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## Abstract

# **An Evaluation of Cultural Studies in Foreign Language Learning**

Lynne K. Parmenter

Cultural studies has come to occupy an important place in the field of foreign language learning. From 1990-93, Durham University and the Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique in Paris ran a project to design, implement and evaluate an experimental programme to teach culture in a structured way in schools and colleges. This thesis was written in the context of that project and is concerned with the evaluation of one part of the programme.

After an introduction to the current situation of cultural studies in language learning, the first half of the thesis surveys the relevant theoretical foundations. Chapter 2 considers the theories important to cultural learning and progresses from definitions of culture in its broadest sense to specific techniques for teaching culture. Chapter 3 moves on to the theoretical background of evaluation, discussing various models, methods and issues in analysis and reporting. Chapter 4 makes the transition from the theoretical to the practical, drawing upon the theories already discussed to explain how this particular evaluation was designed and carried out.

The second half of the thesis presents and analyses data collected during the evaluation. Chapters 5 and 6 discuss the aims of the programme and illustrate how these aims were carried through into the classroom. Chapters 7 and 8 focus on what the students learned and their opinions of the programme. The final chapter analyses the students' suggestions for change and considers the significance of the programme within the wider scope of foreign language learning.

**An Evaluation of Cultural Studies in Foreign Language  
Learning**

Lynne K. Parmenter

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A thesis submitted in requirement for the degree of  
Master of Arts in Education  
University of Durham  
School of Education  
1993



10 MAY 1994

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### Declaration

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# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Culture in Language Teaching

Throughout the many centuries that foreign languages have been taught and learned, various methods and approaches have gained and waned in popularity. Depending on the chosen method, the cultural aspect has been accorded greater or lesser importance. The subject of this thesis is cultural learning within the wider field of foreign language learning. The context of the thesis was a project on cultural learning which was carried out over two and a half years at Durham University and the Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique in Paris.

Until the late nineteenth century, the grammar-translation method was unrivalled and even now remains influential. This method, which relies, as its name suggests, upon the practice of grammar exercises and translation from and into the foreign language, places little or no emphasis on the context in which that language is used. Stern (1983:246), discussing this method, points out:

*Language teaching was preparatory to the study of literature, and therefore the main emphasis was upon formal language study, particularly upon its written*



*form. Even the shift towards an attention to the spoken form, which occurred by the end of the nineteenth century, did not bring about a fundamentally new approach to language in society. Language learning in the classroom continued to be conceived as a training rather than as 'real' communication or as an introduction to a foreign society.*

Although the grammar-translation method retained its influence, the next major movement in language teaching was the direct method. As Hawkins (1981) describes, this method had been around for many centuries, but it was revived as a reaction to the grammar-translation method at the end of the nineteenth century and focussed on speech as the prime means of communication and learning. In this method, students are encouraged to learn the foreign language without reference to the mother-tongue, thus reducing interference and acquiring the language more 'naturally'. The cultural aspect has greater prominence in this method, as Brumfit & Roberts (1983:81) note:

*Learning a foreign language, then, meant learning a new and independent system of language, but it also meant becoming immersed in the culture of the target language, and the Direct Method sought to encourage interest in the foreign culture.*

These two approaches formed the basis for subsequent methods. Stern (1983) outlines several methods which gained and fell from favour, but perhaps the one which had the greatest impact was the audiolingual method. This



reflected the psychology of the 1950s and 1960s, and was particularly influenced by Skinner's behaviourist theories. The learning of foreign languages was seen in terms of behaviours which had to be acquired and reinforced by repetition. This was apparent in the audiolingual method's emphasis on mimicry, memorisation and drills, facilitated by the use of the language laboratory. Evidently, the teaching of culture has little place in such a method, as the language is divorced from its context and even from its meaning.

Chomsky's linguistic theories cast doubt on the behaviouristic foundations of the audiolingual method and introduced the notion of 'linguistic competence'. At the same time, developments in other fields, such as sociolinguistics, began to be influential. Gradually, as Brumfit & Roberts (1983:85) point out:

*...both social pressures and evidence from sociolinguistic research have in recent times led to approaches emphasising not linguistic competence as the goal for language teaching so much as communicative competence.*

It is clear that an approach which emphasises the social and communicative nature of language ought to give due consideration to aspects of the culture of the target language. In order to acquire communicative competence, students need to achieve cultural and social competence as well as linguistic competence. In acquiring communicative competence in a foreign language in particular, the dimension of intercultural competence needs to be added.

The elements of communicative competence and the nature of cultural learning will be further explored in the second chapter.

## 1.2 Current approaches in upper secondary language teaching

As approaches to language teaching have changed over the years, methods and content of assessment have also altered to reflect these changes. This is obviously true throughout the language learning programme, but the focus here will be on 'A' level syllabuses and examinations.

A brief glance at the syllabuses of various 'A' level examining boards reveals that their aims and objectives have altered considerably in a relatively short period to accommodate language learning theory. For example, the London syllabus of 1978/79 did not even mention culture and certainly did not have such a thing as a topics paper, whereas the 1992/93 syllabus A has as one of its four aims:

*to make the Advanced level course enjoyable and to stimulate candidates' interest in aspects of France...*

To take another example, the AEB syllabus of 1983 was beginning to incorporate the newer trends, already containing a topics paper and stating that:

*In the examination emphasis will be placed on the oral use of the language and an accuracy in both the oral and written tests.*

This does not necessarily involve any cultural aspect, but by 1992, the aims of the syllabus were explicitly intended to "reflect the increasingly communicative nature of language teaching at 16+ and in the Sixth Form" (AEB syllabus 1992). These aims stated that:

*A course based on this syllabus should:*

- (i) enable the candidate to use the foreign language for the purpose of communication;*
- (ii) foster the ability to collect, analyse and exchange information, ideas and attitudes through the medium of the foreign language.*
- (iii) encourage an interest in the contemporary culture of the foreign culture.*

The emphasis here is clearly on French in context. It is notable, though, that the centrality of the cultural aspect is not necessarily carried through the syllabus. In the AEB syllabus, the paper designed primarily to examine this aspect, entitled *Civilisation, literature and culture*, carries 20% of the total marks. As Morgan (1993:42) has pointed out, in fact, only 12% of this 20% is allotted for content, and what began as a central concept ends as a marginal fraction of the total.

The central concepts of the syllabus, nevertheless, are important and emphasise French in its social and cultural context. The elements outlined in the aims of

linguistic competence, the acquisition of skills and the cultural aspect were all given prominence in the project carried out at Durham, which will be described in detail in Chapters 4 to 8.

Morgan has examined the eight available syllabuses for French 'A' level in greater depth and discusses their cultural aims and content. She comes to the conclusion that:

*If...cultural understanding is to be part of a sixth form syllabus then radical changes to the current A-level format would be both necessary and inevitable. (1993:44)*

The French syllabuses for English teaching in the equivalent age range, the seconde, première and terminale, published by the Ministère de l'Education Nationale in 1990, show a similar trend. One of the three objectives of English teaching in the seconde is "enrichissement culturel", which involves the following:

*Il s'agit de baliser un domaine culturel vaste, ouvert et varié, par des repères coordonnés, historiques, géographiques, économiques, politiques, scientifiques, sociaux et, proprement, culturels. (1990:17; emphasis in original).*

This theme is returned to in the section on "enrichissement culturel" in the syllabus for première and terminale. Here the aim is that:

*on s'efforcera de couvrir un champ aussi large que possible en évitant, bien sûr, les simplifications trompeuses et les clichés...* (1990:85)

The importance of cultural learning here does seem to be recognised. However, it is significant that the part of the syllabus devoted to describing "enrichissement culturel" covers only two pages. By contrast, the "présentation fonctionnelle et sémantique" and the "présentation grammaticale", lists of structures and functions the student should master, occupy a total of thirty four pages. While linguistic objectives are specified in fine detail, the cultural component is left to the teacher, as is explicitly stated:

*Comme il n'y a pas de programme culturel, la tentation est grande de se laisser guider par ses propres préférences, ou tout simplement par les textes du manuel. Pour échapper à ce danger de juxtaposition, de la culture en miettes, il faudrait prévoir des cheminements qui, sur un parcours de deux années, permettraient à l'élève de se construire une image aussi juste, aussi complète et aussi nuancée que possible de la réalité vivante des pays de langue anglaise.* (1990:86)

This seems to place a great responsibility on teachers of English to achieve an aim but without any guidelines as to how the aim can be achieved. In France, as in England, the importance of cultural learning has been recognised but the theory and methods of teaching culture have been neglected.

### 1.3 The Durham/INRP project

Such developments in the teaching of French at 'A' level and English at the lycée were the concern of the project team at Durham University School of Education and their counterparts at the Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique in Paris. The project to introduce cultural learning to the foreign language syllabus ran simultaneously in France and England from September 1990 to March 1993. In France the project was carried out with two age groups, in both collèges and lycées. In England the project was restricted to 'A' level students in sixth forms or tertiary colleges.

On the English side the project, funded by the Leverhulme Trust, had its foundations in the previous work of the leader of the research team (see Byram 1989, 1991). In addition, the research team consisted of one full-time researcher and five teacher-researchers, who worked together to design an experimental course to teach culture to 'A' level students and then implemented this course in their respective schools/colleges. The aim of the course was to introduce aspects of French culture to students in a systematic manner, at the same time equipping the students with the skills necessary to further explore the culture independently. For this purpose the course was divided into five topics covering different aspects of society, namely, the family, education, work, regional identity and politics. Further details on the project participants and the course will be found in the fourth

chapter, while the foundations of the project, the theories of cultural learning, will be explored further in the second chapter.

#### 1.4 The aims of this thesis

Throughout the implementation of the project and after the project had finished, evaluation was carried out. Various forms of evaluation were used. For example, the French and English teams evaluated each other's work as well as constantly reviewing their own progress. My part in the project consisted of evaluating one part of the course, the Regional Identity topic. This evaluation was carried out mainly using ethnographic principles and techniques such as classroom observation and interviews with students. The third chapter consists of a review and discussion of the theories and practice of evaluation, which provide a context for the principles and practice applied in this particular evaluation. The evaluation was undertaken over a period of approximately three months towards the end of the experimental course. Chapters 5 to 8 describe and discuss the evaluation of the Regional Identity topic in terms of teaching and learning. From a teaching point of view, the sixth chapter describes what was actually happening in the classroom while the fifth chapter examines how the various sets of aims formulated follow through into practice. From a learning point of view, the next two chapters explore the students' response

to the topic in terms of the their acquisition of knowledge and skills and their attitudes to the topic and course.

The three aims of the thesis are therefore:

1. To survey the theoretical background to cultural learning.
2. To survey the theoretical background to evaluation and design an evaluation suitable for the project.
3. To apply these theories in evaluating one aspect of the project and reporting on the findings.



## Chapter 2

### CULTURAL LEARNING

Cultural learning is a term used to describe a wide-ranging area of study, encompassing disciplines traditionally compartmentalised in the social sciences or humanities. The objective of this chapter is to look at the background to cultural learning. This will be done progressively, beginning with the general nature of culture. The second section will treat the components of cultural learning. Subsequently, the levels of cultural learning will be considered, followed by methods and techniques and gradually honing down to the specificities of the Durham project. Of necessity, this will be a general rather than in-depth survey, as each one of these elements could be expanded to fill much more than an M.A. thesis.

#### 2.1 Definitions of culture

The subject of culture has been arousing interest for centuries. Descartes, writing in his "Discours de la Methode" in 1637, set out the essential when he observed that:

*un même homme, avec son même esprit, étant nourri dès son enfance entre des Français ou des Allemands,*

*devient différent de ce qu'il serait s'il avait toujours vécu entre des Chinois ou des Cannibales.*

This immediately leads to the question of what it is that makes people different, or what exactly culture is. This is the specialist field of the anthropologists and they have not yet managed to agree on a definitive definition. However, many definitions have been put forward by anthropologists and others and it is interesting to consider some of these to see what they have in common and how they differ.

In foreign language learning, the study of 'culture' has traditionally been synonymous with the reading of set texts by classic French writers with perhaps a smattering of history and geography. This 'cultural study' has been reserved for sixth form and university level, so that the vast majority of French language students have never had the opportunity to become familiar with even the restricted menu of culture on offer.

The concept of culture has now widened to include more than just this small, though valuable, part of the whole. Definitions by language teaching specialists of what culture is are numerous. Seelye (1984:13), after pointing out that no generally accepted consensus has been reached, offers the all-embracing,

*culture emerges as a very broad concept embracing all aspects of human life.*

Robinson (1985) proposes a framework of definitions of culture which should be taken as complementary rather

than alternatives. The behaviourist approach treats culture as sets of observable behaviours, the outward manifestations of cultures such as traditions or habits, for example, ways of greeting someone. The advantages of using this approach in cultural learning are that much information can be gained through observation and students can learn how to act appropriately in certain circumstances. The disadvantage is that the reasons for the behaviour are not necessarily understood. The second definition, the functionalist approach, also concentrates on culture as a social phenomenon, but emphasises the reasons and rules behind the observed behaviour rather than the behaviour itself. Again, this approach provides a large amount of information and must be particularly useful to outsiders, who can infer rules of society from what they observe. However, both approaches require that all aspects of culture are directly observable and that observers notice and interpret the foreign culture in a way they may never have applied to their own culture. The third definition given by Robinson is the cognitive definition. This emphasises culture as being internal rather than observable. A shared culture is created not through a shared set of behaviours but through a shared means of interpreting and classifying information. One method used to access this approach is ethnography, where observers try to understand the experiences and attitudes of their informants from the informant's own point of view. The final definition, the symbolic definition, sees culture as an ongoing system of symbols and meanings.

Meanings are not fixed; they vary between individuals and within individuals according to past experience. This approach emphasises neither the experiences themselves nor the method used to interpret them, but rather the results when the two meet. Obviously, each of the four definitions has its usefulness and all four are interdependent. The sum of the four definitions covers a vast area and perhaps this is why no single definition has been regarded as complete. Most definitions of culture include one or more of the above areas, for example, Loveday's (1984:34) interpretation:

*It involves the implicit norms and conventions of a society, its methods of 'going about doing things', its historically transmitted but also adaptive and creative ethos, its symbols and its organization of experience.*

## 2.2 Components of cultural learning

As culture does cover such a wide range of human experience, it obviously has many components. A framework for considering the components of culture as they relate to foreign language learning can be taken from Van Ek's Objectives for foreign language learning of 1986. In the first volume of this document, entitled Scope, Van Ek describes the six competences he considers necessary to achieve comprehensive communicative ability. These are linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence,

discourse competence, strategic competence, sociocultural competence and social competence. Evidently, these competences overlap constantly in practical use, but as all are essential for learning a foreign culture as well as language, it is worth considering them in further detail.

### 2.2.1 Linguistic competence

Linguistic competence is defined by Van Ek (1986:39) as;

*the ability to produce and interpret meaningful utterances which are formed in accordance with the rules of the language concerned and bear their conventional meaning. By 'conventional meaning' we mean that meaning which native speakers would normally attach to an utterance when used in isolation.*

Linguistic competence is the foundation for all the other competences; without some understanding of the vocabulary and structures of the target language, it is almost impossible to grasp the culture that that language represents. The importance of language within culture has been emphasised by Brown (1987:123):

*A language is part of a culture and a culture is part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven such that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture.*

On the other hand, linguistic competence without the other competences is incomplete. Students can master thousands of words and hundreds of grammatical structures, but still be unable to hold a simple conversation in the target language. If it is to be used in a real-life situation, a language cannot be separated from its culture. Valdes (1986:1) elaborates on this position, considering the three aspects of language, culture and thought to be three parts of a whole, which cannot operate independently. From this she postulates that:

*It is conceivable that the lack of acceptance of artificial languages such as Esperanto may be explained by their isolation of language from culture. Thought, in any real sense, is very difficult to express without an underlying value system understood tacitly by both the sender and the receiver in a communication.... No one can feel, or therefore think deeply, in an artificial language.*  
(emphasis in original)

While linguistic competence is fundamental, then, it is only one element of learning a culture.

### 2.2.2 Sociolinguistic competence

Van Ek (1986:41) clearly defines the difference between linguistic and sociolinguistic competence:

*Linguistic competence covers the relation between linguistic signals and their conventional meaning (conventional in the sense of what they are normally,*

*in isolation, supposed to mean), whereas sociolinguistic competence covers the relation between linguistic signals and their contextual - or situational - meaning.*

In cultural learning, there is no reason why sociolinguistic competence cannot be acquired at an elementary stage, just as it is in the native culture. Even a toddler, refusing to leave the park, for example, is capable of understanding an adult's; "Well, I'm going - bye-bye..." not as a statement of the adult's intention, but as a threat that he is going to be left alone. Similarly, in the native culture children quickly become aware of other situational elements such as the relationship with the person they are talking to and what kind of language is appropriate in what situations. Even a basic level of sociolinguistic competence added to the student's linguistic competence could greatly improve his overall ability to communicate.

### 2.2.3 Discourse competence

Van Ek (1986:35) elaborates on what discourse competence is:

*We mean by this the ability to perceive and to achieve coherence of separate utterances in meaningful communication patterns.*

Again, this is a skill which is usually well developed in the native culture, but which may be neglected in learning a foreign language and culture. It

is all very well to have swallowed a dictionary of technical vocabulary, but it is of little use in clinching business deals unless one knows how to open and end a conversation, how to express disagreement, how to insist without being offensive etc., etc. To give an example, an English person learning purely Japanese language would learn that 'iie' means 'no'. A student learning the language in its cultural context would realise that saying 'iie' as a direct translation of 'no' would not be as acceptable and that much softer ways of saying 'no' are necessary to construct and maintain a discourse. Also, knowing when to speak is as important as knowing what to say. The English custom of listening silently to a speaker and the Japanese custom of constantly interjecting are both used to signal attention on the part of the listener. To the English speaker, the Japanese person would seem to be rudely interrupting, while to the Japanese speaker silence would be taken as disagreement. Both could hinder the flow of 'normal' conversation. Without some level of discourse competence, it would be difficult to sustain a conversation satisfactory to both parties.

Discourse competence also applies to written texts. In this area the cultural learner needs to be able to produce and to interpret texts. At a simple level this could involve filling in personal information on forms. At a more advanced level, the student may be required to write a formal business letter, taking into account the conventional formats and type of language normally used.



#### 2.2.4 Strategic competence

In defining strategic competence, Van Ek (1986:35) quotes Canale & Swain. According to them, this particular competence involves:

*the use of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies to compensate for gaps in the language user's knowledge of the code or for breakdown of communication for other reasons.*

Although there are more gaps and more breakdown of communication in the foreign culture than in the native culture, Van Ek goes on to observe that these strategies are in fact used much more often in the native culture. He lists some of the strategies often used, for example, retracing a sentence, rephrasing, substituting words, describing, demonstration or gesture. These strategies can all be used to emphasise, supplement or replace normal language and are a natural part of communication. They could probably be used to even greater effect in a foreign language, in addition to particular strategies such as word-creation, foreignising native words and transliterating. Van Ek points out that the transfer of native strategies and acquisition of new strategies is indispensable in achieving communicative competence, as a conversation without any of these strategies would sound abnormally stilted.

### 2.2.5 Sociocultural competence

*The use of a particular language implies the use of a reference frame which is at least partly determined by the sociocultural context in which that language is used by native speakers. (Van Ek:35)*

It is this reference frame which is at the heart of what the cultural learner has to grasp. Any communication involves a cultural context, a frame of shared meanings and assumptions which do not need to be made explicit at each meeting. To the foreign learner, this framework of shared meanings can present a far greater barrier to understanding than the language itself. What is accepted cultural knowledge to a native speaker may in fact make a conversation unintelligible to an outsider. Zarate (1986:19) has underlined this point:

*Le fonctionnement de l'implicite culturel sous-entend une organisation de la réalité, une logique acceptée et diffusée par les membres de la communauté. Il présuppose un ensemble d'opinions et de croyances qui se donnent comme indiscutables, qui, alors qu'elles relèvent de la conviction, ont la force de l'évidence et les vertus de l'absolu. L'implicite entraîne une adhésion immédiate à une vision du monde...*

This world view is reflected in the linguistic and paralinguistic behaviour of the members of any particular group. Within the group, members are able to conform to the behaviour required by the accepted set of shared meanings. Problems can arise when communication is

attempted between members of different groups, without any adaptation of the native reference frame. Loveday (1982:38) explains how this happens linguistically:

*Every utterance contains presuppositions of some kind and many are culturally relative... Obviously, native speakers and perhaps teachers of their own language take such culturally determined presuppositions for granted and often leave them for L2 learners to incomprehend.*

On a less obvious level, paralinguistic behaviour is also often ignored and left to be 'incomprehended', yet it is accepted that nonverbal communication is important in reflecting the accepted norms of a culture. Studies into methods of nonverbal communication have abounded recently, both in research and in popular literature. Morain (1986:64) writes of the importance of kinesics in cross-cultural understanding:

*Words in themselves are too limited a dimension. The critical factor in understanding has to do with cultural aspects that exist beyond the lexical - aspects that include the many dimensions of nonverbal communication.*

Morain goes on to describe some of these dimensions. She points out that posture and movement are used differently by different cultures to express various attitudes, states or ideas. It seems that even the action of walking is culturally determined, with a French gait being more disciplined and space-constrained than an American style. Facial expression and eye contact are also meaningful - in

some cultures it is polite to gaze attentively at a speaker while in others this would be considered aggressive. Gestures vary from culture to culture - even something as simple as nodding to mean yes and shaking one's head to mean no is reversed in some countries. Finally, proxemics are probably the least consciously learned but one of the most important aspects of nonverbal communication. Different cultures establish varying distances of interaction for different purposes. Some cultures favour a close interaction distance with a large amount of physical contact. A foreigner from a large-distance, low-contact culture would probably feel extremely uncomfortable entering such a culture.

It seems essential for cultural learners to try to understand the reference frame or shared meanings which are used by speakers of their target culture. Only by doing this can they begin to produce spontaneous and consistent linguistic and paralinguistic behaviour which seems natural to a native speaker. Clearly, the achievement of sociocultural competence presupposes parallel achievement in all the other competences, but like the others, the process could begin early - it is not necessary to have attained a high level of linguistic fluency before knowing anything about the culture that language lives in.

### 2.2.6 Social competence

Social competence is Van Ek's final element and is defined (1986:35) as follows:

*If two or more individuals are to coordinate their efforts to engage in interaction they must, at least, have the will and the skill to do so. The will to interact involves motivation, attitude and self-confidence; the skill to interact involves such qualities as empathy and the ability to handle social situations.*

Although social competence is much more general than the other competences, it is still an integral part of language learning. Language and culture learning is a social activity which involves emotional as well as cognitive commitment from the learner. For this reason, personality factors such as self-esteem, extroversion and motivation are central to the learning process. This is particularly true in the cultural aspects of language learning, where the validity of the student's own cultural background, beliefs and values may be questioned. In spite of the potential threat, though, it is false to deny these cultural aspects, as this results in the separation of language from its culture. Byram, in Buttjes & Byram (1991:18) discusses the effects of such a division:

*...to separate language and culture teaching is to imply that a foreign language can be treated in the early learning stages as if it were self-contained and independent of other sociocultural phenomena.*

*The consequence is that learners, rightly unable to accept this isolation, assume that the foreign language is an epiphenomenon of their own language, and that it refers to and embodies their existing understandings and interpretations of their own and the foreign cultures. Where this arises, as it does so frequently in the early years of secondary education, the pupils cannot be said to be learning a foreign language in the proper sense; they are learning a codified version of their own.*

It appears, then, that students learning a language without the culture face two alternatives. The result is either a version of the target language filtered through their existing frames of reference or a kind of artificial language which holds no real meanings or values at all.

Through learning a foreign culture as well as language, the student's own perceptions and world view are changed. Learning a 'codified version' of one's own language is a safe option for students. It requires only cognitive effort to learn which words of the target language symbolise which concepts in the native language and which structures should be used to link the words together. Learning a culture as well as a language demands a great deal more involvement on the part of the student. Because language, thought and culture are intertwined, the student must be willing to accept that his own world view is not the only correct one and to extend and modify his ways of thinking in the light of what he learns. This approach provides opportunities for

personal development and understanding as well as an increase in knowledge, but at the same time can be viewed as threatening as it requires a degree of commitment from the student. A teacher can provide the factual knowledge necessary to pass exams in a foreign language, but when it comes to cultural learning, the onus is on the student himself to develop alternative ways of thinking and doing. In this regard, the student's social competence is of considerable importance.

Van Ek's six competences provide a framework within which language and cultural learning can be achieved. If the purpose of language teaching is to enable the student to operate in the target culture, then it is evident that language teaching should not be confined to purely linguistic competence, but should apportion greater importance to the other, culturally related, competences.

### 2.3 Levels of cultural learning

Once the importance of cultural learning is accepted, it is necessary to examine what exactly is involved. This section will consider what is aspired to in cultural learning and what levels of cultural learning are attainable.

### 2.3.1 Aspirations and limits of cultural learning

First of all, it may be useful to consider what cultural learning is not. Cultural teaching does not aim to produce born-again French or Englishmen, any more than religious education aims to convert students to Hinduism by teaching about it. Learning about another culture does not mean that the student has to relinquish his existing cultural identity, nor does it mean that he has to wholeheartedly embrace all aspects of the foreign culture. What cultural learning does aspire to is relativisation, understanding and empathy.

An important stage of cultural learning is an awareness of one's own language and culture and an ability to relativise it. Descartes realised this in 1637:

*Il est bon de savoir quelque chose des moeurs de divers peuples, afin de juger des nôtres plus sainement, et que nous ne pensions pas que tout ce qui est contre nos modes soit ridicule et contre raison, ainsi qu'ont coutume de faire ceux qui n'ont rien vu....* (Discours de la methode:96)

Through studying other cultures, students can be helped to realise that their own culture is not the only 'right' way and that there are aspects of their own culture which others might consider strange. This could conceivably come as a shock to students who have never questioned their own cultural background, but is an essential step to intercultural understanding. Zarate (1986:39) remarks:



*La classe de langue invite a une prise de conscience des mécanismes de l'identité: dans la confrontation avec l'autre, c'est une définition de soi qui se construit.*

This new or reconsidered definition of self can be enriched by an awareness of the definitions held by other peoples. Byram (1989:117) explains this concept:

*To bring about change in pupils' schemata of their own ethnicity, we need to confront them with new experience of their ethnicity.. This can be done by presenting them with a foreigner's view of their ethnicity, with the intention that their existing schemata of their own ethnicity shall change when they cannot cope with the new experience. Such new experience needs, of course, to be agreeable and non-threatening, so that pupils are prepared to change their schemata rather than reject the experience by assimilating it to their existing views of foreigners; they must be helped to take seriously foreign views of themselves which differ from their own, and to adjust their own to give recognition to the foreign views.*

Once the student has considered his own cultural identity and adapted it if necessary to accommodate foreign views of his culture, this can be used as a valuable asset in learning another culture. Robinson (1985:100) observes that:

*Since no one can be a cultural or perceptual tabula rasa, any authentic product of cultural learning will*

*be a synthesis. Synthesis indicates change; in this case, cultural change, cultural versatility.*

The student can profitably draw on his experiences of his own culture provided he is able to adapt his interpretations according to what he learns about the new culture.

Once the student has become aware of and is able to some extent to relativise his native culture, he is in a much stronger position to be able to understand and accept facets of that culture which are strange to him. Valdes (1986:50) stresses that it is understanding and acceptance which are aimed for in intercultural communication and that approval is not essential. She gives the example of a role-play in which American and Malaysian students' attitudes towards helping an old lady carrying a heavy burden were examined. The Malaysian students, who immediately relieved the lady of her burden, were shocked by the American reaction of seeing and then ignoring the lady. The American explanation was that this reaction respected the lady's independence and pride in doing things for herself. In this case, the aim was not to stop the Malaysian students helping old ladies, but to help them to understand and accept why the American students reacted in the way they did.

One step on from understanding and acceptance is empathy. With some cognitive adaptation, it is possible to understand and accept others' ways of interpreting the world. Empathy requires being able to put oneself in

somebody else's shoes and see things from their point of view. Brown (1987:107) describes empathy as:

*reaching beyond the self and understanding and feeling what another person is understanding and feeling.*

It is probably the ability to 'feel' what another person is feeling which carries empathy beyond understanding and accepting. At the same time, empathy does not demand agreement with or approval of the other person - there is still a certain degree of detachment possible. Brown goes on to say that:

*Psychologists generally agree...that there are two necessary aspects to the development and exercising of empathy: first, an awareness and knowledge of one's own feelings, and second, identification with another person.*

In other words, students who want to attain the ability to empathise with members of a target culture first need to go through the process described above of becoming aware of and relativising their own culture and identity. If they can achieve this and are able to show empathy, they will have tapped into one of the essential skills of cultural learning, what Brown (1987:107) acclaims as:

*probably the major factor in the harmonious coexistence of individuals in society.*

Awareness, relativisation, understanding, acceptance and empathy are thus essential processes in cultural learning. The result, if these elements can be mastered,

has been described by several researchers as the ultimate aim of cultural learning. Loveday expands (1982:57):

*The experiencing of a different version of sociocultural reality is an undeniably valuable and enriching process and most L2 teaching should offer the opportunity to gain entry to it by freeing students from ethnocentrism and sensitizing them to cross-cultural contrasts and similarities.*

Seelye (1984:56) furnishes an even more vivid picture:

*...knowledge of another culture is tantamount to moving out of a dark dank corner of the cave into more illumination.*

Cultural learning thus aspires not only to provide knowledge and skills, but through the encouragement of essential processes such as reflection and understanding offers an opportunity for personal development and enrichment.

### 2.3.2 Levels of acculturation

Obviously, a monocultural student does not master the processes, skills and knowledge involved in cultural learning overnight. There are many stages or levels of competence and progress is gradual. Several researchers have devised models of levels of acculturation or competence, and it would perhaps be useful to look at some of these. Acton and Walker de Felix (1986:31) review a dozen of these models, some of them models of cognitive

development, others models of affect and acculturation and yet others personality models. They found similarities between all the models in the various levels of acculturation they proposed. Most of the models reviewed divide neatly into four stages, corresponding to Acton and Walker de Felix's own model. Their first level is defined as *tourist*. At this stage the learners rely heavily on their first language and culture to communicate in and interpret the foreign culture. Culture shock is most likely at this stage, although it is possible at a later stage. Brown (1987:128) outlines the symptoms:

*Culture shock refers to phenomena ranging from mild irritability to deep psychological panic and crisis. Culture shock is associated with feelings in the learner of estrangement, anger, hostility, indecision, frustration, unhappiness, sadness, loneliness, homesickness and even physical illness.*

Controlled cultural learning in the classroom could help to preempt some of the possible causes of culture shock. If the student manages to survive this level intact, he proceeds to the *survivor* stage. At this stage the first language and culture still hold priority, but the learner can operate functionally in the target culture.

Progression to the next stage, according to Acton and Walker de Felix, is a critical period, as this is when the learner must surmount the *acculturation threshold*. This is the point at which the learner passes from advanced beginner to competent (Wong-Fillmore), identity

development to self-esteem (Maslow), responding to organizing a value system (Bloom) or being nurtured to independence (Curran).

Once learners have conquered the acculturation threshold, they progress to what can be termed the *immigrant* level. By this stage language presents few problems and learners can communicate competently in the target culture. It seems that this is the stage reached by most literate people living and working in a foreign culture.

The final stage, defined as *citizen*, is rarely attained. By this point the learner has an intuitive command of the language and its subtleties, uses non-verbal communication effectively and presumably has attained the cultural competence necessary to operate at the level of near-native.

Acton and Walker de Felix's review, which brings together many different models, provides a framework for the various levels of cultural learning which can be aimed at and attained. In their summary (1986:29), they address the relevance of these models to education:

*It may be possible, for instance, for pedagogy to lead learners into stage 3, beyond the acculturation threshold, but it appears to require extensive socialization or acculturation beyond the classroom to proceed much further than that.*

This theory seems to be borne out by research undertaken by Meyer and Kordes. Meyer (1991:142) proposes a three stage model of levels of intercultural

performance. As this has been developed specifically in the context of cultural learning, it would be worth examining in greater detail.

Meyer's first level of performance is the *monocultural level*. He defines this level as follows:

*The learner uses behavioural schemes and demonstrates ways of thinking which are merely adequate for his own culture, and he does so in situations which demand cross-cultural activity and understanding. The learner's concepts relating to foreign cultures are stereotyped, cliché-ridden and ethnocentric. Problems arising in interaction are solved in ways adequate among fellow countrymen and women, not in intercultural situations.*

This is the starting point of cultural learning, and at this stage learners do not have the awareness or competence to communicate interculturally. This stage probably relates to the *tourist* first stage of Acton and Walker de Felix's model, where the learner has a very limited command of the target language. It is important to note that these two stages, although they are linked, would probably not occur simultaneously. As Kordes (1991:287) has pointed out, the development of intercultural competence often lags far behind the development of linguistic competence.

Meyer's second stage is described as the *intercultural level*:

*The learner is able to explain cultural differences between his own and the foreign cultures because he*

*can make use of the information he has acquired concerning his and the foreign countries, or because he is able to ask for information in relation to cross-cultural differences. The information he has may be of historical, sociological, psychological or economic nature, etc. Putting it metaphorically, one could say that the learner stands between the cultures.*

By this point the learner is aware of his own cultural identity and has developed the ability to relativise aspects of his own and the foreign culture. He is more able to understand the foreign culture as is evident from his ability to explain cultural differences. By the end of this stage, when he is genuinely standing between the two cultures, he is ready to cross the acculturation threshold.

