and to the fact that the principal of School B received special training (see par. 3.4.1). Hawthorn effects caused by the present investigation at Schools A and B may also have played a role.

c) Another possible reason for School B's good results is that a teacher or teachers at School B were exceptionally good. Only two teachers at School B were regarded by the investigator as

exceptionally good. One was the 1992 teacher of Gr. 2A. In the following tests her influence was eliminated to some extent.

* The composition *My Mother* was written by thirty-five Gr. 4 pupils of which only six weak pupils (Pupils 40, 50, 81, 87, 90 and 99) had been in Gr. 2A, so that the influence of the Gr. 2A teacher on the group was minimal.

* The results of Composition E were computed after screening out a number of the best pupils, pupils who had been in Gr. 2A. Pupils range from No 9 to 94 (see Appendix H).

The teacher who gave English lessons to some classes, and history lessons to all classes in Grades 5 and 6, was also regarded by the investigator as exceptionally good. She could only have had an effect on tests taken since 1995, when she taught history.

Although the influence of specific good teachers cannot be eliminated completely, the superiority of the School B pupils cannot be wholly ascribed to them. Furthermore, the aspect in which these teachers excelled was communicative ability, exactly that ingredient underlying the difference in the instruction provided at the two schools. Some of the teachers of School A, especially the teachers of Gr. 2A in 1992 and of Gr. 4A in 1994, were regarded by the investigator as equally good communicators. However, the fact that they followed a form-focused approach kept them from using communication in English as teaching method.

The arguments discussed above do not indicate sound reasons for invalidating the conclusion that the superiority of the test group of School B should be attributed to the meaning-focused L2 teaching they received. Therefore hypothesis H1 may be accepted.

5.5 **Evaluation of hypothesis H2**

Hypothesis H2 is a stronger version of hypothesis H1, as was explained in par. 1.5. On hypothesis H2 only supporting evidence is sought, by evaluating it against test results obtained.

5.5.1 **Indications that grammatical constructs were learnt and not acquired**

The continuous tense

As seen in chapter 3, sentences in the continuous tense were drilled extensively during 1992 at School A. However, the verbs were never singled out in any way nor used meaningfully. At the end of 1992 the School A pupils could not use this tense, but by middle 1993 they used sentences

such as *The boy is sitting* fairly well. In the 1994 compositions on their mothers, they used the continuous tense 14 % less correctly than School B's pupils, meaning that either the copula or the *-ing* were omitted. The difference in correct use grew over time, as the following table shows:

	1994 *(Mother)*		**1995** (*Snake*)		**1996** (*Noah*)	
	A	B	A	B	A	B
Continuous used per total sentences:	26 %	46 %	33 %	54 %	21 %	18 %
Cont. used correctly per tot. continuous:	49 %	63 %	47 %	66 %	9 %	66 %
Copula omitted per total continuous:	18 %	17 %	30 %	17 %	35 %	26 %
-ing omitted per total continuous:	39 %	22 %	27 %	17 %	72 %	20 %

In the 1994 compositions the pupils wrote sentences such as *My mother is washing clothes; My mother is washing plates*. In compositions on picture series like *The Snake*, the continuous was more appropriately used. At both schools the continuous tense was used less as more use was made of other tenses, but while at School B it was used more correctly each time, it was used more and more wrongly at School A. The fact that in the Noah test the continuous was used correctly at School A in only 9 % of cases, against 66 % at School B, seems to indicate that it was not acquired by most pupils at School A. The number of School A pupils who took the last test was small, though, only 24, but information on the use of continuous tenses was also gained in 1996 from compositions written by Gr. 6 pupils at Schools C, E and F, since they also represented traditional teaching. For Composition E (*The Bicycle*), the averages of School A, School B and Schools C, E and F were:

1996 *(The Bicycle)*	Sch. A (20 pupils)	C, E & F (30 pupils)	Sch. B (40 pupils)
Continuous used per total sentences:	56 %	27 %	29 %
Cont. used correctly per total continuous:	32 %	34 %	67 %
Copula omitted per total continuous:	30 %	47 %	25 %
-ing omitted per total continuous:	61 %	51 %	24 %

Indications are that despite the amount of initial input containing the continuous construct received at traditional schools like School A, most Gr. 6 pupils could not use continuous tenses correctly by providing both the copula and the *-ing* suffix. The greater ability of School B pupils

to use continuous tenses correctly serves as indication that it was the form-focused aspect of the traditional teaching methods that led to the inability to acquire the continuous construct at traditional schools.

The conclusion that mechanical *learning* of English containing the continuous construct did not lead to *acquisition* of this construct, may be supporting evidence for Krashen's hypothesis.

The plural -s

As mentioned in chapter 3, the plural -s received a lot of form-focused attention at School A. It received attention at School B also, but not in drills. It was used in tasks like counting objects in pictures. In African languages plurality is indicated at the beginning of words, not at the end, so that the pupils find the -s endings difficult. In most tasks they avoid plural words, so that with the *Noah* composition the School A pupils had to be asked later to add to their compositions a list of what they could see in the picture. It was the only composition specifically testing plurals.

The following table compares the acquisition of plural -s at the two schools.

(percentages are used)

	Spoken English				Written English			
	1993		**1994**		**1995**		**1996**	
	Sch. A	Sch. B	Sch. A	Sch. B	Sch. A	Sch. B	Sch. A	Sch. B
Plural -s correct:	58	42	57	49	-	-	55	71
Plural -s omitted:	42	58	27	41	1	27	45	29
-s added wrongly:	30	20	16	11	-	-	4,3	3,8

In the 1993 test the pupils of School A outdid those of School B, but they used the -s wrongly with singular nouns 10 % more than the School B pupils. It does seem as if the drilling helped them to learn the -s. On the 1994 tapes similar results were found. Information in column 3 is incomplete because it is from the May 1995 history compositions, where Plural -s correct was not counted. Column 3 has mistakes with plural -s per total sentences, and indicates that the School A pupils tended to avoid plurals. In the Nov. 1995 history compositions similar results were found. The Gr. 6 results of the *Noah* compositions imply that only the School B pupils improved over time. They supplied the plural -s in 71 % cases, against 55 % at School A. It seems as if the

School A groups initially scored higher due to much drilling work, but were surpassed by the School B pupils as the latter acquired the plural.

However, this conclusion is not warranted. The 1993 test was taken from only 14 pupils and the *Noah* test from only 24 pupils per school, less than half of the group of 14 belonging to the group of 24 at School A. Only in as far as the smaller groups can be regarded as representative of larger groups, is the result significant. However, most pupils who did both the early and later tests either scored high on Plural or low on Plural in all their tests, so that the above conclusion is not warranted, as it would have been if pupils who initially scored high on Plural later scored low on it. Drawing information from the tests of specific pupils is hampered in two ways: many of the pupils who scored high on Plural in the early tests, the Obligers, did not do the later tests, because of failing (see par. 4.10); and plural nouns were clearly avoided by some pupils.

5.5.2 **Indications that learnt/drilled vocabulary was not acquired**

As recorded in chapter 3, the Gr. 2 pupils of School A spent much time on drilling sentences, e.g. *What is the woman / girl / boy doing? The girl is fetching water. The boy is sitting / is reading.* At the end of the Gr. 2 year, the pupils were tested with some of the pictures they had in their reader with the above sentences. Most School A pupils were unable to formulate a sentence to describe the pictures. A common response was simply *Boy / Girl.* They could mostly not answer the question *What is the - doing?* with anything appropriate. When tested in Gr. 5 with a picture series (*The snake at the tap*), only two out of 30 pupils used the word *fetch*, or something appropriate, while 16 School B pupils used it. That means most School A pupils did not acquire some of the very words they used over and over in drills.

5.5.3 **Conclusion concerning learnt language knowledge**

The preceding paragraphs indicate that a grammatical construct, the continuous tense, and various words which were *learnt* by the School A pupils, were not *acquired* by them due to the *learning*. This is slight supportive evidence for Krashen's hypothesis, as far as children are concerned, that conscious language *learning* does not turn into *acquisition*. More evidence of the same kind was sought regarding the plural -s construct, but was not found since the pupils who might have supplied the necessary information dropped out of the test group because of failing.

5.6 Additional investigation: the use of English as medium of instruction

Additional investigation for the evaluation of hypothesis H3 was done on the use of English as medium of instruction. In 1995 the investigated groups were in Gr. 5 and started receiving nearly all their lessons through medium English. Consequently some of the following classes were attended by the investigator at both schools: English, History, Geography, Mathematics, Health Education and Science. The objective was to see if the different levels of acquisition attained at the two schools, as established by the tests discussed in chapter four, would affect the way English was used for instruction. These observations are given in par. 5.6.2.

All the schools had text books which were seldom used other than for looking at pictures. Teachers said the books were too difficult, as found elsewhere [1]. Notes were copied from the chalkboard to be learnt. The notes were often unclear and contained many kinds of mistakes, and what the pupils copied had even more mistakes. However, oral revision was done before tests and examinations. The same sets of questions were used over and over for tests and examinations.

5.6.1 Using unacquired chunks in L2 medium classes

Subjects like history can easily be learnt in parrot fashion, even through the L1, without understanding what is learnt. When learning through the L2, pupils can learn sentences without having previously acquired the language. Such learning leads to inert knowledge, that is, propositional knowledge the learner can express but not use.

Unacquired L2 chunks were discussed in par. 2.8.1. When pupils write down memorised sentences and facts in a second language, it is not obvious if something is a well-learnt but unanalysed chunk, or something understood. A pupil can write down a memorised sentence correctly even though he does not understand it, or he can have a slip or make a grammar mistake in a sentence he understands. However, it may be assumed that as the amount of work becomes larger, it becomes more and more unlikely that pupils will reproduce in an acceptable manner what they do not understand. Because of this assumption, the pupils were tested on their knowledge of history on two occasions, in June and November 1995. Some tests were also taken at three other schools. The tests are discussed in par. 5.7 and 5.8.

[1] Investigation showed the language of DET used text books unsuitable: the findings of Lanham (1986) and Meyer (1987) were tested by Langhan (1989:28), who found that the text books were too difficult even for teachers.

5.6.2 **Observations at School A**

This paragraph contains descriptions of some English lessons and some content subject lessons.

5.6.2.1 **English lessons with literature content**

Neither the English reader nor other stories were used for SLA at School A. In English classes nearly 30 long pages with seven stories were read from the English reader, but it seems that no comprehension checks were used on the stories, nor were they discussed. In a lesson attended by the investigator, each paragraph was read by the teacher and repeated by the class in chorus. They started with a new division of the story near the end of the period, without any question on the previous division. From his own report, it seems as if the teacher had tried to give oral marks to pupils by asking them questions on the stories in the reader, but found it more workable to give oral marks for speeches pupils prepared at home. A comparison of the contents of the reader with the comprehension tests discussed in chapter 4, on which the pupils of School A did very poorly, leaves the impression that most pupils understood nothing read from the reader.

5.6.2.2 **History and other lessons done through medium English**

a) Educational aims and content

Pupils were mainly taught to memorise and to categorise. Both in history and geography great emphasis was placed on the nine regions of the new South Africa, with their premiers, the four provinces, the former national states, etc. The geography lesson of 9/2/95, for example, consisted of questions expecting pupils to categorise names into countries, provinces and regions. Pupils often gave wrong answers to which the teacher reacted with: *No, north-east is not a region, it is a direction; No, that is not a region, it's a continent.* Factual knowledge was the only concern.

Memory work was also the aim in other subjects. The first science lesson led to a test on the properties of air. Pupils were not penalised for spelling mistakes in the test, but the following mistake with the passive, *Air cannot be see*, was simply marked wrong.

b) Learning activities

Interaction between teacher and pupils was very limited in scope. It mainly consisted of display questions (explained in par. 1.4), and of repetitions of sentences and phrases.

Questions and answers

Pupils mostly did not ask questions, only teachers did. Mostly the answers called for were names, and pupils could proceed to the correct answer by guessing according to categories, e.g. after the statement *South Africa is a country* the teacher asked: *Can you tell me about another country?* The first guess was *Cape Town*, indicating a place, so that other pupils guessed more places. On the question *Who is the premier of KwazuluNatal*, the guesses were: *Dr. Buthelezi, Shaba Zulu, Thabo Mbeki, Tokyo Sekwale*, etc. When asked about the first president of the Republic of the O.F.S. the guesses were *President Lekota, F.W. de Klerk* and *Pik Botha.* The teacher then told them to find the answer in their notes, which they did. When answers had to be found in notes, time was only allowed for the bright pupils to do so. At School A copies of typed notes were sometimes given to pupils, but most notes were copied from the board.

Questions intended to serve as comprehension checks were seldom used. If the teacher realised from an answer that there was some confusion, as with the answer *Lekota* for *President Brand*, he tried to explain the difference between the Republic of the O.F.S. and the present set up, partly using the L1 for his explanation, but clearly not quite sure himself.

When definitions of terms were written on the board or in notes, pupils were asked these definitions but they simply read off the answers. Definitions were not clarifying, because they were long and consisted of unfamiliar words, e.g. *Territory: area of land ruled by particular race.*

Repetition of sentences and phrases

Repetition was the learning activity mostly used. A frequent repetition was of the last part of a teacher's sentence, e.g. *We are called South Africans because we live in South Africa. In ..?* The class in chorus: *South Africa.* On 9/2/95 a class repeated three times: *South Africa is divided into nine regions.* Yet when on 6/3/95 the poorly formulated question was put: *The provinces are divided into how many regions?*, the class answered: *Four.* Probably they reacted to the first noun, not listening to the rest of the question.

Narration and discussion

Narration and discussion were not much used in history classes. The method of telling history like an interesting story, as will be described in par. 5.6.4 below, was never witnessed at School A. Short lectures on history were delivered at times (perhaps to impress the investigator), but at a

level far above the comprehending ability of the pupils, inter alia because of the use of the passive voice. Note in the following, delivered on 24/4/95, how the question is intended to enable the pupils to be part of the lesson again:

> We say, after the territory between the Orange and Vaal rivers was annexed by the British in 1848, it was called the Orange River Colony. The people who lived between the Orange and Vaal Rivers were the Voortrekkers. In 1848 the British government annexed that territory. My question: Which river separates the O.F.S. and Transvaal?

Rote learning

Pupils learnt by heart the sentences supplied by the teachers. It was not immediately clear if the sentences were unanalysed chunks to them. One can learn quite a large number of unanalysed chunks, but the greater the number and the longer the chunks are, the more difficult it becomes to remember what one does not really understand. If teachers try to teach history in this way, one would expect the chunks to be made smaller and fewer. This is what seems to have happened at School A. Below is given the first set of notes they copied on the Bushmen:

> They were the first who lived in the Central Part of Africa. Because other nations were stronger than them, they drove them further. Eventually they moved to S.A. These people called themselves San. In English they are Bushmen. Bushmen are yellowish, small, and they are about 1,5 meters tall. Their faces are triangular in shape. Their weapons are Arrows, Bows, Knobkerries. At first the Bushmen lived in Caves. Later they made shelters using branches of the (!) trees. When he (!) died he would be buried near his family. Bushmen were merry people and loved to dance.
>
> (All the mistakes are not copied, e.g. the *f* of *further* was omitted in all the books seen.)

However, the above was too long, so the following was learnt for tests as questions and answers:

> The Bushmen came from the Central Part of Africa. They called themselves San. The English called them Bushmen. They were yellowish in colour, triangular in shape, and 1,5 meters tall. Their weapons: arrows, bows, knobkerries.

On 6/3/95 these test answers were written on the board: 1) Central Part of Africa; 2) San;

> 3) Yellowish, Triangular, 1,5; 4) Arrows Bows Knobkerries.

As will be shown below, the way in which the above sentences were rendered in two different tests of the investigator, indicates that for most pupils the sentences were unanalysed chunks of language. It seems as if pupils only learnt the above test answers as responses to questions. Many pupils could not put question and answer together as a statement. Most of the questions asked in the final examination had appeared frequently in tests throughout the year.

c) The principles of classroom SLA

Since there was little genuine communication between teacher and class, most of the principles of SLA were not adhered to. Lectures by teachers cannot be genuine communication if pupils do not understand what is said. Supplying learnt answers to questions is also not genuine communication, because there is no information gap.

The L1 and L2 were also not kept separate. Although it might have become known at School A that the investigator advised teachers to use only English in English medium classes, most teachers did use the L1 even in her presence, probably more often in her absence. For example, in a science period on sprouting bean seeds handed out on 20/3/95, the L1 was used for explanations at least 17 times, and eight times in a mathematics period. However, two male teachers did not use much L1 explanations in the investigator's hearing.

5.6.3 **A comparison of School A and other black schools**

A comparison of higher primary classes at School A and at other Welkom schools was not done by the investigator. However, there are corresponding descriptions of higher primary classes in the literature. Diamondidis (1996:59-62) reports on a study that involved 18 teachers of mathematics and science classes at six schools in the Port Elizabeth area. Research findings are: Pupils did not ask questions, but showed a strong ability for language pattern recognition and excellent vocabulary recall. Teacher questions required only one- or two-word responses from pupils, but repetition and choral response prevailed. Pupils had to label, list, repeat, and choose, they never had to explain, analyse, evaluate, create or debate.

Brand (1991:360) attended all the geography lessons at two schools during the last term of the year. She compared her observations to information supplied by questionnaires, and found that despite teachers' training on progressive teaching styles, they could not apply it in practice. Brand (1991:312) writes that teachers tend to stick to the traditional teaching style which is teacher centred rather than child- or activity centred, and in which memorisation of content is more important than insight and application.

5.6.4 **Observations at School B: history and other lessons in Grade 5**

a) Educational aims and content

The aim was not only that pupils gain information, but also that they gain insight. Narration, followed by comprehension checks, was used both in English and history classes as a method of imparting knowledge. Pupils were expected to contribute to lessons in a way which could lead to insight.

* In English classes five stories were done during the year, e.g. *Snow-White and the seven dwarfs, Ali Baba and the forty thieves.* Only the teacher had a copy of a book, and she read most of the story but gave some good readers turns. After reading part of a story, and at the end, the story was retold by asking questions. To check the comprehension of all pupils, all were expected to participate in answering the questions, and pupils who did not put up their hands were reprimanded. The pictures in the book were shown and questions asked, e.g. *Which one is the prince?* Examples of other questions: *What made her to open her eyes?, Which people said, 'She's awake?'* Where necessary, explanations were given. The story of Snow-White took two days to be read and retold, and then pupils had to write the story by themselves.

* History classes mostly also consisted of telling and retelling stories. The method differed from that described above in that the "stories" were historical events; they were not read but only told; pupils did not write their own stories afterwards but copied a few notes; and they wrote tests etc. on the contents learnt during history lessons. However, there were more similarities than differences. In history classes pupils were also expected to pay attention and follow the story. Should one answer wrongly, he could be taken down with *Are you still with Mizilikazi?* Where necessary, a deviation was followed to clarify a word, e.g. at the note *Blacks came from the Great Lakes of Central Africa,* the teacher asked: *Who can just stand in the centre of the classroom?* When a pupil did that, she explained: *This word central comes from the word centre, which means middle.* However, such explanations where not written on the board, nor were any definitions.

b) Learning activities

Pupils contributed to most lessons in various ways, according to the activity principle (D6).

* As shown above, pupils contributed to the retelling of stories and history events by answering questions. They put up hands and answered individually, groups speaking together occasionally,

but then often told not to chorus. Speaking in chorus is against the policy at School B. Preparation for examinations in any subject was done mostly orally by asking and answering questions, so that much was covered during revision that was not in their notes (see par. 5.8.3).

* Revision of a previous lesson was mostly done by asking questions about it, e.g. on 2/5/95 the science teacher, referring to his drawing on the board, revised the previous day's experiment with questions such as: *We said, what was this? We said, what must be here for the lamp to burn?*

* Pupils often contributed to the writing of notes. For example, on 13/3/95 the science teacher wrote on the board: *The uses of water*, and then added whatever was given by the pupils, even writing down some of their mistakes and duplications: *I wash myself; I make a (!) tea; I drink water; I make drink out of water; We use water for cooking;* etc. (a list of 12 sentences, including plants, cars, toilets, cement, building, cleaning, swimming.) The teacher stopped them listing too many things that are *washed*, saying: *All those things are the cleaning of houses.*

c) Adhering to the principles of SLA

The interaction between teachers and pupils described above, indicates that most of the principles of SLA (par. 2.7.3) were adhered to. Principle 5, about appropriate challenges, needs special mentioning, for when pupils found a question difficult, an answer was mostly expected from them nevertheless. Occasionally the investigator saw a class perplexed with a question, or trying out many answers in vain, but the teacher did not drop the issue. On 13/2/95 in a history lesson, the teacher had used a map of Africa, speaking of the west, east and south of Africa. Then she changed to a map of South Africa and asked about a part of it. She wanted the answer *The south of South Africa*, but the pupils could not give it. So she explained again, using the L1 also, expecting them to understand. Switching to the L1, however, occurred less than at School A.

5.6.5 **Conclusions to be drawn from lessons at Schools A and B**

The main characteristics of teaching at School B, described above, were only possible with pupils who had acquired English as L2 to a certain degree. If the same kinds of questions and comprehension checks were to be used at School A as at School B, very few pupils would have been able to answer. As indicated by the comprehension tests discussed in chapter 4, most of the pupils at School A were not able to listen to, or read, a story and answer relevant questions

correctly. Probably most of them understood very little of the stories that were read in their English reader, especially since, as shown in par. 3.4.2 c), most pupils are used to reading without understanding. The teaching methods used at School A were adapted to the pupils' abilities: pupils memorised names and short bits of information, and were questioned on what they could be expected to know. They sometimes contributed to the writing of notes, especially if the notes consisted of names previously taught. For the rest they contributed by repeating sentences, or by giving answers to display questions in a stimulus-response fashion. By writing many short tests, they learnt enough to prepare them for examinations.

Macdonald (1990a:143) shows how easy it is for pupils to answer questions seemingly intelligently in the words of a text which they do not understand. She also complains about what she calls the 'Rote Rhythm method', a term coined for "the indigenous version of the transmission teaching method." She says it has "several disconcerting ritualised aspects," e.g. that pupils often do not have to be cued: they repeat spontaneously the last word or structure that the teacher has said. One problem is that pupils do not have to pay full attention to the teacher. If they go into a cycle of chanting, they can disengage their attention, and the next "sentence filler" can be filled in from short term memory store. "The most worrying aspects of the method is its capacity to mask the absence of comprehension" (Macdonald 1990b:37).

5.7 **Compositions written in History by Grade 5 pupils in June 1995**

The test was taken from 30 pupils each at Schools A and B, and from 10 pupils each at Schools C, D and E. The pupils were asked to write what they had learnt in history about the Bushmen, the Hottentots or the Blacks, or more than one of the groups.

5.7.1 **Contents of the compositions received from School A**

On the Bushmen, only one pupil (No 13) mentioned the shelters and burial place included in their first notes. Since pupils had to write answers only in tests, not full sentences, many pupils again gave only the "answers" they knew, causing ungrammatical, meaningless sentences, e.g. *The central part of Africa*. The sentences they had learnt follow below, divided into seven facts:

1) The Bushmen came from the central part of Africa. 2) They called themselves San. 3) The English called them Bushmen. 4) They were small / 1,5 meters tall, 5) triangular in shape (!), 6) and yellowish in colour. 7) Their weapons: arrows, bows, knobkerries.

In the test, pupils often rendered the sentences in such a way that they resembled ill-understood and unanalysed chunks, e.g. *The Bushmen were in English* (Pupil 2); *They color this San Brown Yellow wish in color They are very small and tall* (Pupil 15). The full sentence *Their faces are triangular in shape* was not given by one pupil in School A.

To interpret the School A data, it must be compared to what was found at other schools.

5.7.2 **Comparison of the compositions written at the different schools**

The five School A sentences quoted in par. 5.7.1 were counted as seven facts. Since more or less the same was learnt about the Bushmen and Hottentots, a child could score two marks on any of these facts. Pupils at School A were not penalised for the wrong *Bushmen are triangular in shape*. But when a child unsuccessfully tried to give one of the seven facts, it was counted as a mistake, e.g. when only part of a sentence was written, like *Central part of Africa*. Every other historical fact was also accorded a mark. At the other schools the same emphasis was not given to the same facts as at School A, so that the scores on these seven and other facts were as follows:

	School A	Schools C - E	School B
a) Seven facts emphasised at School A:	100	55	100
b) Unsuccessful rendering of these 7 facts:	62	30	22
c) Total of these and other history facts:	137	124	216
Total number of words written by the groups of 30:	1,239	1,757	1,562

The fact that the other schools scored in the categories of a), shows that School A's seven facts were covered there. The School E pupils seem to have started their course with *History is the subject that tells us about the past, the present and the future*. Although the combined schools (C, D and E) have the highest number of words and sentences, they have the lowest number of history facts. For them it was perhaps the first opportunity to do a test for a European and they might have tried to impress with long answers, but they often wrote sentences such as *I love History,* with which they did not earn any marks. Their score is about half that of School B.

