

**A COURSE IN CLASSROOM ENGLISH FOR COLLEGES OF EDUCATION**

by

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SOLI DEO GLORIA

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# CHAPTER 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Orientation

Owing to many far-reaching changes that have taken place in South Africa and particularly in education, the need has arisen for introducing at Colleges of Education a language course that focuses on the *specific* linguistic needs of the teacher who has to teach through medium of a second language. This study aims at suggesting a course in Classroom English for second language speakers who will have to teach through medium of English.

### 1.2 The problem defined

A policy framework for education and training issued by the ANC (1994: 65) states that 'some form of bilingual education throughout the compulsory stage' is required. The implication is that all South African teachers should be capable of instructing in at least two of the official languages. Evidence presented by, for example, Heugh (1993), Chick (1992), and Barkhuizen (1993) argues that English is the favoured medium of instruction (MOI) in the South African context. English is also the second language of most teachers in South Africa. Chick (1992: 31), therefore, proposes that teacher-training courses should be adapted so that all South African teachers may be prepared for teaching their subjects through medium of English. Barkhuizen (1993) and Van der Walt (1981) point out that the English Communication courses at Colleges of Education, however, are general courses aimed at improving the students' second language communicative competence. A survey of the syllabuses and the study guides of the Colleges of Education in the North West Province, for example, shows that all the communication courses consist to a large degree of remedial exercises and class and group discussions based on the prescribed literature. The courses aim to improve the students' grammatical knowledge of the language, general writing skills such as the writing of letters, notes and reports and to teach some literary appreciation. None of the Colleges presents a language development course in the Classroom English required for medium of instruction purposes in the South African context.

Research by Cullen (1994), Murdoch (1994) and Cameron (1997) suggests that one way in which to enable second language (L2) speakers of English to teach through medium of this language is by

introducing a specific course in language development. Johnson (1992: 269) says that 'a course that focuses on the effective use of [any] language in the classroom must form an important part of the training of any teacher, whether of first or second language; but it is crucial where a second language is the medium of instruction, since in this case the vital connection is most at risk'. Murdoch (1994: 254) argues that a specific course in language development for second language speakers of English has to be given a central place in the curricula for teacher training institutions. It is Cullen's (1994: 163) belief that 'few teacher training courses have either the time or the resources to provide a sufficiently intensive language improvement course which stands a reasonable chance of achieving its purpose, that is, to improve the trainees' communicative command of the language, rather than their knowledge *about* it.' Cullen (1994: 163) maintains that it is also a fact that the main concern of teachers who have to use English as a medium of instruction is 'the need to improve their own command of the language so that they can use it more fluently, and above all more confidently, in the classroom'. Hughes (1981), Murdoch (1994), and Barkhuizen (1993) all agree that teachers who are not proficient in the language that they instruct in feel themselves inadequate and unequipped for their task. Consequently, they either use as little of the L2 as possible, or else use it incorrectly. Hughes (1981: 5) states that 'in both cases there is likely to be a detrimental effect on learning'. Kennedy (1983: 83), therefore, suggests that teacher training institutions should focus on an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course for teachers. Widdowson (1987: 96) describes an ESP course as a 'custom-made course of English' for students with 'specific communication needs'.

Hughes (1981: 5) argues that 'teachers in training spend considerable time acquiring the basis of sound methodological habits for the presentation, practice and testing of learning items, but it is often forgotten that the classroom procedures derived from a particular method invariably have to be verbalised'. For this, Hughes (*ibid.*) contends, teachers need language skills that he refers to as Classroom English. Research done by Willis (1985), Spratt (1994), and Johnson *et al.* (1996) supports this argument.

### 1.3 Research Questions

The questions that need to be addressed are the following:

- What are the characteristics of Classroom English?
- What should a language development course in classroom English for MOI purposes consist of in the South African context?
- How should such a course be taught?

#### **1.4. Aims of this study**

The aim of this study is to propose an ESP course in Classroom English for second language speakers of English where English is widely used as the medium of instruction.

This study will have to:

- determine the characteristics of Classroom English
- select the most suitable syllabus type for this course and propose an outline for a syllabus in Classroom English
- supply guidelines for the teaching of such a course.

#### **1.5 Methods of research**

The study is a descriptive one that involves a review of literature to determine the characteristics of Classroom English. The research is focused on the function of language in the classroom and the planning of an ESP course for second language speakers who have to teach through medium of English.

#### **1.6 Programme of Study**

Chapter 2 defines Classroom English by describing its characteristics.

In Chapter 3 a brief overview of syllabus design is provided in order to suggest a suitable syllabus for the design of a course in Classroom English.

Chapter 4 consists of an outline for a proposed syllabus in Classroom English.

Chapter 5 suggests guidelines for implementing the syllabus.

Chapter 6 contains a conclusion, and points out the limitations of the study and recommendations for further research.

## CHAPTER 2

### The Characteristics of Classroom English

#### 2.1 Introduction

Before a course in Classroom English can be developed, the course designer needs to define what is meant by the term 'Classroom English'.

Willis (1985: v) defines Classroom English as follows:

*"... the specialised and idiomatic forms of the English used when teaching. It is an English that enables teachers to use English effectively and imaginatively as a means of instruction or as a means of organising a class or even a means of communicating with their pupils as individuals about their life outside the classroom."*

This definition places Classroom English in the realm of ESP as defined by Widdowson (1987: 96) and Raath (1991: 16)(cf. 1.4).

Johnson *et al.* (1996: 8) say that all languages used in the classroom have certain basic functions that are universal. It is their belief that Classroom English shares characteristics with all other classroom languages.

In order to define the characteristics of Classroom English a researcher will thus have to look at Classroom English in terms of its function as both classroom language and ESP.

#### 2.2 Classroom English as classroom language

Johnson *et al.* (1996: 8) point out that all classroom languages have certain functions in common. These functions are both pedagogical and interpersonal. This classification is in line with Halliday's (1985) identification of the three major functions of a language: interpersonal, textual and ideational. The interpersonal and ideational functions of a language are of particular significance in a discussion on classroom language. *Interpersonal* functions refer to the ability to use language for social purposes and *ideational* functions refer to the use of language to express content and to communicate information. Ellis

(1990: 77) proposes a similar classification of classroom language when he talks about the 'interactive goal' of classroom language and the 'pedagogical intentions' of the teacher.

Johnson *et al.* (1996: 9) maintain that both the pedagogical and interpersonal functions of classroom languages are influenced by certain physiological factors. *Physiological factors* refer to ways in which the voice is used to produce language and include aspects such as rate, tone, pitch, articulation and fluency. In order to understand the characteristics of classroom language, one has to understand to what extent its pedagogical and interpersonal functions are influenced by physiological aspects.

It is, therefore, necessary to investigate what is understood by the physiological, interpersonal and pedagogical aspects of classroom language.

### 2.2.1 *Physiological aspects of classroom language*

Johnson *et al.* (1996: 9) argue that each utterance made by the teacher may express either an interpersonal function or a pedagogical function, or both. Johnson (1992: 273) maintains that the teacher's voice is, therefore, the most important physiological aspect of classroom language and, in spite of technological advancement, is likely to remain a major educational source. Johnson *et al.* (1996: 10) say that vocal aspects such as loudness, pitch, rate, variation, articulation, fluency and relaxation all influence the classroom language and the effectiveness of the communication that takes place. For the teacher who uses a second language as medium of instruction, however, *rate, articulation and fluency* 'are of prime importance'.

In a situation, such as the one discussed in this mini-dissertation, where English is used as classroom language by L2 speakers, it is important that one should take a closer look at the influence such physiological aspects may have on the effectiveness of the communication that takes place in the classroom.

*Rate:* Rate refers to the timing of the delivery of speech and silence (pauses). Johnson *et al.* (1996: 11) mention that it is a common complaint that new teachers tend to speak too quickly. Factors such as excitement and nervousness can contribute to an increase in the rate of speech. In general, the more formal and the more complicated the information (such as the type of information conveyed in a classroom), the slower and more deliberate the presentation needs to be. Where most of the participants in

the classroom (learners and teachers) are second language speakers, training teachers to speak more slowly in the MOI may contribute towards ensuring more effective communication in the classroom.

*Articulation:* Sounds normally carry contextual clues, and from these clues, the listener attempts to reconstruct the message. In the case where a second language (L2) is the medium of instruction, we may find that the teacher's first language often interferes with articulation in the L2, thereby impeding effective communication (Johnson *et al.*, 1996: 12). In the South African context some African speakers often find it difficult to distinguish vowel contrasts in English. Adendorff and Savini-Beck (1993:247) point out that Zulu, for example, has only five vowels versus the twelve of English. Words such as BIRD and BED are therefore often pronounced with the same vowel sounds. On the other hand, English has some phonological features (such as stress and slur) that many English second language (ESL) learners find difficult to master (De Villiers 1997: 43). Clear articulation is therefore important and a further reason for relatively slow rate of speech.

*Fluency:* Although fluency can be defined in many ways, a fluent delivery is usually regarded as one where there is an absence of phenomena that distract the listener's attention from the message (Johnson *et al.*, 1996: 12). Amongst the phenomena that put communication at risk are hesitations, pauses, false starts and verbal mannerisms. Johnson *et al.* (1996: 13) argue that in the case of a second language speaker a lack of language proficiency contributes towards the frequency and intensity of these phenomena. The second language speaker simply does not have the language resources that make the appropriate language available. Speech is thus often halting, delivered in a monotone, and lacks conviction. As a result the teacher whose fluency is suspect sacrifices credibility with his or her pupils.

Because of the effect these physiological aspects of classroom language can have on effective communication in the classroom, they should be taken into consideration in the design of a course in Classroom English.

### 2.2.2 *Interpersonal aspects of classroom language*

Interpersonal functions refer to those language structures that deal with the establishment of a social climate in the classroom and the execution of certain routines (Johnson 1992: 273). Such structures include greetings, checking attendance, organising seating and books, using visual aids, dividing the class into groups, handling interruptions such as late comers and things lost, controlling and disciplining the

pupils, etc. (Willis, 1985: 6-75). Hughes (1981: 5) declares: 'Whatever the subject taught, all teachers require this specialised classroom competence and should be trained in it'.

One of the factors that contribute towards the establishment of interpersonal relationships in a classroom is the teacher's use of 'suasive' language (Hughes, 1981: 14). 'Suasive' language includes the language used when the teacher distributes commands, requests and suggestions. Although the teacher has a number of ways of controlling the behaviour of his or her students, Hughes (1981:14) feels that the choice the teacher makes may consciously or unconsciously reflect his or her underlying attitude. Johnson *et al.* (1996: 15) maintain that the language that is used to establish a disciplined, well-organised classroom with well-motivated students, is often very 'subtle' and used in 'indirect' ways. The typical native-speaker reaction if the foreigner makes an incorrect choice is to depict the foreigner as 'bossy', 'rude', or 'direct'. If the teacher uses the suasive function of the language incorrectly, it may not only prevent the learner from ever acquiring the all-important language functions and the rules for their appropriate use, but it may also create an atmosphere that is detrimental to learning (Hughes, 1981: 15).

### 2.2.3 *Pedagogical aspects of classroom language*

One of the major pedagogical functions of classroom language is 'the transmission of knowledge, attitudes and skills to a new generation' (Johnson *et al.*, 1996: 8). Johnson (1992: 273) maintains that the effective use of language is crucial for helping students acquire new skills for dealing with abstract and decontextualised ideas.

Johnson *et al.* (1996: 15) distinguish three pedagogical aspects of classroom language. They are the *operative mode* (where the teacher gives instruction or sets tasks in order to produce performance from the pupils), the *interactive mode* (where the teacher asks questions in order to elicit response from the pupils) and the *informative mode* (where the teacher imparts new information). According to Thomas (1987: 37), pedagogical competence in a language comprises four components: 'management', 'teaching', 'preparation' and 'assessment'. All of these, however, presuppose language competence. Ellis (1990: 88) argues that pedagogical discourse manifests a particular, three-phase structure. This structure, which Ellis (1990: 88) calls *teacher elicitation*, *student response* and *teacher feedback*, closely resembles Johnson *et al.*'s (1996: 15) classification.

One of the problems when implementing the pedagogical function of classroom language in a second language is that it requires teachers to produce long exchanges of speech which are more difficult to plan

and produce than the short turns typical in conversation. Thomas and Hawes (1994: 22) argue that long turns used to communicate ideational content place great demands on the speaker who has to control the flow of complex information according to the needs of the listener. Kennedy (1983:77) illustrates this by pointing out the potential linguistic and conceptual difficulties a non-native speaker may experience in the preparation of lessons. A teacher who has poor reading skills in his or her second language, and who has to use notes or a text-book written in English in the preparation of lessons, may react in a number of predictable ways, all counterproductive. Such a teacher might attempt a laborious, time-consuming, and frustrating word-by-word approach. On the other hand, the teacher might skip the explanation and go straight for the answer contained in the key (without understanding the reason behind the answer), or the teacher might decide to reject the teacher's book (and with it the methodology) and use his or her own tried and trusted methods. Thomas and Hawes (1994: 22-25) conclude that the spoken English skills that most urgently need to be taught seem to be those that relate to selecting appropriate information on a subject, and then ordering and expressing it in a clearly comprehensible way.

Another problem facing the teacher who uses an L2 as MOI is that when imparting new information, it is possible for the first language (L1) teacher to assume that if the concept is new, the language will also be new. If the concept is familiar, the language will also be familiar. Using an L2 as MOI changes this relationship (Johnson *et al.*, 1996: 49). A concept may be very familiar, and the relevant L1 language expression may be readily available, but the English term for the concept may be unknown. The teacher's decision about how to encode the new information in order to achieve effective communication may be one of the most important decisions made during the presentation of a lesson.

It is Johnson's (1992: 275) contention that pedagogical discourse has a 'very high level of predictability'. Both Johnson (1992: 275) and Hughes (1981) are of the opinion that proper training can equip the teacher with the skills needed to impart new information in such a way that effective learning takes place. Some of these skills are methodological, others linguistic (cf. 3.3). A course in Classroom English will have to make provision for both components.

### **2.3 Classroom English as ESP**

An analysis of the characteristics of ESP proves that Classroom English has a number of features in common with other ESP courses.

One important reason for the development of ESP courses was the realisation by those involved in the teaching of English as a foreign language that, 'while students might be acquiring some knowledge of English usage through English for General Purposes (EGP) classes, they had not actually learned to use the language in the specialised contexts of work or study' (Robinson, 1991: 22).