This brings the learner to Meyer's highest *transcultural level*:

*The learner is able to evaluate intercultural differences and to solve intercultural problems by appeal to principles of international co-operation and communication which give each culture its proper right and which allow the learner to develop his own identity in the light of cross-cultural understanding. He is able to negotiate meaning where negotiation is possible. Speaking metaphorically, one can say that the learner stands above both his own and the foreign culture, but it should be clear*



*that this does not mean a 'cosmopolitan neglect' of his own culture. (emphasis in original)*

This level corresponds most closely to the third and fourth stages of the models outlined by Acton and Walker de Felix. By this stage the learner is able to use his ability to empathise to help him negotiate between members of different cultures. At the same time, his own identity is not threatened as he may have feared in the early stages, but on the contrary is enriched by his intercultural experience. However, this level is difficult to attain, particularly with school-age students who have not had prolonged experience of a foreign culture. Kordes (1991:288) seems to echo the theory that stage 3 and beyond are largely inaccessible to such students when he explains the results of research undertaken with 112 sixth form students of French in Germany:

*...more than a third of all the young students remained in a monocultural stage; only with great difficulty did the majority advance to an intermediate intercultural level... an insignificant minority of just six pupils reached a 'transcultural stage'.*

Although these results seem to be portrayed quite negatively, they could in fact be viewed in a more positive light. Acton and Walker de Felix claim that extensive acculturation beyond the classroom is needed to proceed beyond their stage 3. If the majority of German students attained the intercultural level by the end of

the Oberstufe, then they already have a solid foundation to proceed to the transcultural level given the opportunity of spending an extended period in the target culture through later work or study.

It may not be possible always to reach the highest levels of cultural learning in the time span or confines of the school system. It should be possible, however, for students to reach some level and to acquire knowledge of and practice of the processes essential for independent cultural learning in their future.

#### 2.4 Methods of developing cultural learning

The knowledge, skills and processes involved in cultural learning are not acquired instantly or haphazardly. One discipline which offers a structure suitable for cultural learning is ethnography. This section investigates some of the principles and techniques of ethnography which have potential for use in cultural learning.

##### 2.4.1 Principles of ethnography

Ethnography originated within, and is still most closely associated with, the science of anthropology. However, its usefulness as a process extends to most areas of knowledge concerned with people, including language and

cultural learning. Hammersley & Atkinson (1983:2) have indicated the widespread potential of ethnographic methods:

*In many respects ethnography is the most basic form of social research... it also bears a close resemblance to the routine ways in which people make sense of the world in everyday life.*

The fundamental principles of ethnography do indeed bear resemblance to the way people interpret the world around them, particularly their native culture. It is for this reason that ethnography is so well suited to the process of cultural learning.

One of the underlying principles of ethnography is its emphasis on understanding the *insider* view. This means trying to describe the culture from the inside rather than the outside. The ethnographer tries to formulate an image of the target culture through the use of informants, who are usually native participants in that culture. The information gained should describe the culture in its own terms, using the categories and meanings employed by the native. In this respect the use of language is paramount, for it is largely through language that a coherent picture of an informant's world can be constructed. Robinson (1985:73) stresses the importance of this principle:

*The purpose of ethnography is to find out the way people within the target culture categorize and prioritize experience. Ethnography does not apply concepts for crosscultural comparisons, i.e., "etic"*

*concepts, before such concepts naturally emerge as part of the culture being described.*

To fulfil this purpose, contact with native informants is clearly essential. This "non-laboratory", in the field setting is another basic aspect of ethnography. The ideal situation would be for the student to experience a prolonged, maximum-contact stay in the native culture. Clearly, this is not usually practical within the student's language learning context, at least at school. However, there are ways in which the student can maximise the opportunities available. These will be discussed in the second part of this section.

Another important principle of ethnography is its toleration and encouragement of reflexivity. The core principle of reflexivity, as developed by Hammersley & Atkinson (1983) is that the researcher is part of the social world he studies and cannot divorce himself from that world, but the fact that the researcher is an active participant in the research process can be turned to advantage once he is aware of his own involvement. This obviously has direct relevance to cultural learning, where the student has to become aware of and relativise his own culture before he can go on to understand other cultures.

#### 2.4.2 Ethnographic techniques

The techniques of ethnography aim to gather data which can then be used to provide a description of the culture in question. Hammersley & Atkinson (1983:112) specify further:

*The aim is not to gather 'pure' data that are free from potential bias. There is no such thing.*

*Rather, the aim must be to discover the correct manner of interpreting whatever data we have.*

Data collected through ethnographic techniques are by their very nature subjective. The aim is therefore to acknowledge this subjectivity and to minimise it by comparing or triangulating data obtained through different techniques.

One of the main techniques of ethnography is participant observation, learning through watching and participating in the target culture. As was mentioned above, the school context is not ideal for practice in this technique. Nevertheless, many students have the opportunity to spend time in the target culture through holidays, exchanges or even work experience. This experience can be complemented by the use of video, television, radio and tapes. With a little training in how to observe, students should be able to gain a great deal of cultural information through both first-hand and second-hand experience.

The second important technique in ethnography is interviewing. Interviews used in ethnography are usually

informal, with the informant given the chance to talk about things from his own perspective using his own language. From this, the interviewer can build up a picture of what topics are of significance to the interviewee and how the interviewee treats the topic in terms of language used and meanings attached. This type of interviewing requires a certain level of skill. If students could acquire and practise this skill in the classroom, they would be well equipped to approach and find out about not just the target culture, but any culture.

Thirdly, questionnaires can be useful. Again, questionnaires using ethnographic techniques usually consist of open questions, where the informant is invited to share his opinions and attitudes. Such questionnaires are more difficult to analyse than closed questionnaires, but they provide richer, more qualitative data. In a cultural learning programme, questionnaires could be used to gain information on a variety of topics from contemporaries in the target culture.

Documents are also a valuable source of primary data. Many things are written - from school timetables to advertisements to history textbooks - and these documents all reflect something of the culture they were written in. This written form of culture is particularly accessible to the learner who is not resident in that culture.

Finally, statistics are a useful source of data in a technique which relies heavily on information from individuals or small groups. Statistics can be used to

support or limit generalisations ethnographers may be tempted to make from their data. They can provide a counterbalance, a broad overview to the detailed information gained through other ethnographic techniques. The ability to interpret statistics enables students to decipher information available on the larger society they are studying.

The principles and techniques involved in ethnography appear promising for cultural learning. The application and implications of ethnography in cultural learning have been examined by Byram & Esarte-Sarries (1991:11):

*...the learner - and the teacher as co-learner - seeks to question and elicit from the native an account of his culture which, together with other accounts, native and learner interpret jointly. The learner begins then to perceive the significance of specific accounts and their underlying structures and, in the advantageous position afforded by his comparative perspective from his own culture, he can begin to grasp the characteristics of the foreign culture in a way not available to the native. Moreover, the learner is then in a position to reflect on his own culture and perceive and understand it from the viewpoint of an outsider.*

This returns to the points made in the last section about the processes essential to successful cultural learning. Ethnography would seem to provide the ideal

methodology for enabling students to master these processes. Buttjes (1991:8) expresses it more succinctly:

*It seems that ethnography is providing the missing link between language and culture studies.*

## 2.5 Techniques and materials for cultural learning

Much has been said about the theory, principles and aims of cultural learning, little about the methods and materials which can be used to put this theory into practice. The first part of this section will discuss some of the techniques and materials suggested by cultural learning researchers. The second part will look more specifically at the Durham project.

### 2.5.1 Suggested teaching techniques and materials

It should be pointed out that almost any method or primary material has potential for gleaning cultural information, providing appropriate skills are applied. However, Hughes (1986:167) has sketched out what he deems to be eight of the vehicles most practical for cultural learning. They are:

1. *Comparison method.* Here items from the target culture and the native culture are compared and discussed. This technique could be valuable in many cases, particularly to help students to relativise their own culture.



2. *Culture assimilators.* These are concise accounts of an episode in the target culture which may cause misunderstanding. For each episode, several explanations are given and the student must choose the most appropriate. Seelye (1984:117) has pointed out the advantages of using such assimilators:

*Assimilators are more fun to read; they actively involve the student with a cross-cultural problem; and they have been shown to be more effective in controlled experiments.*

3. *Culture capsule.* This is similar to a culture assimilator but a little more in depth. The student is presented with a text on a specific cultural item and is given questions, so that he has to provide the explanations to accompany the text. The text may be accompanied by visual or other information.

4. *Drama.* Role-play has a valuable part to play in the teaching of another culture. By asking the students to improvise the role of another person, they are being encouraged to develop and practise empathy and skills of negotiation.

5. *Audiomotor unit of Total Physical Response.* This involves the students responding to oral commands to act out some form of cultural experience.

6. *Newspapers.* Newspapers and magazines can be used to gain a considerable amount of up-to-date cultural information. Headlines, advertisements, cartoons and editorials can be put to advantage.

7. *Projected media.* Films, television and videos can all prove valuable in presenting a visual image of the target culture.

8. *The culture island.* Here Hughes is referring to the use of authentic material such as posters, pictures and information, which provide surrounding first-hand cultural information.

These techniques can obviously be extended and adapted to fit the needs of the cultural learner. However, they do provide an outline of some of the possibilities available.

#### 2.5.2 The Durham project

The project carried out at Durham drew on some of the techniques described above, added others and placed a greater emphasis on those techniques which look at the culture ethnographically, from the inside. At this stage it would be worthwhile looking at the Durham project itself in greater detail.

The project was carried out over a period of two and a half years from September 1990. It involved developing, implementing and evaluating a pilot course of cultural learning. The project was carried out with teachers and students of first-year French 'A' level in sixth-forms and colleges. The course was spread over one year in approximately 50 hours of class-time.

The course was divided into five topics which were structured in terms of content and difficulty of conceptual learning. Students progressed from the familiarity of the immediate environment to more unfamiliar topics of wider society. The topics studied were, in this order, family, education, work, regional identity and politics. Each topic had its own aims and objectives, related to the general aims of the course. The progression of topics represented an advance from the familiar concepts and vocabulary of the family to the more difficult notions and language required to study individual and national politics.

In the same way, ethnographic techniques, intended to enable students to study French and other cultures in the future, were introduced gradually. For example, in the first topic they studied statistics on types of family in France. By the fourth topic, they were administering and producing questionnaires and interview schedules to assess the degree of regional identity of a member of the target culture.

The techniques and materials used during the implementation of the pilot course were varied. Some examples of the kinds of techniques and materials used show the range of available sources which can be used effectively in cultural learning. Examples are taken from the course outline of the pilot course.

*Comparison.*

- study time-lines of family reunions written by French students and compare this to their own experience.

(Family)

- discuss diagrams showing the French and English education systems. (Education)

As well as increasing knowledge of both the target and home culture, this type of comparison helps the students to become more aware of their own culture and provides a framework in which to place their learning as well as a basis for understanding.

*Role play.*

- take part in a "balloon debate" representing a range of jobs. (Work)

Role play helps students to apply the knowledge they have acquired and to develop a degree of empathy to play and defend a part. It could probably be used more widely to support other aims of the topics.

*Literature.*

- read extract from French novel on how births are registered (P. Modiano: Livret de Famille). (Family)

- read extracts from Elise ou la vraie vie in which the issue of social reputation and its effect on relationships is explored. (Politics)

In this case literature is being used not as a language exercise or as an example of 'high' culture, but as a representative element of the whole, the language and culture that is France.

*Participant observation.*

- watch video in which a French family discusses their names. (Family)
- watch video of life of a farmer and a bus-driver and work out time-lines for their typical day. (Work)

In these examples the participant observation is second-hand, through the medium of video. However, this is still a valid opportunity for practice of the skills necessary in participant observation. These skills can be further reinforced if the student can carry out some of the 'fieldwork options' given for each topic. Examples of these include shadowing a French student for a day (education) or visiting the 'mairie' (politics).

*Interviews.*

- ask French assistants to talk and answer questions about their own "bac". (Education)
- prepare an interview schedule for an in-depth interview with a French native speaker and, where possible, carry out an interview to investigate the nature of the interviewee's regional identity. (Regional Identity)

As well as learning how to carry out interviews, students had the opportunity to listen to many interviews with French speakers of their own age on different topics. Information gained from such sources is rich in detail and is of immediate relevance to the students. Again, fieldwork contained many options for interviews.

This variety of sources provides the practice for the three kinds of learning the Leverhulme project is

concerned with. They are, according to the course outline:

- *acquisition of knowledge about French culture and cultural practices and their significance for members of the cultural group.*
- *development of empathetic understanding of aspects of French culture and skills in inter-cultural communication.*
- *acquisition of skills and techniques for comparing, relativising and interpreting both a foreign culture and one's own.*

These three kinds of learning, taken within the context that has been looked at in this chapter, provide the framework of structured cultural learning.

## Chapter 3

### EVALUATION

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss evaluation theories as they relate to the work I did within the Durham Project. This will be done by considering some of the major issues which arose during the course of planning and carrying out an evaluation of the Regional Identity topic, which was the fourth of five topics in the pilot course.

The first section will give an overview of the main models and ideas which have influenced the evaluation field. This will be followed by some discussion of the questions of why evaluation should be carried out, who it is for and what it should do. Next is a description of several methods used in evaluation, succeeded by a section on analysis and reporting. The final section considers some of the ethical issues raised in carrying out an evaluation.

#### 3.1 Models of evaluation

In order to understand evaluation, it is necessary to understand something of the major figures and trends which have shaped it into its present form. The art of evaluation has developed and changed dramatically over the

past few decades, largely as a result of support for and reaction to various influential models. These are the models which will be discussed in this section.

The father of evaluation models must be Tyler's 'objectives model'. This is the model which has influenced all subsequent evaluation theory - those who have not agreed with it have been primarily concerned with refuting it. The model is based on the principle that goals for education can be pre-specified in behavioural terms, appropriate conditions for learning provided and then the evaluation consists of measuring how far these pre-specified objectives have been attained. The behaviourist approach to education necessary for this model to work is outlined by Tyler (1949:5):

*Education is a process of changing the behavior patterns of people... it is clear that educational objectives, then, represent the kinds of changes in behavior that an educational institution seeks to bring about in its students. A study of the learners themselves would seek to identify needed changes in behavior patterns of the students which the educational institution seeks to bring about.*

Having identified the needed changes, or objectives, and put into operation the learning experiences necessary to achieve these objectives, the evaluation consists of:

*determining the degree to which these changes in behavior are actually taking place. (1949:106)*



Tyler's theories were supported and developed by other prominent evaluators such as Bloom and Popham and when the field of evaluation started to arouse interest in Britain, its theories were firmly in the Tyler mould. Wiseman and Pidgeon (1970:28) emphasise the importance of setting objectives to evaluate and go on to claim that:

*If sufficient thought is applied, the objectives of any course can usually be set down precisely and clearly in terms of the effects (or 'behaviors') that the course is intended to produce.*

The setting down of these objectives, they argue, is the key to the evaluation.

In the years that followed the publication of Wiseman & Pidgeon's book, the objectives model found itself at the receiving end of an increasing mass of criticism. This criticism was led by the initiators of an opposing model of evaluation, Parlett & Hamilton. They compare Tyler's model to the type of evaluation used in agriculture and label it "a paradigm for plants, not people". They go on to summarise a few of the model's shortcomings (1977:8):

- it is rare for a group of people even to approach agreement on a set of objectives.

- language is imprecise and objectives can therefore be interpreted in a number of different ways.

- there is a strong tendency to dehumanise an essentially human situation (students are people, not plants).

- the before-and-after design assumes that little or nothing changes during the actual programme - a belief which is rarely seen in practice.

- the emphasis on quantitative data and objectivity means that important 'subjective' or 'impressionistic' data are often omitted completely as they have no place.

The model which Parlett & Hamilton propose in place of the objectives model is known as illuminative evaluation. Illuminative evaluation belongs to the social anthropology paradigm and is much more concerned with the whole context of the programme in question, not just pre-specified objectives. The authors explain (1977:10) that illuminative evaluation:

*aims to discover and document what it is like to be participating in the scheme, whether as a teacher or pupil; and, in addition, to discern and discuss the innovation's most significant features, recurring concomitants and critical processes.*

They believe that the study of the progress of the programme as it unfolds is important, and that the evaluator should gain an insight into the whole so that he can appreciate unforeseen effects as well as pre-stated objectives.

After many years of fierce opposition, it is now generally recognised that this model also has value and can stand as an alternative to the objectives model. Now that illuminative evaluation is accepted, however, it is

open to criticism. Two of the major criticisms, as Parsons, quoted in McCormick & James (1988:184), points out, are that formal theory has been neglected in illuminative evaluation and that evaluators accept the perspective of the participants and thus corroborate the existing situation. The second criticism is perhaps unfair. Although illuminative evaluators attempt to understand the perspective of participants, they do not necessarily accept this perspective.

The objectives model and illuminative evaluation have been the two most influential models of evaluation in education. Many other approaches have also been developed; most have evolved from the models described above and tend to emphasise a particular aspect or theory of them. Some of these approaches merit more detailed consideration.

Responsive evaluation was developed by Stake and is within the illuminative paradigm, with a particular emphasis on the personal element of the evaluation process - the face-to-face contact. Stake, in Patton (1987:35), elaborates:

*To do a responsive evaluation, the evaluator conceives of a plan of observations and negotiations... He finds out what is of value to his audiences, and gathers expressions of worth from various individuals whose points of view differ. Of course, he checks the quality of his records: he gets*

*program personnel to react to the accuracy of his portrayals; and audience members to react to the relevance of his findings. He does most of this informally - iterating and keeping a record of action and reaction.*

In responsive evaluation it is important to personalise the evaluation through direct contact both with the participants and with the audience. Issues are identified and developed through this face-to-face contact and reports are matched to a specific audience.

Another approach, again within the illuminative tradition, is goal-free evaluation, developed by Scriven and explained in Patton (1987). As its name suggests, this approach rejects the narrow focus imposed by pre-specified measurable goals. Patton (1987:36) summarises the emphasis of goal-free evaluation:

*...goal-free evaluation requires the evaluator to suspend judgment about what it is the program is trying to do and to focus instead on finding out what it is that actually happens in the program and as a result of the program. The evaluator thus can be open to whatever data emerge from the phenomena of the program.*

This approach enables the evaluator to study aspects of the evaluation system which might not have been foreseen or which may not have been regarded as significant.

Whereas responsive and goal-free evaluation are extensions of the illuminative model, MacDonald's approach is more wide-ranging and takes a political stance. He proposes three models of evaluation based on their political purpose (1987:44). These are bureaucratic, autocratic and democratic evaluation. In a bureaucratic evaluation, the evaluator is an employee of an agency who has no independence or control over the use made of his evaluation, and who is working as an instrument of his employer. On the other hand, the autocratic evaluator has greater independence and retains ownership of the evaluation. He is regarded as an "expert adviser" and is expected, through the use of strong techniques, to provide authoritative results and recommendations. MacDonald claims that these two models are still dominant in current evaluations. His final model, democratic evaluation, is the one most closely connected with illuminative ideals. MacDonald acknowledges his personal preference for this model, defining it as:

*an information service to the whole community about the characteristics of an educational programme.*

Another model which has its roots in the illuminative tradition but which has developed considerably from there is action research. Action research aims to combine theory with practice and is a cyclical model which is particularly applicable to self-evaluation and cases where the main researchers are teachers in their classrooms. This theory has mainly developed in the field of education

in the UK thanks to the work of Stenhouse and Elliott.

Elliott (1991) explains that:

*action research integrates teaching and teacher development, curriculum development and evaluation, research and philosophical reflection, into a unified concept of a reflective educational practice.*

Evaluation cannot be treated separately as a specialised task, but is an integral part of the process as a whole. At the all-important classroom and school level, therefore, action research provides a framework for teachers to evaluate.

Much recent interest has been in case-study as a model for evaluation. Again this approach has evolved from illuminative evaluation. The central idea in this approach is to take a single case, whether it be a classroom, a system, a programme etc. and study it in great depth, using a variety of methods. Simons (1989:115) describes the advantages of using case study:

*Case study... recognizes the particular contexts in which innovations are embedded and aspires to describe and analyze the processes by which and the conditions in which innovations are implemented... They allow judgments to be made in relation to particular circumstances and clienteles, they allow more of the complexity of educational processes to be portrayed and they permit documentation of change over time.*

The case study aims for depth in a complex study, attempting to portray a single instance.

The various models and approaches outlined above provide a theoretical background for any evaluation, but an evaluation does not have to adhere rigidly to a particular model. Cronbach (1987:32) has underlined this point:

*Evaluators need not - in fact, they should not - decide which school of thought they 'belong' to. Something is gained when an evaluation becomes more objective, more reproducible, more concentrate. Something else is gained when the evaluation becomes more phenomenological, more flexible, broader in its coverage. The choices should differ from evaluation to evaluation...*

### 3.2 The role of evaluation

#### 3.2.1 Why evaluate?

Evaluations can be useful in a wide range of circumstances, but the reasons given for evaluating may be split into two general categories - formative and summative.

Summative evaluation does not influence the process being evaluated but is used to assess the programme's success and provides judgment on which to base policy

decisions. It is widely used with the objectives model, where it measures to what extent the pre-specified objectives have been attained.

On the other hand, formative evaluation is concerned with improvement. Formative evaluation is an ongoing process - it is carried out throughout the programme and its role is to help decision-makers to improve and modify the programme in the light of the evaluator's observations. As it influences the programme being evaluated, it is usually associated with illuminative or naturalistic approaches.

The differences are not always as clear cut as the definitions, as Hopkins (1989:167) has pointed out:

*Often formative evaluations are little more than a series of mini summative reports; and, similarly, summative evaluation reports are often used to encourage development.*

The distinction, Hopkins claims, is in the users of the evaluation findings (1989:16):

*When the cook tastes the soup it is formative evaluation and when the guest tastes the soup it is summative. The key is not so much when as why. What is the information for, for further preparation and correction or for savouring and consumption? Both lead to decision making, but towards different decisions.*

In each evaluation, both formative and summative evaluation can be of use. The choice depends on whether the evaluator is to influence the process he is evaluating



or whether he is to provide an account of its success or failure.

### 3.2.2 Who is evaluation for?

This is one of the key questions of any evaluation. Without this, there is usually little justification for doing an evaluation. Alkin (1987:314) underlines this as the difference between research and evaluation. While the justification for research can be to add to the body of knowledge, this is not sufficient for evaluation, which must provide information for decision-making. Whereas the results of research may never be used by others:

*in an evaluation it is important if someone 'needs' the evaluation and someone 'cares'.*

The general justification for evaluation is then that it provides information for the decision-makers. In 1963 Cronbach, quoted in McCormick & James (1988:172), wrote:

*we may define 'evaluation' broadly as the collection and use of information to make decisions about an educational programme.*

And 24 years later, Patton (1987:9) agreed that:

*the challenge in evaluation is getting the best possible information to the people who need it - and then getting those people to actually use the information in decision making. (emphasis in original)*

The next logical question is that of who the evaluation has to be useful to, or who the decision-makers actually are. McCormick & James (1988:173) give a summary. They claim that the interpretation of who the decision-makers are has undergone several changes over the years. In the 1960s and early 1970s the decision-makers were usually assumed to be the project teams or the sponsors. The role of decision-maker next shifted to the consumers rather than the sponsors, that is, to the teachers and schools who were ultimately responsible for the implementation and action of the programmes concerned. Today, however, the situation is even more complex as different evaluations involve different decision-makers:

*Thus, politicians, administrators, inspectors, the electorate, parents and governors may be considered the decision-makers in accountability contexts, because they have the power to restrict or expand the resources and support received by schools. In terms of curriculum review, however, the headteacher and staff may be the chief decision-makers; whilst in the context of professional development decisions about practice are likely to be made by individuals or groups of teachers.*

One of the first tasks of every evaluation must therefore be identification of the audience or audiences - it is essential to know who the decision-makers are before they can be provided with information.

### 3.2.3 Description versus judgment

This seems to be another of the disputed questions amongst evaluators. The black and white are judgment and description and there are quite a few shades of grey in between. The essential question is how far the evaluation report should provide conclusive, judgmental information and how far it should provide description which allows the reader to make an independent but informed judgment. To some extent the evaluator's position on the objectives/illuminative continuum will influence his leaning towards description or judgment - proponents of the objectives model tend to judge, while supporters of illuminative evaluation prefer to describe. However, this is certainly not necessary and often not true.

At the descriptive end of the scale, the onus is very much on the reader to assimilate the information provided by the evaluator and use it to generate his own judgements. The description role is subscribed to by Parlett & Hamilton (1977:10):

*(Illuminative evaluation's) primary concern is with description and interpretation rather than measurement and prediction.*

MacDonald (1987:45) supports this role of information-gathering and description and emphasises the role of presenting informants' judgments rather than the evaluator imposing his own judgments:

*The democratic evaluator recognises value pluralism and seeks to represent a range of interests in his issue formulation. The basic value is an informed citizenry, and the evaluator acts as broker in exchanges of information between groups who want knowledge of each other.*

The evaluator can never produce a completely descriptive evaluation, however, as the selection of which material to use and the choice of how to present it involve judgment on his part. Wolcott, in Fetterman (1984) has summarised the difficulties this presents at the description end of the scale. He points out that although ethnographic techniques are becoming increasingly popular in educational evaluation, the phrase itself 'ethnographic evaluation' is a contradiction in terms, as ethnography is concerned with description and understanding rather than evaluation. Wolcott proposes two solutions; firstly, a compromise between the two (ethnographers sans ethnography) or secondly, ethnography as an alternative to rather than an alternative form of evaluation.

In contrast, there are many evaluators who believe that the key components of an evaluation are judgment and assessment. Most of the advocates of the objectives model support this view in their use of testing, measurement and statistical analysis. For example, Wiseman & Pidgeon (1970:27) argue that:

*The term 'evaluation' involves measurement, but it also includes the aspect of valuing - saying whether*

*something is good or bad, desirable or irrelevant... It cannot be overstressed, however, that appropriate and accurate measurement is a fundamental prerequisite to sound judgment.*

A wide scale of evaluation styles is thus acceptable in different contexts. Most evaluations come somewhere between the extremes of pure description and pure judgment, but even this middle position does not necessarily ensure a straightforward passage through the evaluation process. Adelman & Alexander (1987:299) outline some of the dangers:

*If one accepts that an evaluation combines a purportedly accurate description of an educational circumstance with a judgment of its worth, one has to consider the status of descriptions and judgments in general. A description is a linguistic or otherwise symbolic representation of the external world and there are, to say the least, competing views about the point (if there is one) at which language and the external world might coincide. And a judgment of worth is ultimately an expression of personal value, an ethical statement rooted in individual beliefs and experiences, and as such cannot claim to be true or false. So educational evaluations are value judgments based on what are debatable pictures of a 'real' world of courses, teaching and learning, and evaluators may need to accept that there can be no 'objectivity', only various degrees of subjectivity... (emphasis in original)*

The question of objectivity will be treated in greater detail in the final section in this chapter. Generally, most evaluators do not get too entrenched in the philosophical implications of description and judgment. Once they have come to terms with the fact that they cannot provide an objective description and that their judgments are merely expressions of personal value, they get down to actually evaluating. Most of the time this means reaching a compromise between description and judgment, adopting and combining different evaluation styles for different circumstances.

Although it would be rare to find, Stenhouse, in Rudduck & Hopkins (1985:31), provides an imagination-catching thought on the two extremes of purely descriptive and purely judgmental evaluations:

*The contrast is between the breakdown of questionnaire responses of 472 married women respondents who have had affairs with men other than their husbands and the novel, Madame Bovary.*

### 3.3 Methods for evaluation

The methods selected for an evaluation tend to depend primarily on the model being followed. Thus proponents of the objectives model will tend to favour quantitative methods while supporters of the illuminative model will prefer qualitative methods. This is not to say that the methods are strictly limited to use within their

particular model. Patton (1987:21) recognises the importance of being flexible in choice of methods:

*A major challenge in evaluation is matching research methods to the nuances of particular evaluation questions and the idiosyncrasies of specific stakeholder needs. To meet this challenge evaluators need a large repertoire of research methods and techniques to use on a variety of problems.*

Having recognised that the boundaries are movable, however, the rest of this section is going to be split into two parts dealing with quantitative and qualitative methods.

### 3.3.1 Quantitative methods

Basically, quantitative evaluation methods are techniques which can produce data in the form of figures which can then be analysed and generalised. These methods are usually designed to be carried out on a large number of subjects so that individualism can be minimised and a representative sample generalised. They are concerned with the results rather than with the process and with the norms rather than the exceptions. Several of the methods used are:

- experiments. These usually take the form of pre-testing, submission to a programme or experience followed by post-testing. The experiment is usually only testing one variable, holding other variables such as IQ

and social class under control, and produces statistics to prove or disprove the effect of the tested variable. It takes no account of any other change which may occur during the process of the experiment.

- systematic observation. This technique uses a standardised coding scale to record classroom interactions, for example, one mark for each time the teacher uses a question. It can be used effectively in conjunction with unstructured observation.

- surveys. The advantage of surveys is that once they are designed they can reach a large audience and are relatively straightforward to collate results from.

### 3.3.2 Qualitative methods

Using qualitative evaluation methods, the emphasis is on depth rather than breadth. Qualitative methods usually reflect a desire to describe and understand the human perspective of the programme in question as opposed to processing and analysing figures. Representativeness is sacrificed to depth of study, which can raise the question of how applicable the results of the evaluation are to other situations. The problems of reliability and validity will be discussed further in the next section. The other frequent criticism of qualitative methods is that they are subjective, but this can be countered in the evaluation by using triangulation. Patton (1987:20)



denies the accusation that qualitative methods are unscientific, quoting Filstead:

*The qualitative perspective in no way suggests that the researcher lacks the ability to be scientific while collecting the data. On the contrary, it merely specifies that it is crucial for validity - and, consequently, for reliability, to try to picture the empirical social world as it actually exists to those under investigation, rather than as the researcher imagines it to be. (emphasis in original)*

Some of the most used qualitative methods are:

- participant observation. This is a direct import from ethnography and involves, as its name suggests, observation, as far as possible from the point of view of the participants. Patton (1987:72) gives guidelines for the use of observation:

*The purpose of observational evaluation data is first to describe the program thoroughly and carefully. This includes describing the activities that took place in the program, the people who participated in those activities, and the meaning to those people of what was observed... The basic guideline to apply to a recorded observation is this: Write the description in a way that permits the reader to enter the observed situation. (emphasis in original)*

This is the result that the process of participant observation is aiming towards. Obviously, a great deal

has been written on how exactly the result can be achieved.

- interviews. These can vary in the degree of structure from an informal chat through a list of issues to be covered to a pre-determined, specifically ordered set of questions. Each is useful in a different context. For example, a large study with several different interviewers may call for a more structured schedule to ensure that the same areas are covered with each set of informants. On the other hand, there may be instances, for example, during an observation, where it is not appropriate to draw out a list of questions, and where an informal chat yields more valuable information. Whatever the format of the qualitative interview, the object remains the same - to gain information which will help the interviewer to understand the informant's view. Stenhouse (1987:216) describes the purpose of the interview:

*The people I interview are participants and they are observers of themselves and others; my object is to provide in interview the conditions that help them to talk reflectively about their observations and experience. It is their observations I am after, not mine.*

- questionnaires. Open questionnaires which leave the respondent free to shape his own answer can provide valuable information. However, they are open to misinterpretation, they depend on the degree of the

respondent's literacy (they are not appropriate to use with young children, for example) and they are time-consuming both to design and analyse. Although they can cover the same ground as an interview, questions have to be worded more clearly as the respondent cannot ask for clarification of a point he does not understand. Also, they provide little opportunity to explore unforeseen issues. On the other hand, they can be administered more widely than interviews as they require less direct contact time.

- documents. These can provide contextual and background information from sources not specifically designed for the evaluation. This is important in an approach which relies heavily on personal accounts of one form or another and it is a good source to use for triangulation.

Obviously, this list is not exhaustive. Any combination of these methods and/or others could be used depending on what was most suited to the particular evaluation task.

### 3.4 Analysing, interpreting and reporting evaluation

#### 3.4.1 Analysis and interpretation

The process of analysis and interpretation will depend to a large extent on the factors already discussed - the models and methods used, whether the evaluation is formative or summative, who the decision-makers are etc., etc. The techniques of analysis of quantitative data have been well documented, those of qualitative data less so, as Hopkins (1989:66) points out:

*The problem is that there is an insufficient corpus of reliable, valid or even minimally agreed on working analysis procedures of qualitative data.*

In this section, therefore, the intention is to concentrate on those methods which can be used with qualitative data.

Patton (1987:144) has given concise definitions of analysis and interpretation as they relate to qualitative data:

*Analysis is the process of bringing order to the data, organizing what is there into patterns, categories, and basic descriptive units.*

*Interpretation involves attaching meaning and significance to the analysis, explaining descriptive patterns, and looking for relationships and linkages among descriptive dimensions. (emphasis in original)*

These are very neat, separated definitions, but Patton goes on to point out that ideas about analysis and

interpretation often occur during the course of data collection, and that this is desirable:

*The overlapping of data collection and analysis improves both the quality of the data collected and the quality of the analysis so long as the evaluator is careful not to allow initial interpretations to bias additional data collection.*

Patton outlines several stages in the analysis and interpretation process. Throughout the negotiation and data collection phase, he argues, it is important to focus the analysis, to constantly reestablish and review the purpose of the evaluation and the major evaluation questions as agreed with the decision-makers.

