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Communicative Language Teaching and the *ELT Journal*: a Corpus-Based Approach to the History of a Discourse

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Applied linguistics and English Language Teaching

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Abstract

Despite recent challenges, CLT remains influential and continues to be implemented in a number of contemporary ELT contexts. This project represents an attempt to investigate the history of CLT as a means of gaining a clearer understanding of its main principles and ideas. The investigation aims to identify some key concepts in the discourse of the *ELT Journal* over the period when the communicative approach is believed to have emerged. Two consecutive periods are studied; an earlier (1973 to 1981) phase when the journal was edited by W.R. Lee, and a later (1981 to 1986) period under Richard Rossner. The project makes use of two separate keyword “traditions” to examine words that play an important role in the discourse of the journal. Firstly, a machine-based, corpus procedure was carried out, using the collections of articles as a kind of corpus. Later, a more thorough, detailed keyword analysis was undertaken, borrowing from the techniques pioneered by Raymond Williams, in which the histories of individual words are traced chronologically across texts.

Chapter One, the literature review, presents a rationale for the project and the use of history to illuminate our understanding of CLT. It carries out a review of the existing body of literature covering the emergence of the approach and suggests a more systematic and thorough-going historical approach based on primary sources is now needed.

Chapter Two describes the process by which I assembled the methods and tools necessary to carry out the analysis. Chapter Three describes the project procedure itself, explaining the decisions made, and processes arrived at, to carry out the investigation.

Chapter Four presents the first phase of the project’s findings. Quantitative keyword lists are presented and briefly discussed in relation to existing accounts.

Chapters Five, Six, Seven, Eight, and Nine are “word histories” for the keywords COMMUNICATIVE, LEARNER, ACTIVITY, TASK and SYLLABUS, respectively. Using the findings from Chapter Four as a starting point, each chapter traces the history of an important keyword across the chronological period of the corpus, recontextualising data isolated by the quantitative keyword procedure.

Chapter Ten is the project’s discussion and conclusion.

Declaration

I declare that the present thesis has been researched and composed by myself and has not been submitted elsewhere for any other degree or professional qualification.

Duncan Hunter

Chapter One: Literature Review

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 CLT as a Contemporary Approach

It could be easily be argued that the communicative era in British ELT, which began in the 1970s, persists in the present period as the dominant model for language teaching and learning. Howatt (2004) remarks of the communicative approach that although 'some of the details have been modified' in the period since the 1970s, when the 'communication 'revolution'' occurred, its 'achievements have remained largely intact' (p. 258). In the conclusion to his chapter discussing the communicative period, he assesses the revolution as having affected lasting changes. In Paul Davies and Eric Pearse's (2000) *Success in English Teaching*, the authors consider that 'it is probably the approach most used by trained language teachers today' (p. 193). For Swartbrick (1994), writing little more than a decade ago, and describing the implications of communicative methodology for British secondary schools, the achievements of communicative language teaching remain fresh, and the movement contemporary. In the introduction to her collection of articles, *Teaching Modern Languages*, she describes 'the revolution in languages education which has taken place in recent years under the banner of the 'communicative approach' (p. 1). The volume, she explains, aims at defining and explaining issues within communicative teaching so as to clarify our understanding of contemporary issues.

Communicative methods have, it is true, come under attack in recent years, perhaps most prominently for their failure to take into account local conditions and needs. In *Appropriate Methodology and Social Context* (1994) Adrian Holliday raises the issue as to whether techniques, pioneered in a largely western context to address the needs of local learners, should be exported uncritically to other learning-teaching contexts. In Stephen Bax's (2003) article, 'The end of CLT: a context approach to language teaching', included as an intendedly controversial item in the *ELT Journal's*

'Point and Counterpoint' section, this criticism is levelled specifically against CLT. Although CLT 'has served the language teaching profession well for many years' (p. 278), Bax explains, there is now an urgent need to consider solutions to learner needs that take into account factors, 'the culture, the students, and so on', (p. 284) other than methodology. Bax portrays CLT as an approach rooted in the methodology-fixated mindset of the professional past. It is, in his opinion, now time 'to place methodology and Communicative Language Teaching where they belong — in second place — and recognise that the learning context, including learner variables, is the key factor in successful language learning' (p. 286).

Bax's article appears to have achieved its desired effect, as the issue is raised repeatedly by contributors in subsequent *ELT Journal* articles. These responses indicate that CLT is far from a spent force in contemporary language teaching. As a response to Bax's article, in 'The need for CLT in China' (2004 58/3 270—273)¹ Xiaoping Liao rejects Bax's charge that CLT methodology is inappropriate to Chinese conditions. He comments indeed that Bax's position, consistent with a 'relativist' western approach in which teachers are given leeway to determine approaches and methodologies, is itself culturally situated (p. 271). He concludes that the 'adoption of CLT is the government's position and application of CLT will bring about a positive effect on English teaching and learning' (p. 272). Pham Hoa Hiep, in his article 'Communicative Language Teaching: Unity within Diversity' (2007 61/3 193—201) also references Bax's discussion and describes recent attempts to reassess the application of CLT techniques to overseas contexts. Hiep acknowledges the arguments being made, but considers that despite the dangers inherent in adopting any methodological approach, 'CLT is best' (p.193). He explains that '[w]ithin the broad theoretical position on which CLT is based' (ibid) there are a number of interpretations, and many of these remain relevant to present teachers.

¹ Since articles from the *ELT Journal* will be frequently referred to throughout, hereafter this standard format will be used to reference them: ([year] [volume/edition] [page range]).

Apart from the fact that the Chinese government—responsible for the education of hundreds of thousands of children—has now adopted a version of the CLT curriculum in its education system (c.f. for example Jiang (2008)), the opinions of these overseas writers caution against premature dismissal of CLT as a compelling and persisting approach. And while Bax's article makes valid points concerning the need to adapt methods to the conditions in which they are applied, it also acknowledges the central position that CLT still occupies in the present teaching environment. Bax furnishes several, anecdotal, examples from his own experiences that illustrate its continuing authority. He describes a teacher at a development conference who indicates surprise that Czech students can learn English even when 'they do not use CLT approaches' (p. 279). Another speaker, during a workshop presentation, conveyed the opinion that Dutch language learning techniques, which did not refer to CLT practice, were 'by implication, backward and bad'. He identifies as a contemporary assumption the idea 'that CLT is not only 'modern', but it is in fact the only way to learn a language properly' (p. 279). For good or ill, CLT is still regarded, particularly in the discourse of "western" journals and literature, as "best practice".

1.1.2 Understanding CLT

Given the persistence of the influence of CLT as a methodology, and its continued dominance in the discourse and practice of the profession, it is surely essential that ordinary practitioners possess a clear understanding of its central ideas. Swartbrick presents the need to sharpen and clarify 'our definition of "communicative"' (p. 1), so as to arrive at a better understanding of the notion underpinning contemporary approaches, as an important goal of her collection. This aim, she suggests, is essential, if the word is to be rescued from its status as a cliché, inferring "best practice", but without a clear shared meaning. Terms such as 'communication', 'differentiation', 'autonomy', 'role play' tend, she suggests, 'to infiltrate the language of education' (p. 10). At the same time, however, they 'are interpreted in superficial ways, quickly become jargon, and eventually lose their original meaning and purpose' (p. 10). They 'become shorthand for teachers' (p. 1); terms whose

meanings, and ownership are too often lost by the teachers whose profession they shape.

However, recovering “shared” meaning is by no means an easy task. Swartbrick acknowledges the vagueness with which the term is frequently used (p.1). The absence of a clear shared definition for CLT and the eclectic nature of the methodology appear, in fact, to form part of its identity. Johnson (1998) explains that it is for this reason that the term ‘approach’ is frequently used as a label for methods conforming to communicative principles, and under his dictionary entry for “Communicative Method” argues that there are ‘many versions’ (p.68) of communicative methodology. Hiep, whose article supporting the continued application of a communicative approach has just been described, makes the same point. Existing as a ‘broad theory’, he explains, CLT describes ‘the nature of language and of language learning and teaching’. Yet ‘many different ways of understandings, descriptions, and uses of CLT’ exist (p. 193).

It is surely significant that both Hiep and Swartbrick, having identified as their aim the definition of the nature of CLT, look at once to history as a means of achieving insight into the nature of the approach. The practice of history—the examination of events, occurring in the past but impacting on the present— appears as the obvious first step in their investigations. The opening article in Swartbrick’s (1994) collection, *The Historical Ball and Chain* by William Rowlinson, attempts to place recent changes in the broad context of hundreds of years of language teaching history. Hiep, less ambitiously but in a similar historical vein, begins his task by tracing the communicative movement to its origins in Hymes’ 1972 work *On Communicative Competence*. These writers share the common sense belief that the concepts underpinning Communicative Language Teaching, in its present-day incarnation, can be revealed and illuminated by tracing the “history of ideas” that gave rise to them.

1.1.3 Using History to Understand the Present

This proposal, that the root of present concerns in ELT might be revealed through a careful examination of their past origins, seems to these writers a common sense

proposal that needs little in the way of theoretical justification. However, given the central role that history will play in this research, it is necessary here for me to expound briefly upon the importance and relevance of history to this investigation.

A general claim for “history”, frequently made by its practitioners, is that its practice can confer on the investigator the benefits and insight of past experiences. In his (2004) work *Landscape of History: How Historians Map The Past*, John Lewis Gaddis states that, for all the post-modern turns the discipline has taken in recent decades, the act of interpreting past events remains ‘a vicarious enlargement of experience from which you can benefit’ (p. 10). Gaddis considers that this is a belief that can be traced to some of the discipline’s earliest and most famous practitioners. Returning to the period of the Renaissance, he explains that in *The Prince*, Machiavelli offers his patron a ‘distillation’ of past events in order to ‘vicariously enlarge the personal experience’ (p. 8) of the reader. Gaddis considers that this claim concerning the value of history has been maintained, and persists in the modern period. He notes that E.H. Carr, the twentieth century historian who became known as an opponent of the traditional “empiricist” tradition of history, nevertheless shared this view concerning the aim of the discipline. Gaddis cites Carr’s proposition that the effectiveness of human thinking has been enhanced by the ‘experience of the intervening generations’ (cited p. 9) recovered and recorded by historians.

Applying this simple, but nevertheless compelling argument, it seems reasonable to assert that the investigation of past events within the ELT profession can recover similarly useful insights, and offer a comparable “distillation” of experiences, which can be of real practical value to present day ELT practitioners. Swartbrick, mentioned in the last section, exhorts teachers to regain ownership of the key ideas within their profession, and recover them for their own benefit and utility (p.1). One response, then, an attempt to make sense of our current, continuing pre-occupation with communicative ideas, is to carry out an investigation of its origins.

1.1.4 Arguments for History in ELT

These may appear to be rather general and abstract arguments for the relevance of history, and in particular for the claim that history can recover data that is of value for present-day practitioners. However, looking within the literature of applied linguistics and ELT, more “local” endorsement for a historical solution to contemporary questions can be identified. Three works in particular, H.H. Stern’s (1983) *Fundamental Concepts of Language Teaching*, Diane Musumeci’s (1977) *Breaking Tradition: An Exploration Of The Relationship Between Theory And Practice In Second Language Learning* and Smith’s (2005) *Teaching English as a Foreign Language, 1936–1961: Foundations of ELT* make the case that history is not only desirable, but necessary for the language teaching profession. Examination of the past, they suggest, is essential if we are to gain a real understanding of the developments that continue to shape its progress.

Stern’s *Fundamental Concepts of Language Teaching* offers an historical, and interdisciplinary, perspective of developments in language learning leading up to the early communicative period. It was written in 1983, when CLT was still far from fully-fledged, and had yet to experience the effects of Howatt’s communicative ‘sea change’ (Howatt 2004²; p. 255). Much of Stern’s discussion of ELT history is found in Part Two of his book, ‘Historical Perspectives’ (pp. 75–114) the first chapter of which, ‘Approaches and Studies’, deals directly with the question of history in ELT. Here, Stern explicitly and enthusiastically advocates historical examination of past events and documents in language teaching. Musumeci (1997), referencing Stern as a rare practitioner and advocate of language teaching history, describes these influential passages, noting that Stern devotes an ‘entire chapter’ of his *Fundamentals* ‘to plead in favour of historical research’ (p. 5).

² Henry Widdowson contributed to Howatt’s 2004 (second) edition of *History of English Language Teaching*, and is listed as co-author. To simplify frequent, future references, however, hereafter I shall refer only to Howatt (who wrote all but the final chapter).

While Stern's voice is not unique in advocating a historical approach to problems in the profession, his arguments for its value in uncovering the roots of present concerns, remain, as Musumeci suggests, the most powerful and persuasive yet made. Stern begins his advocacy of history by describing the psychological development of an individual teacher. Self-awareness and introspection are, he explains, key to personal professional development. Through a better understanding of our own individual pasts and influences as learners and teachers, he feels, we learn much about our presence in those roles today. Stern then goes on to make the same argument for the language teaching profession as a whole (pp. 75—76), and thereby connects the notions of "personal" and "professional" history. Both the individual and the profession exist as entities whose identity has been constructed over time, and whose present is inextricably linked with their past.

Apart from these psychological arguments for the examination of the past, Stern then produces a number of important, practical reasons for professional history. He explains firstly that when knowledge concerning the past is lost, it must then 'be laboriously rediscovered in succeeding generations' (p. 76). A historical study of second language teaching can, he believes, 'establish a descriptive record of the development of language pedagogy in the past' (ibid) which might then serve as 'a store of ideas, experiences, and practices' for future generations of practitioners (ibid). Stern's position here, quite at odds with the "progressivist" tendency present in much ELT writing (and discussed further below) is that the past might be viewed not merely as a record of past failures or "near-misses", but also of important and recoverable achievements. The second, closely related advantage of establishing such a store is that the profession might be given a broader perspective on new developments. 'Language teaching theory', Stern notes, 'has a short memory' (ibid). As a result 'of our involvement in current problems and polemics, we have tended to ignore the past or to distort its lessons, and to re-enact old battles over and over again' (pp. 76—77). Through studying the history of language teaching, we gain background knowledge which helps us to contextualise and test the claims of contemporary practitioners against a record of earlier experiences. In summary,

Stern feels that by looking at earlier periods, we might ‘gain perspective on present-day thought and trends and find directions for future growth’ (p. 76).

Stern produces a further argument for serious study of our professional past: existing coverage is inadequate, since too little research has been carried out, and much of the meagre work that has been done is of an inadequate standard. Stern points to the paucity of material in existence (pp. 76–77) which provides an inadequate resource for the profession. He notes that ‘[a]ccessible and reliable information is lacking even on quite recent and important trends of development’ (p. 77). The gap that he points to here is the absence of studies describing such developments as the direct method or ‘audiolingualism in the late sixties’ (p. 77). Looking at this passage today one cannot but think that the history of the communicative movement falls into the same “urgent” category.

Stern makes a final, indirect, but nonetheless crucial argument for the value of — well-conceived and professionally executed—histories of our professional past. He observes that language teaching practitioners do in fact make reference to history frequently, but generally unsatisfactorily, in their usual discourse. He complains, however, that when writers include passages of historical description, frequently as introductions to a body of work, they are ‘often no more than a backdrop to set off with bold strokes those aspects the writer wishes to emphasize and the historical treatment is necessarily brief and often reveals a definite bias’ (p 77). Given the prevalence of this practice, he suggests, “real” history, carried out upon some more principled basis, is all the more necessary to combat the negative effect of these writings.

Musumeci and Smith echo many of these points. Musumeci ‘s *Breaking Tradition: An Exploration Of The Relationship Between Theory And Practice In Second Language Learning* also presents history as a crucial means of discovering insight into contemporary concerns. In a section entitled, in fact, ‘the past as a tool for the present’ (p. 109), Musumeci points to our deficiency in this area. She notes that ‘only a handful of studies have examined systematically how language teaching has

evolved over the past two thousand years' (p. 1). Considering 'the questions facing today's second language teaching profession she wonders, 'have they never been asked before?' (p. 3). Although studies of various kinds proliferate which aim to 'amass data and inform teaching practice' (p. 3), one kind, 'the historical study' is conspicuous by its absence. Like Stern, Musumeci identifies as an important rationale for historically-oriented research the fact that it is frequently used, and misused, by authors to justify the validity of their ideas. She notes that, to this end, a kind of surge of historical study occurred in the U.S. in the 1960s, during the prolific and confident early phase of the audiolingual movement. History was frequently invoked by these writers to explain and justify the audiolingual concepts then being promoted (pp. 109—110). Critiquing the work of one such author, she derides his 'use of "history" to support a theoretical position' (p. 112).

In the introduction to his multi volume collection, Smith also complains that 'history is only referred to, indeed 'used' within contemporary applied linguistics and ELT discourse as a foil to the more 'progressive' ideas being promoted' (p. xvii). Partly for this reason, he passionately advocates the undertaking of serious historical research as a tool within ELT study.

1.2 Review of Historical Summaries dealing with CLT

1.2.1 Introduction

The comments made by Stern and others in the last section describe a contradiction in the way that history is used by writers in the language teaching profession. On the one hand, they concur, there is a scarcity of dedicated historical research carried out in the field. At the same time, however, they suggest that it is quite common for authors in the field to refer (if briefly) to history in professional writing as a means of introducing or establishing the setting for a particular idea. Indeed, when reviewing the literature produced within our profession (dictionaries, training manuals and encyclopaedias, for example) which attempt an explanation of the communicative approach, it is striking how frequently writers begin their descriptions with some form of historical analysis. Generally, these works furnish a distilled summary —

“potted histories” in effect—of the events leading to the emergence of the approach. The author’s intention in each case is frequently the same; to identify the influences and impulses that led to CLT’s appearance, and therefore to present its underpinning ideas to the reader. In this section I will carry out a brief survey of some of these historical summaries, identifying the content of their ideas, and commenting on the nature of the accounts produced.

1.2.2 Approaches and Methods in English Language Teaching

Richards and Rogers’ *Approaches and Methods in English Language Teaching* (1986/2001), is perhaps the most best-known work introducing the history of ELT theory and practice. Pennycook (1989) describes it as an ‘influential’ (p. 601) survey of major approaches to language pedagogy. Its format and approach, as we shall see, does seem to have had some considerable impact on later writers. Most chapters of the book, apart from the earliest (which deal generally with the history of the Reform Movement) describe an individual language teaching method, framing it in the historical context from which the authors feel it to have emerged. Interestingly, the final section of the book, ‘Current Communicative Approaches’ includes several chapters, each dedicated to a separate method: including the Natural Approach, Cooperative Language Teaching and Content-based Instruction. An important feature of the book’s format is its use of an identical template, or framework, to describe each approach or method. In each chapter the ‘underlying theories of language and learning’ (p. ix) are presented first, and followed by other sections such as ‘learning objectives’, ‘syllabus’, and ‘procedure’. The purpose of this framework, according to the authors, is to ‘highlight the similarities and differences between approaches and methods’ (p. viii), but this has, as we shall see, important implications in terms of their presentation of the methods’ main features.

Richards and Rogers, perhaps for reasons of space, provide little in the way of background context (social, international or educational) in their description of the origins of CLT. Whereas Howatt (2004) (whose work will be discussed in detail below) sets the scene in terms of the educational and social changes that were taking place in the 1960s and 1970s —depicting, for example, the expansion of

tertiary education that occurred—Richards and Rogers’ account focuses almost exclusively on the theoretical background of CLT. The writers trace the origins of the movement to intellectual developments outside language teaching. They identify as major influences ideas concerning language and context originating from British applied linguistics, American sociolinguistics (in particular Hymes) and the speech act theory that emerged from the discipline of (Searle and Austin’s) philosophy. Malinowski’s work in anthropology and his cooperation with Firth are cited as other important influences (p. 158).

Apart from the influence of linguistic theory, two other “agents” of historical change are described. The role of the committee set up by the Council of Europe to produce the Threshold Project, is described in some detail. Richards and Rogers cite the success of the Threshold Project as an important reason for the rapid acceptance of CLT, alongside the writings of British applied linguists (p. 154). The authors also suggest that some of the impetus for the movement came from ideas developed in other areas of the education system. They explain that CLT’s’ learner-centredness and experience-based view of second language learning bear antecedents in the early twentieth century American education system. The account describes the attempts made by an important American commission in the 1930s to introduce an experience-based curriculum, and develop classroom practices and materials in response to student needs (p. 158)

One important observation concerning Richards and Rogers’ account is its depiction of a series of methods emerging and evolving over time, in a clearly-defined sequence. Grammar-Translation, the Oral Approach, Situational Language Teaching, Audiolingualism; each method is depicted as emerging as the result of the application of new ideas. CLT, in this scheme, is the latest and most successful product of a process of continuous improvement. Chapters often begin with a description of the errors acknowledged in earlier approaches, and the insights gained by the proponents of the newer method. Pennycook (1989), as we shall see, criticises this “progressivist” narrative in which methods appear to develop in some teleological way towards their current, more advanced state.

This is, also, very much a history which privileges theory over practice in its account of events. The authors' foregrounding of theory is embedded in the organisation of the structure of the book itself. By presenting theories of language and learning before any other exposition takes place, the authors come to identify them as the starting point, or essence of the approach, out of which practices emerge. The direct, causal connection between theory and practice — and indeed the direction of movement between these spheres — is made clear by this structure. That this is an intended consequence of their approach is evident in their statement that the 'Communicative Approach in language teaching starts from a theory of language as communication' (p. 159).

It can be observed too, that the account of the approach's emergence appears quite similar to Howatt's in terms of the influences it references. Like Howatt, the authors describe as key influences on the movement, British functionalism, and Malinowski's cooperation with Firth. Their description of the work of the Council of Europe team is also similar, describing the same main players and achievements (p. 154). Whether Richards and Rogers have deferred to Howatt's analysis in their approach to the subject, or simply arrived at similar conclusions due to their shared concern for theory, is unclear. However, some of the writers' ideas are fresh; their suggestions concerning the influence of the 'experience-based' view of second language teaching, originating in America and proposed in the 1930s, is wholly new.

1.2.3 Other 'Sketches'

Pennycook, as we have seen, observes that Richards and Rogers account is 'influential'. It is certainly true that other works sharing its objectives frequently also appear to apply its narrative pattern and assumptions. Diane Larsen-Freeman's (2000) *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* is written to serve much the same function as Richards and Rogers' work. Addressing the imagined reader, presumably a trainee teacher, the author explains that her goal 'is to for you to learn about many different language teaching methods' (p.1). As in Richards and Rogers' work 'one teaching method' (p. 6) is presented, a chapter at a time. Larsen-Freeman's segmentation and chronology of approaches is similar, though not

identical, to that produced by Richards and Rogers. The sequence of methodological periods prior to the advent of CLT is given as: grammar translation, direct method, audio-lingual method, the silent way, desuggestopedia, community language learning and TPR. In her account, much less emphasis is placed on history as a means of introducing each method, and her account of the emergence of CLT is particularly brief. As in *Approaches*, Larsen-Freeman's account is very much a record of the new approach's success in addressing the inadequacies of earlier methods. 'In the 1970s', she begins, 'educators began to question if they were going about meeting the goal [of communication] in the right way' (p. 121).

Paul Davies and Eric Pearse's (2000) *Success in English Teaching* (Oxford: OUP) is a book designed to serve as a reference for classroom teachers and teacher trainers, and contains a single chapter, 'Development in Teaching English', dedicated to the area of history. The authors explain that they are offering here 'a historical survey of widely used approaches' (p. 185), and describe 'the principles underlying them and the typical activities and techniques used in each' (p. 185). The chapter offers what is in some respects a distilled version of the book-length project undertaken by Richards and Rogers. An innovation, a chronological chart, indicates the sequence in which approaches are felt to have become widespread, and presents a timeline (grammar translation from the nineteenth century, the direct method from c. 1900, etc). Despite the novelty of its presentation, the writers' representation of a series of methodological "epochs" appears familiar from other accounts. The authors suggest that the approach 'grew out of the new theories of language and language learning that developed in the 1960s and 1970s in Britain, the USA and elsewhere' (p.193). As in other descriptions, changes in theory are depicted as the prime mover, with 'new classroom procedures' (ibid) emerging only as a result of the impact on teaching of ideas originating in external disciplines.

Johnson's (2001) *An Introduction to Foreign Language Learning and Teaching* is another work explicitly aimed at new or developing teachers. Like Davies and Pearse, Johnson confines his historical analysis of the development of recent methods to a single chapter: 'Language teaching; a brisk walk through recent times'. Johnson

sequences and labels methods in much the same way as other writers (he describes for example the emergence of Grammar Translation and the Direct Method, as well as the later appearance of Audiolingualism). His account is also conventional in that he describes events occurring outside the profession as the starting point for the movement. Johnson depicts the intellectual ‘sociolinguistic revolution’ (p. 182) of the early 1970s as the starting point of developments, and specifically mentions Hymes’ paper ‘On Communicative Competence’ as an influence on practitioners like Wilkins. ‘The sociolinguistic revolution had’, he explains, ‘a great effect on language teaching’ (p. 182).

However in some other respects Johnson’s narrative is unique. One section, combining a description of ‘situational and audio-visual language teaching’, demonstrates the common features of these methods. Johnson appears to suggest in these passages that these techniques, with their emphasis on ‘the notion of ‘the context of situation’’ (p. 179) were in some ways antecedents of CLT. This has the effect, rare in most short accounts reviewed here, of depicting CLT as a continuation, or development of existing traditions, rather than as a revolutionary movement that replaces and dismisses earlier ideas. It seems significant that in the beginning of his chapter Johnson cites Kelly’s huge (1969) retrospective, *25 Centuries of Language Teaching*, and summarises as its central insight the observation that ‘each generation, in ignorance and through vainglory, pats itself on the back for re-inventing the wheel’ (p. 161). This observation militates against the depiction, clearly present in works such as Richards and Rogers’, of methods improving and evolving over time in a kind of evolutionary sequence.

1.2.4 Substantial Encyclopaedia Entries

Two entries from professional encyclopaedias are sufficiently substantial, and indeed, authoritative, to merit assessment as accounts in their own right. Entries in the (1998) *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Applied Linguistics*, edited by Keith and Helen Johnson, cover much of the same ground as the historical summary he provides in his *An Introduction to Foreign Language Learning and Teaching*. Although the accessible and friendly tone of that work is absent from his writing here, the

“shape” of the narrative is noticeably similar. Under the entry “CLT”, academic ideas, emerging from external disciplines like sociolinguistics, are depicted as providing the initial impetus behind the communicative movement. Johnson explains that ‘the roots of the movement lie in the emphasis given at that time to sociolinguistics [...] and pragmatics’ (p. 68). A much longer entry “communicative methodology” contributes a more detailed version of the same account. Johnson explains that the origins of a ‘standard model’ of communicative methodology ‘lie in the reconceptualisation of language behaviour which occurred in the early 1970s with the work of sociolinguists like Hymes, ethnographers of speaking, ethnomethodologists, speech "activity" theorists and others’ (p. 68). Johnson adds influences from British sources of theory (including Halliday and Firth) and recalls Hymes’ challenge to Chomsky’s notion of linguistic competence. Once again, Johnson appears to depict Wilkins work with syllabuses as arising almost as a direct consequence of these earlier intellectual events. He explains that Wilkins’ notional/functional framework owed much to ‘the view of language formulated by Hymes’ (p. 69). Once again, practical work is described as arising later, as a consequence of theoretical insight.

Sandra Sauvignon’s entry for ‘Communicative’ in *Language Teaching in the Encyclopedia of Language Teaching and Learning* (2000) is complex and multi-stranded. In Howatt’s history, Sauvignon appears as an important figure in the early communicative approach; her publication of ‘positive classroom research’ utilising Hymes’ ‘rubric’ is described as stimulating British practitioners’ interest in his ideas (2004: p. 253). Like Johnson, then, Sauvignon is a direct participant in the events she describes and cites her own contributions more than once in the entry. Perhaps as a result of her firsthand experience of, and involvement in its history, she furnishes a particularly detailed and wide-reaching summary of the new approach’s historical roots. The convergence of different ideas, originating in a wide variety of geographical locations and disciplines, is emphasised in her account. She traces the origins of CLT to ‘concurrent developments in both Europe and North America’ (p. 124). ‘Europe’ in this context is effectively separated into Britain and the Continent. She describes the work of ‘the Council of Europe’ (p. 124) and British efforts to

develop effective forms of needs analysis. She then describes—almost uniquely, it should be noted—some projects aimed at improving the process of materials development, aimed at communication, undertaken in France and Germany (p. 124). American developments are then described, focusing on Hymes’ ideas, and drawing a parallel between his work (with its emphasis on ‘the integration of language, communication and culture’ (p. 125) and Firth’s in the UK.

Sauvignon, then, adds much to our understanding of events, and foregrounds contexts generally neglected in other accounts. However an emphasis on theory, and the application of a pattern in which theory gives rise to practice, is present in her (as in almost every other) account of the approach. She explains for example that CLT ‘can be seen to derive from a multi-disciplinary perspective that includes , at least, linguistics, psychology, philosophy, sociology, and educational research’ (p. 126). Practice is presented, even in the case of her own development of materials, and the Council of Europe’s of their syllabus, as emerging or responding to the more important impulse of theory.

1.2.5 Reflections on these Historical Sketches

What then, can be gleaned from these accounts concerning the history of the emergence of CLT? The summaries concur concerning the main origins and influences on the approach. They cite, though to a varying extent and with different degrees of coverage, developments in sociolinguistics (particularly the work carried out by Hymes) as a particularly powerful influence. Some of the works, notably Richards and Rogers’, and Johnson’s, also point to an earlier tradition in British applied linguistics, including Firth, Halliday and Malinowski, that regarded language as a form of social behaviour (though no evidence of their direct impact is offered). Many of the accounts also describe Chomsky’s attacks, throughout the 1960s, on the structuralist and behaviourist ideas that were felt to underpin audiolingualism as an impulse and encouragement for new, “communicative” ideas.

Where an attempt is made to explain the mechanism through which these ideas pass into ELT and form the basis for some concrete action in that field, the work of the

Council of Europe's "Threshold" team is frequently referred to. Even here, though, writers like Johnson tend to characterise their achievements as responses to the intellectual developments that occurred in external disciplines, rather than as pragmatic and practical attempts to resolve problems that arise within language teaching.

Apart from this privileging of the perspective of theory, two further themes appear particularly common. The first is that CLT is the last of a sequence of methods, each an attempt to solve the problems of language and language learning, and a reaction against the inadequacies of the previous, partly- or wholly-failed approach. The second, related, theme is that CLT arose as a response and solution to the inadequacies of discredited audiolingual and SLT methods. In many of the summaries, events such as Chomsky's attack on behaviourist and structuralist principles "dramatise" the exposure of these inadequacies, as does the description frequently given of Hyme's later criticism of Chomsky's own, too narrow, position.

At a methodological level, Stern's comments concerning the need for original research, carried out using original documents, may not appear wholly applicable in the case of these summaries. It is, after all, the aim of these accounts to supply the reader with a simple (or even simplified) and uncontroversial account of the appearance of the communicative approach. In the case of the encyclopaedia entries, it might be said, the standard of scholarship is extraordinarily high, with the authors making careful reference to the seminal, theoretical works felt to have had most impact. As we have seen, however, Stern's criticism concerning the 'derivative' nature of some accounts does seem applicable, particularly in the case of Richards and Rogers' narrative, which is perhaps too similar to Howatt's to warrant serious attention as original history. The widespread acceptance of certain narrative patterns —the tendency to emphasise theoretical impulses for the movement, and to describe CLT as emerging as the last link in an evolutionary chain of teaching approaches, for example— might itself be seen as evidence of a 'derivative' and uncritical tendency in these works.

1.3 Retrospective Accounts

1.3.1 Introduction

One observation that can be made concerning the historical summaries that were reviewed in the last section, is that they were largely produced by individuals who participated in, and even (as in the cases of Johnson and Sauvignon) contributed significantly to the histories being written. This draws attention to the obvious but nevertheless important fact that the development of CLT occurred within living memory. Many of the approach's pioneers are not only still alive, but continue to be active in the profession. One advantage that this offers the historian is the opportunity to review, as primary, firsthand descriptions rather than secondary sources, the more informal accounts of those who had direct experience of the events and issues being investigated. Fortunately, a number of practitioners' reflections have recently been assembled in the form of "retrospectives", commemorating and celebrating the developments of the recent professional past. These accounts, produced without reference to any other source apart from the practitioner's own memories, are often unstructured and informal, and offer a narrative that has been filtered through the experience of a single individual. They are, nevertheless, invaluable in that they offer the reader an opportunity to observe events from a variety of different perspectives, and to identify apparently insignificant details that might be omitted from more "official" accounts. Here I will review two such retrospectives: Jack Richards' "30 Years of TEFL" and "Forty Years of Language Teaching" (2006), a collection of personal reflections published in *Language Teaching*.

1.3.2 '30 Years of TEFL'

Jack Richards' (2000) retrospective '30 Years of TEFL' is a personal account of 'changes that have come about in language teaching in recent years' (p.1). The methodology that Richards deploys is a complex hybrid. On the one hand his approach is openly subjective. He mentions that he has 'recently had the opportunity to reflect on' the changes that have occurred during his career (p.1), and

to some extent his assessments appear to be highly intuitive evaluations of the changes that have occurred. On the other hand, his account has also been partly formulated based on his assessment of a considerable body of (what historians would refer to as) primary data including 'several hundred journal articles and books' (p.1). Apart from this considerable "corpus", he also considers articles drawn from two 'important professional journals' (p1), *English Language Teaching Journal* (as it would have been known in 1970) and *English Teaching Forum*. In accordance with his overall aim, Richards has focused his reading on two five year periods; the first being 1970-1975 (in order to garner a sense of the "before" picture) and the second ("after" period) 1995-2000.

Richards' findings are too numerous to describe in detail here. However, there are several observations that can be made concerning their validity, and usefulness in arriving at an understanding of CLT principles. First of all, since Richards has selected two five year periods, at the start and end of the chronological timeline under discussion, little effort is made to describe what occurred 'in between'. The "then" and "now" mode of description prioritises, in fact, very recent developments, such as the increased acceptance of World English, whose longevity and significance cannot yet be ascertained. Richards' history is in effect, an assessment of the events that have led to the "state of play" today.

Richards' decision to use a "then" and "now" assessment also has the effect of accentuating, and perhaps even simplifying the differences that exist between earlier and contemporary periods. In the section labelled 'what is the role of grammar in language teaching?', for example, Richards arrives at a pair of bullet-pointed lists that are, by and large, neat opposites: 'Then: sentence –grammar the focus of teaching' heads the first list, while 'Now: grammar taught in meaningful contexts' (p. 9) appears in the second. In such lists, a sense of the complexity of the changes is sometimes lost. His assertion that, for example, grammar, is, only 'now' taught in meaningful contexts, contradicts his own account, in *Approaches And Methods In Language Teaching* that SLT carefully contextualised structures well before the 1970s (e.g. p.35). There is also, in these paired descriptions, a sense that

a value judgement is being made, that the profession has moved on from past inadequacies. This contributes to the impression that the narrative is being “shaped”, perhaps excessively, by the writers’ own proclivities.

1.3.3 ‘Forty Years of Language Teaching’

1.3.3.1 Introduction

‘Forty Years of Language Teaching’ (2006) draws together the experiences of several (generally high-profile) participants in the ELT industry, asking each of them to reflect on particular periods in which they were active. The project is surely unique, in that it gathers together the first-hand accounts of a large number of individuals who were well placed to observe changes in the profession firsthand. This project, in a sense a form of “contributory history”, was instigated by Christopher Brumfit, at a meeting of the Board of *Language Teaching* in 2005, as a means of commemorating the journal’s 40th year of publication. Brumfit proposed that a number of academics ‘who had started their careers in one of the preceding four decades’ (p.1) be invited ‘to comment on what appeared to them were the major new trends that represented best hopes for the future at that time’ (p. 1) . Reflections concerning four decades: the sixties, seventies, eighties and nineties, are therefore included.

While the 1970s and 1980s, the first two decades of the “communicative period”, are perhaps of greatest relevance to this investigation, descriptions given of the 1960s, and therefore the events leading up to the appearance of the communicative approach, are also considered here. Some details of the contributors and accounts produced are shown in table 1.1, below.

Table 1.1 Some details of contributors and accounts in 'Forty Years of language Teaching'

Contributor	Current location	Period described
H. Douglas Brown	San Francisco State University by, USA	The nineteen-sixties
Elaine Tarone	CARLA, University of Minnesota, USA	
Michael Swan	St Mary's College, University of Surrey, UK	
Rod Ellis	University of Auckland, New Zealand	The nineteen-seventies
Luke Prodromou	Greece (sic)	
Udo Jung	University of Bayreuth, Federal Republic of Germany	
Anthony Bruton	University of Seville, Spain	
Keith Johnson	University of Lancaster, UK	
David Nunan	University of Hong Kong, China	The nineteen-eighties
Rebecca L. Oxford	University of Maryland, USA	

Given the detail and length of these accounts it seems most appropriate here to identify common themes, rather than comment at length on individual contributions.

1.3.3.2 The Characterisation of CLT and its Development

Many of the contributors give a sense of the chronology of events, and the speed and rapidity with which change overtook the profession. Tarone, writing about the 1960s, feels that by the end of that decade the foundations of 'CLT change' (p. 5) were in place. Swan describes the 1970s as the period in which new ideas emerged and events 'suddenly got much more complicated' (p. 4). Luke Prodromou, refers to the same decade as 'early pioneering days' (p. 6). For Anthony Bruton, too, the 1970s was the definitive decade in the history of ELT, playing in its history the same role as the 1960s 'for pop music' and being, definitively, 'the decade of the Communicative Approach (p. 7).

What ideas and preoccupations characterise the new movement? Contributors refer to a bewildering array of influences. Tarone describes the emergence of 'interlanguage study, second language acquisition research, communicative language teaching and English for specific purposes' (p. 3). Swan mentions the appearance of such innovations as 'discourse analysis by Coulthard and Brazil' (p. 4), and (referring to Munby's work in this field) the appearance of needs analysis approaches. Discourse analysis and sociolinguistics are also cited as major influences. Rod Ellis emphasises the role of interlanguage theory, but also mentions Widdowson's theoretical contributions. Luke Prodromou remembers that teachers were pre-occupied with functional-notional syllabuses, ESP and 'teaching language as communication' (p. 6). Nunan's description of the 1970s emphasises shifts in methodology. He explains that the decade was 'punctuated with the so-called designer methods movement –Suggestopedia, the Silent Way, Community Language Learning and so on' (p. 9).

1.3.3.3 CLT as a Reaction against Audiolingualism

Another common observation that emerges from these articles is the degree to which developments in the 1960s and 1970s are portrayed as reactions against, and departures from, audiolingualism. The precepts of audiolingualism are often described in some detail, generally in order to portray it as a discredited methodology whose obvious shortcomings made reform necessary. American

contributors seem to converge closely in their descriptions of the features of the approach. H. Douglas Brown, for example, describes the ‘Audiolingual Method’, as being ‘firmly grounded in linguistic and psychological theory’ (p. 1) and the ‘ “ scientific descriptive analysis” ’ of languages arrived at by linguists like Fries (p. 1). A similar depiction appears in Elaine Tarone’s piece. Brown explains that during that decade the ‘widely embraced ALM [Audiolingual Method] was destined to grow into disfavour’, as it was challenged by developments in linguistics, cognitive psychology, and research findings that challenged the ability of ALM techniques to ‘teach long-term communicative proficiency’ (p. 1). Perhaps surprisingly, this American narrative appears to have been accepted and developed by some of the British contributors. Michael Swan, writing from a British and European perspective, explains that during the 1960s ‘[s]tructuralism and audiolingualism reached us belatedly and complicated matters’ (p.3). Luke Prodromou, too, comments that his epiphany concerning the validity of new communicative approaches occurred when he attended a talk at Leeds University in which communicative and ‘audiolingual’ approaches were contrasted (p. 6). Tarone, whose experience bridges American and British/European contexts, describes Corder’s recent Edinburgh work on ‘the learner’s built-in syllabus’ (p. 2), as an off-shoot of Chomsky’s belief in an innate language acquisition device which ‘helped overturn the intellectual foundations of audiolingualism’ (p. 2). She adds that the cumulative effect of the changes that she was observing ‘would help to end the audiolingual era in the USA’ (p. 3). This version of history, in which audiolingualism, underpinned by behaviourist and structuralist principles, is superseded by a more enlightened, communicative ideology serves in a way to dramatise the conflict between old and new approaches, which are often contrasted as direct opposites. It is a model which, as we shall see, Smith (2005: p. xvi) explicitly refutes, and describes as a ‘fallacy’.

1.3.3.4 ELT and Continuous Change

Another theme which emerges in many of these accounts is the notion that English Language Teaching is a profession subject to, and perhaps afflicted by, waves of rapid and/or continuous change — often originating in external disciplines. H. Douglas Brown, evaluating the five decades that preceded the 1960s, suggests that

this tendency already adhered to the profession: '[a] glance through the previous five decades' language teaching shows that as disciplinary schools of thought – namely psychology, linguistics, and education – waxed and waned, so went language-teaching trends' (p. 1). He describes 'the rise of 'scientific' oral approaches at the beginning of the 20th century' which were then abandoned with a return to grammar-translation methods in the 1920s and 1930s. This was then overturned by a 'revival of behavioural and structural schools of thought in psychology and linguistics' occurring during the 1940s and 1950s. Brown describes this process as 'a cyclical pattern in which a new method emerged about every quarter of a century' (p. 1). Swan suggests that this pattern continued into the 1960s and 1970s, and remarks that for many practitioners during the two decades, 'newer was axiomatically better' (p.4). Referring to the early communicative period, Johnson also describes (though in more positive terms) this cycle of innovation and decline; dawn, noon, dusk in his analogy. He even cites Wordsworth's lines concerning the French Revolution:

Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven! (p. 8)

For Johnson, CLT represented the dawn of –the latest of many –new eras in language teaching.

1.3.4 Reflections on these Personal Accounts

What, then, can be said of these accounts? As was posited in the introduction to this section, they clearly offer the reader an opportunity to view the developments that occurred in the early communicative period from a variety of firsthand perspectives. The longer ensemble piece, "Forty Years of Language Teaching", is particularly useful in this respect. Characterisations of the early communicative movement, such as those furnished by Bruton, provide a rich, complex distillation of the influences perceived as important at the time. Some of these are largely unrecognised in the "official" summaries already reviewed. Apart from sociolinguistics and speech act theory, repeatedly referred to in those pieces, contributors in these articles mention the important role played by the emerging tradition of discourse analysis, and the specific role in the formation of "communicative theory" played by Henry

Widdowson. Perhaps even more importantly, many of the accounts emphasise the influence of SLA theory and research, and the related area of psycholinguistics. Corder and Krashen, virtually neglected in narratives such as Richards and Rogers, are here represented several times as central figures in the communicative movement.

From the perspective of methodology, these accounts are clearly highly valuable, but also significantly restricted by their fundamental nature and purpose. They are all, ultimately, highly personal, and deliver interpretations of history that are necessarily selective and controversial. Even Richards' piece, which appears to have been assembled based on a sophisticated review of hundreds of documents, offers what is in the end a very personal view. His insights, simplified into lists of contrasting propositions, reflect his valuable but very subjective assessment of general chronological trends.

1.4. Towards a Methodology for ELT History

1.4.1 Satisfactory Studies

So far, then, two kinds of historical account describing the communicative period have been reviewed. Firstly, a number of short historical summaries produced as a means of explaining and characterising CLT through a history of its emergence, and secondly, some retrospective, first-hand accounts of the same period. As we have seen, narratives in both categories provide insight which assists in building our understanding of the events surrounding the emergence of CLT. However, as helpful and interesting as these accounts may be, they do not appear to qualify as "history" in the normal sense of that term. They do not conform (or even intend to conform) to the scholarly standards and practices of that discipline. This is largely a matter of function. Accounts, like Johnson's, in his *Encyclopaedia*, of the emergence of communicative methodology, have not been not written for the purposes of history *per se*, but rather to introduce and contextualise the discussion that follows. These pieces, in other words, are not histories produced "for their own sake"; they serve some local function, introductory or explanatory, in a larger text. Bearing this in

mind, I have attempted in the reviews above to evaluate passages on their own terms, taking into account the writers' purposes.

These purposes explain, and often justify features that might otherwise be considered shortcomings. Many of the historical summaries, for example, bear evidence of having borrowed, uncritically and without reference to primary sources, elements of earlier accounts. In the case of the personal retrospectives, it is generally the case that little or no reference is made to data other than the individual's own memory of the events. From the stand-point of traditional history, these limitations represent serious methodological flaws. Considering the nature of these accounts, however, these features are understandable or even essential. A historical summary necessarily brings together "known" information from existing secondary accounts; the expectation of a personal memoir is that it is inherently subjective and does not make reference to other records.

One implication of the comments made in the last paragraph might be that, applying stringent methodological criteria, the sketches and retrospectives reviewed so far can in some sense be "dismissed" as academic history. But what, exactly, are the criteria that should be applied to assess whether or not a work qualifies as such? This is, clearly, a crucial question with respect to this investigation, which is intended to furnish an account that is satisfactory from an academic, historical point of view. Fortunately, the issue of methodology in ELT history has been fairly extensively discussed by authors observing the poor state of work carried out into our professional past. Stern, Musumeci and Smith, in particular, have written on the subject in order to suggest what standards of historiography need to be applied. In the rest of this section, I will summarise the main points of their discussion so as to arrive at a list of important methodological principles.

1.4.2 Key Methodological Criteria

1.4.2.1 Selection and the Use of Primary Sources

As we have seen, Stern, in his *Fundamentals*, complains not only concerning the paucity of historical material in existence (pp. 76—77), but also its quality. He believes that many of the studies that have been carried out, particularly those he describes as ‘general historical surveys’, lack academic rigour, and fail to conform to basic standards of historical scholarship. Stern believes that studies should:

- contain adequate references to the research upon which they are based (p.77)
- explain the principles upon which materials are selected for study. He notes that a reader ‘rarely finds’ a discussion of the reasons for the selection of the events, books or names ‘(ibid) in most pieces of existing professional history.
- not be derivative; elements of one account (including errors) are too often found in later ones! (ibid)
- ought to be based on the examination of primary sources (p. 77, pp. 87—88)

This last point is clearly the most pressing, in Stern’s view, as he dedicates an extensive swathe of his “methodology” chapter (pp. 87—94) to this issue. In a section ‘the study of primary sources’ (pp. 87—88), Stern makes clear his belief that “second-hand” history, based merely on the observations of others’ accounts, is not sufficient (p. 87). The task of identifying and investigating materials from the past should now, he urges, be carried out. He offers as examples of materials that might be beneficially studied:

Theoretical and polemical writings, older teaching grammars, textbooks and other manuals for learning languages, early issues of language teachers’ professional periodicals, government papers and reports of public commissions concerned with language questions (pp. 87—88).

Smith, too, raises these methodological concerns in the introduction to his (2005) collection. Like Stern, Smith explicitly extols the value of historical investigation based on primary materials, emphasising the need for original research which might arrive at fresh findings, and challenge standard narrative patterns established by

historians. 'A return to sources is needed', he explains, 'if ELT professionals are to be enabled to evaluate the past on its own terms' (p. xvii). Smith, indeed, offers this reason as an important rationale for his assembly of his collection. He hopes that the examination of such source materials might lead to 'a more accurate appreciation of the history of ELT' (p. xvi).

1.4.2.2 Scope: General Survey or 'Particular Aspects'

Related to the question of methodology, is the nature of the account being produced. In his examination of existing historical work, Stern distinguishes between two groups of studies that have been made; 'general surveys', and studies of 'particular aspects'. Within the first group he provides two further categories, those (for example Mackey's (1985) *Language Teaching Analysis*) which provide a general chronological treatment, and other thematic surveys such as Kelly's *Twenty Five Centuries of Language Teaching*. Stern's conclusion, after considering examples of work in each sub-category, is that both are needed, and that 'twin' approaches can be combined to complementary effect (p. 83). However, while he identifies much of value in general accounts, Stern seems to favour the approach taken by writers in the second group, those studying 'particular aspects'. Stern feels that by selecting and restricting their field 'historians have a better chance of discovering and analysing a manageable body of data and thus of contributing to an understanding of language teaching in general' (p. 83).

1.4.2.3 Perspective and Bias

Another important consideration is the need to take into account the *perspective* of the history being written. The issue of perspective is related to that of *selection*—described by Stern, and mentioned above—and pertains partly to the origins of the materials being examined in order to build a description of past events. However, the issue of historical perspective does not end at the stage of selection, but has implications for the kind of narrative the historian is likely to construct. Smith draws our attention to the idea that many histories of the industry have been formulated so as to privilege the perspective of a powerful minority of its participants. He describes as a frequent misconception the view that 'ideas, materials and practices

for ELT have been in the past, and continue to depend on applied linguistic expertise (rather than is, on the experience of teachers themselves)' (p. xvi). Partly as a result of this, he feels, something of a "mythology" (ibid) has grown up concerning recent history. A set of 'common ahistorical and anachronistic assumptions' (ibid), observed in professional contexts, such as conferences, where history is deployed, have sprung up, which need to be counteracted. Events in the profession are too often attributed to the outworking of theoretical and academic activity. This is a top-down view of history, in which practitioners "at the chalkface" play only a passive role.

Pennycook's (1989) stance on this issue, in 'The Concept of Method, Interested Knowledge, and the Politics of Language Teaching' is more elaborately theoreticised than Smith's "commonsensical" observations, and less optimistic. For Smith the privileging of the perspective of academia in much existing history is a problem that rests in the accounts themselves. The contribution of practitioners less engaged in abstract theory is under-represented in such narratives, since writers (often academics themselves) are more likely to be interested in theoretical developments. For Pennycook, however, the imbalance reflects the nature of the power and knowledge relationships that exist in the real world; between the academic and practitioner, the British 'Centre' and the non-European 'Periphery'. The history that is produced reflects the all too real 'power of the Western male academy in defining and prescribing concepts' (p. 612). His critique focuses on these power relationships at different, connected levels —economic, international, and gender-political. Pennycook, whose article includes a historical survey, and who has subsequently published works (e.g. Pennycook 1994) containing much ELT history, comments that within the industry 'there in fact exists a one-way flow of prescriptivist knowledge', which is produced 'in the central academic institutions'. Such academic expertise is privileged 'over other possible forms of knowledge' (p. 596). The 'other' neglected forms of knowledge that Pennycook refers to here include the practical, experiential knowledge of classroom teachers. Therefore, while Smith and Pennycook's approaches might differ from the perspective of history, their conclusions concerning the neglect of practitioners in existing accounts are strikingly similar.

Smith and Pennycook concur that the perspective adopted by the professional historian contributes to the nature of the account they are likely to generate. Smith believes that, as a consequence of perspectives emphasising the role of theory, a widespread view of ELT history has emerged which depicts ‘a decontextualised, quasi-allegorical procession of methods’ (p. xvi); one common example of this being a methodological progression through phases of Grammar-Translation, Audiolingualism, and the Communicative Approach (p. xvi). One result of this is a tendency to emphasize an underlying sense of progress; Smith explains that such narratives contain a sense that the ‘past is ‘worse’ than the present’ (p. xvii). This view, in which events are depicted optimistically as developments, progressing through stages towards some present or future attainment of methodological excellence, conforms to the model derided by “general” historians as “Whig History”. This term, still used by contemporary historians (cf. for example Adrian Wilson and T. G. Ashplant’s (1988) ‘Whig History and Present-Centred History’) describes, derogatively, accounts such as McCauley’s *Nineteenth Century History of England*, which depicted history as a staged progression towards political enlightenment. Generally focusing on the lives of Great Men, history comes to be dramatised so as to demonstrate the effects of their heroic, progressive efforts.

Richards and Rogers’ account, depicting the emergence of CLT as the last stage in a series of language teaching developments, clearly conforms to Smith’s description of ‘quasi-allegorical procession of methods’. Pennycook remarks that the historical introduction to Richards and Rogers’ (1986) work ‘reflects a ‘positivist and progressivist’ (p. 601) view of history, in which the scientific advances achieved by the western Academy are translated into a succession of increasingly theoretically well-grounded and therefore satisfactory language teaching methods. This view is, he suggests, at odds with writers like Kelly, who emphasise the perennial character of language teaching ideas, and their adoption by societies according to changes in cultural and educational priority rather than scientific advancement. Pennycook explains that, as a result of the perspective adopted by Richards and Rogers, emphasising theory and the activities of linguists and academics, ‘a historical view emerges’ in which older approaches guided by “tradition” are gradually replaced

by newer, more effective ones governed by scientific principle (p. 601). Like Smith, Pennycook clearly feels that it is time other perspectives—and forms of narrative—are considered. The position adopted by these historians matches Swartbrick's, who exhorts teachers to regain ownership of the key ideas within their profession, and recover them for their own benefit and utility (p.1).

1.4.2.4 Conclusion: a List of Methodological Criteria

On the basis of this survey the following methodological criteria can be identified:

- The investigation should proceed based on the use of primary sources
- Selection of materials must be carried out according to some clearly stated principles
- Care should be taken to ensure that an account is not dominated by a particular personal or professional perspective. The question should be asked: “whose” history is being written?
- Efforts should be made to avoid a “progressivist” tendency, as described by Pennycook, in which events are depicted as emerging wholly due to a process of evolution and the application of increasingly refined professional insight.

1.5 Histories

1.5.1 Introduction

In this section, attention turns towards what might be described as “scholarly” accounts, in which some effort has been made to observe some, or all, of the methodological criteria outlined in section 1.4. Looking at the short list of studies that are candidates for this section, Stern's complaint concerning the scarcity of historical studies seems only too pertinent. Only three works, it seems, exist which might provide a model for a sources-based investigation. Moreover, of these three, as we shall see, only one can be considered a substantial account, from which significant insights concerning the communicative period can be discovered.

1.5.2 Linguistic Imperialism

Phillipson's (1992) *Linguistic Imperialism* offers an account of recent ELT history, describing the spread of ELT, in its contemporary form, as a kind of post-colonial enterprise. Phillipson's work is overtly "political". His stated aim is to 'unravel some of the links between ELT and imperialism' (p. 313). He attempts to show how ELT, re-invigorated in the post-colonial period, partly as an instrument of euro- and anglo-centric hegemony became 'integral to the functioning of the contemporary world order' (p. 318). His account therefore appears to offer insight into an area that is generally wholly neglected in the theory-focused accounts that are typically produced as summaries. In describing the aims and activities of important institutions such as the British Council, the Overseas Development Agency and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, he seeks to illuminate the socio-economic and political context in which post-war ELT developed into its existing form.

Unfortunately, despite its (implicit) claim to examine recent and contemporary events, Phillipson's narrative concentrates on the 1950s and 1960s — the early period of decolonization in which, he believes, ELT began its expansion. He describes, with particular care and attention to detail, the proceedings and outcomes of the 1961 Makerere Conference and the 'seven tenets' (including for example, the need for native teachers) expounded by those attending (pp. 173—215). These tenets, he explains, reveal the means by which post-colonial control of 'Peripheral' countries has been maintained by the industry's 'Centre'. Given this interpretation, and the author's belief that the industry continues to operate in accordance with these tenets, one might expect Phillipson to refer, in some detail, to the development of CLT. Given the significance and persisting influence of this methodology (and indeed its apparent conformity to the spread of the Centre-to-Periphery pattern he identifies), the absence of any direct reference to CLT is surprising. In terms of content, his work offers very little of direct relevance to the communicative period at all.

While Phillipson's work can, in a sense, be dismissed as irrelevant in terms of its direct reference to the history of CLT, it does provide illumination concerning

methodology. Despite his ELT background, Phillipson has clearly gone about his work as a “serious” historian. Firstly, concerning primary sources, Phillipson has dedicated much effort to the papers produced by the Makerere conference, examining them with great care and attention to detail (a whole chapter, indeed (pp. 173—215) analyses the Makerere ‘Tenets’). In addition, he explains that he has also interviewed ‘eight ELT policy makers who have been influential as academics, administrators, and writers over a period of thirty years’ (p. 4).

Phillipson’s adherence to the principle that accounts should be established on the basis of primary sources appears at first impressive. However concerning the (related in this case) issues of selection and interpretation, his work appears less satisfactory. On the one hand, the author carefully outlines the geographical limitations of his study; focusing on the role of ELT in developing nations, and explicitly neglecting the ‘adult education market’, including ‘self-funding’ countries like Japan and Southern Europe (p. 303). However, Phillipson often appears to select and interpret data in order to defend a pre-existing position. Developments are described at times as though they were engineered by the ‘architects of ELT’ (p. 179), powerful institutions like the British Council. ‘Inter-state’ ELT, we are told, is part of these institutions’ wider policy; ELT professionals who ignore this fact ‘are deluding themselves’ (p. 303)! Chronologically, his account appears to restrict itself largely to the events of the early post-colonial period, perhaps since the documents produced at this time bear stronger evidence of the colonial attitudes he seeks to reveal. Howatt (2004) in fact criticises Phillipson’s interpretation of features of the conference, and points to several apparent errors in his account (p. 323). Phillipson’s narrative is, on the one hand, refreshing in that offers an alternative perspective to those academic and theory-focused narratives that predominate in historical summaries. Yet his own narrative is, also powerfully controlled by over-riding themes— in this case the neo-Marxist ideas that form the basis of his critique.

1.5.3 *Breaking Tradition*

The title of a short (9-page) section in Musumeci’s (1997) *Breaking Tradition*, “‘Communicative Language Teaching’ Theory and Current Pedagogy” (pp. 116—124),

raises high hopes that she will carry out an investigation into the period using the techniques she extols (making reference to Stern , as we have seen) in her introduction. However, while the book does treat the period in a sense, making reference to some of its thinkers and ideas, it is not really useful as an account of the movement's emergence. Musumeci's book is dominated by a single underpinning theme; that throughout the last two millennia or so of its history, language teaching can be seen ('except during the brief hiatus of audiolingualism' (p. 111) to have consistently looked to a self-evidently effective, natural, communicatively-oriented approach to language learning (ibid). In the foreword (not written by the author) it is explained that while theories to this effect have appeared and re-appeared over successive generations, language teaching 'has an apparent tradition of not conveying theory into practice' (p. ix).

The section "'Communicative Language Teaching" Theory and Current Pedagogy' is , in fact, essentially an argument for this position. CLT is portrayed as the latest incarnation of a perennial idea, expounded by theorists before and since Comenius, that communicatively-oriented techniques are most effective for the purposes of language learning. Thus, when providing a list of features describing CLT (p. 116), and even analysing a communicative lesson based on observation notes (pp. 120—124), Musumeci's intention appears to be to draw parallels with these earlier approaches. Although the effort is "historically-oriented", in the broad sense, it does not attempt to describe or illuminate the emergence of the approach itself. Methodologically, also, the passage has little to offer. Even the notes of the lesson observation do not really represent "a primary source", but have been taken from Omaggio Handley's (then recent) 1993 *Teaching Language in Context* manual.

Concerning selection and interpretation of sources, it can be seen that in Musumeci's, as in Phillipson's, work, the author describes events in a way that supports, perhaps too closely and uncritically, her main theme and purpose. As a further example of this tendency, 'audiolingualism' is generally portrayed, in the passages describing the emergence of CLT, as the predecessor, and then adversary of the new communicatively-oriented approach. This construction of events,

criticised by Smith as largely irrelevant to the context of British ELT, is given much credence in her account. Her emphasis on this idea can be explained by her desire to communicate her over-arching theme. Audiolingualism, in Musumeci's historical scheme, represents the force of "tradition", which can now, she believes, be broken as communicative-oriented theories are allowed to pass into practice. While Musumeci's ideas concerning an ongoing conflict between traditional and communicatively-oriented tendencies may seem plausible, they are foregrounded in her text to the extent that no actual narrative of the emergence of CLT appears to have been attempted.

1.5.4 A History of English Language Teaching

1.5.4.1 A Satisfactory Account

In A.P.R. Howatt's (2004) *A History of English Language Teaching*, finally, we discover an account which has much to offer concerning the history of the communicative movement. No doubt recognising the gap that his work seeks to fill, Howatt has produced a history of the period which balances scholarship with personal insight, and which provides a description of specific events within the communicative period. Having established some criteria for 'good history' (as summarised at the end of section 1.4.2.4) it is disconcerting to discover that only one work can be identified that fulfils them. It is, as a result, all the more important that Howatt's account be examined in careful detail. There is, ultimately, little else upon which to proceed.

1.5.4.2 Content

1.5.4.2.1 Overview of the Work

Looking firstly at the content of the passages describing the communicative period in *A History of English Language Teaching* (Howatt 2004), it is evident that the work offers the most comprehensive account of this period to date. Even so, the passages describing the emergence of CLT are but sections in a volume which attempts, ambitiously, to describe the whole history of English language teaching. The early

chapters begin with the first emergence of English as a state language during the Fifteenth Century, and the work describes events right up to the current period. Given the scope of his work, Howatt's description of individual periods is necessarily quite brief, usually providing only a general sketch of developments. Fortunately, the—two—sections that deal with the communicative period are the most detailed. The first, an overview, '1970 to the present day', identifies broad changes which have occurred during the most recent phase of the profession's history. A second, longer section, 'The notion of communication', is a parallel account of the communicative period, focusing on particular influences and ideas.

In his introduction to Part Three of the *History*, where he briefly previews the developments of the twentieth century, Howatt explains that during the communicative period, attention was drawn to 'the way that instruction in a new language can be designed to meet the needs of learners intending to use it for real-life communication' (p. 231). Howatt returns to this theme in his later sections, and offers the "broad-brushed", but surely plausible explanation that the movement appeared as a result of changes in the social, cultural and broader educational context in which learners and teachers were situated. He describes a number of these: a growing demand for specialists to assist as advisors in the newly independent Commonwealth countries (p. 326); the worldwide expansion of ELT, and its extension within the UK to centres beyond its traditional powerbase in London (p. 250, p. 326); an explosion of activity in tertiary education as the government carried out initiatives to provide opportunities for HE to a broader section of the population (p. 250, p. 326), which in turn encouraged modern subjects like linguistics to be added or upgraded in academic departments (p. 250); with increased immigration, the appearance of language education for adults and children of ethnic minorities (p. 326). New learners, and new teachers appeared, who urgently needed to be able to deploy English for real-world use.

1.5.4.2.2 The Role of Theory

Howatt's narrative quite clearly confers upon applied linguistics, and by extension the universities that included the new discipline, the role of dealing with the

challenges that appeared. The formulation of a solution to the problems presented by these radical changes, was he believes, 'a task tailor made for applied linguistics, which took the opportunity of extending its interests well beyond the rather narrow concern of 'core linguistics' (phonology, syntax, etc.) which had tended to dominate its work in the early stages, to cover a much broader spectrum of language-related studies' (pp. 326—327). Applied linguistics, he suggests, was uniquely placed to address the changes that were occurring, and adapted itself internally quite radically to do so.

Howatt promotes the view that many, if not all of the main initiatives behind CLT, came from a small group of universities; most of the initial energy behind the emerging CLT movement' he explains, 'came from those universities which had invested heavily in the language sciences and related subjects' (p. 250). He describes the special contribution of the University of Edinburgh, which 'played a particularly influential role in the early stages of the movement' (ibid). This, he describes, was partly due to the legacy of its involvement in the 'first wave' of applied linguistics. Some of the leading figures in that movement (Halliday, Abercrombie, Catford, Strevens, Corder and Sinclair among them) now came forward to make their mark on the emerging communicative project (pp. 250—251).

Furthermore, Howatt's narrative describing the emergence of the central preoccupations of CLT is really something of a history of theory. He identifies many of the key notions underpinning the communicative movement as originating from outside ELT and applied linguistics, in the disciplines of philosophy, theoretical linguistics and sociology. Austin, for example, is described (along with Jespersen) as one of the 'godfathers' of CLT (pp. 252—253). The speech act theory that Austin and Searle contributed, A.P.R states, 'came from philosophy' (p. 328). Howatt also describes the important role of the intellectual tradition of 'functionalism', with its roots in the discipline of theoretical linguistics. The account describes how Prague School and American sociolinguistic traditions came into contact with each other through the agency of Roman Jakobson (p. 253,328—329). Sociolinguistics is also described as playing an important role, becoming influential in particular through the

works of Labov and Hymes (p. 329). Hymes' criticism of Chomsky's definition of linguistic competence (pp. 329—330), and his definition of communicative competence, are cited as having a direct influence on the communicative movement (p. 253). Closer to home, Howatt describes the contribution of British applied linguists such as Firth. Like Sauvignon, Howatt draws parallels between American and British work (p. 253).

1.5.4.2.3 Other Important Influences

Along with the institutions of the universities, Howatt's account also places considerable importance on the activity of the "Threshold Level Project", and describes this in considerable detail. Howatt regards the project, initiated by the Council of Europe in 1971, as a serious attempt to address the needs of a large, new group of adult learners. He describes its starting point as the analysis of the language and learning needs of these students (p. 252,338). He explains how Wilkins' famous syllabus model, with its 'categories of meaning as well as linguistic form' (p. 252) was proposed, in order to develop a new format for courses which address learner needs. Van Ek's definition of a general Threshold level appropriate for all languages, and the appearance of its first specification in English, is portrayed as one of the main spurs for the burst of publishing activity that heralded the arrival of CLT on the general professional stage (p. 338).

Howatt also proposes, from time to time in his account, that ideas from 'general' education may have played an important role in the events that occurred. He suggests for example that the shift in ELT away from arguments over methods and towards arranging appropriate conditions for learning 'was in line with much of the progressive educational thinking of the time' (p. 326). The success of new, communicative ideas can therefore be attributed to 'the fact they were generally in harmony with those of the contemporary educational establishment' (p. 326). He relates that teachers, attempting to locate satisfactory theories of learning in the aftermath of the collapse of behaviourism, found welcome ideas in the 'discovery' and 'activity' approaches which had appeared in 1960s education (p. 334). The idea of 'activities' which became such a characteristic of CLT pedagogy, he suggests,

‘derived in part from the primary school projects of the 1960s’ (p. 334). The broader educational environment is thus described as a major source of ideas—one which many in the ‘humanistic’ second phase of CLT’s development may have turned to more readily than applied linguistics.

1.5.4.2.4 Two Phases of Development?

Howatt’s description of the communicative movement does not depict it as a single, monolithic event, but rather appears to separate it into two phases. Although the initial formulation of communicative principles is described in the most detail, Howatt suggests that by the end of the 1970s a second phase began in which teachers, rather than academics, played the major role. As he states, a ‘sea-change’ occurred in ELT at this time as teachers became dissatisfied with the remote and technical aspects of needs analysis (p. 255). Many teachers began to resent the influence of the newly powerful discipline of applied linguistics, and sought ‘an alternative place in the sun which seemed “safe” from science’ (p. 256). Teachers began to look to the humanistic approaches of thinkers like Stevick for inspiration. Stevick’s publications reintroduced methods that had fallen out of favour during the earlier ‘scientific’ era of language teaching, and refocused professionals on the human process of learning (p. 256).

Howatt’s analysis is that the communicative movement, at least in its applied linguistics-inspired ‘first phase’, put forward a powerful theory of language but failed to furnish a coherent account of how learning itself occurred. Partly, he suggests, this was the result of the wilful rejection by practitioners of those ideas which were put forward, and which perhaps threatened to curtail their new freedom. Perhaps surprisingly, Howatt appears to suggest that the post-Chomsky models of learning provided by thinkers such as Corder and Krashen were virtually ignored:

What was language teaching to make of this story which was expressed with considerable vigour by some powerful voices? In general, the answer seems to have been: leave well alone. In the real world teachers had to get on with the job

of teaching foreign languages and the post-behaviourist eclecticism served them well enough (p. 257).

