Instructed Second Language Acquisition Case Studies
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Very sincere thanks are extended to the teachers who participated so willingly in the research when approached. The views they express are their own, and they make no claims to be experts.

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INTRODUCTION

This book is intended for teachers of languages at all levels in New Zealand schools. It has two principal aims:

1. to present a set of general, research-based principles that can serve teachers as a guide to effective language teaching and as a basis for evaluating their own teaching;

2. to present case studies of teachers’ beliefs and instructional practices, informed by the general principles, as models of teaching that language teachers can use as a basis for reflecting on their own beliefs and practices.

The underlying goal of this book is to provide a tool for teacher self-development.

The Ministry of Education’s Quality Teaching for Diverse Students in Schooling: Best Evidence Synthesis (2003) identifies the key characteristics of effective teaching in the schooling sector. From this, we know that teachers who are effective:

- are focused on student achievement and have high and clear expectations of all learners’ abilities to achieve;
- know their curriculum material or subject and have learned effective teaching and learning strategies;
- use evidence to assess the learning needs of all groups of learners and use research to identify appropriate teaching strategies;
- build purposeful relationships with learners, peers, families, and communities and can link teaching to the cultures and beliefs that all groups bring to their learning.

For teaching to be effective, teachers need to participate in and contribute to professional communities that are committed to an evidence-based approach and continuous learning. This approach integrates the knowledge base of researchers, teacher educators, and classroom teachers.

Consistent with this approach, the Ministry of Education commissioned a review of the literature on second language acquisition (SLA) to provide evidence of “effective language teaching” (Ministry of Education, 2005). This is not an easy subject to address, because there are many competing theories offering very different perspectives on how teaching can promote language learning and because research does not always provide clear-cut findings.

The literature review began by examining the learning theories that underlie three mainstream approaches to language teaching. Next, it considered empirical studies of classroom teaching and learning. Because a vast amount of research has taken place over the last three decades, the research considered was necessarily selective, focusing on key theoretical claims and seminal studies. The selected research was the basis for identifying a set of general principles.

The principles, based on theory and research, are offered by the researchers as “provisional specifications” (in line with Stenhouse’s [1975] arguments) that are best discussed, interpreted, and then tried out by teachers in their own contexts.

The research team also developed case studies to illustrate how the principles can support teachers in curriculum-based teaching and learning in ways that:

- provide an evidence base that can be used to inform teacher professional learning and practice;
- provide an evidence base for the development of illustrative material and/or exemplars of effective practice;
• provide a means by which teachers can come to understand the rationale for their existing practices and for options that are not yet part of their repertoire;
• illuminate pedagogic problems and possible solutions;
• enable teachers to interpret and test the relevance to their own teaching context of principles drawn from second language acquisition research.

Improving the quality of teaching practice requires teachers to connect theory and practice. The observation and discussion tools used in the development of the case studies are published as appendices. Teachers are encouraged to use them in ways that can assist their own and others’ professional learning and practice and support their students’ learning and achievement.

The literature review is available at www.tki.org.nz/e/community/language

The structure of the book

This book sets out ten principles of successful language instruction and four case studies based on them. A summarised, edited version of the principles is presented on pages 4–6. The case study section introduces and describes the participants, the methods of data collection, and the method of analysis used. The analysis of the data in relation to each of the ten principles makes up the main part of each case study. At the end of each study (except case study C) is a commentary from the teacher concerned. The appendices contain the original, full version of the principles, the two questionnaires used by the teachers, and the observational field-note forms used by the researcher. References are on pages 67–68. Specialist terms are highlighted in bold text in the book the first time they occur and are defined in a glossary at the back of the book.
THE PRINCIPLES

In this book, the term “instructed second language learning” refers to learning in a classroom setting with formal instruction from a teacher. The term “successful language instruction” means “effective language teaching” as encapsulated in the ten principles.

The descriptions of the principles outlined here have been summarised from the original version, which can be found in Appendix 1. The teachers in the case studies saw the original, full version of the principles.

**Principle 1**
*Instruction needs to ensure that learners develop both a rich repertoire of formulaic expressions and a rule-based competence.*

Traditionally, language instruction has focused on developing learners’ knowledge of specific grammatical rules and their skill in applying them. This knowledge and skill help learners to express themselves in accurate language. In order to achieve fluency, learners also need to acquire a rich repertoire of formulaic expressions, such as “How do you do?”, “I don’t know”, “Can I have a ___?”, and “Where’s the ___?” Early in the learning process, formulaic expressions are very important for learning any language. In the long term, both formulaic expressions and the ability to apply grammatical rules are essential.

**Principle 2**
*Instruction needs to ensure that learners focus predominantly on meaning.*

The term “focus on meaning” refers to two types of meaning – semantic meaning (that is, the meanings of words and grammatical structures) and pragmatic meaning. Both are important but pragmatic meaning is crucial to language learning.

In linguistics, “pragmatic meaning” is a term for meaningful language that is used for real communication. Learners need to see themselves as communicators and to use the target language as a tool for communicating. In the classroom, teachers can achieve a focus on meaning through “tasks” (Ellis, 2003). Ellis describes a task as an activity that:

- requires the learners to focus primarily on meaning;
- has some kind of gap that the learners can close by communicating;
- requires learners to construct their own productive language rather than to manipulate language that the teacher provides;
- has a clearly defined outcome (other than producing “correct language”).

Engaging learners in tasks that focus them on creating meaning for an authentic purpose enables them to acquire language. It also gives them opportunities to develop fluency and is intrinsically motivating.

In this book, the term “task” is always used in Ellis’s sense.
**Principle 3**  
*Instruction needs to ensure that learners also focus on form.*

Learners need to pay attention to specific forms in the language they are learning. For example, learners of English as a second language need to notice that verbs sometimes end in *–ed* and that this form indicates completed action in the past.

In the context of attempting to communicate accurately, learners discover the importance of focusing on the form of the language that they use. Teachers can help them by giving them focused tasks rather than teaching grammar in isolation.

Note that “focus on form” and “focus on forms” have different connotations in the literature. Refer to the glossary.

**Principle 4**  
*Instruction needs to be predominantly directed at developing implicit knowledge of the target language while not neglecting explicit knowledge.*

**Explicit knowledge** means consciously held knowledge. It includes all of the phonological, lexical, grammatical, and pragmatic features of the target language that the teacher gives explicit instruction about and that the learner consciously learns. Explicit knowledge also includes the metalanguage for discussing language.

**Implicit knowledge** means the knowledge that learners hold unconsciously. They can access such knowledge quickly and easily to use in rapid, fluent communication. This is the kind of knowledge we have of our first language. Proficiency in any language involves having considerable implicit knowledge.

Because implicit knowledge underlies the ability to communicate fluently and confidently, building up this kind of knowledge should be the goal of all language programmes. Explicit knowledge can be used to facilitate the development of implicit knowledge.

**Principle 5**  
*Instruction needs to take into account the learner’s “built-in syllabus”.*

Research has shown that there is a consistent process for acquiring language. Initial research revealed that second language learners who had no formal instruction mastered the use of grammatical structures in a fairly consistent order, going through similar learning stages for each structure. This could be called the **“natural” developmental process**; it is also known as the **“built-in syllabus”**.

Further research showed that instructed and uninstructed language learners generally mastered grammatical structures in the same order. Although instructed learners used grammatical structures more competently than uninstructed learners, they did not always retain those levels of competence.

Researchers concluded that teachers could best help learners by providing explicit instruction that was compatible with the “natural” developmental process and that built on that process. Such instruction could include the following approaches:

- Teachers could provide authentic **communicative tasks** without planning the grammatical content of the lesson;
In a classroom setting, this may not be possible or practical;

- Teachers could focus on making key information about grammar explicit in the context of a programme based on the “natural” developmental process or “built-in syllabus”.

**Principle 6**

*Successful instructed language learning requires extensive target-language input.*

Research shows that learners achieve high levels of proficiency in a target language only when they have many opportunities to listen to, view, and read the language in the classroom and in other contexts. The more high-quality language they are exposed to, the more language they learn.

**Principle 7**

*Successful instructed language learning also requires opportunities for output.*

Learners also require opportunities to produce sustained output in the target language. Research shows that extended talk in a classroom context is more likely to occur when students initiate interactions and have to find their own words. Teachers can ask learners to perform oral, visual, and written tasks that require them to communicate clearly and explicitly for many authentic purposes.

**Principle 8**

*The opportunity to interact in the target language is central to developing proficiency.*

Social interaction is the context in which language acquisition takes place. When learners have a need to communicate, they will engage in negotiating for meaning. This pushes them to modify their own output. When learners take ownership of their interactions, discussion can be more engaging and more acquisition can occur. Teachers can incorporate interactive tasks into their programme and have their students work on these together in small groups.

**Principle 9**

*Instruction needs to take account of individual differences in learners*

Teachers can help to address variation in their students’ language learning by teaching in a flexible way and by developing the learners’ awareness and use of language-learning strategies.

**Principle 10**

*In assessing learners’ target-language proficiency, it is important to examine free as well as controlled production*

Assessment should measure how proficiently learners can communicate. Many common assessment methods, however, only require learners to provide a particular “right answer”. A communicative task that calls for a constructed response (with no single “right answer”) is more like authentic communication and is therefore the best measure of learners’ target-language proficiency.
**Final comment**

These general principles have been derived from second language acquisition research. This research, on which this book is based, has drawn on a variety of theoretical perspectives. Together, all these perspectives provide a psycholinguistic account of how learners internalise new linguistic forms and how they restructure their linguistic knowledge in the process of acquisition. Other theoretical perspectives are not reflected in this book, for example, educational theories of “good teaching”, and theories that view language learning in terms of cultural learning. Such theories could serve as the basis for formulating additional general principles. Although the principles outlined here are selective, they are intended to specify the minimum that is needed to ensure successful language learning in the classroom.
INTRODUCTION TO THE CASE STUDIES

- There are four case studies: Case Studies A, B, C, and D.
- The participants were four teachers: Teachers A, B, C, and D. Teachers A and B are teachers of French; Teachers C and D are teachers of Japanese.
- The case-study data was collected through a background questionnaire, observation of selected classes, and an in-depth interview with each teacher.
- Information on the researcher’s school visits was provided to the Ministry of Education but is not included in this book.
- The main body of each case study (the researcher’s report) analyses the data in relation to the ten principles.
- Each teacher commented about the researcher’s report on their teaching practice. However, Teacher C’s comments are not available.

The participants

Teacher A was born in the United Kingdom where she did both her teacher training (specialising in French and German) and a Masters degree in French. She has been teaching French for seven years. Teacher A rated both her spoken and her written language proficiency as 4 (on a five-point scale where 5 was described as high or near-native proficiency).

Teacher B started learning French informally at age six and formally in school at age eleven. He rated his spoken and written language proficiency as 5 (high or near-native). Teacher B has a New Zealand teaching qualification and has studied French at Masters level. He has been teaching French for twenty-two years, along with Latin and German at different times.

Teacher C has been teaching Japanese for three and a half years. She has taught ESOL in the past but at the time of this study was teaching Japanese only. She studied Japanese at high school, majored in Japanese in her undergraduate courses at university, and lived in Japan for 16 months to study the Japanese language. Teacher C holds a postgraduate diploma in teaching. She assessed her Japanese abilities as 2.2 in speaking and 2 in writing (on a scale where 1 is low and 5 is high or near-native).

Teacher D had been teaching Japanese for nine months in the school where this research took place. She lived in Japan for eight years while her husband coached rugby at a Japanese university. Teacher D holds a BEd Teaching Diploma but she has never received any formal Japanese instruction; she learned Japanese as part of everyday life in Japan by picking up phrases and vocabulary. She assessed her spoken and written Japanese abilities as 2 on the scale (1 is the lowest and 5 is near-native). During the school holiday, when this data collection took place, Teacher D went to Sydney for a week for training in Japanese teaching and language. She was selected for the Japanese government-funded programme as a teacher of Japanese who had not received formal training in Japanese teaching. Teacher D was very pleased with this experience and, also, the principal showed strong support for Teacher D’s further training.
The methods of data collection and analysis

Data collection
To collect data of each teacher’s practice, three methods were used: a background questionnaire, observation of selected classes, and an in-depth interview with the teacher.

1. Background questionnaire
Each participating teacher completed a fifteen-item background questionnaire asking for information such as the teacher’s first language, the number of years they had been teaching French or Japanese, how they learned French or Japanese, any (language) teaching qualifications they held, and their general views about teaching French or Japanese. A copy of the background questionnaire can be found in Appendix 2.

2. Observation of selected classes
Each teacher was observed five times – three times teaching one class and twice teaching another. As a guide to the observations, a set of questions was devised. These questions, which related to the ten general principles for instructed language learning, expressed ways of putting each principle into practice. For example, for principle 2 “Instruction needs to ensure that learners focus predominantly on meaning”, the following three questions were used:

- Are there opportunities for students to focus on pragmatic meaning during the lesson?
- Does the lesson contain any communicative tasks?
- What proportion of the lesson time engages learners in processing pragmatic meaning?

A field-observation notebook was developed, with a single page for each principle and with the questions relating to each principle listed at the top of the page. The list of questions for each principle can be found in Appendix 3.

The researcher sat in the classroom and completed a set of field notes for each lesson by jotting down observed student and teacher behaviours relevant to each principle.

3. Interview
The interview was conducted face to face between the teacher and the researcher. It consisted of twenty-four questions (see Appendix 4) asking what the teacher believed about teaching behaviours associated with the ten principles of language teaching. For example, they elicited the teacher’s views about the importance of teaching formulaic expressions and grammar, their understanding of what a communicative task was, their ideas about how languages are most effectively learned, the extent to which they tried to use the target language in the classroom and to provide opportunities for students to produce in the target language, and the methods they used to cope with individual differences among their students.

Analysis
The data collected for each teacher was analysed in relation to the ten principles of instructed language learning. That is, each principle was considered separately, and the observed behaviours relevant to each principle were described for each teacher. Information from the questionnaire and the interview was used to establish the extent to which the teaching and learning practices observed in the lessons matched the teacher’s expressed beliefs about language teaching. The aim of the analysis was to examine how far each teacher’s practice reflected the principles and to provide a rich, detailed account of the practices and beliefs associated with each principle.
The teachers’ commentaries

Each teacher was given a copy of the report on their teaching practice and asked to write answers to two questions:

1. Do you think that this report is an accurate account of your teaching practice?
2. In what ways has reading this report made you reflect on your own teaching?

Each teacher’s responses to these questions (except Teacher C’s) are included at the end of the report on their teaching practice.
CASE STUDY A: FRENCH CLASS

The school

The participating school has a roll of 1540 students and is rated as decile 4. Of particular interest is the ethnic mix, with 43 percent of students being classified as European/Pākehā, 22 percent as Māori, 20 percent as Pasifika, and 10 percent as Asian. French is taught at years 9 and 10 only; students wishing to study French at senior level do so through correspondence as numbers, to date, do not warrant timetabling a teacher for their instruction. These students do, however, have the possibility of attending the French club run outside of class time by Teacher A. Those year 9 and 10 students who do elect to study French receive two out of four semesters of instruction in French in a given year. During this time, they have four lessons a week, each of one hour’s duration. The other two semesters they spend studying another elective subject.

Background information about the classes observed

The researcher observed a total of five lessons. Three were with a class of twenty-nine year 9 students, who at the time were only in their eighth week of instruction in French. Two were with a class of eight year 10 students, who had not had any French instruction for a semester and who had been invited to attend three “refresher” lessons by Teacher A. All but one student elected to attend these optional lessons. All lessons were an hour long.

Teacher A described her students at year 9 as being of “mixed ability”. She said that students tended to self-select as they progressed through the school so that, while she would still describe her year 10 class as of mixed ability, it included students of higher ability than her year 9 class.