Classroom English has at least three characteristics in common with other ESP courses that are often thought as criterial to ESP courses. ESP courses are regarded as:

- goal-directed. It is usually accepted that the students who study English do so because they need English for study or work purposes. This has implications for the topics and kinds of activities dealt with in the course (Munby, 1978: 218; Robinson, 1991: 3; Schleppegrell, 1991: 18);
- based on a needs analysis. Widdowson (1987: 96) maintains that 'if a group of learners' needs for the language can be accurately specified, then this specification can be used to determine the content of the language programme that will meet these needs'. Robinson (1991: 3) states that the needs analysis aims to specify as closely as possible what exactly it is that the students have to do through medium of English. She adds that ESP courses are 'tailor made' and based on a rigorous analysis of the students' needs, and
- involving specialist language and content (Widdowson (1987: 96-97). Robinson (1991: 4) points out, however, that ESP courses need *not* always include specialist language and content. What is more important, according to her, are the activities that students engage in. She contends that these activities may be specialist and appropriate even when non-specialist language and content are involved. This is of particular significance for a course in Classroom English.

Other common characteristics include that ESP and Classroom English courses are likely to be for adults rather than children (Schleppegrell, 1991: 18). Robinson (1991: 3) argues that the students on ESP courses are usually in tertiary education, or are experienced members of a workforce. She also adds that, although not preclusive, it is usually accepted that ESP students will not be beginners but 'will have studied EGP for some years'. According to Munby (1978: 80) 'an ESP programme is suggested where a homogenous group of learners is interested in achieving the same language goals'. Robinson (1991: 4) says that ESP courses may be written about as though they consist of identical students, that is, that all the students in the class are involved in the same kind of work or specialist studies.

## 2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has aimed to identify the characteristics of Classroom English. Classroom English is seen to comprise two major characteristics: it is simultaneously a classroom language and ESP, and has features and characteristics in common with both. Such features include the pedagogical and interpersonal functions of a classroom language, as well as the physiological aspects that influence the effectiveness of the communication in the classroom. On the other hand, Classroom English exhibits ESP characteristics such as goal-directedness, specialisation, etc.

Fig.1 provides a schematic presentation of the characteristics of Classroom English.

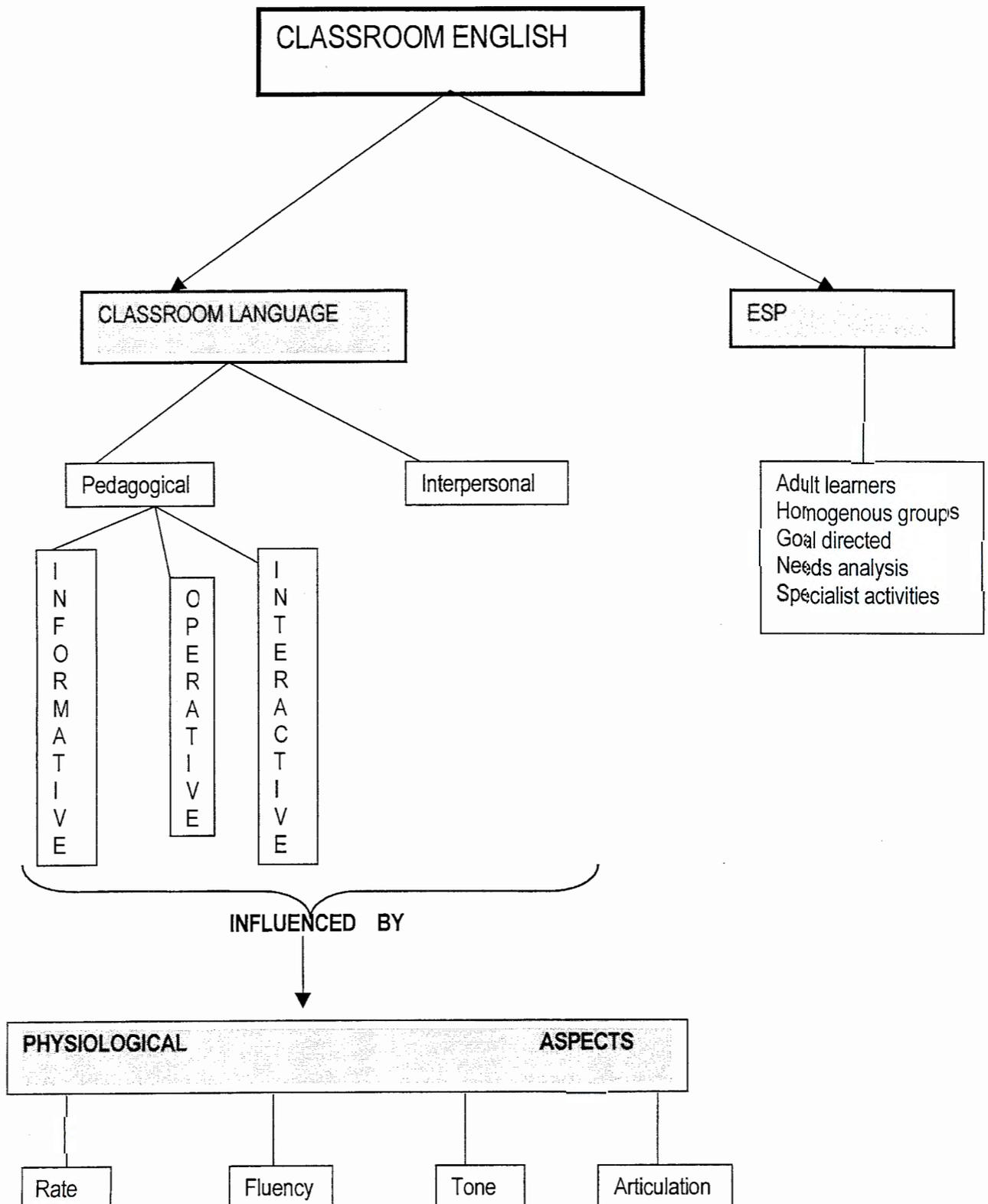


Figure 1: Schematic presentation of the characteristics of Classroom English

## CHAPTER 3

### ESP syllabuses and course design

#### 3.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 (cf. 2.3) illustrates that Classroom English has a number of features in common with other ESP courses. This chapter thus deals with the design of an ESP syllabus.

Robinson (1991: 34) indicates three important aspects in the design of an ESP course. She says that ESP course design is the 'dynamic interaction' between the results of the needs analysis and the course designer's approach to syllabus and methodology. Long and Crookes (1993: 10) suggest that a course designer should commence with the choice of the unit of analysis for syllabus design since the type of syllabus chosen will have a pervasive influence on decisions in other areas, particularly the interpretation of the results of the needs analysis and the approach to methodology.

In accordance with the sequence of design suggested by Long and Crookes (1993), the issues that need to be discussed in this chapter are:

- the types of second language syllabuses available
- the course designer's choice of syllabus

The results of the needs analysis will only be discussed once the course designer has decided on the unit of analysis for syllabus design.

#### 3.2 Types of syllabuses

'A syllabus is a plan of work and thus essential for the teacher, as a guideline and context for class content' (Robinson, 1991: 34). Breen (1984: 47) says any syllabus is 'most typically a plan of what is to be achieved through our teaching and our students' learning. Long and Crookes (1993: 9) point out that there is much to recommend the choice of unit of analysis as the starting point in planning courses. They also argue that the issue is not which particular syllabus to adopt, but which *type*, and this, in turn, is a question of identifying the appropriate unit of analysis in syllabus design (Long and Crookes, 1993: 9).

Robinson (1991:33) distinguishes three main types of syllabuses for English language learning. They are *content-based* syllabuses, which are product, or ends-driven, *skill-based* syllabuses and *method-based* syllabuses, which are process or means-driven.

### 3.2.1 *Content-based syllabus*

Robinson (1991: 36) mentions that there are several kinds of content-based syllabuses. She distinguishes between form-focused syllabuses, situation-focused syllabuses, topic-based syllabuses and functional syllabuses.

In a *form-focused* syllabus, language items are graded by the supposed difficulty of learning. Syllabus content selection is done by means of a structural analysis of the language. Linear advancement from predetermined simplex to complex forms indicates grading procedures. Students are expected to cumulatively master grammatical structures and vocabulary that they should then apply to new contexts (De Villiers, 1997: 76). Robinson (1991: 36) states that for many ESP course designers this is an unacceptable model since little emphasis is placed on the use of the language, yet many courses are still structured around this model. Johnson (1982: 55) explains that course designers find this type of syllabus easier to compile than most other syllabuses since they do not have the problem of deciding what will be taken as the unit of organisation: it is always the structure of the language.

Critics of the form-focused syllabus point out that the type of interaction in the classroom is often forced and that only a narrow scope of language is dealt with. Pinto da Silva (1993: 40) complains that the structural, grammar-based approach had 'a negative effect on her students' motivation towards English'. She adds that while her students seemed to remember the memorised material for a while, they were often unable to use the same chunks of language in similar situations. Her findings are supported by De Villiers's (1997: 79) research on this type of syllabus.

The *situationally organised syllabus* is, according to Long and Crookes (1993: 18), less well-known and less widely-used than structural or notional-functional varieties. This type of syllabus can often be found in English for business purposes courses (Robinson, 1991: 36). Long and Crookes (1993: 20) contend that two difficulties when designing such a syllabus lie in defining and distinguishing situations and topics, and in the broadness of concepts. The structure of the situation-based syllabus tends to become loose since there is no scientific way of predicting the exact sequence of situations that a student may need to be

trained for (Robinson, 1991: 36). Long and Crookes (1993:21) also mention that it is almost impossible to grade situations in terms of difficulty.

The so-called *topic-based syllabus* is usually derived from some fairly well defined subject area that may include specialist subject matter relating to an academic or a technical field (Nunan, 1988: 48). The topic-based syllabus may have certain advantages for ESP course design since one objective of the ESP course may in fact be to teach this specialist content. Robinson (1991: 37) mentions that in the USA and Canada, combined language and specialist teaching has been considerably developed under the umbrella title of Language across the Curriculum (LAC) and Nunan (1988: 50) confirms that in Australia much of the teaching in adult ESL classes is topic-oriented. But many of the criticisms of situational syllabuses (such as the broadness of concepts, the looseness of structure and difficulty of grading) apply to topical syllabuses as well. Another drawback of this type of syllabus is that topics are of limited use for predicting grammatical form (Long and Crookes, 1993: 23- 24).

The *functional syllabus*, also content-based, has always been quite popular among ESP course designers (Robinson, 1991: 36). This type of syllabus lists the functions and notions that learners are supposed to learn and is based on the current and future needs of the learner (De Villiers, 1997: 79).

The functional syllabus - in practice usually referred to as notional-functional (Long and Crookes, 1993: 14)- was initiated at a time when there was a growing disillusionment within certain quarters of the profession with the apparently mechanical and analytic methodology associated with grammar-translation and audio-lingualism (Breen, 1987: 158). Long and Crookes (1993: 15) call the notional-functional syllabus 'the most popular alternative to have emerged to the structural syllabus'. Breen (1987: 88) explains that the notional-functional syllabus gives priority to the different purposes which language can serve. Long and Crookes (1993: 15) state that the main advantage of this syllabus is that the target language is presented, not as isolated linguistic forms, but as 'groups of linguistic devices needed to encode three kinds of semantic categories namely the semantico-grammatical, modality and communicative functions'.

Nevertheless, Long and Crookes are critical of the functional syllabus. They argue that this syllabus is based on the mistaken assumption that notions or functions are acquired singularly and are later synthesised (Long and Crookes, 1993: 17). They also argue that the units of analysis (functions and notions) are stilted and unnatural and that the model dialogues that are used are often 'far from realistic samples of the ways native speakers talk' (Long and Crookes, 1993: 17). Apart from that, functions and notions are difficult to grade (De Villiers 1997: 81).

### 3.2.2 Skill-based syllabus

White (1988) and Robinson (1991: 37) describe skill-based syllabuses as 'something of a halfway house between content or product syllabuses on the one side and method or process syllabuses on the other'. Pett (1987: 48) sees a skill-based syllabus as a movement away from the product-based syllabuses towards a syllabus more concerned with 'process'. According to him, 'skill-based syllabus' refers to the development of syllabuses that focus exclusively or principally on one of the four language skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). Pett (1987: 48) contends that objectives in a skill-based syllabus are not described in terms of formal categories, but rather in terms of inherent skills. A skill-based syllabus that focuses on writing, for example, concentrates on the act of writing rather than on the product. Instruction consequently takes place throughout the whole process of writing and students are helped to generate content. The stages of writing are seen as overlapping, while writing itself involves the whole person and not just the rational faculties (Pett, 1987: 49).

Robinson (1991: 37) points out that an interesting development has come from looking not only at the four language skills, but also at the constituents of these four skills. Various terms, such as sub-skills and micro-skills, are used to describe these constituents. A useful framework for identifying micro-skills is Munby's (1982: 123-131) taxonomy of language skills. Some micro-skills, such as *deducing gist*, can belong to more than one language skill at the same time so that courses in 'learning skill' development may cover more than one language skill. Other skills that are mentioned are 'the professional' or 'communication skills'.

The criticism against the skill-based syllabus is that, although some attention is paid to the process of language acquisition (Pett, 1987: 48), it breaks language acquisition down into a number of skills (macro-skills to micro-skills) that need to be acquired, separately or at the same time. Researchers have come to the conclusion, however, that language acquisition is a holistic task (De Villiers, 1997: 35) that incorporates more than the acquisition of language skills. Jurgensen (1996: 74) states that without motivation learning is unlikely. De Villiers (1997: 276) and Vaccarino (1995: 35) maintain that affective outcomes influence all stages of learning while Nunan (1989: 89) and Parrott (1993: 57) emphasise that the learning strategies that are employed during the learning process play an important part in language acquisition and that students need to be made aware of how these strategies influence their learning. Another matter of concern is that the skill-based syllabus emphasises accuracy in language usage but pays little attention to aspects such as meaningfulness and appropriacy (Breen, 1987: 160).

Although a course in Classroom English involves the identification of the skills a teacher would need during the course of a normal working day (Kennedy, 1983:75), the course designer also needs to look at other factors that influence the process of language acquisition.

### 3.2.3 *Method-based syllabuses*

Robinson (1991: 38) calls method-based syllabuses a 'major new paradigm' of which two different categories may be distinguished. These categories are *process-oriented syllabuses* and *procedural syllabuses* (Robinson 1991: 38).

Process-oriented syllabuses indicate the processes or method through which knowledge and skills might be gained (Nunan, 1988: 40). Breen (1987: 160) explains that 'process plans will seek to represent knowledge of *how* correctness, appropriacy and meaningfulness can be simultaneously achieved during communication within events and situations'.

