Traits and Conditions that Accelerate Teacher Learning

Susan Barduhn, SIT Graduate Institute

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TRAITS AND CONDITIONS THAT ACCELERATE TEACHER LEARNING:

A consideration of the four-week Cambridge RSA Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults

Susan Barduhn

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Thames Valley University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

This research programme was carried out in collaboration with International House London

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DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My greatest thanks go to Jost Sigrist, for his encouragement, support and never-doubting faith that I could do it. I also thank my supervisor, Peter Skehan, for his brilliance and sense of humour; and Jean Robinson, my Alexander teacher, for keeping the energy flowing between brain, spirit and body. I am grateful to International House, both management and colleagues, for their support, flexibility and inspiration; and to the 44 trainees who took part in my research I owe the most. I’ll never forget you.

This book is dedicated to the memory of my grandmother, Etta Barduhn. Had she been born in this century she, too, would have travelled the world teaching languages.
ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to discover more about the process of learning to teach. The focus is on those trainees for whom this process is accelerated. The teacher training course that is at the centre of this research is the four-week course which leads to the Cambridge / RSA CELTA (Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults). The research also examines the CELTA itself to analyse and explain why it is effective. The research questions were the following:

- Why do some trainees do well and others not?
- What are the characteristics of the learning that takes place?
- What is it about this course that usually makes it so effective?

The data was gathered from trainees using a wide range of techniques: a repertory grid, the Honey Mumford Learning Styles Questionnaire, dialogue journals, a written assignment on learning styles and a guided discussion questionnaire that elicited opinions from the trainees about their experiences on the course. An extensive pilot study had also been undertaken using these and other research instruments.

The findings reveal that for those who do well on the course it is their inherent personal characteristics and learning styles that have the greatest influence on determining a successful outcome on the course. Most significant are aptitudes for engaging in reflective activities and the possession of metacognitive awareness. The findings also identify the CELTA itself as intuitively following the Experiential Learning Cycle (Kolb, 1984), which makes it a rich learning experience that appeals to different kinds of learners.

The implications are that reflection does make a difference and that some trainees have an innate capacity for reflection, but that other trainees need to be assisted and supported in developing reflective abilities. The same implication holds true for metacognitive awareness: Trainees need to learn how experienced teachers think, not just how to execute their techniques. The process of learning how to teach can be accelerated when trainees begin the process of learning how to reflect from the very beginning.
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PART ONE
Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

“There is no such thing as good teaching. There are only good teachers. In other words, teaching is realized only in teachers; it has no independent existence.” (Richards, 1998: 81)

This introduction contains four sections. The first gives the reader background information on the CELTA, which is the teacher training course that was the focus of my research (although its history will come in the following chapter: Learning to Teach). The second section gives a brief description of the research methodology employed (the full description is in Chapter Eight: Research Design). The issue of grades, the independent variable of my research, is introduced in the third section. The last section is a guide to the chapters of this dissertation.

1.1. The nature and role of CELTA courses

There are various avenues one might take to become a teacher: These include a Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), which is a one-year full-time course for people who already have a B.A. in the subject area that they wish to teach; a Bachelors Degree in Education; and a Masters Degree in teaching a chosen subject. Courses for people with no previous teaching experience are referred to as pre-service; in-service is a term that describes further training for practising teachers. The literature on each of these avenues is considerable. In language teaching, in addition to the above training, there are also the Trinity Certificate and the Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (CELTA), both of which are pre-service courses for the same market. It is the four-week intensive version of the CELTA on which my research is centred.

Candidates who pass the CELTA are admitted to the English Language Teaching (ELT) profession, which means that the amount of change that needs to occur during the brief timespan of this course is considerable. Most candidates start the course with no previous
experience in ELT, although some may have had some training such as a PGCE. Others may have been teaching with no recognised certification, and others may even have had decades of teaching experience of another subject matter. The typical trainee, nevertheless, is in his/her early twenties and has had limited work experience of any kind. His/her concept of what makes a good teacher is generally based on his/her subjective experiences as a student. Those trainees who are older may have chosen this course hoping or needing to make a career, and therefore life, change. Those few with ELT experience but no qualification may have decided to make ELT a profession, in contrast with it having been a means of making money while travelling in some countries where language schools exist that value native speaker status more than qualifications.

