

*Assessment for learning in teacher education:
the development of a diagnostic language test for
trainee teachers of French*

Final report to the Higher Education Academy

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Introduction

The motivation and rationale for this project stemmed from concerns about standards of subject knowledge in trainee French teachers during a one-year PGCE course. These concerns relate to students' overall language proficiency, and particularly to key areas of grammar, lexis and orthography that successive cohorts of students have found difficult. An important factor is whether trainees have sufficient depth of *explicit* knowledge to teach rules, explain and correct pupils' errors and understand why learners make such errors.

General aim of the project

The overall aim was to develop procedures and instruments that would further improve the quality of subject knowledge assessment and assessment for learning in the PGCE French course at the University of Reading; to address a specific issue raised by Ofsted, namely concern about the explicit grammatical knowledge of native speakers of French; and to make the benefits of these developments available to others.

Specific Objectives

There were five main objectives:

1. To identify areas of grammatical, lexical and orthographic knowledge that are essential for teaching French to 11-18 year-olds but which trainee teachers find difficult, or about which native speaker trainees may not have explicit knowledge that they can use in their teaching.
2. To develop a test of French language that provides diagnostic information about the areas identified and which will lead to high quality formative feedback to trainees.
3. To develop self-assessment instruments for use with 2. above that can be monitored by tutors.
4. To integrate the diagnostic test and the feedback obtained into a programme of formative assessment of subject knowledge that includes target-setting and systematic monitoring of progress.
5. To conduct a full-scale trial of the instruments and an evaluation of their effectiveness.

The research and development was planned to take place in four phases:

1. Identifying essential areas of language that cause problems for trainees (Objective 1).
2. Constructing, piloting and revising the diagnostic test (Objectives 2 and 3).
3. Full-scale trial (Objectives 4 and 5).
4. Monitoring of procedures and final revisions to instruments (Objectives 2, 3, 5).

The remainder of the report below is structured according to these four phases.

Phase 1: identifying essential areas of language that cause problems for trainees

Dr Jon Roberts was appointed consultant to the project in January 2007 and conducted a focus group meeting with the Modern Foreign Language subject mentors from all of our partnership schools. The information obtained was supplemented by interviews with five university PGCE tutors, and analysis of: a) 70 language tests completed by previous groups of PGCE students, b) French writing tests completed at interviews, c) written feedback by tutors and mentors to students on their lessons, lesson plans and teaching materials.

The outcome was the identification of 42 areas of syntax, morphology, lexis and spelling that would be potential material for constructing test items in Phase 2 (see Appendix II for the areas of knowledge assessed in the final version of the test).

Phase 2: constructing, piloting and revising the diagnostic test

Diagnostic testing

Literature on diagnostic language testing for second language learners is extremely sparse (see Alderson, 2005 and Huhta, 2007 for recent reviews) and research on the proficiency of trainee language teachers is even rarer. Exceptions are David and Hudak's (1993) work on summative testing for teachers of English as a foreign language and that of Elder (2001) on accreditation of teachers of Italian. However, there seems to be little or no research that brings together diagnostic testing and language teaching proficiency.

Neither is there a consensus on the definition of diagnostic testing. Following an in-depth analysis of the foreign language assessment literature Alderson (2005: 11) produced two lists of 'hypothetical features' of diagnostic tests, pointing out that some features directly contradicted others. For our purposes, therefore, we drew on the existing literature on educational assessment (see the bibliography at the end of this report) to develop a set of specific criteria for our own test. As set out in Richards (in press, 2008), these are that it should:

- be formative, i.e. it contributes to learning;
- focus on individual students;
- identify strengths and weaknesses;
- provide detailed information [for learners and tutors] about skills, and areas of knowledge and understanding;
- provide information that leads to 'recipes for action' by tutor and/or student;
- be criterion-referenced;
- be appropriate for all students rather than restricted to those with basic difficulties.

Accessing explicit knowledge about language

Grammaticality judgement tasks have been employed to elicit both implicit and explicit knowledge of grammar at least since Bialystok (1979). According to Ellis (2004, 2006),

tasks with time pressure are likely to access implicit knowledge, while untimed tasks give access to explicit knowledge. The test developed here is therefore untimed, i.e. there is no time pressure at all on respondents.

As in our earlier German test, we adopted two further features of Ellis's 'Grammaticality Judgement Test for English as a Second Language': we ask respondents to state their confidence in each answer as a percentage, and we ask whether they answered each question by 'feel' for the language or recourse to explicit knowledge of the rule (see final version of the test in Appendix I).

Constructing the test items

The previously identified 42 areas of French language were prioritised according to the following criteria: frequency of mention by tutors and mentors; frequency of error by students; usefulness/importance for teaching up to A Level; testability; and formative potential for native and non-native speakers. Forty-four candidate test items were developed from the areas prioritised.

With the help of two native speakers and on-line French language corpora (including Kate Beeching's Bristol Corpus), each candidate item was embedded in as authentic a sentence as possible, and three incorrect/inappropriate distractor sentences were formulated.

Scrutiny

The resulting 44 multiple choice items were submitted to a scrutiny panel consisting of: two native speakers (both university lecturers in French), two mentors in partnership schools, two university PGCE tutors, and one Professor of Linguistics from a School of Language, Linguistics and Area Studies with special expertise in language testing. As a result, half the questions (22/44) and a quarter (43/176) of the multiple choice options were revised in some way.

Pilot study

For the pilot study, the order of the revised 44 items and the order of the multiple choice options were randomised. A rubric was designed to elicit information about respondents' age, whether they were native speakers and, if not, for how many years they had learnt French. Instructions were included about stating percentage confidence and whether they had answered by 'rule' or 'feel' (see Appendix I). Candidates were also asked to note the time they started and finished.

Piloting was carried out on 52 people with a fairly wide range of proficiency and language learning experience. These included 11 native speakers, 5 year 13 students in a grammar school, 12 PGCE secondary students at the end of their course, 6 PGCE secondary students at the end of the first year of a two-year conversion course, 3 PGCE primary students taking the French specialism, 5 qualified teachers of French, and

members of an adult French conversation group. Written comments were invited from all participants.

Responses and background information were entered into a statistical package (SPSS) resulting in a total of 195 variables (for each test item these were: correct/incorrect, percentage confidence, rule or feel, and, where appropriate, the incorrect distractor chosen). Overall reliability for the total score out of 44 was excellent (Cronbach's alpha = .932), although it was impossible to compute a separate reliability coefficient for the native speakers because there was so little variance in their scores (see below).