According to Robinson (1991) the difference between a process syllabus and a procedural one is that procedural syllabuses indicate the procedure of using tasks or activities that are ordered according to cognitive ability (Robinson, 1991: 39; Johnson, 1982: 135). Procedural syllabuses organise and present what is to be achieved through teaching and learning in terms of *how* a learner may engage his or her communicative competence in undertaking a range of tasks (Breen, 1987: 160). Nunan (1988: 42) states that a procedural syllabus consists of a specification of the tasks and activities that learners will engage in in a classroom. He remarks that procedural syllabuses share a concern with the classroom processes that stimulate learning. The notion of 'task' or 'activity' seems to be the determining factor in these syllabuses and has led to the design of task-based syllabuses.

'Task', as defined by Long (1985: 89), 'is a piece of work undertaken for oneself or for others, freely or for some reward'. Cameron (1997: 346) defines 'task' in a fairly broad sense as being 'a classroom event that has coherence and unity with a clear beginning and end, in which the learner takes an active role'. In her comprehensive study on the implementation of a task-based syllabus in South African primary schools, De Villiers (1997: 111) defines a task as 'a meaningful activity that produces a measurable outcome'. A task is interactive in nature and involves a process (physical or mental) that utilises and challenges existing knowledge parameters. A task is contextualised in culture and develops both fluency and accuracy skills.

Nunan (1988: 44) points out that the selection of 'task' as a basic building block for syllabus design has been justified on several grounds, but most particularly for pedagogic and psycholinguistic reasons.

Both Aboagye (1997: 22) and De Villiers (1997: 82) regard the task-based syllabus as a synthesis between process and procedure. Robinson (1991) explains that the process syllabus makes an analysis of tasks as a part of the input to a syllabus while the procedural syllabus utilises these tasks as the syllabus.

According to Breen (1987: 161) a task-based syllabus has three major characteristics:

- it represents communicative competence as the undertaking and achievement of a range of tasks;
- it is reliant on the contribution of learners in terms of the prior communicative competence which learners bring to any task, and
- it emphasises the learning process as appropriate content during language learning.

Raath (1991: 27) says that in recent years there has been a trend to abandon the linguistic syllabus in favour of specifying a set of language tasks that makes it possible for the learner to know what he or she should be able to do at the end of a course. Aboagye (1997: 30) concludes that task-based syllabuses 'seem to point the way to the future in language syllabus design'.

### 3.2.4 Choice of syllabus

Breen (1987: 165) points out that within English language teaching, the earlier functionalist orientation of ESP has more recently evolved into a strong concern with the development of tasks which are appropriate to the learning and target needs of specific groups. This is confirmed by Robinson (1991: 41), who remarks that the task-based approach is of particular significance for ESP practitioners and designers since tasks can be directly utilised as the syllabus. ESP specialists have become more aware of the limitations of a purely linguistic focus and have called for an increased emphasis on 'seeing the students in action' (Crookes and Gass, 1993: 38). Breen (1987: 165) maintains that 'task-based work in ESP emerges from the practicalities of planning classroom work so that it may have face validity for students who are learning language, not for its own sake, but as a means for the achievement of communication within particular work'. Raath (1991: 28) recommends 'an analysis of the occupational field in terms of tasks involved' as the most relevant approach for ESP course design.

A number of other researchers working in the field of ESP agree that the task-based approach may be the approach most suitable for designing an ESP syllabus. Thomas and Hawes (1994: 25) say that an

approach organised around realistic tasks that lead to specific outcomes has advantages such as actively involving students in their own learning. Both Parrott (1993: 5) and Cameron (1997: 345) support this argument. Pinto da Silva (1993: 41) maintains that involving her students actively in activities relevant to the learning situation has promoted learning and improved motivation. She comes to the conclusion that in an ESP programme it is not as much the content of the course that is of importance, but the 'what you do with the content', the tasks and activities, that is significant.

Raath (1991: 26) mentions a number of advantages of the task-based approach. He maintains that the task-based approach offers a bridge between content and methodology. It addresses decisions that have to be made regarding the content as well as the working procedures that have to be undertaken for learning language in a group. Raath (1991: 27) believes that the task-based approach helps the course designer to be realistic about his goals and also gives the learner insight into the expected outcome of his or her learning. The task-based approach is, for that reason, particularly suitable for the South African context since this is closely related to the Outcomes-based approach advocated by the Department of Education (1997).

Of particular significance to this study is Murdoch's (1994: 255) tenet that 'one way [teacher] trainees can receive increased levels of language support is through activity-based teacher education tasks'. It is also Parrott's (1993: 3) conviction that the task-based approach is particularly appropriate in a teacher's training course as it 'ensures that the participants are actively involved and are taking the kinds of decisions that they need to take in the classroom'.

Long and Crookes (1993: 3) conclude that many researchers are of the opinion that 'work on second language classrooms, syllabus design, and materials development can benefit from a task-oriented perspective'. They close their argument by stating that task-based language teaching and task-based syllabuses are 'likely to have most to offer to second language teacher and learner, on both empirical and conceptual grounds' (Long and Crookes, 1993: 3).

The approach adopted in the design of this course is, therefore, task-based.

### 3.3 Conclusion

The first step in ESP syllabus design is the identification of the unit of analysis (cf. 3.1). Different types of syllabuses are discussed (cf. 3.2) in order to enable the course designer to choose the appropriate unit of analysis for this study.

The syllabus most suitable for the design of an ESP course in Classroom English is the task-based syllabus (cf. 3.2.4).

Chapter 4 deals with syllabus design in general and task-based syllabus design in particular before a task-based model for designing a course in Classroom English is proposed.

## CHAPTER 4

### Syllabus outline for a course in Classroom English

#### 4.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to propose a model for the design of a task-based syllabus for a course in Classroom English.

In order to do so, this chapter provides:

- a brief overview of syllabus design in general;
- a discussion of three models for task-based syllabus design;
- a proposed task-based model for a course in Classroom English, and
- an outline for a syllabus in Classroom English

#### 4.2 Syllabus design

Before task-based syllabus design can be discussed the principles generally accepted to be present in all language syllabus design need to be mentioned. Steyn's (1982: 21) cyclic model for syllabus design (cf. Fig. 2) lists the following components:

- Situation analysis
- Aims and objectives formulation
- Selection and organisation of learning content
- Selection and organisation of methods
- Evaluation

A brief overview of what is generally meant by each of these terms is now supplied.

##### *Situation analysis*

Vaccarino (1995: 15) states that a situation analysis is the first step in designing a teaching-learning programme. De Villiers (1997: 84) says that situation analysis involves an analysis of all the variables that

may influence it. Munby (1978) suggests that curriculum design start with a needs analysis and Brindley (1989: 63) says that it is now widely accepted that a needs analysis is a 'vital prerequisite to the specifications of language learning objectives'. A needs analysis is considered especially useful in the field of ESP (De Villiers, 1997: 84).

The needs analysis, therefore, forms the starting point for the course proposed in this paper.

### *Aims and objectives*

De Villiers (1997:88) calls aims 'long-term learning outcomes' to be reached after following a course. This is in line with Dippenaar (1993: 11), who defines aims as an educative purpose focused on long-term results. Aims are set after an interpretation of the needs analysis or situation analysis has been made (Jurgensen, 1996: 8).

Objectives, on the other hand, are defined as short-term learning outcomes that are specific and focus on specific results (Vaccarino 1995: 15). Objectives determine the success of teaching, since they guide the activities in the classroom (Vaccarino 1995:16).

### *Selection and organisation of content*

In a language course *content* refers to the language that is contained in the programme. For the task-based syllabus, De Villiers (1997: 93) defines content as 'subject matter expressed in terms of learning tasks, but which integrates learning products and learning processes'.

Once a decision has been taken regarding the content of the syllabus, the next decision concerns the sequencing or ordering of selected items. Nunan (1989: 92) argues that, traditionally, items in a grammatical syllabus are graded largely according to whether they are easy or difficult in terms of grammatical difficulty, but many researchers now claim that learning difficulty, rather than grammatical difficulty, should determine what should be learnt at what stage in the programme.

### *Selection and organisation of methods*

According to Vaccarino (1995:15) 'methods' refer to the ways in which aims and objectives are facilitated in the classroom: to *how* content is taught. Wallace (1991: 33) states that it is important to think in terms of

learning outcomes when methods or 'teaching modes' are considered. The question is not just 'How?' but also 'What outcome does the teacher expect from the pupils or students?' This is in line with De Villiers's (1997: 100) argument that researchers now appear cautious to recommend any one 'method' as the absolute method. A more hybrid, or eclectic, approach, where teaching-learning opportunities are structured around learning outcomes in a holistic fashion, seems to have gained field among course designers (De Villiers 1997: 100).

### *Evaluation*

Evaluation is often seen as 'one of the most important stages of the teaching-learning process' since it may help to detect whether learning has taken place and whether objectives have been reached (Vaccarino, 1995:15). Breen (1989; 195) uses the term 'assessment' and calls it 'a crucial diagnostic phase for both learner and teacher'. This is also the term preferred in this paper.

Fig. 2 provides a schematic presentation of Steyn's (1982) cyclic model for syllabus design.

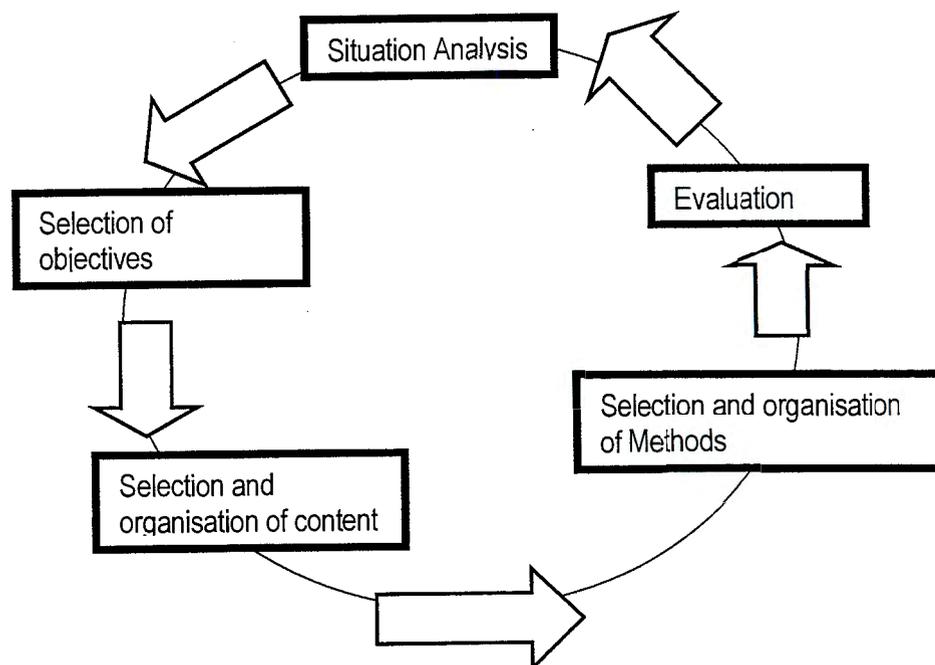


Figure 2: Steyn's cyclic model for syllabus design

### 4.3 Task-based syllabus design

In order to present a task-based model for syllabus design aimed particularly at the development of a course in Classroom English, the course designer first has to look at other, relevant models for task-based syllabus design.

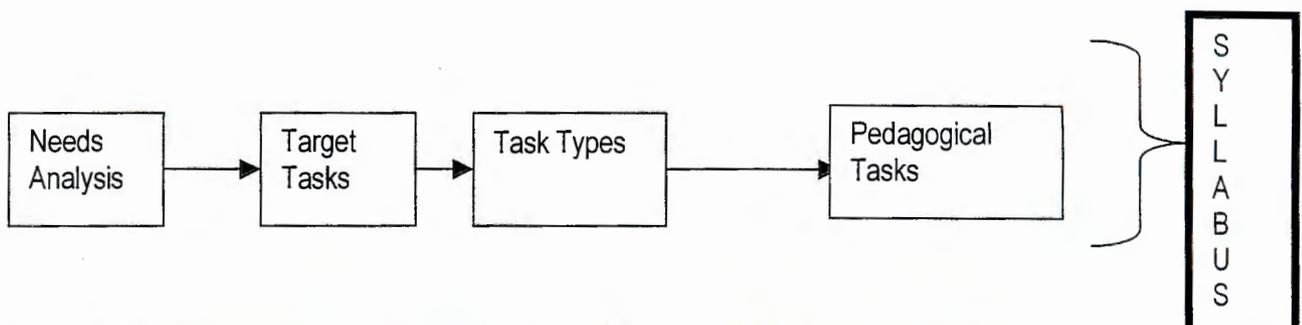
#### 4.3.1. Long's model for task-based syllabus design

Long's model for task-based syllabus design involves an analysis of the information gathered from the needs analysis in terms of real world *target tasks* learners are preparing to undertake. Long's target tasks are defined as 'those tasks identified as required in order for an individual to function adequately in a particular occupational target domain' (Long and Crookes, 1993: 19).

Long's (1985: 91-92) selection of target tasks for inclusion in the syllabus is determined by the needs analysis. But, because learners will find target tasks too difficult, especially in the early stages, target tasks are classified into task types. From the task-types the pedagogical tasks (tasks the teacher and students will work on in the classroom) are derived, which are in turn selected and sequenced to form a task-based syllabus (Nunan 1988: 47; Crookes and Gass, 1993: 40).

A schematic presentation of Long's model for task-based syllabus design (cf. Fig. 3) shows how target tasks are identified from the needs analysis. After this, task types are derived from the target tasks that are then divided into a number of smaller, pedagogical tasks which the learners and the teachers occupy themselves with in the classroom. Once these pedagogical tasks have been sequenced they form the task-based syllabus.

Figure 3 provides a schematic presentation of Long's model for task-based syllabus.