School A's high number of 62 unsuccessful renderings of their seven facts indicates rote learning of work that was not understood. Many pupils had simply learnt unanalysed chunks which they reproduced in a way that made no sense.

5.7.3 **Linguistic analysis of the compositions**

A linguistic analysis of the compositions again shows an important difference between Schools A and B to be in the use of verbs. Only the number of different verbs used by a child was counted. *Was* and *were* were counted, but *is*-statements not. At School A, 47 verbs were thus counted (5 % of Total Words), and 144 at School B (9 % of Total Words). History should be written in the Past Tense, but, as seen above, notes given at School A contained *is*-statements about Bushmen which still hold true. These *is*-statements resulted in School A having very few Past Tense verbs, even few obligatory positions for Past Tense verbs: only 37 Past Tense verbs were used, and 23 Present verbs in Past Tense positions. In comparison, 142 Past Tense verbs were used at School B, and they had 103 Present verbs in Past Tense positions. Computed as a percentage of sentences, School A had 17 % correct on the Past Tense, and School B had 54 % correct on the Past Tense.

School A was very high on ungrammatical sentences, 43 %, partly because of the faulty notes the pupils were given: the sentences on weapons mostly lacked a verb. Where only the answer part to the usual questions were written, e.g. *Central part of Africa*, they were also counted as ungrammatical. In comparison, School B had only 3 % ungrammatical sentences, and the three schools (C, D and E) had 16 % ungrammatical sentences. Schools C - E had 15 % incomprehensible sentences, as did School A, while School B had only 5 % of these. One reason why Schools C - E did better than School A in most categories is that some very poor work at these schools was disregarded, e.g. mere lists of names. At School A such names were counted as ungrammatical sentences. At School A a fixed group of pupils was tested and their answers had to count, however poor. At the other schools it was difficult to decide how many pupils to test if only ten answers were needed. At School C where a larger group was tested, most of the poorest answers were discarded. At School E only ten pupils were tested, and since one answer was illegible it was exchanged for a poor answer from School C. At Schools C - E teachers were asked to group pupils in three ability groups, and random pupils from each group were given different tests to do.

The list of totals and the graph in Appendix L give a comparison between the three groups, Schools A, B and C - E. On positive attributes School B is ahead, with Schools C - E in a middle position, whilst School A had the lowest scores. On negative attributes it is the other way round, except for School B being far worse than the other groups on Plural Wrong and Article Omitted.

5.7.4 **Explanations for School B's high score on two specific mistakes**

Explanations were sought for the following:

Plural -s Wrong.	School A	Schools C - E	School B
Total number of mistakes:	3	23	72
Mistakes per words:	0,24 %	1,3 %	4,6 %

As was shown in par. 5.5.1, the School B pupils scored well below the School A pupils in tests on the plural -s in 1993 and 1994, and well above them in a test on plural -s taken early in 1996. The history test under discussion was taken in June 1995, and the much higher School B score on mistakes with the plural -s should be explained. There are two possible explanations.

a) It may be that the use of plural nouns was avoided more by the School A pupils.

b) The finding may also indicate that the School A pupils were mostly writing down learnt chunks, which were little affected by their acquired ability in English, while the School B pupils more often constructed their own sentences, which led to more mistakes (see par. 2.8.1).

Article Omitted.	School A	School B
Total number of mistakes:	45	97
Mistakes per words:	3,6 %	6,2 %

Possible reasons for the many omissions of the article by the School B pupils are the following.

a) Their very fine history teacher was often heard omitting the article, and even told the investigator that *They came to Cape* is correct, since *Cape* is a place.

b) The same explanation as in b) above. African languages have no articles. If pupils construct sentences from own acquired repertoires, more errors than in rote-learnt utterances will be made.

5.8 **Compositions written in history by Grade 5 pupils in November 1995**

At School A they wrote the tests on Friday, two days after their history examination. At School B they wrote the tests on the Monday before the Wednesday's history examination, and without any prior notification. However, no one complained about not being prepared to write the test, and they did very well. It seems that most of the revision for an examination is done orally in class before examinations commence, and not at home the day before a specific examination.

At both schools the pupils had as much time for the test as they wanted, but at School B they started at about twelve-thirty, after a late Mathematics examination. They did not all start at the same time but as they came in from their examination, and some may have been in a hurry to go home. However, despite the unfavourable conditions, they wrote long and good compositions.

The topic given to the children was: *Jan van Riebeeck and other white settlers.* However, at School A some pupils misunderstood the oral instructions and wrote on the Bushmen. They were again told what was wanted, and many of them wrote a second piece, but three pupils wrote nothing on Jan van Riebeeck, and three others had no more than one sentence or a few words on Van Riebeeck. (The latter were disregarded). Ten wrote on Van Riebeeck as well as on the Bushmen and even added pieces on the Hottentots, Blacks, or the New South Africa. It was decided to consider all the pieces for the test, a total of 35 pieces to be compared to the 25 compositions written by the 25 pupils of School B. One reason for analysing all the work received at School A, was to get a larger corpus of work for the comparison. However, the School A pupils wrote such short pieces that even with 35 pieces they had an average of 20 words per pupil less than the pupils of School B. Half of the work of Pupil B:69 was disregarded. It was off-point.

5.8.1 **School A's compositions on the Bushmen**

The work on the Bushmen provides further evidence that History sentences were learnt as unanalysed chunks and remained unanalysed, because further deterioration of the English had taken place. Examples of two of the "best" pupils' work will be discussed:

A:3. The Bushmen from central of Africa the are very small the are 1,5 merters tall
the are traenguleng is (!) shape the are yellowish in colour.

Most pupils did not leave out the *came* in the first sentence as this one did, except for those who only wrote *central part of Africa.* Omission of the *y* of *they* occurred often, even in the work of pupils who had had *they* correct five months earlier. This is a very important finding, for it indicates that learnt chunks had deteriorated over time. Still common was the misspelling of *triangular,* which leaves great doubt that the teacher was right in believing that they knew the meaning of the word, for he had drawn a triangle for them. *Yellowish* was mostly spelt as below:

A:8. Bushmen come from sentral part of Africa. the are yellow wish in colou.
The weapons (1) Bows (2) Arows (3) weapons.
The are faces small. the are 1,5 metrs in shape in tall.

The second mention of *weapons* indicates poor understanding of the subject matter. The mention of *faces* is because in class there was again mention of the fact that it was the Bushmen's faces that were triangular in shape. (Pupil 5 wrote *Trangualar in face*). Some attention was also given to Past Tense verbs, and Pupils 14 and 26 used *were* as well as *are*. Although *came* is often used, it need not indicate the Past Tense, for *came* is often used anywhere, e.g. *The Bushmen were came from* ... (Pupil 17).

The 13 pieces on the Bushmen had little more information than the two examples above, except for a few more weapons and some faulty information, e.g. that the Bushmen spoke English and *she drink is milk*. That means only five of the former seven bits of information on the Bushmen survived. The two "lost" sentences are: *They called themselves San; the English called them Bushmen*. The following may be relics that survived: *there weapons is Sun* (Pupil 26), *The Bushmen is colled the Bushmen* (Pupil 39) and *The name of Bushmen is Hantes* [hunters] (Pupil 14).

5.8.2 School A's compositions on Jan van Riebeeck

Although the history teacher of School A said that he had done Van Riebeeck's history well, so that it was decided to set this topic, the children understood very little of this history. Pupils 7, 8, 17 and 19 gave under the title *Van Riebeeck* the same list of weapons as with the Bushmen, the latter calling the list of Van Riebeeck's *problems* also *werpons*. Pupil 29 writes of Van Riebeeck: *very small 1,5 metras tall traegural in shep*. One of the better pieces is:

> A:18. Jan van Riebeeck and his people he cam to the halfway station. After having the company of five years. the trouble of Jan van Riebeeck at the cape (1) Drought (2) winds (3) havy rain Jan van Riebeeck he was decided to give small farms.

Some pupils added to the list of problems: Railway line and Telegraph (Pupil 6), border problems (Pupil 5) and fighting. The following shows the confusion:

> A:14. Jan van Riebeeck came from Dutsh East India company Jan van Riebeeck stop fiting to white and Black an this boder problem.
>
> A:2. Jan van riebeek in 1888 pupils trekked away from the Cape because the Xhosa and the Zulu were fiyting Jan van Riebeeck problems because the Zulu and the Xhosa were fiyting.

The above makes some sense, but a lot of work does not. The following is all Pupil 8 wrote:

> Jan van Riebeek is a City state. jan van Riebeek is a state of a kings in 1952 he was smaller people the

In total 20 % of the sentences received from School A were regarded as incomprehensible.

Only the following pupils (and no 18 above) wrote on the first farmers:

A:1. He used some men from the D.E.I C. so that they can make farms. These men worked and worked and after a piriod of 5 years These men were given free small farms.

A:10. Jan van Riebeeck give her people small farmer so that they can make any thing they want with their farmer.

A: 3. J.v.R. give the farmer a small famer her is very asides [?] of the farmers the self-saffiet [?] gives this small farmers many [money?]

It is clear that the amount of work done at School A was very limited, and even the little that was learnt was ill understood, giving the impression of being unanalysed chunks of language.

5.8.3 **School B's compositions on Jan van Riebeeck**

In comparison, the pupils of School B produced very good work. On average they gave 7,5 historical facts per pupil, in 25 pieces of work, compared to 3 facts per pupil at School A in 35 pieces. Mostly the School B pupils rendered one fact per sentence, but, for various reasons, what they wrote could not always be accepted as historical fact, e.g. when one said Van Riebeeck was the leader of the D E I C, something that could be deduced from their notes. Not only were their compositions much longer than the 35 pieces from School A, but they also gave a great variety of information. Each wrote on what interested him, e.g. Pupil 6 wrote eight sentences on the clothing of the white settlers, sentences which did not appear in their history notes and were not mentioned by any other pupil. Likewise Pupil 7 had five sentences on the fact that the Dutch people spoke a language like Afrikaans and called the Bushmen *Bosjesmanne*, because the Dutch did not know English. Pupil 28 had three sentences on the fact that the ox-waggon was house and transport to the people: they were not paying for transport [as we have to!].

Other bits of information given by pupils but not contained in their notes: *The slaves were sell by R12 each* (Pupil 10); Holland is outside Africa (Pupil 12); *People ate stale food* (Pupil 13); *White settles wen they are at church Hottentots came and stole their cattle* (Pupil 37); *Van Riebeeck was love her people and rule them well* (Pupil 56); and some referred to control by law, to the British government helping people to come to the Cape, to *hartbeeshuisjes* and *velskoene*.

However, there were also indications of a lot of misunderstanding, as could be expected from Gr. 5 pupils learning about events of 350 years ago. Pupils confused the Dutch and the English: Pupil 31 wrote that Van Riebeeck gave the people passports and wanted them to speak English,

and that the *Dutch fight with Whites long years. Now they sign for peace.* There was also confusion about the different reasons why Van Riebeeck and the British settlers came to the Cape: Pupil 19 said of Van Riebeeck: *They came to cape because they haven't got much food and no work they were very ill of food they eat.* Pupils 29 and 43 seem to give another reason: Van Riebeeck wanted to go to India; their ships were controlled by sea currents; they found themselves in the Cape and built a halfway station. Pupil 37 understood it better: *They move [from] Holland with ships and the food became stail. other eat stail food and they sick and they died. they build half way station to plant vegetations.*

The fact is that the pupils of School B gave their own interpretation of what they had learnt, because they understood enough of it to interpret it in terms of their own limited knowledge of the world, e.g. Pupil 12 who said *Van Riebeeck built a halfway station and other buildings.* In many cases they went beyond their scanty notes, which consisted of questions and answers, e.g. *Which company controlled them?,* followed simply by the name. More than one pupil gave the fact as a passive sentence: *They were controlled by the D E I C.* The note *British soldiers could not find work,* is rendered by Pupil 16: *There was no work for soldiers.*

5.8.4 **The history compositions as evidence of learning type**

The examples quoted in the previous paragraphs indicate that the School A pupils mostly memorised unanalysed chunks, chunks that remained unanalysed. What the School A pupils did, was nothing but rote receptive learning. History is not a subject that provides much opportunity for discovery learning, especially not from too difficult textbooks written in a poorly understood L2, so that receptive learning is the only option. But meaning can also be constructed from receptive learning, and the examples quoted from the work of School B pupils indicate that meaningful receptive learning took place in many pupils. The evidence that pupils did not merely write down notes verbatim means that they were able to relate history facts to existing aspects of their cognitive structure, even when they had wrong ideas, e.g. of the meaning of *halfway station.* According to Ausubel (1968:41) there are two prerequisites for meaningful learning: the learner must *want* to relate new material to his/her cognitive structure; and the symbolically expressed ideas must be relatable in a nonarbitrary and nonverbatim way to what the learner already knows. Should any of the prerequisites not be met, learning is meaningless.

5.8.5 **Linguistic analysis of the November history compositions**

A linguistic analysis of the compositions once again shows the difference in the use of verbs to be great: at School A only 6 % of total words were verbs (the same verb counted only once per pupil), and only 8 % of the sentences were complex. At School B 11 % of the words were verbs, and 27 % of the sentences were complex. School A had 28 % of sentences with correct past tense verbs, while School B's score on Past Tense Correct was 61 %. School A had 13 % of copula mistakes as against 5 % at School B (see Appendix M for tables, totals and a graph).

School A was down on ungrammatical sentences but up on incomprehensible ones on the June test:

	June: ungrammatical	incomprehensible	Nov: ungrammatical	incomprehensible
School A:	43%	15%	28%	20%
School B:	3%	5%	2%	2%

There was some improvement at School A over the two tests: average words per sentence was up from 6 to 7.5, higher than at School B. Misspelled words was down from 13 % to 11 %.

As in the June test, School B performed far worse than School A in two respects.

Scores for two mistakes:	Article Omitted:		Plural -s Omitted	
	School A	School B	School A	School B
Total number of mistakes:	27	126	6	25
Mistakes per words:	2,1 %	7 %	0,5 %	1,4 %

As said before, the greater number of the above mistakes at School B may be taken as indication that the School A pupils made more use of learnt chunks than of own construction in the L2.

5.9 **Concluding the Grade 5 investigations: when is L2 medium instruction beneficial?**

To conclude the Gr. 5 investigations, the question of L2 medium instruction will be discussed.

5.9.1 **An answer from the present empirical investigation**

The question as to when L2 medium instruction is beneficial, can be answered both from the empirical investigation and the literature survey undertaken for this thesis. The analyses of history compositions indicate that the School B pupils benefited from using English as medium of instruction in Gr. 5, but the School A pupils did not. Both in content and language use, the history

compositions of the School B pupils are far better than the compositions of the School A pupils. In fact, where many of the School B pupils showed an astonishing interest in the subject matter, something impossible if the medium of instruction is not understood, many of the School A pupils wrote pieces that made no sense. The fact that even short sentences such as *They are small* deteriorated with time, indicates that they were unanalysed chunks. This evidence that the pupils of School A did not understand what they learnt in history, indicates that pupils receiving form-focused instruction in English will not benefit from education through medium English, and that L1 medium instruction will allow greater assimilation of subject matter.

The School B pupils did benefit from their L2 history lessons, but no tests were taken to find if they also benefited from English medium instruction in other subjects. All that can be said is that pupils with a good foundation in English as a second language, can benefit in their SLA from taking history through medium English in Gr. 5. It may be necessary to add: if they have a good history teacher. Afrikaans speaking pupils at the same level, tested at two schools, found it very difficult to write history in English and did not do as well as the pupils of School B. The finding that the School B pupils benefited from L2 medium instruction after only three years of learning English at school, is of great importance to the debate on L2 medium instruction. As mentioned before, Corson (1995) holds that for most children it takes four to six years to acquire an L2 sufficiently for dealing with ordinary classroom activities. Corson's statement is not disputed here, since an exceptional history teacher at School B might have made the difference.

5.9.2 **An answer from the literature study presented in this thesis**

The issue of using an L2 as medium of instruction was discussed at length in par. 2.9. According to the CUP model (see par. 2.9.5.3), maintenance bilingual education seems to be the best alternative for S.A., if the switch to English-medium instruction is made only when the pupils have acquired enough English to understand it in context-reduced circumstances. The important issue is not the grade pupils are in, but the level of English proficiency and of conceptual proficiency they have attained. These levels should be diagnosed daily for each class in each subject, according to Principle D9 of par. 2.7.2, the principle of diagnosis.

As said in chapter 1, since 1996 the Welkom schools start with English medium instruction in Gr. 3, though pupils receive very little instruction in English in Grades 1 and 2. In par. 1.2.5

prerequisites to be met before a child should be instructed through the L2 were cited. It was said, inter alia, that for the adequate explanation of any concept in a subject lesson a rich vocabulary, complex syntax, and the ability to link ideas logically are necessary.

The simplistic assumption that the development of L2 academic skills is directly related to amount of exposure to the L2 is naive, as shown by a great number of studies mentioned in par. 2.9.5.2. Of more importance is the extent to which learners are capable of understanding the academic input to which they are exposed. Switching to English-medium instruction before pupils can understand what they have to learn, means a three-fold loss: pupils will not make the necessary progress in their L1, nor academically, nor in the L2. In a recent European publication, Extra (1993:374) also pleads for postponing L2 medium instruction. He mentions that various studies have shown that participation in L1 instruction does not lead to lower achievement in other subjects, and may even have positive effects on these subjects. The following question may well be asked: How many more studies indicating that a later switch to L2 medium instruction is better in circumstances similar to what we have in S.A. need to be quoted to convince South Africans to postpone L2 medium instruction?

5.9.3 **Opinions on when to start with English medium instruction**

Rosseel (1996:7), a senior lecturer at the University of Leuven, Belguim, maintains that only L1 medium instruction should be used at primary school. However, that will cause problems for pupils who go to open secondary schools, where no L1 support is available as in the former DET schools. Because of the above practical consideration it may be best if pupils, after 3 to 4 years of sound meaning-focused English lessons, start receiving L2 medium instruction in one or two subjects in Gr. 5, e.g. in history, from which the School B pupils benefited in Gr. 5. In other subjects the switch may be made over the next two years. This advice is in accordance with that of Helm (1979:319), who also feels that switching to English-medium instruction should be done gradually, first in the visual subjects (e.g., needlework, woodwork), then the literary subjects, and last in science.

The opinions above differ significantly from that of Macdonald (1990a:166-170). She also advocates a gradual transition to English medium education, but wants it to start much earlier, with the possibility of a modified "straight for English policy" in selected schools. She derives the

notion of a *modified* straight for English policy from Anglophone Africa, where it seems that children who do not have a rich preliteracy background on entering school are *more* successful at learning English if they have *first* become literate in their mother tongue. She adds that one year's experience on a programme like *Breakthrough to Literacy* (Molteno Project) could bring children to a state of readiness for beginning English literacy. She also adds that the transition to English medium instruction may start in Gr. 2 or Gr. 3 and be completed by Gr. 5 or 6. The present language policy followed at Welkom schools seems to fit in with Macdonald's proposals for "selected schools" in most respects, except for the idea of a gradual transition, since in Gr. 4 children already receive nearly all subjects through medium English.

Macdonald may be answered that observations in Welkom, and observations by Macdonald herself, deny the advisability of such an early switch to English medium instruction.

* It was found in Welkom that even with *Breakthrough to Literacy* many pupils do not become literate in one year. Macdonald (1990d:44) also found that the course is not completed in one year. In the schools she investigated, as in the Welkom schools, the course is completed in the first term of Gr. 2. Macdonald (1990b:57) remarks: "We do not know whether, or to what extent, the introduction of L2 instruction before mother tongue literacy is well-established is detrimental to the learning experiences of the children. The problem is that English is literally chasing the curriculum, and that the child must have substantial control of a variety of English skills to deal with demands of English as medium."

* Macdonald (1990a:49-50) gives the following reasons why a "straight for English" policy does not work in developing countries:

There is inadequate linguistic development in the L1.

There is no adequate pre-literacy support from the family, nor a literate environment.

There is little opportunity to practise the L2 in meaningful contexts with peers or L1 speakers.

The teachers are not well-trained, nor are they competent bilinguals.

Macdonald (1990a:50) relates that in Zambia a 1973 evaluation revealed that many Gr. 3 pupils could not read at all, but the "straight for English" policy was modified only ten years later to allow children to be taught to read in their L1.

* Macdonald (1990b:15) reports the results of tests taken from Gr. 5 pupils on their knowledge/ understanding of content subjects. The same tests were taken in the L1 and L2. The results were:

SUBJECT	ENGLISH AVERAGE %	L1 AVERAGE %
Geography	28	42
History	35	54
Health education	12	49
Maths: story sums	23	32
Subject vocabulary	49	82

As can be seen, the pupils scored higher in their L1, although the subjects were given in the L2. This was the case with Gr. 5 pupils. How much can Gr. 3 and 4 pupils understand in English?

* Macdonald (1990b:16-17) reports the differences observed when identical lessons were taught in two languages to different but equivalent groups in two classes. In the English medium classes, there were very few hands up when questions were asked. In the L1 classes nearly all the hands went up. There was a great deal less tension in the L1 classrooms, no "look of glazed fear on the children's faces. They looked far more alert and they were far more willing to attempt an answer ..." Macdonald continues that it was the strong conclusion of the case study that Gr. 5 children are put through a painful experience by making them learn through the medium of English when they are not adequately prepared to do so: "they are given the experience of failure in terms of marks and in terms of coming to grips with important concepts."

* Macdonald (1990b:68-68) actually argues for L1 medium instruction: "The interdependence hypothesis [the CUP model] may not operate and the full benefits of transfer might not be experienced if English is chasing too closely on the heels of the L1. The child's ability to write in his L1 may always be in advance of his skills in English. This is one strong argument for the importance of teaching children through their L1 first, in order that (in optimal conditions) they can express themselves and develop their self-concept"

* All the above references from Macdonald deny the wisdom of an early start with English medium instruction, as does the following: Macdonald (1990a:54) says that the total switch to English in one year, Gr. 5, when the curriculum simultaneously broadens out into an array of "content" subjects, plunges children in a crisis. She warns that in a "new core curriculum" the content subjects are due to start in Gr. 4, a consequence of the pressure of content in the higher grades forcing content requirements downwards. She concludes that the discontinuity could simply manifest itself a year earlier *"unless there is careful curriculum development in Environment Studies for Gr. 3."* This statement is challenged below.

As mentioned, Corson holds that four to six years of L2 acquisition is needed before the L2 can be used for academic work. As shown in par. 3.2, the present situation is that pupils receive little or no English in Gr. 1 and not much in Gr. 2. How can 16 periods of English in Gr. 3, and any kind of Environment Studies, prepare pupils in one year for English medium instruction in all the new content subjects of Gr. 4? What happens in Gr. 3 Environment Studies classrooms?

Two exercise books used for Environment Studies by Gr. 3 pupils of School A in 1996 reveal the following:

Lesson 9 in the class-work books reads: *Care of our eyes: We use our eyes to see. Read in good light. Never look into the sun. Keep a book 30 cm from the eyes. Do not rub itchy eyes.*

Lesson 10 has sentences about the nose.

The test books of 15 random pupils reveal the following done on lessons 9 and 10:

On 20/5/96 they wrote ten words for a spelling test, including *eyes, sun, light, tissue* etc.

On 22/5/96 they had to complete seven sentences. The average of the 15 pupils was 3,7 out of 7. Most pupils were wrong on the last two sentences given below, as copied from one book:

I see with my nose; I smell with my see; Read in a good stony (?); Never look into the light; I itchy through my nose; I must hold smell [a tissue] in front of my nose.

The only one of the 15 pupils who had all answers correct, gave on 23/2/96 the four seasons of the year as *Sammar, Otomm, Windin, Seperen* [Spring].

The greatest problem with the examples of lessons above is not the *amount of time* indicated to be necessary for drilling pupils to spell correctly and to put the words in their right places. The greatest problems are the indications that pupils *did not understand* the English they were using, and the fact that the above written work was done in English and *not in the home language*. Surely the meaning of the English sentences was explained to the pupils in the L1, so that they experienced understanding each sentence. Thus there was no need for pupils to analyse the English sentences themselves. That is why most pupils could not do such a simple synthesizing job as adding seven words to learnt sentences, sentences not really understood and therefore not acquired.