Teacher A pointed out that she takes what she calls a “skill-based approach” to teaching French at this level. She spends a lot of time setting up what she calls “a French classroom”, an environment where students can function totally in French. The routines and procedures she establishes help students contextualise, orientate to, and thus learn the language. She explained that other teachers tend to take a content-based approach to teaching French and are often surprised that she has not, for example, taught the students to tell the time yet in French. But she believes that her way sets up a very solid basis for acquisition of French.

Teacher A also commented that she had changed her teaching style significantly since arriving in New Zealand (a year earlier) because she felt that New Zealand students were more prepared to use language orally than her British students had been. They were, on the other hand, less inclined to engage in written-language activities.

At year 9, a focus of the lessons observed was on giving the students the linguistic tools they needed for interviewing and asking questions of each other. There were also opportunities for the students to practise short dialogues in pairs. In all lessons, the students were involved in negotiating lesson objectives with the teacher at the beginning of the class and in evaluating lessons at the end of the class. A number of other routines and procedures, such as roll call, giving out of dictionaries, presentation of the “word of the day”, and so on were features of all lessons and occasions for students to interact with the teacher in the target language. These will be described in greater detail below.

At year 10, the two lessons observed were designed to prepare the students for playing a board game in French, scheduled to take place during the last lesson. Once again, students were involved in negotiating lesson objectives with the teacher. During the first lesson observed, the students revised language structures that they would need to be able to play the game, for example, verbs and negative expressions in French. They also practised answers to prepared questions. In
the second lesson, there was more practice with the role-play and conversation cards that were part of the game. Finally, students had the opportunity to play the game in pairs.

**Researcher’s report**

**Principle 1: Instruction needs to ensure that learners develop both a rich repertoire of formulaic expressions and a rule-based competence.**

Extensive use of formulaic expressions was made by Teacher A in all the lessons observed. The students had access to formulaic expressions in the following ways:

1. Expressions (untranslated) were posted on cardboard shapes around the walls of the classroom. Examples were: *Je ne suis pas d'accord* (I don’t agree), *Madame a fait une erreur, oops!* (Oops, the teacher has made a mistake), and so on. The students were continually encouraged to use these expressions to communicate with in class.

2. The students had laminated sheets of expressions handed out to them at the beginning of class – these were entitled *Problème?* and had expressions that the students frequently used to reply to questions that the teacher posed as part of class routines, for example:
   - *Où est ton cahier?* (Where is your exercise book?)
   - *Je l'ai laissé dans mon casier.* (I have left it in my locker)
   - *Je l'ai laissé chez moi.* (I have left it at home.)

3. The students were shown a template on the OHP that gave them the linguistic tools they needed in order to take part in discussions with the teacher in which they planned and evaluated the class lesson. This process gave them extended opportunities to use formulaic expressions.

There were many examples of students using formulaic expressions like *Pouvez-vous éteindre la lumière?* (Can you turn the light off?) and *Il sèche le cours* (He is wagging).

Teacher A commented that she thought that teaching formulaic expressions was very important as they were what students could build on for learning. She said that she taught them all the time in context.

Instruction also focused on developing the students’ ability to apply grammatical rules. This will be investigated in greater depth under Principle 3.

Given the level of the students observed, it was not realistic to expect them to produce utterances that contained complex sentence constructions.

**Principle 2: Instruction needs to ensure that learners focus predominantly on meaning.**

The learners had lots of opportunities to focus on pragmatic meaning in class. These opportunities were both incidental (for example, the teacher negotiated in French how many points a particular student should be awarded for his team; the teacher asked students if it was OK for her to write on the whiteboard in red ink and planned (for example, students discussed the day and date with the teacher in French, reported whether they had brought their dictionaries and books and whether they had done their homework, and explained why not if they hadn’t). The students were also focused on pragmatic meaning as they worked with the teacher to, for example, establish in French the objectives of the lesson, decide whether they had enough time to complete all the tasks planned and, at the end of the lesson, evaluate the lesson with the teacher.
The researcher estimated that between 50 and 70 percent of lessons observed focused on pragmatic meaning.

Students took part in paired interviews/role plays and conversations in class. However, these were for the most part situational grammar exercises rather than communicative tasks in that there was often no information gap (an example of a task with no information gap is a dialogue with students answering questions such as Comment t’appelles-tu? What is your name? and Quel âge as-tu? How old are you?) and no communicative outcome (Ellis, 2003).

Teacher A defined a communicative task as one that involved not only completing the task itself but also some discussion about the task and what it involved.

**Principle 3: Instruction needs to ensure that learners also focus on form.**

There were opportunities for the students to focus on form in all lessons observed. This focus tended to be incidental and most often extensive. For example, in discussing le mot du jour (the word of the day), the teacher drew the students’ attention to the placement of the adjective and compared it with English; later in the same lesson, the teacher pointed out the difference between des and les in faire des/les interviews (do some/the interviews).

Correction of students’ errors was at times occasion for a brief period of “time out” to focus on form in the lesson. For example, the teacher explained, in response to the error Je suis 14 (I am 14), that you have to use the verb avoir (have) for age.

At other times, there was a discussion with the students (on at least one occasion initiated by a student himself) about the grammar that they would need in order to be able to complete a particular task.

There was also an example, in one lesson, of a planned and intensive focus on form. On this occasion, the students were asked to identify adjectifs ou verbes au féminin (feminine verbs and adjectives) and adjectifs au masculin (masculine adjectives) from a written passage.

Teacher A indicated in the interview that she thought that a focus on form was important in the classroom but that she preferred it to be incidental to what she was doing in the lesson rather than the main focus. She also indicated that she tended to take an inductive approach to teaching grammar.

**Principle 4: Instruction needs to be predominantly directed at developing implicit knowledge of the target language while not neglecting explicit knowledge.**

Researchers’ rating on continuum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate the lesson overall as being directed at “fluency” or “accuracy” on this scale:</th>
<th>&lt;br&gt;Fluency</th>
<th>Accuracy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
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</table>

All the lessons observed were directed more at developing fluency than accuracy. The researcher rated all lessons as 6.

There was, however, in all lessons, some focus on explicit language knowledge, as outlined above in the comments under Principle 3. Teacher A used, moreover, a number of metalinguistic terms during times when she focused on form, for example, verb, adjective, negative, masculine, feminine, and so on. These terms and explanations were given, at different times, in either French or English.
In the interview, Teacher A said that she taught grammar selectively. She said she felt that her teaching catered primarily to implicit knowledge because she used so much French in her lessons and because at times she felt that students were learning implicitly aspects of the language, like word order, that she had never explicitly taught them. She talked about teaching beginning students to be able to communicate for real purposes and that they needed to know more than the present tense to be able to do this. Her explanations of how she did this, “introducing” language structures such as past tense rather than “explaining [them] necessarily to them”, clearly indicated an approach aimed at developing implicit knowledge. She indicated that, as students progressed with the language, she would teach them how language structures such as the past tense “worked”.

Teacher A felt that the statement that best encapsulated her ideas about language teaching was “teaching explicit knowledge of a grammatical structure is helpful if it is accompanied with lots of opportunities to practise the grammatical structure”. Explicit knowledge does, she stated, help students build on what they learn and makes them successful as they progress in their learning.

**Principle 5: Instruction needs to take into account the learner’s “built-in syllabus”**.

The instruction observed was not of the “focus on forms” type.

Teacher A explained that she taught students the language structures that they needed in order to be able to communicate according to their purposes. For example, she felt that beginning students did need to know past tenses because they did need to know how to communicate what they had done.

**Principle 6: Successful instructed language learning requires extensive target-language input.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researcher’s rating on continuum</th>
<th>Language goals</th>
<th>Entirely TL</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Entirely English</th>
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<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Entirely English</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framework goals</td>
<td>Entirely TL</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Entirely English</td>
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</table>

All lessons observed were occasions for students to gain extensive input in French.

- **Language goals**
  These were almost all in French (rated as 5 on a 5-point scale with 5 equating to exclusive use of the target language). The students negotiated and discussed with the teacher in French, at the beginning of the lesson, the lesson objectives for the day. The teacher explained to the students how language activities were to be conducted in French, for example, *Vous faites le maximum d’interviews possible* (You do as many interviews as you can), *Vous ne pouvez pas parler en anglais* (You mustn’t speak English), *Vous ne pouvez pas bouger* (You can’t get out of your seats). There were some occasions where English was used, however; for example, on one occasion, the teacher asked the students to give her the French equivalent of phrases that she gave them in English.

- **Social goals**
  These were either entirely target language (6 on the scale) or 5 on the scale. The presence of the researcher was explained in French, and absences were discussed. Before the lesson began, individual students were greeted in French and there was some discussion about how they were.

- **Framework goals** (classroom management)
  Again, in almost all lessons, the target language was used for these goals. There was discussion in French as to who should get points for their team and of class routines that needed to be completed, for example, *Je n’ai pas fait l’appel* (I haven’t taken the roll).
Students were given instructions in French, for example, *Il faut mettre les chaises sur la table* (You need to put the chairs on the desk), *Tu peux fermer la porte?* (Can you close the door?) and student behaviour was monitored in French, for example, *Tu as été méchant! Manger le chewing gum, c’est une infraction* (You are out of line. Chewing gum is against regulations).

To make the target language more comprehensible (comprehensible input), the teacher used a number of strategies.

- At times, an English equivalent was given. For example, when *le mot du jour* (the word of the day) was presented to the class, a translation was typically given.
- The teacher at times used gesture to aid comprehension, for example, gesture to accompany the phrase *Qu’est-ce qu’elle aime bavarder* (What a chatterbox!).
- The routines and procedures that the teacher followed during each lesson and that were familiar to all the students helped contextualise language for the students and make it more comprehensible to them.

When asked if she did anything to help her students gain input in French outside the classroom, Teacher A explained that she asked them to research words and vocabulary to contribute to the lesson (this was the section of the lesson that focused on *le mot du jour* – word of the day). She hoped that, in doing this, the students would be looking at books, dictionaries, and websites and getting exposure to the wider Francophone world.

**Principle 7: Successful instructed language learning also requires opportunities for output.**

There were a lot of opportunities for students to produce target-language output in the classroom. A number of strategies used by the teacher encouraged this:

- Students were penalised for speaking English aloud in the classroom by losing points. This meant that they had to negotiate in French the right to speak in English in the classroom with the teacher.
- The teacher frequently told students that *oui/non* (yes/no) answers were not sufficient. They were encouraged to use phrases such as *Je suis d’accord/Je ne suis pas d’accord* (I agree/don’t agree).

Students tended to speak in full clauses, short phrases and, at times, single words. Examples were:

- *Le pion est ennuyeux.* (The token is boring.)
- *Est-ce que nous pouvons écrire en papier?* (Can we write on paper?)
- *J’aime écouter de la musique.* (I like listening to music.)
- *J’ai oublié mon vocabulaire.* (I’ve forgotten my vocabulary.)
- *Je crois que j’ai fini.* (I think I’ve finished.)

In the year 9 class, the output produced by the students involved text manipulation rather than text creation. In one lesson, for example, they were given both questions and incomplete answers to guide them in completing an interview. In the year 10 class, the output produced by the students involved text creation; however, the students were given time in advance to plan for this. They were, for example, asked to role-play “asking three questions at a tourist office in France” or prepare a conversation where they talked about what they did and did not like.

Teacher A felt that students were prepared to talk in French in class because they were rewarded for doing so. She felt that getting one half of the class to compete against the other worked well and that students got a big sense of achievement from beating the other team. She also thought that it worked well to reward individual students for speaking French and to make speaking English a forbidden but comical activity. She explained that at year 9, students do not do a lot of
writing in French beyond worksheets and a presentation at the end of the term. In year 10, they do more writing: they work on a piece of collaborative writing and do other writing outside of class.

**Principle 8: The opportunity to interact in the target language is central to developing proficiency.**

Almost all interaction with the teacher was in the target language. As has been described elsewhere, lesson objectives were negotiated in discussion with the teacher, tasks were discussed, awarding of points was negotiated, and the lesson was evaluated. The right and need to speak in English needed to be negotiated by both the teacher and the students.

There were numerous instances of the teacher scaffolding the students’ attempts to use the target language. The following are given as examples.

1. The teacher on occasion cued students as to the word that they needed, for example,
   - **T:** *Se pré-* (cherchez dans vos cahiers), *se présenter* (intro- [look in your books], introduce).

2. The teacher often cued students as to the appropriate response to a question.
   - **T:** *Qu’est-ce que nous avons fait aujourd’hui?* (What have we done today?) *Nous avons* ...
     (We have …)
   - **S:** … *révisé les phrases* (… revised the sentences).

On other occasions, the teacher gave students a choice of linguistic structures appropriate to a particular context.

- **T:** *Tu reçois ou tu ne reçois pas d’argent de poche?* (You do or you don’t get pocket money?)
- **S:** *Je reçois.* (I get it.)

There were a number of occasions where students worked in groups. During these times, the researcher heard interaction between students in the target language. There were also instances where students were interacting in English.

Teacher A explained that she saw it as really important to give students a choice about the topics that they focused on in class and that it was very motivating for them when they were involved in negotiating these. She indicated that this was easier with the year 10 students than the year 9 students, who had not learnt enough to be able to have a lot of choice, but that she would still try and involve them in decisions about the type of language they were working with. She also reported that she uses group work a lot in class because she feels that it is a very effective learning strategy for students of different abilities. She indicated a number of ways in which she endeavours to set up opportunities for students to interact with native speakers: she encourages a native French speaker who is a student at the school to attend the French club that she runs, and she has established contact with a French school that is open to corresponding with New Zealand students – she was setting that up for term 4.

**Principle 9: Instruction needs to take account of individual differences in learners.**

To cater for different learning styles, all lessons gave students the opportunity to process both auditory and visual input (that is, the teacher presented language orally but often accompanied this with the written equivalent) and language was often accompanied with gesture.

During the year 9 lessons, no marked differences in the students’ proficiency were obvious to the researcher. As the students were only in their eighth week of learning French, it was perhaps not reasonable to expect that these would be apparent at this stage of learning.
In the year 10 class, there were some apparent differences in the students’ proficiency. Both the year 10 lessons observed were revision lessons for all students in this year so were an opportunity for students with less proficiency in French to have reinforcement of language already familiar to them.

Teacher A reported that, when she was aware that some students had not learnt what she had taught, she would go back over the material in a different way. She said that she was aware that learners had different learning styles and that she would try to vary the way material was presented to benefit different learning styles.

All the students in all lessons appeared involved in and attentive to what was happening in the classroom. The fact that the year 10 students had all agreed to attend three additional French lessons that were not timetabled for them at this stage of the semester is evidence of their motivation.

Teacher A rated as a top priority the importance of having students experience learning as fun. She explained that she felt that students would learn if they were enjoying lessons, so for her, ensuring success meant making learning fun. In achieving this, she explained that it was important to empower students so that they were part of a process and did not “have lessons happen to them”. She described herself as a facilitator, helping students access something rather than “doing it to them”.

Principle 10: In assessing learners’ target-language proficiency, it is important to examine free as well as controlled production.

In discussion, Teacher A reported that she assessed her students’ oral production as often as possible. She said that she had a very good idea of how much students were using French in class and that, when students took part in group presentations, she would often mark them on their performance. Individual students were also awarded stickers for participating orally in class, and these were put in students’ books, thus becoming a record of a student’s level of oral participation.

Teacher A commented that assessment was not, however, a huge part of what she did and that in her view too much assessment detracts from the learning process.