The analysis begins with the task of organising the data. Once the evaluator has brought some kind of order to the mass of data, he has to identify themes and patterns, and sort the data into categories. This might mean collecting together all the observations that relate to a particular idea, or all the interview quotations that shed light on a specific evaluation question. This process of classifying the data is essential to bring it to any degree of manageability.

After the data have been divided into categories, it is possible to begin the interpretation process of explaining patterns and attaching meaning to them. It is important that these meanings come from the data and are not imposed upon them, as Patton (1987:158) stresses:

*...conjectures or speculations should not, however, be derived simply from the theoretical*

*predispositions of the evaluator. The cardinal principle of qualitative analysis is that causal and theoretical statements be clearly emergent from and grounded in field observations. The theory emerges from the data; it is not imposed on the data.*

(emphasis in original)

Throughout the entire evaluation, including the process of analysis and interpretation, it is important to consider the issues of validity and reliability, as these give added weight to the evaluation.

Reliability, according to McCormick & James (1988:188) is:

*concerned with consistency in the production of results and refers to the requirement that, at least in principle, another researcher, or the same researcher on another occasion, should be able to replicate the original piece of research and achieve comparable evidence or results. (emphasis in original)*

In educational evaluation, reliability is difficult to achieve, as it is practically impossible for the same study to be replicated under precisely the same conditions.

Validity is explained by McCormick & James (1988:188) as follows:

*...researchers are expected to demonstrate that the observations they actually record and analyse, match what they purport to be recording and analysing.*

Validity can be enhanced by such techniques as using multiple sources of evidence, having key informants review evaluation drafts, verifying conclusions, collecting data at different points in time and by using triangulation.

This last point, triangulation, is one of the main methods of enhancing validity in qualitative evaluation, as McCormick & James (1988:190) explain:

*In qualitative approaches the fact that there may only be one 'instance' of the phenomenon being researched, and that its appearance may be fleeting, makes the application of a battery of measures difficult. However the idea that different kinds of data can be collected about a unique event, and that these can subsequently be used to cross-check one another, has provided the basis for the principal validation procedure used in qualitative research. This is known as triangulation.*

Different types of triangulation can be used within a single evaluation. Sources of information can be triangulated, so that the same issue is discussed, say, from the point of view of a headmaster, teachers and pupils. Triangulation of methods can be used, so that information is gained through, for example, attitude tests, interviews and observation. Triangulation of evaluators would give a different view of the same situation. The balancing effect provided by these various forms of triangulation helps to reduce the criticisms of qualitative evaluation as being too subjective or unscientific.

### 3.4.2 Evaluation reports

It has already been pointed out in the third section how important it is to get the evaluation findings to the decision-makers, in other words, to report. After all, the only thing the majority of people will know about the evaluation is what the report tells them. Hopkins (1989:152) considers two issues relevant to the production of an evaluation report:

*The first is that those who are subject to receiving an evaluation report take it more seriously than those who wrote it. And once it is in the public domain, there it remains. Consequently, great attention needs to be paid to language and style... Secondly, there are always different levels of interpretation of an evaluation report. Not everyone involved in an evaluation is interested in the same things. Not everyone will react to, or interpret, feedback in the same way. Be prepared for this and build into the evaluation safeguards against misinterpretation and also provide information for differing groups.*

Both these points underline the evaluator's responsibility towards those he is writing for. In writing a report, the evaluator has already selected and interpreted certain information. In reading the report, the reader is carrying out a further process of selection and interpretation. It is therefore the evaluator's responsibility to ensure that the evaluation is presented



as clearly as possible, and that enough information is provided for the reader to be able to select, understand and make an informed judgment.

### 3.5 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are an issue in any evaluation, however small or however impersonal. Raffe, Bundell & Bibby (1989:13) point out in their article on educational survey research that even using such a method, noted for its impersonality and anonymity, they were faced with many ethical dilemmas. In qualitative evaluation, concerned with personal response and in-depth study, the ethical issues are even more prominent. Some of the main issues which arise often in educational evaluation, and which were concerns in this particular evaluation, are those discussed in this section concerning confidentiality, informed consent and objectivity.

#### 3.5.1 Confidentiality

Pring (1987:279) sets out the main issue regarding confidentiality in evaluation:

*The problem is a complex and difficult ethical one - the right of some to know versus the right of others to preserve a degree of privacy even in matters that affect the public good.*

This right to know versus privacy argument is a matter of balancing the interests of two sides. The idea that people have a 'right to know' is dominant in contemporary society and is popular in education, with parents and public having the right to know about the performance of schools, their test results etc.

On the other hand, individuals and groups have a right to privacy, and evaluators have to recognise this in keeping some of the material to which they gain access confidential. It is a relatively simple matter to judge the use of documents - if they are marked as confidential they should be treated as such. It is less easy to judge confidentiality with information gained from interviews or observation. Evaluators often assure confidentiality through anonymity, and this can be effective in a large-scale evaluation. In something like a case study, though, anonymity does not necessarily assure confidentiality as Simons (1989:117) has observed:

*Anonymity, one of the codes of convention typically adopted in social research, is rarely applicable. In a closely documented case describing the complexity and the idiosyncrasy of the case, key individuals will always be identifiable at least to those within the case. This may be just as threatening or more, than being identifiable to those outside the case to whom the case study may be disseminated.*

The solution to this conflict of confidentiality versus the right to know, although probably never completely satisfactory, would seem to be a balancing and

negotiation of the two demands. This is what Pring (1987:283) advocates:

*The answer to this, of course, is not to deny the right to know, but to see that right as something that needs to be established in particular cases. Its establishment, of course, will require the acceptance of a set of rules that incorporate that right, as well as obligations upon which it is made conditional.*

### 3.5.2 Informed consent

The notion of informed consent is often cited as being desirable in evaluation, but the question of what exactly informed consent is is rarely addressed. It is generally agreed that informed consent involves telling the participants in an evaluation what is happening and gaining their agreement. However, within this agreement, a wide range of behaviour is allowable. Burgess (1989:65) tackles this issue:

*Certainly, in my study teachers had been informed that research was taking place but it was not possible to specify exactly what data would be collected or how it would be used. In this respect, it could be argued that individuals were not fully informed, consent had not been obtained and privacy was violated.*

In this case, the researcher did not give the information because it was not available. In other cases,

the evaluator may consciously withhold information, perhaps because it would impede or otherwise affect the evaluation process.

As far as consent is concerned, the situation may also arise where information is given to the participants and their consent requested, but where the participants are not really in a position to withhold their consent if they so wished. This could be true in schools, where pupils may be sent by their teacher to interviews with an evaluator, whose gaining of consent is probably little more than a token gesture.

Even if the evaluator gives all the information possible and the informant freely gives consent to be interviewed or observed, other factors may affect the issue. Bridges (1989:151) introduces a further two dimensions:

*First, that the version of the truth which we communicate is partly communicated for us by a situation or setting which may speak in terms other than those which we might choose - and we cannot always control this. Secondly, that the truth which we are able to tell is partly constrained by what our audience is able to hear or to understand.*

To illustrate the first point, in a school setting, for example, the evaluator is likely to be seen more as a teacher than anything else, and treated accordingly.

On the second point, in the same situation, the pupils are unlikely to have much familiarity with, say, university research projects. They probably have a

partial idea of what the evaluation is about, but this is unlikely to be accurate or complete. Is this informed consent?

### 3.5.3 Objectivity

The main questions in this issue are whether objectivity is possible and whether it is desirable at any stage of the evaluation process. Traditionally, objectivity has been the ultimate aim of an evaluation, as Patton (1987:166) describes:

*Science places great value on objectivity. Often the primary reason decision makers commission an evaluation is to get objective data from an objective scientist.*

Questions are now being raised as to whether even pure science can be objective. Even in the most quantitative of methods, some human element is involved in the design, and any human element involves subjectivity. Therefore it seems unlikely that human evaluators studying human subjects using humanistic methods can attain objectivity.

The next point is whether objectivity is desirable. The concern with objectivity has been a concern for seeking the answer, the truth. But finding one single truth denies the existence of all others. As qualitative evaluation takes care to prove, there are many truths in a given situation, depending on the perspective of the participant, the viewer, the time and so on. Accepting

that there are many truths makes objectivity less desirable.

Nevertheless, subjectivity on the part of the evaluator is not accepted, as this would be imposing his truth on what is being evaluated. The remedies here are triangulation, as considered in the last section, and reflexivity on the part of the evaluator. McCormick & James (1988:191) describe this notion:

*Reflexivity demands that researchers constantly monitor, not only their own interactions with the groups being investigated, but also their own roles and reactions to what they observe. In other words they make a conscious effort to make explicit anything that could bias their interpretations of events.*

By self-study as well as study of other people, the evaluator acknowledges his subjectivity and tries consciously to minimise it.

Obviously, there are many more ethical issues which could arise, depending on the kind of evaluation undertaken and the particular context of the evaluation. These are just a few of the main ones which arose in the particular evaluation I was undertaking.

The various themes and 'schools' of evaluation are important and need to be considered before an evaluation can be conducted in practice. Throughout, however, it is helpful to remember that the theories are not absolute, as Cronbach, quoted earlier, emphasises:

*Evaluators need not - in fact, they should not - decide which school of thought they 'belong' to. Something is gained when an evaluation becomes more objective, more reproducible, more concentrate. Something else is gained when the evaluation becomes more phenomenological, more flexible, broader in its coverage. The choices should differ from evaluation to evaluation...*

The evaluation I carried out was based on the theories discussed in this chapter. In the next chapter something of the context of the evaluation will be given first. This will be followed by an explanation of how the evaluation I designed and carried out related to the issues raised in this chapter.

## Chapter 4

### CONTEXT OF THE DURHAM PROJECT

Before moving from the theories of cultural learning and evaluation to the practice of evaluating cultural learning in the classroom, it may be useful to give some more detail on the context of the Durham/Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique (INRP) project.

#### 4.1 The course and its participants

Basic details of the course and its participants were given in section 1.3. The project ran concurrently in England and France from September 1990 to March 1993. In England, the first academic year was spent conceptualising and planning, the second year implementing and assessing the experimental course and the final six months evaluating. Regular meetings were held throughout this time between the French and English teams to discuss ideas and progress. In France the project was carried out with two age ranges in collèges and lycées. In England it was limited to sixth-form students. More specifically, the participants were all in their first year of French 'A' level study when the programme was implemented in five colleges and sixth-forms in the North-East. These five schools and colleges covered quite a large area



geographically and catered for a wide range of students. The teachers from the five establishments were actively involved in all aspects of the project and attended regular meetings with the researchers at the university throughout the two and a half year period. Each teacher was responsible for a particular topic and produced objectives and materials for that topic.

The five topics were designed to be studied in approximately 15 hours each of class time and 7 hours each of the student's own time. The topics began with the familiar content and vocabulary of Family, easing the students from GCSE to 'A' level study. From there the content and language became progressively more challenging, through Education, Work and Regional Identity as a dimension of Social Identity to Politics. Each topic had its own aims and objectives but was designed to fulfil some or all of the general aims of the course. Chapter 5 treats these various sets of aims more fully. Along with the progression in content and language, students were expected to increase their repertoire of appropriate skills and techniques for cultural learning. In addition to learning during the course, opportunity to extend and practise ethnographic skills was provided at a 'French Day' in the middle of the year. On this day, which was held at Durham University, students practised interviewing native speakers, designing questionnaires and so on.

## 4.2 Project evaluation

The evaluation of the project as a whole was comprehensive and took place throughout and after the implementation of the experimental course. Various evaluators were involved. The French and English research teams undertook reciprocal evaluation, each looking at the other's materials and classes and interviewing the other's teachers. The researchers at Durham held in-depth interviews and carried out semantic differential tests on approximately 20% of the English participating students at the beginning and end of the course. They also observed and taught classes during the course. The teachers too evaluated the teaching and learning as well as the materials, giving feedback to the research team at regular intervals. Finally, I carried out an evaluation of the Regional Identity topic, which was the fourth of the five topics on the course.

## 4.3 Regional identity evaluation methods

### 4.3.1 Purposes of the evaluation

Before commencing the evaluation itself, it was necessary to consider the questions raised in the previous chapter of who and what the evaluation was for. As far as identification of the audience was concerned (see section 3.3), it seemed that the evaluation would be most useful

to those directly involved in the project. This was because of the small scale of the evaluation and the fact that it formed only a part of a more comprehensive whole, as outlined in section 4.2. The audiences envisaged for this evaluation therefore included the teachers and students in the participating colleges/schools, the researchers involved in the project and, finally, any other interested reader.

As for the role of the evaluation (see section 3.4), the tendency was towards the descriptive rather than judgmental end of the scale. I thought that it was more important to present the judgments of the participants than to impose my own judgments and this is what I have tried to do in the following chapters.

#### 4.3.2 Methods

I carried out the evaluation of the teaching and learning of the Regional Identity topic over a period of three months from March to June 1992. Due to time and other constraints, the evaluation was largely confined to the implementation of the topic in one college. All the data collected were qualitative, relying largely on ethnographic techniques (see section 3.5). This seemed to be most appropriate in the circumstances as my aim was to describe what it was like to be participating in the course as well as discover the main features of the topic.

Primary data were collected by various techniques. I observed six of the seven lessons taught on the Regional Identity topic in the one college and tape-recorded them for later analysis. An overview of the content of these lessons is given in the sixth chapter.

I had access to materials relating to the topic as well as written work the students produced during the course of the topic. These documents provided me with information both from the teaching point of view (in terms of aims, objectives, materials etc.) and from the learning point of view (through students writing about what they had learned).

In addition, at the end of the Regional Identity topic, I carried out interviews with six of the seventeen students in the class. These interviews were conducted in the college with three pairs of students, each interview lasting approximately 30-40 minutes. Transcripts of the interviews can be found in Appendix A. The interviews were semi-structured. They followed a checklist of issues covering the students' learning, attitudes and opinions of the topic and course in general but allowing considerable freedom within the scope of the questions.

#### 4.3.3 The process of analysis

The analysing of the data proved to be the most difficult part of the evaluation process. The first task was to try to make some sense of all the tape-recorded data, pages of observation notes and documentation.

The data could first be split roughly into the teaching and learning aspects of the topic although obviously these aspects are interdependent and overlap. Different data were more directly relevant to different aspects of the evaluation. The aims and objectives of the topic and course formed the theoretical basis of what was taught and learned and these will be discussed in Chapter 5. The observations tended to reveal much more about the practice of what the teacher was teaching rather than what the students were learning. One of these observations was selected and the lesson in question described and analysed in greater depth. This description and analysis is the basis of Chapter 6. A transcript of the lesson observed can be found in Appendix B.

On the other hand, interviews with students and examples of their written work tended to draw out what they had actually learned. Data from the interviews with the students could be split into two categories of what they had learned during the topic and what they thought of the topic and course. These general categories were used to structure Chapters 7 and 8. For Chapter 7, further analysis of the data revealed that the four Regional Identity aims as stated in the pilot course outline in fact covered most of the themes emerging from the data. This is why these aims are used as titles in this chapter, along with the acquisition of ethnographic skills, which did not appear in this particular set of aims, but which were part of the general aims stated for the whole course.

The four main areas which emerged from the data are thus treated separately in the following four chapters. Within each area, clearly, further analysis and refinement was essential. Nevertheless, these four chapters are intended to respond to the evaluation purpose, which was to describe the main features of the topic and describe what it was like to participate in the course. As far as judgments are concerned, the first part of Chapter 9 draws together the students' judgments on the topic and course and presents their suggestions for changes.

The attempt to achieve validity (see section 3.6) throughout the data collection and analysis procedures consisted of a number of measures. Triangulation was used, as mentioned above. Data on the topic was collected from different sites and different perspectives (students, teachers, documents). In addition, after the first analysis had been completed and the following five chapters had been written, the draft was given to the teacher at the college where most of the data was collected to review and comment upon.

#### 4.3.4 Ethical issues in the regional identity evaluation

Some of the ethical issues important in educational evaluation were discussed in section 3.7. Consideration of the issues raised in that section were necessary in the evaluation I carried out.

Firstly, confidentiality was important, particularly for the students interviewed. The students only knew me

as an observer of their French lessons and most of the information they gave in the interviews was non-confidential. However, occasional worries were expressed when they were giving their opinions and I did assure them of anonymity. This seemed to balance their concerns of confidentiality with their enthusiasm to talk about the project.

Secondly, the issue of informed consent was not resolved as satisfactorily, at least in my own mind. The students were informed at the beginning of the interview that I wanted to ask them about what they they had learned and what they thought about the topic and that I was a student at Durham University. They were then asked if they minded being interviewed. None of them objected, but the gaining of consent did seem to be a mere formality once they had been sent downstairs from their class to be interviewed. Also, it seems unlikely that the consent they gave was 'informed'. Although they had some idea of what the project as a whole was about, I should think that what I was doing was largely a mystery to them.

Finally, I did not aim to achieve objectivity in the evaluation. What I did aim to present was multiple perspectives on the topic and course which all contributed to the whole, that is, what was actually happening.

#### 4.3.5 Limitations and constraints

Clearly, there were aspects of the evaluation which could have been better. One of the main areas in which

improvements could have been made was in the scope of data collection. The fact that the Regional Identity topic was only being taught in two of the five schools/colleges at the time I was carrying out the evaluation was one constraint. The majority of the data I collected came from one of these colleges. These data form the basis of the following chapters. I did try to ensure validity by collecting additional data from the other college teaching the topic at that time. These data, which included examples of the students' work and tape-recordings of lessons, were used as general context for the evaluation but probably could have been exploited more fully.

However, as Walford (1991:2) points out:

*...the process (of educational research) is presented as a cold analytic practice where any novice researcher can follow set recipes and obtain predetermined results... the reality is very different.*

As a novice evaluator, I have realised many of the difficulties in the reality of following the 'recipes' of evaluation, and I acknowledge that my evaluation has flaws and limitations. Nevertheless, I hope that what I have done will be considered to have some significance and relevance to the project as a whole.

In this chapter I have tried to describe the evaluation I carried out in terms of its relation to the theories discussed in Chapter 3. The following chapters



move on to description and discussion of the evaluation  
itself.

## Chapter 5

### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

In the next chapter a single lesson will be described in detail, set in the context of a brief outline of the content of six lessons on the Regional Identity topic. Before discussing the practice of teaching the Regional Identity topic in detail, however, this chapter discusses the aims and objectives underlying the lessons which were taught. This will be done by taking these Regional Identity aims and looking at them in greater depth, considering how they fit into the scheme of aims as a whole. Examples of the progression from general aims to classroom practice will be given and the consistency of aims and practice will be evaluated.

#### 5.1 Sets of aims and objectives

Three main sets of aims and objectives, detailed in the Pilot Course Outline, structured the Regional Identity topic. The first, most general, set was the General Aims of the course, which applied to all the five topics.

##### 5.1.1 General aims

*The aims of the course are that students shall acquire:*

*\* empathy with French people and some feeling of what it is like to be French.*

*\* a body of knowledge about key aspects of French culture.*

*\* ethnographic techniques with which to approach other cultures and the curiosity, openness and independence to do so.*

*\* a perspective on their own culture, allowing them to relativise it and see it as specific to time and place rather than assuming it is the norm.*

*\* some understanding of the link between language and culture and an understanding of culture-specific verbal and non-verbal behaviour, and the ability to use these in a culturally appropriate way.*

*\* positive attitudes towards and interest in French people and speakers of other languages.*

#### 5.1.2 Regional identity aims

The second set, already quoted in the previous section, were the Regional Identity topic aims:

*1. Students shall acquire an understanding of the concept of 'regional identity' as part of individuals' social identity.*

2. *Students shall acquire an understanding of regional identity in their own environment.*

3. *Students shall acquire an understanding of regional identities and cultures in France.*

4. *Students shall acquire an understanding of a particular regional identity and culture in one area of France.*

#### 5.1.3 Regional identity objectives

The final, more specific, set are the Regional Identity topic objectives through which the aims could be taught:

a. *Students shall investigate attitudes to their region among people in their own locality and become more aware of their own identity.*

b. *Students shall acquire knowledge of the history of regional differences and the repression of regional identity.*

c. *Students shall acquire knowledge of Brittany and some of the distinctive features of Breton culture.*

d. *Students shall investigate the changes and conflicts created by modernisation and centralisation in Breton culture and identify the implications for the individual.*

## 5.2 Consistency of aims

Clearly, these aims follow a natural progression from concepts of what the course sets out to do to more concrete specifications of how these aims could be achieved in the teaching of the Regional Identity topic. Within this progression, though, it may be interesting to consider how the Regional Identity aims, which are central, relate to the other two sets of aims and to practice. The Regional Identity aims will be taken individually and examined in greater depth.

### 5.2.1 Students shall acquire an understanding of the concept of 'regional identity' as part of individuals' social identity.

This is probably the broadest of the four Regional Identity aims. The idea is that students should grasp something of the concept of regional identity, in terms of what makes them and others part of a region. In addition, though, they should understand that regional identity is only one aspect of an individual's social identity. Other factors such as gender, age, race, class etc. also play an important part in making up each individual's unique combination of common elements.

This first aim relates to several of the general aims. Many students may previously have regarded their own culture and identity as the norm, without ever questioning or analysing it. By realising that the

notions of regional identity and social identity exist and are applicable to every individual, they may begin to relativise their own culture and experience. Taking it one step further, if they realise that this concept of regional identity plays a role in a Breton student's social identity just as it does in their own, they might be able to identify more easily with the foreign student. This could help the English student to foster positive attitudes towards and greater interest in French people and also help him to develop a degree of empathy with the people of the culture he is studying.

Relating down to the Regional Identity objectives, an understanding of the concept of regional identity as part of social identity is important for all the Regional Identity objectives but in particular is reflected in the first one. By investigating attitudes to their region amongst friends and relatives and discussing their own identity, students should acquire a better understanding of the existence and nature of the concept of regional identity.

An example of the progression from General Aims to practice can be found right at the beginning of the topic in the first lesson. In this situation, the students have been working in groups, discussing stereotypes of and associations with different areas of Great Britain. This group is reporting back on their own region, N.E. England. The progression can be portrayed as follows:

General aim: (Students shall acquire) a perspective on their own culture, allowing them to relativise it and see

it as specific to time and place rather than assuming it is the norm.

Regional identity aim: Students shall acquire an understanding of the concept of 'regional identity' as part of individuals' social identity.

Regional identity objective: Students shall investigate attitudes to their region among people in their own locality and become more aware of their own identity.

Practice: When asked what their group had decided about the North-East:

**S1: Région socialiste, football, le stéréotype est beaucoup de chômage, classe ouvrière, les gens sont amicals, c'est une région industrielle.**

**T: Est-ce que c'est vrai?**

**S1: Non.**

**T: Quelle est la vérité?**

**S2: Pas tous les personnes aiment le football.**

**S1: C'est agriculteur aussi. C'est très riche.**

**S3: C'est très joli. It's developing...**

(T: teacher; S1: first student; S2: second student etc.)

(NB. All sections in bold are quoted speech)

Here the students give two perspectives on their own region; their own 'insider' view and a view of the region as it is stereotyped from outside. They show therefore that they are able to accept multiple perspectives on their own culture and are able to relativise it, although they are obviously still defensive when faced with the stereotyped view. In discussing their own region, they introduce other components of social identity, such as

"classe ouvrière", recognising that these other factors are linked with regional identity in making up a whole. These first impressions and stereotypes are clarified through group discussion, which has already taken place, and through the teacher's questions. In this initial phase of the topic, students are thus given the opportunity to investigate the attitudes to their region of their own small group, using these to become more aware of their own identity.

#### 5.2.2 Students shall acquire an understanding of regional identity in their own environment.

Having acquired an understanding of the existence of regional identity, the next logical step for the students is to explore that concept in an environment familiar to them, that is, their own region. Of course, each individual in the North-East has a different identity, but by studying regional identity in their own environment, students should be able to acquire an understanding of the scope of the concept.

Again, this aim relates to several of the general aims, particularly in the way it was approached. Its most obvious relevance was to help students gain a perspective on their own culture. To analyse regional identity in their own environment, students had to set themselves apart from it a little, and this perspective should aid them in relativising their own culture rather than unquestioningly assuming it is the norm. In the way



it was approached, this aim also related to the general aim of improving the students' ethnographic techniques, as they had chance to practise administering and analysing questionnaires.

As far as the objectives were concerned, this aim too was linked specifically to the first objective, that is, students investigating attitudes to their region among people in their own locality and becoming aware of their own identity.

An example of the progression from General Aims to practice can be found in the second lesson of the topic. At the end of the previous lesson, students had been given a questionnaire in French on regional identity to administer to ten of their acquaintances, relatives and friends, preferably of different ages and backgrounds.

General aim: (Students shall acquire) ethnographic techniques with which to approach other cultures and the curiosity, openness and independence to do so.

Regional identity aim: Students shall acquire an understanding of regional identity in their own environment.

Regional identity objective: Students shall investigate attitudes to their region among people in their own locality and become more aware of their own identity.

Practice: During the first half of the second lesson, students reported back on the results of the questionnaires they had administered. Their results were

collated by the teacher on the board and they then had to write a report on their findings.

Here the General Aim of acquiring ethnographic techniques and the Regional Identity Aim of acquiring an understanding of regional identity in their own environment were combined to produce a practical exercise which fulfilled the objective of of investigating local attitudes to the North-East region. The questionnaire in this case was actually designed by the teacher. However, the practice in administering, analysing and interpreting such a questionnaire provided the students with a basis for designing their own questionnaires on regional identity, which they did at the 'French Day' at Durham University. Having had such practice, the students should then be able to apply the technique to unfamiliar situations and subjects. This should provide a tool for approaching other cultures and finding out about them independently.

### 5.2.3 Students shall acquire an understanding of regional identities and cultures in France.

For this aim the emphasis moves away from regional identity in the students' own environment and towards regional identity in France. At this stage it is still fairly general, giving an overview of the different regions and cultures which exist in France.

Once more, this aim should help the students to gain a perspective on their own culture through comparing one aspect of it with the same aspect in another culture. More obviously, though, this aim is related to the general aim of acquiring a body of knowledge about key aspects of French culture, in this case knowledge about the different regions and identities in France. Hopefully, this combination of knowledge and relativisation should provide a basis for the other general aims of encouraging positive attitudes and developing empathy towards French people. In addition, the aim of acquiring ethnographic skills was taken care of in this case by a study of statistical tables and documents on regional identities and languages.

Moving to the Regional Identity objectives, this aim is most directly linked to the objective of students acquiring knowledge of the history of regional differences and the repression of regional identity.

One of the sequences including this aim could be as follows. The example of practice is taken from the second lesson where students are studying a sheet of statistics on regional languages and immigrant languages in France since 1851.

General aim: (Students shall acquire) a body of knowledge about key aspects of French culture.

Regional identity aim: Students shall acquire an understanding of regional identities and cultures in France.



Regional identity objective: Students shall acquire knowledge of the history of regional differences and the repression of regional identity.

Practice:

T: Je vais vous montrer sur la carte maintenant... vous avez les langues.. à base territoriale. Alsacien d'abord... David, combien de personnes comprennent ou parlent alsacien?

S: Une million...

T: Quel pourcentage?

S: Le pourcentage? 70 à 80%.

T: Oui, c'est la majorité. Alsacien, c'est dans l'est de la France, ça c'est Alsace (shows on map), c'est près de la frontière allemande... et alsacien, c'est une sorte de variation de la langue allemande. Alors, dans l'Alsace, qui dans le passé appartenait à l'Allemagne, on a cette langue qui ressemble à l'allemand et c'est, c'est compris et c'est parlé par la majorité des alsaciens, qui sont français mais qui comprennent et parlent l'alsacien.

Here the line is direct from the general aim of acquiring knowledge to information about the regional identity, language and history of Alsace being delivered in the classroom. However, the explanation of this sheet of statistics was the only direct factual knowledge about the regions of France given to the students during the topic.

5.2.4 Students shall acquire an understanding of a particular regional identity and culture in one area of France.

The particular regional identity and culture studied in the pilot course was Brittany and this was the aim which was given most attention in the teaching. Calculating from the times given in the next chapter in the overview of the content of the lessons, approximately 46% of lesson time was devoted primarily to this aim. The purpose was for the students to go beyond statistics and generalisations and to gain an insight into regional identity, culture, language and attitudes in Brittany.

Like the third aim, this one involved the general aim of acquiring a body of knowledge about key aspects of French, in this case Breton, culture. Through listening to tapes and reading texts about Breton people's attitudes to their language, students should also have gained an insight into the link between language and culture. In this instance, the link between Breton culture and Breton language was made explicit on the tapes and in the texts. From here, though, the students may go on to realise that there is a link between language and culture in general, a link which was not made explicit in the topic. This more extensive study of a particular regional identity, including people's attitudes to and feelings about their region and identity, could help students to develop some empathy with the people and some feeling of what it is like to be a French Breton person.

As far as the Regional Identity Objectives are concerned, this aim is obviously related to the two final objectives, that is, to acquire knowledge of Brittany and some of the distinctive features of Breton culture and to investigate the changes and conflicts created by modernisation and centralisation in Breton culture, identifying the implications for the individual.

This example is taken from the final lesson of the Regional Identity topic. The students are listening to a tape in which their teacher interviews a French student about his Breton roots and his opinion on Breton identity. The students listened to the tape twice and answered written questions.

General aim: (Students shall acquire) empathy with French people and some feeling of what it is like to be French.

Regional identity aim: Students shall acquire an understanding of a particular regional identity and culture in one area of France.

Regional identity objective: Students shall investigate the changes and conflicts created by modernisation and centralisation in Breton culture and identify the implications for the individual.

Practice: (On tape)

T: ...Alors, pour les Bretons, leur foi a disparu, leur langue a disparu...

Ronan: Et tout ça, c'est plutôt des raisons économiques, les raisons économiques qui ont, qui ont fait que les Bretons ont dû abandonné leur campagne et ont dû

s'intégrer... ce qui est dommage aussi, c'est sûr, perdre une culture, mais enfin, on habite en France, donc on doit...faire preuve d'intégration pour ne pas être exclu des autres régions de France.

T: Est-ce que c'est important d'être intégré et ne pas exclu alors?

Ronan: C'est important, oui, parce que je pense que la Bretagne n'aurait pas réussi à se développer, développer ses industries sans l'aide de, des autres régions de France... c'est une région qui s'est développée tardivement par rapport aux autres régions...

At this point the students were at the end of the Regional Identity topic and should have acquired a considerable amount of knowledge and some degree of understanding of regional identity in their own environment, France and Brittany. In this example they have the chance to listen to a French student of their own age giving his opinions on Breton identity and the conflicts caused by centralisation. Hearing this information in a personal form may have made a more lasting impression on the students than a textbook stating economic facts. At the same time, this personal approach is more likely to facilitate an understanding of Breton identity and provide the students with a feeling of what it is like to be French.

Clearly, some of the aims are easier to teach than others and are more acceptable. For example, the general

aim of acquiring a body of knowledge about key aspects of French culture is expected and accepted by students and teachers alike. On the other hand, the development of empathy with French people and some feeling of what it is like to be French, although often expected implicitly, is rarely recognised as an essential part of an 'A' level course and may even be rejected explicitly as irrelevant and unteachable. The idea of attempting to change people's attitudes may also be considered an ethical issue and may be unacceptable to some students and teachers.

Obviously, there are many more permutations of progressions from general aims to practice in the classroom. Sometimes the lines run smoothly, sometimes they do not. Often, one general aim will be reflected in all four objectives or two regional identity aims in one objective. In practice, all the aims and objectives are intertwined and support each other.

This chapter has considered the aims and objectives in some detail, giving examples of what was taught. The next chapter will examine in greater depth an example of the teaching of the topic.



## Chapter 6

### STUDY OF A SINGLE LESSON

The purpose of this chapter is to attempt to give a picture of a typical lesson during the Regional Identity topic. The aim is to provide some depth and detailed description as a context for following chapters. The section will be structured as follows. An outline of the contents of each of the six lessons observed will be given as a context for the lesson chosen for discussion. This lesson will then be subdivided into various sections and each section will be treated in some detail.

#### 6.1 Overview of the regional identity lessons in one college

First, the outline of the six lessons observed during the Regional Identity topic in one college. The number in brackets below the time is the aim the section relates most closely to. Only one aim has been specified for each section, although obviously there are cases where one section has elements of other aims too. The four aims, which were developed more fully in the last section, are:

- 1. Students shall acquire an understanding of the concept of 'regional identity' as part of individuals' social identity.*

2. *Students shall acquire an understanding of regional identity in their own environment.*

3. *Students shall acquire an understanding of regional identities and cultures in France.*

4. *Students shall acquire an understanding of a particular regional identity and culture in one area of France.*

### Lesson 1

09.10-09.50: Students discuss their first impressions of

(4) Brittany from a video they have watched. Teacher notes on board their comments and students use these to write an essay for homework. On board, notes on agriculture, legends, costumes, landscape, language, fishing and religion.

10.05-10.25: Students split into three groups. Each

(1) group takes two English regions (from N.E., N.W., S.E., S.W., Midlands) and one country (from Wales, Scotland, Ireland). In groups they discuss stereotypes and associations with their areas.

10.25-10.45: Report back on allotted regions/countries.