**Figure 3: A schematic presentation of Long's model for task-based syllabus design**

#### 4.3.2. Kennedy's model

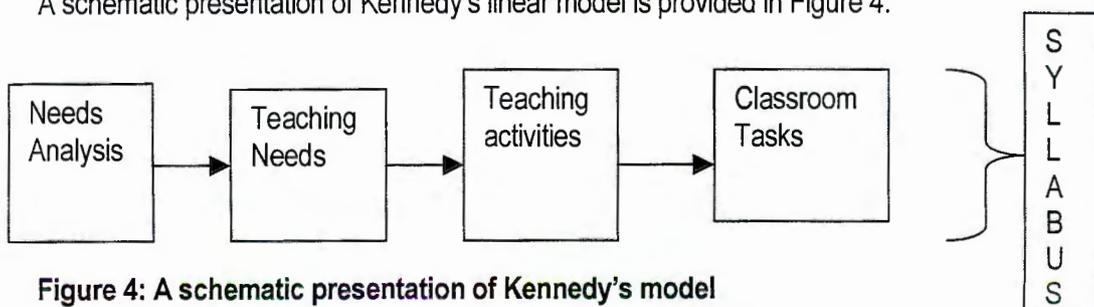
Although Kennedy (1983) does not refer to his model as a model for task-based syllabus design, the design he has in mind is closely related to Long's model for task-based syllabus design. Kennedy's model is significant in that it is designed with teacher training in mind and the tasks that he refers to are all derived from the teaching profession.

Kennedy (1983: 75) argues that the role played by language is of fundamental importance in the training of teachers. Kennedy (1983: 75) puts language and learner purposes for acquiring language as a central component in his syllabus design. He suggests that a Target Situation Analysis be used in order to determine:

- what variety of (English) language the learner requires
- the purposes for which the language is required
- the specificity of that purpose

The answer to these questions, Kennedy believes, should make up the foundation of a teacher training course. The purpose of the course may be described as the 'teaching needs of the teacher trainee and refers to the 'actual [variety of] English language and [teaching] strategies' used by the teacher inside and outside the classroom. Once the teaching needs have been determined, this leads to the identification of the teaching activities that the course participant will have to perform *after* the course as a teacher and, therefore, needs to be trained in. Teaching activities are defined as 'an ordinary teacher's tasks during a working day' (Kennedy, 1983: 77). Once the course designer has compiled a sample list of the teaching activities and has indicated the language skills required for the successful execution of these tasks, the teaching activities can be broken up into a number of classroom tasks that the students and trainer will perform in the classroom by using the *language of teaching*. This series of classroom tasks now constitutes the course content or syllabus.

A schematic presentation of Kennedy's linear model is provided in Figure 4.



**Figure 4: A schematic presentation of Kennedy's model**

Both Kennedy (1983: 79) and Long's (1985) models indicate progress from a macro-task to a number of micro-tasks that eventually constitute the syllabus. Neither of the two models refers to evaluation or assessment as a component of syllabus design.

#### 4.3.3 De Villiers's model for task-based syllabus design

A comprehensive framework for task-based syllabus design proposed by De Villiers (1997:253), and in line with Steyn's cyclic model for syllabus design, starts with a *situation analysis* that reflects the current situation such as dictated by government policy, the students' needs, etc. The situation analysis leads to an identification of *aims* and defines the general purposes for using the language. Once the general purposes have been established more specific goals or *objectives* need to be defined. De Villiers (1997: 283) argues that the objectives of the task-based syllabus should be measurable in terms of language skill outcomes (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) even though they should not be treated as separate components. Language skill outcomes are, therefore, means of achieving the general purposes of the course.

The core of the syllabus, according to De Villiers (1997: 255), is to be found in the *content* and teaching-learning opportunities. Content and teaching-learning opportunities are simultaneously formulated in terms of tasks so that 'content' becomes 'subject matter expressed in terms of learning tasks' with measurable outcomes (De Villiers, 1997: 91). A task can, therefore, be seen to consist of both content and activity and involves aspects such as themes and topics, vocabulary, resources, language forms and communicative functions, skills, strategies and affective outcomes.

A series of tasks and their sub-components constitute the course content or syllabus. In her model for task-based syllabus design De Villiers (1997: 255) suggests that once completed, holistic tasks, rather than sub-tasks, are assessed by means of formative and summative *assessment*.

In contrast to the other linear task-based syllabuses discussed (cf. 4.3.1; 4.3.2), De Villiers's (1997) model makes provision for assessment.

Fig. 5 shows a schematic presentation of De Villiers's model as discussed above.

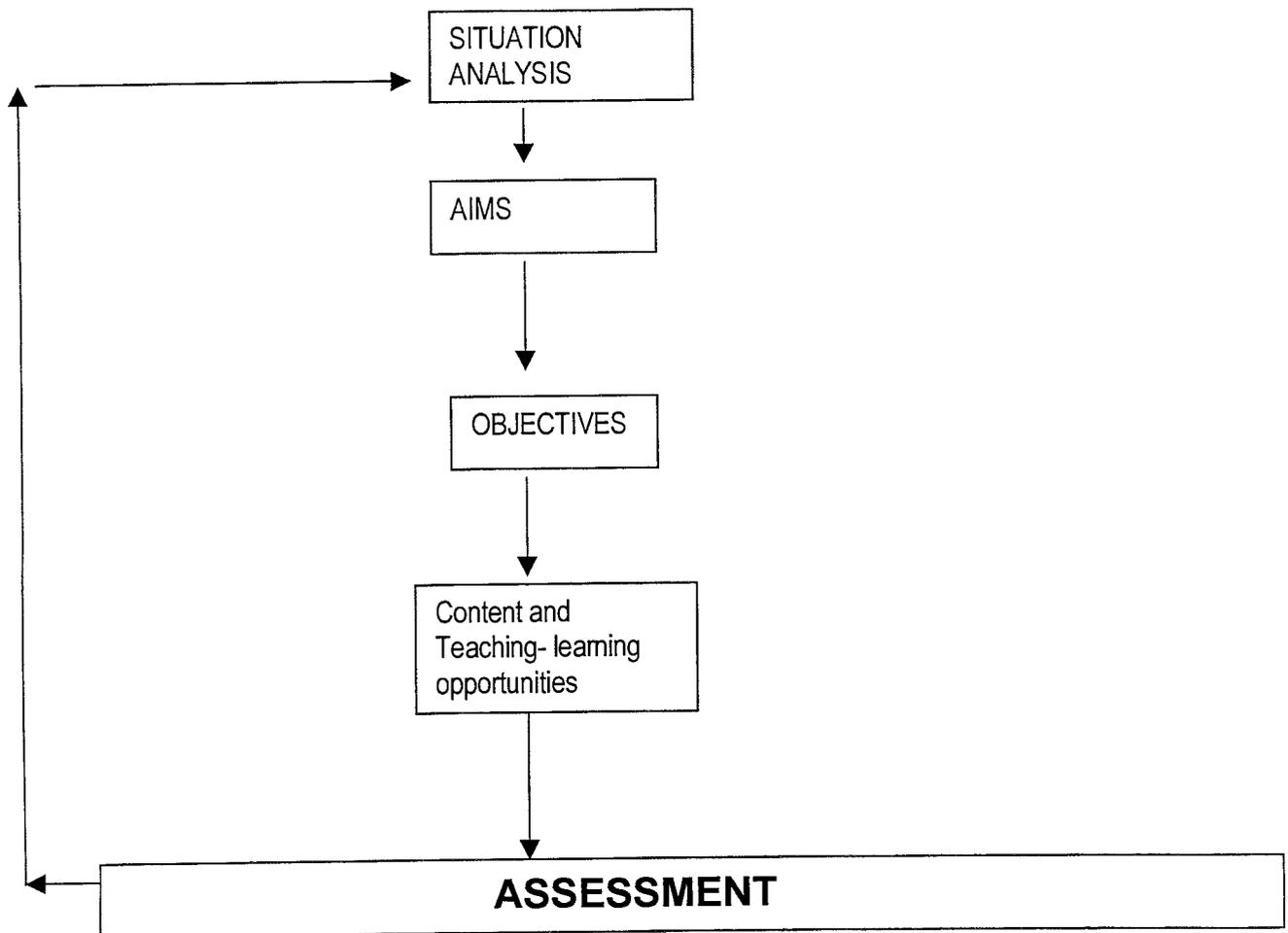


Figure 5: A schematic presentation of De Villiers's (1997) model for task-based syllabus design

#### 4.3.4 Synthesis

An analysis of the three models discussed above (cf. 4.3.1-4.3.3), shows that they have much in common. All the models have either a needs analysis or situation analysis as the starting point or first step of syllabus design. The next step involves an identification of target tasks (Long 1985), aims (De Villiers, 1997) or teaching needs (Kennedy, 1983) of the course. Once the aims have been established, all three models show that the learner needs to be trained in certain [career-related] strategies or skills in order to achieve these aims. Kennedy (1983) considers the *teaching activities* a teacher has to perform during the course of a normal working day in order to define the [teaching] strategies and [teaching] language that the course participant needs to be trained in, while De Villiers (1997) describes these skills in terms of the four language skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) and calls them the *objectives* of the course. Long (1985) refers to these professional strategies and skills that the learner needs to be trained in as 'task types'.

Kennedy (1983) classifies subject matter and methodology under the 'classroom tasks' that the lecturer and teacher trainees perform in the classroom, while Long (1985) has the same integration of content and methodology in mind in the 'pedagogical task'. Long (1985) calls the selection and serialisation of pedagogical tasks 'the compilation of a task-based syllabus'. In line with both these models, De Villiers (1997) sees 'tasks' to consist of both content and teaching-learning opportunities (methodology). In De Villiers's (1997) model assessment is added as the final step towards designing a cyclic model.

#### 4.3.5. A proposed model for designing a task-based syllabus in Classroom English

An analysis of the three models discussed above makes it possible for the course designer to arrive at a suitable model for syllabus design for an ESP course in Classroom English. In line with Long's (1985), Kennedy's (1983), and De Villiers's (1997) models, the model proposed in this study will consist of:

- a needs analysis, from which
- general aims will be developed. It has already been established in the discussion on classroom language (cf. 3.) that the main purposes for using Classroom English would be to establish pedagogical and interpersonal relationships. This is in line with Kennedy's (1983) model, which suggests that the purpose of the course is to teach the variety of English that is required for the course (cf.4.3.2). However, in line with the Outcomes-based approach, which is currently advocated in South Africa (Dept. of Ed., 1997), these general aims are called general outcomes in this study. Once the general outcomes have been established, they lead to the identification of more specific objectives, or
- specific outcomes. During this stage the course designer will keep both Kennedy's (1983) and De Villiers's (1997) models in mind in order to determine the relevant sub-components of this step in syllabus design. Kennedy (1983) suggests that in a language improvement course that forms part of a teacher training course, the teacher trainee needs to be trained in those activities that he or she will need to perform after the course and for which he or she needs the specific English identified earlier. De Villiers (1997) states that these outcomes may be expressed in terms of the four language skills. This leads to the conclusion that in the case of a course in Classroom English, specific outcomes can be described as the specific language skills a teacher trainee will need to possess in order to successfully carry out the activities an ordinary teacher engages in during an ordinary working day.

The next step involves an identification of:

- classroom tasks. De Villiers (1997:255) calls this step in her model 'Content and teaching learning opportunities'. But, a more logical term, in line with both Kennedy's (1983) and Long's(1985) models (cf. 4.3.2.and 4.3.3), would be to refer to this step as 'Tasks' or 'Classroom tasks' and to then indicate that tasks consist of subject matter (content) expressed in terms of teaching-learning opportunities, where the latter implies the activities performed in the classroom by the teacher and the student and thus refer to the methodology used.

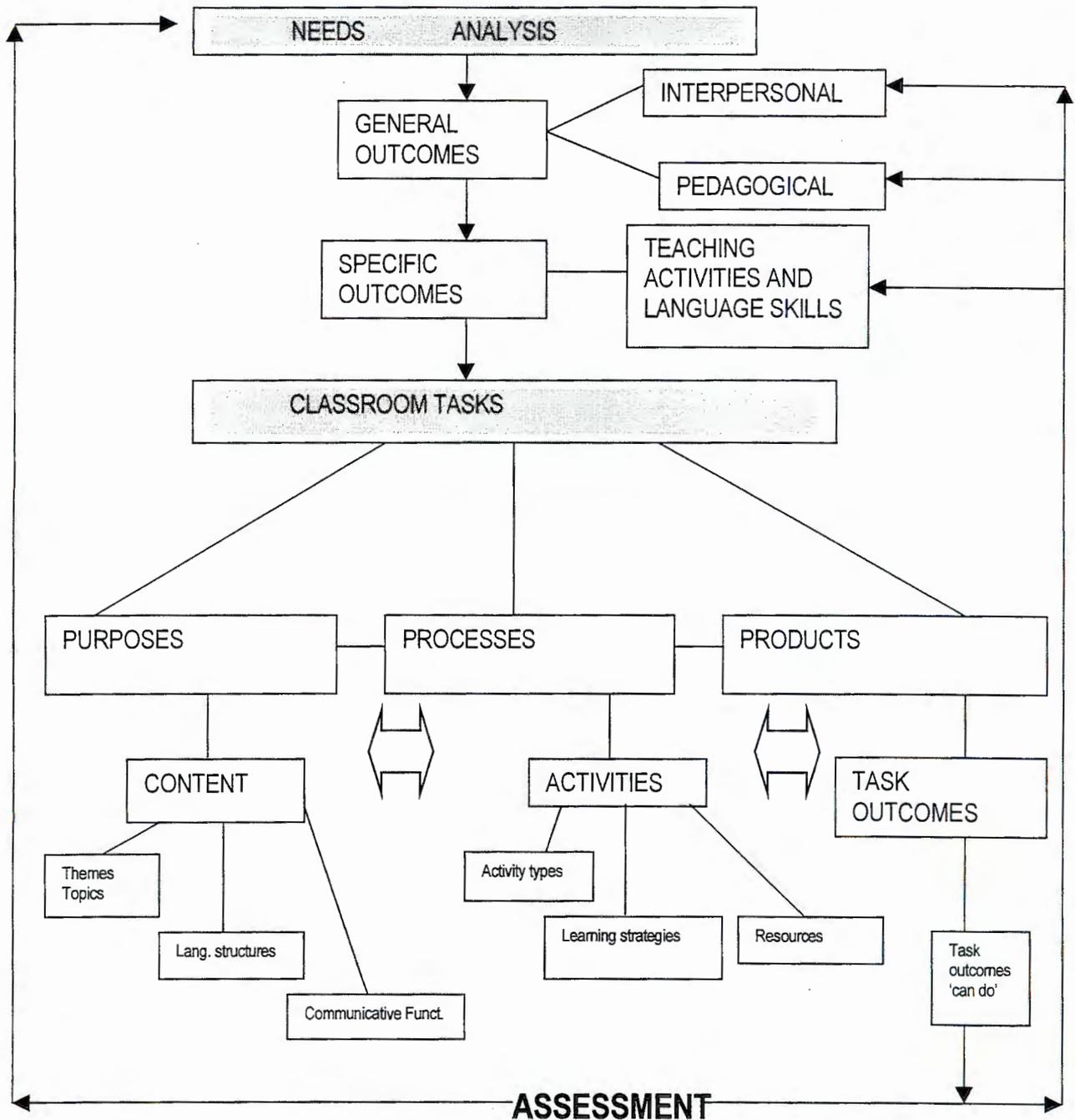
In the model proposed in this study, 'tasks' are seen to integrate the learning purpose (the 'what' or content) of the lesson, the learning processes (the 'how' or methodology) of the lesson, and the learning product (the 'why' or outcome of the learning process). In line with task-based syllabus design, these three sub-divisions of a task are interpreted holistically, consisting of the sub-components identified by De Villiers (1997). A classification of De Villiers's (1997) sub-components involves:

- *Purposes*. These involve themes and topics, that, in turn, involve the identification of language structures, communicative functions and the vocabulary required for completing the task based on the theme and topics.
- *Processes*. Processes describe the language skills required in terms of activity types, and the learning strategies employed by the learners in order to complete a series of holistic tasks. Because De Villiers (1997: 52) maintains that the distinction between methodology and content becomes insignificant in a task-based syllabus she, therefore, regards the use of resources (which include text-types and media) as part of the process of teaching and learning (De Villiers 1997: 251). For this reason 'resources' are listed under *Processes* in this model.
- *Products*. The outcomes or products of a task indicate what pupils 'can do' with the language (De Villiers, 1997: 251).
- The final step involves suggestions regarding the assessment of the classroom task.