As shown in par. 1.2.4, the present situation in Welkom schools is not in accordance with the departmental "Discussion Document" *Towards a language policy in education* issued in Nov. 1995. The Document says that many schools are implementing a straight-for-English policy, thus

undermining the intent of a *home language policy*. It also explains that the recommendation that subjects such as Science, etc. be included in the Gr. 4 timetable "has been widely misinterpreted to mean that these subjects now have to be taught through the medium of English." These extracts indicate that it was never the official policy that English should be the language of instruction. The following extract from p. 13 indicates that present practice is not due to a lack of knowledge on SLA theory in departmental circles: "This discussion document strongly recommends that additive bilingual models should become a central feature of educational policy. Such models recognise learners' home languages as powerful tools for cognitive development. These languages, in fully bilingual systems, are maintained as languages of learning at all levels in the education system. Further languages are added at no loss to the home language(s)."

The previous quotation completely contradicts the following statements by Edmunds (1988:16): "A second reason to concentrate on English early is to stimulate the conceptual and cognitive awareness of the child, a training that can seldom be achieved, given present conditions, through the home language." Also: "Furthermore, many thousands of Black children come from utterly deprived backgrounds ... Thus the average Black child's conceptual development can be furthered only through English and in the classroom."

If Europeans who are concerned with and about black education, do not give informed advice on an issue such as instruction medium, how can the policy makers know what to do with social sentiments about L1 and L2 medium instruction?

5.10 **What happened to the School A test group beyond Grade 5?**

Since indications are that most of the School A test group did not know enough English to benefit from English medium instruction in Gr. 5, the question arises: what happened beyond Gr. 5? This question was not specifically investigated, since it is already answered by test results indicating that black Gr. 8 and 9 pupils are behind Afrikaans Gr. 6 pupils in comprehending ability. Information about matriculation results of DET pupils quoted in chapter 1 gives the same answer. However, some attempts were made by the investigator to improve the English of the School A test group in Gr. 6. The results of these attempts confirm the informal hypothesis that a poor foundation in English in the lower primary phase has consequences for many years.

5.10.1 **Investigation of the possibility of rectifying a poor foundation in English**

As seen above, the pupils of School A used English as medium of instruction in Gr. 5 without understanding much of the history they learnt as chunks. The problem is that pupils may become used to treating subject matter as something to be learnt and reproduced without understanding.

In an attempt to rectify the problem for pupils already in Gr. 6, the investigator discussed the issue with the teacher who taught both English and history to the pupils of the test group in Grades 5 and 6. The investigator also presented some lessons herself, using pictures, miming games and reading groups under the trees. It was found that the English teacher could not easily change his teaching style, but stuck to the learning by heart of passages, to class discussions in which only a few pupils could take part, and to the method of allowing pupils to guess answers until the correct one is hit upon, without treating wrong answers as genuine communication. Some Gr. 6 pupils, especially the repeaters, were unable to use the correct word order for: "What am I doing?" in a miming game, and said about a boy in a picture "I am running." The teacher did not see the necessity of remedial work for the despised repeaters, nor of bringing the bulk of the class up to the level of the few who were able to take part in genuine class discussions. Later tests of the original test group did not indicate much improvement in the pupils' English ability.

5.10.2 **Investigation on the doing of comprehension tests**

As was seen in chapter 4, the pupils of the investigated schools learn strategies for "doing comprehension tests" which are counter productive, since pupils use the strategies rather than try to understand a passage. Most probably these strategies are not taught by teachers, but the way in which pupils find the strategies to "work," will influence the way they set about answering comprehension tests, especially if they do not understand much of the passage on which the test is set. The main strategy seems to be: look for a sentence with a number of words that are the same as those in the question, and simply copy the sentence. This strategy will lead to correct answers if a comprehension test is not carefully compiled, otherwise to "right copies." The great number of right and wrong copies made by the pupils in the comprehension tests done for this investigation, indicates the use of such strategies. Other strategies are: answer the first question with the first sentence, and the last with the last. That the strategies are counter productive, is indicated by the low percentage of correct answers for the tests, especially as compared to the answers of

comparable Afrikaans pupils. For Test 3, black pupils from traditional schools obtained on average about 30 %, pupils from School B nearly 50 %, and Afrikaans pupils above 70 %.

A problem to be investigated is how pupils using such strategies can be helped to improve their performance in comprehension tests. The investigator unsuccessfully tried to train the English teacher at School A to help his pupils to perform better. The poor results of his pupils were shown to him at the beginning of Gr. 6, and the issue discussed. Copies of Tests 1, 2 and 3 were given him in the third term, together with correct and wrong answers, as well as explanations of some problem areas. Test 4 (not included in chapter 4) followed at the end of the Gr. 6 year. The School B test group scored 10 % better in Test 4 than in Test 3, but the School A pupils only 7 % better. The difference is small, but at least does not indicate that the School A pupils benefited from the investigator's intervention. Furthermore, the scores of the School A pupils for irrelevant answers and wrong copies did not differ much in the two tests, but their score for ungrammatical sentences was up from 8 % in Test 3 to 21% in Test 4. (One word answers were accepted, but a sentence counted as ungrammatical if it lacked a verb or subject, and if it was incomplete.) It seems as if the teacher told the pupils not to simply copy sentences as answers, and being unable to find the correct answers, they copied only parts of sentences. In Test 4 the irrelevant answers of School A pupils included the following: 53 % answers to a *Why*-question were not reasons; 30% answers to *Who*-questions were not people; 40 % answers to a *Yes/No* question were neither of the two; 80 % answers to a *When*-question did not indicate time, the latter partly due to the last sentence being used to answer the last question.

The conclusion to be drawn from this experiment is the same as the one given in par. 4.6.5: If pupils do not understand a passage, there seems to be no way of helping them to do the comprehension test. The results of such tests should rather be seen as what they are: indications of a lack of comprehension. "Doing comprehension tests" seems to be rather counter productive if pupils do not grow up on a diet of frequent comprehension checks in a communicative program, where also their *understanding of what they read* in their readers, is regularly checked.

Macdonald (1990a:75) writes that performance in comprehension tests is affected by poor reading skills, as poor readers will struggle to extract meaning. They will get choppy, segmented versions of a text and will be unable to check their own understanding. Comprehension of what is read will be limited if the reader is rigidly bound to the superficial form of the material, and unable

to move beyond it. These limitations will hold both in the L1 and L2. Macdonald (1990a:76) states that if the above limitations generally obtain for black pupils, then they constitute the most daunting of constraints for genuine learning through reading.

Lanham (1986:8-11) identifies three strategies that form the basis of competent reading:

* The reader locates what he believes to be in the text in the context of previous experience. Reading comprehension comes as much from the knowledge structures the reader brings to the text as from the text itself. Lanham says there is evidence suggesting that even if this first strategy is practised in the L1, it may not be transferred to reading in the L2, so that the reader will not attempt to construct a background. Another limiting factor may be deficient linguistic competence: knowledge of vocabulary, syntax and semantics.

* From the interaction between reader and text evolves a prediction of what is to come. The expectations of the competent reader are formed by cues from words, structures and meanings, resulting in a running hypothesis of what lies ahead. The antithesis of competent reading is to process every word from left to right, working out meaning in retrospect and adding it to that of a previous sentence. Lanham says information obtained in this way is incomplete, but that there is good evidence that even high school pupils are still operating at this level of the reading skill.

* Lastly the reader must construct for himself the coherence of the text, which includes the extraction of the theme of the text. This implies an ability to store the content of a lengthy text, to recall necessary information and to inter-relate different parts of the text, arriving at a synthesis.

This paragraph discussed the problems of pupils who went through the lower primary without acquiring much English. If they also have poor reading skills, they must be unable to answer the questions of carefully devised comprehension tests. This investigation does not indicate methods of rectifying a poor foundation in English. In chapter 6 it will be mentioned as area for further research.

5.11 **Conclusion**

In this chapter the evidence that the pupils of School B acquired more English than the pupils of traditional schools with their form-focused L2 teaching, was reviewed. A discussion of possible invalidating circumstances indicated that the better results found at School B could be attributed mainly to the teaching methods used at School B. Findings suggest that hypothesis H1 is valid.

Slight supporting evidence for a hypothesis of Krashen was also indicated in this chapter, but on some constructs not enough evidence could be found.

This chapter also described additional investigation done in Gr. 5 classes, and tests taken in history. The evidence suggests that the pupils of School A did not understand what they learnt as rote learning in history, taken through medium English. This evidence has a direct bearing on Hypothesis H3. Since indications are that the School A pupils did not benefit from education through medium of the second language in Gr. 5, while the School B pupils did benefit, it seems that Hypothesis H3 is valid. In chapter 6 two of the three hypotheses will be accepted, as indicated by the findings of this study.

The question concerning the best time for starting with English medium instruction in black primary schools was also discussed in this chapter. Answers from both the empirical research and the literature survey were considered. Conflicting opinions were addressed. In the next chapter recommendations regarding starting time with English medium education will be put forward, amongst others.

Lastly, some material concerning the problems of rectifying a poor foundation in English, and of improving the "doing" of comprehension tests, were discussed. The problems of pupils who had advanced to the higher primary school without having acquired sufficient English, were not addressed by this study. In chapter 6 recommendations regarding further study will be made.

Chapter 6

EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter the empirical part of the investigation, as given in chapters 3, 4 and 5, will be evaluated to see if any conclusions are warranted. Depending on the evaluation, the three hypotheses posed in chapter 1 of this study will be accepted or rejected.

In this last chapter the question is also asked: What can be learnt from this investigation into the acquisition of English as second language, so that English can be used successfully as medium of instruction in black primary schools? Answers along the following lines have been found.

* The results of both the literature survey and the empirical investigation suggest that teaching methods with a focus on meaning are far superior to the traditional methods with their focus on form. This finding begs for the implementation of meaning-focused instruction in black schools. However, success with implementing meaning-focused instruction is not easily attained (see par. 3.11). A series of practical demonstrations in handling English classes for young children may be more effective than a single course. The first recommendations will therefore concern practical training for teachers in using communicative-based teaching methods, training that may be done once per week per class by someone trained in communicative language teaching.

* Some practices in black schools which are not benefiting pupils have been revealed during the investigation. Where possible, these practices may be discussed with teachers, and even with learning facilitators and inspectors. New insights may cause teachers to switch to practices that will help pupils to conceptualise learning material and to acquire more English.

* Some results of the investigation have bearing on the question of when and how the transition to English-medium instruction ought to be made in the schools under discussion. This issue will be discussed along the lines of the literature survey covered, and the results of this investigation as discussed in chapter 5.

* Notice was taken of black parents' concern about the education of their children, and the preferences of Blacks regarding education medium. A possible role for black parents who want to improve the education of their children, will therefore also be indicated.

Furthermore, the merits of the investigation as a whole will be considered and some recommendations regarding similar future investigations at black schools will be made.

6.2 An evaluation of the reports on teaching methods

A report of the English instruction provided at a school, in all the classes of a certain grade, cannot be complete without large volumes of data. The investigator did not attempt to monitor all classes, as explained in par. 3.4. Therefore the reports given in chapter 3 of the teaching methods used at Schools A and B are not exhaustive. Yet they provide a fairly representative picture of what happened in the English classrooms of the two schools over a period of three years. From the reports it is possible to conclude that at School A the main focus of English teaching was on form, while at School B the main focus of English teaching was on meaning, with a fair amount of form-focus present also.

These reports coincide largely with the only other reports of lower primary teaching in black schools the investigator is aware of, namely those by Macdonald and by Kroes & Walker, discussed in par. 3.10. As mentioned in par. 3.10.2, the present reports highlight certain counter productive teaching practices not specifically mentioned by the earlier reports. Some counter productive teaching practices will be discussed in par. 6.7.

6.3 An evaluation of the tests discussed in chapter 4

No standardised tests were used to compare the various groups, as explained in par. 4.3. But the tests used were answerable tests of specific abilities in English. All the groups were treated equally so that differences in test results may be attributed to differences in the abilities of the groups at the time of testing. The fact that a great variety of tests was used, and that all showed the pupils of School B to be significantly ahead of the pupils of School A regarding performance in English, may be taken to indicate that the School B pupils had acquired more English.

6.4 Investigation concerning L2 medium instruction

The observation carried out in Gr. 5 classrooms where the L2 was used as medium of instruction was also not exhaustive, and tests were taken only in the subject history. However, the

information supplied in chapter 5 gives enough indication that there was a significant difference in the way L2 medium classes were conducted at Schools A and B, and that the difference can be attributed to the different levels of English acquired at the two schools. The history tests also indicate that the School B pupils benefited from their first year of English medium instruction, but the School A pupils did not.

6.5 An evaluation of the conclusions drawn in chapter 5 from the test results

In chapter 5 each of the three hypotheses was evaluated against the findings of this thesis.

6.5.1 Accepting hypothesis H1

In par. 5.4 different possible reasons for the better results of the School B pupils were discussed. In each case it was shown that the necessary measures were taken to eliminate the conclusion that other factors played a major role in determining results. Therefore there is insufficient reason to attribute the better results to other factors than the different teaching methods used at the two schools. Indications are that the superiority of the test group of School B should be attributed to the meaning-focused instruction they received in English. Since sufficient grounds for invalidating it could not be found, hypothesis H1 should be accepted:
During the first years of L2 instruction at primary school, children benefit more in SLA from teaching methods with the focus on meaning than from methods with the focus on form.

6.5.2 Supporting evidence for hypothesis H2

In par. 5.5 some findings indicating that *learning* did not become *acquisition* were discussed, concerning supporting evidence for Krashen's (1982:83-84) hypothesis. From a number of tests indicating that the School A pupils decreased in ability to use continuous tenses correctly, the conclusion was drawn that the School A pupils did not acquire what they had learnt. They also did not acquire some of the very words they used over and over in drills. Supporting evidence for Krashen's hypothesis was found only as regards the continuous construct and vocabulary. Supporting evidence for the hypothesis is also indicated by the literature study: par. 2.6.4 cites three examples of empirical evidence that learning by children did not turn into acquisition, and par. 2.8.2 includes an unsuccessful search for clear evidence that children benefited on the long run

from specific form-focused instruction. Both the present empirical investigation and a literature survey suggest supporting evidence for hypothesis H2:

Language knowledge gained by children only through conscious learning (without meaningful usage) does not become acquired knowledge.

6.5.3 **Accepting hypothesis H3**

The bulk of the available evidence indicates that most of the School A pupils did not understand much of what happened in English medium classes in Gr. 5. They simply repeated certain phrases, and learnt a number of unanalysed chunks by heart for tests. Most of them were not able to recall more than a limited number of learnt sentences per topic, and did even that poorly. They were not able, as were the School B pupils, to interpret their history lessons in terms of their own limited knowledge of the world. The fact that some of the learnt sentences deteriorated over time, e.g. *They are small* becoming *The are small*, indicates that even simple short sentences remained unanalysed chunks for some pupils. Indications are that the majority of School A pupils did not benefit from receiving history and other subjects through medium English in Gr. 5 in 1995, while the School B pupils did benefit from their history classes conducted in English. Therefore hypothesis H3 should be accepted:

If the focus of second language instruction is on grammatical form and other formal aspects, the SLA of primary school children will not proceed sufficiently for the children to benefit from education through medium of the second language.

6.6 **Recommendations regarding teaching English as L2**

Black education urgently needs teachers who can give L2 instruction with the focus on meaning. What is necessary is in-service training of teachers until they grasp the principles of communicative language teaching (CLT). It is not enough to tell teachers that pupils must "speak". Drill work, repetition of models and recitation of learnt work may all be interpreted as "speaking" in the L2. What is needed is authentic communication such as exchanging information, delivering messages, or reporting real news. When black teachers have grasped the essentials of CLT, they should perform very well, for Blacks are by nature warm and friendly people and great talkers.

However, observation in some classes on the Molteno Project show that success with implementing meaning-focused instruction is not easily attained. The investigator attended most of a four day course for Gr. 3 teachers starting on the Molteno Project, and afterwards attended a lesson by a teacher known to her. The teacher used the new material in the old ways she was accustomed to and had clearly not grasped much of the new approach. Brand (1991:312) found that teachers who had been taught a progressive style of teaching at college, did not implement it in their classrooms. It is therefore recommended that in-service training be done by visiting teachers once a week in their classrooms, to demonstrate the new methods and to monitor progress.

6.6.1 **Important principles when two languages are used at school**

All the general didactic principles and the language principles mentioned in par. 2.7 should be incorporated into the teaching of an L2. Of prime importance is the child-centred principle of self-initiated communication, in contrast to easy repetition, as the goal towards which all the initial kinds of repetition must lead as soon as possible.

The first step towards acquiring English is that pupils should learn to listen and understand collectively as a class. Later they should learn to say words and to give commands to each other in pairs. One objective with the pair work is to compel each child to take responsibility for listening and understanding, not simply to follow the example of some bright pupils. Pair work also gives the child a chance to speak in the L2 without fear of making mistakes, and to take initiative. Group work gives brighter children a chance to advance beyond the rest. The teacher's role while pairs/groups are talking is to check on some of them. She should not be doing other work, and discipline should be maintained at all times.

According to Principle 6 of par. 2.7.3, there should be a clear separation between the two languages. That means no switching to and from languages. However, the L1 can be used to help pupils understand the L2 by giving an intended L2 lesson in the L1 first, preferably with a good break in between. For example, a Gr. 1 class can spend a few minutes before break time on Yes/No questions in the L1, e.g. *Is this my dress? Is this your shirt? Are you a girl? Is he a girl?* Pupils may be taught to accompany the answers with a nod or shake of the head. After break, without any explanations, the same questions, and more, may be put in English.

6.6.2 **Teaching English as second language to beginners in Grade 1**

The following suggestions, especially a) to e), are intended as supplement to the oral course of *Bridge to English*. As shown in par. 3.3.3 d) and e), the Teacher's Manual of the first *Bridge* course fails initially to train teachers and pupils to have genuine communication, and does not adhere to Principle 2, that reception should precede production. It was also shown that the teaching of the he/she distinction does not receive sufficient attention in the *Bridge* course. Therefore suggestions a) and b) should be started with, in preference to the first *Bridge* lessons.

According to Principle 2 of par. 2.7.3, beginners should not be required to speak in an L2 initially, not even in greetings. Instead the two modes of communication indicated in a) and b) can be used intermingled. Communication is the goal. If the teacher gives her own jacket to a child to put on, asking the child's belt or tie in return, and the shoes of some pupils, much communication is made possible: *Is this my belt / tie? Whose shoe is this? Is this your shoe? Where is my jacket? Bring my jacket! Is this my jacket? Who wants my jacket now? Put it on! Give me your belt!*

a) Commands. Give commands, to which pupils should react, e.g. *Stand on one leg / on two legs / on your chair; Sit on the floor; Girls stand up; Look / point to the door; Show me your table / the small window; Touch your leg / mouth / friend; Take out your pencils; Give me a book; Open / close the door / your eyes; Scratch your cheek; Pat / rub your arm.* Teachers use gestures or examples to teach unknown words. After watching the teacher handling a cup, saucer and teaspoon, pupils love pretending to take a saucer, put a cup on it, pour some tea, stir and drink it.

b) Questions. Ask questions to be answered with a gesture, a name, or *Yes / No, e.g. Is the tea nice? Is this my / your dress? Whose belt is this? Are you a girl? Is he a girl? Where is the door?* Combining a) and b), do the following: *Mary, pull your ear! Class, is Mary pulling her hair / ear/ nose?* On the *No* of the class, extend their answer with *No, she is not pulling her nose, she is pulling her ear.* Do this exercise with boys and girls, to teach the he/she distinction.

The type of commands and questions in a) and b) should be continued and extended throughout the year. Teachers should write down some new commands and questions when preparing lessons. *Whose, Who* and *What* questions can be used soon, *How, When* and *Why* later.

c) Pair work. In pairs all the pupils in class should give instructions, as in a), to each other simultaneously, while the teacher listens to a number of pairs during each session. Teachers

should rotate the partners. Specific instructions should be given to pupils, e.g. to tell their friends to *touch* things or to *point to* things. After every pair-work session, the teacher must repeat the specific type of command, to provide feedback to pupils who made mistakes. Later, competitions can be held to see which pair can carry on the longest in giving each other different commands.

When the command construct is established, pupils can be told to give commands to a puppet, e.g. *Tell Anna to nod / to shake her head / to jump.* "Anna" can answer with *I am nodding my head.* Following Anna's example, individuals can answer the question *What are you doing?* with: *I am touching my ear / pointing to the door.* Later pupils ask and answer this question in pairs.

d) Speaking about own drawing book. Each pupil must have a drawing book in which he draws pictures to be spoken about. In pairs pupils tell what they have drawn, e.g. themselves (*This is my head*); all the things of which they know the English names; their own homes; their families; what they like to buy. They may also ask questions or tell each other, *Write your name! Draw a tree!*

e) Teaching the he/she distinction. As seen in b) above, pupils can be introduced to *he, she, his,* and *her* while only *Yes/No* answers are expected from them. In this way they receive the necessary listening input. Later easy answers can be expected from them, as follows: *No, she is not pulling her nose, she is pulling her _?* Still later: *She is pulling _?* When all pupils can answer questions such as *What is Thabo?* with *He is a boy,* questions such as *What is Thabo / Mary doing?* may be put to them. Indicate individual bright pupils to answer: *He/She is clapping his/her hands.*

f) Teaching numbers and plurals. In every classroom there should be hundreds of small stones and sticks. Use stones to teach for example *big / bigger / small*; sticks to teach *long / longer / longest.* Work to be done in small groups with the teacher: When pupils can count in English, the teacher can work with small groups as follows: *Give me / your friend three stones. How many stones do you have now? Take this stone also. Ask Mpho for two more stones. Put them in a row.*

For pupils acquainted with mathematics only in their L1: Teach them the numbers 1 - 5 in English and let pairs tell each other: *Write 2 + 1 _ ?* They will soon ask the teacher the numbers larger than five. Thus a need to extend their knowledge is created, a sound way of motivating pupils.

For work on plurals, use posters depicting numbers of similar objects and ask: *How many cats are in the picture?* All pupils answer by putting up a number of fingers, then one pupil says *Four cats.*

g) Extending vocabulary. Many large pictures and great numbers of objects from daily life should be taken to the classroom, e.g. a tea bag, pot, jug, matches. Tell pupils how to use these things, and let pairs mime making tea. Later both singular and plural should be used in demonstrations. Let pupils guess what you have in a bag. Use small magazine pictures to be handled by the pupils. The pictures can be used for learning names of things, for sorting, or for exchanging pictures.

h) Abstract concepts. By using similar and different objects or paper forms, pupils can be taught to answer to the question *Are they the same?* Pictures of objects or people in the class can be used to help pupils differentiate between real things and pictures of things, e.g. a picture of a girl and a real girl. They can learn the meaning of *pretend*, e.g. *Pretend to drink tea / to be a dog.*

i) Group work. Groups can be organised, each having a bright pupil as leader. Easy work: The leader asks each pupil: *Give me one shoe.* The shoes are arranged from the biggest to the smallest. Then the leader takes a shoe and asks each member: *Is this your shoe?* On the answer *Yes* the pupil's two shoes are compared: *Are they the same?* Also compare the pencils of group members. Later groups can play guessing games and the miming game: *What am I doing?*

j) Play. Pupils enjoy learning by playing. Show pupils how to use their imagination, e.g. the cup and saucer of a) above. A dish with water, soap and a towel can help all to use imaginary objects. Rather have a "shop" for each group than only one per class, with empty containers to stock shops. Pretend to go by bus to town or to a farm, whether or not real journeys are undertaken. Hide away a small object and let pupils guess where it is. Do rope pulling, throwing and catching. Outdoor play: Let "families" build houses by drawing walls or building them with sand or pine needles. Let them play at housekeeping by using stones or bricks as furniture. Be their visitor.

6.6.3 **Teaching English as second language in Grades 2 - 4**

Schools having *Bridge* courses, need only follow them. The following are a few suggestions for schools not having *Bridge* courses. In both cases instruction in English should be augmented by using "English across the curriculum" in subject classes from Gr. 3 onwards, as will be explained in par. 6.8.4.

a) Oral work. For English Lessons in Grades 2 - 4, suggestions a) - j) should still be used and extended, taking care to maintain discipline. Extending the use of a drawing book can include

pictures of what pupils dream about or want to become, what they dislike or imagine, or what they saw in a television program, after which pupils who saw a program can tell others about it.