The CELTA is administered by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES) and the Royal Society of Arts, and is now referred to as the Cambridge/RSA CELTA. The course is offered at recognised training centres all over the world. The aims are described in this way:

Specifically, the Certificate is designed to enable candidates to:

1. Develop an awareness of language and a knowledge of the description of English and apply these in their professional practice;
2. Develop an initial understanding of the contexts within which adults learn English as a foreign Language, their motivations and the roles of the teacher and the learner;
3. Develop familiarity with the principles and practice of effective teaching to adult EFL learners;
4. Develop basic skills for teaching adults in the language classroom;
5. Develop familiarity with appropriate resources and materials for use with adult learners for teaching, testing and for reference;
6. Identify opportunities for their own future development as professionals in the field. (UCLES, 1997, p. 5)

The fact that the majority of trainees achieve these aims is generally credited to the practical nature of the course: Trainees start teaching real students from the second day of the course. Each day the trainees receive three hours of input from tutors on methodology, techniques and language analysis. At the centre where I work (International House London), most courses have fifteen trainees on them; this group is then divided into three teaching practice (TP) groups of five trainees. TP lasts for two hours each day; trainees begin by teaching twenty minutes each and then work up to 55 minutes. They teach a low-proficiency level for two weeks and a higher level for two weeks, although it is also possible
to teach three different levels during the four weeks. Teaching each day is followed by feedback with the tutor who observed that day's teaching. This can be contrasted with many teacher preparation programmes in which practice teaching is either not a part of the course at all, or alternates with semesters of theory.

1.1.1. Accounting for CELTA success and failure

Up to the time of my research, very little was known about why some trainees do well on the course and others do not, although all CELTA centres have screening procedures. Before being accepted onto a CELTA at International House London, for example, applicants must be successful at each of three stages. The first task is a lengthy application form, which checks grammatical knowledge, practical ideas, and attitudes about teaching and learning. Those who make it through this first hurdle are offered an interview at which they will be given a task to test their writing, spelling and ability to explain meaning. The interview, which lasts one half hour, is designed to check if the applicant has a suitable personality for teaching, can probably survive the stress of the course, and can communicate simply in English when asked to do so.

The purpose of such careful, time-consuming screening is to avoid accepting candidates who will not pass the course, yet on each course of fifteen trainees there are frequently one or two who drop out or do not get a passing grade. We are also unable to predict accurately which students will do well on the course, even once the course is underway. Moreover, we are sometimes surprised when trainees who start out strongly do not make the progress that was anticipated. Most trainees, however, do learn a tremendous amount during the four weeks both about teaching and about themselves, and are well equipped to start their first teaching jobs. At the end-of-course feedback, in fact, regardless of where this course was taken and regardless of the final grades they receive, trainees state with surprising frequency that they learned more in the four weeks of this course than in any other educational experience in their lives.

Drawing on this characterisation of the CELTA, it was my hope that my research would shed light on the following fairly general questions, with the intention that by becoming better informed, we might be able to intervene in the learning process in order to avoid failures and to help each trainee reach his/her potential:
• Why do some trainees do well and others not?
• What are the characteristics of the learning that takes place?
• What is it about this course that usually makes it so effective?

The CELTA and its origins will be discussed more fully in the chapter on Teacher Learning.

1.2. **A brief description of the research methodology**

My data was gathered from three CELTA courses (known at the time as CTEFLA) on which I was the main course tutor in the summer of 1996. There was a total of 44 trainees. There were five research instruments used: the Honey Mumford Learning Styles Questionnaire, a Repertory Grid, a written assignment on Learning Styles, Reflection Books, and a Guided Discussion Questionnaire. Each is described very briefly below and then in full in the chapter on Research Design, followed by chapters on Results and Discussion, and copies of each of the instruments are to be found in Appendix B. Data from the first three instruments described below were submitted by volunteers, and therefore do not represent all 44 trainees.

