A Case Study of the Group Work Management Techniques of an English Second Language Teacher in the Molopo Circuit of Bophuthatswana

Thesis

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by

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Abstract

This study examines the small group work management techniques of a teacher of English in a second language classroom in Bophuthatswana. The school at which the observation takes place, is a black secondary school in Mmabatho which follows the Department of Education and Training (DET) syllabus and writes the DET external matriculation examination.

The goal of the research is to assess and evaluate the methods the teacher uses in managing group work according to five specified areas. These areas are noted for their importance in the successful management of group work.

The report on the findings of this research reveals that the teacher's understanding of the nature of small group work differs from the accepted characteristics of successful group work management as interpreted by authorities in this field. This gives rise to management techniques that are sometimes inappropriate and ill-considered.

Although this study observes only one teacher, the findings indicate the need for more classroom-based research in order to establish the true nature of classroom practice. Assumptions about classroom practice are too readily made by innovators, syllabus designers and textbook writers who design materials based on methodologies which can be complex and difficult to implement. These methodologies require understanding and commitment from the teacher. However, the pre-service and in-service education and development that the teacher receives often does not guarantee understanding of the processes involved nor does it generate the necessary commitment to small group work as an effective teaching technique.

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Aims of the Research

This study deals with the small group work management techniques of an English teacher in a second language classroom in Bophuthatswana. The goal of the research is to assess and evaluate the ways in which the teacher manages group work in an English second language class in five specified areas:

1. procedural - the setting up of the groups, their composition, size and task allocations within the groups,

2. the introduction of the lesson and the type of task set.

3. the amount and quality of the interaction between students in the groups, and the quality of the teacher's interaction with students,

4. the control, movement and actions of the teacher during group work,

5. the report back and teacher questioning skills
   (Jaques 1984, Nation 1989, Van Ments 1990).

1.2 Group Work in Education

Language has long been recognised for the important part it plays in cognitive development (Piaget 1952, Vygotsky 1978). The amount of language used by pupils in the classroom is therefore of vital importance to the quality of education that a pupil receives, for it is by producing language that half-realised thoughts

are exposed for observation, modification and clarification (Barnes 1976). Corson (1988: 27) advocates that teachers make the production of language an integral part of a lesson rather than relegate it to a separate "oral" lesson. Language should be viewed "as an indispensable learning tool: a pedagogy across the curriculum". A group work methodology provides a way of ensuring maximum production of language in the relatively supportive and non-threatening environment of peers. Peers will tolerate the lack of explicitness of exploratory talk and this is believed to aid the assimilation of "half-grasped ideas" (Barnes 1976: 13).

1.3 Group Work in Language Learning

In language learning, talking acquires an added importance. Theories of second language acquisition place high value on giving students sufficient practice in producing spoken language (Brumfit 1984, Ellis 1990). Nation (1989: 20) claims that group work can help language learning in a variety of ways:

* negotiation of input
* acquisition of new language items
* development of fluency
* development of communication strategies.

1.4 Reasons for Resistance to Group Work

The case for using small group work in any classroom is a compelling one. Yet it remains "understressed" in schools world wide (Corson 1988: 26). This is of great concern to teaching in general and language teaching in particular. It is important to attempt to understand the possible reasons for this. Corson cites problems of class size, ineffective pre-service training in this methodology and teachers' resulting feelings of inadequacy when faced with managing groups. A deeper and more fundamental reason, Corson believes, lies in the sociology of knowledge and the curriculum. A school's task is usually directed at preparing

students for success in the higher levels of schooling. Curricula become more academic as students progress through the school. The end point in a high school career is marked by an external examination which focuses on the academic curriculum followed. Academic curricula place more value on "high status knowledge which is abstract and individualistic" (Corson 1988: 26). Because of the abstract and individualistic nature of the content to be covered, coupled with the increasing amount of the content, teachers see little benefit in cooperative learning which is often perceived by them to involve students in little else but idle chatter.

In South Africa the picture is much the same. Huge classes in cramped classrooms, lack of training in group work management at pre-service level, crowded syllabuses, all militate against exploratory talk in the classroom (Hartshorne 1992).

During in-service courses in Bophuthatswana I have noted that teachers express reluctance to use group work in the classroom. The most common reasons given are that firstly, group work demands a great deal of time which teachers do not have, as syllabuses are too crowded. Secondly, teachers find that students are very noisy especially when classes are big. Other teachers and principals often object to this noise. Thirdly teachers find that students speak their mother tongue instead of English during group work and teachers believe that this hampers the acquisition of English. Many teachers have also expressed a lack of confidence in coping with the changing role of the teacher from a transmitter of knowledge to a facilitator of learning which this methodology requires, as it implies a shift in control from the teacher to the pupils.

A pilot study was carried out to investigate how teachers who advocated using group work in their classrooms, managed to cope with this change in control and how they organised the lesson. Three second language English classes were observed and the results show clearly that all three teachers had major difficulties managing group work in the classroom despite their enthusiasm for

it (Alfers 1992). Two of the teachers did not relinquish their dominance over the proceedings and the third teacher adopted what Abercrombie (1974: 41) calls a "laissez-faire attitude to the group" by offering no control or structure for pupils to work within.

This pilot study indicated that allowing students to talk in groups did not necessarily ensure that their interaction was meaningful or that they learnt anything. As Brown and Atkins note (1988: 52) "in spite of the potential strengths of group work - it can be dominated by the teacher and low levels of thinking". Therefore how the teacher manages group work is of vital importance to the quality of the interaction. A highly structured approach, with clear tasks and learning goals, well-planned seating arrangements, group composition, and skilful questioning are all believed to enhance the learning experience of members in the group (Jaques 1984, Nation 1989, Van Ments 1990).

1.5 Social Reasons for Group Work

The reasons given so far in favour of the use of group work in the classroom, have involved only the educational advantages of this methodology. However Corson (1988) notes that the social reasons for group work are equally important for it is in the classroom that the skills of conversation, debate, negotiation and compromise can be taught explicitly.

There is a recognition that education should reflect the needs of the wider society (Samuel 1992, Hartshorne 1992). Although it is understood that the needs of society can be problematic and multi-dimensional (Unterhalter 1991), this thesis takes for granted that a democratic society based broadly on political and social justice for all, is the ideal for which we should strive. This thesis also accepts that education should strive to meet these needs of society. Democratic education would entail:

* providing a tolerant and supportive classroom environment in which students'

views are affirmed and their sense of self worth developed

* providing students with the necessary skills for participating in a democratic society.

This presupposes an abhorrence of authoritarian education which results in uncritical minds and convergent thinking (Corson 1988). This is viewed as the antithesis of the quality of citizenship that South Africa needs as it attempts to make a difficult transition to a new social and political order (Hartshorne 1992).

1.6 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis, although small scale, attempts to show that group discussion is essential to quality education: for language learning, problem solving, social skills and critical thinking. In order to achieve successful group work classes, teachers have to organise and structure their lessons carefully. The techniques for this, and the educational and social advantages of group work, are discussed in Chapter Two.

In Chapter Three, the research theory and methods of a single case study are discussed. In keeping with ethnographic research, the methods and problems of the data collection process are discussed as openly and carefully as the description and interpretation of the data (Van Lier 1990). In keeping with the tenets of democratic research , a draft copy of this research report was given to the teacher observed in this study for her comment and approval. This was done in an attempt to work **for** and **with** the teacher rather than **on** her (Cameron et al 1993). A draft of the description and analysis of this research has been discussed with the teacher and her comments are included in full in the Appendix section (Appendix 7). The inclusion of her written reaction to this report has been done in the belief that transparency at all stages of the process is essential to ethnographic research as it relies for its validity and reliability on the integrity and openness of the researcher (Yin 1984).

The research involved observation of five classes; three reading lessons, a summary lesson and a literature lesson. Transcriptions of these lessons are attached to the main report as an appendix.

In Chapter Four the concluding remarks and recommendations are made together with an acknowledgement of the limitations of the research.

I have used the neutral term "person" wherever applicable and to redress the imbalances of the past, I have used the female pronoun "she" when the person referred to is of indeterminate gender. However where direct quotes are used, I have kept to the original words of the writer in the belief that "sic" used too often, is more irritating than the offending pronoun.

Chapter Two

The Theory of Group Work

2.1 Introduction, Definitions and Roles

This chapter will define small group work in the classroom and will discuss in broad terms, the attitudes of the teacher to the nature of learning which this particular methodology would espouse. This will be followed by a discussion of the importance of small group work methodology as an educational tool for meeting the needs of the wider society with particular reference to South African education. The next section will focus on small group work in education generally and in language teaching in particular. Finally, the practical techniques for teacher management of small groups will be discussed.

An educational group is defined in many ways. Sometimes it refers to the whole class, sometimes to smaller groups which have been set up formally by the teacher for the completion of a specified task (Abercrombie 1970). These formal groups can vary in size from fairly large (10-15) down to pair work. The size chosen usually depends on the task set. The more open-ended or challenging the task, the greater the need for groups to reflect a variety of experience and ideas (Jaques 1984). In language learning contexts, tasks may often be closed; a task may be set in order to facilitate the acquisition of certain structures and vocabulary rather than to explore ideas. The focus is on maximising students' chances for using the language. In these cases, pair work is advocated (Jaques 1984). This thesis will use the term "group" to mean formal, teacher-selected sub-groupings of pupils within a class. Sometimes this will refer to a pair and sometimes to a large group.

Abercrombie (1970) defines group work as a small number of people who face each other and interact with each other. The group must be small enough so that

each member is able to interact with each of the other members. However, group teaching entails much more than placing people together face-to-face and allowing them to talk. "The teacher deliberately withdraws from being the focus of attention" (Abercrombie 1970: 1). This means the teacher must change from filling the traditional teacher-dominated role, to a role in which the focus is on the interaction between participants of the group. This does not mean that the teacher relinquishes control completely. She must provide purpose to the lesson and monitor the groups closely so that constructive use is made of the time spent interacting in groups.

> There must always be some points of reference to give direction to the process and it is the teacher's job to provide them (Widdowson 1990: xiii).

The role of the teacher must also change from being the provider of knowledge (in a general educational context) and provider of data or input (in a language teaching context) to the facilitator who provides the opportunities for students to internalise information or practise data (Corson 1988). Group work therefore necessitates a change from the "transmission mode" of teaching to the "interpretation mode" (Barnes 1973: 14-15). In the former mode the teacher has total control over what is made available to the students. Information in content subject classes is often provided without the necessary exploration of ideas which is believed to be necessary for the internalisation of knowledge and understanding (Barnes 1973, Vygotsky 1978). Input in language classes is provided and students are expected to assimilate structures and vocabulary without the necessary practice in the target language which is believed to be essential to language acquisition (Long and Porter 1985).

The interpretation mode views language learning as something which people do for themselves. In content subject classes this would entail students comparing incoming information with what they already know and believe in order to "discover personal meaning" (Rudduck 1979: 5). In language learning, the interpretation mode would entail practice in the production of the target language

with the negotiation of meaning necessary to develop the communicative competence in the second language (Brown 1991).

2.2 Education and Society

This section will deal with broad issues of education and its role in society before discussing the narrower pedagogical implications of a group work methodology. There is a recognition that education should meet the needs of the wider society (Giroux 1983, Hartshorne 1992, Samuel 1992). This has two broad implications which will be explored in this section. Firstly the awareness that the needs of society can be problematic and are always multi-dimensional (Giroux 1983, 1987; Unterhalter 1991). Secondly, the identification from within the multi-faceted needs of South African society, of a common, over-arching need that characterises our transitional context.

2.2.1 The Nature of Societal Needs

Hartshorne (1992: 145) has suggested that a future South Africa needs education that enables people to cope with a difficult and changing environment. This, he is at pains to point out, includes not just the development of a "social literacy", but also includes the development of a "political and economic literacy". This means that if students are given social skills without being made aware of the political and economic pressures on society, they will learn to fit into society uncritically. Without these "literacies" people will accept the dictates of the most powerful group in society, which could lead to a "narrow skills and training approach to education". Unterhalter (1991: 3, 15) agrees when she argues that educational change is not enough to bring about social change because "education cannot be analyzed as an autonomous social force". If links are not made between the processes of educational change and other social, political and economic conditions, then education will be "edged towards performing a predominantly reproductive rather than transformatory role". Education needs to develop citizens who are aware and critical of the narrow ideologies and

interests which may increase the power of big business and widen the gap between rich and poor.

2.2.2 Giroux

The need to develop critical citizens through education is a dominant theme in Giroux's writing (1983, 1984, 1987). His theory of resistance combines a realisation that societal needs have to be treated critically, with the idea that people are agents, capable of changing conditions under which they live. His theory of resistance incorporates the development of an understanding of the nature of resistance and an analysis of its different forms. His work acknowledges that not all forms of resistance are desirable or emancipatory - they can take the form of deviant and self-seeking behaviour. A theory of resistance also needs to give students the tools to reject the dominant culture. Giroux believes that the way to do this is by bringing into the classroom an "understanding of how power, resistance and human agency can become central elements in the struggle for critical thinking and learning" (Giroux 1983: 293). Giroux does not believe that this in itself will change society

> but we [radical educators] can create in [schools] pockets of resistance that provide pedagogical models for new forms of learning and social relations - forms which can be used in other spheres more directly involved in the struggle for a new morality and view of social justice (Ibid: 293).

Giroux stresses the importance of students developing "civic courage" which he defines as a willingness and ability to act as if one is in a democratic society even if one is not. One of the ways he sees this happening is through students being active participants in the learning process. They must be taught how "to act collectively to build political structures that can challenge the status quo" (Giroux 1983: 203). This would entail a two-pronged strategy. Firstly students need to be involved in consciousness-raising activities which would equip them with the understanding of the structural constraints on their personal freedom. Secondly they would need to be taught how to challenge these structures

effectively, and this would involve developing personal power in the form of speaking skills, negotiation and conflict resolution skills and debating skills. Small group work would enable these skills to be taught and practised at the same time as ensuring active participation in learning. It is only when

> a classroom is a supportive environment in which students learn to communicate honestly, bolster each other and develop process skills for working effectively in small groups, [that] they can feel comfortable asking critical questions and working actively for change (Bell and Schniedewind 1987: 62).

2.2.3 Democratic Education

Underlying Giroux's theory of resistance and development of "civic courage", and Hartshorne's plea that education "concern itself with the nurturing of commonly-accepted ethical and moral values" (1992: 146), is the recognition that the education system of a country should be linked to the struggle for democracy in society (Samuel 1992).

A democratic society is one in which individuals have certain inviolable rights. For democracy to work the individuals in the society must understand the nature and functioning of a democratic state. This understanding would be the aim of a democratic education system. It implies two strategies. Firstly, the implementation of democracy **in** education where the classroom becomes a microcosm of society and democratic principles are practised in an atmosphere of tolerance and respect. Learning in the "interpretation mode" (Barnes 1973) would be an essential part of this atmosphere as it is only when students are treated as people with ideas and beliefs that are worthy of attention, that they will develop the self confidence necessary to act with "civic courage". Teaching methodology would also be an important consideration when creating a democratic atmosphere because what teachers do and how they organise their classrooms is the single biggest influence on pupils' minds (Mickelson 1987). The hidden curriculum should not be underestimated.

The second strategy involves educating **for** democracy where human potential is developed "so that every member of [a classroom] is able freely to make a useful contribution to advancing social values" (Samuel 1992: 114). The skills necessary for participation in a democratic society need to be explicitly taught where possible. Some of these skills can not be taught explicitly, they need to be developed. The skills which can be explicitly taught include the interpersonal skills already stressed by Giroux (cf 2.2.2). The skills that require development are critical thinking and a sense of judgement. Morrow (1989) says that judgement is not something that is inherently part of the human condition. It has to be consciously developed otherwise people "end up not simply not expressing their judgement, but having no judgement to express" (Morrow 1989: 133). Both the ability to think critically and the acquisition of a sense of judgement are essential attributes for full and coherent participation in a democratic society. They would be best taught through the inclusion of a critical component in the syllabus and with the use of participatory learning methods.

2.2.4 South African Needs

Judgement and critical thinking, Morrow believes, have for too long been subdued in South African schools. Interpersonal skills are seldom taught explicitly and yet now more than ever South Africa needs an education system that will develop tolerant citizens who can operate effectively in a democracy.

The over-arching need that binds South African society is a commitment to a "non-racial, democratic, equitable and just society" (Hartshorne 1990: 184). Despite post 1990 educational changes, the majority of schools in South Africa are still segregated, nurturing grounds of intolerance and prejudice, displaying what Corson calls a focus on "abstract and individualistic knowledge", which views cooperative, participatory methods as a waste of time (cf. 1.4). In addition, Black education, has experienced a collapse and disintegration of the school learning environment which has led to an emotionally charged and volatile situation in which the obstacles to democracy are enormous.

The need to educate for democracy must be a high priority. The best place for this education is in the schools because they are a major transmitter of culture and they have potentially "the intellectual tools and human energy to overcome evil" (Wasserman in Bell and Schniedewind 1987: 73). Teaching methodology would play a vital role in education for democracy, and the ability to manage effective learning in small groups would need to be an essential part of every teacher's practice. This is because it is the only method that allows students space to discuss, analyze, be critical of ideas and social values, make judgements, develop self confidence, while learning the interpersonal skills of negotiation, compromise and debate; all of these are essential skills and attributes for participation in a democratic future.

2.3 The Importance of Group Work in Education

While recognising the importance of a group work classroom methodology for the development of social and democratic skills, this methodology is also important for cognitive development. The need to assimilate new ideas by comparing new information to existing information in the mind, has long been recognised by educational psychologists such as Piaget (in Barnes 1973: 13). His assimilation and accommodation theory claims that learning takes place when new knowledge and old knowledge come together so that "each reinterprets the other" and a new understanding is created. If the new incoming information does not fit the old knowledge it would probably need to be discussed, questioned or argued over in order for it to be internalised or assimilated. Piaget therefore recognised the importance of speech in the learning processes of very young children when he wrote of egocentric speech being used to control thinking.

2.3.1 Vygotsky

Vygotsky took this further and claimed that egocentric or intermental speech (as he termed the non-social speech of the young child) does not disappear as Piaget had claimed. Instead Vygotsky believed that intermental speech becomes

intramental (inner speech) and plays an important role in cognition. Vygotsky argued also that a child's concept formation is a slow and gradual process which is facilitated by social interaction with peers as well as teachers. He believed that it is this process that forms individual consciousness and higher mental functioning and that this process occurs during formal education (Britton 1987). Bruner (1986) agrees with this when he states that,

> I have come increasingly to recognise that most learning in most settings is a communal activity...It is not just that the child must make his knowledge his own, but that he must make it his own in a community of those who share his sense of belonging to a culture. It is this that leads me to emphasise not only discovery [learning] but the importance of negotiating and sharing (Bruner in Britton 1987: 25).

To explain how a child makes knowledge "his own", Vygotsky distinguished between schooled (scientific) and everyday (spontaneous) concepts. Spontaneous concepts are those that are acquired unconsciously from everyday life. Scientific concepts are those that are learned formally through education and are therefore consciously learned. The two concepts are interdependent as scientific concepts can only be learned if they are based initially on everyday concepts. In this way everyday concepts mediate the learning of scientific concepts as learning proceeds from the known to the unknown. Everyday concepts, on the other hand, benefit from the link to scientific concepts because they are opened to a whole new realm of meaning: abstraction and generality. The development of higher mental processes is the bringing together of these two concepts (from concrete to abstract and abstract to concrete) because it is this union that forms what Vygotsky called "true concepts" (Vygotksy 1978).

As Britton suggests, if speech lays the foundations for thinking, and higher mental functioning is most efficiently achieved in formal schooling, then talking, discussing, sharing ideas in groups should be an integral part of any classroom methodology.

2.3.2 Other Views

The importance of group work for concept formation is also noted by Rudduck (1979:5) when she says that the point of group discussions is not to win arguments but "to explore and discover personal meaning". Van Ments (1990: 16) would agree when he states that it is only through talking that it is possible "to clarify our thinking and the thinking of others". Barnes (1973: 13) points out that although some people can assimilate new information silently, most find it easier to talk it over in order to test understanding on others, because "what often happens is that something only half grasped falls into place as we talk".

It could be argued that this can be achieved without the difficulties that accompany dividing the class into groups. However, too many pupils would feel inhibited and constrained by having to share their ideas in front of the whole class. An intimate group allows space for communication to be inexplicit and sometimes incoherent. The small group is tolerant of exploratory talk, which is not true of a large group (Barnes 1973).

From an epistemological perspective, group work also has a firm base. For Popper (quoted in Corson 1988) it is only through language that knowledge is created.

> Only thought contents that are expressed in some language can stand in logical relationship to one another, such as equivalence, deducibility or contradiction: that is, we can use the language of one another to find out whether things are so or not, and this creates new knowledge (Popper in Corson 1988: 10).

A point that is basic to Popper's theory is that the creation of knowledge needs a "rich language framework" (Ibid:11) and in order for knowledge to be internalised, the learners need to share this framework. The only classroom methodology which would allow for this is small group work.

Corson continues by suggesting that the emphasis on talk should be increased

in the secondary school for two reasons. Firstly, pupils at this stage view their teachers less as authorities than in the primary phase. Secondly, their own understanding of the world is too complex for this understanding to be contradicted by teacher-talk alone. Oral language at this secondary phase "becomes a means for absorbing patterns of thinking that were previously not [the students'] own " (Corson 1988: 2).

Yet Corson notes, the use of talk in the classroom often decreases in the secondary phase. The pressure of syllabus demands and examinations, results in teachers who have little time to think about methodology in their attempts to get through the content. Also the oral skills of pupils in this phase are deceptively close to adult skills; therefore the need to develop these skills seems less urgent. However if Vygotsky's theory that the development of concept formation and word meanings is gradual and long term, is accepted, then pupils in the secondary school will still need to assimilate and accommodate new concepts otherwise it is likely that these meanings will not be grasped.

2.3.3 Research

Research has borne out the link between language, learning and knowledge. Ross and Raphael (1990) conducted research which shows the strong link between academic achievement and group work. They observed

> groups which spent more of their time discussing the substance of the material to be learned - the facts and concepts - outperformed other groups (Ross and Raphael 1990: 159).

Furthermore research done by Johnson and Johnson (1987) showed superior academic achievement results for cooperative as opposed to individualistic learning methods.

Research into the social climate of the cooperative learning classroom also revealed positive benefits. Sharan's research (1980: 252), which involved issuing

different questionnaires over two years assessing the affective aspect of group work, revealed that students were happier in group work classes than control classes using the whole class teaching method. Some of the comments were that learning in small groups "gave pupils greater freedom to express themselves, greater independence and a sense of responsibility". Sharan also found that small group learning improved students' sense of self worth because their ideas were listened to.

2.4 The Importance of Group Work in the Language Classroom

In order to understand the importance of group work for language teaching, it is necessary to discuss briefly the main trends in language teaching and theories of second language acquisition.

2.4.1 Trends in Language Teaching

The most fundamental change in ideas on language teaching emerged with the recognition that language is not an independent system, but a social activity in which people engage in order to communicate with each other. This view holds that learning the structures of a language alone does not ensure that the learner will become a competent user of the language. This is because knowledge of the structures does not give the learner a sense of when and how to use these structures appropriately in different contexts. It is only when a learner has the ability to combine appropriacy with structural accuracy that she can be deemed communicatively competent (Hymes 1972).

This recognition of the communicative function of language necessitated a change of emphasis in language teaching from a focus on structures to a focus on the functions that these structures play in any communicative act and the effect that these structures have in conveying meaning. This new emphasis gave rise to communicative language teaching (CLT) which acknowledges the communicative value of language. CLT emphasises the need to practise real

communication in the classroom as opposed to the meaningless drills which had dominated language classes prior to this (Stern 1983). The only efficient method which ensures maximum use of authentic oral communication in the classroom is group work because, at any one time, most students will be actively engaged in a communicative act, whether listening or speaking.