Past tense should be taught by referring to events remembered well, e.g. when something exciting has happened at school. Events may also be organised, e.g. give one pupil a letter or parcel and show another a "secret" picture. Ask the next day: *Who received the letter? Did you read it? Who saw the secret picture? Whisper to your friend what you saw. Did you hear?*

Pair work, group work and games should be used as much as possible. For example, pairs can be given a set of pictures, similar in some respects but different in others. Without looking at each other's pictures, each pair must find the differences. In a group, one may read out the specifications for a drawing, e.g. *Draw a girl with one leg longer than the other and her right hand pulling her left ear.* Each one in the group must obey the instruction, then compare the drawings. Games: *Guess what I can see; Guess what I am thinking about; Guess what I saw yesterday.*

b) Reading. When teaching pupils to read English, comprehension should be checked constantly. Using *Bridge to English* as first reader makes that easy, if it can be bought. In pairs pupils should tell each other the content of a whole lesson (not line by line), at first in their L1 and later in the L2. In whole-class sessions with questions and answers the teacher can help with the L2. Letting pupils tell in the L1 what they have read in English is a way of testing comprehension, and should not be seen as a violation of Principle 6, keeping the L1 and L2 separate. In Canadian Immersion pupils are also allowed to answer in the L1 for some time.

Since authentic communication is the main objective of CLT, pupils and their teacher must get used to many pupils speaking at the same time without creating undue noise. Where pupils are not accustomed to this method, a starting point in higher classes is for all the pairs of a class to read to each other simultaneously from their L1 reader, and later from the L2 reader also. The one listening may not follow in the book in higher classes, but must afterwards retell the story to his/her friend. Thus the listening habit is fostered, and also the habit of reading with understanding. To finish both readers every year, some reading must be done at home, and the story then told in class to a partner. Teachers should rotate the partners often. Oral marks should be given during whole class pair-speaking sessions, which means that the whole class is not listening to the one "speaking for marks." Oral marks should be given for homework on a regular basis.

6.7 **Counter productive teaching practices in some black schools**

Some practices that are not benefiting pupils have been revealed during the investigation. These practices may be common to black schools, and should be warned against.

A preoccupation with nouns, names and memory work

At School A, Gr. 2 teachers were satisfied that pupils knew nouns only, not verbs or sentences. Vumendlini (1996) said, as if that is the way it should be: "The first year they learn vocabulary, the next year sentences." In history classes, lists of names and other pieces of information were given to pupils to learn in stimulus-response fashion. Preoccupation was with the first cognitive level only. As mentioned in par. 5.8.4, Ausubel (1968) holds that two prerequisites apply for meaningful learning: the learner must *want* to relate new material to the cognitive structure; and he must be able to relate the new material to his structure of knowledge in a nonverbatim way. If new material is potentially meaningful but the learner's intention is to memorise it verbatim, both the learning process and learning outcome must be rote and meaningless.

At School A, teachers expected nothing more from pupils than memory work, aided by frequent repetition. Teachers did not expect pupils to show understanding or to be innovative in any way. A reason may be that they wanted to avoid errors from being made. They took for granted that pupils understood what they could reproduce from memory, but unanalysed chunks can also be reproduced and as shown in chapter 5, even short sentences remained unanalysed chunks for some pupils. The rote learning model seems to be widely used in black schools (cf. par. 3.2.3).

Codeswitching or language alternation

Language alternation is the practice of switching between the L2 and L1, especially of translating the L2 into the L1, for pupils to understand what is being said. From the investigation of Meyer (1995:257) it is clear that language switching is a common practice even up to Gr. 12. As mentioned in par. 2.9.7, Fillmore showed with video recordings that codeswitching hampers SLA because pupils "turn off" as soon as the L2 is used. As long as a teacher uses translation to convey the content of subject lessons, pupils will not feel a need to analyse the sentences they learn as chunks. They will be satisfied that they know the meaning of a sentence if they know it globally,

that is, if they can translate it. However, for a sentence to add to the assimilated knowledge of an L2, it must be analysed and each part must be understood (cf. par. 2.8.1).

As was shown in chapter 3, codeswitching occurred far less at School B than at School A, a fact that may to some extent account for the better results at School B.

An absence of checks on pupils' comprehension

The habit of not paying attention to pupils' comprehension of the L2, or of subject matter, or of what they read, was witnessed on numerous occasions. Teachers do not check if pupils understand what they read in the L1, English or Afrikaans, but take understanding for granted (cf. par. 3.2.4 c). In subject classes teachers test memory, not understanding. As shown in par. 3.10.2, this finding is not new, for McGregor complained about it 26 years ago.

The three practices discussed above do not benefit pupils, but seem to be common in black schools. It would be beneficial if learning facilitators and inspectors would advise teachers rather to use practices that will help their pupils to acquire English better.

6.8 The issue of a second language as medium of instruction

As shown in chapter 1, the question of when to switch to L2 medium instruction is most relevant.

6.8.1 Insights gained from the present investigation

The results of this investigation give rise to serious doubts as to the advisability of starting too early with English-medium instruction. At School B the Gr. 5 pupils did benefit from their first year of English-medium instruction, for they had a good foundation to build on, but at School A pupils only learnt to memorise names and facts they did not understand. For young children a sentence like *The Bushmen came from the central parts of Africa* is not "comprehensible input," for it is not embedded in a context familiar to them. Considerable language growth is needed before a child can understand input that is not context-embedded but context-reduced.

Therefore it is most disturbing that since 1996 English is used as medium of instruction from Gr. 3 onwards, with very little English language instruction in the two preceding years. Not only is a certain level of proficiency in the L2 necessary for a pupil to benefit from instruction in the

L2, as mentioned in par. 1.2.5, but the pupil must already have some language ability in context-reduced circumstances, as explained in par. 2.9.5.2.

6.8.2 **Insights gained from the literature survey of chapter 2**

To be able to make an informed decision about English medium instruction for Blacks in S.A., it is necessary to consider the options. Immersion along the Canadian lines needs careful consideration. As shown in par. 2.9.3, *immersion* and *submersion* are superficially very similar, and one must make sure what one ends up with. Immersion implies that for most of the school career the L1 is the medium of instruction. Pupils receive immersion in an L2 only for about three years and then return to L1 instruction for at least 50 % of the day. Unless a program uses the L1 as medium of instruction for much of the school career, it cannot be an *immersion program.* It will rather be *submersion*, and therefore not a bilingual program.

In South Africa the use of African languages as medium of instruction in the secondary school seems at present not advisable, since it may cause problems with finding work after school or adapting to the language of tertiary institutions. Furthermore, for L1 medium education at secondary school the necessary text books will have to be rewritten in nine African languages.

For L1 medium instruction in the higher primary school textbooks are less important, for as shown in par. 5.6, the existing English text books are not much used in the primary school, so that using the vernacular as instruction medium for primary education is immediately possible. However, as said by D'Oliveira (1997, personal communication), L1 medium instruction may not be officially introduced unless the necessary text books exist in the various black languages.

A comparison between Canadian Immersion and current S.A. practice

As mentioned in chapter 1, the present practice in many black schools is to start with instruction through medium English in Gr. 3, where parents have chosen that option. Furthermore not much time is spent on English language instruction prior to the onset of English medium instruction. This contrasts with the practice in Canada, where children are not put on delayed and late immersion programs before they have acquired sufficient knowledge of the second language in L2 language classes, as mentioned in par. 2.9.1.

The present practice might have been inspired by superficial information on Canadian Immersion, for in early total immersion the L2 is used as medium of instruction for children not knowing the L2 at all. However, early total immersion starts at the last year of pre-primary school, three years earlier than Gr. 3. There is a vast difference between using the L2 in pre-primary school and using it for subject teaching in Grades 3 and 4. Language use in pre-primary school must concern the 'here and now', since pre-school children do not participate in context-reduced activities associated with formal instruction, such as reading and spelling. If the L2 is used all day for showing children how to make simple things, to play games, to obey commands, a communicative approach is followed. Especially if the child is never addressed in his L1, the circumstances are as near to naturalistic SLA as classroom SLA for homogeneous L1 groups can ever be. Then it can be expected that a child will acquire the L2 sufficiently in one year to benefit from instruction in reading and writing through medium of the L2 the next year.

Early immersion in Canada worked inter alia because of the following important features:

* It started very early so that the 'here and now' principle was observed, far from formal contexts;
* The teachers were mother tongue speakers of the L2 and never used the pupils' L1;
* Parents and pupils were proud of their L1 and kept it up at home (cf. par. 2.9.2.1).

The situation in black schools in S.A. is so different that it is simply impossible to apply the Canadian model at present. At least, pride in the L1 of Blacks should first be cultivated.

South African options

If immersion cannot be a solution to the problem of bilingualism for Blacks in S.A., which options are left? There are four options, and the choice will ultimately be decided by the question as to whether or not a particular group wants to retain its own language and culture. Where the necessary pride in the L1 does not exist, the danger is that pupils may lose their L1 and culture altogether. As mentioned, Cummins & Swain (1986:97) hold that the maintenance of a child's L1 is critically important to his or her psychological, linguistic and cognitive well-being, but it is an assumption with which everyone may not agree. Baker (1988:91) reminds us that issues surrounding bilingual education cannot be divorced from political, cultural and societal issues, and research "cannot conclude that debate, only inform about the options." The present options are:

* Submersion, in which the L1 is not used at all as medium of instruction;

* Transitional bilingual education, which allows only a few years of L1 usage; (Both a) and b) will tend to increase the lack of pride in the L1 and the possibility of language and culture loss).
* Maintenance bilingual education which makes a switch to L2 instruction when pupils are ready for it, but attempts to promote both languages as far as possible, even up to Gr. 12; (Codeswitching should not be mistaken as being a method of promoting any language).
* Mother tongue education up to Gr. 12. This will present practical problems, as mentioned earlier, and it is unacceptable to Blacks.

Until recently it was the policy that maintenance bilingual education should be provided in black schools, with the L2 used as medium of instruction only from Gr. 5, while the L1 had to be taken as subject up to Gr. 12. According to the CUP model (cf. par. 2.9.5.3) it seems to be the best alternative if certain present problems can be eradicated, and if the switch to English-medium instruction is made only when the pupils have acquired enough English to understand it in academic circumstances. It does sound wrong to remedy English language deficiencies through instruction in the learner's L1, but the assumption that the development of L2 academic skills is directly related to amount of exposure to the L2 is naive. Of more importance is the extent to which learners are capable of understanding the academic input to which they are exposed. In the case of second language learners, understanding academic input is related not only to the level attained in the L2, but also to the conceptual attributes which have developed through the L1. Switching to English-medium instruction before pupils can understand what they have to learn, means a three-fold loss: pupils will not make the necessary progress in their L1, or academically, or in the L2. Insights gained from the literature study of chapter 2, from the observation of classroom practice in Gr. 5 English medium classes, and from compositions written in history by Gr. 5 pupils, all combine to caution against an early start with English medium instruction.

6.8.3 **Recommendations concerning starting time with L2 English lessons**

Due to the indications (par. 2.5) that "younger is better" for SLA, the following is recommended: an early start in Gr. 1 with listening to and speaking English, not later than the third term. The necessary guidance and programs for the oral work should be provided to teachers, as well as guidance in using sound meaning-focused instruction.

In Gr. 2 one hour per day should be allowed for English instead of the present one hour per week, but no reading or writing in English should be done before the third term of Gr. 2, so that a firm aural-oral basis can be laid. The investigator agrees with Krouse (1988:20) that when reading is added as a language skill, it should have its own time allocation, and one hour per day should still be devoted to developing the skills of listening and speaking. As first English reader *Bridge to English* of the Molteno Project has many merits, and it would be in the national interest if it could be issued to all schools in South Africa.

Helm (1979:320) reports that the Transvaal Buro for Education launched an investigation from 1971 - 1974, comprising 4000 white pupils from 50 Afrikaans and English schools. They found that the best time to start reading in the L2 is Gr. 4. However, for black pupils the reasons for an earlier start given by the Molteno Project, quoted in par. 3.3.3 f), are deemed important enough to warrant such an earlier start until circumstances with regard to early school leaving by black pupils change. It would also be better to start with Afrikaans two years later than the present Gr. 3. It need not mean that less Afrikaans will be acquired, for if pupils know more English before starting with Afrikaans, they may get less confused and learn more quickly.

6.8.4 **Starting time with English-medium instruction**

Switching to beneficial English-medium instruction in some subjects may be possible in Gr. 5 if the above measures, and sound conceptual instruction, have laid a proper foundation. However, the important issue is not the grade pupils are in, but the level of English proficiency and of conceptual proficiency they have attained. If these levels are diagnosed daily for each individual class in each subject, "English across the curriculum" may start as early as Gr. 2 or 3. It means that what pupils do and learn through the L1 in any subject, may be used as topic of discussion in English lessons. It is recommended that pupils have only one teacher for all lessons up to Gr. 4, as it used to be in the DET era. For the following recommendations, one teacher is assumed.

"English across the curriculum" should start with a subject test in the L1, followed by asking or giving pupils the necessary English vocabulary - without assuming that vocabulary is the only concern. The important step is to let pupils say in English what they know in the L1 about a topic. Their English may be full of mistakes and may need clarification requests, rephrasing and

extending utterances. But in this way a subject lesson can be used for learning English by communicating about what is at hand: the latest subject lesson. The goal is that groups of pupils will draw up English notes for a lesson just completed in the L1. However, at first they should just "make English sentences," keeping the exercise oral only. In this way a diagnosis of the structural level of the pupils' L2 regarding the specific lesson can be made. Next it may be expected from the class as a whole to help with drawing up English notes, which the teacher puts up on the board with the necessary alterations. But care must be taken that a few good pupils do not do all the work. That is why group work is the goal. When pupils in grades lower than Gr. 5 are expected to learn some English notes for tests, the tests should be part of English Lessons. The subject tests and examinations should be written in the L1. Principle 6, keeping the L1 and L2 separate, should always be observed, even though it may be difficult. Teachers should be strict on themselves and on pupils about when it is "time for English" or "time for our language."

The above is taken together in Principle D9: Diagnosis. For "English across the curriculum" and for English medium instruction, it is necessary to diagnose daily the level of English structures acquired by a class in a specific subject, before giving them notes to learn for tests. Pupils should not memorise sentences much longer or more complex than what they can formulate by themselves. The use of Principle D 9 will indicate for each subject when "English across the curriculum" should go over into English medium instruction.

Switching to English-medium instruction should be done gradually, even within a subject. The method of presenting lessons first in the L1 and then in the L2, with pupils verbalising information in the L2, may be used in some subjects up to the first term of Gr. 7. It means that in the higher primary every subject teacher should also be an English teacher, and that two sets of tests may be written, the L1 test at a higher cognitive level than the L2 test as long as it may be necessary.

6.9 **The role of parents in helping children to become bilingual**

The Department of Education and Culture rightfully gives parents a say in the education of their children. During 1995 parents had to choose which language should be the medium of instruction at their children's school, and in Welkom the vernacular was not chosen as medium of instruction for any school. Unfortunately parents do not have a say regarding the timing of the switch to L2

medium instruction, and it is doubtful if parents will be able to make an informed decision on such matters. It would be good if parents could be informed on issues so important to the future of their children. The following is regarded as important information for parents.

* Firstly it is important for parents to know what to refrain from. As mentioned in par. 2.9.2.1, advice to Blacks to use English in the home can have disastrous effects if parents use broken English or a mixture with the L1. Rather, children should be exposed to the L1 as much as possible, for a high level of bilingualism can only be attained when there is a strong emphasis on the development of L1 skills. The L1 is the foundation on which to build an L2. To the extent that the L1 is not developed, acquisition of an L2 will be constrained. Using English at home may lead to a restricted home language and will not prepare a child for what is required at school. It may also influence parent-child interaction and communicative proficiency, and result in negative feelings towards the own language and culture. Feeling positive about the own language is important for pupils' acquisition of an L2, as Canadian Immersion showed.

However, the investigation done for this thesis has shown that in traditional schools the only pupils likely to make good progress are the ones who acquire English somewhere out of school (cf. par. 4.10). Therefore it may be advantageous if someone in a child's family or extended family, siblings, cousins, even the father but never the mother, *constantly uses English* for interaction with the child. Investigation done by Bester & Cann (1996:120) on factors affecting the SLA of Setswana speaking pupils, indicates that both the acquisition of the L1 and the English spoken at home are factors in SLA. This indicates that it may be possible to cultivate pride and proficiency in the L1 and also to teach the L2 at home.

One problem is that if an older sibling is asked to help someone with English, he/she is likely to teach the child grammar, unless he/she is at a school where progressive methods of L2 teaching are used. One may try to explain the difference between *using* English and *learning grammar*. If no one can be found who is willing to speak English with a child, the able mother may have English sessions with her children, for which purpose suitable books can be put to good use. The habit of reading in the L1 and L2 should be fostered, as well as watching English television.

* It should be noted that it was the parents in Canada that took the initiative to improve the abilities of their children in the second language, for they realised that their children had a

drawback in the market place. They asked advice from academics, and started an innovation that spread all over their country. Parental interest and involvement was an important factor all along.

Likewise black parents in S.A. will ultimately shape the future of their children, for they will have to decide whether their own language and culture are to be retained. As shown in par. 2.9.6.1, some Blacks do not want black pupils to lose their own language and culture. For example, Mndende (1994) speaks of parents having an inferiority complex, and Kamwangamulu (1996) says that English-medium education has tended to be elitist and has failed to promote literacy in Africa. He pleads that mother-tongue education be cleansed of the stigma it carries.

* Black parents should also demand better in-service training for teachers. It may be quite cost-effective in terms of less failure at school, higher self-esteem and better end products.

* Furthermore, black parents should ask for subsidised pre-primary schools where English instruction of the right kind can be given. At present many pupils are admitted to primary school at age five-and-a-half, and even younger, because it is cheaper than sending a child to a creche. Inability to understand school work may foster the habit of not paying attention from early on.

6.10 **Contributions of the present study**

With this study it was attempted to contribute to existing knowledge in a number of ways.

A contribution to SLA theory and research

As shown in par. 2.8.2, discussions of SLA research often neglect to differentiate between studies on adults and studies on children, where the issue of benefiting from form-focused instruction is concerned. This study reviewed some research on SLA by adults and children. A realisation that adults and children acquire languages in fundamentally different ways should help to clarify the issue of when and how form-focused instruction can be beneficial.

The present investigation may also fulfil a need mentioned by Lightbown & Spada (1993:81): "The widespread adoption of communicative language teaching in recent years has meant that researchers in some settings have not been able to find classrooms which are exclusively form-oriented in order to make direct comparisons with classrooms that are exclusively meaning-oriented." School B is not exclusively meaning-oriented, but great differences could be shown in the results of its teaching and those of traditional schools.

A great advantage of this study is that comparable groups were studied, so that findings could be interpreted. For example, in par. 5.10.2 it is mentioned that the School A pupils improved by 7% from Test 3 to Test 4. This fact is meaningless, since those were two different tests. However, the fact becomes significant in comparison to the School B pupils who improved 10 % over the same two tests. It is in comparison to findings at School B, e.g. in comparison to their history and other writings, that one can say the pupils of School A have not acquired as much English as is possible in the circumstances. And in comparison to Afrikaans pupils it is clear that the understanding of even the School B pupils is insufficient.

In contrast, Alderson & Beretta (1992:138) comment on a study which had no control group. They say that no comparisons were possible, so that the nature of the generalisations that could be made was limited, and it was virtually impossible to say anything about the degree of language proficiency attained and the nature of the bilingual experience of the children.

Knowledge of procedures in black primary schools

In order to address a problem such as the low pass rate of black matriculants, extensive knowledge of the issue is necessary, also knowledge about primary education. Macdonald (1990a:25) mentions five descriptions made from 1971 - 1986 of teaching and learning patterns in African schools, one Nigerian, and says that there is a regrettable lack of developmental psychology research concerning black children in S.A., and an almost total absence of papers on the language learning of primary school black children.

The investigation and class attendance done by Brand concerns higher primary classes only, but the research reported by Kroes and Walker (1988) concerns the lower primary, as does the work of Macdonald. Likewise this thesis reports on what happened in lower primary classes and in Gr. 5. In Gr. 1 only reading in the L1 was observed, in Grades 2 - 4 only English lessons, and in Gr. 5 both English lessons and the use of English as medium of instruction. Our knowledge of teaching procedures in black primary schools is therefore enlarged by this investigation, increasing the possibility of applying remedies at the right stages. However, information on School B given in par. 3.4.2 provides a fuller picture of the problem of improving black education. The large amount of money that must have gone into training the teachers and principal of School B, seems to have benefited only four year groups of pupils.

The disappointing observation was made, however, that even HSRC reports seem not to have had much positive effect on the status quo. The 1988 HSRC report by Kroes & Walker, commissioned by the DET, showed clearly that the *Bridge* course is far superior to the *Day by Day* and *MacMillan* courses, yet at present schools in the Free State are supplied with the latter courses free of charge, but have to pay for the *Bridge* course. Another disheartening fact is that traditional approaches to teaching are followed to this day, despite earlier HSRC reports, e.g. by Macdonald, on excessive drill work, meaningless repetition and rote learning, and all that was said against such practices. The plea by Hartshorne cited in par. 2.9.6.2, that the teaching of English, and the "English across the curriculum" approach, be given more serious attention, seems also to have fallen on deaf ears. It is also disheartening to find that already in 1981, in the De Lange Report (1981:21), it was stated that few black children were ready for education on being admitted to primary school, and yet free pre-primary schools still do not exist.

Knowledge of the English ability of black pupils

Our knowledge of the ability in English of black pupils at various levels is extended in two ways.

* The test results of the pupils of School A and other traditional schools indicate how little black pupils sometimes know after one year, or after several years of learning English in primary school. It was even indicated that at the beginning of Gr. 9 many pupils do not use the he/she distinction to aid their comprehension. What is very disturbing is how poorly black pupils perform in comparison to Afrikaans pupils when writing a story from a picture series, and when doing comprehension tests. Many pupils (16 %) at the beginning of Gr. 8 did not discern a Yes/No question. Also disturbing are the many irrelevant answers to Where, When and Why questions. The pupils' poor understanding of the various comprehension passages, set against familiar backgrounds such as school, children and dogs, leaves serious doubts as to what they understand of their school subjects taken through the L2.

* The test results of the School B pupils, especially the results of the last history test, indicate that under circumstances similar to those at other schools, but with different teaching methods, enough English can be acquired for pupils to benefit from English medium instruction in Gr. 5. As mentioned in par. 3.10.1, Kroes & Walker (1988:109) took tests from pupils working from *Mac-Millan* and *Day by Day* courses. Pupils on the *Bridge* course were not tested, because the *Bridge*

materials for Gr. 4 were not available at the time, with the result that the pupils continued using the Gr. 3 materials in Gr. 4. It is a pity that these pupils did not do the test for such an inadequate reason. The tests of the present investigation serve to supply results indicating that pupils using only two of the three *Bridge* courses can outperform other pupils by far.

Tests indicating ability in an L2

The types of tests used for this investigation are not new. Some of them (the compositions) are too time consuming to rate to be widely used, but although the present work was done on only a small scale, useful information regarding the SLA of classroom learners could be gleaned from it. The following may be contributions to the issue of testing children's ability in an L2:

* The suggestion made in par. 4.10 that to test the L2 proficiency of young beginners, one may consider only the verbs they are able to use, thus reducing the amount of work to be done;

* The thorough analysis of written compositions, coupled with the use of a computer. Such analysis enabled the investigator to find slight deviations from expected findings, e.g. that the School B pupils lagged behind in the use of the plural -s and the suppliance of the article.

* The thorough analysis of written comprehension tests, indicating for example right and wrong copies, may be a contribution. Such analysis points out why the common school exercise of "doing comprehension tests" can be counter productive. Suggestions for the writing of worthwhile comprehension tests are implied, that is, comprehension tests which cannot be answered by just copying a sentence with most of the same words as that of the question. The counting of specific wrong answers also provides information about the problems of black pupils in understanding specific words and questions, e.g. the word *until*. The specific investigation of the acquisition of the *he/ she* distinction contributes to our knowledge of the acquisition of constructs of the L2 not present in the L1.

Debate in S.A. on teaching an L2

This thesis contributes insights gained from SLA theory and research to the debate in South Africa concerning the SLA of children. Consequently it can also make a contribution to the debate on issues such as L2 instruction and the use of an L2 as medium of instruction. Ways in which the present study may contribute insights gained from SLA theory and research, are indicated below.

* As shown in par. 2.5.1, the 1982 HSRC report by Nijsse is marred by a lack of knowledge regarding the kind of input most beneficial for SLA by children.

* The 1988 HSRC report by Kroes & Walker (1988:23) states that SLA theory is not sufficiently developed to provide precise hypotheses against which to measure what is observed in the classroom. This thesis, however, shows that SLA theory can provide precise hypotheses.