Howatt therefore describes the decline of an early, initially compelling approach based on 'needs analysis' which collapses due to its sterility and lack of appeal to practitioners. But he perhaps neglects to genuinely characterise the period that follows; beyond his description of teachers' efforts to resist new theoreticisation, little effort is made to distinguish the "new" from the "old" phase.

1.5.4.3 Methodological Considerations

1.5.4.3.1 Original Sources and Selection

As far as use of original sources is concerned, it can be seen that Howatt makes extensive reference to source materials throughout his account. Apart from theoretical works, Howatt also references a (smaller) number of classroom textbooks, and even refers to resources, like the *Concept 7-9* resource pack (p. 334), which might be considered classroom artefacts as much as publications. Howatt is, also, meticulous in his careful observation of dates, events and participants. As we have seen, Howatt criticises Phillipson's interpretation of the events of the Makerere conference. His objections, based on a careful analysis of the event's participants (p. 323), appear to demonstrate his ready command of documents, and basic willingness to check key facts.

However, the extent to which Howatt's account has been developed based on a principled study of primary sources is unclear. While he makes frequent careful reference to documents, the pattern of his narrative proceeds according to his own, insider's experience of events, and on his intuitive assessment of developments that he observed, in many cases, firsthand. Howatt is, like the "veterans" called upon to produce the retrospective accounts in section 1.3, in many ways an important participant in the events he describes. A graduate of the University of Edinburgh's Department of Applied Linguistics himself, the date of book's first (1984) publication suggest that he worked there for much of the period described in these chapters

(OUP 2007). Howatt's authorial voice is, frequently, that of the seasoned expert, rather than the objective historian. On the issue of translation, for example, Howatt, states that 'is a psychologically complex problem and language teachers could do with appropriate advice' (p. 259). The authoritative, and far from neutral voice of the senior professional is clearly evident here, as elsewhere in the text.

1.5.4.3.2 Selection and Interpretation

Howatt himself explicitly recognises the problem of selection in history, and his introduction states that:

Like most interesting human activities the teaching of languages has inhabited many different contexts in its time and any historical study will inevitably be selective and partial (p. 1).

Apart from the fact that Howatt makes no attempt to explain the principles upon which materials have been selected, there is also no clear sense as to why certain events and sectors of the industry have been considered as significant. Once again, the content of Howatt's narrative appears to reflect the nature of his own experiences and his perspective as a university academic.

Much of Howatt's history is, no doubt as a result of this, a description of the movement and application of ideas originating from external academic disciplines. It is a narrative of "transmission", in this sense, in which applied linguists are implicitly identified as playing a key, mediating role. An example of this is Howatt's description of the impact made by Austin's speech act theory. 'Although speech act theory was influential in academic circles in the early years of CLT', he explains, 'the term itself did not reach the wider market place, but was overtaken by the ubiquitous term 'function' in one of its many meanings' (p. 328). The direction of movement here, as Austin's theory reaches 'the academic circles' of applied linguistics but passes no further, seems clear. This is consistent with Howatt's statement that the task of dealing with the challenges of the period was one 'tailor made' for applied linguistics.

Howatt also devotes considerable attention to the emergence of various kinds of ESP (and of labels such as English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Other Purposes (EOP) to describe them). Howatt relates that the distinction ‘between ‘specific’ and ‘general purpose’ learners was made early on in the communicative period’ (p. 251). He sees this as an important development, and devotes a lengthy section ‘English for Special/Specific Purposes (ESP)’ (pp. 340—345) to its emergence.

While this is an obvious focus of attention in Howatt’s work, two areas — events in the language teaching classroom, and developments in the EFL private sector— receive much less attention. There is very little discussion indeed concerning the implications of CLT on actual classroom teaching. In fact, classroom activities are only discussed at all in the first, general section of the narrative. Even here it is left until the very end, and its coverage is brief (pp. 256—257, 258—259). Howatt describes three approaches: role-playing, ‘problem solving’ and ‘skill training’ that were adopted by teachers (pp. 256—257). Later he describes the most distinctive characteristic of the CLT classroom to be ‘probably the adoption of the concept of ‘activities’’ (p. 258). He describes also how the old presentation and practice model of lessons came to be modified to include a final production phase (p. 258). No examples of any of these activities are furnished. It is assumed, perhaps, that the reader knows something of the subject being described and requires no further explanation.

Another obvious omission in Howatt’s account is its failure to describe the role of private language schools. Reference to the history of private school entrepreneurs such as Frank Bell (see for example Bell Centres 2008)), and their undoubted contribution to the events of the 1960s and 1970s, is noticeable by its absence. The private language school sector was a burgeoning new industry in this period. John Haycraft’s numerous obituaries in the *Times*, *Guardian*, *Telegraph*, *Independent* (links provided at Wikipedia ‘John Haycraft’ (2009)) recognise his role and influence in the growing ELT sector. Christopher Brumfit states that ‘Haycraft contributed to many language teaching developments of the 1960s and 1970s’ (ODNB, 2006).

Haycraft's (1998) autobiography *Adventures of a Language Traveller* makes clear that the impact of schools like International House on professional practice and training was significant.

1.5.4.3.3 Conclusions Concerning Howatt's Account

Howatt's account avoids the simple narrative pattern, common in of the many short accounts we have seen, in which CLT is depicted as the latest and best product of a sequence of methodological developments. It is, rather, shown to have emerged in response to unique socioeconomic and educational phenomena, and to have possessed characteristics not wholly explicable simply by making reference to earlier, discredited ideas. However, Howatt's account is not entirely free of the "progressivist" tendency described by Pennycook. His focus on the actions of applied linguists, distilling solutions from the new sciences of sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics, retains perhaps something of the positivist, and progressivist outlook that Pennycook seeks to challenge. What emerges most strongly from this review is a sense that these tendencies themselves may be a direct result of Howatt's relatively narrow focus on the academic sphere he inhabits, and his natural desire to emphasise the contribution of his peers to the unfolding of events. The problem of interpretation, then, appears here to be closely related to that of selection. While Howatt begins his account by taking a broad-brush approach to events, his later descriptions focus on the history of theory and the achievements of those working within academia. At the same time the work of private EFL schools, and the practical efforts made by classroom teachers to adjust to the exigencies of the times, receive much less serious attention.

While accepting the usefulness, authority and insight of Howatt's narrative on many levels, it therefore seems reasonable to suggest that its value as a general history is in some respects limited by:

- A greater reliance on personal experiences and judgements than primary sources, than would be the case in a wholly 'documents-based' study
- Restricted professional and institutional perspectives

- Evidence in passages of an over-emphasis on the role of the ‘Academy’ (to use Pennycook’s term). Even if a quasi-allegorical model of progress is absent from Howatt’s account, the emphasis on theory and the mediating role of applied linguistics is retained
- The author’s chronological and professional “closeness” to the events he describes. Although this invests Howatt’s version of events with a unique authority in some respects, it also marks it as a “veteran” rather than a dispassionate historical account.

1.6 Conclusions Regarding Existing Accounts

1.6.1 Summarising the Rationale for the Project

A number of points have been raised as a form of rationale for the project. Rather than restate these in detail, I will summarise the main ideas here in the form of a list:

- CLT still dominates in the discourse of British ELT, and the need to understand its precepts remains urgent
- As Routledge suggests, key terms, such as “communicative” that dominate current practice need to be examined, and rescued from their status as “bandwagon” terms
- History can serve a valuable function in examining the roots of present ideas
- CLT is a natural candidate for historical examination; the results of its investigation will be directly applicable to current practice

1.6.2 Paucity of Scholarly Studies

One obvious and important finding of this review is the dearth of actual historical studies of the period. Stern (1983: pp. 76—77) and Smith (2005: p. xvi) as we have seen, comment concerning the general paucity of historical research relating to language teaching. Their observations, on the basis of the evidence marshalled here, are certainly borne out with respect to the early communicative period. It is remarkable in a sense that in spite of the continued influence and ongoing impact of

communicative ideas, Howatt's study remains the only thoroughly researched study of its emergence.

But the findings of the literature review support Stern's observation that while practitioners frequently invoke and refer to history, there is frequently little sign that original work has been carried out to derive data. The critical reader, as Stern laments, 'expects (but rarely finds) a clear indication of the research on which the account is based' (p.77). The dearth that exists is precisely in the area of original, scholarly investigation.

It is easy to imagine why this is the case. Work carried out on primary sources with the exactitude that Stern recommends is time consuming. History, furthermore, is a quite specialised subject and requires particular skills that 'visitors' from other disciplines often fail to take into account (historian Eric Hobsbawm suggests that few sociologists make good historians, for similar reasons (1997: p. 278)). Few applied linguists (or other language teaching-oriented academics) appear to have delved deeply into it. However, the need for a serious, full-length historical investigation of the communicative era remains urgent. It is here that the real "gap" lies; while there is plenty of material explaining or referring to CLT's emergence, there is much less original research upon which to base writers' narratives. Whatever procedure is arrived at to carry out the investigation that follows, these should make an effort to fill the methodological gap exposed by Stern, offering a method that incorporates his stipulations into its procedure.

1.6.3 Historical 'Bias', Proximity and a New Way Forward

Looking again at the list of points derived from Stern's comments (1.4.2.4, above), it can be seen that they are underpinned by a common principle. This is that serious efforts must be undertaken to mitigate, or at least balance, the effects of personal bias in the production of accounts. Throughout this review it has been observed that writers tend to focus on events and interests close to themselves, their working context and proclivities. This tendency, pervading the literature to different degrees but always present, lies at the root of much of its insufficiency from a rigorously

academic, historical perspective. While it is most notable when looking at the retrospective memoirs in 1.3 (in which a ‘personal angle’ is both inevitable and even desired), it is also present even in Howatt’s — somewhat university-oriented — account. Two particular tendencies, common to both the summaries analysed in 1.2, and the more academic works investigated in section 1.3, have been observed and commented on throughout this chapter. Firstly, that “theory”, often of a quite abstract or even philosophical nature (whether Speech Act Theory, Jacobsen’s functionalism, Halliday’s view of language as social action) is portrayed as playing an important, even crucial role in the evolution of the movement. Secondly, that CLT is often depicted as part of a “progressivist” history; the culmination of scientific and academic endeavour that has been applied with ever greater success within the field of language teaching. Both might be seen as springing from a bias in perspective; the narrowing, or distortion of a version of events due to the writers’ “situatedness” — both physically and psychologically—and their tendency to focus on particular events according to their experience.

While the problem of subjectivity and bias is a philosophical and ontological issue that confronts all researchers and historians, it appears to affect the literature describing the communicative period particularly seriously. One explanation for this might be that writers are, in almost every case, participants in the action they describe. Until now, the emergence of CLT, still in very real living memory for many language teaching practitioners, has remained too close for dispassionate historical description. Compounding the problem of personal bias, there is also the fact that when writers experience events firsthand, they are less likely to undertake the kind of analysis — based on original documents, explaining selection, etc as Stern suggests — which assume distance and the need to carefully reconstruct events from documents. It is interesting that Stern himself, writing in 1982, describes contemporary developments without reference to any of the procedures that he demands of language teaching history. Listing Wilkins, the Council of Europe, Candlin and Widdowson as important founders of the recent communicative movement (pp. 178—179), he makes no effort to explain why their influences are regarded as crucial.

What might therefore distinguish this project from those others investigated above is the fact that it will be written as actual “history”, in the sense that it will be carried out by an individual who did not participate in the period under examination.

Enough time has elapsed, perhaps, that the emergence of CLT can be approached and analysed in a less personal and more dispassionate and principled manner. How then, might this study be achieved? Apart from the methodological points that have been discussed thus far, another possible source of insight is the set of personal memoirs reviewed in section 1.2. These collections of accounts offered, instead of the single, organising voice of a historian, a multiplicity of perspectives that together generated a complex, even if collectively incoherent, account of events. There is here, perhaps, a suggestion of a way forward. An attempt to describe events based on the assessments of a variety of perspectives, rather an attempt to fashion a single objective narrative.

Whatever the direction that is taken, there is now surely a need to strike out into new research territory. An account must be provided that is qualitatively different to those that have already been generated, and whose “close-up” perspective cannot, at any rate, now be re-attained. Any new attempt that is made will, like the accounts that have been analysed here, also contain insufficiencies and similarly fail to conform to some others’ research criteria. However, I hope that by adopting a new approach, perspectives will be offered that might challenge, complement and extend the understanding of the topic that has been attained thus far.

Chapter Two: Methods and Tools

2.1 Evaluating a Sources-Based Approach

In the literature review Stern's urgent call for historical studies to be carried out, based on the analysis of primary sources, was cited as a key element of the rationale for this project. Furthermore, the specific criteria concerning methodology that Stern proposes were also expounded as potential solutions to problems—such as bias and a lack of investigative rigour—all too evident in existing literature. Given that the methodology proposed in this chapter will be formulated by paying close attention to Stern's judgements it seems necessary to begin by evaluating the assumptions and possible limitations of his ideas.

It is difficult to consider the arguments for a sources-based history advanced by Stern without being reminded of Leopold von Ranke, considered by many to be the founder of the modern, documents-based approach to historical research (e.g. Evans 2000: pp. 18 —19). Stern, as we have seen, seems to share Ranke's confidence in the ability of historians to assemble an objective record of past events through the analysis of primary sources. In her (2002) work, *Historical Theory*, Mary Fulbrook describes Ranke as a key figure in 'the scientisation of history' (p.13) in that he promoted the belief—which might be described today as empiricist and positivist—that the historian can arrive at an objective account of events by analysing historical data in a systematic and dispassionate way. History can, and should be described 'as it actually was' (as Fulbrook translates his oft-quoted phrase (p. 13)). Ranke brought rigour and an array of techniques from philology to history; this injection of sophisticated methods helped to 'establish it as a separate discipline, independent from philosophy or literature' (p. 17). Ranke introduced into history the central principle that the systematic analysis of past documents can eliminate falsehoods and establish basic truths about the past.

Yet how confident can we feel regarding the claim that a record of historical events can be recovered, through the analysis of primary sources, that is authoritative, or even objective in a “scientific” sense? During the period of my undergraduate training, the problem of ontology was generally discussed within a “positivist” neo-Marxist framework, in which the notion of objective history remained largely unchallenged. However, I discovered that in the last two decades historians have become increasingly engaged with the challenge, mounted by post-modernists, of truth-telling in history. During this period, Fulbrook writes, ‘a number of scholars have brought insights from linguistics and literary theory to bear on history, seeking to argue that history is in some senses merely another form of fiction’ (p.5).

Fulbrook herself is highly receptive to claims that traditional history needs to be reassessed in the light of new, post-modern ideas (p. 54). Indeed, she seems to accept the assertions of theorists concerning the ‘naïve empiricism’ of traditional historians. She urges fellow professionals ‘to accept the pervasiveness of world-views, operating at unconscious as well as conscious levels’ (ibid). On the issue of sources, for example, she agrees that these do not “speak for themselves” (p.119). Not all historians, it has to be said, appear to have taken these challenges so seriously. Eric Hobsbawm (1997), whose neo-Marxist approach remains influential, more or less dismisses it. He emphatically opposes the challenges of post-modernist writers to assertions of empirical or objective reality. He considers that these ‘fashions’ imply ‘that all “facts” claiming objective existence are simply intellectual constructions — in short, that there is no clear difference between fact and fiction’ (p.7). Hobsbawm, however, clearly feels that such a distinction can be made. As he states: ‘[e]ither Elvis Presley is dead or he isn’t’ (ibid).

Richards Evans, in his (2000) book *In Defence of History* takes what appears to me to be a common sense, intermediary position. On the one hand —like Fulbrook—he urges historians not to reject out of hand the challenges that have been mounted by ‘postmodern’ theory. However, Evans feels that the theorists themselves may harbour some naïve assumptions concerning the nature of the ‘traditional’ historian’s approach. As the title of his book suggests, his intention is to defend

history from some of the most extreme of the attacks of post-modernists, dealing in particular with arguments seeking to de-stabilise traditional faith in the authority of evidence. On the matter of primary sources (the historian's stock-in-trade so as to speak) Evans considers that part of the problem is a tendency to conflate facts and evidence, which are 'conceptually distinct and should not be confused with each other' (p. 78). Evans specifically denies the claim that that the problems presented by documents are so great as to invalidate the 'traditional confidence' of historians that they can reach through the sources to extract essential truth (p. 80). He suggests that these criticisms emanate from a kind of caricaturing of the role of historians, in which they are presented as believing that documents offer a transparent window on the past. Evans points out that historians have always—and long before post-modern theory!—read 'against the grain' of texts, fully aware of the multiple uses and interpretations that can be applied (p. 81). Evan's writing also indicates that Ranke has become something of a "straw man" in this debate. While Ranke believed that individual facts can be established with confidence using appropriate sources, it is clear from his writing elsewhere that he considered their interpretation to be problematic. Historians can assemble data; its subsequent interpretation requires sympathetic and open-minded engagement (p. 17).

Reading Evan's work, I came to feel that neither Ranke—nor Stern, a proponent of similar ideas regarding sources—deserve derision for their assertion that historical research should be grounded in rigorous, principled investigation of primary materials. One irony that emerged at this point is that while Ranke embarked upon a career in history as a result of his early work in philology, my next step (as we shall see in 2.3, below) was to move from history to the study of word meanings. The stimulus for this shift was Raymond Williams' (1976/1983) book *Keywords*. Williams' work consists of 110 short entries, or essays, each describing a word felt to be socially or culturally significant. Like a traditional philologist, Williams tracks chronological change in word meanings; he begins with the classical or historical origin of a word and traces its development over time. Williams' approach appeared to offer a way forward. If the investigation of change in words used by a culture produces evidence of its shifting preoccupations, the same principle could be applied

to words that were important within the narrower discourse of a particular profession. Williams describes his work as being neither ‘a series of footnotes to dictionary histories or definitions of a number of words’ (p. 15). It is, rather, ‘the record of an inquiry into a *vocabulary*; a shared body of words in our most general discussions’ (ibid). Through examining the development of these words, Williams suggests, we learn about the culture and society that uses them. On investigating a word, Williams often discovered that its meanings were ‘inextricably bound up with the problems it was being used to discuss’ (ibid). By tracking the development of words, one established a record of the discussions and issues associated with its use. This approach became increasingly appealing as a form of chronological, and therefore historical, investigation.

2.2 Going in Deep: Investigating the Period

At the same time that I was making preliminary investigations into keywords as the basis of an approach, I was also undertaking steps to understand something of the “background” —educational, theoretical, professional—of the period in which communicative ideas first appeared. In Eric’s Hobsbawm’s discussion concerning the practice of traditional history, he explains the demanding and intensive work that historians must carry out when approaching their subject. Historians, he feels, should not enter ‘the difficult territory of historical source material without an adequate knowledge of the hazards they are likely to encounter there, or the means of avoiding or overcoming them’ (p. 90). Rather, they need to have an intimate knowledge of the subject and period they are describing, coming to grips with its preoccupations, language and special problems. Reminded by Hobsbawm’s comments of the duty of the historian to “enter” the period under investigation, I endeavoured to familiarise myself with the atmosphere of British ELT in the decades of the 1970s and 1980s in as intensive and immersive fashion as time permitted. In this task I was fortunate in having access to the University of Warwick’s ELT Archive, which contains original material of all kinds from these decades. While there is not space here to describe the whole of this exploratory procedure I should like to outline some of the documents and methods that were of particular use:

- The reading of texts held to be “classics” of the early communicative period; Wilkins’ (1976) *Notional Syllabuses*, reviewed in the Classic Texts section of the *International Journal of Applied Linguistics* (Johnson 2006) falls into this category. Widdowson’s (1978) *Teaching Language as Communication*, Brumfit and Johnson’s (1979) *The Communicative Approach to Language Teaching* and Johnson’s (1982) *Communicative Syllabus Design and Methodology* were also helpful in “setting the scene”.
- Canale and Swain’s (1980) *Theoretical Bases of Communicative Approaches to Second Language Teaching and Testing* served as a particularly invaluable aid to understanding the period. It offers an extraordinarily comprehensive and well-researched survey of the literature, describing communicative competence, published during previous decades.
- Articles and texts published earlier than the communicative period itself, but which appear to have contributed to the intellectual background of the period: Hymes’ (1972) *On Communicative Competence* and Chomsky’s (1965) *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* were of particular use in this respect.
- Personal Accounts such as John Haycraft’s (1998) *Adventures of a Language Traveller*. The retrospectives reviewed in section 1.3 were also helpful in this respect.
- Publications by the Council of Europe’s Threshold Project team (e.g. van Ek 1973)
- Interviews and discussions with editors of journals being published during the period. These included:
 - An informal interview with Susan Holden (held on 9th February 2007), discussing her role as editor of *Modern English Teaching*.
 - A meeting with Keith Morrow, current Editor of the *ELT Journal*, held on the 9th April 2008, which focused on his memories of early CLT
 - A formal, recorded interview with Richard Rossner, editor of the *ELT Journal* 1981—1986. This wide-ranging discussion touched on a number of important areas, and will be referred to later in the investigation.

- Separately, a recorded (video) interview with David Wilkins, held on 15th December 2006, discussing his contribution to the early phase of the communicative movement

2.3 The Emergence of CLT and the Problem of Complexity

What emerged most strongly from this initial period of absorption and exploration was a sense of the complexity of the period that was to be analysed. The ‘communicative movement’ that Howatt describes was clearly not a simple or monolithic entity. Howatt himself describes the ‘mosaic of enterprise’ (p. 327) that led to its creation. I felt increasingly that what was needed was a methodology that would help to make sense of the events that occurred, taking into account the multi-stranded and disparate nature of the contributions and institutions at work. I also believed that it was important to resist the temptation, evident in the work of writers like Richard and Rogers, of imposing a unity on developments by describing them as convergent; inputs into a common, consistent approach. Rather than assuming and inferring relationships between separate ideas and events I felt that it would be more useful — and indeed ‘honest’ — to resist the urge to retrospectively connect them. I therefore sought to find a way of breaking down the discourse of the period into separate components, isolating ideas or preoccupations. In doing so, I might be able to arrive at units of analysis that were sufficiently manageable for investigation on their own terms, and which conformed to Stern’s idea of a ‘study of particular aspects’ sufficiently closely.

Here, too Williams’ “keywords” approach seemed particularly useful. By tracing the development of prominent words Williams seeks to gain insight into the whole society that uses them. The principle that broad insight can be attained by carrying out detailed and specific analysis is broadly consistent with Stern’s ideas regarding the analysis of ‘particular aspects’ as a means of gaining understanding into the ELT profession. As Ranke himself states, ‘[f]rom the particular, one can carefully and boldly move up to the general; from general theories, there is no way of looking at the particular’ (in Bruch 1999).

2.4 Using a Corpus Approach

2.4.1 New Directions: Corpus Linguistics

Williams' technique of manually tracing words across documents was beginning to appear increasingly useful. However, further investigation of his work led to the discovery of more recent studies, which utilised an updated "version" of the keyword as a research tool. Within corpus linguistics, the notion of the keyword has been popularised by Mike Scott, and his well-known (e.g. Hunston 2002: p. 199) Wordsmith Tools programme suite. This contains an application, 'Keywords', that uses a computer procedure to identify words based on the profile of their statistical frequency. Rather than selecting important words intuitively, as is the case in Williams' study, Scott's approach is to assemble texts and allow the application itself to identify outstandingly frequent words. Numerous studies had been carried out (over 240 listed online at Scott's www.lexically.net website), in a variety of fields, using the procedure and the tools that Scott has developed. Most interestingly I discovered that a (2000) study, *New Labour, New Language?* by Norman Fairclough, uses Scott's technique to identify keywords, from comparison of texts taken from two chronological periods, to discover historical change. By applying this procedure, it seemed possible to produce evidence of historical, chronological developments specific to the early communicative period.

2.4.2 Advantages of a Corpus Approach to the Investigation

Having begun my exploration of the possibilities of a corpus analysis approach to the history of early CLT, I next began to examine the implications of utilising such techniques. It became apparent that there were serious issues to be addressed, relating to the limitations of a procedure that extracts words from their meaning-giving context (this is discussed in detail in 2.6 below). Yet from the outset it was also clear that these procedures offered important benefits.

As the result of quite recent developments in computer and software technology, corpus analysis techniques have come increasingly to be applied to the study of texts in a variety of fields (Hunston 2002: p.96). Corpus tools have not always been

accessible or appropriate for small-scale, individually executed research projects. Tony McEnery and Andrew Wilson (2001) explain that before the arrival of computer technology, the basic processes of corpus analysis; searching for, retrieving, sorting and calculating corpus data had to be carried out by hand (pp. 16—17). This was costly, time-consuming, and labour-intensive, and the possibility of inaccuracy introduced by human error made it doubly unattractive (p. 17). Since computers have become widespread and accessible, the means of computer analysis by non-specialist researchers have become both more feasible and more popular (p. ix, p. 1). In order to carry out computer-based analysis of texts, researchers no longer require specialist computer science knowledge, or programming skills. Over the last two decades, a variety of relatively cheap and user-friendly tools have been developed. Stubbs, writing in the mid-1990s, was able to describe the easy-to-use concordancing and pattern matching software that was already commercially available (Stubbs, 1996: p. xviii, p. xix). Since then, the range of free and commercially-produced applications has continued to expand. Packages, in particular Mike Scott's (2006) WordSmith Tools, a suite of programs (including tools for frequency listing, concordancing and identifying keywords) bundled into a software package, have made it increasingly possible for computer "novices" to carry out machine-based corpus analysis procedures.

By taking advantage of these developments, therefore, it seemed possible to apply corpus techniques to address the objectives of this investigation in a principled and effective manner. Two of the potential advantages offered by a corpus approach are obvious and stem from the advantages proffered by the use of machine, as opposed to human, modes of analysis. Firstly, machine procedures, as McEnery and Wilson suggest, enable the investigation to 'cover more ground', more quickly, assessing a much larger body of data than would be feasible using manual procedures. Baker refers to the 'incremental effect of Discourse' (2006: pp. 13—14), in which meanings and ideas are extended across large numbers of texts; great quantities of evidence need to be examined to identify these patterns. Secondly, using an automatic procedure makes the analysis of texts more systematic and reliable; unlike the

human observer, a computer program will carry out its task uniformly over a corpus of texts.

More importantly, however, the application of corpus tools would help to address the methodological criteria outlined above (in 1.5.4.3.3). Given the importance of these criteria in assuring that the project furnished data and conclusions which were reliable and “fresh”, I shall here look at each of these briefly in turn. Firstly, concerning the need that the investigation proceed based on the examination of primary sources, it seemed that by assembling a corpus comprised wholly of materials produced during the period under investigation, Stern’s requirement for the use of original documents could be fulfilled. Secondly, by building a corpus of texts according to a procedure which was carefully described and recorded, Stern’s further stipulation that the process of selection should be systematic and observable would be directly addressed. Finally, and most importantly, by making use of a computer procedure to select key concepts for investigation, the potential for damaging human bias might be mitigated. In the literature review the issue of objectivity was identified as crucial. The effects of bias; its distorting effect on the structure of accounts, for example, and its role in writers’ privileging of areas such as theory, were identified as serious weaknesses in existing literature. These tendencies, I felt, might be avoided by using techniques in which topics were selected using statistical, rather than intuitive procedures. Overall, then, it seemed possible that by applying a corpus approach the project objectives, and the concerns which were raised in the literature review, might be directly addressed.

2.4.3 Keywords within a Corpus Approach

The potential of the “keyword” has been expounded by a number of writers (e.g. Baker 2006, Scott, Tribble 2006, Stubbs 1994, Williams 1983) for encapsulating important ideas in a corpus or text. Despite its origins in Williams’ painstaking manual work, it has increasingly come to be used by corpus linguists to describe words identified, using machine tools, and by a mathematical procedure, as appearing unusually frequent in a particular text or corpus. Typically software, such as Mike Scott’s own Keywords application (one component of the Wordsmith Tools

suite of programmes) operates on a set of texts to identify outstandingly frequent words. Scott and Tribble, who are at the forefront of work in this area, explain that ‘for us, keyness is a quality words may have in a given text or set of texts, suggesting that they are important, they reflect what the text is really about, avoiding trivia and insignificant detail’ (2006: p. 2). These writers have theorised that key words can reflect important ‘themes’ which characterise the meaning of a text. Key words, in other words, can be indicators of the *aboutness* of texts (p. 58). The writers suggest that a ‘keyword’, or ‘KW’ ‘may be defined as a word which occurs with unusual frequency in a given text’ (p. 55). Scott’s programme identifies keywords by means of a simple procedure, in which the frequencies of words in one text or corpus are counted and then compared, using a log-likelihood (or, if desired, chi-square) formula, with those derived from a reference corpus. However carefully the notion of a keyword is theoreticised in Scott and Tribble’s work, it remains at bottom a wholly pragmatic concept. A keyword is the output of a simple computer procedure, and the log-likelihood calculation used to select and order keywords might comprise its most effective definition.

Scott clearly feels that he has hit upon a procedure that can identify, with a certain degree of objectivity, important ideas within a text. As he explains:

Keyness is a quality words may have in a given text or set of texts, suggesting that they are important, they reflect what the text is really about, avoiding trivia and insignificant detail. What the text “boils down to” is its keyness, once we have steamed off the verbiage, the adornment, the blah, blah, blah. (pp. 55—56).

To illustrate their claim, Scott and Tribble provide the example of a keyword analysis carried out on Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* (pp. 59—61). In this example, the keywords isolated by the selecting algorithm can be seen to correspond closely to major themes in the text. Scott’s experiment using this famous play is particularly effective in demonstrating the effectiveness of his procedure, since it leverages readers’ familiarity with its themes. Looking at the list of keywords derived by the procedure from the table (2.1) below, it appears that they do indeed appear to

reflect important themes in the play, and to match closely the human reader's intuitive evaluation of the play's central preoccupations. Other words in the list, though, are not so easily interpreted. Here at least, Scott is candid concerning the fact that his keywords are merely the artefacts of a computer process. 'All the algorithm can tell us', he concedes, 'is that these features of this play stand out as being unusually frequent' (p. 60). He suggests a cover-term, 'style', to describe words (like *O*, *art*, *wilt*, etc) that do not relate to thematic content. Nevertheless, despite this acknowledged limitation, the example provides evidence of the obvious potential of the keyword procedure in identifying central themes, by isolating words that encapsulate important notions within a corpus or text.

Table 2.1: KWs extracted from comparison of 'Romeo and Juliet' against a corpus containing all of Shakespeare's other plays (adapted from Scott 2006: p. 60)

AH	DEATH	MARRIED	SLAIN
ART	EARLY	MERCUTIO	THEE
BACK	FRIAR	MONTAGUE	THOU
BANISHED	JULIET	MONUMENT	THURSDAY
BENVOLIO	JULIET'S	NIGHT	THY
CAPULET	KINSMAN	NURSE	TORCH
CAPULETS	LADY	O	TYBALT
CAPULET'S	LAWRENCE	PARIS	TYBALT'S
CELL	LIGHT	POISON	VAULT
CHURCHYARD	LIPS	ROMEO	VERONA
COUNTY	LOVE	ROMEO'S	WATCH
DEAD	MANTUA	SHE	WILT

An important feature of Scott's analysis here is his careful selection of a reference corpus. He combines all the Shakespeare plays (comedies, tragedies and histories) to create a reference corpus, against which he derives the words presented in the table. Changing either the test or reference corpora will produce different results: the analysis is *about* selection in this sense. If the wordlist from the play is compared

with one drawn from a less directly comparable corpus, the BNC for example, language characteristic of Shakespearean English (e.g. *adieu, anon*) is foregrounded in the list of KW results. If only Shakespeare's tragedies are used, certain KWs disappear from the original list (e.g. *married, poison, slain*, etc) suggesting that these are relatively more common in the tragedies (p. 63). When Scott uses *Romeo and Juliet* as his test corpus, and a corpus consisting of all other known Shakespeare plays as his reference corpus, he is aware that the results reflect these selection decisions directly.

Scott's procedure for keyword analysis therefore involves careful consideration of results with respect to the reference and test corpora that are used. Keyword lists can only make sense, and can in fact only be labelled, according to the decisions made with regard to the corpora that are compared. A corollary of this is that any analysis is essentially meaningless unless the decisions made in the choice of these corpora are made absolutely explicit. Here, then, the interests of both historical rigorosity on the one hand, and validity of corpus analysis on the other, converge. If Scott's techniques are extended, to study documents taken to represent periods in ELT professional history, results will have to be explained in terms of the corpora (which documents, from which period) that are used. The issues of principled selection and observability, crucial requirements within both Stern's historiography and Scott's quantitative procedure, should therefore be well assured.

2.4.4 Addressing the Issue of Bias

The controversial claim that corpus techniques can ensure, or at least improve the reliability of findings based on original documents, is clearly a controversial one, and demands closer inspection. According to corpus linguists McEnery and Wilson (2001), one of the significant advantages of a corpus approach is that it provides a means of analysis which is transparent to observers. Comparing a corpus linguistics approach with intuitive techniques (in the context of their role in describing language) he states that the 'corpus has the benefit of rendering public the public point of view used to support a theory' (p. 14). McEnery and Wilson's statement here concerns the limitations of intuitive procedures in identifying what is 'core' or

typical in *language*. Their argument concerning the application of corpus tools to linguistics, might however be extended to those new fields, such as textual analysis, where corpus techniques have now come to be used. Applying McEnery and Wilson's rationale, corpus techniques, when applied to historical materials, might present a means of selecting data which is, if not wholly objective (due, for example, to issues concerning the selection of the corpus) at least transparent and replicable.

At a philosophical level, the issue as to whether corpus techniques can wholly remove researcher bias is taken up by Baker (2006: pp. 10—12). Baker describes the challenges mounted by those, particularly social constructionists, opposed to the idea of scientific objectivity that generally adheres to a corpus position. Baker cites Burr's (1995) proposition that the notion of the unbiased researcher itself emerges from the 'discourse of science through which a particular version' of human experience is constructed (p. 160). Baker summarises Burr's position in the statement that 'the "objective" stance is still a stance' (p. 10). While Baker himself appears to reject the extreme constructionist position proposed by Burr, he acknowledges her observation that objectivity is difficult, perhaps ultimately, impossible to achieve. He points not only to the effects of subconscious bias on researchers' interpretations, but also to the limitations of human information processing in interpreting evidence (explaining, for example, that decision makers cannot help but interpret information in order to support their own claims (pp. 11—12)). Baker concedes, too, that corpus researchers are just as likely as any other to select or interpret information according to their own conscious or unconscious biases.

However, despite his caution, and his careful consideration of the arguments against the notion of objectivity, Baker clearly feels that corpus analysis does offer the researcher a means of reducing the influence of 'human' processes that filter and distort data. 'By using a corpus,' he suggests, 'we at least are able to place a number of restrictions on our cognitive biases' (p. 12). The researcher can hopefully start from the position, 'whereby the data itself has not been selected in order to confirm existing conscious (or subconscious) biases' (*ibid*). Baker's comments, therefore,

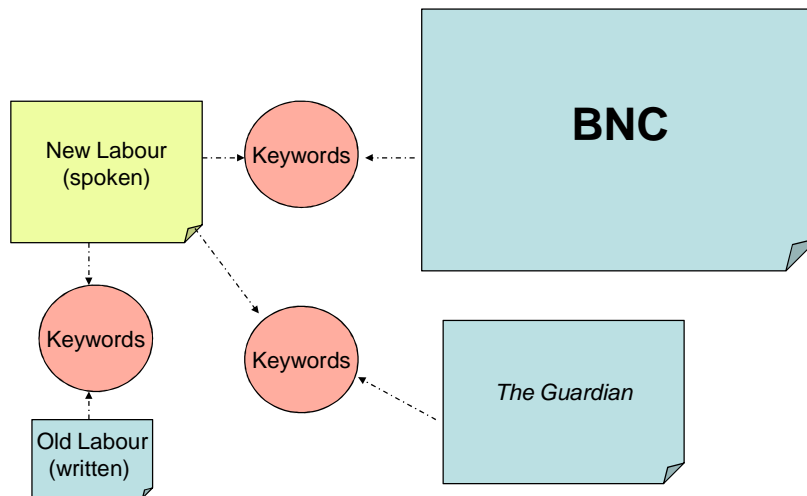
support the common sense position that that ontological issues concerning the selection of facts, their synthesis and interpretation, adhere to any scientific or procedure, including a corpus–dependent methodology. A corpus approach, however, offers techniques that may at least mitigate some of the difficulties surrounding the problem of bias and selection.

2.5 Applying the Tools: a Possible Model

2.5.1 Fairclough’s study

Considering the particular problem as to how to conduct a historical study which would examine important ideas in the emerging communicative movement, Fairclough’s (2000) *New Labour, New Language?* offered a substantial and interesting model. In this book-length work, the author deploys similar keyword procedures to those described by Scott and Tribble to accompany his analysis of the discourse of New Labour. The corpus part of his investigation involves the comparison of a selection of New Labour texts, composed largely of speeches, against three other corpora. Two of these are “general” reference corpora; the British National Corpus and a selection of articles from the *Guardian*. The third is a selection of “old Labour”, printed texts. By comparing the word frequency lists extracted from his New Labour corpus with those of the three other corpora, he generates three separate keyword lists. He then identifies words common to all three lists in order to arrive at a final selection of keywords. These, it is claimed, are indicative of themes in the discourse of the New Labour texts being analysed. The process is illustrated in Figure 2.1, below.

Figure 2.1: Diagram representing the corpus comparisons made in Fairclough's (2000) analysis of New Labour discourse



Unfortunately, Fairclough makes little or no effort to explain or justify his procedure in detail. As a result, his purpose can only be inferred from the few details that are available. The design perhaps attempts to take into account Scott's observation that comparisons made using different reference corpora can throw up different results. His decision to select words which are key in all three lists therefore appears to be an effort to ensure reliability, cross-checking the results of three different tests to identify common findings.

The most interesting feature of the methodology from the perspective of this investigation is its analysis of New Labour and comparable, old Labour corpora. In making this chronological comparison, Fairclough manages to isolate words that reveal themes unique to the New Labour period. The keywords procedure formulated by Scott to identify themes specific to a particular text or corpus has here been adapted to isolate historical preoccupations. As a further step, and apparently taking the lead from Stubbs and others interested in collocation analysis (though

none are referenced), Fairclough then considers the most frequent collocations of each keyword in order to recover a deeper sense of the words' meanings and associations. These findings are compiled into discussions, or 'summaries', that are inter-dispersed throughout the book. The first of these, entitled 'Renewal, Modernisation, and Reform' (pp. 18—19), based on careful examination of the keyword 'new', begins in the following way:

'New' occurs 609 times in 53 speeches of Tony Blair's between 1997 and 1999 (for comparison, 'modern' occurs 89 times, 'modernise/modernisation' 87 times, and 'reform' 143 times). The most frequent collocations [co-occurrences between words in a text] are 'New Labour' (72 instances) and 'New Deal' (70 instances). The sense of political renewal conveyed by 'New Labour' is also evident in references to a 'new politics' (4 instances) and a 'new centre and centre-left' (2 instances) (p. 18).

2.5.2 Problems with Fairclough's Study

Technically, unfortunately, Fairclough's study has a number of flaws. Perhaps the most serious is that none of the reference corpora he uses seem suitable for direct comparison with the New Labour material. The old Labour corpus, for example, is composed of written material, whereas the New Labour test corpus includes both written and spoken material. The old Labour corpus is also smaller than the New Labour one (p. 165); some analysts believe that the reference corpus should be at least similar in size (cf. e.g. Scott 2006: p. 64). A further problem is that Fairclough provides very little description of the process by which the corpus was assembled, or of the methodology he employed in generating his lists (most of the details are compressed into a single, paragraph-long note (pp. 165—166)). He does not explain for example, whether his lists were 'lemmatised' (see 3.2.2, below). It seems possible that Fairclough himself was not intimately involved in the corpus work at all; he acknowledges the help of a colleague in assisting with its production (p. x).

Perhaps even more serious than these technical issues, however, is the fact that Fairclough's study makes no attempt to link the insights he gains from the corpus

component of his investigation to other elements of his procedure. In a subsequent work, his (2003) *Analysing Discourse: Textual Analysis for Social Research*, Fairclough himself appears ambivalent concerning the success of the corpus techniques he employs in *New Labour, New Language?*. He acknowledges the keywords work as being helpful, but of 'limited' usefulness to his purpose (p 6). Although Fairclough does not expand greatly on this comment, an obvious shortcoming within the study is that it is unclear how the keywords findings contribute to the analysis he conducts, based largely on Critical Discourse Analysis principles, elsewhere in the text. The keyword summaries are inter-dispersed throughout his book as 'side-bars', hardly referred to in the main body of the text. Fairclough explains in the work that he decided to 'periodically insert into the text a summary of information from the corpus about one or more New Labour "keywords"' (p. 18). Thus separated from the main flow of the text and the development of the author's argument, these summaries appear at times to have been inserted as an afterthought; one indeed gains a sense at times that they might better have been included in the work's appendices. The two components of the study, the intuitively conducted, CDA analysis on the one hand, and the corpus-based procedure on the other, remain separate and un-integrated.

2.6 The Big Issue: Context

Perhaps the best explanation as to why Fairclough fails to fully exploit these keyword findings, is that the keyword analysis he employs necessarily *de-contextualises* findings from the texts they are drawn from. The nature of the relationship between these 'whole-corpus' findings and Fairclough's detailed, context-sensitive investigation of individual texts is unclear. There seems, therefore, to be an inherent tension between the two approaches being used.

This appears to be a crucial point; a criticism that might be extended to corpus approaches in general. Hunston (2002) refers to this as a limitation inherent within corpus analysis. Corpus techniques necessarily extract and isolate words from the meaning-giving context of their original environment. As a result, she explains, there is some resistance within the field of cultural studies concerning the efficacy of

corpus analysis for context-sensitive work (p. 110). Baker (2006) also identifies this as a significant issue. The use of corpus techniques for the investigation of texts, may, in the eyes of many researchers, provide a view that is too “broad” (p. 7). Since the approach provides the investigator with information about large numbers of texts, close reading, and therefore any detailed understanding, of individual texts is neglected. Partly as a result of these misgivings, Baker explains, the ‘inter-disciplinary’ combination’ of corpus and “traditional” discourse analysis techniques, is not universally accepted by discourse analysts. He agrees, indeed, with Hunston, that ‘it appears to be subject to some resistance’ (p. 6) partly for this reason.

Hunston summarises many of the most pertinent points in this discussion when she states that:

If a corpus is composed of a number of texts, corpus search and processing techniques, such as word-lists, concordance lines and lists of collocations, will tend to obscure the character of each text as a text. Each individual example is taken out of context-that in a sense, is the point. Furthermore, the corpus treats texts as autonomous entities: the role of the text producer and the society of which they are part tends to be obscured (p. 110).

Baker, acknowledging these criticisms, nevertheless defends a corpus approach on the grounds that it is a question of selecting the appropriate methods for particular purposes. ‘Acknowledging what a corpus-based approach can do and what it cannot do is necessary, but should not mean that we discard the methodology altogether’, he states. Instead, ‘we should just be more clear about when it is appropriate to use it or employ some other method’ (p. 7).

2.7 Towards a Solution: Integrating Meaning

2.7.1 Introduction

Despite the criticisms made by non-corpus methodologists, that corpus techniques take insufficient account of contextual factors, Scott and Tribble (2006) demonstrate an acute awareness of the issue of context. Concerning keywords, Scott argues that

several ‘levels’ of context can be identified which contribute meaning to the “node word” under examination (p. 9). First to contribute are the ‘few words, three or four on either side of the term we are interested in (the “node”)’ (p. 8). The next level of ‘scope’ is the whole sentence in which the word appears. Following that, the paragraph, ‘the story so far’ (the text up to the “node”), the section or chapter, the whole text, etc., all contribute additional information. Scott’s scheme is represented in Table 2.2 (below).

Table 2.2: Five Levels of scope for Context (adapted from Scott and Tribble (2006: p. 9)).

Contextual Scope	
SCOPE 1	a few words to left and right
SCOPE 2	the whole sentence
SCOPE 3	The paragraph
SCOPE 4	The story so far
SCOPE 5	The whole text
SCOPE 6	The colony of texts to which this one belongs
SCOPE 7	other related texts
SCOPE 8	The context of culture
SCOPE 9	Where you are when you meet the text
EXTRA-LINGUISTIC SCOPE	

In support of these ideas, Scott cites Cruse’s comment, that ‘[i]t is assumed that the semantic properties of a lexical item are fully reflected in appropriate aspects of the relations it contracts with actual and potential contexts’ (p.8).

It seems possible that Scott is particularly sensitive to this issue, precisely because it has come to his attention as a result of frequent criticism; that he is, in effect, rising to the challenge being mounted. Another possibility, however, is that corpus researchers working within applied linguistics, and particularly perhaps in the area

of textual analysis, have developed a fuller understanding of the importance of context than critics suggest. Stubbs, pointing to the persistence of a corpus tradition in British applied linguistics, cites Firth, Halliday and Sinclair as important proponents of attested data (p. 28). Firth and Halliday, who emphasised the role of context in language, saw no conflict between these positions; corpus data, indeed, provided evidence of language use in real-world situations. In Stubb's account, the two traditions share common roots. Looking at Stubb's own (1996) work, his analysis of two short speeches by Baden Powell includes a brief (two paragraph) biographical introduction to Baden Powell himself (p. 82) (Scope 8, according to the scheme described by Scott). It also includes some general commentary concerning the content of the texts themselves (p. 83) (Scopes 5 and 6). Stubbs does, therefore, make an effort to carefully contextualise the data he goes on to present.

2.7.2 Some Studies Integrating Meaning

In more recent studies, carried out by discourse analysts making use of corpus techniques, similar attempts to provide appropriate, contextualising commentary can be identified. Baker and McEnery (2005), analysing collocations for the term *refugee* to identify 'discourses' surrounding its use, take care to precede their examination of frequent collocations with some background information about The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (pp. 199–200), the source of some of the data used in the study. More impressive from this perspective is Mulderrig's (2003) article, 'Consuming Education: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Social Actors in New Labour's Education Policy', which assesses two government texts relating to education policy reform. Within these texts, the writer looks at three words— *government*, *teachers* and *pupils*—to uncover associations and connotations that reveal the government's ideological position. Mulderrig uses a highly theoreticised CDA approach, similar in many ways to Fairclough's, which necessarily considers the 'social embedded-ness of discourse' (p. 2). Unlike Fairclough, though, Mulderigg retains within her examination of individual words an awareness of textual meanings that extend beyond the scope of her concordance lines. For example, regarding the sense of the term *young people* (used instead of *pupils* in certain cases), she explains that it occurs 'more frequently in the 2002

policy text on 16-19 education, where the emphasis is on retaining more people in education for longer' (p. 10). She also at times references whole sentences, rather than concordance line fragments, making use of a WordSmith Tools function that allows the user to extend the horizons of the concordance line (p. 2). In this way, Mulderigg appears to have made some effort to re-integrate corpus data with meanings identifiable from larger stretches of text.

However, in all three of the studies mentioned, corpus and non-corpus findings have been only partly integrated. Generally, "big picture" commentary, referring to background institutions, history and the nature of documents being examined, appears separately from corpus data. In Stubb's piece, the short biography of Baden Powell is presented as "background" data, leading into his analysis of individual words. Baker and McEneaney's article follows a similar pattern in this respect, with the general description of the UN agency appearing as a form of introduction to the study proper. Even in Mulderigg's work, this tendency to separate corpus and non-corpus sources of insight is evident. Her article begins with a wide-ranging description of the shift in schools policy that resulted from a downturn in the 1970s economy (p. 2). Once again, then, background information, and then (largely) de-contextualised word data, are presented in separate sections.

One final article, Macalister's (2006) *The Maori presence in the New Zealand English lexicon, 1850-2000* is of particular interest since its approach is, like Fairclough's, chronological, and therefore also in a sense a "historical" study. Macalister attempts to identify shifts in the occurrence of important words in the discourse of New Zealand English, by making reference to raw frequency data for individual words. It is therefore particularly interesting to observe how the writer has here dealt with the two (corpus, and 'historical') sources of data. As in the studies produced by Mulderigg, Baker and Stubbs, Macalister presents data—corpus and non-corpus—quite separately. The 'history'-based introduction describes Cook's first contact with the Maori in 1773, and then provides an account of the entry of Maori words into the New Zealand lexicon, which continues to the present. In the later, corpus-based body of the study, he quantifies diachronic changes in the national lexicon by

referring to changes in the number of Maori word ‘tokens’ and ‘types’ used over a fifty year period. While Mulderrig’s paper demonstrates satisfactorily that a historical study can be carried out which incorporates corpus techniques, its structure continues to separate the two ‘modes’ of analysis.

Viewed from one perspective, these studies provide further evidence that quantitative, corpus tools can be deployed within studies that retain elements of a traditional, qualitative and intuitive approach. However, they provide little real defence against the charge, described by Hunston, that corpus techniques de-contextualise word data and strip lexical items from the environment in which their associations and meanings can best be made sense of. In my opinion these writers have succeeded only very partially in integrating corpus and non-corpus modes of analysis.

2.8 Combining Old and New ‘Keyword’ Traditions

One possible solution to the problem of keyword context can be identified by looking at the history of the notion of the keyword, and comparing the two traditions that have arisen. From one perspective, Scott and Tribble’s conceptualisation of the keyword can be seen as a development of, and improvement on the ideas pioneered by Williams. It is in a sense a logical “next step”, in which keywords come to be identified according to an objective and automatic procedure, rather than painstakingly by eye. Perhaps the most convincing evidence of its value and potential is the fact that corpus linguists Geoffrey Leech and Roger Fallon, independently, hit upon a similar (perhaps identical) procedure. Like Scott, they recognised the potential of a technique that compared the frequency profiles of different sets of texts to reveal key concepts. In 1992, Leech and Fallon carried out a study, ‘Computer Corpora—What Do They Tell Us about Culture?’, which compares frequency tables for words sampled in two corpora: the Brown Corpus of American English, and the Lancaster–Oslo–Bergen Corpus of British English. By identifying which words were outstandingly frequent in each, Leech and Fallon isolated words which they felt characterised aspects of the British and American cultures represented by the texts. Scott denies that his work was carried

out in emulation of Leech and Fallon's project, explaining that he originally produced a simple 'keywords' program in order to assist with a student's MA dissertation in 1991–2 (2007, personal communication). However, it clearly makes use of strikingly similar procedures (Leech and Fallon employed a chi-square test to identify these items; the same calculation that was used in early versions of the Keywords program in WordSmith Tools (Scott 2006)). The procedure recommended itself to these researchers, independently, because the value of the procedure appeared self-evident.

However, looked at from another perspective, these corpus analysts' approach might actually be considered reductive and simplistic compared to the older, manual techniques utilised by Williams. As we have seen, corpus techniques strip data from texts, isolating them from their source and context ('in a sense', as Hunston says, 'that is the point'). In Williams' procedure, in contrast, the context of every incidence of a given keyword is examined closely. It reveals each keyword's role in texts, and indeed in discourse that traverses whole bodies of texts, and uncovers deeper senses and roles. In Williams *The Country and the City*, incidences of just two interesting words, the 'country' and 'city' of his title, are explored across a number of famous literary works, including novels by Maugham, Austen, Hardy and Dickens. "Country' and 'city' are very powerful words,' he explains, 'and this is not surprising when we remember how much they seem to stand for in the experience of human communities' (p. 1). Williams also considers the impact of historical events, such as the English Civil War, on the way that these words are conceptualised by English authors. Williams identifies how, in a number of texts, the City is represented in conflicting ways, and the Country and City together used to represent conflicting ideals (rural innocence, for example, versus urban worldliness). By considering the context of the larger passages in which they occur, Williams makes the case that the words 'stand for' (ibid) a number of important ideas within the English experience.

In his (1994) *Text and Corpus Analysis*, Michael Stubbs acknowledges Williams' pioneering work using key words, and accepts his view that they are 'culturally significant words' (p. 171) whose careful study can lead to the illumination of

powerful ideas. Stubbs suggests that Edward Said's (1978) *Orientalism* uses similar techniques, and can in this respect be seen as a comparable study. He indeed refers to Said's work, along with Williams' *The Country and the City*, as 'two of the most famous and thorough analyses of keywords' (p. 168). Said's work is perhaps best known for the author's application of ideas concerning the relationship between discourse and ideology, originally formulated by Foucault, to representations of 'the Orient' in 19th century western texts. Looking at the work from the perspective suggested by Stubbs, however, it can also be viewed as a form of keyword study, carried out to investigate incidences of a single item, 'Orient' (and its derivatives), across a corpus of texts. As in Williams' *The Country and the City*, Said carefully investigates the way that the term is used by a variety of authors, referring in this case to 19th century accounts of the Middle East.

Though the procedures described by Williams on the one hand, and Scott on the other, both make reference to the notion of the keyword, they appear to have quite different objectives. What Scott's technique offers in terms of keywords methodology, is in fact largely a procedure for their identification. Williams' studies, in contrast, take the procedure for the selection of keywords for granted; their choice is either (as in *The Country and the City*) pre-determined by the subject or (as in *Keywords*) wholly intuitive.

As I looked at the two traditions, it seemed possible to conceptualise a meaningful approach which combined Scott's automatic, with Williams' intuitive techniques, so as to access the strengths of both approaches. By first applying Scott's methods, important words could be identified from a suitable corpus using the reliable and objective procedure he describes. Having identified keywords in this way, Williams' example might then be followed, returning to analyse the keywords, text by text and in appropriate chronological order, in their full context. This second procedure would be carried out, like Williams', painstakingly and 'by eye'. Such a step might partially reverse the process, described earlier by Hunston, in which word data is de-contextualised and isolated from texts. In support of such an approach, we note that Baker suggests that corpus techniques are best used when 'triangulated' with other

(usually intuitive and qualitative) methods that complement their use (2007: pp. 15–17).

2.9 Conclusion

What follows in this section is a brief summary of the chapter's content. While exploring the possibilities of using a keyword approach to the investigation, the use of modern, corpus-based procedures presented opportunities for analysis which directly addressed and supported the priorities identified in the literature review. By undertaking a corpus procedure, principles of selection and observability of primary materials would be upheld. Most importantly, the issue of bias, identified as crucial in the project, would be directly addressed. As we have seen, historical accounts of the communicative period (even those furnished by those, such as Howatt, adopting a genuinely historical approach) tend to filter events according to their own experiences and proclivities. As Scott's study of *Romeo and Juliet* perhaps demonstrates, a keyword procedure might facilitate the opposite process, genuinely *eliciting* ideas from documents, objectively and without the biasing tendency of the human observer. Whereas historians of the early communicative period have tended to look to documents to support their hypotheses concerning the origins of the CA, in this case the converse might be achieved. The keywords procedure might provide conditions under which ideas might "emerge" from the texts themselves.

By applying corpus techniques of this kind, therefore, efforts could be made to address these historiographical issues, making them explicit in the project's design. Using corpus tools, though, introduced a new problem; the tendency for quantitative, corpus procedures to strip data of its meaning-giving context. The challenge that now arises is how to apply both quantitative and qualitative versions of the keyword procedure, to analyse data in a way that does not isolate findings from their origins in texts. In this chapter, it has been suggested that by triangulating the two ("automatic" and "intuitive") keyword methods, techniques from both traditions could be performed and the results combined to maximise the value of the findings. In the next chapter, I will describe the actual procedure that was developed to attempt a realisation of this objective.

Chapter Three: Methodology and Implementation

3.1 Selecting Primary Sources for the Investigation

3.1.1 'Studies of the Particular'

As we saw in the literature review (1.4.2.2), Stern (1983) identifies two major 'groups' of works concerned with language teaching history; 'general studies' and 'studies of particular aspects' (p. 77). In the former category are global overviews, of the kind generated by Kelly (1969), which attempt ambitiously to encompass the whole (or a large period) of language teaching history. Such works typically make general observations, and draw broad conclusions that link insights from across the ages (pp. 77–83). In the latter group are studies directed towards not only a particular period within language teaching, but also a specific field or endeavour. Stern mentions several works, mostly written in the 1950s and 1960s, typified by Angiolillo's (1947) *Armed Forces Foreign Language Teaching*, a history of the 'GI Method' program aimed at the American armed forces at the end of the Second World War. Stern's opinion is that studies are more urgently required that conform to this latter category. 'At the present state of our knowledge', he explains, 'the study of particular aspects is perhaps more fruitful than further global studies' (p. 83). Stern also furnishes the examples of two Belgian scholars, Closset and Marechal, who embarked on studies of the history of language teaching in Belgium and discovered that it was necessary to restrict the area of enquiry to make it manageable. He remarks that Marechal's final work in fact covers the period 1830 to 1914 and deals only with the teaching of languages in secondary schools (p. 84).

When considering which primary sources should be assembled for the purposes of the investigation, I attempted to respond to Stern's ideas regarding selection. By studying 'a restricted field', he states, 'historians have a better chance of discovering and analysing a manageable body of data and thus of contributing to an understanding of language learning in general' (p.83). This led me to consider

narrowing the investigation by using a specific journal. This seemed to support the notion of ‘principled selection’ Stern proposes while conferring the additional advantage of textual “homogeneity”. Change identified in texts within the same journal over a chronological period could more reasonably be held to indicate historical tendencies than if qualitatively different sources were used; this was a lesson learned from Fairclough’s study (2.5.1). It would ensure that the body of data analysed was ‘manageable’, as Stern suggests, and would allow its systematic analysis by applying the same method to all texts.

Support for this approach could be gleaned from Heidi Byrnes’ (2000) ‘Shaping the Discourse of a Practice: The Role of Linguistics and Psychology in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning’. Byrnes’ study appears to provide an excellent model for chronological study based on the detailed observation of trends in a specific journal. She focuses on a particular segment of the discourse of the *Modern Language Teacher*, ‘the period from the 1940s to the 1960s’ (p. 486) which she regards as ‘a formative period that defined the field through an increasingly strong bond between linguistics and modern language teaching and learning’ (pp. 486—487). Byrnes describes the pre- and post-war period in American English language teaching as one in which the profession comes to be dominated by ideas emanating from audiolingual theory.

Other advantages of using a journal suggested themselves, particularly after it became clear that the investigation would make use of a corpus procedure. Some of the most important considerations were that a publication:

- consists of large numbers of short articles contributed by different authors, and therefore reflects the perspectives of a variety of practitioners
- captures, for the same reason, insights and reflections from different sectors of the ELT industry, provided the periodical is sufficiently inclusive. These two points relate to the project aims, that the investigation should aim to mitigate the emphasis on theory that is a feature of so much existing literature (see 1.4.2.3).

- contains articles which are largely homogenous, in the sense that they are generally of a similar length and conform to editorial standards for inclusion in the publication. This fulfils the requirement for effective keyword comparison that test and reference corpora consist of closely comparable texts.

3.1.2 Selecting a Publication

3.1.2.1 Publications other than the *ELT Journal*

Having decided to use a publication as the basis for the corpus, it was then necessary to make an appropriate selection from the list of candidate publications. This was not a simple task. A number of difficulties presented themselves, not the least of which was that it was difficult to determine exactly which publications, defunct, or still being published, were being produced during the early communicative period. Another was that in some cases, such as that of the *IATEFL Newsletter*, surviving archival copies were either difficult to locate or missing.

The first question that needed to be addressed in choosing an appropriate journal was: when might the communicative period be considered to have begun? In the preface to *Currents of Change* (1990), Rossner and Bolitho describe 1981 (when Rossner became Editor) as the 'beginning of the second decade of the communicative era in language teaching-and for some the first of the post-communicative era' (p. 2). This suggests that the 1970s could be viewed as the earliest in which communicative ideas could be traced. Howatt also suggests that the communicative approach appeared in the 1970s, and publication based on new, communicative ideas began in earnest 'during the second half of the decade' (p. 327). Ideally, then, a suitable corpus would contain contributions dating from the mid 1970s at the latest.

What journals, then, were available that provided coverage of that period? Susan Holden, writing as Editor of the *M.E.T.* in 1991, provides a useful survey of the ELT periodicals that were being published in the early 1980s. She suggests that when the

MET was first published 'in 1982 (sic)' the *ELT Journal* 'was the sole British -published international journal, albeit at a much more theoretical level [than the *MET*]' (p.2). Holden notes that many more publications had appeared by the time of her writing: 'PET, the Teacher Trainer, The EFL Gazette, the IATEFL Newsletter, JET, and a host of nationally produced publications for teachers' (ibid). Her comments suggest the existence of a limited number of professionally-oriented publications available before the 1980s. Holden has, however, made one or two errors in her evaluation of the situation. Her own magazine, firstly, had been existence for almost a decade longer than she describes (in fact Vol. 1, no. 1 was published in January 1973, rather than in 1982) and the *IATEFL Newsletter*, too, had in fact been published continuously since the foundation of ATEFL in 1967. At least three journals, then, rather than one, existed during the period of the emergence of the Communicative Approach.

The *IATEFL Newsletter* did not initially present itself as a strong candidate, on the basis of its function. This, as the most cursory reading of old editions indicates, was to report on important events touching upon the IATEFL organisation. In edition no 65 (October 1980), for example, one notes that there is an item announcing the organisation's decision to hold its next conference in Athens the following year (pp. 13—14), a report of the last A.G. M. (p. 50), information about membership (p. 51) and numerous other small news items. However, much of the newsletter, (pp. 15—38 in a 53 page bulletin) is given over to abstracts or 'summaries' of presentations given at the latest IATEFL conference. Frequently, however, many of those pieces presented at conferences and reported in the newsletter, were subsequently published in the *ELT Journal* itself. Throughout the 1970s and until 1981, Bill Lee, editor of the *IATEFL Newsletter*, held the same position at the *ELT Journal* and appears to have used the conference and/or *Newsletter* as a means of gathering articles (Hunter 2007). In this sense *Journal* articles are often, then, "recycled" from the conference (and newsletter). Thus while the newsletter contains some content which might be of historical interest, it seems to be the case that much of this anyway finds its way into the *Journal*.

Considering the correct starting date for the *M.E. T.*, January 1973 as we have seen, it seemed possible that material from this magazine might also be considered as the basis of a suitable corpus. The content of the *M.E.T.*, which began as an internal publication for International House (Director John Haycraft serves as 'General Advisor' in early editions (noted e.g. 1973 1/2 p. 2)), is quite different to that of the *ELT Journal*. The magazine, in early editions, is subtitled 'a magazine for practical suggestions for improving the teaching of English as a Foreign Language'.

Moorwood's editorial in the magazine's second ever edition, entitled 'Plain and Simple', states that the magazine team 'do not wish to fill Modern English Teacher with jargon and have tried to keep the language as simple as possible' (p. 2). This message recurs in subsequent editorials. In 1975 Moorwood explains that the 'MET is chiefly concerned with methods, activities, materials, aids and techniques' (p.3). In 1980 new Editor Susan Holden states that the magazine 'is written for anyone who is involved in Teaching English as foreign language' (p. 1) and expounds a list of intended readers that is similar to Moorwood's. Scrutiny of the content of the MET throughout the 1970s and 1980s bears out its practical emphasis. In the 1975 edition just mentioned, Peter Wingard provides a page long discussion about 'Composition in groups' (p. 4), and Paul Kusel one entitled 'Their first lesson—how to learn' (p. 10), which is concerned with learner training. Most of the items that appear might be best described as short articles, discussing, in quite accessible terms, the use of a particular method or technique. Considering these editions, my conclusion was that its emphasis was perhaps *too* practice-based, to the extent that broader ideas and background discussions might have been neglected.

Another British journal, not mentioned by Holden, is *Applied Linguistics*, the first edition of which appeared in 1980. This periodical was also "disqualified" for use as a corpus for two important reasons. Firstly, it begins too late; according to Rossner and Howatt, much of the formative period of the communicative revolution was already "over" before *Applied Linguistics* appeared. A second difficulty was that as it appeared too theoretical, directed more at the academic discipline of applied linguistics, rather than the ELT profession itself. The first article to appear in *Applied Linguistics* was Michael Canale and Merrill Swain's (1980) 'Theoretical Bases of

Communicative Approaches to Second Language Teaching and Testing' which, with its careful and detailed theoretical unpicking of the notion of communicative competence, citing earlier studies by Sauvignon and Hymes, served to set the tone of the discourse; academic, detailed, and wholly embracing of communicative principles. This, it was felt, was inappropriate to the aims of the project. In order to remove the focus, present in existing historical accounts, on theoretical concepts arising outside language teaching, another publication would have to be used.

3.1.2.2 Arguments for the *ELT Journal*

In contrast to these publications, *The ELT Journal* supported the purposes of the investigation in two important ways. Firstly, in terms of the time period covered, the *Journal* provides a record of professional discourse that covers the whole of the period in question. Furthermore, the publication also includes, uniquely, the period *before* the advent of the communicative approach. This therefore offered an opportunity to gather a suitable reference corpus. This was crucial. By assembling texts, of a similar length and format to those in the test corpus, direct chronological comparison (between periods respectively unaffected, and transformed by, communicative ideas) would be made possible.

Secondly, in terms of its position in the profession, the *ELT Journal* seemed to occupy "central ground". In contrast with those publications discussed thus far, it was a periodical that emphasised the relationship between theory and practice, and made explicit efforts to ensure that the contributions of both theorists and practitioners were included. This objective is stated consistently throughout the history of the *Journal* over the period of investigation. In a (1973) editorial William Lee explains that the publication will continue to publish contributions, for 'language teachers and other specialists', which range 'from the article on language-teaching theory or on a piece of research to the article on classroom procedures and techniques' (p. 52). After 1981, the *Journal* came to occupy a position in the profession that was even more studiously 'central'. Richard Rossner, in an interview conducted on the 11th January 2007 (at Eurocentre, Victoria, London), described the very deliberate

efforts that they made to ensure that the journal held centre ground in the profession. Three particular points were made with regard to this aim:

- 1) Rossner explained that the Editorial Advisory Panel, appointed (for the first time in 1981) to assist the Editor, was selected so as to bring together representatives from different parts of the profession. Rossner aimed to achieve balance in his choice of panellists. Chris Brumfit and Keith Johnson 'represented' Applied Linguistics, while others like Rod Revell were appointed on the basis of their experience of 'face-to-face teaching' (personal communication).
- 2) In the interview recording, Rossner explains that he desired to involve a broader cross-section of the profession than had previously been the case under Lee. While 'Bill was trying to focus on getting practising teachers to talk about their experiences, and themselves', Rossner also wished to encourage contributions by academics. 'What we wanted', he explains, 'was people coming to ELT from across the spectrum' (ibid).
- 3) Rossner was well conscious of the *ELT Journal's* position in a market that was becoming increasingly saturated with ELT-related publications. His strategy was to occupy the central position in this market, differentiating its contributions from those of the *MET* and *Applied Linguistics* so as to steer a middle course between them (ibid).

3.2 Selecting Appropriate Applications

3.2.1 Wordsmith Tools

As mentioned in the last chapter, the corpus analysis tool used in the project was Michael Scott's *Wordsmith Tools 4.0* (2006). These tools are well-known amongst corpus researchers working on small-scale projects. Hunston (2002) explains the usefulness of Scott's notion of the 'keyword' in the context of his program (p.68), and later describes the use of the Wordsmith Tools software in an ELT-related project using a specialist corpus (p.199). It was decided, after a number of trials using *Wordsmith* (initially using the simpler, less functional version 3.0), that this

application was well-suited to the investigation. It offered a number of options and functions, but was still comparatively easy to use. Importantly, given that there was no specialist assistance available, use of the tool was also well-supported. ‘Help’ files for the application are unusually comprehensive and concise, being written in an informal style which offers numerous examples. Wordsmith Tools is best described as a suite of applications. It currently consists of three main programmes; Wordlist, Keywords and Concord.

3.2.2 Wordlist

Wordlist is a basic program that analyses a text file, or group of text files, and generates a list indicating simply which words appear in the files examined, and how often they occur. Results can be listed in either alphabetical or frequency order. This allows the analyst to see at a glance which words are the most frequent items in a corpus. It can therefore allow the user to ‘study the type of vocabulary used in a text or corpus’ (Scott 2009).