2.4.2 Theories of Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

Many theories and hypotheses of second language acquisition reinforce the idea that active production of language, both written and spoken, is essential to language learning. However none of these theories leads conclusively to the suggestion that group work results in greater second language acquisition (Ellis 1990). Long and Porter (1985: 207) argue that group work has the potential to enhance the acquisition process because in a small group there is "more negotiation of meaning" which creates the comprehensible input which Krashen (1982) claims, aids second language acquisition.

However as Ellis notes (1990), these claims are not based on conclusive research findings and he believes that the theories probably all explain to some degree, the acquisition process. Acquisition of language is a delicate and extremely complex process and no single theory can hope to capture its essence. Also, although these theories are usually divided into production and reception based theories, it is important to see production and reception as equally and simultaneously necessary in the interaction process. When communicating orally it is as important to listen (receptive) with understanding as it is to produce comprehensible language (production). Group work encourages both.

Ellis (1990) believes it is more important to consider ways of organising classroom interaction so as to promote acquisition than to worry about which set of skills in particular will be enhanced by the interaction. He gives four points which teachers need to observe in order to allow for an optimal language

learning environment based on reception and production theories.

1. Students need to separate the first and second languages so that they communicate only in the second language. This would entail the teacher providing "scaffolding" in the form of structures and vocabulary in order to ensure that students have enough target language to work with.

2. The students must be interested in what they are discussing so that production is not forced.

3. They must have the opportunity to participate in the kinds of discourse they will need to use outside the classroom.

4. Learners must be forced to extend their linguistic resources by having tasks set which will tax these resources, otherwise they will not progress. This requires moving away from closed questions to more open-ended ones. This coincides with real-life discourse (on which CLT is based) because unpredictability of open-ended discourse means that the learners have to make linguistic choices and concentrate on the meaning they wish to convey.

2.4.3 Acquisition and Learning

A fundamental point in the debate on second language acquisition, and one that has implications for group work is the distinction between acquisition and learning (Krashen 1982). Acquisition refers to the unconscious process through which language is picked up from hearing or reading comprehensible input. Learning is the conscious process in which the structures and rules of the language are learnt through explicit teaching.

Ellis (1990) distinguishes between the two processes when he says that implicit (acquired) and explicit (learnt) knowledge are two distinct cognitive processes

and students need to be exposed to both fluency (acquisition) and accuracy (learning) activities separately. However, it is generally believed that there is a transfer of knowledge between the two processes and Ellis believes that it is possible that fluency activities are the "switch that starts the flow of learnt to acquired knowledge" (Ellis 1982: 80). Fluency and accuracy are classroom methodological terms for processes which give rise to the higher order cognitive processes of acquisition and learning respectively.

CLT requires that acquisition and fluency activities be used in the classroom. Ellis divides communicative activities into firstly, informal approaches which lead to acquisition and secondly, formal approaches which deal with the learning of language functions, strategies of discourse or structures. Both approaches are necessary in CLT because they both recognise that the purpose of language teaching is to enable the learner to communicate effectively. This means that learning the linguistic system is not irrelevant provided that there is ample opportunity given for acquisition activities. Yet acquisition is frequently neglected in favour of learning in many language classrooms, despite the fact that research has proved "that the absence of natural discourse inhibits language learning" (Ellis 1990: 90).

Prabhu (1987) would disagree that the structures of a language ever have to be taught. The only prerequisite for acquisition in his task-based syllabus, is the extensive use of the target language in meaningful and challenging contexts (cf. 2.5.6). Savova and Donata (1991: 12) also adopt this strategy. They distinguish between learning "activities" which are "meaning-centred" and learning "exercises" which are seen as "mechanistic", undesirable and of no value to SLA. This attitude seems rather prescriptive and it is my belief that a combination of form-focused exercises and "meaning-centred" activities is conducive to SLA. As Ellis (1982) notes, to deny that people can learn a language formally through grammar-based instruction, is to deny the evidence of the many people who have learnt a language in this way.

2.4.4 Errors

With the change in thinking which led to CLT, there arose a change in attitude to learner-produced errors. The behaviourist view of language teaching saw errors as evils to be eradicated and teachers were urged to allow only error-free language in their classrooms. CLT views errors as part of the learning process. Unless the teacher allows errors to be made, the learner is unlikely to progress because the necessary production practice is hampered by over-correction.

Elliot, S. (1986) in her classroom action research concluded that students seldom take the risk of making errors when they are involved in whole class activity. In her research she noticed that the frequency with which students used the target language and experimented with it was considerably higher when they were involved in group work. Davies (1980: 261) supports this when he stresses the need to allow students to practice their fluency in the relative privacy of the small group because it is in this environment that students are more likely to take risks and experiment with language. He claims that fluency can only be achieved by "actual and frequent use of the language in a meaningful context". He goes on to stress the importance of not correcting student errors in these exercises otherwise the level of fluency will remain low.

Brumfit (1984: 60) states that another important role of fluency exercises is that they give students the "opportunity to convert tokens that have been formally learnt into communicative systems that have been acquired". The only possible method to achieve this is group work as it is the one method which "will combine most effectively all aspects of communication, learning and human interaction...in the most integrated, non-threatening and flexible mode of classroom organisation available to the teacher".(Brumfit 1984: 78).

2.4.5 South African Black Education - A Special Case

As this research is concerned with a Black school in South Africa, the special characteristics of this group of students need to be discussed.

Black students in South Africa learn their entire curriculum through the medium of English from half way through the primary phase. Although English teachers are expected to help students meet the language needs of their content subjects, teachers are given very little practical assistance with this task. This fact often results in students who do not have sufficient competence in English to operate in the interpretive mode of learning. The ability to explore ideas, to assimilate and accommodate information, presupposes a high level of language competence.

This neglect in dealing with the language needs of students has led to a situation which can be explained in Vygotskian terms (cf 2.3.1). The scientific skills and concepts which most need schooling are treated as spontaneous skills. If a content subject is learnt in the first language, the pupil can use her stock of everyday concepts to mediate the unfamiliar scientific concepts. But if pupils learn a subject through a second language which is in itself a scientific concept, this will lead to a confusing chain of mediation where the content subject is mediated through the second language which then has to be mediated again through the everyday concept of the first language (Lenahan 1992).

2.4.5.1 BICS and CALP

Another way of understanding this is through the concept of BICS and CALP (Cummins and Swain 1986). BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communication Strategies) is the "spontaneous" language used in conversation and informal contexts. This spontaneity only exists in a first language environment; in a second language context as in S.A., BICS would be developed through schooling. CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) refers to the "schooled" language necessary for higher cognitive functioning. CALP language is abstract and cognitively demanding. Cummins and Swain claim that an ability to operate at the BICS level of competence does not enable the child to perform cognitive operations with enough proficiency for that language to be used as a medium.They also believe that it is important for children to develop CALP skills

in their mother tongue as these skills are then more easily transferred to a second language. This, together with a belief that if the first language is maintained the second language will be better learned, has led Cummins and Swain to advocate a bilingual model of education.

The arguments against BICS and CALP are acknowledged. The distinction between them can set up notions of deficit and CALP skills tend to be viewed as having concrete reality "when in fact they are a culturally specific set of school-based discourses and cognitive abilities" (Luckett 1993b: 21). However, as Luckett (Ibid) points out, the BICS and CALP distinction is a useful model in helping us to understand the demands made on students' language and the language competencies that they need to develop. Also, the decontextualised language that Cummins has identified as CALP, is valued in modern society and to exclude students from access to this society (whether to fit in to it or be critical of it), by not acknowledging the existence of CALP skills, would be to deny them a basic freedom.

Macdonald (1990) in the research done in Black primary schools in Bophuthatswana, found that pupils were not well grounded in their first language and CALP skills were not adequately developed in the mother tongue. Yet children were learning foreign concepts in a foreign tongue with demands made on them that were equal to the demands made on children learning in their mother tongue. The result of this is often that teachers feel unable to cope with pupils who seem to lack basic understanding, and transmission mode teaching together with rote learning becomes the predominant classroom practice. Learners are reduced to learning facts in a verbatim fashion and are not encouraged to explore meaning. Their minds may be filled as a result with "vague and empty verbalisms" (Ibid: 19).

When these students reach high school there is every reason to believe that their ability to use language for school purposes, is still grossly underdeveloped (Craig 1988). This has led to a belief that more emphasis should be placed on

developing CALP skills in the classroom. However Cummins and Swains' call for bilingualism in the classroom together with the general belief that a more democratic language policy in South African education system should exploit our multilingual heritage (Adendorff 1993, Luckett 1993 b), suggests perhaps that students should be allowed to discuss their ideas in their first language to begin with. This could facilitate the flow of ideas. At tertiary level, this idea has been suggested by Mbali et al (1993). They advocate that second language students coming from DET schools should be allowed to use their first language to sort out their ideas, to assimilate texts and plan essays; in short, to develop their CALP skills, at tertiary level.

2.4.5.2 Bilingualism in the Classroom

Mbali et al conducted research on first year second language students at Durban University. They video-taped group work sessions which dealt with error correction of history essays that students had produced. In the bilingual groups where students were allowed to switch between their first language and English, discussions were more lively and more points were discussed than in the English medium group. Mbali et al, see the use of the first language to facilitate the development of CALP skills, as extremely important for students who have not developed them in their mother tongue first. This would seem to fit with Cummins and Swains' belief that CALP skills developed in the first language, will transfer more easily to a second language.

Mbali et al do see this as an interim measure to help establish CALP skills because it is accepted that students need to progress in their English competence. Although this action research involved tertiary students, its findings and suggestions could be applicable at school level. In DET schools there seems to be little that recognises the enormous liabilities of learning through a second language, or addresses the pupils' needs in this regard. It is often a very hostile learning environment in which "cognitive discontinuity may impede further cognitive development" (Luckett 1993b: 21). If it is accepted that our multilingual

heritage is not a curse and that teachers should be encouraged to view it as a rich, communicative resource (Adendorff 1993), then allowing students the opportunity to use the first language in class would perhaps greatly facilitate cognitive development. This would be achieved in part, through the development of CALP skills in the first language before the transference of these skills into English.

Mbali et al do advocate a planned approach to the use of the first language, and in group work this would necessitate allowing students a set time to explore ideas in the first language before asking them to switch to English. The report-back phase would be carried out in English and this would provide the external stimulus needed to ensure that students at some stage are forced to express their ideas in English.

It must be acknowledged here that the acceptance of English as the medium of instruction is done with full recognition of the problematic nature of this acceptance. It has become a *common sense* assumption in many societies that proficiency in English is the key to social and economic advancement (Tollefson in Luckett 1993a), and yet in South Africa this assumption leads to social injustice because the majority of the "under classes" will not be able to acquire sufficient proficiency in English (Luckett 1993a: 44) and will find it difficult to attain what Corson calls their "voice" in society (1988: 25). A more equitable language policy than exists in South Africa at present would need to view all South African languages as having equal weight in society. This in part would entail providing first language medium of instruction education for all language groups (Luckett 1993a). However English as a medium of instruction is the classroom reality that faces teachers now in South Africa and probably for some time to come, as *common sense*, tacitly-held notions are undoubtedly extremely difficult to dismantle. Therefore the acceptance of English as medium of instruction in this thesis is done for pragmatic, immediately relevant reasons and not because of a belief that English has sole right to this domain for ever.

An example of how deeply ingrained and automatically accepted English as sole medium in Black schools is, can be seen in the attitudes of teachers in these schools. The concept of students being allowed to talk in their first language is an anathema to many of these teachers. This is particularly true of English teachers who see the elimination of the first language as of paramount importance. In my experience of in-service courses, the probability that students will speak in Setswana during group work is the single biggest objection that teachers have for using this methodology.

The special case in Black South African education is that students need to develop their English competency while simultaneously developing their ability to use it as an instrument of learning. Teachers often seem to ignore the importance of developing language across the curriculum skills in their pupils and instead concentrate on English as just another subject (Macdonald 1990). This results in students who may have developed BICS competence in English but not CALP competence by the time they reach Matric. A group work methodology enhances second language acquisition (cf. 2.4.2) and would facilitate the development of CALP skills necessary for learning and higher cognitive functioning (cf. 2.3.1-2.3.2). However teachers need to be clear of this dual function of English and address it. When setting group tasks for their students they would need to separate language acquisition activities in which the focus is on learning structures and developing fluency in English, from group tasks in which the main purpose is to explore ideas, and develop CALP skills in the process. This second type of task would be typical of a literature, pre-writing or reading class. In language acquisition classes, students in groups would be expected to speak only English for, as Ellis (1990) emphasises, an optimal language learning classroom is one where students are encouraged to speak only in the target language (cf. 2.4.2). However these lessons would need to be extremely well structured so that learners had the vocabulary and grammar to enable them to speak exclusively in the target language.

I have attempted to show that both types of task are important in Black second

language English classes and that the most effective methodology for this is group work. Learners need to develop communicative competence in English and also to develop English as an instrument of learning through a methodology that allows them maximum exposure to and practice in the language. However teachers do need to be disabused of the idea that speaking Setswana in group discussions, where the purpose is to explore ideas, will hamper their students' language development.

2.5 Management Techniques for Group Work

As Abercrombie has noted, students do not automatically learn if they are put into groups and allowed to interact. Even in a language class where any interaction may provide the necessary comprehensible input and practice, students would need sufficient structure and organisation to maximise the learning potential of the group interaction. Therefore, the teacher's role in group work is essential. This section will discuss the many different tasks that the teacher has in order to make group work a meaningful experience for the learners. Tarleton (1988) sees two ways of ensuring the successful management of group work.

1. The task set must be structured.
2. Pupils must be taught how to talk and listen.

This section will discuss each of these in turn.

2.5.1 The Need for Structure

The need for structure in group work is well documented. Van Ments (1990) claims that every phase of the process from the setting up of the groups, monitoring the discussion and finally the debriefing stage, needs careful thought and planning. Abercrombie (1974: 41) notes that it is not unusual for teachers "swinging away from the authoritarian position [of the transmission mode] to

adopt a laissez-faire attitude to the group" where the teacher uses the time to mark and deal with administrative work. There are far too many difficulties in making group work effective, especially in a language class where teacher input is so important, to treat the time that pupils are in groups, as free time. In fact Pritchard (1987) says the failing of much group work is because it is too unstructured. He also feels that it is particularly important to give pupils lacking in confidence, the security of knowing exactly what is expected of them and that someone is in charge who they can refer to if the process begins to fall apart. Van Ments agrees when he says:

> effective learning is facilitated by formal... structures and procedure. It should be realised that rules and structure are devices which protect the timid and less self assured (Van Ments 1990: 33).

Ross and Raphael (1990: 160) however add a cautionary word against too much structure as it can lead to "depressed student achievement" due to too much mental energy being expended on procedures, and the material to be discussed becomes secondary in importance.

Despite the necessity for structure, it must be acknowledged that group work is often used in the pursuit of goals that are open ended and unpredictable. Some of the difficulties of group work emanate from this unpredictability and open-endedness Questions of the balance between too little and too much control become important. How do teachers avoid silences, how do they draw students out, what sort of questions to ask which will extend thinking? Timing becomes vital because if too much time is given, pupils may finish the assigned task, become bored and the teacher may find it difficult to rekindle their interest. Too little time given could give rise to rushed thinking and lack of quality in the interaction.

Nation gives five essential principles which should guide the language teacher in structuring group work:

1. the learning goals of the group,
2. the task set,
3. the social relationships,
4. the way information is distributed,
5. the seating arrangement.

Nation feels that a useful way of classifying group work activities is to identify the distribution of the information needed to complete the activity. He divides this into four types:

1. the cooperating arrangement where learners have equal access to the same material or information and they cooperate with each other on the task.
2. the superior-inferior arrangement where one member of the group has information that the others need.
3. the individual arrangement where each learner has equal access to the same information but must deal with a different part of it.
4. the combining arrangement where each learner has a different piece of information that the other members need.

> These four different types of group work achieve different learning goals, are best suited to different kinds of tasks, require different kinds of seating arrangements and draw on or encourage different kinds of social relationships (Nation 1989: 20-21).

The following table illustrates how these four classifications of group work will affect the five principles for structuring group work.

Table 1. The Factors Involved in Group Work.

	Combining	Cooperating	Superior/ Inferior	Individual
Distribution of Information	Each learner has unique essential information	All learners have equal access to the same information and to view each other's view of it	One or more learners have information that the others do not have	All learners have the same information but use a different part
Seating Arrangement	Learners sit at an equal distance from each other, facing each other	Learners sit beside each other facing the information	The knowers face the seekers	The learners face each other
Social Relationship	Equality mutual dependency	Equality	Inequality the knowers are in a superior position	Equality but with the focus on individual performance
Most Suitable Learning Goals	Negotiation of input Mastering of content Fluency	New language items Fluency	New language items Mastering content	Fluency New language items
Most Suitable Tasks	Completion Ordering Providing directions Matching classifying distinguishing	Ranking ordering choosing Finding implications causes uses Solving problems Producing material	Data gathering Completion Providing directions	Solving problems Completion
A Typical Example	A strip story	A ranking exercise	An interview	A chain story or roleplay

(Nation 1989: 21)

The chart illustrates that questions such as group seating arrangement, the constitution of the group, the most suitable tasks and learning goals, all work closely together. For example, if the learning goal is to learn new language items, then a superior-inferior distribution of information with the "knowers facing the seekers" might be the most suitable. However if the goal is to develop fluency, groups could be made up of roughly equal participants in a cooperating arrangement.

2.5.2 Group Size and Constitution

Although Nation does not specify optimum group size, other writers do. Jaques (1984) says that if groups are too large such as twelve people and over, then sub-groups emerge. He believes that the size of the group can be fluid but it is important to remember that from two to six people is the most manageable number because less organisation and structuring is required than with groups of seven to twelve students. In a language class, the smaller the number, the more the participants get a chance to talk. This is an important consideration for otherwise teachers will be "cheating [students] of the greatest satisfaction of spontaneous language use" (Elliot, S. 1986: 1). As noted earlier (cf. 2.4.4) Elliot observed in her own language classroom that students seldom took risks or experimented with language in large groups and Haralam (1986) also notes that students in her class needed the privacy of pair work in order to become "risk-takers". Jaques (1984: 82) suggests dividing group tasks into three phases. Firstly, individuals work on the task, then pairs share ideas and finally pupils discuss tasks in groups of between four and six. Although Jaques is not specifically referring to a language class, his suggested procedure would fit in well with pupils trying out new vocabulary or structures first by themselves, then with the relative safety of a partner, before being asked to produce language in front of a larger group. The important thing for teachers to remember is that in language classes, where fluency is the prime goal, teachers must not correct structural errors (cf. 2.4.4).

On the question of the constitution of the group (mixed ability, friendship, homogeneous), there is again a call for flexibility and matching group composition with the goals of group learning. Van Ments (1990: 33-34) identifies three objectives:

1. to learn and acquire knowledge.
2. to allow students an opportunity to practise their fluency.
3. to create something or make decisions.

With group work which is aimed at learning, he suggests that students at the same level should be grouped together so that they learn from each other. Where fluency is the goal, introverts and extroverts are best kept in separate groups in order to allow the introverts space to express themselves without being "swamped". Where the goal is creativity of thinking, it is best to use a mixed-ability group which will display a range of experience and knowledge.

In a language class the second two are more obviously language class goals than the first one, although in literature classes, group work could be set for the acquisition of knowledge and understanding of the content and characterisation in a piece of writing. In the writing class creative thinking in the form of brainstorming ideas on a particular topic, is an ideal group work activity. A reading lesson where students have been given challenging questions on a text, would also fall under this third objective, because the pupils would be forced to make decisions and think creatively in order to achieve an acceptable answer. All areas of the English curriculum would claim the second objective as extremely important. It becomes the teacher's job to sort out whether structural accuracy is the uppermost goal or whether the goal is the exchange of ideas. The constitution and arrangement would be organised accordingly.

2.5.3 Teaching the Art of Effective Communication

Van Ments (1990: 40-41) emphasises the need for teachers to give rules to

pupils about their roles and behaviour in the group, so that everyone knows what they should be doing and how they should be doing it. There should always be a leader or chairperson in the group whose task it is to maintain order, and ensure that everyone in the group has a chance to speak. A secretary should be appointed so that decisions are recorded and a different person who is appointed to report back to the whole class. Finally everyone in the group should be made aware of the rules relating to effective discussion which ensure that group work is a positive experience. These are:

* do not argue about purely personal opinions or tastes
* stick to the issues. Be relevant
* do not listen only to yourself
* check out preconceptions and assumptions
* do not treat a question just as a signal to speak
* make an effort to understand
* use each response as the basis for further questions or comment.
* avoid appeals to authority and arguing ad hominen (about the person not the subject)
* beware of voting unless a decision is needed
* beware of using examples to prove rather than illustrate, but ask for examples to clarify understanding if necessary
* avoid anger, sarcasm, belittling, fastening on trivial mistakes.

Van Ments (1990: 40) also gives a useful summary of behavioural patterns which the teacher should be aware of so that in her movement around the groups she can monitor and, if need be, check the behaviour of the members in the group.

Table 2. Behavioural Categories.

Proposing	Behaviour which puts forward a new concept, suggestion or course of action (and is actionable).
Building	Behaviour which extends or develops a proposal which has been made by another person (and is actionable).
Supporting	Behaviour which involves a conscious, direct and reasoned declaration or difference of opinion, or criticism of another person's concepts.
Defending/ Attacking	Behaviour which attacks another person, or defensively strengthens an individuals own position. Defending or attacking behaviour usually involve overt value judgements and often contain emotion overtones.
Blocking Difficulty stating	Behaviour which places a difficulty or block in the path of a proposal or concept without offering any alternative proposal, and without offering a reasoned statement of disagreement.
Open	Behaviour which exposes the individual to risk of ridicule or loss of status. This behaviour may be considered as the opposite of defending/attacking, including within this category admissions of mistakes or inadequacies, provided that these are made in a non-defensive manner.
Testing understanding	Behaviour which seeks to establish whether or not an earlier contribution has been understood.
Summarizing	Behaviour which summarizes, or otherwise restates in a compact form, the content of previous discussions or considerations.
Seeking information	Behaviour which seeks facts, opinions or clarification from another individual or individuals.
Giving information	Behaviour which offers facts, opinions or clarifications to other individuals.
Shutting out	Behaviour which excludes, or attempts to exclude, another group member (eg interrupting, talking over).
Bringing in	Behaviour which is a direct and positive attempt to involve another group member.

(Van Ments 1990: 40).

Once students are aware of the social aspects of group work and their responsibility for the effective running of the group, there is more chance of pupils maintaining the set learning goals (Tarleton 1988).

2.5.4 Teachers' Roles

The teacher's role during group work is to act as a peripatetic advisor (Mills 1987: 209). According to Mills the teacher should move from group to group

> sometimes asking a searching and specific question in order to focus attention; sometimes giving a summary of points made...sometimes exercising a disciplinary function; sometimes giving information; often remaining silent, listening and storing... thoughts and impressions for later use (Ibid).

This, as Jaques (1984: 145) says emphasises the "various" nature of the teacher's task. He identifies three roles for a teacher during group work. These are:

1. Leader/Instructor. The traditional role where the teacher initiates and controls proceedings. This type of role is commonly used in the report back phase when each group reports their findings to the class as a whole. This can include the teacher as neutral chairperson where the teacher does not offer opinions, or as a commentator where she comments on the ideas or decisions made by groups.
2. Facilitator. The teacher elicits without dominating the process or content. Many students and teachers would find this role difficult to adopt because it appears that the teacher is giving up her role. It means that the teacher has to be truly student-centred because teachers must accept students' contributions, respect them for what they produce rather than what the teacher thinks they should produce.
3. Counsellor. Should tensions arise from clashes of personality, or participants not adhering to acceptable group behaviour, the teacher's job would be to tackle these so that emotional issues do not impinge on the academic

purpose of the group.

In a language class, all of the above apply, but it should be noted that the teacher has to keep clear in her mind whether the task goal is to produce accuracy, fluency or both. If the task is to practise certain structures in a pair work exercise, then the teacher would pay attention to the language being used. If the task is to enhance fluency through the exploration of ideas, then the teacher would have to be very careful about error correction and limit it to situations in which communication has broken down. In these instances the teacher would need to provide the structures or vocabulary that the student needed in order to be understood.