Mann-Whitney tests showed that there were statistically significant differences between native speakers and non-native speakers on their total score (native speaker mean = 41.4, SD = 1.4; non-native speaker mean = 30.8, SD = 9.4) and on their average confidence across questions (native speaker mean = 96.8%, SD = 3.5%; non-native speaker mean = 76.2%, SD = 15.7%) ($p < .001$). They did not differ significantly, however, on the proportion of questions answered by rule or feel (native speaker mean = 34.3%; SD = 36.7%; non-native speaker mean = 45.42%; 26.2%) but, as indicated by the large standard deviation, the native speakers showed much more variability in the way they responded. Native speakers took significantly less time on average to complete the test (22 minutes as opposed to 31 minutes for non-native speakers).

Item analysis identified 8 items with low item-total correlations whose removal would either improve, or in one case, not reduce the alpha coefficient. Other candidates for removal included three items with item facility of over .9 and one item with a surprisingly low item facility of .5 for native speakers.

As this is primarily a criterion-referenced diagnostic test, however, for which monitoring standards from year to year and serving as a research tool are only secondary functions, it is important not to make decisions purely on the kind of statistical criteria that are used to validate norm-referenced tests. For example, because the test addresses knowledge that, in theory, PGCE students ought to have already, we would not be expecting a normal distribution of total scores, or a facility index of 0.5 for these respondents. We therefore re-examined the pedagogic usefulness and formative potential of each doubtful item and finally decided to omit only 4, leaving a test of 40 items, rather longer than we had originally envisaged. The four items that were removed were all suspect on statistical grounds, but were also either confusing or over-complex, or overlapped too much with other questions.

Further revisions at this stage included adjustments to the rubric, starting the test with the question with the highest item facility; and amendments to the wording of eight items.

Phase 3: full-scale trial

The sample of respondents

During the autumn of 2007, the test was administered to 186 people, including native speakers, trainee French teachers, undergraduates and a small number of A Level candidates. A breakdown of the sample is given in Table 1. The trainee French teachers were from four universities: Reading, Roehampton, Manchester Metropolitan and the Institute of Education, London. The undergraduates were from Reading and Roehampton.

Our own PGCE students at Reading have been taking part in the whole programme of assessing and developing subject knowledge since September 2007 and are still being monitored. We are able to report on progress up to mid-February 2008.

Table 1: Sample of respondents in the full-scale trial

	Native speaker	Non-Native	Total
Secondary PGCE and GTP	27	60	87
4th year undergraduates	2	18	20
2nd year undergraduates	4	55	59
2-year PGCE course	0	2	2
Primary PGCE course	0	7	7
A Level students	1	7	8
Lectrices in French Depts.	3	0	3
Total	37	149	186

Data analysis

Data were entered into the SPSS statistical package as in the pilot study above and three summary scores were calculated for each participant: total of correct answers out of 40; the average confidence level across all 40 items; and the percentage of items answered by recourse to rules rather than feel. For these three summary variables, reliability (internal consistency) was estimated and item analysis was conducted taking into consideration the item-total correlations, the facility index and possible effect of the removal of each item on Cronbach's alpha.

In addition, we assessed how well the three summary scores discriminated between the subgroups in the sample, the expectation being that on total score and mean confidence the native speakers would score highest, followed by postgraduate trainee teachers, fourth-year undergraduates, second-year undergraduates and, lastly, A Level students. Results for the percentage of questions answered by rule were much harder to predict as there were so many factors involved, and the performance of the native speakers in the pilot had been more rule-based than we would have predicted.

Results

Total score out of 40

For the total score out of 40, reliability was high. Cronbach's alpha was .920 (.839 for native speakers; .884 for non-native speakers). The mean facility index was .64, ranging across items from .34 to .88. Item-total correlations ranged from .03 to .672. Two items (Questions 34 and 35 in Appendix I) had particularly low item-total correlations, but they were judged to be testing important areas and their removal would only have raised reliability to .922. They were therefore retained in the test.

Above, we predicted a rank order for the average performance of the subgroups in the sample. This prediction is perfectly borne out by the results in Table 2, with the highest mean score for the native speakers, followed by the trainee secondary teachers, undergraduates and A Level students.

Table 2: Mean total score out of 40 and standard deviation for each sub-group in the sample

Sub-group	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i> ¹
Native speakers	36.2	3.9	37
Secondary PGCE and GTP (excluding native speakers)	29.8	6.1	40
4th year undergraduates	23.3	7.1	18
2nd year undergraduates	18.7	6.7	55
A Level students	16.6	6.2	7
Total sample	26.1	9.4	157

¹Students from the two-year secondary PGCE course and the primary PGCE were omitted from this analysis. There were also some missing data from a small number of respondents who had failed to complete a significant proportion of the test.

The native speakers were a much larger and more heterogeneous group compared with the pilot, and this is reflected in the larger standard deviation. Nevertheless, they are once

again the group that shows least variability. There were 10 questions on which none of the native speakers made an error (Qs 2, 6, 13, 19, 25, 27, 30, 31, 33, 38 in Appendix I), even though a small number performed surprisingly badly with scores under 30 (see the range and outliers in Figure 1).

The box and whisker plots for each group in Figure 1 give a visual comparison of the average performance of each group and the distribution of scores. These show the median (the horizontal bar), the inter-quartile range, i.e. where the middle 50% of cases lie (the shaded box), the range (the whiskers), plus any outliers or extreme cases, which are indicated by the circles and case numbers.

What is striking about Figure 1 are the large ranges and the extent to which the distributions overlap. There are also some very low scores. With 40 questions and 4 multiple choice options, test-takers might be expected to obtain a score of 10 purely by chance, and there are five scores below this. A binomial test tells us that to score *significantly* ($p < .05$) better than chance, a score of 16 or above out of 40 is required. In total 25 students fail to do so, of which 2 are A Level students, 17 are second-year undergraduates, 1 is a fourth-year undergraduate, and, more worryingly, 5 are trainee secondary French teachers with degrees in modern languages.