* The debate about the best L2 teaching methods must unfortunately also be taken up against Macdonald, who did a great amount of good work. Yet it seems Macdonald's (1990a:174) ideas on L2 instruction are not derived from genuine communication but rather from audiolingualism. She mentions for stage I: "Language drills with content; ... conversations on formulaic lines, later simple topics; following demonstrated directions; ... playing a simple game, where roles and routines are modelled ..." These ideas are far removed from communicative language teaching, where drills, formulae and routines have little place, and where verbal directions are preferred to demonstrated ones. For stage III she mentions: "Uncontextualised language drills; ... predictable telephone calls; shopping lists; recipes; copying words and sentences;" etc. The quoted activities can be done as repeated rote learning, not necessarily understood. This thesis tries to bring insights from SLA theory and research to the issue of classroom L2 teaching.

* Krouse published a book in S.A. with practical advice on English L2 instruction for the lower primary school. Again the insight that meaning-focused instruction provided through genuine communication should be the main goal, seems to be lacking. Krouse's (1988:3) reference to SLA theory is confined to the following: "With young children the audio-lingual approach, which relies on listening and speaking, is widely used and adapted". From audiolingualism, he says, the *situative-drill approach* has been developed. It is a form-focused approach, as seen for example in his "transformation drills" (Krouse 1988:38).

Some of Krouse's examples of lessons may be put to good use, but not with beginners. His lessons for later stages would be suitable if the drill element could be left out. For example, in a lesson (pp. 224-226) for pupils in the first half of their second year, pupils should be able to answer the following questions: *Who has a pet at home? What kind of pet do you have?* Later: *Can you call Spot?* However, it sounds strange to let a class who can answer the above questions say in chorus: *Dick calls Spot; He pats Spot; He plays with it; He teaches Spot to sit*, whereafter

pupils must say these four sentences to each other in pairs. This *situative-drill* does not seem different from the method followed in history classes in Gr. 5 at School A: ask as introduction questions which only a few pupils can understand and answer, then let the whole class drill some sentences on the lesson to be reproduced in tests.

The only kind of pair work advised by Krouse (1988:24-25) seems to be like the above: it is done immediately after group speaking, and in the first year it is "generally no more than repeating a sentence to a friend." The investigator's experience is that pupils can, less than one month after their first English lesson, say about ten random sentences per session to each other, e.g. *Touch your nose, head, leg, table,* or *Point to the door, teacher, ceiling, floor, cupboard* etc.

Krouse's (1988:255-257) example of a verse speaking lesson has the possibility that pupils will do nothing but easy memory work, while answering the difficult questions only with *Yes*:

Two ears to hear, Two eyes to see, Two hands to work And play for me.

Two shoes to tie, Two feet to walk, Two lips to help me When I talk.

This short verse should be used to teach pupils, in the L2, even gratitude for their senses. Some questions to be asked on *hearing* are: *What else can you hear? Can you hear Mommy's voice? Does it sometimes sound friendly? And cross?* When pupils are at a stage when groups must recite lines of the above verse (p. 257), they cannot understand the above questions.

If Krouse's work is compared to the traditional teaching style of black teachers, as described in par. 3.2.3, it is clear that teachers will not easily change their teaching style to genuine communication by using Krouse's book. In the situation of S.A. black schools, it may be better to move away from repetition and chorusing as much as possible, as was observed at School B.

Debate on an L2 as medium of instruction

As shown in chapter 1, the debate on when to start with an L2 as medium of instruction has become of utmost importance in South Africa since 1996. For that reason more attention was given to the issue in this thesis than was originally envisaged. In par. 5.9.3 attention was given to what is considered to be mistaken views by Macdonald and Edmunds. In par. 2.9.7 it was shown that Meyer (1995) has a mistaken concept of codeswitching and its use in L2 medium instruction. Recommendations regarding switching to L2 medium instruction were given in par. 6.8.4.

6.11 **Recommendations for future research**

The present investigation was commenced in a very inexperienced manner. Suggestions for future researchers may be in order. Palmer (1992:141) writes "We would have found it useful to have on hand a document describing how someone else had dealt with the issues we were facing, and we might have saved considerable time and energy ..." The present investigator had to face different issues, and made a number of wrong choices.

Investigating growth in language knowledge

A great drawback of the present investigation was that the test group at School A quickly became very small, because of the decision to use only pupils who had not repeated a grade. It was a wrong decision for two reasons: only the best pupils of the original test group did the later tests, giving a better-than-true picture of the ability of black primary school children; and pupils who failed even once became lost for the investigation, ruling out the possibility of doing any longitudinal work on them. One bit of information would have been of special importance regarding hypothesis H2. It is the answer to the question if the so called obligers, who scored above average on plural -s in the first tests, later scored below average on plural -s. That would have been clear evidence that they initially learnt a construct but did not acquire it. However, as shown in par. 4.10, most obligers soon failed and thus dropped out of the test groups. It is recommended that in future more information about pass rates should be gathered before launching research covering some years.

An interesting study may be to compare pupils taught the he/she distinction according to the suggestions of par. 6.6.2, to pupils in other schools.

Improving the teaching style of teachers

As seen in chapter 5, the investigator unsuccessfully tried to help a teacher at School A to improve the ability of his Gr. 6 pupils to do comprehension tests, and their English ability in general. The pupils were already stuck in patterns of "doing English", "doing comprehension tests" and "learning history", from which they could not be moved by a little outside attention. Likewise the teacher's style could not be easily influenced. Nothing can be deduced from an

experience with one teacher, but it should be investigated how teachers can be helped to adopt modern teaching styles. As said in par. 3.11, workshops at Butterworth attained partial success.

Regarding the proposal that English medium instruction in Grades 3 - 4 be replaced by "English across the curriculum," investigation resulting in practical teacher's manuals is urgently necessary.

Improving pupils' learning in the higher primary school

As an interim measure, methods should urgently be found to help pupils who went through the lower primary phase without *acquiring* much English, so that they can acquire it in the higher primary phase. These pupils still do not have the learning abilities of adults, and may lack basic knowledge of English and certain basic skills, e.g. reading with understanding. In par. 5.10.2 it was said that doing comprehension tests is affected by poor reading skills, and three strategies that form the basis of competent reading as identified by Lanham (1986) were explained. The practical question is: if pupils have advanced to the higher primary phase without such strategies, how can they be helped? There may be various possibilities. Using comic strip reading material may be investigated, for the basic L2 knowledge some pupils lack may be supplied by the pictures, enabling a child to construct some coherence for himself. Compiling useful material of this kind may not be easy, though. Peirce (1989:414) suggests the use of a particular comic book, but her reasons may be at least partly political.

Regarding comprehension tests the following research is recommended:

* Research on the comprehension tests found in text books used at higher primary level, to see to what extent they advance the counter productive strategies discussed in chapter 4;
* Research on training teachers of all grades to check the understanding of pupils, and to improve the ability of pupils to "do comprehension tests."

Investigation on teaching the he/she distinction may also be undertaken, as long as it is never seen as of equal importance to issues such as understanding English and acquiring it sufficiently for L2 medium education. The following was used with some success at secondary school: *Anna, what are you doing? I am rubbing my cheek. What does she say?* Class: *She says she is rubbing her cheek.* It was never long before the class used *She* for a boy, on which a bit of ridicule was used: *Is Thabo a girl? Thabo, they say you are a girl!* Ridicule was tried because it is a method seen to be much used by children in L1 acquisition. This is form-focused work, however, and as

said in par. 2.8.2 such work only gives results with children if kept up. In South Africa we first need to advance to meaning-focused education before we should be concerned about high levels of correctness. The danger is that too much time may be given to form-focused work again.

6.12 **Conclusion**

The present study may be of value in respect of the following findings.

* It indicates that, for children, teaching methods with the focus on meaning lead to more SLA than teaching methods with the focus on form.

* It makes a small contribution to the linguistic debate on a role for *learning* in child SLA, providing instances where mechanical *learning* did not turn into *acquisition*.

* It provides evidence that Gr. 5 pupils who have not acquired sufficient English prior to Gr. 5, do not benefit from English medium instruction. It also brings together a great amount of information concerning education through medium of a second language, indicating how, when and under which conditions it can be beneficial.

The most important finding of the study, however, is a realisation that the necessary steps should urgently be taken to address the problems of black education in S.A. It concerns the future of multitudes of black pupils.

Other contributions of the thesis concern recommendations regarding teaching an L2, including lessons for beginners, and using "English across the curriculum." The thesis also contains observations that may extend our knowledge of teaching procedures in the first five grades of black primary schools, and test results indicating the problems black pupils have with English, e.g. with understanding questions, and with the he/she distinction. Therefore recommendations were made regarding undesirable teaching practices common to black schools; a later switch to L2 medium instruction than at present; and advice to parents. Minor findings of the thesis concern a suggestion that to evaluate the L2 ability of young beginners, attention to verbs only is necessary. Other suggestions concern tests, especially the issue of compiling comprehension tests so that they cannot be done with the help of certain strategies, but will really test comprehension.

Some recommendations concerning future investigation were also put forward.

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APPENDIX A Pupils of investigation groups

SCHOOL A

Pupil	Group 1	m / f	Birth date	Gr. 4 (Dec 1994) Sotho	Afr.	Eng.	Maths	Sub-tot	Report	Pass / F	Gr. 5 (Dec 1995) Sotho	Afr.	Eng.	Maths	Sub-tot	Hist & Geog	Report	Pass / F	Listening comprehension tests 1994 correct	Wrong	irrelevant	1995 correct	half correct	Wrong	irrelevant
1		m	83	81	77	79	51	288	77		94	103	105	70	372	77	89		6			11		1	
2		f	84	76	61	56	68	261	70		89	66	83	69	307	50	53		2	3	1	5		4	3
3		m	85	73	54	58	67	252	70		75	56	72	65	268	45	53		3	2	1	6		4	2
4		f	82	75	52	54	65	246	70		84	70	79	73	306	55	53		1	1	4	1		4	7
5		f	83	73	70	65	56	264	69		92	78	85	48	303	62	55					11		1	
6		m	81	72	63	52	56	243	67		73	83	69	65	290	38	49		3	1	2	5		5	2
7		f	84	74	51	46	71	242	65		69	56	70	69	264	52	48		0	6		1		5	6
8		f	83	69	50	50	68	237	65		94	62	74	68	298	40	52		0	0	6	3		4	5
9		m	83	75	50	42	50	217	64		81	59	69	42	251	47	46		0	2	4	3		3	6
10	G1	m	84	71	58	53	50	232	64		76	75	79	60	290	80	57		5	1					
11		f	82	67	64	50	30	211	64	F									2	4					
12	G1	f	84		62	58	51	171	64		87	90	85	70	332	74	58		3	3		5	2	4	1
13		m	82	72	57	47	52	228	64		85	72	85	64	306	67	55		2	3	1	7		3	2
14	G1	f	83	62	62	46	50	220	63		84	62	76	60	282	59	51		5	1		4		6	2
15		f	84	63	50	43	70	226	63		55	65	64	72	256	38	42		3	2	1			5	7
16		m	79	66	39	50	73	228	63		90	64	75	54	283	53	51		2	1	3	5		5	2
17	G1	f	83	70	50	50	54	224	63		80	70	76	32	258	50	46		0	3	3	2		4	6
18	G1	m	81	61	56	50	59	226	62		76	72	97	63	308	85	59		4	2		3	1	8	
19		m	83	64	50	58	46	218	62		61	56	63	32	212	66	44		2	1	3	3		8	
20		f	83	71	50	56	52	229	62		76	57	87	51	271	52	52	out				3		3	6
21		f	83	56	50	40	61	207	61		73	48	57	50	228	40	40	F				1		5	6
22	G1	f	84	67	50	43	50	210	60		70	72	68	24	234	62	47	out	3	2	1	1		4	7
23		f	82	69	43	45	50	207	60	F									2	3	1				
24		f	84	55	37	42	69	203	60	F															
25		m	81	61	53	55	58	227	59		81	70	82	61	294	67	53		0	3	3			5	7
26		m	85	61	59	50	51	221	59		93	64	85	60	302	71	57		2	2	2	9		1	2
27		f	83	64	45	34	67	210	59	F									1	3	2				
28		f	83	60	54	44	58	216	58		80	58	79	60	277	42	50		3	3		4		6	2
29		f	80	62	44	51	53	210	57		68	60	42	40	210	50	42		1	1	4	3		2	7
30		f	84	66	41	44	44	195	57	F									2	3	1				
31		f	84	58	50	53	33	194	57		80	62	72	18	232	40	41		1	4	1	3		3	6
32	G1	f	84	59	36	42	59	196	57	F									2	1	3				
33		m	83	61	40	50	40	191	56		71	63	79	34	247	72	49		2	4		5		7	
34		f	85	55	50	50	57	212	56	out									3	3					
35		m	81	60	47	33	38	178	55	F									4	2					
36		m	83	64	40	50	51	205	54		76	62	60	36	234	75	46		1	4	1	4		5	3
37		m	82	64	42	29	50	185	54	F									4	1	1				
38	G1	f	83	61	50	42	28	181	54		85	58	38	15	196	42	39	F	1	2	3	4		1	7
39		m	83	55	50	43	51	199	53		71	60	70	55	256	54	48		2	4		4		6	2
40	G1	f	83	61	35	42	34	172	53	F									4	1	1				
41		f	84	68	33	38	28	167	53	F															
42	G1	f	83	61	40	40	42	183	53	F									3	3					
43	G1	m	84	54	50	34	50	188	52		60	74	75	42	251	56	48		5	1		10		1	1
44		m	84	54	32	36	53	175	52	F	Total						1570		4	2		126	3	123	107
45		f	83	58	36	36	58	188	51	F	Avg:						51	%	1	4	1				
46		m	80	57	33	38	23	151	51	F									4	2		Correct:	126		
47	G1	f	85	54	26	39	54	173	51	F					Hist. & Geog.		57	%				Wrong:	230		
48		f	84	64	47	46	20	177	50	F									0	1	5	Irrelevant	107		
49	G1	f	83	55	32	50	44	181	50	F									0	3	3	Pupils	30		
50	G1	m	84	56	21	25	50	152	49	F									0	1	5				
51		f	83	60	26	55	30	171	49	F									0	3	3				
52		m	80	56	27	28	28	139	47	F									0	1	5				
53		f	80	53	29	34	19	135	45	F									0	3	3				
54		f	84	35	27	37	32	131	41	F															
55		m		36	18	36	19	109	36	F									1	5					

APPENDIX A Pupils of investigation groups

SCH00L B

Pupil	Group 1	m / f	Out	Birth	Gr. 4 (Dec. 1994) Sotho	Afr	Eng	Maths	Sub-tot	Report	Pass / F	Gr. 5 (Dec. 1995) Sotho	Afr	Eng	Maths	Sub-tot	hist.,G	Report	Pass / F	Listening comprehension tests 1994 correct	Wrong	irrelevant	95 correct	half corr.	Wrong	irrelevant
1	G1	m		83	68	72	72	79	291	74		95	88	120	96	399	72	71		4	2		10	1	1	
2		m	*	84	68	74	65	71	278	72		85	86	108	73	352	74	65								
3		m	*	85	68	75	70	67	280	71		87	92	110	65	354	80	66								
4		f	*	85	69	78	71	58	276	71		101	121	125	72	419	89	74								
5		f	*	85	61	68	72	74	275	69		93	98	111	98	400	84	70								
6		m		85	58	75	62	77	272	69		84	90	111	62	347	69	63		3	3					
7		m		86	61	69	65	73	268	69		94	87	87	77	345	73	65		4	2		12			
8		f	*	84	69	70	62	59	260	68		94	83	99	72	348	72	64								
9		f		84	57	68	65	68	258	68		95	95	94	71	355	49	62		5	1					
10		f		85	66	68	64	58	256	67		89	93	93	62	337	66	63		5	1		5		6	1
11		f	*	83	52	60	63	80	255	67		84	70	84	46	284	52	52								
12		m		84	58	71	68	66	263	66		83	67	108	63	321	66	61		6	0		10		2	
13		m		85	61	69	65	58	253	66		80	82	99	62	323	72	61		3	3		4	1	7	
14		m	*	84	52	56	65	69	242	66		100	76	101	66	343	67	60								
15		f		80	50	62	63	72	247	65		77	83	72	48	280	48	54		2	4					
16	G1	m		85	67	70	58	58	253	65		93	86	116	64	359	72	62		4	2		10		2	
17		f	*	84	58	62	65	67	252	65		93	80	94	78	345	63	60								
18		m		83	55	72	70	50	247	64		102	80	75	65	322	45	53		1	5		5		4	3
19		f		83	60	63	62	65	250	64		88	85	100	71	344	58	61		4	2		5		6	1
20		f	*	85	51	67	62	65	245	64		77	98	100	92	367	77	66								
21		m		85	51	73	65	47	236	63		87	97	94	63	341	59	60		5	1					
22		f		83	55	61	57	64	237	63		79	71	82	80	312	57	54		3	3		6	1	4	1
23	G1	m		83	59	56	53	64	232	63		91	96	90	80	357	41	59		2	4		2		7	3
24		f	*		52	61	61	50	224	61																
25	G1	m		83	61	55	54	57	227	61		71	51	71	43	236	51	50		3	3		10		2	
26		m		84	53	59	62	57	231	61		85	68	91	51	295	67	53		4	2					
27		f	*		56	55	70	44	225	60																
28		f		85	60	46	61	55	222	60		83	78	90	89	340	55	62					9		3	
29		f		84	59	65	57	35	216	59		77	87	91	48	303	52	56		3	3		3	1	7	1
30		m	*	84	64	57	60	38	219	59		85	59	53	68	265	57	47								
31		m		85	52	56	54	62	224	59		65	78	75	73	291	45	52		4	2		6	1	5	
32		m		83	51	47	53	61	36	58		64	69	80	54	267	48	52		3	3					
33		m	*	84	57	58	67	35	217	58		83	97	89	68	337	65	59								
34	G1	f		84	50	67	51	51	219	58		94	88	86	78	346	58	57		1	5		4	1	7	
35		f		83	61	51	61	38	211	58		95	59	70	60	284	42	50		3	3		7		2	2
36		f	*	84	60	57	65	30	212	58		90	95	107	60	352	67	61								
37		f		83	59	52	56	50	217	57		94	94	82	49	319	57	56					10		2	
38		m		83	58	56	52	42	208	57		86	62	66	47	261	43	49								
39		f	*	82	53	48	45	54	200	57		92	104	77	79	352	48	58								
40		f		83	62	50	61	45	218	56		84	75	65	55	279	46	51		3	3					
41		f		85	61	56	50	41	208	56		88	66	81	68	303	47	53		2	4		4		6	2
42		m	*	82	59	53	59	28	199	55		67	59	65	36	227	25	36								
43		f		84	56	51	60	32	199	55		92	58	100	51	301	47	51					4		5	3
44		f		84	51	58	52	33	194	55		92	60	83	35	270	63	52		3	3					
45		f	*	82	53	47	50	56	206	55		71	71	58	40	240	34	42								
46		m		84	57	53	45	50	205	55		87	46	60	37	230	53	43		4	2		3		4	5
47		m		85	58	46	39	41	184	54		78	80	65	53	276	56	53					6		4	2
48		f	*	84	50	45	60	37	192	54		106	72	60	43	281	40	49								
49	G1	f		83	52	51	50	36	189	54		76	61	74	42	253	44	49					8		1	3
50		f		85	60	51	57	30	198	54		86	71	75	72	304	48	52		2	4					

SCH00L B APPENDIX A Pupils of investigation groups

Pupil		m / f	Out	Birth	Sotho	Afr	Eng	Maths	Sub-tot	Report	Pass / f	Sotho	Afr	Eng	Maths	Sub-tot	hist.,G	Report	Pass / f	correct	Wrong	irrelevant	correct	half corr.	Wrong	irrelevant
51		m	*		56	50	52	25	183	54																
52		m		85	58	53	61	19	191	54		110	80	98	53	341	46	54		5	1		4		5	3
53	G1	f		84	52	53	44	43	192	53		83	80	86	66	315	54	53		3	3					
54		m	*		50	47	43	50	190	53																
55		f		84	50	40	50	52	192	53		107	61	60	78	306	45	51		3	2	1	5		3	4
56		f		85	50	49	43	44	186	53		91	92	72	49	304	46	55		3	3					
57		f	*	85	60	52	55	24	191	52		91	75	77	72	315	46	56								
58		f		84	50	48	52	36	186	52		86	62	73	73	294	31	46		4	2		6		2	4
59		m		81	54	44	62	26	186	52		85	53	68	60	266	45	46		3	2	1	3	1	6	2
60		f	*	83	61	48	54	22	185	51		89	49	60	30	228	38	40	F							
61	G1	m		84	50	41	50	24	165	51		92	77	77	27	273	46	50		3	3		7		3	2
62		f	F		48	43	64	26	181	51										3	2	1				
63		m		83	60	58	63	30	211	50		96	65	55	56	272	47	50		1	5		4		3	5
64		m	*F		46	34	45	51	176	50																
65	G1	f		83	51	49	40	31	171	49		90	70	62	22	244	43	45		2	3	1	4	1	6	1
66		m	F		63	31	59	16	169	49										5	1					
67		m	*F		46	45	47	37	175	48										4	2					
68		f		84	57	48	56	14	175	48		79	49	64	33	225	30	43		4	2					
69	G1	f		85	50	45	40	32	167	48		72	72	55	53	252	46	43	F	0	0	6	1	1	5	5
70		m	*F		53	40	44	27	164	48		Total:						3349		4	2		177	9	120	53
71		m	F		42	46	46	19	153	48		Pupils	61		Avg:			54	%	5	0	1				
72		f	F		54	38	33	40	165	47													Correct:	177		
73			*F		53	44	41	22	160	46													Wrong:	173		
74		f	F		52	41	52	13	158	45										3	2	1	Irrelevant	53		
75		m	F		50	43	44	43	180	45													Pupils:	30		
76		m	*F		42	41	38	43	164	44																
77		m	F		35	39	48	24	146	44										2	3	1				
78		m	F		40	37	52	29	158	44										4	2					
79		m	*F		58	45	57	25	185	43																
80		f	F		42	30	34	23	129	42										2	3	1				
81		f	F		53	42	46	9	150	42																
82	G1	f	F		40	33	31	16	120	40										1	4	1				
83		f	*F		46	29	32	24	131	39																
84		f	F		39	23	25	21	108	38										4	2					
85		f	F		33	31	22	9	95	34																
Pupils screened out for repeating Gr. 2:																				154	119	15				
86			*	85	60	58	61	48	227	61		79	65	81	52	277	54	51								
87		f		82	56	51	43	55	205	56		86	63	60	69	278	49	50		Correct:	154					
88		m		83	56	45	52	46	199	55		77	68	54	63	262	48	50		Wrong:	134					
89		m	*F		40	48	50	25	163	54										Irrelevant	15					
90				84	59	45	36	50	190	53		89	60	55	61	265	52	48		Pupils:	48					
91		m		84	45	40	51	60	196	53		72	60	40	66	238	47	43								
92			*	82	59	47	44	36	186	53		84	69	91	57	301	51	51								
93		m		83	55	46	53	32	186	52		75	61	72	38	246	42	43								
94		m		83	51	50	50	24	175	51		101	67	61	30	259	49	50								
95		m	*		52	54	53	19	178	51																
96		f	F		50	47	45	35	177	49																
97			F		53	46	35	30	164	48																
98		m	*F		33	44	34	23	134	42																
99		m	F		44	37	32	28	141	40																

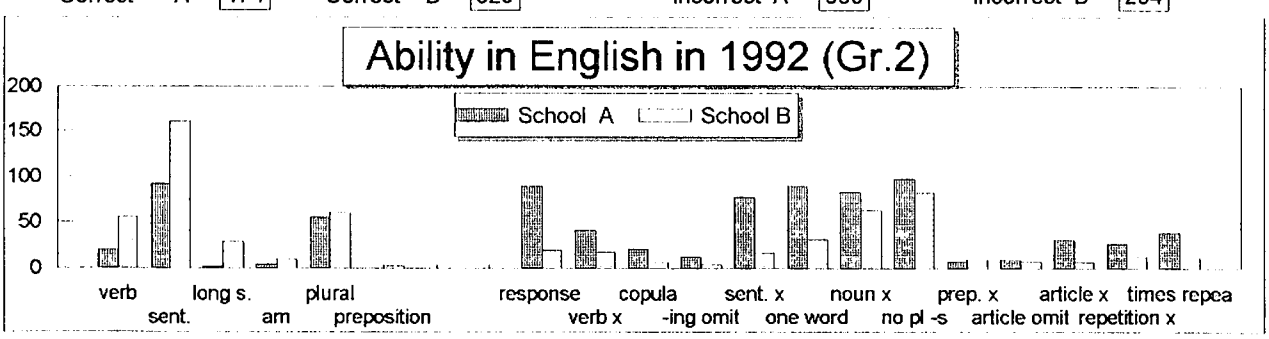
SPEECH ELICITED in NOV. 1992 (15 per group compared in graph) APPENDIX B