2.5.5 Questioning Skills

Good questions are the base on which effective learning lies (Antonellis 1983). They can encourage thinking and can lead to constructive learning. If questioning is weak, the class can be dominated by low levels of thinking because pupils have not been sufficiently challenged to develop new understanding. As Vygotsky (1978: 89) says, "the only good learning is that which is in advance of development". In keeping with a structured approach generally, questioning should be carefully thought out in order to achieve learning that extends pupils cognitively. Prabhu (1987) would see this as important for language acquisition too because he believes it is only the sustained use of the target language which challenging questions would demand, that leads to language acquisition.

This section will discuss types of questions, the kind of cognitive activity that each gives rise to and the type of questions that are best suited to group work.

Van Ments (1990) classifies questions into closed and open categories. Closed or lower order questions either require a simple repetition of facts or short-answer questions which require a "yes" or "no" answer. Closed questions also tend to have only one correct answer. The purpose of a closed question in

education generally, would be to determine whether pupils remember facts. In a language class these questions could be used to check knowledge of language structures or prepare pupils for a particular fluency exercise or pre-reading activity.

The second type of question is the open or higher order question. The open question does not have one clear answer. The higher order question may demand one clear answer but will require a high level of thinking in order to achieve the correct answer. Both these questions require thoughtful and lengthy answers, taxing students' language and cognitive ability. These questions typically require students to analyze, synthesise and evaluate information given to them (Knowles 1983). Corson (1988) believes that analytic competence is the most important cognitive operation of the senior secondary years. In language classes these high order questions would promote fluency as well as cognitive development because they require lengthy and sustained answers.

Both low order and high order questions have their place in the classroom and usually a good questioner will use both. Van Ments (1990) suggests that the secret to using both effectively is to sequence the questions so that respondents move from the concrete to the abstract. This would entail asking fairly closed questions to establish observable facts and then move to asking higher order questions which demand analysis, evaluation, exploration and synthesis in order to arrive at acceptable or well thought out answers. In group work this could involve the teacher asking the whole class low order, focusing questions which may require pupils to recall language structures or vocabulary in a language class, before breaking into groups to discuss high order questions. These low order questions would also help supply students with the language they require to complete the high order questions.

Barnes (1971: 26) states that teachers tend to ask more closed, factual or short answer questions than high order or open questions. He concludes that "teachers talk far more than pupils can reply" and he suggests that one of the

reasons for this is that closed questions help to maintain teacher dominance in the classroom. Although Barnes based these remarks on research done some time ago, other more recent research has confirmed that teachers still ask predominantly low order questions (Jaques 1984, Van Ments 1990).

One of the problems noted by Knowles (1983) and Van Ments (1990) is that teachers sometimes ask a question that sounds open but proceed to ignore all responses except the ones they consider "correct". These Barnes refers to as "pseudo questions". This kind of response by the teacher can result in students feeling a loss of value in their contributions. Another common fault is asking a multiple question in the guise of one question. A few guidelines to good questioning technique are given by Van Ments and include:

1. keeping questions concise and vocabulary simple
2. encouraging further explanation - not accepting statements at face value
3. asking neutral questions to establish facts and not leading questions that reveal the answer the teacher expects
4. being flexible and sensitive to the responses from students in order to adapt questions to their needs.

2.5.6 Tasks

Tasks are set for the discussion phase of group work in which the learners are involved in sustained activity. Tasks, like questions, need to be challenging to the learner's language and cognitive ability. This section will discuss the types of tasks which are most conducive to second language acquisition while providing sufficient cognitive challenge (Prabhu 1987) which is essential to the South African context (cf. 2.4.5 and 2.2.4).

Tasks that require negotiation of meaning or "modification of language" (Brown 1991: 2) are thought to provide ideal language learning situations (Krashen 1982). This modification includes prompts, clarification checks, definition

requests, repetition and rephrasing - all part of negotiating understanding and meaning and learning new language in the process. Research by Brown (1991) involved the observation of groups performing tasks in order to assess the correlation between task-type and the amount and nature of interaction they gave rise to. It was hoped that this would further clarify the relationship between task set and SLA potential. He took three decision-making tasks (which involve participants contributing their opinions and arguments in order to help participants make a decision) and divided them into procedural or interpretive task-types. If the task involves dealing with facts and making decisions based on these facts then the task is procedural. If the group has to interpret data and negotiate these interpretations within the group - then the task is interpretive. He divided them further into closed/open or tight/loose tasks. One task was loose and open but procedural. Two tasks were interpretive but one was tight and closed and the other was open and loose. All three tasks showed no difference in language modification over the categories of closed/tight, loose/open, except for the interpretive tasks which showed a great deal more hypothesising whether the task was open or closed.

Hypothesising as Brown notes, requires the members of the group to use more complex language. The task in the procedural group required students to "practice" language. This means that they used language with which they were already familiar. "Learning" language (i.e. adding to existing competence) was much more evident in the interpretive tasks which lent themselves to hypothesising. Brown suggests that tasks that require members of the group to learn new language and not just practise existing language, should be given more weight in the classroom as they provide greater SLA opportunity.

> We should not be thinking only of the quantity of modification as being a possible indicator of SLA opportunity, but of quantity of modification **and** appropriate level of challenge that together ensure practice and learning (Brown 1991: 10).

Prabhu (1987) would seem to agree with Brown's findings when he advocates

setting tasks that have a reasonable challenge in order to extend learners' production of language, rather than simply practising or "borrowing" as Prabhu calls it, already known language. Again Vygotsky's notion of a zone of proximal development would tie in with this, as it is only when tasks push learners into the "potential area" that they become extended (Vygotsky 1978: 89). Prabhu states that it is in the efforts of the learners to cope with the task, that they learn to match meaning and structure. It is through this matching process that people will acquire language. Acquisition for Prabhu, is an assimilation over time of language structures which the learner has been exposed to naturally in meaningful tasks.

> Available abstract structures are thus deployed on new samples of language, helping to interpret those samples, but in the process, themselves getting firmed up, modified, extended (1987: 70).

Tasks set with Prabhu's theory in mind would not only lead to language acquisition, but would also ensure cognitive challenge. In this way both the language and cognitive needs of students would be met. As stated earlier (cf. 2.4.3), this does not negate the importance of learning the structures of the language formally. These would occupy different lessons with different tasks.

2.5.7 Report-Back

The report-back phase of group work is seen as an essential part of group work management and too often curtailed or left out (Van Ments 1990: 59). There are many different ways of conducting debriefing as Van Ments calls it, but whatever method is used, it is essential to have a well planned structure for it.

> The advantage of a properly prepared and structured debriefing session is that time is used far more effectively, it ensures that everyone has the opportunity to participate...The more unaware, inarticulate and uncomfortable the group is, the more structure [the teacher] needs to provide (Van Ments, 1990: 63).

Van Ments offers three phases involved in reporting back.

1. To establish facts or ideas from each group
2. To analyze the reasons for these.
3. Draw conclusions and plan follow-up actions.

Davies (1980: 264) also emphasises the importance of the report back, particularly in a language class.

> The ability to present a report, a point of view, or an argument clearly and persuasively, is a valuable communicative skill which can be well trained in a language classroom.

He adds that the final presentation of a group effort should be shared among group members, so that everyone has a chance to present in front of the whole class. Knowles (1983: 73) notes that often when only one student in a group reports back to the whole class, this report back can represent a consensus rather than a reflection of the multiplicity of views generated by the group discussion. Therefore he suggests that each member of the group be allowed to summarise their view, either verbally or in the form of a written report.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to show the importance of group work as a classroom methodology for general social, educational, psychological and epistemological reasons. As the classroom under observation in this research, is a language classroom, the reasons why group work is important for language acquisition have also been furnished. The special needs of the South African context have been discussed and the importance of group work in the classroom for building up a democratic society has been stressed. The exact area of group work that this thesis focuses on, is the management techniques of the teacher. Therefore the final part of this chapter has discussed what these management techniques involve. The complexity of managing group work; the size and constitution of groups, the necessity for structure, the role of the teacher during the process the types of questions and tasks to set and the handling of

debriefing at the end, have all been described in order to show that group work needs a teacher who is well versed in all these techniques otherwise there is a danger that group work will be characterised by low levels of thinking and fluency. As Abercrombie (1970: 12) has noted, the understanding of difficult material can be achieved through the discussion group, "but not through permissive and unstructured approaches".

Chapter Three

Research Outline and Methods

3.1 Research Outline

This chapter will begin with a description of the research process: the reasons for the choice of the teacher under observation, the setting up of the research and the equipment used. This will be followed by a discussion of the research theory applicable to this study: a justification for the use of the single case study using interpretive methods, a further justification on the grounds of reliability, validity and generalisability and finally a discussion of the ethical problems encountered in this research.

3.1.1 Choice of Subject

It is necessary to explain why I chose the subject I did. In the interests of privacy I have given her and the school she works at, a pseudonym.

In the course of my work as an English subject advisor at the Bophuthatswana Inservice College of Education, I first met and observed Pula teaching at Pabelipole High school in 1992. This school lies in the urban complex of Mmabatho, the capital of Bophuthatswana. It is a large, overcrowded school which has 1050 students crammed into standards 8, 9 and 10. The average size of each class is 50 and the standard 9 class that I observed had 56 pupils. The classroom was an average size built to accommodate between 30-40 pupils comfortably.

Pula had previously attended one of my courses held at the college and I was performing a routine follow-up programme which entailed observing teachers in the classroom and giving them feedback and help if necessary. In my course I

had emphasised the importance of small group work to enable pupils to develop their communicative abilities in English. In the lesson that I observed Pula give, she taught what appeared to be the end result of a previous group work lesson. The students were seated in groups and each group was given a chance to present material to the whole class. This material had obviously been prepared prior to the lesson. I assumed that it had been prepared in groups at a previous group work lesson. I did not ask her. In my discussion with her after the lesson, she expressed her interest in using group work in the classroom. She had also demonstrated in this lesson an ability to handle the groups successfully, maintaining control while allowing pupils to express themselves. This ability, together with her general competence as a teacher, made me judge her a suitable subject for research into teacher management techniques of small group work. When I asked her if she would be prepared to be the subject of my research, she complied with my request willingly.

Another reason for her suitability in this regard was that she had had a local DET schooling in the Saulspoort region of the Northern Transvaal (before it was incorporated into Bophuthatswana). She had done her teacher training at the University of Bophuthatswana (Unibo). This meant that if I, or any other researcher, wished to do further research based on my findings in Bophuthatswana then the job would be made easier. It is important to note that Bophuthatswana has many expatriate teachers (in Bophuthatswana terms this does not refer to South Africans), many of whom would have made equally good subjects. It would however, have made it difficult for subsequent research to make any meaningful contribution to the state of education in South Africa if I were conducting interpretive research into a teacher whose educational experience and training had been gleaned outside the country.

3.1.2 Process of setting up the Research

At the beginning of 1993 I approached Pula again to confirm her willingness to be a subject. I explained that I wished to observe her conducting five one hour

lessons. I requested that, if possible, each of the lessons should be on a different aspect of the English curriculum: a reading, writing, literature, grammar and general fluency lesson. The reason for this was to observe whether the group work tasks differed according to the type of lesson. For instance, would her grammar lesson lead to more structured and controlled group work interaction than the fluency lesson? I did not explain this reason to her as I believed this would influence her by alerting her to possibilities that she might not have considered. If further research is to be contemplated in the future into what is taught in the teacher training institutions, then the information obtained in this research has to be a true reflection of the subject's perceptions and abilities, not mine. My course that she had attended had not touched on the management techniques of group work in any detail and therefore the course would have been unlikely to change her group work management techniques to any extent.

The next step after gaining Pula's consent was to get permission from the school principal. Mr. Mopati agreed and gave me free access to the school at any time. I decided not to abuse this hospitality and consequently I always sought his permission whenever I entered the school.

3.1.2.1 Equipment

I obtained a medium-sized tape recorder and a specialised microphone from the Unibo technical services department. The microphone was designed to be unobtrusive while still able to pick up every spoken word uttered in a room with several people. The original purpose of this microphone was to record accurately, the proceedings at board meetings. I was assured that it would serve my purpose. In order for the data to be as open and as accessible as possible, I asked Barbara at the Inservice College to video the lessons as a back-up for the audio material. The video camera she used also had a built-in microphone.

3.1.2.2 Trial Run

A date was set for a trial run of the equipment in the classroom. This was to ensure that the students became familiar with the equipment and us. It was also to check that the equipment worked and whether it gave the desired performance. I began by explaining to the students who we were, what the equipment was for and how it worked. The purpose of our visit was explained but again I was not totally open with them. I told them that I was observing group work and that I would be moving among them with the microphone and that Barbara would also be moving around with the video camera. I stressed that it was important for them to attempt to behave as normally as possible and to try to ignore us. The trial run went smoothly. The students did not seem distracted by us and the quality of both the video and the audio was good. Unfortunately the lesson had not been quite what I had wanted because the students were not interacting in groups. This meant that I could not try the microphone out on group discussions to see if it picked up individual voices against the background noise from other groups talking. The lesson was very similar to the one I had observed in 1992. The students were reporting back to the whole class on what I again assumed, had been a previous lesson in which the students had discussed the topic in groups.

At the end of this trial run, a date and time was set for the first observation. Pula chose to do a reading lesson.

3.1.2.3 Allaying Fears

Before the actual observation began, I decided that my contact so far with Pula had been unsatisfactory. These times had always been rushed and I never felt that she understood what I was doing. Although I did not want her to know the exact focus of my observation, I did want her to understand how I would be operating. I also felt that she was nervous (quite justifiably), and that this did not fit with the open approach that I was trying to adopt. To overcome this, I invited

her to lunch so that we could discuss the research at leisure and allay fears as much as possible. I explained as carefully as possible that I was observing group work in the classroom and that I needed to see different kinds of lessons in order to obtain a full understanding of how this methodology worked in her classroom. This was as much as I was prepared to reveal due to the reasons given above. This would prove to be a drawback as the contradiction between openness and secrecy implied an ethical problem that would be difficult to solve. However I saw no way out of this dilemma and I thought it would be judicious to leave it until the end of the research process when I could discuss my findings with her.

3.2 Research Methods

In attempting to understand the techniques used by teachers in managing small group work in an ESL class, I have decided to focus my classroom observation on one teacher. The rest of this chapter will discuss the nature of a single case study and attempt to justify the use of qualitative, interpretive methods for gaining insight into classroom practice.

There are two broad types of classroom based research. Firstly, there is systematic observation (McIntyre and Macleod 1986) which considers "micro action" using a systematic set of classifications for recording classroom events. It falls into the positivist paradigm of research methods because its analysis is based on quantitative data. It describes overt behaviour and pays little heed to the context in which the observed lessons take place. The second approach to classroom observation exploits ethnographic techniques in an interpretive paradigm. The purpose is to gain an understanding, not only of the overt behaviour, but the reasons behind such behaviour. The great strength of this kind of research is that it moves away from "the simplistic behavioural emphasis of the prespecified coders" (Delamont and Hamilton 1986: 37). Delamont and Hamilton add that classroom research cannot afford to "divorce what people do from their intentions" (Ibid).

3.3 Case Study Research

Many writers believe that in case study research, both types of observation are important. McIntyre and Macleod maintain that systematic observation is essential because if only the global issues are studied, the information "collapses" into that global picture and the elements that make it up, are lost. They advocate a flexible approach which uses systematic observation and considers the contextual (global) factors that cause certain behaviour.

Van Lier (1990) agrees with this when he distinguishes between the "etic" and the "emic". The etic are the instruments and the emic is the context of any research. He argues that a combination of these two is essential, and he refers to this as the "holistic principle". The etic depends on the emic as it is only through studying the context in which a given behaviour occurs, that a full understanding of this behaviour can be reached. In keeping with Van Lier's holistic principle I also describe as fully as possible, the context of the school and, where relevant, the macro culture affecting this context.

In my research I set out to develop a systematic set of criteria that would be employed in my observation. These criteria were decided on in consultation with books (Jaques 1984, Abercrombie 1979) and with practising teachers who used group work successfully. In addition these criteria came from my own experience gained during a pilot study in 1992. From these three sources, I pinpointed five aspects which form the framework for observing the management techniques of the teacher (cf. 1.1).

Walker (1986: 189) has defined case study research as "a selective collection of information of an instance" which will give that instance meaning. This "instance" can be any single phenomenon such as an educational innovation or the testing out of a theory. The case study researcher will observe any of these instances, question them and study them from all angles .

Case studies have as their guiding principle, a wish to study the "idiosyncratic and the particular as legitimate in themselves." (Walker 1986:190). He therefore disputes critics claims that single case studies are invalid because their findings are not generalisable. One instance can always be a source of reality to people who read the research.

> It is the reader who has to ask, what is there in this study that I can apply to my own situation (Walker 1986: 191).

Bassey (in Bell 1991) also emphasises the importance of people in similar situations being able to benefit from the research and claims that this is achieved through vividness of description.

> the merit of a case study is the extent to which the details are sufficient and appropriate for a teacher working in a similar situation to relate his decision-making to that described in the case study (Bassey in Bell 1991: 7).

Bell (1991: 6) further justifies the single case study when she claims that the strength of this type of research lies in identifying "the various interactive processes at work". These processes may not be obvious in large scale research projects, but they are often the cause underlying the success or failure of the "instance".

Lack of generalisability, reliability and validity are the three biggest sources of criticism levelled at single case study research. All are potential threats to the effectiveness of this research (Yin 1984) and I will discuss what these notions mean and how they can be accounted for in the single case study.

3.3.1 Reliability

Reliability refers to the extent to which a procedure can produce the same results

under the same conditions even with a different researcher. The aim of reliability is to eradicate researcher bias in a study. However, case studies not only rely on multiple representations of an instance, they are also open to multiple interpretations (Walker 1986). In interpretive research it is highly probable that a different researcher would have a different interpretation of the same event. No claim is made for the researcher's interpretation over anyone else's. Walker believes that the way to overcome the problem of reliability without damaging the essential nature of interpretive research is by making the research as open and explicit as possible. Yin emphasises this as well and suggests conducting research as if someone were checking up on every move made as though "auditing" procedures.

3.3.2 Validity

Validity refers to "truth conditions" (Walker 1986) which is the match between the conclusions drawn and the reality from which they were taken. In interpretive research this would amount to ensuring that the criteria on which observations are based are validated by authorities other than the researcher so that the researcher's subjectivity is minimised. This Yin refers to as construct validity. In my research I have tried to overcome this problem by using the five criteria (cf. 1.1) which have external validation.

Yin (1984: 37) gives three tactics to ensure construct validity. The first is to use "multiple sources of evidence" at the data collection stage, in the belief that various perspectives on the situation will reflect reality more honestly than only one perspective. The second tactic is to form 'a chain of evidence' which involves observing the same situation repeatedly in order to establish whether a phenomenon happens more than once. If something happens only once over a series of observations, it would be inadmissible as evidence of anything other than chance. The third tactic is to have a draft of the research paper read by the person involved so that the description and analysis can be validated by them.

Walker also emphasises the importance of gauging the reactions of the observed subject to the findings of the research when he notes that one of the characteristics of democratic research is the collection of different definitions and reactions to the event described. In this way researchers are denied the power to impose their own interpretations on the data. Like Yin, he believes this is extremely important for validity because the case study relies on "human instruments" which are open to researcher bias. Furlong and Edwards (1986: 60) stress that what damages research is not just the lack of an open mind but a "false presentation of classroom observations as objective data". The only reliable way to overcome this is to allow the findings to be verified by the person being researched.

3.3.3 Generalisability

Yin believes, like Walker, that the lack of generalisability in single case study research is not really an issue providing that the research is open and explicit so that people reading it can relate it to their own needs and situations. However, he gives more of an insight into how lack of generalisability appears to threaten this type of research. Case study research is always compared unfavourably to the generalisations that are possible from experimental research. Quantitative research tends to rely on statistical generalisations whereas qualitative research tends to rely on "analytical" generalisations (Yin 1984: 38). With this latter type of generalisation, the research attempts to tie particular results to a theory. This means that multiple case studies do not necessarily result in more generalisable and therefore more valid data.

What is vital is that the single case study is adequately linked to a firm theoretical base. This is because

> the theory... that led to a case study in the first place is the same theory that will help to identify the other cases to which the results are generalisable (Yin 1984: 39).

Cohen and Manion (1989) would seem to disagree with this when they define interpretive research as being theory producing. According to them the theory does not precede research, but follows it. However Sharp (1986: 121) emphasises the importance of a prior theory in the belief that research cannot be simply exploratory. Atheoretical research assumes "that individuals socially construct their own reality". However this ignores that people are born into a previously constructed world and that there is a level of reality which is independent of the individual. This external reality becomes the theoretical base on which any study of human behaviour must rest. This theory must however be seen as provisional so as to allow the researcher flexibility (Hargreaves 1986). The researcher should be able to alter her theory if there is an unexpected change in events which contradicts her expectations. Rowan (1981) refers to "reflexivity" in research which seems to confirm flexibility as an important attribute of any researcher. Reflexivity refers to the mental shift that happens due to the dialectical nature of this type of open observation. The researcher discovers new things as she observes and reflects on her observation - her thinking is changed in the process.

Delamont and Hamilton (1986) supply a different application of the word reflexivity when they note the impact that the researcher has on those she observes. Reflexivity refers to the change in behaviour of those under observation due to the presence of an observer. This may seriously damage the validity of the findings if this impact is not recognised and discussed so that it becomes an inherent part of the research. They claim that systematic, quantitative observation ignores the vital impact that the observer has on the behaviour of the pupils and teacher in the classroom observation. By pretending that this reflexivity does not exist and immersing the research in a welter of statistics in the hope of achieving objectivity, the researcher threatens the realism of the findings.

> ...the price paid for such "objectivity" can be high. We believe that by rejecting as invalid , non-scientific or "metaphysical" data such as the actor's ("subjective") accounts, or descriptive

("impressionistic") reports of classroom events, the prespecified coding approach risks furnishing only a partial description (Delamont and Hamilton 1986: 34).

3.4 Ethics

In single case study research of an interpretive nature, ethical questions become prominent. The reason for this is because case study research is "rooted in the practicalities and politics of real life situations...and is more likely to expose those studied to critical appraisal, censure or condemnation" (Jenkins 1986: 221). It is a social process "leading to a social product" because case studies are public documents "with consequences for the lives of those portrayed as well as for the reader" (Walker 1986: 194). The question this poses is whether researchers have the right to publish their findings at the expense of the teacher's self esteem, in the knowledge that there is a wider audience who need to know what happens in classrooms? Walker poses several questions which a researcher in the democratic mode has to think carefully about.

* to whose needs and interest does the research respond?
* who owns the data (the researcher or the subject)
* who has access to the data?
* what obligations does the researcher owe to: his subject...his fellow professionals, others?
* who is the research for? (Walker 1986: 197).

These would all need to be discussed openly and negotiated with the subject.

To this end democratic evaluation (to which all researchers claim to aspire) involves an assessment of how justified the claim for privacy is for any piece of research. If the participant has been promised confidentiality and this covers up important information which would be of benefit to educationists then confidentiality frequently takes second place (Elliot, J. 1986). Researchers are always making these kinds of judgements and it is as well to promise

confidentiality only when there is hope of meeting that promise. The most that one can promise is anonymity of person and context so that the participants are not identifiable. This needs to be established with the participant at the beginning of the research process so that she is aware of the aim, the audience and the methods of the research. The participant would also need to be left in no doubt about her right to privacy and in which particular areas she could exercise this right (Walker 1986). In democratic research this negotiation should become an integral part of the whole research process.

3.4.1 Ethics, Advocacy and Empowerment

My interest in the ethics of research is not merely academic, for my particular piece of research has put me in an unenviable catch 22 situation. My focus was on how the teacher managed group work without my intervention at any stage. My observation of the *teacher's* management techniques required circumspection on my part in order to avoid a radical change in behaviour. For instance, if my participant had known that I was focusing solely on her and not group work generally, several things could have happened: firstly she may have panicked and tried to do things that she normally would not have done and secondly she could have asked me for help in preparing the lessons. (My role as inservice personnel would help to confuse the issue). Both of these would have led to unreliable findings.