Figure 1: Box and whisker plots showing the median total score and its distribution in each sub-group

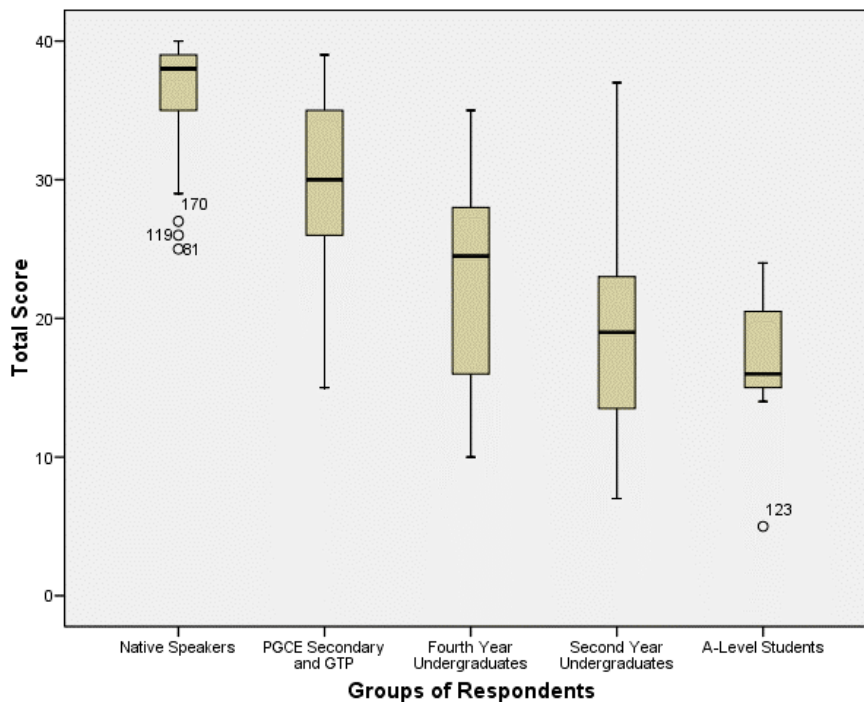


Figure 1 also illustrates a performance from the A Level students (all grammar school pupils) that exceeded our expectations.

A Kruskal-Wallis test confirmed that there were statistically significant differences between the groups (Chi-square = 88.9; d.f. = 4; $p < .001$). Pairwise comparisons between groups using Mann-Whitney tests with the alpha level adjusted for multiple comparisons (Bonferroni correction) showed that six out of a possible ten comparisons were significantly different ($p < .005$). There were no differences, however, between PGCE students and fourth-year undergraduates, between fourth-year and second-year undergraduates, between fourth-year undergraduates and A Level students, and between second-year students and A Level students. Note, however that the small size of the sample of A Level pupils makes it difficult to detect reliable differences.

Mean confidence

The reliability of the mean confidence score was extremely high (alpha = .980 for the whole sample, .846 for native speakers and .971 for non-native speakers). The average confidence rating per question ranged from 60.4% to 83.2%, and item-total correlations from .53 to .85.

Figure 2: Box and whisker plots showing the median confidence and its distribution in each sub-group

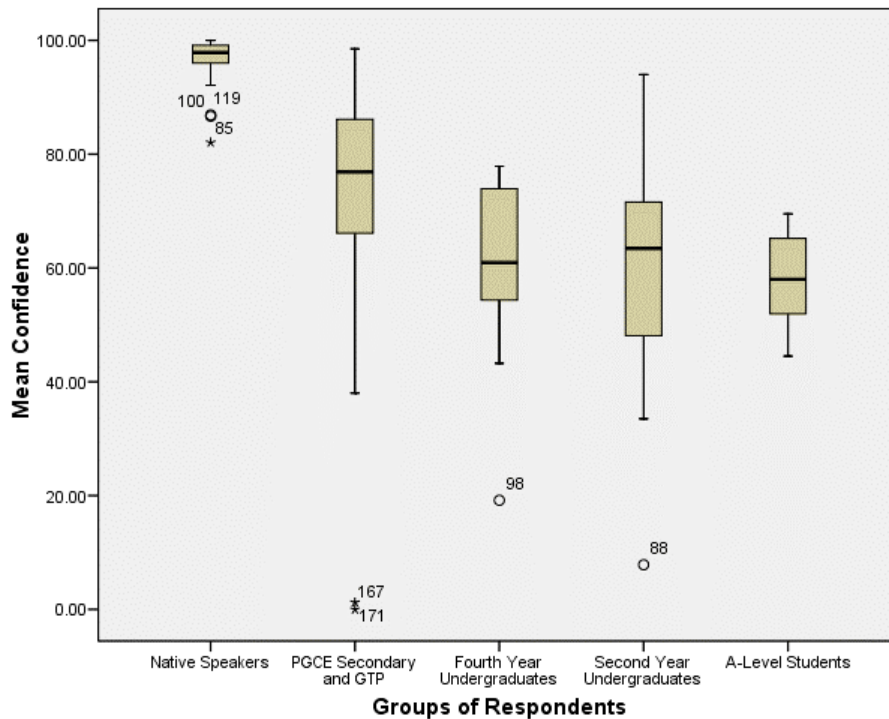


Figure 2 shows how the groups compare. The results for the native speakers, PGCE students and fourth-year undergraduates follow a predictable trend. The extremely high ratings and the homogeneity of the native speaker group are particularly notable.

However, the high ratings for the A Level students and second-year undergraduates are surprising as their total scores did not necessarily justify such confidence. Note also the zero scores of two PGCE students who rated their confidence on every question as zero. These students obtained total scores of 16 and 17 out of 40.

Again, a Kruskal-Wallis test shows significant differences among the groups (Chi-square = 91.8, d.f. = 4, $p < .001$). As Figure 2 would suggest, post hoc tests show that native speakers and PGCE students are significantly different from each other and from all other groups, but that the two groups of undergraduates and the A Level pupils form a homogeneous cluster.

Proportion of questions answered by rule

The reliability of the summary variable for answering questions by ‘rule’ rather than ‘feel’ is slightly lower than for the previous two summary variables, with an alpha coefficient of .87 (native speakers = .915, non-native speakers = .861). This is still very high, but suggests that whereas respondents tend to perform relatively uniformly across items in terms of correctness and confidence, their recourse to rules depends more on the nature of the question and less on an overall tendency to use one strategy or the other. This is reflected in lower item-total correlations which range from .10 to .54. The percentage of respondents claiming to answer questions by rule ranged from 78.4% to 24%.

Figure 3: Box and whisker plots showing the median for percentage of questions answered by rule and its distribution in each sub-group