Tape	Pupil	verb correct	sentence	long sent	am correct	plural cor.	preposition	response x	verb wrong	copula x	-ing wrong	sent. wrong	one word	noun wrong	plural -s	preposition	article omit	article x	repetition x	times repeat
SCHOOL A (Pupils L2 and L4 did not belong to Group 2)																				
1	**38**	0	6	0	0	3	0	6	4	3	1	10	8	3	7	1	1	0	2	3
2	**L2**	0	1	0	0	0	0	11	3	2	1	7	6	9	8	1	1	2	2	5
3	**47**	1	10	0	0	1	0	6	4	0	3	3	2	3	9	1	0	8	2	0
4	**L4**	1	2	0	0	0	0	3	5	0	1	11	6	12	8	0	1	0	2	3
5	**18**	2	10	0	1	0	0	3	1	0	3	4	4	5	10	2	0	1	2	5
6	**42**	3	11	0	0	2	0	1	1	1	0	5	2	7	9	1	0	8	2	1
7	**43**	5	5	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	6	3	6	0	1	0	1	0
8	**17**	1	3	0	1	5	0	7	2	0	0	1	18	5	6	0	0	0	0	1
9	**12**	3	4	1	0	7	0	4	1	1	0	1	8	4	3	0	1	2	2	5
11	**22**	1	6	0	0	11	0	7	4	0	1	5	5	5	2	1	0	3	2	5
12	**10**	2	7	0	0	3	0	2	3	1	1	3	10	1	7	0	1	0	2	0
13	**14**	0	5	1	1	5	0	21	5	1	0	13	0	1	7	1	1	4	2	5
14	**40**	0	5	0	0	6	0	4	4	2	1	0	6	12	5	0	1	0	2	3
15	**32**	1	10	0	0	6	0	9	2	9	0	11	5	8	6	0	1	2	2	1
16	**49**	0	7	0	0	4	0	6	3	1	0	3	4	6	5	0	0	1	2	2
Tot.		**20**	**92**	**2**	**4**	**56**	**0**	**90**	**42**	**21**	**13**	**78**	**90**	**84**	**98**	**8**	**9**	**31**	**27**	**39**
10	**50**	0	3	0	0	3	0	14	1	0	2	3	15	12	7	1	1	0	2	3

SCHOOL B (Pupils T1, T2, T7, T12, T16 did not belong to Group 2)																				
1	**T: 1**	6	14	4	1	6	1	0		0	0	1	1	4	3	0	3	1	1	
2	**T: 2**	5	6	3	1	1	0	3		1	0		8	4	10	0	2	0	0	
3	**16**	2	2	0	1	7	0	1	2	0	0		7	0	3	1		0	0	
5	**25**	6	3	4	0	3	2	5		1	0	1	7	5	8	0	1	0	0	
6	**49**	5	10	1	1	4	0	2		0	0		5	2	7	0		0	0	
7	**T: 7**	4	7	2	0	1	0	5	1	2	1	2	1	5	10	1	1	2	1	
8	**61**	3	16	2	1	2	0	0	3	1	1	2	0	5	9	3		0	2	
9	**34**	1	17	0	1	11	0	0	2	0	0	3	0	6	0	3		4	1	
10	**23**	6	20	6	0	6	0	2		0	0	1	0	1	5	0		0	1	1
11	**53**	5	16	3	1	5	0	0		0	1		1	4	6	0		0	0	
12	**T: 12**	2	13	1	1	6	0	1		0	1		0	6	4	1		0	1	1
13	**69**	2	11	1	0	2	0	0	3	0	0	1	0	7	7	1		0	2	2
14	**82**	4	12	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	1	5	9	0	1	0	1	3
15	**65**	3	6	0	1	6	0	0	3	1	0	3	1	7	2	0		0	2	3
16	**T: 16**	2	8	1	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	0	3	0	0		0	1	2
Tot		**56**	**161**	**29**	**10**	**61**	**3**	**20**	**18**	**6**	**4**	**17**	**32**	**64**	**83**	**10**	**8**	**7**	**13**	**12**
4	**1**	5	13	1	1	5	0	0		0	0		0	6	6	0		5	0	

	Positive Attributes						Negative Attributes												
School A	20	92	2	4	56	0	90	42	21	13	78	90	84	98	8	9	31	27	39
School B	56	161	29	10	61	3	20	18	6	4	17	32	64	83	10	8	7	13	12

Correct A 174 Correct B 320 Incorrect A 630 Incorrect B 294



A	Verb correct per context	32 %	Verb wrong per context	68 %	Article wrong per sentences	18 %
	Sentence correct per context	54 %	Sentence wrong per context	46 %	Repetition wrong	90 %
	Plural correct per context	36 %	Plural -s omitted per context	64 %	Number repetitions received	39
B	Verb correct per context	76 %	Verb wrong per context	24 %	Article wrong per sentences	3.9 %
	Sentence correct per context	90 %	Sentence wrong per context	10 %	Repetition wrong	43 %
	Plural correct per context	42 %	Plural -s omitted per context	58 %	Number repetitions received	12

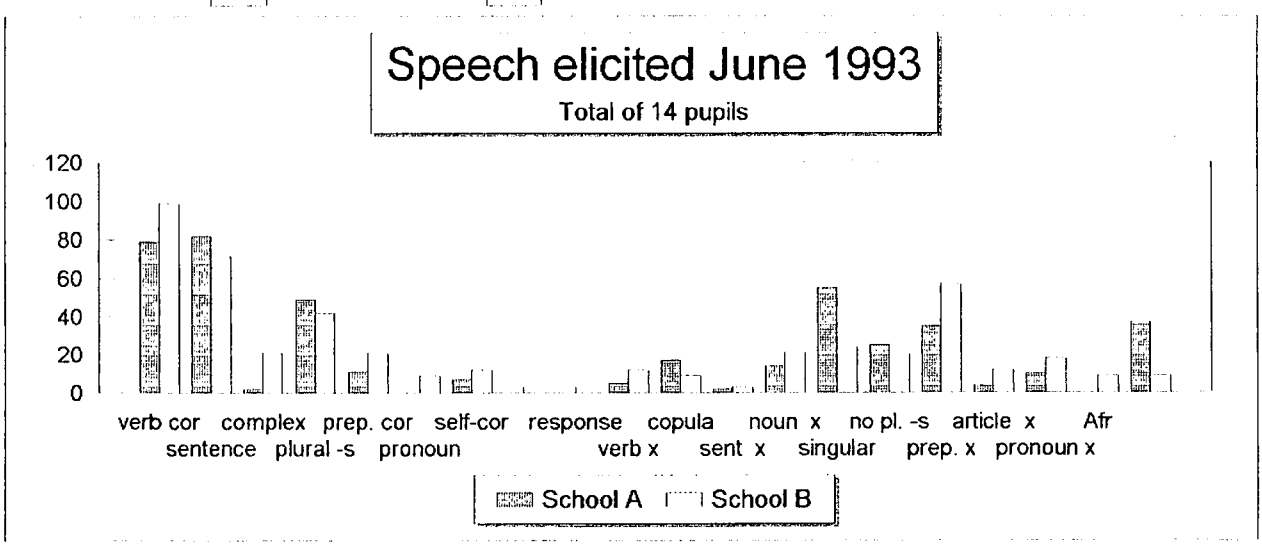
Pupil	verb correct	sentence c.	complex s.	plural -s	preposition	pronoun	self-correction	response x	verb wrong	copula x	sentence x	noun x	s in singular	no plural -s	prep. x	article x	pronoun x	Afrikaans
10	2	5							2			4	2	3	1	1		2
L2												3	2	2				
12	4	3		5	1				1			1	1	2				1
50	3	3		1				3	3			4	2	1		4		
38	3	3		5			1		1			4		2				
22	4	4		8							1	6	2					6
47	4	5							2		1	4	2	5				2
14	4	3		2					1	1	1	2	3	4		1		
43	8	6	1	1	1							2	3	6				1
40	3	4		5	2				1			5	1	4	1			6
54	2	2		5			1				2	8	2	3				7
49				5			1					4		1				5
L13	6	8		7	2		3					4	3					2
32	2	1		5			1		3		3	4	2	2				5
Tot.	**45**	**47**	**1**	**49**	**6**	**0**	**7**	**3**	**14**	**1**	**8**	**55**	**25**	**35**	**2**	**6**	**0**	**37**

SCHOOL B (Pupils not belonging to Group 2: T2, T4, T5, T6, T10, T12, T13)

53				1									2	2				
T2													1	5				
34				5									1	1				
T4				6												4		
T5				7								1	1					
T6				4									2	1				
1				5			2					4	1	4				2
49	6	3		1	2			1		1		2	2	7			2	
25	6	5	1	4	1	1		2				2	3	3				
T10	5	6	5	2			1				5	2	1	7		1		3
69	3	2		1								4	1	8		1		2
T12	2	2				2	4		2		2	7	2	9	3		1	
T13	7	6	1		2		3	1				1	2	8	1			2
3	4	1		6	2		2		1			1	1	2				
Tot.	**33**	**25**	**7**	**42**	**7**	**3**	**12**	**4**	**3**	**1**	**7**	**24**	**20**	**57**	**4**	**6**	**3**	**9**

	Positive Attributes							Negative Attributes										
School A	79	82	2	49	11	0	7	5	17	2	14	55	25	35	4	10	0	37
School B	99	72	21	42	21	9	12	12	9	3	21	24	20	57	12	18	9	9

Correct A 230 Correct B 276 Incorrect A 204 Incorrect B 194



SCHOOL A Tape recordings made at the end of 1994 in Grd 4

Pupil	Past Tense	Cont. correct	Continuous x	Present cor.	concord x	plural cor	-s in singular	no plural -s	word x	verb x	verb correct	to + verb	prep. correct	preposition x	Afrikaans	pronoun 1	pronoun 2	pronoun x	S. pronoun	other pronoun	conjunction	have	indef. article	article omit.	article x	possessive	why correct	why incorrect	
5	2	5	6		6	3	3	3	3	1	13		2		2												1	
6		10	9			5	8	1	9	6	9		5	4	4												1	
8			16		5	1	1	2	4	5	10		5	5	6									1			1	
10	1	1	2	14	14	5		1	6		13	2		2	1	1	1								2			
12	2		5	1	5	4		1	4	2	5		1	3	1								3	6	1			
13		8	5	3	4	1			4		7	3		4	8													
14		10	1			4		2	7	5	9			1	1			1					9	2			1	
17		1	3	2	2	2		3	8		4			1	8	1	1									2	1	
22		9	1			4			9		4			4	4										1			
23		18	1		1	4	1		11	6	5			2	2	5	2										1	failed
24		2				1		2	4	2	1				5												1	failed
29		1	4			4		1	3		1			3	4	1	1								1			
34		5	5	1	1			6	9		7				9			8									1	
38		2	2				1	4	8	4	4			2	1												1	
39			3			2		3	4		3		1		1												1	
41	1	6	2			6	2		7	3	5		4	8	1													failed
48	8	7	6	1	1	3		2	2		7			3		5	1	1							1			failed

SCHOOL B (Scores of pupils T2, T3, T8, and T9 do not appear on this list.)

16		6	3	6	9	8	1		2	1	18	1	4	3	2				1	2	1	3	2				1	
32	1	10	4	1	4				3	1	13	3	6	1	1	6	4	2		1			4	1	3		1	
36		3	2	5	13				4	1	13	4	2	2		8	4	1		1			1	5	1			
39	5	6		12	3		1		2	1	18	3	5	2		9	5						7		1	*1		
40		20	1			4		3	5	4	13		6		1			4	1	2	2		16	1	2		1	
44		12	6	1		2	1	2	3	1	14		2	1		3	2	2		1	1		21		2		1	
49	1	13		2	10			5	4	1	15	2	4	1		3	2		2	1	3		27				1	
52		10	3	4	2	1			2	2	13	4	5	1		5	4	3	1				24		2			
53		9	8		9	3		3	4	1	15	1	8	3		1	1		1		1		29	1	5			
61	1	11	4	4	2				4	3	14	2	9	1	2	10	4					*2	13				1	
66		16	3		2				9	6	11	1	1	9	1	1	1			1	1		18		2			failed
68		15	1	1	3	3	1	2	4	2	16		3	2		6	2	4	3		1		18				1	
73	8	6	4	3	9				7	2	20	9	12	2		14	5	7	1	1	5		14					failed
88	3	8	6	2	9				3	1	15	5	8			15	5	8	2				5	2		2		
90	1	1	7	1	8	2	1	6	6	2	13		2		1	4	1	6	2			1	12				1	
97		29	3						17	6	11	4	6	9		4	1						9	1	1		1	failed

Totals School A (scores of pupils L1, L5, L6, L60 and L61 added):

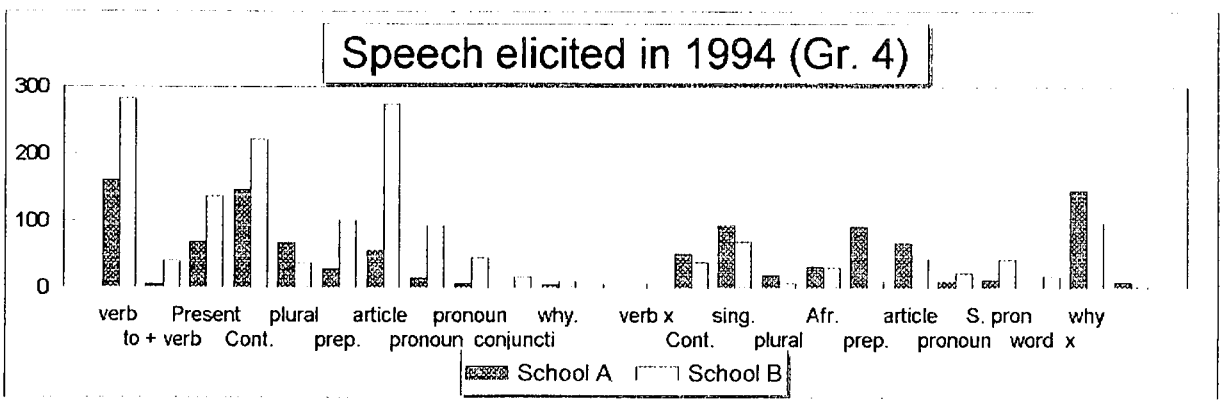
tot	27	146	94	26	42	67	19	32	145	51	160	5	28	67	91	15	7	12	0	1	0	0	56	12	10	2	5	9

Totals School B (scores of pupils T2, T3, T8 and T9 added):

tot	21	222	69	43	94	37	8	31	97	39	283	40	102	44	10	93	45	42	18	11	17	4	274	11	22	2	10	2

Pos

	verb corr	to + verb	Present	Cont.	plural cor	preposition	article: a	pronoun 1	pronoun 2	conjunctic	why corr		verb x	Cont.	singular	plural -s	Afrikaans	preposition	article x	pronoun x	Sotho pro	word x	why incorr			
School A	160	5	68	146	67	28	56	15	7	0	5		51	94	19	32	91	67	10	12	0	145	9			
School B	283	40	137	222	37	102	274	93	45	17	10		39	69	8	31	10	44	22	42	18	97	2			



	1	3	4	5	6			7				8	9	10			11			12	13			14	15	16	17	18	19
Pu[pil	names	words	sent.	verbs	complex	Present	concord	concrd x	Cont. cor	Cont. x	copula o	ing x	Past T	Past T. x	plural x	sp. verb	sp.	Afr	prep	prep. o.	prep. x	art. omit	art. 'x	pronoun	pronoun	pron. x	Sotho pr.	wrong w	omission	sent x	incompr.	repetition	full stop
23	3	42	6	3		1		1	5				1				3		3		3		1	2	1		3		2	1		1	
28		37	5	3		3		3	2								3		3		1		1	1	1			1				
34	1	76	9	7	3	7		7	1	1	1		2			1	7		6	1	1	1		5	1		1		1			
33		53	7	5	2	7		7						2			3	1	2	1	1		2	4	1	1	1	1	1			
35		80	14	7				2	5	7		7			2	4	5		1	1			7					7	1		1		
38		44	5	7	2	3		1	5	1	1						0		3					4	1		2					1
40		38	6	5	1	4		4	1					1										2	1							
41	6	21	4	1		1		2									2			1									2		1		
43		46	4	7	4	7		4						1			3		1			2		2	1			1				2
44		36	6	6	1	6		6		1	1					3	5	1			1			3	2	2		2	1				
46		30	6	2		6		6									2	2				2		5	1				1			
47		53	7	6					7							3	4	1	4							4	4	2			1		
50		52	10	8		8		8						2		1	4		2	1	1	1		10	2	3			1	1	1		
51		18	5	5		4		4		1	1					3	5		1					2	2	2				1	1		
52		60	10	4	2	7	2	2	1							2	8		2	1			1	5	3	1	2		1	1			
53		28	4	3	1	4	1	2	1							1	4		2				2	2	1							
59		86	9	6	3	3			1	6		6				1	3	2	4			1						3	2		1		
62		83	14	8	1				13								6	1	2	2		3	1			1		3	2		1		
63		57	9	6		2		1	3	3	4					1	4		2	1			2	1	1			2	2	1		1
65	2	41	5	3	1	3		3	1	1	1					2	13		2		3	2	2	2	1	3						4
66	1	69	10	9	3	1			5	4	1	3				4	9	1	3		1	1	2			2		3	2				
68	1	78	9	8	4	4	3	2	6	2	1	1		2		5	21	4	6					1	1	1		4		4	1		2
69		62	11	4		5	1	4	1	3	1	2				3	15	1			1	1					1				1		
70		46	5	4	3	8		8								1	7		3		2		3			1		2			1		
73		97	15	7	1	10		8						1		5	21		7			3	1	3	1	4				2	1	
74	4	37	5	4					1			2				3	5		2		1		1			1		4			2		
75	4	53	12	4	2	1				10	9	1				1	12				3	2		1	1			3	4	1	1	2	1
78		98	15	7	4	10	3	7	2	1		1				7	24		4		2			2	1	3	2	1			1		
81	0	65	11	8	3	12	4	7						1		2	3		2		3	3				2						1	
85	1	36	6	2		1		1								1	10		1					1	1		2	4	1	1	1	1	
87	3	64	10	6	1	1		1	2	5	2	3				3	9		4		4	2	3	2	1	7	2	1	2		3		
90	1	32	2	5	1	4		4		1		1				2	5	1	1		1		3	3	2	1		1	2				1
93	1	27	5	3					1	1	1		1				0		2		1		1	1	1							1
95		82	12	8	1				12							4	15		5				2					2				
99	2	104	14	9	7	7		7	6	1		2					11		5				3			6		1			1	
Tot.	30	·····	287	190	51	140	14	112	82	49	24	29	4	10	2	63	251	15	85	9	30	24	38	64	29	39	26	48	28	11	19	7	14

Avg. words per pup	55	Present tense / sentences	41 %	Correct prepositions /sentences	30	%
Avg. words per sen	7	Continuous used / sent.	46 %	Pronoun 1 / sentences	22	%
Verbs per total words:	10 %	Cont. correct / total Cont.	63 %	Sotho pronoun / sentences	9	%
Verbs misspelled / verl	33 %	-ing omit / total Cont	22 %	Omissions (four kinds)	85	
Words misspelled / wo	13 %	Tenses used / sentences	84 %	Ungrammatical sentences	4	%
Afrikaans per sentence	5 %	Article wrong / sentences	8 %	Incomprehensible sentences	7	%

Information from School A:

Tot	40		236	85	6	51	5	34	30	31	11	24	5	3	36	139	41	18	8	4	19	20	20	13	22	8	25	19	16	42	5	

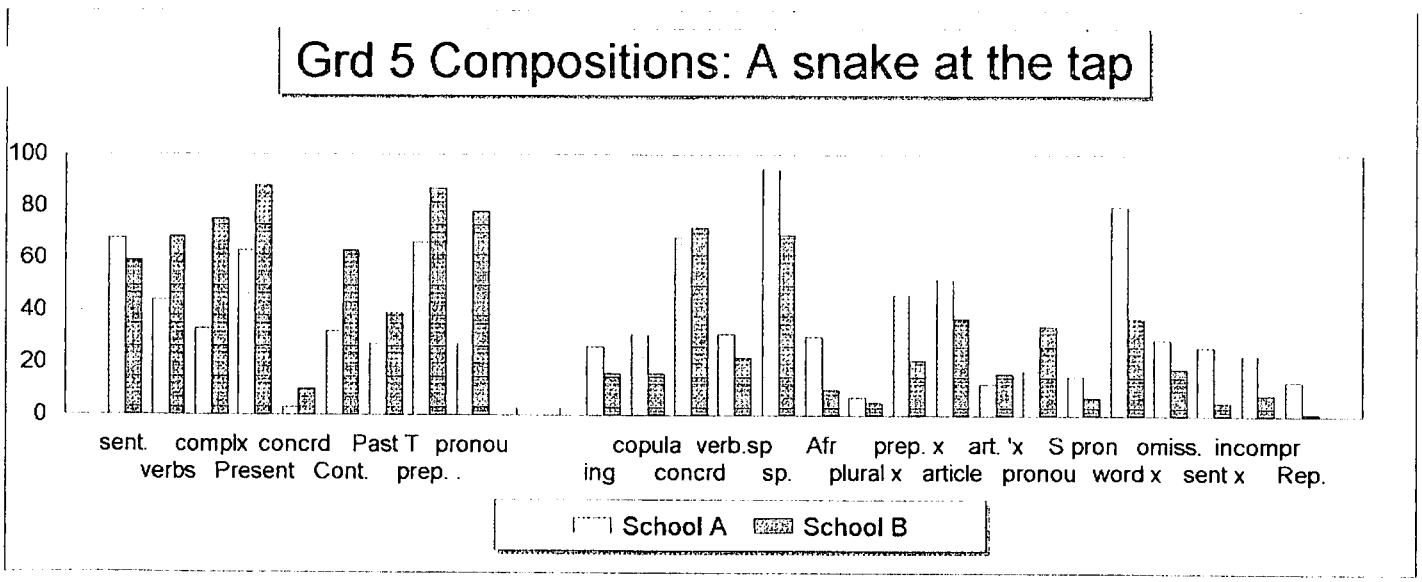
Avg. words per pup	35	Present tense / sentences	21 %	Correct prepositions /sentences	8	%
Avg. words per sen	5	Continuous used / sent.	26 %	Pronoun 1 / sentences	8	%
Verbs per total words:	7 %	Cont. correct / total Cont.	49 %	Sotho pronoun / sentences	3	%
Verbs misspelled / verl	42 %	-ing omit / total Cont	39 %	Omissions (four kinds)	57	
Words misspelled / wo	11 %	Tenses used / sentences	48 %	Ungrammatical sentences	7	%
Afrikaans per sentence	17 %	Article wrong / sentences	8 %	Incomprehensible sentences	18	%

School A (30 pupils)		Continuous used / sent:	33 %	Correct pronoun / tot. sent:	12 %
Complex sent. / total sentences	14 %	Cont. correct / total Cont.	48 %	Wrong words + Afr. / words	11 %
to + verb. / Sentences	3 %	Copula omitt / Cont. tense	30 %	Ommisions (4 kinds)	93
Aver. verbs per total words:	9 %	Concord wrong / Present T	68 %	Ungrammatical sentences	13 %
Aver. words misspelled	13 %	Correct prepositions / sent:	33 %	Incomprehensible sentences	11 %
School B (30 pupils)		Continuous used / sent:	54 %	Correct pronoun / tot. sent:	37 %
Complex sent. / total sentences	30 %	Cont. correct / total Cont.	66 %	Wrong words + Afr. / words	5 %
to + verb. / Sentences	19 %	Copula omitt / Cont. tense	17 %	Ommisions (4 kinds)	69
Aver. verbs per total words:	14 %	Concord wrong / Present T	72 %	Ungrammatical sentences	2 %
Aver. words misspelled	9 %	Correct prepositions / sent:	49 %	Incomprehensible sentences	5 %
School F (30 pupils)		Continuous used / Sent:	27 %	Correct pronoun / Sent:	20 %
Complex sent. / total sentences	20 %	Cont. correct / total Cont.	35 %	Wrong words + Afr. / words	11 %
to + verb. / Sentences	12 %	Copula omitt / Cont. tense	33 %	Ommisions (4 kinds)	99
Aver. verbs per total words:	12 %	Concord wrong / Present T	74 %	Ungrammatical sentences	6 %
Aver. words misspelled	14 %	Correct prepositions / Sent:	37 %	Incomprehensible sentences	5 %

Totals:	Avg. words	sentences	verbs	complex	to + verb	Present	concord	concord x	Continuous	Cont. x	ing omit	copula o.	Past corr.	Past T. x	plural X	sp. verb	sp.	Afr	preposition	prep. omit	prep. x	article omit	article x	pronoun 1	pronoun x	Sotho pr.	wrong w	omission	sent x	incompreh	repetition
School A	48	203	132	33	6	63	3	43	32	35	18	20	27	10	7	40	189	30	66		32	52	12	24	17	13	80	21	26	22	13
School B	49	177	205	75	33	88	10	63	63	32	16	16	39	2	5	45	138	10	87		15	37	16	66	31	7	39	16	4	8	1
School F	42	189	156	46	22	108	7	80	18	33	18	17	21	4	13	28	179	34	70	20	27	49	16	37	34	15	64	13	11	9	1

GRAPH COMPARING SCHOOLS A and B

	Positive attributes									**Negative attributes**																
	sent.	verbs	complx	Present	concrd	Cont.	Past T	prep. .	pronoun	ing	copula	concrd	verb.sp	sp.	Afr	plural x	prep. x	article	art. 'x	pronoun	S pron	word x	omiss.	sent x	incompr	Rep.
School A	68	44	33	63	3	32	27	66	27	**26**	**31**	**68**	**31**	95	30	7	46	52	12	17	15	80	29	26	23	13
School B	59	68	75	88	10	63	39	87	78	**16**	**16**	**72**	**22**	69	10	5	21	37	16	34	7	37	18	5	8	1



The first four negative attributes represent percentages, not totals: 1) -ing omitted per Continuous.
2) Copula omitted / Continuous 3) Concord wrong / Present Tense counted 4) Verbs misspelled per verbs counted.