Teacher’s commentary on the report

1. Do you think that this report is an accurate account of your teaching practice?
Yes, very much so.

2. In what ways has reading this report made you reflect on your own teaching?
I really hadn’t thought much about how I do things until reading this report. Reading the principles of effective second language teaching made me really think about what I’m doing and where my approach comes from. It is fascinating to read someone else’s observations, and I haven’t been as aware of my teaching practice since being at training college. Reading the report has made me want to investigate more and get involved in producing teaching resources that will make it easier for teachers to put these principles into action. I think current resources do that very poorly indeed. I can’t use textbooks very well, and I don’t think resources support teachers in the way they need to.
CASE STUDY B: FRENCH CLASS

The school

The participating school is an independent boys’ school with a roll of 925 students. The school accepts some female students in years 12 and 13. Around 80 percent of students are classified as European/Pākehā.

French is taught at all year levels, and there is a total of four French teachers employed at the school (some have other teaching responsibilities as well). French is compulsory for all year 9 students (except for a few students who have English language problems and do Language Development instead). The top two classes of year 9 students also study Latin. At year 10, French becomes an elective, along with Latin and Spanish. Students studying French have lessons five days out of six over the period of the whole school year. Lessons last for fifty minutes.

Background information about the classes observed

The researcher observed a total of five lessons. Three were with a class of twenty-six year 9 students. Most of these students were in their first year of French, although some would have had some introduction to French at intermediate school.

Two lessons observed were with a class of ten year 13 students; twelve students were on study leave and therefore missing from this class. These two lessons were the last that this class were having for the year, before their oral exam. Lessons were, therefore, to a large extent preparing students for this exam. Students in this class were in their fourth or fifth year of French (a number had skipped year 12 and gone straight to year 13).

Teacher B described his students as being of high ability and used the word “bubbly”. He said that they were usually well mannered but often a little too indulged. He described his approach to teaching as “eclectic”. He reported that he makes considerable use of textbooks at junior level but that his teaching is much more “open-ended” at years 12 and 13.

At year 9, lessons focused on teaching students to discriminate between and identify a range of food and drinks (using the correct partitive article in the naming of these) and getting students to fulfil a range of speech functions, such as accept or decline food, describe what they have at different mealtimes, and so on. Lessons typically gave students the chance to hear language input and, from this, to induce grammatical principles that were then presented deductively. Students completed taped listening exercises that were also presented in their textbooks and then had the opportunity to practise producing the linguistic structures targeted in the lesson in pairs in structured contexts. Lessons also gave students opportunities to write grammatical rules in their books along with the language practised in classes.

At year 13, students worked at developing their oral proficiency in preparation for their oral exam. For example, they practised, in pairs, answering the types of questions that they would have to deal with in their oral exam. There was also a review of the subjunctive and the opportunity for students to gain practice in using the subjunctive in structured contexts.
**Researcher’s report**

**Principle 1: Instruction needs to ensure that learners develop both a rich repertoire of formulaic expressions and a rule-based competence.**

Teacher B made use of formulaic expressions in both levels of classes observed. At year 9, phrases that could be used to accept food were elicited from students and written on the board as support for a written and oral activity (*je voudrais ... ; je veux bien ; oui, s’il vous plaît* – I would like ... ; yes, please).

In the year 13 class, students were given different versions of a cloze task to complete in pairs. Phrases that they might find useful in completing this task (and in the oral exam) were written on the board. Examples were: *Comment ça s’écrit?* (How is that spelt?), *Répétez s’il vous plaît* (Could you please say it again?).

Teacher B thought that it was particularly useful to teach formulaic phrases at junior level. He said that he often taught whole phrases, using a “visual” or a charade to enable students to associate the correct meaning with the phrase.

In the lessons observed, there was also a considerable focus on developing the ability to apply grammatical rules. This will be discussed more fully under Principle 3.

There was evidence that students at year 13 were able to produce utterances, in the target language, that contained complex sentence constructions. The following are examples of unplanned utterances created by students during both spoken and written activities in the lessons observed.

- *Je pense que la chose la plus importante, c’est la musique parce que si on peut comprendre la musique on comprend l’histoire et la culture* (spoken) – I think that the most important thing is music, because if you can understand music you will understand history and culture.
- *Après avoir étudié une langue, on est mieux préparé à apprendre d’autres langues européens* (written) – After you have studied one language, you will do better at studying other European languages.
- *Ils boivent aussi trop d’alcool et comme résultat ils montrent des comportements violents* (written) – They also drink too much alcohol, which results in violent behaviour.

**Principle 2: Instruction needs to ensure that learners focus predominantly on meaning.**

Lessons observed at year 9 focused predominantly on semantic rather than pragmatic meaning. For example, the students learnt the names of different foods, listened to a taped dialogue where they had to identify what a family had for a particular meal, and participated in a role play where they had to decline or accept food (as depicted on cards that they turned over) according to given instructions. Occasions where they had to focus on pragmatic meaning were when they were required to follow instructions given to them in French by the teacher and when they were required to answer questions that pertained to their own lives, for example, *Qu’est-ce que tu prends pour le petit déjeuner?* (What do you have for breakfast?)

There was a greater focus on pragmatic meaning in the year 13 lessons as the students prepared for their oral exam. They were given questions such as *Quelles sont les différences entre la culture anglo-saxonne et la culture polynésienne?* (What are the differences between the Anglo-Saxon and Polynesian cultures?) and *Est-ce qu’il y a trop de violence dans le sport?* (Is there too much violence in sport?) to answer in pairs and later to give written answers to. There was also a focus on pragmatic meaning as the students were greeted by the teacher and given instructions in French.
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Principle 7: The researcher estimated that around 40 percent of lessons observed at this level focused on pragmatic meaning.

Students at both levels took part in paired interviews and role plays in class, but these were for the most part not communicative tasks as described by Ellis (2003) in that there was often no information gap and no communicative outcome.

Teacher B described a communicative task as one where there is an interaction between two or more people and the task is a real-life situation. He said that he used communicative tasks as much as possible in his teaching but that some of his students were studying French for linguistic rather than communicative reasons and that these students did not always respond well to a communicative approach.

Principle 3: Instruction needs to ensure that learners also focus on form.

There were opportunities for the students to focus on form in all the lessons observed. For the most part, these opportunities were through grammar lessons designed to teach specific features; therefore the focus on form was both planned and intensive. The students were given explicit information about target-language structures, which included grammatical rules and the use of metalinguistic terms.

In the year 9 class, the partitive articles were introduced to the students, and they worked at structured activities that required them to produce these forms. The teacher also initiated reactive attention to form, correcting the students’ errors when they made mistakes with particles during these activities. There were also, on occasion, examples of incidental focus on form. On one occasion, this attention to form involved a focus on vocabulary, with the teacher demonstrating how the English words poultry and beef were derived from the French words poulet and boeuf.

At year 13, there were also examples of planned and intensive focus on grammatical form. For example, in one lesson the teacher asked students to summarise the use of the subjunctive and reviewed with them subjunctive verb endings and irregular verb subjunctive forms. The students then worked on activities that gave them structured practice of the subjunctive, which provided occasion for teacher-initiated corrective feedback. Once again there were examples of incidental focus on form at this level; the teacher made the following comment to one student in reaction to an error he had made: *Les mots qui terminent en “ion, tion” sont toujours de quel genre?* (Words ending in “ion, tion” are always what gender?)

Teacher B commented that he thought it was extremely important to teach grammar to students. He also felt that students learn more effectively when they are encouraged to work out a grammar point for themselves and put it into their own words.

Principle 4: Instruction needs to be predominantly directed at developing implicit knowledge of the target language while not neglecting explicit knowledge.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researcher’s rating on continuum</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rate the lesson overall as being directed at “fluency” or “accuracy” on this scale:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
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</tbody>
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At year 9, there was a greater emphasis on developing students’ explicit, rather than implicit, knowledge. For example, in the year 9 lesson described in Principle 3, where the focus was the use of partitive articles, the students were asked to explain why there was more than one word for “some” in French, which led to a classification of the different forms as masculine, feminine, singular, and plural. In a subsequent lesson, there was a focus on the use of the partitive *de* in
negative utterances. The grammatical rule was written on the board for the students to copy into their books. On a number of occasions, irregular verbs such as prendre (to take) and avoir (to have) were conjugated on the board for students.

There were also opportunities, however, for students in these lessons to “proceduralise” explicit knowledge (that is, develop implicit knowledge through practice – DeKeyser, 1998). Students were given repeated practice in orally naming pictured foods and drinks, which required the use of partitive articles. In another lesson, students were given opportunities to practise negative phrases such as Je ne bois pas (I don’t drink) and Je ne prends pas (I don’t eat) both in response to questions posed by the teacher (Est-ce que tu bois du jus d’orange pour le petit déjeuner? – Do you drink orange juice for breakfast?) and in structured pair work.

At year 13, there was perhaps a greater emphasis on fluency than accuracy, especially in one lesson, where students were engaged in answering and asking questions in preparation for the oral exam and which the researcher rated as 6 on the scale described above. In the second lesson observed at this level, however, there was an emphasis on reviewing the students’ explicit knowledge about the subjunctive.

The approach evidenced in these lessons and Teacher B’s professed belief about language learning indicate an interface position with respect to the role that explicit knowledge plays in language learning (that is, explicit knowledge becomes implicit knowledge if learners have opportunities for communicative practice). Teacher B felt that the statement that best summed up his ideas about language teaching was “teaching explicit knowledge about grammar is helpful as a basis for developing implicit knowledge later on”. He made the point that the students at year 9 have explicit knowledge about language because they are all studying Latin, and so he can use that knowledge to try to develop implicit knowledge. Teacher B also stated that he felt his teaching catered for both explicit and implicit knowledge.

Principle 5: Instruction needs to take into account the learner’s “built-in syllabus”.

At year 9, partitive articles were the specific grammatical focus of one lesson. The students appeared to handle this structure easily. In introducing this structure to the students, the teacher started with the knowledge base the students already had, eliciting from them the noun markers that they already knew (le, la, un, une, and so on). He also later drew a parallel between the forms of the partitive articles and the preposition forms au, à la, à l’, aux, with which the students were already familiar.

Teacher B commented in the interview that the order of teaching different grammatical structures was determined by the curriculum and that that order was not ideal, as the order of instruction needed to be based on students’ communicative needs rather than on historical precedent.

Principle 6: Successful instructed language learning requires extensive target-language input.

All the lessons were occasions for the students to gain input in French, as described below:

- **Language goals**
  At year 9, the language used to present new language material, lesson tasks, and objectives was a mix of both French and English (rated as 3 on the scale). English was used to introduce
the new unit, and all explicit information was given in English, as was information about the exam. French was used exclusively to present new vocabulary and new language structures, working from what the students knew. For example, after having taught vocabulary for food and drink in a previous lesson (using pictures), the teacher asked individual students *Est-ce que tu prends du café au petit déjeuner?* (Do you have coffee at breakfast?), gradually eliciting and modelling for students phrases such as *Non, je ne prends pas de café* (No, I don’t have coffee).

At year 13, all language goals were in French.

To enable the students (at year 9 and year 13) to comprehend the target language during presentation of new language, the teacher used two main strategies: use of visuals to enable the students to understand new vocabulary items; and use of paraphrase to enable them to understand new vocabulary items and phrases. For example, one year 9 student asked, What is *viande*? (meat) and the teacher replied, *Tu manges du bœuf, du poulet, ça, c’est de la viande* (You eat beef, chicken; they are meat). (At times, the teacher also gave a translation in English.) To a year 13 student, the teacher explained in French the expression *faire sauter les contrôles* (to kick over the traces).

- **Social goals**
  At year 13, the target language was always used to greet students and engage in social chit-chat.
  At year 9, there was also use of the target language for these goals (rated as 4 on the scale).

- **Framework goals (classroom management)**
  Once again, at year 13, the target language was always used for framework goals, and at year 9, the researcher rated use of the target language at 3 on the scale above. Examples of use of target language for framework goals at year 9 are:

  *Distribuez les tests, s’il vous plait.* (Hand out the tests, please.)

  *Je vais parler en anglais pour commencer.* (I am going to talk in English to start with.)

Teacher B said that he tried to use French as much as possible in the classroom but that such use often depended on the affective barriers that he faced in the classroom. For example, a class coming from a physical education lesson (as they had on one researcher visit) would require more English to help them settle. When asked if he did anything to help the students gain input in French outside the classroom, Teacher B said that year 9 students worked with the French assistant and that there were opportunities for students to use the Internet to access French websites. Senior students all had the chance to attend an intensive eight-week language course at the Alliance Française. All students also had opportunities to take part in trips to New Caledonia, Tahiti, and France.

**Principle 7: Successful instructed language learning also requires opportunities for output.**

There were numerous opportunities for the students to produce target-language output in all the lessons observed. At year 9, these were mainly through structured activities that were designed to have the students practise targeted language forms (for example, partitive articles, negation). Students at this level tended to speak in full clauses and, at times, in multiple-clause sentences. Examples were (the last example was from a written activity; all others were spoken during lessons observed):

  *C’est du poulet* – It’s chicken.

  *Je regrette, je n’aime pas le poisson* – I’m sorry, but I don’t like fish.

  *Je prends de l’eau* – I’ll have water.
Pour commencer il y a du potage. Vous prenez ça? – To start with, there is soup. Would you like some?

At this level, the output produced by the students tended to involve text manipulation rather than text creation, in that the students were provided with the linguistic resources they needed to be able to complete activities.

At year 13, the students were involved in text creation as well as text manipulation, in that they had to use their own linguistic resources to answer questions requiring them to give explanations, make comparisons, express an opinion, and so on. See Principle 1 for examples of complex language structures that students produced during this activity.

Teacher B felt that rewarding the students encouraged them to make more of an effort to speak in French. He also said that the fact that French staff often spoke French among themselves in front of students encouraged students to speak French because it was “highly visible”. With respect to producing extended pieces of writing in the target language, Teacher B explained that a requirement of the Cambridge exams (which students at this school have the opportunity to sit) is that students write 400-word essays in French. Senior students therefore are given many opportunities to research for and write extended essays in French.

Principle 8: The opportunity to interact in the target language is central to developing proficiency.

There were opportunities for the students at year 9 to interact in French. Interaction with the teacher tended to be in response to either referential questions (that is, questions to which the teacher did not know the answer) or display questions (that is, questions to which the teacher did know the answer). At this level, there were no opportunities for students to negotiate meaning as defined by Long (1996). The referential question Qu’est-ce que tu prends pour le petit déjeuner? (What do you eat for breakfast?) elicited a variety of responses, including, from one student, Je ne mange pas le petit déjeuner (I don’t eat breakfast). The students also had the opportunity to interact with each other in French to talk about what they do and don’t eat and drink during structured activities designed to require them to practise linguistic forms. For example, during one activity completed in pairs, they turned over 2 cards, one designating a language function (for example, say no thank you, you have had enough) and one depicting a particular food and they had to produce a sentence in French relating the function to the food depicted.

There was evidence of the teacher scaffolding students’ attempts to use the target language at this level. The following examples are exchanges recorded during the teacher’s use of display questions. As part of a planned presentation of vocabulary, the teacher gave the students a choice of linguistic structures to use in response to questions.

T: C’est de la viande ou de l’omelette? (Is it meat or omelette?)
S: C’est de la viande. (It’s meat.)

On occasion, the teacher cued students as to the word that they needed.

T: Qu’est que c’est? Du ... (What is it? Some …)
S: Du pâté. (Some paté.)

At year 13, there was opportunity for the students to use language to express their own personal meaning as they answered questions in pairs, such as Où as-tu voyagé dans le Pacifique? (Where have you travelled in the Pacific?) or Est-ce que l’égalité existe en Nouvelle-Zélande? (Does equality exist in New Zealand?) However, the students did not engage in debate or discussion over these issues but treated this activity as an opportunity to practise language performance for the exam (as was intended). The students also interacted with the teacher in French, asking
questions such as *Est-ce que tu as des bonbons pour aujourd’hui?* (Do you have some treats for us today?). All teacher-initiated interaction with the students at this level was in French. There were instances when students replied to the teacher in English or asked in English what particular words or expressions meant in French.