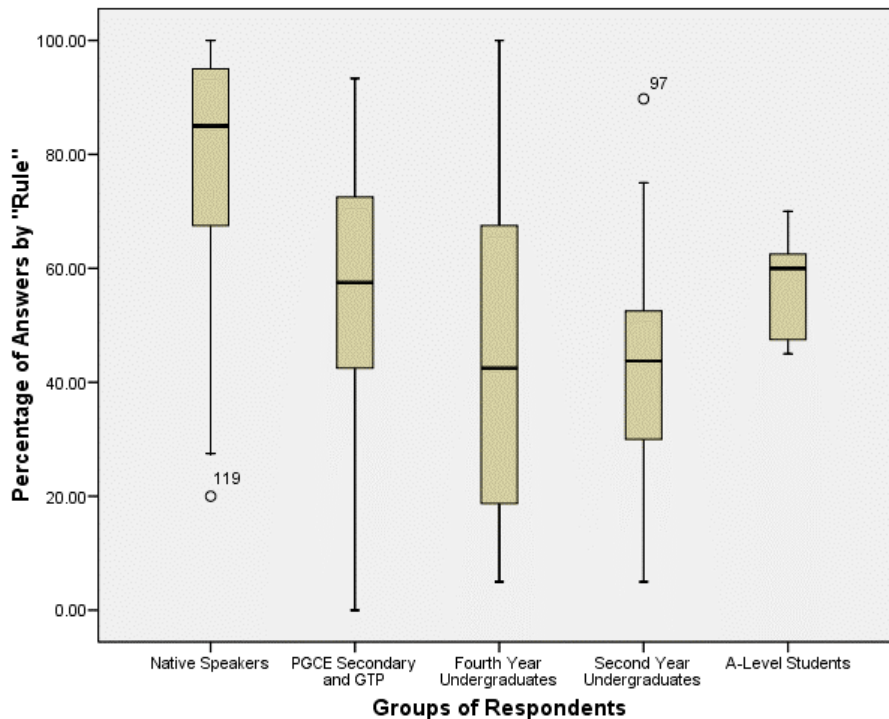


Figure 3 shows the group comparisons. The pattern here is similar to the previous one for confidence in that there appears to be a trend towards being less rule based from the native speakers down to the fourth year undergraduates, but with higher scores than this trend would predict for the second years and A Level students. Concerns that the native speaker do not have access to explicit knowledge of their language do not appear to be justified. On average they claim to be answering well over 90% of questions by recourse to rules. Nevertheless there is noticeably more variability among the native speakers on this variable than on the previous summary variables.

Again, there are significant differences between the groups (Chi-square = 45.2, d.f. =4, $p < .001$). Post hoc tests show that the native speakers score higher than all other groups and that PGCE students score higher than the second-year undergraduates. No other pairwise comparisons are statistically significant.

The unexpectedly high average for the A Level students and the lack of difference between the fourth-year and second-year undergraduates deserve some comment. A combination of relatively formal teaching in their grammar school and lack of experience of interaction with native speakers may well account for the high scores of the school students, while for the undergraduates it is important to recall that most, if not all, will have spent six months to a year in a francophone country between their second and fourth year. There may therefore be conflicting factors at work for the fourth years whereby an additional year of university teaching has furthered explicit rule knowledge while time spent in the country of the target language has facilitated the acquisition of procedural knowledge, allowing conscious rules to be bypassed.

Correlations between variables

Intercorrelations between the three summary variables are high (Total score x confidence = .752, total score x rule = .639, confidence x rule = .718) and statistically significant. In other words, people whose answers are accurate tend to be confident in their answers and claim to have explicit knowledge of the rules.

There was considerable variation in the amount of time respondents took to complete the test. The averages for the groups ranged from 15 minutes for the native speakers to 34 minutes for the A Level pupils. Nevertheless, surprisingly, there was no correlation between the time taken and total score, confidence, or use of rules.

We also looked at the relationship between years of study and age and the three summary variables. Interestingly, it was age rather than years of study that predicted these scores. For the non-native speakers, years of study was only weakly related to total score ($r = .20$, d.f. = 106, $p = .042$) but unrelated to confidence and rule. By contrast, age was related significantly and more strongly to all three variables (age x total score = .58, d.f. = 106, $p < .001$; age x confidence = .38, d.f. = 106, $p < .001$; age x rule = .28, d.f. = 106, $p < .01$).

Finally, for a very small sub group of non-native speaker PGCE students at the University of Reading ($n = 11$) we were able to investigate the relationship between their self-rating

of accuracy at the beginning of the course (before taking the test) and the three summary variables. Despite the small sample there was a significant relationship between accuracy and percentage of questions answered by rule (Spearman's $\rho = .55$, $N = 11$, $p < .05$). No other statistically significant correlations were found. Relationships between students' self-rating and the diagnostic will be explored more fully in the future as data from successive cohorts of our PGCE students are added to the data base.

Phase 4: monitoring of procedures and final revisions to instruments

Integration of the test into the PGCE programme

During the academic year of 2007-8, the diagnostic test and accompanying documentation (Appendices I to IV) were used with our own PGCE students at the University of Reading. These instruments were integrated into an existing programme of formative assessment as follows:

1. Applicants for the course are tested at interview and set subject knowledge targets to be addressed by the beginning of the course.
2. At the beginning of the course progress on these targets is monitored and students carry out a subject knowledge audit and self-assessment.
3. The diagnostic test follows within a few days. Students are given immediate feedback and time is allocated for detailed discussion of the results and issues arising (this also draws on the material in Appendices II and III).
4. Results are entered into SPSS, collated and passed on to students' personal tutors and to the staff who run language enhancement classes.
5. Students negotiate subject knowledge targets arising from the diagnostic test and subject knowledge audit.
6. Throughout the year students keep a Record of Progress towards their subject knowledge targets. This is monitored by university tutors and mentors in schools.
7. Students use the self-assessment check list (Appendix III) to check progress on specific areas of knowledge in the diagnostic test. This addresses pedagogy as well as understanding and is monitored by university tutors and mentors in schools.

Monitoring of procedures

Clearly, a complete evaluation of the programme will not be possible until the end of the current PGCE course. Nevertheless, indications thus far are encouraging as indicated by three sources of data.

First, qualitative data were collected by means of an open-ended request for comments at the end of the diagnostic test. This was voluntary and, although it was completed by only 27 of the 186 respondents, all comments were constructive and informative. There were no frivolous comments and the only ones that could be construed as negative were by students who were disappointed by their own performance. Second, in-depth semi-structured interviews with a small number of Reading PGCE students were conducted

soon after they had taken the test the previous autumn. These indicated diversity in test-takers' response strategies (e.g. guessing, what they meant by selecting 'rule' or 'feel'), and focused on the design of the test. Finally, a short questionnaire drawn up from the comments on the test and the interview responses, and this was returned by 10 of our students in February 2008. Results from the questionnaires strongly suggest that the respondents saw the diagnostic test as useful for their subject knowledge development for the following reasons:

1. it provided information precise enough to be useful for personal target-setting, for individualised subject knowledge work, and for use as a yardstick for personal progress;
2. the format of the test stimulated self-assessment and reflection on what participants knew and how they knew it;
3. it implied an appropriate standard of precision required for the analysis of personal grammatical knowledge;
4. it led to social use of the test, through peer discussion of items;
5. it enhanced the confidence of test-takers.

We speculate that finding 5. was due to their enhanced sense of control over their personal grammar knowledge agenda.

The data, particularly from the interviews, also hinted at the complexity of participants' cognitive processes while responding to items, and that processes were more complex and interdependent than could be adequately subsumed by a dichotomy between explicit formal knowledge of rules on one hand, and intuitive procedural knowledge on the other. The latter finding merits further research in our view, as does a more detailed understanding of strategies test-takers use in completing items.