1.2.1. **The Honey Mumford Learning Styles Questionnaire**

This is an 80-item questionnaire, which attempts to identify four learning styles: Activist, Reflector, Theorist and Pragmatist. It was inspired by Kolb’s Experiential Learning Cycle. I was able to collect a total of 101 of these questionnaires from my own courses and others being held the same summer.

1.2.2. **A Repertory Grid**

Based on George Kelly’s Personal Construct Theory, a repertory grid is a means of discovering how an individual construes his/her reality. The Grid which I designed was given to volunteers at the beginning and at the end of each of my courses, and considered eight elements (e.g., *Self as a Learner, Self as a Teacher, Self in Solitude*) in terms of eight pairs of constructs (e.g., *leader/follower, independent/dependent, simple/complicated*).
1.2.3. Reflection Books

These are dialogue journals written by the trainees after each teaching practice. Each trainee would write twice, immediately after teaching and then again after feedback and time for reflection, usually at home. Both sets of comments received written responses from the tutor who had watched the teaching practice.

1.2.4. A written assignment focusing on the trainees’ learning styles during the course

This assignment was written on the weekend preceding the last week of the three different courses. As there had been an experiential input session during the second week on learner styles, and feedback after teaching practice often focused on the learning styles of their students, the trainees were very aware of learning styles as a concept and were able to comment articulately on their own processes.

1.2.5. The Guided Discussion questionnaire

On the last Thursday of the course, each group of fifteen trainees was divided into three groups, and sent to separate classrooms, each containing a tape recorder. They responded to a discussion questionnaire which asked each group to choose three of the learning modes which had helped them the most (input, teaching, being in a peer group, feedback, etc.), the affect of the intensity and lifestyle changes on their learning, and how their motivation for taking the course had affected their learning.

1.3. Grading and the CTEFLA/CELTA Distinction

The aim of my research was to discover as much as possible about the trainees who received the higher grades, on the assumption that these grades signified having done well on the course and having achieved a high standard of teaching, within the confines of a preparatory course. The fact that there were no trainees who received an “A” on the three courses in my study is elaborated upon in some depth in the chapter on Research Design, but
I feel it would be useful to the reader to mention right from the start that the descriptions of the grades at the time of my research (July, August and September 1996) were different from what they are at present. The reason for this is that this course changed officially from the CTEFLA (Certificate in Teaching English as a Foreign Language to Adults) to the CELTA (Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults) on 30 October 1996, only a few months after my study. The changes which were made to the syllabus of the course have no bearing on the content of my data, because the courses I ran were already following the upcoming syllabus, with its stronger emphasis on learning styles and professional development. However, and this is described fully in a later chapter, the CTEFLA grade “B” at the time of my research might be regarded as closer to the grade “A” of the present CELTA. Thus, the trainees who got “B”s are the principal focus of my research, but the conclusions drawn from this dissertation should be applicable to CELTA “A”s.

1.4. **A guide to the chapters of this dissertation**

**Part One** of the dissertation is comprised of five chapters, which review the literature and make some initial connections with my research. They are: Learning to Teach, Experiential Learning, Individual Differences, Reflection, and Personal Construct Theory. These are followed by **Part Two**, which are chapters related to my own work: Pilot Studies, Research Design, Results and Discussion. The research instruments are to be found in Appendix B.

There is also, located in Appendix A, a collection of material entitled *Focus Group*, which needs some explanation. Of the 44 trainees in my study, 19 obtained a “B” grade. There was a certain amount of previous teaching experience amongst these 19. In order to isolate the personal qualities existing in an individual who does well on the CELTA, I chose to look in considerably more depth at six trainees who had had no relevant teaching experience or training prior to starting the course. Of these six, four received “B”s (Horatio, Carla, Agnes and Peter) and two achieved strong passes, but had a number of “B”ish qualities (Bill and Sylvia). The contents of the data on these six trainees include information from their original applications, their interviewer’s comments, their tutors’ comments on their weekly progress, their reflection books summarised by week, scores and statements from the five research instruments, and a copy of the final written report.
Chapter Two

LEARNING TO TEACH

This literature review chapter considers the tradition of Teacher Education and then looks more intensively at the CELTA, both its history and the impact it has on trainees. The question of whether teachers are born or made, a central theme of this dissertation, is examined in light of the literature, and the chapter concludes with a discussion of the emerging importance placed on teachers’ thought processes.