Teacher B reported that he often got students to work in groups, especially at junior level, where he would give them opportunities to act out little sketches like going to a café. However, he said that there was often a tendency for students to try to be smart and act out of line during such activities and he often had to rein them in. At senior level, Teacher B reported that there were opportunities for students to talk in French about topics of their own choosing. In terms of opportunities to interact with native speakers, Teacher B said that students had the opportunity to interact with the language assistant and that students were always informed about what was happening in the local French community and encouraged to take part.

**Principle 9: Instruction needs to take account of individual differences in learners.**

All the lessons gave the students the opportunity to process both visual and auditory input. Language was initially presented orally (at times with accompanying visual stimuli) and later written on the blackboard or referred to in textbooks. Students at year 9 were often given time in class to write target language in their books. Different learning styles were thus catered for. Teacher B stressed the importance of offering a variety of teaching methods that catered for different learning styles and different language learning goals (as mentioned before, he stated that some students were learning French for linguistic reasons).

It was difficult for the researcher to be aware of differences in students’ proficiency during a small number of observations. All the students, however, appeared to be coping well with the language taught, and some students were obviously capable of being extended beyond what they had learned. For example, one student spontaneously added the clause *parce que je l’aime* (because I like it) to the question of what he ate for breakfast.

Teacher B reported that if he was aware that any student had not learnt what he had been taught (that is, demonstrated that he did not understand it) then he would explain it to him one on one after class, but that usually language structures were re-encountered in subsequent lessons and so students had several opportunities to learn them.

All the students appeared motivated and involved in lessons. At junior level in particular, students were putting up their hands and seemed keen to answer questions asked by the teacher. Again at this level, students were asking the teacher questions in order to clarify the explicit information they had been given.

Teacher B described students as being conditioned, through exposure to television, to twelve-minute slots of learning. He talked about the importance of having a variety of activities in a lesson and stressed that students had different needs and ways of learning. He mentioned that students respond well to having stories told to them, to teasing, and to playing games such as Trivial Pursuit in French. Teacher B also indicated the importance of the role of the teacher in motivating students. He reported that, as means of rewarding students, he used both treats and a performance award system used by the school for exemplary achievement.

**Principle 10: In assessing learners’ target-language proficiency, it is important to examine free as well as controlled production.**

Teacher B reported that, at junior level, he used a series of multi-skill tests that came with the textbook he used. These tests were focused on giving students an indication of what they had mastered in terms of language skills rather than on ranking them in relation to their peers.
At senior level, students sit Cambridge exams. From the lessons observed by the researcher, which aimed to prepare the students for the oral component of this exam, it was evident that students were examined on their ability to use language in free production. Teacher B outlined a set of descriptors that were used to assess oral language production: pronunciation, accuracy, content, and the ability to provide and seek opinions. Teacher B commented that for assessment to be worthwhile, it had to be intrinsically linked with providing students with feedback on how to improve.

Teacher’s commentary on the report

1. Do you think that this report is an accurate account of your teaching practice?
Yes, although in a couple of areas where you suggested I didn’t do things, I actually do, but you didn’t observe enough to catch me doing them. At the end of the year was a bad time. Also the percentage of French being used was probably less than at the beginning of the year.

2. In what ways has reading this report made you reflect on your own teaching?
Yes. I was very interested in the definitions of what is communicative and the shift to task-based teaching. Something we don’t always do and which very few texts are up to date with. I have circulated the two reports to senior management and my colleagues, and they will be the basis for ongoing discussion about our teaching.
CASE STUDY C: JAPANESE CLASS

The school

Teacher C explained that the school was located in a high socio-economic area and the students were quite capable, academic, and enthusiastic. Many students came from a background where they already spoke another language, so they had an awareness of learning a language. Teacher C said that another advantage of this school was that she did not have any management problems. Teacher C could trust the students to be on task without her close supervision. For example, she allowed the students to do pair work where they preferred: they could stay inside the classrooms or, if they liked, go outside.

The school had provided every student with a textbook that was accompanied by a CD. Each student also purchased the workbook for the textbook. The students seemed to like the textbook and workbook because they could feel they were in charge of their own learning. Also the school had a computer lab, which had many Japanese self-learning programs installed. The students seemed to like the fact that they could choose their preferred program and learn the language at their own pace during the computer-assisted language-learning period.

Background information about the classes observed

Teacher C usually went through similar instructional routines, which were designed to build on each other. They were:

1. review of the vocabulary and teaching points;
2. presentation of the target language and teaching points;
3. skill exercises, such as speaking or listening activities;
4. extension of 3.

In order to illustrate this process, the lesson on August 31 in a year 9 class will be described.

1. Review
Teacher C reviewed and reminded the students how to say the days of the week (and also the phrases for “next week” and “this week”).

2. Presentation of language or teaching points to the students
In this section, Teacher C presented the words of a song (about days of the week) in Japanese with an OHP. During this time, the students seemed enthusiastic; they were listening, singing the song, and writing it down in their notebook.

3. Skill exercises
On this particular day, Teacher C employed a listening activity using a CD and workbook. Before she played the tape, she reviewed a number of vocabulary items, asking, “What’s fish in Japanese?”, “What’s rice in Japanese?”, “How about Japanese tea?”, to which the students answered enthusiastically. The first part of the exercise involved listening to sentences on the tape and ticking the appropriate pictures in the workbook. Sample utterances were: “I eat fish and rice for breakfast” and “I eat cornflakes and drink coffee for breakfast”. The students were able to answer without too much trouble. The input from the tape consisted entirely of sentence-level utterances.
4. Extension
As an extension of the previous listening exercise, Teacher C introduced an exchange student from Japan, Yumi, to the class. Yumi had prepared her self-introduction in Japanese and talked about where she was from, what she liked, what she ate for breakfast, and so on. Yumi’s speech incorporated many of the expressions and vocabulary that the students were learning at that time. After Yumi finished speaking, some students asked questions, such as “What time do you get up?” and “What time do you eat breakfast?” in Japanese.

For a further extension activity, Teacher C proceeded to another listening exercise using the workbook and the tape. This time the students needed to listen to types of food and days of the week (for example, “I eat bacon and eggs on Monday”), selecting appropriate information from the textbook. Another activity in the workbook was to listen to casual Japanese (on a similar topic – breakfast) and to try to understand the dialogue. As they listened to the tape a couple of times, the students learned new vocabulary items, such as the Japanese for “break”, “it’s early”, “cannot be helped”, and “it was a great meal”.

Just before the lesson finished, Teacher C announced that they would have a Japanese breakfast day. The class would bring food appropriate for a Japanese breakfast and also the teacher would provide typical Japanese breakfast food. It was intended to give the students an opportunity to have a first-hand experience of the language that they had been learning (relating to Japanese food).

Researcher’s report

Principle 1: Instruction needs to ensure that learners develop both a rich repertoire of formulaic expressions and a rule-based competence.

Teacher C used formulaic expressions throughout the lesson. These formulaic expressions arose out of interactions with framework goals. That is, they consisted of instructional language, in which the teacher tried to explain the procedures for performing an activity or to monitor students’ understanding. These expressions from the year 9 class included Kotchi mite (Look here), Shizuka ni shite (Be quiet), Pen wa oite (Put down your pen), Ato de hanashimashoo (Let’s talk later), Kakimashitaka? (Have you written it?), Dekimashitaka? (Have you finished?), and Moo ichido? (Shall we do it again?).

In another class, with year 10 students, Teacher C presented formulaic expressions directed at the functions of accepting or refusing an invitation. The conversation went as follows:

A: Moshi moshi. (Hello.)
B: Hai, Niwa desu. (This is Niwa speaking.)
A: Sally desu. (Sally speaking.)
B: Kondo issho ni eiga ni ikimasen ka? (Shall we go to a movie together?)
A: Ii desu ne. Ikimashoo. (Sounds good. Let’s go.)
or: Ee to ... eiga wa chotto. (Well, perhaps not to a movie.)

The interview data supports the belief that Teacher C thought teaching formulaic expressions was very important. She claimed that formulaic expressions relating to framework goals could be useful if the students went to Japan and studied there at school. Furthermore, she believed that one of the biggest advantages of learning these formulaic expressions was that the students could develop listening skills, especially getting used to the sound of Japanese, through exposure to these expressions. Teacher C said these formulaic expressions were easy to pick up and that the students felt that they could understand them very well. This helped the students to develop self-esteem as learners of Japanese.
Principle 2: Instruction needs to ensure that learners focus predominantly on meaning.

There were many opportunities for the learners to focus on meaning. But due to the students’ relatively low proficiency, there were few opportunities for them to focus on pragmatic meaning during the lessons other than when using the above formulaic chunks.

As they looked at the pictures in the workbook and listened to fairly authentic Japanese, the students had to complete various listening activities, such as answering true/false and multiple-choice questions. In these activities, the students needed to focus on the meanings of the utterances and find the correct answers in the workbook.

The teacher thought it was not necessary for students to be immersed in Japanese but that it was very important for the students to see her using Japanese. She considered it was hypocritical for her to say that the students needed to speak in Japanese while she did not do so, so she tried to speak and use Japanese as much as possible in her classes.

Teacher C defined “communicative tasks” as activities that involved using the language taught, not teaching about the language. She believed that the activities fostered learning through the use of the language.

Teacher C says she tries to incorporate communicative tasks into her lessons as much as possible. She is aware of the structures she wants to teach, but her main focus in designing activities is to think about how the students can use these structures. She gave one example. The students needed to plan their holidays using the structure *ikutoto ni shimashita* (I’ve decided to go to …). The students were not so aware of the target structure, but they needed to use it often in order to talk about their holiday plans to their classmates.

In response to the interview question about whether Teacher C encouraged her students to talk in Japanese about a topic of their own choice, she said that perhaps the year 13 students might be able to do that, but that other, younger students would find it difficult to do so due to lack of lexical and grammatical knowledge.

Principle 3: Instruction needs to ensure that learners also focus on form.

Most of the attention to form was at the semantic or phrasal level. It focused on aspects of pronunciation and on writing kanji (Chinese characters).

In one of the classes, the students learned these phrases in Japanese:

- *Irasshaimase* (the phrase you use when you greet the customer)
- *Gochuunom wa nani ni nasaimasuka* (when you ask for an order as a waitress)
- *Onomimono wa nani ni nasaimasuka?* (What about something to drink?)

Teacher C thought that a focus on grammar was important and also that the students liked learning grammar because they wanted to know the way some language structures worked. Teacher C was hesitant to teach grammar straight away because, although she learnt Japanese in a grammar-focused way, she did not believe it was a very successful way to learn the language. So she tried to find interesting ways in which the students could apply their knowledge of grammar when using the language. This is because Teacher C believed we need grammar when we communicate but we should not make it the sole focus.
Thus, Teacher C did teach grammar, recognising that the students wanted it and needed it to pass exams. She explained how she tried to incorporate grammar in her teaching in the following way:

Sometimes you don’t really need to teach it, especially because, at this stage, they will pick it up. Like the other day, when we were doing agemasu and stuff like that: *Purezento wa katte agemasu* (I’ll buy you a present). They can pick up what that means anyway because they’ve got enough stuff to go on and can guess what that means. So I prefer that to explaining everything to them so that they can notice it. Also, in the book, there are some explanations, so they can look through that. Usually they listen and say, “Oh, that’s how it works.” Then I really don’t have to explain that. But sometimes, like NCEA, it is a prescribed structure that I feel like I need to explain.

**Principle 4: Instruction needs to be predominantly directed at developing implicit knowledge of the target language while not neglecting explicit knowledge.**

| Rate the lesson overall as being directed at “fluency” or “accuracy” on this scale: |
|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Fluency | Accuracy |
| 7       | 6       | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Teacher C reported that she primarily catered to explicit knowledge, but at the same time she believed that if the students were engaged in communicative activities, they would develop implicit knowledge as well. She could not articulate to what extent the students were developing explicit and implicit knowledge.

The teacher said that exams rewarded students who had explicit knowledge; that is, they rewarded a person who knew about the language. This explicit knowledge could also speed up the process of students’ learning, but she did not believe explicit knowledge was enough where use of the language was concerned, so she tried to foster implicit knowledge as well.

In one of the classes that the researcher observed, the students were practising the expressions of giving and receiving an object or service. This language goal in Japanese is difficult for second language learners because they need to select an appropriate verb depending on the perspective they are taking (for example, that of a receiver or a giver). In this lesson, Teacher C first explicitly taught which verb to select depending on the perspective by using a diagram. Then she moved on to controlled practice exercises. In one exercise, the students were required to work in pairs, asking their partners questions such as *Anata wa tomodachi no tanjoobi ni purezento wa katte agemasu*? (Do you buy a present for your friend’s birthday?) or *Anata ga byooki no toki, goryooshin wa nani o shitekuremasuka?* (When you are sick, what do your parents do for you?). The partner had to select an appropriate answer from the multiple choices provided. Examples of answers to the first question are *Hai, itsumo katte agemasu* (Yes, I always buy them) and *Iie, amari katte agemasen* (No, I usually don’t buy them). They also watched a video, where they had to understand the meanings of the target forms in context.

**Principle 5: Instruction needs to take into account the learner’s “built-in syllabus”**.

Teacher C said she followed the order of instruction in the textbook. She claimed that the textbook did not strictly follow the New Zealand Curriculum, but she believed it was the best textbook she had seen so far, so she had adopted it as a basis for planning her lessons.

Teacher C accepted the idea that the students did not always immediately learn what they were taught. She usually reviewed the vocabulary and language goals at the beginning of each lesson. She also said that if she saw many students struggling with a certain structure, such as particle systems, she tried to do an extra lesson to help the students learn the target structure.
Principle 6: Successful instructed language learning requires extensive target-language input.

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<td>Rate the extent to which the target language (TL) is used by teacher and students for these goals:</td>
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<td>Language goals</td>
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<td>Social goals</td>
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<td>Framework goals</td>
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Teacher C tried to provide extensive target-language input for students. There were five main techniques observed during her teaching to achieve this. They were:

1. repeating Japanese phrases to ensure understanding;
2. translating Japanese phrases into English so that the students will understand the meaning;
3. using gestures;
4. exposing the students to different Japanese speaker voices and different registers;
5. maximising opportunities to invite native Japanese speakers to the classroom.

Each point will be described in detail:

1. Teacher C used Japanese a lot, primarily for language and framework goals. She usually repeated the items a couple of times so that the students could understand them.
2. When she tried to accomplish these goals, she often repeated the phrases in English afterwards. She believed that, over time, the students could be weaned gradually from translation, but for the year 9 students, this technique was necessary at times.
3. She also used many gestures. For example, when she wanted the students to pay attention, she said *Kiiite kudasai* (Please listen), accompanying this with the gesture of putting her hand next to her ear.
4. She used many listening exercises from the textbook. These exercises were designed to expose the students to different types of speakers (female and male voices) and different registers (formal and informal Japanese). She stated that when learning a foreign language, students might be limited in their exposure to different speakers or voices and registers, but the listening exercises were a good way to experience different types of listening materials.
5. As mentioned above, the teacher invited an exchange student to the class and asked her to introduce herself. The students could listen to a native speaker, especially of their own age, and could also communicate with her using the Japanese they had learned so far. Teacher C also asks the native-speaking language assistant to come to her class to join the classroom activities. In one of the classes, Teacher C and the assistant demonstrated the telephone dialogue and the assistant monitored the group work that followed.

Principle 7: Successful instructed language learning also requires opportunities for output.

The students had quite a lot of opportunities to engage in speaking activities. Most of the utterances were short phrases with occasional longer stretches.

Most of the students’ output involved text manipulation, not text creation.