This has left me with an ethical problem which the literature is surprisingly thin on helping me resolve. Surprising because it seems unimaginable that I am the first researcher to be met by this conundrum. In order to meet the commitments of democratic research I must show a draft of my findings to the participant so as to negotiate interpretation. However when she reads this draft she will realise that my focus has not been on the class but on her. This will surely destroy my credibility in her eyes and make her feel exploited and deceived.

This problem is briefly referred to in an article entitled "Ethics, Advocacy and

Empowerment..." (Cameron, Frazer, Harvey, Rampton, Richardson 1993), but never really resolved. However there are important points made and a brief summary of their argument will illustrate this and serve to place my research into a framework.

The authors pose the problem of power in which the control of the research process lies more often with the researcher than with the informants. They ask if this is inevitable and then proceed to show how it need not be by identifying three frameworks for understanding the relationship between the researched and the researcher. These are, ethics, advocacy and empowerment. They discuss the three frameworks and show that in rejecting the ethics and advocacy frameworks for an empowering framework, the researcher can overcome the "asymmetrical" relationship that usually exists between researcher and researched. Ethical questions, they say, are usually limited in focus. The questions asked concern "observer's paradox" where it is not considered unethical for the researcher to be "less than candid" about the true intentions of the research. The authors claim that this ethical model of relations is asymmetrical because it relies on the researcher to decide on the fine line between what is acceptable ethically and what is not. The researched person is passive, and consideration of an ethical code only goes as far as the researcher wishes. This type of research the authors term "research **on** social subjects".

The advocacy framework is seen as one step towards a more acceptable model as the research is done **for** the subject but relations are still asymmetrical because the researched is a passive participant. This research must contain a commitment to using the information gained to help the informant in some way. Cameron et al ask why the information has to be used "on behalf of" the researched. They suggest instead that the knowledge gained should be given to the informants to enable them to act for themselves. This would necessitate greater interaction between researcher and researched throughout the process and would fall within the empowerment framework where research is done **with** social subjects. Its guiding principle is to shift the balance of power between

researcher and researched. This belief does admit that power is not monolithically on the side of the researcher. The informant can withhold information or manipulate the process to her own advantage which leaves the researcher in an extremely powerless position. However the researcher does have the ultimate power of being able to represent the informant in the report in the way the researcher sees fit. Therefore interaction and negotiation have to occur at every stage of the research process in order to give informants the chance to "maximise opportunities for defining themselves in advance of being represented" (Cameron et al 1993: 90). Empowering research also seeks to ensure that informants are given the skills so "that those involved in a project are able to have the tools to continue to make critical evaluations themselves" (Ibid).

3.4.2 Criticism

While few people would argue with the sentiments behind empowering research, it seems a bit simplistic to suggest that asymmetrical power relations are so easily overcome. Interacting closely and negotiating interpretation at each stage does not in itself redress this balance. There are status imbalances where in-service lecturers are held in more regard socially than high school teachers. There are also "situations where expert knowledge is felt by the [researched] to be held legitimately by the [researcher]" (Giles 1993: 107). Having elevated notions of empowerment for one's research may cause uncertainty and confusion if this asymmetry is denied. It is one thing to have a desire to communicate and interact with the participant so that the research is open, but quite another to claim that this is redressing the balance of power between participants.

Another problem with the Cameron et al's definition of empowering research is the division into three seemingly exclusive paradigms **on, for** and **with** participants. To be concerned with ethical questions does not preclude committing research to an empowering framework where the informants gain skills from the experience of being part of the research process. Nor does it preclude conducting research for people so that they gain the skills to help

themselves. Surely empowering research can incorporate all three frameworks without jeopardising its essential empowerment. Cameron et al seem to deny this when, on the topic of ethics, they say that,

> the prevailing 'ethical' framework... rests its case for the status quo on the idea that reducing the distance between researcher and researched will destroy the enterprise of research; it will bias the results, muddle the scholarly objectives of academic disciplines and lead researchers into conflicting and irrelevant activities (Cameron et al 1993: 93).

Earlier, they speak disparagingly about "positivist ethical research methods" condemning ethics to synonymity with positivism. They gloss over the reality of the ethical problems that face many researchers perhaps because they reject the ethical framework in favour of the empowerment framework, believing that ethical problems do not arise in an empowering framework (Rickford 1993: 129). In the empowerment framework, empowerment is "the defining principle, the goal of the research" (Figuero 1993: 102). Ethical problems fall away and "innocuous deceptions" would be untenable. For instance it would be impossible to conceal one's true focus if the results were to be shared at every stage with the participants. This however, does not overcome the problem of obtaining accurate data in some research contexts such as mine.

The aim of my research is to be ultimately empowering but in order to compile courses on group work management techniques, I have to find out what actually happens in classrooms so that I understand the problems. As Cameron et al admit "there is a difference between what people do and what they say, between their behaviour and their accounts of their behaviour" (1993: 86). I would add to this that there could be an important difference between how a teacher normally behaves in the classroom and how she behaves when the researcher is in the classroom too and the teacher knows the exact area and focus of the research. Yet Cameron et al would deny that there is any research context where partial

deceptions are justified in order to discover the real extent of this difference. If as Rickford states, the use of partial deceptions meets with no consensus amongst researchers then perhaps this issue needs to be thrashed out before it is glibly relegated to the ranks of positivism and therefore oblivion.

3.4.3 Concluding Remarks on Ethics

It is not within the scope of this paper to find answers to this question, but it seems necessary to state that ethical issues are far too complex to ignore. If it is thought that empowering research need not consider these issues then in some contexts the research may run the risk of being unreliable and invalid because the data collected may be false. If I had pronounced my research to be empowering and been totally open about my focus, I might have run the risk of my subject changing her behaviour in the classroom. This would have given me false data which would not truthfully inform the basis of my "empowering" course on group work techniques to in-service teachers.

On reflection, my research goal falls into an advocacy framework because I hope to help teachers in my area to manage small group work better. The goal is also empowering because I will give them the skills to enable them to manage this methodology on their own. However, the research process is an unhappy mixture of the ethical and empowerment frameworks. I use a partial deception but also attempt what Rickford says is an impossibility; I allow the participant to comment on a draft so that her perceptions become part of the report. The two do not mix well and it has resulted in a "mad, sad, bitter...disappointed" subject (Rickford 1993: 130).

3.5 Audio and Visual Equipment

While the need for openness and transparency hangs in the balance on the question of whether to be totally honest to the informant or not, it is undeniably important in the methods used to collect the data. These methods and the data

itself should be accessible to anyone wishing to check the findings. The use of audio and visual equipment ensures this. One disadvantage of this which Delamont and Hamilton (1986: 38) note is that contextual data may be missed if an observer is not present. They say that in their view, "while an elaborate technique can facilitate description of behaviour, it cannot furnish explanation for behaviour".

3.6 The Interview Technique

The interview technique is important in order to understand the motives behind the behaviour of the subject. It is a vital tool in accessing what a person knows, their values and beliefs (Cohen and Manion 1989). Interviews may also be used to follow up unexpected results which have been thrown up during the data gathering phase.

There are various types of interview. The one most applicable to my situation is what Cohen and Manion call the "focused" interview because it focuses response to a known situation in which the interviewee has been involved. It is also focused because the researcher has specific questions that require answers. In this way the interviewer has more control than in a completely unstructured interview. This direction is important when complex attitudes are involved and where knowledge is vague (Cohen and Manion 1989).

One of the biggest threats to the interview technique is that of researcher bias. The questions asked may reflect the values and beliefs of the interviewer. There is "a tendency for the interviewer to see the respondent in his own image" (Cohen and Manion 1989: 318) which can lead the interviewer to seek answers that support his own preconceived ideas. The respondent can also invalidate the interview by giving answers that do not reflect reality but are aimed at presenting herself in a positive light.

To overcome these problems as much as possible, the interviewer has to

generate an empathetic environment in which the respondent feels at ease. This, says Kitwood (in Cohen and Manion 1989: 319) is vital so that people "are more likely to disclose aspects of themselves...than they would in a less human situation". The more rational, calculating and detached the interviewer is, the more likely the answers are to be closely guarded and calculated.

Walker (1986: 214) also emphasises this when he states that the important skills for an interviewer are "psychological mobility and emotional intelligence". Psychological mobility describes the researcher's ability to switch off her own value system so that she can be open to and aware of the respondent's values. It requires the researcher in a cross-cultural encounter to be conscious of her own frame of reference in order to move outside it because "conscious involvements are not a handicap...unconscious ones are always dangerous" (Powdermaker quoted in Walker 1986: 215). Emotional intelligence extends psychological mobility. It is not enough to be self aware - you need to "enter the world of the other" to become sensitive to the feelings and attitudes of the respondent so that you understand their frame of reference. Both these skills will help ensure that what the researcher says and how it is said will not threaten or appear to judge the respondent.

3.7 Conclusion

Interpretive research needs transparency to be its guiding principle at all levels of the process. This is necessary on four main counts based on the foregoing discussion:

* so that people working in similar situations to that under observation can relate this situation to their own and learn from it.

* the perspectives of the researcher and teacher need to be discussed and explained so that researcher bias is at least open to scrutiny and the teacher's attitudes and behaviour are explicable.

* the theory behind the observation and to which the observation is linked, must be openly discussed so that it is obvious to the readers the reasons for the conclusions drawn.

* the context in which the "instance" occurs must be described in detail in order to build up as full and vivid a picture as possible, in the belief that this fullness gives the instance meaning.

Without this transparency at all levels, the research is likely to fall foul of the essential concepts on which all good research is based: reliability, validity and ethics.

Chapter Four

Research Description and Analysis

4.1 Structure of Report

This report will cover the observed lessons and the interviews, in chronological order so as to reflect the process of revelation and thinking more accurately. Therefore a discussion of interview 1 follows on from lesson 1 and 2. It was at this point that I conducted the interview as I needed clarification on Pula's perceptions of her first two lessons. This is followed by descriptions of lessons 3, 4 and 5. A discussion of interview 2, in which I attempt to pursue unanswered questions and unexplained statements, concludes the report.

4.2 Lesson One (Appendix 1)

4.2.1 Setting-up

We arrived ten minutes early and reported to the headmaster. We waited for a further fifteen minutes before Pula arrived to escort us to the classroom. The students were waiting in their groups. This was one problem that arose from not telling Pula of the exact focus in my observations. I had missed one vital part of the management of small group work; the setting up of groups at the beginning of the lesson, because she did not realise the importance of this.

The only available space for me to sit and observe was in the middle of the room. Fifty six people in a small space who have already been arranged in their groups do not leave much room for anyone else. Barbara stood in the corner with the video camera on her shoulder. However the zoom facilities on the camera could make up for lack of mobility. It also meant that my seat in the middle of the class was not a problem as the camera could be my eye for the

groups behind me or when the teacher went out of view.

Pula told me that the students arranged themselves in groups and that she had nothing to do with this formation. The students had arranged themselves into seven groups with between six and ten pupils in each group.

The lesson we had agreed on was a reading lesson using an old matric comprehension test (November 1991: Appendix 9). The passage was an article on Aids with a six framed cartoon and questions.

4.2.2 Pair Work and Report-Back

The lesson began with a whole class "question and answer" routine on the general nature of Aids. This lasted five minutes. The class was then asked to discuss the cartoon *in pairs* and analyze its meaning. The pair work lasted five minutes. The class as a whole reported back with individual randomly picked pupils asked to give their analysis (Appendix 1). The teacher fitted the leader/instructor role as defined by Jaques (1984) in this report back. However as Jaques notes (1984: 145) it is very easy for teachers in this role to develop "an authoritarian mode in order to preserve their image and control". Pula seems to slip into this as she increasingly dominates proceedings so that no student gets a chance to say more than 15 words and most exchanges are considerably less. As Prabhu (1987) states, it is only when pupils' contributions are sustained that acquisition takes place (cf. 2.5.6). Also, in the last half of the lesson there are 11 "chorus" exchanges in which all the students react in unison to her statements and questions. The conclusion is that very little fluency would have been developed in this lesson as students were not given enough chance to make utterances. It is not certain from the student exchanges that they have understood the cartoon as she takes away the initiative from students before she has given them a chance to reply fully (exchange 14 and 15). Unfortunately the pair work was not recorded, but it only lasted five minutes and students were extremely subdued during their interaction. This led to the impression that there

was not enough sustained language interaction to develop fluency.

4.2.3 Comment on Pair Work Task

The question is, how could this lesson have been improved so that the teacher was not forced into becoming authoritarian? I think the answer lies in structuring. Although Pula appears to give very clear instructions (exchange 1), her directive to them 'to analyze with your friend' is too vague. They are not told what to look for or what "analyze" means. Therefore when they give answers that do not fit with her expectations, she feels the need to step in and explain (exchange 7 - 15). This task of describing the cartoon was not an open-ended one. There were only limited options and definite right and wrong answers. This means that possibly a tight series of questions would have directed the pupils towards the right answer. It was still a valuable group exercise particularly suited to pair work because it did not demand the generation of creative ideas or creative thinking. The more open-ended the task, the greater the need to have more than two people in the group (cf. 2.1).

4.2.3.1 Task Structure

A way to give more structure to the exercise would have been firstly, to ensure that students had the necessary vocabulary (exchange 7, "immune") to talk about the topic. Then to give a definite clear question to be answered and a clear method for arriving at the answer. For example: "What is happening in each picture? Each of you take three pictures and look carefully at facial expressions and actions so that you can describe the relationship and feelings of the "people" as well as their actions in the cartoon. Then share your understanding with your partner." This would tie in with the Vygotskian notion of "scaffolding" in which students had their tasks carefully structured in the belief that this mediated learning more efficiently than unstructured tasks.

As Knowles (1983: 76) says it is unlikely that "vigorous talk and relevant

comment, analysis or evaluation" will emerge spontaneously. The teacher needs to pay close attention to questions "if pupil responses of value are to emerge". As Barnes and Todd (1977: 83) say, the most effective types of questions are the ones "which help the learners to structure their discussion without pre-determining its content".

4.2.4 Conclusion to Lesson One

The next twenty minutes were spent with the teacher reading the passage to the pupils, explaining words and concepts to the whole class. The whole class then read the passage silently for ten minutes.

The questions were tackled as a whole class activity. The teacher asked the questions and chose a pupil whose hand was up, to answer. Many of the questions were perfect for group discussion particularly questions 1, 2 and 3. They were open ended and cognitively challenging. Students could have benefited from discussing these in small groups of no more than three to four pupils in order to diminish the chances of 'sleeping partners' in the learning process.

The whole lesson took seventy minutes and the students were told to write the answers for homework. Only a few minutes of cooperative learning in the form of pairs had been used, but I felt confident that this was just an introduction. This was confirmed when Pula asked us to return the next day so that she could complete the lesson as she had not had time to finish it. I expected to observe a follow-up group work lesson with perhaps a task or a question put to them which they could discuss in groups. I thought as I left the school, that what was emerging was a different perception of group work to mine. Pula did not seem to acknowledge group work as an integral part of the reading lesson. Instead, it seemed as though group work might be seen as an activity that happened in a separate lesson in which the theme of the reading lesson could be used as a topic for discussion.

4.3 Lesson Two. (Appendix 2)

The class was arranged in the same groups as the previous lesson. Forty-five minutes of the lesson was spent checking the homework from the previous day as a whole class activity. Pula set a topic on Aids for the class to go home and prepare for an 'oral' lesson the next day. The topic was: should a pregnant, HIV positive woman be allowed to give birth? This seemed a perfect topic for a group discussion. The students had background knowledge of the topic and it was open-ended and controversial which could have led to real differences of opinion. This would have meant that students would have to argue their points, negotiate, accept other's arguments, listen, and generally participate in the cut and thrust of real debate. With fifteen minutes left Pula turned to me and announced the end of the lesson.

4.3.1 Researcher Interference

Before I could think, I expressed my shock at seeing no group work. She looked confused and said that she thought the students had worked in groups in the previous lesson and that she had given them a chance to discuss the questions in groups. This contradicted my impression and the video footage bore me out. I realised that we had different ideas about the nature of group work and so I dropped the subject. I wanted to find out what her ideas were and suggested that we watch the video of the first lesson together and discuss it. However, I did suggest that she allow the pupils to discuss the topic in groups until the end of the lesson. Pula grudgingly asked them to discuss the topic in their groups and I had the strong feeling that I had overstepped the bounds of my researcher status. I had interfered with the unfolding of her lessons and threatened her self confidence. She moved around the groups, listening and at the end checked through groups points made in writing. She only corrected grammatical mistakes.

4.3.2 Description and Analysis of the Group Work

I taped four groups during this group work section. I wanted to obtain a clearer picture of the students' abilities, both cognitively and communicatively. Of the four, only one group seemed able to ignore the microphone. Their discussion was extremely interesting (Appendix 2). There were five arguments put forward by the pupils only one of which was not explored by the group as a whole (exchange 17). The other four are discussed in what Knowles (1983) refers to as typically exploratory talk, not directed or purposeful. There is a great deal of groping for the right word (exchange 35) and ideas (exchange 9 - 15 where Boy 3 is grappling with whether the cure for Aids will be found. If so when and should it affect our decision to allow the child to die). There is a very clear leadership role taken by Boy 3. He challenges (exchange 23 "support your statement".), ensures that everyone in the group has a chance to speak (exchange 28 "Thank you. Let's hear others".), clarifies position (exchange 30. "Is that your position".), asks challenging questions (exchange 39. "What about if the baby could be born now".) and controls (exchange 57. "Okay guys".).

4.3.3 Teacher Reaction

I decided to speak to Pula immediately concerning her feelings and to set a date for her to view the video. It proved to be a good time to deal with her feelings because her guard had not had time to manifest itself. I felt that what she said on this occasion was more revelatory than her rather pat responses to some of my interview questions (Appendix 6). She gave two reasons for feeling upset. Firstly that the pupils had "behaved badly" and were noisy and undisciplined. The chairpersons had not done their work in maintaining control (this was certainly not true of group 1 which had an extremely competent chairperson). Secondly, they had spoken Setswana despite her pleas to speak English. This contradicted our impression as both Barbara and I felt the groups were orderly and amazingly quiet considering the size of the class. They did speak Setswana except when the microphone was put in front of them. However I pointed out to Pula that it

need not be a problem. If the topic is as cognitively demanding as this was, then students are bound to feel the need to express themselves initially in their first language. After this stage, they would need time to translate their thoughts into English and the report back stage would need to be in English (cf. 2.4.5.2). A comment that she made which was more disturbing, was that she had not wanted to stop them speaking Setswana in case she interfered with my research. This is again a problem arising from not being open about the focus of my research. Her "interference" was exactly what I wanted to observe. I again emphasised that it was important for her to be as normal as possible in her treatment of the groups. I told her that I was observing everything about group work including her interaction with them. Pula suggested that I return the next day for the final stage in the reading lesson.

4.4 Interview One (Appendix 7)

The aim of this interview was to establish:

1. whether Pula was conscious of the lack of group interaction in the first two lessons.
2. to establish the aims of the lesson.
3. how these aims incorporated small group work.
4. how the small group work was planned.

The interview was conducted in the media centre at the in-service college. We sat in front of the edit suite in order to view the tape together and to stop it when necessary. I emphasised that I wanted her to stop the tape when she wished to say something and I showed her how to.

Unfortunately I had not gone through the tape rigorously beforehand in order to note points at which to ask questions. Nor had I formulated questions in a careful enough manner. This resulted in many leading questions due to my lack of experience as an interviewer. I was relying on Pula's initiative and ability to

perceive what needed explanation. This worked some of the time as in exchange 2-5, but the remainder of the interview consisted of my stopping the tape and asking the questions.

The interview made it quite clear that the aim of the lesson was to prepare standard nine pupils for a matric exam (exchanges 17 and 18). Another reason seemed to be the relevance and interest of the topic (exchanges 27 and 28). The last and least important reason was the potential that the topic and questions had for small group work. She does acknowledge that she believed that group work would fit in well with this lesson, but this may have been the result of a leading question from the interviewer. I classify it as an afterthought. I feel this classification is justified because despite admitting that the lesson was ideal for cooperative learning, the pupils never interacted in groups in these two lessons. Pula did not pick up the lack of group interaction even when she watched the tape. This illustrates that it was not uppermost in her mind despite knowing that this is what I was observing. It is further illustrated in the fact that she only stopped the tape twice and both times were to point out things not related to group interaction.

I inferred from this interview and from my observations of the two lessons, that the use of group work is not perceived as an integral part of the lesson. It seems to be limited to the physical arrangement of the pupils in groups.

4.5 Lesson Three (Appendix 3)

4.5.1 Description and Comment

The lesson turned out to be a traditional "oral" class. The students were once again seated in their groups and a spokesperson from each group stood up and gave their group's verdict on the Aids topic. Group I (Appendix 2) gave a very hesitant, unrepresentative display of their discussion (Appendix 3). It reflected none of the lively debate of the previous group discussion nor did it attempt to

sum up the various arguments that people had made. One can only agree with Knowles (1983: 74) that each member should be allowed to give a brief summary of their argument to ensure that the report-back reflects all the views expressed and not "a consensus which serves to mask important views and ideas". For instance Boy 4's views are not expressed in this report-back. Despite his "volte face" at the end (exchange 87), Boy 4 does represent the only differing opinion and reasonably sustained argument for this opinion, in the group. His views should have been aired, either by himself (although this is probably impractical in large classes) or the group spokesperson giving a summary of the different arguments.

4.5.2 Report-Back

The other groups gave what could have also been just the opinion of the individual spokesperson/s. Many of them began by saying "I think/don't think..." and this was not challenged by the teacher. After each group was given the chance to "report-back", the teacher played a facilitative role in renewing the discussion as a whole class activity. She gave further points for them to think about (exchange 27). She gave points on either side of the argument and then asked for reactions. Predictably, only six people spoke and except for one, they had all spoken before. The whole class activity is unlikely to draw out the timid, self-conscious or less competent speakers of English. It may have been better for the teacher to ask the students to discuss the very interesting points that she had brought up, in different groups or pairs in order to get a different mix of ideas. It is interesting to note that all the points that Pula raised in exchange 27 ("Okay from a social view...Think of the pains caused to the child. If you abort the baby and then only next year scientists come up with the cure") had been discussed in Group 1 (Appendix 2): peer pressure and rejection, possibility of a cure, pain and suffering caused in the interim. If Group 1 had been encouraged to offer a summary of their discussion, Pula could have built on what they had said. A golden opportunity to boost self worth was lost. She also failed to give students help in making their language appropriate. Numerous pupils spoke

about 'killing the child' instead of "aborting" the foetus.

4.5.3 Comment on Report-Back

Of the 56 pupils in the class, only 17 spoke during this lesson. Only one group of girls reflected a difference of opinion. Two girls from group 7 gave different reasons from each other although their opinions were the same (exchange 19 and 20). Other pupils merely repeated the same argument as the previous speaker in their group. Reporting back is a skill which has to be taught and practised, but it is made much easier if the students have been given plenty of time to discuss so that they can exchange and develop ideas and sum these up for the report back stage. Fifteen minutes was not enough time for all this. The groups seemed to have enough time to discuss the topic although the discussion was still fairly animated by the time the lesson ended. However there was not enough time for organising the report-back; who was going to do it, the organisation of the material to incorporate everybody's opinions and the shaping of the language needed for a polished performance. Although sufficient time was given to the report-back (which Van Ments says is essential) there was not enough time given to organising the report-back. Barnes (in Knowles 1983: 216) says that students need considerable time to plan and organise their ideas after their tentative group discussions. Therefore the teacher must structure this "ordering of knowledge for others" into the time allocated to group discussions. This is particularly important if students are expected to deliver their report-back in English having first discussed the topic in Setswana (cf. 2.4.5.2).The teacher could announce at a certain point that the groups should begin to prepare their reports for the whole class.