(1) For most areas images are stereotype/tourist. For N.E., distinction is drawn between stereotype and reality.

10.45-11.00: Questionnaire on regional identity

- (2) distributed and explained. Students should administer questionnaire to up to 10 people of varying ages.

### Lesson 2

- 09.15-09.50: Results of the local regional identity questionnaire. Collated class results written on board.  
(2)
- 10.10-10.35: Students work in small groups to write up results of the questionnaire. Meanwhile, Breton music playing in the background.  
(2)  
(4)
- 10.35-10.40: Map of Bretagne distributed and teacher explains family of Celtic languages and different dialects spoken in Bretagne.  
(4)
- 10.40-10.50: Students look at statistics of regional and immigrant languages; teacher points out on map where each regional language is spoken.  
(3)
- 10.50-11.00: Students look at sheet of Breton vocabulary and relate words to Welsh or Cornish place names they know.  
(4)

### Lesson 3

- 09.10-09.55: Text entitled *Langues Regionales: agonie ou renaissance* (survey results on regional languages in France) is distributed. Students work in small groups to find answers to questions on the text and then discuss the answers they have found.  
(3)

10.10-10.55: Students read aloud extracts from *Le Cheval d'Orgueil* by Pierre-Jakez Hélias, on the struggle to keep Breton language and culture alive. Teacher explains parts.  
(4)

#### Lesson 4

09.05-09.50: Introduction of theme of the "exode rural."  
(3) Gapped transcript of song *La Montagne* (Jean Ferrat) distributed. Students listen to song on tape twice and fill in gaps, then go through, checking words and discussing themes and meanings.

09.50-10.05: Sheet of photocopied photos, stickers, symbols etc., showing aspects of Breton culture, distributed and discussed.  
(4)

10.05-10.25: Text *Le breton dans la vie quotidienne* (analysis of statistics on Breton language; who uses it, when etc.) given out.  
(4) Introduction discussed, then students work in pairs to find answers to questions on text.

10.25-10.30: Mini-sondage among students on whether there is a difference in use of Geordie between men and women.  
(2)

10.30-10.45: Continue reading text. Then questions given on another text *La langue bretonne n'est pas encore perdue* (statistics on who speaks Breton and where); students to find answers for homework.  
(4)

Lesson 5

- 13.20-13.40: Students given a scale on which are marked  
(1) ten categories of French people e.g. parisien, canadien francophone, français habitant une ex-colonie. Students listen to assistante grading the scale from what she considers to be most to least French.
- 13.40-14.05: Students listen to tape and note down  
(1) responses of two French students doing the scale, check answers.
- 14.05-14.15: Sheet of photocopied photos of aspects of  
(4) Breton folklore, e.g. lacemaking, dating from various times given out. Students examine photos in pairs, try and date them. Teacher and assistante circulate.
- 14.30-14.35: Introduction of subject of regional  
(3) folklore used for marketing.
- 14.35-14.40: Students give examples in own region of  
(2) marketed folklore e.g., Beamish.
- 14.40-15.10: In small groups, students study short texts  
(3) from Hélias (*Le Cheval d'Orgueil*) and Grall (*Le Cheval Couché*) on the subject of folklore and lift out key phrases. Then class discussion, listing phrases found in favour of folklore tourism (mostly from Hélias) and against (mostly from Grall). Homework given is to write a description of folklore for tourists in Bretagne and N.E. England.

## Lesson 6

- 09.05-09.55: Text *Le Cheval Couché (Grall)* (describing author's return from Paris to Breton roots) (4) distributed. Teacher introduces text, then students must read through, finding synonyms to words on board. Students find this difficult, so read through text aloud and answer questions.
- 10.15-10.30: Students pick out from text as many words (4) as possible to describe Bretagne, then pool findings.
- 10.35-11.00: Tape of *Ronan et la Bretagne* (French (4) student talking about Breton customs and culture) played. Students listen and answer questions on what Ronan says about Bretagne.

### 6.2 A lesson in detail

The lesson selected for more detailed study is the penultimate one, lesson 5. A transcript of this lesson appears in Appendix B along with copies of the materials used. Fifteen students were present for this lesson, which took place one afternoon in May. The assistante was present for the first half of the two-hour class. This lesson is representative in that it reflects something of all the regional identity aims. At this stage, the students are already familiar with most of the themes

running through the topic and should be more able to contribute to their study of regional identity. By this point the students have already administered questionnaires to study regional identity in the North-East, discussed and written up the results thereof, looked at statistics concerning the use of regional languages in France, considered the family of Celtic languages, compared Breton vocabulary to Welsh and Cornish names and words, read literature on Brittany, listened to Breton music and discussed the 'exode rurale' through the study of a particular song, studied pictures and photos relating to Brittany and read a text about the decline of the Breton language. Thus, in theory, students should have gained an awareness of regional identity in their own environment, an idea of different regional identities and languages in France and a growing body of knowledge about Breton culture. In this lesson they study the concept of French identity. They look at different aspects of Breton folklore, compare folklore in Brittany and North-East England and explore the idea of folklore as an expression of regional identity or as a marketable tourist attraction.

This lesson can be broadly divided into five sections, each of which will be treated separately. The five sections are:

1. The 'échelle'.
2. Study of photos of Brittany.
3. Consideration of Breton folklore attractions.

4. Comparison of folklore in Brittany and the North-East.

5. Study of two texts.

6.2.1 The 'échelle'

A sheet of paper, entitled *Qui est "le plus français"* was distributed to all the students in the class. On this paper ten categories of French people were marked, as follows:

*Canadien francophone*

*Français habitant un autre pays européen (non francophone) - Espagne*

*Français habitant un DOM/TOM (Antillais)*

*Français parlant une autre langue (Breton, Basque, Corse, Alsacien)*

*Français dont les parents (ou un parent) sont (est) immigré(s)*

*Parisien*

*Provincial*

*Français "pied noir"*



*Français habitant une ex-colonie*

*Ressortissant d'une ex-colonie immigré en France*

To begin with, the various categories were explained, as students were unfamiliar with some of them, for example, *français pied noir*.

Next, the assistante was asked to create a scale of 'Frenchness', beginning with the category she considered most French. While she did this, the students listened and noted down her order. The assistante went through the list clearly, stating her reasons for each choice. The picture of 'Frenchness' presented to the students through her explanations seemed to be one primarily of traditionalism, embodied in language. For example, citing *provincial* as the most French, she says:

...pour moi le provincial est le plus français parce qu'il garde ses traditions, il a le savoir-vivre de la France, sans trop de changements, et puis généralement il y a moins d'immigrés, donc moins de cultures différentes, moins de mélange de races, donc le provincial a réussi à garder un peu son mode de vie d'avant...

The explanations of the other categories all follow along the same line of Frenchness being something static which is not adaptable to change and which, to be attained, has to be guarded from outside influences.

Obviously, the content of the assistante's explanations was not necessarily 'right', nor was it

claimed to be. It was valuable, though, in giving one 'insider' view of French identity.

The students then listened on tape to two French students of their own age, one male and one female, who had been asked to perform the same task as the assistante. The students agreed on some points, for instance that *provincial* was most French and that language was an important factor, but disagreed with the assistante and with each other on many other points.

By the end of this section, therefore, the students should have understood something of what French people consider makes them French. They should also have picked up something of the plurality of opinions - even in the sample they heard, where the respondents were of a similar age and status, there was a considerable divergence of views. As far as the Regional Identity topic aims were concerned, this was probably the most general consideration of identity and should have helped the students to place regional identity into a wider field. It was also useful in the training of ethnographic techniques, as the students were presented with several different, personal opinions of a single issue, which could have provided them with a basis for their own understanding of the issue.

In fact, it was quite difficult to ascertain how well the students had understood the explanations given by the three respondents and what their reaction was. Their task in each case was to note down the order given, from 1 to 10. The students were attentive throughout the exercise

and seemed to enjoy doing it, although they had a little difficulty understanding the tape of the two French students. Their comprehension of the order these two students had given was briefly checked, but there was no discussion of the explanations given by any of the three respondents, nor was there any discussion of what the students thought about the notion of Frenchness which was presented to them. If time allowed, it would perhaps be valuable to extend the exercise to include this discussion and also to encourage comparison with and relativisation of the students' own ideas of identity, perhaps by doing a similar scale of 'Britishness'.

#### 6.2.2 Study of photos of Brittany

For this section, another sheet of paper was distributed, this time a photocopy of eight photos dating from different periods, entitled *Le costume breton: folklore authentique, nostalgie pastorale ou attraction touristique?*

The students were asked to work in pairs and were set the following task:

*Que voit-on sur les différentes photos? Essayez de les dater un peu - 20ème siècle, modernes, 19ème siècle, en justifiant vos hypothèses - pourquoi est-ce moderne, pourquoi les années 70 par exemple?*

The students undertook this particular task enthusiastically, discussing the pictures and trying to estimate when they dated from. They were helped by the

teacher and the assistante, who both circulated to give further explanations. These explanations were sometimes factual (for example, that lace is traditionally made in Brittany), sometimes linguistic (for example, how to spell *dentelle*) and sometimes more in depth (for example, when the assistante, having asked the question *Qu'est-ce qu'elle vend?*, went beyond the obvious answer that the woman was selling lace to elicit the idea that what she was actually selling was *la culture*).

This section may only have lasted ten minutes, but it seemed to leave a fairly deep impression on the students. At the end of the topic, all the students I interviewed remarked spontaneously on "the women with the funny hats", who they had seen on this sheet of photos. Perhaps this image was more prominent in the students' minds than it should have been, but the use of photos certainly seemed to help them to retain an image of some of the distinctive features of Breton culture.

### 6.2.3 Consideration of Breton folklore attractions

Photocopies of several examples of Breton folklore attractions were distributed. Examples included the *Maison de la faune sauvage et de la chasse*, an exhibition of over 50 birds and mammals of Bretagne, and the *Maison des Pilhaoueriens*, tracing the history of the rag-pickers of the region. Students looked at these photocopies while the teacher introduced the notion of folklore as a marketable tourist attraction. It was pointed out that

folklore is selling the past of a particular region, and more precisely, an idealised view of the past, so that, for example, the poverty-stricken, hard life of the rag-pickers is made to seem somehow attractive.

This section of the lesson may have helped the students to understand a little about culture as a marketable resource and about the manipulation and use of regional identity as an attraction to tourists.

#### 6.2.4 Comparison of folklore in Brittany and North-East England

Again, this was a very short section, but one in which the students were involved and enthusiastic. Having introduced the subject of folklore as a marketable asset of a region, the teacher related this to the students' own environment, asking the following question:

**Ce que je voudrais savoir: est-ce que vous voyez une sorte d'équivalence, si vous voulez, entre ces idées-là et ce que nous, nous avons dans la région - par exemple, est-ce que vous pouvez penser a quelques exemples dans notre région du folklore, de la nostalgie du passé, nostalgie du passé vendue aux touristes.**

After a few seconds thought, the students suggested various examples, including Beamish museum, Washington Old Hall, Hadrians Wall and the castles. This small section therefore helped them to relate the ideas they had been listening to and looking at to the context of their own environment.

### 6.2.5 Study of two texts

For this final section, the students were given a photocopy which quoted two short extracts, one from *Pierre-Jakez Hélias: Le cheval d'orgueil* and one from *Xavier Grall: Le cheval couché*, which give conflicting views on the role and importance of folklore. The students were asked to read the texts and were told:

**Essayez de trouver, avec votre partenaire, des phrases pour le côté positif et le côté négatif.**

They were then given about ten minutes to find the important phrases and make two lists of the positive and negative elements. Again, the students seemed to quite enjoy the task, and most managed to extract several phrases.

After the allotted time, a table was drawn on the board, with two columns headed *positif* and *négatif*. The students were then asked individually for phrases they had found. The resulting table was as follows:

#### *Positif*

- *la totalité de la civilisation populaire*
- *synonyme de gentillesse*
- *permanence de l'homme*
- *la main prévalait sur la machine*
- *on se distinguait par le costume*

#### *Négatif*

- *le folklore n'a rien a voir avec la mode*

- *l'habit ne fait pas le Breton*
- *le peuple des morts*
- *cette navrante collection de déguisés*
- *super-provincialisme*

Through this exercise, the students should have learned more about the different views on folklore, especially in Brittany, and perhaps should have been able to relativise culture to time and place, while realising that opinions on the expression of regional identity vary widely.

Working from the table they had created and from the previous two sections, the students were finally set for homework an essay which drew together the threads of folklore they had studied in this lesson and asked for their response to what they had learned:

**Lisez l'extrait de Hélias ("Or, aujourd'hui...").  
Décrivez quelques exemples en Bretagne et dans le Nord-Est de cette nostalgie du passé. Comment l'expliquez-vous?  
Etes-vous d'accord avec Hélias ou avec Grall?**

It is hoped that this description of a lesson helps to provide a more concrete picture of how the Regional Identity topic was actually being taught in one class. The following chapters move on to what the students actually learned.

## Chapter 7

### STUDENT RESPONSE - ACQUISITION OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

In this section the aim is to look at the student response to the Regional Identity topic in terms of what knowledge and skills they acquired. This will be done by taking each topic aim and assessing, as far as possible from information gained in interviews with six students at the end of the topic, the extent to which this aim was fulfilled in the students' learning. The final section will consider the ethnographic techniques acquired by the students.

#### 7.1 Students shall acquire an understanding of the concept of regional identity as part of individuals' social identity

Although this aim had underpinned a large part of the teaching of the Regional Identity topic, the interview seemed to be the first time most of the students had consciously thought about it. When faced with the question "What is Regional Identity?", students were hesitant, thoughtful and gave a wide variety of answers. Some students were evidently thinking in terms of identification with their own region when they replied: Just something that you associate with the region... the first things that come to mind.



or

What you know about your region.

Others answered in terms of an outsider's view:

Stereotypes really.

or

Like different traditions in that kind of region, what makes it stand out from the others.

One pair talked each other through the progression from the general 'what you think of' through the outward manifestations of a regional identity, their traditions, to what they considered the heart of regional identity, drawing on what they had learned during the topic:

I: What is Regional Identity?

S1: Like what er.. like when you think of a region, like what do you initially think of...

S2: I think the pride, like the Breton people are very proud..

S1: Their identity's probably more traditional than others..

I: So what makes up their identity, the identity of the North-East or of Brittany or whatever?

S2: The people..

S1: Yeah, like the people and what they do and how they live.

(I: interviewer; S1: first student of each pair; S2: second student of each pair)

Another student used her own experience to help her understand the significance of regional identity:

Everyone's different, because like I was born in Britain but my family's from Hong Kong so I'm very, well, I feel like I really want to be Chinese, you know, and not English... well, I speak English obviously but it's very important to me that I can speak (Chinese) so, you know, and keep the like, it alive, you know, so I can relate to that I suppose.

The students were all more expansive when the question of regional identity was applied to them personally and they were asked "Do you consider yourselves to be North-Easterners?". Considering that all the students were born and brought up in the North-East, it was surprising that only one student did claim to consider herself as a North-Easterner, due to the fact that she had spent all her life in the region. The others supported negative replies with varied arguments, all reflecting their sense of identity. For one, national identity takes precedence over regional identity:

I: Would you consider yourself to be North-Eastern?

S: Not as much as English or British. I think on the main England, with it being quite a lot smaller than France, you tend to think of yourself as being British first rather than... well I do.

This student had obviously grasped the significance of regional identity in France, with the comparison of England and France. This had led to reflection on his own identity and the conclusion that he did not attach great

importance to regional identity as part of his own social identity.

Another student saw regional identity as being very specific and could not identify herself as belonging to that particular group:

I: Do you think you're very North-Eastern?

S: No, not really, no, I think sort of if you're getting more like into Newcastle, I think you're classed more as like, you know, a Geordie but I mean like obviously when you go abroad and you say; "Oh, I'm like from the North-East, from Sunderland", they automatically think "Oh, you know, you're a Geordie", but I mean the accent isn't as much as what it is in like areas of Newcastle, so it's not as prominent... you've like got to tell them exactly where you live before they like register...

This student too has considered the importance of regional identity as a part of social identity as a whole. By looking through the eyes of an outsider she seems to have decided that the smaller unit of her home town plays a more significant role than either the region or the country.

Some students went further and explored the question of identity beyond the limits of a geographical area:

I: Do you consider yourselves to be North-Easterners?

S1: I wouldn't like say I'm proper North-Eastern.. like, working-class, yeah, but not sort of like...

S2: But if we moved somewhere, say down South we would still manage to mix in probably.

I: So you'd say you're more British than North-Eastern?

S1: In some ways, yeah, but in others, I don't know, I think you're still used to like the working-class way but, I don't know, sort of... I don't think I could like mix in with countryside, like I'd have to move to another city, town...

...

S2: I don't really consider myself to be proper North-Eastern because I don't really like the language...

S1: Yeah, but I wouldn't want to like change my accent.

S2: You can't change your accent but...

S1: Cos like, it's different and people know you for your different accent...

S2: It's part of you, part of your character, isn't it?

It is difficult to tell how much of this discussion is a direct consequence of their study of the topic, but these two students seemed to be trying out different ideas in what makes up social identity. There seems to be some discrepancy between the denials that they are North-Eastern and the importance of their accent to them, but perhaps this is because they have not given the matter much thought before or else North-Eastern was not the right term to use in the question.

Overall, the students seem to have fulfilled the aim (or are in the process of doing so) of acquiring some understanding of the concept of regional identity as part of individuals' social identity. Some have gone further to consider other factors in social identity, some have used what they have learned during the topic to apply to

their own situation. Although the students seemed to find it difficult to express the concepts involved explicitly, they did seem to have gained something from the topic in terms of an understanding of regional identity.

## 7.2 Students shall acquire an understanding of regional identity in their own environment

The students concerned were all keen to talk about regional identity in their own environment. It was difficult to ascertain how much of what they said was influenced by their study of this topic and how much was influenced by existing understanding and other factors. However, it seemed that the questionnaire they administered to family and friends at the beginning of the topic had helped them to focus on regional identity in their own area.

The students were asked about their own opinions of the North-East, how they would describe the region to a French student and about the stereotype picture of the region. In several cases the stereotype matched with their own views; in many cases, though, they emphasized the differences between the stereotype and 'reality'. Practically all the stereotypes they gave, where these were judgmental, were negative. The autostereotype, on the other hand, contained a mixture of positive and negative views.

Many of the stereotypes given related to traditional industries - most students mentioned mining, heavy industry, shipbuilding and steelworks. This seemed to be an essential part of the region's identity to the students, but was closely followed by mention of unemployment and change. One student explained:

S: I think it's in the process of changing from like being a coal-place... it's just like in mid-ground sort of.. trying to find something else..

I: So where do you think it's going?

S: Nowhere at the moment.

Perhaps this loss of an important part of the region's identity, which has not yet been replaced in the students' minds, could help to explain why they did not consider themselves to be 'real' North-Easterners.

As far as the people were concerned, though, there seems to be more stability in the opinions held. The stereotype again tended to be negative:

S2: They just think that people in the North-East aren't very intelligent..

S1: Yes, they think they're like poor and like.. well not like poor, but... they're not like well-off, compared to the people down south.

Asked how they would describe the North-East to a French student who was going to visit the area, the same two students gave a very different, more positive picture:

S2: They're more open in the North-East I think..

S1: Like working-class.

S2: Yeah, they like a good laugh and they like going to the local pub..

...

S1: It's more like traditional.

S2: People in the North-East are quite proud, aren't they really, of being British, I suppose, or Geordie or a Mackem.

Occasionally the stereotype and autostereotype were the negative and positive sides of the same coin. When asked about the stereotype of the North-East, one student replied that:

There seems to be a lot more sort of housewives. I think it's always been kind of traditional in the North for women to stay in the house, whereas in the South I think it's more liberated now.

Asked to describe the North-East to a French student, the same student said:

They're more caring, like people in the South seem to be just really individual, they just want to look after themselves, just don't want to spend, you know, their time thinking about other people... they just want to look at their own kinds of ambitions.

The students were also asked to respond to a number of one-word definitions of their region. These definitions had been obtained during a previous observation of the class when they had discussed the stereotype and 'reality' of their region. The students were asked to grade the definitions from 1 to 9 with 1

being the word they thought best described the region and 9 being the one they thought least true. The cumulative scores of the six students are shown below. The lowest total represents the definition thought to be most true by these students, while the highest total is the least applicable definition.

(1) Industrial	13
(2) Working-class	16
(3) Unemployment	20
(4) Hard-working	28
(5) Friendly	29
(6) Developing	31
(7) Beautiful	40
(8) Agricultural	43
(9) Rich	50

The totals do not represent a full picture of the students' views. For example, one student gave a high score to "developing" because she thought the region is already developed. Another student also gave a high score to "developing" but for the opposite reason - she thought it hasn't started developing yet.

However, it is interesting to note that the three definitions given priority by the students all relate to work or lack of it. This ties in with what the students had already said about the stereotypes and reality of their own region's identity and perhaps gives a clue as to



why the students themselves do not identify with the region.

One student, who put "hardworking" in first place, gave an explanation based on the disadvantage of the North-East: I just basically think that the North-East really really tries, like people from the North-East really really try.. whether they get anywhere when they do that is another matter, but I think they sort of tend to work a lot harder than other people who've just been handed it on a plate. I think there's more.. obviously there's more sort of job opportunities elsewhere in the country, so therefore you've got to work harder for what you get here... but as for like developing, I don't think it's very like as developed as what (name) says, I think it's still stuck in its old traditional ways.

The comments attached to the least applicable definitions, "agricultural" and "rich" were also enlightening, reflecting the boundaries of the students' understanding of regional identity in their own environment. Although the question specifically asked students to grade the statements in a scale describing the North-East, the results seemed to be limited particularly to their own town. Explaining why she had put "agricultural" last, one student said:

There's not many farms, well, there is farms but they're more inland, like you don't really know about them.

As regards "rich":

Not that many rich people.. like you get more of the rich people down South.. like the upper class and that down South.

The limits of the North-East seem to be synonymous here with the boundaries of Sunderland.

Generally, the topic did seem to have helped students to consider and clarify their understanding of regional identity in their own environment. To a certain degree, too, they were able to relativise their own 'insider' view of the region to an outsider's view, although this may be due to other factors than the teaching of this topic or the course overall. One student explained how the topic had helped her to understand regional identity in her own environment better. Responding to the statement "I feel as though I know more about my own regional identity through comparing it to other regional identities", she agreed strongly and explained further:

I think it's important to compare because then you can sort of like pick up points that you wouldn't already, originally have thought of.

### 7.3 Students shall acquire an understanding of the significance of regional identities and cultures in France

The students had had more teaching related directly to this aim than to the previous two. Over the course of the topic they had studied statistics of regional and immigrant languages, they had studied a text discussing

the popularity of regional languages (*Langues Regionales: Agonie ou Renaissance*), they had listened to and discussed a song on the theme of the "exode rural" and they had considered the phenomenon of local traditional folklore used for tourism. The time spent on this part of the topic did not seem to be proportional to the impression it made on the students. None of them mentioned the theme of regional identities (other than Brittany) spontaneously, and when asked, they seemed to draw more on other sources of knowledge than what they had learned here.

Perhaps this was partly due to the fact that in order to make sense of the significance of regional identities and cultures, it is first necessary to have a basic factual knowledge of where the regions actually are - a factual context to put the understanding in to. This was not always the case, at least with these particular students. At one point in the interview, each student was given an outline map of France and asked to mark in and name any towns/regions/areas known. All the students placed Paris (to the nearest 100 miles) and Brittany. Normandy, the Alps, Bordeaux, Marseille and places the student had visited were usually correctly placed. In some cases, though, the geography was alarming - Bordeaux was in Alsace, Nice in the Pyrenees, Nantes in the Massif Central, Alsace Lorraine south of the Alps and Quimper in Le Havre. All the maps had large white gaps, where the student couldn't think of anything to put in. While completing this exercise, students claimed that they

didn't have a clue about where places were in France and one typical conversation was:

S2: Oh, where's that Bordeaux where they do the wine?

S1: Boulogne, isn't it?

The comments of a pair of students at the end of this exercise also reflected their sense of a lack of basic knowledge:

I: Is that about it?

S2: It looks like it. Ee, that's disgusting, I'm ashamed...

S1: This had better not go on our records!

At other points in the interview, too, students suggested they would have understood the topic better had they had some basic foundation of knowledge, for example:

S1: I think I would like to study France as a whole, like we don't really know much about France itself

S2: It's like just all bits, isn't it?

It must be difficult for students to understand the significance of regional identities and cultures in France when they lack the basic knowledge of what and where these regions are.

Nevertheless, the students did have some notion of regional identity in France, considerably supplemented by their own experience and imagination. Their descriptions generally came from three sources: knowledge gained during the topic, intuition and experience.

Some students did retain information they had picked up during the topic. When asked to describe a region of France and whether and how it was different from other

regions, one student, who had never been to France, chose Alsace:

There's a lot of German influence, wine... just a mixture of culture between Germany and France, houses in the German style, German words in the local dialect.

Another student extended her existing knowledge of language in Great Britain to apply to France, supplemented by the information she had gained during the topic:

Like Breton, like in Brittany|and that, and I think they've got like accents like up here as well, like in here, this country, like there's different accents and different regions and dialects... I think that's the same in France as well, depends on where they come from.

Other students relied on basic knowledge from the course supplemented by a large amount of intuitive imagination.

One student chose Normandy and, helped by her partner, created an identity:

S2: We can say that the Bayeux Tapestry is in Normandy..

I: So what do you think Normandy's like?

S1: Countryside..

S2: A bit of a ruin perhaps..

S1: I think there'd be loads of monuments and like..

S2: And it's probably got like this strange little feeling to it..

S1: Yeah, cos that Mont St. Michel's there, isn't it?

S2: Kind of mysterious feeling...

I: Why?

S2: Cos of the legends, it's just a creepy, but a nice creepy type of thing.

This student (S2) too had never been to France.

The remaining students all drew on their own experiences in visiting France to describe a region and explain how it was different from the rest of France. In contrast to the above two students, who did not mention people, these students all focussed on people as an essential part of the region's identity. Whichever part of France they had visited, they claimed that the people there were probably more friendly than in other parts of France. The way they chose to describe the region was strongly influenced by the reason for their visit. For example, one student who had gone to Northern France on a history trip retains the impression that:

S: I think they still, er.. they respect the war, they still like go back to the war with all the things they do and that... they have memorial services, more so than like the others...

I: Do you think the people are different?

S: Yes, I think they respect each other more.

Another student, who had been to Laval on holiday, was left with a holiday image:

S: It's like typical France, what you imagine it, like countryside and tall trees and things. The people.. oh, and quite a few onions as well. It's just so typical. But then the people, I don't know, you didn't see so much working-class squalor, I think they were quite well-off..

I: So that's French, is it?

S: Oh no, but you don't really associate poverty with, when you think of France... I don't.... I don't know whether you should.

This particular student had previously recognised the fact that his impression was probably not very representative of the region in question because:

It was for a holiday, so it's hard to describe what it was like really.

In general, from the information I gained, this aim did not seem to have been realised to any great extent in the students' learning. This seemed to be caused mainly by the students' lack of basic factual knowledge of the geography of France, which gave them no base upon which to build.

#### 7.4 Students shall acquire an understanding of a particular regional identity and culture in one area of France

In this course the particular regional identity and culture studied was that of Brittany. This was the section of the topic which was allocated most teaching time and which made the deepest impression on the students - in fact, they all referred to the topic as "Brittany" rather than Regional Identity. During the topic the students had watched, discussed and written an essay on a video of Brittany. They had looked at the family of

Celtic languages and the different dialects spoken in Brittany and at a list of Breton vocabulary, relating it to Welsh or Cornish place names. They had listened to Breton music and studied texts by Breton writers (*Le Cheval d'Orgueil*, Helias; *Le breton dans la vie quotidienne*, Gwegen; *La langue bretonne n'est pas encore perdue*, Kernan; *Le Cheval Couche*, Grall). They had also looked at pictures and photographs and listened to tapes of Breton people talking about various aspects of Breton culture.

All the students were enthusiastic about talking about Brittany and had obviously retained a considerable amount of information on the subject. They were asked to describe Brittany, Breton culture and what makes the region different from others in France. Their comments ranged over the spectrum from physical features of the landscape through folklore, language, history, religion and industry to character and attitudes to the rest of France.

Visual impressions came from the video. Some students mentioned physical features:  
**Like a mixture, there's like sea and country and mountains**  
or, more poetically,  
**It's a savage coast with myths, mystery and legend.**  
Others had been struck more by man-made features:  
**There's loads of like monuments and churches... and loads of crosses.. there's that cross that blesses the sea or something.**



These visual images were few though, as one student pointed out. When asked what she remembered most, she said the culture and the festivals more so than like the actual, what's actually there, cos I don't think we've done a lot like, only like the sort of crosses.

Most students referred to the traditional folklore of the region. Frequently mentioned were the fest-noz, lacemaking, dances and music, costumes, different types of festivals and, of course, "the funny hats". These images had been presented to the students through video and photos and all the students referred to them spontaneously.

All the students did progress, however, beyond the physical features of the landscape and the visible folklore of the region. All were aware of the Breton language and the fact that it was linked to other Celtic languages such as Welsh. Some students recognised the importance of the language in maintaining the regional identity and culture, remarking, for example, that: They've managed to withhold their culture and their language whereas other places like Cornwall haven't. One student used his knowledge of the history of Brittany to explain why the region was different from the rest of France: I think it used to have like its own kings and things... they didn't become part of France till quite late on.

Others thought that the legends associated with the region helped to create a distinctive identity - examples were given of King Arthur and Ankou.

The religious identity of Brittany was mentioned by most students. As well as the crosses and monuments, students observed that the people are very religious (although they weren't all sure which religion) and that religious festivals are important. One student's comment was that:

They have different religious festivals and things like that, whereas French are like religious but... I mean they have like sort of festivals but not as like in depth as the ones in Brittany.

As for industry and employment in the region, knowledge was sketchy. Only two students even mentioned the topic of work, which was so important in their own regional identity. One said that:

There's a lot of farming.... and fishing, they like fishing.

while the other claimed that:

It's not like developing, not much industry.

More comment was forthcoming on the character of the people of the region. Positive and negative views were given, but the overall picture was the same, that of an area steeped in tradition and folklore. The negative view was given with a comparison to Wales:

Like the people I can imagine being quite like Welshish... probably a bit backwards sort of thing, not very well-developed, still playing on the bagpipes.

However, a more positive view of a common regional identity prevailed generally:

I think in Brittany they seem to be more, like more together.

One pair of students considered the relationship of Brittany to the rest of France:

I: What are the people like?

S1: Dead traditional and like, they follow, like they're in little communities...

S2: Would they be a bit suspicious about new people coming in?

S1: Under... like not underdeveloped, but sort of like....

S2: A bit distant from the rest of the..

S1: Like they speak another language, sort of their own language and that..

S2: It's like their own little country.

One of these students later added that:

It's like they want to live the old way and they don't want anything to be modernised really.

Overall, the students seemed to have a fairly clear understanding of Breton identity and culture, dominated by the traditionalism of the region. In a series of self-evaluation statements, most students agreed that they could "understand how the Bretons feel about their language and culture". A couple of students were more doubtful - one explained that she understood on the surface but that:

I think you've got to have that kind of a character, you know, be brought up in that kind of environment to really appreciate and understand it.

Evidently, it requires more than two hours a week of French 'A' level to understand in depth a foreign, unexperienced regional identity and culture, but within the limits of practicalities, this aim did seem to have been fulfilled.

As one student concluded, giving her reasons for enjoying the 'Brittany' topic:

You've like got a picture in your mind of what it is.

#### 7.5 Students shall acquire ethnographic techniques with which to approach other cultures

The Regional Identity topic gave the students the opportunity to acquire and practise various ethnographic techniques.

At the beginning of the topic the students took and administered a questionnaire in French on regional identity in their own environment. They recorded their results on an answer sheet and discussed them in class. Many of the students seemed to have learned something from this in the types of questions to ask and how to deal with the results.

When asked to give tips on carrying out questionnaires, suggestions included:

Make sure the questions are understandable.

and

Try not to be biased, like, don't like fit, like do the questions to get a certain answer.

Secondly, the students analysed statistical data to gain information twice in this topic. They studied data on regional and immigrant languages, discussing the increase and decline of various languages and possible causes. They also produced a written report on the collated class results of the questionnaire. In addition to statistical data, the students studied documents from the region, such as guide books, photographs and Breton stickers and posters.

Thirdly, the students had some exposure to interview techniques. They listened to several interviews with French students of their own age, using these to obtain information about Breton culture and attitudes. Also during this topic, some of the students took part in a "French Day" at Durham University, which was a day course about aspects of ethnography. Here, in addition to designing a questionnaire, they had the chance to prepare an interview schedule and interview a native French speaker on his/her region's identity. During these interviews the students made use of the Regional Identity questionnaire they had already administered at the beginning of the topic to their friends and relatives, importing directly such questions as "Est-ce qu'il y a un plat typique de votre région?" and "Lisez-vous un journal régional?". This experience seemed to help the students' confidence in putting techniques into practice, as well as

adding to the knowledge of those who were listening to their interviewee's replies. Asked to give tips on interviews, students drew on their experience, particularly on the French Day, to offer the following advice. First were suggestions on the interview subjects: I interviewed people of different ages, get like a wide variety.

and on how to treat the subjects:

I think asking his opinion on things he didn't really know anything about, that... he just couldn't answer it - he had to stop the tape and ask him something else.