Teacher C used a song activity to help the students learn numbers. She divided the class into groups and asked each group to create and perform a song to memorise the numbers (counting objects from one to ten).
In response to an interview question about whether the students try to speak in Japanese, she said it all depends on the students. However, in general the students are enthusiastic about using Japanese and asking questions. Teacher C believes that the students feel comfortable enough to speak in Japanese, which she thinks is very important.

**Principle 8: The opportunity to interact in the target language is central to developing proficiency.**

There was not much evidence of negotiation of meaning, although this is perhaps not surprising given the level of proficiency of the students (see Pica, 1996).

When the students were in a group, they tended to follow the conversational patterns that they were taught and they exchanged messages using the given sentence constructions. In the classes observed, Teacher C used a lot of group and pair work. For example, groups of students performed a song to help them remember numbers in Japanese. After they created a song and practised it, each group sang their song in class. On another occasion, the groups of students practised phone conversations. In the lesson where Teacher C taught “giving and receiving”, the students worked in pairs to practise these forms in various listening and speaking exercises.

Teacher C also reported in the interview that she tries to use group work a lot because it is a good way for students to listen to others speak Japanese. She said she uses pair work for a slightly different purpose. Pair work is a good way to check whether the students understood a point. She stated that both group and pair work motivate students because the students are not working on their own.

**Principle 9: Instruction needs to take account of individual differences in learners.**

There did not seem to be a wide range of students’ abilities in the classes observed. Since motivation is one of the important topics relating to individual differences, the ways that Teacher C tried to motivate students to learn Japanese will be described.

Teacher C characterised the students in this school as “enthusiastic and academic”. Indeed, the students seemed motivated to participate in the lessons. When the teacher asked questions, some students always volunteered to answer. The only time the teacher nominated students was to give an opportunity to quiet students.

Teacher C adopted many strategies to try to foster learner motivation. As described earlier, during the lesson, she moved rapidly from one exercise to another to prevent the students from getting bored. Another strategy, which the teacher used in an activity involving practising phone conversations, was to provide the students with copies of paper mobile phones. Teacher C also created situations in which the students could experience in a “real” context the language she had taught them. For example, in a lesson aimed at teaching the vocabulary for talking about food, she planned a Japanese breakfast. She was also planning to take the senior students to a Japanese restaurant.

As Japanese is an optional subject, Teacher C believes it is important to make Japanese classes fun in order to keep students motivated. The teacher said it is difficult to encourage students to continue learning a language, because many parents want them to take business studies instead of languages. Therefore, during the lessons, whenever Teacher C has a chance, she tells the students what they can do with the language. She talks about her friend who is using Japanese in her business work. Also she talks about her own work experiences before she became a Japanese teacher, so that the students can hear about real experiences where language knowledge and abilities have been applied to a real world situation beyond school.
**Principle 10: In assessing learners’ target-language proficiency, it is important to examine free as well as controlled production.**

No formal assessment activity was observed.

In the interview, Teacher C commented that assessing students was difficult no matter what methods and criteria teachers decided to adopt. For example, one student who had spent three months in Japan and who was fluent in conversational Japanese had difficulty in carrying out a conversation in which she was required to use particular structures. This test was based on NCEA guidelines. Teacher C saw this as demonstrating the difficulty of assessing free production.

**Teacher’s commentary on the report**

The data for the teacher’s commentary for Case Study C is not available.
CASE STUDY D: JAPANESE CLASS

The school

Teacher D teaches Japanese at a school located thirty minutes south of Auckland. This relatively small primary and intermediate school is nestled in the residential area of its town. According to the principal, the school serves a wide range of students: students from a nearby residential area, students from a state housing area, and some from rural areas, who bus to school.

The school offers three foreign languages: German, Spanish, and Japanese. The intermediate students select a language to study each semester. They can select the same language in consecutive semesters, or they can select different languages. It is entirely up to the students’ preferences. Teacher D said that because students make their own decision about studying a language, they tend to respond to classes very positively. She also mentioned that she aims to make her classes interesting and fun so that many students choose or keep choosing Japanese. The principal said that Japanese lessons had been popular since the school started a Japanese programme nine months previously.

Background information about the classes observed

Teacher D teaches two Japanese lessons on Friday. The first class is year 7, and the second is year 8. Both classes have about twenty-five students. Four classes in total were observed, and a one-hour interview was conducted.

Teacher D was extremely effective in classroom management, and the students were very responsive and enthusiastic. All the classes observed proceeded very smoothly, and both the teacher and the students seemed to be enjoying the lessons.

Teacher D typically organises her lesson into three or four sections.

First she gives some type of specific language input. For example, in the first segment of the lesson on observation day 1, the teacher wrote down numbers (21, 51, 25, 33, 89, and so on), the students raised their hands, and Teacher D nominated students to say the numbers in Japanese. This was a typical IRF (initiation, response, and follow-up) pattern. This segment of the lesson was conducted mainly in English except for the time that Teacher D and the students said the numbers in Japanese.

On another day, she did an activity to teach the students how to introduce themselves. In English, the teacher first explained the paper, scissors, rock game to the students. She explained that it was like flipping a coin to decide who wins. Each student was then given a business card, and the students were asked to move around the classroom, forming pairs. The procedure of the game is that each pair of students first introduce themselves (Watashi wa Cathy desu. Boku wa Alex desu) and then play paper, scissors, rock. The winner says Katta! (I won!), the loser says Maketa! (I lost!), and the winner gets the business card from the other person. The objective of this lesson was to review the language of self-introduction and learn phrases like “I won” and “I lost”. Also, it introduced the students to cultural aspects of Japan: business cards and paper, scissors, rock.

Before this activity, the teacher laid down the rules clearly: if the students made a linguistic mistake (for example, mixing up watashi and boku), they could not introduce themselves, say “I won”/“I lost”, or get a card from the loser. So this game’s focus was on accuracy as well as fluency.
The students moved around the classroom and were engaged in the activity – the on-task rate was high. At the end of the game, the teacher asked the class who had received the largest number of business cards.

After these introductory language activities and games, Teacher D moved on to introduce Japanese cultural topics. During the first observation, Teacher D showed a video about Japan that was made in New Zealand. It started with information about Japanese geography and showed Tokyo, Japanese schoolchildren going to school and eating lunch, and so on. Prior to watching the video, Teacher D asked some questions to elicit the students’ background knowledge about Japan. The students talked about what they knew about Japan, such as it being crowded, having new technology, and people eating raw fish. The teacher asked the students whether they knew about any significant catastrophes in recent Japanese history. The discussion led to talk about the Second World War and the Great Tokyo Earthquake. Also the teacher brought a Japanese schoolbag that her daughter had used when they lived in Japan, and she explained how schoolbags are used and what is carried in them.

Language items included in this lesson were:

Greetings (hello, good evening)

Introducing oneself (Watashi wa XX desu).

On the second day of the researcher’s visit, the teacher brought Japanese traditional toys for the students to play with and also various Japanese books (children’s stories, first-grade school textbooks, comic books, a Bible in Japanese) so that the students could get a feel for the Japanese writing system.

Teacher D typically tries to conclude her lesson with another language activity. For example, the last section of the lesson on the second day dealt with how to count people (counting is complex in Japanese). Teacher D wrote down the phrases for one to ten people on the board. After the students said these numbers a couple of times, they sang “Ten Little Indians” using these numbers in Japanese. They sang the song twice. After this, they played another game practising this counting system. All the students stood up, and Teacher D said “Three people!” in Japanese. Then the students had to make groups of three people. If the students could not form these groups, they were told to sit down. The activity went well, and the students seemed to enjoy it.

Researcher’s report

Principle 1: Instruction needs to ensure that learners develop both a rich repertoire of formulaic expressions and a rule-based competence.

The students used a number of formulaic chunks in Japanese. The phrases they were using during the lessons included: Doomo arigatoo gozaimasu (Thank you very much), Doo itashimashite (You are welcome), Watashi wa XX desu (My name is XX), Doozo (Please). Teacher D used many formulaic chunks, such as Hasami kashite (Can I borrow your scissors?), Tatte kudasai (Stand up, please), and Namae o kaite kudasai (Write down your name, please).

Also the teacher reported in the interview that she thought teaching formulaic chunks was important because she believed that was the kind of language that the students needed to use. At this stage, she tried to teach phrases rather than single words or writing in Japanese.

Since the students had been studying Japanese for only seven weeks, their utterances consisted mostly of single words and occasionally a complex nominal construction.
Principle 2: Instruction needs to ensure that learners focus predominantly on meaning.

There were very few opportunities for the learners to focus on pragmatic meaning during the lessons. When Teacher D used the above formulaic chunks for the instructional language, the students needed to focus on the pragmatic meaning of these phrases. But except for these examples of instructional language, there were few opportunities for the students to focus on pragmatic meaning or engage in communicative tasks.

Teacher D gave an example of what she thought of as a communicative task. It is “perhaps the business card game we played this morning. So introducing themselves, playing a game, exchanging the business card.”

Based on what she thought of as communicative tasks, she said she wanted to adopt communicative tasks most of the time because she believed that when the students went to Japan, they would need to ask and answer questions and introduce themselves.

In response to the interview question about whether Teacher D let the students talk in Japanese about a topic of their own choice, she replied that she did not do that because she believed that the students did not have adequate vocabulary yet. This accorded with the researcher’s impression during the observation. The students did not yet have the language skills and knowledge, and they were not able to talk about a topic of their own choice. If they had been forced to do so, the teacher would probably have faced a management problem or it might have led to frustration among the students.

Principle 3: Instruction needs to ensure that learners also focus on form.

Most of the attention to form was at the semantic level and occasionally on an aspect of pronunciation. The students were mainly learning how to count in Japanese (from one to a hundred) and, as a variation, they learned how to count different objects (Japanese has different systems for counting different objects).

Teacher D reported in the interview that she thinks teaching conversational Japanese (perhaps she means formulaic or phrasal expressions) is more important than teaching grammar. She does not focus on grammar during the lesson. To another interview question, she responded that if she was going to teach grammar, she believed it was better to teach grammar and vocabulary in a communicative context. She also stated that she usually tried to correct students’ errors on the spot, saying, “When they get the wrong pronunciation, I repeat it and repeat the correct form straight away”. That is, her corrective feedback strategy was to use recasts.

These answers suggest that she does not focus on particular grammatical features in the lessons, but if she did decide to do so, she would integrate them with vocabulary teaching in a communicative activity. It is possible that because she does not focus specifically on grammatical features, she prefers to attend to students’ errors when they happen incidentally so that the students can notice the errors and can learn from them.

Principle 4: Instruction needs to be predominantly directed at developing implicit knowledge of the target language while not neglecting explicit knowledge.

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As noted above, the teacher does not consider grammar teaching a priority. She did not teach the language explicitly (explaining how the language works or its rules), but rather she taught it
implicitly, by introducing and using many phrases, chunks, and vocabulary items throughout the lessons. These appeared appropriate for the students’ age and proficiency levels.

During the interview, Teacher D said that she learned Japanese implicitly and she did not know much about Japanese grammar, and that’s how she taught the language too.

**Principle 5: Instruction needs to take into account the learner’s “built-in syllabus”**.

As the above description shows, the teacher did not really focus on grammar in her lessons. She reported in the interview that she uses the resource *Hai! An Introduction to Japanese* because there are some lessons that are better sequenced and she sometimes gets a general idea for what she might want to teach next from the kit.

**Principle 6: Successful instructed language learning requires extensive target-language input.**

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<th>Researcher’s rating on continuum</th>
<th>Language goals</th>
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<th>4</th>
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<tr>
<td>Framework goals</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Entirely English</td>
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Given the limitation in the students’ proficiency in Japanese, Teacher D tried to use Japanese as much as possible and to make it as comprehensible as she could. The teacher used several techniques to make the input comprehensible. First, Teacher D repeated the words or phrases many times so that the students were exposed to them repeatedly. Another technique that she used was to structure the activities one after another so that the students could gradually build their knowledge and skills over time. For example, Teacher D reviewed the numbers from one to a hundred. After that, she played bingo games with these numbers. Then she introduced the counting system for people in Japanese. This was a good opportunity to review the number system and also learn that counting people involved different vocabulary.

Another technique she used was to review and recycle language materials. She had taught how to say names and greetings earlier in the semester. When she showed the video about Japan, she encouraged the students to listen for the phrases and expressions that they had learned. The students could successfully report what they understood in the video.

In response to the interview question of “How important do you think it is to try to use Japanese in class as much as possible?”, Teacher D responded that she believed it was important. But she was also aware that the students could be overloaded with too much input in Japanese. So she tried to repeat the same phrases each time, such as “Sit down” and “Write your name on the board”. She believed it was important to expose the students to Japanese gradually.

Also, she tried to understand the complex processes involved when the students listen to Japanese:

Yes, I really ask them to speak as much as they know. But you could see it in the game this morning. I would say “twenty-five” in Japanese, and a person would say “twenty-five” in English, and process it – there is a lot happening in their heads. They hear it, then they think, and then decide what the number is. Also I don’t mind it when they tell each other. If I say *Hasami kashite*, and then someone else says “Pass the scissors”, that’s OK. I affected someone else, maybe not the person that I was talking to. But I communicated with someone.

The teacher also tried to increase opportunities for the students to interact with native speakers. In her interview, she said, “One child had a homestay student at his house, so she came to school. And that was a good opportunity for the students to hear the pace of the language. When I speak
Japanese, I try to speak slowly, whereas the Japanese person spoke faster, so it was good to have a native speaker.”

Principle 7: Successful instructed language learning also requires opportunities for output.
Since the students were at the very beginner level, they could only produce single words and short phrases.

All of the students’ utterances were examples of text manipulation. During the self-introducing game, for example, they were given the phrases at the beginning of the activity: *Watashi wa XX desu* (I am XX). During the activity, the students substituted their names for XX and introduced themselves to other classmates.

Principle 8: The opportunity to interact in the target language is central to developing proficiency.
The students were enthusiastic about participating in classroom activities, but there was not much evidence of negotiation of meaning, perhaps due to their beginner proficiency level.

When the students were in a group, they tended to use English quite a lot except when using the target features of Japanese, for example, numbers and greetings.

When asked what she did when the students had not learned what they were taught, Teacher D answered: “The pace of the lesson usually gives them time to practise, and also the following week we reinforce the concepts. I’m not too concerned if the students do not seem to have learned what they are taught. If someone has not learned anything in three months, it doesn’t make me anxious. Perhaps they have learned something about the culture, a different ritual or tradition or games they played, rather than the language. So I don’t get stressed about that.”

This response suggests that the teacher considered language learning as a long-term process and believed that not every student could learn what they were taught. She thought the students needed to develop positive attitudes towards learning Japanese language and Japanese culture. In particular, she believed that learning about the culture was an important part of language education and, as mentioned earlier, she tried to incorporate cultural elements into each class.

Principle 9: Instruction needs to take account of individual differences in learners.
Some students were more outgoing than others. In order to provide equal opportunities for each student to participate, the teacher gave three tiles to each student, and every time a student had a chance to say something, she gave one tile back to the teacher. Teacher D said that in this way, she could encourage everyone to speak several times during the class, which was often difficult to accomplish in large classes.

The students seemed motivated. All the students were very attentive, and Teacher D used short activities so that the students’ attention span would not be unduly taxed. Also she reported in the interview that making a Japanese class fun is vital. She tried to tell them stories that they could relate to, such as about the Japanese education system, what shopping is like in Japan, and what kind of food they eat. Also she believed that making the class fun was important because she wanted them to continue with Japanese and choose her as a teacher again.
**Principle 10: In assessing learners’ target-language proficiency, it is important to examine free as well as controlled production.**

No formal assessment activity was observed. Teacher D reported that she did not give grades. Her objective was that the students would have exposure to the language and would be more informed about Japanese culture and language. In order to meet this goal, Teacher D gave self- and peer assessments frequently, whenever the students learned something new. The teacher believed this was a good way for the students to feel they were learning and achieving, and to have a sense of control over their own learning.