Final revisions to instruments

Only one further change has been made—three native speakers suggested that the use of the word 'branche' in our original version of Q14 was not authentic. The word was changed to 'agence' (see Appendix I).

Conclusion

All five of the objectives set out in our original proposal have been achieved. We identified the areas of knowledge to be tested and successfully developed a diagnostic test, accompanying documentation and a self-assessment instrument. These were integrated into a programme of formative assessment for the current cohort of Reading PGCE students.

A full-scale trial of the diagnostic test was conducted on 186 respondents. This provided evidence of its reliability and validity through the ability of its summary scores to discriminate between different proficiency groups and correlate with age, years of study and self-rating of accuracy. These results suggest that, in addition to its specialist function

as a criterion-referenced diagnostic instrument, it also has potential for norm-referencing. For example, it can be used in monitoring standards across successive cohorts of students, providing some indication of the average and range of scores to be expected of PGCE students and other groups, and as a research instrument, particularly in the investigation of the relationship between implicit and explicit knowledge.

A major finding that helps to refute fears articulated by Ofsted that native speakers did not have sufficient access to explicit knowledge of their own language, is that native speakers rated themselves significantly higher on recourse to rules than any other group. As noted above, however, the findings from the qualitative data suggest that further investigation is needed into how all groups of students conceptualise the 'rule' versus 'feel' contrast, something that appears to be treated as methodologically unproblematic in the literature (e.g. Ellis, 2004, 2006). These data also suggest that research into the strategies that respondents use to answer the questions would be profitable, particularly as there is a dearth of information about the use of grammatical strategies (Ernesto Macaro, personal communication).

Data from questionnaires and interviews, and comments added to the test itself suggest a very positive response to the diagnostic test. PGCE students felt that it promoted more precise target setting, enhanced their confidence and motivation, and contributed to their learning.

Further evaluation will take place at the end of the course from the perspective of the students' university tutors and mentors in school. It is important to note that the aims of the whole programme of formative assessment can only be achieved if procedures for monitoring students' targets and their progress towards them are rigorously carried out by tutors and mentors and this is something that will be assessed in the next meeting between the university and partnership schools.

Dissemination

1. We presented our findings in a seminar given at the University of Oxford Department of Educational Studies on Feb. 28, 2008. Title: "*The Development of Diagnostic Language Tests for Trainee Teachers of Modern Foreign Languages.*"
2. We have been invited to submit a chapter for a new book on language testing to be edited by Barry O'Sullivan at Roehampton, published by Palgrave (contract pending). Title: "*A model for the development and application of a diagnostic test for trainee foreign language teachers.*"
3. An abstract has been submitted for the BAAL conference in September, 2008. Title: "*Diagnostic assessment for trainee teachers of French.*"
4. We will give a seminar at the University of Reading Institute of Education on May 15, 2008. Title: "*Testing and developing subject knowledge in teacher education: an example from French.*"

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Appendix I

**Final revised version of the diagnostic test
following the full-scale trial**

Diagnostic Language Test for French (v4.0 April 2008)

Name:

Date:

Course (delete as appropriate): PGCE Secondary/PGCE Primary/
Yr 1 Conversion Course/Yr 2 Conversion Course

Age:years

Are you a native speaker of French?

If not, how long have studied French at school/university, etc.:years

Time started test: Time finished test:

For each set of four sentences:

1. circle the letter of the sentence that you think is the best French.
*** **circle one sentence only** ***
2. show as a percentage how sure you are of the right answer (i.e. if you are **totally** sure put 100%; if your answer was a complete guess, put 0%).
3. underline to show whether you answered mainly through your **feel** for the language or **explicit** knowledge of the rule (i.e. could you state the rule?) or if it was just a **guess**.

-
1. a. Nous sommes arrivés en mangeants notre petit-déjeuner.
b. La tarte satisfaisant était merveilleuse.
c. La tarte était satisfaisant.
d. Nous sommes arrivés en mangeant notre petit-déjeuner.

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

2. a. Expliques-moi cela mon petit.
b. Expliquez-moi cela s’il vous plaît monsieur.
c. Explique-moi cela mes enfants.
d. Explique-moi cela s’il vous plaît monsieur.

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

3. a. Il a décrit les vacances qu’ il se souvient avec plaisir.
b. Il a décrit les vacances lesquelles il se souvient avec plaisir.
c. Il a décrit les vacances dont il se souvient avec plaisir.
d. Il a décrit les vacances desquelles il se souvient avec plaisir.

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

4. a. Elle est belle avec sa robe et son chapeau vers.
b. Elle est belle avec sa robe et son chapeau verts.
c. Elle est belle avec sa robe et son chapeau verte.
d. Elle est belle avec sa robe et son chapeau vertes.

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

5. a. Les professeurs travaillent dur pour que leurs élèves aillent à l’université.
b. Les professeurs travaillent dur pour que leurs élèves iront à l’université.
c. Les élèves travaillent dur pour qu’ils aillent à l’université.
d. Les professeurs travaillent dur pour que leurs élèves vont à l’université.

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

6. a. Si tu l’aies averti il t’aurait téléphoné.
b. Si tu l’aurais averti il t’aurait téléphoné.
c. Si tu l’as eu averti il t’aurait téléphoné.
d. Si tu l’avais averti il t’aurait téléphoné.

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

7. a. On y s’habitue.
b. Sa soeur lui l’a acheté.
c. Elle en y a bu.
d. Mon père me l’a donné.

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

8. a. Cet hôtel est très agréable!
b. Cette hôtel est très agréable!
c. C’est hôtel est très agréable!
d. Ce hôtel est très agréable!

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

9. a. Je me suis mis de travailler.
b. Elle a refusé venir.
c. J’ai décidé à partir à sept heures.
d. Il a commencé à pleuvoir.

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

10. a. Pendant qu'il regardait la télé il a entendu la sonnerie.
b. Pendant qu'il a regardé la télé il entendait la sonnerie.
c. Pendant qu'il regardait la télé il entendrait la sonnerie.
d. Pendant qu'il a regardé la télé il a entendu la sonnerie.

Percentage sure = %
"feel" / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

11. a. C'est la plus jolie fille du monde.
b. C'est une des rues plus élégantes de Londres.
c. C'est la fille plus intelligente du monde.
d. C'est une des plus chics rues de Paris.

Percentage sure = %
"feel" / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

12. a. Ce sont des questions que personne ne posent.
b. Ce sont des questions que personne pose.
c. Ce sont des questions que personne ne pose.
d. Ce sont des questions que personne ne pose pas.

Percentage sure = %
"feel" / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

13. a. On m'a offertes des fleurs.
b. Elle a été offerte des fleurs.
c. On m'a offert des fleurs.
d. J'ai été offert des fleurs.