Other hints concentrated on the questions themselves: Make sure that you ask a question that doesn't just require yes or no, try to make them think about the question.

Another student emphasised the interviewer's techniques: Try and get them to say more... like sit there and nod your head and say "mmm" and like; "Can you tell me more because I don't know much about that".

It was interesting that several of the students expressed doubt at their ability to actually put into practice these ethnographic techniques. For one student this was attributed to lack of knowledge:

I think I could do one (a questionnaire) but like I don't think I know enough about it to do a questionnaire on them (French people) cos like, I don't know which way they sort of think.

Two students out of the six mentioned lack of confidence as a problem. One student applied this directly to carrying out a questionnaire, claiming that he would know how to do one in theory, but:

I wouldn't have the confidence.

Another student mentioned lack of confidence as a more general concern:

S1: I'd like to do more discussion but I'm not confident in it.. it's just, I mean, like with experience I'd become more confident but it's... getting rid of that barrier...

S2: I think like it's expected but it's not encouraged, and I think it needs to be encouraged before you can get that confidence.

A lack of confidence in discussion in the foreign language will almost certainly lead to a lack of confidence in interviewing and administering questionnaires in that language. It is clear that students need to feel confident in themselves and in their abilities before they can master ethnographic techniques successfully, so perhaps these students' worries need to be taken more into account.

## Chapter 8

### STUDENT ATTITUDES TO THE REGIONAL IDENTITY TOPIC AND THE COURSE IN GENERAL

The following information was gained from the same students during the interviews at the end of the Regional Identity topic. The students were asked several questions about what they remembered most, what they had learned, what they liked and disliked and what they would change.

#### 8.1 Overall impressions of the topic

When asked what they remembered most about the topic, all the details the students mentioned were specific to Brittany and almost all were visual images, remembered from either the video or from sheets of pictures. The following was typical:

I think sort of the clothes, the different type of festival that they have, I suppose it's just because it's something sort of unique to that kind of place, and they're sort of really religious.

The single detail mentioned spontaneously was the 'coiffes', which they had seen on pictures:

I: What do you remember most?

S: Truthfully?

I: Yes, truthfully.



S: Them women with them daft hats on. Every time I think of Brittany I just think of them women.

These were just the first impressions. When asked what kinds of things they had learned, the students again referred exclusively to Brittany, although this time the answers were more wide-ranging. Some students again referred to the folklore aspect:

About sort of their folklore and festivals... the churches, I think it was, it's catholic, isn't it?

This uncertainty about basic facts again perhaps raises the question of how much the students can be expected to take in without an elementary foundation of knowledge. Other students referred to religion as well as other aspects of everyday life:

S2: We learnt about their industries, about what they work, you know...

S1: Their beliefs, like the church is the centre of the community and everything.. like they're really religious.

Other students emphasised the study they had done of language and attitudes to language:

S2: Really about the language, wasn't it?

S1: Yes, like how the people feel about using the language and things, how they feel...

Although the students' first reaction was largely the superficial images of the folklore of Brittany, their ensuing comments show that they had appreciated something of the nature of what had been taught. This is particularly evident in the comment about language, where the student emphasises not the outwardly visible

indications of culture but how they feel about their culture.

## 8.2 Usefulness

The students saw little relevance in what they had studied in this topic to other subjects they were studying. When asked whether anything they had learned could be useful in their other 'A' level subjects, the only positive replies were from one student who thought she probably had unconsciously but can't think of what and a music student who commented that he had heard some Breton music but wouldn't be able to write it down. The other four students gave a categoric no.

As far as going to France was concerned, the initial response from all the students was that what they had learned would only be useful if they went to Brittany. Having thought about it a bit more, though, some of the students decided it might be more useful than it had first appeared. The following conversation shows this progression:

I: How will what you've learned be useful if you go to France?

S1: I don't think it will actually.

S2: I don't think so...

S1: I think it's just like giving you an indication of how and what people are like, the kind of things that they

sort of sway towards. Apart from that, I don't think it'll sort of...

S2: Everywhere's different anyway.

The first student here seems to have doubts about the usefulness of the topic, although she appears to have grasped what was being taught, that is, how and what people are like.

The second student's comment that what they learn about Brittany cannot necessarily be applied to the rest of France was echoed by another student:

Useful if you go to Brittany, but as to how it compares to other parts of France, I'm not sure that Brittany's very... very French.

This student had travelled quite widely in France and found it difficult to relate what he had learned in class about Brittany to what he had experienced in France.

The final pair of students considered that what they had learned would be useful:

S1: I think like you'd be able to communicate better...

S2: That is, if we went to Brittany we might understand them better, so, because if they said something to us we'd say, if we hadn't known anything we'd say; "What is that person talking about?"..

S1: Yeah, and like we wouldn't know their way of living...

These students have clearly realised that there is more to learning a foreign language than learning the appropriate words and grammatical structures. In the comments that you'd be able to communicate better and we might understand them better they recognise that it is essential

to know something about the culture behind the language to communicate in that language.

### 8.3 Opinions of the topic

The students were asked which part of the topic they found most and least interesting. Here there was no agreement - each student had his/her own personal preferences and what one student liked best was what another liked least. Again, however, answers were contained specifically to Brittany and no mention was made of work done on other regional identities or their own region (for example, the questionnaire).

Favourite parts of the topic tended to correspond with what they remembered most and were largely visual images. One student chose the video on Brittany as his favourite part:

I thought the video helped. I know that wasn't in French, but just seeing things... maybe if you could find one which had French speaking on.

Another student preferred the stories they had been told about King Arthur and Ankou:

About the legends, we've learnt about what was going on at that time and it was pretty interesting.

And one student, much to the amazement of his co-interviewee, claimed that his favourite part was:  
The essay, writing what you thought about Brittany.

Two students thought the video was the least interesting part of the topic:

It was morbid... it was all based on religion and these churches and crosses..

The student who had enjoyed writing the essay decided that his least favourite part of the topic had been:

doing the attitudes to the (Breton) language because we seemed to be doing it again and again.

His co-interviewee claimed that writing the essay on first impressions of Brittany had been the least interesting part. The final student thought for a while before coming up with:

S1: I can't remember.. it was so boring.

S2: Probably just switched off.

Perhaps the only thing this proves is that no one technique or activity is likely to please everyone, and that there is a fair chance that all activities will please someone.

#### 8.4 Opinions of the course

Similarly, students were asked which topic they had liked best and which they had liked least during the year they had followed the course. Each of the four topics they had studied (Family, Education, Work, Regional Identity) was somebody's favourite, while the least favourite was limited to two topics, Family and Education.

Three of the students mentioned Family and their opinion was divided. One of the students had liked the topic:

I didn't enjoy education, but I enjoyed doing like about family.

The other students who expressed an opinion had not enjoyed Family as much and explained why:

I didn't like the marriage as well because I didn't understand that much.

For the other student the reasons were different:

S2: I can't really remember much about it... like I think we were only given about three sheets on it, weren't we, whereas for Brittany we've got piles.. yes, it seems as though we didn't do that much..

S1: It wasn't really covered in enough depth, just a few statistics..

S2: It was very stereotypical..

Perhaps part of the reason for the students' feeling that they did not really understand or go into the topic in depth could be that it was the first topic they studied. At this point the students were all new to 'A' level study and also new to the college.

The next topic, Education, again received a mixed reaction. One of the students who did not enjoy it was quoted above; another agreed:

I don't think I liked the education much because I don't think I understood it very well.

One of the students had enjoyed Education though, largely due to his own efforts:

S: Well, it (Regional Identity) wasn't my favourite - I think I preferred doing the education system one better...

I: Why?

S: I seem to have, maybe I worked a bit harder in that one...

The third topic, Work, received more favourable opinion from the students who mentioned it. The student who had enjoyed Family also liked this topic:

I liked doing work as well, different status for different jobs, like an accountant over here, he's got high status but not over in France.. I found that interesting..

Another pair of students appreciated the greater structure they had found in the Work topic:

I: Which topic did you like best?

S2: Maybe those things about work, the working people...

S1: Oh yes, we had to do projects...

S2: Yes, projects. That was OK I suppose because we knew exactly what we were doing and what we were supposed to be focussing on.

Opinion was again split on the Regional Identity topic. Some of the students had not really enjoyed doing the topic:

S2: A bit dull. It didn't have a lot of.. It doesn't have a lot of depth, it just tells you about the different like

culture, it's quite sort of specific, you know, sort of religious...

S1: I think you've got to be religious to, to like doing that kind of subject...

S2: You've got to have some, I think, connection with it and if you're just like an outsider, completely, it's just not interesting at all.

This particular student had mentioned religion in connection with Brittany at several points during the interview. She asserted that she herself was not religious and this seemed to present a barrier to her understanding and enjoyment of the topic. Another student also had difficulty relating to the topic:

S: I couldn't understand why we did Brittany as opposed to any other part...

I: So which part of France would you like to have done?

S: I don't know, something a bit more... French... You know, Brittany's like different, isn't it, a particular identity.

Other students had managed to relate to the Regional Identity topic and had enjoyed it more:

I: What was this one like compared to the others?

S: Better, I think... it was more interesting... I didn't really enjoy the other topics very much.

Other students agreed that this topic had been interesting and gave more explicit reasons:

S2: This has been like one of the broadest topics we've ever spent the time on...

I: And do you think that's better?



S1: Yes, I think like it was generalised, we just went over it...

These students had enjoyed Regional Identity more than the other topics and later in the interview one of them explained:

...But like Brittany, because we've done more on it I think... like you sort of get into it.

Perhaps because it was the most recent topic, then, Regional Identity seemed to have produced the strongest opinions. Another point to be taken into consideration concerning this topic was that it was the one produced by these students' teacher. She had designed and collected the materials for it, for example, the interviews with French students, and was therefore more familiar with it.

Again, though, even amongst the small number of students interviewed, none of the topics received universal approval or disapproval.

### 8.5 Changes to the course

In general, the students said they were quite happy with the course as it was. All agreed that if they were running it the following year, they would keep the same topics. Only one pair of students commented on the course being different to their expectations of 'A' level:

S2: It's not what I imagined it to be. It's like more studying France than I imagined us learning actual French, you know what I mean?

S1: I thought it would be more literature...

I: So what do you think it should be like?

S2: See, some people prefer to be like studying France as well as learning... whereas other people just prefer to learn straight French.

I: And what about you?

S2: I prefer to be a bit more, the other way..

I: Straight French?

S2: Suppose so.. and maybe a bit of literature as well.

Don't tell anyone else I said that!

Other students seemed quite happy with the balance of the course. When asked for suggestions for improvements to the course, however, they came up with several ideas. Some of these ideas related to the students' perceived lack of basic knowledge of France, as quoted in earlier sections:

S1: I think I would like to study France as a whole...

like we don't really know much about France itself..

S2: It's like just all.. bits, isn't it?

Other suggestions related to treatment of the topics in general:

We could go back to the old topics in more depth, you know, because once you go over it again, you might get a better idea.

and

S1: Go more in depth I think..

S2: Spend some more time on relevant things instead of doing bits and bobs out of books which aren't relevant to the topic.

This student did not elaborate on what kind of material would be more relevant to the topics.

Other students mentioned different methods of learning, particularly an increase in active involvement: I think a lot more could be done like discussion-wise.

and

I'd like to do more discussion but I'm not confident in it.. it's just, I mean, like with experience I'd become more confident but it's... getting rid of that barrier. As was pointed out earlier, an increase in confidence in discussion would almost certainly lead to a greater mastery of ethnographic skills.

The most common suggestion, however, concerned organisation of the topic material:

I'd like not to get as many leaflets, because they're not useful at all. I mean, you read them, translate them, read them and that's it.. they go into your file and you never look at them again.

In a different interview, another student expressed the same idea:

Like we just get like handouts of bits of books and like you don't read it again when you come to revise.

And again:

It's a bit confusing because we're given so many sheets, you know.

The confusion resulting from the number of handouts given to the students was evident from some of their other comments too. In some cases, they were not sure whether what they were studying was part of one the topics or not. Obviously, this was a problem because the teacher-researcher team could not work directly from textbooks and had to compile their own material for each topic. However, if the material could be better organised, the students would clearly benefit. To quote one student:

I think if we know what we're doing before we start the topic, we'd be more motivated, because sometimes we just start the topic without knowing what's going on.

Evidently, any pilot course is likely to have imperfections, but it would seem that most of the students' suggestions for improvement could be implemented without too many problems.

## Chapter 9

### CONCLUSIONS

In this final chapter, the focus will gradually broaden from the project itself to its wider relevance. The first section deals with suggestions for changes to the course arising from data in the previous chapters. The second section discusses how far points raised in the Regional Identity topic can be applied to the course as a whole. The final section considers some of the implications of the course in relation to 'A' level syllabuses.

#### 9.1 Suggestions for change

From the data in the previous sections, several themes emerge repeatedly as areas in which improvements might be made to the course. These areas could be grouped as follows:

- Explicitness of aims;
- Scope of Regional Identity topic;
- Existing knowledge;
- Methods and materials.

### 9.1.1 Explicitness of aims

In this course the approach was inductive rather than deductive. It has already been pointed out that this was apparent in the students' hesitancy and uncertainty when asked the question, "What is Regional Identity?". The advantage of this approach is that the students can themselves progress from the concrete reality of the various aspects of Regional Identity they studied to the abstract notion of Regional Identity as part of a person's social identity. The disadvantage is that sometimes the students do not make the connection. The students I interviewed at this particular college seemed to have gone some way to drawing together the strands of what they had studied, describing Regional Identity as:

...the people and what they do and how they live.

The overview is also apparent in another student's comment:

I think it's important to compare because then you can sort of like pick up points that you wouldn't already originally have thought of.

This student had clearly connected the study they had done of Regional Identity in North-East England with aspects of their study of Regional Identity in France.

At the same time, however, students did seem to be a little confused about how all the work they did on Regional Identity fitted together and what the purpose of some of the work was. As mentioned previously, the students referred to the topic exclusively as "Brittany"

and none spontaneously commented on any aspect of the topic apart from Brittany. This suggests perhaps that they did not really appreciate the relevance to the topic as a whole of activities such as administering a questionnaire to find out about Regional Identity in their own area or listening to the assistante making her scale of "Frenchness" from various categories. These activities must have appeared rather meaningless to students who did not have an overall picture of the aims of the topic. Perhaps making the aims of the course and topic more explicit to the students at the beginning would help to solve the problem as one student suggested:

I think if we knew what we're doing before we start the topic, we'd be more motivated, because sometimes we just start the topic without knowing what's going on.

#### 9.1.2 Scope of regional identity topic

This area is connected with the previous one. Most of the students perceived the topic to be limited to "Brittany" and failed to generalise what they had learned to other areas and identities. This was particularly apparent when they were asked the question of how what they had learned would be useful. Most expressed doubt that it would be useful at all and the following limitations were common:

Useful if you go to Brittany, but as to how it compares to other parts of France, I'm not sure that Brittany's very...very French.

Most of the students drew a direct comparison between Brittany and Wales or Cornwall in terms of Celtic traditions and attitudes to language but did not seem to generalise what they had learned much further to other British or French identities.

In order to help the students to view the topic as "Regional Identity" rather than "One Particular Regional Identity", it might be helpful to concentrate a little less on Brittany and place greater emphasis on different identities in France. It is possible that this could be done using the students' own experience, as all the students who had been to France had comments to make on the area they had visited and the Regional Identity in that area. Of course, this could mean breadth at the expense of some of the depth the students had gone into on Brittany. This could be a bad idea, bearing in mind the comment of one of the students who had enjoyed the Regional Identity topic:

...But like Brittany, because we've done more on it I think...like you sort of get into it.

Perhaps if the aims were made more explicit the students would be able to generalise better. From the interviews it seemed that the students' view of the topic was Brittany with more or less relevant additions and asides. Perhaps if they could see that the topic was Regional Identity and Regional Identity in Brittany was one part of that topic, they would be in a better position to relativise and generalise what they studied.



Another possibility might be to go one step further. One of the aims of the topic was to consider regional identity as part of an individual's social identity. It may be helpful for the students to spend some time considering the other identities which make up an individual's social identity. Some students were already aware of these other identities and were willing to explore them, as was evident when they were asked about their own sense of regional identity:

I wouldn't like say I'm proper North-Eastern. I don't know, like, working-class, yeah, but not sort of like...

In this case the student obviously feels that "working-class" identity takes precedence over her "North-Eastern" identity. Perhaps a wider consideration of social identity, again beginning from the student's own experience, could provide a framework for understanding regional identity into which the study of a particular regional identity could be fitted. Clearly, this broadening of the topic demands more time and may be quite removed from what is considered appropriate for a typical French 'A' level lesson. However, it may be justified if it helps students to understand that Brittany (or any other part of France) is not a list of facts in a foreign language, but is a region made up of people who have social identities which affect the way they live, think and feel.

### 9.1.3 Existing knowledge

One of the most striking points to emerge in the interviews was the students' lack of basic factual knowledge of France. The students themselves recognised the difficulties of studying regional identities when they lack the foundational knowledge of where the various regions are, as quoted in earlier sections. Obviously, this lack of knowledge is not a fault of the course, but is a problem because of the discrepancy between what students learn at GCSE level and what they are expected to know when they begin 'A' level.

One solution to this problem could be to delay the start of the course proper by several weeks or a term and concentrate on factual aspects and background knowledge of France. This would be helpful to the students at a time when they are adapting to the demands of 'A' level study and sometimes also to a new environment. It is largely due to this situation that many of the students made negative comments about the first two topics they had studied, for example:

I didn't like the marriage as well because I didn't understand that much.

or

It seems as though we didn't do that much... it wasn't really covered in enough depth.

Another solution relates to a suggestion made by one of the students:

We could go back to the old topics in more depth, you know, because once you go over it again, you might get a better idea.

This idea of a spiral curriculum could be highly effective using the topics in the course. The first time the topics were approached, they could be treated in a factual manner, with basic knowledge being acquired. The second time, this knowledge could be reviewed and then expanded, so that the students could explore the concepts involved more deeply. This approach would have several advantages. Firstly, some of the gaps in the students' basic knowledge would be filled. Secondly, when the students came to study the topic for the second time, they would already be familiar with the content and vocabulary and could therefore concentrate on more complex concepts and ideas. Thirdly, knowledge which the students had acquired from study of all the topics first time round could be used as they returned to the topics for the second time. For example, something they learned in Regional Identity first time round could be applied to Family second time round. This could help them to develop a view of the course as a more unified whole.

#### 9.1.4 Methods and materials

Two main points arose here from the students' comments. The first was that they would have liked more active involvement in their study of the topics. Several of the students suggested that they would prefer more

discussion work. Some pointed out that they had enjoyed doing projects in the Work topic. Perhaps if more project work could be incorporated into the topics, encouraging the students to work actively and independently, the students would become involved in more discussion. This in turn could help to alleviate the lack of confidence felt by some students, which naturally affects their ability to communicate in French:

I'd like to do more discussion but I'm not confident in it.. it's just, I mean, like with experience I'd become more confident but it's...getting rid of that barrier.

Options for fieldwork were included with each topic, which would obviously have given the students more practice and confidence, but in this case it was not possible to incorporate the fieldwork options in the course of the topic.

The other point raised by the students was the organisation of the material; they were confused by too many separate handouts. Clearly this is a problem of an experimental course, as the material was being constantly developed and collected from different sources. At the same time, however, better organisation of the material may have helped the students to form a more coherent overview of the topic. Another possibility, returning to the beginning of this summary, is that the students themselves would have been better able to organise the material if they had been more aware of how it fitted together, that is, if they had been more familiar with the aims of the topic.

Naturally, improvements can always be made to any course and there are always many alternatives for any improvement. In this summary I have drawn together some of the points which emerged during interviews with the students and some of the comments and suggestions they made. Overall, it would seem that students were fairly happy with the course and their main concerns were minor points, mostly in organisation and presentation of the materials. As consumers of the product, they seemed to evaluate the Regional Identity topic and the course overall as generally successful.

## 9.2 The topic in relation to the course

It is difficult to generalise the points discussed in the section above to the course as a whole, as I did not study every topic in the same depth as the Regional Identity topic. However, it is essential to recognise that the topic was designed and taught as one part of a whole and that students were expected to build on existing knowledge and skills as well as develop new ones. It is also necessary to remember that, although the course as a whole should go some way to fulfilling all the general aims, the Regional Identity topic was only one part of this course and did not necessarily have to emphasise all the aims equally. In fact, as was explained in the fifth chapter, most of the general aims were followed through

the regional identity aims and objectives to be evident in classroom practice.

However, a greater emphasis was probably placed on three of the six general aims. Firstly, the students studied Brittany and Breton culture in greater detail than any other single aspect of the course up until that point, thus acquiring a body of knowledge about key aspects of French culture. They also spent more time than at any other part of the course explicitly studying the link between language and culture. This was particularly apparent in the study of articles, extracts and tapes explaining Breton attitudes to language and culture and the importance of one in retaining the other. It was also noticeable in the texts on other regional languages and cultures in France. The third aim given priority in this topic was the acquisition of ethnographic techniques. The students practised techniques they had been introduced to in earlier topics, such as analysing statistics and documents. In this topic, in addition, they learned and practised how to produce, administer and analyse questionnaires and how to design and carry out an interview. The emphasis on ethnographic techniques was partly due to the fact that the Regional Identity topic in this college coincided with the 'French Day' at Durham University, where students from all the participating schools and colleges were given the opportunity to improve their ethnographic skills.

Clearly, the general aims cannot be neatly divided and compartmentalised when they are seen in classroom practice. The other general aims, as outlined in Chapter 5 and illustrated in Chapter 6, also received some attention. Nevertheless, it was probably in the areas of the three general aims outlined above that the Regional Identity topic succeeded in contributing most to the course as a whole.

### 9.3 The course in relation to 'A' level

In the first chapter of this thesis the point was made that radical changes would need to be made to the current 'A' level if cultural understanding were to be part of a sixth-form syllabus. It is clear that 'A' level examining boards now recognise the importance of cultural understanding as part of language learning in principle, if not in practice. This experimental course takes the stated aims of the examining boards, the largely unspecified aims of increasing interest in and knowledge of the target culture, and shows one way of putting them into practice. In many ways this is a radical departure. Innovative materials had to be designed and collected for each topic, new techniques of study were taught, and different methods of assessment had to be tried out. Critics might argue that administering a questionnaire on regional identity to friends and neighbours has little to do with French 'A' level. They may be right. In the

light of current syllabuses, the exercise would be futile. However, the student who had mastered the skill of designing, administering and analysing a questionnaire and who could use this skill on a visit to France to find out about the people of the region would be improving his linguistic ability as well as understanding what that language represented. This is a key point. Cultural learning is not a second-rate alternative to the traditional language and literature teaching. Neither is it an optional extra to fill in gaps at the end of a lesson or to provide a little light relief. Cultural learning is integral to language learning and can be incorporated at every level and in every aspect of language learning. In this course the students improved their language through study of the culture and vice versa; the two were blended. For example, they studied excerpts from literature, primary documents, statistical tables and newspaper and magazine articles. All these could have been studied in isolation as a language exercise, but they were placed into context and provided cultural meaning as well as linguistic information.

Such an approach, requiring the integration of culture and language, would indeed demand radical changes in current 'A' level syllabuses. New materials would need to be produced, new examinations developed and, probably most difficult, teachers' and students' attitudes to what is appropriate for French 'A' level study would need to be changed. Nevertheless, the advantages would seem to be



clear. Students of such a course would emerge much better equipped to communicate with and understand the people who speak the language they had been learning for seven years or so. As the links between European countries strengthen, interculturally competent individuals will be indispensable in all walks of life. There is a long way to go in developing the teaching which will foster such interculturally competent people. However, this course is a step towards this aim in Britain, as is the parallel course in France. Improvements can be made, of course, but this project proves that the theories of cultural learning are possible to put into practice. Perhaps the most important conclusion comes from the words and actions of the people most directly involved with the project, that is, the students and teachers. The majority of students, when asked, claimed that they had enjoyed the course even though it was not what they were expecting of French 'A' level. As far as the teachers are concerned, most of them have chosen to teach the course again with a new Lower Sixth class, even after the end of the experimental course.

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## APPENDIX A

Transcripts of the interviews carried out with students at the end of the teaching of the Regional Identity topic.

### Note

These transcripts and the transcript in Appendix B are intended for the reader to use as context for the last five chapters of the thesis. They are not intended for close textual analysis.

Throughout the transcripts, a pause of less than five seconds is indicated by two dots. Underlining indicates that two people were speaking at the same time.



## Interview 1

I: Do you both come from the North-East originally?  
S1: Yes.  
S2: I wasn't born here.  
I: Where were you born?  
S2: Liverpool.  
I: Liverpool? And when did you move up here?  
S2: When I was about two.  
I: About two, right. And if you were describing the North-East to a French student who was coming over to stay, what would you say to them, what would you tell them?  
S1: It's horrible.  
I: Why?  
S1: I just don't like it here.  
I: Why?  
S1: I think it's dirty.. bits of it are all right..  
S2: I think it's in the process of changing from being like a coal place.. it's just like in mid-ground sort of.. trying to find something else..  
I: So where do you think it's going?  
S2: Nowhere at the moment.  
I: So if you were describing it to the French student you'd tell them it was developing, you'd tell them it was horrible, what else would you say?  
(Pause 5 seconds)  
I: If they knew nothing about it at all?  
S1: The people are friendly.. maybe!  
I: Mmm.. if they didn't know anything about it?  
S2: About the weather.  
I: Yeah?  
S2: Yeah, the weather's quite bad.  
I: Is there anything good about it?  
(Pause 8 seconds)  
S2: Er.. not really.  
I: No? Right.. And what's the stereotype of the North-East?  
S1: Miners.. whippets.. pigeons..  
I: What else?  
S2: Good cultural stuff!  
(Pause 5 seconds)  
S2: Mines really, it's all to do with the mines. It was developed around the mines..  
S1: Heavy industry, shipbuilding, steelworks..  
I: Yeah. Anything else about the people and things?  
S2: The accent, the Geordie accent. If you come anywhere near Newcastle they think you're a Geordie.  
I: Yes, that's true. If I give you a sheet, this is some of the things that people have said about the stereotype of the North-East. What I want you to do is actually write on it from 1 to 9 the one that you think best describes the North-East to least describes the North-East. OK?.. So 1 is the one that best describes it and 9 is the one that least describes it..  
(Pause 90 seconds)  
I: Well done. So why did you put unemployment first?

S1: Cos I just think there's a lot of unemployment become associated...  
I: And that's the word that best describes it? And why rich last?  
S1: Cos it's an area where people don't have very much money.  
I: Right. And developing you've already explained, and why agricultural last?  
S2: Just because that was the last one left!  
I: That was the one that didn't have a number, right. Are there any other words that you'd use, words like that, to describe the North-East?  
S2: I wouldn't say friendly so much.  
I: No?  
S2: If you go down other places I think you'll find people are more friendly..  
I: Like where?  
S2: Liverpool. Even the more remote places I've been through..  
I: Yeah.. OK.. Have you both been to France before?  
S1: No, I've just passed through it.  
I: So where were you going to?  
S1: Switzerland.  
I: Right, but you haven't really stopped in France at all. And have you (name)?  
S2: Yeah.  
I: Where?  
S2: Laval and Côte d'Azur.  
I: How many times? Have you been a lot?  
S2: Four.  
I: Right, so you've been quite a few times. Can you describe, which area have you been to most?  
S2: Probably the South coast.  
I: So can you describe that? What's it like?  
S2: Nice! It's quite like a rich atmosphere, cos it was beside Monte Carlo where we went. It was for a holiday, so like it's, it's hard to describe what it was like really..  
I: Mmm. But what was your impression of it?  
(Pause 10 seconds)  
S2: Just.. swimming really!  
I: Right. Do you think it's different from other parts of France?  
S2: Yeah.  
I: In what way?  
S2: People said it was.  
I: What did they say?  
S2: Just like, people I knew who lived there just like, some of them came from different parts of France, some of them said it was, it was.. cos it's so close to Italy there was quite a lot of Italian people living there and Italian culture had crept in..  
I: I see.. So it's different in that way?  
S2: Yeah.  
I: Right. And do you know any parts of France, (name)?  
S1: Not really.  
I: So you couldn't really talk about any parts of France?  
S1: No.

I: Right, OK. On the map, can you mark in any areas of France that you know.. and name them. It doesn't matter if it's right or not, just see what you think you know.

S2: What, anywhere?

I: Any areas that you know, and put a name with them.  
(Pause 60 seconds)

I: OK, is that about it?  
(Pause 40 seconds)

I: OK, if you were to choose one of these areas, apart from Brittany, which, which of these regions do you think you know best? I know you know that area, but which else?

S1: Alsace.

I: Alsace? So, how could, what words would you use to describe Alsace?

S1: There's a lot of German influence.. wine..

I: Any more?

S1: Just a mixture of culture between Germany and France.. houses in the German style and German words in the local dialect..

I: So do you think that makes the people different?

S1: Maybe..

I: What do you think?

S1: I think the people are more sort of independent.

I: Right. And what about, what area do you know?

S2: Like Laval..

I: So how, what would you use to describe that?

S2: It's like typical France, what you imagine it, like countryside and tall trees and things. The people.. oh and there's quite a few onions as well, it's just so typical of what like you imagine it to be, but then the people, I don't know, you didn't see much like working class squalor.. I think they were quite well off sort of..

I: So that's French, is it?

S2: Oh no, but.. you don't really associate like poverty with, when you think of France.. I don't.. I don't know whether you should.

I: Right, yes. You've marked Brittany. It's a good job really isn't it after all you've been doing! If an English friend was going to visit Brittany but doesn't know anything about the people or the culture or anything, what would you tell them?  
(Pause 10 seconds)

I: What would you tell them?

S1: Don't go because.. they might get a shock with the local dialect, the Breton and that would probably (inaudible)..

S2: They might get shot.. by the revolutionaries, like "Make Brittany its own country" sort of thing.

I: What else, what would you tell them about Brittany?

S2: It's quite like a lot of England, like Cornwall and Wales..

I: In what ways?

S1: The culture..

S2: Yeah. Also like the people I can imagine being like Welshish.

I: What does that mean?

S2: Like Celtic isn't it?

I: What does that mean? What are they like?

S2: Probably a bit.. backwards sort of thing, not very well developed sort of.. still playing on the bagpipes..

I: Right. What else, what else would you say about Brittany?

S2: It's quite cultural, I mean like historically so.. it's got a lot of its own culture and customs.

I: Anything else? What kind of customs?

S1: Just fêtes.. their own costume..

S2: Their own language..

I: Yes..

S2: Ankou as well, you've got to watch out for him.

I: Right, and if you were a Breton student, imagine you were a Breton student who'd come over here and you were trying to explain what characterises Brittany, what makes it different from everywhere else, what would you say?

S1: That they've managed to withhold their culture and their language whereas other places like Cornwall haven't.

I: And how have they managed to do that?

S1: By talking the language and keeping it going.. still holding like the fêtes and things, still making lace..

I: Right.. So it's the traditions that they've kept up that have kept their Bretonness?.. What else has had an influence in making Brittany different?

S1: I think it used to have its own like kings and things.. they didn't become part of France till quite late on..

I: That's right. Anything else? If you were a Breton student, what would you say?

(Pause 10 seconds)

I: If someone said to you, "Oh, you're French, aren't you?", what would you say?

S2: True.

S1: There's a lot of legends attached to it..

I: Like what?

S1: King Arthur.. (*inaudible*)..

S2: They're less Latin than most of France.

I: Yes. And you've already said that they can be compared to what countries, what parts of England?

S1: Wales..

S2: Wales, Cornwall, Ireland.. all like the Celtic places..

I: Well done. Here's your next piece of paper.. hang on, I'll ask this first.. If you were asked to explain what regional identity was, what would you say? What is regional identity?

S1: Just something that you associate with the region, what people say.. (*inaudible*).. the first things that come to mind..

I: Right. And is that the identity?

(Pause 10 seconds)

I: What makes your regional identity?

S2: Stereotypes really..

I: Yeah?

(Pause 5 seconds)

I: Do you think, are you attached to this region?

S1: No.

I: Would you consider yourselves to be North-Easterners?

S2: Not as much as English or British. I think on the main England, with it being quite a lot smaller than France, you tend to think of yourself as being British first rather than.. well I do.

I: Right.. Do you as well?

S1: Yeah.

I: Oh, that's interesting. But if people say they're North-Eastern, what's the, what's it make, what makes that?

S1: That they (*inaudible*)..

I: OK. On this one (*sheet of paper*) there's some statements. It's about the topic and just about what you think.. so it goes from 1 on the left, which means you strongly agree to, down to there, which is strongly disagree.. so if you could just read them and put the marks on..

(*Pause 95 seconds*)

I: Right. So you feel, you feel as if you know quite well, both of you, how the Bretons feel about their language and culture, you can understand that?

(*Both nod, but S2 looks doubtful*)

I: What, you couldn't explain it but you can understand it?

S2: It doesn't say that, does it?

I: No, no, that's right. You've already done that. So you wouldn't be able to do a questionnaire or interview, you don't think you could do that?

S1: I wouldn't have the confidence..

I: But would you know how to do it?

S1: Yeah.

I: OK.. And you'd have the confidence to go and do it?

S2: I'd have the confidence but I don't think I'd know how to do it..

I: And you're interested in.. that's great. You don't feel as though you know anything about your own regional identity?