2.1. The tradition of Teacher Education

There are several routes a person wishing to become a teacher may take to get accredited. In many countries the initial qualification is the B.A. or B. Ed., which is often academic rather than practical, while in the United States even an M.A. is often a pre-service course. In Britain the Post-Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) is required in order to teach in the public sector. These programmes have similar approaches stemming from an acceptance of the same research paradigms which have over time defined in various ways what it is that constitutes effective teaching (Shulman, 1986). Paradigm is here defined as “ways of thinking or patterns for research that, when carried out, can lead to the development of theory” (Gage, 1963, p. 95), and an example of a paradigm which has shifted is that of describing teacher effectiveness in terms of student exam scores. In addition to sharing certain beliefs over time, teacher education programmes have often had the same or similar failing: in particular, an imbalance and/or insufficiently related links between theory and practice (referring to the U.S.: Johnson, K.E., 1996; to the U.K.: Roberts, 1998, McIntyre, 1988; to Canada: Russell, 1988; to Israel: Ur, 1992).

In the past ten years there has been considerable attention in the literature both to the lack of practical experience accompanying a teaching qualification and to our lack of knowledge about how pre-service courses impact on the professional development of teachers (Johnson, K.E., 1996). Johnson states that even though the teaching practicum on TESOL courses in the U.S. is finally becoming recognised in many programmes as one of the most important experiences in learning to teach, the assumption is still being made that once pre-service
teachers have completed their required course work, they will be able to transfer their knowledge into effective classroom practices.

In looking at B.A., B. Ed. or other long programmes intended to prepare EFL teachers in Britain and elsewhere, Ur (1992) found that they consist mainly of theoretical courses in aspects of such subjects as linguistics, language-learning theories and psychology. If there is teaching practice and/or teacher observation, it is usually separate in time and space, and regarded as less prestigious.

The principle behind this type of course design is a theory called ‘technical rationality’ (Schön, 1983) or ‘rationalism’ (Elliott, 1979) according to which the trainee professional is expected to learn given theory derived from university-based research and study, and then take this into the classroom to apply it in practice. Theory can and should be separated from practice: the function of the academic is to perform the research and discover theories which are then handed down to the practitioner; all the latter then has to do is to learn and apply them correctly.

(Ur, 1992, p. 56)

She goes on to suggest that in Israel, where she is based, one “reason for the research-based orientation of teachers’ courses is the intention to upgrade the status of the teacher by making him or her an ‘academic’” (ibid., p. 47).

McIntyre (1988) summarised some of the endemic problems in the British system which research up to the date of his article had revealed within traditional forms of PGCE programmes:

1. that student-teachers frequently find the ‘educational theorising’ they encounter in their courses irrelevant to the practical tasks which confront them in schools;

2. that student-teachers sometimes find little opportunity or support in the schools for trying out even the practical advice they have been given in their courses;

3. that student-teachers generally do not learn much, although there is a great deal to be learned, from their observation of the practice of experienced teachers. This is because the student-teachers do not know what to look for and because the teachers often do not recognise how much there is to be learned from their own teaching;

4. that student-teachers frequently observe a wide range of practice in schools, and are not generally helped to subject this range to critical examination, and to understand the factors and considerations which shape it;
5. that there is great variation in the extent to which supervising teachers are able to conduct systematic diagnostic appraisals of student-teachers’ teaching or to conduct coherent and helpful discussions about their teaching;

6. that visiting tutors may have insufficient recent school experience to provide credible assistance, in that context, to student-teachers;

7. that visiting tutors, although generally seen as authoritative assessors, cannot visit student-teachers sufficiently often for their visits to be much more than tests for the student teachers to pass, sometimes with the collusion of the school staff;

8. that student-teachers learn to view their situation as one of needing to meet the different criteria of school staff and of university tutors. They learn to meet these different criteria by applying them on different occasions and in different kinds of context;