**Teacher’s commentary on the report**

1. *Do you think that this report is an accurate account of your teaching practice?*
   Thank you for your report about my teaching practices and beliefs. I do believe that it is an accurate summary of what generally goes on in my Japanese class.

2. *In what ways has reading this report made you reflect on your own teaching?*
   After each two-hour block, I have the opportunity to reflect on the previous lesson and thus plan appropriately for the following week.

   Reading this report gives me the chance to consider and confirm that I do believe what I am teaching is effective given the goals of our school and the age and language proficiency of my current students. Many thanks.
GENERAL REFLECTIONS

This section draws together the insights obtained from the four case studies, pointing to a number of generalisations that reflect commonalities among the four teachers and also to aspects of teaching where they differ. Each of the principles will be considered in turn.

Principle 1 concerns the need for students to learn both to use formulaic chunks and to produce complex utterances. There is plenty of evidence from the case studies that all the teachers were aware of the importance of formulaic expressions. Their students were exposed to formulaic expressions and were also encouraged to use them themselves in the everyday classroom routines that were conducted through the medium of the target language. Thus, a major source of formulaic expressions was the framework goals. Also, some of the teachers (Teacher A, for example) made special efforts to teach the students useful expressions. Thus, this aspect of second language acquisition was well catered for. There was less evidence of opportunities for students to hear and produce more complex utterances, however. Only Teacher B achieved this in a higher level class where the students were strongly motivated to learn French. Clearly, the use of complex constructions is problematic with learners in the beginning stages of language learning. Such learners cannot be expected to produce such utterances. They can, however, receive some exposure to them through listening activities, as long as these activities are designed in such a way as to ensure that the input is comprehensible.

Principle 2 concerned the importance of giving students opportunities to focus on meaning. The general picture that emerged from the case studies is that (with the exception of Teacher A) there were relatively few such opportunities and that those opportunities that did arise occurred in the context of interactions with framework goals. It is interesting to note that all four teachers elected to use the target language (rather than English) to achieve framework goals. What does appear to be lacking in these classrooms is the opportunity for the students to perform communicative tasks, although some were evident in the more advanced classes. The explanation for the scarcity of communicative activities lies in the teachers’ belief that such activities are not possible with beginner level learners. This is obviously true if “tasks” are viewed as requiring learners to produce in the target language but, in fact, tasks can also be input-based (that is, requiring listening or reading). The teachers did seem to view tasks as requiring production or, alternatively, defined them as contextualised language exercises (for example, role plays designed to practise specific linguistic features). There is a need, perhaps, for teachers to think through more fully what a “task” is and how they can incorporate them into lessons for learners of all levels.

In contrast, all the teachers focused extensively on form in one way or another (Principle 3). There was an interesting difference between the two French and the two Japanese teachers. Whereas the former taught planned grammar lessons (especially Teacher B) and expressed the view that grammar teaching was important, the latter focused more on teaching ready-made expressions, vocabulary, and pronunciation and were clearly less convinced of the value of teaching grammar. The two French teachers, while agreeing on the need to teach grammar, differed in both the approach they employed and their views about what constituted effective grammar teaching. Teacher A favoured an inductive approach, whereas Teacher B adopted a deductive approach involving explicit explanation of the target points. All the teachers gave some incidental attention to form (in the context of activities not specifically designed to teach form), reflecting their beliefs that students can “pick up” a lot of language if their attention is drawn to specific points. All the teachers were aware that the goal was not simply that students should understand how grammar works but that they should be able to use the grammatical structures taught. The differences in the teachers’ approaches and in their stated beliefs about how to handle form-focused instruction reflect the differences apparent in current theories and research about the role of form-focused instruction in second language learning.
The teachers varied considerably with regard to the priority they attached to developing implicit and explicit knowledge of the second language (Principle 4). Teachers A and D prioritised implicit knowledge. However, they both considered explicit knowledge had a role to play in language learning. Their stated preference was to focus on implicit knowledge first and explicit knowledge later. Thus, the preferred sequence in their teaching was from implicit to explicit. In contrast, Teachers B and C gave much greater emphasis to the teaching of explicit knowledge, and their preferred sequence was from explicit to implicit. That is, they believed that it was best to start with an explicit explanation of a linguistic point and then attempt to proceduralise the students’ knowledge through practice activities. Teacher B was the most traditional and favoured providing learners with written notes on grammatical structures and having them practise conjugations. In part, this reflected the fact that Teacher B’s students had all studied Latin. Teacher C pointed out that one reason for her emphasis on explicit knowledge was that the Japanese examination that the students would have to sit favoured learners with this type of knowledge. These differences again reflect controversies in the research literature. From a practical point of view, the extent to which instruction should favour implicit or explicit knowledge depends on such factors as whether students are taking the language for just a semester or two or for longer and whether the students are being prepared for an examination. Where students are studying the language for just a short time and are not planning to take a formal examination, it would seem sensible to focus on developing implicit knowledge.

How teachers can take account of the learners’ “built-in syllabus” (Principle 5) is not obvious. The teachers’ comments in the interview indicated that they did not have an explicit understanding of what was meant by “built-in syllabus”. This is not surprising as this constitutes technical knowledge that they could not be expected to possess unless they were familiar with second language acquisition research. The easiest way to ensure that teaching is compatible with the learner’s “built-in syllabus” is not to follow a structural syllabus. This was the approach adopted by Teachers A and D. Both Teacher B and Teacher C did base their teaching on a structural syllabus, pointing out that they followed the order laid out in the curriculum or in the textbook. Teacher B expressed reservations about this, feeling that students’ communicative needs should dictate the order. Teacher C recognised that learners do not always learn what they have been taught and emphasised the need for constant revision. To some degree, then, all the teachers demonstrated an awareness of the problems attendant on following a structural syllabus.

All the teachers showed awareness of the need to maximise their students’ exposure to input in the target language (Principle 6). This was reflected in the fact that they sought to use the target language extensively in achieving all interactional goals – language, framework, and social goals. Teachers A and D achieved this to a greater extent than teachers B and C, but the latter two used more target language than English. The two Japanese teachers made efforts to bring in native speakers of Japanese to the classroom to speak with the students. All the teachers also employed a range of strategies to help make their input comprehensible to the students – repeating words and phrases, making use of routines, gesturing, using visuals, structuring activities carefully so one activity built on another – and were all successful in this. However, except by Teacher B’s school, little was done to bring the students into contact with the target language outside the classroom. Students at Teacher B’s school students had the opportunity to make trips to French-speaking countries and to take outside courses in French. They were also encouraged to seek out Internet sites in French. Interestingly, none of the teachers made any mention of an extensive reading programme – the most obvious way of maximising input.

The extent to which there were opportunities for output (Principle 7) depended largely on the proficiency level of the students. Thus, Teacher A and Teacher B both provided text-creation activities for the students in their advanced classes. These activities allowed the students the opportunity to produce multiple-sentence turns and full clauses, not just single words and short phrases. Teacher B reported that the advanced students in his school were also required to research and produce extended essays in French. All the teachers relied more on text-manipulation activities for students with less proficiency. Student output at this level was likely to consist of
single words or short phrases. However, Teacher A made special efforts to “push” such students by discouraging the use of English and requiring more extended responses to questions than oui or non. Teacher A demonstrated that it is possible to elicit “pushed output” even with lower level learners.

Classrooms are not typically characterised by the kinds of interaction that have been hypothesised to promote second language acquisition (Principle 8). The four teachers’ classrooms were, in some respects, no exception. For example, there was very little evidence of any negotiation of meaning in any of their classrooms. Also, in the text manipulation activities, the interactions that took place involved the production of modelled conversational patterns. However, there was evidence of teachers’ attempts to scaffold learners’ attempts at production. Also, all the teachers were clearly aware of the need to provide opportunities for the students to interact and sought to do so through pair and group work, although one problem in some of the lower level classes was the students’ communicating in English. Teacher A was the only teacher who emphasised the importance of allowing students to talk on topics of their own choice.

There was plenty of evidence that the teachers were responsive to individual differences in the students (Principle 9). They appealed to their students’ different learning styles by presenting material both orally and in writing, they sought to vary the classroom activities, and they tried to keep activities fairly short to maintain the students’ attention. The students in all the classes observed appeared attentive, interested in learning, and prepared to participate. In some cases, their motivation was probably extrinsic in nature (that is, they were motivated to pass an examination) but it was also clearly intrinsic as well. The students enjoyed their language lessons. All the teachers emphasised the importance of making language learning fun, and all had thought out ways of achieving this. But it is important to recognise that the kinds of activities they employed to generate intrinsic motivation also had serious learning objectives (that is, they did not play games simply to entertain).

No formal assessment was observed in any of the teachers’ classes (Principle 10). Teacher A reported that assessment was not her main focus and that when she did assess, she focused on oral production. This was also evident in her practice: she was observed rewarding students with stickers when they participated as speakers. Teacher C commented on the difficulty of assessing oral production. The secondary school teachers demonstrated a clear concern with the demands of formal assessment and its impact on their teaching. They commented on the fact that the formal examination that some of the students would be taking influenced the way they taught.
SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

The case studies, with the tools that were used to develop them, are intended to provide an evidence base and methodology that teachers can use in a range of ways for their professional learning.

It is recognised that language teaching and learning are enormously complex. Ensuring that what is taught matches what is learned should be the goal for any teacher. Research can assist teachers to achieve such a match but research cannot be used to prescribe what teachers should do to achieve it. Teachers of languages are not all the same. They differ in their in background knowledge, personal goals, who they teach, how they teach, and the conditions under which they teach.

The case studies were developed to illustrate how the principles extracted from the literature review can support teachers in curriculum-based teaching and learning (see page 2). Research provides insights into what kinds of teaching behaviours have been shown to work for learning. Then it is up to teachers to discover what works for them in their classrooms.

In the 2005 Review of the Impact of Collaborative Continuing Professional Development (CPD) on Classroom Teaching and Learning conducted by the CPD Review Group, EPPI-Centre, University of London (http://eppi.ioe.ac.uk), the characteristics of professional development for which there is medium to high evidence of positive teaching and learning outcomes include:

- the use of external expertise linked to school-based activity;
- observations, particularly those used formatively and combined with data collection, and reflection based on observation;
- an emphasis on peer support and collaboration between teachers that takes account of individual teachers’ starting points and uses processes to encourage, extend, and structure professional dialogue;
- scope for teacher participants to identify their own professional development focus;
- processes for sustaining the professional development over time to enable teachers to embed the practices in their own classroom settings;
- collaboration between teachers that is focused around active experimentation, which appears to be more effective in changing practice than simply reflection and discussion around practice;
- pair or small-group collaboration, which appears to have a greater impact on professional development outcomes than larger groups;
- the capacity for teachers to further develop their learning in the light of:
  - students’ responses;
  - sustained professional dialogue about both the strategies and students’ responses.

The ten principles and the four case studies are a source of data for professional learning. Opportunities exist both for self-directed teacher learning and for more structured forms of professional learning that may use outside expertise. Examples of “tasks” that language teachers could use to build expertise based on these data, are:

1. Preparing
   Example: Prepare a lesson plan that takes into account the ten principles of instructed language learning)
2. Evaluating
   Example: Evaluate the ten principles of instructed language learning. To what extent do you agree that they constitute sound principles?

3. Ranking
   Example: Do you consider some of the principles more important than others? Rank them according to the importance you attach to them.

4. Adding/extending
   Example: Are there any additional aspects of learning that you consider important that are not covered by the ten principles?

5. Comparing
   Example: Compare the case studies of the two Japanese teachers. Which of these teachers’ practice seems to best reflect the principles?

6. Listing
   Example: Look through Case Study A. Make a list of the different teaching activities and behaviours that relate to each of the principles.

7. Improving
   Example: Choose any one of the case studies. What suggestions would you give this teacher for improving his/her teaching?

8. Selecting
   Example: Choose the case study that comes closest to your own teaching situation. Select five teaching behaviours described in the case study that most appeal to you.

9. Innovating
   Example: Identify one teaching behaviour described in the case studies that you do not currently employ in your own teaching. Try this behaviour out in one of your lessons. Notice if it makes a difference.

10. Researching
    Example: Carry out a case study of your own teaching, using the same methodology as for the case studies in this report. You will need to analyse your own teaching and also record your answers to the interview questions (see Appendices 2 and 4). Alternatively, you might like to ask another teacher to do the observations and interview with you.
APPENDICES

Appendix 1: The principles in their original form

**Principle 1: Instruction needs to ensure that learners develop both a rich repertoire of formulaic expressions and a rule-based competence**

Proficiency in another language requires that learners acquire both a rich repertoire of formulaic expressions, which is necessary for achieving fluency, and a rule-based competence consisting of knowledge of specific grammatical rules, which enables learners to express themselves in complex and accurate language.

Formulaic expressions include both “routines” such as “How do you do?” and “I don’t know” and “patterns” (that is, chunks with one or more empty slots) such as “Can I have a ____?” and “Where’s the ___?” There is now widespread acceptance of the importance played by formulaic expressions in language use. Native speakers have been shown to use a much larger number of formulaic expressions than even advanced second language learners (Foster, 2001). Formulaic expressions may also serve as a basis for the later development of a rule-based competence. Learners appear to bootstrap their way to grammar by first internalising and then analysing fixed sequences. Studies of classroom learners (e.g., Myles, 2004) show that learners often first internalise rote-learned material as chunks, which they later break down for analysis. Formulaic expressions, then, have an important role to play in both language use and language learning.

Traditionally, however, language instruction has been directed at developing rule-based competence (that is, knowledge of specific grammatical rules) through the systematic teaching of pre-selected structures. While such an approach may result in learners internalising the rules and thus being able to use them in their creative speech, programme planners and teachers need to recognise that it is perhaps more likely to result in students only learning rote-memorised routines and patterns. Thus, there is a need to acknowledge what can be realistically achieved by a traditional approach, especially with young, beginner learners.

If formulaic chunks play a large role in early language acquisition, it may pay to focus on these initially, delaying the teaching of grammar until later. A functional approach (that is, an approach directed at teaching such functions as “greetings”, “requesting” and “apologising”) lends itself perfectly to the teaching of prefabricated patterns and routines and may provide an ideal foundation for instruction in the early stages. Clearly, though, a complete language-teaching programme needs to ensure that it caters to the development of both formulaic expressions and rule-based knowledge.

**Principle 2: Instruction needs to ensure that learners focus predominantly on meaning.**

What does “focus on meaning” refer to? It is necessary to distinguish two different senses of this term. The first refers to the idea of focusing on semantic meaning, that is, the meanings of lexical items, such as words, or of specific grammatical structures. We can obtain information about semantic meaning from a dictionary or grammar book. The second sense of “focus on meaning” relates to pragmatic meaning, that is, the highly contextualised meanings that arise in acts of communication, for example, being able to use the target language appropriately to request help or to make an apology. We create pragmatic meaning when we communicate.

There is an important difference in the instructional approaches needed to learn semantic and pragmatic meaning. In the case of semantic meaning, the teacher and the students can treat language as an object and function as instructors and learners. But in the case of pragmatic meaning, they need to view the target language as a tool for communicating and to function as
communicators. In effect, this involves two entirely different orientations to teaching and learning.