Gr. 6 Compositions: The Story of Noah. (Written early 1996) APPENDIX G

School A (24 pupils)

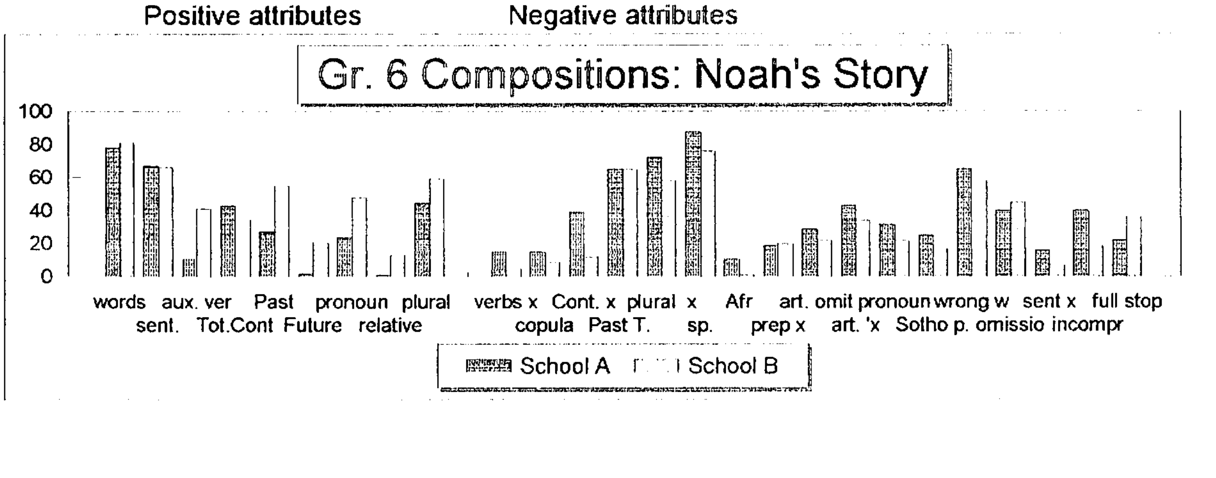
Average words:	78	Past T correct / sentenses	27 %	Pronoun correct / sentences	12 %
Words per sentence:	9	Past T correct / context	30 %	Sotho pronoun / sentences	12 %
Wrong verbs / sentences	7 %	Past T. wrong / context	70 %	Article omitted / sentences	14 %
Continuous used / sentences:	21 %	Plural correct / context	55 %	Article wrong / sentences	21 %
Cont. correct / total Continuous	9 %	plural - s omit. / context	45 %	Wrong words / sentences	32 %
-ing omitted / total Continuous	72 %	Afrikaans per sentences	5 %	Ungrammatical sentences	8 %
Auxilliary verbs / sentence	5 %	Relative correct / sentence	0 %	Incomprehensible sentences	20 %

School B (24 pupils)

Pupil	command	words	sentence	aux. verb	verbs x	concord	concord x	Continuous	Cont. x	copula o	ing x	Past tense	Past T. x	Past form	Future	plural	plural x	plural xx	sp.	Afr	prep x	art. omit	art. 'x	pronoun	x	Sotho p.	wrong w	omission	sent x	incomprehen	full stop	possesive	there x	relative cor.	relative omit	because
7		57	9			2	2	1				2	5			5	1		3		2	1	1	2			2	1			1					
10		77	7	6		2						3	10		4	3	8		3		1	1	3	2			1	3			4	1				2
12	1	79	11	2		2						10	1		1	8	2	1	14		1			3	2		2	2								
18		97	10			1	2	1	1	1		2	10			15	3		2					1			2	1								
19		67	6	1		3		1				6	4			2	6		5		2			1		1	3	2			2			1	1	1
22		46	5	1			2	3				3	3			5	2		4		1	1	1	2		3										
23	1	83	7	4	1	2	1					5	5			5			1				5	3	2	1	1			2						
25	4	54	6	5								1			4	7	2		3			1	1	3			1	2			1					
28		96	8	2	1	3	2	4					11		3	9							2	2			2	3	2							2
31		95	12	1			3		1	1	1	10	7			1	6	1	7					4	0	1	2					2	1	2		
34	1	92	14	2			4		1		1	9	7		1	1	1		4		4	3		4	2		4	5			1		1	2	1	
37		93	8	2					1		1	4	8		2	3	4		9			2	2	1		1	1	2		1			2		1	1
41	1	44	5									1	2			3	2		0		1	2			3		1	2	2							
43		91	7	4		2	4	1				1	11		3	2	3		4				2	4	1		1	2						1		1
47	2	76	10				4		1	1		2	6			2	3		4	1		1	4	1	1	2	1		1	1			1			
49	2	86	10			2	2	3				6	6		1	2			6					4			2	2			7					
52		83	5	1			2	3				8	3			12	1	3	5		1			1	1		1				2					
53	1	90	8	5	*2	1				1		5	3	2	2	5			3		1		2	1	2		2	1						1		
55		60	8				4	3	1		1	3	3			4		1	5			1		1			1				1					
58		96	9	1			1			1		1	9			9	1		8			6		1		4	5	2	1	5	5		1			
59		90	8		1		4		1	1		1	10	1		8	2		3		3	3	3	1		2	4	5	1	3					1	
61		91	10	3			2		2		2	7	5			3	4		13		1		2	2	2		5	1					1			
65		93	5				8	2				13	1			5	2	1	30		1		3	1	1	1	5	6				1	1	6	1	
90		96	11	1	2	2	7	1	3	3	1						5	3	16		1		3	3	5	1	9	3								
Tot	13	1932	199	41	5	22	54	23	12	9	7	110	130	3	21	119	58	10	152	1	20	22	34	48	22	17	58	45	7	19	36	4	8	13	5	7

Average words:	81	Past T correct / sentenses	55 %	Pronoun correct / sentences	24 %
Words per sentence:	10	Past T correct / context	46 %	Sotho pronoun / sentences	9 %
Wrong verbs / sentences	3 %	Past T. wrong / context	54 %	Article omitted / sentences	11 %
Continuous used / sentences:	18 %	Plural correct / context	67 %	Article wrong / sentences	17 %
Cont. correct / total Continuous	66 %	plural - s omit. / context	33 %	Wrong words / sentences	29 %
-ing omitted / total Continuous	20 %	Afrikaans per sentences	1 %	Ungrammatical sentences	4 %
Auxilliary verbs / sentence:	21 %	Relative correct / sentence	7 %	Incomprehensible sentences	10 %

Positive attributes Negative attributes



School A (20 pupils)

Average words:	50	Continuous used / sentences	56 %	Wrong prepositions / sent:	18 %
Words / sentence.	7	Cont. correct / total Cont.	32 %	Correct pronoun / tot. sent:	56 %
Verbs per total words:	11 %	- ing omitt. / total Cont.	61 %	Wrong w.+ art. x +pron x / words	11 %
Present used / sentences	29 %	Past tense used / sent.	15 %	Ommisions (3 kinds)	47
Concord wrong / Present.	90 %	Total tenses / sentences	114 %	Incomprehensible sentences	15 %

School B (40 pupils)

Average words per pupil:	54	Continuous used / sentences	29 %	Wrong prepositions / sent:	6 %
Words per sentence.	8	Cont. correct / total Cont.	67 %	Correct pronoun / tot. sent:	77 %
Verbs per total words:	13 %	- ing omitt. / total Cont.	24 %	Wrong w.+ art. x +pron x / words	6 %
Present used / sentences	65 %	Past tense used / sent.	36 %	Ommisions (3 kinds)	29
Concord wrong / Present.	77 %	Total tenses / sentences	132 %	Incomprehensible sentences	7 %

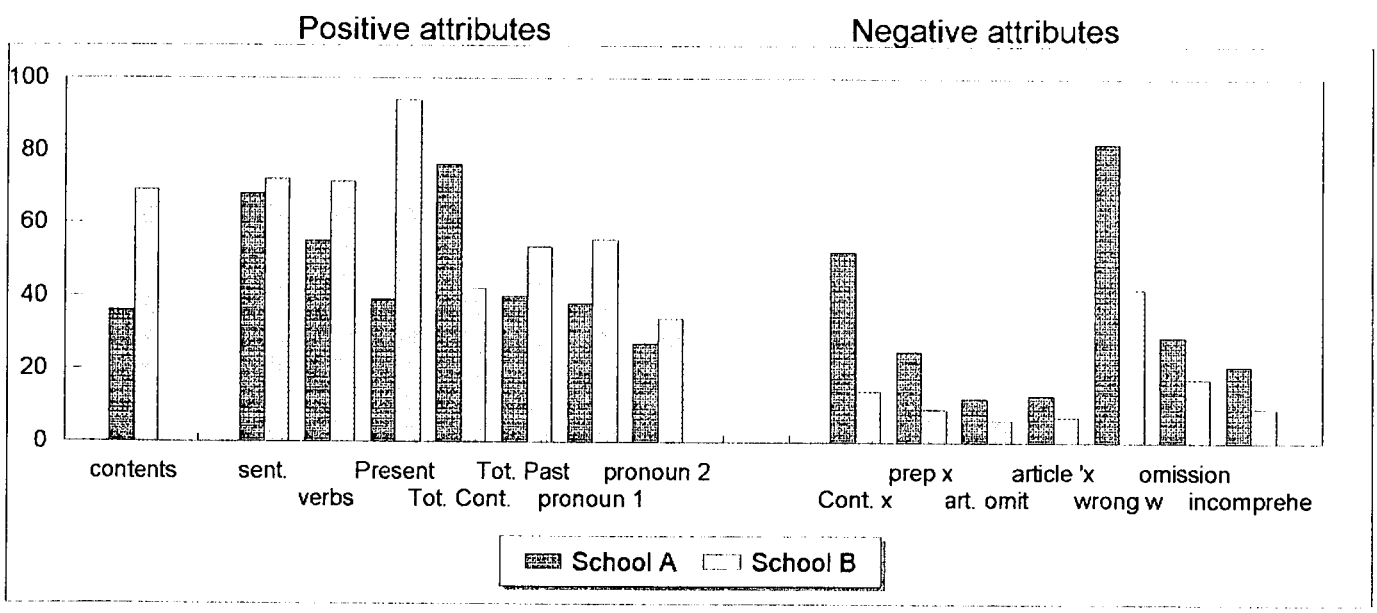
Totals of Schools C, E & F: (30 pupils)

Average words per pupil:	58	Continuous used / sentences	27 %	Wrong prepositions / sent:	20 %
Words per sentence.	6	Cont. correct / total Cont.	36 %	Correct pronoun / tot. sent:	45 %
Verbs per total words:	10 %	- ing omitt. / total Cont.	49 %	Wrong w.+ art. x +pron x / words	10 %
Present used / sentences	49 %	Past tense used / sent.	27 %	Ommisions (3 kinds)	76
Concord wrong / Present.	79 %	Total tenses / sentences	100 %	Incomprehensible sentences	12 %

Comparison of totals of three groups, as if for 20 pupils

	contents	stone	wave/ laugh	afraid/ cry	get on	ride	hold / let go	hit	fall	words	sent.	verbs	Present	concord	concrd x	Cont. cor	Cont. x	copula o	ing x	Past T	Past T. x	past form x	plural x	sp. x	prep x	art. omit	article x	pronoun 1	pronoun 2	pronoun x	Sotho pron.	wrong w	omission	incompreh.	full stop x
A	12	11	3	5	7	11	0	4	13	1005	136	110	39	4	35	24	52	6	46	15	25	1	2	88	25	12	13	76	27	18	4	82	29	21	13
B	23	18	12	13	4	23	2	3	21	1087	144	143	94	18	73	28	14	5	10	18	36	2	1	81	9	6	7	111	34	14	3	42	18	10	27
Co	13	15	13	10	1	9	1	2	9	1163	183	116	89	7	70	18	32	9	25	18	26	3	1	99	37	16	6	83	27	35	7	75	25	23	11

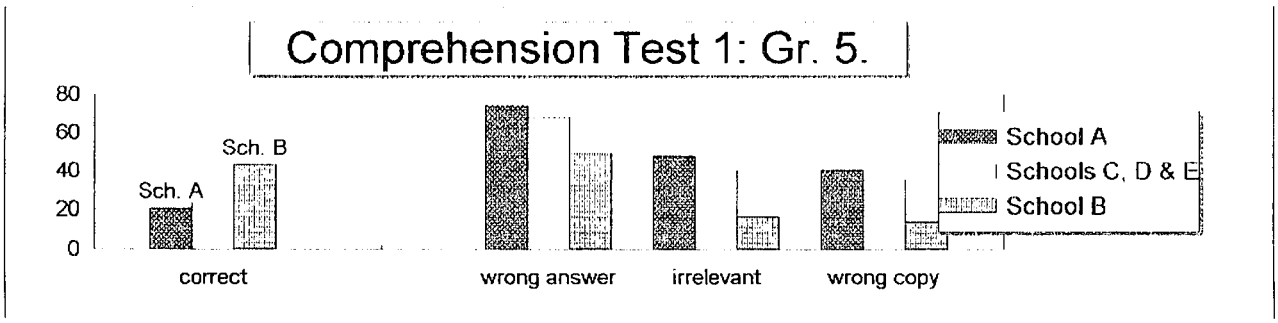
GRAPH COMPARING SCHOOL A and SCHOOL B



Results of 30 pupils per school in Gr. 5:

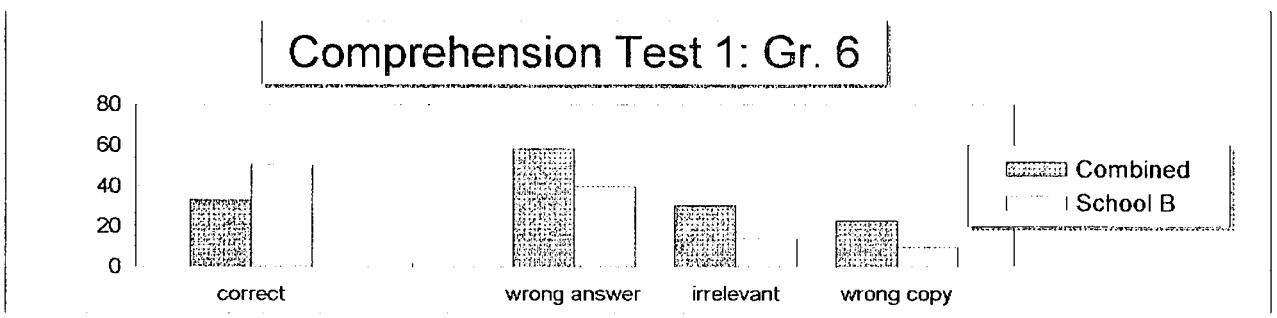
			correct	half correct	wrong	right copy	irrelevant	wrong copy	wrong	irrelevant	wrong copy	ungrammatica
School A	Gr.	**5**	62	15	55	24	22	122	223	144	122	31
(Schools C,D & E)	Gr.	**5**	70	12	42	41	15	106	204	121	106	26
School B	Gr.	**5**	130	22	86	11	8	43	148	51	43	11
(Schools A, C, D & E)	Gr.	**6**	100	20	58	26	22	69	175	91	69	10
School B	Gr.	**6**	152	29	56	22	13	29	120	42	29	3
School A	Gr.	**7**	135	24	48	33	15	45	141	60	45	6
School B	Gr.	**7**	212	32	24	28	0	0	52			0

Graphs comparing the results:



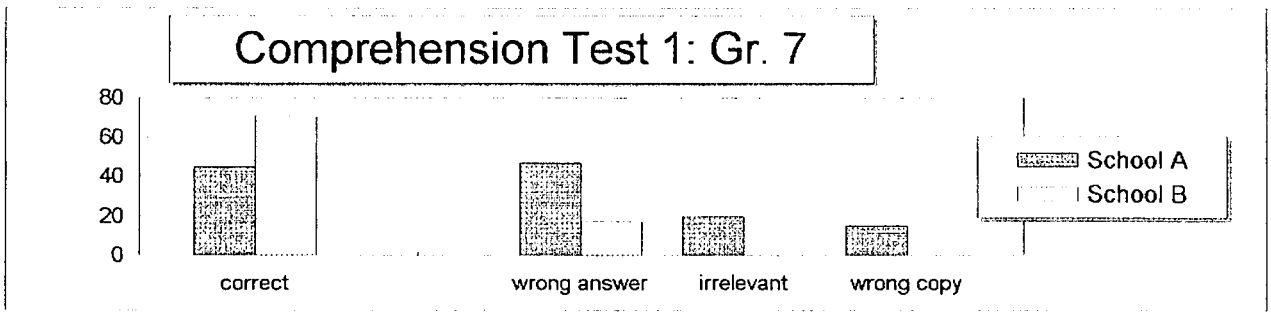
Gr. 6:

Combined schools :	correct	33 %	wrong	58 %	30 %	23 %
School B	correct	51 %	wrong	40 %	14 %	9.7 %



Gr. 7:

School A	correct	45 %	wrong	47 %	20 %	15 %
School B	correct	71 %	wrong	17 %	0 %	0 %



Schools:		A	B	C	E	F	School A	Average: C, E & F	School B		N	J
											(Molteno schools: B, N, J)	
Correct:		28	48	31	29	24	28	28	48		38	41
Wrong:		63	44	62	64	69	63	65	44		56	50
Irrelevant:		37	16	34	36	37	37	36	16		24	29
Sentences x:		8	3	4	9	5	8	6	3		5	4
Number of pupils in test:		26	56	61	45	43					32	17 (Only Sotho pupils.)
Correct answers:	1	8	52	28	20	21	8	23	52		38	59
	2	4	14	7	4	0	4	4	14		6	6
	3	42	79	38	44	35	42	39	79		63	53
	4	42	63	38	40	47	42	42	63		59	53
	5	23	59	33	33	23	23	30	59		44	24
	6	46	59	46	44	49	46	46	59		53	88
	7	4	7	3	0	2	4	2	7		3	12
	8	12	32	10	9	5	12	8	32		16	29
	9	0	38	20	7	2	0	10	38		19	18
	10	27	36	30	29	23	27	27	36		31	35
	11	81	86	66	60	44	81	57	86		75	65
	12	50	55	57	60	42	50	53	55		47	53
	Avg.	28	48	31	29	24	28	28	48		38	41
Counted wrong answers:												
1) Mother / John's mother		19	18	24	18	33	19	25	18		25	
1) Copy: Her name is Mpho		15	5	7	22	19	15	16	5		16	
2) John		46	50	44	42	42	46	43	50	NB	56	
2) Copy of passive sentence:		31	27	32	29	53	31	38	27		38	
3) Not a Yes/No answer:		38	16	46	40	51	38	46	16		22	
3) Correct but Yes/ No omitted		8	2	5	9	5	8	6	2		6	
4) Answer using She for John		23	18	24	9	2	23	12	18	NB	13	
4) Copy: She thinks ...		8	7	17	29	30	8	25	7		19	
5) Not a Yes/No answer:		31	9	22	22	19	31	21	9		19	
5) NO omitted.		38	20	34	33	49	38	39	20		22	
6) Not a WHERE-answer		54	29	63	51	47	54	54	29		47	
7) Not a WHEN-answer		62	36	44	62	53	62	53	36		41	
7) Negative wrong: If not locked		12	20	37	11	19	12	22	20	NB	28	
8) Wrong copy: Mpho ... lesson		27	11	24	7	30	27	20	11		22	
9) Not a WHEN-answer		85	46	61	80	70	85	70	46		50	
9) UNTIL for WHEN		15	16	24	9	23	15	19	16	NB	28	
10) Not a Yes/No answer:		50	16	39	40	60	50	46	16		28	
11) Not a WHY-answer		15	9	20	27	42	15	30	9		19	
12) Not a Yes/No answer:		35	20	20	22	47	35	30	20		22	
12) Yes implied: Mpho (correct)		15	11	10	24	19	15	18	11		16	

Notes:

a) NB indicates that School B does not have the smallest number of the mistake.

b) The combined schools have more Right Copies for questions 1), 2) and 4) than the others.

GRAMMAR TESTS APPENDIX K

Grammar Test 1: (marks per category in brackets)
a) Fill in **is , are** or **has** : My mother .. three children. The youngest child .. still a baby. She .. a small bed to sleep in. The other children .. in school. They .. in Gr. 5. (*is / are* - 3; *has* - 2)

b) Underline the correct word in each sentence:
Every day Sipho *walk / walks / walked* to school.
He always *take / takes / took* food with him to eat at school.
Yesterday he *forget / forgot / forgotten* his food.
Then he *come / comes / came* home during break time.
Yesterday his mother *hasn't / isn't / wasn't* at home.
Sipho *took / take / taked* food for himself and *eat / ate / eats* at home yesterday.
Last night his mother *is / was / were* angry because the floor and table *is / was / were* in a mess.

c) Fill in: **on, above, from, with, under, in, near:** The cat sits . .*under* ... the table. The chair stands . .*near* ... the table. The lamp hangs ...*above* ... the table. Light comes . .*from*. . . the lamp. There is a glass ..*on* . . the table. There is a pen . .*in* . . the glass. One writes . . . . . a pen. One stands . . . . a table to reach high. (8) (A picture indicated the first six prepositions.)

Grammar Test 2:
a) Fill in **is , are** or **has** : John . . . . three shirts. The newest one . . . . blue, the other two . . . . white. The blue shirt . . . . long sleeves and it . . . . many buttons. (*is / are* - 2; *has* - 3)

b) Underline the correct words:
John *go / goes / went* to school every day. He always *took / take / takes* food with him. Yesterday he *leave / left / leaves* his food at home, so he *walks / walk / walked* home during break time. John's mother *isn't / hasn't / wasn't* home when he *comes / came /come* there, so he *took / take / taked* food for himself and *eats / ate / eat* it in the kitchen. Last night John's parents *is / was / were* angry because the kitchen *is / was / were* in a mess.
c) The same question on prepositions as above, with omission of the last sentence. (7)

Grammar Test 3: a) Underline the correct words:
This year Thabo *was / is / are* in Std. 9. He *like / likes / liked* soccer very much. Last week he *go / goes / went* to Pretoria to *plays / play / played* for a national team. The big match *was / is / are* yesterday. Thabo *plays / play / played* very hard yesterday, and his team *win / winned / won* the trophy. They *give / gave / given* Thabo some money and he *come / comes / came* home last night. His parents *are / was / were* very happy when he arrived last night, and Thabo *is / was / were* happy to *see / saw / seen* them. Today Thabo *sleep / sleeps / slept* a lot. (13)

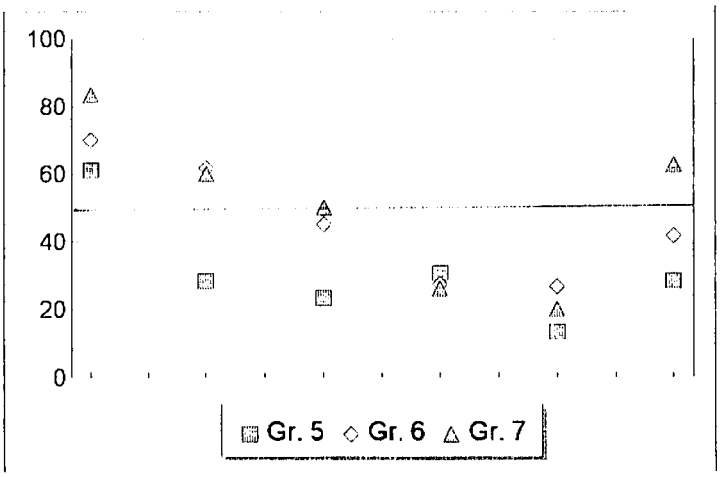
b) Fill in: **above, in front, on, in, beside between, behind.**
One tree is ..*behind* . the house and the other ..*beside*.. the house. The cat sits ..*between/beside*.. the house and one tree. There is a cloud ..*above* . the house and there are flowers ..*in*.. the garden ..*in front*.. of the house. There is a chimney .. *on*.. the roof. (7)
(A picture indicated the prepositions.)