A schematic presentation of the model for syllabus design (Figure 6) based on the discussion above shows:

- the components of the syllabus;
- the sub-components of the main components, and

- the cyclic nature of this syllabus.



**Figure 6: A proposed model for syllabus design for a course in Classroom English**

The model for task-based syllabus design illustrated in Fig. 6 proposes an outline for a task-based syllabus in Classroom English.

#### 4.4 Outline for a proposed syllabus

Robinson (1991: 13) warns that the type of information sought and the way it is interpreted during a needs analysis is usually closely related to the approach to teaching and syllabus design followed by the analyst.

Long and Crookes (1993:10) remark that the type of syllabus chosen 'will have a pervasive influence on decisions' regarding the interpretation of the needs analysis. In this study the needs analysis will be interpreted in order to provide the required information regarding each of the components and sub-components of the model for task-based syllabus design proposed in 4.3.5.

There now follows a general overview of what is meant by 'needs analysis' and the results of the needs analysis, after which the results will be interpreted in accordance with the proposed model for task-based syllabus design illustrated in Figure 6.

#### 4.4.1 The needs analysis

Although different forms of needs analysis may be distinguished (Jurgensen, 1996: 16), a *Present Situation Analysis* and a *Target Situation Analysis* are generally considered to be essential in any needs analysis (West, 1994: 4; Jurgensen, 1996: 16; Robinson, 1991: 8). A Present Situation Analysis addresses questions pertaining to the identity of the learners, their preferred learning styles, and their aims and expectations. A Target Situation Analysis focuses on questions related to the setting and relationships in which learners are likely to have to make use of the target language (Jurgensen, 1996: 17).

It is generally accepted that every course designer will have to conduct his or her own needs analysis in order to ensure that the course is 'tailor made' for his or her specific group of students (Raath, 1991: 16). Yet, Robinson (1991: 33) points out that course designers need not 're-invent the wheel'. It may, therefore, be possible for ESP course designers to glean information regarding a specific group of potential students from Target Situation Analyses conducted by other course designers (Jurgensen, 1996: 34). The issue does not necessarily seem to be whom the Target Situation Analysis is conducted by, but the fact that such an analysis is conducted at all. Research done by Murdoch (1994) and Cullen (1994) indicates that all teachers using English as MOI have common core language needs. Different institutions, countries and schools, however, have different cultural pre-conceptions and different views on teaching and learning. Robinson (1991: 11) argues that the lecturers of an institution are familiar with their own situation and 'should thus be able to make relatively quick and informed decisions' regarding the identity of the learners and the situation in which the students will have to use the language. She concludes that, ideally, needs analysts should try to obtain information from a *range* of sources and viewpoints (Robinson, 1991: 12).

The concern of this study is, therefore, not the needs analysis itself, but the results gleaned from various researchers' work. Another study may need to be undertaken in order to determine the specific needs of

the non-native speaker of English in South Africa who will have to teach through medium of English. It must be emphasised that the purpose of this study is to:

- indicate that there is a need for a course in Classroom English at Colleges of Education,
- identify some of the language needs of any second-language speaker who has to teach through medium of English, and
- propose an outline for a task-based syllabus in Classroom English.

#### 4.4.1.1 The results of the needs analysis

Of particular significance to this study is the needs analysis conducted by Jurgensen (1996) among Afrikaans-speaking lecturers at a university where English is used as medium of instruction. An analysis of what these lecturers perceive their linguistic needs to be may help the course designer to predict future problems teacher trainees may encounter once they start teaching. Since the respondents are all adults their learning preference and subject content preference may also help to suggest an approach for the structuring of a course in Classroom English.

Jurgensen's results are based on both a Present Situation Analysis and a Target Situation Analysis.

The most significant finding reported by Jurgensen (1996) is that all the lecturers feel that the training they received both as scholars and on tertiary level was inadequate for the job they are required to do. They all feel that their language skills need improving. The lecturers all believe that a course in English will help to improve their ability to communicate and, therefore, improve their teaching abilities. Eighty percent of the lecturers indicate that they would prefer to try to improve their English in classes that are divided into small groups. They think that discussing various topics, subject-related and general, through medium of English may help to improve their fluency and confidence. Sixty percent of the lecturers feel that a practical course will be more valuable than a theoretical course although a significant number feel that formal grammar teaching will help them to improve their English. There is also the expressed desire to expand their vocabulary in the subject that they teach.

Another important study consists of a survey conducted by Murdoch (1994) among non-native teacher trainees in Sri Lanka who have to teach through medium of English. Murdoch's questionnaire managed to identify needs that are now considered to be fairly common and universal among non-native speakers of English who have to use English as MOI.

Some of Murdoch's (1994) findings regarding the teachers' perceived needs and requirements for a language are:

- 1) eighty five percent of his respondents indicate that learning classroom language would have a beneficial effect on their teaching performance;
- 2) eighty four percent of the respondents would like to find out how to best learn English and study effectively during their language development course;
- 3) activities, which allow trainees to assume an active, involved role in the teacher education classroom, are clearly perceived as beneficial for expanding communicative competence;
- 4) ninety five percent of the respondents agree that teaching skills and techniques should be developed by methods that maximise opportunities for students to develop and practise their language skills;
- 5) as far as learning strategies or learning preferences are concerned, the respondents feel that role-plays, discussions and reading/ writing activities are of great value, and
- 6) on the issue of what subject content would provide good bases for language activities, classroom situations and experiences rank second highest next to modern literary texts.

Murdoch (1994: 255) concludes that 'one way trainees can receive increased levels of language support is through activity-based teacher education tasks'.

Cullen's (1994: 162-166) findings indicate similar results. Surveys conducted by Cullen (1994) among teachers who teach through medium of English in Poland, Bangladesh and Egypt, reflect that most teachers are in dire need of language improvement courses. The questionnaires and interviews conducted among these teachers also suggest that they would prefer a language improvement strategy where methodology is the content of the language improvement (Cullen, 1994: 162-166).

Research conducted by Hughes (1981), Willis (1985), Parrott (1993), Spratt (1994) and Johnson *et al.* (1996) on the target situation (the classroom) has resulted in the identification of certain linguistic structures most needed by the teacher whose mother tongue is not English. In line with Johnson *et al.*'s (1996) argument concerning the characteristics of Classroom English (cf. 2.2), these language structures can be classified as those expressing *interpersonal relationships* and those involving *pedagogical relationships*. Interpersonal relationships involve the language needed to control, organise and motivate. Pedagogical relationships involve the language required to prepare and conduct lessons. Johnson *et al.* (1996: 12) say that, where a teacher lacks fluency, good preparation is of the essence. An L2 teacher, therefore, has to

plan the operative, interactive and informative phase of the pedagogical functions of language (cf. 2.2). Not only do ideas have to be clear and organised in the mind, but also the words and expressions the teacher plans to use may need organising. In a first language the appropriate language can be expected to be available when needed. This is far less likely in an L2 and students may need to be trained in how to organise the content of their lessons. 'There may well be a case for making more use of those modalities of training for methodology components, which significantly extend trainees' communicative competence' (Murdoch, 1994: 224).

Apart from the language structures required to establish interpersonal and pedagogical relationships, the teacher also needs certain teaching strategies (cf. 4.3.2) These teaching strategies and skills, identified by a number of researchers such as Willis (1985), Spratt (1994), Kennedy (1983) and Johnson *et al.* (1996), include the ability to:

- maintain discipline
- give instructions
- set exam papers
- write reports, notes and minutes of meetings
- express emotions and feelings
- perform social rituals such as greeting, congratulating etc.
- select and evaluate materials
- structure materials
- sequence lessons (mark boundaries)
- reply to questions
- rephrase, paraphrase in writing and orally
- exemplify
- demonstrate
- generalise
- classify
- illustrate
- define
- compare and contrast
- qualify
- give reasons
- use technological equipment
- supply verbal commentary to accompany slides etc

- create own resources, slides, transparencies
- supply factual information
- supply background information
- summarise
- structure retrospectively

An analysis of some of the learning outcomes for Communication courses, stipulated in the National Discussion Document on Norms and Standards for Teacher Education, Training and Development, (Dept. of Ed., 1997: 86), suggests that the South African society requires that all its teachers should:

- understand the language of instruction and be able to use it in order to discuss, explain, argue, describe, debate. Although the language of instruction referred to is not necessarily English, research has proved that English is the most widely used language of instruction in South Africa (cf. 1.1);
- be able to effectively read and write the language of instruction for academic and personal purposes;
- understand and apply the principles of language across the curriculum, and
- understand and apply the principles of second language acquisition.

#### 4.4.1.2 Conclusion

The results of the needs analysis point out:

- the need for a language improvement course;
- the purposes for using the language in the classroom i.e. to create interpersonal and pedagogical relationships;
- some of the preferred adult learning styles: e.g. practical application of the language learned, group discussions, formal grammar instruction;
- content preference such as general didactics and literary texts;
- some of the methods that may meet with success in the teaching of such a course, for example: group work, simulations, role-play, and
- outcomes for the course as far as language usage and other teaching skills are concerned.

#### 4.4.2. Interpretation of the results of the needs analysis

Since a task-based approach has been selected for the design of this course, the model for task-based syllabus design proposed in 4.3.5 is now used as a framework for the interpretation of the results of the needs analysis. In accordance with the model presented in Fig. 6, the results of the needs analysis provide the input for:

- general outcomes of the course
- specific outcomes of the course
- classroom tasks
- assessment

##### 4.4.2.1 General outcomes

The primary purpose or aim of the course is to provide trainees with the means for developing and extending their use of English with particular emphasis on the English related to teaching.

An analysis of the research conducted on any classroom language and its functions (cf. 3.2) reveals the purposes for which teacher trainees would use Classroom English as being the establishment of pedagogical and interpersonal relationships, both in the classroom and outside of the classroom.

##### 4.4.2.2 Specific outcomes

The specific outcomes that a course in Classroom English should seek to attain can be defined in terms of the teaching activities that a teacher should be capable of performing once he or she has completed his or her training (Kennedy, 1983).

Research conducted by Hughes (1981), Johnson *et al.* (1996), Willis (1985), and Spratt (1994) provides information regarding the teaching activities a teacher trainee may need to perform. In line with, and resulting from, the general outcomes of the course, teaching activities can be divided into activities where the use of Classroom English will have a pedagogical purpose or an interpersonal purpose (cf. Table 1 and Table 2).

Hughes (1981), Johnson *et al.* (1996), Willis (1985), and Spratt (1994) also identify some of the language skills that a teacher would need in order to perform these activities (cf. 4.4.1.1). These language skills are described in terms of the four language skills: reading, speaking, writing, and listening.

Table 1 and Table 2 describe teaching activities according to the pedagogical and interpersonal purposes (the general outcomes) of a course in Classroom English, and the language skills the teacher trainee will need in order to perform the teaching activities.

An identification of the specific outcomes results in the identification of suitable classroom tasks, involving content, activities and outcomes of the classroom tasks.

General Outcomes	Specific outcomes for a course in Classroom English				
	Teaching Activities	Language Skills			
I N T E R P E R S O N A L		Reading	Speaking	Writing	Listening
	Establish and maintain relationships.	Skim and scan a text to obtain general idea. Identify details.	Convey meaning clearly and coherently.	Develop written texts by presenting main and supporting ideas.	Identify details that support a main idea.
	Exchange ideas and information.	Read written language in meaningful chunks. Use visual clues to work out meaning.	Express opinions. Ask others for their opinion.	Reconstruct information and ideas from print and other media.	Understand a speaker's intention. Listen for specific information.
	Get things done in the classroom and outside.	Understand the connection between ideas. Predict the likely development of a text.	Use appropriate formulaic expressions. Intonation pitch and stress. Use appropriate register to give instructions, make requests.	Formulate clear, unambiguous instructions.	Identify aspects of communication that present problems.
	Exchange messages such as letters, reports and circulars.	Recognise the presentation of ideas through the use of headings, paragraphing, etc.	Use formulaic expressions, intonation, tone, facial expressions and gestures.	Use appropriate layout and visual support.	Understand a speaker's intention.
	Motivate pupils by conversing about feelings, interests, ideas.	Locate information and ideas.	Use appropriate intonation and stress. Elicit responses.	Formulate questions. Write comments and reports.	Listen for specific information.
	Participate in scheduled meetings, seminars, etc.	Re-read to establish and confirm information. Use strategies to self-correct when necessary by rereading, using context, reading further to clarify	Give reasons. Use appropriate register. Control and regulate participation.	Plan and organise information. Respond to written ideas by writing letters, notes etc.	Recognise key-words to predict development of topic.
	Maintain order and discipline.		Maintain interaction by agreeing, disagreeing. Give instructions.	Write reports, comments.	Identify aspects of communication that may present problems.

Table 1: Specific outcomes for a course in Classroom English -Interpersonal.