The principal means of achieving a focus on meaning in the classroom is through “tasks”, as defined by Ellis, 2003 (see page 4). A task is an activity that (1) requires the learners to focus primarily on meaning, (2) has some kind of “gap” that needs to be filled through the communicative efforts of the learners, (3) requires learners to construct their own utterances, not just manipulate language given to them, and (4) has a clearly defined outcome other than simply the display of correct language. Common examples of tasks are “Describe and Draw” (where the teacher verbally describes something in the target language that students have to draw), “Jigsaw task” (where two students have different pieces of information, for example, on a train schedule, and have to share the information each has in order to find something out, for example, which train would get them to a certain place by a certain time) and “Role Plays” (where students work in groups to role-play scenarios given to them by the teacher). Tasks can involve any of the four skills (listening, reading, speaking, and writing) in any combination.

The opportunity to focus on pragmatic meaning is important for a number of reasons:

1. In the eyes of many theorists (e.g., Prabhu, 1987), it is only when learners are engaged in decoding and encoding messages in the context of actual acts of communication that the conditions are created for acquisition to take place.
2. To develop true fluency in another language, learners must have opportunities to create pragmatic meaning.
3. Engaging learners in activities where they are focused on creating pragmatic meaning is intrinsically motivating.

In arguing the need for a focus on pragmatic meaning, theorists do so not just because they see this as a means of activating the linguistic resources that have been developed by other, traditional means but because they see it as the principal way in which the linguistic resources themselves are created. However, this does not mean that instruction needs to be directed exclusively at providing learners with opportunities to create pragmatic meaning, only that, to be effective, instruction must include such opportunities and that, ideally, over an entire teaching and learning programme, they should be predominant.

**Principle 3: Instruction needs to ensure that learners also focus on form.**

There is now a widespread acceptance that acquisition also requires that learners attend to form. Indeed, according to some theories of second language acquisition, such attention is necessary for acquisition to take place. Schmidt (1994), for example, has argued that there is no learning without conscious attention to form.

When researchers talk about “focus on form”, they do not mean that learners need to just attend generally to language form but rather that they need to notice specific forms in the input to which they are exposed. Also, it is not just a question of paying attention to the specific phonetic or graphic forms but also to the meanings that they realise in communication. That is, focus on form refers to form-function mapping. For example, learners of English as a second language need to notice that verbs sometimes end in -ed (for example, “climbed”) and that this form serves to refer to “completed action in the past”.

Instruction can cater to a focus on form in a number of ways:

1. Through lessons designed to teach specific grammatical features. Such lessons designed to involve an inductive or deductive approach. An inductive approach to grammar teaching is designed to encourage “noticing” of pre-selected forms; a deductive approach seeks to establish an awareness of the grammatical rule.
2. Through focused tasks. Such tasks require learners to comprehend and process specific grammatical structures in the input, and/or to produce the structures in the performance of the task. These tasks must satisfy the same criteria as all tasks (see the defining criteria for a task in Principle 2).

3. By means of methodological options that induce attention to form in the context of performing a task. Two methodological options that have received considerable attention from researchers are (a) the opportunity for learners to plan carefully what they are going to say or write and (b) corrective feedback that draws learners’ attention to the errors they make while they are communicating.

Reservations have been expressed with regard to (1) because it has become clear that traditional grammar lessons of either the inductive or deductive kind often do not succeed in enabling learners to use the taught features in real communication. Thus, researchers are increasingly acknowledging the importance of (2) and (3) on the grounds that the focus on form occurs in the context of the learners’ attempts to communicate and that it is this that may be crucial for successful learning.

**Principle 4: Instruction needs to be predominantly directed at developing implicit knowledge of the target language while not neglecting explicit knowledge.**

Implicit knowledge is procedural, is held unconsciously and can only be verbalised if it is made explicit. It is accessed rapidly and easily and thus is available for use in rapid, fluent communication. This is the kind of knowledge we have of our first language. In the view of most researchers, competence in a second language is also primarily a matter of implicit knowledge.

Explicit knowledge is the declarative knowledge of the phonological, lexical, grammatical, and pragmatic features of the target language together with the metalanguage for labelling this knowledge. It is held consciously, it is learnable and verbalisable and it is typically accessed through controlled processing when learners experience some kind of linguistic difficulty in the use of the target language. A distinction needs to be drawn between explicit knowledge as analysed knowledge and as metalinguistic explanation. The former entails a conscious awareness of how a structural feature works, while the latter consists of knowledge of grammatical metalanguage (for example, “indefinite article”, “auxiliary verb”) and the ability to understand explanations of rules.

Given that it is implicit knowledge that underlies the ability to communicate fluently and confidently in a second language, it is this type of knowledge that should be the ultimate goal of any instructional programme. How then can it be developed? There are conflicting theories regarding this. According to skill-building theory (DeKeyser, 1998), implicit knowledge arises out of explicit knowledge when the latter is proceduralised through practice. In contrast, emergentist theories (Krashen, 1981; Ellis, 1998) see implicit knowledge as developing naturally out of meaning-focused communication, aided, perhaps, by some focus on form. Irrespective of these different theoretical positions, there is a consensus that learners need the opportunity to participate in communicative activity to develop implicit knowledge. Thus, tasks need to play a central role in instruction directed at implicit knowledge.

The value in teaching explicit knowledge of grammar has been and remains today one of the most controversial issues in language pedagogy. In order to make sense of the different positions relating to the teaching of explicit knowledge it is necessary to consider two separate questions:

1. Is explicit knowledge of any value in and of itself?
2. Is explicit knowledge of value in facilitating the development of implicit knowledge?
Explicit knowledge is arguably only of value if it can be shown that learners are able to utilise this type of knowledge in actual performance. Again, this is a controversial issue. Krashen (1982) argues that learners can only use explicit knowledge when they “monitor” and that this requires that they are focused on form (as opposed to meaning) and have sufficient time to access the knowledge. Thus, learners’ ability to employ their explicit knowledge is very limited. Other positions are possible. It can be argued that explicit knowledge is used in the process of formulating messages as well as in monitoring and that many learners are adroit in accessing their explicit memories for these purposes, especially if the rules are, to a degree, automated. However, this does require time.

Irrespective of whether explicit knowledge has any value in and of itself, it may assist language development by facilitating the development of implicit knowledge. This involves a consideration of what has become known as the interface hypothesis, which addresses whether explicit knowledge plays a role in second language acquisition. Three positions can be identified. According to the non-interface position (Krashen, 1981), explicit and implicit knowledge are entirely distinct, with the result that explicit knowledge cannot be converted into implicit knowledge. This position is supported by research that suggests that explicit and implicit memories are neurologically separate. The interface position argues the exact opposite. Drawing on skill-learning theory, it argues that explicit knowledge becomes implicit knowledge if learners have the opportunity for plentiful communicative practice. The weak interface position claims that explicit knowledge primes a number of key acquisitional processes, in particular the noticing of linguistic forms. That is, explicit knowledge of a grammatical structure makes it more likely learners will attend to structures in the input and carry out a cognitive comparison between what they observe in the input and what they are themselves using. These positions continue to be argued at a theoretical level.

The three positions support very different approaches to language teaching. The non-interface position leads to a “zero grammar” approach, i.e. one that prioritises meaning-centred approaches such as task-based teaching. The interface position supports traditional grammar teaching – the idea that a grammatical structure should be first presented explicitly and then practised until it is fully proceduralised. The weak interface position has been used to provide a basis for consciousness-raising tasks (Ellis, 1991) that require learners to derive their own explicit grammar rules from data they are provided with. Such tasks aim only at declarative knowledge of grammar rules, leaving it to the learners themselves to subsequently develop procedural knowledge of the rules.

This principle, then, asserts that instruction needs to be directed at developing both implicit and explicit knowledge, giving priority to the former. It is neutral, however, as to how this is to be achieved.

Principle 5: Instruction needs to take into account the learner’s “built-in syllabus”.

Early research into naturalistic second language acquisition showed that learners follow a “natural” order and sequence of acquisition (that is, they master different grammatical structures in a relatively fixed and universal order and they pass through a sequence of stages of acquisition en route to mastering each grammatical structure). This led researchers like Corder (1967) to suggest that learners have their own “built-in syllabus” for learning grammar as implicit knowledge.

There followed a number of empirical studies designed to (1) compare the order of acquisition of instructed and naturalistic learners, (2) compare the success of instructed and naturalistic learners and (3) examine whether attempts to teach specific grammatical structures resulted in their acquisition. These studies showed that, by and large, the order and sequence of acquisition was the same for instructed and naturalistic learners, that instructed learners generally achieved higher levels of grammatical competence than naturalistic learners and that instruction was no guarantee
that learners would acquire what they had been taught. This led to the conclusion that it was beneficial to teach grammar but that it was necessary to ensure that it was taught in a way that was compatible with the natural processes of acquisition.

How, then, can instruction take account of the learner’s built-in syllabus? There are a number of possibilities:

1. Adopt a zero grammar approach, as proposed by Krashen. That is, employ a task-based approach that makes no attempt to predetermine the linguistic content of a lesson.

2. Ensure that learners are developmentally ready to acquire a specific target feature. However, this is probably impractical as teachers have no easy way of determining where individual students have reached and it would necessitate a highly individualised approach to cater for differences in developmental level among the students.

3. Focus the instruction on explicit rather than implicit knowledge as explicit knowledge is not subject to the same developmental constraints as implicit knowledge. While it is probably true that some declarative facts about language are easier to master than others, this is likely to reflect their cognitive rather than their developmental difficulty (that is, the learners’ ability to understand rules rather than to fully internalise them), which can more easily be taken into account in deciding the order of instruction. Traditional structural syllabuses, in fact, are graded primarily on the basis of their cognitive difficulty for learners.

(1), the zero grammar approach, is controversial and not acceptable to many teachers (or learners). However, there is no reason why at least some lessons cannot adopt this approach. (2) is impractical. (3) is both practical and desirable. Ultimately, teaching needs to acknowledge that there are limits to the power of instruction to intervene directly in learners’ language learning and thus that it must endeavour to cater for natural, organic learning in the classroom. Also, however, it needs to help learners to develop the explicit knowledge that will promote this learning.

**Principle 6: Successful instructed language learning requires extensive target-language input.**

Language learning, whether it occurs in a naturalistic or an instructed context, can be a slow and labour-intensive process. Children acquiring their first language take between two and five years to achieve full grammatical competence, during which time they are exposed to massive amounts of input. Research has demonstrated that a substantial portion of the variance in speed of acquisition of children can be accounted for by the amount and the quality of input they receive. The same is undoubtedly true of second language acquisition. If learners do not receive exposure to the target language, they cannot acquire it. In general, the more exposure they receive, the more and the faster they will learn. Researchers agree on the importance of input for developing the highly connected implicit knowledge that is needed to become an effective communicator in the second language.

How can teachers ensure their students have access to extensive input? In a “naturalistic” language teaching context, learners can be expected to gain access to plentiful input outside the classroom, although not all such learners are successful in achieving this. In an “instructed” language teaching context (as when French or Japanese is taught in schools in New Zealand), there are far fewer opportunities for extensive input. To ensure adequate access, teachers need to:

1. Maximise use of the target language inside the classroom. Ideally, this would mean that the language would be the medium as well as the object of instruction. A study by Kim (forthcoming) revealed that foreign language teachers of French, German, Japanese, and Korean in Auckland secondary schools varied enormously in the extent to which they employed the target language in the classroom. In some classrooms, more than 75 percent of the input was in English.
2. Create opportunities for students to receive input outside the classroom. This can be achieved most easily by providing extensive reading programmes based on carefully selected graded readers, suited to the level of the student. Elley (1991) reviewed studies that showed that second language learners can benefit from both reading and from being read to. Also, ideally, if more resources are available, schools could establish self-access centres, which students could use outside class time. Successful second language learners seek out opportunities to experience the language outside class time. Many students are unlikely to make the effort unless teachers make resources available and provide learner-training in how to make effective use of the resources.

It can be claimed with confidence that, if the only input students receive is in the context of a limited number of weekly lessons based on some course materials, they are unlikely to achieve high levels of target language proficiency.

**Principle 7: Successful instructed language learning also requires opportunities for output.**

Most researchers now acknowledge that learner output also plays a part in language acquisition. The following is a list of the contributions that output has been claimed to make:

1. Production serves to generate better input through the feedback that learners’ efforts at production elicit.
2. It forces syntactic processing, that is, it obliges learners to pay attention to grammar.
3. It allows learners to test out hypotheses about the target language grammar.
4. It helps to automatise existing knowledge.
5. It provides opportunities for learners to develop discourse skills, for example by producing “long turns”.
6. It is important for helping learners to develop a “personal voice” by steering conversation on to topics they are interested in contributing to.
7. It provides the learner with “auto-input”, that is, learners can attend to the “input” provided by their own productions.

The importance of creating opportunities for output, including what Swain (1985) has called pushed output (output where the learner is stretched to express messages clearly and explicitly), constitutes one of the main reasons for incorporating tasks into a language programme. Controlled practice exercises typically result in output that is limited in terms of length and complexity. They do not afford students opportunities for the kind of sustained output that theorists argue is necessary for successful language acquisition. Allen et al. (1990) have shown that extended talk of a clause or more in a classroom context is more likely to occur when students initiate interactions and when they have to find their own words. This is best achieved by asking learners to perform oral and written tasks that require both oral and written language.

**Principle 8: The opportunity to interact in the target language is central to developing proficiency.**

While it is useful to consider the separate contributions of input and output to acquisition, it is also important to acknowledge that both co-occur in oral interaction and that theories of second language acquisition have viewed social interaction as the matrix in which acquisition takes place. As Hatch (1978) put it: “one learns how to do conversation, one learns how to interact verbally, and out of the interaction syntactic structures are developed” (p. 404). Thus, interaction is not just a means of automatising existing linguistic resources but also of creating new resources.
The classroom constitutes a special interactive context in so far as one participant (the teacher) assumes control over the interactions that take place there. These interactions centre around three general goals, which Ellis (1984) has labelled “core goals”, “framework goals” and “social goals”. Interactions with core goals focus on content (that is, what is to be taught) – either language or some subject matter. Interactions with framework goals involve the organisational language used by the teacher and the students for purposes of classroom management and task-accomplishment. Interactions with social goals concern talk that centres on the personal life of the participants and their social relationships. A key issue is whether these different types of interactions are conducted in the target language or the students’ first language.

Researchers have attempted to identify the specific characteristics of classroom interaction that will promote acquisition. According to the Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1996), interaction fosters acquisition when a communication problem arises and learners are engaged in negotiating for meaning. The interactional modifications (for example, confirmation check and requests for clarification) that arise help to make input comprehensible, provide corrective feedback and push learners to modify their own output. According to the sociocultural theory of mind (Lantolf, 2000), interaction serves as a form of mediation, enabling learners to construct new forms and perform new functions collaboratively. According to this view, learning is first evident on the social plane (that is, in interaction) and only later on the psychological plane (that is, in the learner’s mind). In both theories, while social interaction may not be viewed as necessary for acquisition, it is viewed as the primary source of learning.

Johnson (1995) identifies four key requirements for interaction to create an acquisition-rich classroom:

1. creating contexts of language use where students have a reason to attend to language
2. providing opportunities for learners to use the language to express their own personal meanings
3. helping students to participate in language-related activities that are beyond their current level of proficiency
4. offering a full range of contexts that cater for a “full performance” in the language.

Once again, these requirements are more likely to be met through learners performing “tasks” than through exercises.

Ellis (1999) has suggested that a key to ensuring that interaction is beneficial to acquisition is to give control of the discourse topic to the students. This, of course, is not easily achieved, given that teachers have a duty to ensure that classroom discourse is orderly, which, in turn, is most easily achieved by their taking control of the discourse topic by means of IRF exchanges (that is, sequences consisting of teacher initiate – student response – teacher feedback). Thus creating the right kind of interaction for acquisition constitutes a major challenge for teachers. One solution is to incorporate small group work into a lesson. When students interact among themselves, acquisition-rich discourse is more likely to ensue. However, there are a number of dangers in group work, which may militate against this (for example, excessive use of the first language in monolingual groups).
Principle 9: Instruction needs to take account of individual differences in learners.