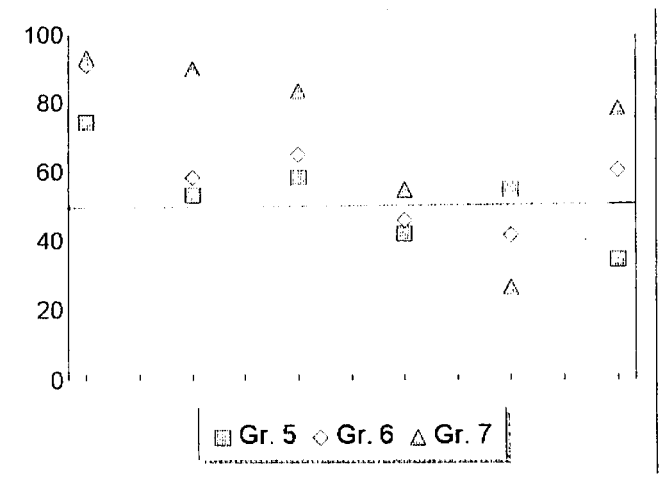
TEST 1: TRADITIONAL SCHOOLS

Percentages	is / are (3)	was/were (2)	has (2)	Past T (5)	Present (2)	preposition(8)
Gr. 5: Sch. A	61	28	23	31	13	28
Gr. 5: C, D & E	49	43	52	25	32	32
Gr. 6: A, C, D & E	70	62	45	27	27	42
Gr. 7 (10 pupils)	83	60	50	26	20	63

SCHOOL B (Marks per category in brackets.)

	is / are (3)	was/ w (2)	has (2)	Past T (5)	Present (2)	preposition(8)	
Gr. 5: Sch. A	74	53	58	42	55	35	(30 pupils)
Gr. 5: C, D & E							(30 pupils)
Gr. 6: A, C, D & E	91	58	65	46	42	60	(30 pupils)
Gr. 7 (10 pupils)	93	90	83	55	27	78	(15 pupils)



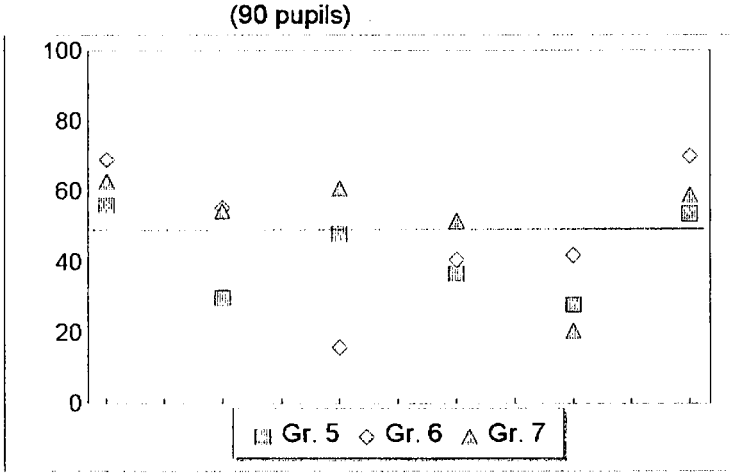


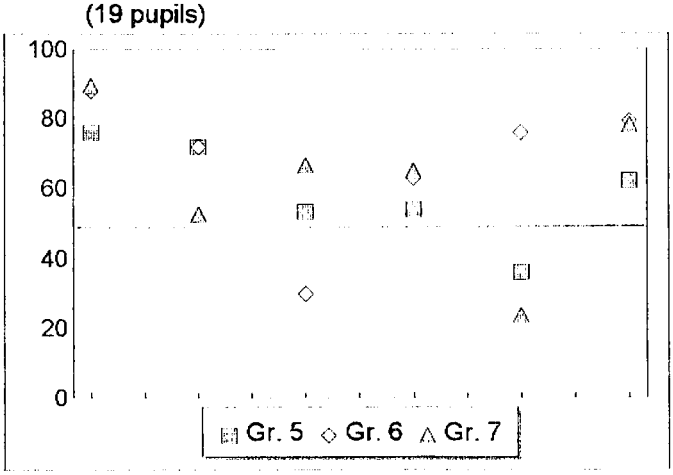
TEST 2: TRADITIONAL SCHOOLS

	is / are (2)	was/ w. (2)	has (3)	Past T (6)	Present (2)	prep. (7)
Grd 5: Sch. A	56	30	48	37	28	54
Grd 5: Sch. F	42	30	51	33	22	41
Grd 6: Sch. A	69	55	16	41	42	70
Grd 7: Sch. A	63	54	61	52	21	59
	(90 pupils)					

SCHOOL B

	is / are (2)	was/ w. (2)	has (3)	Past T (6)	Present (2)	prep. (7)	
Grd 5: Sch. A	76	72	53	54	36	62	(25 pupils)
Grd 5: Sch. F							
Grd 6: Sch. A	88	72	30	63	76	79	(50 pupils)
Grd 7: Sch. A	89	53	67	65	24	78	
	(19 pupils)						





SCHOOL A

Avg. words per pupil	41	Avg. verbs per total words	4 %	Correct prepositions / sent.	41 %
Avg. facts per pupil	4.6	Complex sent. / total sent.	1 %	Pronoun 2 / sent.	10 %
Names per total words	20 %	Past tense correct / sent.	17 %	Article omitted / sent.	21 %
Avg. words misspelled	13 %	Continuous tense	0 %	Ungrammatical sentences	44 %
		Plural wrong / sent.	1 %	Incomprehensible sentences	15 %

SCHOOLS C, D, E

Avg. words per pupil	59	Avg. verbs per total words	5 %	Correct prepositions / sent.	28 %
Avg. facts per pupil	4.1	Complex sent. / total sent.	11 %	Pronoun 2 / sent.	12 %
Names per total words	14 %	Past tense correct / sent.	26 %	Article omitted / sent.	3 %
Avg. words misspelled	16 %	Continuous tense	7 %	Ungrammatical sentences	16 %
		Plural wrong / sent.	9 %	Incomprehensible sentences	15 %

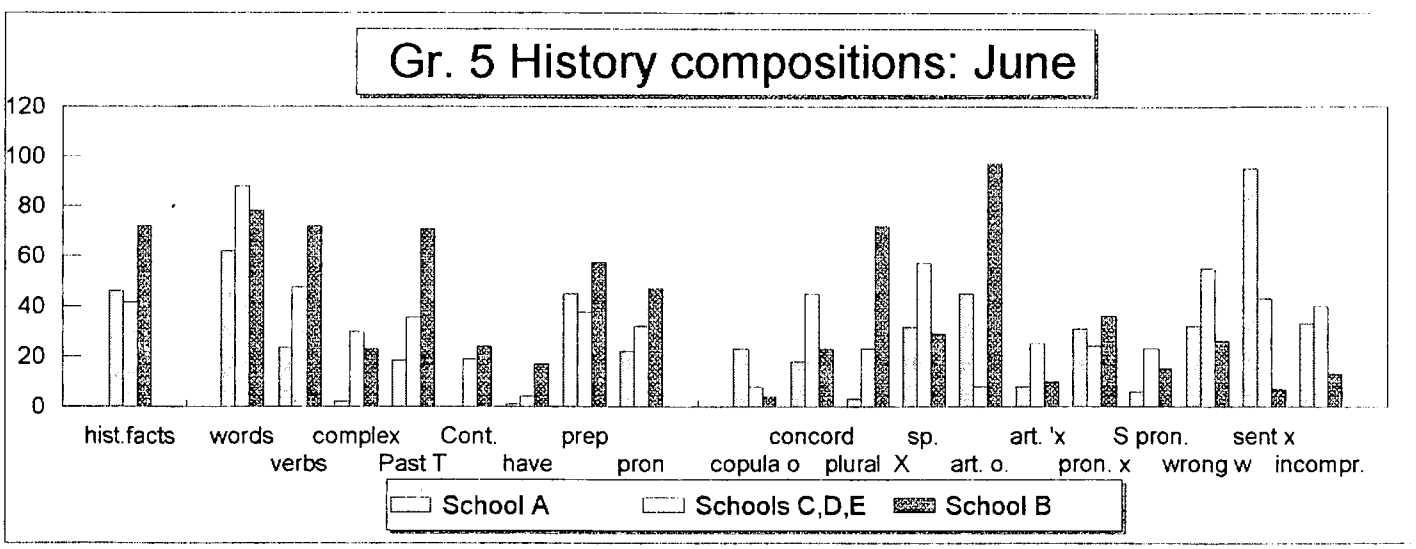
SCHOOL B

Avg. words per pupil	52	Avg. verbs per total words	9 %	Correct prepositions / sent.	44 %
Avg. facts per pupil	7.3	Complex sent. / total sent.	9 %	Pronoun 2 / sent.	18 %
Names per total words	14 %	Past tense correct / sent.	54 %	Article omitted / sent.	37 %
Avg. words misspelled	9.3 %	Continuous tense	9 %	Ungrammatical sentences	3 %
		Plural wrong / sent.	27 %	Incomprehensible sentences	5 %

Comparison of totals:

School	hist.facts	names	words	sent.	verbs	complex	Past T	Past T x	Cont.	ing omit	copula o.	concord X	have cor.	plural X	sp.	Afr	preposition	prep. x	article o.	article x	pronoun 2	pron. x	S. pron.	wrong w	ommision	sent x	incompr.	repetition	full stop	posses c.	because	comparisor	passive c.	novel
A	138	250	1239	217	47	2	37	23			23	18	1	3	158	3	90	22	45	8	22	31	6	32	34	95	33	17		1	3		1	6
C - E	124	247	1757	268	95	30	71	30	19	14	8	45	4	23	286	4	75	23	8	25	32	24	23	55	30	43	40	11	24	1	3	2	3	37
B	216	222	1582	264	144	23	142	103	24	4	4	23	17	72	148	2	115	28	97	10	47	36	15	26	33	7	13	4	2	4	4	2	0	23

	positive attributes									negative attributes											
	hist.facts	words	verbs	complex	Past T	Cont.	have	prep	pron	copula o	concord	plural X	sp.	art. o.	art. 'x	pron. x	S pron.	wrong w	sent x	incompr.
A	46	62	24	2	19		1	45	22	23	18	3	32	45	8	31	6	32	95	33
C - E	41	88	48	30	36	19	4	38	32	8	45	23	57	8	25	24	23	55	43	40
B	72	78	72	23	71	24	17	58	47	4	23	72	29	97	10	36	15	26	7	13



:hool A:

g. words per pupil	52	Past tense correct / sent.	28 %	Wrong prepositions / sent.	10 %
cts per pupil:	3	Present verb in Past context:	21 %	Article omit / total sentences	16 %
er. words per sent.	7.5	Copula omit / total sentences	13 %	Correct pronouns / sent.	10 %
verbs per total words:	6 %	Plural -s omit / sentences	3 %	Wrong words / total words	6 %
mplex / total sentences	8 %	Aver. words misspelled	11 %	Ungrammatical sentences	28 %
				Incomprehensible sentences	20 %

:hool B

g. words per pupil	72	Past tense correct	61 %	Wrong prepositions / sent.	8 %
cts per pupil:	7.5	Present verb in Past context:	41 %	Article omit / total sentences	51 %
er. words per sent.	7.2	Copula omit / total sentences	5 %	Correct pronouns / sent.	23 %
verbs per total words:	11 %	Plural -s omit / sentences	10 %	Wrong words / total words	4 %
mplex / total sentences	27 %	Aver. words misspelled	8 %	Ungrammatical sentences	2 %
				Incomprehensible sentences	2 %

Comparison of totals:

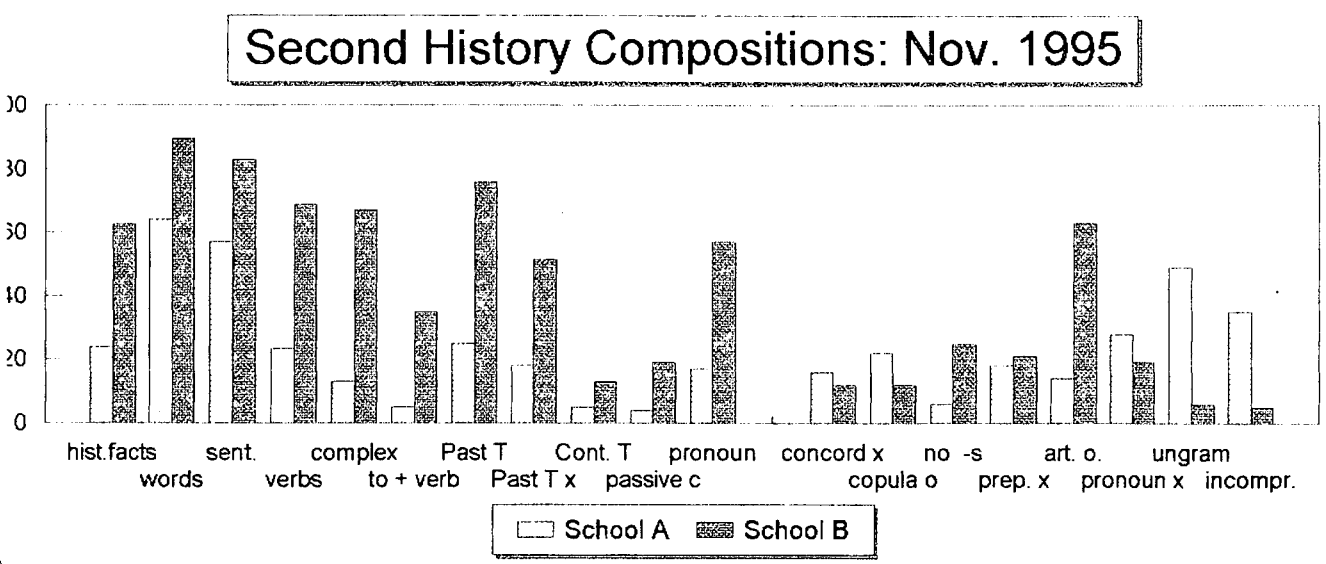
hist.facts	date x	words	sentences	verbs	complex	to + verb	Past T corr	Past T x	Past form	Present	concord c.	concord x	Cont. T	ing omit	copula o	plural X	no plural -s	spelling	preposition	article o.	article x	pronoun c	pronoun x	SS pron.	wrong w	omission	ungrammat	incomprehen	repetition	passive c	P participle	posses c	because
72	10	1288	172	71	13	5	49	36	2	1	4	16	5	3	22	4	6	141	18	27	9	17	28	10	61	24	49	35	12	4	0	0	5
188	3	1793	249	206	67	35	152	103	4	5	3	12	13	12	12	6	25	146	21	126	13	57	19	7	53	26	6	5	2	19	10	1	9

Positive

hist.facts	words	sent.	verbs	complex	to + verb	Past T	Past T x	Cont. T	passive c	pronoun
24	64	57	23	13	5	25	18	5	4	17
63	90	83	69	67	35	76	52	13	19	57

Negative

concord x	copula o	no -s	prep. x	art. o.	pronoun x	ungram	incompr.
16	22	6	18	14	28	49	35
12	12	25	21	63	19	6	5



planations:Verbs: Number of different verbs per child **Plural wrong:** e.g. childrens.
st tense wrong: A Present verb in a Past context **Past form wrong:** P T form used wrongly, e.g. to killed

SUMMARY

This study investigates the effect different teaching methods had on the acquisition of English as second language (L2) by black primary school children. At two schools the English input pupils received from Grade 2 - 4 was observed by attending some classes from 1992 to 1994. At School A the instruction was almost entirely form-focused, while at School B the instruction was mainly meaning-focused, since two *Bridge* courses of the Molteno Project were used there. At both schools pupils were tested over five years, using a variety of tests.

The rationale for the study is the investigator's deduction that second language acquisition (SLA) theory suggests that children cannot acquire an L2 from form-focused input. Research indicates that people past puberty do not have the same access to the innate language acquisition device that children have. On the other hand, Piaget's work indicates that children do not have the same mental abilities that adults have. These two findings indicate that children and adults learn an L2 in completely different ways, so that teaching methods successful with adults need not be successful with children. Adults can benefit from formal L2 instruction, but children not. Experience also indicates that children do not acquire an L2 successfully with the effortless repetitions of audiolingualism, which stems from the same structural approach to language as the traditional grammar methods.

The method of L2 teaching found to be most successful with children is communicative language teaching (CLT), which stems from a functional view of language. A basic premise of CLT is that there must be genuine communication, indicated by communication gaps and/or comprehension checks.

As proponent of CLT Krashen is well known, especially for his hypothesis that input must be comprehensible to cause SLA. Krashen also differentiates between consciously *learnt* language knowledge and unconsciously *acquired* knowledge. 'Acquisition' refers to the way children acquire languages in naturalistic settings. One of Krashen's hypotheses is that *learnt* knowledge does not turn into *acquired* knowledge per se. This 1977 hypothesis has been severely criticised. However, of late many linguists support Krashen's point of view, and there is supporting evidence in the literature. The present study also supplies supporting evidence. Krashen's hypothesis is relevant to this study because of the notion that where the focus of language teaching is mainly on form, as at School A, very little acquisition of the L2 will take place.

The tests taken at Schools A and B all indicate that the pupils of School B acquired far more English than the School A pupils. Moreover, investigation carried out at the schools in Gr. 5 during 1995, indicates that the School B pupils benefited from taking history through the medium of English, while the School A pupils did not. The latter mostly memorised unanalysed chunks of language, chunks which deteriorated over time. They did not understand enough of the English through which they learnt to benefit academically, neither did they advance in English by learning incomprehensible sentences.

Using an L2 as medium of instruction is an acknowledged way of providing meaning-focused input, as the success of Canadian Immersion showed. However, there are vast differences between situations in Canada and South Africa. A great number of empirical studies indicate that in circumstances such as exist in black schools in S.A., it is best to postpone L2 medium instruction as long as is practical. Indications are that in bilingual education, instruction in one language can promote the proficiency underlying both languages. Until pupils have acquired sufficient knowledge of the L2 to benefit from L2 medium instruction, their cognitive structure should be developed through the language they know.

This study indicates that two profound changes are urgently needed in black education in S.A.:

* English instruction in the primary school should become meaning-focused and should meet all the requirements of CLT;

* The use of English as medium of education should again be postponed at least to Grade 5. In the lower grades "English across the curriculum" should prepare pupils for English medium instruction by using L1 subject lessons as communication material for L2 lessons.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie studie ondersoek die uitkoms van verskillende onderwysmetodes op die verwerwing van Engels as tweede taal (T2) deur swart laerskoolleerlinge. Die Engelse lesse wat leerders vanaf 1992 tot 1994 in Graad 2 - 4 onvang het, is by twee skole waargeneem. Die fokus by Skool A was hoofsaaklik op die grammatikale vorm, terwyl die fokus by Skool B hoofsaaklik op betekenis geval het, omdat twee *Bridge* kursusse van die Molteno Projek daar gebruik is. By beide skole is 'n verskeidenheid toetse oor 'n tydperk van vyf jaar afgeneem.

Die rede vir die ondersoek is die navorser se afleiding uit die teorie van tweedetaalverwerwing (TTV) dat *kinders* nie 'n T2 kan verwerf deur onderrig met die fokus op vorm nie. Navorsing toon dat nà puberteit mens nie meer dieselfde toegang tot die aangebore taalverwerwingsvermoë as 'n kind het nie, terwyl Piaget se werk toon dat kinders nie oor dieselfde verstandelike vermoëns as volwassenes beskik nie. Hierdie twee bevindinge dui daarop dat kinders en volwassenes 'n T2 op heel verskillende maniere aanleer, sodat onderrigmetodes wat vir volwassenes geskik is, nie noodwendig vir kinders geskik sal wees nie. Volwassenes kan baat by formele T2 onderrig, maar kinders nie. Ondervinding toon dat kinders ook nie baat by die moeitelose herhalings van audio-lingualisme nie. Die rede is dat audio-lingualisme uit dieselfde strukturele siening van taal as formele grammatika spruit.

Die T2 onderrig wat die effektiefste vir kinders bevind is, is kommunikatiewe taalonderrig (KTO). Dit spruit uit 'n funksionele siening van taal. 'n Basiese vereiste vir KTO is dat daar werklik kommunikasie moet plaasvind, wat in die skoolsituasie aangedui kan word deur kommunikasiegapings en/of begriptoetsing.

Krashen is 'n bekende voorstander van KTO, veral vir sy hipotese dat invoer verstaanbaar moet wees om taalverwerwing moontlik te maak. Krashen differensieer ook tussen bewuste *leer* van taal, en onbewuste taal*verwerwing*. 'Taalverwerwing' verwys na die manier waarop kinders tale in natuurlike omstandighede aanleer. Een van Krashen se hipoteses is dat *geleerde* taalkennis nie sonder meer oorgaan in *verworwe* kennis nie. Hierdie 1977 hipotese is al hewig gekritiseer, maar tans ondersteun baie taalkundiges Krashen se standpunt. Daar is ook ondersteuning vir die standpunt in die literatuur, en die huidige studie lewer ook ondersteuning. Krashen se hipotese is van belang vir hierdie studie vanweë die aanduiding dat as die fokus van onderrig slegs op vorm val, soos by Skool A, min TTV sal plaasvind.

Al die toetse wat afgeneem is, dui daarop dat die Skool B-leerlinge baie meer Engels verwerf het as die Skool A-leerlinge. Boonop het navorsing wat in 1995 in die Graad 5 klasse van die skole uitgevoer is, aangetoon dat die Skool B-leerlinge gebaat het by onderrig deur medium Engels, maar die Skool A-leerlinge nie. Laasgenoemdes het meestal ongeanaliseerde taalbrokke memoriseer, taalbrokke wat mettertyd swakker weergegee is. Die leerlinge het nie genoeg verstaan van die Engels waardeur hulle geleer het om akademies te kon baat nie, en hulle kon ook nie in Engels vorder deur onverstaanbare sinne te leer nie.

Die gebruik van 'n T2 as medium van onderrig is 'n beproefde manier om onderrig met die fokus op betekenis te verskaf, soos die sukses van Kanadese "immersion" staaf. Daar is egter groot veskille tussen die omstandighede in Kanada en Suid-Afrika. 'n Groot aantal empiriese studies toon dat in omstandighede soos dié van swart skole in S.A., dit die beste is om onderrig deur medium van 'n T2 uit te stel so lank dit prakties moontlik is. Daar is aanduidings dat in dubbelmediumonderwys, onderrig in enige van die tale die taalvermoë onderliggend aan albei tale bevorder. Tot tyd en wyl leerlinge genoeg kennis van 'n T2 verwerf het om te kan baat by onderrig deur medium van die T2, is dit beter om hulle kognitiewe struktuur op te bou deur middel van die taal wat hulle ken.

Uit die studie blyk dat twee diepgaande veranderings dringend nodig is in swart onderwys in Suid-Afrika:

* Vir die onderrig van Engels in die primêre skool moet die klem op betekenis val, en al die beginsels van KTO behoort geïmplementeer te word.

* Die gebruik van Engels as medium van onderrig moet weer uitgestel word tot ten minste Graad 5. In die laer grade kan "Engels regdeur die kurrikulum" leerlinge voorberei vir die gebruik van Engels as onderrigmedium, deur T1 lesse in enige vak te gebruik as besprekingsonderwerp vir T2 lesse.