Percentage sure = %
"feel" / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

14. a. L'agence est fermée depuis 2005.
b. L'agence sera fermée depuis 2005.
c. L'agence a fermé depuis 2005.
d. L'agence a été fermée depuis 2005.

Percentage sure = %
"feel" / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

15. a. Ces vêtements sont ceux de Marianne.
b. Ces vêtements sont celles de Marianne.
c. Ces vêtements sont celui de Marianne.
d. Ces vêtements sont celle de Marianne.

Percentage sure = %
"feel" / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

16. a. De Gaulle est un des plus grands personnalités de son temps.
b. De Gaulle est un des plus grand personnalités de son temps.
c. De Gaulle est une des plus grandes personnalités de son temps.
d. De Gaulle est une des plus grande personnalités de son temps.

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

17. a. Rendez-leur leurs crayons!
b. Rendez-leur leur crayons!
c. Rendez leurs leurs crayons!
d. Rendez-leurs leur crayons!

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

18. a. Elle n’a jamais vu rien.
b. Elle n’a jamais personne vu.
c. Elle n’a jamais rien vu.
d. Elle n’a rien jamais vu.

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

19. a. C’est demain quand il sortira de l’hôpital.
b. C’est demain qu’il sortira de l’hôpital.
c. C’est demain il sortira de l’hôpital.
d. C’est demain où il sortira de l’hôpital.

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

20. a. C’est intéressant!
b. C’est intéressent!
c. C’est interéssant!
d. C’est interèssant!

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

21. a. Donnez lui la!
b. Je n’en lui donne pas.
c. Donnez-lui-la!
d. Donnez-la-lui!

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

22. a. Ma tante est une bonne médecin.
b. Ma tante est un médecin bon.
c. Ma tante est un bon médecin.
d. Ma tante est une médecin bonne.

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

23. a. Je n’ai de monnaie dans ma poche.
b. Je n’ai pas de la monnaie dans ma poche.
c. J’ai de la monnaie dans ma poche.
d. Je n’ai pas monnaie dans ma poche.

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

24. a. Ses parents, elle les a vue en ville.
b. Ses parents, elle les a vu en ville.
c. Ses parents, elle les a vues en ville.
d. Ses parents, elle les a vus en ville.

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

25. a. Ne mettez pas les là!
b. Ne les mettez pas là!
c. Ne pas les mettez là!
d. Ne mettez les pas là!

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

26. a. J’ai pas vu personne.
b. Je n’ai pas vu personne.
c. Je n’ai personne vue.
d. Je n’ai vu personne.

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

27. a. Sa femme s’est monté sa valise en haut.
b. Sa femme a monté sa valise en haut.
c. Sa femme est monté sa valise en haut.
d. Sa femme est montée sa valise en haut.

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

28. a. C'est un beaux exemple de roman!
b. C'est un belle exemple de roman!
c. C'est un bel exemple de roman!
d. C'est un beau exemple de roman!

Percentage sure = %
"feel" / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

29. a. Ceux-ci me plaît!
b. Celles me plaît!
c. Ce me plaît!
d. Celui-là me plaît!

Percentage sure = %
"feel" / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

30. a. Toutes les rues étaient couvertes par glace.
b. Toutes les rues étaient couvertes de glace.
c. Toutes les rues étaient couvertes de la glace.
d. Toutes les rues étaient couvertes avec glace.

Percentage sure = %
"feel" / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

31. a. Elle est couchée la poupée de bonne heure.
b. Elle a couché la poupée de bonne heure.
c. Elle s'est couchée la poupée de bonne heure.
d. Elle s'a couché de bonne heure.

Percentage sure = %
"feel" / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

32. a. Il faut que je le dire.
b. Il faut que je le dis.
c. Il faut que je le dise.
d. Il faut que je le dit.

Percentage sure = %
"feel" / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

33. a. C'est la politique du chacun pour lui!
b. C'est la politique du chacun pour on-même!
c. C'est la politique du chacun pour soi!
d. C'est la politique du chacun pour lui-même!

Percentage sure = %
"feel" / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

34. a. Après s'être réveillée, elle s'est levée.
b. Après s'être réveillé, elle s'est levée.
c. Après s'être réveillé, elle s'est levé.
d. Après s'être réveillée, elle s'est levé.

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

35. a. Les vacances sont très importantes pour les français.
b. Moi, je suis Français!
c. Il a un mauvais Français!
d. Je suis professeur de français en Allemagne.

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

36. a. Comprenez-vous ce qui est arrivé?
b. Comprenez-vous quoi est arrivé?
c. Comprenez-vous ce qu' est arrivé?
d. Comprenez-vous qu' est arrivé?

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

37. a. C'est toujours ouvert lundi.
b. C'est aujourd'hui lundi mai le cinq.
c. C'est aujourd'hui le lundi cinq mai.
d. Est-ce qu'il arrivera lundi?

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

38. a. Elle est la meilleure élève de la classe.
b. Elle est la plus bonne élève de la classe.
c. Elle est la mieux élève de la classe.
d. Elle est l'élève meilleure de la classe.

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

39. a. C'est le mois de Janvier.
b. C'est le vent du Nord!
c. Pendant la nuit de dimanche.
d. En Hiver on ne peut pas se chauffer.

Percentage sure = %
“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

40. a. C'est à onze heures du matin qu'il viendra.
b. Il sera à onze heures du matin qu'il viendra.
c. Il est à onze heures du matin qu'il viendra.
d. Ce sera à onze heures du matin qu'il vienne.

Percentage sure = %

“feel” / knowledge of the rule(s) / guess

Please add any comments you wish to make here

Appendix II

Areas of knowledge tested and correct answers (as given to students)