If the students had not had those fifteen minutes of discussion that I initiated, would their report back have been any better? This is doubtful because it would have relied on their discussing the topic in their spare time or thinking up ideas on their own. Neither of these would have ensured any principled cooperative learning because both would have been completely out of the teacher's control.

It also could have resulted in the confident few, whose English was good, delivering the report back with nobody else in the group ever having to say anything - the classic sleeping partners.

4.6 Lesson Four (Appendix 4)

Pula had chosen to do a summary lesson. Although this had not been part of my original request, I said nothing because it had become clear that her perception of group work was different from mine. I had assumed that we meant the same thing when talking about this methodology. Therefore it seemed unimportant to insist on adhering to the previous lesson's plan.

She had asked me to photocopy a summary question from an old DET exam to use in the lesson (Appendix 9). She handed this paper out to all pupils along with a sheet with guidelines to follow when summarising. The first half of the 80 minute lesson was spent reviewing the process of how to write summaries and how to answer an exam summary task. This was done as a whole class activity with the teacher asking questions and choosing individuals to answer. It was a good explanation of the process of summary writing because points made were illustrated with examples from the everyday writing in newspapers. Pula used real newspaper headlines to illustrate prediction for example.

4.6.1 Group Discussion

In the second half of the lesson the students were asked to read through the text of the matric summary task individually and then discuss it in their groups. First, Pula went through the matric texts with the four points from the summary guidelines. She showed pupils how to use the guidelines on the two texts in the matric paper. After she had made sure that the students knew how to proceed, she told them to start reading. She told them that when they had finished reading they were to discuss the answer in their groups and come up with six points (Appendix 4).

This interactive section of the lesson lasted 10 minutes including the initial silent reading. While the groups were busy, Pula moved amongst them, listening and occasionally interrupting them. She told several of the groups to underline rather than write out the six points in order to save time. She explained to one group who had been silent, how to proceed. She told one pupil in this group to give his points one by one and check that everyone had the same answer.

The students seemed to be speaking in English on the whole. This could have been because the vocabulary that the pupils would have needed in order to express themselves in English, was there in the text.

I taped two groups and both displayed signs of grappling with the problem in classic group work style. They contradicted each other, challenged each other, made points clearer for each other and generally showed signs of cooperative learning that had not been present in any of the previous lessons (Appendix 5). I asked one of these groups if they had been allocated roles. The teacher had given the role of chairperson to one student and secretary to another.

4.6.2 Report-Back

The last phase of this lesson was the report back. Each group was given the chance to give one point. She then asked the class if everyone agreed with the point before she wrote it on the board. One group did not agree with a point made and Pula allowed them to give their reasons before asking the rest of the class for their opinions.

4.6.3 Comment on Report-Back

For the first time in four lessons, Pula had used group work as an integral part of the lesson. She gave clear task instructions (exchange 1), she moved among the groups clarifying the task to three groups. The report-back was well structured, each group getting the chance to give one point. Every point was

written up on the board so that the class could see the end result together. Pula ensured that each group was in agreement with every point that was given before she wrote it on the board. All the hallmarks of a successful group lesson were there: structure and control, teacher facilitating without dominating, students having enough time to discuss the topic. The reason for this may lie in the fact that the task was not an open one. This meant that the group discussion did not have to continue for very long before the students were ready to report back. There were six definite answers, and anything else would have been unacceptable. The vocabulary, and structures were all in the text which made the job easier for students as they did not have to think too hard about the language they needed. This would provide the scaffolding which Ellis (1990) believes to be a requirement for an optimal language learning environment. The impression throughout this lesson was that the teacher felt comfortable and so did the students. They knew exactly what they had to do and had a very clear answer to compile. The teacher was in the leader/instructor role mainly although she facilitated the five minute group discussion and the report-back, very well. She seems to feel most comfortable with this role, as evident in all the five observed lessons and the fact that she reacted badly to the group session that I had initiated, on the grounds that the class were undisciplined. Perhaps this was an indication that she felt out of control rather than that the pupils were actually out of control. This would again confirm Jaques' (1984) theory that teachers often revert to authoritarian mode if their natural authority appears to be challenged.

Although I had intended this to be the last of my observations, I felt strongly that I had to check whether Pula used group work as an integral part of the lesson again. This would entail observing another class. I set up a date and she chose to conduct a literature lesson.

4.7 Lesson Five (Appendix 5)

4.7.1 An Outline

The lesson centred around the short story "Thanks to Mrs. Parsons" by H.C. Bosman. The lesson had obviously been started prior to this one. A student from each group gave a prepared account of some conflict that their family had experienced with a neighbour and how they had resolved it (Appendix 6). The short story is about a similar conflict. Five out of seven groups participated. Two groups had prepared nothing and this amounted to 13 students sitting passively during the entire lesson. This did not seem to worry Pula as she glossed over their inactivity by moving directly onto the next group (exchanges 2-4). Although it was evident from interview 2 (exchange 75) that she had noticed their inactivity and did not approve of it, she did not relay her feelings to the students and could easily have given them the impression that it was acceptable to have done nothing. Overall 13 students participated actively:

* Group 2 had 7 girls and three of them contributed.
* Group 3 was made up of 6 girls and only one of them spoke.
* Group 5 was composed of 8 boys one of whom read and two of whom attempted to give solutions to the conflict. At this point Pula asked a series of questions about their conflict and each question was answered in one sentence by a different student from the group.
* Group 6 had 8 boys and three of them contributed.
* Group 7 was made up of 6 girls 3 of whom spoke.

Although group 3 appears to have many more pupils participating, only 3 did so actively. Each group read their contribution from pieces of paper and although this is understandable in a second language it led to a very stilted presentation which became tedious to listen to. Pula did try to stop them reading (exchange 6) and a few groups tried to look up occasionally from their papers.

After the individual group report back, a more successful intergroup discussion began. Pula asked the class if they thought someone's solution had been a good one. It proved to be a catalyst which led to an interesting debate (exchange 56-87). However only 7 students participated in this phase of the lesson and no attempt was made to draw in other pupils or pupils from the two groups which had prepared nothing.

4.7.2 Questions to the Teacher

During the lesson several questions arose which I asked Pula directly afterwards. It was obvious that the students had prepared something beforehand in a previous lesson. My questions to her were:

* what lesson had taken place prior to this one?
* what were the instructions to them during this previous lesson?
* had the students worked together in groups on this occasion?

Her answer was that she had read the story with them in class the previous day. She had then asked each group to prepare a story based on conflict between their family and a neighbour. This was set them for homework and they were given no time in class to prepare this nor was there any group work. They were instead told to prepare their story with the members of their groups during their spare time.

4.7.3 Comment on Lesson Five

The important part of group work was relegated to "spare" time and one wonders how much group effort there was or how much was left to 2 or 3 students in each group to pull the whole story together. The fact that two groups did not prepare anything is an indication of how unsuccessful this approach was. It was too open to abuse and did not give the pupils the disciplined environment of the classroom with the presence of the teacher, in which to discuss their stories.

The topic was not conducive to interesting group work. Composing a common story is very difficult to achieve as it is likely to be dominated by 1 or 2 imaginative students in the group. It does not lend itself to the exchange of ideas, debate, arguments that are normally associated with group work. This topic was better suited to pair or individual work.

The task does not fit any of Nation's (1989) types of group work described earlier in this thesis (cf. 2.5.2). It is not really a cooperative exercise, although it could have been if it had been carefully structured and monitored by the teacher. Each group could have been given time to compile a story in a combining arrangement, then each student in the group could have contributed at least one solution to the resolution of the conflict that arose. Or the groups could have been given a story by the teacher (either the same one or different stories to each group) and they could have made suggestions to resolve the conflict in a cooperating arrangement. This last one would have been better suited to the task of resolving conflict as it would not have entailed the students spending precious time on manufacturing the story in the first place. Although Pula said to me that she had asked each group to compile one story, Group 2 had compiled two stories (exchange 7). This showed that there had been some confusion over the task. Because of the lack of focus and structure, the class degenerated into a typical teacher-dominated question and answer routine in which only the articulate few participated.

This lesson fitted the picture I had begun to build up during my observations. Pula's notion of small group work seemed to be based on the physical arrangement of students in groups and that the interaction of students in groups was not necessarily an integral part of the lesson. Nor was the control inherent in the classroom environment seen as an important attribute of successful group work. The initial trial run which I have not used as evidence, fits this pattern as well. The students sat in groups but no group interaction took place. As Barnes and Todd (1977: 80) say "the very use of small group discussion in lessons is a powerful way of showing that the teacher believes in the value of talk in

learning". I would tentatively suggest that Pula does not value talk as a way of learning because she relegates the all important process during which ideas and language are formed and practised, to "spare" time after school. I use the word tentatively because I do realise that I did not see enough lessons to make my statement any more definite.

4.7.4 Preparation for Interview Two

In order to establish Pula's notion of group work, I conducted a second interview with her at the in-service college (Appendix 6: Interview 2). In this second interview I attempted to resolve the problems I had experienced in the first interview of not having sufficient structuring of questions. Relying on Pula to initiate a free flow of information had not been successful. I therefore compiled some questions and decided on the order in which I would ask them, starting from simple operational questions to put her at ease, and ending with potentially threatening questions. The questions were:

1. operational. How are the groups organised? This is an important part of group work which was always done prior to my arrival in the classroom.

2. autobiographical. Had she ever experienced cooperative learning either as a pupil or as a student at university? These questions derive from the notion that peoples' attitudes to teaching and learning are derived from their own experiences as pupils.

3. attitudinal. What does group work mean to her and what are her reasons for using it in the classroom? After these first two questions I planned to play her the tape of the group of boys discussing Aids. I felt it was a good example of the benefits of interacting in groups. I wanted to establish her opinion of it.

4.8 Interview Two *(Appendix 6)*

4.8.1 Operational

Pula's answers to the first group of questions showed that the groups stayed the same throughout the year. This is understandable considering the number of pupils and the size of the classroom, which would make the re-ordering of groups cumbersome. The groups formed themselves (this I established in a conversation with her outside the taped interview) and there was a clear gender division with only one mixed group. This Knowles (1983: 213) believes is inevitable in a class of teenagers where single sex groups are more at ease with each other. He suggests allowing students to sit in self selected groups "to minimise the social problems that have to be dealt with in addition to the set task". Pula organised a chairperson and secretary for each group and these roles were also fixed for the year (exchange 15-19). She had not thought of changing roles within the groups

> ...even though I've never thought of changing them (exchange 20).

She seems to suggest in exchanges 1-6 that group work becomes the main aim of the lesson. It is not seen as something that facilitates another educational objective. The students' "activity" becomes the objective of the lesson.

4.8.2 Autobiographical

Pula's answers to the autobiographical questions confirmed the impression that she had never experienced interactive learning herself as a pupil. At Unibo where she did her teacher training, she had been advised to use group work in the classroom and had seen a video of students being taught using this methodology. She never experienced it herself as a student. This was confirmed by Professor D. Reading (1993 May 24 pers. comm.) who had been Head of the Cluster of Professional Studies in the School of Education at The University of

Bophuthatswana in 1986 when Pula was a student there. He said that students had been advised to practise group work but they had never been explicitly taught how to do it. The problem of not experiencing a methodology at first hand is emphasised in exchange 28 where she mentions that it was difficult to put group work methods into practice without the necessary skill in managing them.

> We were shown a video...but at times it's not that easy until someone is there who keeps telling you how about...how to go about doing that because if we have large numbers in our classes we really don't know how to go about it (exchange 28).

This methodology was never related to the reality in which she found herself teaching, so that the problems of overcrowding only compounded the problem for her. The in-service course she attended and which I gave in 1992, did give concrete examples of how to use group and pair work for specific lessons, but it was not long enough or thorough enough to make an impact.

4.8.3 Attitudinal

This interview brought out sharply that Pula's ideas on the nature of group work and how it should be conducted were in contradiction to her practice. In exchange 44 she says "...it needs my supervision to ensure that they aren't discussing anything...out of the classroom". In practice, on at least two occasions the group discussion took place in their spare time and she had no control over it. This evoked the question of what group work meant to her (exchanges 45 and 46). The first part of her definition again contradicted her practice. "It means a group of students working together in class sharing ideas". Only one out of five of the observed classes reflected this perception. The second part of her definition, "At the end...coming up with something common from each group" is a true reflection of what happened in her classes. However this belief in consensus is not a necessary attribute of cooperative learning. In fact Corson (1988: 113) claims that teachers must encourage divergence of views rather than

consensus as this enables students to develop the ability to tolerate differences of opinion. It is important for students to learn that differences are not threatening. It is this tolerance that cooperative learning encourages and seeking consensus on every issue could be damaging to this spirit. If it is the chairperson's job to ensure that every member of the group has to agree, then some members of the group will have to compromise their opinions. The whole exercise could begin to resemble a competition to see who can browbeat everyone into submission. As Corson adds, it is important for teachers to teach the democratic skills and behaviour involved in debate, i.e. how to argue rationally, to persuade through well thought out argument, to tolerate other's views, but in the end if there is no agreement then this should be accepted and the views of everyone in the group should be reflected in the report at the end of the discussion.

This idea of consensus is illustrated again in exchange 63-64 where she talks about the literature lesson. The groups are expected to achieve a common story. "...they'll bring all their facts together so that when that lesson comes they know what to talk about". Group discussions do not always have to focus on controversial issues. In a language class especially, a teacher may just want to give students fluency practice or indeed to "come up with a common story" as in the literature lesson. However Pula does not distinguish in her expectations between controversial issues such as the Aids topic and the summary lesson which was not open-ended or controversial. She requires of them both that students reach consensus.

Pula revealed another important perception about group work on the subject of the literature lesson. In exchanges 68-71 she seems to imply that the product is more important than the process they have gone through in order to compile their story. The product, she states, is the important part as it reveals that "at least they did the work". The quality of the discussion leading to the report-back does not seem to be an issue for her. This is evident again in exchanges 82-85. In this exchange I draw a distinction between group interaction during the discussion

phase of group work and a group report-back. She denies this distinction. In the end, she says, the students have "to give feedback to the class" in both "types" of group work and therefore there is no difference between them. She has revealed a lack of understanding about the importance of the process that students are involved in order to achieve their "product". As Barnes and Todd (1977: 84) say:

> when teachers set up group work it is often because they place more emphasis upon the journey than upon the destination, because they are more interested in developing their pupils' ability to think than in taking them to specific conclusions.

It would seem that Pula's notion of group work lacks this dimension.

4.8.4 Comment

Exchanges 32 and 34 show that Pula understands the problems of using group work in a classroom to promote competence in a second language.

> In the first place since I've mentioned that we have large numbers of students in class there are those who hide behind others. You really can't be sure that each and every one participates because of the large numbers...(exchange 32).

> ...some of them do have this problem..they have a problem when it comes to expressing themselves. Like maybe if they were doing it in their mother language..mother tongue, then they would...would participate (exchange 34).

Firstly she realises that it is difficult to ensure that everyone takes an active part so that they are in fact practising the language and not just "hid[ing] behind others" (exchange 32). Secondly she understands the problem of attempting to

combine practice in the second language with cognitively challenging topics. Very often the students "do not feel free" (exchange 34) when they have to express opinions or grapple with problems through the medium of the second language, because their competence in the language is weak not because they lack opinions or ideas. She also acknowledges that students who do not have confidence in their English ability, will probably not participate in group discussions for fear of being ridiculed (exchange 38).

> ..so most of them have this problem...when it comes to expressing themselves...they really don't know how to go about it...they feel they don't want to make blunders in front of other [students] (exchange 38).

However none of these problems are dealt with in her classes. She has not attempted to resolve shyness by reducing the number of students in a group and nor has she tried to resolve the issue of language practice versus the exchange of ideas. Sometimes it is necessary to provide carefully structured activities where the aim is to practise the language. At other times group work could be more open-ended, so that the exchange of ideas, arguing a point and listening to others becomes the main focus of the lesson. It is in this last type of lesson that I have argued that the first language could be used very profitably (cf.2.4.5.2).

4.9 Teacher Reaction to the Draft Report

In keeping with the requirements of democratic research I showed a draft copy of my research findings to Pula. Her written reply (Appendix 8) confirmed my apprehensions concerning the impossibility of mixing an ethical and empowering framework where I use a partial deception to maintain reliability but also allow the participant access to the draft in order for her perceptions to become part of the report (Rickford 1986: 130). Her observation that she had thought my only interest was in observing her lessons and not with the school in general, were

justified, and as a result I have deleted these comments from my final report. Another reason for leaving them out was because a discussion of the school environment did not prove relevant to an understanding of Pula's management or perceptions of group work. They were included in the draft because I felt it important initially to paint as broad a picture of the event as possible in order to give "the instance meaning" (Walker 1986: 189).

The other comments in her letter reflect my fear that she would feel exploited and deceived and that my credibility would be destroyed in her eyes. "I really feel disappointed considering that I've done several lessons with her thinking I was on the right track. She too kept telling me how good and interesting my lessons were...". I did point out to her in a subsequent discussion that I still consider her a good teacher. She explains well, is clear in her task-setting and she relates well to the students. Knowing how to conduct successful group work is only one aspect of teaching (albeit an important one) and is not synonymous with good teaching.

4.9.1 Researcher's Comment on Teacher's Reaction

On reflection, I think that openness at all stages is preferable to the situation in which trust and confidence is destroyed. I also believe now with hindsight, that my findings would have been much the same if I had been totally open with her. For instance I could have told Pula that I was observing her management of groups as I wished to set up courses on the subject the following year. I could have told her honestly that I could not help her during the observations but that at the end I would give her the full benefit of my findings. This would have made my research acceptable ethically without jeopardising its position within the empowerment framework as I would have been working not only **on** her, but **for** and **with** her as well. I also believe that my results would still have been reliable because her understanding of the accepted definitions and practices of group work was so different that she might have been unable to hide this understanding. However, I did not anticipate this before the research had been

done and it was therefore impossible to know at that stage whether or not my openness on the subject would have resulted in unreliable findings.

4.10 Conclusion

A detailed analysis which takes the five observation areas specified in chapter 1 (cf. 1.1) and compares them to the observed lessons, will appear in the following concluding chapter.

Chapter Five

Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction and Discussion of the Five Specified Areas used in the Observation

The aim of this study was to observe the group work management techniques of a teacher in an English second language classroom and assess the techniques according to five specified areas (cf. 1.1). This chapter will begin with an assessment of each of these five areas followed by a discussion of the possible reasons for the teacher's performance. Recommendations and further research areas are then advanced together with an acknowledgement of the limitations of this study.

5.1.1 Procedural

The physical arrangement of the groups was never witnessed by the researcher. However, it was revealed in subsequent discussions with Pula that she allowed the students to form their own groups (cf. 4.2.1). This resulted in friendship and mixed ability groupings. The size of the groups varied from six to ten pupils and this size together with the group composition, remained constant over the five observed lessons. Some members of each group had been allocated tasks and a chairperson and secretary were chosen for the year in each group. (cf. 4.6.1).

It is understandable in a big class with little space that a teacher wishes the composition and tasks of the groups to remain the same. These could appear to be areas of little consequence when faced with thirty-five or seventy minute periods in which to manage all the other extremely important aspects of group work. However, her decision to do this is not a considered one (..."even though I've never thought of changing them". Exchange 20, Interview 2, Appendix 7).

This points to a lack of understanding of even the basics in group work management.

5.1.2 Introductions and Tasks

Introductions to lessons were generally well structured and clear. In lesson 1 the teacher asked pre-reading questions on Aids in order to focus the students on the topic. Lessons 2 and 3 were continuations of lesson 1 and were not given special introductions. The introduction to lesson 4 was very well structured and clear. It began with an imaginatively taught explanation of how to write a summary and although the topic to be summarised was not discussed, the students were given very clear guidelines to adhere to when producing a summary. There was no proper introduction to lesson 5 as the teacher had already introduced the story in the previous lesson which the researcher missed. This highlights the adverse effect that lack of transparency has on the research process.

The types of tasks set for group work over the five lessons varied in effectiveness. The pair work task set in lesson 1 was challenging linguistically and cognitively (cf. 4.2.2). Unfortunately the interactions were not recorded, therefore, the following comments are only conjecture. The students would have practised the vocabulary and structures they had just heard and they would probably have had to modify and extend their existing competency to some extent as well. This would fit in with Prabhu's definition of "learning" language (1987). At the same time students would probably have had to decipher and translate a cartoon which would involve some cognitive activity. This could have resulted in an effective learning exercise, however the task was not clearly presented to the pupils (cf. 4.2.3) which led to some confusion in the report-back phase. Therefore the effectiveness of the pair exchange was undermined.

In lesson 2 (cf. 4.3) the task set was interpretive, open and challenging. Students were asked to discuss a topic and formulate opinions based on what they had

learnt from the text. Although the teacher had thought of the topic, it was the researcher who persuaded her to allow the discussion to take place in the class. This resulted in some extremely interesting discussions (Appendix 2). The task was conducive to language learning and it was cognitively challenging. It is doubtful that this would have been the case had the discussion been left up to the students to do on their own. This indicates that Pula did not see the group interaction as important in the process because it could be relegated to an after-hours activity.

Lesson 4 (cf. 4.6) had a very clear task. It was closed, tight and procedural, which according to Brown's research (1991) is not a particularly effective SLA environment (cf. 2.5.6). However judging from the transcription of one group (Appendix 5), this was clearly a linguistically challenging task. The students were engaged in the negotiation of meaning, clarifying meaning and requesting information (exchanges 1, 4-5, 13, 15-18) which Brown (1991) says is an ideal language learning environment. The task was also cognitively challenging (exchanges 1, 4-5, 6-9). The students discussed whether points in a summary were an advantage or a disadvantage. In this way they grappled with the text in pursuit of Rudduck's "personal meaning" (1979. cf. 2.1). Although this task was procedural, it produced interpretive activity because students grappled with the meaning of words and concepts in order to complete the summary. This discrepancy could have been the result firstly, of insufficient exploration of word meanings during the introduction, and secondly, of inhibitions preventing the student from exposing her ignorance to the whole class (Appendix 5). This again demonstrates the importance of allowing students to discuss in groups, because often a teacher cannot anticipate everything that a student may fail to understand.

The task set in lesson 5 (cf. 4.7) as already noted, was not conducive to group discussion. It demanded group members to make a common story in their spare time. The likelihood of one or two students doing all the work while the rest did nothing, was strong. The task was also not clearly defined. Students were not

clear about what they had to do. Appendix 6 exchanges 6-7 show that students did not realise that they had to think up only one story for the group..

Tasks set over all lessons were sometimes effective and sometimes not. This hit or miss arrangement once again indicates a lack of training in this methodology.

5.1.3 Quality of Group Interaction and the Nature of the Teacher - Group Interaction

When groups were allowed to interact during class time, the interaction was typically exploratory (Appendix 2) and had all the hallmarks of a successful SLA environment: negotiation of meaning and modification of language (Appendix 5), that are so important to the assimilation and accommodation of knowledge in general and SLA in particular. Unfortunately the pair work exercise in lesson 1 was not recorded and so judgement cannot be passed on the quality of this interaction.

The teacher interaction with group members was at the level of grammar correction (cf. 4.3.1). Most of the time she moved silently between the groups. Her questioning and challenging was confined to whole group discussions and report-back sessions when she showed a considerable talent for controlling students while extending their thinking (Appendix 6). This indicates that with correct development of group management techniques, she would be extremely competent in listening to students in groups and asking challenging questions at the group discussion stage. This would have ensured that more students participated than in the whole class discussions. In these discussions only the confident and clever took part.

5.1.4 Teacher's Control during Group Work

The teacher's control of group interaction was unobtrusive. She allowed pupils the freedom to discuss without interfering in the process. Sometimes this could

be desirable as in lesson 2 where students needed the space to discuss and explore without the inhibiting presence of the teacher. However there are times when students deviate from the topic, become bogged down in inconsequential detail or develop anti-social behaviour which prevents group members from participating freely. The teacher needs to be on constant guard against all these possible developments by listening to the interaction as unobtrusively as possible and acting to counter them when they arise by questioning and challenging group members.