S2: I don't think that com.. doing Brittany has helped us understand it more.. through comp.. I don't think comparing's helped us any.

I: Right, thank you. The next, this last bit, I just want to know what you think of, not just the bit you've just done but everything you've done so far.. you know, you did the Family, Education, Work.. so this is your chance to say exactly what you think of what you've been doing! So what do you remember most about the topic you've just done?

S1: Just sort of the.. the pictures of the landscape..

I: What do you remember most?

S2: Truthfully?

I: Yes, truthfully.

S2: Them women with them daft hats on. Every time I think of Brittany I just think of them women.

I: That's fine. And what kind of things did you learn?

S2: Really about the language, wasn't it?

S1: Yeah, like how the people feel about using the language and things, how they feel it's helping them be different.

I: OK. And how will what you've learned be useful if you go to France?

S2: Useful if you go to Brittany, but as to how it compares to other parts of France, I'm not sure that Brittany's very, very French..

I: Right, so if you go to Brittany it'll be useful but not..

S2: Maybe not..

I: Can you think of any ways it'd be useful or do you agree with (name)?  
S1: Just if you go to Brittany..  
I: OK. And have you learned anything that would be useful in other subjects? What other subjects do you do?  
S1: English.  
I: And? Just English.. right.  
S2: Maths and Music.  
I: Have you learned anything that would be useful in English, Maths or Music?  
S2: I heard some Breton music but it wasn't too good. It wasn't exactly.. I couldn't write it down..  
I: Right.. No? Is that it?.. Which part of the topic did you find the most interesting?  
(Pause 8 seconds)  
S2: Silence!  
I: Well, think hard!  
S1: The essay, writing what you thought about Brittany.  
I: Right.  
S2: I can't believe you said that!  
I: What did you find the most interesting?  
(Pause 10 seconds)  
I: What did you find..interesting?  
S2: I thought the video helped.. I know that wasn't in French, but just seeing things as opposed to like little pictures.. maybe if you could find one which had French speaking..  
I: OK. And which part was the least interesting?  
S2: Writing the essay.  
I: Writing the essay, OK. Which did you think was the least interesting?  
S1: I think the attitudes to the language because we seemed to be doing it again and again.  
I: Right. What was it like compared to the other topics, you know, the Family, Education, Work?  
S1: Better I think.  
S2: A bit longer.  
S1: It was more interesting.  
I: Why?  
S1: Cos I didn't really enjoy the other topics very much.  
I: Why not? Do you know why not?  
S1: I just didn't like the topics.  
I: Fair enough.  
S2: What was the question?  
I: What was it like compared to the other topics?  
S2: Well, it wasn't my favourite. I think I preferred doing the education system one better.  
I: Why?  
S2: I seem to have.. maybe I worked a bit harder in that one. I.. I wasn't really interested in Brittany.. I couldn't understand why we did Brittany, as opposed to another part..  
I: So which part of France would you like to have done?  
S2: I don't know, something a bit more.. French. You know, Brittany's like different, isn't it, a particular identity..  
I: So you'd like to have done typical French?  
S2: I don't know, like I think it would have been a bit more beneficial, maybe..  
I: So what's typical French then?

S2: I don't know. I mean, not Paris, cos Paris isn't.  
I: Right. And which topic have you liked the best? You say you've liked the Education one, and you like?  
S1: Part of Brittany, I didn't mind some bits..  
I: On a scale! Which topic did you like least?  
S1: I think the Work one.  
I: The what?  
S1: The Work one.. and Family..  
I: Why?  
S1: I just didn't really like the materials they used.  
I: OK. Which one did you like the least?  
S2: There was five of them?  
I: I think you've done four so far.. Family, Education, Work, Regional Identity.  
S2: Family.  
I: Least? Why?  
S2: I can't really remember much about it, like I think we were only given about three sheets on it, weren't we, whereas for Brittany we've got piles. Yeah, it seems as though we didn't do that much.  
S1: It wasn't really covered in enough depth, just a few statistics and..  
S2: It was very stereotypical.  
I: OK. And if you were running the course next year, what changes would you make to it?  
S2: It's not what I imagined it to be. It's like more studying France than I imagined us learning actual French, you know what I mean.  
S1: I thought it'd be more literature.  
I: So what do you think it should be like?  
S2: See some people, some people prefer to be like studying France as well as learning.. whereas other people just prefer to learn straight French..  
I: And what about you?  
S2: I prefer to be a bit more.. the other way.  
I: Straight French?  
S2: Suppose so.  
I: So you'd rather there was more French in it?  
S2: Well, maybe a bit of literature as well.. don't tell anybody else I said that!  
I: And what changes would you make?  
S1: I think I'd probably change the format of the Tuesday lessons and try and get better materials available..  
I: So what kind of materials?  
S1: Perhaps more native speakers.. talking about things, that sort of thing..  
I: Right.. Any other changes?  
(Pause 8 seconds)  
I: No? Is that about it? Anything else about all the course? Have you enjoyed doing it.. or not really?  
S2: It's something to do, isn't it, like an 'A' level.  
I: Anything else?  
(Pause 5 seconds)  
I: No? OK, thank you.

## Interview 2

I: Do you come from the North-East originally?  
S1: Yes  
S2: Yes  
I: You've always lived here?  
S1: Yes  
S2: Yes  
I: Right. So if you were describing the North-East to a French student who was coming over, what would you tell them?  
S1: Well, it's quite an industrial town, village, er..  
S2: A load of different like accents and that..  
S1: I think it's quite friendly really...sometimes people don't think that.  
I: And what are the people like? You said they're quite friendly, what else?  
S1: I think they're probably the most friendly in the country..  
I: Yeah?  
S1: Cos I live up here!  
S2: Just really biased, that's all! No, it's just like when you go and visit like different places around the country, I mean, people do like..  
S1: It's more open up here..  
S2: Yeah. I don't know, they're more caring, like people in the South seem to be just really individual, they just want to look after themselves, just don't want to spend you know their time thinking about other people, you know, they just want to look at their own kinds of ambitions..  
I: Yes, and people up here are more..community?  
S2: Yeah.  
I: Right, and what's the stereotype of the North-East?  
S1: Lager louts.  
I: What else?  
S1: Geordie..  
S2: Sort of coal mining and shipbuilding..er..there seems to be like a lot more sort of housewives. I think it's always been kind of traditional in the North for women to stay in the house, whereas in the South I think it's more like liberated now..  
I: Mmm, that's true. Right, there's some definitions here that people have said, words that describe the North-East..have you got a pen?..and what I'd like you to do if you can is put from 1 to 9 the one you personally think is most true to the one you think is least true, so 1 is the one that best describes the North-East and 9 is the one that least describes it.  
(Pause 45 seconds)  
I: Brilliant. So you put..what did you put as number 1?  
S1: Industrial.  
I: Why?  
S1: Cos it's an industrial area.  
I: And that's what you think most characterises it?  
S1: I think that that's the first thing that you think of..  
I: And what did you put last? Developing?  
S1: I think it's already developed.  
I: OK. And you put hardworking..



S2: I just basically think that the North-East really really tries, people from the North-East really really try.. whether they get anywhere when they do that is another matter but I think they sort of tend to work a lot harder than other people who have just been handed it on a plate. I think there's more.. obviously there's more sort of job opportunities elsewhere in the country so therefore you've got to work harder for what you get here.. but as for like developing, I don't know whether it's very like as sort of developed as what (name) says, I think it's still stuck in its old traditional ways..

I: Right, and rich you put right at the bottom?

S2: Yeah, I think it's just one of those things that you sort of er, sort of er, what's the word I'm looking for, sort of relate that sort of, the rich, like they're more South and you think of like unemployment and not a lot of job.. er.. satisfaction, that kind of thing..

I: Right, thanks. Are there any other words you'd use to describe the North-East apart from those ones?

(Pause 10 seconds)

S1: Not that I can think of.

I: No? That's fine..

S2: Just traditional I suppose.

I: Traditional? Mmm, yes. And going on to France, have you been to France before?

(Both nod)

I: So which areas have you stayed in?

S2: I stayed in the South near Perpignan when I was younger, like for holidays.. er.. and I went on a French exchange when I was about 15 to Saint Nazaire. It was really interesting, that one, I enjoyed it more, I think I could appreciate it more than when I was younger.

I: Yeah..

S2: It was with school so there was a lot of like work involved in it, not just like enjoyment..

I: Mmm. So did you feel you got more out of it?

S2: I did a lot better when I was, I came back to school because we had an exam fairly soon after that and the vocab and oral work improved dramatically, so it was well worth it.

I: That's good. So could you describe, what's the area like?

S2: It's quite a big town, er, it's sort of very near the beach as well, there's quite a lot to do, er, the house I stayed in was really large, er, compared to sort of like the majority of houses here. There's loads of like shops and things..

I: And do you think it was different from other places in France?

S2: Er, I don't really know, I suppose it was. It was quite, it wasn't busy, it was quite like quiet, you know there wasn't sort of a lot of people who didn't know a lot of other people, it was quite a friendly place and I think in some cases that isn't always true in other places, like Paris I think is very sort of (inaudible)..

I: Great. And where have you stayed, (name)?

S1: I've only been once, that was in a little village next to Boulogne.

I: Right? So did you stay with a family or..

S1: No, we went with the school and..it was supposed to be a hotel, but.. They were dead friendly though, like they didn't speak English so you had to speak French.

I: Right, and how old were you then?

S1: It was only last year. I enjoyed it.

I: So, what was the area like?

S1: We didn't see much of it, like we just, we normally went like out of the area that we were in, like on trips and things, but we were on holiday so it wasn't, like we didn't go to many French places, it was just like Aqualand or like a theme park or..

S2: That was true in Saint Nazaire, like it was a big town but we didn't sort of like spend a lot of time in it, so it was, you know, you can't really say like, well, I thought there was a lot to do in it.. you just heard that there was quite a lot to do, and then we only like had visits to the bowling place and like a couple of shops and like that was as much of what we saw of Saint Nazaire.. apart from that it was day trips out and things like that..

I: Mmm. And what were the people like that you met there?

S1: Oh, they were dead friendly where I was.

S2: Yeah, and the family was really nice as well, nice atmosphere..

S1: They encourage you to speak French..

I: That's good..

S1: I was the only one who spoke French like on our trip, like the rest of them were like younger, so like I had to translate things for them.

I: Just a minute. (*Interruption at door*). So how was it different from other places in France, do you think, where you stayed?

S1: I've never been anywhere else.

I: But can you imagine?

S1: I think it was probably more friendly with it being a little village.. I don't know what else.

I: Right. A map of France. Can you just mark on it any areas of France that you know.

S2: Do you want the names?

I: And the names, yes.

(Pause 25 seconds)

I: It can be areas as well as towns.

(Pause 20 seconds)

S1: I don't know where Brittany starts from here.

I: Just put where you think.

(Pause 25 seconds)

S1: I wonder how far that bit goes down..

(Pause 10 seconds)

S1: This is good, this.

(Pause 35 seconds)

I: Is that it?

S1: I think it'll have to be.

I: So of these areas, if you were to choose one of these areas, not Brittany, can you describe what it's like?

S1: I would say Pays de Loire, cos my auntie lives there..

I: Oh, really?

S1: So I would know more about that..

I: So what words would you use to describe that?

S1: Country. Quiet, friendly. A lot of villages.

I: And what are the people like?  
S1: Friendly, talkative..  
I: Yeah?  
S1: I think they're quite rich as well. That's about it.  
I: So which part..  
S2: Probably the South coast.. quite busy, sort of large towns.. er.. there's a lot more things going on, so people don't spend sort of a lot of time talking to each other, things like that.. I don't know..  
I: OK. You've both marked Brittany on the map.  
S1: But I don't know where it starts from.. from about there to here!  
I: So if an English friend was going to Brittany but they didn't know anything at all about the people or the culture or anything, what would you tell them?  
S2: They're very religious.. are they Catholic?  
S1: It's a lot like ruins and like a mixture, there's like sea and country and mountains. I think the people are friendly there as well.  
S2: They speak Breton.  
I: Right, and what kind of language is it?... Is it like French?  
S1: It's like Welsh.  
I: Yes. And if you were a Breton student who'd come over to the school and someone said to you; "Oh, you're French, aren't you?", what would you say?  
S1: We're not!  
I: Right, why not?  
S1: They have different, like different traditions, I think..  
S2: Cultures, things like sort of the folk, is it folklore or something?  
I: Mmm?  
S2: Different like sort of religious festivals and things like that, whereas French are like religious but, I mean they have like sort of festivals but not as like.. in-depth as the ones in..  
S1: I think in Brittany they seem to be more, like more together, like they do a lot of things together, well they do in all of France but..  
I: But in Brittany in particular?  
S1: Yeah.  
I: Right. Anything else? What makes them different?  
S2: They wear funny hats!  
I: What else? What characterises Brittany?  
(Pause 5 seconds)  
I: No? Is that it?.... That's fine. If you were asked to say, to tell someone what regional identity is, what would you tell them? What is regional identity?  
S1: What you know about your region, where you live..  
S2: Like different traditions in that kind of region, what makes it sort of stand out from the others..  
I: Yes. Do you think you're very North-Eastern?  
S2: No, not really, no. I think sort of if you're getting more like into Newcastle, I think you're classed more as like, you know, a Geordie, but I mean like, obviously when you go abroad and you say "Oh, I'm from like the North-East, from Sunderland", they automatically think "Oh, you know, you're a Geordie" but I mean, the accent isn't as much as what it is in like areas of Newcastle so

it's not as prominent.. you've like got to tell them exactly where you live before they like sort of register that that's exactly where you come from.

I: Right, and do you think you're North-Eastern (name)?

S1: I don't know. I'm not sure, like, I live in the North-East, I do consider myself to be North-Eastern but..

I: But what makes you that?

S1: Cos I was born here.

I: Cos you were born here, yes, but what else?

(Pause 5 seconds)

I: I mean, could you go and live in the South and just because you were living there you'd consider yourself to be a Southerner?

S1: No.

S2: No, I think you've got a kind of character, you're characterised to the place that you live in, I mean, consider like that with me, some of my friends are really down-to-earth, whereas like I know a couple of people from the South and you've got to like really try to get any kind of information out of them.. er.. no, I think, I really think you sort of characterise the sort of stereotype..

I: OK. The next sheet of paper.. I'll take this one away.. there's statements about the topic that you've just been doing. If you can make a mark to say.. and it goes from strongly agreeing, which is number 1 to strongly disagree, number 5, or anywhere in between..

(Pause 80 seconds)

I: OK? So you don't think you can understand very much how the Bretons feel about their language and culture?

S2: No, because I'm not particularly religious myself..

S1: I think you've got to be Breton.

S2: To understand, I think you've got to have that kind of character, you know, be brought up in that kind of environment to really appreciate and understand it.

I: Right. But you could tell an English person about Brittany and Breton culture. You think you could?

(looking at S2), you're not sure? (looking at S1).

S1: I'm not sure. I could tell them a little bit but..

I: Well you've just told me a bit anyway, so..

S1: I couldn't go into depth about it though.

S2: I think it depends what it's down to, you know, you can sort of give like the surface, but like, it needs more study I think.. to go into it a bit more.

I: Yes, right. And you'd be happy doing a questionnaire or an interview, both of you?

(Both nod)

I: Er.. you're both interested in Breton culture?

S2: Mmm, cos it's so different.

I: Right... And you think you know, how have you found out more about your own regional identity?

S2: Comparing. I think it's important to compare, cos then you can sort of like pick up points that you wouldn't already, originally have thought of. That could be sort of like a comparison.. I think it's important to compare.

I: Yes. Great, thank you. That's all the pieces of paper done. Right, the last bit, this is what you think of the topic you've just done and of the course and everything. OK? So what do you remember most about the topic?

S2: I think sort of the culture.. is this Brittany?

I: Yeah.

S2: I think sort of like the clothes, the different type of sort of festival that they have.. I suppose it's sort of just because it's something unique to that kind of place. And they're sort of really religious..

I: And what do you remember most (name)?

S1: I think I would say the same, like the culture and the different like festivals..

S2: I'd say more so than like the actual.. what's actually there, cos I don't think we've done a lot like, only like the sort of the crosses..

S1: Yeah, and the churches and a couple of hills..

I: Right.

S2: That's about it really, I think we know sort of more about the culture..

I: OK. And what kinds of things did you learn?

S2: About sort of their folklore and festivals.. the churches.. I think it was, I think it's Catholic isn't it?

I: Yes. And how will what you've learned be useful if you go to France, do you think?... Will it be useful?

S1: I don't think it will actually..

S2: I don't think so.

I: No?

S2: I think it's just like giving you an indication of how and what like people are like.. er.. the kind of things that they sort of sway towards.. apart from that I don't think it'll sort of (inaudible)

S1: Everywhere's sort of different anyway so..

S2: It's just, I think really when you visit France you've just got to go, you've just got to sort of find out for yourself, that kind of thing..

I: Yes. And have you learned anything that'll be useful in other subjects? What other subjects are you doing?

S2: Psychology and English.

S1: Business Studies and Sociology.

I: Right. So have you learned anything that would be useful in those?

S1: No.

S2: No.

I: Categorical no! OK.. which part of the topic did you find most interesting?

S1: Not the video.

S2: I don't think I found any of it really interesting because I didn't find it was, you know, relating to anything. It was just telling you about one particular place and I don't think we've done.. I mean it's been sort of quite.. in little bits, hasn't it?

S1: Yes.

S2: We haven't like sort of actually spent one lesson where we've actually sort of sat down and..

S1: We've only like done Brittany on a Tuesday morning and we'll get like French Monday and Thursday so like we're doing different bits..

I: Right.

S1: I don't think you can like take it in as well..

S2: I don't think you can. You've either got to like come home and like really sit and read your notes and it's, it's not exactly exciting to come home and read about

religion and things like that so, er.. no, I don't think it was very encouraging..

I: Right, yes.. So which actual part of it did you find the least interesting?

S1: That video.

S2: Yeah, I think the video.

I: The video? Why?

S2: I didn't find it very er..

S1: It was morbid. We had to write an essay on it and there was just nothing we could write.

S2: There wasn't. I mean, I think the majority of things you could get out of it only gave you an essay for about a page if that, and then she came back and said "Well, this can't be entered for like an examination piece".. well, I mean this is the first thing that we'd done on Brittany, it wasn't as if like we were writing up all of it, so it wasn't very..

S1: First impressions.. anybody seeing that video wouldn't go. It was all based on religion and these churches and crosses..

I: Right. And what was it like compared to the other topics you've done, you know on Family, Education, Work?

S2: I didn't enjoy Education, but I enjoyed doing like about Family.

S1: I liked doing Work as well, the different status for different jobs, like an accountant over here, he's got a high status, but not over in France.. I found that interesting.

I: And what was this one like compared to those?

S2: A bit dull.. it didn't have a lot of, it doesn't have a lot of depth.. it's just, it just tells you about the different like culture, it's quite sort of.. specific.. I think, you know, sort of religious.. er..

S1: I think you've got to be religious to, to like doing that kind of subject..

S2: You've got to have some, I think, connection with it, and if you're just like an outsider completely, it's just not interesting at all.

I: Right. So, if you were running the course next year, what changes would you make to it, the whole course?

(Pause 10 seconds)

S2: I don't know really.

S1: I think I would like study France as a whole, like we don't really know much about France itself..

S2: It's like just all.. bits, isn't it?

I: So what would you like to study, how would you do that?

S2: I'd like to study a bit of like history of France, I think, er.. like find out a bit about different.. I mean, one part of the Brittany one like had a, had a bit of history to it, but it wasn't as if we could like really understand it, the way she explained it, but like, er.. I think it'd be interesting to do, to find out a bit about the history of France as a whole rather than sort of bits of it.

I: Right.. What else?

S2: I'd like not to get as many leaflets, cos they're not useful at all. I mean, you read them, translate them, read them and that's it.. they go into your file and you never look at them again.

S1: They're not really useful..

S2: I don't think so. I think a lot more could be done like discussion-wise.. er.. I mean, when we did GCSE it was really good, I mean, everybody was like involved in the lesson, whereas you're just sitting reading bits of paper.. it's not really sort of.. I don't know.. sort of satisfying..

I: Mmm, right. Anything else? What would you say about the course, or this part of it, the Brittany, Family, Education, Work bit?... Have you enjoyed doing it at all?

S2: Yeah, I have.

S1: What, the course itself or the topics?

I: The different topics.

S2: I think it's sort of, I don't know, we probably could have done more discussion work, I mean, you just seem to do like about half a lesson of discussion work and get told to write an essay on it.. the rest of that time's spent, as I say, reading the leaflets, so it's, it's not really er.. I don't know how to say it.. satisfying in a way or, not sort of gained any experience of speaking a lot.. I mean you just like answer a couple of questions and that's it.. I mean, I'd like to see more discussion..

I: What about you (name)?

S1: I'd like to do more discussion but I'm not confident in it.. it's just, I mean like with experience like I'd become more confident but it's.. getting rid of that barrier.

I: Yes.

S2: I think like sort of it's expected but it's not encouraged.. and I think it needs to be encouraged before you can get that confidence.

### Interview 3

I: Do you actually come from the North-East?

S1: Yes.

S2: Yes.

I: So you were born here and you've lived here all your lives?

S1: Yes.

S2: Well I was born in Durham..

I: Right, but you've lived in the North-East.. So if you were describing the North-East to someone, to a French student who was coming over, what would you say to them?

S2: Bring an umbrella!

S1: It's like.. it's not much of a holiday resort or anything..

S2: Like more industry.. more industrial..

I: Yes?

S1: Not.. well.. when you get nearer the coast there's not much like countryside..

I: Right..

S2: Like as you go further inland there is..

I: Yes..

S2: And there's a lot of houses and shops.

I: And what are the people like?

S1: Friendlier..

S2: Sometimes they're friendly..

S1: I think like compared to other parts of the country they're not so..

S2: Yeah, they're more open in the North-East I think..

S1: Like working-class..

S2: Yeah.. they like a good laugh and they like going to the local pub.

I: Aha?

S2: And their Sunday dinners..

S1: And their big Yorkshire puds..

I: Yeah?

S1: And it's more like traditional..

S2: People in the North-East are quite proud, aren't they, really.. of being British I suppose, or Geordie or a Mackem.

S1: They can't understand the language..

S2: Yeah, the language'll be difficult..

I: Right, and what's the stereotype of the North-East?

S1: Working-class, I think..

S2: Mmm.. they just think that people in the North-East aren't very intelligent..

S1: Yes, they think like they're poor and like.. not like poor but like..

S2: Paupers!

S1: No, they're not like that well-off, compared to the people down South.

I: Mmm. There's a sheet of paper here - it's got things that other people have said about the North-East, words to use to describe the North-East.. (*sheet given to students*). So if you could write a one by the one you think best describes the North-East down to a nine for the one least describes the North-East.. for what you think. (*Pause 60 seconds*)

I: Great. So you both put working-class as first; why?



S1: Because there's like, a lot of ehm, there's like a lot of..

S2: It's like from the mining.. it derives from the mining and it's just that impression of the working class.

I: Mmm?

S1: It's not like that, not that many rich people..

S2: Well, there's nothing like them mansion things around..

S1: Like you get more of the rich people down South.. like the upper class and that down South.

I: Yes.. so is that why you put rich as the last one?

S2: Well, there are some well-off people but..

S1: Most of them like, you don't, you sort of like get more people that work in factories and that..

S2: More than like owning the factories..

I: Right, and why did you put agricultural last?

S1: Cos there's not many farms... well, there is farms but..

S2: They're more inland like..

S1: You don't really know about them..

S2: I don't think like you get, it's not sort of agricultural..

S1: Like the North-East doesn't make its trade from agriculture..

S2: Like it's places like East Anglia or Wales which are...

I: Yes. Right, could you put your names on them.. thanks.. OK, are there any other words you'd use to describe the North-East?

S1: Colder weather..

S2: Football..

S1: Yeah..

I: Football?

S2: Quite strong I think..

S1: Really like, dead strong support for them, like..

S2: Like the people get really upset if they couldn't get to go to a football match or something..

S1: Like when they lost the Cup and that.. they were just like.. gutted.

S2: Like I think they spend all their money, most of them do, on like football.

S1: Yeah..

I: Why? Why do you think?

S1: I don't know..

S2: I'm not really into football, but she is..

S1: I don't know, it's just something that you follow..

S2: It's like your parents, it like goes through the generations, from your parents....

I: Oh right.. And, have you actually been to France before?

S1: Yeah..

S2: No, I'm going to Paris this summer..

I: So you've never been to France?

S2: No..

S1: I've been, when I was at school I went on a history trip and er, I went to like Northern France where the first World War, like, it was more like on the Belgian border, like I went to see all the trenches and everything and all the cemeteries..

I: Really? So what was it like, what was the area like?

S1: Just, I think it was a bit like England really, like there was loads of countryside and then like you came to a big town and then there's loads more countryside.. like the weather was like the same, and.. I don't know really.. I wouldn't like go back to the same place where I went, but like the people were friendly and that..

I: Do you think it's different from other parts of France?

S1: Yeah..

I: In what way?

S1: Just ehm, they like, I think they still ehm, sort of like, they respect the war, like they still like go back to the war, with all the things they do and that.. they have memorial services, more so than like the others..

I: Do you think the people are different, apart from respecting the war?

S1: Yeah, I think that cos.. I think they respect each other more..

I: Yeah?

S1: I think like they treat you, they treat you as more like a tourist rather than just somebody..

I: Right.. so how do you think Paris is different from other parts of France?

S2: More to do.. more expensive, looking at the shops, and you've got the Eiffel Tower.. it's more like, I would say it's quite popular with tourists who've never been; that's why I'm going.. I think the weather won't be very nice either, I think it'll rain for some reason...

I: And what do you think the people are like in Paris?

S2: I'm not sure.. they might all know how to speak English by now...

S1: I think the further you go South the more they speak English with it being more touristy.. I'm probably wrong like...

I: No, no.. OK, on the map, can you draw in any of the regions of France that you know and write the names.

*(Gives outline maps of France, students look doubtful)*

I: It doesn't matter, you don't have to do it perfect, just write what you think you know..

*(Pause 5 seconds)*

S1: Paris is about here..

*(Pause 10 seconds)*

S1: I think the, Marseille or something is somewhere down here..

S2: Cannes.. *(inaudible)*..

*(Pause 10 seconds)*

S1: I'm just putting dots anywhere..

*(Pause 20 seconds)*

S1: I can't think what's on this side...

S2: Oh, this bit's Dover..

S1: No, it's Calais.. Dover's in England...

S2: Terrible..

S1: Oh God, I'm getting all my names wrong..

*(Pause 5 seconds)*

S1: I don't know.. this is probably totally wrong..

S2: The Alps are about here, isn't it..

S1: About here, isn't it?

S2: Where's the Pyrenees?

S1: Ah, it's around here, isn't it?

S2: Where's Marseille then?

S1: Paris.. *(inaudible)*..  
S2: I bet the Alps isn't down there.. there's some mountains along here, I know there is..  
S1: Oh, yes, cos Spain's here, isn't it?  
*(Pause 10 seconds)*  
S1: This'll be totally wrong..  
S2: Where's that Bordeaux where they do the wine?  
S1: Boulogne, isn't it?  
S2: Dinard..  
S1: Oh, that's here.. my cousin's going there..  
S2: I'll just stick that on here.. I think Bordeaux's around, you know.. I'll mark grapes or something..  
*(Pause 10 seconds)*  
S1: I think.. what's this bit?  
S2: That's Brittany.. oh, the Loire.. *(inaudible)*..  
S1: The Loire's down here somewhere, isn't it?  
S2: Oh, just forget the rivers..  
*(Pause 5 seconds)*  
S1: Er...what's here? Where's Marseille?  
S2: That's down here, isn't it?  
*(Pause 5 seconds)*  
S2: There's Bordeaux but I cannot remember where it is..  
I: Just put, put where you think it is.  
S1: I bet it's on the top me..  
S2: I think it's about here.. do some grapes..  
S1: What's that meant to be?  
S2: Grapes. I bet you that Bordeaux doesn't even do them..  
Oh, God, how do you spell it?  
S1: B.o.r.d.e.a.u.  
S2: X. isn't it?  
S1: Yes.  
*(Pause 8 seconds)*  
S2: What else is there?  
S1: Cannes..  
S2: Dunno where Cannes is, is it there?  
S1: It's where that festival thing is..  
S2: About there, isn't it, on the corner?  
S1: I don't know.. what's there like? *(pointing to blank space in the middle)*  
S2: Country, countryside.. a few trees..  
I: Is that about it?  
S2: Looks like it.. eeh, that's disgusting, I'm ashamed..  
S1: This had better not go on our records.  
I: So if you were to describe one of these places, not Brittany, but one of the other places, which one do you think you'd know the best?  
S1: Paris, I think..  
S2: Paris or Marseille, I don't know..  
S1: Cannes, isn't that where they hold the Cannes film festival?  
S2: Yeah.  
I: Yeah, that's right.  
S1: I think..  
S2: What are you writing there?  
S1: The Loire valley, where the castles are..  
S2: Aah, yes, the Loire valley..  
I: So, what's the Loire valley like?  
S1: It's like, there's loads of castles and everything.. that's it..  
I: And what would you say about Bordeaux, for example..

S2: They grow grapes..  
S1: Wine..  
I: Yeah, anything else?  
S1: Probably a totally different pace of life..  
S2: We can say that the Bayeux tapestry is in Normandy..  
I: That's right.  
S2: Something to do with William the Conqueror..  
I: So what do you think Normandy's like?  
S1: Countryside..  
S2: A bit of a ruin perhaps..  
S1: I think there'd be loads of like monuments and like..  
S2: And it's probably got like this strange little feeling  
to it..  
S1: Yeah, cos that Mont St. Michal's there, isn't it?  
S2: Kind of mysterious feeling.  
I: Yeah? Why?  
S2: Legends and that..  
S1: Cos of the legends, it's just a creepy, but a nice  
creepy type of thing.  
I: Right. You've both marked Brittany on, so if an  
English friend was going to visit Brittany and didn't know  
anything about the people or anything, what would you tell  
them?  
S1: Very traditional, like the costumes and everything..  
and big hats..  
I: Right..  
S2: Funny shoes, don't they, galoches..  
S1: The galotte's a dance or something..  
S2: Gavotte.  
S1: Oh yes.  
S2: And, er, there's a lot of farming..  
S1: Loads of like monuments and churches, the church is  
like, dead like centre of the community..  
S2: Yeah, they've got lots of religious beliefs and.. what  
else have they got there?  
S1: It's a savage coast with myths, mystery and legends..  
that's quoted out of the (*inaudible*) book.  
I: That's very poetic!  
S2: Oh yeah, fishing, they like fishing..  
S1: Yeah, there's loads of little ports and that.. er,  
there's like loads of crosses, oh, there's that cross that  
blesses the sea or something..  
S2: They've got the cavalry thing, you know that, what's  
it called, the cavalry that's stone, you know, carved into  
stone, it's like a monument and people go to see it all  
the time.. er, what else have they got?  
I: What are the people like?  
S1: Dead traditional and like, they follow, like they're  
in little communities..  
S2: Would they be a bit like suspicious about new people  
coming in?  
S1: Under.. like not underdeveloped but sort of like..  
S2: A bit distant from the rest of the..  
S1: Like they speak another language, sort of their own  
language and that..  
S2: It's like their own little country..  
I: Right. So if a Breton student came over here..  
S1: They probably wouldn't understand..  
I: But, if someone said to them, you know: "Oh, you're  
French, aren't you?", what would they say, do you think?

S2: "No, I'm Breton."

I: And what makes them like that, what would they say?

S1: Probably think like, they've got their own little country..

I: Why?

S2: Cos the language is different and they are different. They wear different things from us..

S1: It's like more traditional and cultural than other parts, I think.. like, it's not like developing, not much industry..

S2: They haven't got much communication with the, like say, Paris..

I: Right.

S2: It's like they want to live the old way and they don't want anything to be modernised really.

I: Right, yes. Do you think that Brittany can be compared to any part of Great Britain?

(Pause 5 seconds)

S2: Wales..

S1: Yorkshire..

I: Why?

S2: Somewhere, it sounds cold actually..

S1: I think Wales.. like some like agricultural place..

S2: Rock, like rocky places..

I: Yeah?

S1: Like somewhere like really out in the country..

S2: Sheep, like somewhere that's got sheep..

S1: Penshaw Hill's got sheep on!

S2: Somewhere on the coast.. is that what you said?

S1: No, I think it's somewhere more inland, like countryside and agricultural..

I: Right.

S1: And like little ruins..

S2: Yeah.. like little monuments..

S1: Yeah, just like ruins.

I: Right, OK. And, if someone asked you to explain what regional identity was, what would you say..what is regional identity?

S1: Like what er, like when you think of a region like what do you initially think of..

S2: I think the pride, like the Breton people are very proud..

S1: Like their identity's probably more traditional than others..

S2: Like Paris, it's like a really big city and really dear and all that..

S1: Like Cannes or Brussels..

I: So what makes up their identity, the identity of the North-East or of Brittany or whatever?

S2: The people.

S1: Yeah, like the people and what they do and how they live.

I: Mmm. So do you consider yourselves to be North-Eastern?

S1: I wouldn't say like I'm proper North-Eastern.. like, working class, yeah, but not sort of like..

S2: But if we moved somewhere, say down South, we would still manage to mix in probably..

I: So you'd say you're more British than North-Eastern?