Wordlist files are important in this study because the Keywords program (described below) works by directly comparing wordlists so as to make a statistical comparison of their word frequencies. Since no examples will be furnished in the data that follow, a simple example is provided here. Table 3.1 below shows the beginning (first twenty items) in a wordlist compiled from Kipling’s poem *If*.

Table 3.1 Table listing the first ten items in a wordlist for Kipling’s ‘If’

Freq. order	Word	Freq.	Lemmas
1	AND	20	
2	YOU	18	
3	IF	14	
4	CAN	12	
5	YOUR	10	

6	BE	9	be[2] are[2] being[2] is[3]
7	TO	8	
8	THE	7	
9	WITH	6	
10	MAKE	5	

It is important to note the wordlist in the table has been *lemmatised*. This means that words are grouped into lemmas (or word families). In the example above the words 'be', 'are', 'being' and 'is' are grouped as members of the lemma BE (lemma names are usually capitalised). Lemmatisation is important in any serious analysis because if words (such as most verbs) that have many inflections are counted separately, they will appear to be much less frequent in the corpus than if the whole lemma is considered on aggregate.

3.2.3 Concord

Concord is perhaps the most commonly used of the Wordsmith Tools applications. The program makes a *concordance* based on a search word, whose every incidence is recovered from the files analysed. The concordance program lists each incidence of the search word, placing the word in the centre of the screen and showing which words appear in its immediate context (to the left and right of the word). This allows the user to see how a particular word is used, and which other words (collocations) it tends to appear with within the texts. The concord program can also allow the user to view extra statistical information indicating which words appear as the most frequent collocates, and what clusters the word appears in.

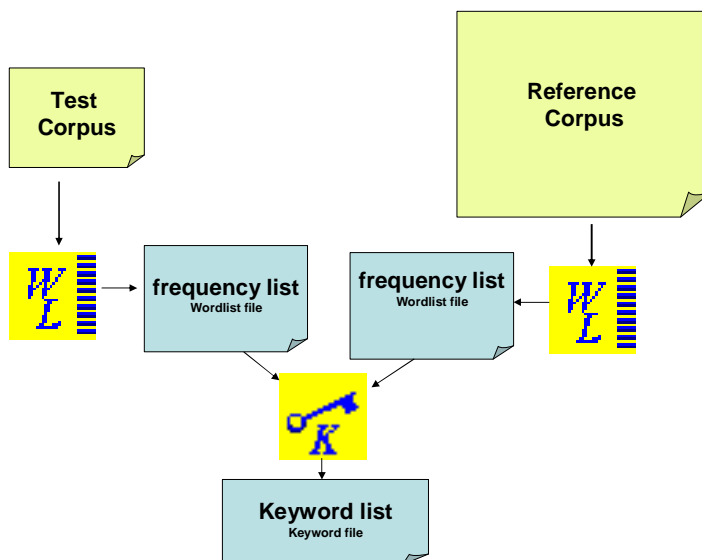
3.2.4 Keywords

This is the most essential application to the procedure of this investigation. In the extensive 'help' files for his Wordsmith Tools programs Scott writes concerning the Keywords application that:

This is a program for identifying the "key" words in one or more texts. Key words are those whose frequency is unusually high in comparison with some norm (Scott 2009).

The keywords application operates by comparing two wordlists (which are input into the program as the starting point of the process). One wordlist is entered for the test corpus (the file or files which are of interest to the analyst). The second is used as a reference corpus (the file or set of files that the test file can be usefully compared against). The keywords procedure then operates by making a statistical comparison (usually a log-likelihood test) which generates a value for each word, based on its frequency in the test corpus as compared to its frequency in the reference corpus. A high value indicates that the word is much more frequent in the test corpus than the frequency information in the reference corpus would lead us to expect. The procedure is illustrated in the figure 3.1, below.

Figure 3.1 Figure illustrating the procedure by which Wordsmith Tools generates a Keywords list by comparing two (reference and test) wordlists.



As explained in section 2.4.3, the choice of test and reference corpora is essential, and different selections should reflect different purposes and outcomes. To illustrate this crucial point further, table 3.2 represents likely outcomes given the use of

Romeo and Juliet (Mike Scott's example described in the second chapter) as the test corpus, and a variety of different reference corpora.

Table 3.2 Table representing likely outcomes based on comparison of 'Romeo and Juliet', used as a test corpus, with various reference corpora.

Test corpus	Reference corpus	Likely outcome
Romeo and Juliet	All Shakespeare tragedies/all Shakespeare plays	Keywords will reflect the main themes of the play, when compared to other Shakespeare plays
Romeo and Juliet	A corpus of Elizabethan texts	Keywords will highlight themes of Shakespeare's works, and features of his writing style, compared to other writers of the period.
Romeo and Juliet	A general corpus like the BNC	Keywords will generally reflect thematic and stylistic differences between Elizabethan and Modern English

Test and reference corpora must therefore be very carefully selected with regard to purpose. A poor design may test for something other than the user intends. The extensive work required to select most appropriate test and reference corpora for this investigation is described in the following sections.

3.3 Assembling Appropriate Corpora

3.3.1 An 'Iterative' Process: Building Test and Reference Corpora

At this stage, decisions needed to be made regarding:

- from which period would articles be assembled to form the *test* corpus ?
- from which period would articles be assembled from to form the *reference* corpus?

Here again the issue of selection, and the aim that materials should be investigated according to well-explained principles, was central. The nature of the chronological divisions made—which periods of the *Journal* should be used, and which beginning and end points applied—would determine the content of the keyword lists. These decisions would decide the nature of the historical, thematic changes that would be recovered by the analysis.

In the end, a solution to this question was only arrived at through a quite lengthy process of trial and error. The corpus design evolved, “iteratively”, as successive attempts to carry out a meaningful analysis were shown to be inadequate. On each attempt, different sets of data were recovered and analysed: keyword lists, along with other sets of related data, such as lists of collocations. As time-consuming as this process was, it provided useful insight as to how a keyword analysis, carried out on historical lines, can be organised in different ways to produce different results.

For the purposes of reducing the space given over to description, the procedure will here be simplified into two stages: ‘The Initial Model’ and the ‘New Model’ (which was used as the basis of the analysis proper).

3.3.2 The Initial Model

The Initial Model followed Fairclough’s *New Labour, New Language?* example quite closely, by comparing a number of different corpora to achieve a range of results. However, a decision was made early on not to make use of a general corpus, like the BNC, in emulation of Fairclough’s study. Preliminary testing showed that comparison of this kind generated words that were so general, relating to the professional purpose of the *Journal*, so as to be useless for historical study.

What characterised the procedure of the Initial Model was the decision to use selections of texts, grouped by decade, to form the test and reference corpora. Comments by both Rossner and Howatt, suggesting that the communicative period emerged during the 1970s (see 3.1.2.1 above), were influential in this. The length of a decade, otherwise arbitrary, in this case seemed to mark out the initial, formative

period of the approach quite neatly. Having accepted this decade-by-decade division, the next decision was to determine which ten-year block of articles would serve as the test corpus. It was intended that this should represent the discourse of the earliest, fully “communicative” period in the profession. One complication here was that, having carried out an overview of journal articles from the 1970s and 1980s, it seemed clear from reading that communicative ideas appeared to have come fairly late to the *ELT Journal*. While there was, as we shall see, emerging discussion of communicative ideas in the publication during the 1970s, it seemed clear that the decade was only partly characterised by its communicative content. This assessment was confirmed by early tests using collections from the various decades as corpora. It quickly became clear that the 1980s, rather than the 1970s, was in fact the first decade whose discourse was dominated by the presence of words including COMMUNICATIVE, ACTIVITY, TASK, etc, as top key items (see Table 3.2 below). The collection of articles from the 1980s therefore seemed the best candidate, at this stage, as the test corpus for the investigation.

A pilot study was then carried out to check these early assumptions. The process (again, emulating the quite complex procedure described by Fairclough) was as follows:

Step 1. Two lemmatised keyword lists were derived by comparing the test corpus (articles from the 1980s) against :

- a keyword list comparing the (1980s) test corpus against texts from the 1970s only
- a keyword list comparing the test corpus against texts from the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s combined

Step 2. Following Fairclough’s example, the lists of keywords were then cross-checked. Any keywords which did not appear as one of the 100 items in both keyword lists were eliminated. The effect of this was, by and large, to remove items that were not “content” words (grammatical and functional words such as ‘and’, ‘the’, ‘can’, etc.).

Table 3.3 Table listing the top twenty keywords recovered from the pilot test: 1980s (test corpus) versus 1950s, 1960s and 1970s (reference corpus)

Ranking	KeyWord	Keyness (log-likelihood)	Individual keywords within lemma *	No. of texts	% of texts
1	COMMUNICATIVE	1602.44	communicative	31	11
2	LEARNER	1433.04	learner	11	3
3			learners	32	11
4	STUDENT	1217.86	students	58	20
5	ACTIVITY	1171.25	activity	14	5
6			activities	27	9
7	TASK	907.97	task	15	5
8			tasks	13	4
9	STRATEGY	890.10	strategies	17	6
10	TEXT	627.11	text	29	10
11			texts	16	5
12	INTERACTION	607.27	interaction	13	4
13	SYLLABUS	588.85	syllabus	17	6
14	COMPUTER	567.39	computer	10	3
15	THEIR	561.07	their	20	7
16	INFORMATION	506.64	information	17	6
17	ESP	463.16	esp	9	3
18	VIDEO	444.67	video	11	3
19	CLASSROOM	390.33	classroom	17	6
20	ESL	389.75	esl	12	4

*only listed if identified as key items themselves

These results confirmed the impression that had been gained so far from reading and informal testing, that it was during the 1980s that words representing communicative themes emerged at the very top of the keyword list. However,

during the process of assembling the texts and analysing results, a number of observations could be made regarding the project design and its possible shortcomings. The most important and pressing observation was that the use of the decade as the central chronological reference point for the analysis, came to appear increasingly arbitrary.

3.3.3 The New Model

The innovation at the heart of the New Model was the decision to use editorial periods, instead of historical decades, as the basis for the grouping of texts. The need for this change became evident when reviewing the results, and reading texts drawn from various periods in the *Journal's* history. The sense gradually emerged that articles published under the two editorial regimes were “different”, subject perhaps to distinctive selection criteria and editorial preferences. After Rossner’s 1981 assumption of the role of Editor, it was clear, the thematic content of articles shifted quite radically. The important decision to abandon the use of the decade as the basis for groupings of texts was based on a number of parallel investigations, the most influential of which were:

- The interview with Richard Rossner, Editor of the *ELT Journal* (see 3.1.2.2) in which it became clear that editors imposed, and operated under different constraints. The structure and policy of the *Journal's* editorial board changed quite radically upon Rossner’s assumption of the post.
- The preparation of an article (Hunter 2007), for the *IATEFL Newsletter*, describing the life and contribution to that publication of Dr William R. Lee. (Editor between 1959 and 1981). It became clear when researching this article that Lee had a distinctive personality and approach to selection, which also influenced the content of the *Journal*. A distinctive style and approach to selection could be identified which accorded with the dates of his editorship. The extent of his influences—and Rossner’s later changes— did not in fact emerge until well into the second phase of investigation, and will be discussed at greater length in Chapter Ten.

- Consideration of Smith's (2007) detailed study of the history of the journal. Smith's paper, which focuses on the editorship of its founder, A.S. Hornby, identifies the dependence of features of the journal's discourse on its editors. Smith states: '[a]s a glance at the Appendix will show, successive editors have left their own mark on the journal' (p. 1).

As a result of this research, it was decided that the practice of isolating selections of texts by decade be abandoned, and instead corpora reorganised on the lines of editorial period. The notion of a chronological comparison based on what were, at bottom, arbitrary time divisions, no longer seemed feasible.

In the quite radically revised "New Model", therefore, there were again three "corpora" (selections of texts), this time based on periods representing distinctive editorial regimes:

- a corpus consisting of ELT Journal articles taken from the "Rossner" period: 1981 to 1986
- a corpus consisting of ELT Journal articles taken from W.R Lee's "second" period of editorship: 1973 to 1981
- a corpus consisting of ELT Journal articles taken from W.R Lee's "first" period of editorship: 1959 to 1973

The separation of W.R. Lee's period of editorship into two periods was useful and justifiable for two reasons. Firstly, 1973 represents a date by which communicative ideas had begun to be mentioned in the *Journal* (Widdowson's (1972 27/1 15 – 19) 'The Teaching of English as Communication' appeared in October of the previous year). Secondly, Lee himself appears to recognise the period after 1973 as a discrete phase, in which a different name and format was adopted to represent a kind of "fresh start". In a 1973 editorial, Lee describes the publication as a means 'of spreading information and ideas about teaching methods and materials'. He states his intention of connecting more widely to teachers at home and abroad using a

medium which is less expensive than a book, yet more easily deliverable than a seminar or course (p. 52).

3.3.4 'Looking Backwards' as a Final Modification to the Design

One further methodological revision was made to the design of the project, reflecting the insights that had been gained from this process of experimentation. In the Initial Model, all the analyses made were uni-directional: examining “positive” (newer versus older) changes over time. This appeared, on closer analysis, unsatisfactory. It was felt that an effort should be made to capture “negative” thematic differences, too; identifying which ideas had become *less* important over time. By switching test and reference corpora, lists of keywords could be derived which reflected ideas that had become less prominent in the journal discourse. One example is that the word DRILL seemed to decrease in importance as a term over the period that ACTIVITY became more significant (see 4.2.2.4, below). A decision was therefore made that collections of texts in the revised model would be used as both ‘reference’ and ‘test’ corpora to elicit different sets of results. Although this might complicate the findings to some extent, it would facilitate deeper understanding of keyword data and allow relationships between declining and emerging terms to be perceived.

3.4 Extracting and Cleaning the Data

By far the most time-consuming work of the project was that of assembling and then treating texts so as to form a meaningful corpus. Even though some of this work was carried out by a research assistant (exact details are provided in Appendix Two), the duration and complexity of this activity had not been forecast at the project’s start. As little in the existing literature seems to discuss actual procedures for corpus assembly (though Baker (2006: pp. 34–35) concedes that preparation of texts can be problematic), I have described the work in some detail in Appendices Two (describing procedures for cleaning) and Three (dealing with selection). Briefly, the work undertaken involved several steps, as follows:

Extraction. *ELT Journal* articles were transferred from PDF to text format so they could be processed by Wordsmith Tools software (see appendix section A.2.1, 'Extraction').

Identifying and Explaining Errors'. When unexplained errors were identified in the transferred data, it became necessary both to discover the reason for their presence and to arrive at some means of removing the most serious of them from the corpus (see A.2.2, 'Identifying and Explaining Errors').

Cleaning the Corpus. The corpus was cleaned in several stages. Firstly, a number of tests were carried out to assess the scale and nature of the errors present (see sections A.2.3.2 and A.2.3.3). It was then possible to carry out some principled cleaning of the corpus (A.2.3.4), using both manual and automatic procedures to remove the most serious errors.

Selection. Accompanying this process of cleaning, some policies were formulated and then executed to ensure principled *selection* of texts from the data available. These procedures are described in detail in Appendix Three. Taking into account Hunston's observation that decisions 'about what should go into a corpus are based on what the corpus is going to be used for' (2002, p. 26), an effort was made to ensure that the corpus contents should reflect the purpose of the analyses to be carried out. Decisions were taken at the time when files were selected at source (A.3.2.) but also later, applying policies to select passages within documents (A.3.3) to ensure uniformity of content.

Again in keeping with Hunston's comments, not all periods were treated in the same way, or to the same level of care. Given that they were to be used only for large scale quantitative analysis (and then, mainly for the purposes of forming a reference corpus), Old Lee texts were processed so as to ensure that only the most serious errors were treated. Additional decisions and steps had to be taken when processing articles taken from the Rossner period (see A.3.4), to deal with the changes in format that occurred after 1981.

Finally, in addition to these measures, the New Lee and Rossner collections were later treated, manually and by eye, so that the second qualitative phase (see 3.5.3 in this chapter) of the research could be carried out to a satisfactory standard.

3.5 Towards a Whole Design

3.5.1 Overview: a Two-Phase Project

In the conclusion to the last chapter it was mentioned that while keywords derived from the chronologically organised corpora might serve to isolate important historical themes, the usefulness of the raw data to any further investigation was somewhat limited. This was a result of the fact that keywords are wholly “decontextualised” by the procedure used for their extraction; words’ relationships with surrounding text is broken during processing. In order to address this crucial issue, an attempt was made to formulate an innovative procedure in which keyword data could be “re-contextualised” after identification. The investigation was therefore conceptualised as consisting of two main ‘phases’:

- a (shorter) first phase, following the design formulated during the tests already piloted (and described above). This phase would identify keywords by performing a battery of tests using various combinations of the three corpora. From these procedures some general trends might be discerned relating to the periods assessed.
- a second, more detailed phase of investigation focusing on a small number of very important keywords (identified from the first phase). The historical senses and significance of these terms might be recovered by looking at them again in context, returning to the *ELT Journal* articles from which the first, corpus procedure had isolated them.

In other words, the first phase would generate lists of quantitative keywords data that could only be partly processed to reveal thematic trends. In the second phase a few items, identified from the first, would be re-considered. In this procedure, each of these words would be analysed meticulously and chronologically, following each incidence of their use in the journal texts.

3.5.2 Phase I (Keywords Analysis: A Battery of Chronological Tests)

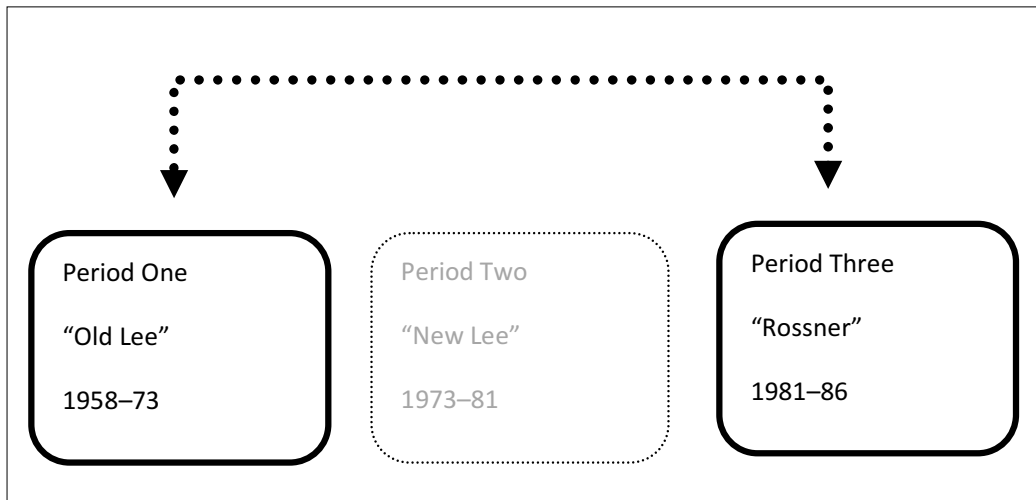
3.5.2.1 Implementing the New Model

In this first phase the 'New Model', whose development has been described in the sections above, would be implemented in order to discover the preoccupations of writers working during the period of CLT's emergence. Scott and Tribble (2007), as we have seen, have argued convincingly that a list of keywords is highly indicative of the 'aboutness' of an individual text. Such a list, furthermore, might even be seen as providing something like a *summary* of the text's thematic content. The aim here was to extend the principle suggested by Scott and Tribble by carrying out a keyword analysis of whole collections of texts from different periods in the *ELT Journal*, in order to isolate key concepts in each era. The keyword lists derived would therefore to serve as indicators of the thematic preoccupations of *Journal* contributors over the three distinct periods: 1958—1973 ("Old Lee"); 1973 to 1981("New Lee") and 1981 to 1986 ("Rossner"). The battery of tests consisted of:

- 1) *Two tests identifying changes over the whole corpus period.* In these tests, keyword data would be extracted which would provide an overview of the thematic changes that took place over the whole period of investigation (from the first, "Old Lee", to the third and final "Rossner" era). Two tests would be needed, since both positive and negative changes would be examined, analysing the texts in forward, and then in reverse (see 3.3.4 above) chronological order. To clarify this;
 - a) In the first of these tests, a keyword list would be generated using the Rossner texts as the test corpus, and the Old Lee texts as a reference corpus. These data would reflect thematic tendencies that emerged over the whole period of the investigation.
 - b) In the second of these tests the opposite perspective would be adopted. By using the Old Lee texts as a test corpus, and the Rossner texts as a reference corpus, it might be possible to identify which concepts and preoccupations disappeared, or became significantly less important, over the same period.

The procedure is illustrated in figure 3.2, below.

Figure 3.2: Diagram describing the nature of analyses performed for the first set of tests

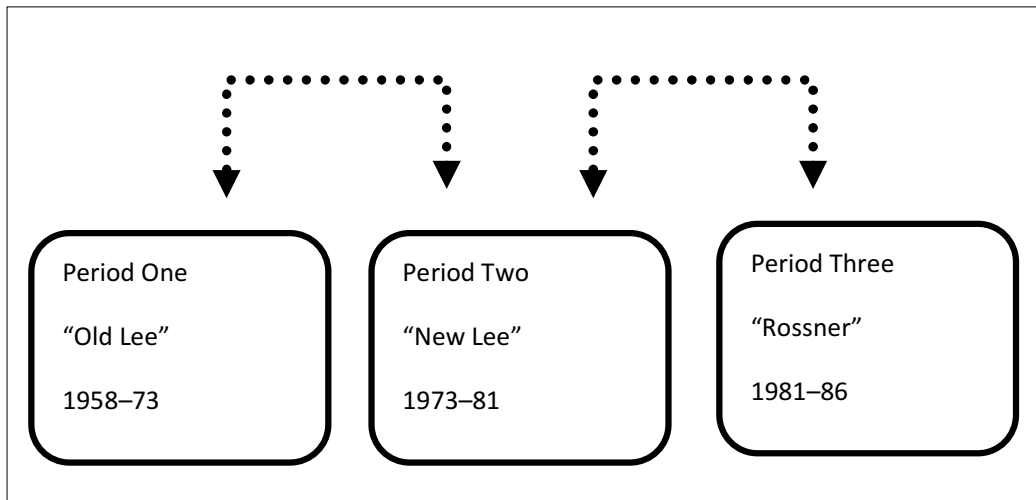


2) **A series of tests carried out to describe thematic shifts *period by period*.**

Keyword data would be derived by comparing texts from consecutive eras; between firstly, the New Lee and Old Lee corpora, then secondly between the Rossner and New Lee corpora.

The hoped for effect in this case would be to generate something like a "chronological profile" of the changes that occurred. From this, it might be possible to determine when important ideas emerged and how quickly these concepts became prominent in the changed discourse of the *Journal*. The changes that occurred over the three periods would therefore be analysed, as it were "one step at a time". The procedure is illustrated in figure 3.3 below.

Figure 3.3: Diagram describing the nature of analyses performed for the second set of tests



3.5.2.2 Organising Results by Thematic Grouping

The outcome of the procedures described in the last section would be a series of lists for each of the chronological, corpus comparisons made. In some ways, these data would be simple to interpret; the higher an item appeared in a list, the more likely it was to evidence an important preoccupation of the period being examined.

However, even when applying the minimum settings for the inclusion of data, some of the lists might be very long. In such cases, in order to restrict analysis to the most important themes, some further processing would clearly be needed. The solution arrived at here was to group the keyword items in longer lists according to their thematic content. The aim was to simplify data, capturing wider trends, by assigning keywords intuitively into 'thematic groupings'. Support for this technique can be found in Baker's (2004) 'Querying Keywords: Questions of Difference, Frequency and Sense in Keywords Analysis', perhaps the most up-to-date discussion (at the time of writing) of methods for keywords analysis of 'discourse'. Baker suggests that keywords might be grouped according to their semantic similarities and 'overall functions in the texts' (2004: p. 352). By making decisions about groupings, it might also be possible to discover more about the thematic preoccupations of contributors to the *Journal's* discourse.

3.5.3 Phase II (Keywords Analysis: Examining Keywords in Detail)

3.5.3.1 Returning to Context

In this second, more detailed phase of the investigation, a small number of words would be analysed intensively and in detail, examining the context of the articles in which they appeared. This approach was formulated largely with reference to the work carried out by exponents of the earlier 'manual' tradition of keyword analysis (described in 2.8); chiefly Raymond Williams and Edward Said's work tracing keywords across large numbers of texts.

3.5.3.2 Step One: Choosing Keywords for Further Analysis

3.5.3.2.1 A Process for Selection

It was immediately clear that, in this phase, only a quite small number of words could be analysed. Said, it should be remembered, extended his examination to only one lemma: *orient*, and *oriental*. In Williams' *The Country and the City* only two words were studied. In these works incidences of words were evaluated with respect to large numbers of texts (over a hundred in Williams' *The Country and the City* study, as his appendices attest). Given that, in phase one of the investigation, several hundred *Journal* articles had been assembled, my task seemed at least equal to Williams'. The final decision as to how many words could be analysed, in how much detail, was partly iterative. Early attempts to analyse large numbers of texts proved unsatisfactory, as much valuable detail (the objective after all, of this new phase) had to be omitted. In the end, as we shall see, five items were chosen; but it was not clear until after some work had been performed in this area how many words could be feasibly studied. The most pressing concern was that the basis for their individual selection should be principled, combining quantitative as well as qualitative information to explain why they were considered worthy of deeper analysis.

The obvious starting point for this procedure was the Rossner<> Old Lee keyword list, the most significant set of data, as has been discussed (see 3.3.2, 3.3.3 above) in

terms of isolating “communicative” themes. One simple approach to selection that presented itself was to choose items in order of their appearance in this list. This idea, by itself, has some basis in common sense, and the claims made for the keyword procedure itself. The topmost elements in the list, most disproportionately frequent in the test corpus, are most likely to be indicative of important themes. However, it soon became clear (as will become evident in the following chapter presenting findings) that the significance of keywords cannot always be established on such a straightforward basis. In the end, a number of criteria were considered. The procedure employed is outlined in the next two sections; 3.6.3.2.1 (explaining how key-keyword data was applied to check words’ significance across the whole corpus) and 3.6.3.2.2 (explaining more “common sense” criteria that were applied).

3.5.3.2.2 Considering Distribution: Key-key Word Information

Baker (2004; p.350), discussing strategies for arriving at manageable keyword list sizes, advances part of the solution by suggesting that keyword lists should be examined to determine which words have ‘global’ significance within a corpus. He recommends generating a *Key-keyword* list for each of the words in a keyword table, then cross-checking the results of both so as to assess each item’s global significance within the corpus.

The ability to generate a Key-key word list for a table of keywords is provided by Wordsmith Tools’ Keywords programme. According to Scott (2009), the Key-keywords function creates a database of keywords and analyses how many texts each is present in. The objective is to check whether words are ‘key-key’ (i.e. key in a large number of texts) rather than merely used very frequently and intensively within (say) a single short passage. Rayson (2003) tends to refer to this phenomenon as ‘burstiness’. Investigators must use key-keyword information to ensure that some words do not appear to be significant because there are a small number of ‘bursts’ in their appearances. Baker suggests that analysts consider keyword, and key-keyword data simultaneously:

'[...] it would be useful to find a way that combines the strengths of key keywords with those of keywords but is neither too general or exaggerates the importance of a word based on the eccentricities of individual files [...]. One could specify, for example, that a keyword has to occur at least x times and/or in y or more of the individual texts in a corpus, relative to its frequency, in order for it to be viewed as a representative keyword.' (p. 351)

One difficulty that remains, however, is the decision as to how widely distributed a term should be in order to be considered 'key-key'; i.e. significant in terms of the whole corpus. This inescapably required using an arbitrary figure. In the end, I adopted the percentage cut-off suggested by Tribble. He plumps for 5% as the minimum proportion of texts in which a term should appear (Scott and Tribble 2006: p. 78) in order to be considered a 'key key' term. Thus, while the choice of this figure remained arbitrary, there was at least the precedent of its earlier use by experienced corpus researchers. Applying this figure to the collection of 153 Rossner period texts, a minimum requirement of 7.65 texts was identified. Words which appeared in less than 8 texts in the Rossner corpus were therefore eliminated for selection.

3.5.3.2.3 Further Factors in the Selection of Keywords for Further Examination

Other, more intuitive and common sense factors were also considered when selecting words. These included:

- Some considerations relating to "overlap of meaning", and a desire to avoid investigating words that described the same or similar concepts. STUDENT and LEARNER, for example, were felt to be too close in meaning to justify the careful analysis of both items.
- Other common sense principles, eliminating words whose presence as highly key items could be accounted for by considering reasons other than their increased thematic significance (see for example 4.2.1.6, concerning TEXT, below).

3.5.3.3 Step Two: Examining Incidences of Words across Texts

3.5.3.3.1 Locating 'Key' Texts

Having decided which words would best reward detailed examination, each word selected would then be carefully analysed, as in Williams' work, to identify the pre-occupations it encapsulated, and the arguments in which it was deployed. In this stage the emphasis was placed on *texts*—whole articles in which keywords appeared— as a means of reversing the isolation of word data that occurred in the first phase of keyword analysis. As a refinement of Williams' manual procedure, however, harnessing the availability of new technology, Wordsmith Tools' *Concord* program was used to list appearances of the word across the New Lee and Rossner periods. Supporting the procedure of manual reading by using the application ensured that:

- no appearances of the term were overlooked
- the word's emerging role in the journal discourse was traced in exact chronological order.

Using this procedure it was also possible to identify *key texts*; an expression I coin here to describe those articles whose very detailed examination was important to the understanding of a selected word's role and developing sense in the *Journal* discourse. A key text might be defined as one in which:

- the keyword appears relatively frequently (at least 3 times, or disproportionately frequently compared to other texts selected by the concordance program)
- the word appears to be explicitly expounded in the article, or forms part of a consistent discussion in the text.
- the discussion in which the keyword appears is present in other articles, and therefore forms part of a consistent thematic thread that can be traced longitudinally (and therefore "historically") through at least of part of the corpus

Particular note would be taken of early texts in which new senses and ideas could be seen to be taking root.

While this procedure would contain elements of a data-driven approach, in that it would make some use of rudimentary order and frequency data, the final decision as to whether an article was a 'key text' was ultimately an intuitive one. Where a keyword formed part of an important discussion in an article, that piece would then be read and evaluated in its entirety to assess the keyword's role and significance throughout.

3.5.3.3.2 Applying Data from Concord

An additional step, not described thus far, emerged as yet another opportunity to apply corpus techniques to support what was otherwise an intuitive procedure. This was the decision to use additional data, provided by Wordsmith Tools Concord, to assist in the evaluation of the changing senses and uses of the keywords being studied. When using Concord to list incidences of a term in a particular corpus, the tool provides the following additional data:

- 1) Collocation data, indicating which words collocate with (appear close to, within a range of five places to the left or right of) the keyword. Collocation frequencies might easily be measured independently for, for example, the New Lee and Rossner periods to help identify historical change. As an example, 'activity' collocates with COMMUNICATIVE more frequently in the Rossner than the New Lee list. This might support the sense, gained intuitively from reading, that that the notion of an activity became increasingly closely associated with 'communicative-ness' as CLT became increasingly predominant in the discourse. This collocation data, which consists chiefly of frequency counts for each collocate of a keyword, can be further processed to provide statistical data as to which collocates are in fact the most statistically 'salient' (since raw frequency data can be misleading).
- 2) 'Cluster' data, also indicating principally which phrases and expressions the keyword appears in. 'Communicative language teaching' is such a cluster. Once again, cluster data might serve to illuminate the use of keywords in

texts, and could again be used comparatively, measured separately for different periods, to determine what changes may have occurred.

3.5.3.3 Collocation Data: How Useful?

What was largely unknown before beginning this stage of the project was the extent to which this additional data would be useful in the analysis of words. Great claims have been made concerning the efficacy of collocations in exposing the ideology (Stubbs 1994, 1996, Hunston 2002). Collocations, Hunston explains (e.g. 2002: pp. 117–119), can be used to identify writers' (conscious or unconscious) assumptions, through such features as connotation and 'semantic prosody' (p. 119). Stubbs, also, states that the concept at the heart of his approach is that 'words occur in characteristic collocations, which show the associations and connotations they have, and therefore the assumptions which they embody (Stubbs 1996:p. 172). This principle did not seem directly applicable in the case of this investigation. While the validity of this approach to the study of what Hunston describes as 'ideology and culture' (2002: p. 109) cannot be doubted, this project is concerned with "ideas" rather than "ideology", and phenomena such as connotation and semantic prosody might have much less value in revealing "objective" thematic preoccupations.

Another Concord procedure identified in studies analysing underlying or unconscious ideas was 'pattern analysis'. Wordsmith Tools Concord allows users to sort concordance lines by column, choosing different positions in the Horizon Span (e.g. R1, first on the right; L2, second on the left; etc.) to order the data. Mulderigg's CDA study of New Labour education policy (see 2.7.2, above), for example, appears to have made use of this technique, arranging concordance lines in various column orders so as to discover verb transitivity. After some experimentation using these ideas, it was again decided that these procedures were best suited to studies investigating 'ideological' rather than (explicitly stated) 'thematic' content. However, it was while working with the Concord software in this way that the technique for detailed chronological analysis (the project's second, qualitative phase of analysis, described in section 3.5.3, above) was arrived at. Indeed, the procedure used, listing concordance lines by date, issue and the order of a keyword's appearance in the

text, could be itself be seen as a form of ‘pattern analysis’, in which lines are sorted by clicking column headings to produce a particular useful order. The pattern sought in this case reflected the aims of the project; columns related to chronological order and text position (rather than horizon position) were selected to achieve a “historical” sorting.

Returning to the There were further, more practical concerns regarding the utility of these data. Firstly, it was not clear whether it was better used “predictively”, or “retrospectively”. In the first case the data would be read carefully first, and taken to be potentially indicative of important themes requiring further detailed analysis. In the second case, collocation data might be reviewed during or after text-by-text analysis had occurred, to check conclusions and provide evidence for tendencies discovered via intuition. Another, more serious concern was that the collocation (and cluster) data gleaned from Concord was itself de-contextualised, describing aggregate trends which were difficult to check reliably with reference to individual examples. It seemed possible that words might collocate with others for a variety of complex reasons; changes in frequency of collocation might be attributable, for example, to simple differences in the frequencies of the words themselves! Therefore the value and best means of using this information would have to be assessed, experimentally, as it were, as the project continued. In fact, as we shall see in Chapter Ten, several important findings concerning the use of collocation data were arrived at in the course of the analysis.

Chapter Four: Findings (Phase One. Keyword Analysis)

4.1 Introduction: Identifying Concepts in a 'Communicative Discourse'

In this section the first phase of the project's findings will be presented. What follows is an examination of keyword data, drawn from comparison of texts produced during three distinct periods: 1958 to 1973 ('Old Lee'), 1973 to 1981 ('New Lee') and 1981 to 1986 ('Rossner') in the *ELT Journal*. The premise of the chapter's discussion is that these data reflect changes in the thematic content of the *Journal's* discourse over the period of the emergence of the communicative approach. Briefly revisiting the basis for this claim, Scott and Tribble (2007) (as we saw in Chapter Two) have argued convincingly that a list of keywords derived by analysis of word frequency profiles is highly indicative of the 'aboutness' of an individual text or corpus. Furthermore, such a list might even be seen as providing something like a *summary* of the texts' thematic content. The results presented in this chapter have been generated according to the same keywords procedure, and merely extend the principles established by these authors. Since the corpora have been assembled according to chronological period, those key concepts that have been isolated as a result of comparison can be seen as providing evidence of historical changes in the journal's discourse.

Again reiterating an earlier point, the data presented here are the product of the first, wholly quantitative phase of the investigation (see section 2.8). Increasingly as the investigation has continued, it has become clear that quantitative data will be of limited value without making reference to the articles from which keywords have been extracted. The evidence presented in this chapter therefore represents only preliminary data, which will be built on in later chapters (Chapters Five to Nine) investigating individual keywords. The results of the procedure (described in 3. 5.3.2) by which keywords are selected for further examination are given at the end of this chapter (in section 4.4.2).

4.2 Rossner and Old Lee

4.2.1 Rossner versus Old Lee: Emerging Concepts

In this section results of the keyword comparison of texts from the Rossner and Old Lee corpora will be presented. The pilot and test studies, described in the Chapter Three, determined that Rossner era articles represent the contribution of writers influenced overwhelmingly by communicative ideas, and belong to a discourse in which communicative ideas are not only emerging but dominant. This can be contrasted with the New Lee period, in which, while 'communicative' concepts are discussed with gradual but increasing frequency, those precepts are present alongside discussions relating to earlier approaches. By the time of Rossner's appointment as Editor both *ELT* as an enterprise, and the *Journal* itself, were entering their 'second communicative decade' (Rossner, *Currents of Change*, p.2). Communicative ideas had by this stage already had considerable impact on the profession, and affected significant change in the outlook of its contributors. Consequently, the results presented in this section are perhaps the most interesting of those presented in this chapter. They provide evidence of the nature of the thematic and conceptual changes that had occurred in the *Journal* by the time of the establishment of the communicative approach in language teaching.

A decision, as important in its own way as that to use the Rossner period as the primary 'test' corpus for this first comparison, was to use the Old Lee corpus collection of articles as the reference corpus. Bearing in mind Scott's comments concerning the dependence of keywords results on the nature of the reference corpus used, it can be seen that the decision to use the Old Lee articles for this purpose (as opposed say, to those from the New Lee period, or both Old and New Lee periods combined) is also crucial. Old Lee texts are ideal for the purpose of deriving, through contrast, data concerning the nature of the discourse that emerged as a result of the 'communicative revolution'. The articles are drawn from a period which is as close as possible to the Rossner and New Lee eras, and appear

highly similar to the texts from these periods in terms of target audience and purpose³. At the same time, it is clear that communicative ideas have had virtually no impact at all on texts from this period. The Old Lee collection of articles therefore serves as a form of “control” corpus for communicative ideas. By comparing Rossner against Old Lee texts, ideas from the highly communicatively-influenced Rossner period can be effectively isolated, and held up for historical examination.

4.2.1.1 Overview: Keywords Representing Emerging Themes in the Early Communicative Period

In order to reduce this list (and those appearing later) to a manageable length, a ‘p’ value setting of .000000000000001, the very lowest possible in Wordsmith Tools, was applied. In theory at least this means that the results have a .000000000000001 % chance of error (Baker 2006). Baker notes that in the social sciences a value of .05 (a 5% danger of error) is usually considered acceptable (pp.125—126). However, this comparison should be viewed with some caution. Unlike most ‘parametric’ statistical tests performed on data in the social sciences a keyword test is ‘non-parametric’ (Miller 1984, Rowntree 1981). The numbers are calculated based on the comparison of one set of data against another, rather than (in the case of a parametric test) against the expected norms of a standard ‘population’ sample. Notwithstanding this, the strength of the ‘p’ setting is sufficiently high as to lend some “authority” to the figures and rankings extracted. Although the keyness figures themselves are difficult to assess —what does a keyness score of 1,605.40 mean exactly to the observer if it is not directly comparable with other data?— the log-likelihood algorithm and the exceptionally high ‘p’ settings lend us confidence that the rankings are very far from random.

³ However, one important finding which emerged during the investigation was that these chronological similarities were not as close as they first appeared; a new, more “professionalised” genre of article (see 10.4.2) seems to have emerged during the Rossner period.

Table 4.1: Key lemmas derived from comparison of the “Rossner” against the “Old Lee” corpora (‘p’ at .000000000000001; lowest possible setting)

N	Keyword	Keyness	N	Keyword	Keyness
1	COMMUNICATIVE	1458.7	26	THEY	221.91
2	LEARNER	1126.2	27	LEARN	210.16
3	# ⁴	709.24	28	SKILL	202.43
4	ACTIVITY	679.93	29	PROJECT	195.69
5	STUDENT	616.94	30	LISTEN	183.08
6	TASK	516.57	31	METHODOLOGY	181.1
7	TEXT	497.08	32	TARGET	179.51
8	ELT	449.2	33	COMPUTER	174.37
9	SYLLABUS	406.44	34	SIMULATION	171.21
10	FOCUS	387.89	35	GROUP	169.06
11	STRATEGY	381.75	36	QUICKWRITING	166.45
12	INFORMATION	379.24	37	PARTICIPANT	153.94
13	EFL	341.95	38	MESSAGE	141.45
14	ESP	304.74	39	INPUT	142.21
15	AUTHENTIC	284.3	40	TRAINEE	137.57
16	ERROR	276.51	41	TOEFL	137.07
17	INTERACTION	267.36	42	TOPIC	134.21
18	DISCOURSE	259.9	43	FIGURE	134.18
19	COMMUNICATION	256.81	44	DECISION	133.69

^{4 4} This marker ‘#’, indicating any numeric value identified by the corpus tools in texts, was left in the data to permit comparison between periods. On reflection, however, it was felt that differences in frequency of numeric data might be present as a result of corpus cleaning procedures. No “analysis” of these results have therefore been attempted.

20	ESL	254.58	45	CLASSROOM	130.67
21	VIDEO	238.53	46	PROCESS	128.27
22	APPROACH	237.33	47	DESIGN	127.31
23	ROLE	237.09	48	CIRCUMSTANCES	127.28
24	CONTENT	236.74	49	OK	127.28
25	THEIR	236.49			

As explained in the methodology section (see 3.5.2.2) items from the above list are grouped below according to their semantic similarities and ‘overall functions in the texts’ (Baker 2004: p. 352). These groupings should help to simplify the keywords list so as to gain some better sense of the thematic preoccupations of the period. For this table, a key-keyword analysis has also been carried out (generated initially using the Keywords program, then lemmatised “by hand”). Reference to key-keyword figures will be made from time to time to ascertain the *distribution* of words across texts (see 3.5.3.2.2). The key-keyword list appears in Appendix Six.

Words selected (see 4.4.2) for in depth, ‘second phase’ analysis, will receive detailed attention in the dedicated chapters that follow. Their discussion here will therefore be quite brief, and some of the insights gained from keyword analysis deferred until the full discussion of the words’ histories. However, in some cases words which were not selected for further examination in the second phase of the project may nevertheless appear sufficiently interesting to reward some further attention. In these instances, a brief history of the term’s use in the *Journal* will be provided.

4.2.1.2 COMMUNICATIVE and COMMUNICATION

COMMUNICATIVE, ranked first in the KW list, and COMMUNICATION (ranked 19th) are obvious candidates for a group. They are not only closely related lexically and grammatically (according to some definitions, they might even be felt to belong to the same lemma), but used in the Rossner texts consistently and even interchangeably (as we shall see in Chapter Six) to expound the same propositions.

COMMUNICATIVE is not merely the top item in the keyword list, ranked as the most outstandingly frequent item in the Rossner<>Old Lee comparison; the keyness figure, 1458.7, calculated according to the log-likelihood formula (which expresses the *degree* to which the word is outstanding) indicates that COMMUNICATIVE outranks by far every other item in the list. It is the only item, apart from LEARNER, to receive a score above 1,000. Compared with other words in the top ten (ACTIVITY, for example, at 679.93) a clear sense of its significance within the set of data comes across. The ranking and high log likelihood figure are all the more remarkable when we consider that COMMUNICATIVE, as a lemma, contains only one item (the adjective *communicative*), whereas most others in the list typically contain two or more (the number two item, LEARNER, consists of learner and *learners* for example).

In terms of 'dispersion', both items appear to be well distributed within the corpus; COMMUNICATIVE being key in 30 texts and COMMUNICATION in 10. This suggests that their high Keyness scores are not merely the result of their 'bursty' incidence within a small number of texts. While no doubt there are texts in which the terms are used intensively and disproportionately frequently, it is clear that they are important across the corpus as a whole.

If it is accepted that the Keyword data collated here do indeed represent something of the 'aboutness' of the Rossner corpus, then the most obvious conclusion that can be drawn from these results is that 'communication' or more specifically 'communicative-ness' are the notions that, above all others, preoccupy contributors during the Rossner period. On the basis of these findings, it might even be said that the concepts embodied by these terms could be seen as *characterising* the discourse of the period.

How then, do these findings help us to assess, according to the project's stated objective, existing accounts of the period? In this case, obviously, corpus and existing historical literature are in very close agreement indeed. Howatt, as we have seen the leading writer in the field of British ELT history, has characterised the history of the early movement as one 'dominated by a single powerful idea' (2004: p. 250); that

idea being 'communication'. This is precisely the conclusion that can be drawn from our results.

Unsurprisingly, according to the results of the selection procedure given at the end of this chapter (see 4.4.2), COMMUNICATIVE was the first of the words selected to receive much closer and more detailed attention in the second 'qualitative' phase of the investigation. The quantitative data exposed here and in later sections of the chapter will serve as preliminary data for that procedure. The word history for COMMUNICATIVE is provided in Chapter Five.

4.2.1.3 LEARNER and STUDENT

LEARNER and STUDENT are also obvious candidates for grouping. Co-investigation of these terms reveals that, quite apart from the fact that they are synonyms in a general sense, in the Rossner corpus they are used so interchangeably as to make the possibility of investigating one word independently from the other virtually impossible. It is interesting that both *learners* and *students* (plural forms within each lemma) appear in exactly 38 articles each; the degree to which they are 'distributed' across the corpus is therefore identical (and high). One reason why these figures are identical may be that the terms often actually co-occur in the same texts; this is borne out by closer analysis (see Chapter Six). It also seems likely from a common sense perspective; in passages where one term is deployed intensively by writers, the other can be used as a synonym and therefore, for stylistic reasons, an anaphoric reference to avoid repetition. However, it should be noted that while the terms are similarly distributed, the log-likelihood score for LEARNER (1126.2) is considerably higher than that for STUDENT (616.94). Based on Scott's proposition that a word's 'keyness' reflects its thematic importance in a text, it might be proposed that it is the term LEARNER that better represents the thematic preoccupations of contributors in that period.

As far as existing accounts are concerned, the prominence in the table of LEARNER and STUDENT, but particularly (and perhaps revealingly, given its higher keyness ranking) the former, again accords closely with existing descriptions of the

communicative movement. We can see at once that the emergence of interest in the needs of the learner is a central theme in Howatt's writing. He presents, indeed, learner needs as a concern that is not merely important, but *crucial* to the movement. As he states:

[...]the notion at the heart of the communicative movement in applied linguistics and language pedagogy after 1970 was the conviction that language teaching should take greater account of the way that language worked in the real world and try to be more responsive to the needs of learners in their efforts to acquire it (2004: p. 326).

At the level of ELT practice, Richards and Rogers (2001) also describe this shift toward a learner-centred approach, in which the student assumes a more central role in the teaching/learning process (pp. 76–77).

Howatt also foregrounds the role of the learner in a somewhat different context. He explains how, at the end of the 1970s, practitioners looked increasingly to humanist thinkers to furnish solutions to teaching/learning problems. Humanist approaches centred on the learner and the process of learning as a whole personal and psychological process; something which had been largely sidelined in America during the heyday of audiolingualism. This search, he suggests, 'centred on the ideas of a particular teacher, Earl W. Stevick', who he describes as one of the 'grand old men of American language teaching' (p. 256). This led to the reconsideration of a number of older approaches, embodying what would come to be described as 'humanist' themes: Gattengo's 'Silent Way', Curran's 'Community Language Learning' and Lozanov's 'Suggestopedia' (p. 110).

LEARNER was also selected for further examination in the second phase of the project. The word history for LEARNER appears in Chapter Six.

One general observation that should be made at this stage is that after COMMUNICATIVE and LEARNER, the log-likelihood scores for items in other groups drops quite dramatically; from 1126.2 for LEARNER, to 679.93 for ACTIVITY, the next highest word in rank. This suggests that, to the extent that log-likelihood scores

provide insight as to the relative importance of terms in the corpus, COMMUNICATIVE and LEARNER are uniquely significant within the corpus, representing the most outstanding themes in the Rossner period.

4.2.1.4 ACTIVITY and TASK

It seems reasonable from a common sense perspective to connect the appearance of the terms ACTIVITY and TASK. The terms, used virtually synonymously, frequently co-occur in texts (see Chapter Seven), and in this sense share a relationship that is similar to that between LEARNER and STUDENT. While ACTIVITY and TASK, ranked third and sixth respectively in order of their log-likelihood score, are clearly very important in the corpus, the dramatic falling off in log likelihood scores after LEARNER suggests that they point to concepts and preoccupations that are less pervasive than those discussed earlier. The terms are also much less widely distributed across the corpus (*activities* in 17 texts, as opposed to *learners* in 38, for example). This difference is roughly proportionate to the difference in the log-likelihood scores themselves. Looking at KKW data it appears that incidences of neither ACTIVITY nor TASK are particularly ‘bursty’ (appearing disproportionately frequently in a small number of texts).

The words are however still ‘important’ and suggest that the notion of the ‘activity’, as well as the linked (though still emerging, as we shall see in section 4.3.3 , below) concept of the ‘task’ are pervasive in the Rossner era. Once again, their presence bears out the observations made in the historical literature that describes the early communicative period. The notion of the activity, like that of the learner, is foregrounded in Howatt’s account in a way that parallels its ranking in this quantitative data. Howatt declares that ‘the legacy of the CLT classroom that distinguishes it most clearly from its predecessors is probably the adoption of ‘activities’’ (2004: p. 258). The writer’s use of inverted commas here, as if to accentuate the novelty and new professional awareness of the term itself, is interesting. Richards and Rogers (1986: p. 66), too, explain that amidst the competing ideas as to what actually constitutes Communicative Language Teaching, a common belief is that ‘it means using procedures where learners work in pairs and

groups employing available language resources in problem-solving tasks' (p. 66). In other words, for these writers, at the level of actual classroom practice CLT is essentially *characterisable* by its use of activities/tasks.

ACTIVITY is another word selected (see the procedure described in section) for in depth, 'second phase' analysis, and its history is described in Chapter Seven.

4.2.1.5 Initialisms: ELT, EFL, ESP, ESL

The next most interesting and important group in terms of statistical strength are those professional initialisms that appear in the list. Even taken as individual items, the importance of these terms can be seen to be highly important in the KW list. Particularly impressive is the distribution of some of the initialisms; for example according to the KKW data 'EFL' appears in 11 texts.

Yet again keyword trends appear to support Howatt's depiction of events. Howatt describes the proliferation of such terms (a phenomenon which he sees as occurring in particular within universities (p.251)) as a feature of the communicative period. He describes, as an example, the process through which the initialism 'ESP' diversified into 'EAP' (English for Academic purposes), 'EOP' (English for Occupational Purposes) 'EST' (English for science and Technology), 'and so on' (p. 251).

As none of these initialisms will receive further attention in later chapters, I will briefly extend their discussion here. In the literature review, it was suggested that Howatt's emphasis on the area of ESP was perhaps indicative of a somewhat narrow, university-centric bias. Even within the relatively short space of his account of the communicative period, he dedicates considerable space to the development of ESP (e.g. p. 251; pp. 340—345). He traces the history of the initialism itself, explaining that it was held first to be an abbreviation of 'English for Special Purposes', a convention which persisted until the late 70s (p. 251). However, the appearance of ESP here as the 14th keyword in the list, found in 6 texts, is perhaps partly supportive of the importance Howatt's account places on the work carried out in this

area. The keyword ranking of the term is less impressive than that of COMMUNICATIVE, say, or ACTIVITY. But this is consistent with the *nature* of the emphasis in Howatt's description, where it is depicted as an important, but specific rather than universal area of work. 'Right from the start,' as Howatt relates, 'it was recognised that a distinction had to be drawn between general purpose learners whose aims were widely shared by others and those whose needs were specific to a particular, often tightly defined group' (p. 251).

However, there is one area where the keyword data do suggest a development that diverges quite significantly from Howatt's history. Contrary to the relative emphasis placed on the terms in his account, EFL appears to be more significant in the keyword list than ESP (the former ranked 14th, and identified in 11 texts; ESP ranked 14th and found in only 6 texts). As was noted in the literature review, the coverage of EFL as a whole enterprise is noticeably sparse in Howatt's—and indeed most others'—account of the communicative period. Haycraft (1998) laments that the contribution made by private language schools to the development of EFL as an enterprise has been virtually neglected. This position, that the contribution of institutions such as Bell, International House and Eurocentres is not taken account of in existing histories, finds some support in these data. The appearance of EFL as an important item in the keyword list may well reflect something of the emerging role of that sector within the UK profession and an increasing tendency for the *Journal* to depict its activities. Smith (2005) explains that as the result of significant growth in private enterprise within Britain during that period, this term came to be used to refer to the teaching of overseas visitors to the UK; earlier it had described only the teaching of English in countries where it had not, until recently, been used as a medium of instruction (p. 7).

Indeed, in terms of distribution (the number of texts in which it is found), ESP appears to be less thematically significant in the corpus even than 'ESL' (the 20th keyword, found in 10 texts). The significance of this term needs some elaboration, since according to Smith ESL—like EFL—had recently undergone a change in meaning. Before the 1960s, the term ESL had labelled the activity of teaching English

to learners overseas (usually in a colonial context) for whom it was an official, but not first, language. During the 1960s, as large numbers of immigrants arrived in the UK, the term came to be used increasingly to describe the activity of teaching these new arrivals (pp. 6—7). While Howatt, as we have seen, touches on this area, it is hardly depicted as an important centre of innovation and change. In his account it is largely left to his co-writer (see footnote 1 in Chapter One), H.G. Widdowson, to comment (and then only briefly) on developments in this area in his final chapter (pp. 362—363).

However, some caution must be shown in taking these data at face value. It seems possible that the marked increase in the incidence of these terms in the Rossner texts may not directly reflect their increased importance, or the emerging significance of the fields they label within the profession. Concerning the appearance of these terms (in particular 'ELT'), the common sense observation must be made that the publication changed name, in 1981, from *English Language Teaching Journal*, as it had been known since 1973 (Smith 2007: p. 8; 2004: p. 6), to the abbreviated *ELT Journal*. This development, by itself, might well account for some of the importance that the item 'ELT' plays in the keyword list. This suggests that 'ELT' is present as a highly key item at least partly because of the publication's name change.

This tendency was, anyway, a development that had been occurring steadily in the post-war period. Smith (2004) explains that during the 1950s and 1960s, 'the acronym 'ELT' came to be used informally both as an abbreviated title for the [*ELT*] journal' and as the 'British cover term' for the field of English teaching to speakers of other languages in general (p. 6). He also believes that after the 1960s the initialism 'started to become more common than the full phrase' itself (*ibid*). It seems reasonable to extrapolate from the history of this term the fact that a similar process may have occurred with at least some of the other initialisms (EFL, ESP, ESL) in this group.

4.2.1.6 TEXT and DISCOURSE ('Language as a Unified Event')

These items are certainly linked thematically in Howatt's account as words that relate to the notion, recovered by the communicative movement, of 'language as a unified event' (p. 330). Howatt explains that 'in linguistic terms' (p. 330) this is the 'key concept' (an interesting choice of words from the perspective of this investigation) of the communicative movement. As he states: '[w]e are concerned with wholes—utterances, texts, conversations, discourses, and so on—and not with components such as sounds, words and sentences' (p. 330).

After TASK, already discussed above, TEXT (KW 7, *text* found in 22 articles, *texts* in 10) is the next highest ranked key term. DISCOURSE (KW 18, *discourse* only, found in 11 texts) is also far enough up the list to be considered an important keyword. Confirming Howatt's interpretation of events, the data suggest that by the Rossner period contributors to the *Journal* had come to adopt an approach which rejected the isolation of structures and patterns which characterised the Old Lee situational approach. Instead, these data suggest, practitioners began to embrace texts as whole incidences of language.

Perhaps surprisingly neither of these items was selected for further examination in the second phase of the investigation. DISCOURSE was not ranked, or distributed sufficiently highly compared to other items to warrant investigation in phase two. The reasons for not examining TEXT further are more complex. The prominence of the item cannot be entirely accounted for by an increase in practitioners' concern for the notion of TEXT as an actual 'concept' with wider implications for language or learning. In almost every incidence (9 out of 10 in one concordance sample), contributors to the *Journal* use TEXT to refer to the actual —physical—materials or stretches of writing that they present to learners during lessons. The use of the term in the following sentences, from Mike Scott's 'Using a 'standard exercise' in teaching reading comprehension' (1984 38/2 114—120) exemplifies its most common sense:

Course designers and teachers may have available a number of good *texts*, suitable in various ways for the students they are responsible for, and a number of exercises to practise certain teaching points arising from those *texts*. But after any given *text* has been used once with a particular group of students, its communicative value is lost (italics mine, p.144).

For the writer of these sentences ‘texts’ are materials or artefacts of learning. This is not uninteresting in itself. Teachers’ increased use of whole passages of writing in the classroom may well reflect, at the level of practice, the success of approaches like Widdowson’s which focused on language beyond the level of the sentence. However, the prominence of TEXT in the Rossner corpus is indirect evidence only of these trends. Tracing its development over the period of the investigation it is seldom, if ever used within arguments expounding the new approach. Moreover, unlike other terms like ACTIVITY or COMMUNICATIVE, its meaning remains static. In the end, other words presented themselves as better candidates for highly detailed investigation.

4.2.1.7 Other Key Groups and Items

After this last grouping of terms it becomes more difficult to assemble, with any confidence, groups of items that might be considered to share semantic or thematic roles. The relative difficulty of identifying groups in this Rossner<>Old Lee table⁵, when compared to those that appear in the following sections (in which keywords fall much more clearly into easily identifiable, thematically consistent groups), is in a sense a feature of the keywords extracted from this Rossner period. The phenomenon is suggestive of the period’s comparative complexity in terms of theme, and the multi-stranded nature of its discourse when compared to other tables; this point that will be taken up further later.

⁵ Henceforth, the notation ‘<>’ will be used to indicate which selections of texts were used as the test corpus (before the expression) and reference corpus (afterwards)

One further, interesting grouping, however, is that of items like VIDEO (21st), and COMPUTER (33rd) that point to the discussion of new educational technology, not in existence in the Old Lee period. These are developments not mentioned at all in Howatt's account. This perhaps represents an area that has been neglected by historians; the impact of new forms of technology on teaching and the various claims made for each new technological arrival. It is perhaps significant that in several of the personal accounts reviewed earlier in 'Forty Years of Language Teaching' the impact of new IT is mentioned by several contributors. David Nunan points out that the computer had not yet appeared on the scene by the 1970s (2007: p.9). Udo Jung complains concerning its omission from literature of the period. Describing H.H. Stern's *Fundamentals*, he states that the writer, '[f]or reasons best known to himself omits the educational technology movement' (p. 7). Jung portrays the advent of computer technology as a significant advance, and one perhaps worthy of deeper treatment than it is given in the existing histories.

It seems consistent with Scott's ideas concerning 'keyness' to assume that the topmost items in this list might be held to capture the most important ideas, particularly where the statistical measure of their disproportionate frequency distinguishes them from other items in the list. For this reason, other individual words present in the list, less highly ranked than those discussed so far, but still well distributed across a number of texts, also require careful scrutiny and consideration against known accounts.

SYLLABUS (KW 9; *syllabus* in 11 texts, *syllabuses* in 4) is, based on these figures, an extremely important idea in the discourse of the Rossner period. In Howatt's account, 'syllabus' is frequently present, in his discussion of the Council of Europe's language framework project, and in this sense receives serious attention. This project, in Howatt's history, was a key mover in implementing communicative ideas at the level of practice. Howatt, too, explains in some detail the implications of the innovations that were introduced along with the early notional/functional syllabus. He makes the comment that, to many teachers, their first exposure to communicative ideas was through their experience of this new kind of syllabus. 'To

teachers', he explains, the new ideas emanating from the work of the Council team 'became known as the 'notional/functional approach' and for many of them it became synonymous with 'communicative language teaching' (p. 339). In those early days, then, CLT was a notion deeply connected to that of the syllabus. What is perhaps a mystery here is why SYLLABUS should appear prominently in the Rossner<>Old Lee texts when it is, according to Howatt, a notion which received greater attention during the 1970s (firmly within the New Lee period). This mystery only deepens, as we shall see, when considering the keywords results for the Rossner<>New Lee comparison in section (4.3.3) below. Here, in fact, SYLLABUS appears as the sixth most highly ranked item (suggesting a large increase in its discussion in the Rossner, over the New Lee texts!).

SYLLABUS is another of the terms selected for investigation in the second, more qualitative phase of the investigation. The issues raised by the quantitative data here will be addressed in detail in Chapter Nine.

STRATEGY (KW 11, *strategy* in 3 texts, *strategies* in 13) receives only quite brief attention in Howatt's account. Howatt touches on the idea indirectly, when he discusses study skills in the context of ESP (pp. 256—257). However, closer examination of incidences of the word in the corpora indicates that STRATEGY is indeed an important term within the discourse of the *ELT Journal*. STRATEGY is not only a prominent keyword, but also one for which a distinctive history can be discerned in the New Lee and Rossner texts. Since it is not one of the items selected for further investigation in the chapters that follow, a brief history of the term will be provided here.

The history of STRATEGY over the period of the investigation is partly one of its transition from use as a general term, to one carrying specialist meanings particular to the ELT profession (to anticipate slightly, this is a pattern repeated for many of the words analysed in the coming chapters). In Old and New Lee texts it is frequently deployed in a general sense to refer to teachers' or educationalists' organisation of curricula, teacher training and learning. One article in which it appears repeatedly

carrying this general, 'non-specialist' sense is Rebecca Ullman's 'A Broadened Curriculum Framework for Second Languages' (1982 36/4 255—262). Ullman suggests that in order to achieve the aims of a particular syllabus, teachers need to adopt appropriate 'strategies'; seeking contact with the target culture to pursue a cultural syllabus, for example (p. 260).

However, a newer, more specialist meaning of STRATEGY, as something applied by learners to the problems of learning and language use, gradually emerges over time. In the New Lee period, Paul Lindsay (in 'Resistances to Learning' (1977 31/3 184 — 190)) describes the need for teachers to 'make a frontal attack' (p.184) on students' outmoded strategies for learning and to encourage them to accept newer methods. This discussion intensifies and becomes more sophisticated in the Rossner period. In, 'What Do We Want Teaching Materials For?' (1981, 36/1 5—17), R. L. Allwright advocates the teaching of 'learning strategies' (p.8) alongside the target language. The aim is to assist those students 'who may well want to become better language learners' (ibid).

STRATEGY becomes an increasingly referred to concept as the Rossner period progresses. Rod Ellis' 'Communication Strategies and the Evaluation of Communicative Performance' (1984 38/1 39—44) reflects the emerging acceptance of the notion of linguistic and learning 'strategies' in the profession. Ellis actually suggests that learners' language ability can be assessed not by means of 'focusing on correctness, intelligibility, or style' of learners' utterances, but rather on the 'communication strategies' they use (p. 39). By 1985, clearly, a classroom focus on strategies, along with skills, has become identified as an important component of the communicative approach. As such its over-emphasis is attacked by Michael Swan in 'A Critical Look at the Communicative Approach (1)' (1985 39/1 2—12). Swan questions the assumption that skills/strategies such as 'guessing' and 'the negotiating of meaning' (p.9) need to be taught explicitly. Swan complains that focus on strategies is now widespread: 'assertions like this, he explains, 'regularly pass unchallenged at conferences' (p. 10). The notion of the strategy, and an

understanding of its particular meanings, now appears to have been accepted by the profession as a whole.

AUTHENTIC (KW 15, *authentic*, only, in 8 texts) is the last item which will be considered here. The notion of authenticity receives some attention in Howatt's account (e.g. p. 330—331). But, as in the case of STRATEGY, it could also be argued that the idea is under-represented in terms of its obvious impact on communicative thought, and that it deserves further attention. In Little, Devitt and Singleton's article 'The Communicative Approach And Authentic Texts', the concept of authenticity is portrayed as one of the most lasting legacies of the Communicative Approach (pp. 43—47). The authors suggest that, 'from the beginning, 'authenticity' has been one of the key concepts of the communicative movement in language teaching' (p. 45); an assessment that is supported by these data.

Once again, since a clear history for the word's emergence in the discourse can be discerned (and since there is no chapter dedicated to its study), an effort will be made to describe its development here.

Like STRATEGY, AUTHENTIC is often used, especially in earlier texts, in a general sense without any special senses specific to the discourse of the profession. When Arthur H. King ('Some General Principles of Advanced Reading Instruction' (1978 33/1 38 —45) mentions that choral reading 'is normally too inefficient to have an authentic effect' (pp. 42—43) the word has a meaning, perhaps similar to 'genuine', that has no specialist or professional sense at all.

This gradually changes, however. Still in the New Lee period, Susan M. Maingay's (1980 34/3 217—221) 'Selection and Grading of Authentic Material for the Reading Class' is the first article in which the term is explicitly expounded and discussed as a key ELT concept. Maingay states that the 'question of what is a truly 'authentic' text is open to discussion' (p. 217). Maingay's use of scare quotes here suggests a growing awareness of its special importance within the professional discourse. She goes on to provide a working definition: 'For the purposes of this article [...] I will

define an authentic text as one which has not been specially prepared (written, simplified, or adapted) for language-teaching purposes (p. 217).

Within the Rossner corpus, the extent and sophistication of the discussion begun by Maingay increases rapidly. Increasingly the meaning of AUTHENTIC comes to be discussed and carefully defined by successive users. In the very first edition of the Rossner period corpus, Don Porter and Jon Roberts' article 'Authentic Listening Activities' (1981 36/1 37 —47) acknowledges that authenticity has emerged as an important new professional priority. 'Features of authentic language use', they explain, 'are beginning to make their way into ELT materials.' (p. 37). Later the authors explain that the 'need for and usefulness of authentic materials have been increasingly acknowledged in recent years' (p. 39).

Porter and Roberts are careful to define their use of the term 'authentic language', explaining that for their purposes it is that 'not initiated for the purpose of teaching' (p. 37). In later articles, other authors make similar efforts to define the term. In 'What Should Language Teaching Be About?' (1982 37/3 229—234), Vivian Cook describes authentic language as that 'produced naturally by native speakers, rather than language specially designed for teaching' (p. 230). Li Xiaojun, in her article *In Defence of the Communicative Approach* (1983 38/1 2 —13) contends that authentic language is that that is 'relevant to our students' (p.5). She illustrates her point with an example: '[i]f after graduation our students have to read encyclopaedias, then the language of encyclopaedias is authentic for them' (p.5).

AUTHENTIC has therefore by this time emerged as a genuinely key professional concept, influencing teachers' approaches to language, design of activities and selection of materials.

4.2.2 Old Lee versus Rossner: ‘Disappearing’ Concepts

4.2.2.1 Overview: Keywords Representing Themes in Decline during the Early Communicative Period

The results described in the last section are based on an analysis that uses the Old Lee texts as a reference corpus. Composed as it is of articles from the period 1958–73 (issues 12/4–Volume 27/3) the Old Lee corpus has been extremely useful as a kind of ‘control’, or ‘reference’ corpus in which communicative ideas can be safely held to be absent.

The results presented in this section (listed below in Table 4.2) have been generated by applying the reverse procedure. Old Lee corpus texts in this case form the test corpus, and the Rossner texts the reference corpus. The aim here is to produce “negative keywords”; “negative”, that is, from a chronological perspective, since we know that the keywords isolated are important in the Old Lee period but have become markedly less important in the *Journal* by the Rossner era.

The identification of these negative keywords is useful for two reasons. Firstly, since any historical investigation is necessarily a chronological one, taking into account developments over time, it is necessary to select some “beginning” point from which changes can be identified. Secondly, knowing which terms become less “key” over the period of our investigation helps to make sense of the positive changes that occurred at the same time. The process by which a particular term comes to prominence in *Journal* discussions is often, as we shall see, one in which another item falls into decline. R. A. Close’s article ‘Banners and Bandwagons’ (1977 31/3 175–183) describes the phenomenon in which, within ELT, a word falls out of favour and another more acceptable term comes into vogue (he gives the example of the declining word ‘structure’, and the trendy new ‘pattern’). Many of these relationships will become clearer in the word history chapters that follow. To anticipate one such connection for the purposes of illustration, the highly key status

of the item ACTIVITY in the Rossner period may be partly explained by the decline in the keyness of the term DRILL, identified as a negative keyword in these results.