General Outcomes	Specific Outcomes for a course in Classroom English				
	Teaching Activities	Language skills			
P E D A G O G I C A L		Reading	Speaking	Writing	Listening
	Prepare lessons on different subjects e.g. History.	Skim and scan a text to obtain general idea. Identify details.	Convey meaning clearly and coherently.	Develop written texts by presenting main and supporting ideas.	Identify details that support a main idea.
	Provide, organise and present new information.	Read written language in meaningful chunks. Use visual clues to work out meaning	Paraphrase, exemplify, rephrase, and summarise.	Reconstruct information and ideas from print and other media.	
	Mark transitions between sections of the work.	Understand the connection between ideas. Predict the likely development of a text.	Use appropriate formulaic expressions. Use proper intonation pitch and stress.	Write descriptions of lessons.	
	Provide learners with a frame of reference.	Recognise the presentation of ideas through the use of headings, paragraphing etc.	Describe pictures; provide commentary for slides and visuals. Use correct intonation, pitch and stress.	Use appropriate layout and visual support.	Understand a speaker's intention.
	Elicit responses and set tasks.		Ask questions. Use appropriate intonation and stress.	Formulate questions and assignments.	Recognise differences in use of intonation.
	Provide explanations.	Re-read to establish and confirm information.	Give reasons, exemplify, rephrase, paraphrase	Plan and organise information.	Respond to questions.
	Summarise and evaluate the information.	Use strategies to self-correct when necessary by rereading, using context, reading further to clarify.	summarise.	Assess own work and written work.	Identify own shortcomings- identify errors of pronunciation language structures etc.

Table 2: Specific outcomes for a course in Classroom English – Pedagogical.

#### 4.4.2.3 Classroom tasks

The model for task-based syllabus design (cf. Fig. 6) indicates that classroom tasks are holistic tasks that involve a purpose, a process and a product.

The questions that need to be answered regarding the purposes of a classroom task are:

- What themes and topics need to be dealt with in a syllabus on Classroom English?
- What vocabulary, language structures and communicative functions does the teacher trainee need that will enable him or her to teach through medium of English?

Questions regarding the processes of classroom tasks are:

- How can the language skills referred to and listed as specific outcomes, be described in terms of measurable outcomes that will simultaneously involve the subject matter described under purposes of classroom tasks?
- What learning strategies will the teacher trainee need to apply that will aid him or her in the acquisition of the language?
- What resources may be used in a course in Classroom English?

A question regarding the outcomes of classroom tasks is:

- How can the products of the classroom tasks be assessed?

##### 4.4.2.3.1 Purposes of classroom tasks

###### *Themes and topics*

In line with the specific outcomes for the course, themes and topics have to be suggested that may form the basis of the course. It must be emphasised that the aim of this study is not to suggest all the themes and topics one would expect to find in a syllabus, but simply to propose an outline for the development of a syllabus.

Some of the themes suggested by Spratt (1994), Willis (1985), and Hughes (1981) are:

- Talking about lessons
- Talking about relationships
- Classroom Management

Each of these themes forms the framework for a set of topics. A range of topics that may be developed from a theme such as Classroom Management include:

- Beginning and ending lessons appropriately
- Seating arrangements
- Taking roll call
- Maintaining discipline
- Giving instructions
- Getting things done in the classroom

### *Vocabulary*

The themes and topics selected for classroom tasks provide an authentic context for vocabulary presentation (De Villiers, 1997: 265). The teacher who is forced to use English as MOI to teach a subject such as Geography or Maths usually finds that he or she does not possess the necessary vocabulary. The teacher trainee, therefore, also needs to be trained in the vocabulary of his or her specific subject area.

One way of solving the problem of inadequate vocabulary range may be to adopt the model suggested by Stribling and Thurstone (1993) for helping pupils cope with English MOI classes. The most significant feature of the syllabus is the calculated inclusion of concepts and vocabulary that prepare the pupil for English MOI classes in different subjects. A similar model aimed at the inclusion of content-specific tasks and vocabulary could help to raise the proficiency level of the teacher trainee in order to teach and communicate effectively in the subject that he or she majors in. The development of such a model, specifically for teacher trainees, may be the subject of another study.

### *Communicative functions and language structures*

Hughes (1981: 5) says that teachers need to be trained in the key classroom functions of interrogation and organisation in particular. In the case of an essentially ESP course such as the one in Classroom English, communicative functions may be one of the most important focus-points of the course. Both Johnson (1992: 275) and Hughes (1981: 5) argue that there is a very high level of predictability in pedagogical discourse. The teacher needs specific communicative functions and language structures to achieve the general and specific outcomes in Classroom English.

Some of the communicative functions suggested by research conducted by Hughes (1981), Willis (1985), Spratt (1994), and Johnson *et al.* (1996) are now analysed according to their interpersonal and pedagogical purposes.

### *Communicative functions needed by the teacher*

#### Interpersonal functions

The teacher needs communicative functions for:

- issuing warnings
- apologising
- expressing an opinion and inviting others to express theirs
- extending greetings
- beginning a conversation
- eliciting responses from the pupils

This is the last time I'm warning you...

Would you excuse me for a while (a moment)?

What about you, Maria?

I think that...

Good morning, everybody. How are you all today?

Well, did anyone do anything interesting during the weekend?

- indicating turns to speak

Wait a second, Kevin, let someone else...

- introducing oneself

I'll just tell you a bit about myself...

- checking attendance

Does any one know where Lee is? Etc.

Right! I am going to call your names to see if you are all here.

- discussing physical conditions in the classroom

It's terribly noisy in here, isn't it?

- classroom management
- maintaining control and discipline

Please would you turn the lights on?  
 Would someone mind cleaning the board, please?  
 Could you move your chairs forward please?  
 I want you to turn your chair round, please.  
 Don't talk while I'm writing on the ...  
 Settle down.

### Pedagogical functions

The teacher needs communicative functions for:

- marking boundaries
- focussing
- prospective structuring
- paraphrasing
- rephrasing
- exemplifying
- demonstrating
- generalising
- classifying
- glossing

### Examples

O. K. (well, right, all right then, ready?), It's time we did something different...

You remember that in our last lesson we were talking about...

Today we are going to look at ways of producing...

Soya beans make bean curd. Bean curd is made from soya beans.

Bean curd is inexpensive. In other words, it is cheap.

Soya beans make bean curd. These soya beans that I've got here in this bowl can be made into bean curd.

Some examples of soya bean products are soya-milk, bean curd and bean paste.

Here are some soya beans that have been dried. Now, I am going to wash them like this and then soak them in water.

So, as you can see, bean curd is popular with many people, rich and poor.

The people who benefit most from bean curd can be classified into three categories: the poor, the

- comparing
- verbal commentary to accompany slides, pictures, etc.
- retrospective structuring
- working with tape recorders and other equipment
- eliciting choral and individual response;
- dividing the class up: pairs and groups;

*Language structures needed by the teacher*

### Situations

The teacher needs language structures to:

- talk about something that happened in the past and to talk about consecutive actions
- talk about habitual actions
- talk about people, relationships
- give commands, instructions, advice
- talk about things that might be
- talk about hypothetical past events or states

elderly and the vegetarians.

Soya milk, just like cow's milk, contains a good percentage of protein.

Take a good look at the picture, what do you think?

Tell me about the scenery in the middle of the picture.

In this chapter we have looked at the ways of producing bean curd.

Could you possibly plug the tape recorder in for me?

I'd better turn the volume down.

I had better adjust the tone.

I want all of you to repeat this question.

Now, this time, hands up before you answer.

One by one right?

You can take turns to answer, ok?

Turn around and face your neighbour.

When you have finished, swap around, so that you each get a turn (take the other part).

### Structures required:

past simple, past perfect tense.

past simple and past continuous.

relative clauses.

using verbs.

the second conditional.

the third conditional.

- express preference, priorities, position, comparatives and superlatives.
- compare, contrast interrogatives (who, where, when, how, why, what).
- use the right question to elicit the right response tag questions.
- express certainty indirect questions.
- explain how or why definite article is used the definite article.
- give advice modal verbs.

#### 4.4.2.3.2 Processes of classroom tasks

The *Process* component of classroom tasks consists of the activities the students and the lecturer engage in and through which subject matter is expressed as a series of holistic language learning activities. De Villiers (1997: 276) defines language learning activities as 'purposeful, interactive activities, described by verbs that reflect a process (physical or mental) during which fluency and accuracy skills are developed, and which produce measurable outcomes within a specific context'.

#### *Activity types*

Examples of such activity types suggested by Wainryb (1992: 54-55), incorporating the subject matter through which they are expressed are:

#### **Reading**

- texts about teaching
- course material
- reports or essays written by learners

#### **Listening**

- to tapes of lessons
- to opinions of learners
- to descriptions of the experience of co-participants on the course

#### **Watching**

- other teachers (or co-participants) teach lessons.

**Speaking**

- by taking part in collaborative brainstorming (pooling, exchanging and comparing opinions, ideas, knowledge, beliefs, assumptions, and experience) with co-participants in the task.
- by asking questions of learners, etc.

**Writing**

- descriptions of lessons
- questionnaires, interviews, etc
- summaries of research reports

**Drawing**

- diagrams to represent the interaction in a class
- diagrams to represent the sequence of time in a graphic illustration
- graphs to indicate progress

**Ticking**

- to indicate agreement with statements
- to show approval of materials
- to indicate progress on a checklist

**Numbering**

- to show an approved order for items
- to rank ideas or statements

**Mock Teaching**

- to experiment with an unfamiliar approach
- to demonstrate an approach or technique

**Matching**

- a procedure to a theoretical tenet
- the role a teacher is likely to be performing to an activity within a lesson

**Comparing**

- personal opinions with those of co-participants
- two or more lessons
- two or more mistakes made by a learner in a written text

**Ordering**

- the stage in a particular lesson

**Ranking**

- statements made about teaching techniques and methodology according to the extent to which they reflect the participants own preference

**Classifying**

- by grouping a series of statements about learning or teaching according to the theoretical assumptions underlying them

**Selecting**

- materials which would be appropriate to a particular group of learners

**Recalling**

- types of material used in the classroom
- learning styles (own and others')

**Producing**

- materials for classroom use
- lesson plans and schemes of work
- questionnaires for eliciting opinions from learners

**Recording**

- interviews with co-participants or other people
- lessons (own or other students' – audio, video or written)

**Gathering data**

- by asking questions to other students or learners (informally or more systematically using a questionnaire)

**Putting forward arguments**

- by justifying points of view with which the other students may or may not agree

**Adding**

- personal examples to extend a given list of criteria for making decisions, identifying characteristics of learners, etc.

*Learning Strategies*

A learning strategy is a measure that the learner actively (although not necessarily consciously) employs to facilitate or advance learning (Parrott, 1993: 57). It is, therefore, clear that learning strategies have to be

employed during the execution of the language learning task and must be considered a methodological issue.

Language learning strategies for teacher trainees involve the ability to:

- *identify and solve problems using critical and creative thinking.* This includes aspects such as experimenting with different ways of using words, playing with different arrangements of sounds and structures, inventing imaginative texts and playing language games; inferring meaning from clues provided in the surrounding text and developing the capacity to work out meanings by making intelligent guesses;
- *collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information.* This may include: developing ways for learners to organise what they have learned, through making notes and charts, grouping items and displaying them for easy reference or organising information by using notes, charts, mapping, grouping, and developing reference skills by trying to work things out with the help of resources, dictionaries, etc.;
- *develop study skills such as organising information about language.* This includes using mnemonics; skimming, scanning, summarising, paraphrasing; learning formalised routines; learning production routines, etc.;
- *reflect on and explore a variety of strategies to learn more effectively.* Learners discover what ways of learning work best for them by watching other learners in class and using all senses to learn in as independent way as possible;
- *plan, manage and evaluate own learning.* This includes making own opportunities for improving English, checking own progress, identifying own errors; reading different kinds of texts and practising writing, and
- *work with others.* Learning language actively by performing tasks in class, for example by interacting with fellow learners, asking questions, listening regularly to the language, and seeking correction.

### *Resources*

Resources refer to the text-types and media used in order to introduce the subject matter. Text-types and media need to be as varied and authentic as possible since the teacher trainee needs to come into contact with real-life tasks. Some suitable text types for teacher trainees would be: graphs, charts, diagrams, forms,

instructions, letters, lists, maps, messages, notices, poems, novels, posters, signs, reports, newspaper articles, textbooks, etc.

Media include all media that the teacher will eventually use in his or her classroom: videos, tape recordings, pictures, compact discs, films, realia, etc.

#### 4.4.2.3.3 Products of classroom tasks

##### *Task outcomes*

Task outcomes refer to what the student 'can do' with the newly acquired knowledge. De Villiers (1997: 40) maintains that, although outcome implies product only, both the learning process and the learning product should be emphasised.

Task outcomes refer back to the general outcomes and specific outcomes of the course and will need to be assessed in order to determine the success of the teaching-learning experience.

#### 4.4.2.4 Assessment

Vaccarino (1995: 44) aptly states that assessment should be regarded as a natural step in the learning process that serves two purposes: as a guide to learners and a guide to the tutor.

The *Discussion Document on Norms and Standards for Teacher Education, Training and Development* issued by the Department of Education in 1997 (1997: 86), suggests some general guidelines for assessment. Continuous, formative and summative assessment should take place. Formative assessment should be done throughout the year. Summative assessment usually takes place at the end of a course or learning period. It provides a comprehensive profile of students' achievement during the period of learning. In line with world-wide trends in teacher training assessment (McLaughlin and Vogt, 1996), it is recommended that for this course the students keep a 'Classroom English' Portfolio with a record of tasks and exercises completed during the course. McLaughlin and Vogt (1996: 5) say that such portfolios allow for authentic assessment that reflects each student's real progress. In addition, it allows students to learn methods they will one day use in their own classrooms. The development of portfolios and the assessment

techniques involved in such an approach are not discussed in this study but may constitute the subject of another one.

#### 4.4.3. A proposed syllabus document

A syllabus document listing the components, sub-components and elements of a syllabus in Classroom English, as described above, is developed from the outline illustrated in Fig. 6. An outline of this syllabus document is illustrated in Fig. 7.