Pula's control of the report-back stage was sometimes authoritarian as in lesson 1 and succeeded in inhibiting student participation. Sometimes her control was tight which proved to be helpful and challenging as in lesson 4 and parts of lesson 5. Sometimes there was no control at all such as when she asked students to discuss topics outside the disciplined environment of the classroom.

5.1.5 Report-Back and Questioning

Reporting-back is a skill that needs to be explicitly taught, so that students who are responsible for reporting-back develop an ability to summarise each group member's opinion or contribution. The summarising of the group's contribution takes time and it needs to become an integral part of group work so that the teacher gives sufficient time for students to work out their report-back (cf. 2.5.7).

The failure to summarise the group contribution was evident in all the report-back sessions. In lesson 3, the report-back did not reflect the true nature of the group discussion, as two students from group 1 merely gave their own opinions on the topic. Lesson 5 also displayed this phenomenon where students gave their own stories with little acknowledgement of others' contributions.

In lesson 1 the report-back became increasingly dominated by the teacher until student participation was reduced to the level of chorused answers or incomplete sentences. She took away students' initiative and confidence.

The lesson 4 report-back was structured and well-managed (cf. 4.6.2 and Appendix 4) providing security to students without oppressing their initiative. The possible reason for this is that the task was closed and tight which gave students little scope for deviating from the controlled course set by the teacher. This in turn did not threaten the teacher's authority.

The entire lesson 5 was in the form of a report-back. Students read their contributions. This may be understandable in a second language classroom but it does not capture the interest of the audience and it is doubtful if it aids fluency. Pula's questions in the first part of lesson 5 reflected the lack of clarity of the task. She spent much of the time extracting solutions from the students who obviously thought the goal was only to compile the story (Appendix 6, exchanges 39-50). The questioning resembled drawing blood from a stone.

However in some respects her management of the report-back and her questioning in lesson 5 were skilful. She went through the three phases of reporting-back that Van Ments advocates (1990. cf. 2.5.7). She established the story and ideas from each group (exchange 34), she tried to extend the thinking of students (exchange 52-65) and in this way the students were forced to use their powers of analysis (exchange 8). She also helped them draw conclusions and provide follow-up actions (exchange 56, 28).

Her questions in lesson 5 were occasionally loaded (exchange 58) and some "pseudo questions" were asked (exchange 56, 28) in which the task was open-ended but the questions revealed that the teacher required a "correct" answer.

5.2 Comment on Research Findings

This study has revealed that Pula, who is a competent teacher in many respects and who advocates the use of a group work methodology in the classroom, has a severely limited understanding of the tenets and practices of effective group work. Students were placed in groups physically but seldom given the chance to

interact with each other. The all important part of group work, the interaction, was relegated to an after-school activity. Her thoughts and ideas on group work often conformed to the tenets of effective interactive learning (Interview 2, Appendix 7), but they were sometimes contradicted by her practice. The impression one is left with is of a confused and contradictory handling of an extremely complex activity.

5.2.1 Possible Reasons for Problems in Implementing Group Work

Although this thesis has not set out to discover reasons for the teacher's management skills of group work, it is important to give some indication of what may have produced this gap between theory and practice and lack of understanding, in order to signpost directions for further research.

The first reason could be that she was not exposed to group interaction as a pupil at school, nor as a student at Unibo. As Murray (1991) notes, the way we teach is developed from our own personal educational experiences. If there has been no explicit training and no past experience to fall back on, then teachers will have great difficulty in adapting to a complex and demanding methodology.

The second reason could be cultural. Murray also notes that our cultural and social experiences affect the way we teach. In African culture generally, authority relationships are strictly adhered to and respected. Pupils would be expected to treat a teacher as an authority figure and the teacher would enjoy it (Ndhlovu 1993). A methodology which seemed to undermine this sought-after authority, would be difficult for a teacher brought up in this kind of culture, to accept.

Both these reasons seem likely. The fact that Pula's approach to the management of group work is haphazard and inconsistent reveals her lack of training. Her negative reaction to the group work that was initiated by the researcher (cf. 4.3.3) where the students had, in her perception, "behaved badly", could be indicative of her desire to maintain her authority. This was the only

lesson in which the students interacted in groups without her tight control. The other two lessons had group work tasks that were closed and where she displayed very tight control throughout.

A third reason could be Corson's recognition that the education system places high value on "high status" abstract knowledge which is examined individually and competitively (cf. 1.4). This fact together with overloaded syllabuses leaves little time or inclination for exploratory learning. Pula acknowledges this in Interview 2 (Appendix 7, exchange 67).

There is no easy solution to the problems mentioned above. These emanate from diverse sources and are deeply ingrained psychologically. The Colleges of Education should be facilitating student teachers' understanding of how knowledge is gained and language is acquired so that these teachers develop an awareness that knowledge and skills are "generated from within" and not "imposed from outside" (Murray 1991: 8). However the Black Colleges of Education propagate fundamental pedagogics. The aim of this educational principle is to promote authoritarian teachers and methods so that learning becomes "submission to hidden power and unknowable rules...It is the essence of the destruction of learning" (Morphet 1991: 5).

In language learning and teaching in the colleges, fundamental pedagogics manifests itself in an "overly formal, linguistic approach...in which language structures are learnt in an abstract, decontextualised fashion" (Murray 1991: 7). This, as Murray notes, has been damaging not only for the acquisition of English as a language, but also for the acquisition of English as a medium of instruction.

Cultural differences which Ndhlovu discusses (1993), are important to consider when introducing innovation so that the implementation process is not left to teachers who are uncommitted psychologically to change. Innovators have to learn to work within the physical, psychological and cultural constraints of the domain that they wish to affect. It is important to overcome these cultural

constraints because the advantages of learning interactively in groups are so overwhelming, that whatever the dictates of her cultural background, the teacher will have to overcome the attitudes towards learning and authority that this culture inspires, if she is to develop students who are capable of operating in a Western context. Murray acknowledges this when she says that "in [S.A.], school-leavers [of all races] have to compete for places at the same universities and jobs in the same market place" (Murray 1991: 8).

5.3 Recommendations

A concerted and united effort in teacher education is needed to ensure that classroom practices deemed important educationally and socially become part of the "culture" of schooling in South Africa. The enormous constraints on effective methodology must be recognised and practical help given to student teachers to enable them to deal with the constraints.

Changing in-service teachers' existing practice will be a much harder task, for these practices have become deeply ingrained. With this in mind, Kennedy (in Leahy 1989) advocates a strong cognitive component to any in-service course to ensure that changes in teaching methodologies among practising teachers is deep and lasting.

I intend to follow this approach in the in-service course on the management of group work in an E.S.L. classroom, that I hope to run next year This course will deal firstly with the constraints of this methodology in the South African context and how to help alleviate them. Secondly it is hoped to facilitate teachers' understanding of the importance of this methodology through the analysis of videos and transcriptions made in local classrooms. Thirdly teachers will be introduced to the management techniques of group work and will be encouraged to explore the possibilities of these for the contexts in which they work.

5.4 Areas for Further Research

This investigation has identified that there is a contradiction in one teacher's understanding and practice of group work. This research needs to be extended to include a larger sample in order to ascertain the prevalence of this contradiction. Ndhlovu (1993) found in his research into the implementation of communicative language teaching in DET schools in Natal, that teachers claimed to use CLT methods, but failed to practise them. Instead they resorted to the old teacher-centred, authoritarian methods of language teaching. My research has found the same phenomenon and it suggests that modern teaching methods cannot be assumed to be part of a teacher's practice until adequate classroom observation has proved it. It is imperative that classroom-based observation becomes a priority in order to gain understanding of classroom practices, as it is believed that to facilitate successful innovation, innovators need to have knowledge of and build on, teachers' existing practices (Kennedy in Leahy 1989).

Another important area for research would be to identify cultural, psychological and physical constraints which cause resistance to major methodological and attitudinal change. These constraints could be opened up for discussion in the belief that understanding is the first and most vital step in innovation management (Shaw 1989).

5.5 Limitations of this Study

In small scale research, there are bound to be limitations. In the interest of transparency these will be discussed below.

* The ethical problems experienced have already been discussed in detail, but they must serve as a warning to any future researcher who wishes to operate within a democratic and empowering framework.

* The inexperience of the researcher as interviewer led to many unexplored

avenues and dead-ends. This has resulted in incomplete data which cannot be held as conclusive evidence. The most that can be claimed is that it serves as a pointer to a problem and would be an area for further research.

* A further limit to the usefulness of the evidence is the obvious time constraint put on a course-work thesis. If full-scale research had been carried out, many more of the teacher's classes would have been observed to gain a broader picture of her methods. Interview questions which were loose, loaded or directive could have been followed up in subsequent interviews which would have resulted in more reliable conclusions being drawn.

5.6 Concluding Remarks

South Africa is desperately in need of a new education system which will cater for the needs of society and the individual. This will necessitate colleges (both in-service and pre-service) and universities, providing student teachers and existing teachers with an understanding of the nature of knowledge and learning and the kind of classroom environment that would provide an effective learning context. The fact that English is the medium of instruction in DET schools, that it probably will be for the foreseeable future (Luckett 1993), and the fact that the language of government will in all probability be English, necessitates the improvement of English teaching as a language and a medium. Existing authoritarian methods would need to give way to participatory, interactive practices and small group work would be an essential part of this transformation.

Abercrombie (1974) makes an important point when she says that in a country experiencing rapid change, there is a great need for students to be taught to question, analyze and challenge, otherwise their powers of discrimination will not mature. They will not be able to modify and replace incoming information as rapidly changing needs arise. Further, if these students are only ever exposed

to learning from authority figures, they will find it difficult to think independently. This is an important thought for all South Africans who are involved in education and concerned for the future of this country. It is now imperative for teachers to realise that their job is not only to teach a subject but to help the student "learn how to learn" (Abercrombie 1974: 8). This learning will entail attention to language competence, to the way concepts are learnt and to methodologies that are believed to facilitate learning. As this thesis has been at pains to point out, small group work would be an essential part of a new education system that contributed to better learning, language learning and the development of social skills among students. Above all, this methodology would recognise the learner as capable of being an independent, mature and critical thinker.

Appendix 1

Lesson 1

Transcription of Report-Back on Group Discussion

1. *T.* I want you to turn to page two. We have a picture there which is divided into six blocks. I want you to have a closer look at those pictures. And I want you to try and analyze what the picture is all about. Just have a closer look at those pictures, Discuss with your friend. Try to analyze with your friend. You are sharing [the text] with your friend, so just discuss it with your friend. Just take five minutes.
(Teacher walks from group to group).

2. *T.* Are you ready people? Can we start with the first drawing? Who can tell us what is actually happening in that drawing? (hands go up). Listen to what she says.

3. *Girl....*Because of the white blood cells. A body is protected by a white blood cells.

4. *T.* (repeats). Immune system...what is that?

5. *Boy.* It refers to strong cells that protect you.

6. *T.* What else?
(silence).

7. *T.* If you say you are immune what does that mean?
(long silence).
Okay I've been to a clinic and this deadly disease affecting everyone round here cannot affect me because I'm immune. What does that mean?

8. *Girl.* Because you're protected.

9. *T.* Because I'm protected. How?

10. *Boy....*Healthy.

11. *T.* Not that you're healthy.

12. *Girl.* Strong?

13. *T.* What makes you strong? There is something protecting you. You can't be infected by the disease. So...what about block 2?
(silence).
Okay, back to block 1. We have two young men. Who are they?

14. Boy. Body and white blood cells.

15. *T.* Yes. The first one is the body and the second is white blood cells that are protecting your body. You can see the difference between the two. The other one is stronger than the first. The one who is stronger is the one who is protecting ne?

16. *Chorus.* Yes.

17. *T.* Okay fine. What about block 2?
(hands up)

18. *Boy.* White blood cells fight diseases.

19. *T.* Yes. He says the w.b.cs fight diseased germs from your body. What does that mean in simpler terms?

20. *Boy.* Stops diseased germs to enter your body.

21. *T.* Yes it means w.b.cs can stop germs from entering the body. There again you have your body, then you have the w.b.c.. Can you see that he is fighting?

22. *Chorus.* Yes.

23. *T.* Whom is he fighting?

24. *Chorus.* Cough.

25. *T.* Yes. So that you can cough for some time, but the w.b.c. are there to fight it from your body. Then there is block 3. What about block 3? What does it teach us.

26. *Girl.* ..Tells us w.b.cs can fight strong diseases.

27. *T.* She says..(repeats). Strong diseases...such as... such as...? Come people.

28. *Chorus.* Diahorrea.

29. *T.* As long as you have w.b.cs in your body even these strong diseases can be fought by your w.b.cs. You have your body and you have the w.b.c. fighting the diahorrea.

30. *Chorus.* Diahorrea.

31. *T.* From entering your body. What about block 4? I haven't heard from group 1.

32. *Girl.* The H.I.V. is very strong and it can attack the w.b.c.

33. *T.* Come again. What is very strong?

34. *Girl.* The H.I.V.

35. *T.* And it can attack the w.b.c. They have been so strong all along. They have been fighting these diseases. But with the H.I.V. it can't do it. H.I.V. is so powerful, so strong that it fights the w.b.c. itself ne?

36. *Chorus.* Yes.

37. *T.* Can you see the body there and the w.b.c. being attacked?

38. *Chorus.* Yes.

39. *T.* Yes it's a strong germ. Okay then to the fifth block. H.I.V. has killed the w.b.c. Let's hear what they say there. (reading). After a very long struggle lasting years, H.I.V. kills most of your w.b.cs leaving your body...?

40. *Chorus.* Unprotected.

41. *T.* Which means it doesn't kill w.b.cs at once ne?

42. *Chorus.* Yes.

43. *T.* After a very long struggle lasting...?

44. *Chorus.* Years.

45. *T.* It takes time to kill the w.b.cs. If the w.b.cs are killed what is going to happen to your body?

46. *Girl.* ..Going to be H.I.V positive.

47. *T.* She says..(repeats). If w.b.cs are killed what is going to happen?

48. *Boy.* You are going to infected by many diseases.

49. *T.* By many diseases. Your body is no longer going to resist those diseases because the w.b.cs that have been protecting you are now killed. What about the last block?

50. *Girl.* The H.I.V. have killed the w.b.cs then it can enter the body.

51. *T.* Yes. Yes she says H.I.V. has killed the w.b.c. and one can easily get Aids. If the w.b.c no longer protects you then you can easily get diseases like...?

52. *Chorus.* Aids.

53. *T.* Yes.

Appendix 2

Lesson 2

Transcription Of Group One discussion on Aids

1. *Boy 1.* I think they should be given a chance because..because...maybe maybe some day they'll make some cures.

2. *Boy 2.* It takes 6 or 7 years for a person who is infected with Aids to be (inaudible) so a baby who is born with Aids may live up to 7 years...so I think she should be given a chance to live because doctors are trying to find medicines for Aids so maybe before she can she or he can reach certain years...the ...er..medicine to cure Aids may be found...so I think the best thing is to leave...

3. *Boy 3.* I think it's going to be a waste of time...

4. *Chorus.* (laughing) Waste of time!!...No.

5. *Boy 2.* Do any of you guys agree with this guy? Is it a waste of time for her or him to live?

6. *Chorus.* (difficult to pick anything out as they all spoke at once).

7. *Boy 2.* What if they kill the children and some few years thereafter they find the medicine to cure Aids?

8. *Boy 3.* There is no medicine that can...(Noise from many voices).

9. *Boy 2.* But they are trying to find that medicine.

10. *Boy 1.* Okay okay.

11. *Boy 3.* Because I believe doctors are working...If they can find the medicine and the child died at the same time...

12. *Boy?* Mmm.

13. *Boy 3.* But...so they can cure them...but if I think that he or she...

14. *Boy 2.* Okay..he or she got certain years to live but if they find medicine before he or she dies, they may cure him. I believe...

15. *Boy 3.* But so far there is no medicine.

16. *Boy 2.* But anytime they may get it in the near future. Do you get my point?

17. *Boy 3.* I don't agree with your point. I think if a child is in his age group they[peers?] will chase him out of playing with them.

18. *Boy 2.* Ja I agree with your point.

19. *Boy 4.* Come on guys.

20. *Boy 2.* If a child reaches certain years, they find out they are...

21. *Boy 4.* Let's hear your decision about whether the baby should be given a chance to live.

22. *Boy 1.* The baby should be given a chance to live.

23. *Boy 3.* Support your statement.

24. *Boy 1.* Because maybe they might find the cure for Aids.

25. *Boy 4.* My solution is that the baby must be killed because he or she is going to suffer...maybe the doctors may say they may find the cure for Aids. It may take them more than 6 years and the baby's growing up with...

26. *Boy 3.* with Aids.

27. *Boy 4.* ..and most of the white blood cells they'll be dead...then the better way is that...must find...(inaudible)...injection.

28. *Boy 3.* Thank you. Let's hear others.

29. *Boy 1.* To kill a baby...but it.. to kill a baby. It is an offence to kill someone. Now if they..(inaudible) world research, they can maybe find the cure for Aids and people will be helped by the cure.

30. *Boy 3.* Is that your decision?

31. *Boy 4.* It's not an offence because it's just like when you are grown up then in hospital they say they can not do...(inaudible)...they ask your relatives to fill in forms...okay...The same thing as that child. It's not an offence. They are going to fill in some forms before they kill you.

32. *Boy 2.* Don't you think the baby has the right to live...?

33. *Boy 3.* Actually....

34. *Boy 4.* It's going to infect other people.

35. *Boy 3.* Actually the baby has the right to live but we are facing that he or she is going to suffer in life. So we are not killing him or her by doing

something bad, we are trying to ..er.. protect...um yes protect..actually we are taking him or her out of suffering..

36. *Boy 1.* Don't you think the cure for Aids might be found?

37. *Boy 3.* But according to me, it's going to take a long time. Then maybe after 16 years...where will be the baby..by now.

(interruptions and participants shouting out "now' now")

38. *Boy ?* By now there is not anything that can...They're still testing...

39. *Boy 3.* For how long..(interruptions). What about if the baby could be born now?

40. *Boy 2.* In 2 years time the cure will be found.

41. *Boy 3.* 2 years! You are not sure about that. When...

42. *Others.* You are not sure.

43. *Boy 3.* When did this...

44. *Boy 2.* It's going to be found.

45. *Boy 3.* Let's not talk about that...you are not sure.

46. *Boy 2.* And you might kill the baby and after that the cure could be found.

47. *Boy 1.* Yes.

48. *Boy 2.* And you can regret killing your baby.

49. *Boy 3.* Actually I think there are many people who have Aids, but they never...never..cured.

50. *Boy 4.* By 199...by 19...

51. *Boy 3.* It's in the past..cannot live in the past...People dying now were infected by this disease..1983 or 84...because they say it takes 10 years....for it to really affect you..(inaudible).

52. *Boy 4.* Could you save the baby if he or she..will the baby be physically...healthy?

53. *Boy 3.* Ja.

54. *Boy 4.* It might go to the doctors. He or she may not be healthy because...maybe at the age of 12 you'll be suffering strongly.

55. *Boy 2.* If you are saying 12 you are saying beyond 2000...and you can't say that beyond the year 2000 they will not have a cure .

56. *Boy 4.* Okay let me tell you (lots of noise).

57. *Boy 3.* Okay guys.

58. *Boy 4.* The cure of Aids...discovered...but even now the research (inaudible)...Coming to your point of 10 years I agree with you there. Aids will affect you for a period of 10 years. Okay...now some people they just...by that H..H..

59. *Boy 3.* HIV.

60. *Boy 4.* HIV positive.

61. *Boy 2.* Aids from when?

62. *Boy 4.* About from 1985.

63. *Boy 2.* That's 8 years from now.

64. *Boy 4.* It's not a long time- you said...

65. *Boy 2.* 8 years.
(All talk at once as this point seems to cause a lot of dispute).

66. *Boy 3.* Come on guys let's conclude.

67. *Boy 4.* Imagine a big grown-up from 1 month to 6 years..before she reaches 10 years. Just imagine my brothers.

68. *Boy 3.* Come on guys.

69. *Boy 4.* Do you know that Aids takes a long time to kill?

70. *Boy 3.* Okay fine...(inaudible).

71. *Boy 4.* No..No...NO! Let me tell you...

72. *Boy 2.* Cure..(inaudible).

73. *Boy 4.* Let me tell you....

74. *Boy 4.* Aids cannot be cured by now.

75. *Boy?* Let...but beyond 2000.

76. *Boys.* You cannot be sure.

77. *Boy 4.* I'm telling you.

78. *Boys* ...going to suffer.

79. *Boy 3.* Come on guys.

80. *Boy 3.* Must be given a chance to live... The research is...

81. *Boy 4.* Let me tell you.
(everyone talking at once).

82. *Boy 2.* Do you know they are close to finding the cure.

83. *Boy 3.* They will not find...I'm telling you...it's going to take a period of more than 20 years.

84. *Boy 4.* People said that about Cancer.

85. *Boys.* I agree with...

86. *Boy 2.* Ja...I I.I agree with you.

87. *Boy 4.* Boys boys come on. The baby should not be killed...let's agree. Come on guys. According to me..at the beginning I said the baby should be killed but according to the facts the baby should not be killed....

(At this stage I moved the microphone to another group).

Appendix 3

Lesson 3

Transcription of Report-Back on Group Discussions

1. *Teacher (T)* . You were asked to discuss the topic of whether a pregnant HIV positive woman should be allowed to keep the baby. Which group can we start with. Okay fine. Let's hear from you at the back.

Group 1.

2. *Boy 1.* Er..the baby who got Aids should er er.. not be killed. Er.. I suggest they should give the baby a chance. So maybe um.. they will find a cure for Aids.

3. *Boy 2.* I think the baby should be given a chance to live because if not given a chance maybe the mother...the child...might find a cure..(inaudible)....that baby might lead a normal life.

4. *T.* Anyone else from that group?
(silence).

Group 2.

5. *Girl 1.* I er..don't think the baby should be given a chance to live because if the baby is born, the baby is going to spread Aids. And the number of Aids victims is going to increase. And so far the doctors haven't found ..the..the medicine to...cure Aids. So I don't think a baby should be given chance to live...a child is going to live a short time.

6. *T.* Um. That's what she thinks. Anyone else from this group? Yes let's have you..

7. *Girl 2.* I don't think the child should be given a chance to live because it is going to suffer. I think they should abort the child because it's not going to be healthy. He or she is going to require treatment...and also the most (inaudible)...the more chance the baby has of getting the virus. Those mothers should not keep their babies because the children are going to suffer.

8. *T.* Mmm. Where are all the others? What do others say? Which group? Okay.

Group 3.

9. *Girl 1.* I think the baby should not be given a chance to live because the baby will be suffering...(pause)..

10. *T.* Anyone else from that group? I don't want to hear from only one member when there are so many members.

11. *Girl 2.* I don't think the baby should be given a chance to live because the baby is going to suffer And another reason is the mother will blame herself for the disease which is killing her child. And I think it would be painful as a parent to see your child suffering.

12. *T.* Mm Mm.

13. *Girl 2.* Sometimes the mother blames it on the child and she's poor..and she's poor and she sees that her child is going to suffer from many things and who will take care of the child if she [the mother] dies from Aids...

14. *T.* Yes that group

Group 4

15. *Boy 1.* The baby should be given..be given..should be given a chance to live. Reasons.. Firstly, what if the child is killed maybe a month before doctors found ..found the medicine to cure the disease. Then second...the child should have a chance to enjoy...to see what health is. Then the child should be given a chance to live because...because it is not her fault, it is her father's...or his mother's...his mother's or father's fault.

16. *T.* Anyone else from that group?

17. *Boy 2.* Um. I also believe that the child should be given the chance to live. The child may be killed and then thereafter the medicines to cure Aids may be found also. I believe that doctors and scientists right now are still in search ..the medicine to cure Aids..

18. *T.* Yes... that's what they feel. Let's hear from you.

Group 7 (mixed group- 2 boys and 4 girls).