Table 4.2: Key lemmas derived from comparison of the “Old Lee” against the “Rossner” corpora (‘p’ at .000000000000001; lowest possible setting)

N	Keyword	Keyness
1	HE	609.43
2	ENGLISH	513.16
3	HIS	362.01
4	PUPIL	334.51
5	SOUND	281.75
6	DRILL	207.57
7	LABORATORY	205.72
8	BE	204.95
9	PATTERN	200.82
10	VOWEL	172.17
11	TENSE	166.24
12	HIM	153.68
13	PRONUNCIATION	150.19
14	CONSONANT	138.92
15	CIRCUMSTANCE	132.36
16	CHILD	130.76

4.2.2.2 Male Pronouns: HE, HIS, HIM

The appearance of these terms as the most important group in the Old Lee corpus can be explained by stylistic differences between articles in the Old Lee and Rossner periods. Using a concordance to find incidences where both ‘he’ and ‘his’ appear in close proximity, several hundred lines are returned. The following passage (extended from one of these concordance lines) illustrates the prevalence of male pronouns in the pre-1973 discourse of the *Journal*:

Circumstances change with countries, of course, and whatever the country *the teacher* will find *himself* in part taking advantage of *his* students' prejudices and preconceptions and in part engaged in combating them. In Japan, for instance, *he* should try to persuade *his* classes that a little ordinary down-to-earth understanding is not out of place (from D. J. Enright's 'Splendours and Miseries of a Literature Teacher' (1958 13/1 7—11)).

In keeping with the linguistics fashions of the time, in the discourse of the New Lee *Journal* both teachers and students are assigned default male status. It seems extremely likely that the stylistic differences in the Old Lee and Rossner corpora identified by these Keyword data explain much about the Rossner Keywords presented in the last section (4.2). LEARNER and STUDENT, it will be recalled, were important items in that list (see 4.2.1.3), and it was suggested that this reflected a greater emphasis being placed, during the Rossner period, on the needs of learners and their role in the learning process. These data seem to indicate that this is not the whole story. It seems very likely that they came to be deployed by writers in place of generic male pronouns as gender-neutral terms. Consider for example the following passage taken from a Rossner period article:

f. Predictive listening exercises. For example, the learner can be given a partial transcript of a recording including the sentence about the cockroach. Only *disgusting* would be blanked out. Before hearing the tape, the learner would be invited to guess what the missing word is (1985 39/4 October 235—243: p. 242).

'The learner' here clearly performs the same function as 'he' in the last, Old Lee passage. This fact does not suggest that LEARNER (and STUDENT), as keywords in the Rossner corpus, should be dismissed as thematically important terms. As we shall see in the word history for LEARNER (in Chapter Six) the keyword does appear to be present for both thematic and stylistic reasons. However, these "negative" data indicate how keywords, emerging over a chronological period, also sometimes need to be analysed with reference to "disappearing" counterparts.

4.2.2.3 Teaching of Children: PUPIL , CHILD

These data suggest that child education is an important preoccupation of writers in the Old Lee, when compared to the Rossner, period. Different explanations for the simultaneous emergence and decline of these terms might be posited. For example It seems possible that the term PUPIL, with its associations of a strong teacher-student hierarchy, may no longer have been seen as appropriate within the Communicative Approach (in which, as we shall see, the student was conceptualised as assuming a more powerful, central role). A second, simpler, explanation is that the emergence of STUDENT and LEARNER reflect a shift in the Rossner period towards a concern with the education of adults.

This interpretation, that the data indicate a shift away from the education of children and towards the consideration of the needs of adult learners is a finding that can be assessed directly against Howatt's account, as well as some contemporary sources. Howatt's history explicitly describes a renewed emphasis on adult learners in the 1970s. He refers, for example, to the large numbers of overseas students 'looking for specialist instruction prior to attendance of tertiary education (p. 250). His dedication of a considerable section of his short account to the teaching of ESP (pp. 340—345) can be seen as part of this theme. Indeed, he describes ESP as an endeavour directed at making the process of learning languages 'more relevant' to the purposes of adult learner (p. 340). The presence in the Rossner keyword list of such acronyms as EFL, ESP and ESOL, which describe sectors of the profession generally considered to be more concerned with adult learners, also appears as consistent with the decline in the thematic significance of the words in this group. Other evidence of a shift towards interest in the needs of adult learners in Howatt's work can be found in his detailed description of the work of the Council of Europe. Howatt states that the Council of Europe team's work was directed at adult learners (2004: p. 252, 337—339).

4.2.2.4 Focus on Structure: DRILL, PATTERN, TENSE

The appearance of these words as prominent items in the Old Lee<>Rossner list appears to support the depiction, central to most accounts of the communicative period, that the Communicative Approach was one in which focus on form gave way to a pre-occupation with meaning. Indeed, this interpretation of the events of the early communicative period is well-served in Howatt's account. In his history, he explains that 'structure drills' evidence the 'excessive pre-occupation' with sentences, and with components rather than whole incidences of language, which was a feature of the structural approach to linguistics rejected by the communicative movement (pp. 330—331). As the communicative approach became established, he relates, teachers celebrated the passing of this kind of drilling. His interpretation is that the consensus, 'by the end of the 1970s, was that the bad old days of behaviourist drilling had long gone and left and this left the profession free to choose from a battery of teaching techniques as and when they seemed relevant and/or useful'(p. 256).

Richards and Rogers (1986) explain that during the 1960s, and therefore for much of the period of the Old Lee corpus, Situational Language Teaching, the then current approach in British ELT (p. 34) , was essentially a 'drill-based manner' of practising new sentence patterns (p.37). In Richards and Rogers' book, a comparative list of the features of the Audio-Lingual, and Communicative Approaches is presented in which drilling appears as central to the former, whereas in the latter '[d]rilling may occur, but peripherally' (1986:p. 34).

4.2.2.5 Pronunciation and Focus on Work with Sounds: SOUND, LABORATORY, VOWEL, PRONUNCIATION, CONSONANT.

These words represent the largest set of groupable items in this set of results, and are perhaps also for this reason the most interesting. What is intriguing about this large group is that whereas all of the negative keywords described thus far have supported existing histories of the period, these items suggest changes that are not covered explicitly by Howatt's account. Widdowson, however, writing as 'co-

author', does touch on the subject. He perhaps *suggests* a falling away of interest in, and concern for, this area of pedagogy, when he remarks that in the current period, 'when spoken ability is the objective, there is many a course these days which, for better or for worse, dispenses with phonetics altogether' (p. 354).

This is, however, only a brief acknowledgment of a shift that, according to these data, represented an enormous diminishing of intellectual and pedagogic effort in a particular field. Some evidence for this —negative— development can however be found in contemporary sources. Looking at literature produced at the time of the early communicative movement, it is possible to discern a level of scepticism concerning 'traditional' pronunciation exercises, such as those that might have been performed in a language laboratory. Pit Corder, in his (1973) work *Introducing Applied Linguistics*, is already quite critical of aspects of the then current laboratory procedures (pp. 244—254). Wilkins (1972) considers pronunciation to be 'perhaps one of the least satisfactory aspects of language learning, probably because little is understood of pronunciation learning (p. 60). He is doubtful as to the value of common pronunciation activities, such as the practising of isolated phonemes in drill activities (pp. 54—61).

4.3 Old Lee to New Lee to Rossner

4.3.1 Overview: a Period-by-Period Perspective

As explained in the methodology chapter, the overall approach in this last section is to examine briefly the historical changes that took place between the three periods under investigation "one step at a time" (the procedure is illustrated in figure 3.2, in the previous chapter). The aim is to identify more exactly than in previous sections when changes occurred, so as to ascertain:

- where developments appeared gradually, i.e. where traces of the changes identifiable in the Rossner<>Old Lee tables are also present in the New Lee<>Old Lee results
- where changes appeared later, and more 'suddenly', so that Rossner<>Old Lee developments are first identifiable in the Rossner<>New Lee tables

- whether there are any ‘anomalous’ developments in the earliest communicative (New Lee) period that became less important in the Rossner one; whether, therefore, there are keywords in the New Lee<>Old Lee tables that are not present in the Rossner<>Old Lee results

One outcome of this analysis might be that it will become possible to assess the extent to which the discourse of the *Journal* during the Rossner period, as represented by the Rossner<>Old lee keywords presented at the beginning of the chapter, was merely a continuation, and culmination of the discussion that first emerged in the New Lee texts. Or whether, on the other hand, the Rossner articles represent, a distinctive, ‘new’ phase in the communicative discussion, possessing unique characteristics and dealing with topics and ideas that were largely absent in the New Lee articles.

4.3.2 New Lee versus Old Lee

The first period of transition which will be examined is that represented by the New Lee<>Old Lee comparison of texts (as represented in figure in 3.2).

Whereas the Old Lee corpus represents (with perhaps one single exception, Widdowson’s 1972 ‘The Teaching of English as Communication’) a period “untouched” by communicative ideas, the period of the New Lee corpus is roughly contemporaneous with the emergence of the communicative discussion within other applied linguistics /ELT texts. It therefore bears traces of an emerging awareness of communicative concepts. By carrying out an analysis of the keywords which emerged over this period (by using the New Lee corpus as a test corpus, and the Old Lee texts as the reference) it should therefore be possible to identify which concepts were unique to the first “phase” of CLT’s emergence, and formed part of the communicative discussion from its very beginning .

Table 4.3: Key lemmas derived from comparison of the “New Lee” against the “Old Lee” corpora (*p* at .000000000000001; lowest possible setting)

N	Key word	Keyness
1	#	1178.7
2	STUDENT	503.04
3	LEARNER	359.68
4	MOTIVATION	321.74
5	ERROR	249.94
6	COMMUNICATIVE	207.41
7	EFL	198.56
8	TEXT	188.7
9	GROUP	185.81
10	SKILL	152.25
11	TOPIC	152.18
12	ESL	149.33
13	LISTEN	132.31
14	ROLE	128.2

What can be seen at once from this table is that while communicative ideas (as represented by the term COMMUNICATIVE itself, the sixth ranked item) have emerged by this stage, their impact on the discourse is nowhere near as significant as in the Rossner era. A much more prominent and obvious grouping is that of the thematically related items: STUDENT (ranked second), LEARNER (third) and MOTIVATION (fourth). If taken at face value, these keyword data, and particularly the items LEARNER and STUDENT, suggest that in the discourse of the *Journal* the

New Lee period is dominated thematically by a concern for the ‘learner’ that is absent from earlier texts. ROLE (14th), is another term pointing to the changed status of the learner.

As we have already seen, however, there is other information that needs to be considered in relation to this finding; the increased use of the two terms appear to be accompanied by a decline in the use of male pronouns, in particular the item HE, which the words have replaced. The question as to whether this development might therefore represent a change in ‘style’ (to use Scott’s term) rather than theme will be taken up in Chapter Six.

Considering whether there is continuity between the communicative ideas identifiable in this list, and those in the Rossner <>Old Lee tables, it seems clear that the discourse preoccupations of this period are in some respects “foundational” to those of the Rossner one. Almost all of the items which appear in this list are also keywords in the Rossner<>Old Lee table. The only items which do not appear in the later table are MOTIVATION, CATEGORY and SCORE. This provides evidence that many of the important Rossner period themes are already present in the discourse of the journal by this period. Not only are ‘COMMUNICATIVE’ and ‘LEARNER’ listed in both tables, but initialisms (EFL, 7th, ESL, 12th)—an important feature of the Rossner list—are also present.

Some Rossner words are, however, not to be found. ACTIVITY is one notable absentee, and it seems possible from these data that the notion of the activity is in many respects a distinctively ‘Rossner’ preoccupation. Some other important Rossner keywords—TASK, SYLLABUS, FOCUS, AUTHENTIC AND DISCOURSE—are also absent. While, therefore, these results suggest that there is much continuity between the New Lee and Rossner discourse preoccupations, it cannot be said that the communicative discussion arrived in the *Journal* “fully-formed”, as it were, with all of its later concepts intact. While the Rossner discussion incorporates almost all of the New Lee themes, some of the Rossner items point to newer concepts, distinctive to that later period.

4.3.3 Rossner versus New Lee

The aim in this section is to identify which concepts became significant only in the later, 'Rossner' phase of the *Journal's* history. These keywords were derived by comparing Rossner texts (as a test corpus) against New Lee texts (as a reference corpus), in order to isolate keywords that reflect important ideas which emerged in the Rossner period. These words are interesting in that they point to themes that are unique to this later phase of the communicative discussion in the discourse of the journal.

Table 4.4: Key lemmas derived from comparison of the "Rossner" against the "New Lee" corpora ('p' at .000000000000001; lowest possible setting)

N	Key word	Keyness
1	COMMUNICATIVE	709.66
2	TASK	315.92
3	ELT	312.83
4	LEARNER	310.32
5	ACTIVITY	300.29
6	SYLLABUS	298.87
7	RECOGNIZE	185.49
8	AUTHENTIC	184.65
9	COMPUTER	178.66
10	REALIZE	172.82
11	VIDEO	169.77
12	IDIOM	160.39
13	QUICKWRITING	156.56
14	FOCUS	141.11
15	DISCOURSE	138.96
16	DICTIONARY	133.16
17	ORGANIZE	130.37

The first, and most obvious observation that can be made concerning the items in this list is that COMMUNICATIVE appears as the most highly ranked item in the list. This is particularly noteworthy, given that the word is present as an important item in the New Lee texts used here as a reference corpus. Since the log-likelihood score used as the basis of the ranking is a comparative figure, calculated based on the relative frequency of words in the test and reference corpora, it provides evidence of the supreme importance of communicative-ness as the dominant theme of the Rossner period. It suggests, quite clearly, not merely a continuation of interest in communicative themes, but rather a heightening, or intensification, of an already considerable thematic preoccupation.

Much in this list confirms the observations made in the last section (4.3.2). TASK, SYLLABUS, FOCUS, AUTHENTIC and DISCOURSE, as mentioned, are terms which did not appear in the New Lee <>Old Lee list. These items therefore represent themes which have emerged only within the Rossner era. They are, too, suggestive (though this point is made retrospectively, with reference to many of the issues raised in the following, individual word chapters) of the emergence of something like a “second phase” in the communicative movement. It can be seen that almost all of the major communicative concepts from the New Lee period persist in this later phase (only MOTIVATION, in fact, has disappeared from the earlier list). But the appearance of several new key items suggests the emergence of a more complex and many-stranded discussion, in which several additional new themes are introduced.

4.4 Conclusions

4.4.1 Limitations of the ‘Quantitative’ Method

These keyword results have proved intriguing; as with Scott’s *Romeo and Juliet* example, given in Chapter Two (section 2.4.3) there have been instances of close, even uncanny agreement between the keyword findings and the intuitive assessments of historians. Pleasingly, too, a few anomalies have been identified. Perhaps the most interesting of these is that chronological keyword analysis of the discourse of the *ELT Journal* seems to identify a huge falling away of interest in the

area of phonology; a phenomena hardly accounted for at all in existing literature. Some of the issues will be taken up further in the final discussion.

However, what has become clear in the discussion of these findings is that while the results themselves are interesting, in every single case further reference to context and individual instances was needed to check their veracity and particular significance. In the formulation of the methodology for this chapter it was suggested that in this first stage of the investigation, raw keyword data would contribute to our understanding of the early communicative period, as represented by the discourse of the *ELT Journal*, by isolating the major preoccupations of its writers. This objective now seems somewhat naïve; the quantitative keyword data does not stand on its own merits; interpretation and reference to context is required even at this (supposedly) wholly quantitative stage. Several particular examples where qualitative information was needed to make sense of quantitative results spring to mind. In the case of LEARNER, for example, it was discovered that the item did not appear, solely, as a result of its increased thematic importance. Rather, stylistic reasons for its increased use were identified. In the case of TEXT, too, it was noted that while the prominence of the term seemed to signify the emergence of a concern for language beyond the level of the sentence, actual examination of examples in the texts did not always bear this out. Perhaps most revealingly, it was necessary in the case of the keywords AUTHENTIC and STRATEGY to refer in detail to texts ; carrying out what is essentially a “brief” version of the procedure that was envisaged for the second stage of the investigation. Reference to context, and common sense procedures in which individual results were checked in articles to understand their role in discourse, was necessary even within this “hard”, quantitative phase of the project.

This might, at one level, be regarded as a kind of failure. The purpose of the project design was to capture quantitative evidence, during this first stage, and then combine it with qualitative data garnered from the next. However, perhaps what has been exposed here is the pressing need that further detailed work be carried out to make sense of these results. The findings presented in this chapter indeed represent

only a form of preliminary data, which require further treatment to provide genuinely useful insight. Chronological keyword data—both positive and negative—can be referred to in later chapters to investigate individual keywords. It is here, it is hoped, that the two-step procedure will come into its own; harnessing the strengths of a data-driven approach on the one hand, and detailed intuitive investigation on the other.

4.4.2 Selecting Items for the Word Histories

Applying the procedure explained in detail in 3.5.3.2, a small set of keywords—five proved the optimal and most manageable number—were selected for the next stage in the investigation. The aim was to arrive at a smaller group of items which would each receive very detailed, individual attention (see section 3.5.3.3.). Using techniques pioneered by Williams, it was hoped that qualitative analysis of a few selected keywords would extend understanding of the decontextualised data garnered thus far.

The procedure used for selection was that:

- the list of Rossner <>Old Lee keywords, held to best represent key concepts in the communicative movement (as described in 5.2.1), was used as the starting point of the selection.
- Using items' ranking in the keyword list as the primary criteria for prioritisation, key-keyword data was then applied to ensure that highly key items also had global significance in the corpus (see 3.5.3.2.2 above). Several items (including the 8th ranked item, ELT) were therefore removed from near the top of the list on the basis that they were present in less than 5% of texts.

The top twelve remaining candidates for consideration were then:

1. COMMUNICATIVE
2. LEARNER

3. #⁶
4. ACTIVITY
5. STUDENT
6. TASK
7. TEXT
8. SYLLABUS
9. FOCUS
10. STRATEGY
11. INFORMATION
12. EFL

Pursuing a (now familiar) iterative pattern of analysis and development, items in this list were investigated individually to assess their significance in the discourse of the *Journal*. The aim was to identify whether further and more intensive textual analysis would yield insights that were sufficiently rewarding of the efforts involved. This was, in a sense, a “risk analysis” approach, in which words were investigated, briefly and informally to discover whether they justified painstaking and time-consuming chronological investigation. The following additional steps were taken to eliminate words so as to arrive at a list of items that could be held to illuminate the discourse of the communicative period most powerfully:

- Items 2 and 5, LEARNER and STUDENT, are close synonyms, and as we have seen their presence is partly due to stylistic changes concerning the use of non-gendered pronouns. It was decided that LEARNER should be analysed rather than STUDENT, since it was, firstly, most key (and key-key). Exploratory analysis also indicated that LEARNER was the term carrying the most thematic significance.

^{6 6} This marker ‘#’, indicating any numeric value identified by the corpus tools in texts, was left in the data to permit comparison between periods. On reflection, however, it was felt that differences in frequency of numeric data might be present as a result of corpus cleaning procedures. No “analysis” of these results have therefore been attempted.

- Whereas TASK and ACTIVITY were also synonyms, preliminary analysis indicated that, particularly towards the end of the Rossner period, TASK carries specific senses that would justify its separate, detailed analysis.
- After TASK, it became less clear which items (which shared very similar keyness scores despite their ranking) could be considered most significant. Greater emphasis was placed on intuitive evaluation after this point. STRATEGY and AUTHENTIC, for example, did appear to mark important discussions (see 4.2.1.6 above), while TEXT, INFORMATION and EFL were less rewarding of analysis. Whereas TEXT appeared at first sight to be an interesting candidate, possibly indicative of a shift towards the awareness of language at the discourse level (see 4.2.1.6 'TEXT and DISCOURSE ('language as a unified event') above), analysis indicated that it was used in most cases to refer to actual physical classroom materials. EFL, as an initialism, appeared to be present mostly due to stylistic changes (as explained in 4.2.1.5 'initialisms', above) above, favouring abbreviations.
- Having applied these steps, five final items were selected as being most highly representative of the conceptual changes occurring in the *Journal* discourse. These were:
 1. COMMUNICATIVE
 2. LEARNER
 3. ACTIVITY
 4. TASK
 5. SYLLABUS

The next five chapters are dedicated to the detailed chronological examination of these items.

Chapter Five: The Keyword COMMUNICATIVE

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Reviewing Chronological Keyword Data for COMMUNICATIVE

Reviewing the quantitative, keyword data that was presented in Chapter Four we note that COMMUNICATIVE is the top keyword in the Rossner<>Old Lee list. The log-likelihood score of 1,458.7 (which expresses the *degree* to which the word is outstanding) is higher by far than any other item in the list. This suggests that ‘communicative-ness’ is the notion that articles in the Rossner period are most often ‘about’, and which, above all others, preoccupies contributors of the time.

The term’s longitudinal profile—the keyness data, shown in section 4.3, calculated to identify when terms became important— requires careful assessment. The New Lee <>Old Lee keyword list places COMMUNICATIVE at 6th position, with a log-likelihood score of 207.41. This indicates that the term emerged to become important during the New Lee period, and that the notion of ‘communicative-ness’ was already much-discussed by the time Rossner became Editor. However, the Rossner<>New Lee list also places COMMUNICATIVE in first place (with a log likelihood score of 709.66). While the word may have achieved some currency in the New Lee period, this suggests, it underwent something of an explosion of popularity during that later phase. This contributes further to the sense that the Rossner period is *the* ‘communicative’ period; one whose discourse is closely characterised by its concern for communicative ideas. A close reading of New Lee and Rossner articles very much bears out this quantitative assessment.

5.1.2 Issues of Meaning and Polysemy

The item COMMUNICATIVE is polysemous, carrying subtly different senses in different instances of its use. The sense that language must be practised for real world use in actual communication, and not simply for abstract or studial purposes,

is present even in texts published in the “Old Lee” period. In ‘Some Points about Aims and Means in the Foreign-Language Course’ (1969 23/3 100—107), W.R. Lee explains that ‘the language laboratory is not the right ambience for uses of language which reveal its communicative role and enable the learner to take part in communication’ (p. 106). However, two articles contributed by Henry Widdowson, ‘The Teaching of English as Communication’ (1972 27/1 15—19) (which appears at the very end of the Old Lee period), and ‘Literary And Scientific Uses Of English’ (1974 28/4 282—292) (at the beginning of the New Lee period), “re-introduce” the terms, assigning to them a new significance in the discourse of the publication. These articles mark the beginning of a “communicative discussion” in the journal. COMMUNICATIVE begins to take on highly specialised senses, and is increasingly theoreticised by writers. Widdowson for example introduces the concept of the ‘communicative meaning’ of language (p. 16) into the discourse, a notion that he distinguishes carefully from the propositional level of meaning (which, he claims, is taught exclusively under existing methods).

Although Widdowson’s two articles attempt to assign particular, carefully defined new senses to the term, it is not a simple matter to distinguish between uses of its “old” and “new” meanings in the succeeding discourse. Even by the end of the Rossner period, authors use the word in a quite a “general” way, to refer to learners’ ability to use language to achieve real world communicative tasks. In Li Xiaoju’s ‘In Defence of the Communicative Approach’ (1984 38/1 2—13), as we shall see, the writer appears to conceptualise the methodology of her title as one which prepares to students to actually use the language for real world communication. This is closer, in fact, to the “old” sense deployed by Lee than to any of the definitions provided by Widdowson or later theorists.

5.2 COMMUNICATIVE in New Lee

5.2.1 Widdowson’s Articles

Widdowson’s articles propose a reappraisal of existing practices in language teaching, taking account of new ideas concerning the nature of language and

communication. His overall approach is radical; existing language learning methods are, he feels, in need of re-assessment. In his first article he explains that the 'root of the problem is to be found', not in teachers' failure to master current language teaching techniques, but 'in the [existing] approach itself' (p. 16). Widdowson rejects the proposal that communicative meaning is taught under the existing situational approach (p. 16). Although 'the ability to communicate is not the ability to compose correct sentences' (p. 15), existing methods focus only on the development of this ability (p. 16). Communication, he explains, 'only takes place when we make use of sentences to perform a variety of different acts of an essentially social nature' (ibid). Widdowson's second article, 'Literary and Scientific Uses of English' (1974 28/4 282—292) specifically addresses the problems faced by teachers frustrated by their 'lack of knowledge of how language functions in scientific and technical communication' (p. 282). It reiterates many of the principles expounded in his first piece. He suggests that the teaching of language in these two areas be considered aspects of the same activity: 'namely the teaching or learning of English as communication' (p. 283).

Widdowson's articles can be seen to represent the clear beginnings of a distinctive communicative discussion in the pages of the journal. In presenting a view of language which foregrounds its communicative role, Widdowson coins terms and establishes concepts that are taken up by later contributors. His articles clearly serve to "pattern" arguments which appear in later pieces. Widdowson seems keen on contrasting ideas through the definition of paired, oppositional terms (a proclivity in "communicative" writing ridiculed by Swan ('A Critical Look at the Communicative Approach' (1985 39/1 2-12: p.8)). He distinguishes between two kinds of meaning in language, *propositional* and *communicative*, and suggests that students need to be given opportunities to understand how communicative meaning is achieved through the English language. He also proposes two categories of meaning; *signification* (the meaning that language items have 'as elements of the language system') and *value* (the meaning these have when 'actually put to use in acts of communication') (p. 15). Existing methods, he proposes, have focused on the first kind of meaning and failed to attend to features of the second. Evidence for the continuing influence of

these concepts can be found in collocation data⁷. ‘Value’ is the fifth strongest collocate of ‘communicative’ (appearing 14 times) in the New Lee corpus; the cluster ‘communicative value’ appears 11 times. Regarding ‘communicative use’, ‘use’ is the sixteenth strongest collocate, appearing 15 times; the cluster ‘communicative use’ appears in 9 texts. These particular terms are discussed most intensively in the period immediately after the publication of Widdowson’s articles. ‘The Use of Visual Materials in Teaching English to Economics Students’ by Richard Mead and A.D. Lilley (1975 29/2 151—156), for example, is a fairly practical article which describes the authors’ development of classroom materials. However, it reproduces in its rationale Widdowson’s distinction between propositional meaning and communicative value, and the need for teachers to analyse ‘both appropriate linguistic items and communicative acts’ (p. 151), so as to co-ordinate the teaching of these items.

5.2.2 ‘Communicative Competence’ and the Council of Europe

Despite the early importance of these concepts, apparently framed by Widdowson, COMMUNICATIVE comes increasingly to be discussed as a component of the expression “communicative competence”. ‘Competence’ is the top collocate for the New Lee period⁸. ‘Communicative competence’ is also by far the most significant cluster. ‘Communicative competence’ makes its brief debut in Mead and Lilley’s article, but receives its first serious attention in Bernard Lott’s ‘Sociolinguistics and the Teaching of English’ (1975 29/4 271—277). Lott’s article conveys the sense that sociolinguistics is a new and thriving discipline, whose impact has begun to be felt in the language teaching profession. The article serves as a veritable mini-history of recent developments in sociolinguistics and their implications for language teaching. He mentions the work of Bernstein and Barnes in ‘discourse analysis’ (p. 273) and Labov’s discovery of ‘patterns of language behaviour among immigrant populations and others in New York State’ (p. 273). The significance of linguistic

⁷ The collocation and cluster data for COMMUNICATIVE are given in Appendix Six

⁸ ‘Competence’ appears as the top collocate if the search term itself, ‘communicative’, is ignored; Wordsmith Tools includes this automatically in its listing.

'appropriateness' is expounded, 'functions' are mentioned (p. 272), as is the fact that sociolinguistics studies 'language in use', as well as the 'context-bound' nature of meaning in language (p. 273).

Perhaps surprisingly, then, Lott introduces the notion of communicative competence not in the context of the work of sociologists, such as Hymes, but rather in connection with the recent work of the Council of Europe. Lott evidently feels that the work of the CoE team (he mentions Richterich (p. 274), van Ek (p. 275) and Wilkins (p. 276)), is compatible with the sociolinguistic perspective he describes. He identifies one of the purposes of Wilkins' paper, 'An investigation into the linguistic and situational content of the common [grammatical] core in a unit/credit system' as being to identify a 'grid to show what constitutes a speaker's communicative competence, i.e. what notional information or content the learner is most likely to want to express, and the forms or realisations it should take' (p. 276). Lott's framing of the notion of communicative competence within the work of the CoE is in fact typical of most articles in the New Lee period. In Carmen Silva's 'Recent Theories of Language Acquisition in Relation to a Semantic Approach in Foreign-Language Teaching' (1975 29/4 337—346) this association of communicative competence with ideas outlined by Wilkins and other team members is very much evident. Silva discusses the linkage between communicative competence, as the goal of language teaching, and its achievement through the definition of learner needs in terms of notional or functional categories. She also describes work carried out by Wilkins in some detail (pp. 341—342) and explains that 'to develop [a learner's] communicative competence' we have to base our teaching on rhetorical units of communication' (p. 342). In 'An Outline Proposal for the Testing of Communicative Competence' (1976 30/2 128—135) Josie Levine clearly connects the concept of 'communicative competence' with 'notions' and 'functions'. She proposes a testing procedure to identify the level of students' communicative competence in specific contexts or 'domains', such as 'School', by breaking down relevant skills into 'language functions and speech acts' (p. 131). This association of communicative competence with the work of the CoE team persists until the very end of the New Lee period. In 'A Double Helix at the Nucleus?' (1981 35/3 224 —228) Alexander

Adkins credits '[m]uch of the recent work' in promoting notionally-based material to 'D. A. Wilkins's Notional Syllabuses' (p. 226). This work, he explains, 'itself has as a background document The Threshold Level, a project sponsored by the Council of Europe as an attempt to determine target levels for a unit/credit system for adult foreign-language learning in Europe' (p. 224).

5.2.3 "Communicative Competence' is king'

As the decade progresses, evidence for the growing importance of the notion of communicative competence can be discerned from the appearance of something of a "backlash" against the claims made for its importance. In 'What Price Correctness?', R.J.H Matthews-Bresky discusses the concept of language correctness and the criteria that might be applied in 'adjudicating the correctness of pupils' utterances' (p. 254). 'How important is correctness?' he asks, '[w]hat part, if any, does it play in communicative competence?' (ibid). Matthews-Bresky implies that the notion of communicative competence has become too important, in the sense that it has caused issues concerning formal correctness to be downplayed. 'If 'communicative competence' is king', he asks, 'how far down the line of succession to the throne is formal correctness to be relegated?' (p. 257). Similarly, in 'Elements of Communicative Competence' (1979 34/1 18—21), Eddie Williams expresses concern that communicative competence has received so much emphasis in recent discussions that other important areas, such as learner motivation, are not receiving the attention they deserve. In attempting to 'teach total mastery of communicative competence', he warns, 'the communicative confidence' of learners might be impaired. (p. 21)

Despite this note of final caution, however, Williams' article is itself an attempt to offer a history, definition and taxonomy for 'communicative competence'. His article puts the history of the term under considerable scrutiny and states (unusually, for this period, where it is generally associated with the work of the Council of Europe) that the term 'came into prominence through the sociolinguistic work of Hymes' (p. 18). He also shows considerable concern for its proper understanding and use, and complains that it 'is often vaguely equated with 'using language appropriately' (p. 18)

(a sentiment expressed later by Howatt (2004: p. 330)). Furthermore, Williams elaborates on the term extensively, and attempts to arrive at a description of its characteristics. To achieve this, he produces a kind of ‘taxonomy’ in which communicative competence is described as consisting of four elements (similar, in fact, to Hymes’ own (1972) fourfold division). These are, firstly, the ‘mechanical’ (structural) rules of language; secondly, what he describes as the ‘meaningful rules of language’ (whether speakers manage to convey meaning) ; thirdly, ‘appropriacy in terms of the setting and the relationship between the people involved’; and finally ‘non-linguistic conventions concerning position, gesture, eye movement, facial expression, etc’ (p. 19).

5.2.4 ‘Communicative’ and ‘Functional’

As contributors come to identify the origin of the term ‘communicative competence’ with the Council of Europe, and in particular David Wilkin’s work within the CoE team, so too do they often conflate the notion of a ‘communicative approach’ with the Council’s proposals for a notional/functional syllabus. ‘Function(s)’, the corpus data indicates, is an important collocate (‘functions’ ranked 4th, ‘function’ 7th) of ‘communicative’ in New Lee texts. ‘Communicative function’ and ‘communicative functions’ are also important clusters. In ‘Classroom Language: Materials for Communicative Language Teaching’ (1978 32/4 270—274) by Colin Black and Wolfgang Butzkamm, (incidentally, the first article in which the actual term ‘Communicative Language Teaching’ appears), the authors refer to the ‘notional categories’ they have used to develop materials, cross-referenced against ‘situational categories’ (p. 272), as reflecting those described by Wilkins. In Alexander Adkin’s article, (which as we have seen makes direct reference to Wilkins’ work) the author explicitly connects functional perspectives on language with communicative methods. Throughout the article the terms ‘notional-functional’ and communicative are used interchangeably; at one point Adkins even refers to ‘notionally-based or communicative material’ (p. 225).

This tendency to connect the notion of ‘communicative-ness’ and notional-functionalism continues until the very end of the New Lee period (and , as we shall

see, persists to some extent in Rossner articles). Rod Wheeler, in 'Structure Interaction-the Present Continuous and its Companions' (1981 35/2 106—109) identifies the 'communicative approach' as one in which 'notional-functional materials' are used (p. 106). In the very last edition of the New Lee corpus, Annamaria Geiger's article, 'Application of 'British Contextualism' to Foreign-Language Teacher Training' (35/4 209—216), makes little or no distinction between a 'communicative' and 'notional/functional' approach. She describes, for example, recent work concerning 'language functions, social functions, or communicative functions' which 'are being used as the basis for much of communicative L2 teaching today' (p. 211).

5.2.5 'Linguistic' versus 'Communicative'; Concepts in Tension

Returning for a moment to Widdowson's earliest article, we note that he urges practitioners to consider 'the process of limitation, grading and presentation' not only in terms of 'linguistic structures and situational settings, but also in terms of communicative acts' (p. 18). Widdowson uses the words 'linguistic' and 'communicative' here contrastively. 'Linguistic' is strongly associated with the existing Situational Language Teaching approach that he is challenging; 'communicative' with the new perspective he seeks to promote. In numerous later articles 'linguistic' (ranked eleventh as a collocates) and 'communicative' are used to contrast the old and new perspectives, and frequently to represent them as being in conflict. Mead and Lilley's (1975 29/2 151—156) article, described above, is highly emulative of Widdowson's ideas, and also depicts 'linguistic' and 'communicative' objectives of teaching (p. 151) as existing in tension. They explain that as a result of the insights provided by new ideas ESP teachers 'can now emphasise communicative competence *rather than dwell on grammatical competence*' (emphasis mine, p. 151). Somewhat later in the New Lee period Silva declares that '[p]rinciples such as the rigid selection and gradation of vocabulary and syntactic structures' which characterise 'linguistic' approaches 'have been declared superfluous' (p. 339), superseded by the semantic approach of her title.

In D.J.S. Blackie's 'Towards a definition of ESP' (1979 33/ 262—266) the author could hardly depict the conflict between two historical, methodological forces more explicitly, or starkly:

There are basically two approaches. They are not mutually exclusive but, generally speaking, are distinguished by differences in emphasis. The first sees language primarily as a system which as to be mastered by the learner. The second sees language as primarily a medium of communication. The former, which maybe called the descriptive approach tends to specify learning objectives in terms of structure and lexis, while the latter, which may be called the communicative approach, tends to specify learning objectives in term of language functions and communicative needs. (p. 263).

As a 'communicative' approach came increasingly to be identified closely with a 'functional' outlook, this pattern expands, with terms like 'linguistic', 'structural' and 'semantic' often being depicted in opposition to 'communicative' and 'functional'. In Silva's (1975) article, described above, she suggests that a 'semantic approach' is preferable to those based on 'grammatical and situational considerations' (p. 342), as it 'includes communicative functions which have no unique grammatical realisations and no unique situational occurrences' (p. 342). In 'A Double Helix at the Nucleus?' (35/ 3 224 —228) Alexander Adkins states that 'it is argued by those concerned for the communicative teaching of language that language is not in itself a static set of grammatical structures, combined in particular ways' (p. 224).

5.3. COMMUNICATIVE in the Rossner Period

5.3.1 An Overview of the Period

As discussed, longitudinal data for the keyness of the term 'communicative' indicate that while it emerged to become important in the discourse of the New Lee publication, in the Rossner period it emerges as the journal's central preoccupation. Apart from the keyness data, which as we have seen, suggests that the notion of 'communicative-ness' dominates as the overriding theme of the period, further

evidence of its ascendancy can be identified in collocation and cluster tables. One tendency that can be noted from the collocates and cluster tables for the Rossner period is an increase in the importance of terms that relate the word ‘communicative’ to the expressions ‘communicative approach’ (‘approach’ is the top collocate in the Rossner period, and ‘communicative approach’ the most frequent cluster) and ‘communicative language teaching’ (‘language’ is the eighth collocate, and ‘communicative language teaching’—and various fragments thereof—are prominent in the cluster table).

Returning briefly to the New Lee period, we note that the notion of ‘communicative competence’ itself seems to have served as the banner term for new, communicative ideas. Even when the terms ‘communicative language teaching’ and ‘communicative approach’ do appear, it is not clear whether they are used with the intention of labelling a whole methodology. ‘Communicative Language Teaching’ makes its first appearance in the title of Colin Black and Wolfgang Butzkamm’s ‘Classroom Language: Materials for Communicative Language Teaching’ (1978 32/4 270—274), in which the authors describe the notional-functional procedures they have used for the preparation of materials as ‘a step towards the preparation of materials for communicative language teaching’ (p. 271). The ‘communicative approach’, arrives later, in D.J.S. Blackie’s ‘Towards a definition of ESP’ (1979 33/ 262—266). Even here, though, it is never quite clear whether the author is merely describing a set of principles that can be used to specify learning objectives. Blackie actually refers to “‘a communicative approach”’, using the term with inverted commas intact (p. 264), suggesting that the term is not yet widely used. It is not until the very last year of the New Lee corpus, in fact, that ‘Communicative Approach’ appears, unambiguously, to label a methodology incorporating what are now recognisable as communicative principles. This is in ‘Structure Interaction—the Present Continuous and its ‘Companions’ (1981 35/2 106—109), where Rod Wheeler describes ‘the emergence in recent years of a communicative approach to language teaching’ (p. 106). The term appears to have arrived in earnest, then, at the very end of the New Lee period. In the Rossner corpus, however, as we shall see, uses of the terms ‘communicative approach’ and ‘communicative language teaching’ are

ubiquitous. They appear right from the very start of the Rossner discussion and consistently label the new, dominant approach.

5.3.2 Communicative: Attempts at Clarification

Within the first “new” volume of the journal, two articles appear: ‘Informal and Formal Approaches to Communicative Language Teaching’ (1982, 36/2: 73—81), by Rod Ellis and ‘What is Communicative?’ (1982 36/3 164—168), by Jeremy Harmer, which serve to characterise and presage in many ways the nature of the discussion of ‘communicative-ness’ that follows. The authors share similar aims. Both feel that ‘communicative’ has become something of a ‘bandwagon’ term (to use Close’s expression) and attempt to put forward a useful definition that will rescue it from this status by clarifying its sense. Ellis describes his purpose as to ‘give some clarity to the use of the term ‘communicative’ in describing approaches to foreign or second language teaching’(p. 73). He explains that this has become necessary since it has become so ubiquitous, and oft-referred to, that its meaning is no longer clear:

The label ‘communicative’ has become a catchphrase in language teaching. Scarcely a text-book appears without the term in the title or tribute being paid to it in the book’s preface. The term is applied to syllabus design, to teaching materials and to classroom practice itself (what I shall henceforth call ‘methodology’). Furthermore the *types* of syllabus, materials and methodologies incorporating the ‘communicative’ label are often widely different. This suggests that the term has no clearly understood and received meaning when it is applied to language teaching (p. 73).

Jeremy Harmer’s article also attempts to arrive at a meaningful definition of ‘communicative.’ His assessment of the status of the term in the profession is strikingly similar to Ellis’s, and he complains of its ubiquity and ‘catch-all’ status:

Everything is ‘communicative’ these days. Published courses almost exclusively advertise themselves as being the latest in ‘communicative methodology’, and as having ‘communication’ as their main aim. Convention papers deal with the

'communicative use' of language, and the teaching of English as communication has changed from the title of an important article in an earlier issue of *ELT Journal* (Widdowson 1972) into a received truth of the English language teaching profession. No self-respecting teacher, materials designer, or applied linguist would think of teaching English as anything else.

Harmer clearly feels that the meaning of 'communicative' needs to be rescued from its status as an ill-defined but widely referred-to shibboleth.

In their attempts to clarify the meaning of communicative, both writers in fact offer characterisations of 'communicative', rather than definitions. Ellis' attempt to describe what is meant by a communicative approach is a two-step process. Firstly, he distinguishes between three processes—learning, acquisition and monitoring—referred to by Krashen (p. 74). He then attempts to define criteria that characterise a communicative approach in *each* of these cases. 'One way', as Ellis puts it, 'of interpreting what is meant by 'communicative approaches to language teaching' is to ask what is needed to develop acquired and learnt knowledge, and effective monitoring skills' (p. 73). Ellis refers mainly to the distinction between acquisition and learning, emphasising the fact that 'the two processes—according to Krashen—entail different mental operations' (*ibid*). Ellis' characterisation of a communicative approach to *acquisition* is explained in the most detail. The principle criterion, he explains, 'must be the provision of a linguistic environment that corresponds as closely as possible to the authentic communicative settings in which the learner might find him or herself' (p. 74). Ellis dedicates much of the remaining article to the examination of this criterion, analysing it from the perspective of 'syllabus design, language teaching materials, and methodology' (pp. 75—76).

Harmer's criteria for 'communicative-ness' are derived from a simple, briefly presented model of communication theory (pp. 165—166). Harmer proposes that three conclusions can be drawn concerning what characterizes a communicative activity. Firstly, students must have a desire to communicate, and 'there must be some communicative purpose to their communication'. Secondly, 'the students'

attention will be focused on the content of what they are saying, rather than the form'. Thirdly, the materials used do not control the students' use of language (p. 166).

5.3.3 Notional/functionality: Persistence and Challenge

The connection between the concepts of 'communicative-ness' and notional-functionality, which was such a feature of many discussions in the New Lee texts, persists to some extent in the Rossner period. 'Function(s)', although ranked much less highly than in the New Lee period (functions, 4th; function, 7th), still appears in the Rossner table of important collocates (functions, only, 13th). Ellis, for example, closely identifies the emergence of a communicative approach with the acceptance of notional-functional insights by the profession. When reviewing the recent history of 'communicative' as a concept, Ellis explains that language teaching has been affected by 'two major trends', which 'together contribute to what is now popularly called communicative language teaching' (p. 73). The first refers to the shift in emphasis in teaching and learning towards learners, and their role in the process of teaching and learning. The second 'concerns the nature of the linguistic descriptions which serve as the basis for language teaching approaches' (ibid). Here Ellis refers to Wilkins' work with notional syllabuses, which represent a shift in focus, 'from what language 'is' to what language 'does'' (ibid). Ellis therefore identifies notional-functionality as one of only two central pillars of the communicative approach.

Throughout the Rossner period, this relationship between the notion of what is 'communicative', and notional-functionality, never entirely disappears, and can be identified in a number of articles. In 'a modular communicative syllabus (1) the underlying ideas' (1982 36/2 82—88), A.M. Shaw attempts to elucidate the principles behind the introduction of a 'modular communicative syllabus' at the British Institute in Madrid (p. 82). In Shaw's account of this work, the 'communicative' syllabus, and 'communicative' materials, are characterised as such by virtue of their conformity with notional functional principles. 'Communication', Shaw explains near the beginning of the article, 'means that the communicative aspect, here in the form of functions, is given due importance, but not that the

necessary grammatical items are neglected' (p. 82). Another clear example is 'The Communicational Testing of Reading' by Yasmeen Lukmani (1982 36/ 4 217—225), which attempts to outline a 'communicational' approach to teaching. This approach, derived from A.S. Prabhu's work, is allied to, but in some respects distinctive from the 'communicative' one. In order to clarify the distinction he wishes to draw, Lukami briefly contrasts 'communicative' methodologies against those local, 'communicational' ones he is describing. 'Communicative language teaching,' he explains, 'as represented by the notional-functional approach (Wilkins 1972; Johnson 1979) has made communication, viewed primarily in terms of social interaction, its goal' (p. 217). Here too, then, the notional-functional aspect of communicative language teaching remains its chief characteristic.

This tendency to connect and even conflate CLT with notional-functionalism is present in articles even towards the end of the Rossner period. In 1985, Michael Swan, in 'A Critical Look at the Communicative Approach (2)' (1985 39/2 76—87) suggests that '[f]or many people the central idea in communicative language teaching is probably that of a 'semantic syllabus' (p. 78). Swan indeed complains, later in his article, that the 'new toy' effect' of the approach 'is leading us to look at everything in functional terms' (p. 81). To Swan then, the association between communicative approaches, and concepts such as 'function', remains very close indeed.

However, right from the beginning of the Rossner period, a separate, parallel discussion can be identified in which notional-functionalism is challenged, and increasingly, discarded as the central feature of a communicative approach. The quite dramatic decline in the ranking of the term 'function', already noted, is one indicator of this change. Challenges to the centrality of notional and/or functional principles are mounted from the very beginning of the period, and can be clearly discerned in Ellis's and Harmer's early articles. Ellis's piece, as we have seen, begins with an acknowledgement of the importance of the shift, begun by theorists such as Wilkins, towards a description of language based on function (even describing this as one of two trends that make up communicative language teaching). However, he

later pursues a line of argument that brings into doubt its continued central status. While he supports the use of a syllabus that makes use of notional and functional categories, he suggests that it is only appropriate when addressing students' *learning* (as opposed to their *acquisition*, or *monitoring*) of the language (p. 77). Since 'linguistic descriptions provide an account of the product of communication', he explains they can provide 'only a statement of what has to be learned' (ibid). In advocating that teachers show greater concern for the (neglected) process of acquisition, for which, in fact 'language descriptions have no obvious part to play' (ibid), he proposes a form of communicative language teaching in which notional and functional considerations have a limited, narrowly prescribed role. He advocates that formulations of a communicative approach aimed at acquisition should, indeed, *not* be based on such 'elaborate descriptions of a communicative product' (p. 78) as those furnished by notional/functional writers. What is provided by such descriptions, he explains, are 'are the ends, not the means' (p. 77); a communicative approach to the acquisition of language should focus on the process of language learning rather than its product.

Harmer, briefly but more even decisively, decouples the concepts of communicativeness from the application of notional/functional categories to teaching. The criteria he provides to characterise activities as communicative or non-communicative, make no reference at all to notional/functional categories. Giving the example of a 'controlled dialogue involving the functions of asking for and giving opinions' he explains that if students 'are only asked to apply an identical formula to different information' the activity cannot be defined as communicative. 'There is', he explains, 'after all, nothing especially communicative about teaching functions!' (p. 165).

5.3.4 'Communicative Activity'

Accompanying the tendency for some writers in the Rossner period to decouple the notion of 'communicative -ness' from that of a notional/functional perspective on language, a trend emerges in which the notion begins to be discussed, with increasing frequency, in relation to activities. The interest of many writers appears to shift away from issues of course content and syllabus design, and towards

features of actual classroom practice. At an abstract and theoretical level, this change is evident in the increased tendency of writers to describe a need to focus on the *process*, rather than on the *product* of learning. This is one of the ideas put forward by Ellis, as we have seen, and is clearly expressed again by Jack Richards in 'Communicative needs in foreign language learning' (1983 37/2 111—120). Richards complains that 'ESL/EFL materials too often focus only on the finished products of communication, rather than on the processes by which people communicate (p. 117)'. At a more practical level, contributors can be seen to apply the concept of communicative-ness more and more frequently to procedures which take place within the classroom, describing events that occur between teachers and learners, and between learners themselves. Corpus evidence for this shift, while not dramatic, is nevertheless present. 'Activity/activities' appears as an important collocate of COMMUNICATIVE in both New Lee (activity, 13th; activities 15th) and Rossner texts, (activities, 4th; activity 9th); considerably higher. Cluster data also show a rise. Whereas the noun phrase 'communicative activities' appears only 6 times in the New Lee corpus, there are 23 incidences in Rossner.

Ellis's and Harmer's articles are, once again, highly indicative of this change of mood. In defining criteria that describe whether a particular approach to acquisition is communicative, Ellis looks at actual classroom materials, and the activities that these generate. The first of the five criteria that he proposes is that: '[t]he success of the enterprise generated by the materials must be demonstrated by the outcome and not by the process of the activity' (p. 165). The main theme of Harmer's article is in fact that the term 'communicative' can *only* be used helpfully to characterise *activities*, rather than to describe an overall approach. As he states; '[w]hat I am suggesting is that the concept of 'communication' and 'communicative' should not be applied to a methodology (p. 165). Harmer's —three—criteria therefore identify only the degree to which an *activity* is communicative.

This important trend can be seen to persist, and indeed to accelerate, over the Rossner period. In Richard Young's 'The Negotiation of Meaning in Children's Foreign Language Acquisition' (1983 37/3 197—206), for example, the author concludes that

both grammatical and functional items should be contextualised in activities ‘which are genuinely communicative in the sense that they permit individual children to negotiate meaning in order to perform the activity’ (p. 205). ‘Communicative’, here, again takes on a meaning quite independent of any reference to notional or functional principles of organisation, and comes to be applied to describe activities. Young’s article examines practice activities (pp. 200—201), ‘communication games’ (pp. 201—202) and children’s games (pp. 202—203). Its overall theme is that the ‘negotiation of meaning’ is a crucial precondition for learning activities that are intended to foster (Krashen-style) acquisition (pp. 198—200). Activities that necessitate such negotiation between learners are therefore ‘communicative’. Echoing Ellis’ earlier point that communicative materials should be more concerned with the process, rather than the content of teaching, Young explains that there are ‘content materials’ on the one hand, and ‘process materials’ (p. 205) on the other, and it is clearly the latter that he considers to fulfil the criteria of a ‘communicative’ approach.

Clear evidence that a shift in the term’s reference occurs within this period can be gleaned by comparing Shaw’s 1982 article, described above, with Gerald Mosback’s 1984 piece, ‘Making a Structure-Based Course More Communicative’ (1984 38/3 178—191). Shaw, explaining a project initiated in the late 1970s, describes communicative reform which is directed largely at modifications to the teaching syllabus. Mosback’s article, however, describing ‘the techniques and strategies that have been helpful’ (p. 178) in adapting Sri Lanka’s ‘interim stage’ (p. 178) language programme, is concerned almost entirely with the introduction of communicative activities. He describes ‘a supplementary manual’ (p. 179) designed to show teachers how the exercises in their existing textbooks ‘could be taken off the page and used to generate useful pair work and group work in the classroom’ (p. 179). ‘Communicative pair and group work’ seems to be the feature of the communicative approach that the writer appears most keen to introduce. Mosback explains how traditional coursebook exercises have been modified so as to give opportunities for communicative interaction (pp. 180-184).

Even in Michael Swan's 'A Critical Look at the Communicative Approach (1)' (1985 39/1 2—12)], which identifies the notional-functional syllabus design as a central feature of the communicative language teaching, the discussion moves gradually towards a consideration of communicative activities. While Swan is scathing concerning the over-application of notional-functional principles to syllabus and materials design, he acknowledges the advances in *methodology* that have been ushered in by the new approach. He is pleased that the 'boring and mechanical exercise types which were so common ten or fifteen years ago' (p. 2) have almost disappeared as result of such advances. His follow-on article, 'A Critical Look at the Communicative Approach (2)' (1985 39/2 76—87), describes communicative language teaching as an approach that impacts on methodology and classroom activity, in more detail. He suggests here that 'methodology is perhaps the area where the Communicative Approach has done most to improve our teaching' (p. 83). It is interesting that whereas Swan generally refers to the "communicative approach" in his two articles, using quotation marks, here he uses the term without ironic punctuation, and in capitalised form—reflecting, no doubt, his more positive assessment of its merits in this area! This second article describes, favourably, information gap activities (pp. 83—84), as well as role-play and simulations (p. 84).

5.3.5 Communicative Competence Revisited

As we have seen, the notion of communicative competence was central to conceptions of a communicative approach in the New Lee period, and came to be used as a definition of its goals. The collocate 'competence', ranked second in the New Lee corpus list, behind only 'communicative' itself, is in third position in the Rossner table. Examining the cluster data, it can be seen that 'communicative competence', which appeared 61 times in the New Lee texts, here appears 55 times. It remains, therefore, an important item. While no longer the expression used to "label" communicative discussions, as was often the case in the New Lee period, its significance in the discourse of the journal persists.

In the Rossner corpus, the term continues to be used to describe the aims of communicative teaching. Yasmee Lukmani, for example, in 'The Communicational

Testing of Reading' (1982 36/4 217 —225) characterises the “communicative’ approach’ (p. 217) as one that subsumes ‘linguistic competence under the broader realm of communicative competence’ (p. 217). Li Xiaoju, in ‘In Defence of the Communicative Approach’ (1984 38/1 2—13) also acknowledges, even more explicitly, ‘communicative competence’ as the objective of CLT. ‘*Our* objective is communicative competence’ (italics hers, p. 7); the notional ‘they’ refers to proponents of the traditional language lesson in China (p. 7). She uses the term again, in a similar sense, when she later explains that testing procedures should be adjusted so as to take account of the changed objectives of the new approach. ‘It is communicative competence that we should aim at’, she states, ‘and therefore it is communicative competence we should test’ (p. 13).

However, despite this element of continuity in the use of the term, we note here a shift in Li’s concept of what it is that ‘communicative competence’ actually describes. On its first appearance in the discourse of the journal, the notion of communicative competence appeared to have some relationship with its theoretical origins in the work of theorists such as Wilkins (or, later, Hymes). In Li’s article, though, the term seems to have been freed from these associations. No longer a theoretical concept, communicative competence here emerges as a practical and professional term describing the objectives to be achieved by teachers and learners in their pursuit of the target language. In Li’s declaration that ‘for the purposes of acquiring a working communicative competence, you still have to rely on down-to-earth communication practice’ (p. 3), the terms ‘working, and ‘down-to-earth’, carry just this suggestion.

Jack Richards ‘Communicative Needs in Foreign Language Learning’ (1983 37/2 111—120) is in many ways the Rossner period counterpart of Eddie Williams’ New Lee article, ‘Elements of Communicative Competence’. Like Williams, Richards also attempts to arrive at a clear definition of the term which is applicable to ELT. As in Edwards’ earlier piece, Richards discusses ‘several components of communicative competence in foreign language learning’ (p. 111), this time arriving at five rather than four separate components. The ‘components’, or ‘aspects’ enumerated in the text are in fact better described as ‘principles’, elaborated under the following

headings: 'communication is meaning-based' (pp. 111-114), communication is conventional' (pp. 114-115) 'communication is appropriate' (pp. 115-117) 'communication is interactional' (p. 117) and communication is structured' (pp. 117-199). Like Edwards, Richards's quotes from Hymes, and elements of his model appear to have been derived from Hyme's original paper. But, like Li, Richards is concerned with 'down-to-earth' communication practice. Despite the theoretical nature of some of his initial discussion, Richards is at pains in to relate each of the ideas he expresses to the context of teaching and learning. Concerning his observation that 'communication is conventional' (pp. 114—115), for example, he proposes that conversational openers, routine formula, ceremonial formula, and memorized clauses might be taught to learners in the classroom (p.115).

5.3.6 Swan and After: A New Phase?

Michael Swan's articles, which appear quite near the end of the end of the Rossner period, and which critically examine the communicative approach, appear to serve as a kind of watershed in the communicative discussion. Swan's articles capture, for the purposes of his critique, what amounts to a "snapshot" of the communicative approach. His first article identifies four main concepts, which he feels, 'form part of the theoretical basis of the new orthodoxy' (p. 2). These are:

- (1) the idea of a 'double level of meaning' associated with such terms as 'rules of use' and 'rules of communication', and the related concept of 'appropriacy' ; and
- (2) some confusions regarding 'skills' and 'strategies' [...]
- (3) the idea of a semantic ('notional/ functional') syllabus, and
- (4) the 'real life' fallacy in materials design and methodology. (pp. 2—3)

While there is not enough space here to go into the details of Swan's precise arguments, in the conclusion to his first article Swan describes the extent of his misgivings. 'I have argued, he here summarises, 'that the 'communicative' theory of meaning and use, in so far as it makes sense, is largely irrelevant to foreign language teaching' (p. 11).

After the period of discussion and “advocacy” of a communicative approach that preceded the publication of Swan’s pieces, the journal now appears to adopt a more reflective, perhaps less stridently “pro-communicative” tone. Few articles after this directly address such fundamental questions as those attempted by Ellis and Harmer in the first year of the Rossner journal. Such terms as ‘communicative’, ‘communicative competence’ or ‘communicative language teaching’ are no longer directly expounded. Swan’s critical articles seem to signal that a phase of exposition, and theoretical advocacy of the communicative approach, has come to an end.

Another article which perhaps exemplifies the less pronouncedly “pro-communicative”, more reflective atmosphere of the late Rossner period, is ‘Queries from a Communicative Teacher’ by Péter Medgyes, (1986 40/2 107—112). Medgyes here offers a thoughtful, teacher’s eye view of the impact of the communicative approach in Hungary. While he refrains from ‘scrutinising the theoretical basis of the Communicative Approach’ (p.3), he describes a number of difficulties experienced by teachers in embracing the new approach. Like Swan, he offers some criticism of ‘communicative’ precepts, even stating that there are ‘contradictory tendencies inherent in the main principles of the Communicative Approach’ (p. 107). Medgyes’ main complaint is that, at a practical level, too much is required of teachers, who are asked to fulfil impossible roles. One example, that the approach requires teachers to ‘withdraw’ from the classroom without ‘relinquishing control over the class’ (p. 109) reflects the writer’s sardonic, rather than directly negative stance. However, despite the lightness of his tone, Medgyes appears to share with Swan the view that CLT is a potentially positive movement which, in its swift rise to ascendancy, has made too strong claims and placed too heavy a burden on practitioners to conform to its precepts. Communicative theoreticians, he suggests, divorced from the practical realities of the chalkface, are ‘deaf to the inaudible cries’ (p. 111) of teachers. Medgyes concludes by calling for mediators; ‘non-native teachers of English’ (p. 112) to ‘work half-way between the zealot and the wary’ (ibid).

5.4. Conclusion

Widdowson's articles, which introduce such notions as 'English as communication', and 'communicative activity' have an immediate impact on the discourse of contributors, and the influence of the ideas he introduces can be clearly identified in a number of articles that follow. However, it is the notion of 'communicative competence', introduced in the context of the recent work of van Ek's team for the Council of Europe, that launches the extensive discussion of communicative ideas in the journal. By the end of the decade this discussion has become so extensive that articles appear protesting its 'bandwagon' status and its uncritical acceptance as the objective of English language teaching.

Several tendencies in the Old Lee discussion of communicative ideas can be seen to have a continuing impact in Rossner texts. The association drawn between 'communicative' ideas and notions, proposed by the Council of Europe, including 'functions' and in particular the idea of a 'notional-functional' syllabus, continues well into the 1980s. The propensity of writers to contrast the notion of a 'communicative' approach, usually favourably, against older 'grammatical' or 'structural' methods is another persistent and revealing pattern.

At the beginning of the Rossner period, the central importance of communicative ideas in the "re-launched" journal is immediately established. Articles like Harmer's and Ellis's appear in which contributors aim to clarify the term's sense, and appraise its importance to teachers. In this early period the journal's advocacy of, and eagerness to discuss, communicative ideas is strongly evident. At the same time, the process begun in the New Lee texts, in which 'communicative' ideology becomes increasingly detached from its origins in notional-functional approaches to syllabus design, and realigns itself with an emerging concern for methodology, can be seen to take hold.

This trend has begun to emerge by the end of the New Lee period and represents a shift in contributors' thinking in which 'communicative-ness' acquires new

associations, quite independent of the syllabus-oriented work of the Council of Europe team. Several writers, contributing articles to the last volumes of the *Lee* journal, use the term increasingly in the context of discussions describing actual classroom procedures such as activities. In the Rossner period, Harmer and Ellis begin a discussion in which a communicative approach comes increasingly to be discussed in terms of methodology, and the performance of language activities which support the process of language acquisition.

By the end of the Rossner period some of the discussion concerning communicative ideas appears to lose its intensity; perhaps ideas have become so well established that further advocacy and argument is no longer considered appropriate. At the same time, critical or cautionary voices, such as Swan's and Medgyes', are allowed to be heard. This perhaps heralds something like a "post-communicative" phase in the journal discourse, in which the implications and limitations of the new approach can be openly discussed.

Chapter Six: The Keyword LEARNER

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Reviewing Chronological Keyword Data for LEARNER

LEARNER is ranked second in the Rossner<>Old Lee keyword list. While the log-likelihood score of 1126.2 is significantly lower than the figure for COMMUNICATIVE (1,458.7), it is almost double the value of the next word, ACTIVITY (679.93) in the table. COMMUNICATIVE and LEARNER can, therefore, be seen to occupy together a special place in the list.

The data calculated to identify the term's keyness at each stage in the Old Lee/New Lee/Rossner progression evidences a somewhat different longitudinal profile to that of COMMUNICATIVE. LEARNER appears in third place in the New Lee <>Old Lee keyword list, with a log-likelihood score of 359.68. In the Rossner<>New Lee list it occupies fourth place, with a log-likelihood score of 310.32. LEARNER, this suggests, is just as significant, and perhaps more so, in the New Lee as in the Rossner phase of investigation. The only other lexical item to occupy a more important position in the New Lee <>Old Lee table is STUDENT, a synonym of sorts, which might serve as an indicator of similar preoccupations. LEARNER appears to represent the most important preoccupation of New Lee contributors, achieving a prominence in the period's discourse that appears similar to COMMUNICATIVE in the Rossner period.

However, as we have seen in Chapter Four, closer investigation of the keyword tables urges some caution in this assessment. One of the principle findings of the Old Lee<>Rossner (negative) keyword analysis (see 4.2.2) was that important stylistic changes occurred over the period of investigation. The male pronouns HE (p.KW 1), HIS (p.KW 3), HIM (p.KW 12) were, in particular, indicators of this shift, during which default male references were increasingly abandoned in favour of inclusive terms, including 'learner' and 'student', to describe important agents in the journal's

discourse. If LEARNER is present, at least partly, because of changes in style, then it follows that its thematic impact might be less significant than the figures alone indicate.

6.1.2 Issues of Meaning and Polysemy

Scott (2007), as we have seen, draws a distinction between keywords that are indicative of 'style', and those that are indicative of 'theme', in texts. He demonstrates this effectively in his list of keywords for *Romeo and Juliet*, in which, for example 'death', 'love' and 'Juliet' might be considered to be of thematic significance, but 'O' and 'Thou', of stylistic importance (p. 60). Applying Scott's categories, in the lists for these corpora LEARNER is present for thematic reasons in some cases, and for 'stylistic' reasons in others. As an example of the former, in some incidences writers use LEARNER, intentionally and explicitly, to draw attention to an individual who is an agent in the teaching/person process. When Saitz ('Remember the Pupils'(1974 28/3 220—221)) refers to theories of behaviourism which considered 'the learner in a way that banished 'unscientific terms like mind and spirit' (p. 190), the word might be interpreted as having 'thematic' significance. In other cases, clearly, it has simply been used as the new default subject, used where in the past HE was more common. In this section we are obviously interested in incidences where LEARNER does have thematic significance. It is not always an easy distinction to draw, or one that can be made on any principled basis. Nevertheless, in the articles discussed below, attention has been directed towards texts in which LEARNER is expounded as a central theme.

One unfortunate implication of this phenomenon is that the collocation and cluster data assembled for LEARNER are less effective in reflecting changes in theme⁹. Whereas the collocate and cluster data for COMMUNICATIVE, discussed in the last chapter, were often helpful in suggesting themes in the discussions surrounding the keyword, this is much less obviously the case for LEARNER. Incidences of

⁹ The collocation and cluster data for LEARNER appear in Appendix Six

LEARNER used for stylistic reasons “dilute” these data, so that their value is perhaps brought into question (this matter will be discussed further in the project’s discussion chapter (10.5.7)). There are however, two important exceptions (‘need/needs’ and ‘motivation’ as we shall see) whose collocation and clustering with LEARNER will be discussed in greater detail below.

6.2 LEARNER in New Lee Texts

6.2.1 The Return of the Learner

Looking at texts from the early part of the New Lee corpus it is clear that the morale and participation of learners in lessons is a perennial, frequently discussed issue. In ‘Let them Speak!’ (28/1 1973 23—29), for example, published at the very beginning of the New Lee period, Nancy Salama describes how she gives pupils a chance to speak in front of the class every day (p.23). Salama’s depiction of classroom roles is still “traditional”, and she suggests for example that since ‘[s]ome pupils may be exceptionally inhibited, or even lazy’ (p.24) teachers should use a marking system to evaluate pupils’ performance. Nevertheless, the idea that students should be given opportunities to speak, uninhibited by teacher activity, is expressed confidently here as a self-evidently ‘good thing’.

However, quite early on in the New Lee period, articles appear which appear to foreground the importance of the learner in the language learning process in a more explicit, principled way. Making reference to recent historical conditions which have impacted on the profession, these writers describe a revival of concern for the aims, needs and motivation of learners. This revival, it is explained, has come about as recent approaches which neglect the perspective of the learner have become discredited. Two such articles, published early on in the New Lee period, are A.V.P. Elliott’s ‘Aims and Aids in Learning and Teaching’ (28/ 3 1974 189—197) and Robert L. Saitz’s ‘Remember the Pupils’(1974 28/3 220—221). Elliott explains that language teaching has recently emerged from a period in which the perspective of the learners has been systematically neglected. He gives a historical account both of the

period of neglect and of the circumstances under which a revival of concern for the learner has taken place. Since WWII, he explains:

[F]oreign language teaching, and more particularly the teaching of English, has been strongly influenced by the work of American linguists. The effect of this work, and the psychological theory of behaviourism that became associated with it, was to consider the learner in a way that banished 'unscientific terms like mind and spirit (p.190).

The negative influence of these approaches, Elliot suggests, has held sway until very recently. 'Only in the last fifteen years', Elliot asserts, 'with the writings of Chomsky and others and with much distinguished work on language acquisition, has thinking begun to change' (p.190).

Saitz confirms this interpretation of developments, suggesting that concern for 'student variables', essential to teaching, disappeared during a period when practitioners were pre-occupied with the 'latest language-learning theories' (p.220). This near obsession with theory, he explains, 'led us to focus more upon the language than upon the learner' (p.220). Both Elliott and Saitz suggest that it is now time to re-evaluate pedagogic practice and place the learner, so long neglected, at the heart of the learning enterprise.

Elliott advocates, as a response to the disappearance of these negative methodological strictures, the need to consider affective and psychological factors that may determine learners' failure or success in learning a language. It is important, Elliott explains, to consider the history of each learner, and how this affects their current behaviour as students. In his conclusion, Elliott suggests that 'a little more understanding of the learner's problems, whether linguistic, emotional or cultural, may help us to help him to a little more success in his task' (p.197).