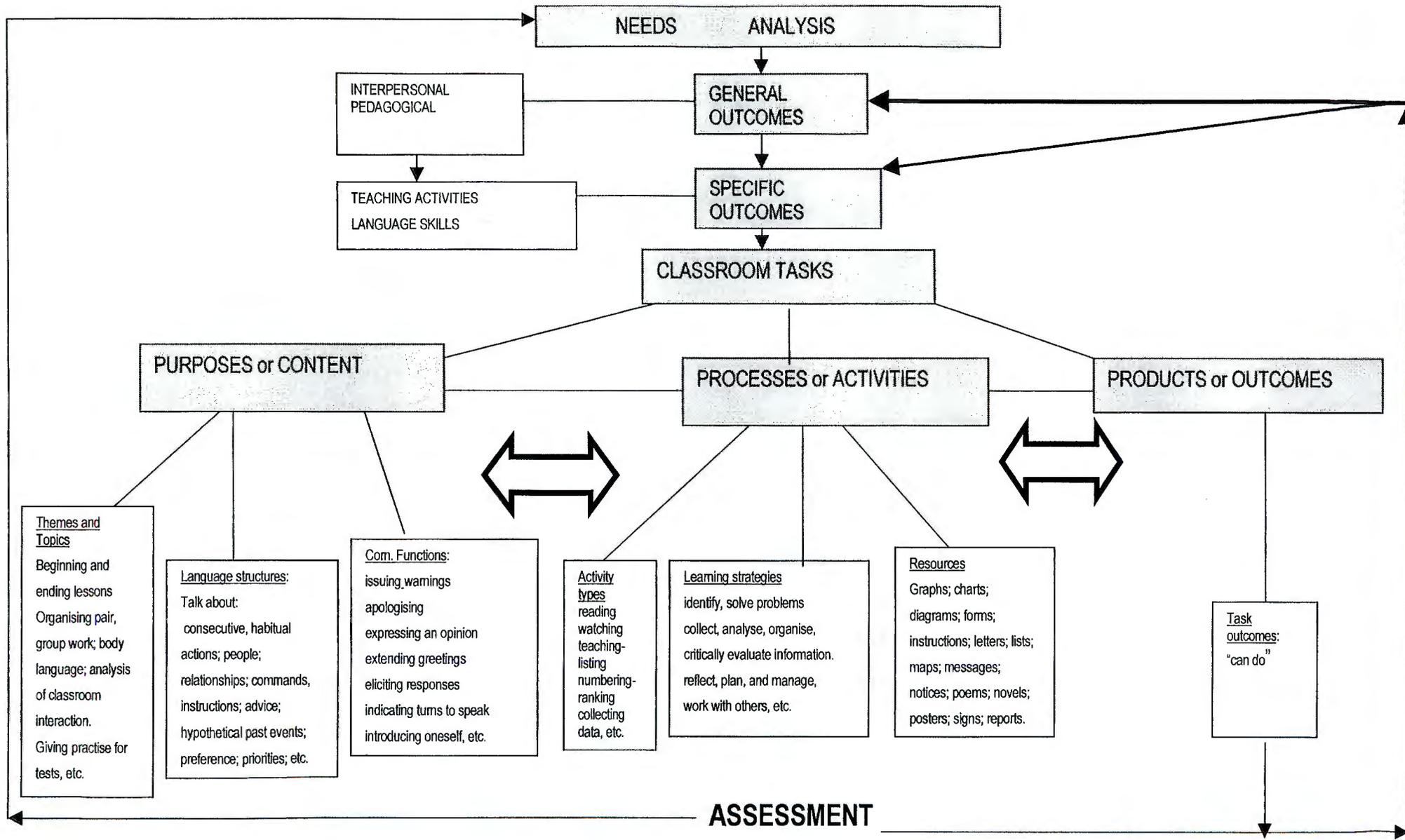


Figure 7: A syllabus outline for a course in Classroom English

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

A brief discussion of syllabus design in general and some of the types of syllabuses available to the course designer, has led to the conclusion that a task-based syllabus may be the most appropriate type for the design of the course discussed in this paper.

An analysis of three task-based models for syllabus design (cf. 4.3.1-4.3.3) shows that the models have much in common and makes it possible for a model for syllabus design (cf. Fig. 6), specifically for a course in Classroom English, to be developed. This model is then used as a framework for the interpretation of the results of the needs analysis (cf.4.4.1 and 4.4.2) and finally leads to the designing of a syllabus document for a course in Classroom English (cf. Fig. 7).

Chapter 5 provides some guidelines regarding the implementing of a task-based syllabus in Classroom English.

## CHAPTER 5

### Implementing the syllabus

#### 5.1 Introduction

Once the general outcomes, specific outcomes, and classroom tasks for a course in Classroom English have been established (cf. 4.2), the classroom teacher or lecturer has the daily task of selecting content and designing holistic language learning tasks.

Nunan (1989: 84) suggests that 'the planning of a course, or lesson, is a matter of putting [a series of] tasks together'. The implication is that what happens on macro-level (selecting of classroom tasks for course design) is similar to what happens on micro-level (selecting of language learning tasks for lesson-design). It should, therefore, be possible for the course designer to take the syllabus outline and implement it in such a way that daily lessons can be designed.

#### 5.2 Lesson design

In order to design lessons, using the syllabus outline as framework, the course designer needs to describe

- the structure of the language lesson
- how the different components of the syllabus can be implemented in an integrated language lesson

##### 5.2.1 The structure of the language lesson

De Villiers (1997) distinguishes three phases within the language learning lesson. She explains that a language learning lesson can be seen to consist of a pre-task, task and post-task activity which each represents a different phase in the lesson (De Villiers, 1997: 285). During the pre-task phase existing vocabulary and concepts are activated. This helps to raise the pupils' consciousness and prepare their minds for new concepts and vocabulary. During the task-phase, learners are engaged in activities and exercises to practise new words, structures, functions and skills that need to be acquired. During the post-task phase the pupils apply newly acquired vocabulary, structures, and functions in a variety of language

learning exercises that may consist of songs, language games, worksheets, crossword puzzles, etc. Cameron (1997:347), who describes similar phases in the language learning lesson, supports this framework. She refers to the pre-task as a preparation activity, the 'task' as a core activity and the post-task as a follow-up activity. Cameron (1997: 347) emphasises that the preparation and follow-up activities need to be seen as internal stages of the task itself with the core activity as central to the whole process of language learning and teaching.

A critical aspect highlighted by Cameron (1997: 347) is the importance of precision in the identification and description of the core activity. She emphasises that lack of precision, in terms of language learning, about the nature and goals of core activities may lead to inadequate support at the preparation stage and under-exploitation of the follow-up possibilities of tasks. To assist this, both Cameron (1997: 347) and De Villiers (1997: 285) believe that the core activity needs to be broken down into sub-components.

De Villiers (1997: 285) divides the core activity of the language learning task into three sub-components. They are the purpose (the why) of the core activity, during which time the lecturer decides on the vocabulary and language structures that need to be learnt from the activity; the process, or types of activities and strategies, involved in the acquisition of the new knowledge (the how), and, finally, a product or learning outcome (the what) defined by a verb with a measurable outcome. The measurable outcome refers to the language or other output learners actually produce as a result of the task (Cameron, 1997: 348) and is thus evaluated in terms of what the students 'can do' with his or her newly acquired knowledge (De Villiers, 1997: 251). Cameron (1997: 348) explains that outcomes can be compared with goals in the evaluation of the task, and that outcomes of the one stage can be used in, or linked with, the next stage of the task. Once the follow-up activities have been completed, the language learning lesson, as one holistic classroom task, may be assessed in terms of the general and specific outcomes described in the syllabus.

### 5.2.2 Implementation of the syllabus outline

When the structure of the core activity is compared with the structure of the classroom task, it is clear that, where classroom tasks define the content, skills and outcomes of the tasks on macro-level, the core-activity in the lesson does the same on micro-level.

A model of how the syllabus outline on macro-level leads to lesson design on micro-level is illustrated in Fig.8.

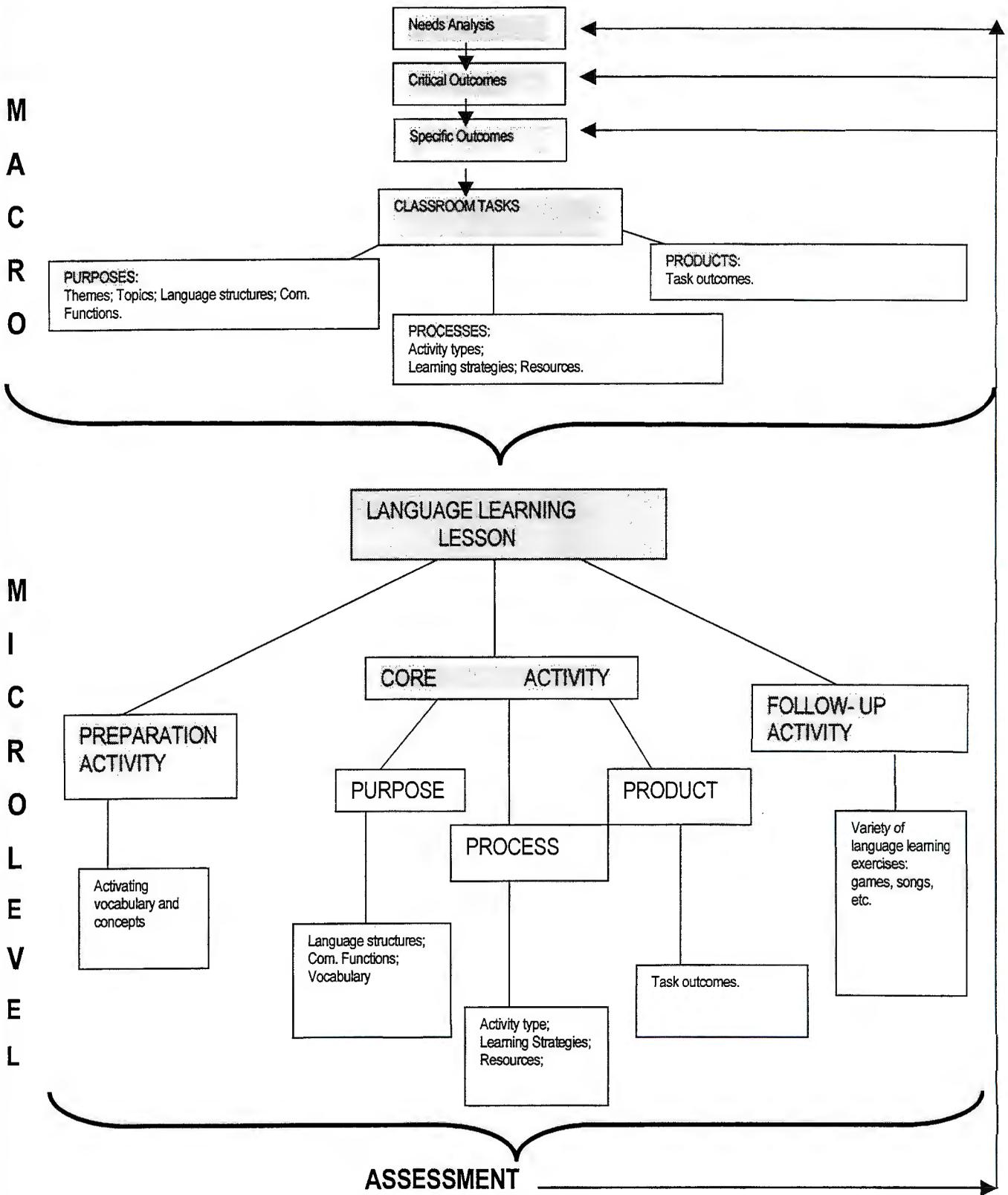


Figure 8: A proposed model for lesson development in the task-based syllabus.

### 5.3 An example of an integrated lesson

The proposed model for lesson development (cf. Fig. 8), incorporating all the components of the syllabus and describing the different phases of the language learning lesson, may now be used for lesson planning and presentation. In the planning of a lesson the general outcomes, specific outcomes, and classroom tasks, consisting of activities and content, are systematically included. General outcomes and specific outcomes may be marked with a date by using Table 3 and Table 4 as a checklist. This prevents over-use or neglect of certain aspects. The same applies to the language structures, communicative functions, learning strategies and resources listed in the syllabus.

The following integrated lesson shows how lessons may be planned and taught. Lesson material, as well as an example of how Table 3 may be used as a checklist, is supplied in Addendum A.

**General outcomes:** Interpersonal and Pedagogical

**Specific outcomes:** Teaching activities and language skills

**Theme:** Classroom Management

**Topic:** Dividing the class into pairs or groups

**Language learning task:** Using Classroom English to introduce pair correction

Lesson phases	Processes (Activity types)	Purpose of lesson			Products
		Vocabulary	Resources	Language structures Communicative functions	Task outcomes
<p><b>Preparation activity</b></p> <p>Introduce concepts and language required for lesson</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read a quotation from a British educational newspaper. Do you agree with the opinion expressed?</li> <li>2. Listen to a tape recording of a teacher suggesting ways in which teachers can manage their classrooms better.</li> <li>3. Imagine that at the beginning of the term, six pupils in your class cannot decide where to sit this term. Read about them and the classroom and then decide where they should sit. Compare answers in a group. Compare your list with the rest of the group. Discuss ways of improving classroom management.</li> </ol>	Disruption Hostile Negative classroom atmosphere Frequent criticism Confrontation Consistent	Tape recording. Handouts	<u>Ways of introducing opinions:</u> Present indefinite tense. I think; As far as I'm concerned... From what I can see; In my experience... What I've found is...	Students discuss possible seating arrangements. They express their opinions and ask other for theirs. They identify ways to improve classroom management.
<p><b>Core activity</b></p> <p>Content, Skills and strategies involved in the acquisition of new knowledge</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read the article on violence in schools in New York and fill in the missing words.</li> <li>2. Complete the rule for the use of the definite article and explain to a partner.</li> <li>3. Complete exercise with instructions that a teacher could use to introduce pair correction on Activity 1.</li> <li>4. Explain to a partner how to do pair correction.</li> <li>5. Use own words or expressions practised above to introduce a pair correction activity.</li> </ol>	Iron grilles Knapsack Slug Intervene homicide	Handout	Prepositions: in, up, along, back forward etc. The definite article  <u>Communicative Functions</u> Giving instructions: Would you mind...? Could you move your desk, please? Generally speaking...	Students use the definite article correctly and can explain the rules for its use to each other. Students complete a close exercise with instructions for pair correction. Students introduce pair correction activities.

Lesson phases	Processes (Activity types)	Purpose of lesson			Products
		Vocabulary	Resources	Language structures Communicative functions	Task outcomes
<b>Follow-up activities</b> Re-enforcement of new knowledge	1. Students take a passage from a textbook in their major subjects and prepare pair work activities and exercises that will demand pair work corrections from their pupils.	Subject-related vocabulary	Textbooks		Students design their own pair correction activity.

Lesson adapted from Spratt (1994:102-109) and Willis (1981:25)

## **5.4 Conclusion**

This chapter describes how the syllabus document (cf. Fig. 7) can be implemented for lesson design on a daily basis (cf. Fig. 8). Lesson design and the different phases in a lesson are discussed (cf. 5.2.) and an example of an integrated lesson is supplied (cf. 5.3). This chapter also suggests that the teacher can use the syllabus outline as a checklist to ensure that no aspect of the syllabus is neglected.