Knowledge Tested and Correct Answers

1. d. Nous sommes arrivés en mangeant notre petit-déjeuner.
Present participle: agreement v. no agreement
2. b. Expliquez-moi cela s'il vous plaît monsieur.
Appropriate usage: vous & tu forms; **Imperative form**
3. c. Il a décrit les vacances dont il se souvient avec plaisir.
Relative pronouns: dont
4. b. Elle est belle avec sa robe et son chapeau verts.
Adjectives: agreement
5. a. Les professeurs travaillent dur pour que leurs élèves aillent à l'université.
Subjunctive versus indicative: after 'pour que'
6. d. Si tu l'avais averti il t'aurait téléphoné.
Tense and mood: sequence of tense and conditional
7. d. Mon père me l'a donné.
Pronouns: word order
8. a. Cet hôtel est très agréable!
Adjectives (demonstrative): agreement
9. d. Il a commencé à pleuvoir.
Verbs: verbs followed by 'à' or 'de' plus infinitive
10. a. Pendant qu'il regardait la télé il a entendu la sonnerie.
Tenses: sequence of past tenses
11. a. C'est la plus jolie fille du monde.
Superlative: syntax
12. c. Ce sont des questions que personne ne pose.
Negative: double negative. Verb agreement
13. c. On m'a offert des fleurs.
Passive: agreement and verbs taking indirect object
14. a. L'agence est fermée depuis 2005.
Tense: with 'depuis'
15. a. Ces vêtements sont ceux de Marianne.
Pronouns: demonstrative
16. c. De Gaulle est une des plus grandes personnalités de son temps.
Nouns & adjectives: gender and agreement
17. a. Rendez-leur leurs crayons!
Pronouns v. adjectives: agreement
18. c. Elle n'a jamais rien vu.
Negative: order of elements
19. b. C'est demain qu'il sortira de l'hôpital.
Conjunctions: future time
20. b. C'est intéressant!
Orthography: relationship between accents and pronunciation
21. d. Donnez-la-lui!
Pronouns: word order with declarative and imperative. Hyphens
22. c. Ma tante est un bon médecin.
Nouns & Adjectives: gender, agreement, word order

23. c. J'ai de la monnaie dans ma poche.
Partitive article: after affirmatives v. negatives
24. d. Ses parents, elle les a vus en ville.
Noun gender & Past participle: agreement after preceding direct object
25. b. Ne les mettez pas là!
Pronouns: word order with negative imperative
26. d. Je n'ai vu personne.
Negative: double negative and word order
27. b. Sa femme a monté sa valise en haut.
Transitivity: choice of auxiliary for the *passé composé*
28. c. C'est un bel exemple de roman!
Adjectives: gender & agreement, words beginning with a vowel
29. d. Celui-là me plaît!
Pronouns: demonstrative
30. b. Toutes les rues étaient couvertes de glace.
Prepositions and partitive article
31. b. Elle a couché la poupée de bonne heure.
Transitivity and reflexivity: choice of auxiliary for the *passé composé*
32. c. Il faut que je le dise.
Subjunctive: present tense, irregular form
33. c. C'est la politique du chacun pour soi!
Pronouns: disjunctives
34. a. Après s'être réveillée, elle s'est levée.
Past participle: agreement with past infinitive and reflexive verbs
35. d. Je suis professeur de français en Allemagne.
Orthography: upper v. lower case letters for nationality
36. a. Comprenez-vous ce qui est arrivé?
Pronouns: relative
37. d. Est-ce qu'il arrivera lundi?
Time adverbials: inclusion or exclusion of article
38. a. Elle est la meilleure élève de la classe.
Superlative of adjectives: bon, mieux and meilleur
39. c. Pendant la nuit de dimanche.
Orthography: upper v. lower case
40. a. C'est à onze heures du matin qu'il viendra.
Tenses: sequence of tenses for future events with 'c'est' v. 'il est'

Appendix III

Self-assessment check list used by students as a record of progress following the diagnostic test

French Diagnostic Test: Self Assessment Follow-up (v2.3 April 2008)

1. Underline or highlight the correct options in the questions below.
2. For each alternative option in each question:
 - Tick under **A** if you understand why this option is correct or incorrect.
 - Tick under **B** if you could explain this or teach it to pupils.

If you are unable to tick a column for any of the items, add that grammatical point/area to your *Subject Knowledge Audit*.

A B

1. a. Nous sommes arrivés en mangeants notre petit-déjeuner
b. La tarte satisfaisant était merveilleuse
c. La tarte était satisfaisant
d. Nous sommes arrivés en mangeant notre petit-déjeuner
2. a. Expliques-moi cela mon petit
b. Expliquez-moi cela s'il vous plaît monsieur
c. Explique-moi cela mes enfants
d. Explique-moi cela s'il vous plaît monsieur
3. a. Il a décrit les vacances qu' il se souvient avec plaisir
b. Il a décrit les vacances lesquelles il se souvient avec plaisir
c. Il a décrit les vacances dont il se souvient avec plaisir
d. Il a décrit les vacances desquelles il se souvient avec plaisir
4. a. Elle est belle avec sa robe et son chapeau vers
b. Elle est belle avec sa robe et son chapeau verts
c. Elle est belle avec sa robe et son chapeau verte
d. Elle est belle avec sa robe et son chapeau vertes
5. a. Les professeurs travaillent dur pour que leurs élèves aillent à l'université
b. Les professeurs travaillent dur pour que leurs élèves iront à l'université
c. Les élèves travaillent dur pour qu'ils aillent à l'université
d. Les professeurs travaillent dur pour que leurs élèves vont à l'université
6. a. Si tu l'aies averti il t'aurait téléphoné
b. Si tu l'aurais averti il t'aurait téléphoné
c. Si tu l'as eu averti il t'aurait téléphoné
d. Si tu l'avais averti il t'aurait téléphoné
7. a. On y s'habitue
b. Sa soeur lui l'a acheté
c. Elle en y a bu
d. Mon père me l'a donné

8. a. Cet hôtel est très agréable!
b. Cette hôtel est très agréable!
c. C'est hôtel est très agréable!
d. Ce hôtel est très agréable!
9. a. Je me suis mis de travailler
b. Elle a refusé venir
c. J'ai décidé à partir à sept heures
d. Il a commencé à pleuvoir
10. a. Pendant qu'il regardait la télé il a entendu la sonnerie
b. Pendant qu'il a regardé la télé il entendait la sonnerie
c. Pendant qu'il regardait la télé il entendrait la sonnerie
d. Pendant qu'il a regardé la télé il a entendu la sonnerie
11. a. C'est la plus jolie fille du monde
b. C'est une des rues plus élégantes de Londres
c. C'est la fille plus intelligente du monde
d. C'est une des plus chics rues de Paris
12. a. Ce sont des questions que personne ne posent
b. Ce sont des questions que personne pose
c. Ce sont des questions que personne ne pose
d. Ce sont des questions que personne ne pose pas
13. a. On m'a offertes des fleurs
b. Elle a été offerte des fleurs
c. On m'a offert des fleurs
d. J'ai été offert des fleurs
14. a. L'agence est fermée depuis 2005
b. L'agence sera fermée depuis 2005
c. L'agence a fermé depuis 2005
d. L'agence a été fermée depuis 2005
15. a. Ces vêtements sont ceux de Marianne
b. Ces vêtements sont celles de Marianne
c. Ces vêtements sont celui de Marianne
d. Ces vêtements sont celle de Marianne
16. a. De Gaulle est un des plus grands personnalités de son temps
b. De Gaulle est un des plus grand personnalités de son temps
c. De Gaulle est une des plus grandes personnalités de son temps
d. De Gaulle est une des plus grande personnalités de son temps