In Elliot's article, a separate, important theme is the need to identify and specify learners' needs and aims. As mentioned above, 'Need(s)' ('needs' ranked 9th, 'need'

19th) is one of the few collocates of LEARNER in the New Lee corpus which assists in identifying writers' preoccupations when using the term. Without a clear understanding of learner needs, Elliot explains, teaching can become aimless. There are cases where learner aims are clear: to gain a job, for example or travel overseas. But in many other cases, and particularly that of the 'captive' school learner, there 'may be no aims at all' (p.193). The solution here lies in 'supplying aims' which are more immediate to the learner than those suggested by national educational institutions.

6.2.2 Increased Complexity: A Growing Theoretical Base

Organisers of the 1974 IAFEFL conference seem to have selected "learner motivation" as its main theme. In those articles published in the period after the conference, the topic of learner motivation, along with its implications for teaching and learning, comes to be discussed in increasingly theoretically confident and nuanced terms. This is a process that resembles, it might be said, the increasingly sophisticated discussion of 'communicative' ideas in early issues of the Rossner period. I.S.P. Nation's 'Motivation, Repetition and Language-Teaching Techniques' (1975 29/2 115—120) is the earliest effort in the journal to provide some actual theoretical basis for the notion of motivation. Nation explains that there are two kinds of motivation; that which comes 'from the learner himself', called primary motivation, and that from 'outside the learner' (p.115) called secondary motivation. Having primary motivation means that the learner 'feels that he wants to learn, that he is interested, that the subject he is studying is exciting' (ibid). This kind of motivation is stronger, Nation suggests, and he therefore encourages teachers to make use of procedures that encourage its growth.

In 'The Urge to Communicate Versus Resistance to Learning in English as a Second Language' (1976 30/4 265 —282), James E. Alatis extends this theoretical base considerably. Alatis's discussion is wide-ranging, citing a number of theoretical sources. These include the work of 'humanist' writers such as Gattengo (p.268) and Stevick (p.265), but also a group of Canadian psycho-linguists which included W.E. Lambert and R.D Gardner (p.268). Alatis explains the hypothesis, proposed by this

last group, which predicts ‘the degree of success which students are likely to exhibit in second-language learning’ (p.268). He expounds their now famous bifurcation of motivation into *instrumental* and *integrative* types. Alatis, like Elliot and Saitz, lays historical blame for the profession’s failure to consider the needs and motivation of learners on audio-lingualists’ obsession with methods and materials (p.265). He explains that those methods which were considered ‘best’ during that period were those considered to be ‘linguistically sophisticated and pedagogically sound’ (ibid). Alatis proposes that a new and better approach to the problems of language teaching can be formulated by considering the position of the learner.

Further evidence of the growing acceptance and sophistication of theories concerning motivation can be found in R.L. Allwright’s ‘Motivation—the Teacher’s Responsibility?’ (1977 31/4 267—274). Allwright cites work recently undertaken by Corder, and agrees with that writer’s proposition that motivation poses ‘the key problem for the language teacher’ (p.267). He presents a table which allows practitioners to assess the impact of such factors as school, society and family on learners, and to cross-reference these against individual components of learner motivation so as to arrive at a detailed analysis of the motivational forces at work (p.270). The model that Allwright uses here conceptualises motivation as a complex entity, and integrates all of the theoretical components discussed by earlier contributors; ‘intrinsic’ and ‘extrinsic’ categories appear, for example, and the latter is further subdivided into ‘instrumental’ and ‘integrative’ types (p.270).

6.2.3 Motivation as ‘the be-all and end-all of successful language learning’

Perhaps the article that best illustrates the ascendancy of motivation as the centrally important idea of this period is Egon Foldberg’s passionate ‘Why? When? What? How? A Plea to Think More of the Language Learner’s Situation’ (1977 32/1 15 —23). Foldberg expresses his belief in ‘true, inner motivation as the be-all and end-all of successful language learning’ (p.15). To support this statement, Foldberg describes the situation of young learners in Denmark. He notes with alarm that students in that country who set off motivated and keen to learn tend to lose their initial enthusiasm within two years of exposure to classroom learning (p.18). The aims and

procedures of the course that these students experience, do not, he explains, take sufficient account of their aims or motivation (pp.20—21).

Equally as revealing, perhaps, of the increasing dominance of motivation as a topic, are articles warning against practitioners' over-valuing of, and over-dependence on, the concept. Maurice Antier, in 'Language Teaching as a Form of Witchcraft' (1976 31/1 1—10), criticises what he sees as a recent over-emphasis on the notion of learner motivation. Teachers have turned, he explains, to psychology to provide solutions to their teaching dilemmas; 'hence the emphasis placed on motivation' (p.1). Antier is clearly sceptical about the historical 'reversal' (p.1) that has occurred in recent years, in which learner motivation, once ignored, now occupies centre stage. He even suggests that 'psychology does not yet seem well enough equipped to help us much' (p.1). Similar caution is shown by Patricia Mugglestone in 'The Primary Curiosity Motive' (1977 31/2 11—16). Although Mugglestone's overall attitude to the renewed emphasis on learner motivation is generally positive she warns that since 'there is no psychological motive theory to account completely for human motivation' teachers have begun to refer to motivation as a vague concept, and 'to use the lack of it to explain away their pupils' failure to learn' (p.111).

6.2.4 Role of Learners and Teachers

A sense of a new, or renewed emphasis on the importance of the learner also appears in articles which discuss the *roles* that learners and teachers adopt in the classroom. Those articles which propose the most radical re-assessment of learner and teacher roles often appear to deploy terms suffixed by '-centred'; 'learner-centred', 'pupil-centred', 'teacher-centred' are the most common. This fact is not suggested strongly, it might be noted, by the collocation or cluster data. This is partly due to the general "noisiness" of these figures, already described, but also because the number of occurrences in each case is quite small. 'Pupil-centred' only appears 4 times in the New Lee corpus, 'learner-centred' and 'student-centred' both 5 times.

Significantly, terms of this type which relate to LEARNER generally carry a positive sense, and are often used approvingly to describe practices advocated by the author.

For example, in 'In-Service Training by Radio and Television' (1975 29/3 221—229), Leena Pasanen describes an English language training programme designed to be closely integrated with other subjects. Pasanen states that '[a]s the modern teacher aims at pupil-centred methods he remembers that his pupils should have a say when themes and passages for such a programme are being selected' (p.225). The term 'teacher-centred', on the other hand (which appears 12 times in the New Lee texts) clearly carries quite negative associations. It generally describes 'teacher-fronted' practice, which is, it seems, increasingly considered by contributors as a discredited mode of teaching. In 'Stimulating Motivation Through Audio-Visual Aids Based on 'English by Radiovision'' (p. 32/1 1977 43—49) Raymond Janssens provides a list of potential 'cons' for the technique (using audio-visual slides to enhance learning during lessons) that his article advocates. This includes the criticism that 'audiovisual aids tend to be even more teacher-centred than the much maligned 'frontal' teaching or lecturing.' (p.49). In 'An Attempt to Individualise the Reading Skill at Kuwait University' (1981 35/4 398—404) by Nayef N. Kharma, the author explains that many attempts to introduce individualised approaches within the traditional classroom have failed since they 'do not satisfy the very first principle underlying the concept, namely that instruction should be *child*-centred, not teacher-centred' (emphasis his; p. 400).

Use of terms such as 'learner-' or 'pupil-centred' quickly takes root in the discourse of the journal. By 1976, in 'Language-Teaching as a Form of Witchcraft' (1976 31/1 1—10 cited above), Maurice Antier (who as we have seen is sceptical about some of the recent changes that have occurred) refers to 'pupil-oriented teaching' as one of the 'fashionable' new concepts about which he expresses concerned scepticism. Given its present emphasis, he states 'it may sound unfashionable to concentrate on the teacher' (p.1). By the end of the New Lee period the sense that classroom practice ought to be centred on the learner seems to have become well established. Gerry Abbott's article 'Encouraging Communication in English: A Paradox' (1981 35 /3 228—230), which appears in the penultimate New Lee issue of the journal, provides an interesting assessment of the changes in learner and student roles that have taken place. Abbott mentions that the traditional role of the teacher, 'who had

the dominant role in the classroom' (p.228), has been radically altered. In place of 'highly controlled chorus-work' (p.228) for example, 'group interaction, simultaneous self-paced pair-work' are now recommended (p.228).

6.2.5 Individualised Learning

Another consistent strand in the discussion surrounding the term LEARNER is that concerned with adaptation of practice to provide "individualised" opportunities for learning. Contributors demonstrate an interest in this area throughout the New Lee period. In 1973, Mark Clarke, in 'Individualising Instruction in The Composition Class' 28/1 1973 43—46), proposes a simple form of "differentiation by task", in which teachers can assign more or less complex tasks to learners, depending on their confidence, but using the same materials. In 'Teaching Vocabulary in Difficult Circumstances'(1975 30/1 21—24), I. S. P. Nation explains that in many parts of the world, financial and other restrictions prevent students from having access to textbooks and other materials. In such circumstances, particularly where large class sizes exist, 'teacher-centred (p.21) materials are inadequate. One of Nation's suggestions is that vocabulary exercises might be developed which learners can choose, complete, and mark; by themselves, and at their own speed.

The concept of individualised learning is discussed with some sophistication by Nayef N. Khurma in 'An Attempt to Individualise the Reading Skill at Kuwait University' (1981 35/4 398—404). Khurma describes a recent experiment carried out at Kuwait University, in which Commerce students were exposed to a 'course/credit hour system' (p.403) working individually on reading tasks (p.400), as well as a more 'traditional' course, in which learners were able to exercise a degree of choice. Khurma explains that the real test of individualisation is choice. Learners' choices, regarding such matters as the content of the syllabus and methodology of lessons, need to be real. It is the learner, he explains 'who should have choice in one or more of the following areas: objectives, learning rates, learning method, and content of programme' (p. 400). Interestingly, Khurma offers an account of the origins of the concept of 'individualised instruction' (ibid), explaining that it 'started in the late 1960s' and was recognised in a US ACTFL publication in 1970.

6.3 LEARNER in the Rossner Period

6.3.1 Overview: Continuing Themes

LEARNER was the third most important keyword item in the New Lee texts (with a log-likelihood score of 359.68), second only to STUDENT (a related term). The New Lee articles represent a period in the history of the journal during which (at least according to Elliott, as we have seen) professionals returned their attention to learners, after a period of lengthy and even 'principled' neglect. In terms of 'raw' keyness LEARNER increases in importance in the Rossner years (the log likelihood score for 'learner' is 310.32 when Rossner texts are compared against those from the New Lee collection). However, as in the case of the Old Lee <>New Lee transition, it is difficult to assess the degree to which the term's increase in keyness indicates a shift in (Scott's) *theme* rather than *style*. Certainly in the Rossner articles the practice of referring to learners or teachers using the generic 'he' appears to continue to decline. As one crude measure of this, it is significant that 'their' is listed as an important collocate of LEARNER in the Rossner period, rather than 'his', more frequent in the New Lee period.

However, whereas the New Lee period was one in which the notion of the learner was deliberately and even explicitly fore-grounded by contributors, in the Rossner articles few wholly novel propositions relating to the term are introduced. In this sense the "history of ideas" relating to LEARNER is quite different to that of COMMUNICATIVE, concerning which term several new ideas are expounded and developed by Rossner contributors. However, while a few concepts relating to a learner-centred approach to teaching are, as we shall see, elaborated by Rossner writers, even apparently "new" Rossner ideas can be seen to have had clear antecedents in New Lee writing. There is considerably greater historical continuity between New Lee and Rossner articles as far as LEARNER is concerned than in the case of COMMUNICATIVE.

6.3.2 The Learner and Communicative Language Teaching

In the Rossner period, ideas relating to the importance of the learner, which were formulated during the New Lee period, appear to have become absorbed within the new, preoccupying discussion of the Communicative Approach. “Appropriated” by writers concerned with communicative ideas, a focus on the learner comes to be depicted as a —given —feature of the communicative approach . Many Rossner articles which attempt to characterise the Communicative Approach therefore describe CLT’s emphasis on the learner as a distinctive and important characteristic. In his ‘Informal and Formal Approaches to Communicative Language Teaching’ (1982 36/2 73—81), for example, Rod Ellis identifies the recent historical emphasis on the role of the learner as one of only two major contributions to communicative language teaching (the other, as we saw in the chapter dealing with COMMUNICATIVE, being the adoption of pragmatic descriptions of language (p.73)). Tom Hutchinson and Alan Waters go even further in ‘How Communicative is ESP?’ (1984 38/2 108—113), explaining that they ‘take the term ‘communicative’ to mean ‘geared to the competence and expectations of those participating in the learning process’ (p.108). However, they propose that the two notions ‘communicative’ and ‘learner-centred’ are not quite the same thing. Since ‘the learner is not the sole focus of the learning process’ the writers ‘reject the view that that a communicative approach is learner –centred (ibid). Their refinement of the relationship between these concepts is that a communicative approach is *‘learning-centred*, and this implies taking into account the needs and expectations of all the parties involved in the learning process when designing courses and selecting methodology’ (p.108). Hutchinson and Waters’ repeated use of the term ‘learner-centred’, which as we have seen, became current towards the end of the New Lee period, evidences the term’s persistence in Rossner texts.

Li Xiaojun’s ‘In defence of the communicative approach’ (1984 38/1 2—13) also describes emphasis on the learner as a feature of the approach. Li includes student-centeredness (pp.9—10) as one amongst many characteristics of communicative teaching, included alongside such other features as practitioners’ attention to use, rather than form, emphasis on authentic language and materials, grading by task

rather than according to linguistic features of the language, and other markers of 'communicative' practice (pp. 4—6).

This tendency continues, and indeed perhaps increases, as the Rossner period proceeds. In 'You Try Doing it with a Class of Forty!' (1986 40/2 100—106), Rob Nolasco and Lois Arthur appear to identify a learner-centred approach so closely with Communicative Language Teaching that the concepts become virtually indistinguishable in the text. The communicative methodology they have attempted to introduce into Moroccan secondary school classrooms appears largely to consist of 'techniques , procedures, and classroom activities which would offer a chance for student/student interaction independent of the teacher, and for students to determine what they wanted to say' (p.100). Much of the article is dedicated to the authors' description of the objections raised by teachers (pp. 102—103) to the introduction of such techniques. The solution they describe involves gradual introduction of such practices as group and pair work (pp.104—105) to assuage student and teacher anxiety and allow them to become used to their new roles.

In 'Queries from a Communicative Teacher' (1986 40/2 107—112), several of the crucial elements of the Communicative Approach that Péter Medgyes satirises relate to its focus on the needs and role of the learner. These include the precepts that teaching must be learner centred (p.107), that work ought to be based on an analysis of learners' needs (pp.107—108), that classroom activity should provide opportunities for real interaction (pp.108—109), and should apply a 'humanistic attitude' (p.109). Even the point that teachers should 'rely less on textbooks' (p.110) seems to be based on the reflection that teachers should be responding more to learners within lessons.

6.3.3 Armanet and Obese-Jecty: Learner Needs and Autonomy

Returning now to a chronological perspective, C.M. Armanet and K. Obese-Jecty's article, 'Towards Student Autonomy in the Learning of English as a Second Language at University Level' (1981 36/1 24—28), appears in the first few pages of the first issue of the Rossner period. The article serves in some respects as a "bridge"

between the New Lee and Rossner collections, indicating not only that there is a high degree of continuity with earlier ideas, but also that some of the principles outlined in the previous decade have by now come to be implemented in practice. The authors report the progress achieved by a project begun in 1977 at the University of Compiègne (p.221). The courses Armanet and Obese-Jecty describe have been set up to allow students a high degree of autonomy in their English language studies. Based partly on the results of a rigorous needs analysis, a system has been developed which permits students considerable independence in terms of their selection of tasks and materials for study (pp.24—26).

Two themes in particular emerge which are consistent with earlier discussions. The first, not directly discussed but implicit within the article's description of the project's activities, is the authors' concern for learner needs ('need (s)', one of the few collocations of LEARNER in the New Lee period which seems to be present for reasons of theme, is also present in the Rossner corpus ('needs' 6th, 'need' 15th)). The fact that the New Lee emphasis on learner needs has persisted into the Rossner period is strongly evident in this article. The authors describe the sophisticated needs analysis they have applied throughout the project. This was carried out using 'several questionnaires, enquiries, meetings, and interviews' (p.25). Students were also asked to complete a survey describing their reactions to the reorganised course regime (*ibid*). A second, more explicit, theme is the ongoing discussion concerning learner and teacher roles. The authors explain that teachers and students have been urged to discard their traditional functions; teachers by relinquishing their authority and status as sources of knowledge, and pupils by rejecting their traditional position as passive recipients, 'in the 'no risk', maternal system' (p.26). The writers suggest that in order that all parties "play the game" as far as their new roles are concerned, a tacit, ongoing contract between teachers and learner must be achieved (*ibid*). Something that is interesting and quite new within the author's discussion is their use of the term 'autonomy' to describe the state of the learner's independence from teacher control. Armanet and Obese-Jecty relate that responses to a survey indicated that a majority, '(79%-86%)', preferred to be 'semi-autonomous in class' (p.25). The concept of autonomy, today ubiquitous in ELT literature, is here

discussed explicitly for the first time in the journal, and represented as an important aim of the project. The authors explain that although learners continue to receive regular interviews with teachers as the course develops, they are encouraged to carry out work more and more autonomously, as 'the help of the teacher is needed less and less' (p.27).

6.3.4 Roles of the Teacher and Learner

The discussion concerning the need to effect changes in the roles performed by teachers and learners is pursued by a number of new, Rossner period contributors. Ellis explains that a crucial aspect of his methodology, which facilitates learners' acquisition of language, 'concerns the allocation of roles in the classroom'. If, he explains, 'the teacher operates as the 'knower' and the pupil as the 'information-seeker' (Corder 1977), which are the traditional classroom roles, then it is unlikely that the learner will have sufficient independence for acquisition to take place' (p.78). Teachers, as he sees it, have two choices. They may either set up pair or group work and act as an onlooker, or to take part in these activities as a participant. Too much teacher participation, he suggests, might not only be unnecessary but even actively harmful to the students' process of acquisition (p.78).

In 'The Teacher as Moderator: a Technique for Interactional Learning' (1983 37/3 221—228) Keith Purvis explains how he applies the technique of moderation, originally used in 'West German firms and organisations' (p.221) to ensure that as many parties as possible are involved in a consultative process to facilitate language-learning. In Purvis' article, as in the several New Lee pieces discussed above, learner-centred activity is portrayed, indirectly and through linguistic association, as inherently desirable, while teacher-centred action is depicted as outmoded and inhibiting. Purvis explains, for example, that using moderation within the context of teaching is a way 'of organising a group with a minimum of teacher *interference*' (emphasis mine, p. 221). More explicitly, Purvis explains that if a teacher restricts their role to that of neutral moderator, avoiding a 'more directive style' there is 'less risk that course participants will 'switch off'' (ibid).

Another article in which learner and teacher roles are discussed in detail is 'Motivating Those That Know It All' by Aleksandra Gołębiowska (1984 38/4 274—278). Gołębiowska appears at first resistant to the ethos, by now fairly dominant, in which the learner's wishes and perceptions are seen as paramount. He suggests for example that that the university students he is teaching, many of whom have studied English abroad, 'lack self-criticism' and rely too much 'on their intuition and their own observation' (p.275). Gołębiowska even suggests that some of these students might be 'know-alls' (p.276) who perceive that there is little that their (non-native) teachers can offer them. However, despite these counter-fashionable comments, Gołębiowska's clearly accepts some of the underlying principles of the recent emphasis on learner-centred processes. He attributes the inability of his students to accept responsibility for their language, and adopt more active roles, to their experience of teacher-centred education. 'Why', he asks, 'would we expect anything else from students who have experienced more than ten years of inflexible, teacher-centred education at primary and secondary levels?' (p.278). His solution is to increase students' self-awareness of the language by exposing them to the subtleties of the language, and encourage them to engage with learning 'as a life-long process' (p.278).

'Learner Choice in Language Study' by Andrew Littlejohn (1985 39/4 253 —261) serves as a kind of summary and culmination of this strand of discussion, in which the author assesses earlier attempts to formulate approaches directed at learners. He presents his own views as to what 'learner-centred' (p.253) actually means. Littlejohn explains that the benefits of a learner-centred perspective on language teaching have now become widely-accepted. 'We now realise,' he states, 'that a healthy classroom is one in which learners are active and where teacher talk is reduced to a minimum' (p.254). Whereas in some earlier articles learner-initiated activities are extolled, and teacher-initiated ones condemned indirectly, through the author's selection of language, Littlejohn makes these judgements explicit. He explains the need for teachers to gain a clearer understanding of when their help is not required by learners, and to reduce opportunities for their interference with language learning (p.260).

Littlejohn characterises 'learner-centred' approaches adopted thus far as being:

- 1) learner-centred in terms of syllabus design (i.e. what the learners will learn);
- 2) learner-centred in terms of classroom activities (i.e. how the learners will learn) (p.253)

He provides a brief assessment of the efforts that have been undertaken in both of these areas, and offers the general appraisal that they are, by and large, inadequate in terms of 'making the learner the centre of language education' (p.253).

Concerning syllabus design, Littlejohn also discusses the history of attempts to directly specify and address learner needs; an oft-mentioned, as we have seen, but seldom directly discussed topic. He considers that while 'the development of functional/notional approaches and related insights in sociolinguistics' (p.253) are a major achievement, he also feels that they have led to an approach to specifying learner needs that adheres too closely to its own formula, and overrides the 'personal interests and wishes of the learner' (p.254).

Concerning learner-centred activities, Littlewood considers such practices as students working in groups, doing role plays, and giving personal opinions (p.254) as generally helpful, producing 'learners who are more ready to use the language outside the classroom' (ibid). However, he feels that many activities do not facilitate genuine information exchange. Instead, they require that students 'pretend' to need information in artificial activities that make no real difference to learners (ibid).

6.3.5 The Importance of Choice

What is missing from these two approaches, Littlewood explains, is *choice*, and it is the element of choice that identifies whether or not an approach is learner-centred or not (p.255). This notion, that students be allowed to participate in decision-making concerning their learning, has in fact been present in the discourse of the journal since New Lee writer Nayef Kharma's 'An Attempt to Individualise the Reading Skill at Kuwait University' (1981 35/4; described above), in which the author

advocates learners' having the opportunity to select the nature, and speed of activities they undertake. In the Rossner period, 'choice' is ranked 28th in the table of collocates ('choice' only, with 21 incidences) and Littlewood's extensive discussion of the term accounts for most of its significance in the data. Armanet and Obese-Jecty's article also touches on the idea, when discussing their project at the University of Compiègne. The authors explain that their 'autonomous' learners have to be willing to accept a range of responsibilities for defining the content of their own learning; this includes describing the materials, activities and conditions to be used during their course, and the way that their progress is to be evaluated (p.26). In Ellis's discussion concerning learners' acquisition (rather than learning) of language, the issue of learner roles, and learner choice are central. Ellis believes that the appropriate methodology to support acquisition is one where 'the learner is left free to find his own route; it must be facilitative rather than prescriptive' (p.78). Purvis, too, suggests using his 'moderation' techniques for the purpose of inviting learners to participate in the selection of materials and design of their own course; even suggesting that students might be encouraged to design their own teaching module (p.228, 225—226). The idea that Littlewood expresses has, therefore, been "in the air" for some time. However, his view that the existence of opportunities for students to exercise decision-making actually *characterises* a learner-centred approach is novel. Littlewood appears to criticise existing courses in which learners are required to pursue the same route regardless of individual differences in needs or interest. He feels that learner difference can be best taken into account by allowing learners to make choices concerning what, and how they will learn (p.255). While he concedes that it is neither practical nor desirable that choice be introduced into all areas of teacher-learner decision-making, '[l]earner choice in some of these areas could, however, be introduced into the traditional classroom with little but significant benefit' (p.255). He lists possible areas where students might be allowed to participate in decision making: determining time spent on materials, the course goals, mode of activities, content including subject matter, as well as ongoing evaluation of the course and the nature of support and help provided (p.255).

6.3.6 Learner Training

Littlewood's article also serves to introduce a relatively new theme into the discussion surrounding LEARNER. This is the notion of 'learner training': learners may need help in accepting the new roles required by a learner-oriented approach, and 'training' can be proffered to assist in their assimilation of new ideas. Littlewood recognises that students' and teachers' roles within the classroom need to be re-assessed and re-defined by both parties (pp.256—257). He suggests that changes can be brought about by actively challenging these roles and assumptions and inculcating a sense that new approaches are possible (*ibid*); also that this can be achieved by 'learner training' (p.260). Such learner training can be difficult, however, since learners and teachers have 'prior experience' (p.261) of roles that can be difficult to change. Littlewood therefore counsels 'that we must move gradually if we are to expect learners to take responsibility for managing their own learning.' (p.261)

Littlewood suggests that '[i]f we wish to involve learners more in the running of a language course, then we need to devise tasks and materials that specifically develop the learner's ability to choose' (p.260). This idea is taken up enthusiastically in two later articles, 'Helping Learners Think About Learning' by Anita Wenden (1986 40/1 3—12) and 'Helping Learners Adapt To Unfamiliar Methods', by Sharron Bassano, (1986 40/1 13—19). The articles, which are incidentally both written by American women, on a similar topic, appear consecutively in the same edition of the journal's final volume. Wenden's hypothesis is that learners have 'explicit' (p.3) beliefs about how they learn a language, which influence the way that they behave in the language classroom. She proposes a set of modules that can be used in class to help students discover these, 'and consider alternative views' (*ibid*). Wenden enumerates a list of common beliefs, examples of which have been derived from interviews conducted at Columbia university. One learner, for instance, believes that it is best to 'learn the natural way' (*ibid*), picking up language through use, while another considers that a systematic approach that focuses on structure is better (p.4). Wenden explains that 'these beliefs were reflected in the learner' approach to language learning' (*ibid*) in various ways.

Whereas Littlewood's focus is largely on changing student and teacher attitudes to *roles*, so as to encourage students to take on some of the decision-making functions of the teacher, Wenden's interest is in the beliefs and strategies that learners deploy. She describes 'the kinds of strategies' different students tend to use and 'where they concentrated the use of their strategies' (p.4). If learners do operate different beliefs and strategies, Wenden explains, 'teachers should try to discover what their students' beliefs are and how they may influence their approach to language learning' (p.4). Wenden has a clear sense concerning which approaches are most effective. She is interested in the notion of the 'good' language learner—the frequency of the collocation of the words 'good' and 'learner' in her article alone account largely for its presence in the list of collocates for 'learner' (ranked 22nd, with 30 instances) in this period.

Sharron Bassano covers many of the same points, focusing on ways that learner's negative reactions, or outright resistance to new methods can be effectively dealt with. Bassano outlines a number of principles that should be applied in order to achieve these goals. Her starting point, number one in a six-point list, is to '1) become aware of students 'past experiences and their assumptions about language learning' (p.15). Bassano explains that '[t]he first step 'towards the elimination of resistance is to be fully aware of the students' previous classroom experience with language learning, either through a written survey of the class or through open discussion' (p.15).

6.3.7 Humanism

Both Wenden and Bassano suggest an approach, referring to students' earlier experiences as learners and evidencing a humanistic concern for the student, that is similar to that introduced in A.V.P. Elliot's New Lee era article, 'Aims and Aids in Learning and Teaching' (1974 28/ 3). As Wenden and Bassano are contributors from the United States, it seems possible that they have been influenced more directly by the American humanism of Stevick. Bassano aims to put students 'in touch with' (p.15) their positive and negative experiences of learning, and to examine the assumptions they have acquired as a rules.

This theme of humanistic concern for the whole learner has strong roots in New Lee period concerns. James E. Alatis' (1976 30/4) 'The Urge to Communicate Versus Resistance to Learning in English as a Second Language', described above, presented many of the same ideas and also emphasised the need to take account of an individual's personal learning history. Interestingly, however, though these ideas are present in the Rossner period, their discussion is much less prominent than in New Lee years. Traces of their influence can be discerned as secondary themes in a number of Rossner articles. In C.M. Armanet and K. Obese-Jecty's piece, for example, the authors suggest that teachers should exchange their role 'as 'the authority from whom all al knowledge flows', for 'empathy', and the ability to act as listeners and 'catalysts' (p.26). Ellis, too, makes some connection to humanistic principles when he makes reference to the Community Language Learning approach described by Stevick (who coined the 'humanistic label' (Howatt 2004: p. 256)). Ellis describes the method as one which comes close to meeting the conditions he considers ideal for acquisition (p.77) , calling for 'the teacher to relinquish control of the teaching/learning process in favour of the pupil'. It seems possible that humanistic principles—particularly concern for the learner as a whole person, and the need to relinquish control to the learner as the centre of the learning process—have become so deeply rooted in the discourse that they no longer require explicit advocacy.

The article which most obviously exemplifies the persistence and legacy of humanistic themes is surely Mario Rinvolucris, 'Writing To Your Students' (1983 37/1 16—21). The author appeals to teachers to interact and communicate with learners as fellow human beings. Rinvolucris explains that, through a process of writing to his students, not correcting or marking letters but rather responding in an "ordinary" fashion, he gained a deeper understanding of their needs and concerns. Rinvolucris remarks that the letter-writing exercise 'forced me to spend an hour or more each day thinking about my students as individuals, both humanly and linguistically' (p.18) As a result, he explains, he was able to prepare lessons that focused, not on the 'class' as an undifferentiated and homogenous group, but rather as a group of individual learners. The exercise helped him to think about the impact

of classroom exercises ‘on each learner as a whole person’ (p.20), and ‘to do *person-centred* preparation rather than preparation for the mythical ‘group’’ (p.20).

6. 4 Conclusions

Interpretation of qualitative data concerning the thematic significance of LEARNER has been rendered difficult by the fact that the term is increasingly frequently used in place of the generic pronoun, ‘he’, common in earlier texts. Despite this, close examination of occurrences of the term makes it clear that the notion of the learner emerges in the New Lee period as a hugely significant topic of discussion. LEARNER, indeed, appears to play a similar role in the New Lee period, marking writers’ central preoccupation during those years, as COMMUNICATIVE in the Rossner texts. In the early 1970s, writers such as Elliott depict the period in which he is writing as one in which the concept of the learner is undergoing something like a ‘renaissance’, as practitioners return to address issues such as learner needs and motivation after a lengthy period of neglect. This discussion intensifies and appears to reach a sort of climax after the 1974 IATEFL conference, from whose proceedings several important *Journal* articles appear to have been gleaned. Clearly, then, LEARNER is present in the keyword results for thematic as well as stylistic reasons, and deserves the close attention that the chapter has paid to its development and use.

By the opening of the Rossner period, much of the earlier discussion concerning LEARNER seems to have become assimilated within the new discourse, dominated by concern for COMMUNICATIVE ideas, of that time. Ellis, for example, characterises communicative language teaching as an approach in which the notion of the learner comes into much greater focus. Later articles continue to develop ideas that emerged as important strands in the New Lee period discussion; chiefly learners’ needs, their role in the classroom and the need to provide them with opportunities for choice within the classroom. Concern for humanistic principles, and a desire to characterise the “good language learner”, also persist as important ideas. However these themes are frequently expressed less explicitly in later years, often appearing as secondary topics in articles concerned, for example, with the characterisation of CLT. By the end of the Rossner period, the idea that the learner should be placed at

the heart of the language learning process, so revolutionary in New Lee years, has become an uncontroversial “given” in the discourse, almost invisible within newer discussions.

Chapter Seven: the Keyword ACTIVITY

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 Reviewing Chronological Keyword Data for ACTIVITY

ACTIVITY appears as the fourth item in order of disproportionate frequency in the main, Rossner<>Old Lee keyword list (log-likelihood score 679.93). Use of the word increases gradually over the period under investigation, and it is already a key item, in 20th position (log-likelihood score of 103.96), in the (extended) New Lee<>Old Lee table of results. However, like COMMUNICATIVE, ACTIVITY is also prominent in the Rossner<> New Lee list (in fifth position, log-likelihood score 300.29). Its 'keyness history' also therefore resembles COMMUNICATIVE in that while it gains a modicum of importance in the New Lee period, in the Rossner texts it becomes very frequently used indeed. Since it is calculated as key, even when compared against a corpus in which it is already a key item, ACTIVITY must be considered a crucial term in the Rossner texts.

The negative keyword data for the three periods is particularly revealing in the case of ACTIVITY. It seems likely that it serves to "replace" disappearing terms such as DRILL, the sixth item (log-likelihood 207.57) in the Old Lee<> New Lee list. 'Drills' are described in some New Lee texts, as we shall see, in a way that makes the term a synonym of 'activity'. They are also characterised as being *types* of classroom activities (as, for example, by James and Lloyd Mullen, below). This is a tendency which declines over the period represented by the corpus. It represents part of the process, explained below, by which ACTIVITY sheds early, "general" senses and emerges to become a more professional and technical term.

7.1.2 Issues of Meaning and Polysemy

The issue of polysemy is complex in the case of ACTIVITY, and requires careful attention. In both New Lee and Rossner texts, it conveys several very different

meanings. The word is often used —as in everyday discourse—‘anaphorically’, serving as a substitute for another (usually earlier) term, usually to avoid clumsy repetition. In these cases the reference needs to be traced back, often to an earlier sentence or paragraph, to locate its meaning. When, for example, P. V. A. Adkins states that ‘[t]here are those who maintain, wrongly in our view, that the two activities have little in common’ (‘English For, not English As’ (1981 35/4 216—219)) the ‘two activities’ being referred to are ‘teaching English as a ‘foreign’ language and teaching it as a ‘second’ language’ (p. 216).

Despite the complication that anaphoric use introduces, a number of reasonably distinctive meanings for ACTIVITY can be identified in the New Lee and Rossner texts. References to ‘external’ activities, unrelated to teacher or student behaviour in language learning, are quite common. In ‘Teaching Numbers’ (1974 28/3 245—246), for example, David Dungworth explains that numbers play an integral part in such ‘everyday activities as shopping, travelling, telling the time [...] and talking about one’s age and family’ (p. 245). In many other instances ‘activity’ is used, as an uncountable noun, to describe behaviour that is occurring in a classroom at a particular time. This is the case in A. F. Deyes’ (‘Speech Activity in the Language Classroom’ (1974 28/3 222—226)) comment that ‘total student speech activity was alarmingly small’ (p. 223) in the lessons he investigated. It is also quite frequently used as a technical, specialist term, often describing some concept in academic disciplines external to language teaching. In Leo van Lier’s ‘Analysing Interaction in Second Language Classrooms’ (1984 38/3 160—169), for instance, the author discusses ‘activity frames’, a specialist term within the tradition of applied linguistics tradition of discourse analysis, that developed from Sinclair and Coulter’s classifications of patterns of classroom interaction.

ACTIVITY is, though, still most often used to describe procedures that facilitate language learning in the classroom. This use is often in fact explicitly “marked” by its inclusion in the expression ‘classroom activity’¹⁰. Collocation and cluster data

¹⁰ The collocation and cluster data for ACTIVITY appear in Appendix Six

indicate that this sense of the term is stable over the New Lee and Rossner periods, with ‘classroom activities’ being referred to almost as equally as extensively in both corpora. ‘Activities’ is the top collocate in the New Lee list, while ‘activity’ is the ‘second’. ‘Classroom activity’ and ‘classroom activities’ are also important clusters in each. In the New Lee corpus the former appears 15 times, the latter 24 times. In Rossner texts the singular form appears 25 times; the plural does not appear at all. It cannot be said, however, that what actually constitutes a legitimate ‘activity’ remains constant over the period of investigation. Particularly in earlier, New Lee period texts it is frequently used in a very general way to include such procedures as formal drills and teacher-led exercises. In ‘English as She is Heard’: Aural Difficulties Experienced by Foreign Learners’ (1973 28/1 15–22), for example, Kenneth James and Lloyd Mullen provide a list of ‘typical classroom activities’ that includes grammatical drills, reading aloud and dictation (p. 16). In ‘Some Basic Principles of Teacher Training’ (1974 29/1 19–22) Peter Strevens uses the word in a similarly broad sense. Reflecting the “structural” approach to language teaching then prominent, he portrays ‘[t]eaching techniques and classroom activities’ as procedures in which structural elements are presented as ‘teachable items’. The purpose of the activities he describes is to present language points so that ‘their significance is grasped and the learner is enabled to use them with accuracy and ease’ (p.19).

7.2 ACTIVITY in New Lee Texts

7.2.1 Games and Activities

Throughout the New Lee period, the terms ‘game’ and ‘activity’ are frequently linked. Evidence for this association in the collocation data is not perhaps as prevalent as intuition might expect; ‘games’ (plural only) appears, in 9th position. However, a number of factors, gleaned from careful reading of the wider passages and texts in which the terms appear, provide support for this linkage.

From a modern practitioner's perspective, the descriptions given of New Lee period 'games' are often identifiable as 'activities' in the contemporary sense, in that they conform to later descriptions of simulations, information gaps, etc frequently referred to as such by the modern teacher. They are also often described, in considerable detail and with concern for their successful implementation, in a manner that anticipates the description of activities given by many Rossner period writers (striking parallels can be found between articles described here and 'Authentic Listening Activities' (1981 36/1 37—47), discussed in the Rossner section). These discussions concerning 'games' might therefore be seen as a kind of precursor of, or "preparation" for, the activities-centred approach that emerges in later texts.

The use of games in class is frequently advocated and defended by writers on such grounds as their provision of conditions for authentic language use, and their ability to motivate learners and permit them a degree of independence. In William Edmundson's 'An Approach to the Short Language-Teaching Course' (1974 28/2 112—117) the writer describes his preparation of a short in-service course for teachers, which includes a period described under the heading of '*Language-teaching games and activities*'. This is dedicated to '[e]xamples of blackboard contests, chain and spelling games, story-telling aids, useful nursery rhymes, children's songs, and dramatisation (p. 115). Edmundson here links the terms 'games' and 'activities' explicitly, connecting them with 'and' in a way that suggests they are synonyms. They are, at least, sufficiently similar so as to be taught in the same session.

'Games and Question-Practice' (1975 29/2 135—143) by A. L. W. Rees is an article that describes twelve different kinds of question-asking games. Here too, the items GAME and ACTIVITY are closely connected throughout the text using various connectives; Rees mentions 'games and related activities' (p.136), 'games and other activities' (p.137), and even 'games-like activities' (p.137). In several cases the two words are used interchangeably, in a way that suggests they might be synonyms. Moreover, many of Rees's games are identifiable, from our current perspective, as 'activities', and a contemporary teacher would probably identify them as such. More than one of Rees' 'games', for example, is clearly a role-play, or simulation (pp.

139—140), while another, in which an image is withheld and then partially revealed by the teacher so as to stimulate student responses (p. 139) has many of the features of an “information gap”. Reese’s article provides strong evidence that many of the features, and justifying arguments for the extensive use of activities, have their origins in similar discussions about games.

Reese suggests in his introduction that games provide an opportunity to relieve students from excessive teacher control. Teachers, he suggests, talk too much; many indeed are perhaps frustrated ‘preachers, politicians, public speakers, rhetoricians, or lecturers at heart!’ (p. 135). He proposes that language learning ‘should be ‘democratic’, and that the duty of teachers ‘is clearly to provide practice for all our pupils’ (p. 136). He closes the article by suggesting that ‘the real value of games and related activities is that they create an environment for learning and reinforcing in which the teacher interferes as little as possible’ (p. 143). Apart from his concern here with learner-centredness and autonomy Reese also demonstrates concern for the notion of authenticity. For example, he recognises, as a limitation of two of his games, the fact that ‘they are unreal in the sense that the questioner is already aware of the answer before he asks the question.’ (p. 138). Reese is keen to stress that games are not merely for children, and that teachers should resist their rejection on the grounds that they are not suitable for adult learning. He believes that adults will readily accept their inclusion in a lesson ‘if they are made aware of the rationale behind playing them’ (p. 136).

In Emilio G. Cortez’s ‘Language-Teaching Games: What about them?’ (1978 32/3 204—207) the author also uses ‘games’ and ‘activities’ interchangeably. He makes the connection between the terms explicit, stating that for the purposes of his article, a ‘language game’ is ‘considered to be an activity designed to stimulate and to sustain interest while affording the learner practice in listening and/or speaking for purposes of language acquisition’ (p. 204). In ‘Asking Questions with the Help of Pictures and Slides; Some Language Games’ (1980 34/4 277—281) Michael J. Fitzgerald explains how visual resources can be adapted and recycled for use in games, commenting that there ‘can be few more involving activities than language-

teaching games' (p. 278). Fitzgerald's games are 'activity-like'; in one, an 'information gap' activity (although not described as such), a picture is revealed gradually so as to elicit student questions (pp. 278 —280). The writer admires the game since it provides 'an authentic context for asking questions because we genuinely do not know what the pictures are' (pp. 279—280). In 'Interaction and the Individual' (1981 35/2 83—89) D. R. Scarbrough reiterates, and elaborates on, the arguments made in support of games by earlier contributors. Games are not merely 'frivolous' break activities that 'are fine for Friday afternoons or as a reward' (p. 87) but provide valuable (and perhaps even superior) opportunities for learning in their own right.

It is hard to determine exactly when contributors begin to use 'activity' in place of 'game' in journal articles, and it seems likely that the two phases overlap considerably. Scarbrough's article, however, may represent one beginning of the process in which activity comes to be used in place of the older and less precise term. Scarbrough describes a 'classroom activity', as a procedure for learning that is 'personally meaningful' (p. 86) to the learner, and then suggests that '[a]ll such classroom activities can be categorised under the two headings of GAMES and SIMULATIONS' (capitals his, p.87). Scarbrough therefore proposes that the term 'activity' be used to include the notion of a game. In effect, he creates a terminological taxonomy with 'games' subsumed under 'activities'. This narrows the scope of the term 'game' (which in earlier articles, had been all-encompassing, and had included 'simulations' and activities of many different kinds) and elevates 'activity' to its former position.

7.2.2 Activities in the Discussion about Authenticity

In New Lee texts ACTIVITY plays an important role in discussions surrounding the issue of (what would later be termed as) 'authenticity', and anticipates the importance of that term in the Rossner period discussion of activities. In 'Reading Comprehension-Is There Such A Thing?' (1978 32/4 291—297) David Carver expresses his concern that too many classroom activities are 'artificial' (p. 293) and that greater care should be taken to ensure correspondence between in-class and

real-world language events. He suggests three ways in which ‘classroom activities may relate to out-of-class activities’. Firstly, the activity itself might consist of an event, such as watching a film, which can be undertaken in both classroom and real world environments. Secondly, the activity might ‘simulate’ a real-world activity (for example writing a letter). Thirdly, activities might contribute to ‘real-world’ language skills whilst following an artificial pattern in the classroom (he suggests that ‘most traditional exercises and drills are examples’ of this (p. 293)). Carver suggests that by considering the relationship between real-world and classroom activities, learners can be better supported in their efforts to utilise the language outside the classroom environment.

V.J Cook’s article ‘The English are only Human’ (1979 33/3 163 —168) also addresses the issue of whether language teachers fail to take into account the ‘gap between the language they present to their students and the language of real-life situations’(p. 163). One of Cook’s main points is that the kind of activities undertaken by learners in most classrooms do not relate closely enough to those undertaken by native speakers in the real world; in fact native speakers asked to participate in such classroom activities actually do quite poorly (p. 166). Cook’s conclusion is that the ‘yardstick against which we must measure the student is not perfection but the capabilities of the native speaker in the same situation’ (p. 167). Cook explains that as a result of these observations teachers must ask themselves how ‘the activity he is using relates to the abilities of real English speakers’ (ibid). While teachers should not ban ‘activities that cannot be found in life outside the classroom’ (p.168), they should be aware of ‘the extent to which a given activity represents the real use of language by an ordinary native speaker (ibid).

7.2.3 Communicative Activities in New Lee

Howatt describes the notion of the ‘activity’ as an event ‘expressedly designed to get learners to draw on their communicative resources in order to produce appropriate language’ (Howatt 2004: p. 258). In early New Lee texts, as we have seen, ACTIVITY is often used to describe a wide range of classroom procedures, including such formal and teacher-led events as drills and presentations of grammar. However, as the

period progresses, it is possible to identify incidences in which a narrower sense of the term, embodying the associations described by Howatt, emerges. One 'marker' of the emergence of this particular sense of the term appears to be the expression, 'communicative activity', whose marked increase in frequency is clearly demonstrated by the corpus data. The notion which this term embodies represents what is perhaps the most important strand in the history of ideas surrounding ACTIVITY in the journal. Although it emerges to become a central feature of the discourse of the publication only during the Rossner period, 'communicative' is an important collocate of ACTIVITY even in the New Lee texts, in fact the tenth highest ranking item in the corpus (occurring in 16 texts).

It is not in fact until quite late in the New Lee corpus, in 1980, that the notion of the 'communicative activity' emerges as a distinctive strand in the discussion surrounding the term. In 'Corrections and Communicative Activity' (1980 34/3 205—206) Huw Edwards describes how, by means of using a monitoring sheet, teachers can collect valuable information concerning students' use of 'words, structures or strategies' during pair or group-based 'communicative activities' (p.205). Edwards appears to place this conception of a communicative activity at the heart of his teaching. He believes that 'communicative activities' are 'their own justification, in that they train the student to call on the language at his disposal for real communicative purposes' (p. 206). So important are they, in fact, that he considers that the role of the teacher should be reassessed to be that of a 'consultant, manager or advisor' (p. 205), in which the teacher's main function is to advise and support learners in their independent performance of activities. Edwards considers them to be central to, perhaps even the defining feature of, the new communicative approach. This suggestion is certainly present in the article's opening passage:

Many materials and activities have been evolved recently which exemplify a communicative approach to language teaching. Very often the learners are asked to form groups or pairs in order to communicate (p. 205)

Quite early in the history of this new expression, in 'Encouraging Communication in English: a Paradox' (1980 35/4 228—230), Gerry Abbott challenges the merits of the widespread adoption of communicative activities by teachers. He describes, in a somewhat ironic tone, the efforts made by 'eminent authorities', to 'make our pupils' activities more 'communicative' (p. 228). Abbott is sceptical concerning the recent over-emphasis, as he sees it, on such activities. Apart from the 'paradox' of the title—Abbott suggests that there is a tendency for learners in monolingual groups to revert to their own language or to use unformed utterances to communicate ideas in order to complete activities—the writer is also concerned that accuracy is being neglected. 'Is it enough', he asks, 'simply to encourage communication?' (p. 230).

Despite his apparent scepticism, Abbott describes quite a number of different communicative activities, and gives '[g]roup interaction' and 'simultaneous self-paced pair-work' (p. 229) as examples of recommended methods. He also describes, in terms that suggest that it is as yet something of a novelty, an information gap activity, in which 'learner A has information withheld from learner B who, in turn, may have information complementary to learner A's' (p. 229). Elsewhere he explains that '[r]ole-playing activities, games, and problem-solving exercises are also used to provide the additional motivation of realism, enjoyment, or challenge' (p. 229).

Abbott places the appearance of such methods in some historical context, by contrasting them against the older methods they are intended to supplant:

Highly controlled chorus-work provided an anonymous rehearsal for public performances; this was seen as speech-training rather than communication. There typically followed some consecutive practice in which only one student (or two in pair-work) spoke at a time, while everyone else listened. This stage sometimes involved communicative exchanges but was seldom more than an extension of the speech-training. (p. 228)

7.3 ACTIVITY in Rossner Texts

7.3.1 ACTIVITY as a “Professional” Term

Not only does ACTIVITY emerge as a key term, disproportionately more frequent in the Rossner corpus when compared to earlier collections of texts, but particular senses of the term are also more frequently used. ACTIVITY continues to appear with a variety of “external” and general meanings, in which none of the particular, professional associations conveyed by Howatt’s description (given in 7.2.3 above) are present. However, there is a clear trend, evidenced by data shown in table 7.1 (also represented visually in charts 7.1 and 7.2) below, that contributors make more extensive use of ACTIVITY to describe procedures undertaken in the classroom. At the same time, other uses of the term decline. Use of ACTIVITY, for instance, to describe events for the purposes of illuminating grammatical tenses (e.g. continuous is used for activity in progress) declines quite sharply. Whereas in the New Lee period the term is quite frequently used to describe “external” events, such as students’ hobbies, in Rossner texts this is less frequent. What this evidences, perhaps, is a shift in the term’s terminological status within the journal discourse. It becomes, increasingly, a technical term carrying senses peculiar to the language teaching profession. Moreover, over the Rossner period, as we shall see below, the notion of the ‘activity’ comes to be expounded with increasing theoretical sophistication, and concern for the ways in which it is implemented in practice. As such carefully described professional and technical senses adhere to the term, contributors deploy it less frequently as a general word.

Table 7.1 Data indicating frequency of word senses of *ACTIVITY* in both the New Lee and Rossner periods.

Word Sense (see code explanations below)	Frequency		Frequency		% Change
	in New Lee	Percentage	in Rossner	Percentage	
Sense A	9	1.27%	5	0.62%	-0.65%
Sense D	21	2.96%	6	0.74%	-2.21%
Sense E	169	23.80%	68	8.44%	15.37%
Sense G	14	1.97%	2	0.25%	-1.72%
Sense Q	368	51.83%	524	65.01%	13.18%
Sense TT	13	1.83%	42	5.21%	3.38%
Sense U	62	8.73%	33	4.09%	-4.64%
Sense X	54	7.61%	126	15.63%	8.03%
Total	710	100%	806	100%	

A-describing action, activity itself, for example (e.g. ‘this game encourages activity in the classroom’)

D- anaphoric reference to “gerunded” activity: e.g. eavesdropping, translation

E- activity “external” to language learning e.g. yachting

G-reference to grammar e.g. present continuous for “activity in progress”

Q-classroom activity (a procedure undertaken for language practice)

TT-teacher training

U-(uncountable) “what’s happening at the moment”, frequently modified by an adjective, e.g. speaking activity

X- residual category

Figure 7.1 Chart indicating the proportion of various word senses of ACTIVITY used in the New Lee period

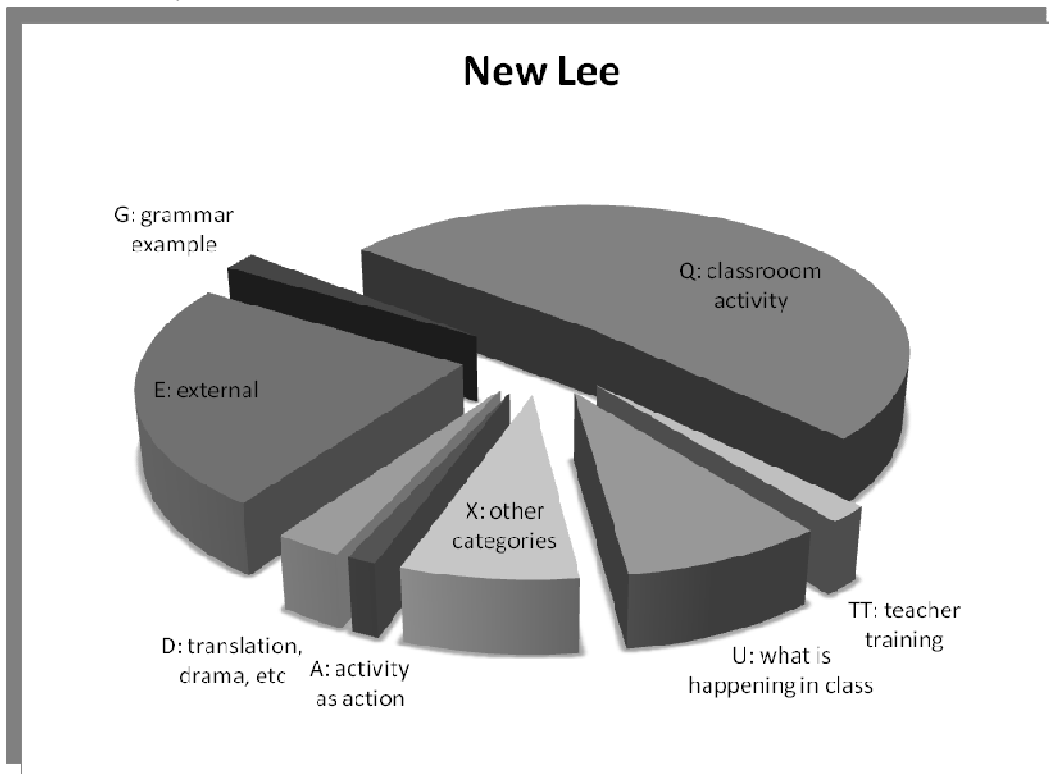
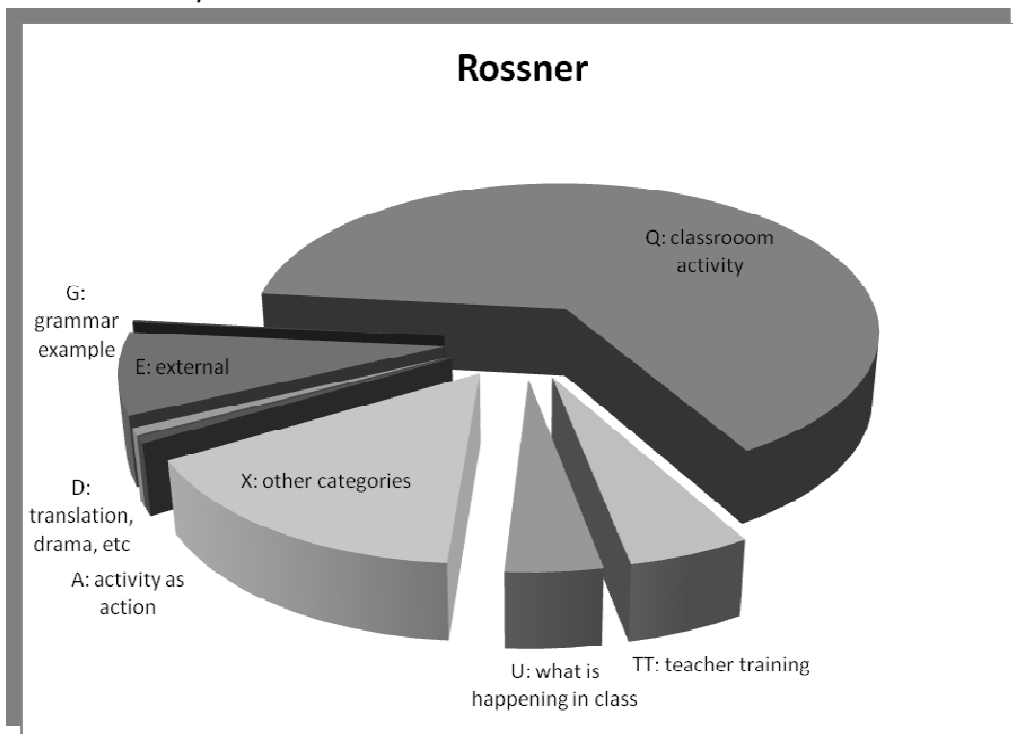


Figure 7.2: Chart indicating the proportion of various word senses of ACTIVITY used in the Rossner period



7.3.2 Emphasis in the New Discourse

The quite radical change in the ranking of ACTIVITY as a key term in the Rossner corpus, from 20th (in the New Lee texts) to 4th position, is reflected in the discourse of the *Journal* by a major intensification in its discussion. Two articles which appear in the first (36/1) edition of the 'new' journal, which demonstrate this are R.L.

Allwright's 'What Do We Want Teaching Materials For?' (1981 36/1 5—18), and Don Porter and Jon Roberts 'Authentic Listening Activities' (1981 36/1 37—47).

Allwright's article is a wide-ranging and theoretical discussion, in which he expresses the need for practitioners to identify the purposes of learning materials before considering their actual nature and content. Although Allwright's intention appears to be to arrive at "first principles" in materials design, he clearly views the necessity of including activities as a kind of "given" in language teaching. He explains that an effective 'method' should attend to the three 'main issues' (p. 8) in materials provision; namely learning processes, activities and activity management. Regarding activities, Allwright states that it is important to address the question as to 'what activities, or learning tasks, will best activate the chosen processes, for what elements of content' (p. 8). Concerning 'activity management', he describes efforts to 'set up group work, run simulations, etc.' (p. 9). One outcome of this is that materials writers should supply teachers not with materials that have explicit content, but rather with 'ideas' for content and 'ideas for activities' (p. 15).

Don Porter and Jon Roberts' article, a less theoretical and far more practically-oriented piece, is similarly preoccupied with the notion of the activity; no fewer than 35 incidences of the word appear in the text. Their article proposes that there is a need, in the preparation and execution of classroom listening practice, to replicate the purposes and activities of listeners in the real world. The flexibility and polysemy of the word are strongly evident in the article, and its sense shifts throughout. Porter and Roberts emphasise, for example, that it is not merely authentic linguistic content that they wish to introduce into the classroom. They also wish to simulate what it is that real-world listeners *do* with that content, and this appears (at least at first) to be the sense of the expression, 'authentic listening *activities*', that appears in the title. An authentic listening experience, they suggest, 'involves more than exposure to

certain features of language: it also involves a great variety of listening activities' (p. 37). The article explains how these can be exploited. The authors' suggestions and arguments closely resemble those expressed by Carver, in 1978, and Cook, in 1979 (described above), in that they are similarly concerned with the relationship between classroom and real-world events. Like Carver and Cook, Porter and Roberts use the term 'activity' to refer to both, and as the article progresses the senses conveyed by the terms 'real-world activities' and 'classroom activities' become indistinguishable. In the first section the authors therefore describe such everyday tasks as listening to the radio, eavesdropping, and watching TV (pp. 40–41). Later, they provide a list of example activities—now referring to actual classroom events—that simulate these real-world counterparts. One example is a listening activity in which language learners listen to (recorded) railway station announcements (pp. 43–44). The writers' idea is that the listening activities that learners undertake in the classroom should mirror real world ones, and involve the same processes and outcomes. Porter and Roberts make extensive use of the term 'authentic' to describe their approach, and therefore label, using this emerging term, the concepts described in Carver and Cook's earlier works. They explain for example that 'the authentic eavesdropping situation reflects in miniature the learner-listener's permanent need to pick up bits and pieces of meaning' (p.41).

7.3.3 Rise of the 'Communicative Activity'

As we have seen, the phrase 'communicative activity', and the notion it embodies, appears with increasing frequency towards the end of the New Lee period. In the Rossner era this expression becomes markedly more prominent in the discourse. The corpus data indicates that 'communicative' is, overwhelmingly, the most important collocate of 'activity' in these texts, appearing in third place (behind only 'activity' and 'activities' themselves), appearing 84 times. The cluster 'communicative activity' appears 23 times, and 'communicative activities' appears 32 times.

The notion of the 'communicative activity' comes to be described and elaborated in increasing detail over the Rossner period. It is indeed possible to identify a process in which the component words —'activity' and 'communicative', two of the topmost

keywords in the discourse of the period—are described in such a way as to link the terms, and make each integral to the other’s definition. In the chapter dealing with COMMUNICATIVE we saw that two articles, Rod Ellis’s ‘Informal and formal approaches to communicative language teaching’ (1982 36/2 73 — 81), and Jeremy Harmer’s ‘What is communicative?’ (1982 36/3 164 — 168) introduced the discussion relating to ‘communicative’ ideas in the Rossner period. Interestingly, these articles also serve to frame the era’s approach to the notion of the ‘activity’. Both offer descriptions of a communicative approach to teaching in which the ‘communicative activity’ play a central role.

Ellis considers the ‘role of communicative activity in the acquisition process’ (p. 75) to be particularly important since he disputes the usefulness of a traditional syllabus in supporting learners’ acquisition of language. He offers, as a model activity that meets all of his suggested criteria for successful acquisition, a symbol drawing exercise that he explicitly describes as a “‘communicative activity’” (p. 76). Ellis’ quotation marks here appear to offer the term, as well as the notion of a communicative activity itself, as a solution to the problem of promoting opportunities for acquisition.

In Jeremy Harmer’s article, ‘What is Communicative?’ (1982 36/3 164—168), the two ideas at the heart of communicative language teaching, ‘communicative-ness’ and ‘activity’ are linked further. Whereas Ellis suggests merely that communicative activities are extremely valuable in providing the appropriate conditions for acquisition, Harmer actually states that the quality of ‘communicative-ness’, as the term is understood in the language teaching profession, *can only in fact be applied to activities*. He asserts that proponents of a communicative approach err in attempting to assign the label to a whole approach; ‘the concept of ‘communication’ and ‘communicative’, he states, should not be applied to a methodology’ (p. 165). Doing so, he feels, has undesirable outcomes, such as teachers’ rejection ‘of many tried and tested techniques’ (p. 165) that are not ‘communicative’ according to theorists’ criteria. Harmer considers that such techniques as choral repetition and formal grammatical study are useful in effective teaching. Harmer makes the second

criticism that describing an approach as ‘communicative’ will lead to a definition of the concept of ‘communicativeness’ that is so broad it would become effectively ‘meaningless’ (ibid).

Harmer’s response to the question posed in the article’s title is therefore to offer a means of characterising *activities*. He achieves this through expounding a clear set of criteria, similar in many ways to those proposed by Ellis, which can be used to assess the degree to which an activity is communicative. These criteria, developed from a simple communication model that Harmer expounds briefly, are quite detailed and specific (p. 167). To qualify as communicative, an activity must firstly offer learners some communicative purpose. It should inculcate in learners a ‘desire to communicate’, and that it should be focused on the content of the meanings being exchanged, rather than on the form in which those meanings are expressed. Further requirements are that it should incorporate more than one isolated language item, remove teacher intervention, and impose no control over learners’ actions through ‘materials control’ (ibid). Activities can therefore be described according to their conformity with these criteria, and placed somewhere along a spectrum, with ‘non-communicative’ at one end and ‘communicative’ at the other (ibid).

The notion of the communicative activity plays a key role also in Richard Young’s ‘The Negotiation of Meaning in Children’s Foreign Language Acquisition’ (1983 37/2 197—206). Young’s article describes how ‘recent theoretical insights’ can be applied to ‘maximise the benefit of activity-based teaching methods’ (p. 197). Young’s central proposal is that all teaching and learning, whether directed at using ‘grammatical or functional items’ should be arranged so as to be ‘contextualised in activities that are genuinely communicative’ (p. 205). Although he is uncommitted with respect to the controversy concerning which approach —functional, structural, or a combination or a combination of both— should be applied to syllabus design, Young is unequivocal in his certainty about the central role of activities. To justify this emphasis, Young puts forward both some theoretical insights proposed by Krashen, whose description of acquisition as a distinctive process he sees as particularly relevant to the teaching of children (p. 198), and also by theorists who

consider the ‘negotiation of meaning’ as crucial to the development of language skills in children (pp. 198—199). The central tenet of this theory is that through meaningful interaction, with for example their mother, children learn a language by arriving at ‘mutually agreed meanings and behaviours’ (p. 199). Young uses these theories as a basis upon which to develop certain criteria to evaluate a number of games of activities to discover whether or not they will provide the conditions necessary for children to acquire language. These bear quite a close resemblance to those proposed earlier by Harmer and Ellis.

7.3.4 Activities as a Priority in Teacher Training

Two articles published later in the Rossner period, Harmer’s ‘Balancing Activities: a Unit Planning Game (1984 38/2 91—97) and Ellis’s ‘Activities and Procedures for Teacher Training’ (1986 40/2 91—99) indicate that the notion of the communicative activity had by then achieved such widespread acceptance as to be included within training courses. It is perhaps no coincidence that the two articles have been submitted by the same authors who introduced the notion of the ‘communicative activity’ at the beginning of the Rossner period. Both pieces offer suggestions as to how teachers can be trained in their classroom use. In ‘Balancing Activities: a Unit Planning Game’, Harmer describes a training activity in which teachers are asked to take cards, each representing an activity (broadly defined and including ‘traditional’ procedures such as the presentation of grammar points), and assemble them to make a balanced lesson in which there is a suitable range of activities. The aim is to also to make the ‘thematic relationship’ (p. 91) between activities as close as possible so there is some consistency within lessons.

At a more theoretical level, and referring implicitly to Krashen’s work, Harmer also proposes that it is important to achieve a balance between activities that provide input (both ‘finely’ and ‘roughly-tuned’) as well as opportunities for output (pp. 91—92). Throughout the article, ‘activities’ are therefore represented as little less than the fundamental building blocks from which lessons can be assembled. Eschewing elaborate syllabus design principles, and turning instead to a procedure by which activities are mixed and matched to produce as optimal a lesson fit as possible,

Harmer's view is clearly that activities should be regarded as the essential units of classroom teaching and learning.

Ellis' article makes two separate and distinctive uses of the term 'activity'. In its first meaning, it describes what it is that trainees actually do during their training sessions (p. 93), such as comparing and evaluating lesson data (p. 94—95). However Ellis also uses the word, in its now familiar and established sense, to describe a classroom activity designed to be performed by language learners. On the teacher training course he describes, trainees are asked to evaluate a variety of such classroom activities, including information gaps and similar exercises, so as to evaluate the extent to which they are 'communicative'. Ellis' appendices indicate that the criteria given to trainees for this purpose are similar, if not identical to those listed in Harmer's 1982 'What is Communicative', which appears as a result to have already acquired the status of a "classic text" in the journal discourse. By deploying ACTIVITY in these two different senses— in effect he describes a teacher training 'activity' in which teachers evaluate (classroom) 'activities'—Ellis' writing creates a recursive effect in which the notion of the activity is foregrounded in several ELT contexts. The processes of teaching, learning, and teacher training itself, all now seem to depend on 'activities' of various kinds.

7.3.5 Resistance to the Dominance of Communicative Activities

In earlier chapters dealing with COMMUNICATIVE and LEARNER, a tendency was identified in which, when ideas are perceived as becoming over-emphasised or "fashionable" in the professional discourse, articles appear which warn against their too widespread and uncritical acceptance. This phenomenon also occurs with respect to ACTIVITY. One article that appears to express some level of dissatisfaction with an 'activity' -focused approach is 'Communicative Language Teaching and Local Needs' (1984 38/3 170—177). The contributors, Masayuki Sano, Masao Takahashi, and Asaji Yoneyama, express their view that the extensive use of activities, a feature of the new communicative approach, is inappropriate to Japanese conditions. Since it is 'vital to exploit every minute of teacher-student interaction' in these conditions, the writers complain that '[i]ndulgence in casual communicative activities often eats

up the precious time available to prepare students for study at home' (p. 173). Sebastain Balet's 'Testing some current assumptions' (1985 39/3 178—182) is another such article. Balet complains that, as result of adopting an activity-centred approach, there no longer appears to any coherent methodology underlying classroom teaching. He believes that 'the concept of method has become increasingly discredited' (p. 178). He notes for example that as a result of recent changes, many lessons exclude 'the traditional stages of presentation and explanation' (p. 179). In the current environment, Balet describes, 'the bulk of classroom procedure now seems to consist (if current literature is a reliable indicator) in giving students tasks, roles and games' (p. 179) . He bemoans 'the unsystematic nature of classroom procedures' (p. 179) that have appeared, and their replacement of a more 'principled' approach to teaching. To support his assertions that things have gone too far, Balet describes a survey of language learners, conducted at the *Pius Font i Quer* secondary school in Manresa, Spain, in which students themselves express their belief that learning cannot be facilitated merely through the provision of activities. Only a tiny minority of learners, Balet explains, 'thought that successful learning could take place on the basis of communicative activities, such as tasks and role-playing, alone' (p. 180).