While there are identifiable universal aspects of second language acquisition, there is also considerable variability in the rate of learning and in the ultimate level of achievement. In particular, learning will be more successful when:

1. the instruction is matched to students’ particular aptitude for learning
2. the students are motivated.

Teachers can best cater to variation in the nature of their students’ aptitude by adopting a flexible teaching approach involving a variety of learning activities. They can also make use of simple learner-training materials (for example, Ellis and Sinclair, 1989) designed to make students more aware of their own approaches to learning and to develop awareness of alternative approaches. Good language learner studies (for example, Naiman et al., 1978) suggest that successful language learning requires a flexible approach to learning. Thus, increasing the range of learning strategies at learners’ disposal is one way in which teachers can help them to learn. Such strategy training needs to foster an understanding that language learning requires both an experiential approach, where learners engage in the effort to communicate, and an analytical approach, where they focus on language as an object to be studied, and to demonstrate the kinds of strategies related to both approaches. School-based students often tend to adopt an analytical approach to learning (even if this does not accord with their natural aptitude) as this is the kind of approach generally fostered in schools. They may have greater difficulty in adopting the kind of experiential approach required in task-based language teaching. Some learner-training, therefore, may be essential if learners are to perform tasks effectively.

Researchers have begun to explore the kinds of teaching strategies that teachers can employ to develop and maintain their students’ intrinsic motivation. Dornyei (2001) offers a list of thirty-four instructional strategies that teachers can adopt to promote motivation in the classroom. These are directed at “creating the basic motivational conditions”, “generating initial motivation in learning activities”, “maintaining and protecting motivation”, and “encouraging positive self-evaluation”. Teachers need to accept that it is their responsibility to ensure that their students are motivated and stay motivated and not bewail the fact that students do not bring any motivation to learn the target language to the classroom. While it is probably true that teachers can do little to influence students’ extrinsic motivation, there is a lot they can do to enhance their intrinsic motivation.

Principle 10: In assessing learners’ target-language proficiency, it is important to examine free as well as controlled production.

The extent to which instruction can be shown to be effective is contingent on the way in which it is measured. Norris and Ortega (2000) distinguish four types of measurement:

1. metalinguistic judgment (for example, a grammaticality judgement test)
2. selected response (for example, multiple choice)
3. constrained constructed response (for example, gap-filling exercises)
4. free constructed response (for example, a communicative task).

Method (4) constitutes the best measure of learners’ second language proficiency, as it is this that corresponds most closely to the kind of language use found outside the classroom. The ability to judge whether a sentence is correct or not or to get a multiple-choice question right amounts to very little if the student is unable to use the target feature in actual communication.
Free constructed responses are best elicited by means of tasks. Performance on a task can be assessed in three ways: (1) a direct assessment of task outcomes, (2) discourse analytic measures and (3) external ratings. Method (2) may not be practical for busy classroom teachers as it requires transcribing speech and then painstakingly calculating measures such as number of error free clauses and clause complexity. (3) is practical but it requires considerable expertise to ensure that the ratings of learner performance are valid and reliable. (1) may be the most promising. However, it is only possible with “closed” tasks (that is, tasks for which there is a single correct outcome). An example would be a Spot the Difference Task where pairs of learners have a picture each and need to interact (without seeing each other’s picture) in order to find a specified number of differences between each of their pictures. In this task, assessment would consist of establishing whether they were able to successfully identify the differences.
Appendix 2: Background questionnaire (for teachers)

Name: __________________________________________

1. How long have you been teaching French/Japanese? ______________________________

2. What is your mother tongue? ________________________________________________

3. If French/Japanese is not your mother tongue, how would you describe your proficiency in French/Japanese? (please circle your choice)

   Spoken French/ 1-----------------2-----------------3-----------------4-----------------5
                   (low)            (high/near native)

   Written French/ 1-----------------2-----------------3-----------------4-----------------5
                   (low)                      (high/near native)


5. Do you have a formal qualification in French/Japanese?    Yes    No

   If yes, what? (e.g., BA majoring in French etc.) ______________________________

6. What teaching qualification do you have? _________________________________

7. Where and when did you obtain this qualification? _________________________

   _______________________________________________________________________

8. Have you received any other teacher training?  If so, where?

   _______________________________________________________________________

Instructed Second Language Acquisition: Case Studies
9. How much time have you spent in a country where French/Japanese is widely spoken?

_____________________________________________________________________

10. Do you teach any other languages? Yes No
If yes, which? ______________________________

11. Do you speak any other languages? Yes No
If yes, which? ______________________________

12. In teaching French/Japanese, do you use a syllabus? Yes No
If yes, what do you use? ______________________________
How closely do you follow this syllabus? ______________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

13. Do you use a textbook? Yes No
If yes, which? ______________________________
How closely do you follow this textbook? ______________________________

14. How would you describe your general approach to teaching French/Japanese?

15. Why do you think you are a successful teacher?
Appendix 3: Observation field note forms

Teacher’s name: 

School/class name: 

Date/period: 

1: Target of the lesson

2: Main activities
**Principle 1: Instruction needs to ensure that learners develop both a rich repertoire of formulaic expressions and a rule-based competence.**

Do the students use formulaic chunks in the target language during the lesson?

Do the students produce utterances in the target language that contain:

- a. complex nominal constructions?
- b. complex sentence constructions?
**Principle 2: Instruction needs to ensure that learners focus predominantly on meaning.**

Are there opportunities for students to focus on pragmatic meaning during the lesson?
Does the lesson contain any communicative tasks?
What proportion of the lesson time engages learners in processing pragmatic meaning?
Principle 3: Instruction needs to ensure that learners also focus on form.

What evidence is there of attention to form in any of these ways:

- through grammar/vocabulary/pronunciation lessons designed to teach specific linguistic features?
- through focused tasks?
- through methodological options designed to induce attention to form (e.g., planning, pre-emptive attention to form, and reactive attention to form)?

Is the attention to form evident in the lesson of the intensive or extensive kind?
Principle 4: Instruction needs to be predominantly directed at developing implicit knowledge of the target language while not neglecting explicit knowledge.

Does the teacher attempt to teach explicit knowledge of the target language? If so, how?

Rate the lesson overall as being directed at “fluency” or “accuracy” on this scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fluency</th>
<th>Accuracy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Principle 5: Instruction needs to take into account the learner’s “built-in syllabus” (only relevant to Focus on Forms.)

If the lesson is of the focus-on-forms type what specific grammatical structure is the target of the lesson?

How did the learners appear to handle this grammatical structure?

a. very easily
b. with some difficulty
c. with great difficulty/not at all
**Principle 6: Successful instructed language learning requires extensive target-language input.**

Rate the extent to which the target language (TL) is used by teacher and students for these goals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Entirely TL</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Entirely English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language goals</td>
<td>Entirely TL</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Entirely English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social goals</td>
<td>Entirely TL</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Entirely English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framework goals</td>
<td>Entirely TL</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Entirely English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What does the teacher do to try to make the TL input “comprehensible”?
**Principle 7: Successful instructed language learning also requires opportunities for output.**

When the students speak in the target language how long are their utterances typically?
- single words / short phrases / full clauses / multiple clause sentences

Does the output produced by the students involve “text manipulation” and/or “text creation”?
Give examples.
Principle 8: The opportunity to interact in the target language is central to developing proficiency.

What evidence is there of negotiation of meaning taking place?

What evidence is there of the teacher scaffolding students’ attempts to use the target language?

Do the students work in groups? If they do, do they use the target language or English?
Principle 9: Instruction needs to take account of individual differences in learners.

To what extent are the instructional activities designed to take account of differences among the students?

How intrinsically motivated in the instructional activities do the students seem to be? What indicators are there of their motivation or lack of it?

Are there any marked differences in students’ proficiency? If so, how does the teacher deal with it?

General observations

(Please note that the observational field note forms do not include an observation sheet for Principle 10 because the researcher did not aim to observe assessment during the classroom visits.)
Appendix 4: Interview questions (for teachers)

Could you briefly comment on the students in your classes?

How important do you think it is to teach formulaic expressions such as
  Comment t’appelles-tu?, Je voudrais ..., Qu’est-ce qu’il y a? Ohayoo gozaimasu, etc.?
  Do you teach these? If so, how?

How important is it to teach grammar to students?

Do you teach grammar? If so, how?

Can you define for me a “communicative task”?

To what extent do you use communicative tasks in your teaching?

Do you think that it is better to have separate grammar/vocabulary lessons or to teach grammar/vocabulary in the context of some communicative activity? Which do you do in your teaching?

When you are doing a communicative task with the students do you think it is helpful also to focus on form when the opportunity arises? For example, do you deal with students’ errors during the communicative activity, at the end or don’t you bother?

Language acquisition research suggests that learners have two types of knowledge about language – implicit and explicit language knowledge. Here are definitions of each of these types of language knowledge:

  **Implicit knowledge**: Intuitive knowledge of a language that manifests itself in actual language performance. The knowledge that most learners have of their language is implicit.

  **Explicit knowledge**: Knowledge about the language. For example, knowledge of the rule for making nouns plural in English.

Which type of knowledge does your teaching cater primarily to?

Which of these statements best sums up your ideas about language teaching?

1. Teaching explicit knowledge about grammar is a waste of time.
2. Teaching explicit knowledge of a grammatical structure is helpful if it is accompanied with lots of opportunities to practise the grammatical structure.
3. Teaching explicit knowledge about grammar is helpful as a basis for developing implicit knowledge later on.

How do you determine the order in which you teach different grammatical structures?

Sometimes you may be aware that students have not learnt what you have taught them. What do you do in such circumstances?

How important do you think it is to try to use French/Japanese in class as much as possible?

Other than setting homework, do you do anything to help your students gain plentiful input in French/Japanese outside the classroom?
Do your students make an effort to try to talk in French/Japanese? What do you do to try to encourage this?

What opportunities do you give your students to produce relatively extended pieces of writing?

Do you sometimes let students talk in French/Japanese about a topic of their own choosing?

Do you use group work much? Why/why not?

Do you set up opportunities for your students to interact with other native speakers of French/Japanese?

Do you make any attempt to teach your students how to learn French/Japanese? For example, do you try to make them understand the value of learning experientially as opposed to learning analytically?

How important do you think it is that your students find French/Japanese fun? What do you do to make learning fun?

How do you assess your students’ proficiency in French/Japanese?

Does the way you assess them correspond to what you think is the best way to assess them? If not, why not?
REFERENCES


GLOSSARY

Built-in syllabus
The “natural” developmental process of learning a second language. Research has shown that second language learners who had no formal instruction mastered the use of grammatical structures in a fairly consistent order, going through similar learning stages for each structure. (See also “‘Natural’ development process”.)

Communicative task
A task where students are using language to engage in genuine exchanges of meaning, rather than just practising language for its own sake. (See also Ellis’s definition of “task” on page 4.)

Comprehensible input
Comprehensible input is input that has been made comprehensible to learners either by simplifying it by using the situational context to make the meaning clear, or by interaction involving the negotiation of meaning.

Consciousness-raising task
A consciousness-raising task is a task that engages learners in thinking and communicating about language (often grammar). Thus, a language point becomes the topic that is talked about.

Content-based language teaching
Content-based language teaching is an approach that involves teaching language through the teaching of subject content. Thus, a programme based on this approach consists of a series of thematic units linked to content relevant to the learners.

Core goals
Interactions with core goals focus on content (that is, what is to be taught) – either language or some subject matter. Interactions with framework goals involve the organisational language used by the teacher and the students for purposes of classroom management and task accomplishment. Interactions with social goals concern talk that centres on the personal life and social relationships of the participants.

Corrective feedback
Corrective feedback is feedback that a teacher or another learner provides in response to a learner utterance or learner writing containing an error. The feedback can be implicit, as in the case of recasts, or explicit, as in the case of direct correction or metalinguistic explanation.

Deductive approach
A deductive approach to grammar seeks to establish an awareness of the grammatical rule. (See also “Inductive approach”.)

Discourse skills
Discourse skills are the skills that enable learners to connect utterances or sentences together to communicate effectively in conversation or in writing.

Explicit knowledge
Explicit knowledge consists of knowledge about language (e.g., knowledge about the rule for making nouns plural in English) that is consciously held and is potentially verbalisable.
Extrinsic motivation
Extrinsic motivation is the motivation that a learner brings to the classroom. It consists of the reasons the learner has to learn the language together with the effort the learner is prepared to put into trying to learn.

Focus on form
Focus on form is the term used to describe the cognitive processes by which learners attend to form incidentally when comprehending or producing communicative messages. Long (1991) uses the term to refer to instruction that engages learners’ attention to form while they are primarily focused on message content.

Focus on forms
Long (1991) uses this term to refer to instruction directed at teaching pre-selected linguistic items in activities where the students’ primary focus of attention is on form rather than meaning.

Framework goals
In this book, “framework goals” refers to classroom or instructional language in which the teacher explains the procedures for performing an activity or monitors students’ understanding.

Inductive approach
An inductive approach to grammar teaching is designed to encourage “noticing” of pre-selected forms.

Implicit knowledge
Implicit knowledge is the intuitive knowledge of language that underlies the ability to communicate fluently in the first language. It manifests itself in actual language performance and is only verbalisable if it is converted into explicit knowledge.

Interface hypothesis
This hypothesis claims that explicit knowledge can be converted into implicit knowledge as a result of practising specific features of the target language. It provides a clear justification for teaching explicit linguistic knowledge.

Language goals
In this book, “language goals” refers to a focus on content (that is, what is to be taught) – either language or some subject matter.

Modified output
The process by which learners attend to aspects of their own production and modify it as a result of feedback from another task participant or the teacher.

Monitoring
The process by which learners attend to aspects of their own production and modify it with a view to making it more grammatical or acceptable. Monitoring involves self-correction and is distinguished from modified output in that it is triggered by learners themselves rather than by feedback from another.

“Natural” developmental process
Studies have shown that grammatical structures are acquired in a relatively fixed order (e.g., English plural -s is acquired before possessive -s) and also that many structures (e.g., interrogatives) are acquired in a series of well-defined stages. For example, learners typically first use intonation questions (e.g., “Your name is Keiko?”), then master yes/ no questions (e.g., “Is your name Keiko?”) and finally WH questions (e.g., “What is your name?”). (See also “built-in syllabus”.)
Negotiation of meaning
Negotiation of meaning is the process by which two or more interlocutors identify and then attempt to resolve a communication breakdown. However, negotiation of meaning may or may not result in mutual understanding.

Noticing
In terms of language-learning, noticing is a cognitive process that involves attending to linguistic form in the input learners receive and the output they produce. Schmidt (1994) argues that noticing is necessarily a conscious process and is a prerequisite for learning to take place.

Pushed output
Pushed output is output that reflects what learners can produce when they are pushed to use the target language accurately and concisely. Pushed output may or may not contain modified output.

Recast
A recast is an utterance that rephrases a preceding utterance “by changing one or more of its sentence components (subject, verb or object) while still referring to its central meanings” (Long, 1996, p. 436).

Social goals
In this book, “social goals” refers to talk that centres on the personal life of the participants and their social relationships.

Scaffolding
Scaffolding involves the interactive work participants engage in to accomplish a task collaboratively to enable learners to perform functions that they would be incapable of performing independently.

Skill-building theory
Skill-building theory views knowledge as originating in an explicit form and gradually being proceduralised into an implicit form through practice. (See also “interface hypothesis”.)

Sociocultural theory of mind
A theory of learning, derived from the work of Vygotsky, that emphasises the role played by mediated learning in enabling learners to exercise conscious control over such mental activities as attention, planning and problem-solving.

Structural syllabus
A structural syllabus is one based on selecting grammatical items and structures that occur in a language and arranging them into an order suitable for teaching (Richards, J. et al., 1992).