19. *Girl 1.* I don't think...the child should be allowed to live because these children will go...will suffer in this world. How should mother feel...how should she feel being HIV.

20. *Girl 2.* I don't think we must leave the child to live because I think he or she will affect all the babies. Maybe she goes to the treatment and the doctors use needles. And they forget to change the needles. That HIV will infect other babies and so there will be many babies who will have HIV at the end will die.

21. *T.* A religious point of view. What does the bible say about killing? What does the bible say about abortion? What does the Bible say and what do you say?
(6 hands go up around the class.)

22. *Girl.(new).* The Bible says it is a sin to kill a child. I think that it is right to

kill even if the mother is HIV and so I think the mother should live.(????).

23. *Boy (new).* For myself it is not a sin because the child is going to suffer. He or she will be weak.

24. *Girl (spoken before)*....this terrible disease called Aids. The doctors should try to do something...the child is going to suffer if he or she is allowed to live. And the mother is not going to stand to look at his or her baby. So I think when it comes to Aids, the expectant mother should think and they should accept that the baby should be killed.

25. *T.* Mm. Mm.

26. *Girl (spoken before).* He or she will be weak and will not be able to play around with other kids and at that stage it is when children like to play. Another thing.. it would be hard for the child to see others playing while he lies...

27. *T.* Yes but don't forget that once you are infected your w. b. c.s are killed. So you know the result so then imagine you are a child being given a chance to live for 7 years being infected by the disease. What's going to happen to you from the day you are born till year 7. Which means you are going to be a victim to all these other diseases. But still they say we shouldn't kill. What do you do? Do we say God forgive us? But we'll be committing a sin. Do you have to give him a chance like others said...even for a short time...just to have a taste of life?
Okay from a social view..if that baby is born and at the age of 2 think of neighbours, think of friends, his peer group. Think of the rejection if he has to go to the nursery school. Let's hear about. And if he is not given a chance like others have been saying, then maybe maybe, being very optimistic about it that maybe somewhere somehow, the doctors will come up with the cure. So do we wait in the hope that one day there will be a cure. Maybe the child will die at 7 unable to wait any longer. Think of the pains caused to the child. If you abort the baby and then only next year scientists come up with the cure. What do you say? Let's have different people.

(7 people speak. Only one has not spoken before)

28. *Girl (new).* According to the Bible there will be no cure because it's one of the signs that falls under the end of the world. According to the Bible it says that as time goes on there will be more sickness coming which there will be no medicine for.

29. *T.* So that means we are near the end of the world?

30. *Girl.* Yes according to me ..it is one of those signs.

31. *Boy (spoken before).* I think the children should be spared but keep them in a hospital.

32. *Girl (spoken before).* I don't think they would be happy. They need to lead a normal life and socialise with other kids.

33. *Girl (spoken before).* I think the mother should give all her time to this child because the baby has a very short life.

34. *Girl (spoken before).* I don't think keeping a child in hospital is a solution. I think the solution is to ...kill the child.

Appendix 4

Lesson 4

Edited Transcription of Summary Lesson

Teacher introduces lesson on Summary writing. She uses an old Matric paper. She goes through the points to work through when beginning a summary activity. She uses newspaper headlines to demonstrate her points. She asks individual students to make contributions.

Pick up the lesson where she prepares them for group work.

1. *T.* The main points of our summary will depend on your summary question. Remember the summary question is looking for the advantages. As you read, make a note of the main points. Is that clear? Then having done that, you write the summary. In writing the summary they say, organise your notes into the appropriate order. Decide what information is important and what needs to be left out.

Now read through silently....Then having done that, just go through the passage once - then come together as a group, decide on what would be the advantages of staying in a hostel. Start off by reading it.
(Pause of 7 mins.).
Yes you can start discussing it.

(Teacher clarifies what to do to 3 groups. Comes up to a group of boys).

2. *T.* Are you asleep? What's wrong? What's wrong?
(Waits 5 mins).

3. *T.* Okay, have you finished? How many points do you have? (repeats 3 times). Okay let's try people....and which points you consider to be the advantages. I'll read the letter from the college lecturer. (reads). Now let's hear from the college student. (reads). So let's hear what are the points for staying in a hostel from the lecturer?

4. *Girl.* The atmosphere of the hostel lends itself to work.

5. *T.* (repeats). Have you all agreed upon that?

6. *Chorus.* Yes.

7. *T.* Is there any group who has not agreed upon it?

8. *Girl.* Our first point is different...

9. *T.* I mean no, even if it is not your first point. Do you have it as one of your advantages.

10. *Girl.* No.

11. *T.* You don't? So they don't... What do you say?

12. *Boy.* Give us a reason

13. *T.* Ja. They say you must give us a reason why you don't see it as an advantage.

14. *Girl.* We missed it.

15. *T.* Oh.So I'll write on the board. (writes on the board).
Second point. Let's hear from you group 2.

16. *Girl.* It's quiet in the hostels.

17. *T.* (repeats and writes on the board). Have you all written that? Do you all have that point?

18. *Chorus.* Yes.

19. *T.* Okay another point. Group 3.

20. *Girl.* You have a room to yourself.

21. *T.* (repeats and writes). Group 4?

22. *Boy.* You can discuss your work.

23. *T.* Do you all have point 3?

24. *Chorus.* Yes.

25. *T.* So now he says you can discuss your work with your fellow students. Do you all have it?

26. *Chorus.* Yes.

27. *T.* (writes on board). Point 5. Group 5?

28. *Boy.* You will deal with people of your same age.

29. *T.* (repeats). Do you all have it? Which group does not have it? Yes. Why? Oh you do have it. But I heard someone say no. So you all have

it.

30. *Chorus.* Yes.

31. *T.* I doubt. (writes). Group 6?

32. *Boy.* Having the same aim - to pass at the end of it.

33. *T.* How do you think we should write that? Shouldn't we add it to point 5?

34. *Pupils.* We should.

35. *T.* You will deal with people of the same age - all having the same aim - to pass at the end of the year. These are all the points. Are there any other points which you've left out? Okay let's start to count.....

Appendix 5

Lesson 4

Transcription of Group Discussion

1. *Girl 1.* (reading) "the atmosphere of the hostel lends itself to study..." which means I think...it means that living in a hostel means it can help us to go on with our studies. At hostel there is more time to study than at home.

2. *Girl 2.* Do you agree?

3. *Girl 3.* I agree
(general chorus of agreement)

4. *Girl 1.* College lecturer...So this is not the advantages..this one and this one?

5. *Girl 3.* No this is not the advantages.

6. *Girl 4.* The atmosphere is a disadvantage.

7. *Girl 2.* No its an advantage.
(general noises of agreement).

8. *Girl 4.* (reading) "it is quiet in the hostels". Ja Ja.

9. *Girl 2.* This one is a disadvantage.

10. *Girl 1.* Which one?

11. *Girl 2.* "to be with the people of your own age and most of them...."

12. *Girl 1.* not a disadvantage.

13. *Girl 2.* No no it's not that. Look carefully at the sentence "regrettably not quite all have the same aim." (group reads in unison) The others are not inclined to pass.

14. *Girl 3.* They make noise. But as you can discuss your work with them its an advantage.

15. *Girl 1.* Can I ask what the meaning of 'regrettably' is?

16. *Chorus.* To regret something.

17. *Girl 1.* Regret..regrettable. yes. And 'roaming' - what does it mean?

18. *Girl 2.* To go about. (Teacher stops the groups at this point).

Appendix 6

Lesson 5

Edited Transcription of Literature Lesson

1. *Teacher (T).* Today's lesson is based on Across The Board on one of the short stories, Thanks to Mrs. Parsons. So we have to talk about the quarrel or argument between two families. That is, your family and that of your neighbours. How did this quarrel come about? What caused the quarrel? Who were involved in the quarrel? How were you as children of the two houses affected by the quarrel. So now group 1 will start. Let's hear from...then the rest listen to what they are going to say.
(Long pause with lots of shuffling and suppressed giggles)

2. *T.* Don't we have group 1 here.

3. *Chorus.* Yes we do.

4. *T.* And which group's that? Okay group 2.

Group 2

5. *Girl.* Our mowing machine was broken at our neighbour's house. Without telling us they just hand it to my brother. Afternoon, when my father was just going to mow the lawn, he realised that the machine was broken. I was ordered to call our neighbour. When he came, he told my father he brought the machine in when it was in order. Soon they started to argue till everyone in the street..(inaudible). It was settled that no one or the other must visit. We as children were not allowed to go and play at our neighbour's house. It was very hard because we have been family friends for a long time. Days went on. Even if they lacked something in their house, they never came to ask us. It came that we, as the children came with the idea of bringing the two families together. We tried by all means to talk to our parents and we succeeded. Then the matter was solved.

6. *T.* I think the best thing people, is you don't present by standing up and reading like that. You have to talk among yourselves. Let one introduce the whole thing. The other one should take over. Because I didn't hear what she was saying. I didn't hear anything because she was reading.

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7. *Girl 2* (same group, different story. Not reading). We think that their parents might..um..think that..um..the other kicked the other on purpose. And then the parents may fight...may argue. Because the other parents will say the other child has no right kicking and they may hit him. Then the other parents may think they are wrong for hitting their child. They must consult them before the take action.

8. *T.* The first case what do you as children do? Let me hear from others. What do you think is the best thing to do? How does it affect you? What is your feeling if you are told never to go there anymore?

9. *Girl 2.* The friendship may be destroyed.

10. *T.* What's the best thing to do? Let's hear from others.

11. *Girl 3.* Talk to their parents. Tell them they do not feel the same way as they do. Make them understand that you need their friendship.

12. *T.* Anyone else from group 2 who would like to add or clarify something. (pause). Okay let's switch over to group 3.

Group 3

13. *Girl 1* (reading mainly). The two neighbours used to be friends to each other. My mother used to go to..(?) with the women of the neighbour and my father used to go to the ..(?) with their father. We as children, we used to go to the ..(?) to play together because I was in the same class with one of their kids.... Our neighbours decided to make a shebeen whereby people used to come to drink, to make noise, make a lot of music every weekend. And their customers used to throw their empty cans into our place. My parents one day went to them to talk to them about the rubbish that their customers threw into our place. And the owner of ..the father of the children, my friends, told my father he would tell them not to throw this rubbish. One weekend the same thing happened again. My father went to them again and they started to quarrel. And the owner of the shebeen tells my father that my father is jealous because (inaudible). Their mother told them..the children.. not come and play with us. It was hard for us because we used to be friends forever. So our friendship was over.

14. *T.* And then what did you do? (silence). Yes from one of the other members of the group. What did you decide? (long silence). Did you try and bring the two families together again?

15. *Girl 1.* No the shebeen carried on everyday.

16. *T.* No one tried to go and get the two families together again? Do you think they did the right thing? (asks the whole class).

17. *Chorus.* No

18. *T.* What were they supposed to do? (pause and silence).What do you think they could have done?

19. *Girl 2.* The children could have spoken to their parents and tried to bring the two families together.
(Silence).

20. *T.* Which children? (silence) The younger ones? (Silence).

21. *Girl 2.* Can I ask a question? Do you have..(inaudible).. for both families? The families could have...

22. *T.* Mmm. What do you think?
(Silence).

23. *Girl 3.* Mmm... the children...they should come together and collect the rubbish and put them in plastic and throw them away.

24. *T.* Which children?

25. *Girl 3.* From the neighbour's house...the neighbour's children and...

26. *T.* The children from the two families. Really?!

27. *Girl 3.* They should help each other.

28. *T.* What do you think? (to class generally). She says they must **both** pick up the rubbish. Do you think that was going to be the right thing? Put yourself in that position people. Imagine if you were to do that. Yes.

29. *Girl 3.* They should help each other...both of them must pick up the rubbish.

30. *Girl 2.* I think that would bring back the quarrel because maybe the children from the other family will say they are not the ones to bring the rubbish into their neighbour's house.

31. *T.* Let's hear from group 4. (silence) Which group is group 4?
(long silence)
Okay another group

Group 5.

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32. *T.* How was the problem settled? (silence). Did you try to settle the quarrel?
Okay group 6.

Can anyone continue after that?

33. *Boy 2.* (Reading hesitantly) The children from the neighbour's house said that the window was broken so the family from the neighbours came in and said they should pay the money of the window and.. but they told..but the children from the other family said that they didn't, so their parents believed them.

34. *T.* That is two families? - Yours and your neighbour's? And you were playing with the children of another family? They break the window of your neighbours? Okay and then they said they were the ones...they didn't break the window and then what did that family do, what did they say?

35. *Boy 2.* They just came to our parents and say we commanded them not asked them.

36. *T.* The parents of the two families or one family?

37. *Boy 2.* One family. They did not..(inaudible)

38. *T.* They did not??

39. *Boy 2.* Ask politely. And our parents refused to pay them

40. *T.* Okay someone else from that group.

41. *Boy 3.* ...be better if they spoke to each other.

42. *T.* Who?

43. *Boy 3.* The neighbours.

44. *T.* Who tried to bring the two families together?

45. *Boy 3.* Us.

46. *T.* How?. How did you repay that broken window?

47. *Boy 3.* We talked to our parents.

48. *T.* And then?

49. *Boy 3.* We talked to our neighbours...(inaudible).

50. *T.* Okay Mmmm.

Group 7.

51. *Girl 1.* (very quiet).

52. *T.* Okay, she says had a quarrel over a rubbish tip. The neighbour's dog used to ..to..come in at night and tip rubbish all over the garden. In the morning they found rubbish lying all over the garden. Are you sure it was your neighbour's dog?

53. *Girl 1.* Yes.

54. *T.* How did you ensure that it was? Were there no other dogs in the place?

55. *Girl 1.* The dog used to come round in the day too.

56. *T.* Okay. So what they decided to do - the neighbour's children should be the ones to keep picking up the rubbish. Do you think that it was the right decision to make?
(Silence)

57. *Girl from another group (spoken before).* I think they ..to keep the dog away they should have chained him.

58. *T.* She says the best thing is to keep the dog chained and not to keep asking the children to keep picking up the rubbish. Don't you think that was the right thing? Imagine if every day to keep on picking up rubbish.

59. *Girl 1.* We did tell them to.

60. *T.* She says they told them to chain the dog. So if that was the case the best thing was to...?

61. *Unidentified pupil.* To kill the dog.

62. *T.* To kill the dog?!? Do you think so?

63. *Girl (from another group).* The only solution is to kill the dog.

64. *T.* I wonder how you are going to do that?
(Various suggestions).

65. *T.* You say..one suggestion is to poison a piece of meat.

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66. *Girl (from another group).* A question. How did the dog get into the yard?

67. *Boy (not spoken before).* They should keep rubbish out the way of the dog.

68. *T.* (repeats).

69. *Girl 1.* How are we going to do that?

70. *Boy* Maybe hang it on the fence.

71. *T.* (repeats what he says. Looks across class - nods head at pupil) Hear the question please.

72. *Girl (spoken before).* Do you have a storage room or garage?

73. *Girl.* No.
(lots of classroom noise as the pupils discuss it).

---

74. *T.* He says you have no choice but to buy a fence.

75. *Girl.* We don't have money to buy.

76. *Girl (from another group).* Okay if you don't have money to buy - if you have a stop nonsense - then you can hang it on the side....?

77. *T.* Why can't you keep the gates locked?

78. *Girl.* It jumps.
(lots of discussion. Teacher has to shout to make herself heard).

79. *T.* Why don't we ask why the dog doesn't go to other yards. That's why we say this yard is inviting this dog.

80. *Girl (from another group).* They should take left-over food and put it for the dog and ...

81. *T.* Which dog?

82. *Girl.* Neighbours. I mean they can't just throw food in the dustbin knowing that the dog is going to come to the dustbin.

83. *T.* Mmm.

84. *Girl.* If the dog is going around looking for food, then it means you are not feeding it enough.

85. *T.* It isn't their dog.

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86. *Boy. (new).* I think they should put stones in the rubbish bag. (laughter).

87. *T.* Why? What are the stones going to do?
(various comments from pupils)
Oh, it would keep it from falling down. Okay that's what You all think about this. I think that's all. Thank you.

Appendix 7

Interview 1

Viewing video of comprehension lesson 1 25/2/93

1. *Interviewer (I)* I'm going to show you the tape of the first part of the comprehension lesson. I'll ask questions every now and then, but I'd also like you to stop whenever you'd like to say something. I'd like you to focus on methodology..so whenever you want to explain why you did something in a certain way.

2 *Teacher (T)* Sure.
(T reads comprehension passage to the class. She stops me during this phase).

3. *T.* I prefer reading it myself for the first time so that students... so that students...when I read it myself they're in a position to understand it better and even some of those maybe new words and they know how to pronounce it after hearing it. That's why I prefer reading it for the first time. Thereafter then they can read it individually.
(T continues reading)

4 *I.* We'll skip this bit unless there's anything you want to say.

5. *T.* Yes. ..(inaudible) ..comprehension passage. and that's why I did the reading and I was asking questions..I was asking questions and because I wanted them to know what is expected of them next time when they do it. even when they read a comprehension passage they should know that they have to understand it know what the passage is all about before attempting to answer the questions.That's one other reason why...

6. *I.* you read and explain.

7. *T.* I'm reading and explaining.

8. *T.* Sure.
(tape continues. Still reading and explaining)

9. *I.* (stops the tape) Just one question. Why did you choose this comprehension?

10. *T.* Why (inaudible)?

11. *I.* Well of anything.. I mean um... do you have a textbook.

12. *T.* Yes we do.

13. *I.* What do you use.. Advance with English.. oh no you use Let's Use

English.

14. *T.* Let's use English yes. I and um you prefer something from a matric?

15. *T.* Yes.

16. *I.* Do you... was it the topic or do you just want them to practice matric papers?

17. *T.* Okay...the first reason is the topic and then the second one was to get used to the style of ..the style of being asked questions... that style that is used in matric.
(tape continues and teacher goes through each of the questions on the paper)

17. *I* (while winding the tape forward) I want you to try and concentrate on the group. Tell me.. I want to talk about what you think is happening in the groups ...you know... what you see while you're watching.... just try and talk about or focus on the groups as much as possible. (tape continues)

18. *I.* I mean its quite a clear pattern with your.. um ..presenting of the questions.. you ask... you go through all of the questions before going back.

19. *T.* Because that is what I have to do. Like I told them ..I said study the comprehension passage the method they must use to go through the passage and then read the questions and then go back to the passage.. and then we can answer the questions...so its only doing the same thing..like I have read it and then I went through the questions.

20. *I.* So it was like a...a an example of what they must do?

21. *T.* Yes.
(tape continues)

22. *I.* (silence on the tape) were they going back to the passage...were they reading the passage to themselves?

23. *T.* Yes.
(tape moves on)

24. *I.* So you're really just showing them ..them how they must answer..how they must answer ...what they must look for when they answer an exam paper.
(tape continues and ends)

25. *I.* Okay..um.. just thinking about that particular um comprehension. You said that you chose it for the matric exam. Did you choose it because you thought um.. it would be a good topic for group work or anything like that?

26. *T.* Okay um...one reason why I'm saying to choose this one on aids is because since I know that it's a um.. it's something I know they need to be taught about and again it made me realise that it .....that they can ...they can arrange their groups and they can discuss it with their partners because at least it has something ...there's something to talk about.

27. *I.* And it is interesting too.

28. *T* ..and at least it can help them in the long run.

29. *I.* And were you pleased with the way ...they...they answered the questions..when they um ..did their writing for homework?

30. *T.* Yes I was.

31. *I.* ... cause you took the books in ...and you felt that they'd actually gained from the lesson.

32. *T.* Yes I was very pleased.

33. *I.* How many comprehensions do you do in a year...or ..or in a term?

34. *T.* Umm .... I can't say to you... it all depends if on whether I'm satisfied with the way .....(inaudible) the first comprehension and the questions I've given them. If I'm not satisfied then at least I choose one or two until I really feel that they have the direction.

35. *I.* And do you find that these Std 9's that you've got this year are they as good as last year?

36. *T.* No.. I..I can't say that because we only met last month.

37. *I.* Ja..ja its difficult.

38. *T.* But I hope that as time goes on they'll be in a position to understand what I expected them.

39. *I.* Ja sure .... Okay is there anything else you'd like to say... anything that you noticed... that you picked up on the video that you weren't aware of when you were giving the lesson?

40. *T* .....um... Yes one other thing is that.. because of the large numbers in the class whilst you're concentrating on that side then that side is sort of neglected that other side and then they don't really become ...they become less active in the class.. then you really have to move around.

41. *I.* So you as the teacher have to be quite active as well..more active?

42. *T* ..more active in fact but I'm getting more used to it ...being more active

than anyone else in class... having to move around.

43. *I.* But you feel that its a better way of teaching?

44. *T* Yes..yes.

45. *I.* You are more interested?

46. *T.* Yes.. because I need a challenge with my other colleagues.

47. *I.* And how do they react?

48. *T.* They react they react. They are now practising it.....They're even doing that in Setswana.

49. *I.* Really.

50. *T.* mmm. Seeing one teacher doing in Setswana..group work...students working in pairs.

Interview 2 1/ 4/ 93

1. *I.* Okay...um...I just want to ask first of all some questions about about how you go about organising the groups...um.. for instance ..um..when you decide on a group lesson decide on a lesson and you plan your lesson..um... how do you plan for the group work part?

2. *T.* Okay..it..it depends on the lesson I'm going to do you know.

3. *I.* Ja.

4. *T.* Then um ..I first think on how to introduce the lesson. Then thereafter I think on points to bring up in order to involve students actively.

5. *I.* Ja ..mmm.

6. *T.* In that way that is how I manage to get them to talk and now I'm ready to have group work. Is ..(inaudible).

7. *I.* Ja that's fine ..I mean just..Ja ..um I just really want to find out how you organise it how you operate it and now every time I went into your lesson you'd already.. I mean the groups were already set out . I'd like to know how you go about?

8. *T.* doing that.

9. *I.* Ja.

10. *T.* The methods of each and every group they never change.. they stick to

their groups. Every time I talk of group work they know where to go.

11. *I.* I see.

12. *T*...that's what I told them from the beginning of the year....you're going to be a member of that group until the end of the year.

13. *I.* At the previous time we spoke..um.. I asked you about.. you know.. did you have sort of.. formal roles in your groups like somebody to be the chairperson...?

14. *T* Ja...Ja.

15. *I.* Now do you change that every time or?

16. *T.* No I haven't changed them.

17. *I* ...So they stay the same?

18. *T.* Ja.

19. *I.* Ja ...and do you find that works okay?

20. *T.* It does it works even though I've never thought of changing them. Maybe I'll try it later on...give others that responsibility.. it gives them a sense of ..a feeling of responsibility.

21. *I.* And um ..(long pause..searching through questions) Okay ..um.. I just..I want to actually now ask you about..um .. how you were taught when you were..um.. at high school...or..or primary school.. I mean did you ever experience group work yourself?

22. *T.* No.

23. *I.* So you were taught?

24. *T.* I was never introduced to that before because if I remember very well when I was doing Std. 9 I don't remember having...okay we had an English teacher but I don't remember ever attending a language lesson. We were taught.. most of the time we were taught literature. Then he would say. in teaching literature he's almost teaching language.. so there's no need for him to divide his lessons.

25. *I.* That's interesting.

26. *T.* Like today this is for oral lesson this is for literature this is for written work ...and the like...maybe only did them.....I don't know but he never specifically had that. So arriving at tertiary level I was ...okay like in education we were taught how to teach in class like group work and the

like.. I really I...I...kept wondering how on earth was that going to be possible since I was never introduced to it.

27. *I.* So they didn't attempt to show you how to do it?

28. *T.* We were shown a video..but at times its not that easy until someone is there who keeps telling you how about...how to go about doing that because if we have large numbers in our classes we really don't know how to go about it until maybe like I attended courses here (Inset College) that's where at least I got the light.

29. *I.* Was that the first time you'd been introduced to exactly how to do it?

30. *T.* Yes.

31. *I.* And what sort of problems do you feel that..um.. that group work..um..gives you?