Chapter 6 discusses the limitations of the study and makes some recommendations for future research.

## CHAPTER 6

### Conclusion

#### 6.1 Introduction

Research conducted in this study suggests the need for the introduction of a course in Classroom English at Colleges of Education. This chapter summarises the main features of a course in Classroom English, points out the limitations of the study, and suggests some areas for further research.

#### 6.2 The course in Classroom English

This study shows Classroom English to comprise of two major characteristics: it is simultaneously a classroom language and an ESP, and has features and characteristics in common with both. Such features include the pedagogical and interpersonal functions of a classroom language, the physiological aspects that influence the effectiveness of the communication in the classroom, and ESP characteristics such as goal-directedness, specialisation, homogenous groups and adult learners (cf. Fig. 1).

A brief discussion of syllabus design and some types of syllabuses available to the course designer has led to the conclusion that the task-based syllabus is the most suitable syllabus for the design of a course in Classroom English. This is in keeping not only with recent developments in curriculum design, but also with the Outcomes-based approach to teaching adopted by the Department of Education.

An analysis of three task-based models for syllabus design (cf. 4.3.1-4.3.3) shows that the models have much in common and makes it possible for a model for syllabus design, specifically for a course in Classroom English (cf. Fig. 6), to be developed. This model is then used as a framework for the

interpretation of the results of the needs analysis (cf.4.4.1 and 4.4.2) and finally leads to the designing of a syllabus document for a course in Classroom English (cf. Fig. 7).

A proposed model for lesson development (cf. Fig. 8) shows how all the components of the syllabus may be incorporated in a lesson. It also identifies the different phases of the lesson and the types of activities the students and lecturer may engage in during the different phases. An example of such an integrated lesson is provided in Chapter 5.

### **6.3 Limitations of the study**

This study has a number of limitations. These are:

- it does not propose a full syllabus consisting of modules and units to be completed within a specific period of time;
- it does not indicate how much time will be spent in the language laboratory, in group conversation and in lecturing. All of these specifications need to be clarified once a full syllabus has been designed;
- the needs analysis is based on research and not on the needs of the specific learners who enrol for the course;
- the syllabus can only be evaluated after implementation, and
- assessment criteria need to be developed.

### **6.4 Recommendations for future research**

A number of recommendations for future research can be made:

- the concepts and vocabulary needed by the teacher who uses English as MOI need to be researched and refined, determining the threshold level of proficiency for each subject to be taught through medium of English (cf.4.3);

- the participation of learners themselves in the development of syllabus material needs to be refined;
- assessment procedures, and in particular the use of portfolios, need to be researched, and
- the most effective distribution of contact sessions should be determined. Research needs to be done to determine if contact sessions should be crammed or spread over a longer period of time.

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## **ADDENDUM A – Lesson material for the integrated lesson**

### **Input**

#### **Preparation activities**

##### **1      Reading material**

There are teachers who lack confidence in their ability to deal with disruption and who see their classes as potentially hostile. They create a negative classroom atmosphere by frequent criticism and rare praise... Their methods increase the danger of major confrontation not only with individuals but with the whole class.

*Adapted from Spratt (1994: 106)*

##### **2      Transcript of tape recording**

First of all you can make your classroom as attractive and as stimulating as possible. It should look orderly and purposeful and create the expectation that people do useful work here. It should also be a place that makes your work as easy as possible. The way the furniture is arranged must reflect the way you want to work. It need only take a couple of minutes for a class to rearrange their tables and chairs, after a little practice.

Your lesson planning can also help your classroom management. Plan your lessons so that the work is differentiated so that every pupil, even the lowest attainer, has something productive that they can do and so there is a graded sequence of higher-level extension activities for the others.

Of utmost importance too is how you relate to your class. Teaching is a professional activity, requiring human warmth, tact, sensitivity, resolve and professional detachment. The management of pupils needs to be calm, patient, measured. Your comments should be as positive as possible. You should give more praise than censure, more reward than punishment. We should try to reinforce the behaviour that we want more than we complain about the behaviour that we don't want.

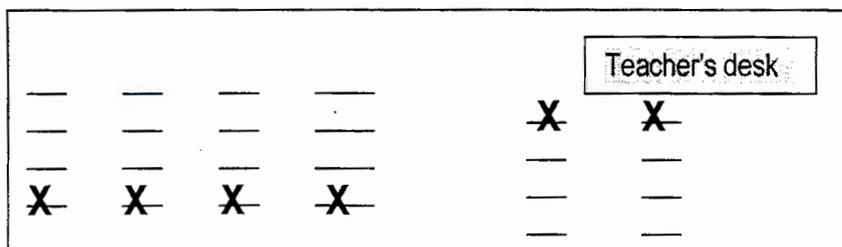
Think too about your own behaviour. Be consistent and don't let your own psychological baggage make you moody. Something ignored one day and punished the next is naturally resented by the pupils. If a situation arises that you cannot control, stay calm and send immediately for support from a senior member of staff.

And finally, don't forget: all the advice in the world can only be of limited use unless we are willing to examine and reflect on what we do in the classroom. Systematic evaluation is the key to any effective teacher development.

*Adapted from Spratt (1994: 134)*

### 3 Class plan

The desks are grouped as follows. Those marked with an X are empty.



#### THE PUPILS

*Martin*: a very bright pupil who lacks concentration and spends a lot of time unintentionally disturbing others.

*Maria*: a very serious pupil who does not relate well to her classmates. She is withdrawn and lacks self-confidence.

*Richard*: an easy-going pupil who works well when he chooses to.

*Sara*: a sociable student who gets on well with others. Sara likes school and school work but her serious problems at home depress her.

*David*: a keen and well-disposed boy but one who has great difficulty in learning. Others tend to laugh at him.

*Anna*: a well-balanced character who is generally a good student.

*Adapted from Spratt (1994:47)*

## **Core activities**

### **1. Reading**

The passage below is an extract from a newspaper article about violence in a school in New York. Read it and then fill in the blanks with *the* where necessary.

Thomas Jefferson High School is a five-storey redbrick building occupying an entire block on Pennsylvania Avenue, in the East New York section of Brooklyn. All the windows on the lower three floors are protected by iron grilles and the main entrance doors are of steel.

Shortly before 10.30 a.m. on a).....Monday, November 25, a fight broke out between b).....two students in a third-floor hallway.

Fourteen-year old Jason Bentley saw that his brother was one of those involved. Intending to help his brother, he pulled out of his knapsack c).....9mm automatic pistol that he had bought on d).....street for R50. e).....boy his brother was fighting saw f).....gun and began retreating down g).....corridor. Jason, in panic, fired three shots. Children in h).....crowded hallway scattered, screaming with i).....terror. j).....first slug.....hit k).....ceiling. l).....second hit Robert Anderson, 48, a teacher, who had been coming to intervene; he staggered into a nearby classroom, wounded in m).....neck. n).....third bullet hit

Darryl Sharpe, aged 16, who fell to o).....floor with p).....blood pumping from his neck and collecting in a pool on q).....polished stone floor. Daryl died in r).....hospital before noon. Jason Bentley fled s).....school, but was arrested later that day on homicide charges.

## 2 Grammar

:

Complete this rule for the use of *the*

Generally speaking, in English, *the* is used to refer to:

- a) .....things e.g. *The box is on the table*
- things that have b) ..... been mentioned, e.g. *There was a boy and a girl. I didn't really notice the boy, but the girl was very smartly dressed.*
- things that are considered c) ..... e.g. *the sun*

It is not used:

- when referring to d) ..... things, e.g. *There was a box on the table*
- when referring to classes of things in e) ..... *Children often need a lot of attention.*

## Answers

1 The following numbers in Activity 1 do **not** take *the*:

*a; b; l; p; r.*

2 a) *specific* b) *already* c) *unique*

d) *unspecified* e) *general*

### 3 Classroom English

A teacher might ask a class to carry out pair correction on Activity 1 with instructions below. Read them and then fill in the blanks.

Right a)..... you all finished? Have you all decided b) ..... each blank? Yes? OK. Now let's move on to c) ..... your answers. I'd like you to correct your work d) ..... pairs, so, look at your answer to the first blank, compare it e) ..... your partner's answer and then decide together what the answer is. Your answers may both be right, or one may be right and the other wrong. But in any f) ..... I want you to talk g) ..... your answers and discuss why you've put the answer you have. Then when you've done blank (a) go h) ..... and do blank (b) in the same way. If you can't agree i) ..... something you can ask me.

So, remember, lots of discussion - I don't want you to just say "yes \ no, agree \ disagree " but really discuss why you've put what you put. OK, does j).....understand?

*Adapted from Spratt (1994:109)*

#### Answers

a)have b) on \ about c) checking, correcting, looking at d) in e) with f) case g) about \ over h) on l) on \ about j) everyone\ body

An example of how Table 3 may be used as a checklist for this lesson is illustrated on page 72. The same method may be used for Table 4.

General Outcomes	Specific outcomes for a course in Classroom English				
I N T E R P E R S O N A L	Teaching Activities	Language Skills			
		Reading	Speaking	Writing	Listening
	Establish and maintain relationships. Date completed: 24-10-98	Skim and scan a text to obtain general idea. Identify details. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Convey meaning clearly and coherently. <input type="checkbox"/>	Develop written texts by presenting main and supporting ideas. <input type="checkbox"/>	Identify details that support a main idea. <input type="checkbox"/>
	Exchange ideas and information. Date completed: 24-10-98	Read written language in meaningful chunks. Use visual clues to work out meaning. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Express opinions. Ask others for their opinion. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Reconstruct information and ideas from print and other media. <input type="checkbox"/>	Understand a speaker's intention. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Listen for specific information.
	Get things done in the classroom and outside. Date completed: 24-10-98	Understand the connection between ideas. Predict the likely development of a text. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Use appropriate formulaic expressions. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Intonation pitch and stress. Use appropriate register to give instructions, make requests.	Formulate clear, unambiguous instructions. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Identify aspects of communication that present problems. <input type="checkbox"/>
	Exchange messages such as letters, reports and circulars. Date completed: 24-10-98	Recognise the presentation of ideas through the use of headings, paragraphing, etc. <input type="checkbox"/>	Use formulaic expressions, intonation, tone, facial expressions and gestures. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Use appropriate layout and visual support. <input type="checkbox"/>	Understand a speaker's intention. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Motivate pupils by conversing about feelings, interests, ideas. Date completed: <input type="checkbox"/>	Locate information and ideas. <input type="checkbox"/>	Use appropriate intonation and stress. <input type="checkbox"/> Elicit responses. <input type="checkbox"/>	Formulate questions. Write comments and reports. <input type="checkbox"/>	Listen for specific information. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Participate in scheduled meetings, seminars, etc. Date completed: <input type="checkbox"/>	Re-read to establish and confirm information. Use strategies to self-correct when necessary by rereading, using context, reading further to clarify. <input type="checkbox"/>	Give reasons. Use appropriate register. <input type="checkbox"/> Control and regulate participation. <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan and organise information. Respond to written ideas by writing letters, notes etc. <input type="checkbox"/>	Recognise key-words to predict development of topic. <input type="checkbox"/>
	Maintain order and discipline. Date completed: 24-10-98		Maintain interaction by agreeing, disagreeing, <input type="checkbox"/> Giving instructions. <input type="checkbox"/>	Write reports, comments. <input type="checkbox"/>	Identify aspects of communication that may present problems. <input type="checkbox"/>

## **ABSTRACT**

Owing to many far-reaching changes that have taken place in education in South Africa, English has become the generally suggested medium of instruction (ANC, 1994). Many teachers, however, are not proficient in the language and feel themselves inadequate and unequipped for their task. This study argues, therefore, that a *specific* course in Classroom English for second language speakers needs to be given a central place in the curricula of Colleges of Education.

In order to propose an outline for a syllabus in Classroom English this study investigates the characteristics of Classroom English, the language needs of a second-language speaker who has to teach through medium of English and the types of syllabuses available to the course designer.

An overview of the types of syllabuses available indicates the task-based syllabus as the most viable option for syllabus design for this particular course. This is in keeping not only with recent developments in curriculum design, but also with the Outcomes-based approach currently advocated by the Department of Education.

The outline for a task-based syllabus in Classroom English suggested in this study identifies the general and specific outcomes for such a course, as well as the classroom tasks that lecturers and students may engage in. It also suggests some possible methods for assessment, and a model for lesson design that shows how all the components of the syllabus may be incorporated in a lesson.

*Descriptors:* Teacher Training; Medium of Instruction; Second Language Learning; Second Language Instruction; English for Specific Purposes; Task-based Syllabus Design; Syllabus Design; Course Design; Classroom Language; Classroom English.

## OPSOMMING

As gevolg van omvangryke veranderings binne die onderwys in Suid Afrika, het Engels die voorgestelde medium van onderrig geword. Baie onderwysers wat egter deur middel van hierdie medium moet onderrig gee, is nie vaardig genoeg in die taal nie, met die gevolg dat hulle ontoereikend en onopgewasse vir hulle taak voel. Hierdie studie dui daarop dat dit noodsaaklik is dat 'n spesifieke kursus in Klaskamerengels vir tweedetaal sprekers ingesluit moet word in die kurrikulum van Onderwyskolleges.

Ten einde 'n raamwerk vir die ontwikkeling van 'n sillabus in Klaskamerengels te ontwerp, ondersoek hierdie studie die kenmerke van Klaskamerengels, die taal-behoeftes van 'n tweedetaal spreker wat deur medium van Engels onderrig moet gee, asook die tipes sillabusse waaruit die kursus-samesteller kan kies.

'n Kort oorsig van die tipes sillabusse wat beskikbaar is, toon aan dat die taakgebaseerde sillabus die mees lewensvatbare opsie vir die ontwerp van hierdie spesifieke kursus bied. Dit is nie alleen in lyn met huidige tendense in sillabusontwerp nie, maar hou ook verband met die Uitkomsgebaseerde benadering wat tans deur die Departement van Onderwys onderskryf word.

Die raamwerk vir die taakgebaseerde sillabus in Klaskamerengels identifiseer algemene en spesifieke uitkomstes vir hierdie kursus, sowel as die klaskamertake wat deur lektore en studente onderneem kan word. Dit stel ook moontlike metodes van evaluering voor en 'n model vir lesontwerp wat voorsiening maak vir die integrering van al die komponente van die sillabus.

*Trefwoorde:* Onderwysersopleiding; Medium van onderrig; Tweedetaalverwerwing; Tweedetaal Onderrig; Engels vir Spesifieke Doeleindes; Taakgebaseerde Sillabusontwerp; Sillabusontwerp; Kursusontwerp; Klaskamertaal; Klaskamerengels