7.3.6 End of the Period: Activities Established in the Discourse

By 1986, in the last volume of the Rossner period journal, there is plenty of evidence that the preoccupation with activities described by Balet has become widespread. It appears to dominate practice at the level of classroom teaching. Sharon Bassano's article 'Helping learners adapt to unfamiliar methods' (1986 40/1 13—19) represents an effort to help learners come to terms with the impact of the new, activity-based methods. She describes a much-changed language learning milieu, which emphasises 'highly active, independent group work, self-investment, personal involvement, and informality' (p. 13). Activities, the article suggests, are the central feature of this environment, and Bassano encourages teachers to provide assistance to learners as they adapt to the 'wide variety of strange and wonderful new classroom methods and procedures' (p. 13) that have appeared. The main aim of Bassano's piece is to overcome 'negativity and resistance' (p. 13) by students to activities.

Bassano's description suggests that activities are now so central to teaching that devising them takes up much of tutors' preparation time for lessons. 'This instructor,' Bassano explains, 'like many others, spends hours designing and developing second-language learning activities' (p.14). She also makes strong claims for their efficacy, explaining that the objective of using such activities is to 'ensure high participation, effective, oral language practice' (p. 14). Her article also, somewhat unusually, provides an actual account of an activity being conducted; the opening passage gives a colourful description of a class's participation in a creative drawing activity (pp. 13—14). It seems possible that part of Bassano's intention here is to promote and encourage their more widespread use.

Two more articles which appear near the end of the Rossner period, 'A Piece of Cake' by Suzanne Irujo, (1986 40/3 236—242) and 'Humanistic Activities and Teacher Motivation' by Françoise Cormon (1986 40/4 278—281) offer lists of activities, describing these in enough detail to permit teachers to make direct use of them in their own classroom. As in Porter and Robert's 'Authentic Listening Activities', at the very beginning of the Rossner period, Cormon provides a detailed and teacher – friendly list of activities that might be applied by classroom teachers (resembling, in this respect, pieces published in a 'practice-oriented' journal such as the *MET*). Irujo's article, which begins with some general comments concerning the teaching of idioms, culminates in a list of no fewer than ten activities which aim to improve learners' ability to use idioms. In one example, students are asked to draw 'sets of pictures which show both the literal and the idiomatic meanings of an idiom' (p. 239). Another idea is for students to write short plays to demonstrate their ability to produce language that contains idiomatic language (p. 240). Irujo's approach appears totally 'activity-centred' in that traditional presentation and practice procedures are not mentioned at all; the performance of activities by learners represents the whole of her approach in this sense.

7.4 Conclusions

The history of ideas surrounding ACTIVITY in the New Lee and Rossner texts is many-stranded, but a number of important themes can be identified. In the New Lee period, it is noticeable that it frequently appears within articles describing games, and it seems likely that the notion of the 'activity', in its modern sense, has borrowed much from the earlier notion of the classroom game. ACTIVITY also figures strongly in Old Lee discussions about authenticity, and it is clear that the term gained its association with this concept quite early in the history of its emergence as a professionally significant term. The expression 'communicative activity', an important phrase in the Rossner period, can be seen to have appeared towards the end of the New Lee period, during which time several articles extol (or criticise) the extensive use of communicative activities within the classroom.

As appears to be the case with all of the terms discussed so far in this stage of the analysis, the history of the term in the Rossner era often represents a continuation of earlier, New Lee, discussions. However, it is also the case that writers step up efforts to promote, at a theoretical and practical level, something like an "activity-centred approach" to language teaching, in which the notion of the activity is deployed as a solution to many of the problems posed by earlier teaching models. Incidences of the term's use as a non-specific term, describing events external to teaching, or referring generally to procedures within the classroom (such as teacher-led presentations) decline. ACTIVITY comes to assume the status of a technical term, carrying particular senses and associations specific to the discourse of the professionals using the journal. As the Rossner era progresses, activities come to be described in an increasingly broad range of contexts, such as teacher training, and in a way that suggests that their performance now dominates classroom practice. Activities come to be viewed not only as a useful feature of the communicative approach, but as its most central and widely referred to characteristic.

Chapter Eight: The Keyword TASK

8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 Reviewing Chronological Keyword Data for TASK

TASK appears as the sixth item in order of disproportionate frequency in the main, Rossner<>Old Lee keyword list (log-likelihood score 516.57). Unlike COMMUNICATIVE or ACTIVITY, which emerge gradually, and like SYLLABUS, TASK appears quite suddenly. It becomes statistically prominent only in the Rossner texts.

Following its history across the three corpora, it can be noted that the term does not appear at all in the New Lee<>Old Lee results, but is the second item in the Rossner<> New Lee list (log likelihood score 315.92). Corpus data here appear to reflect the chronological changes that can be observed in the discourse accurately. While some early “traces” of the term’s significance can be identified in New Lee texts, the Rossner period is more important by far in terms of its thematic impact.

8.1.2 Issues of Meaning and Polysemy

A practical problem that arises when investigating TASK is that, from any common sense perspective, it is a synonym of ACTIVITY. A corollary of this is that the two terms share similar histories that are sometimes difficult to unravel in the journal’s discourse. Examination of journal articles, in both New Lee and Rossner periods, reveals that the two words are indeed sometimes used in a similar way. In the Rossner text ‘What Do We Want Teaching Materials for?’ (1981 36/1 5—18), for example, R.L. Allwright frequently connects and combines the terms, referring to ‘activities or tasks’, ‘activities and tasks’ and ‘activities/tasks’, on several occasions. This close relationship between the sense of the terms ACTIVITY and TASK continues until the very end of the Rossner period. Even by 1986 the words are frequently used interchangeably as useful synonyms. In ‘Bangalore Revisited: a Reluctant Complaint’ (1985 39/4 268—273), for example, John Greenwood complains that he

cannot make out whether a column in one of the project's document's 'was a list of task/activity types' or not (p. 269). In Sharon Bassano's article, *Helping Learners Adapt to Unfamiliar Methods* (ELTJ 40/1 1986 13—19), in the last volume of the Rossner corpus, it seems that the terms 'activity', 'task' (and indeed also 'method' and 'procedure') are used in a similar way. The 'wide variety of strange and wonderful new classroom methods and procedures' (p. 13) that she refers to early on in the piece are later referred to as 'tasks', which are carried out 'in independent pairs and small groups' (p. 13).

However, despite these overlapping senses, a distinctive —and interesting—history for TASK can be traced. Even in the New Lee period, before it comes to be used within the discourse of (what might retrospectively be referred to as) a "task-based" approach, particular senses and associations can be isolated. TASK, firstly, frequently appears in articles concerned with examinations and assessment, to describe the procedures that students must undertake as components of a test. Furthermore, it is also used by writers within discussions of (what would today be referred to as) 'differentiation'. This is a teaching method that considers the objectives of a lesson, not in terms of the linguistic complexity of the materials being used, but rather of the "tasks" being accomplished by learners (cf., for example Brien, Guiney 2001). It could be argued that many of the later senses and associations of TASK have their roots in these earlier discussions. Even at the beginning of the New Lee period, TASK is being deployed to describe language work targeted at skills rather than language, and in which the processes undertaken by learners are regarded as more important than outcomes described in terms of linguistic objectives.

Like ACTIVITY, though, TASK is a word that can carry a number of senses, and is often used as an anaphoric referent to an earlier term. Paula J. Edwards, in 'Teaching Specialist English' mentions for example that '[t]eaching specialist English is not an easy task,' (1974 28/3 247—252: p. 247). The 'task' being referred to, in other words, is often something carried out by a teacher or educational administrator. In fact

'teacher's' is the fifth item in the New Lee list of collocations (12 occurrences in the texts), while 'teacher', is at 24th position (14 incidences)¹¹. TASK is also used to refer to a whole range of other disparate activities, not specifically related to ELT. In John C. Maher's 'Guided Poetry Composition' (1981; 35/2 168 – 171), the author describes writing poetry as a 'dangerous task' (p.171).

As with ACTIVITY, the history of TASK in the journal's discourse can be seen to one in which it is used, over the two corpora periods, increasingly less frequently in its broader, general sense. At the same time a new, discourse-specific, professional sense emerges that is increasingly prescribed and theoreticised. Evidence for this shift, indicative of the word's emergence as a specialist (perhaps even a jargon) ELT term, will be presented below.

8.2 TASK in the New Lee Texts

8.2.1 Testing, and "Differentiating by Task"

Perhaps the most obvious and distinctive role for TASK in the New Lee period is to describe the procedures that students are required to undertake in tests or examinations. In 'New Alternatives in EFL Exams or, 'How to Avoid Selling English Short'' (1976 30/2 135—144), Harold S. Madsen explains that 'certain integrative tasks such as translation and *précis*' are not suitable for some examinations (p. 141). In 'Foreign Language Testing: A Current View' (1980 35/3 345—352), Valerie Whitson also describes the 'specific tasks' (p. 349) that learners need to perform in a learning-testing procedure. This sense, consistent with its everyday meaning (in the COBUILD dictionary a task is described as 'an activity or piece of work which you have to do' (Sinclair 1995: p. 1709)) adheres to the word from the start.

In the New Lee texts, TASK is also used consistently within another distinctive discussion. It appears in several articles describing practitioners' efforts to design

¹¹ The collocation and cluster data for TASK appear in Appendix Six

and implement classroom procedures, not according to the content of the language they include, but rather the complexity and difficulty of the skills they require learners to perform. In Mark A. Clarke's 'Individualising Instruction in the Composition Class' (1973 28/1 43—46), which appears near the very beginning of the period, many of the main ideas in this discussion seem to be well in place. Clarke explains a procedure for developing competence in written composition skills which takes into account the individual ability of each learner. He describes a class in which all the students are required to answer the same composition question (to compare ships, described in a series of short passages) However, the means of 'solving' the composition problem differs, 'depending on the student's strengths and weaknesses and the degree of difficulty inherent in the problem itself' (p. 44). Clarke describes his approach as a form of 'programmed' learning 'in which each learning objective is broken down into a series of specific tasks' (p.44). Some students are asked only to compare one aspect of two ships, and others to compare several aspects, while a few advanced learners are asked to structure their answers according to more complex formula (pp. 44—45). This appears to be an early attempt at what would today be described as 'differentiation by task' (e.g. Brien, Guiney 2001) in which '[a]ll students concentrate on the same material' (p. 46), but are required to carry out operations of different complexity according to their ability. Recognisably similar ideas appear at the end of the New Lee period, in 'Selection and Grading of Authentic Material for the Reading Class' (1980 34/3 217—221), in which Susan M. Maingay suggests that groups of different ability can be asked 'to perform different reading tasks' (p. 218) on the same, un-adapted, 'authentic' reading text. While elementary learners could look at 'titles, introductory and concluding paragraphs, and illustrations', and 'the general theme of a text', an advanced group might be asked to exploit it in a much intensive and thorough way (p. 218).

In both these articles, the association between the notion of a 'task', and the development of language *skills* as opposed to knowledge of *language*, is present. Clarke and Maingay attempt to persuade practitioners to pay attention, not to the linguistic content of the materials as such, but rather the activities and skills that students perform when using them. Clarke distinguishes between learners'

understanding of ‘grammar’ for example, and their ability to perform, using this language, in the following statement:

Writing ability is a skill in which creativity plays a much larger role than mastery of basic structural patterns. The fact that a student can form grammatically correct sentences by no means ensures that he is capable of producing acceptable English prose (p. 44).

This emphasis on skills, and the *process* of learning, as opposed to its linguistic product, is one of the underlying themes of later, Rossner period discussions concerning the nature of a ‘task-centred’ approach.

8.3 TASK in the Rossner texts

8.3.1 The Emergence of TASK as a ‘Specialist’ Term

In the New Lee period, as we have seen, TASK seldom carries ‘ELT-specific’ meanings unrecognisable to readers without language teaching training. However, in the Rossner period, as we shall see, a narrower, “professional” sense of the word gradually emerges. Evidence for this shift is difficult to isolate, but comparison of collocations for TASK in the journal against those listed for the word in the British National Corpus (BNC) does appear to suggest such a change. Comparing three lists of collocations for TASK; from the BNC (see table 8.1, below), the New Lee period, and the Rossner period (both in Appendix Four), it can be seen that there is greater similarity between the New Lee and ‘general’ BNC lists, than between the Rossner and BNC lists. This chronological divergence, it might be suggested, is representative of TASK’s more frequent use, during the Rossner period, in a professional rather than a general sense.

Table 8.1 showing 'lexical' items in a list of collocates for 'task', compiled from the British National Corpus.

ranking	word	frequency in BNC	log- likelihood score
1	difficult	373	3027.985
2	perform	241	2686.265
3	Force	176	2037.884
4	force	236	1913.959
5	set	283	1745.644
6	performed	143	1375.471
7	easy	181	1365.297
8	carry	167	1358.774
9	given	198	1129.049
10	daunting	86	1118.491
11	one	341	1074.117
12	main	160	997.091
13	first	240	979.978
14	performing	90	958.710

Looking at the lists, it can be seen that some of the collocations, for instance 'perform' and 'set', collocate with TASK regardless of their sense and therefore appear in all three (New Lee, Rossner and BNC) lists of collocations. However, in some other respects, the BNC and New Lee lists can be seen to share more similarities with each other. BNC collocations, such as 'difficult' and 'easy', appear much more prominently in the New Lee than the Rossner list. It is also interesting that the words 'impossible', and 'difficulty', important in the New Lee table, share similar meanings to those BNC items, and in both lists adjectives that focus on the

degree of difficulty when considering a task (including ‘daunting’ in the BNC list) feature prominently.

Next, comparing only the Rossner and New Lee lists, it can be seen that ‘difficult’, the tenth item in the New Lee list, and ‘easy’, ranked eleventh, disappear from the Rossner table. Another interesting observation is that TASK appears to become less frequently associated with teachers. ‘Teacher’s’, fifth in the New Lee list of collocates, as we have seen, is not present at all in the Rossner table, and ‘teacher’s task’ also disappears as an important cluster. At the same time, evidence of the term’s “technical” use becomes much more strongly evident. Items like ‘pre’ (arising largely from reports of Prabhu’s Bangalore project), ‘level’ (mentioned repeatedly in Kraus-Srebric, Brakus and Kentric’s report of their experiment in Belgrade schools, see below) ‘comprehension’ and, perhaps inevitably, ‘communicative’ are present, each suggesting a more professional, ELT-specific usage.

8.3.2 Continuing Themes: Testing and Differentiation

Despite this evidence for a shift in its usage, the themes of testing and ‘differentiation’ persist into the Rossner corpus. Numerous Rossner contributors make use of TASK within articles discussing testing and examinations. In David Bowker’s ‘The Information Gap in Placement Testing’ (1984 38/4 248—255) the word appears several times, usually referring to the information gap procedure, used for ‘communicative testing’ (p. 248). Desmond Allison and Richard Webber’s ‘What place for Performative Tests?’ (1984 38/3 pp. 199—203) is also about the use of ‘tasks’ in testing. In this article, many of the themes of a “task-based” philosophy expounded by later writers can be identified. The authors describe their use of ‘performative tests’ (p. 199), in which the skills that learners perform in tests are identical to those used when learning. Allison and Webber’s article actually describe this as a “task’ approach’ (p. 199). They explain how performative tests can be used to evaluate learners’ ability to perform ‘study skills’ such as taking notes from a lecture, or undertaking library work, in a secondary school environment. Allison and Webber explain that the contents of a test can be specified by ‘listing the tasks that learners should be in a position to perform’ (p. 199). The writers also promote the

idea that tests should consist of tasks that simulate their real-world equivalents. In order to assess a student's ability to take effective lecture notes, for example, the learner is required to attend an 'authentic' lecture and take notes in the usual way. Since these conditions are not difficult for teachers to arrange, the authors suggest, study skills are 'well suited to performative tests' (p. 199). Once again, it can be observed that 'tasks' that students perform map to particular sets of skills, as opposed to units of language description such as structures or functions. The authors advocate the 'direct testing' (p. 200) of such abilities, or skills, as note-taking, or selective reading.

In Paul Simmonds' 'A Survey of English Language Examinations' (1985 39/1 1985 33—42), the writer also refers to the 'tasks' that learners are required to perform in examinations. Here, too, the sense that the performance of a 'task' requires that the learner make some "real" use of language, focusing on communicative skills rather than merely exhibiting knowledge of language, is strongly present. The author describes approvingly those examinations in which 'meaning is a central aspect' (p. 40). Simmonds contrasts a 'more 'traditional' group' (p. 40) of tests, which includes written summaries, translation, or composition (*ibid*), with a 'more 'communicative' group' (p. 40). In his article, 'task' is only used to describe test activities in this latter category. One example given in the article is a 'writing task' (p. 40), in which examinees are given a short note warning them of a faulty electric kettle. Students have to compose a written warning to others not to use it. Simmonds approves of the question for its realism and 'communicative value' (p. 40).

The second continuing theme associated with 'task' is the notion of 'task grading'. Several articles, in which the word appears extensively, describe an approach to the design and implementation of lessons in which greater account is taken of the complexity of activities and skills required, and less of linguistic content. In 'A Six-Tier Cake: An Experiment with Self-Selected Learning Tasks' by Eva Kraus-Srebric, Lidija Brakus and Dragica Kentric (1981 36/1 19—23) 'task' appears no less than 52 times. These writers describe a project, implemented in Belgrade schools, in which a programme of tasks was introduced in English language classes for 12 and 13 year

olds. The authors explain that the theoretical basis of the project is not new, but is rather based on a taxonomy suggested (by Bloom) in 1956. This proposes a hierarchy of levels of cognitive processing, explaining which operations can be carried out by learners at each level (p. 19). ‘Levels’ are discussed extensively in the article, which by itself accounts for much of the prominence of ‘level’ in the list of Rossner collocations (ranked seventh, with 23 incidences in the texts). In the programme, tasks were prepared for each ability level according to the specifications of this taxonomy. As with the efforts described by Maingay, students worked with the same text (a fable in this case) but undertaking tasks of differing complexity according to their level of ability. At ‘level one’, for example, pupils simply had to memorise the fable. At higher levels the cognitive complexity of the learners’ tasks increased, so that at ‘level two’ they were asked to depict the main ideas of the fable by drawing it. Fifth level students had to write a summary, and at the highest level pupils were asked to write a paper explaining their own ideas about the work that had been undertaken (pp. 21–22).

Similarly, in Li Xiaoju’s ‘In Defence of the Communicative Approach’ (1984 38/1 2–13) the author explains how lessons and materials can be graded in terms of ‘task’, rather than language. She explains that un-adapted, authentic materials can and should be used with students at every level of ability. She defends her position on this against those ‘structuralists’, who take it for granted that grading should be based on pre-selection and ordering of lexical and grammatical items. Li explains that ‘other factors’ can be used (p. 6), ‘for instance, the task you require the students to do’. In an almost exact re-statement of the principle proposed by Maingay she explains: ‘[t]hat is how the CECL course is graded: by control of the tasks. Simple tasks are given to the students in the early stages, and more challenging ones in their later stages.’ (p. 6)

8.3.3 “Task –Centred”: A New Strand Within CLT?

In several articles published in the Rossner period the beginnings of a fully-fledged ‘task-centred approach’ can be identified. Associations carried implicitly by the word in earlier articles about testing, or ‘grading by task’ (in particular the emphasis on

skills over linguistic content, and of meaningful use of language) begin to be made explicitly by writers. Increasingly, an approach based on learners' performance of tasks comes to be presented in terms that begin to constitute an actual language teaching "approach". This approach is one that not only rejects the precepts of traditional, structuralist methodologies, but even the (equally language-focused) notional-functional perspective adopted by early exponents of CLT.

Perhaps the first clear indication that something is afoot in this area is the discussion that occurs in 'New Lamps For Old : Realism And Surrealism In Foreign Language Teaching' (1983 37/4 295—303). In this article, Alan Maley outlines what he feels are the main issues that 'underlie the current debate about language learning and teaching' (p. 295). He makes several proposals which challenge older assumptions about 'best practice' in language teaching, including many concepts (such as the centrality of a notional/functional syllabus) that had been crucial to early formulations of communicative language teaching. One particular passage in this wide-ranging article has the (margin) title 'language-centred and task-centred approaches' (p. 301) —the first appearance of the term 'task-centred' in the discourse of the journal. Here, Maley makes the case for a teaching approach in which greater account is taken of the *activities* that students perform, rather than features of the *language* they are supposed to learn as the result of teaching. He complains that much contemporary classroom activity remains 'focused on the language as the prime target' (p. 301). In adopting such an approach, he explains, teachers may 'lose sight of the fact that language is essentially a means for getting things done' (ibid). He describes an emerging, alternative, approach which includes 'meaningful and interesting activities' which appeal to the learner and allow them 'to invest something of themselves' (ibid). In this 'task centred' approach the focus is placed on activities (presumably, given his title, also describable as 'tasks') themselves. By adopting such a stance, he explains, 'obsessive concern with the language' is replaced by absorption in the activities in which learners are invited to participate. Language activity, such as reading or speaking, which is undertaken in order to complete the task is 'no longer an end in itself, but a necessary step on the way to a non-linguistic outcome' (p. 301). Maley's two points here are inter-

connected. Since learners are absorbed in their task they 'lose inhibitions when using the language' (p. 301). Teachers' or learners' direct concern for language content is portrayed here as an obstacle, rather than a desired objective, in learning language. The writers' two contrasting, and fairly emotive phrases 'absorption in the activity' and 'obsessive concern for the language' depict the notional-functional (or any other language-focused) approach negatively, as a methodology that has had its time.

This depiction of a conflict between differing approaches — one emphasising meaningful use, the other maintaining an obsessive and unhelpful concern for language content — is also present in Li's article (1984 38/1 2—13) 'In Defence Of The Communicative Approach', mentioned above. In a section entitled 'tasks and skills', Li inveighs against the nature of the typical English lesson being conducted in China at that time, which typically has its focus some language points (grammar and vocabulary) which have to be learned by students. This approach, she believes, is concerned with 'only the *form* of the language, since the sole objective of the course is to teach language form' (italics hers, p. 7). Li explains that the objective of her programme is, in contrast, 'communicative competence, which, for pedagogical reasons, is broken down into communicative skills' (p. 7). The central role of the 'task' in her approach is then expressed; in order to 'acquire these skills', she explains, 'the students are set tasks' (p. 7).

Here, therefore, Li deploys the notion of a 'task' in a way that closely connects them with skills. Her article provides a list of example tasks that includes taking notes, writing a summary, and carrying on a conversation or debate (p. 8). She explains that '[t]hese tasks, in their turn, involve different skills, such as the ability to skim or scan with the eyes or the ears, to read or to listen between the lines, to get round some unfamiliar vocabulary or structural items' (p. 8). Tasks here are therefore described, or specified, in terms of the skills that are required to perform them. Li suggests that by focusing on tasks or skills, concern for 'language' has not been abandoned; she explains that within the CECL project described in her article, vocabulary and grammar are still important. They are, however, 'just not the major concern or objective of our lessons; they are dealt with only as and when the tasks require

them.’ (pp. 7–8). While, unlike Maley, Li does not invoke the term ‘task-centred’ to describe the project’s approach, she outlines a methodology centred on their use. ‘[W]hat constitutes a lesson in our course,’ she explains, ‘is a series of tasks to be performed by our students’ (p. 8).

‘Structuring The Information Gap’ by Julian Edge (1984 38/4 256–261) uses the term ‘task’ 13 times. Edge does not, like Li, explicitly label his teaching approach as ‘task-centred’, but nevertheless describes a session which has the performance of a communicative task as its central activity. Unusually for the journal, the article describes a single lesson. The lesson’s main component is ‘a type of information gap procedure that involves the students in looking for and exchanging information in order to complete a set task’ (p. 256). Learners attempt a listening exercise, giving information about the life of a young fashion designer, which is undertaken as a ‘jigsaw listening’. The task sets up an information gap between pairs of students, who then swap the data obtained from listening (pp. 257–258). The most striking feature of Edge’s proposed lesson plan is that learners are exposed to, and invited to ‘produce’ language in its opening phase. In the traditional ‘Practice-Presentation-Production’ (p. 256) pattern the ‘production’ phase occurs after, and as the culmination of, presentation and controlled practice phases. In the procedure that Edge describes, it is performed first, forming the centre-piece of the learner’s experience. A language support stage (similar in function to the traditional ‘Presentation’ section of a lesson) occurs *after* the main activity has been completed. Edge explains that ‘students are more likely to be ‘motivated to do structural practice that might otherwise bore them if they have felt the need for increased structural accuracy in order to carry out a task satisfactorily’ (p.258). The task contextualises new or difficult language, and raises learners’ awareness of its importance.

Like Li, Edge believes that issues of language “form” can and should be addressed by teachers, but can be dealt with more effectively when language is contextualised within a realistic task. Students’ explicit understanding of language form, he believes, does not suffer as a result of its deferment to a later stage in the lesson. It is, rather,

made more pertinent and useful since learners gain, through the performance of a task, an understanding of its purpose and context. Edge describes the procedure as sitting ‘somewhat uncomfortably between the poles of natural acquisition and formal learning that Ellis [...] expounds from Krashen’s monitor model’ (p. 259). His article contributes considerably to the notion of a ‘task-centred’ approach in the journal discourse, in that he proposes for it an actual model that can be applied to everyday lesson design.

8.3.4 The Bangalore Project

The emergence of the notion of the TASK as a key concept in CLT can be seen to achieve its culmination, in the Rossner period, in a series of articles describing Prabhu’s Bangalore project in Southern India. No less than three articles, appearing in 1984 and 1985, describe the scheme, otherwise known as the Communicational Teaching Project (CTP). The CTP, initiated by N.S Prabhu and his colleagues in South India, has now become accepted as a crucial development in the period (cf. for example Howatt (2004: pp. 346—349)). Writers concerned with the origins of task-based approaches (cf. for example, Ellis 2003: p. 5) identify Prabhu’s ‘procedural’ syllabus as an early task-based learning programme, and some of the impetus for increased discussion of ‘tasks’ in the journal might be attributed to the project. Indeed, it seems possible that some of the contributors already discussed, including perhaps Li and Maley, were affected by ideas emanating from the project, since reports and assessments of the Prabhu’s work, which commenced in 1979 (Prabhu 1987: p. 18)), had already been widely disseminated by this time. Greenwood (whose article is discussed below) notes that it had attracted the attention of many ELT professionals, ‘thanks partly to reports and articles over the last four years’ (p. 268).

Christopher Brumfit’s *The Bangalore Procedural Syllabus* (1984 38/4 233—241) provides a discussion of the project and describes its espousal of a ‘procedural’ approach to learning. According to Brumfit, the idea at the heart of the Bangalore project is Prabhu’s notion of a ‘procedure’ (p. 235). He explains that lessons generated by the project team proceed according to the following phases: ‘pre-task’,

'task' and 'evaluation' (p. 235). The pre-task, it is explained, is carried out by a small selection of students by way of demonstration. The whole class then perform 'the task' proper, and in the final 'evaluation' stage discover whether they were successful (pp. 235—236). Examples of such tasks include use of 'a timetable or a set of rules, or a map with its key' (p. 235). What is clearly evident from these passages is that the words 'activity', 'task' and 'procedure' are used interchangeably throughout the piece. Having described the project approach as 'procedural' (p. 233), for example, Brumfit then explains that Prabhu and his colleagues have produced, as the result of the project, 'a sequence of classroom activities' (p. 233). He later describes these being 'introduced as specific tasks' (p. 235) (in his own work, Prabhu himself appears to use the words 'task', 'activity' and 'procedure' interchangeably (e.g. 1987: pp. 23—24)).

Given the interchangeable nature of these terms, Brumfit's reflections concerning the crucial role of the 'procedure' in the Syllabus might therefore also be felt to apply to that of the 'task':

Is it a learning strategy, a process of thinking, the expression of a particular kind of logical relationship? Is it an activity which is not specifically aimed at language? In practice, N.S. Prabhu, has tacitly accepted the third of these possibilities, for his syllabus indicates 'what is to be done in the classroom rather than what parts of the content are to be learnt' (Prabhu and Carroll 1980:2).' (p. 233)

Brumfit here creates a tension between two objectives; contrasting concern for 'what is to be done in the classroom', against teaching 'specifically aimed at language' (Prabhu's approach being directed at the former). In doing so he expresses an opposition that has been detectable, as we have seen, in articles concerned with TASK throughout the New Lee and Rossner periods.

This contra-distinction between concern for task and concern for language is described even more powerfully in 'Evaluation of the Bangalore Project' (ELTJ 39/2 121—127) by Alan Beretta and Alan Davies. The authors confirm Brumfit's

observation that the Project team have rejected established approaches, based on descriptions of, and a pre-occupation with, the language content of lessons. Prabhu's approach, they explain, focuses the attention of learners, through their achievement of tasks, on the meaning, rather than the form of the language being used. In support of this they cite Prabhu's statement that the unconscious acquisition of language 'is best facilitated by bringing about in the learner a preoccupation with meaning, saying or doing' (Prabhu 1982:2, cited p. 121). Beretta and Davies indeed consider this to be the 'central tenet' of the project; 'language form is best learnt when the learner's attention is focused on meaning.' (p. 121)

The article also provides a more detailed description of the tasks performed by students in lessons, and describe what it is that learners are meant to achieve in the three ('pre-task', 'task' and 'feedback') phases of the lesson. The authors explain that the pre-task 'makes known the nature of the task, brings relevant language into play, regulates the difficulty level of the task, and allows some learners to learn from attempts made by others' (p. 121). The task itself is described as 'a period of self-reliant effort by each learner to achieve a clearly perceived goal (e.g. interpreting a schedule or a map)' (p. 121), while the 'feedback' phase 'gives the learners an indication of how successfully they have done the task' (p. 121).

In 'Bangalore Revisited: a Reluctant Complaint' (1985 39/4 268—273), John Greenwood notes the project's rejection of notional-functional, as well as older structural, approaches to syllabus design (p. 268). Significantly, Greenwood uses the word 'task' (rather than 'procedure' or 'procedural', used by those mentioned above) to label the procedure at the heart of the Project's work. He therefore describes the Project itself as 'one that is task-oriented, rather than either grammar-based or content-based' (p. 268). However, Greenwood's article also laments the lack of clarity in certain Project documents, concerning the nature of a 'task' and what it is felt to constitute in the its methodology. He points to an instance of its use in the Project materials in which it is used ambiguously. Greenwood complains that a table column, which lists such items as 'drawing simple maps: symbolic representations of places/buildings/landmarks' (p. 269), is labelled by the heading

'task/activity'. Greenwood wonders whether the project's tasks might merely describe 'functions' (in the notional/functional sense), a notion the program is meant to have rejected (p. 269). He complains that 'if they are not tasks, why are they listed there in a procedural syllabus, which, by definition, is task-based?' (p. 270). Greenwood's complaint emphasises his concern that the Project should pursue an approach to language teaching that is distinctive, in its focus on tasks rather than functions, as the basis for learner activity.

8.4 Conclusions

Two tendencies concerning use of TASK in the Rossner texts can be identified as being continuous with earlier, New Lee trends. The first is of these is that TASK continues to be used extensively in articles concerned with examinations and testing. The second is that writers use the term within descriptions of "task-differentiated" methods, in which concern is demonstrated not only for linguistic complexity, but also for the difficulty of the tasks and that learners are expected to perform within lessons. Even within these quite specific contexts, in the Rossner period TASK begins to be used in a way that suggests its meaning is shifting towards a more distinctive, even technical use. Increasingly, the term comes to be used in passages where concern for linguistic content is backgrounded, and the nature of the activity undertaken by learners emphasised. It appears, too, with growing frequency, within passages where the notions of meaningful and authentic use are described.

More dramatically, in several articles published in the Rossner period, TASK appears within discussions that appear to propose something like a new "strand" within communicative language teaching. Writers begin to describe what amounts to a "task-centred" approach, in which language activities, previously generally described as useful opportunities to practice language, come to be seen as useful in their own right, and indeed to furnish the best possible conditions for learning. Many Rossner writers like Greenwood present the merits of this approach aggressively, as necessary advancements that reject the errors of not only traditional, structuralist

methodologies, but even the language-focused (notional/functional) formulation of the early communicative approach itself.

Chapter Nine: The Keyword SYLLABUS

9.1 Introduction

9.1.1 Reviewing Chronological Keyword Data for SYLLABUS

SYLLABUS appears as the ninth item in order of disproportionate frequency in the Rossner<>Old Lee keyword list (log-likelihood score 406.44).

The pattern of its emergence, according to the keyword data, is similar to TASK (and unlike COMMUNICATIVE or ACTIVITY) in that it appears suddenly, as a feature of the Rossner discourse. SYLLABUS does not appear at all in the New Lee<>Old Lee table of results, but is the sixth item in the Rossner<> New Lee list (log likelihood score 298.87). Like TASK, while SYLLABUS is more disproportionately frequent in the Rossner than the New Lee period, the roots of the Rossner discussion can be clearly identified in New Lee texts. On reflection, longitudinal corpus data is perhaps less than satisfactory in capturing the chronological “shape” of this change. According to these data, SYLLABUS appears “out of the blue” in the Rossner period. However, to some extent this is contradicted by the evidence of the New Lee articles themselves, in which discussion of syllabus-related issues is certainly present, and becomes increasingly intense towards the end of the period.

9.1.2 Issues of Meaning and Polysemy

With SYLLABUS, there are fewer issues concerning multiple meanings as has been the case with the items examined in earlier chapters. Compared with ACTIVITY, for example, which carried a wide variety of senses, SYLLABUS generally carries a predictable, consistent meaning. It appears from the very start of the New Lee corpus within discussions describing the organisation of learning, and this tendency persists throughout the period under investigation. There are a few exceptions to this; in ‘The Bangalore Procedural Syllabus’ (38/4 pp. 233—241) Christopher Brumfit refers to the learner’s ‘internal syllabus’ (p. 233), an internalised scheme described

by SLA theorists for language acquisition. However, generally the definition given above holds true for instances found in the corpus.

As a result of this stability and consistency, collocation and cluster data are unusually helpful in revealing changes in preoccupation¹². The trends identifiable through the analysis of the raw collocation data for SYLLABUS, almost uniquely in the whole investigation, appear to reflect thematic changes observable in the discourse directly. In the New Lee period, for example, top collocations indicate what is, overwhelmingly, the over-riding theme of the period; tension between structural and functional approaches, and attempts to accommodate these differences.

9.2 SYLLABUS in New Lee Texts

9.2.1 Early Articles: Before the Council of Europe

As we shall see, articles produced in the Rossner and later New Lee periods tend to characterise approaches to syllabus design prior to the work of the Council of Europe as excessively and even obsessively concerned with structuralist models of linguistic description. Interestingly, however, while these themes are sometimes present in the New Lee articles published before 1975, a “structuralist” approach to syllabus design is never explicitly described or advocated. The first appearance of SYLLABUS in the New Lee corpus is in ‘Notes on a Remedial Course on Entry to Form One’ by J. R. Weatherhead (1973 28/1 pp. 68–72). This article discusses a course being developed at the Curriculum Development Centre in Lusaka, Zambia, aimed at ‘improving the pupil’s learning skills’ (p. 69). Weatherhead explains that it is necessary ‘to control the teachers’ classroom behaviour in order to prevent the pupils being assigned tasks too difficult for them, and to ensure that all the required skills are practised’ (p. 69). The syllabus needs to be ‘closely structured’ (p. 69), as a result. It is interesting that while the vague notion of careful ‘grading’ is present here, the syllabus described here is skill—rather than structurally—focused,

¹² The collocation and cluster data for SYLLABUS appear in Appendix Six

describing the kind of classroom skills needed by learners to catch up with faster students. In Peter Strevens', 'Some Basic Principles of Teacher Training' (1974 29/1 19—27), the notion of a syllabus as an important component in the teaching-learning process is also clearly evident. Strevens places '[u]nderstanding the role and interrelationships of curriculum, syllabus, and teaching materials' (p. 22) as the final element in a list of (seven) items which, he believes, 'all teachers will need to know' regardless of their subject or specialisation (p.22). Here, however Strevens does not specify or prescribe the nature of the syllabus that should be used, but seems to refer more generally to its important role in organising and co-ordinating teaching and learning. In 'Objective Examinations and the Teaching of English' (1975 29/3 240-246), Ronald Forrest cites a report recommending the '[g]ood objective testing of grammatical structure', which would be 'based on a detailed syllabus' (p. 240). Even here, though, the author is quoting from D. W. Grieve's *Report of an Inquiry into English Language Examining for the West African Examinations Council*, a document published 11 years previously (p. 240) .

9.2.2 The Notional Approach and a Call for Change

Whatever the extent of contributors' concern for linguistic description in syllabus design during the early New Lee period, in 1975 two articles appear which call for a radical re-evaluation of the principles upon which syllabuses are designed. In 'Sociolinguistics and the Teaching of English' (1975 29/4 271—277) Bernard Lott describes existing syllabuses as 'constructed in strict terms of so many words and structures to be taught, which they are to be, and in what sequence they are to be introduced' (p. 274). He explains that the existing 'construction or model is devised in purely linguistic terms', and has the effect of reducing English language learning to 'a school subject', bearing little relation to conditions outside the classroom (p. 274). He introduces the recent work of the Council of Europe team, in contrast, as defining 'language-course curricula other than on strictly linguistic, item-based criteria' (p. 274). He goes on to describe Wilkins' decision to make use of both semantico-grammatical and notional categories in his proposed curriculum, which, Lott explains, is still in its early stages (p. 276). Lott clearly approves of these innovations and wishes, through his article, to help to usher them in.

Lott contrasts 'old' and 'new' (structural versus functional or notional) approaches directly, representing them as systems operating on not merely different, but 'opposed' principles. This pattern, in which structural and functional approaches are depicted as in tension, recurs in subsequent articles over the (remaining) New Lee and Rossner periods. It is a struggle that is reflected, almost directly and 'transparently' in the collocation data. 'Structural' (with 54 instances) and 'grammatical' (with 14 incidences) are, respectively, the third and sixth most important collocates. 'Functional' (47 incidences) and 'notional' are in similar, top positions; 'functional' is fourth and 'notional' is fifth. Cluster data indicates a similar trend; 'structural syllabus' occurs 38 times, 'functional syllabus' 30 times.

The tension suggested by these data is clearly identifiable in 'Recent Theories of Language Acquisition in Relation to a Semantic Approach in Foreign-Language Teaching' (1975 29/4 337 – 346), by Carmen Silva. In her article, the author describes the recent innovations of the Council of Europe as conforming to the 'semantic approach' of her title. She considers their work to be 'basically an attempt to do away with the grammatical syllabus' (p. 341). Silva believes that 'strict gradation according to traditional pedagogic principles is unnecessary' (p. 341), and recommends that 'unity of purpose and content rather than grammatical ordering and cohesion' be applied in syllabus design. She concurs with Lott that the new approach has 'its genesis in the seminal work of D. A. Wilkins, who has put forward his idea of a notional rather than a formal approach to language teaching' (p. 342). In Wilkins' scheme, she explains, 'rhetorical units of communication' (p.342) are used as the basis of the course's organisation. In the article the 'conflict' between the opposing ideas is depicted in powerful, even emotive terms, as Silva clearly associates the older approach with 'the barrenness into which a behaviourist-structural approach has led foreign-language teaching and learning' (p. 341).

9.2.3 Reconciliation and Synthesis

After this brief period of radical espousal of change, based on the CoE's innovations, a whole series of articles appear in which attempts are made to reconcile new, notional ideas with their older, structural counterparts. These articles account for

many of the incidences of the collocations— ‘structural’, ‘grammatical’, ‘functional’ and ‘notional’ —with ‘syllabus’ in the New Lee corpus. Within these articles, however, emphasis is placed on compromise, and synthesis with older ideas, rather than conflict. In L. G. Alexander’s ‘Where do we go from here? A reconsideration of some basic assumptions affecting course design’ (1976 30/2 89—103) Alexander explains that the existing, dominant model for course design is ‘is a structural one’ (p.91) in which items are sequenced according to the principle of structural grading. He shares the misgivings, demonstrated already in the journal by Lott and Silva, concerning its shortcomings. While he sees existing approaches as inadequate on a number of grounds, his strongest objection is that ‘a language course must set out to meet the needs of the learner’ (p. 90), and these are often ignored within the existing model. Since, he believes ‘the exigencies of a structural syllabus are often at variance with the practical needs of the adult student,’ the current system can be ‘indiscriminately applied at the expense of the needs of the student.’ (p. 92). ‘This ‘, he suggests, ‘poses an obvious and acute problem for the course-designer today’ (ibid).

However, although Alexander, himself a member of the Council of Europe team (c.f. Close, below), clearly supports the precepts underpinning the work he has helped to produce, he calls for a more measured assessment of the merits of both existing, and newly formulated, approaches. Despite his criticisms of the ‘unreformed’ structural syllabus, Alexander considers that, ‘[t]here is a lot of good sense in this system and it has undoubtedly led to greater efficiency in the classroom’ (p. 92). A real advantage, as he sees it, is that grammar is presented to students in manageable, digestible steps. His suggestion, as a result, is that practitioners should attempt to ‘reconcile the already-established idea of structural grading with the idea of a functional syllabus’ (ibid). The central theme of Alexander’s article is the need to achieve practical balance. Whereas, for example, he explains that ‘there is no end to the general and specific notional applications of a function’, there are real ‘limitations of time and space implicit in all course design, together with the need to cover a grammatical common core’ (p. 93). The principle of selection is, therefore, ‘with us to stay and so, therefore, control (ibid). Alexander believes that the insights attained

by the work CoE can be usefully applied as 'adjustments' (p. 89) to reform, rather than as replacements of existing syllabus design methods.

A second article which takes a similar, more 'historically conciliatory' approach is R. A. Close's 'Banners and Bandwagons' (1977 31/3 175—183). Close's article discusses the problem of managing change in a fast-developing profession, and in particular the tendency of practitioners to adopt a 'bandwagon' approach to new ideas in English language teaching. Close's description of recent changes in the approach to syllabus design form part of his broader argument, which is that practitioners tend to reject, too quickly and uncritically, old and potentially useful ideas in favour of new, fashionable ones. Close accepts the criticism that the existing structural syllabus 'attempts to teach the entire grammatical system without regard to its application to specific language needs' (p. 181). While wary of over-generalising the applicability of the Council of Europe's work, he speaks approvingly of the 'communicative functions of language' (p. 182), the new approach's emphasis on learners' achievement of 'communicative competence' (p. 182) and acknowledges the value of D. A. Wilkins' work with the Council of Europe Committee for Out-of-School Education and Cultural Development (p. 182). However, Close shares with Alexander the belief that 'the notion of structure—and particularly of syntactic structure—as applied to language teaching' (p. 181) ought to be retained and synthesised with new approaches. Close counsels caution; implementation of the latest proposals for syllabus design 'is clearly a process that should not be rushed' (p. 182). Close is anxious that another reactive, bandwagon cycle be avoided.

A third, even lengthier and more detailed discussion of these ideas appears in Alexander Adkins' 'A Double Helix at the Nucleus?' (1981 35/3 224—228). Once again, the article attests to the concern paid to syllabus design innovations at this time; contradicting, in a sense, the corpus evidence that SYLLABUS is a Rossner period preoccupation. Adkins explains that his article is primarily concerned with the development of teaching 'materials' that are based on notional/functional principles (p. 224), but in fact broadens his discussion considerably to include syllabus design generally. Adkins praises aspects of the new approach pioneered by Wilkins, and also

appears to approve of many of the syllabus reforms that have been implemented. He accepts the position, put forward by the CoE, which is that language is not a 'static set of grammatical structures', but rather a form of 'human behaviour' (p. 224). He also describes, approvingly, Wilkins' approach as one which is based 'on the actual *use* of language as a tool for communicating or doing things' (p. 224). However, despite this positive assessment, Adkins also advises against rejecting too many of the old principles. The article makes the now familiar plea that the advantages of structural syllabuses should not be abandoned. Adkins perhaps goes further than previous writers in suggesting that a functional syllabus alone cannot meet teachers' and learners' needs in the language classroom. Synthesis is not only desirable but necessary. For students learning a general course, he states, 'learning isolated functions will never be enough unless enough of the underlying grammatical system is delivered so as to make the learner eventually autonomous' (p. 226). Adkins even criticises those who have 'gone too far' in the new approach, and warns that grammatical content is being neglected 'without any adequate alternative basis taking the place of the rejected structural principle for selecting and sequencing the language items to be learned' (p. 226).

It is interesting to note that Adkins, like Lott, recognises the fact that Wilkins' original formulation of a notional syllabus explicitly *includes* coverage of structural and lexical features of language. He describes Wilkins's original conception of a Notional Syllabus as one in which three kinds of meaning (propositional, modal and communicative function) are present (p. 225). This original, but increasingly misinterpreted, formulation of a notional syllabus, he notes, 'does not do away with a concern for the grammatical system' (p. 225), but retains semantico-grammatical categories which include elements of grammar and vocabulary (pp. 226—227). Adkins proposes a convincing (and subsequently influential) solution. The best response to the problem of historical over-correction in syllabus design, he summarises, lies in systematically combining structural and functional principles of organisation; a synthesis of past and present approaches. He therefore advocates a syllabus which resembles 'the double helix of the chromosome' in which 'structural

and functional criteria run together along the spiral of the learner's increasingly complex mastery of the language' (p. 227). As he explains:

The learner needs to learn to use the language (its functions). He also needs to learn the language (its structures). If in the past learners have learned the latter at the expense of the former, we must ensure that they do not now learn the former at the expense of the latter. If that happens, they will in fact have learned neither; but it is the job of the teacher to help them learn both (p. 228).

It is interesting to note that Adkin's comments here, a summary in effect of the argument for a reconciled syllabus approach, make use of the words 'functions' and 'structures' to indicate the necessary balance that must be achieved. This, again, reflects closely the 'structural'/'functional' dichotomy depicted in the list of top collocates.

Despite these efforts to reconcile the two, opposed principles of syllabus design, S. C. Bernadette Ho's 'Comments on the Structural versus Functional Syllabus Crisis at School Level in Hong Kong' (1981 35/3 325—328) continues to demonstrate the tension experienced by practitioners when confronted with the two, apparently conflicting, approaches. Ho in fact depicts the issue as to whether teachers should use a structural or functional syllabus at this time (the beginning of the 1980s) as the 'crisis' (p. 325) referred to in her title. Unlike Adkins, Ho uses the term 'functional' without reference to the other (semantico-grammatical, and therefore structural and lexical) elements in Wilkin's original 'notional' syllabus. In her article, as in many later pieces, the sense of the term 'functional' has been isolated from Wilkins' comprehensive model, in which it comprised just one element. Ho therefore explains that the structural syllabus 'is defined in formal terms manifesting the language system', while the functional syllabus 'is defined in functional terms realising the language in some common formal use' (p. 325). As in Lott and Silva's early of depictions the two models, they are here represented as irreconcilable. Deepening the theoretical contrast between the two methods, Ho associates a structural approach with 'what Halliday refers to as the 'meaning potential' of the form' (p. 325). The 'functional syllabus', she explains, 'listing functions, does not recognise this' (p. 325).

Ho does, however, offer a practical solution to the problem of accommodating both structural and functional approaches to syllabus design. She advocates making use of two of 'hybrid' syllabus designs. The first is a 'structural functional syllabus' (accounting for the appearance of this strange 'hybrid' expression in the cluster data); essentially a structural syllabus, in which forms are presented in terms of the functions they might realise (Ho recommends this for higher –post-Form 3 levels—in the Chinese-medium school). The second, conversely, is a 'functional syllabus' (suitable for learners at earlier levels), in which learners practice functions and are shown the forms that can be used to execute these (p. 327). Ho's proposal is therefore a 'two-stage model'. First students learn the language; then they learn how to use it.

9.3 SYLLABUS in the Rossner Texts

9.3.1 Overview: Increasing Complexity

The main theme of the New Lee period, as we have seen, is the tension felt to exist between new, functional approaches to syllabus design, and older ones based on linguistic structure. In many respects this theme continues in the Rossner texts. Both syllabus models continue to be represented by fairly high frequency collocates. However, the significance of the discussion contrasting 'functional' against 'structural' approaches can be seen to diminish. 'Functional' (17 incidences in the texts), drops from fourth to seventeenth position, and 'notional' (16 incidences) from fifth to twenty-first. Their counterparts, 'structural' (20 incidences) and 'grammatical' (21 incidences) fall from third to eleventh, and sixth to tenth positions respectively. 'Language' syllabus' (62 incidences), effectively a re-labelling, as we shall see, of these latter terms, is more prominent, in third place. Cluster data support the observation that while these notions persist into the Rossner period, they assume less importance. Although 'language syllabus' appears prominently enough (36 incidences), 'structural syllabus' appears only 8 times. Neither 'notional syllabus' nor 'functional syllabus' appear at all.

The collocation data for the Rossner period is clearly less straightforward than for the New Lee one. Some of the items, such as ‘modular’ (23 incidences), and ‘culture’ (19 incidences) must be treated with caution due to the narrowness of their distribution (the former found in just two texts, the latter in one), but nevertheless evidence the more complex nature of the discussion concerning SYLLABUS in the Rossner period. They point to a change in the nature, and increase in the variety, of solutions offered to replace the traditional model, as well as new attempts made to integrate and reconcile these.

9.3.2 Continuing Themes: Compromise and Integration

Despite this observable increase in complexity, initial continuity with New Lee themes can be discerned in two articles, A.M. Shaw’s ‘A Modular Communicative Syllabus (1): The Underlying Ideas’ (1982 36/2 82 — 88) and its “sequel”, ‘A Modular Communicative Syllabus (2): The Project’ (1982 36/2 89 — 97). These articles, which demonstrate continuing efforts to reconcile older structural, and new functional approaches to syllabus design, describe a syllabus especially designed for use with students at the British Institute in Madrid. Shaw’s article explains the principles which have been applied to produce the syllabus; Estaire’s follow-up piece describes the details of the syllabus’ implementation, and provides commentary on example sections (included in the article’s appendices). Shaw explains, that there has been ‘a deluge in new courses’, both functional and structural, which are still being published (pp. 82—83). Since both types are being used by teachers at the centre, there is a need to create a ‘unified’ syllabus that relates structures to functions (and vice-versa), and specifies which functional and structural items should be considered as targets for all students. Like Alexander and Close, Shaw appears determined not to relinquish the advantages of a syllabus, based partly on structures, in which the benefits of sequencing and grading according to linguistic complexity are retained. He makes reference to Corder’s concept of ‘learning tasks’ (pp. 84—85), which serve as a means for grading new language based on structural complexity, as a useful concept in this area. Shaw specifically denounces the ‘less informed discussion ‘surrounding syllabus design that has suggested ‘that a syllabus has to be either functional/notional/communicative’ or structural/grammatical (interestingly,

combining in a single clause all of the top collocates of the New Lee period!). Instead, he explains, 'a syllabus should take account of both types of knowledge' (p. 84). It is necessary only to decide which type will *predominate* in a particular syllabus design. He describes two syllabus approaches, one in which a structural framework is used (structures are listed and functions listed according to which structure they realise), and another in which 'communicative' aims predominate (functional items are listed and then expounded according to their grammatical realisations). The latter, incidentally, appears conceptually similar to Alexander's 'spiral' approach.

Another issue which is introduced by Shaw's article is the question as to whether a *synthetic* or *analytic* approach should be adopted in relation to syllabus design. Shaw identifies the term's origins in Wilkins (1976) *Notional Syllabuses*, but also makes reference to a more recent discussion by Johnson (1979) which appears to summarise Wilkins quite lengthy description using a set of simple criteria. Johnson characterises a synthetic approach as one in which the forms of the linguistic system are built up incrementally (p. 86), and an analytic approach as one in which 'it is the student who does the analysis from data presented to him in the form of natural 'chunks'.' (1979:p. 195 cited on p. 86). Shaw observes that there is, inherent in the discussion of this issue 'the implication that synthetic teaching is less student centred and natural (and therefore less good) than analytic teaching' (p. 86). Once again, Shaw argues for a pragmatic approach, synthesising the best aspects of both types of syllabus. He suggests that 'it is not in fact necessary to place the two in opposition' (p. 86). At the British Institute in Madrid, he believes, such a balance has been achieved. The 'free practice' that learners experience constitutes 'analytic' learning, whereas the systematic input of linguistic items ('functional and structural' (p. 86)) provided by the syllabus is synthetic.

'One can', Shaw concludes, 'usefully combine the advantages of both a synthetic and an analytic approach' (p. 86). Describing the principles behind the syllabus, he comments that they 'may not look very revolutionary-why should they?' This practical, pragmatic approach comes across almost defiantly in the article, and defines much of the discussion which is to come.

9.3.3 Emerging Dissatisfaction with Notional/functional Approaches

However, a sense that the notional/functional syllabus is not providing the solutions to the problems of teaching and learning emerges in both Alan Maley's 'New Lamps For Old: Realism And Surrealism In Foreign Language Teaching' (1982 37/4 295—303) and Rod Ellis's 'Informal and Formal Approaches to Communicative Language Teaching' (1982 36/2 pp. 73—81). Maley in fact depicts the notional/ functional approach as one which already combines structural and functional dimensions of organisation, by making structures 'subservient to the major use of language as a vehicle for meaning' (p. 298). Maley's judgement is that a balance between structural and functional approaches is best, and notes approvingly that '[t]he pendulum seems to be swinging back towards a mid-point of common sense, where structure/grammar is considered a necessary but not a sufficient component in a foreign language syllabus' (p.298). However, even within the short passage that this statement appears, there are indications that some doubt exists concerning the efficacy of the new, functional approach. Maley believes that while there 'is no doubt that this movement has caused a considerable change in the ways we view language, and in the content and procedures of teaching it', it has also introduced new problems. He describes two of these. The first is that, 'there is no universally agreed and adequate description of the 'functions' of language' (p. 298). This is a difficulty that is resolved, at least, by the 'balanced' approach he describes. Maley's second observation, however, is that teaching a list of functions as opposed to a list of structures is not 'qualitatively different' (p. 298) to teaching a list of structures. This is a criticism that remains unresolved in his text, and emerges with increasing frequency in other articles as the Rossner period progresses.

In 'Informal and Formal Approaches to Communicative Language Teaching' Ellis similarly praises recent changes in syllabus design methods as a significant development. He describes the advance of 'pragmatic' syllabus design, together with the recent focus on the role of the learner as contributing 'to what is now popularly called communicative language teaching' (p. 73); Ellis here even appears to suggest that these two tenets are the basis of the CA. He describes Wilkins' work as having affected a 'shift from descriptions that view language as an independent and

unitary system to descriptions that treat language as a form of social activity' (p.73). As a result, he explains, the 'focus has shifted from what language 'is' to what language 'does'' (here citing Wilkins (1976) *Notional Syllabuses*).

However, despite this acknowledgement of the importance of Wilkins' work and the functional model of syllabus design generally, the overall effect of Ellis' article is to diminish its significance for language teaching. Ellis distinguishes, after Krashen, between the processes of *learning*, *acquisition* and *monitoring*. Ellis retains for 'traditional' syllabus design approaches, based on the careful grading and selection of content, an important role only in the area of *learning*. Learning (the 'formal' communicative approach he describes in his title), can have as its basis some form of description, which can be 'specified in terms of grammatical items, language functions, or discourse structures and strategies' (p. 77). However, concerning *acquisition* (an area that he believes has been neglected), Ellis believes it is effectively impossible to formulate a syllabus on traditional lines. This is the case since, according to Krashen's theory, 'the learner determines the route of acquisition' (p. 75). The theoretical and practical difficulties of modelling this route via an artificial syllabus are therefore too great (p. 76). Krashen, Ellis notes, rejects the possibility even of a creating a 'check-list' which might be used to record a learner's progress, 'as different learners progress at different rates.' Moreover, if a description of what students are intended to acquire *is* generated, then 'the conditions under which acquisition can take place will not have been met, for the environment will be 'unnatural' and the route a prescribed one' (p. 75). Ellis explains that what is provided by a syllabus, either functional or structural, 'is a statement of the *knowledge* the learner needs to assimilate rather than the *how* this assimilation takes place' (p. 77).

Ellis's implicit suggestion is therefore that the 'advances' achieved by functional designers are of limited value. He feels that it is 'not surprising that at the centre of current debates about communicative language teaching is the choice of the descriptive framework [...] and the design of the syllabus' (pp. 77—78) precisely because practitioners have continued to neglect acquisition at the expense of

learning. It is time, he suggests, to recognise the limitations of a syllabus based wholly on descriptions of language. 'Whether', he explains, 'the target is linguistic competence or communicative competence, the description provides only a statement of *what* has to be learned' (p. 81). He suggests that while language teaching has 'craved a 'content' and has looked to linguistics to provide it' (p. 81), a new perspective is necessary. In communication, he explains, 'language is only a means to some end, seldom an end in itself' (p. 81).

9.3.4 Alternatives: the Multi-Dimensional Syllabus and the Activity Syllabus

Ellis's point concerning the limitations of a notional/functional syllabus figures large in Rebecca Ullman's article, 'A Broader Curriculum Framework for Second Languages', (1982 36/4 255—262), and in fact forms the basis of the rationale for her syllabus design approach. Ullman also acknowledges the recent 'renewed interest in curricula for second languages' (p. 255), along with its importance in helping 'students attain the ability to communicate' (p. 255) However, she expresses dissatisfaction with the ongoing preoccupation with language content as the basis of syllabus design. Ullman feels that while considerable effort has been expended on restructuring the syllabus (she lists the work by Wilkins, Brumfit, Johnson and Breen and Candlin as examples), designers have maintained the underlying (and, she feels, unhelpful) assumption that syllabuses should be based on a *description* of language (p. 255). As she states:

The underlying assumption that the content of the L2 curriculum and the content of the language syllabus are one and the same goes unchallenged in the current debate about communicative teaching (p. 255).

As a result, she implies, real progress and innovation has been limited.

Ullman's contribution to the discussion is to suggest that the language learning curriculum should acknowledge elements *other* than those describable through linguistic (structural or notional) analysis. Here she defines the terms 'curriculum' and 'syllabus' clearly to support her proposal. A syllabus is a 'sub-area' of a curriculum (itself defined as 'a general term for the entire organised teaching plan of a subject') (p. 256). A curriculum can legitimately contain more than one syllabus,

therefore, and Ullman proposes one consisting of four component syllabuses: '(1) the language syllabus; (2) the communicative activity syllabus; (3) the culture syllabus; (4) the general language education syllabus' (p. 256). Ullman refers to these words extensively; the article accounts for their prominence in the collocates and cluster tables for the period. Ullman's 'language syllabus' is organised according to such features as 'speech acts, notions, functions, and discourse' (p. 257), but shares space in the curriculum with other learning areas. Ullman's proposed culture syllabus, for example, has as its objective 'knowledge about a people and its culture' (p. 258). Without cultural understanding, Ullman feels, learning 'lacks an important context'. Ullman's view is that these four syllabuses, components of an overarching curriculum, should be fully integrated. A single lesson, she suggests, might fulfil objectives in more than one syllabus. The strands should 'not be thought of as separate entities' (p. 260) but inter-woven as much as possible.

Perhaps Ullman's most effective arguments are those put forward for the 'communicative activity syllabus', whose purpose is to 'engage students' attention and involve them directly in the use of the second language' (p. 258). Communicative activities, she explains, offer 'opportunities for natural communication' (p. 258) and their importance has become increasingly accepted within the profession. The inclusion of a dedicated syllabus ensures their regular performance, which has until now been 'rather unsystematic' (p. 258). Ullman's view is that the need for such an activity-based syllabus strand in the curriculum is obvious; something that has always been 'known as a common sense fact' (p. 258) (indeed, though unacknowledged as such, the 'free practice' sessions described in Shaw's article perhaps represent such a parallel syllabus). She also makes it clear that language, and communicative activity syllabuses are mutually compatible and complimentary; the first focuses on 'the *formal* approach to L2 learning, the communicative activity syllabus stresses language in *use*' (italics hers, p. 258).

Ullman's proposal that activities be integrated into a syllabus as an element in their own right appears also in Richard Young's *The Negotiation of Meaning in Children's Foreign Language Acquisition* (1982 37/3 197—206). Young also suggests that recent

syllabus approaches have continued to focus on linguistic description, and proposes a solution based on 'diversifying' the curriculum. He is concerned with the education of children in Hong Kong and proposes, along with Krashen's theoretical insights concerning acquisition, some new insights concerning L1 development in childhood. He introduces the concept of the 'negotiation of meaning', based on 'the work of the British educationist and linguist Gordon Wells at the University of Bristol' (p. 198). According to this theory, Young explains, learners (though he confines his discussion to children) need to be exposed to situations in which the meaning has to be actively negotiated, 'by a process of give and take' (p. 199), in order for the normal, L1 language acquisition process to occur.

As in Ullman's article, Young advocates a solution based on the introduction of new syllabus elements, that mitigate the weaknesses of a scheme based solely on linguistic description. He advocates a syllabus that is centred on activities such as games and other interactive tasks. 'The main point', he suggests, 'is that communicative materials will be more concerned with the teaching-learning *process* than with the *content* of teaching and learning' (p. 204). He also mentions Prabhu's recent 'procedural' (and clearly, according to the criteria, analytical) syllabus, in which 'pupils should learn English through the performance of certain tasks and activities, rather than by focusing on the language itself' (p. 205). However, Young, whose interest is in the education of children in Hong Kong, notes that 'the pupils in the classes in the Bangalore Project are not absolute beginners' (p. 205); the context of the Bangalore project is different his own. Young, like Ullman, in fact draws back from proposing a syllabus without any linguistic content or emphasis, instead opting for a 'multi-stranded approach' in which different approaches can be synthesised. Young's final proposition is that syllabus be designed that uses 'an activity-based methodology combined with a structural/functional syllabus' (p. 206). Striking a familiar note of 'historical compromise' (though now synthesising structural and functional elements with new components such as activities!) he suggests a syllabus in which the 'insights of grammarians over the years, and sociolinguists for the last twenty years' (p. 205) are retained. The result of this is an integrated scheme, organised and centred on activities but maintaining concern for formal features of

language. 'What we need', he concludes, 'is a multi-dimensional syllabus in which linguistic and communicative elements are clustered together around a particular classroom or out-of-class activity' (p. 205). In the case of younger children, he explains, 'the successful completion of the activity' (ibid) will be the main objective, but for older children 'let us by all means do exercises which practice the linguistic forms and communicative functions which they have used in the activity' (p. 206).

Given that these two writers share similar theoretical perspectives (both show concern for 'process' over 'content', and both in their different ways for also for 'natural' processes of acquisition) it is perhaps unsurprising that they arrive at quite similar practical solutions to the problem of syllabus design. Yet a surprisingly similar formulation of their idea—that a syllabus should integrate features other than structural or functional elements—also appears in Michael Swan's relatively conservative article, 'A Critical Look At The Communicative Approach (2)' (1984 39/2 76—87). Swan's article, which critically evaluates CLT from a number of different perspectives, includes a longish passage which analyses the 'semantic' (p. 76) (notional/functional) syllabus. Swan considers that this concept is, by this time, 'for many people, the central idea in 'communicative' teaching' (p. 78). Swan's theoretical concerns about the notional/functional syllabus are quite different to, say, Ullman's. He feels that issues of syllabus design has been 'oversimplified' (p. 76) by the current discussion and have led practitioners to believe that earlier approaches ignored 'meaning' as an aspect of language. Concerned at failure to recognise the importance of appropriate structural grading, he feels that in textbooks organised along these new, functional lines, 'items which belong semantically together are taught together, even if they are structurally quite diverse (p. 78)'.

However Swan's final conclusions are, surprisingly perhaps, similar to those more "radical" writers" described above. He believes that neither a syllabus organised solely on functional principles, nor one using a wholly structural framework, can do the job that teachers and learners require. He identifies issues other than structure or function that pre-occupy learners—including vocabulary, phonology and skills (p.

79) —that are too frequently neglected by notional designs. He suggests not only the ‘integration of semantic and formal syllabuses’ (pp. 80—81), but the inclusion of additional elements not described by either approach. ‘The real issue’, he explains, ‘is not which syllabus to put first: it is how to integrate eight or so syllabuses (functional, notional, situational, topic, phonological, lexical, structural, skills) into a sensible teaching programme’ (p. 80).

9.3.5 The Bangalore Project: the End of the Language Syllabus?

As we have seen, a common theme which emerges by the end of the Rossner period is a dissatisfaction with existing approaches based on a linguistic description, increasingly felt to be at odds with recent theories concerning natural acquisition in learners. However, while solutions proposed by writers until this point typically involve some element of compromise, salvaging notional/functional ideas for continued use, three late period articles, describing Prabhu’s Bangalore Project, make no such concessions. As Ellis, Ullman and Swan independently acknowledge, for many practitioners the notional/functional approach *represented* the communicative approach itself, or at least a key tenet underpinning its theory. To wholly reject these ideas was, therefore, to attempt something quite new, only indirectly related to the work of the early communicative movement.

The first of the articles describing Prabhu’s project, ‘The Bangalore Procedural Syllabus’ (1985 38/4 233—241) is a report by Christopher Brumfit. Brumfit’s article reveals the extent to which the project has abandoned elements of earlier “communicative” syllabus design approaches entirely. Prabhu and his team clearly agree that existing work with syllabuses have emphasised the linguistic *content* of what has to be learned at the expense of the learning *process*. His solution, however, has been to implement syllabus ‘sequenced in terms of abstract problem-solving with no specific, necessary content.’ (24) Brumfit cites Prabhu and Carroll’s own definition of the procedural syllabus as one which specifies ‘what has to be done in the classroom rather than what parts of the content are to be learned’ (p. 233). He reports that the programme is constructed entirely ‘around a series of problems, requiring the use of English, which have to be solved by the learner’ (p. 235). At the

heart of the syllabus are ‘tasks’, which generally require learners to ‘interpret language data’ (p. 235) (a map, timetable, set of rules, etc) in order to solve some kind of problem. The teacher’s language is not graded or simplified, and is only structured ‘spontaneously’ (p. 235) in response to the demands of the task. Despite making several particular criticisms of elements of the approach in his article, Brumfit clearly approves of its overall aims. By abandoning traditional attempts to structure the syllabus, he suggests, Prabhu and his associates may have arrived at a more effective basis for programme design. This procedural approach, he states, ‘may turn out to reflect cognitive processes more starkly than other forms of content, except probably mathematics’ (p. 240).

Brumfit suggests that the notion of a procedural syllabus is by this time ‘frequently talked about in teacher training circles’ (p. 233); it is true that by this time Young has already referred to the project in his earlier article in the journal. However, he explains, the concept is not yet widely understood, since neither the terms ‘procedural’ and ‘syllabus’ have been clearly defined. He explains that the term ‘syllabus’, is sometimes used ‘metaphorically’ (p. 233) to refer to the learners’ ‘in built mechanism’ for language acquisition (p. 233). Brumfit also explains (following a similar line as Ellis, above) that, since it is impossible to identify a ‘series of specifiable procedures’ that might address reflect this inner syllabus, a teaching syllabus designed on these lines is unachievable.

Both Alan Beretta and Alan Davies’s ‘Evaluation of the Bangalore Project’ (1985 39/2 121—127) and John Greenwood’s ‘Bangalore Revisited: a Reluctant Complaint’ (1985 39/4 268—273) make similarly favourable assessments of the project’s approach to the syllabus. Beretta and Davies re-emphasise both the historical context of the project’s appearance and the radical nature of the decision at its heart. They note that the project ‘grew out of a dissatisfaction with ‘structural’ teaching’ (p. 121) but has also rejected more recent notional/functional directions in reform. Greenwood’s article describes the Bangalore syllabus as ‘one that is task-oriented, rather than either grammar-based or content-based’ (p. 268). He is particularly approving of this step, and appears jubilant concerning the teams’

rejection of the 'notional bandwagon' (p. 268) as a solution to their problems. Greenwood acknowledges the extent to which Prabhu and his colleagues have broken with an influential strand in the communicative tradition, when he describes their work as nothing less than the exploration of 'another avenue within the communicative approach' (p. 268).