17. a. Rendez-leur leurs crayons!
b. Rendez-leur leur crayons!
c. Rendez leurs leurs crayons!
d. Rendez-leurs leur crayons!
18. a. Elle n'a jamais vu rien
b. Elle n'a jamais personne vu
c. Elle n'a jamais rien vu
d. Elle n'a rien jamais vu
19. a. C'est demain quand il sortira de l'hôpital
b. C'est demain qu'il sortira de l'hôpital
c. C'est demain il sortira de l'hôpital
d. C'est demain où il sortira de l'hôpital
20. a. C'est intéressant!
b. C'est intéressent!
c. C'est interéssant!
d. C'est interèssant!
21. a. Donnez lui la!
b. Je n'en lui donne pas
c. Donnez-lui-la!
d. Donnez-la-lui!
22. a. Ma tante est une bonne médecin
b. Ma tante est un médecin bon
c. Ma tante est un bon médecin
d. Ma tante est une médecin bonne
23. a. Je n'ai de monnaie dans ma poche
b. Je n'ai pas de la monnaie dans ma poche
c. J'ai de la monnaie dans ma poche
d. Je n'ai pas monnaie dans ma poche
24. a. Ses parents, elle les a vue en ville
b. Ses parents, elle les a vu en ville
c. Ses parents, elle les a vues en ville
d. Ses parents, elle les a vus en ville
25. a. Ne mettez pas les là!
b. Ne les mettez pas là!
c. Ne pas les mettez là!
d. Ne mettez les pas là!

26. a. J'ai pas vu personne
b. Je n'ai pas vu personne
c. Je n'ai personne vue
d. Je n'ai vu personne
27. a. Sa femme s'est monté sa valise en haut
b. Sa femme a monté sa valise en haut
c. Sa femme est monté sa valise en haut
d. Sa femme est montée sa valise en haut
28. a. C'est un beaux exemple de roman!
b. C'est un belle exemple de roman!
c. C'est un bel exemple de roman!
d. C'est un beau exemple de roman!
29. a. Ceux-ci me plaît!
b. Celles me plaît!
c. Ce me plaît!
d. Celui-là me plaît!
30. a. Toutes les rues étaient couvertes par glace
b. Toutes les rues étaient couvertes de glace
c. Toutes les rues étaient couvertes de la glace
d. Toutes les rues étaient couvertes avec glace
31. a. Elle est couchée la poupée de bonne heure
b. Elle a couché la poupée de bonne heure
c. Elle s'est couchée la poupée de bonne heure
d. Elle s'a couché de bonne heure
32. a. Il faut que je le dire
b. Il faut que je le dis
c. Il faut que je le dise
d. Il faut que je le dit
33. a. C'est la politique du chacun pour lui!
b. C'est la politique du chacun pour on-même!
c. C'est la politique du chacun pour soi!
d. C'est la politique du chacun pour lui-même!
34. a. Après s'être réveillée, elle s'est levée
b. Après s'être réveillé, elle s'est levée
c. Après s'être réveillé, elle s'est levé
d. Après s'être réveillée, elle s'est levé

35. a. Les vacances sont très importantes pour les français
b. Moi, je suis Français!
c. Il a un mauvais Français!
d. Je suis professeur de français en Allemagne
36. a. Comprenez-vous ce qui est arrivé?
b. Comprenez-vous quoi est arrivé?
c. Comprenez-vous ce qu' est arrivé?
d. Comprenez-vous qu' est arrivé?
37. a. C'est toujours ouvert lundi
b. C'est aujourd'hui lundi mai le cinq
c. C'est aujourd'hui le lundi cinq mai
d. Est-ce qu'il arrivera lundi?
38. a. Elle est la meilleure élève de la classe
b. Elle est la plus bonne élève de la classe
c. Elle est la mieux élève de la classe
d. Elle est l'élève meilleure de la classe
39. a. C'est le mois de Janvier
b. C'est le vent du Nord!
c. Pendant la nuit de dimanche
d. En Hiver on ne peut pas se chauffer
40. a. C'est à onze heures du matin qu'il viendra
b. Il sera à onze heures du matin qu'il viendra
c. Il est à onze heures du matin qu'il viendra
d. Ce sera à onze heures du matin qu'il vienne

Appendix IV

Aims of the diagnostic test (as given to students)

Aims of the Diagnostic Language Test

- To see how well you perform on aspects of language that PGCE students often find difficult; to see how confident you are in your knowledge.
- To see whether you have conscious knowledge of the rules and can articulate them.
- To make you aware of some of the common difficulties experienced by pupils and some likely errors.
- (After further reflection) to understand why pupils might make some of these errors.
- To encourage reflection on how to address these errors and give feedback to pupils who make them.
- To encourage reflection on how to teach these areas of language.

To set you targets for subject knowledge development based on the above.

Appendix V

**Questionnaire administered to PGCE students,
February 2008**

YOUR SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE AND THE FORMATIVE FRENCH GRAMMAR TEST

18th February 2008

In October 2007 you did the diagnostic French test to help you develop your subject knowledge during the PGCE year. We are interested in your personal experience of the ways, if any, that the test helped you develop your subject knowledge. We are also interested in your views on the best use of the test for future PGCE students.

We'll be most grateful if you could complete this sheet and return it today. In part B please try to write in as much concrete detail as you can. Your views will be very important in helping us improve the design and use of the test. When completed, please return this sheet to the tray provided in your seminar room, or to me, Jon Roberts c/o Tracey.

Many thanks, Jon Roberts.

French NS/NNS?

Part A

Please rate the following statements on this scale:

disagree a lot *disagree a little* *agree a little* *agree a lot*
1 **2** **3** **4**

- | | | |
|----|---|------------------|
| 1. | The test is very useful for PGCE students | 1....2....3....4 |
| 2. | It made me assess my own grammar knowledge | 1....2....3....4 |
| 3. | There were important areas of subject knowledge that it did NOT cover | 1....2....3....4 |
| 4. | I used it to set targets in my personal learning plan | 1....2....3....4 |
| 5. | I was able to set clearer targets because of doing the test | 1....2....3....4 |
| 6. | I looked up aspects of grammar shown up by the test | 1....2....3....4 |
| 7. | I worked out clearer explanations for judgments I had made by feel or guess | 1....2....3....4 |

- | | | |
|-----|--|------------------|
| 8. | The test directly contributed to my teaching | 1....2....3....4 |
| 9. | The format of the test does NOT need to be changed | 1....2....3....4 |
| 10. | The test had a NEGATIVE effect on my confidence | 1....2....3....4 |

Part B

1. Please explain your reasons for all or some of the ratings you made in Part A, referring to the item by number.

2. How did you use the test to improve your subject knowledge?
What factors either helped or hindered you to do this?

3. What should staff and/or students do to maximise the usefulness of the test for their subject knowledge development?

Continue over the page if necessary