32. *T.* Okay. In the first place since I've mentioned that we have large numbers of students in class there are those who hide behind others. You really can't ensure that each and every one participates because of the large numbers....so there are those that hide behind others..cause if you...if you can't really say you are sure that all participate.

33. *I.* Ja that is difficult..Anything else that you find is a bit of a problem?

34. *T.* Okay...some of them do have this problem..they have a problem when it comes to expressing themselves. Like maybe if we were doing it in their mother language..mother tongue then they would some of them...many of them would participate. But now that it's English not all of them feel free.

35. *I.* You feel that its the ones who're good at the language that speak and the others tend not to?

36. *T.* No I know.. I haven't done it...but I know that if..if..it was done in their language then they would definitely participate..

37. *I.* If..if it was done in Setswana.

38. *T.* Ja so most of them have this problem really when it comes to expressing themselves....they really don't know how to go about it. There is this other thing that.. that they feel they don't want to make blunders in front of other ...so some of them fail to attempt because they think they will be laughed at.

39. *I.* Mm...mm Ja...Okay..um..Do you think..I mean last time you spoke about um..enjoying using group work you said it sort of made you more active and it made the pupils more active. Do you think that the students actually learn better with group work as well. Do you find that they know the

material better at the end than if you were just standing?

40. *T.* Yes I think so from the experience..I really do feel that they understand better than when ...the teacher is talking all the time..because they're able to share ideas.

41. *I.* With each other.

42. *T.* With each other.

43. *I.* Um... Now ... there were a couple of occasions when the students were working in groups okay um.. How do you feel about them talking in groups um..say 56 of them sitting in a classroom all talking together..does it worry you?

44. *T.* No it doesn't..though I tell them not to make much noise..that I must just hear them talk though there shouldn't be a noise. Even though ...even if they make noise it doesn't really matter because its group discussion..they have to be heard talking. So..but it needs my supervision to ensure that they aren't discussing anything...you know ..they aren't discussing something out of the classroom.

45. *I.* Ja something irrelevant..ja ..that's always a problem. particularly with such a large number..you have to get around all the students and listen to them.Um...can you give me some sort of definition of group work..what does group work mean to you?

46. *T.* It means a group of students working together in class sharing ideas and helping each other out when someone has a problem and at the end of it all coming up with something common from each group.

47. *I.* Okay thanks. Um I just want to play you just an excerpt from .. I don't know if you remember that comprehension lesson that you did on aids..um ..the ..the.. groups that ..remember I..I..put the microphone down on various desks and I in fact taped about 5 groups but only one of them came out clearly so I just want to ..want you to listen to it and I want you to give me your ideas of what you think of that group work..you know what do you think of the quality of the talk?
(tape is played)

48. *I.* What did you think?

49. *T.* Okay..um..I think the group was doing well. They were sharing ideas. Each one of them was saying what he thinks like the question was whether the baby should be killed if the expectant mother was found HIV positive. Each and everyone of them says what he feels should be done .They attempt to show one another how..rather the..the..advantages and the disadvantages of the whole thing. So I think that the group itself was really participating.

50. *I.* How many kids were actually talking there. Could you identify?

51. *T.* Not all of them...only 2 or 3. Maybe some of their voices I'm not used to.

52. *I.* I mean it sounded like about 4 different voices. What do you think?

53. *T.* Ja ..Ja.

54. *I.* The chairman you know he spoke quite a lot. And what did you think of the quality of their talk.um.. I mean are you happy with what they were talking about.

55. *T.* Ja...Ja.

56. *I.* Ja I mean I think that it's quite sophisticated. They're obviously quite a clever group hey.

57. *T.* Ja ..Ja..clever.

58. *I.* Whereas..um..some of the other groups..I think they were a bit shy.

59. *T.* Ja..Ja definitely. Maybe when they saw the microphone on the desk they decided to...

60. *I.* But they all ..I'll tell you what they all started speaking English. Okay. Now in the lessons that we observed um.. for instance the very last one on literature.. the one on Thanks to Mrs. Parsons um.. I just want to find out a little bit about how you planned that lesson..um cause there seems ..remember I asked you in the classroom...I just want to find out what had gone on before. You did have a previous lesson where you read through the story and then what did you do?

61. *T.* Okay now that I have got that material so I wanted to draw their attention to the introductory part of the lesson..that is why I wanted them to ..to do those things even though they had read the story.

62. *I.* Ja.Ja.

63. *T.* So ..I told them to work in groups.. I gave them the heading and the heading was they should talk about quarrels between two families and their family being one of those 2. Who caused the quarrel? Who were involved in the quarrel? How were they as children affected by that? So now they had to do it on their own during their spare time like say maybe if the group leader gives... them assigns them with duties they should do them at home. They should come together during their spare time not during my lesson. They'll bring their facts together so that when that lesson comes they know what to talk about they know who is going to say what.

64. *I.* So they make a common story. They decided on a group story and then

they all know what that story is?

65. *T.* They all knew what the story was all about.

66. *I.* Um ..now what I want to ask you is why your.. that ..you asked them to work outside the class?

67. *T.* I don't know. there wasn't any reason in particular really. I think I was pressed for time.

68. *I.* Sure..Ja. So when they reported back their findings..their stories um.. that was the important thing for you?

69. I. Yes.

70 *I.* The reporting back?

71. *T.* Ja.. the reporting back..the participation that shows that at least they did the work.

72. *I.* And do you feel that it was successful. Did you think they.?

73. *T.* Maybe..(inaudible) so much.. but it was successful.

74. *I.* You think that the kids participated.

75. *T.* Even though not all of them because as you will remember there were 2 groups who didn't participate and they said ..I actually don't know ..but something like they felt shy to stand up and talk.

76. *I.* Probably because of us.

77. *T.* I think they're so used to you.

78. *I.* So you think it was just them.

79. *T.* Mmmm.

80. *I.* There seemed to be a very nice discussion towards the end. They were arguing about what they could have done..what should have been done and all that kind of thing. Is that what you wanted to promote.

81. *T.* Ja...Ja. Because the main thing besides any other reasons why I like group work is to have them talk..they must learn to express themselves.

82. *I.* Ja sure . Do you think.. to me there are 2 different types of group work in your class. The type where they stand up and they speak in front of the whole class and then.. like the one we listened to.. the..the boys in the group talking about Aids. That was a ..I mean..I don't know if you think of

it but I think of it as 2 different types. of group work in a way.

83. *T.* Not really because they sit together like those boys did.. they sit together and talk but now thereafter they bring out something that they have all agreed upon.

84. *I.* Ja.

85. *T.* So they don't differ that much because the thing remains at the end of it all he has to stand up and give feedback to the class..

86. *I.* Ja. And do you think that the students in the literature lesson when you told them to do the...discuss it in groups in their spare time.. do you think that ..um.. that's as good a way as doing it in the class where you have control over..

87. *T.* No...it doesn't. Because as you have seen some of the groups failed to participate..maybe because they failed to prepare themselves. So I think it is advisable that they do it in class when I'm there to supervise.

88. *I.* Yeah.. But its a time thing. Sometimes you can manage it and other times you can't.

89. *I.* Ja. Looking at the school context, do you find that ..that um ,there's any restrictions on you from say your headmaster or that other teachers don't like it when your students sit in groups and perhaps make more noise than a very quiet class which is just listening to the teacher.

90. *T.* No . Okay. The principal might hear the noise. Then he might come in and find that I'm in there then he doesn't say anything at all. He can see that they're seated in groups so it means they are discussing. As long as I'm in there then he knows that they are not doing something irrelevant. And no I haven't had any specific complaint about my teaching and group work.

91. *I.* In fact you were saying earlier that um.. some of the other teachers are taking over your ideas.

92. *T.* Yes. Because what I usually do..I.. If maybe I come from class and I had an interesting lesson I find myself just sharing it with other teachers in the staffroom, so now there are others who do not do their language.. who do not teach language, but they really find it very interesting if I do it that way. And even those who are teaching Afrikaans and Setswana they started using group work in their class.

93. *I.* And they find it successful?

94. *T.* Yes.

95. *I.* Just a general question. Is there anything you don't feel happy with or um.. you feel a bit uncomfortable about when I'm researching you. I know you've talked about the positive things but what are the negative feelings that you have about ...?

96 *T.* About your researching..

97. *I.* About the way I've done it or anything.

98. *T.* I don't really feel that I've something against it unless it maybe I find myself not having prepared myself thoroughly for that lesson that's when I don't feel comfortable..because I think in that case I feel that you are recording something that is not my best. Actually I don't have anything against it .

99. *I.* Do you have any questions about what I'm doing. Do you feel that you know what I'm doing.?

100. *T.* Yeah you told me.

101. *I.* And you don't feel as though..um ..I'm disguising what I'm doing?

102. *T.* No I don't think so . You told me that you were busy with your thesis and then you needed my help. No I don't think there's anything wrong because it involves school.. If it was maybe something out what I was expected to do then maybe it would...

103. *I.* In a way.. I mean when I came to you first I said I'd be recording five lessons. Now somehow its got bigger than that. I've recorded I suppose.. only 5 lessons but I've also asked you to come in and watch video tapes, listen to audio tapes, answer questions. How do you feel about that?

104. *T.* Um..No the thing is in the beginning I told myself that I'm working with you she needs someone to complete her thesis. So I agreed to that then I have to give you the chance to ask for my help if you need it.

105. *I.* Okay now when I've finished the research what would you like to get out of it.

106. *T.* Out of it? Maybe if I knew if I had insight what your research was all about. I think maybe I was doing the same thing with you... then I would expect some feedback. But now that I haven't yet started with my honours degree...

107. *I.* No I just meant in terms of ..you know ..don't you feel that.. I mean you've been very good to me .. you've helped me out don't you feel that somehow I'm obliged to also help you.

108. *T.* Out with the problems that I have.

109. *I.* Ja If I think that I can help you in some way with group work don't you think I should.

110. *T.* Ja ..if there are things that you need to help me with then its welcome.

111. *I.* And would you want that?

112. *T.* Yes. Even if you find something that you think would be useful to me.

113. *I.* Okay. Now if next year I'd quite like to in my own courses do something on group work. If I used some of your video tape would you mind.

114. *T.* No I don't think so.

115. *I.* For teachers to observe.

116. *T.* I don't think so .

117. *I.* Well look if I ever do then what I'll do is come to ask you and show you what I intend to show teachers and you can say whether you're happy or not about it.

Appendix 8

Comments by Pula On The Draft Report

I agreed to working with Helen after I had attended her course at the In-service College and she had asked me to help her.

I went through a report she wrote after she had observed my lessons. Firstly I would like to comment on what Helen calls teaching what 'appeared to be the end results of a previous group work lesson.' I cannot disagree with her on that point because of several reasons.

* I didn't know if Helen was interested in seeing me arrange my students into groups.

* I didn't have time to arrange them into groups in her presence taking into consideration the large numbers we have in each class.

I had arranged them into groups a day or two ago in preparation for her lessons. Like she says it was like 'the end result...lesson.' because I had given them a topic to prepare beforehand. Preparations were made in class in my presence during school hours, to avoid wasting time on the "big day." From Helen's report that we seem to have different ideas on what group is, I feel she could have stopped me immediately when she realised this. I really feel disappointed considering that I've done several lessons with her thinking that I was on the right track. She too kept telling me how good and interesting my lessons were. That I was a really good teacher.

It boosted my ego, I was flattered by this and to my disappointment I feel I had just wasted hers and my time. Maybe if she had corrected me, I could have changed and improved.

One other disappointment is about her comment on the description of the school and classes. I had thought her interest was only with observing my lessons and not with the school. I had answered most of the questions she had been asking about the management of the school, about teachers involvement in extra mural activities, about discipline in the school. I never thought my remarks added to the collection and completion of her task.

I feel so much like an informer. I don't think my principal who is said to have been "flattered" by the implication that his school and teacher were worthy of attention, could enjoy reading this report. Some of the questions I had thought were just personal but to my surprise they weren't. I feel that Helen's general comments on the school and its students was unjust.

I feel really bad that what I had been doing, that which I thought was right, was not right. But I'll try and improve and even change what I did for the best.

Appendix 9.

REPUBLIEK VAN SUID-AFRIKA
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
DEPARTMENT VAN ONDERWYS EN KULTUUR
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE
ADMINISTRASIE: VOLKSRAAD
ADMINISTRATION: HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
NASIONALE EKSAMENS
NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

TIME: ONE AND A HALF HOURS

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M0015 ii) 92
March 1992

NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE
ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE HG
SECOND PAPER

MARKS: 100

INSTRUCTIONS

ALL QUESTIONS must be attempted. USE THE ANSWER BOOK PROVIDED
READ THE INSTRUCTIONS AT THE BEGINNING OF EACH QUESTION CAREFULLY.

I. COMPREHENSION (Spend about 40 minutes on this section.)
READ the following passage and answer the questions which follow.

BEWARE OF AIDS

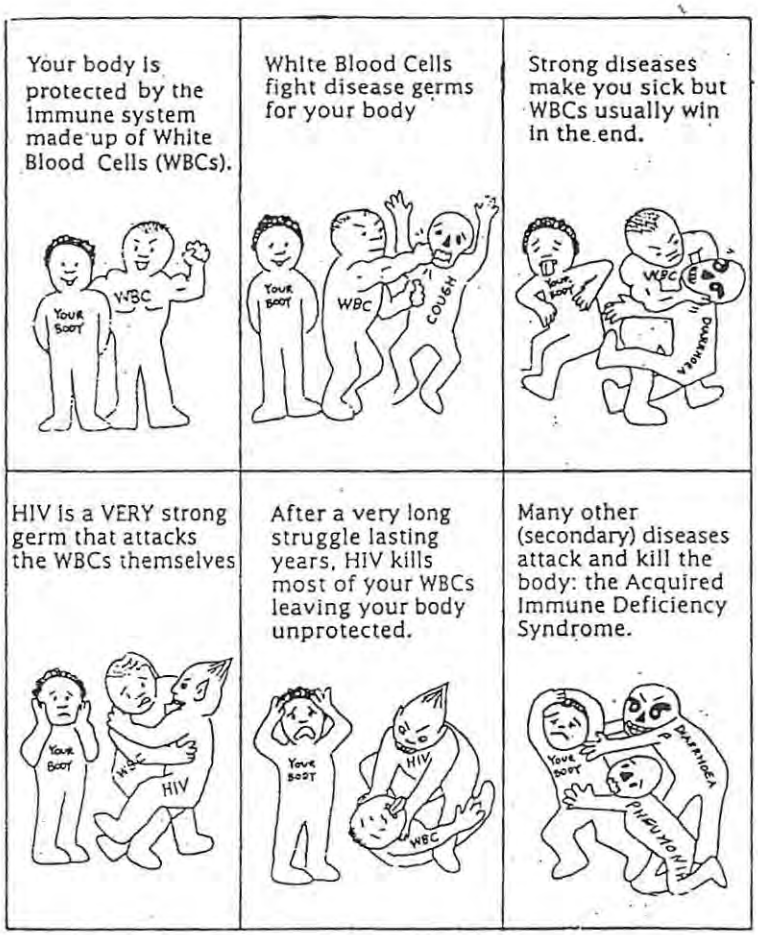
AIDS IS NOT PREJUDICED — IT KILLS ANYONE

PREVENTION IS BETTER
THERE IS NO CURE

1. WHAT IS AIDS?

AIDS is a disease which, so far, is incurable. The word stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. It is acquired, or caught, from someone else through a virus or small germ referred to as HIV. The virus attacks the human body's natural protective system against disease, so that resistance or immunity is weakened (becomes deficient). The body cannot protect itself against common diseases and infections such as pneumonia, tuberculosis and diarrhoea.

2/...



2. HOW PEOPLE ARE INFECTED

AIDS is mainly caught through sexual contact with someone who already has the HIV infection, that is someone who is 'HIV positive'. It can also be caught through blood transfusions, although this is very unlikely in South Africa where all donated blood which is given to other people, is tested for AIDS. But it can be caught through using dirty syringes, for example, those used by some drug addicts. Any instrument which has been in contact with someone else's blood, without being sterilised, can carry AIDS. Babies can be born with AIDS if their mothers are infected.

3. AN AIDS EPIDEMIC IS COMING

An AIDS epidemic is coming to South Africa. The countries with the highest AIDS incidence in the world are in East and Central Africa. So inevitably, AIDS has made its way southwards. It is already here in South Africa and evidence suggests that we have months, not years, to wait for an epidemic. Yet, over half our population has never heard of the disease. Few of those who are aware of it, know much about it and adopt the attitude of 'it can't happen to me'. They turn a deaf

3/

ear to advice about safer sexual practices. Another major problem is that AIDS is an extremely sensitive subject. Certain sections of the population think that any campaign for a safer sexual lifestyle is aimed at a deliberate reduction in the population, rather than a reduction of disease. Some think that the whole subject is far too embarrassing to discuss, especially in front of young people. Lastly, many people still wrongly believe that it can affect only homosexuals.

4. HOW QUICKLY WILL THE DISEASE SPREAD?

Expert opinions vary on this point, but even the most optimistic predict that by 1995 there could be at least one and a half million people with the virus and up to 47 000 deaths. By the year 2 000, at least 5 million could have the virus, and there could be up to half a million deaths. These are not wild guesses, but figures based on research. There are far worse predictions than these.

5. WHAT CAN WE DO?

An intensive media campaign against AIDS is essential. (So far, no politician of any colour has been willing to take a firm stand on promoting such a campaign This should be followed through at all levels of society - in homes, schools, the workplace and social institutions. The nature of AIDS and its effects on the individual and society must be emphasised. We must urge the need for a return to a one-partner-for-life code of conduct. There must be a national determination to avoid internal strife which leads to chaos and poverty - the breeding ground for disease. There is an obvious need to educate sangomas who traditionally play a leading role in health care. Unfortunately, attempts to do this have so far shown that it is difficult to convince them of the nature and dangers of AIDS because it often shows no symptoms for several years. We must take action on all these points - and more - immediately.

FOR ABSOLUTE SAFETY
ONE MAN, ONE WOMAN, FOR LIFE
NO SEX BEFORE MARRIAGE
NO SEX OUTSIDE MARRIAGE

6. THE LIKELY EFFECTS

The highest proportion of sick people and deaths will be among the twenty to forty-five year-old age group which is the one most affected by AIDS. This will have a marked effect on our workforce. There will be a great deal of absenteeism among the country's workers - whatever their jobs. Training of skilled people to replace those affected by AIDS will add to the cost of goods and services. So employers will probably insist on AIDS tests for employees. Secondly, a high proportion of our country's spending on health could be for people with AIDS-related

4/

diseases, leaving less money for other crucial health care. Thirdly, it is also possible that AIDS could lead to a national crisis of ethnic and 'class' rivalries. Fourthly, the 'have-nots' might blame the 'haves' if the disease spreads more rapidly among the poor, as it has elsewhere. There will be other serious effects, too numerous to mention here.

7. ACT NOW

Whatever else - don't think that this account of AIDS is simply to scare you away from sex. AIDS is a terrible reality. Every individual, social and work institution, as well as the government, must be aware of the danger NOW. Don't wait for the disastrous wave to come.

(This passage was adapted from various newspaper and journal sources.)

QUESTIONS

USE THE ANSWER BOOK PROVIDED

For numbers 1, 2 and 3, write only the symbol of the correct answer:

READING FOR GENERAL UNDERSTANDING. Read the whole passage before attempting the answers.

1. Which of the following is the best summary of the passage?

A. AIDS is an incurable disease which makes people unable to fight other diseases. We must realise that it is spreading rapidly from East and Central Africa.

B. AIDS is an incurable disease already affecting this country. It is passed on mainly through sex. The effects will be disastrous unless everyone takes precautions against it now.

C. The effects of AIDS will be fewer middle-aged people, re-training needed for skilled workers and testing employees for AIDS. It will cost our medical services a great deal.

D. The only way to halt AIDS is to make people aware of it. There must be less sleeping around with casual friends. Even the sangomas must be trained to help to fight the disease. (3)

5/...

2. The writer's attitude is that:

   A. it is everybody's responsibility to fight AIDS.

   B. the Government must take full responsibility to fight AIDS.

   C. sangomas are our main hope in the struggle against AIDS.

   D. only more money spent on AIDS prevention will help. (3)

3. Why do you think that illustrations and newspaper headlines have been used in this passage?

   A. To make you laugh

   B. To help you to understand it

   C. To make you more aware of the dangers

   D. Both B and C above (3)

READING FOR DETAIL

4. In each of the following statements, ONE WORD is incorrect according to the information in the passage. On your answer sheet, write the incorrect word and then the correct one in the spaces provided. eg. AIDS is curable._____

   Answer: curable - incurable

(i) It is likely that AIDS can be caught through blood transfusions in this country. (Paragraph 2)

(ii) The most pessimistic predictions suggest that there will be one and a half million HIV positive people here by 1995. (Paragraph 4)

(iii) AIDS is obvious soon after someone has caught it. (Paragraph 5) (3)

5. Which of the following statements are TRUE according to the passage ? (Write down the symbols only)

   A. AIDS can be caught by an infected person breathing on you.

   B. Babies can be born with AIDS.

   C. Only sex can cause AIDS.

   D. It will be a long time before AIDS affects South Africa.

   E. There must be immediate publicity about the nature and effects of AIDS.

   F. The term 'haves' in paragraph 6 refers to people with money. (3)

6. Using the information given in the diagram at the end of Paragraph 1, state why the little man ('your body') is dying of diarrhoea and pneumonia. (A short sentence answer.) (3)

6/...

7. Quote the sentence in paragraph 5 which suggests that sex outside marriage must be avoided. (3)

8. The third sentence in Paragraph 5 begins with the word 'This'. What does 'This' refer to? (3)

9. In a sentence of your own, state why employers might wish to test employees for AIDS. (3)

10. There is a one-word metaphor in the last paragraph. In a brief sentence of your own, say what two things are being likened to each other. (3)

11. Find single words or phrases from the passage (as indicated below) which mean the same as each of the following:

    a) made germ free (one word, paragraph 2)

    b) certainly (one word, paragraph 3)

    c) refuse to listen (four words, paragraph 3)

    d) forecast (one word, paragraph 4)

    e) jealousies (one word, paragraph 6) (10)

TOTAL /40/

IV. SUMMARY (Spend about half an hour on this question.)

INSTRUCTIONS:

You wish to go to a teacher Training College next year. You cannot decide whether to stay in the College hostel or with a friend in his home. So you write to two relatives for advice. One is a lecturer at the college, the other is a final year student. Extracts from the letters they wrote to you in reply are shown below.

From the information given by both of them, summarise in 50 - 60 words, the advantages of staying in a hostel, assuming that you are a serious student. Write your summary in a paragraph or in point form, but you must use FULL SENTENCES. Write the number of words you have used, in brackets at the end of the summary.

Extract 1 (from a College lecturer)

"... The atmosphere of a hostel lends itself to study. There are occasionally parties and so on, but on the whole it is quiet in the hostels and you will have a room to yourself. You will be with people of your own age and most of them - though regrettably not quite all - have the same aim in view, that is to pass at the end of each year. Also, you can discuss your work with fellow students. Staying in someone's home means that you aren't necessarily with other students and you may be more tempted to look for company by roaming the town at night. Whilst an occasional fling is good for you, on the whole you shouldn't do this sort of thing until the holidays come along...."

Extract 2 (from a student)

"... I stayed in the hostel for the first two years of my student life and I can tell you man I'm glad to be away. The food was terrible. Admittedly it's there on the table ready for you and you don't waste time preparing meals. Still, what's the good when you have to eat strictly according to certain hours rather than when your stomach tells you it's empty! Give me home cooking any day! If you feel like taking the day off lectures there's no way you'll get away with it in the hostel. They'll even come and look for you if they are suspicious that you aren't really sick, and then the fat's in the fire. If you're boarding out somewhere away from the college, no-one can come and look for you and it's dead easy to play truant every now and then. I'll admit that being in the hostel means that you're with young people of both sexes the whole time. You have your own room which is small but some students think that's better than having old people snoring in the next bed. You've got to weigh all the pro's and con's when you make a decision about where to stay. Don't forget residence isn't cheap either...."

10/...

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