One idea that emerges from Beretta and Davies' article is that the project has come about as a result of the fact that the notion of the 'syllabus' itself declined in importance. They suggest that the team 'believed that the need for a change in syllabus content was less pressing than the need for a change in methodology' (p. 121). This is the reason, they explain, why 'the CTP syllabus contains no linguistic specification at all, but instead comprises a series of tasks in the form of problem-solving activities' (p. 121). However, the notion of the syllabus, as a term describing the individual's in-built mechanism for language acquisition, continues to receive attention. Beretta and Davies suggest that Prabhu's work is based on the belief that early syllabuses designers had attempted, but failed, to model this internal framework for acquisition through a process of simplifying and grading features of language. In reaction to this approach, they explain, Prabhu has formulated a method based on 'the central tenet' (p. 126) that language *form* is best learnt when the learner's attention is focused on its related *meaning*. Both Beretta and Davies' article, and Greenwoods', appear to offer support for this belief. Beretta and Davies describe it as the notion that 'grammar construction can take place through a focus on meaning alone' (p. 126). Greenwood cites Prabhu's own (1982: p.2) statement that '[g]rammar-construction by the learner is an unconscious process which is best facilitated by bringing about in the learner a preoccupation with meaning, saying or doing' (p. 121).

9.4 Conclusion

While at the beginning of the New Lee period a number of writers advocated radical change in approaches to syllabus design, generally based on the CoE's innovations, this soon gave way to attempts to reconcile new (notional) with older (structural) principles of syllabus design. Articles like Alexanders' called for a unified approach in

which structural and functional syllabus principles could be usefully synthesised. Despite these moderate voices, however, other writers (like Ho) continued to contrast notional and structural approaches in a way that emphasised differences.

This tendency persisted into the Rossner period. However, during the Rossner years, new approaches to syllabus design emerged, in which efforts to combine different types of syllabus (combining activities, or culture, for example) within an overall curriculum, moved the discussion on from its earlier focus on a simple functional/structural bifurcation. In articles by Ullman, and later Young, new solutions were offered in which several different syllabus approaches could be integrated and combined.

Increasingly, however, as the Rossner period wore on, some articles appeared in which both structural *and* functional approaches were criticised as excessively focused on linguistic description. Several articles proffered the opinion that focus on linguistic content, whether structurally or functionally organised, should give way to concern for the process of learning and acquisition itself. This tendency became most noticeable towards the end of the period, in those articles describing the Bangalore Project. Prabhu's scheme rejected utterly any attempt to make use of functional or structural frameworks, and embarked on an entirely new approach to the organisation of learning. In Beretta and Davies' article it was even suggested that, as contributors became less concerned with issues of linguistic content— the very basis of the earliest, functional communicative approaches— the notion of the 'syllabus' itself declined in importance. Prabhu's belief that 'the need for a change in syllabus content was less pressing than the need for a change in methodology' (p. 121) may have signalled a partial conclusion to the discussion of SYLLABUS in the *Journal* discourse.

Chapter Ten: Discussion and Conclusion

10. 1 Introduction

In this final chapter attention will return to the issues raised in the literature review and methodology chapters, and also to some new topics which have emerged during the course of the investigation. As there are a number of separate issues to address, the chapter is divided into several sections. The first two sections will be concerned with the actual content of the findings; what new insights have been recovered, and how they relate to our understanding of the communicative period. In 10.2, 'Some Conclusions from the Findings', I will discuss two ideas that suggested themselves during the second phase of the investigation, when carrying out detailed analysis of individual keywords, which take an overview of these data. In 10.3, 'Comparing Findings with Existing Literature', I will return to the questions raised in the literature review, comparing the conclusions that have been drawn from this examination of the discourse of the *ELT Journal* against the ideas and tendencies identified in existing literature. This section, in a sense, deals with the project's original aims most directly, by assessing the outcome of the analysis and identifying whether genuinely fresh insights have been recovered.

However, the third section, 10.4, 'The ELT Journal as Context', addresses a new objective; to recover some insights concerning the publication itself. Throughout the project, the extent to which ideas have been mediated through lens of the journal "regime", undergoing changes that appear to relate to the history of the *Journal* administration itself, has demanded attention on several occasions. In this section, some discoveries and insights concerning the history of its management will be presented, which may provide some insight into the discourse changes that have been observed.

Section 10.5, 'Evaluating the Methodology', is concerned with the actual project method. What has emerged most clearly from this work is that it is perhaps the

project procedure itself which represents the most interesting product of the investigation. In this section I will address a range of issues; technical, philosophical and historical, that have appeared while developing and carrying out the project's methods. This section includes a conclusion for the thesis; a final reflection on the historical process itself, and the journey that has been taken in carrying out this research.

10.2 Some Conclusions from the Findings

10.2.1 Introduction

While carrying out the second phase of this investigation, subjecting five keywords to very detailed chronological analysis across the New Lee and Rossner periods of the *Journal's* history, several new insights were recovered. Most were specific to the words themselves, and the summaries provided at the end of the various word history chapters briefly summarise trends identifiable in the history of each particular keyword. This is in line with the approach arrived at during the formulation of the project methodology; to provide a freshness of perspective by assessing words on their own terms, without imposing a unifying order on ideas. However, in carrying out this work, two interesting patterns have repeatedly emerged which extend across all five of the chapters. Firstly, while changes in the sense of some of the words— ACTIVITY and TASK in particular—have been easy to identify and explain, it also appears that COMMUNICATIVE, the “super-keyword” in this investigation, is subject to a similar process in the journal's discourse. These changes become easier to identify and discuss when making comparisons with the other word histories. Secondly, more ambitiously, some —“thematic “—connections between words have repeatedly suggested themselves. These connections will be briefly explored as a means of recovering insight into the period, as its events can be perceived through the filter of the *Journal* discourse.

10.2.2 A Communicative Era

Perhaps the most conclusive and easily-supported finding of the research undertaken is that the idea of ‘communicative-ness’ is central to the *Journal's*

discourse over the period investigated. In Chapter Four: Findings, it was suggested that the word could be seen as characterising the discussion of the Rossner period, representing the foremost preoccupation of its writers. This observation was borne out by the term's detailed examination in Chapter Five. However, apart from the sheer prominence of COMMUNICATIVE in the journal discourse, a further important observation can be made concerning its development and use. This is that its definition is not stable over time. Rather, its senses shift; narrowing during brief periods when contributors appear to achieve something close to consensus concerning its meaning, but also undergoing periods of re-definition in which older senses are challenged and discharged.

Evidence for this phenomenon of narrowing or specialisation, in which contributors come to use a word within a more restricted set of senses, emerged several times during the analysis of keywords in the last few chapters. Throughout the history of TASK, for example, it was noticeable that incidences of its use to carry a "general" meaning (referring for example to the 'teacher's task in selecting materials') declined over the period examined. At the same time, more specific, "professional" meanings became more common. In the case of ACTIVITY, such was the degree of change visible that I was compelled to take account of separate senses by undertaking lengthy analysis, assessing and categorising each instance in terms of meaning. However, while the process of specialisation that occurs is less explicit, it can on reflection be seen that COMMUNICATIVE is also subject to the same kind of semantic "pressure" over the chronological profile of the corpus. While there is less evidence of general meanings being discarded over time, there are clearly periods in which the definition of COMMUNICATIVE is limited and restricted by contributors.

The notion of semantic shift has been much discussed by linguists (perhaps most famously by Ullman (1962). Bloomfield (1933) presented a scheme which describes categories of semantic change. The first of his nine categories (which include such classes as 'metaphor', 'synecdoche', and 'metonym') is 'semantic narrowing', in which a word becomes more specialised in meaning over time. More recently, Blank and Koch (1999) have offered an expanded list of categories, in which 'specialisation'

and ‘generalisation’ appear to describe similar processes to Bloomfield’s ‘narrowing’ and ‘broadening’. Commenting on this and earlier lists, Grzega (2004) gives possible reasons for such changes including ‘institutionalised pre- and proscription’, in which ‘peer groups’ aim at demarcating new meanings for their particular use.

The idea that ‘communicative’ is subject to such a process, in which its meaning narrows over the period of the corpus, is in one sense counter-intuitive.

Contributors to the *Journal*, and commentators on the word in the profession at large, often complain concerning its vague, almost meaninglessly nebulous use by professionals. In the first volume of the Rossner journal both Ellis, in ‘Informal and formal approaches to communicative language teaching’ (1981 36/2 73—81), and Harmer in ‘What is Communicative?’ (1981 36/2 164—168), describe the need to address the poorly understood and ill-defined nature of the word as the rationale for their articles. Their position echoes Swartbrick’s (1994) more contemporary comments, referred to in the first chapter, that ‘communicative’ (along with other terms such as ‘differentiation’) have become empty buzzwords, referred to by professionals to instil a vague sense that ‘best practice’ is being adhered to (p.2).

Yet returning to the word history for COMMUNICATIVE, it can be seen that there are periods in which contributors come to deploy it within distinctive, and often surprisingly restricted meanings. Semantic specialisation of this kind occurs most dramatically in the later New Lee period, in which ‘communicative’ comes to be used as a virtual synonym of ‘functional’. As we saw in the COMMUNICATIVE chapter, in section 5.2.4, during this period the word becomes descriptive of an approach to syllabus design in which broader ideas concerning the process of language learning were —if only temporarily—neglected. However, this period of quite restricted use comes to an end in the *Journal* discourse at the beginning of the Rossner period. Although the ‘functional’ definition persists in articles as late as Swan’s (1985 39/2 76—87) ‘A critical look at the communicative approach’, it is challenged by early Rossner period writers. Harmer, for example, goes out of his way to make the point that there is ‘nothing specially communicative about teaching functions!’ (p.165). In the changed discussion, as we have seen (as will be discussed further below),

attention turns to communicative methodology and the performance of communicative activities.

From one perspective, these early Rossner period efforts to redefine the term to include ideas outside syllabus design represent a period of 'widening' of its meaning. However, looked at from another perspective, it might also be said that they represent an attempt to restrict the term's sense on different lines. Harmer's efforts (detailed in section 7.2) to present 'communicative' as a term that could be applied meaningfully only to notion of the activity (supported by his own communication model and a list of 'communicative' characteristics) represent an attempt to apply new, perhaps even stricter constraints on its use. While Harmer and Ellis's stated intention may have been to clarify the senses of 'communicative', the effect of their writing was to effectively reformulate the term, providing criteria and parameters that reflected their own insights and preferences. This is a process that continues throughout the Rossner period; in the next section I will propose that even the reports of the Bangalore project that appeared in the last Rossner editions could be seen as attempts to redefine 'communicative' to suit the latest professional trends.

These observations are important because they address the objective, described in the literature review, of recovering some historical sense of what a communicative approach to language teaching was first felt to include. The conclusion that can be drawn is that, even from the period of its inception, CLT and the idea of communicativeness at its conceptual heart was contested and unstable in the professional discourse. Rather than succeeding in identifying an original, "elemental" formulation of the communicative approach, the investigation confirms that the sense of COMMUNICATIVE has always been a site of change and conflict. Recognising its centrality in the new "communicative" discussion that emerged in the 1970s and 1980s, it could be said that practitioners competed to define its senses, and therefore gain ownership of the content of the new movement.

10.2.3 Linking Themes: COMMUNICATIVE, ACTIVITY, TASK

Despite the regularity with which contributors attempt to remould communicative ideas in the *Journal*, I believe that it is possible to discern an underpinning, even unifying theme that extends across the Rossner period of the corpora. This theme is perhaps most easily discerned in the two articles by Harmer and Ellis (“Informal and formal approaches to communicative language teaching” and “What is Communicative?”) just mentioned. These pieces have featured prominently in the word histories (appearing in the chapters for COMMUNICATIVE, LEARNER, ACTIVITY and SYLLABUS). They serve in a sense as “node articles”, through which strands of the different discussions pass and often combine. Harmer’s article is particularly interesting in that threads of two important discussions, concerning COMMUNICATIVE and ACTIVITY, converge as the two terms are utilised within a common framework to define CLT. Harmer’s decision to characterise ‘communicative’ in terms of its applicability to ‘activities’ seems to me to capture a central insight concerning the *Journal* discourse. Put simply, this is that the notions of communicativeness and activity become increasingly connected over the later, Rossner period of the discourse. Only activities, Harmer explains, can be considered communicative. The term should not be applied to a methodology or even an approach, but rather as a descriptor to categorise forms of classroom activity (p. 74). The article captures the sense, strongly evident in the discourse that follows, that the discussion of the two ideas —communicative-ness on the one hand, the activity on the other— begin to combine and suffuse each other.

Support for this assessment is abundant in the hard, quantitative data produced in the first phase of the project. Looking at the main Rossner <>Old Lee keyword list (table 4.1), COMMUNICATIVE and ACTIVITY are overwhelmingly the two most important items in the Rossner period (if we accept that LEARNER is present as a top keyword at least partly for reasons of ‘style’ (see 4.2.1.3). Furthermore, collocation lists for both COMMUNICATIVE and ACTIVITY indicate that these two “super-key” terms become increasingly linked as the discourse continues. ‘Communicative activity’ is in fact the top collocation for ACTIVITY. Further evidence for this idea can

perhaps be identified from the fact that the next highest item in the keyword list is TASK. TASK is a synonym of ACTIVITY, and one which, as we have seen, carries many of its senses. As was suggested in Chapter Eight, the emergence of TASK as a key term might even be seen as an extension, or refinement of the history of ACTIVITY. In TASK, as we saw, many of the newer, specialist senses of ACTIVITY were absorbed, as TASK took on some of the meanings that previously ACTIVITY alone had carried.

At an intuitive level, this conceptual connection—between ideas related to COMMUNICATIVE on the one hand, and ACTIVITY and TASK on the other—represents the clearest cumulative tendency in the discourse of the *Journal* during the Rossner period. It seems to encapsulate and include many of the trends that were highlighted in the word histories. In many articles there can be discerned a clear movement away from linguistic description (an interest in the “products” of teaching) and towards language learning processes themselves. Maley, as we have seen (1983 37/4 295—303; see 8.3.3), makes the case for a teaching approach in which greater account is taken of the *tasks* that students perform, and urges reconsideration of the existing approach which remains ‘focused on the language as the prime target’ (p. 301). He promotes an alternative ‘task centred’ approach which includes ‘meaningful and interesting activities’ (*ibid*). Similar sentiments are expressed on numerous occasions elsewhere in the discourse; for example in Ellis’ (1982 36/2 73—81) desire to focus on processes that foster acquisition, and Edge’s (1984 38/4 256—261) proposal for a lesson plan in which—if there is to be any linguistic content—it must first be contextualised within a meaningful activity. These tendencies achieve a sort of culmination in the three papers (Brumfit 39/2 121—127; Beretta, Davies 1985 39/4 268—273; Greenwood 1985 39/4 268—273) describing Prabhu’s Bangalore project. These pieces, to varying degrees, champion Prabhu’s approach, in which linguistic description is given no place at all (interestingly, Ellis (2003) cites Prabhu’s focus on ‘meaning based activity’ (p.32) as an important impetus to the TBL “movement”). Greenwood specifically approves of Prahbu’s rejection of notional-functional principles (p.268), and his development of a wholly new, procedural approach to language teaching. It might be suggested that the description of such principles came to form something like an alternative basis for

CLT within this phase of the *Journal's* discourse. The discussion had come a long way since New Lee discussions of “communicative” syllabuses that merely contextualised grammar within functional categories.

10.3 Comparing Findings with Existing Literature

10.3.1 Introduction

To what extent can the findings of this project be legitimately used to evaluate the content of existing histories? This investigation of the discourse of a single publication is, in Stern's terms, ‘a study of a particular aspect’ quite different in scope to Howatt's grand survey of the events of early CLT, or Richards and Rogers' summary of communicative history. It has been acknowledged several times in the course of the discussion that the discourse of the *ELT Journal* cannot be regarded as a transparent window onto the history of the profession. My perspective in the sections below will be that the texts examined within the *ELT Journal* corpora represent a partial view of the profession and its preoccupations. They reflect the perspectives of writers selected as authoritative and interesting by editorial staff, themselves operating a range of personal preferences and priorities (an issue that will be discussed further in section 10.4, below).

However, remembering Stern's call for research that focuses on specific areas or periods of study, it must be borne in mind that the writer promoted such studies on the grounds that their conclusions *could* be generalised (pp. 83—84) ; a principle, as I have mentioned, which Ranke himself shared. Furthermore, in the Methodology Chapter (section 3.1.2.2), it was noted that the *Journal's* editors over the period of investigation, Rossner and Lee, expressed the view that their publication occupied centre ground in the profession. From this perspective the *ELT Journal* might be considered as a kind of sounding board for ELT during the early communicative period, providing a survey of practitioners' ideas and gathering perspectives so as to represent the profession of its title. Finally, it is also my view that the *Journal* discussion does not operate in isolation from the ELT community at large. The ideas discussed and views expressed may not be representative or typical of practitioners;

the overwhelmingly majority of whom are ‘front-line’ teachers. Nevertheless, the *Journal* forms an —influential— part of the discourse of the whole ELT community that it represents.

10.3.2 Emphasis on Theory

One of the most repeated observations made in the literature review was that writers, including important figures such as Howatt and Richards and Rogers, prefer to characterise CLT as emerging as the result of insight gleaned from other disciplines. Notions like ‘functionalism’ are therefore often portrayed as ideas which evolved, often via a convoluted process, from older philosophical origins distant from language teaching. Howatt dedicates pages to the complex development of this idea, ascribing its philosophical inception to influences as far back as pre-war Prague School linguist Roman Jakobson (pp. 328—329). He also expounds the pedigree and development of the notion of ‘communicative competence’ in particular detail. Howatt portrays this as the ‘big idea’ that emerged from Dell Hymes’s work, crystallising many of the insights that had been achieved by American sociolinguistics (pp. 329—330).

Given these descriptions, we might expect to find traces of the theoretical, philosophical origin of these ideas in journal articles, as they begin to filter through into the profession. It might, too, be possible to discern the pedigree of some of the ideas, traced, as Howatt traces them, to their origins in the external, academic disciplines where they arose. Yet, in the New Lee texts, in which the first traces of communicative ideas can be discerned, there is less awareness of the theoretical origins of new ideas than the literature would lead us to expect. Widdowson’s two early articles, it is true, make reference to the notion of ‘communicative’ and ‘referential’ meaning, describing them in theoretical terms. But even in these —exceptional— texts no reference is made to the disciplines or writers these ideas have apparently emerged from. Descriptions of the conflict of ideas expressed by Chomsky versus Hymes, as it is expounded by Howatt and Johnson, are absent. Halliday, let alone Firth or his mentor Malinowski, who are ascribed almost mythical status in Howatt’s account (pp. 253—254) do not appear at all. Most damagingly to

the ‘impact of external disciplines’ view of events, Hymes himself receives quite limited attention; it is not until Eddie Williams glosses the notion of communicative competence in ‘Elements of Communicative Competence’ (1979 34/1 18—21) that his supposedly seminal contribution in this area is really acknowledged.

These observations raise the question as to how communicative ideas did find their way into the discourse of the *Journal*. Looking in particular at New Lee sections of the word history chapters that were presented above, it appears that contributors to many of the very earliest communicative discussions in the *Journal* are pre-occupied with the impact of new concepts, and in particular the notions of ‘function’ and ‘communicative competence’, as those ideas have been introduced and framed via the Council of Europe team’s output. The CoE, and the work, particularly David Wilkins’ *Notional Syllabuses*, undertaken in the wake of the project’s activity, appear to be by far the most influential in the early communicative discourse of the *Journal*. This finding is somewhat at odds with the “history of ideas” approach common in existing literature. The CoE appears in the discourse of the *Journal* as the major conduit—and perhaps the source itself— of ideas impacting on the early movement.

In general, and as was noted in the literature review, the work of the Council of Europe’s ‘Threshold Project’ in the early communicative movement is generally well-acknowledged in the existing literature, in which it is often described as an important agent in the advancement of the movement’s popularity. Many works, notably encyclopaedia entries such as Johnson’s, and Richard and Rogers’ (Richards, Rodgers 2001: p.154) historical sketch, refer to the important role of the CoE project team in providing an impetus to the new movement. Howatt, too, describes the work of the team, and explains its basic work at comparative length (e.g. pp. 337—340). In one sense, therefore, the finding that the CoE was massively influential in the early communicative discourse of the *Journal* seems merely to reinforce the veracity of the accounts furnished in the existing literature. However there is in my opinion a need to make an important, if rather nuanced adjustment to these descriptions. Whereas the CoE is almost ubiquitously acknowledged as important in serious accounts of the early approach, much of the discussion in the *Journal* articles suggest

that it was chief mediator, and even originator of early communicative principles. In the *Journal* the Project is frequently referred to not merely as an important stimulus to the new approach—an exemplar of its ideas and a provider of helpful materials — but in a way that suggests that it is the principle source of new concepts. In my view this reassessment is important as it challenges the depiction, ubiquitous in the literature, of the influence of complex, extra-disciplinary theory on the new approach.

Looking outside the discourse of the *Journal* to check this conclusion, there is plenty of evidence to suggest that the work of the Council of Europe and in particular the contribution made by Wilkins through the publication of his later work, *Notional Syllabuses* (Wilkins 1976), had a singular impact on the profession. In contrast to the “balanced” account offered by Howatt (pp. 340—345), Johnson remarks of the immediate impact of *Notional Syllabuses* that:

It really is no exaggeration to say that the ideas swept like a hurricane through the fusty world of syllabus design. That world, barren for so long, suddenly became interesting; there was at last something to discuss. And not just to discuss but to act on, too; the effect of the book was to make applied linguists and language teachers world-wide change the way they did things (2006: p.415).

Johnson believes that Wilkins’ book provided the specific impulse for the new syllabus approach. It made widely available ideas that had hitherto only been available in the CoE’s less widely distributed papers (a fact acknowledged by Howatt (p. 204)). But it also clarified and extended the ideas so as to facilitate their adoption by ELT professionals. Johnson explains that in *Notional Syllabuses*, ‘the ideas blossomed, with discussions of the theoretical justifications for the approach, proper development of the categories previously only sketched out, and a full consideration of the place of the new syllabus type in language teaching’ (p. 415).

Wilkins' concern for the syllabus, and a description of language based on the performance of communicative acts rather than structure, is evident everywhere in literature describing the 'early phase' (more of this in the next section) of the communicative movement. In his (1978) review of *Notional Syllabuses*, Brumfit describes the impact that the book had made on the profession in the three years since its publication. It had, he describes, 'already shown itself to be an important book for language teachers' (p. 79). Writing just a few years after its publication, the work's precepts had been 'widely accepted' (ibid). Munby (1978) describes the revival of interest in the curriculum that occurred during the 1970s, and credits both the Council of Europe, and Wilkins, as having contributed significantly to this. Munby regards Wilkins' work as a part of a shift against the tendency, in the post-war mainstream of language teaching (and testing), to show greater concern for methodology, 'with how rather than what to teach' (p.1). Wilkins has moved in the opposite direction, developing a new interest in syllabus content. Concerning the new functional basis of the syllabus itself, Stern, writing at a time when the impact of these changes were still being felt, praises the innovative approach as one focused on meaning (1983: pp.109—110). Considering Wilkins' innovations to be 'promising changes' (p.110), he approves of the project and the 'communicative' nature of its work.

10.3.3 Phases of Development

In the word histories, as we have seen, the nature of the discussion surrounding the word COMMUNICATIVE undergoes at least one important, but significant shift. In the *ELT Journal* there is a movement of interest away from the conceptualisation of communication as a principle for syllabus organisation, and towards (what its advocates portray as) a broader view of communication that takes into greater account actual procedures for language learning.

In much of the existing literature this notion that there were distinctive stages in the communicative movement is all but absent. In Richards and Rogers' account, and in the short sketch-like histories that aim to offer an overview of the communicative approach, history is (perhaps necessarily) simplified so as to exclude any sense of

variation or complexity in the CA's development. Howatt does offer some sense that changes occur within the movement. CLT emerges, it seems, as the result of at least two distinctive phases. As Howatt has it:

Towards the end of the 1970s there was a sea-change in ELT. There was a growing belief that it was becoming too 'technical' and remote from the human concerns of teachers as well as learners. The 'needs analysis' methodology had started well, but had developed a 'clipboard' image with checklists and profiles—all very well intentioned of course, but it was somewhat at odds with the reasons why people went into teaching in the first place (p. 255).

Howatt suggests that the new phase that followed from this was one in which teachers, who had been liberated from the strictures of method and 'science' (p. 256), by the recent rejection of structures and drilling, now sought an opportunity to find their 'own way' (ibid). This was, he suggests, a kind of rebuff to the influence of the newly important discipline of applied linguistics. Teachers, seeking freedom, embraced learner-, and learning- centred approaches more in line with their humanist proclivities as teachers and the newly relevant philosophies of writers such as Stevick (p. 256).

It seems reasonable to make the connection, not explicit in Howatt's text, that his "needs analysis' methodology' refers to the notional-functional, syllabus-focused model whose influence is so strongly evident in the New Lee texts. Given this equivalence, Howatt's depiction of an early phase of learner needs-directed activity is certainly present in the corpus data and the descriptions of events provided by the word histories; in Chapter Six, for example we saw that the notion of the learner dominates the New Lee discourse (see especially 6.2.3). However, Howatt's description of the events that lead to the end of this period is less easily reconciled with the picture presented by the *Journal* data. The reasons that Howatt gives for the rejection of the older approach— that it was 'technical', and unattractive in essence to teachers who sought to teach in more humanistic way—does not appear to be clearly present in the discourse at all.

One incentive, however, that is closely supported by the word histories is the simple sense that the value of the principles of notional-functional methodology had been exaggerated; their worth and centrality to the idea of communicative-ness had been emphasised at the expense of other potentially valuable ideas. Within the *Journal*, the gist of Adkins (1981 35/3 224—228) ‘A double helix at the Nucleus?’ is that notional-functional principles had been taken too far. Adkins urges caution concerning the rapid take-up of notional/functional materials in the publishing world. Such materials, he explains, had come to dominate the textbook market (p. 224). *Notional Syllabuses* is mentioned as an important spur for the development of this trend. His conclusion is that moderation and perspective are needed to re-address the imbalance towards notional/functional ideas.

Looking at other contemporary sources, plenty of support can be found that this view had become widespread in the profession by this time. Concern that the principles behind the notional syllabus had been misunderstood, and misapplied, is in fact evident even within Wilkins’ work itself. In Chapter Three of *Notional Syllabuses*, ‘Applications of a Notional Syllabus’, Wilkins describes short-term, remedial and ‘high surrender’ value courses as being particularly appropriate for notional/functional organisation, and makes no general plea for language teaching to shift wholesale towards the use of such syllabuses. Contrary, in my opinion, to Johnson’s claim that the chapter provides ‘a veritable manifesto for notional/functional syllabus use’ (Johnson 1982: p. 416), Wilkins carefully limits the claims he makes for the suitable applications of his syllabus. Even his early (1974) article, ‘Notional syllabuses and the concept of a minimum adequate grammar’, Wilkins strikes a very careful tone. The generalizability of the new emphasis on ‘communicative aspects of language’, he feels, ‘remains to be shown’ (p.92). In his (1978) review of Wilkins *Notional Syllabuses*, Brumfit, already wary of the danger of a bandwagon forming around the approach, ‘the unthinking acceptance of fashion’ (p. 81) in his view, praises Wilkins for his tentativeness. It is only in Wilkins’ choice of title, Brumfit feels, that he ‘appears to accept total revolution instead of the sensible increase in emphasis on meaning and communicative function’ (Brumfit 1978: p. 81).

Evidence for an emerging 'backlash' can be discerned from the 1981 2/1 issue of the (then relatively new) publication *Applied Linguistics*. The edition contains a series of four articles revisiting Wilkins' work and assessing its impact. The first and last of these were contributed by Wilkins himself. In the first, (1981) 'Notional Syllabuses Revisited' Wilkins reiterates the tentative claims for the ideas he expressed in *Notional Syllabuses* and notes the plethora of materials that had since been produced that make use a notional/functional approach. It was, he observes, the functional categories that had clearly captured the imagination of publishers, 'and indeed a number of text books are devoted almost entirely to them' (pp. 85—86). Wilkins' inference is that his ideas have, against his own advice, been applied too extensively and intemperately. The second article, written by Brumfit (1981) recognises the contribution of Wilkins' work, but re-iterates some of the points, concerning its limitations and dangers of its over-application, that appeared in his earlier review.

This narrative, of a bandwagon derailed by its too rapid progress, is also present in Johnson's (1982) *Communicative Syllabus Design and Methodology*. Writing soon after the heyday of the functional syllabus, Johnson seems already to have arrived at an assessment of its role. The author describes (in Paper 7 of the book) the success that the approach had enjoyed since the first publication of Wilkins' ideas (pp. 90—91). Johnson observes that 'there is a danger that more will be claimed for these syllabuses than was originally intended.' Reiterating concerns that Wilkins had expressed himself in his earlier works, he describes cases where 'a functional design might better be avoided' (p. 93). Johnson, who was Wilkins' colleague at Reading, was therefore perhaps well placed to assess developments. His more recent (2006) description of the collapse of a communicative approach based on functional syllabus ideas, "Revisiting Wilkins' Notional Syllabuses", written with the benefit of hindsight and distance, provides a lucid account of historical developments. By the end of the 1970s, he explains, notional/functional ideas had been taken up everywhere; course designers, examining boards, and other influential 'movers and shakers' in the ELT world had seized upon them. However it was, he explains, in the

heyday of the success of notional-functionalism that critics became ‘most vocal’ (p. 417). He describes the end of the notional/functional ‘period’ in the 1970s, ‘as a hurricane extinguished by the intensity of its own progress’ (2006: p. 417). Criticisms of the method, Johnson explains, reflected ‘real problems teachers met when trying to teach in a notional/functional way’ (p. 417). In spite of the efforts of its leader, Wilkins, to prevent it, the notional/functional bandwagon had simply travelled too fast, too quickly. ‘The hurricane’, Johnson describes, ‘blew itself out, as hurricanes will’ (ibid).

Accompanying this feeling, that notional-functional ideas had been applied too extensively and unthinkingly, there is a clear sense in the writing of the time that their over-emphasis had caused other important ‘communicative’ ideas to be neglected. Widdowson, in his (1978) *Teaching Language as Communication*, puts forwards the view, quite at odds with those writing in the *Journal* at that time, that using a notional syllabus is not by itself particularly ‘communicative’ (p. ix) (mirroring—and perhaps being the inspiration behind Harmer’s 1981 —‘nothing especially communicative about teaching functions!’—comment). Regarding the practice of ‘teaching language as communication’, referred to in his title, Widdowson explains from the outset that the application of the precepts of a notional-functional syllabus to teaching is insufficient. He introduces notions, such as ‘discourse’, whose features and implications for teaching demand more urgent attention. Perhaps most revealing of this sentiment, that CLT should be about more than functional organisation, is a (1981) interview, in the occasional ‘Talking Shop’ section of the *ELT Journal*. The discussion is facilitated by Richard Rossner and involves himself, Christopher Brumfit and Don Byrne. Byrnes complains that the functional approach, ‘untested’, had been applied too extensively (p. 35). He also suggests that it provided an account of communicative ideas that was too restrictive and narrow. Regarding the emergence of CLT in the previous decade, Byrne makes the following comment:

But what seems to have happened-it’s very difficult to put a date on this- is that we were suddenly overwhelmed by a new linguistic approach, the notional-functional approach. Now, what’s been very interesting to me is that there has

been a redefinition of this approach, which has come about with the emergence of what you might call a wider view of teaching called ‘communicative’ [...] so the notional-functional question has been pushed to one side [...] (pp. 33—34).

10.3.4 Against Progressivism

In the literature review, I noted the tendency of writers to present ELT history as a series of methods, in which advances in psychology and linguistics are translated by experts into a succession of increasingly “sound” methodologies; a description, it was explained, that has been criticised by writers including Smith and Pennycook. In the last section, two propositions were advanced which impact on this view of events, particularly with respect to the early stages of CLT. Firstly, much less evidence of the influence of theory, originating in external disciplines, was located in the *Journal* than existing accounts might lead us to expect. Furthermore, there is evidence that in the earliest phase of the communicative discussion, ideas were largely traceable to a single source (the CoE and its outputs), which presented practical rather than theoretical ideas for teaching based on syllabus design. The view that CLT emerged as the outworking of the synthesis of new ideas by the ‘Academy’ (to use Pennycook’s term), as applied linguists interpreted new ideas emerging from sociolinguistics, psychology and philosophy, might therefore be re-assessed in light of these findings.

An alternative explanation for the rapid rise of ideas surrounding communication and the communicative approach is offered by William Rowlinson (1994) in ‘The Historical Ball and Chain’. Here the author suggests that the new emphasis placed on the notion of communication appeared as a direct result of the new role that English had come to play in the world by the 1970s. In his view, the new focus emerged less as a result of advances in knowledge and understanding, and more as a pragmatic and practical response to the new status of English as an international language (p. 10). It seems significant that, having furnished an account not based primarily on transmission of theory, Rowlinson offers an overview of the development of CLT that is ‘cyclical’, rather than linear; “perennialist” (my own term) rather than “progressivist”. Rowlinson asserts that language teaching fluctuates between periods

of scholarly and communicative activity (pp. 12—14). The twentieth century itself represents a longer period of development towards communication-focused teaching, in which CLT emerges to address societal demand for language training aimed at everyday use.

Rowlinson acknowledges that he is taking his lead here from Kelly (1969), who he draws from extensively (as his bibliography indicates (pp. 15—16)). Kelly's *25 Centuries of Language Teaching* offers a description of ELT history whose coverage ends —just—before the emergence of CLT. Nevertheless, it is instructive and relevant in that it offers a view of change in the history of the profession which resists the linear and progressive structure of other accounts. A major theme of Kelly's work is that the questions that pre-occupy language teachers and learners are perennial. Language teaching is an endeavour that seldom covers wholly new ground, but tends to undergo cycles of rediscovery according to societal and educational demand. His treatment of the emergence of the twentieth century discipline of applied linguistics, with its access to other sciences, is particularly interesting. In his preface he states that 'what is being claimed as revolutionary in this century is merely a rethinking and renaming of early ideas and procedures' (p. ix). There is some concession here to the notion that twentieth century advances have achieved a modicum of actual progress. Kelly suggests that modern thinkers have indeed had access to new techniques and data hitherto unavailable, but explains that these have seldom been applied to attain genuinely new principles or insight. The following sentence, which opens a chapter entitled 'Psychology and language teaching' explains his attitude:

Few theories of language learning are peculiar to the twentieth century, but modern psychological research has given them a point and clarity they lacked, while clothing them in language that disguises their relationship to older ideas (p. 303).

Unfortunately the historical scope of Kelly's work finishes, tantalisingly, at the very moment that many subsequent writers have pointed to as the starting point of the

communicative revolution. He describes Chomsky's famous statement in the BBC interview of 1968, that "the [habit-structure] view of language is erroneous and that it is a very bad way —certainly an unprincipled way—to teach language" and wonders what we are 'to make of this statement?' (p. 408).

Yet despite the fact that he is writing before the advent of CLT, Kelly still has some specific comments to make about 'communication' (this fact alone is, surely, supportive of his claim that few issues in language teaching are wholly 'new'). A sense can be gleaned that theorists' preoccupation with 'intuitive command' (p. 7), which he also refers to as 'communication', is an oft-visited, but not continuous preoccupation of language pedagogues. Kelly contrasts the approaches adopted during two 'groups' (p. 397) of periods: the classical, Renaissance and modern periods on the one hand; the Middle Ages and the Age of Reason on the other. He explains that 'the basic aim of the first group was communication (with the other aims subordinated), while the other periods aimed at analysis above all else' (p. 397). He also asserts that within these periods 'methods of presentation have varied according to the type of mastery required of the pupil' (p.7). During the Middle Ages and eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (the first group in his hypothesis), emphasis was placed on 'intellectual knowledge of the formal analyses' of languages. At other times, including the classical era, the Renaissance, and the early twentieth century (his second group), 'it was intuitive command of the target languages that was required' (ibid).

Kelly suggests that in the twentieth century the tendency has swung away from analytical, and towards communicative, techniques. Assessing this trend, which had become increasingly visible in the decades before his writing, he remarks that, "[a]s the emphasis was on communication, minimal standards of competence were aimed at, rather than finesse' (p. 403). The History of ELT is, then, the story of the changing balance between communicative and analytical approaches.

Returning to Howatt's *History*, it can be seen that it is only within the (admittedly lengthy) section of his account of early CLT that is dominated by 'theory', that the

progressivist tendency is strongly evident. Looking at the other chapters of his book, we note that, like Kelly, he acknowledges and indeed explores the implications of the approaches that pre-figure a “communicative” method. Describing the life of Joseph Webbe (c. 1560-1633) (pp. 39–43), he identifies in the approach of this Elizabethan scholar similarity with ‘methods and certain features of contemporary methodology’ (p. 41) (clearly referring to CLT). He describes Webbe’s belief that ‘the exercise of communication skills’ would lead naturally, and without conscious analysis, to knowledge of grammar (p. 40). This is ‘such a modern notion’, Howatt comments, ‘or so we like to think’ (ibid).

10.4 The *ELT Journal* as Context

10.4.1 Introduction

So far in this study emphasis has been placed on the history of ideas surrounding keywords, as a means of discovering the preoccupations of contributors during the early communicative period. Now, briefly, attention will be directed towards the history of the *Journal* itself. Whereas this objective was not explicitly identified at the beginning of the investigation, my sense is that findings which offer insights into the publication’s history ought not to be ignored. The history of the publication, after all, forms the background to, and context of, all of the discussions that have been traced in the project thus far.

What emerges most strongly from the findings is that while there is often continuity between New Lee and Rossner discussions, there is also often a sense that the discourse undergoes rapid change. The shifts in theme and (less easily observed) “style” and “approach” that can be observed cannot be wholly accounted for by chronological change. This feeling that the differences between the two periods might extend beyond mere format, and impinge on the thematic content and style of articles, was acknowledged from the very beginning of the investigation. Indeed the decision to segment the corpus chronologically according to editorial periods rather than decades was largely an attempt to acknowledge the reality that the two editors operated quite different ‘regimes’.

In this section evidence previously assessed in terms of its application to individual keywords will be briefly re-evaluated with respect to the *ELT Journal* itself. The phenomenon of specialisation in the meanings of important keywords will be reassessed as a global tendency across the corpus, reflecting explicit policies undertaken by editorial staff in the Rossner period to encourage a discourse that is more specialised and professional than under the earlier regime. In an effort to explore the sources and motivation behind these changes, data gathered at the start of the investigation concerning the nature of the “behind the scenes” administration of the *Journal* will be re-assessed, to provide possible insight into the changes that occurred.

10.4.2 Semantic Shift as Evidence of Change in the *Journal* Itself

In section 10.2.1, above, it was observed that the meanings of several important keywords, such as TASK, narrowed over time. The conclusion drawn here was that specialisation was relevant to the history of ideas surrounding the word. As the word became increasingly entrenched in the discourse of the *Journal* (and presumably, to some extent, the profession at large) the concepts it encapsulated became more closely defined, and a consensus regarding what restrictions should be placed on its meanings more clearly shared. However, another conclusion which might be drawn from these data is that the discourse of the *ELT Journal* itself, the context in which ideas were being discussed, was also transformed over the period investigated. So far, it has been suggested that the phenomena of semantic specialisation identified in the keyword analyses indicate that individual words were “appropriated” by the professional community from for their own, specialised use. A further conclusion might be that it also represents part of a process of the *Journal*’s “gearing up” to achieve the status of a fully professional publication, with a specialist vocabulary as part of its repertoire of identifying practices.

The concept of a professional discourse transformed by pressures towards professionalization and “academicisation” is discussed by Byrnes (2000). Byrnes in fact describes very similar changes occurring in the discourse of the American

Modern Language Journal. As described earlier, her paper traces the impact of new ideas originating from psychology and linguistics in the decades following the Second World War. She describes a process that begins with the *MLJ*'s assimilation of ideas of the Michigan Oral Approach introduced by Charles Fries in the 1950s, and culminates in the domination of its discourse by ideas arising from the theory and methodology of American audiolingualism. Over this period, she identifies a change in the discourse of the publication, from one which 'one is hard-pressed to distinguish' the treatment of ideas about language learning 'from the common sense approach of an educated non-specialist' (p.474) to one that is heavily informed by academic ideas. Byrnes considers that journals are influential in the process of 'professionalization' (p. 492). Looking at the history of the *MLJ* from a critical perspective, she mentions that such 'professionalization' has the 'potential for standard setting, standardisation and privileging only a few, and thereby conveying power to individuals or entire groups' (p. 492). Viewing the *ELT Journal* from the same perspective, it seems possible to identify a similar transformation. The shifts in word sense identified might be seen as evidence of such wider change, in which narrowing of important meanings represents part of the process of 'standardization' described by Byrnes.

This seems to me to be an important finding in itself. The notion of the 'discourse community' put forward by Swales (1990), and also utilised by Byrnes to describe the readership of the *MLJ*, (e.g. p. 474) might reasonably be applied to the *ELT Journal* readership in the same way. Swale's notion of the discourse community is closely linked to the notion of the genre –characterised by communicative purpose –of the documents that they produce. It seems possible that by examining semantic change in professional discourse it might be possible to trace –or at least characterise– the emergence of such discourse communities as they seek to develop vocabularies suited to their purpose. The process might also be viewed (as Grzega (2004) suggests) as a process of 'demarcation' in which a discourse community sets the boundaries of its discourse and membership by means of lexical and semantic constraint.

10.4.3 The *ELT Journal* as a Corpus

At the beginning of the investigation, data concerning the editorial regimes operating in the New Lee and Rossner eras were accumulated in order to; firstly, assess the suitability of the *ELT Journal* as a corpus and archive of historical primary sources (see 3.1.2.2.), and secondly, decide how to segment the corpus chronologically to represent editorial regimes (sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3). In fact a considerable amount of information was gathered regarding the editorial style and approach adopted during the two periods (including, as we saw in 3.1.2.2, a lengthy interview with the Editor of the *Journal* between 1981 and 1986, Richard Rossner). Returning to these data, it can be seen that they can help to illuminate the purposes and motivation behind the changes that have been observed. They appear to support a view that the shifts observed occurred intentionally, as part of an explicit change in policy that accompanied Richard Rossner's appointment as Editor in 1981.

Looking at each period in turn, it is possible to identify considerable differences in the two editors' approaches. Starting with W.R. ('Bill') Lee, what is most noticeable is the extent to which the *Journal* during the period of his editorship, was the product of his own proclivities and activities. Lee himself was famous for his energy and versatility, becoming prominent in the ELT profession in the 1960s and 1970s (Hunter 2007). Henry Widdowson's (1996) obituary instances his many roles as 'adviser, consultant, examiner, author and editor'. He personally founded ATEFL in 1967, and was to serve as its chairman, as well as the editor of its newsletter, until 1984 (Greenall 2007: p. 292). Greenall describes him as 'a tireless traveller', and 'attender of conferences well into his active old age' (p. 292).

Between 1958 and 1981, Lee also served during this period of extraordinary activity as editor of the *ELT Journal*, 'whose style', and character, Greenall explains 'he influenced greatly over two decades' (p. 291). Reflecting on the approach of his predecessor, Rossner explains that as far as the selection and eliciting of articles were concerned, Lee 'had done it himself'. The *Journal*, in this sense, bore the stamp of his complete authority; no article was published that he had not personally approved. Indeed it seems that Lee often determined the contents of the *Journal*

even more directly, by approaching and encouraging potential contributors. Peter Strevens, writing a tribute to Lee's editorship in 1981 (1981 36/1 1), describes that he 'solicited articles, cajoled reluctant authors into writing, spurred the delinquent into meeting deadlines,' and 'identified professional issues needing to be written about'. This energetic, centralised approach seems anyway to have been Lee's "style". Brumfit (1996) writing in the same capacity, explains that he ran IATEFL 'with a small and dedicated team of volunteers'.

Rossner's appointment can be seen, in many respects, to have been a rejection of this enthusiastic but amateur approach, so highly dependent on the energy and proclivities of one individual. Whether Lee decided that the work of editing the *Journal* had become too difficult (born in 1911, 'he was', Rossner commented 'getting on a bit'), or whether a decision was made to replace him, is not known. However, Rossner's appointment as Editor was clearly used as an opportunity, not least by Rossner himself, to introduce wide-reaching changes in relation its legacy under Lee. Asked whether a conscious effort was made to this effect, Rossner responds that he is 'pretty sure there was'. '20 years' he adds, 'was enough of the old format'. Attempts were made to revamp the Lee *Journal* but: 'not just in terms of the look [...] in every other aspect as well'.

Two crucial changes can be identified in the *Journal's* new administration. The first was the appointment of an Editorial Advisory Panel (EAP) to assist in its running. The EAP, selected to represent different sectors of the ELT industry (including private enterprise), was able to assist in the running of the publication, and to discuss such matters as policy and the inclusion of new features. The Panel met with the Editor every quarter. Even more significantly, a system of 'peer review' was introduced. Rossner explains that this was an innovation, whose procedures had to be formulated by himself and the Panel via a process of trial and error. Rossner describes this innovative step as 'really exciting', but work intensive. Much of the work was done in Rossner's own home, with communication gradually improved by making use of early email technology.

Rossner, reflecting on the achievements of his editorship, considers this system of review to be his main success. As a result, he considers, the *Journal* became a truly professional publication, subject to the controls and procedures that lent it this new status. These changes are clearly identifiable in the format and content of the articles themselves. Whereas in Lee's day, few articles had been more than two pages long, the Panel accepted longer pieces in which discussions of a more academic nature could be expounded. By introducing referees, Rossner feels, more contributors of an academic bent were encouraged to contribute.

Another significant point is that, unlike Lee, Rossner had been appointed; the *Journal* was not, as in Lee's case, "his". Having just completed an MA, run by Widdowson and Brumfit at the Institute of Education, Rossner was approached by these teachers to do the job. Rossner remarks that 'it was not an open contest'. To some extent, then, Rossner's appointment might even be viewed as the choice of academics, hand-picked to represent their views and to introduce a regime consistent with their approach. Asked whether he was selected because his views might be felt to be in tune with recent developments, Rossner responds that he was 'sure it was a consideration'; Widdowson and Brumfit were no doubt satisfied that he was 'up to date with their view'. The regimes operated by Lee and Rossner were then wholly different. Lee's was an amateur one, tolerant of submissions that were similarly "relaxed" in tone. Rossner ran a modern professional journal, with the standards, including peer review and the oversight of an editorial board, usual to such a publication.

In her article concerning the *MLT*, Byrnes describes a period in which the discourse of the periodical is gradually transformed under the pressure of ideas, and by a steady process of professionalization, which accompanied the emergence of audiolingualism as a dominant method in the United States. What emerges clearly from these data is a sense that a similar process appears to occur, during the early to mid-1980s, in the discourse of the *ELT Journal*. What is perhaps most markedly different between the case described by Byrnes and the period of Rossner's

editorship is that in the case of the *ELT Journal* 'professionalization' seems to have been pursued as a specific aim by its editor and administrative staff.

10.5 Evaluating the Methodology

10.5.1 Introduction

What has been discussed in the chapter so far has been a response to the question, posed in the literature review and methodology, as to what new insights might be gleaned concerning the history of the emergence of CLT as the result of the application of the project's methods. Having addressed this issue, it now becomes necessary to consider the second main query posed at the project's start; what does a corpus approach to professional history contribute that is valuable and worthy of replication, and what shortcomings can be identified? The methodology developed during the course of this investigation is largely innovative and has been advanced tentatively, in an exploratory fashion. In a sense the set of techniques used represent the most important "product" of the investigation. Given the effort that has been expended in its formulation, and the extent to which discussion of methodology has dominated earlier chapters, it demands assessment here alongside the findings themselves.

10.5.2 Achieving Stern's Criteria for a Systematic Historical Approach

In adopting a corpus approach to the investigation, it was hoped that the objectives identified in the literature review, formulated on the basis of observations of shortcomings in the existing literature, might be fulfilled. Too many existing accounts failed to conform to acceptable historiographical standards; in this project corpus methods would be introduced as a means of embedding attempts towards historical rigorousness (as this quality was defined by historians such as Stern and Smith) in the design. The hope was that a corpus methodology could be adapted to accommodate the requirements of traditional history. Reflecting on the attempts made to fulfil this aim, the project now appears to me to have been an ambitious, multidisciplinary venture, applying tools from quite different traditions to achieve aims consistent with both. Perhaps inevitably the results have been mixed. In order

to evaluate the methodology in a systematic way, I shall here discuss the procedure with respect to the methodological criteria (expounded in 1.4.2.4) it sought to fulfil.

10.5.3 Use of Primary Sources.

By using a corpus approach, the aim of basing the investigation on primary sources was closely supported. In retrospect the articles used can be considered to have been simultaneously “corpus files” (from the perspective of corpus analysis) and “primary sources” or documents (from that of history). Since a corpus approach foregrounds the role of attested data, assembly and organisation of primary sources was placed at the very heart of the procedure.

It might also be said that the corpus procedure also satisfied this criterion by extending the quantity of evidence that could be examined. In terms of the keyword analysis itself, the use of machine tools enabled larger numbers of documents to be examined than might be the case if major themes had been identified “by eye”. Furthermore, in the second phase of the investigation the use of the Wordsmith Tools Concord application ensured that every single incidence of a given keyword was listed in chronological order. This allowed me to assess with reasonable accuracy and speed which discussions and articles were most relevant. This could be perceived, on reflection, to have been a mixed blessing from an investigative perspective. It may, through its rigorousness, have increased the workload for the investigation. By identifying far more articles than would have been the case if concepts had been hunted for by eye (by, say, referring only to titles and abstracts) hundreds or thousands of individual incidences were identified which required individual checking. However, I could at least proceed with confidence that every relevant instance had been identified in order of chronological appearance.

10.5.4 Principled Selection and Observability

Stern’s principle that materials should be selected according to explicit principles was also reinforced by the corpus techniques used. Comments made by Baker (e.g. 2006: p. 147), pertaining to the careful selection of test and reference corpora, emphasise that corpora must be assembled according to clear criteria. By altering

the composition of test and reference corpora, wholly different results will be obtained. Once again, by adhering to these basic principles of corpus analysis, the historiographical aim of principled selection was assured. In the Methodology chapter, an account was given of the process in which documents were separated into different chronological groups, firstly based on arbitrary parameters of time (decade by decade) and then by editorial period. By showing concern for the basis on which these corpora were assembled, historical as well as corpus requirements for selection were observed.

McEnery and Wilson describe 'observability' as a key advantage and principle of a corpus approach; attested data has 'the principal benefit of being observable and verifiable by all who care to examine it' (p.14). In this project corpora were compiled from a distinctive source using precisely limited chronological profiles (*the ELT Journal*, taken from distinctive editorial periods). While other investigators might draw different conclusions from the data used, there is at least no possibility of confusion regarding which sources form the basis of the investigation.

10.5.5 Keywords and 'Objectivity'

Although the claim was carefully limited and hedged, it was suggested in the methodology section that the application of a corpus, keywords approach to identify key concepts in the corpus might mitigate some of the effects of investigative bias. Some of the issues involved —such as that of initial selection and interpretation— have already been considered. They are at any rate well acknowledged and discussed as universal problems in conventional history. While these issues are significant, they are not particular to this study. However, the specific claim that a corpus, keywords procedure can achieve a measure of objectivity, at least in the very earliest stage of keyword selection, can here be assessed on the basis of my experiences in the investigation.

It became clear from my initial analysis of the keywords findings (as described in detail in chapter 5) that the concepts captured often appear to provide close support for the content of existing accounts. In the case of Howatt, in particular, whose

history is held in this investigation to comprise the most authoritative survey of the period, there were points of very close agreement indeed. For example, Howatt's assertion that the period of the 1970s represented a period in which the notion of communicative teaching steadily emerges, while the 1980s is one in which it becomes seriously established, was frequently reflected by the corpus data. The activity of reviewing the lists of keywords generated for the New Lee and Rossner periods and then comparing these data against intuitive accounts, was a similar experience to my earlier encounter with Scott's *Romeo and Juliet* list. The sense that the two modes of (corpus and human, intuitive) analysis led to similar conclusions was powerful in both cases.

However, while the procedure is satisfying from an intuitive perspective, it seems wise to treat Scott's claim— that keywords capture important themes— with some caution. The acceptance of a list of keyword items as representative of the thematic content of the corpora is, in effect, an act of faith in the keywords procedure itself. Scott's own specific claim that keywords might be held to represent important themes in a text or corpus is based, on broader 'truth claim' established by corpus linguistics as a tradition. This is the notion that patterns of lexical repetition, recoverable by machine tools but not always available to the conscious mind of the observer, can reliably reveal themes and intentions (Scott 2006: 56—57). In her chapter describing the application of corpus techniques to the uncovering of ideas and assumptions in texts, Hunston states (though of collocations) that 'patterns are built up over large amounts of text and are often unavailable to intuition or conscious awareness' (2002: p.109). Summarising Stubb's principles concerning repetition and frequency, she explains that in a general corpus frequency information can be used to deduce 'what aspect of a situation society deems to be most salient' (p. 118). Baker makes the point even more strongly: frequency is crucial to understanding of corpora because 'language is not a random affair' (p. 47). Selections of lexical items and patterns are a 'free choice' (p. 48) that reveal the preoccupations and attitudes of an author. Furthermore, corpus techniques are the only reliable way to recover this information. 'Human beings', state McEnery and Wilson (1996, 2001) 'have only the vaguest notion of the frequency of a construct or

word' (p.15). Corpus linguists are clearly united in this belief; frequency data, and observation of repetition should be treated as powerful evidence of content. This consensus provides a measure of confidence that keyword findings can be treated with cautious respect.

A further issue that requires consideration is the problem of circularity in assessing the implications of keyword findings. On a number of occasions throughout the investigation, traditional accounts have been assessed according to their conformity with the evidence of quantitative data. But to what extent, when convergences (or even divergences) are identified, has an unconscious, retrospective accommodation been reached between these sources of data? To return to the example of Scott's *Romeo and Juliet*, the list of keywords generated appear to encapsulate its main themes very satisfactorily. However what is unknown when assessing their salience is whether the viewer is retrospectively fitting their assessment of the play's themes to the list presented. Furthermore, the process of evaluating the list is wholly subjective, introducing enough human agency into the procedure as to mitigate or even cancel the claim towards rigorousness of the keyword technique itself. To some extent this charge cannot be substantially refuted. It is a partly philosophical problem that remains unresolved.

10.5.6 The Problem of Polysemy

One of the most serious issues that arose in the investigation was that of *polysemy*; the fact that a single lexical item can operate according to several, closely-connected senses. As it turned out, a huge amount of time was spent in dealing with this problem. All of the items, with the possible exception of SYLLABUS, were to some extent highly polysemous, requiring that close attention be paid to the way that different meanings could be identified in different contexts. From one perspective this was not only expected but desired, since one of the objectives in carefully analysing the words in the context of whole articles was to determine whether senses changed over time. However, from a practical perspective words carrying general senses often served as "distracters" during analysis. The tendency for the item TASK to carry non-specialised meanings early in the period of investigation

(where for example, 'the task of the teacher' is referred to) is interesting, but it also made it difficult to pick up the thread of a discussions in which the term is deployed to represent distinctive, professional concepts.

The issue as to whether different word senses should be analysed separately is a complex one. Löbner (2005) argues that it is actually unusual to find incidences of words that are genuine homonyms; occurrences where the different senses of a word are entirely unrelated. Löbner introduces the adjective *polysemous* to describe the phenomenon whereby different senses can be distinguished, but common, underpinning meanings also identified. Even divergent senses share common historical roots, and meanings cannot always be conveniently separated. Löbner's position appears to suggest an approach whereby all incidences of a word might best be considered together, *en masse*, in order to reveal common, underlying meanings and connotations. Baker (2006: pp. 104—105), in contrast, advocates the removal of incidences from calculations, where this is practicable, which do not carry senses relevant to an investigation. This idea was resisted at the beginning of the *ELT Journal* investigation, not only on the grounds that the corpus was much larger than that used in his example, but also because it was clear that in many cases (as, for example, with the item COMMUNICATIVE) it was often impossible to distinguish in all instances "how" the word was being deployed. Even after the word has been extensively theoreticised and characterised by writers within the *Journal*, the word retains a close connection with its original, general meaning. Separation of general and specialist senses seemed impossible in many cases.

However, for two of the items, TASK and ACTIVITY, Baker's argument that some instances of a term are simply irrelevant to an investigation appeared more valid. In the case of the item TASK a relatively simple, if "novel" means was found to measure this shift in sense. By measuring collocations of TASK between the New Lee and Rossner periods, and comparing these to known patterns of collocation in a general corpus (the British National Corpus in this case) it was possible to make a broad assessment of changes. In the case of ACTIVITY, however, these measurements did not prove conclusive. Nothing short of an instance-by-instance analysis, it seemed,

was required. However useful this analysis proved in identifying an increase in the technical use of the term, the work of analysing a list of several thousand concordance lines proved time-consuming, exhausting, and did not justify the effort expended. Attention to rigour was here perhaps taken too far! On reflection, and in retrospect (having gained a better understanding of Wordsmith Tools and its capabilities) using Concord's 'Reduce to X' function, effectively reducing the massive concordance result to a representative sample, would have been quite sufficient.

Unfortunately though, apart from having an impact in terms of workload, the effect of polysemy had a further deleterious effect on the conduct of the investigation. This was its tendency to 'scatter' patterns of collocation so that clear trends became more difficult to identify. This point is taken up in the next section.

10.5.7 The Use of Collocations

Great claims have been made concerning the efficacy of collocations in exposing hidden ideology in texts. Hunston (2002), for example, explains that collocations can be used to expose ideological positions, through such features as connotation and 'semantic prosody' (p. 119). Stubbs explains that the concept at the heart of his approach is that 'words occur in characteristic collocations, which show the associations, and connotations they have, and therefore the assumptions which they embody' (1996: p.172).

This principle did not seem directly applicable in the case of this investigation. While the validity of this approach to the study of what Hunston describes as 'ideology and culture' (2002: p. 109) cannot be doubted, this project has been concerned with 'ideas' rather than 'ideology', and phenomena such as connotation and semantic prosody have had little or no direct application in terms of revealing purely thematic preoccupations. However, at the start of the investigation, it still seemed plausible that listings of the most common collocations of a keyword for a particular period could be of value. The fact for example, that COMMUNICATIVE and 'activity' were strong collocations in most chronological selections of texts was clearly of interest.

Furthermore, it also appeared that differences between collocation patterns found in different periods might also be revealing. It seemed possible that such differences might prove indicative of interesting shifts in the nature of the discussion surrounding the keyword.

In fact, throughout the project, the real value of collocation data to analysis was extremely variable. There were two main problems here. The first issue was distribution, or what Rayson (2003) refers to as 'burstiness'. Unlike keyword data, which could be checked against Key-keyword lists to ensure that 'distribution' was relatively even, collocations were listed only by frequency, with no sense of their range across texts. A single article or passage could therefore skew the results dramatically. A second, even more serious reservation was that collocation data did not take account of different word senses. Since patterns of collocation are listed by the Concordance tool for a given word, no impression can be gained as to which senses a given collocate might "belong to". The result was that words that had fewer, and less divergent, senses, produced lists of collocations that were satisfactory and simple to interpret. Lists of collocations for SYLLABUS, as we have seen, were effective in predicting trends in meaning. On the other hand, words with numerous, more divergent senses tended to give rise to patterns of collocation that were fragmented; collocation patterns belonging to different senses combined in the data and became indistinguishable. ACTIVITY, as indicated in Chapter Six, fell into this category. As a result, the usefulness of lists of collocations varied, according to the number of word senses present for a particular item.

For this reason, collocation data was treated with interest, but caution, in the second stage of the investigation. It was intended, during the compilation of the word histories, that collocation information would be closely considered, but only referred to if and when data suggested a tendency that was also observable from an intuitive perspective. Had collocation data been used as the guiding principle in identifying thematic changes across corpora, I felt, it would seem that quantitative data were being given too large a role, especially in a phase specifically aimed at providing qualitative, text-based analysis to support quantitative findings.

Had there been an opportunity to break down all instances into separate sense groups (a task, without special tools, of immense proportions) the outcome of this aspect of the project may have been more consistently satisfactory. Interestingly, it appears that automatic procedures for this purpose have been developed, such is the obvious need for measures that address this problem. Rayson's (2003) *Matrix: A Statistical Method and Software Tool for Linguistic Analysis through Corpus Comparison* describes an application developed to deal with this concern. The paper describes a tool that, firstly, resolves words into different sense groups using special tagging, and then carries out an analysis that takes these groupings in account.

10.5.8 Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches

Perhaps the most significant methodological challenge presented by the investigation was the need to combine quantitative and qualitative data in a consistent and satisfactory way. Hunston's challenge, as we have seen, is that corpus analysis, by its nature de-contextualises data and strips it of crucial environmental information that can be gleaned from sentences and texts. By the end of the preparation of the literature review, I realised that a wholly machine-based keywords procedure would produce de-contextualised results that would require further assessment. As a result, a two-pronged, triangulated method design was formulated. Firstly, keywords were to be extracted and evaluated on their own terms. In a second, complementary phase, some of the most important words would be investigated in detail, recontextualising meaning through examination of individual instances. In this phase whole texts would be considered. The approach used here was, after all, consistent with the proven methods of Williams', and Said's older tradition of manual keyword analysis. It was imagined at that stage that the procedures would be complementary; each offering discrete sources of data. According to this plan, the findings of the two procedures would then be combined as equivalent, converging sources of insight.

As we saw at the end of Chapter Four, however, it became clear that even the most basic quantitative findings needed to be checked through the examination of some

of their individual instances in texts. In the case of LEARNER, for example, it was proposed that the keyword's high ranking offered evidence for an increased concern, in the discourse of the publication, for learners as agents in the teaching/learning process. However, increasingly, confidence in this assertion dwindled as other factors were considered. An alternative interpretation, as we saw, was offered by the presence of HE and HIS on 'negative' keyword lists. Since use of these terms declined over the period that LEARNER came into prominence, it seemed reasonable to assert that LEARNER became important as the use of generic, un-gendered pronoun HE fell into stylistic decline. Eventually, even before this initial phase of the project had been completed, it became clear that intuitive assessment and the application of common sense to quantitative findings was required at every stage.

Despite such difficulties, the two-step process designed generally worked well. As intended, the keyword procedures first harnessed the advantages of an automatic, corpus approach to select words as candidates for examination. The word histories, executed to imitate the painstaking procedures pioneered by Williams and Said, accrued the additional benefits of a detailed analysis based on textual and chronological context. As the word histories attest, much more was often gained from this second stage, in terms of detail and insight, than from the first. Crude predictions could be either discredited or transformed into nuanced descriptions based on the careful assessment of individual instances and texts. Chronology, and a sense of the development of ideas could also be investigated satisfactorily. Many of the definitions and discussions of words that can identified in the Rossner corpus could be seen as responses to, and continuations of New Lee formulations of the same items. Most importantly, the word histories often revealed *why* certain keywords became prominent during particular periods. It is one thing to know that 'syllabus' was a proportionally more significantly discussed term in the Rossner texts. However, it is another to discover that many of its instances can be accounted for "counter-intuitively", as a result of its presence in arguments calling for the rejection of an approach, based on language-oriented, syllabus concerns.

Comments offered by corpus linguists McEnery and Wilson suggest that the kind of compromise achieved, in the end, by the project's method is not only necessary but desirable. Considering the controversial claims made by corpus linguists, and the counter claims made by their opponents in the area of linguistics, these writers conclude that quantitative and qualitative procedures should always be viewed as co-dependent. '[C]orpus linguistics' they explain, 'is, and should be, a synthesis of introspective and observational procedures, relying on a mix of artificial and natural observation' (p. 19). There is no real conflict between these approaches; indeed the one is strengthened, rather than weakened by the co-application of the other. Both procedures, they continue 'have known weaknesses, why not use a combination of both and rely on the strengths of both to the exclusion of their weaknesses?' (ibid). These comments in particular were taken to heart very early on in the project. If the outcome of this investigation was to rely more heavily on intuitive techniques than was expected, this is consistent with the view that corpus techniques are best applied when combined with other forms of analysis.

10.6 Discussion and Conclusion

Reflecting on the project, I realise that it has restored my belief in Stern's basic premise that the study of primary sources is key to the successful investigation of the past. It is true that Stern's approach has at times appeared somewhat naïve in its premise that the study of documents can reveal truths concerning historical developments. During the course of the investigation it became clear that even the most principled, data-driven examination of material is still dependent on intuition and subjective assessment. While attempting to generate new conclusions and reassess existing accounts using the "hard facts" gleaned from original documents, it sometimes seemed that I was nevertheless destined to produce what amounted to yet another highly personal and subjective history. However, reviewing the outcomes of the investigation, I find that my feelings are well-expressed by an analogy provided by historian Richard Evans. Evans (2000) compares the process of synthesising history from sources to 'chiselling a statue from a 'rough-hewn block of stone'. He concedes that the 'the statue was not waiting there to be discovered'; rather, 'we made it ourselves'. But that does not mean that the process is wholly

personal and subjective. We are 'constrained not only by the size and shape of the original stone, but also by the kind of stone it is' (p. 147). Primary sources restrict, at least, the extent to which inventions and interpretations can proceed. As Geoffrey Elton (1991) has it, 'at the most elementary level, one cannot simply read into documents words that are not there' (p. 115). While the conclusions I have reached may not be the only ones that might be drawn, they at least have in their favour the fact that they have been arrived at via close examination of sources. Furthermore, by maintaining a careful record of the sources and procedures used (something I have consistently ensured throughout the project) I propose that my interpretations can be checked, and reassessed fairly, by other researchers.

Richard Evans uses the term 'master narrative' to describe the tendency of writers to generate accounts that proceed according to linear, predictable patterns of causation (p. 150). Interestingly, Evans notes that within the discipline of history, the creation of such narratives is increasingly being discouraged, and is now 'by no means the dominant mode of historical representation among historians' (p. 151). He gives the example from his own work of a study carried out into an early 20th century epidemic in Hamburg. Given the complexity and number of factors involved, he felt 'there could never be any question of presenting a simple chronology [...] because there were far too many events and processes going on at the same time' (p. 147). Applying Evans' perspective here to the literature that has been assessed in the course of the project, it seems reasonable to suggest that the history of ELT has been subject to the imposition of a number of powerful and pervasive master narratives. Within this tradition of professional history, descriptions of the appearance of CLT are also commonly subject to such shaping. Smith's complaint that accounts have been fashioned to accord with a particular model of applied linguistics history, which privileges theory and the movement of abstract ideas from applied linguistics into professional practice, is a reaction against just such a phenomenon.

Where I feel the project has enjoyed most success has been in its provision of an account that avoids a simplistic narrative, in which distinct developments are

connected in order to provide a monolithic explanation of events. At the very beginning of the investigation the idea of using a keywords approach was advanced as a solution to the problem of complexity. Rather than attempting to understand CLT as a whole phenomenon, individual ideas would be isolated and studied in detail. This approach has yielded, I feel, important advantages. By isolating key concepts and treating them on their own terms, those connections that have emerged between ideas have done so “organically”, based on the evidence examined. The connections suggested between COMMUNICATIVE, TASK and ACTIVITY represent just such a linkage. They emerged, unsought, as the investigation continued, and offered what amounts to an evidence-based account of events. In spite, perhaps, of the caveats advanced by the newer generation of historians, one cannot help but be reminded of E.V.P. Thompson’s famous comment that ‘the historian has got to be listening all the time [...]. If he listens, ‘then the material itself will begin to speak through him’ (in Abelow 1978: p.14).