S1: In some ways, yeah, but in others, I don't know, I think you're still used to like the working class way, but, I don't know, sort of.. I don't think I could like mix in with countryside, like I'd have to move to another like city, town..

I: Yeah..

S1: But there'd have to be like loads to do and that..

S2: I don't really consider myself to be proper North-Eastern because I don't really like the language..

S1: I think it's different though..

I: So if you moved somewhere down to the South you'd be quite happy, you'd still feel part of it there?

S1: Yeah, but I wouldn't want to like change my accent..

S2: You can't change your accent, but..

S1: Cos like it's different and people like know you for your different accent..

I: So do you think the accent's the most important part of the, of regional identity?

S2: It's part of you, part of your character, isn't it?

S1: Like I think you should be proud, like of your accent, no matter where you are..

S2: Because if you met somebody and they spoke to you, you'd know exactly where they come from..

I: Yeah.. great. Talking about the topic, there's some statements there. (*Students given another sheet of paper*) It goes from, it says on here, 1 is strongly agree with it and it goes down to 5 is strongly disagree, so if you read the statements and then you can have 1,2,3,4,5 or anywhere in between..

(Pause 43 seconds)

S2: I don't know about this one..

(Pause 30 seconds)

I: OK, so you've both said you understand how the Bretons feel about their language and culture.. so do you think you could explain that to somebody? How do they feel about it?

S1: It's like.. I think it's like us really, cos people say like they don't understand Geordie, but like, they've got sort of a different language..

S2: It depends..

S1: Like Geordie's a sort of different language.

S2: Everyone's different because like I was born in Britain but my family's from Hong Kong so I'm very, well I feel like I really want to be Chinese you know and not English.. well, I speak English obviously but it's very important to me that I can speak (*inaudible*) so, you know, and keep the like, it alive, you know..

I: Yeah..

S2: So I can relate to that I suppose.

I: Right, yes, that's interesting. Right, you could tell an English person about Brittany, you've just been doing that for me. Er.. so you'd feel confident about doing a questionnaire or interview? You wouldn't feel very confident, (name)?

S1: Yes and no really, like I would er.. I think I could do one, but like I don't know..

S2: They might get a bit angry if (*inaudible*)..

S1: I don't think I'd know enough about it to do a questionnaire on them.

I: Right..

S1: It's like, I don't know which way they sort of think..

I: OK, but you'd be quite happy about it, reasonably happy about doing it?

S2: Yes, I'd make something up, some questions..

S1: Like "What's your name?"!

S2: Yeah.

S1: I don't think I could understand them as well if they like, cos it's like a sort of mixture isn't it?

S2: Yeah but I'd get my interpreter, wouldn't I?

I: But would you be happy about the actual writing a questionnaire or..

S1: I think I'd like have to know more about the place, I think I'd have to go there, sort of see what it was like..

S2: Stay there for a bit and do all the background research and then.. pop the question!

I: Right. Are you interested in Breton culture?

(Both nod)

I: OK. And you know more about your own regional identity through comparing it? Yeah?

S2: Mmm.

I: You both think that? Has studying Brittany actually helped, made you think more about..

S2: Yeah well we had to compare like Newcastle with what we did with Brittany like what our, what regional identity is you know.. it's like the Sunday dinners and the accent, you know..

I: Great, that's the end of the pieces of paper. The last bit is what you think about the topic you've just done and about the course and stuff like that... So what do you remember most about the topic?

S1: About Brittany? Them pointy hats! Like the dance and the dress and the costume and all the monuments and that..

I: How about you (name)?

S2: Er, watching the videos.. I can't remember what was on them but I remember I watched the videos..

S1: You were asleep!

S2: Er, just basically talking about them, their traditions and customs, the way they live..

S1: I think like, it would have been good if we could have gone there to see like actual for yourself but on the video everything's just like generalised..

I: Mmm. And what kinds of things did you learn?

S2: New vocabulary.. We learned about their industries, about what they work, you know, the like (inaudible)..

S1: Their beliefs. Like the church is like the centre of the community and everything.. they're like really religious...

I: Yeah. And how will what you've learned be useful if you go to France?

S1: I think you'd be able to like communicate better..

S2: Cos, that is, if we went to Brittany we might understand them better, cos if they said something to us we'd say, if we hadn't known anything we'd say "What is that person talking about?" ..

S1: Yeah, and like we wouldn't know their way of living and like what the monuments were for and that.. like I think their lives sort of revolve round the..

S2: The past.

S1: Yeah, I think sort of, they relate to the past all the time.. they don't like go for the future.. they just like live, you know?

I: Yes, that's fine. And.. have you learned anything that would be useful in other subjects? What other subjects are you doing for 'A' level?

S1: Business Studies and Art.

S2: Psychology and English Literature.

I: Right. So have you learned anything that could be applied to those subjects?

S1: To do with French?

I: Well, in what you've done in these topics.

(Pause 5 seconds)

S2: Er.. we probably have unconsciously but we can't think of anything right now..

S1: I've done like in Art, we haven't done it in French but in Art like we've done about Impressionism and that, but we haven't done that in French..

I: Right..

S1: But I'd know a bit about it if we'd done it.

I: Mmm. And which part of the topic did you find the most interesting?

S1: Er.. Brittany I think.

I: Which part of it?

S1: Oh, er..

S2: Most things were.. about the legends, we learned about what was going on at that time and it was pretty interesting.. things that we knew but not properly.. you know what we've learned at school, 1066 and things like that but nothing in depth..

I: So the history side of it?

S2: Yeah, that's quite interesting.

I: What do you think, (name), which is the most interesting?

S1: About like the costumes and..

S2: How they dress in the festivals..

S1: Yeah, they still have their festivals..

I: And which part was the least interesting?

(Pause 5 seconds)

S1: I don't know, I can't remember, it was so boring.

S2: Probably just switched off.. er, I don't know.. the treecutter, was that part of Brittany.. the sawmill or something, the sawyer..

S1: Oh, was that the forestry man?

S2: I don't know, I don't know whether that was part of Brittany.. it's been quite a long topic so we can't really remember that much.

I: Right. And what was it like compared to the other topics, cos you did Family, Education and Work didn't you as well, so what was it like compared to those?

S1: I think it was better than those..

S2: I think it was better.. Family was a bit..

S1: Cos like we didn't do much on Family..

S2: We didn't do much on Family but we did quite a bit on Work but it gets a bit boring..

S1: We've got, we've done a lot on like the Bac, the Baccalauréat and that, like the education system, but for the others we just sort of got leaflets and that was it..

I: Right..



S2: So this has been like one of the broadest topics we've ever spent the time on..

I: And do you think that's better?

S2: Yeah..

S1: I think like sort of it was like generalised an all, it wasn't like really in depth, but like we just went over it..

S2: I think if we know what we're doing before we start a topic we'd be more motivated because sometimes we just start the topic without knowing what's going on and it's just like..

S1: It's like that one we've done on marriages and christenings like..

S2: Yeah, cos it was a bit higgledy-piggledy, wasn't it?

S1: We just got like, like bits out of a book and we had to read that.. I think we should like..

S2: I wish we understood it more..

S1: It's like we're being, like if she'd explained what they believe in and that, what they do..

S2: And just make things more clearly I suppose cos we skipped from like the marriage to the education..

S1: Yeah and like you don't know when you've finished a topic and when you've started another one and you just like get a different leaflet, another topic..

I: Right..

S1: Instead of like a conclusion..

I: Yes, right. So which of the topics have you liked best?

S2: I don't think I liked the Education much because I don't think I understood it very well.

S1: I didn't like the Marriage as well cos I didn't understand that much.. but like Brittany cos we've done more on it I think.. like you sort of get into it..

S2: Maybe those things about er work, the working people..

S1: Oh yeah, we had to do projects..

S2: Yeah, projects, that was OK I suppose because we knew exactly what we were doing and what we were supposed to be focussing on.

I: And if you were running the course next year what changes would you make to it?

S1: Go more in depth I think.

I: Yeah?

S2: Spend some more time on relevant things instead of doing bits and bobs out of books which aren't relevant to the topic..

I: So..

S1: Yeah like we just get handouts of like bits of books and like you don't read it again when you come to revise..

S2: We should really concentrate on the main subject and..

S1: I think you should get more like factsheets than just like bits or reading books would have been better..

S2: And then like have more discussions on the actual thing and not just on something else..

S1: More videos as well..

I: And would you have the same kind of topics?

S1: I wouldn't have marriage.

S2: Maybe a few (*inaudible*) or no, maybe not, I don't know... We could go back to the old topics in more depth you know because once you go over it again you might get a better idea of it.

S1: Yeah. Like I think if you could see it instead of like just reading all the time you'd get more knowledge of it.. so say if like we'd gone on a trip or something..

S2: Maybe we could go to like the (*inaudible*) to see..

S1: I meant to France.

S2: Oh yeah, sorry.

S1: But like, just seeing a video or something.. but like see for yourself, cos like everybody's got a different picture in their mind and when it comes to like writing things down.. and like some might be wrong.

I: Right. Is there anything else about the course at all?

S1: Just less handouts..

S2: This has been a bit long, hasn't it?

S1: I don't know whether like, if we do like long topics to make it interesting all the way through, like some parts got like really boring..

S2: Yeah, so I don't know, I think..

S1: But like with just handouts like I just, when I come to revise and that I just forget about them so I want to like, I want to know what's in my file but now I've got things in that I'm forgetting about and like I don't know what they are..

S2: And like it's a bit confusing because we're given so many sheets you know..

I: And you don't know where they fit in?

S1: Yeah, and there's loads of like statistics and that..

S2: But if we had you know like one topic and then all the stuff in that topic so we know but like when we get these sheets, cos like we had something on nuclear power and where did that go?

S1: We had like one lesson on nuclear power.

S2: And that was it, out of it.

S1: And like we've done a bit like on diets and then that was it. (*S2 looks puzzled*) You can't remember.

S2: I can't remember anything about that one.

I: And have you actually enjoyed doing these topics?

S1: Some of them..

S2: Some..

S1: Some got really boring.

S2: We didn't, like have a grasp of it really. We can probably handle it if we know where we're going.

S1: Brittany I think, I think you could do, like we've got more knowledge on Brittany than anything else I think..

S2: It's like Brittany this and Brittany that..

S1: But I think that's better in the long run cos if like we got like an essay to write on marriages or something I just wouldn't know where to start..

I: But you'd feel confident doing about Brittany?

S1: Yeah, cos like we've watched videos and everything..

S2: We've wrote like some essays..

S1: You've like got a picture in your mind of what it is.

## APPENDIX B

Transcript of and materials used in one of the lessons  
observed during the teaching of the Regional Identity  
topic

Transcript of lesson discussed in Chapter 6

(Tape starts 3 minutes after beginning of lesson)

...

T: ...les gens qui y habitent sont des Antillais en français, mais ce sont des territoires qui font partie de la France.. er.. une autre catégorie, une catégorie intéressante peut-être, un Français qui est français mais qui parle une autre langue. On a déjà discuté les, les langues.. Français dont les parents sont immigrés.. une personne née en France avec un père peut-être algérien, peut-être, dans le cas de Charlotte que vous allez écouter la semaine prochaine, son père est polonais, sa mère est française, alors son père est immigré, mais il appartient, si vous voulez, à une culture européenne. Pour les algériens c'est un peu plus difficile parce que leur culture est africaine.. c'est une culture différente. Parisien, ça c'est évident, également provincial. Un Français "pied noir", c'est un Français qui habitait, habitait dans le passé.. en Afrique du Nord, par exemple, l'Algérie, jusqu'à la fin de la guerre en Algérie.. à cette époque-là, je crois que c'était 1958, beaucoup de français pieds-noirs sont revenus en France.

C'est-à-dire, il y a des gens qui ont, habitaient.. (noise in classroom above) c'est l'examen, c'est vous l'année prochaine, ce sera vous, c'est l'examen de français en haut et on change les les tables.. alors, les pieds-noirs sont les gens qui ont passé peut-être 30 ans en Algérie, mais après l'indépendance sont revenus en France. Tu sais, (name), par exemple, tu passes du temps dans le Sud de la France, n'est-ce pas, est-ce que tu as entendu parler des pieds-noirs, des gens qui sont revenus de l'Algérie? Tu connais l'expression "pied noir"?

S: Maghrébins?

T: Ah non, non, pas du tout. Ce sont des Blancs, qui étaient autrefois les maîtres en Algérie, qui possédaient les fermes, les vignobles, les commerces, mais quand l'Algérie est devenue indépendante, ils sont revenus en France, surtout dans le Sud de la France, où ils ont, pour la plupart ils ont réussi.. un Français qui reste, par exemple, un Français qui a choisi de rester en Algérie, mais qui est toujours Français.. et, pour finir, un ressortissant d'une ex-colonie immigré en France, c'est-à-dire les Maghrébins, les, pour la plupart, des Noirs, des Musulmans qui sont venus travailler en France. Bon, vous comprenez, vous avez compris, pas de problèmes?.. C'est compris, oui?.. Alors, er.. si possible, je vais, écoutez (l'assistante) maintenant, parce que je vais lui poser, je vais discuter avec (l'assistante) cette échelle, et vous pouvez, si vous voulez, mettre, si vous voulez, C pour (l'assistante) pour savoir quel est le numéro un, deux, trois, etcétera, puis vous allez écouter Ronan et Charlotte, trois personnes, et si vous voulez vous pouvez mettre leurs opinions, écrire, si vous voulez, sur la feuille pour faire une sorte de, de.... (To assistante) Bon, alors, (name), pour toi, qui est le plus français, à ton avis?

A: Le provincial, pour moi le provincial est le plus français parce qu'il garde ses traditions, il a le

savoir-vivre de la France, sans trop de changements, et puis généralement il y a moins d'immigrés, donc moins de cultures différentes, moins de mélange de race, donc le provincial a réussi à garder un peu son mode de vie d'avant..

T: (to class) Alors, vous avez compris? Oui? (To assistante) Ensuite, (name), après le provincial, qu'est-ce que tu penses?

A: (Pause 8 seconds) Je mettrais le parisien en deuxième position..

T: Oui?

A: C'est déjà plus, c'est moins, moins sûr que le provincial parce que dans la région parisienne il y a Paris, il y a beaucoup de mélange de races, mélange de couleurs, mais c'est, il y a quand même encore des gens qui aient gardé le mode de vie parisien..

T: Oui. Et après?

A: Alors.. après je mettrais .. er.. un Français parlant une autre langue, peut-être.. c'est discutable parce qu'un Français parlant une autre langue bien souvent, comme des Basques ou des Corses, veulent leur indépendance, donc refusent un peu la France, la culture de la France, la langue de la France, le mode de vie français, mais il y a quand même quelque part une racine française..

T: Oui. Et après?.. Ça devient un peu difficile..

A: Oui. Je mettrais le français habitant un autre pays européen.. là encore, tout dépend de ce que le Français fait à l'étranger. S'il enseigne sa propre langue, par exemple, il gardera un peu sa culture française, mais s'il fait autre chose, s'il est mélangé à la population locale, il risque de perdre peu à peu ses habitudes et sa mode de vie français..

T: S'il se marie, par exemple?

A: S'il se marie par exemple, ou même s'il vit dans un endroit un peu retiré, il peut perdre ses habitudes.. tout à fait..

T: Oui.

A: Alors, ensuite je mettrais.. le canadien francophone, parce que notamment au Québec, les Québécois sont très, très français, ils refusent tout vocabulaire anglais et ils cherchent vraiment à revenir au mode de vie typiquement français.. c'est un refus complètement de l'Amérique.

T: Ah, ça, c'est intéressant..

A: Oui, j'ai des amis québécois et à la place de dire "le weekend", ils disent "la fin de semaine".. ils vont tout remettre en vrai français, enfin, essayer de remettre ça en français.. ils utilisent aucun, aucun mot anglais.. je sais pas..

T: Mais, il est essentiel d'être bilingue, n'est-ce pas, au Canada?

A: Oui, au Québec ils sont tous pour ainsi dire bilingues, au Canada, je pense que la partie anglaise.. pas besoin..

T: Il est essentiel, par exemple, pour les fonctionnaires de pouvoir, de savoir parler français, même s'ils..

A: Ne l'utilisent pas?

T: Oui. Et c'est, maintenant c'est la loi au Canada.

A: Mais je sais qu'au Québec, ou même dans les régions qui entourent le Québec, certains magasins sont inspectés et si le personnel ne donne, ne dit pas la première phrase

d'accueil en français, ils sont pénalisés.. c'est-à-dire "Bonjour" en français, "Qu'est-ce que vous voulez?" en français, sinon le magasin doit payer une amende.. c'est très, c'est très..

T: Alors faites attention quand vous allez au Canada.. dans certains magasins..

A: Il faut parler en français.

T: On peut pas dire "Have a nice day".

A: Non.

T: Bon, après le Canada, les canadiens..

A: Je mettrais *français dont les parents sont immigrés*.

Généralement ce sont des gens qui ont besoin de se retrouver une nationalité et qui font vraiment leur possible pour s'intégrer dans la culture, pour parler un très bon français et pourquoi pas les considérer comme français?

T: Il reste.. ça, les pieds-noirs, ça et ça..

A: Alors, ensuite je mettrais *français habitant une ex-colonie*. Ça revient un peu au même que le français habitant un autre pays européen.. c'est encore plus difficile de garder son mode de vie français dans une ex-colonie parce que notamment en Afrique du Nord le mode de vie, la culture, la langue sont très différents, donc, c'est vraiment très difficile mais malgré tout, il peut quand même essayer, notamment au communauté, de conserver son identité française.

T: Après?

A: Ensuite je mettrais le français habitant, non, le français "*pied noir*", mais le français pied noir actuel, pas celui qui vivait en Algérie il y a trente ans, il y a quarante ans.. celui qui maintenant est revenu en France parce que quand ils vivaient en Algérie, au Maroc ou en Tunisie, ils désertaient complètement, ils vivaient complètement différemment que s'ils avaient été en France, ils avaient un mode de vie mélangé entre celui du pays où ils vivaient et celui de la France.. maintenant ils doivent être quand même plus intégrés, en tant que français.

T: Oui.

A: Ensuite je mettrais le français habitant un *DOM/TOM*. Là je pense qu'il doit être très difficile de garder son mode de vie français parce que.. aux Antilles les gens vivent vraiment différemment.. ils prennent le temps de vivre, ils ne travaillent pas trop, ils font la fête beaucoup, donc là je pense que ça doit pas être facile..

T: C'est le climat?

A: Oui, c'est le climat, il fait trop chaud. Et ensuite donc, je mettrais en dernier le *ressortissant d'une ex-colonie et immigré en France* parce que là il y a le problème avec le mode de vie, la culture, le langage qui sont vraiment différents.. donc, je pense que c'est très dur pour une personne immigrée de se faire au mode de vie français et de se dire français, de perdre toute son identité ancienne pour une nouvelle identité si différente de la précédente.

T: Oui, merci. (*To class*) Et ça, c'est quelque chose qu'on va considérer l'année prochaine.. vous allez étudier ce problème, ce problème d'immigration, ça, c'est quelque chose que vous allez faire l'année prochaine. (*To assistante*) Mais, merci (*name*).. (*To class*) Vous allez

écouter maintenant deux jeunes personnes qui ont 17 ans et ils vont considérer les mêmes questions. C'est un peu.. er.. ce serait peut-être un peu plus difficile avec eux parce que (l'assistante) a fait, a vraiment fait une liste, mais vous allez entendre, essayer de saisir l'essentiel de ce qu'ils disent. Le garçon, c'est Ronan et la jeune fille, c'est Charlotte... Ça va, vous avez compris, vous avez des questions à poser à (l'assistante)? C'était pas trop difficile? OK, tu as compris, (name 1)?

(Student nods)

T: (Name 2), ça va?

(Student nods)

T: Bon, c'est déjà très bien après un an.. vous avez fait des progrès, même si vous croyez quelquefois que vous n'avez pas fait des progrès.

(Pause 50 seconds while tape rewinds)

T: Bon, écoutez d'abord..

On tape... (R: Ronan; C: Charlotte)

R: Bon, le plus français pour moi, c'est le provincial, parce que le parisien est avant tout parisien avant d'être Français..

C: Oui, moi je suis de ce point de vue aussi.. il y a un grand écart entre le provincial et le parisien et j'ai l'impression que, surtout à la télé, on accorde beaucoup d'importance à Paris, surtout Paris, et que la province est vraiment le bas-monde..

R: Surtout (inaudible) les personnes qui habitent en province, on parle, on a l'héritage, puisqu'ils peuvent parler breton, basque, corse, alsacien, donc ils sont, ils sont plus français par ceci. Pour ça je mettrais après le Français parlant une autre langue..

C: Er.. moi, je mettrais plutôt le, le Français dont les parents sont immigrés parce que je pense que, bon, ça dépend de l'intégration, des personnes, si les personnes désirent s'intégrer, je pense que, généralement, ils sont tout aussi français que les autres.. moi, je me sens tout à fait Française..

R: Je ne sais pas, parce que justement les, les Français dont les parents sont immigrés n'ont pas, n'ont pas participé à l'histoire de la France, à l'héritage qu'on a maintenant.. c'est pour ça que je dis que c'est le breton, le basque, c'est tout le passé de la France..

C: Oui, mais les Bretons et les Basques veulent être indépendents..

R: Ah, c'est pas vrai..

C: Si, ils renient la France, ils veulent avoir une langue à eux, et je pense qu'ils ne s'attachent pas à la France..

R: C'est pas vrai, c'est pas vrai.. Je suis désolé, je suis pas d'accord..

C: Enfin.. sinon.. ensuite je mettrais les DOM/TOM, les Antilles..

R: Er..

C: Tu n'es pas d'accord?

R: Oui, ils restent quand même sous la dépendance de la France, donc.. er.. oui, les habitants des DOM/TOM. Et ensuite je mettrais des Français habitant un autre pays européen.. bon, ben.. 1992, l'Europe ça devient un grand pays en fait..

C: Moi, je mettrais plutôt, er.. les Français pieds-noirs parce que, oui, je pense que les Français habitant un autre pays européen sont plus intégrés au pays d'accueil qu'à la France.. ils ont bien (inaudible) leur origine, je pense..

R: Oui, mais les Français pieds-noirs ont oublié aussi leur origine au pays où ils étaient.. oui, pas tout à fait d'accord..

C: C'est pas grave, hein.. ensuite.. le Français habitant une ex-colonie..

R: Non, moi je mettrais le ressortissant d'une ex-colonie immigré en France.. parce que justement le ressortissant a quitté sa colonie pour habiter en France, donc il est plus (inaudible) des Français que le Français habitant une colonie qui n'y est plus..

C: Oui, c'est tout à fait bon.. j'avais pas vu cette dernière question.. Et en dernier je mettrais un Canadien francophone.. je pense que c'est pas du tout les mêmes, comment dire, les mêmes moeurs, qu'on est complètement différent..

R: Oui, avec la langue et tout..

C: La langue et encore l'accent, très difficile à comprendre..

R: Oui, oui..

C: Je pense que c'est le dernier.. c'est plutôt la culture américaine..

R: Oui.

C: Voilà.. moi, j'espère qu'on a pas oublié.. non.. voilà l'échelle de..

R: De celui qui est le plus français.

T: Encore une fois. Il faut seulement mettre un, deux, trois pour chaque personne.. c'est pas nécessaire de comprendre tout.

S: Vous pouvez le mettre plus fort?

T: J'ai essayé d'avoir une machine, une plus grande machine mais la porte était fermée à clé.. je vais essayer de trouver une machine qui donnera un meilleur son.. attendez.

(T leaves room and student talk amongst themselves. T returns after 2 minutes)

T: Attendez un instant, on va me chercher une meilleure machine. En attendant, je vais distribuer des feuilles, des photos.. er.. on va parler de ces photos.. les photos ne sont pas très bonnes parce qu'elles sont des photocopies des photocopies.. (gives out sheets) Vous pouvez en attendant lire l'explication à gauche, si vous voulez.. c'est assez simple mais ça va vous aider à comprendre.. (continues giving out sheets of photos)

Ceux-ci sont différents.. je vais les distribuer mais vous n'aurez pas tous la même photo.. (gives out sheets advertising folklore attractions, then returns to front to new tape-recorder) Cette fois-ci je vais arrêter la cassette pour que vous puissiez comprendre mieux..

(Pause 30 seconds)

On tape...

R: Bon, le plus français pour moi, c'est le provincial, parce que le parisien est avant tout parisien avant d'être Français..



C: Oui, moi je suis de ce point de vue aussi.. il y a un grand écart entre le provincial et le parisien et j'ai l'impression que, surtout à la télé, on accorde beaucoup d'importance à Paris, surtout Paris, et que la province est vraiment le bas-monde..

T: (pauses tape) Alors, vous avez compris? Bon, Ronan et Charlotte, ils sont d'accord.. qu'est-ce qu'ils ont mis, tous les deux? (Name)?

S: Provincial.

T: Oui, exactement comme (l'assistante). OK, on continue.. ça va?

R: Surtout (inaudible) les personnes qui habitent en province, on parle, on a l'héritage, puisqu'ils peuvent parler breton, basque, corse, alsacien, donc ils sont, ils sont plus français par ceci. Pour ça je mettrais après le Français parlant une autre langue..

T: (pauses tape) Ça, c'est Ronan..

C: Er.. moi, je mettrais plutôt le, le Français dont les parents sont immigrés

T: (pauses tape)

C: Parce que je pense que, bon, ça dépend de l'intégration, des personnes, si les personnes désirent s'intégrer, je pense que, généralement, ils sont tout aussi français que les autres.. moi, je me sens tout à fait Française..

R: Je ne sais pas

T: (pauses tape) C'est elle qui a le père polonais, qui est immigré en France..

R: Parce que justement les, les Français dont les parents sont immigrés n'ont pas, n'ont pas participé à l'histoire de la France, à l'héritage qu'on a maintenant.. c'est pour ça que je dis que c'est le breton, le basque, c'est tout le passé de la France..

C: Oui, mais les Bretons et les Basques veulent être indépendents..

R: Ah, c'est pas vrai..

C: Si, ils renient la France, ils veulent avoir une langue à eux, et je pense qu'ils ne s'attachent pas à la France..

R: C'est pas vrai, c'est pas vrai.. Je suis désolé, je suis pas d'accord..

C: Enfin..

T: (pauses tape) Alors, ils n'étaient pas d'accord..

C: Sinon.. ensuite je mettrais les DOM/TOM, les Antilles..

R: Er..

C: Tu n'es pas d'accord?

R: Oui, ils restent quand même sous la dépendance de la France, donc.. er.. oui, les habitants des DOM/TOM. Et ensuite je mettrais des Français habitant un autre pays européen..

T: (pauses tape)

R: Bon, ben.. 1992, l'Europe ça devient un grand pays en fait..

C: Moi, je mettrais plutôt, er.. les Français pieds-noirs parce que, oui, je pense que les Français habitant un autre pays européen sont plus intégrés au pays d'accueil qu'à la France.. ils ont bien (inaudible) leur origine, je pense..

R: Oui, mais les Français pieds-noirs ont oublié aussi leur origine au pays où ils étaient.. oui, pas tout à fait d'accord..

C: C'est pas grave, hein.. ensuite.. le Français habitant une ex-colonie..

T: (pauses tape)

R: Non, moi je mettrais le ressortissant d'une ex-colonie immigré en France.. parce que justement le ressortissant a quitté sa colonie pour habiter en France, donc il est plus (inaudible) des Français que le Français habitant une colonie qui n'y est plus..

C: Oui, c'est tout à fait bon.. j'avais pas vu cette dernière question.. Et en dernier je mettrais un Canadien francophone.. je pense que c'est pas du tout les mêmes, comment dire, les mêmes moeurs, qu'on est complètement différent..

R: Oui, avec la langue et tout..

C: La langue et encore l'accent, très difficile à comprendre..

R: Oui, oui..

C: Je pense que c'est le dernier.. c'est plutôt la culture américaine..

R: Oui.

C: Voilà.. moi, j'espère qu'on a pas oublié.. non.. voilà l'échelle de..

R: De celui qui est le plus français.

T: Alors, on va vérifier rapidement. Tous les deux, on choisit numéro un, qui était, (name)?

S: *Provincial*.

T: Oui, et en deuxième place alors, (name)?

S: Er..

T: Ce n'était pas tout à fait évident mais..

S: Charlotte a mis Français dont les parents sont immigrés..

T: Ah oui, mais.. c'était parisien quand même. On n'a pas discuté mais on a mis *provincial* avant *parisien* et on pourrait comprendre, on pouvait comprendre que c'était *parisien* en deuxième place comme avec toi.. (looking at assistante) C'était pas très, pas très évident, mais ensuite, (name), troisième place, c'était, pour Charlotte?

S: Français habitant un DOM/TOM, les Antilles?

T: Er.. on a discuté une autre catégorie avant..

S: Dont les parents sont immigrés?

T: Oui, c'est ça. Et pour Ronan, (name), en troisième place c'était?

S: Er.. le Français parlant une autre langue.

T: Oui, mais pour elle c'était le Français dont un parent est immigré, et puis ils étaient d'accord pour la position suivante, qui était, (name)?

S: Français habitant un DOM/TOM?

T: Oui, et ensuite, (name), pour Ronan c'était?

S: Français habitant un autre pays européen.

T: Bon, très bien. (Name), et pour Charlotte c'était?

S: Français habitant une ex-colonie..

T: Je pense qu'elle a mis *pied-noir* avant, n'est-ce pas? Et ensuite pour Charlotte c'était un Français habitant une ex-colonie et pour Ronan c'était, c'était (name), après le Français habitant un autre pays européen c'était?

S: (silent)

T: (Another student's name)?

S: Ressortissant d'une ex-colonie immigré en France.

T: Oui, un immigré, pour lui c'était un immigré et pour Charlotte c'était quelqu'un qui habitait une ex-colonie.

Et en dernière position pour les deux, (name), c'était?

S: Français habitant une ex-colonie?

T: Non, ils étaient d'accord sur la.. ils ont manqué deux ou trois mais pour la dernière position c'était?

S: Canadien francophone.

T: Un canadien.. parce que pour eux, qui, évidemment, ils ne connaissent pas de canadiens, tandis que (l'assistante), tu connais des canadiens francophones..

A: Des québécois.

T: Des québécois, oui. Bon, très bien. On va continuer.. on va revenir peut-être sur ce point-là plus tard, mais pour le moment, pour un quart d'heure, vous allez étudier ces photos (*on sheet distributed earlier*) et

(l'assistante) et moi, nous allons circuler un petit peu.. votre problème, si vous voulez, c'est de réfléchir un peu sur les photos. Que voit-on sur les différentes photos? Essayez de les dater un peu.. vingtième siècle, moderne, dix-neuvième siècle, en justifiant vos hypothèses..

pourquoi est-ce modernes, pourquoi les années 70 par exemple? Les photos ne sont pas très bonnes, donc (l'assistante), la copie de (l'assistante) est meilleure.. tu as ta copie?.. c'est la meilleure..

A: Je l'ai laissée..

T: Ah non.. tu peux te souvenir?

A: Oui, oui..

T: Tu peux les aider quand même?

A: Oui, oui, bien sûr, je suis désolée..

T: La seule bonne copie! Bon, nous allons circuler pour vous aider un peu.. C'est seulement, vous parlez français maintenant!

*(Students work in pairs or threes, looking at the photos and dating them, with occasional reminders of "en français!". Teacher and assistante go round each pair, discussing photos. Only occasional phrases are audible as many people are talking at once. The activity lasts 9 minutes)*

Coffee break.

(Assistante no longer present)

T: Bon, ce que vous allez faire maintenant, c'est.. er.. vous allez considérer cette question du folklore, qu'est-ce que c'est que le folklore. (*Indicating sheet with extracts from Hélias and Grall*) A gauche, à droite, vous avez deux points de vue sur le folklore, qu'est-ce que c'est que le folklore, c'est musées, costumes etcetera, fest-noz, festivals, folklore. Sur les photos que j'ai déjà distribuées, voulez-vous regarder quelques moments les photos, parce que c'est seulement, c'est simplement un exemple du folklore, n'est-ce pas, du folklore?.. mais c'est le folklore pour les touristes.. Tu as un problème, (name)?

S: Is it this one?

T: Oui, oui. Ça ne fait rien. J'ai choisi quatre exemples, tirés d'une brochure sur l'Armorique et ce sont des exemples du folklore. Quand on parle en France de, quand on utilise le mot éco, écomusée, c'est folk museum.. écomusée, c'est un musée qui montre les moulins, mills,

flourmills, les bâtiments du passé, le passé, le folklore, c'est le passé.. une maison du passé, comment on s'habillait autrefois, les costumes, la musique d'autrefois, la musique bretonne, traditionnelle disons.. (*referring to sheet*) également, maison de l'école, vous avez vu cette, cette extrait du *Cheval d'Orgueil*, comment l'école, on allait à l'école dans le passé. Er.. l'ancienne abbaye, ça c'est le passé du Moyen Age, OK? Er.. la faune sauvage, la chasse, les animaux qui très souvent n'existent plus, les renards, oui, mais il y a d'autres qui n'existent plus.. chassés, disparus, parce qu'on a construit une ville, on a abattu les forêts, alors les animaux, comme vous savez, disparaissent.. on les met dans le musée.. également c'est le passé.. er.. le passé également folklorique, les chiffonniers, ragpickers.. c'est la photo des gens qui vendaient, qui collectaient des chiffons, rags, peaux de lapins, rabbit skins, et métaux.. the rag-and-bone man. OK, oui, c'est très joli, mais dans le passé la vie était très très dure, mais sur la photo c'est joli.. c'est un peu de marketing, si vous voulez, le folklore, le passé, c'est quelque chose de pittoresque, et là, les maisons des artisans, les écomusées, un musée qui montre une maison bretonne du 19ème siècle. Ce que je voudrais savoir, est-ce que vous voyez une sorte d'équivalence, si vous voulez, entre ces idées-là et ce que nous, nous avons dans la région.. par exemple, est-ce que vous pouvez penser à quelques exemples dans notre région du folklore, de nostalgie du passé, la nostalgie du passé vendue aux touristes. Réfléchissez un moment.. le tourisme et la nostalgie du passé..

(Pause 20 seconds)

T: Bon, des exemples. (Name), des exemples dans cette région, ici, par ici?

S: Beamish.

T: Beamish, exactement, Beamish.. vous avez visité Beamish, oui?.. d'autres exemples?

S: Washington Old Hall.

T: Oui, également, oui. Et aussi?

S: (*whispers*) Penshaw monument.

T: Oui, ça existe, je sais pas, est-ce que c'est un monument touristique?.. Un peu plus vers ailleurs, par exemple, qu'est-ce qu'il y a dans la région?

S: Les châteaux..

T: Les châteaux à Durham, à Tynemouth il y a l'abbaye en ruines, les châteaux un peu partout, oui... (name), autre chose?

S: Hadrian's Wall.

T: Oui, la muraille, le mur d'Hadrien..

S: Penshaw monument.

S: We've had that already.

(Laughter)

T: Vous connaissez tous Penshaw monument, oui.. Alors, vous avez l'idée là, alors, discutez un peu avec votre partenaire.. là (*indicating Hélias and Grall sheet*) vous avez deux points de vue sur le folklore. A gauche, c'est plutôt un point de vue positif.. essayez de trouver des phrases qui montrent que le folklore peut être positif, er.. et à droite, c'est tout à fait négatif, il critique beaucoup cette nostalgie du passé.. essayez de trouver avec votre partenaire des phrases pour er.. le côté

positif et le côté négatif. Je vais vous donner une dizaine de minutes, OK, pour discuter, et puis on va établir une sorte de liste.

*(Students work in pairs to read texts and draw out key phrases. Most of the talking is indistinguishable as all the students are talking between themselves)*

*(1 minute)*

T: Et si vous avez des problèmes de vocabulaire, vous pouvez poser des questions.. quelques mots sont difficiles peut-être..

*(3 minutes)*

*(In response to inaudible question):*

T: Dans l'extrait d'Hélias il y a des choses négatives mais ensemble il est positif.. peut-être à gauche vous allez trouver des phrases qui sont plus ou moins négatives, er.. vous pouvez les mettre, si vous voulez, à l'autre côté.. en général, vous trouvez le côté positif dans l'article d'Hélias et le côté négatif dans l'article de Grall, mais vous pouvez, si vous voulez, choisir des phrases dans la colonne à gauche pour montrer qu'il y a un côté négatif. OK, vous avez compris? En général, le côté positif, c'est à gauche, le côté négatif, c'est à droite, mais il y a des phrases négatives à gauche, c'est vrai.

*(Pause 5 minutes)*

T: Alors, on va mettre des phrases sur le tableau.

(Name), qu'est-ce que tu as trouvé de positif dans cette article?

S: *Le folklore est la totalité de la civilisation populaire.*

T: *(writes on board)* Bon, oui, *civilisation populaire.*

Oui, (name)?

S: *Folklore est le synonyme de gentillesse.*

T: Oui, *synonyme de gentillesse.* C'est, c'est gentil, c'est sympa, oui.. *(writes on board)* Autre chose, (name)?

S: *(silent)*

T: Tu as trouvé peut-être quelque chose de négatif, (name)?

S: *I haven't got that far yet..*

T: Ah, on passe à (name). Quelque chose?

S: *Il représente toujours une permanence de l'homme.*

T: Le?

S: *Il représente toujours une permanence de l'homme.*

T: *Une permanence de l'homme, oui.. (writes on board)..*

parce que, par exemple, avec la musique pop, c'est toujours changeante, la musique traditionnelle représente la permanence.. (Name), tu as trouvé quelque chose?

S: *Un époque où la main prévalait sur la machine.*

T: Oui, ça c'est.. er.. la main, oui.. il y a toutes sortes de phrases comme ça.. *la main prélevait sur la machine.. prévalait, pardon.. (writes on board)..* Je ne sais pas, quand on pense à tout ce qu'on faisait à, par la main.. à la maison, dans les champs.. si c'était forcément meilleur, mais la nostalgie dit que oui, bien sûr, c'était meilleur.. les machines er.. c'est moins valable. Autre chose, er.. (name)?

S: *Distinguait des autres par le costume.*

T: Oui, *on se distinguait par le costume.. (writes on board)..* oui, tandis qu'aujourd'hui tout le monde en

blue-jean, c'est différent, tout le monde est pareil.

Autre chose, (name)?

S: (silent)

T: C'est presque.. je pense que c'est tout peut-être.. Est-ce que tu peux nous donner quelque chose de négatif, (name)?

S: I haven't done that yet.

T: Non, les autres peut-être.. on va commencer peut-être, (name)? Quelque chose de négatif?

S: Normes de vie imposées par la nouvelle civilisation.

T: Er.. er.. oui, c'est que.. c'est pas le folklore, er.. c'est aujourd'hui, de nos jours.. la phrase commence de nos jours, oui?.. c'est quelque chose qui critique la vie moderne.. on détruit le milieu naturel.. de nos jours.. nowadays.. on détruit le milieu naturel.. c'est une critique, bien sûr, mais c'est pas une critique du folklore.. Est-ce que vous comprenez? Tu comprends, (name)?

S: I cannot find it..

T: C'est là. (points to place on sheet) La phrase commence là.

S: Oh yeah.

T: Oui, on détruit le milieu naturel, ça vous comprenez.. on fait comme tout le monde, on se ressemble.. on est esclave des mêmes normes de vie imposées pas la nouvelle civilisation.. c'est une sorte d'explication, si vous voulez.. pourquoi est-ce qu'il y a cette nostalgie du passé?.. c'est parce que, avec la vie moderne, er.. on n'a pas de.. il n'y a rien d'individuel, on se ressemble, les Français, les Anglais, les Allemands.. c'est les MacDonalds partout, c'est la nouvelle civilisation, c'est hamburger, coca-cola.. c'est peut-être quelque chose qu'on préfère, mais ceux qui cherchent la nostalgie, qui vont à Beamish, qui aiment visiter les musées et les, les cathédrales, les châteaux, sont très souvent ceux qui cherchent le passé.. La nouvelle civilisation, c'est la plage, c'est les glaces, c'est le coca-cola, c'est.. mais ce n'est pas les écomusées.. Alors, quelque chose de négatif, rapidement, (name), est-ce que tu as trouvé?

S: Nous ramons en pleine sottise.

T: Encore une fois.

S: Nous ramons en pleine sottise.

T: En pleine sottise.. je ne trouve pas..

S: A droite..

T: A droite.. ah, oui (writes on board) pleine, en pleine sottise, silliness, sottise.. (Name), autre chose?

S: Le vrai folklore n'a rien à voir avec la mode.

T: Oui, (writes) Le vrai folklore n'a rien à voir avec le monde?

S: La mode.

T: La mode. Er.. (name)?

S: I've just said..

T: Pardon.. (name)?

S: L'habit ne fait pas le Breton.

T: Oui, très bien, (writes).. l'habit.. (Name)?

S: (silent)

T: Bon, il y a une phrase, il y a deux ou trois phrases qui sont assez fortes, par exemple, er.. le peuple des morts.. je vais vous le dire, le peuple des morts.. OK?.. critique du folklore parce qu'il dit que la culture bretonne est morte.. pourquoi jouer la culture parce que la culture est morte.. (writes) le peuple des morts.. Il

accuse les Bretons, il les accuse.. il dit, par exemple, *tournez dans Quimper, les enterrés.. turn in your graves..* OK? Et également.. *cette navrante collection de déguisés.. déguisé, dressing up, se déguiser, to dress up.. navrante, distressing, unpleasant.. (writes) cette..* Est-ce qu'il y a autre chose?

(Pause 10 seconds)

S: *Superprovincialisme.*

T: *Oui, superprovincialisme.. (writes)*

S: *What does it say after cette?*

T: *Navrante?.. navrante collection de déguisés.. c'est dégoûtant.. navrante, ça veut dire dégoûtant, déplaisant.. il n'aime pas voir les gens en costume parce que pour lui, porter une costume c'est.. c'est jouer le rôle, er.. c'est pas vrai, c'est pas authentique.. authentique, authentic.. c'est la comédie.. Bon, ce que je veux vous laisser.. je veux que vous considérez cette question et que vous écriviez une petite rédaction, pas trop longue.. je vais vous donner le titre, vous avez déjà le titre là (*pointing on board*).. Voilà ce qu'il faut faire.. Un.. lisez l'extrait d'Hélias, surtout la partie qui commence *Or, aujourd'hui.. c'est là.. Or, aujourd'hui, c'est l'humanité même qui joue son destin..* Lisez avec soin.. lisez.. réfléchissez.. (pause 30 seconds). Répondez à la question (*which is written on board as follows: Décrivez quelques exemples en Bretagne et dans le Nord-Est de cette nostalgie du passé. Comment l'expliquez-vous? Etes-vous d'accord avec Hélias ou avec Grall?*).. bon, voilà ce qu'il y a à faire pour la semaine prochaine.. et pour les exemples vous avez les photos, les explications que je vous ai données, pour exemples.. et si vous voulez lire, par exemple, vous avez chacun une feuille, mais si vous voulez prendre des notes de la personne qui est assise à côté, pour avoir plus de détails, ça c'est possible avant de terminer.. il vaut mieux peut-être regarder ce que votre partenaire a sur la feuille pour pouvoir avoir beaucoup de, d'exemples du folklore pour les touristes..*

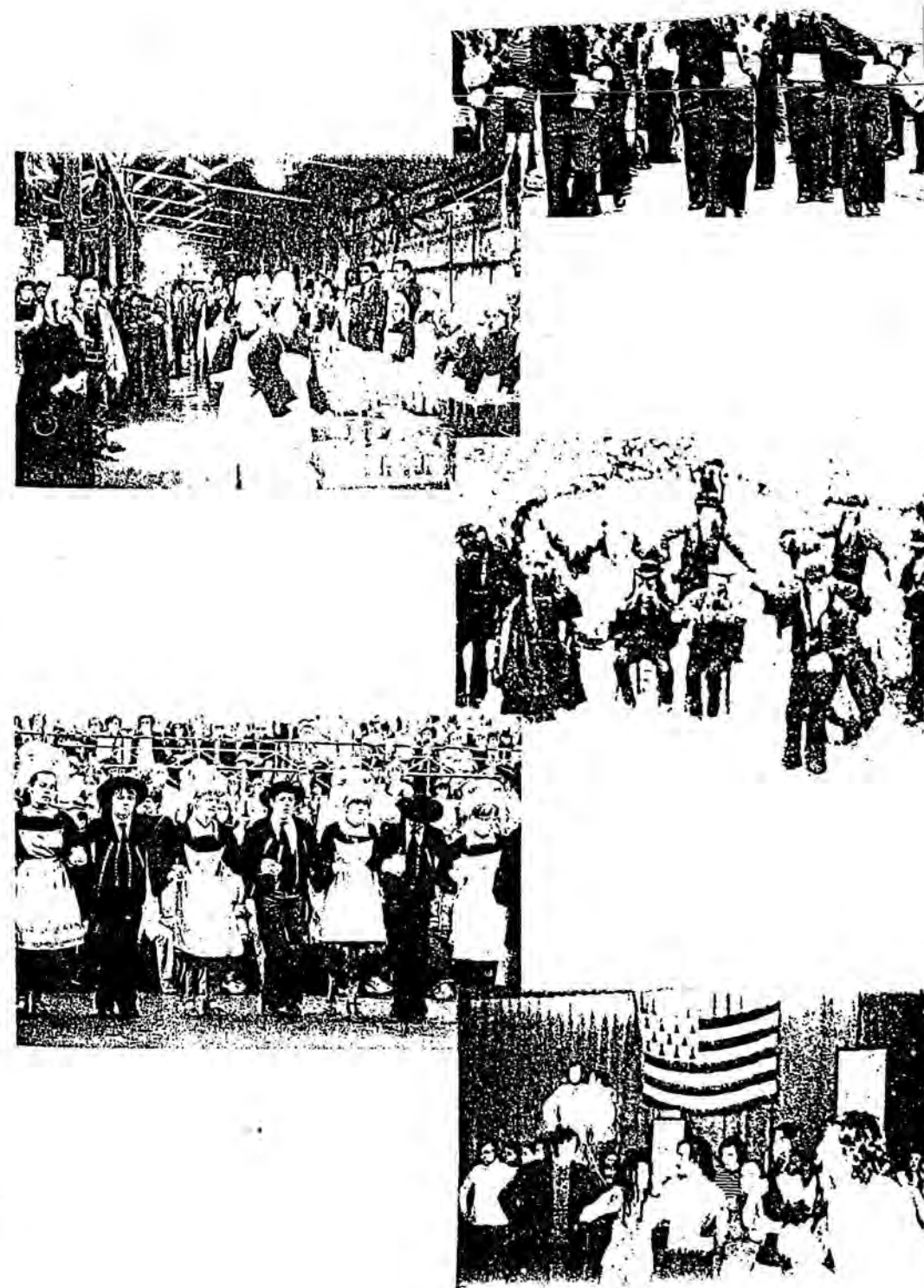
(Talking becomes inaudible as students pack up and noise level rises)

tement croissant.

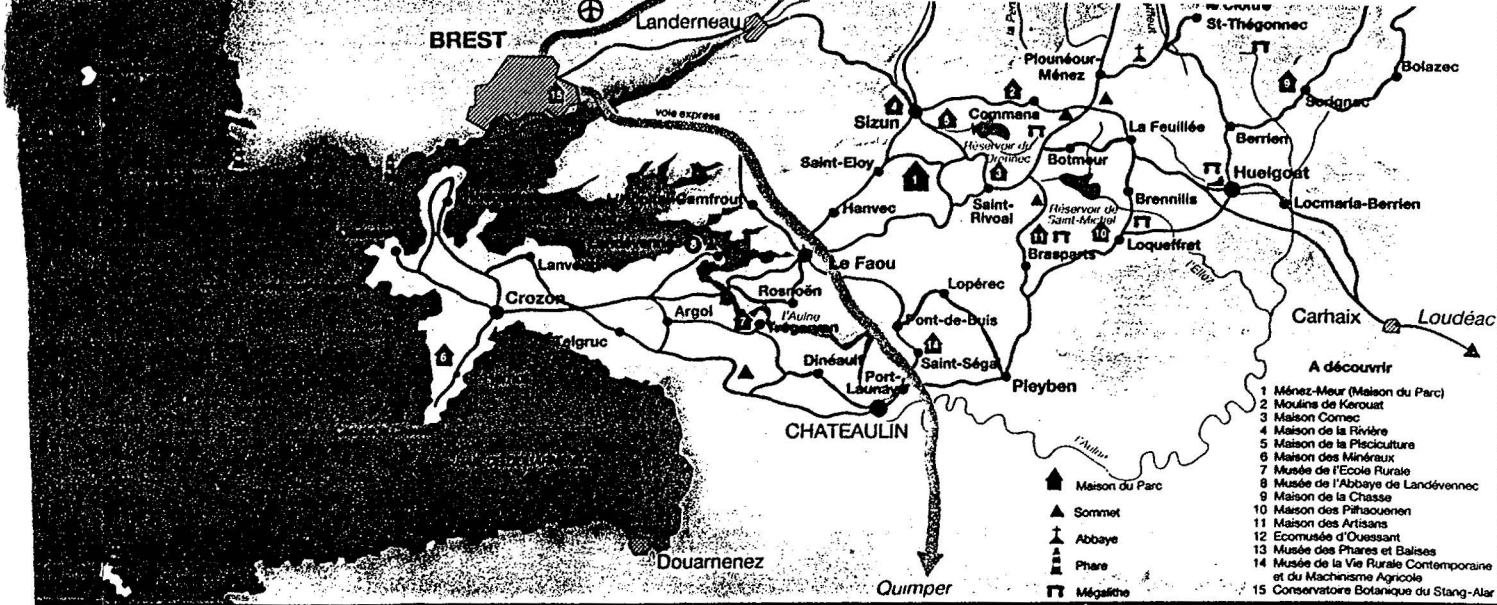
*Extrait de: J. C. Cayard / P. Y. Le Rhum: Un trop long sans développement. Dans: Les dossiers de l'histoire 4, 1976, p. 84/85*

5. Commentez pour finir le point de vue personnel de l'auteur: que pense P. J. Hélias, bretonnant de naissance, de l'emploi quotidien, de la fonction sociale et de la valeur psychologique de la langue bretonne? Comment explique-t-il le problème breton; en voit-il la solution?

**Document 7: Le costume breton: folklore authentique, nostalgie pastorale ou attraction touristique?**







## MAISON DE LA FAUNE SAUVAGE ET DE LA CHASSE

Exposition de plus de 50 animaux naturalisés (oiseaux et mammifères de Bretagne, panneaux pédagogiques, salle vidéo...).

Ouverture :

1<sup>er</sup> juin - 30 septembre :  
10 h 00 - 12 h 00 — 14 h 00 - 18 h 00  
(tous les jours, sauf le mardi).

Pour les groupes : toute l'année sur réservation

☎ 98 78 25 00  
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ANCIENNE GARE  
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29640 Scrignac



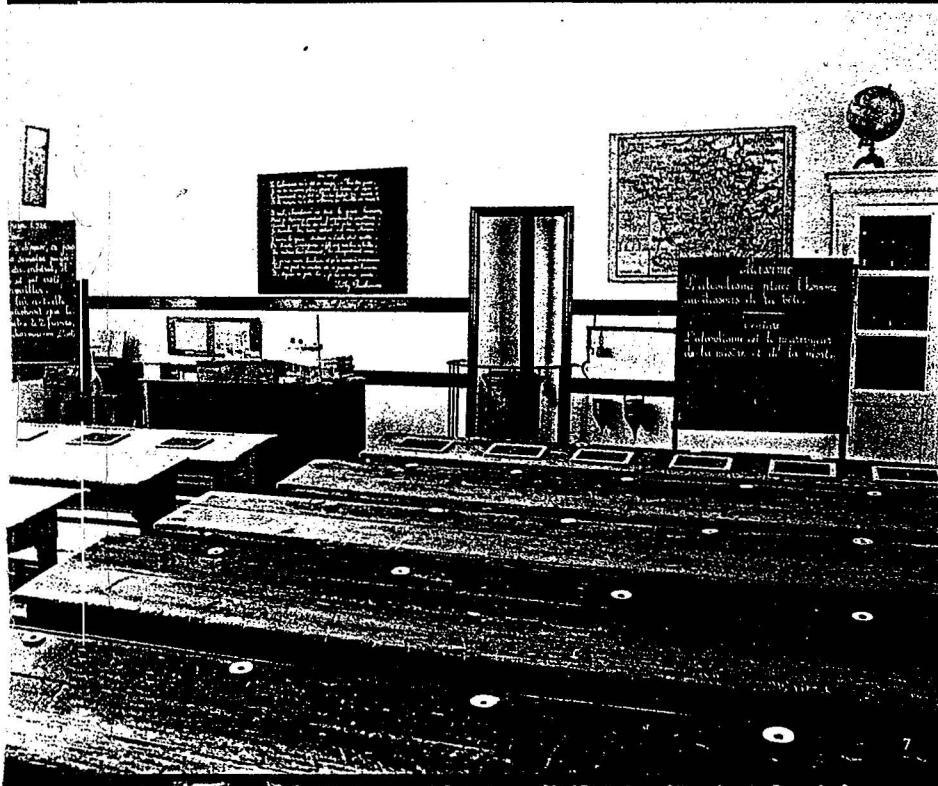
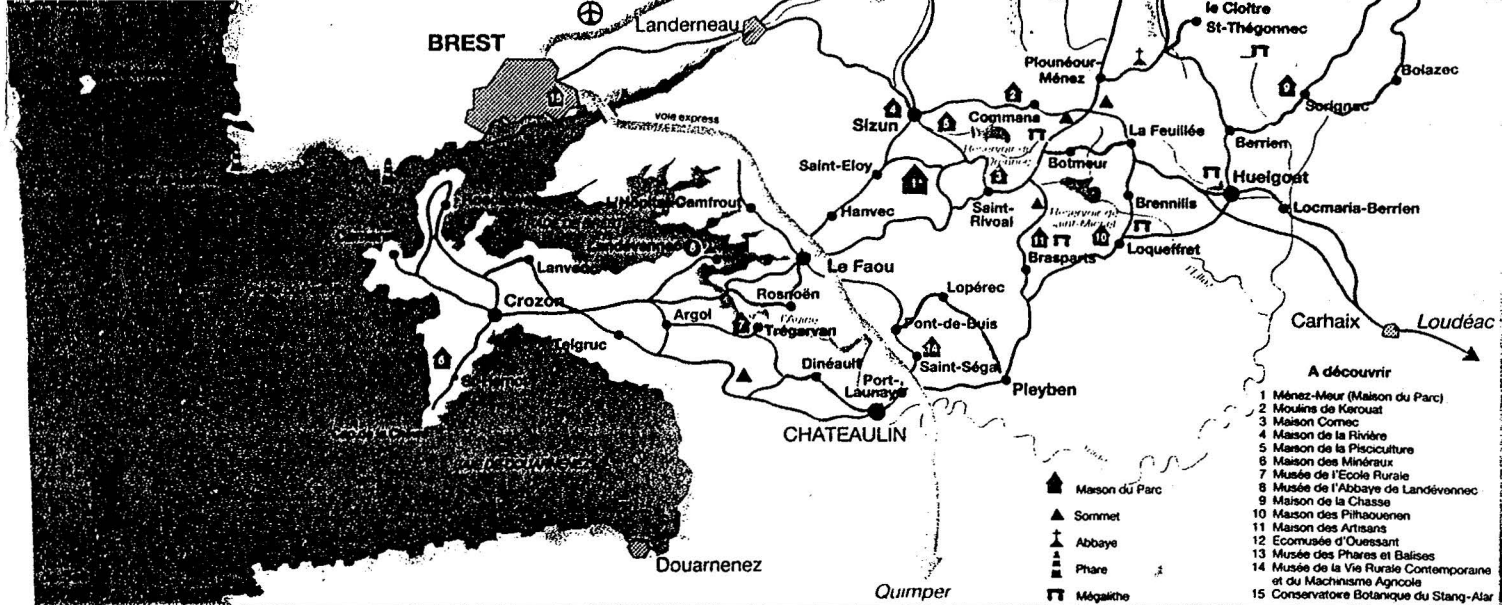
## MAISON DES PILHAOUERIEN

Elle retrace l'histoire des chiffonniers des Monts d'Arrée, petits paysans semi-nomades qui collectaient chiffons, peaux de lapins et métaux.

Ouverture :

1<sup>er</sup> juillet - 15 septembre :  
13 h 30 - 18 h 30 (tous les jours sauf le lundi).

ANCIEN PRESBYTÈRE  
29530 Loqueffret - ☎ 98 26 40 32



## MAISON DE L'ÉCOLE RURALE BRETONNE

L'histoire de la scolarisation du milieu rural en Bretagne est présentée dans une école bâtie au début du siècle, avec sa salle de classe et ses cours de récréations plantés de tilleuls. Une exposition permanente permet de relier l'école de Trégearvan au grand mouvement qui, dès 1881, a fait pénétrer l'instruction au plus profond des campagnes.

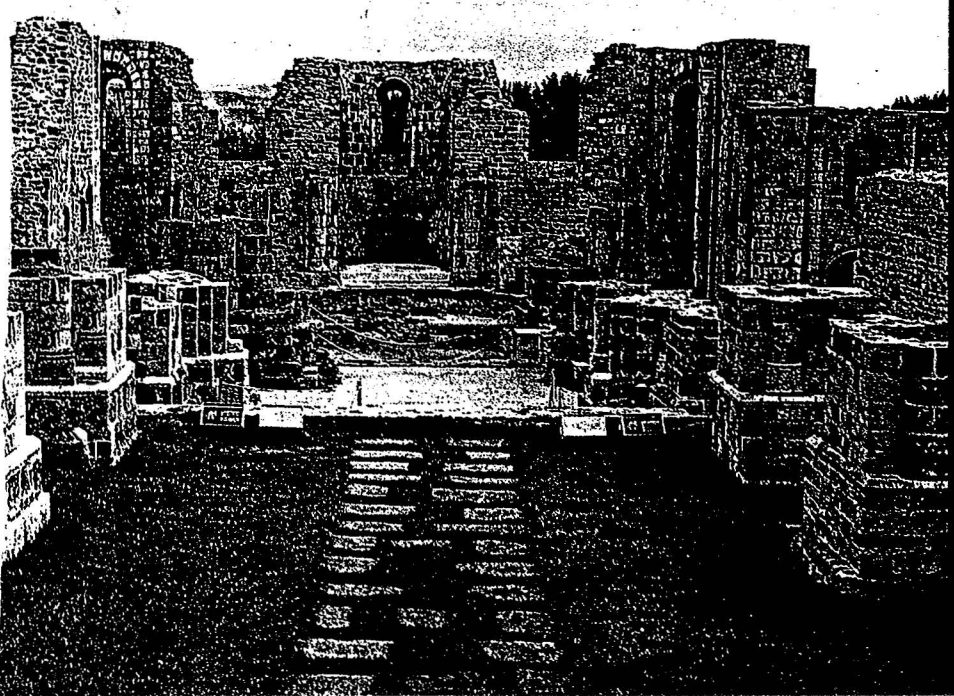
Dans une salle d'exposition temporaire sont présentés chaque année des éléments qui permettent d'approfondir quelques thèmes.

**Ouverture :**  
21 avril au 12 mai : 14 h 00 - 18 h 00 (tous les jours)  
1<sup>er</sup> juin - 15 septembre : 13 h 30 - 19 h 00 (tous les jours)

**Hors saison :**  
1<sup>er</sup> avril - 31 mai - 16 septembre - 1<sup>er</sup> novembre :  
14 h 00 - 18 h 00 (dimanches et jours fériés).

**Pour les groupes :** Ouvert toute l'année sur réservation au tél. 98 68 87 76.

**MUSÉE DE L'ÉCOLE RURALE**  
29560 Trégearvan  
t. 98 26 04 72



## MUSÉE DE L'ANCIENNE ABBAYE DE LANDÉVENNEC

Les ruines de l'ancienne abbaye de Landévennec, fondée en l'an 485 par Saint Gwennolé, puis abandonnée à la Révolution, sont aujourd'hui restaurées et aménagées.

Construit à proximité, un musée présente les objets qui y ont été découverts et retrace l'histoire de l'implantation des moines en Bretagne durant le Haut-Moyen Age : une vie d'ascèse, riche cependant de production artistique, économique et spirituelle... un long cheminement qui nous conduit jusqu'à aujourd'hui à une réflexion sur la pérennité.

Une présentation des techniques archéologiques permet au visiteur de mieux comprendre le travail de fouille qui se poursuit sur le site.

**Ouverture :**  
1<sup>er</sup> mai - 30 septembre : 10 h 00 - 19 h 00 (tous les jours)  
1<sup>er</sup> octobre - 30 avril : 14 h 00 - 18 h 00 (sauf le mardi).

**Pour les groupes :** Ouvert toute l'année sur réservation.

**MUSÉE DE L'ANCIENNE ABBAYE DE LANDÉVENNEC**  
29560 Landévennec  
t. 98 26 04 72

*Costume* : Les femmes portent des corsets de dentelle qui diffèrent selon les communes et, les jours de fête, des robes brodées; les hommes portent des chapeaux ronds, des gilets brodés et des vestes droites.

*Danse* : La danse traditionnelle en Bretagne est une danse de groupe en rond ou en chaîne. Les occasions de danser étaient nombreuses pour un paysan breton: fêtes familiales, fêtes religieuses, pardons, bals bretons de la fin du travail et du week-end, fest-noz. Aujourd'hui, les danses sont encore pratiquées par les groupes folkloriques des Cercles Celtiques, créés après la Seconde Guerre, pour remettre en honneur les costumes, les chants, les danses, les jeux de la tradition paysanne. Elles connaissent aussi un certain renouveau dans les fest-noz, lieux principaux de la reconquête des traditions populaires comme expression d'une prise de conscience bretonne par la jeunesse du pays.

*Musique* : La musique bretonne populaire de tradition celtique est en premier lieu une musique de danse et de chant. Les instruments d'accompagnement en sont: le biniou, la bombarde, le tambourin, le violon et la harpe celtique, ou bien la voix humaine, comme par exemple dans le «kan ha diskan» où deux chanteurs se complètent et se répondent. Dans les années 50 se sont constitués des orchestres, les bagadous, comprenant bombardes, cornemuses et batteries, qui servent surtout à accompagner des défilés. Le mouvement du «folk-revival» des années 60 a été introduit dans la musique bretonne par Alan Stivell, qui a créé le «pop-celtique».

*Fêtes folkloriques* : Les fêtes folkloriques sont des festivals du costume, de la danse et de la musique bretonne. Créées dans les années 50, elles sont étroitement liées au développement du tourisme breton. Les plus connues sont: les grandes fêtes de Cornouaille à Quimper et les fêtes des filets bleus à Concarneau.

*Fest-noz* : Les fest-noz (fêtes de nuit) connaissent une importance croissante depuis 1968. C'est un lieu privilégié de rencontre de la jeunesse bretonne que sa prise de conscience politique a menée à une recherche de l'identité régionale dans la tradition populaire; mais on y trouve aussi des Bretons des autres générations et de toutes les couches sociales. Les fest-noz sont souvent animés par les chanteurs bretons militants comme Glenmor, Stivell, Servat, Gwernig, Dan Ar Bras.

### Propositions d'approche des documents et de réflexion à partir des photos

1. Regardez les photos et essayez de les commenter: Que voit-on sur les différentes photos? Essayez aussi de les dater en justifiant vos hypothèses.
2. Dans les annotations, vous trouverez quelques remarques sur les costumes, la danse et la musique bretonne. Utilisez ces remarques pour définir la fonction des costumes traditionnels ou de la danse sur les photos. Caractérissez la situation dans laquelle la photo a été prise et le rôle des personnes représentées. Ajoutez-y d'autres documents du folklore breton tels que vous pouvez les trouver chez vous, par exemple dans les prospectus touristiques.
3. En Bretagne, les manifestations folkloriques provoquent des réactions bien diverses. Dans les deux textes suivants, vous trouverez des points de vue opposés. Comparez-les et analysez les différents aspects du folklore qui y sont évoqués.

terroir dont le touriste moyen fait son dessert de couleur locale plus ou moins frelatée. (...) Pour d'autres, folklore est synonyme de gentillesse, de naïveté bon-enfant, de sous-développement artistique, de nostalgie pastorale, de veillées des chaumières, de retardement intra-veineux et, en tout état de cause, de facilité, confusion et pagaille.

(...) Le vrai folklore n'a rien à voir avec la mode. Il en est le contraire. Le temps d'une vie ne suffit pas à l'établir. Sa démarche est parfois difficile à suivre. Mais il représente toujours une permanence de l'homme. Or, aujourd'hui, c'est l'humanité même qui joue son destin. Ce qui est montré, dans les fêtes folkloriques, ce sont les images d'une époque où la main prévalait sur la machine, où l'on pouvait boire l'eau des rivières, où l'on n'abattait les arbres que pour le toit ou le feu, où l'on se distinguait des autres par le costume. De nos jours, on détruit froidement le milieu naturel, on n'a d'autre souci que de faire comme tout le monde, c'est-à-dire de se rendre esclaves des mêmes normes de vie imposées par la nouvelle civilisation. Au début de ce siècle, les fêtes folkloriques étaient des manifestations spontanées. Aujourd'hui, elles ne servent plus qu'à représenter certaines valeurs que nous sommes en train de perdre et dont nous savons désormais qu'elles sont essentielles.

*Extrait de: Pierre-Jakez Hélias: Le cheval d'orgueil. Paris: Plon 1975, p. 516, 518*

les cantons. Les villes et les hameaux. Un peuple, y'a! Mais lequel? Je vais vous le dire, le peuple des morts.

(...)  
Qu'est-ce donc que cette Bretagne des Cercles Celtiques qui ne sait pas dresser la tête dans le soleil, cette navrante collection de déguisées?  
(...) Un musée ambulante. Un condensé de pittoresque. Du super-provincialisme. (...) Tournez dans Quimper, les enterrés! Il y a cent ans que vous êtes morts. Vous êtes morts au XIXe siècle. Vous aviez vos villages et vos hameaux et ils étaient autant de Républiques. Vous étiez les êtres du lait et du lin. Oui, vous aviez une civilisation, mais qu'avez-vous fait pour la défendre? Vous vous êtes couchés, alors disparaissent mes frères, car nous voulons vivre. Que nous importent ces costumes, ces broderies, ce chatoïement de haute-couture paysanne? L'habit ne fait pas le Breton.

(...)  
Non, je ne refuse pas le passé de mon pays, mais il n'est rien s'il ne se trouve illuminé par l'esprit du temps présent.

*Extrait de: Xavier Grall: Le cheval couché. Paris: Hachette 1977, p. 83-84*