On first reading the introduction to Williams *Keywords*, to which the project has repeatedly returned for inspiration, many of Williams’ ideas seemed to me rather difficult, even obscure. Now, though, two of Williams’ comments in these passages strike me as especially pertinent. They seem, indeed to provide an account of a longer, but perhaps rather similar journey. Williams comments firstly that ‘it is a central aim’ of his work to ‘show that some important social and historical processes occur within language, in ways which indicate how integral the problems of meanings and of relationships really are’ (p. 23). This strikes me now as particularly relevant— it was through tracing the development of keywords, discovering their changing senses, that the real history of ideas became evident in the discourse. Word meanings themselves provided clues as to the developments that were occurring in the profession. The further idea that words can exist as sites of conflict, where different users provide definitions that conform to their own ideas (as we saw with COMMUNICATIVE, on many occasions) is also present. ‘The vocabulary I have selected’, Williams explains, ‘is that which seems to me to contain the key words in which both continuity and discontinuity, and also deep conflicts of value and belief, are in this area engaged’ (p. 23). Furthermore, Williams also saw in the keywords

procedure a means of identifying relationships between ideas in data-driven way, allowing connections between words to suggest themselves— rather than imposing categories and connections prior to analysis. He explains that the ‘analyses of particular words are intrinsically connected, sometimes in complex ways’ (p. 25). Williams never seeks to force such connections. Despite his belief that his keywords could be connected and grouped according to a number of themes, he retained the alphabetical ordering of a dictionary. He hoped that that ‘other kinds of connection and comparison [would] suggest themselves to the reader, and may be followed through by a quite different selection and order of reading’ (ibid).

Given the expansion of ELT and the increase in its professionalization that has occurred since the 1970s, Stern’s call for studies to be carried out into our professional history remains as urgent as ever. His specific recommendation that researchers investigate ‘particular aspects’ of this history, restricting the scope to a carefully selected range of documents, also remains pertinent. I hope that some of the techniques, particularly since they are corpus-based, and therefore accessible to many working in the area of applied linguistics and ELT, might prove useful to investigators embarking on a similar examination of our professional past. I feel also that the techniques used may be of value to historians and professionals in other fields. By applying tools that isolate and illuminate important ideas in a discourse, it seems possible that a genuinely fresh interpretation of complex events can be achieved.

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¹³ For reasons of length, the bibliography does not contain references to the *ELT Journal* texts analysed in the course of the project procedure. These are referred to in-text using a special referencing format. See footnote 1 in Chapter One for details.

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Appendix One: Information about the Corpus

Collection Label	Period Covered	Volumes included	Editor	Number of Articles	Running Words
Rossner	1981–86	Volumes 36–40	Richard Rossner	153	509,468
New Lee	1973–81	Volumes 28–35	W.R. Lee	480	1,051,636
Old Lee	1959–73	Volumes 14–27	W.R. Lee	523*	1,136,054
Whole corpus	1959–1986	Volumes 14–40		1236 articles	2,815,135

*includes editorials

A detailed explanation of the contents of the corpus, both in terms of its cleaning and selection, are offered in Appendix Two (Procedures for the Assembly and Cleaning of the Corpus) and Appendix Three (Procedures for the Selection of the Corpus). However, some general comments concerning the corpus contents are that:

- The general policy for selection was to include all articles listed as such on each issue’s contents page (generally shown with a title and author, in a recognisable format). In early stages of compilation, items not listed in this format, including Reader's Letters, Question Box items, etc were generally easy to identify even as source files and were not considered for inclusion.
- The Old Lee collection, used entirely for the purpose of a reference corpus for Keywords analysis, was not ‘treated’ to the same extent or standard as the New Lee and Rossner collections. Some items, for example, have been identified as missing from the Old Lee texts. Details are given in Appendix A.4.

- Editorial files are absent from the New Lee collection, and have been removed from the Rossner sub-corpus. However, they are present in the Old Lee collection. The rationale for these decisions is put forward in Appendix Three.
- The Rossner period sub-corpus was treated last, and presented some unique challenges in terms of selection and cleaning policies. These are detailed in Appendices Two and Three.
- All articles were treated 'internally' (removing or annotating sections) according to quite detailed policies. These are detailed in Appendix Three.

Appendix Two: Procedures for the Assembly and Cleaning of the Corpus

A.2.1 Extraction

ELT Journal articles for the period under investigation were available in three different formats:

1. 'Hard copies' of the original journal volumes: the University of Warwick's ELT Archive has a complete historical collection of the publication.
2. A CD-ROM, *The ELT Journal on CD-ROM (1981—2004)* (Oxford Journals, 2006), containing articles from 1981 onwards, stored in PDF format
3. The online archive of articles at the *ELT Journal* website. This gives subscribers access to every edition of the journal from the year of its first publication. These files are also stored in PDF format.

One limitation of the corpus analysis tool, Wordsmith Tools, is that it is able to carry out operations only using plain text files. It was therefore necessary to transfer the electronic data, lifting articles either from the CD-ROM or website, from PDF into text format. In practice a combination of sources were used; while it was faster and more convenient to process files from the CD-ROM, for pre-1981 articles the website had to be used. In order to reduce the time taken to process the data, the source PDF documents were first transferred from the CD-ROM/website to the PC's hard drive. This made later operations on the files faster and more reliable.

However it soon became clear that manually transferring data, file by file, from one individual PDF document to one newly created text file, was extremely time-consuming. In order to speed this process an application was used to 'batch process' the files. The product eventually selected for this purpose, after a process of trial and error, was PDF Ripper (PDFBean, no date given), a conversion tool apparently designed for just this kind of task.

One advantage of the application was that, when extracting data from multiple PDF documents, it automatically labelled the text files it created and organised them into folders which were identical to those of the source documents. The processing therefore resulted in the creation of two parallel file ‘trees’, one holding the source (PDF) files, the other holding the corresponding source (text) files into which the data had been transferred. Not only was this convenient for later processing by WordSmith Tools (which allows users to select multiple files in the same folder), but it also made it easy to locate and compare source and destination documents.

A.2.2 Identifying and Explaining Errors

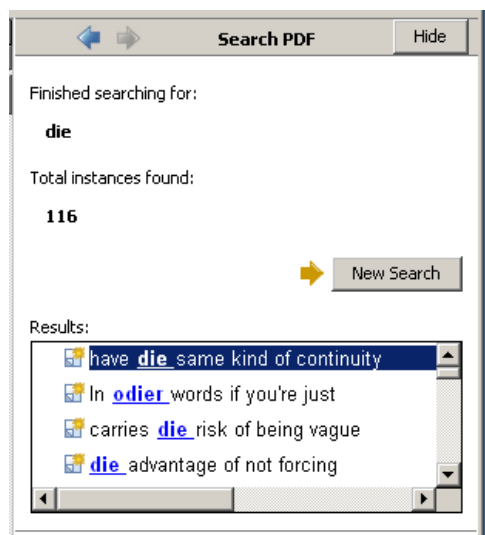
On observing the results of the extraction, however, it was soon clear that errors were appearing in the destination files that were not visible in the original documents. The most obvious anomaly was that the letters *th* often appeared in text files as *di*. The most frequent manifestation of this problem was that the word *the* appeared as *die* in files that had been extracted.

It took some time to unravel the mystery as to why the data, which appeared “sound” in its original format, appeared to contain errors after conversion. It was feared initially that it was the batch processing program that was at fault, and that the data would, after all, have to be processed by hand. However, after frequent posting at the excellent and extremely helpful CORPORA newsgroup (University of Bergen, no date given), an explanation gradually emerged. This was that the source files themselves were corrupted by errors, and would have to be treated regardless of the transfer process used.

The reason why these errors were not visible in the original documents lay in the nature of the Portable Document Format itself. A key advantage of the PDF technology for publishers is its ability to accurately maintain the appearance of original documents. This is possible due to the fact that a PDF file may combine three kinds of data; essentially text, and two types of graphical data. Vector graphics are used to reproduce simpler illustrations and diagrams, while raster graphics are used to represent images such as photographs (Adobe, 2010). In this case, a combination

of two of these data forms was present in the files. Firstly, raster graphics were clearly being used to ‘show’ the texts to the reader in their exact original appearance; a fact that (in retrospect!) was intuitively obvious since even printer’s errors and smudges were reproduced faithfully in the presentation of articles. Secondly, though, text was being stored in a separate layer, underpinning the visual data. It was this textual layer that was being accessed when the data was copied and pasted, and which contained mistakes. Once arrived at, this interpretation of events was easy to check. As the screenshot depicted in Figure A.2.1 (below) indicates, by accessing textual data using the Adobe (PDF) Reader’s own ‘Find’ function it was apparent that these errors were present in the ‘hidden’ text layer, even in the source documents.

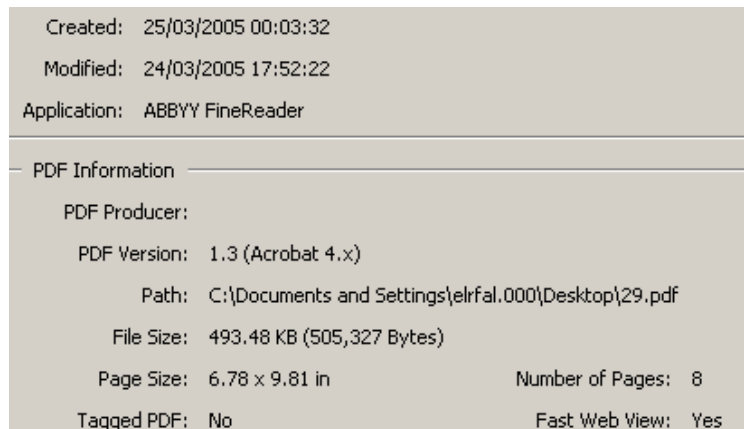
Figure A.2.1: Screenshot of Adobe Reader showing an *ELT Journal* file, demonstrating that errors are present within the original PDF documents.



How did these mistakes become present in the data in the first place? It seems likely that they were introduced at the time, during the publisher’s creation of the PDF archive, when technicians scanned ‘hard copy’ pages of the *ELT Journal*. By referring to the file properties of the archive’s PDF documents in Adobe Reader (selecting File...Document Properties) it becomes clear that this was achieved by carrying out an OCR (Optical Character Recognition) process for extraction. As the screenshot

given in Figure A.2.2 reveals, the PDF documents were created using a well-known PDF package, the *ABBYY Fine Reader*, which includes OCR functionality (ABBYY, date not given).

Figure A.2.2 : A close up of the Properties panel of a typical archive document, indicating that the PDF files had been built using an OCR-capable application.



Settings for the FineReader application can be set during scanning to output data in a form which highlights ambiguous characters (including such errors as the *th -> di* “ligature” identified at the start of the investigation). A screenshot of this function is provided in Figure A.2.3 below. This permits a human reader to check problem letters and correct OCR scans to improve accuracy. This is, however, clearly a time-consuming task, and my guess here is that the technicians responsible chose to allow the program to work on its default, ‘automatic’ setting (without checking for errors).

Figure A.2.3: A screenshot from the ABBYY Finereader application showing how ambiguous data can be identified during OCR, allowing ‘human’ checking.

Brumfit The main difference, of course, is that we work largely in one-year courses, and consequently we're concerned with the development of individuals, perhaps to a greater extent than you can be on a very short course. I think I see my own role in the Department (of English to Speakers of Other Languages at the London University Institute of Education) as a method-ologist, which means that I can't have any particular specialization. Anything that contributes to effective English language teaching and training is something that must be of interest and something I must be involved in. This carries the risk of being vague and non-specific; but it has the advantage of not forcing me to become so enthused with a particular direction that I lose contact with the realities of classroom situations ... so long as I keep on going into classrooms and having contact. I perhaps ought to add that the amount of contact it is in fact possible to have is a great deal less than would be desirable in an ideal situation.

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A.2.3 Cleaning the Corpus

A.2.3.1 Introduction

Looking at literature relating to the issue of cleaning, it seems that there has always been a close relationship between the automation of text-based processing and the correction of the anomalies that result. Ringger and Allen (1996) for example, describe their work dealing with errors in text generated by a speech recognition process. Much work has also been carried out into the use of corpus material extracted from the web (for example Ringlstetter, 2006). Many of the studies describing solutions to such problems, unfortunately, describe large-scale and highly technical solutions well beyond the scope of a one-person project. Ringlstetter, for instance, describes an error correction model and application which required specialised programming skills. While disappointing in this respect, my review of this literature did have one positive outcome: it confirmed that error correction was “normal” and expected in any large-scale corpus project.

A.2.3.2 First Steps: Assessing the Damage

Once it was established that errors would appear regardless of the copying and pasting procedure used, it was realised that some procedure for cleaning the corpus

(or at least assessing the extent of its damage) would have to be arrived at. Even before it was determined *why* there were errors in the corpus, an attempt was made to assess, briefly: firstly, the extent to which errors were present in the text files; secondly, what kind of errors there were; thirdly, whether the errors were distributed consistently, chronologically, or whether they more frequent in particular periods.

An initial 'rough check' was carried by sampling articles published during the 1940s, 1950s, 1960s and 1970s (76 texts in total, more or less equally distributed). The test was carried out using a Word macro, written using the Visual Basic editor in Microsoft Word (Tools/ Macros/ Visual Basic editor on the toolbar). The macro (essentially a tiny programme capable of leveraging Word's own text functions) made use of the application's inbuilt spellchecker to identify spelling mistakes. It operated on each selected file, identifying and recording the errors, and providing a 'count' for the total number of errors found. This error data was copied into a single table in a separate Word document, so that the results could be easily assessed. The first line of this table, in which each row represents one article, is shown in Table A.2.1 below.

Table A.2.1: *The first line of a table produced by a word macro to identify common errors in sampled articles (additional items in the Errors column are shown separately below the table to save space)*

File name	No. of words	No. of errors	% errors	Errors
C:\eltjlocal\ELTJ files\1948\1948II6\141.txt	3209	79	2.4618261140 5422	Kingdon Uldall Svartengren Tibbitts

				Kingdon [...other items in this column are shown below]
--	--	--	--	--

intona	arN	NDo	Ngood
tion	yesterday.x	seasy	I
tonetically	arrivedN	Nblue	I
Ndown	TTiey	tonetic	Imprfccuvc
to'day	ar	allN	Pcftccuvv
Vrite	NThey	Npity	ihIObc
ordera'nother	ar,rived	Waj	ihillhm
Nmeet	ar'rived	ex'ception	bmtung
toYmorrow	arN	Nroom	Pcrfeai
moreN	ar	de,bate	t
in'vite	ex'pect	un'fortunate	hiyW.g
Nbrother	Nhave	de'bate	ioginf
ex.ami.nation	Nhe	xflat	Pomi
consisu	re'ceived	im'possible	Prnod
a'nother	ex%pected	de'pends	Ui
Nbook	Putit,down	desbate	iuo
to'day's	it'down	to'night	uifing
ar'rivedN	xknow	Nhave	
ar,rived	NThey	sup'pose	

By examining this record of errors, it was possible to address the three questions posed at the beginning of this section:

1) **Number of Errors present.** Table A.2.2 below indicates the average percentage of errors found for each decade.

Table A.2.2: *Table summarising error distribution across decades*

decade	Average number of words found to be errors in the documents
40s	4.3 %
50s	0.98 %
60s	1.16 %
70s	1.38 %

It was considered that while the number of errors found was not high on average—less than 2% for most of the decades surveyed—in some individual texts the percentage was much higher. It was these ‘messy’ texts that seemed to be a cause for concern.

2) **Error types.** Regarding the type of errors found, the following basic observations were made:

- Of course some of the ‘errors’ were merely words identified as spelling mistakes by Microsoft Word’s spellchecker utility. Foreign or uncommon names, such as ‘Uldall’ or ‘Tibbetts’, clearly fell into this category.
- Some of the least legible error items, such as ‘Impcrfccuv’, ‘Pcftccuv’ and ‘ihiObc’ were generally identifiable as words copied from (difficult to scan and interpret) footnotes in the original texts. By eliminating these footnotes, it seemed, a great deal of ‘junk’ data could be excised from the database.
- Perhaps the most serious error type was the ‘word fragment’, such as the items ‘intona’, ‘tion’ and ‘tonetically’. This appeared to constitute the most serious obstacle to accuracy and later reading using concordances. This seemed to occur where a hyphen was present in the original text, but was not reconnected during OCR. The danger here was that even quite high frequency items, of interest from a keyword perspective (including indeed ‘communicative’ itself), could easily become fragments missed by the corpus analysis software.

3) Error distribution. Concerning distribution, it could be seen that errors did seem to be more frequent in some periods when compared to others. This was perhaps a result of changes in font style and size in different editions of the volume.

A.2.3.3 Second Test: Identifying Important Errors

Once it was decided that errors were frequent enough in the corpus so as to potentially affect results, a further test was designed to analyse problems more precisely. The analysis this time focused on the 1970s and 1980s; by now identifiable as the periods most likely to be used for the purposes of the investigation. Its primary aim was to determine more exactly what kind of errors were present, and to what extent, so that cleaning could be carried out on some principled basis. A further objective was to furnish a list of the most frequent errors. These could then be corrected in the corpus using a simple find/replace application downloaded from the Internet. A third objective was to compare the two decades, to check once again whether significant differences in error type/incidence were present in texts drawn from different periods.

The test was developed on quite simple lines. Wordlists for the 1970s and 1980s were compiled and cut down so that only those items with a frequency of 10 or more were included. Each shortened list was then pasted into a Word document. A simple macro was written and then run to identify the errors in each list, copying and pasting them into tables in separate 'error list' tables.

As the example rows given in Table A.2.3, below, evidence, the errors were then coded, by hand, to identify more precisely what categories of error were present.

Table A.2.3: *Sample rows from a table listing errors identified from the 1970s wordlist, with error types coded using simple classes:*

Item ranking in wordlist	Item	Frequency in decade	% of sample	Error code
540	Tion	272	0.02	fragment
732	Ing	195	0.02	fragment
736	Efl	194	0.02	acronym
861	Vol	161	0.01	fragment
879	Rp	157	0.01	acronym
901	Elt	153	0.01	acronym
1123	Esl	117	<0.01	acronym
1174	Cf	110	<0.01	format error
1287	Ment	99	<0.01	fragment
1335	Ga	95	<0.01	mixed
1419	Tions	90	<0.01	fragment
1483	Th	85	<0.01	mixed
1669	Distractors	74	<0.01	specialist term
1673	latefl	74	<0.01	acronym
1683	Center	73	<0.01	U.S English

This coding procedure was carried out for the error lists for both the 1970s and 1980s. From this, it could be seen that, as in the first test, many of the ‘errors’ identified (particularly in the files drawn from the 1970s) were simply items flagged as mistakes by Word’s spell-checker. Proper nouns (names not listed in the dictionary) acronyms, technical expressions and American spellings fitted into this category. Some words, however, were true “errors” in the sense that (like the ubiquitous *die* for *the* example described earlier) they had been misread by the OCR software. These items were coded as ‘OCR’ in the table. ‘Fragments’, words broken, as explained earlier, due to the presence of hyphens in the original texts, were given their own category.

Summaries of this analysis are presented in the figures and tables (Table A.2.4, Table A.2.5) below.

Table A.2.4 *Table indicating frequency of error types for the 1970s*

Error type	Frequency
fragment	1872
proper noun	1716
acronym	1394
mixed	669
specialist term	562
OCR	520
format error	303
foreign word	138
U.S English	99
Total	7273

Table A.2.5: *Table indicating frequency of error types for the 1980s*

Error type	Frequency
acronym	3065
foreign word	22
format error	666
fragment	3016
mixed	48
ocr	6102
proper	1526
specialist term	370
u.s. spelling	46
Total	14861

Overall , it was clear that OCR errors ('real' errors in a sense) were clearly much more frequent in the texts from the 1980s. This meant that articles from this decade would require the most serious 'treatment' for errors.

A.2.3.4 Principled Cleaning

As a result of this process, it was now possible to begin cleaning the corpus to some reasonable standard, carrying this out according to a fairly principled strategy. Much of this work was carried out by a research assistant, who was asked to apply a set policy to ensure consistent results. This policy, developed based on the error data recovered, was as follows:

Manual Cleaning. The assistant was asked to carry out the work of cleaning files by completing the following basic tasks for each file:

a) Remove, by hand, headers and footers. These frequently contained footnotes and other forms of small, or differently-formatted text, not easily recognised by OCR software. These fragments appeared to contribute to the most obvious and illegible errors in the corpus.

b) By hand, re-constitute fragments such as 'sub' and 'junctive', obvious in the text.

This kind of error, deemed the most potentially dangerous in terms of its potential affect on keyword results, was present throughout the corpus. Since this procedure was tedious and difficult, a Macro was written to highlight potential fragments (frequently generated, for various reasons, at the end of lines). This meant that documents did not have at least to be scanned line-by-line to identify fragments.

c) Some additional 'selection' procedures working within texts (outlined in more detail in Appendix Three).

Automatic Cleaning. I corrected, using find/replace software, the files from the problem periods identified during testing (chiefly the 1970s and 1980s). This procedure was carried out using the list of error words identified from earlier tests.

A.2.3.5 Phase Two of the Project: A Final Cleaning Phase

It was felt that these 'rough' procedures were sufficient for the first, quantitative phase of the project. For the purposes of providing a reference corpus for Keyword analysis, it did not seem likely that small differences would affect comparative results assessed on the basis of over a million words. It was anyway clear that vagueries of the selection process (see Appendix Four), and the unavailability of certain Old Lee files, meant that that collection would remain slightly incomplete. Furthermore, careful checking of the work carried out by the research assistant indicated that a priority had been placed on principles of data cleaning rather than selection; some passages such as Errata and short, untitled lists of references had been left in. Attempts to achieve perfection in terms of cleaning therefore appeared to be unattainable at this stage.

However, for the purposes of the second phase of the project, in which individual keywords were traced across the longitudinal period of the corpus, it was felt that greater accuracy should be strived for with regard to the New Lee and Rossner collections. This was particularly the case since the detailed "qualitative" procedure arrived at, making use the Concord programme, would (unlike the keywords procedure) be more sensitive to individual errors. Collocation data could also be more easily affected in cases where smaller samples of data were being referred to. To achieve the necessary level of accuracy for this work, the New Lee and Rossner corpora were essentially cleaned by hand. Individual texts, only "partly" corrected by the first cleaning phase, were checked again by eye to remove unwanted fragments and other easily visually identifiable anomalies.

Appendix Three: Procedures for the Selection of the Corpus

A.3.1 Introduction

Hunston comments that decisions 'about what should go into a corpus are based on what the corpus is going to be used for ' (2002, p. 26). Accordingly, explicit selection policies were carefully arrived at prior to the process of compilation, and served as guidelines to ensure that texts were assembled on some principled basis. As will be clear from the last appendix, 'Cleaning the Corpus', principles of selection (which parts of the corpus would be included, and which removed) were often necessarily considered alongside (and subsumed within) those relating to cleaning.

A.3.2. Selection 'at Source'

Much of the selection policy was applied 'at source'; it determined which items should be extracted from the CD-ROM or online database and converted into text files. The general policy here was to include all articles listed as such on each issue's contents page (generally shown with a title and author, in a recognisable format). In practice the issue as to what was an 'article' or not did not prove problematic. They appeared early on the contents pages, following only the editorial, and were easy to distinguish from such 'excluded' items as:

- Reader's Letters
- Question Box
- Reviews

Editorials were not present in the New Lee corpus (during this period, they were relegated to a separate 'editorial note' section). However, editorials found elsewhere were initially processed for inclusion. They contained, particularly in Lee's time, material deemed to be of thematic interest, and in many cases took the form of short articles highly similar in form to those contributed by other writers. It was impossible for example to determine whether Lee's 'Does the 'What' Determine the

'How'?' (1972 26/1 pp. 107-116) was in fact an 'editorial' or an 'article' on any certain footing.

A.3.3 Selection *Within* Texts: General Principles

As explained in the last appendix, files were cleaned 'top and tail' to ensure that text was not repeated. Other instructions, implemented at the same time as cleaning, were as follows:

- place error-filled but legible data, where possible, within chevrons ('<>'). Wordsmith tools will ignore such items.
- while working, refer to the original texts to make sense of items like diagrams and tables that may not have been transferred satisfactorily
- remove 'Reference' sections, particularly where lengthy lists of books are offered.
- 'chevron' (and therefore remove from corpus tool scrutiny) such items as 'erratum' and 'notes for contributors' that are not part of article texts.
- ignore foreign letters and phonemic script, even if they appear confusing
- retain tables and charts. Where they do introduce a large amount of junk data, use chevrons to isolate confusing stretches of text
- re-order table and chart information, where this is practicable, to increase readability
- proof-read passages written in unusual text where OCR errors may be frequent

Article titles, incidentally, were retained throughout the corpus.

As can be seen, some of these points are perhaps as much 'cleaning' instructions as policies affecting selection, and reflect the interconnectedness of these activities.

The Old Lee corpus was treated almost exclusively by the research assistant. Close checking of Old Lee corpus texts revealed that the most detailed and time-consuming of these listed procedures were not always implemented perfectly. A few

short reference lists appear that have not been 'chevroned'. Occasionally, short paragraphs, intended as 'Notices to the Reader' or 'Errata', were not removed or chevroned. However, the most substantial measures, such as the removal of 'tops and tails' from previous and succeeding articles, were carried out effectively. The assistant clearly understood the principle that the Old Lee data were to be assessed *en masse*, and that their chief role was to serve as a reference corpus for keyword selection.

During cleaning/selection and subsequently, some articles were identified as missing from the Old Lee period reference corpus:

1961

J. G. BRUTON's 'English with a Purpose' (1961 15/2 56-63)

1963

Edward M. Anthony 's 'Approach, Method, and Technique' (1963 17/2 63-67)

1967

David Shillan's 'An Articulatory Unit for Speech and Text' (1967 21/2 150-155)

Michael Ockenden's 'The Unfinished Time Aspect of the Present Perfect Tense'(1967 21/2 156-159)

Arthur F. Powell's 'Forms and Uses of Nouns of Nationality' (1967 21/2 159-165)

Andrew G. Bonar's 'Three-Stage or Four-Stage Remedial Grammar Drills in the Laboratory?' (1967 21/2 165-169)

John Parry 'Making it Real: 3. Lost and Found' (1967 21/3 240-243)

Carlton Samarajiwa's 'Teaching English as a Second Language through a Children's Theatre Group' (1967 21/3 244-246)

Chitra Fernando 's 'The Composition of Exercises' (1967 21/3 246-250)

1968

A. L. Jones' 'Theses and Dissertations' (1968 22/3 277-279)

1970

Mamta Agrawal and D. P. L. Dry's 'A Classification of English Verbs' (1970 24/2 138-146)

Marianne Celce's 'The Duality Of Collective Nouns' (1970 24/2 164-169)Latif Doss's 'Teaching English In The United Arab Republic' (1970 24/2 169-172)

Maurice Imhoof's 'An Aspect Of The English Language Programme In Afghanistan'
(1970 24/2 179-182)

1971

Editorial (1971 26/1 1)

M. J. Paine's 'Drill Charts and Reading Cards' (1971 26/1: 56-59)

R. J. Hill's 'Active and Passive Vocabulary' (1971 26/1: 61-62)

These items were identified by detailed checking of texts. Apart from these few missing articles, it can be assumed that all texts, as defined above, are included in the corpus.

A.3.4 Rossner Period Articles

The Rossner period articles were treated last, and since the format of the *Journal* during this time changed somewhat, some additional selection issues were introduced.

An additional feature discovered amongst articles from this period was the 'Talking Shop' interview; generally the transcript of a round table discussion on some agreed topic, often facilitated by Rossner or another member of staff. This was published irregularly. The feeling at this time was that it was clearly not an article in the conventional sense and ought not to be included. Since it was always marked as a 'Talking Shop' piece it could easily be identified and excluded.

Another challenge was that Rossner articles were formatted, 'internally', differently to earlier, Lee period items. New internal format elements included:

- **Much heavier use of margin titles to organise articles.** Where possible, these were included as they were felt to constitute part of the piece. However, they proved very problematic in terms of cleaning (often appearing as fragments, or containing large numbers of errors owing to irregular fonts being used) and were occasionally chevroned or removed as a necessity.

- **An abstract.** This was included as it was felt to constitute part of the text within the context of the new Rossner format.
- **Three sections at the end of articles reserved for scholarly notation; ‘Notes’, ‘References’ and ‘The author’ (a short biographical summary).** These were chevroned since it was clear that they were often error-filled, and contained data that was not of direct interest in terms of content.

As can be seen, some of these decisions had to be arrived at ‘ad hoc’, since there did not always appear to be universal principles that could be easily applied.

A.3.5 The Second Phase: New Lee and Rossner Articles Cleaned to a Higher Standard.

For the purposes of the second, detailed phase of the investigation, as we saw in the last appendix, the New Lee and Rossner corpora were cleaned to a higher standard so as to allow interrogation by concordance tools. An additional step was to remove editorials from the Rossner texts, since these were not present in the New Lee corpus (during this period, they were relegated to a separate ‘editorial note’ section). There were two desired outcomes here. Firstly, that the collocation analysis would yield (slightly) more comparable and therefore accurate results. Secondly, more importantly, that when tracing keywords through the chronological profile of the corpora they should not turn up only in Rossner editorials, as this would lead to findings only applicable to that period.

Appendix Four: Parameters and Settings in Wordsmith Tools

A. 4.1 Lemmatisation

Scott and Tribble (2006) concede that the issue of lemmatization—the assignment of words to groups or families labelled by a headword— ‘is a thorny one’ (p. 14) in terms of arriving at a reliable formula for distinguishing lemmas. However, there seems to be a broad consensus in the literature concerning the necessity of lemmatisation, and the definition of a lemma for corpus purposes. McEnery and Wilson (1996) take it as read that lemmatisation ‘is an important procedure in corpus-based research’ (p.53). According to these writers lemmatisation ‘involves the reduction of the words a corpus to their various lexemes—the head word form that one would look up if one were looking for the word in a dictionary’ (p. 53). In their example, *Kicks*, *kicked*, and *kicking* are all therefore reduced to the lexeme KICK. Hunston (2002) explains that from the perspective of corpus linguistics, the process of lemmatisation is a convenience’; what is to be counted in a lemma depends on the use the idea it is to be put to’ (p. 18). For the purposes of her book, she explains, ‘word forms will be said to belong to the same lemma only if they belong to the same word class’ (ibid).

Since older (v. 4 or earlier) versions of Wordsmith Tools were not packaged with a lemma list, Mike Scott’s support website for Wordsmith Tools (Scott, date not given) offers a link to Yasumasa Someya’s impressively comprehensive (40,569 tokens in 14,762 lemma groups) list, to be used with his Wordlist and Keywords applications.

The list, a simple text file neatly arranged so that individual entries can be easily checked and adjusted by users, makes use of the ubiquitous ‘word class’ principle, described above. Using our five selected keywords as examples, we note that his entries for these items are:

learner -> learners

activity -> activities

task -> tasks

syllabus -> syllabuses

No entry exists for 'communicative', presumably because the lexeme is the only member of the lemma.

A.4.2 Concordance Settings

A.4.2.1 Horizon Span

An important factor in selecting important, or salient, collocates, is the choice of the 'horizon', or 'span' which is used to identify words as collocates. Baker (2006) explains that 'the choice of span length, as with the choice of statistical measure of collocation, is likely to yield slightly different results depending on how it is set' (p. 103).

The default horizon setting in Wordsmith Tools is -5/+5; that is, taking into account the five words to the left and the right of the search term. This is by no means the only viable setting that can be used. One of Baker's studies (pp. 96—120) uses an online corpus tool, BNCWeb, to analyse the collocates surrounding the words *bachelor/bachelors* in the BNC. Baker decides to make use of a -3/+3 horizon for the purposes of this investigation. The issue of which horizon span to use is also discussed in some detail by Scott and Tribble (2006: pp. 34—37). Scott cites Sinclair's findings, based on work done in the 1960s 'with the best technology available at that time' (p. 34). This indicated that outside a span of 4 words on either side of the "node" 'very little is likely to be added in searching for collocates of a node' (ibid). However, Scott seems to suggest that a span of four to five words is optimal, and in the examples given later in the same chapter (pp. 35-37) a -5/+5 span is used. It is also significant that Scott has engineered the -5/+5 span as the default setting for his Concord application.

To check whether or not using a smaller span, such as the -3/+3 span used in Baker's "mini study" would produce significantly different results, I carried comparative tests by searching for the term 'activity' in the Rossner corpus and

adjusting the horizon. Highly similar results were returned for the +5/-5 and -3/+3 lists. It seemed that the 'default' settings were the safest, since there did not appear to be any principle that could be applied to justify the (less common) -3/+3 horizon used by Baker in his mini-study.

A.4.2.2 Decisions Concerning Collocation Order

By default, collocates in Concord are listed by frequency. In the case of the search word 'activity/activities' for example, looking only at the Rossner era texts, the items listed in table A.4.1 (below) appear.

Table A.4.1: *Top 20 collocates for activity/activities in Rossner by raw frequency*

	Word	Total found
1	the	891
2	activities	826
3	activity	706
4	of	587
5	and	448
6	in	354
7	a	348
8	to	335
9	is	215
10	for	173
11	that	151
12	be	139
13	as	139
14	are	136
15	which	132
16	language	124
17	this	102
18	on	102

19	communicative	100
20	classroom	100

As can be seen, even if we eliminate functional words this list of collocates is of limited value in identifying thematic change. Baker (2006: pp. 100-101) agrees that the raw frequency information for collocates is a poor indicator of their actual 'saliency'. One limitation is that a very high frequency item such as 'a' or 'and' will often be found in the vicinity of the search term merely because it is a common term in the corpus. 'Therefore', Baker relates, 'a number of frequency tests have been devised, which take into account the frequency of words in a corpus and their relative number of occurrences both next to and away from each other' (p. 101).

Wordsmith Tools offers four such frequency tests: SMI, MI3, Z Score and log likelihood. Each test applies a different algorithm which assesses the strength of the collocation in a different way. Helpfully, Baker himself has undertaken work exploring some of these test procedures and evaluating their strengths and weaknesses. His mini-project examining collocates of *bachelor/bachelors* in the BNC (pp. 96—120), includes a table compiled to explicitly compare the results of different statistical tests. The comparison includes all four of the tests provided by Wordsmith Tools (Mutual Information, Z score, log-likelihood and MI3) as well as the log-log and observed/expected tests (not provided by the application). Baker's conclusion from these comparative studies is that 'different algorithms tend to favour different types of words' (p. 102). Summarising those of his comments that refer to tests available in Wordsmith Tools), it appears that:

- Log likelihood and MI3 tests return a mixture of lexical and grammar words
- (S) MI score and Z test calculations tend to favour lexical words, but often rank low-frequency words highly (p. 102)
- an option for the investigator could be to 'consider the results from more than one algorithm'(p. 102)

Given the overall objectives of the project; to identify wide-scale and underpinning shifts in the use and meanings of words, the Z-score and SMI tests were clearly unsuitable. While they might reveal interesting incidences or low frequency “quirks” in the uses of terms, it seemed obvious that they would prove less helpful in identifying wider “trends”. The other two tests, the log-likelihood and MI3 calculations, seemed more promising in this respect. While they tended to offer the observer a list that included grammatical words as well as lexical items, it seemed a simple matter to reduce the lists so as to isolate lexical items for examination.

In order to decide which of these two tests, the log-likelihood or MI3 calculation, would be more suitable, I followed Baker’s lead by comparing lists of collocates returned by the MI3 and log-likelihood tests, based on the data gathered from my own corpus. In the end it was decided to apply the log-likelihood tests because:

- This was the test used for the earlier KW analysis. Perhaps there was some virtue in applying a similar algorithm, consistently, throughout the project
- The log-likelihood test was one that I understood intuitively, as an algorithm, from my earlier work with keywords.

The default minimum frequency of *five* collocates was used for the purposes of collocation analysis.

A.4.2.3 ‘Reference’ Wordlist for the Relation Comparison Statistic

In order to carry out a relations statistic comparison in Concord the user must also select a wordlist, upon whose frequencies (expected versus observed) the log-likelihood statistic can be calculated. As in the case of a keyword comparison, the choice of wordlist is up to the user. As Scott (2007) explains, there is no particular rule here; it is ‘up to you to choose a wordlist which actually relates to the concordance you’ve done!’. In this case it seemed most logical, for purposes of chronological comparison, to use a wordlist compiled for the whole corpus; the Old Lee, New Lee and Rossner sub-corpora combined.

A.4.3 Cluster Settings

The settings for cluster analysis were set from 2 to 5, so as to capture as broad a range of cluster phenomena as possible. Default settings were applied in all other respects. In retrospect, the minimum setting of 2 lead to the recovery of fragments that in many cases did not include the keyword itself. Use of the Concgram application might have recovered better results in these cases. However, the lists given in the appendices that follow are given as captured, since these were the lists actually used during the detailed analysis of the texts.

Appendix Five: Ethical Basis for the Assembly of the Corpus

The Proprietary Rights Notice for *ELT Journal* Online indicates that users 'may view, reproduce or store copies of articles comprising the journal provided that the articles are used only for their personal, non-commercial use'(Oxford Journals, 2009). Since the corpus was intended wholly for private, academic study, it was felt that in general terms these Rights would not be breached by compiling a corpus for immediate study. Many of the articles used were extracted directly from the commercially available CD-ROM, *The ELT Journal on CD-ROM (1981-2004)* (2005). Treating these PDF files for use by the corpus tools appeared to be a wholly technical matter that did not require further permissions.

However, files published before 1981 were not available in CD-ROM format. Permission was sought from the person most directly responsible for the *ELT Journal* within Oxford University Press at the time, Bruce Wade, to use the *Journal's* online archive for the purpose of collecting older files. Access and permission were kindly granted to Dr Richard Smith (the main thesis Supervisor) and myself at a meeting in 2006 held with Mr. Wade and Cristina Whitecross, the Chair of the Board of Management of the *Journal*, and the chief commissioning editor for Oxford University Press in the field of applied linguistics. A password was provided which allowed direct access to the online archive (since then, access to this archive has become available to all subscribers to the website).

Once we had requested and been given this access, it was felt that, as a courtesy to the publishers and editor of the *Journal*, they should be kept abreast of project developments, and informed of any findings that they might find useful. On 26th January 2007, for example, I wrote to Keith Morrow, the present Editor, describing the errors that had been found in the corpus, and attempting an explanation for their presence on the lines of those given in Appendix Two. Mr Morrow seemed to find this of interest as he had been involved in the compilation of files for the 2005 CD-ROM and was therefore familiar with problems related to OCR processing (personal communication, 2007). Updates on the project's progress were also sent

to Cristina Whitecross. On 10th April 2008, a meeting was also arranged with her (at the IATEFL Conference 2008 at Exeter) at which my supervisor and I gave a report on the work to date, including a summary of its main findings, in person.

Appendix Six: Collocation and Cluster Data for the Keywords Analysed in Phase Two (Chapters Five to Nine) of the Project

A.6.1 Introduction

In the following sections collocation and cluster data for each of the five words (COMMUNICATIVE, LEARNER, ACTIVITY, TASK and SYLLABUS) analysed in the second stage of the project will be presented in turn.

The collocation tables will show the top 30 items (*sans* functional items) in each list. The only exception is in section A.6.5.1, Collocations of SYLLABUS in New Lee, in which only 29 items appear. This appears to be due to the relatively low frequency of the term SYLLABUS in the New Lee corpus.

Cluster tables are similarly shortened to a 30 word length.

A.6.2 COMMUNICATIVE

A.6.2.1 Collocations of COMMUNICATIVE in New Lee (“Lexical”¹⁴ Items Only).

Order	Order (before non- lexical words removed)	Word	Log likelihood Relation	Total in Corpus
1	1	COMMUNICATIVE	2831.438	243
2	2	COMPETENCE	605.06	62
3	4	ACTS	122.2618	13
4	5	FUNCTIONS	102.5798	14
5	6	VALUE	87.83189	14
6	7	LANGUAGE	76.04003	38
7	9	FUNCTION	66.76273	11
8	11	SITUATIONS	58.31796	12
9	13	TEACHING	46.85792	20
10	14	NEEDS	37.02306	9
11	15	LINGUISTIC	36.37487	10
12	16	DEVELOP	36.10015	7
13	17	ACTIVITY	35.03187	8
14	18	SKILLS	34.56966	9
15	19	ACTIVITIES	34.44662	8
16	20	USE	33.15868	15
17	21	DEVELOPING	28.56639	5

¹⁴ “Functional” or grammar words such as ‘the’, ‘and’, ‘of’, etc. have been removed from these lists

18	23	SITUATION	25.52738	8
19	26	APPROACH	23.58376	7
20	27	REAL	23.41986	6
21	28	PURPOSES	22.61287	5
22	34	TEACH	14.4933	5
23	35	MEANS	13.75889	5
24	36	PARTICULAR	12.97621	5
25	38	ITEMS	12.38026	5
26	40	IMPORTANT	11.58851	5
27	42	FOREIGN	10.84064	6
28	45	LEARNERS	9.080215	5
29	46	DIFFERENT	8.648719	5
30	47	SAME	7.967008	5

A.6.2.2 Collocations of COMMUNICATIVE in Rossner (“Lexical” Items Only).

Order	Order before non-lexical words removed	Word	Log likelihood Relation	Total in corpus
1	1	COMMUNICATIVE	11463.18	737
2	3	APPROACH	904.6204	103
3	5	COMPETENCE	581.2405	60
4	6	ACTIVITIES	429.5912	53
5	9	SYLLABUS	349.0902	43
6	13	TEACHING	264.8118	60
7	14	APPROACHES	238.3675	25
8	15	LANGUAGE	238.1159	74
9	16	ACTIVITY	219.2494	31
10	19	METHODOLOGY	163.1231	19
11	21	NON	123.2695	22
12	23	FORMAL	114.3776	17
13	24	FUNCTIONS	112.014	15
14	25	PERFORMANCE	107.8417	16
15	26	CORE	107.6841	12
16	28	PURPOSE	105.0933	17
17	29	MODULAR	103.9645	9
18	31	MATERIALS	88.56381	17
19	33	TEACHERS	84.84667	24
20	36	VALUE	79.63	13

21	38	SKILLS	72.40909	15
22	40	INTENT	69.9447	6
23	41	ESP	69.90624	9
24	42	DEVELOPMENT	66.90236	12
25	45	DESIRE	61.61533	8
26	46	COMMUNICATIONAL	56.72986	5
27	48	FUNCTIONAL	54.65394	8
28	49	INFORMAL	53.34737	7
29	51	SYLLABUSES	52.66367	7
30	53	EVALUATING	52.03648	6

A.6.2.3 Clusters of COMMUNICATIVE in New Lee

Ranking	Cluster	Freq.	Length
1	COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE	61	2
2	OF COMMUNICATIVE	35	2
3	THE COMMUNICATIVE	31	2
4	OF THE	19	2
5	IN THE	18	2
6	A COMMUNICATIVE	14	2
7	OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE	13	3
8	COMPETENCE IN	12	2
9	COMMUNICATIVE ACTS	12	2
10	AND COMMUNICATIVE	12	2
11	COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN	12	3
12	COMMUNICATIVE VALUE	11	2
13	LANGUAGE TEACHING	11	2
14	IN A	11	2
15	COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTIONS	11	2
16	COMMUNICATIVE SITUATIONS	10	2
17	COMMUNICATIVE NEEDS	9	2
18	COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION	9	2
19	COMMUNICATIVE USE	9	2
20	TO THE	8	2
21	COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS	8	2
22	USE OF	8	2
23	IN COMMUNICATIVE	7	2
24	COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH	7	2
25	COMMUNICATIVE USE OF	7	3
26	OF THE COMMUNICATIVE	7	3
27	IT IS	7	2
28	COMMUNICATIVE ACTIVITIES	6	2

29	OF LANGUAGE	6	2
30	COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE	6	2

A.6.2.4 Clusters for COMMUNICATIVE in Rossner

Ranking	Cluster	Freq.	Length
1	THE COMMUNICATIVE	145	2
2	COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH	95	2
3	THE COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH	74	3
4	OF COMMUNICATIVE	66	2
5	A COMMUNICATIVE	62	2
6	COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE	55	2
7	OF THE	52	2
8	COMMUNICATIVE ACTIVITIES	38	2
9	LANGUAGE TEACHING	32	2
10	OF THE COMMUNICATIVE	31	3
11	AND COMMUNICATIVE	29	2
12	IN THE	28	2
13	COMMUNICATIVE AND	26	2
14	NON COMMUNICATIVE	23	2
15	COMMUNICATIVE ACTIVITY	23	2
16	AND THE	22	2
17	COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE	21	2
18	COMMUNICATIVE APPROACHES	20	2
19	OF THE COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH	20	4
20	COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING	19	3
21	TO THE	18	2
22	IN COMMUNICATIVE	18	2
23	IT IS	16	2
24	IS COMMUNICATIVE	16	2
25	MORE COMMUNICATIVE	16	2
26	COMMUNICATIVE PURPOSE	16	2
27	COMMUNICATIVE TEACHING	16	2
28	OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE	15	3

29	A COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH	15	3
30	COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS	15	2

A.6.3 LEARNER

A.6.3.1 Collocations of LEARNER in New Lee ("Lexical" Items Only)

Order	Order before non-lexical words removed	Word	Log likelihood Relation	Total in corpus
1	2	LEARNER	11064.6	923
2	3	LEARNERS	11033.49	955
3	5	LEARNER'S	2418.988	210
4	11	LANGUAGE	920.7237	229
5	12	FOREIGN	759.1309	123
6	18	IRAQI	474.8779	38
7	20	ENGLISH	422.4805	132
8	22	ADULT	377.8677	45
9	25	NEEDS	328.4574	53
10	27	TEACHER	317.623	85
11	30	ADVANCED	291.6828	44
12	35	ABLE	240.7808	42
13	38	NATIVE	221.4452	45
14	39	MOTIVATION	215.7222	33
15	42	LEARN	200.5729	38
16	45	USE	168.7369	53
17	51	SECOND	146.6193	37
18	53	TEACHERS	140.6783	43

19	59	NEED	125.3131	32
20	60	YOUNG	122.8496	21
21	68	LEARNING	111.053	36
22	71	ENABLE	104.9307	15
23	72	OWN	104.4441	29
24	73	BOTH	103.7082	28
25	74	DIFFICULTIES	103.1938	19
26	75	GROUP	100.9062	29
27	77	BETWEEN	95.75423	29
28	78	INFORMATION	92.31019	22
29	80	ABILITY	89.74245	21
30	82	INDIVIDUAL	87.11149	19

A.6.3.2 Collocations of LEARNER in Rossner (“Lexical” Items Only)

Order	Order before non-lexical words removed	Word	Log likelihood Relation	Total in corpus
1	1	LEARNERS	13442.83	1113
2	2	LEARNER	5083.46	499
3	6	LEARNER'S	1002.052	103
4	8	LANGUAGE	896.6078	225
5	17	ADVANCED	335.6706	49
6	18	NEEDS	320.2438	52
7	22	CENTRED	271.397	28
8	25	TEACHER	256.8321	74
9	27	FOREIGN	250.1188	55
10	29	USE	237.5226	66
11	33	TEACHERS	211.2868	56
12	35	HELP	190.6541	38
13	36	LEARN	179.0169	35
14	38	ENGLISH	174.1105	78
15	39	NEED	173.9026	40
16	42	TRAINING	156.6659	33
17	45	LEARNING	152.2662	44
18	48	MAKE	140.9916	36
19	50	EXPECTATIONS	134.9188	15
20	51	DEVELOP	132.1536	22

21	53	DICTIONARY	122.4196	20
22	54	GOOD	122.1557	30
23	58	COMPETENCE	118.7451	20
24	60	SECOND	117.9159	32
25	61	EXPERIENCE	117.0246	26
26	62	DICTIONARIES	112.5501	15
27	63	STRATEGIES	107.9295	16
28	65	CHOICE	101.9976	21
29	66	ACTIVITIES	100.3923	21
30	67	GIVE	98.65205	24

A.6.3.3 Clusters for LEARNER in New Lee

Ranking	Cluster	Freq.	Length
1	THE LEARNER	502	2
2	THE LEARNERS	314	2
3	OF THE	195	2
4	THE LEARNER'S	168	2
5	TO THE	133	2
6	LEARNER IS	97	2
7	FOR THE	83	2
8	IN THE	76	2
9	OF ENGLISH	76	2
10	LEARNER TO	71	2
11	BY THE	69	2
12	LEARNERS OF	68	2
13	THAT THE	64	2
14	THE LEARNER IS	63	3
15	OF LEARNERS	60	2
16	LEARNERS TO	58	2
17	THE LEARNER TO	52	3
18	LANGUAGE LEARNER	52	2
19	AND THE	51	2
20	THE FOREIGN	48	2
21	LEARNERS ARE	46	2
22	THE TEACHER	46	2
23	ON THE	46	2
24	LEARNERS AND	46	2
25	LEARNERS OF ENGLISH	46	3
26	THE LANGUAGE	44	2
27	LEARNER HAS	43	2

28	A LEARNER	43	2
29	FOREIGN LEARNER	41	2
30	OF THE LEARNER	39	3

A.6.3.4 Clusters for LEARNER in Rossner

Ranking	Cluster	Freq.	Length
1	THE LEARNERS	249	2
2	THE LEARNER	231	2
3	OF THE	121	2
4	LEARNERS TO	101	2
5	LANGUAGE LEARNERS	77	2
6	LEARNERS ARE	77	2
7	THE LEARNER'S	72	2
8	IN THE	71	2
9	TO THE	70	2
10	OF LEARNERS	62	2
11	THAT LEARNERS	56	2
12	THAT THE	48	2
13	OF ENGLISH	43	2
14	A LEARNER	41	2
15	LEARNERS IN	39	2
16	LEARNERS OF	39	2
17	IT IS	38	2
18	FOR THE	36	2
19	AND LEARNERS	35	2
20	TO BE	34	2
21	OF A	32	2
22	ON THE	32	2
23	LEARNERS WILL	31	2
24	LEARNERS AND	30	2
25	LANGUAGE LEARNER	30	2
26	THE TEACHER	29	2
27	LEARNER IS	29	2

28 BY THE

29 LEARNER TO

30 AND THE

29

2

29

2

29

2

A.6.4 ACTIVITY

A.6.4.1 Collocations of ACTIVITY in New Lee (“Lexical” Items Only)

Order	Order before non-lexical words removed	Word	Log likelihood Relation	Total in corpus
1	1	ACTIVITIES	4062.284	367
2	2	ACTIVITY	3876.209	351
3	6	CLASSROOM	274.7957	53
4	11	CLASS	133.0997	38
5	15	LANGUAGE	98.2137	61
6	16	REAL	97.42434	20
7	17	GROUP	96.51233	28
8	18	LEARNING	92.81582	32
9	21	GAMES	76.15285	12
10	26	COMMUNICATIVE	69.58015	16
11	27	ENGAGED	68.91276	9
12	28	READING	66.99061	26
13	35	INVOLVING	48.11763	8
14	37	DIRECTED	43.79349	7
15	38	VARIOUS	43.13878	12
16	39	PHYSICAL	40.16488	7
17	40	VARIETY	39.94743	10

18	43	STUDENTS	37.15006	27
19	44	KIND	36.85188	12
20	45	TEACHER	36.25929	24
21	46	ORAL	36.17748	12
22	47	ENJOYABLE	35.08504	5
23	48	KINDS	34.98705	8
24	49	INVOLVED	34.84832	9
25	50	SOLVING	34.57451	5
26	51	MEANINGFUL	34.47078	7
27	53	PARTICIPATE	33.29442	5
28	54	LISTENING	32.65795	10
29	56	USEFUL	31.3124	10
30	58	LIFE	30.87759	9

A.6.4.2 Collocations of ACTIVITY in Rossner (“Lexical” Items Only)

Order	Order before non-lexical words removed	Word	Log likelihood Relation	Total in corpus
1	1	ACTIVITIES	5371.241	459
2	2	ACTIVITY	3931.25	355
3	3	COMMUNICATIVE	647.0378	84
4	9	CLASSROOM	232.4569	47
5	14	TRAINING	131.339	29
6	16	LISTENING	118.7057	24
7	18	SYLLABUS	110.2113	21
8	19	ORIENTATION	108.043	13
9	20	ELT	105.3069	16
10	21	LANGUAGE	104.7538	63
11	22	FOCUS	93.35172	15
12	24	BASED	81.28325	19
13	26	TASKS	75.01048	13
14	28	LEARNING	74.41879	28
16	32	LEARNERS	70.06543	22
17	33	FOLLOW	68.55203	14
18	34	COMMUNICATION	67.2393	17
19	35	DESIGNED	65.3847	12
20	37	DIFFERENT	63.04309	21
21	38	TYPES	62.03096	14

22	39	STUDENTS	59.31133	34
23	42	RANKING	53.44899	6
24	44	INVOLVE	51.30491	9
25	45	PROCEDURES	50.71803	9
26	47	READING	50.18465	22
27	48	ENGAGE	47.8309	6
28	49	AUTHENTIC	47.50485	8
29	50	TOPIC	44.76827	9
30	51	DESCRIBED	44.71754	10

A.6.4.3 Clusters for ACTIVITY in New Lee

N	Cluster	Freq.	Length
1	OF THE	55	2
2	THE ACTIVITY	54	2
3	IN THE	39	2
4	OF ACTIVITY	27	2
5	ACTIVITIES IN	26	2
6	ACTIVITY THE	24	2
7	ACTIVITIES AND	24	2
8	CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES	24	2
9	THIS ACTIVITY	22	2
10	ACTIVITY IS	22	2
11	AN ACTIVITY	21	2
12	OF ACTIVITIES	21	2
13	ACTIVITY IN	21	2
14	THE ACTIVITIES	21	2
15	IT IS	19	2
16	AS A	19	2
17	ACTIVITIES THAT	17	2
18	CAN BE	16	2
19	ACTIVITIES ARE	16	2
20	ACTIVITIES OF	16	2
21	THESE ACTIVITIES	16	2
22	AND THE	16	2
23	ACTIVITIES THE	16	2
24	THE STUDENTS	15	2
25	CLASSROOM ACTIVITY	15	2
26	ACTIVITIES WHICH	15	2
27	ACTIVITY IT	14	2

28	ACTIVITY WHICH	14	2
29	THE CLASSROOM	14	2
30	CLASS ACTIVITIES	14	2

A.6.4.4 Clusters for ACTIVITY in Rossner

Ranking	Cluster	Freq.	Length
1	THE ACTIVITY	60	2
2	OF THE	49	2
3	OF ACTIVITIES	39	2
4	IN THE	35	2
5	THE ACTIVITIES	32	2
6	COMMUNICATIVE ACTIVITIES	32	2
7	ACTIVITIES AND	32	2
8	ACTIVITIES IN	28	2
9	ACTIVITIES WHICH	27	2
10	CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES	25	2
11	AN ACTIVITY	24	2
12	COMMUNICATIVE ACTIVITY	23	2
13	AND THE	22	2
14	ACTIVITY IS	22	2
15	OF ACTIVITY	22	2
16	ACTIVITY IN	21	2
17	ON THE	20	2
18	ACTIVITIES THAT	19	2
19	ACTIVITIES FOR	19	2
20	IN A	19	2
21	ACTIVITY AND	18	2
22	AS A	18	2
23	THIS ACTIVITY	18	2
24	ACTIVITIES THE	18	2
25	SUCH ACTIVITIES	17	2
26	THESE ACTIVITIES	17	2
27	ACTIVITY WHICH	16	2

28 CAN BE

29 TO THE

30 THE TEACHER

16

16

14

2

2

2

A.6.4 TASK

A.6.4.1 Collocations of TASK in New Lee (“Lexical” Items Only)

	N	Word	Relation	Total
1	1	TASK	3025.159	239
2	2	TASKS	1563.083	124
3	6	PERFORM	190.4338	19
4	7	LEARNING	129.9102	29
5	12	TEACHER'S	75.44788	12
6	13	STUDENTS	66.21495	24
7	16	LANGUAGE	52.12277	28
8	17	SPECIFIC	50.51072	9
9	18	CENTRED	49.87465	6
10	20	DIFFICULT	46.75951	10
11	21	EASY	44.8112	8
12	22	DIFFERENT	44.29788	12
13	24	VARIOUS	43.41173	9
14	25	WRITING	42.4772	11
15	26	PREPARE	41.52681	6
16	28	SET	40.20201	9
17	29	IMPOSSIBLE	37.64287	6
18	30	FACED	37.43076	5
19	31	PARTICULAR	36.9172	9
20	36	EXTRA	34.31747	5

21	37	ADVANCED	33.83149	7
22	39	EASIER	32.53799	5
23	40	DIFFICULTY	32.19162	7
24	41	TEACHER	30.2508	14
25	45	LEARNER	27.35403	8
26	48	CERTAIN	26.14606	7
27	49	ONE	25.90901	15
28	50	TEACHING	25.79622	13
29	53	SIMPLE	21.0841	6
30	56	SMALL	20.76285	5

A.6.4.2 Collocations of TASK in Rossner (“Lexical” Items Only)

Order	Order before non-lexical words removed	Word	Log likelihood Relation	Total in corpus
1	1	TASK	4698.853	342
2	2	TASKS	3140.925	220
3	8	WRITING	174.9034	30
4	10	PERFORM	142.8187	15
5	12	SET	137.1252	22
6	13	LEARNING	129.9102	29
7	14	LEVEL	128.1324	23
8	16	PRE	118.893	15
9	19	DIFFERENT	93.53844	20
10	21	LEARNERS	82.30723	18
11	24	COMPLETE	79.52064	12
12	27	GROUP	72.52396	17
13	28	STUDENTS	70.84252	25
14	29	BASED	69.4952	13
15	31	COMMUNICATIVE	67.17844	12
16	37	CARRY	61.97223	8
17	38	READING	59.59786	17
18	39	ACTIVITIES	58.97776	11
19	41	MICRO	58.65108	7

20	42	GIVEN	58.54556	14
21	43	COMPREHENSION	56.39635	12
22	44	PERFORMED	54.4234	6
23	47	REQUIRE	53.4848	8
24	49	LISTENING	50.42449	10
25	50	PUPILS	50.13134	14
26	51	VIEWING	49.40278	5
27	52	COMMUNICATION	47.20337	10
28	55	CARRYING	42.2242	5
29	56	LANGUAGE	41.82106	25
30	57	SUMMARY	41.52681	6

A.6.4.3 Clusters for TASK in New Lee

N	Cluster	Freq.	Length
1	THE TASK	68	2
2	TASK OF	53	2
3	THE TASK OF	35	3
4	OF THE	35	2
5	TASK IS	22	2
6	TASKS AND	14	2
7	TASK IN	14	2
8	THE TEACHER'S	13	2
9	IS TO	13	2
10	TO THE	12	2
11	TO PERFORM	12	2
12	TASK IS TO	11	3
13	LEARNING TASKS	11	2
14	FOR THE	11	2
15	WITH THE	10	2
16	TASK AND	10	2
17	IN THE	10	2
18	THE TEACHER'S TASK	9	3
19	TEACHER'S TASK	9	2
20	IS NOT	9	2
21	CAN BE	9	2
22	THEIR TASK	8	2
23	THE TEACHER	8	2
24	THAT THE	8	2
25	TASKS OF	8	2
26	TASKS FOR	8	2
27	TASK FOR	8	2

28	ONE OF	8	2
29	LEARNING TASK	8	2
30	IT IS	8	2

A.6.4.4 Clusters for TASK in Rossner

N	Cluster	Freq.	Length
1	THE TASK	102	2
2	OF THE	38	2
3	TASK OF	33	2
4	THE TASK OF	27	3
5	TO THE	26	2
6	THE TASKS	25	2
7	TASK IS	22	2
8	A TASK	22	2
9	IN THE	22	2
10	TASKS AND	21	2
11	OF TASKS	19	2
12	TASK AND	17	2
13	TASKS IN	17	2
14	TO BE	16	2
15	AND THE	14	2
16	TASKS ARE	13	2
17	TASK IN	13	2
18	IN A	11	2
19	OF THE TASK	11	3
20	PRE TASK	11	2
21	WRITING TASK	11	2
22	IS TO	11	2
23	LEARNING TASKS	11	2
24	LEVEL TASK	10	2
25	ON THE	10	2
26	WRITING TASKS	10	2
27	THIS TASK	10	2

28	AT THE	10	2
29	TASK THE	10	2
30	TASK THAT	10	2

A.6.5 SYLLABUS

A.6.5.1 Collocations of SYLLABUS in New Lee (“Lexical” Items Only)

Order	Order before non-lexical words removed	Word	Log likelihood Relation	Total in corpus
1	1	SYLLABUS	2877.877	232
2	2	SYLLABUSES	637.254	52
3	3	STRUCTURAL	514.4626	54
4	4	FUNCTIONAL	513.816	47
5	7	NOTIONAL	208.4922	20
6	11	GRAMMATICAL	75.81117	14
7	15	REQUIREMENTS	34.80631	5
8	16	BASED	34.62334	8
9	17	SITUATIONAL	33.96167	5
10	20	SCHOOL	33.17199	10
11	24	SHOULD	26.41766	12
12	25	TEXTBOOK	25.70801	5
13	26	TEACHING	25.00825	13
14	27	RATHER	23.87565	7
15	29	LANGUAGE	22.53601	19
16	30	MATERIALS	21.36192	6
17	33	ENGLISH	18.2069	16
18	36	SEEMS	17.67829	5

19	37	WHETHER	16.98783	5
20	39	THEREFORE	16.78198	5
21	40	ITEMS	14.05711	5
22	41	GENERAL	14.01373	5
23	44	NEED	10.91965	5
24	46	FORM	10.10704	5
25	49	HAVE	9.820076	11
26	50	COURSE	9.253514	6
27	55	LEARNING	6.363272	5
28	56	ONE	5.956501	8
29	65	OTHER	4.508124	5
30	_____	TABLE ENDS	_____	_____

A.6.5.2 Collocations of SYLLABUS in Rossner (“Lexical” Items Only)

Order	Order before non-lexical words removed	Word	Log likelihood Relation	Total in corpus
1	1	SYLLABUS	6060.299	424
2	8	SYLLABUSES	1135.494	84
3	10	LANGUAGE	200.7522	62
4	11	COMMUNICATIVE	421.7439	50
5	14	DESIGN	441.0645	41
6	19	CORE	326.6414	29
7	21	MATERIALS	150.4691	24
8	23	MODULAR	333.0877	23
9	27	CONTENT	140.4737	21
10	28	GRAMMATICAL	130.7021	21
11	29	STRUCTURAL	148.9987	20
12	31	FIRST	73.41721	20
13	32	BASED	114.5652	19
14	34	CULTURE	144.5074	19
15	35	PROCEDURAL	280.9508	19
16	37	GENERAL	87.22306	17
17	38	FUNCTIONAL	148.6959	17
18	39	ACTIVITY	105.9441	17
19	43	TEACHING	40.58028	17
20	45	YEAR	86.548	16
21	46	NOTIONAL	159.1071	16
22	47	SEMANTIC	125.5199	16
23	48	ITEMS	66.62345	14

24	52	DISCUSSION	64.96851	12
25	53	EDUCATION	57.60692	12
26	57	NEED	39.76588	11
27	60	TERMS	51.19549	10
28	63	LEARNER	32.15771	9
29	64	METHODOLOGY	66.85625	9
30	66	TEXTBOOK	56.74171	9

A.6.5.3 Clusters for SYLLABUS in New Lee

Ranking	Cluster	Freq.	Length
1	THE SYLLABUS	57	2
2	STRUCTURAL SYLLABUS	38	2
3	FUNCTIONAL SYLLABUS	30	2
4	IN THE	28	2
5	OF THE	26	2
6	SYLLABUS AND	22	2
7	THE STRUCTURAL	19	2
8	THE STRUCTURAL SYLLABUS	17	3
9	SYLLABUS IS	15	2
10	THE FUNCTIONAL	14	2
11	SYLLABUS FOR	14	2
12	SYLLABUS THE	14	2
13	A FUNCTIONAL	13	2
14	OF THE SYLLABUS	13	3
15	A SYLLABUS	13	2
16	FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURAL SYLLABUS	12	3
17	THE FUNCTIONAL SYLLABUS	12	3
18	THE SYLLABUS AND	12	3
19	FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURAL	12	2
20	IN THE SYLLABUS	11	3
21	SYLLABUS IN	11	2
22	OF A	10	2
23	A STRUCTURAL	10	2
24	A FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURAL	9	3
25	ENGLISH SYLLABUS	9	2
	A FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURAL		
26	SYLLABUS	9	4

27	IN A	9	2
28	TO THE	9	2
29	STRUCTURAL FUNCTIONAL	9	2
30	ON THE	8	2

A.6.5.4 Clusters for SYLLABUS in Rossner

N	Cluster	Freq.	Length
1	THE SYLLABUS	74	2
2	OF THE	52	2
3	SYLLABUS DESIGN	38	2
4	A SYLLABUS	36	2
5	LANGUAGE SYLLABUS	36	2
6	SYLLABUS AND	28	2
7	IN THE	26	2
8	SYLLABUS IS	23	2
9	THE LANGUAGE	21	2
10	CORE SYLLABUS	20	2
11	THE LANGUAGE SYLLABUS	19	3
12	PROCEDURAL SYLLABUS	19	2
13	SYLLABUS THE	19	2
14	OF THE SYLLABUS	18	3
15	ON THE	18	2
16	AND THE	17	2
17	OF A	16	2
18	ACTIVITY SYLLABUS	15	2
19	THE COMMUNICATIVE	14	2
20	CULTURE SYLLABUS	14	2
21	THE FIRST	14	2
22	COMMUNICATIVE ACTIVITY	14	2
23	FIRST YEAR	14	2
24	GENERAL LANGUAGE	13	2
25	SYLLABUS FOR	13	2
26	COMMUNICATIVE SYLLABUS	13	2
27	OF SYLLABUSES	12	2

28	COMMUNICATIVE ACTIVITY SYLLABUS	12	3
29	MODULAR SYLLABUS	12	2
30	BASED ON	11	2

Appendix Seven: Key-keyword Data for Rossner<>Old Lee (see Table 4.1) Keywords

Order in Keywords Table 4.1	Keyword	Number of texts key in (lemma headword)	Number of texts key in (other words in lemma)
1	COMMUNICATIVE	30	
2	LEARNER	7	Learners 38
3	#	27	
4	ACTIVITY	9	Activities 17
5	STUDENT	4	Students 38
6	TASK	9	Tasks 15
7	TEXT	22	Texts 10
8	ELT	7	
9	SYLLABUS	11	Syllabuses 4
10	FOCUS	7	Focused 1
11	STRATEGY	3	Strategies 13
12	INFORMATION	15	
13	EFL	11	
14	ESP	6	
15	AUTHENTIC	8	
16	ERROR	6	Errors 6
17	INTERACTION	7	Interactions 1
18	DISCOURSE	11	
19	COMMUNICATION	10	

20	ESL	10	
21	VIDEO	5	Videos 0
22	APPROACH	7	Approaches 2
23	ROLE	5	Roles 1
24	CONTENT	6	Contents 1
25	THEIR	10	
26	THEY	9	
27	LEARN	3	Learned 1 learning 13
28	SKILL	2	Skills 10
29	PROJECT	5	Projects 1
30	LISTEN	1	Listening 7
31	METHODOLOGY	4	
32	TARGET	6	
33	COMPUTER	5	Computers 3
34	SIMULATION	2	Simulations 1
35	GROUP	13	Groups 4
36	QUICKWRITING	1	
37	PARTICIPANT	0	Participants 5
38	MESSAGE	4	Messages 1
39	INPUT	5	inputs 1
40	TRAINEE	2	Trainees 6
41	TOEFL	1	
42	TOPIC	4	
43	FIGURE	5	

44	DECISION	3	Decisions 4
45	CLASSROOM	5	Classrooms 1
46	PROCESS	5	Processes 2
47	DESIGN	4	Designs 1
48	CIRCUMSTANCES	0	
49	OK	4	