9. that a great deal of student-teachers’ learning about teaching is at a level of semi-conscious trial and error learning, with ‘correct’ responses being shaped and reinforced by rewards and punishments from pupils. In consequence their patterns of teaching behaviour are not generally easily accessible to their awareness for critical examination;

10. that student-teachers’ habits of scholarly reflection are not generally extended beyond the academic contexts of the university. In relation to their teaching work they learn markedly different habits of decision-making and self-assessment. An example of this is that the short time-scale decision making required of a good teacher does not match the detailed examination of all the data that has been required of them as university students;

11. that the developing agenda of concerns of each individual student-teacher is not necessarily closely related to the official and non-individualised agenda of the teacher education programme;

12. that the criteria for the assessment of student-teachers’ teaching competence and of their professional knowledge and understanding often lack clarity and may appear to be insufficiently related to one another.

(McIntyre, 1988, pp. 105-106)

The year 1986 was a “watershed” year for teacher education, when two major reports were published at the same time in the U.S. strongly criticising second language education: the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, and Tomorrow’s Teachers (Lange, D., 1990). In 1988 the Holmes Group was created. It had begun as a self-improvement effort among some twenty Education deans at research universities who agreed that they should be doing a better job than they had been doing in preparing teachers. Two years later they wrote the influential Holmes Report. One of their recommendations was that aspiring teachers should first get a B.A. in their subject area, followed by an M.A. in Education.
They also strongly suggested that student teachers, in order to graduate, be required to show evidence of appropriate teaching capabilities prior to successful completion of their internship (The Holmes Group Report, 1986). They started the debate on whether teaching was a profession. In 1988 the National Center for Research on Teacher Education had this to say:

Despite the plethora of suggestions, teacher education is still an “unstudied problem.” We know relatively little about what goes on in different teacher education programs and how teachers are affected. The fact that friends and foes of teacher education hold different conceptions of what teaching is like, what teachers need to know, and how they can be helped to learn makes it difficult to compare and evaluate the various proposals for reform.

(NCRTE, 1988, p. 27)

This section has presented some of the frustrations that have been identified in teacher education programmes around the world, particularly addressing the inadequacy of models in which theory and practice are not sufficiently related to each other. Because of its close and simultaneous relationship between theory and practice, the CELTA in many respects stands outside of the tradition of the programmes described above. In the next section the origins of the CELTA will be discussed.

2.2 The Cambridge / RSA Certificate in Teaching English to Adults (CELTA)

The origins of the CELTA lie in a two-week course started by International House in 1962 to develop its own teachers and to create a pool of teachers who could be hired. It was designed by John and Brita Haycraft, the school’s founders. Prior to that there had been very few trained teachers in the EFL profession. That there was a need for training was soon apparent as other schools urged Haycraft to make the course available to their teachers. The Royal Society of Arts (RSA) was asked to become the larger body for what was by then a four-week course in 1978, and when in 1980 the RSA TEFL scheme was transferred to the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate UCLES), the course became the RSA UCLES CTEFLA (Haycraft, 1995). It is now called the Cambridge / RSA CELTA.

From the very beginning the course needed to be practical because the teachers might very well have been asked to start their professional careers on the Monday after the course
finished. In fact, teaching practice (TP) started on the first day (in the present design TP starts on the second day). It remains true to this day that a trainee can start working full-time as a teacher at many language institutes around the world immediately following this four-week course. It is understood that the teacher is a beginner and will need guidance and support. After a minimum of two years teaching full-time, the teacher is no longer considered a beginner, and may be accepted onto a Diploma course (Cambridge / RSA DELTA) for a more professional qualification. A later step in professional development might be an M.A. although, unlike in the U.S., in the U.K. an M.A. in language teaching is most often sought by someone who has been a professional for quite some time, with considerable experience.

Described as a pre-service/initial training scheme, the CELTA focuses on practical aspects of teaching and seeks to give trainees a broad perspective of current classroom practice.

The approach to teaching which underlies the course could be described as “standard communicative language teaching,” as this is interpreted in mainstream British English language teaching. The syllabus areas cover practical awareness of learners, language, and materials; practical ability in classroom management and lesson planning; presentation and practice of new language; developing the skills of reading, listening, speaking, and writing; and study of the nature of language, learner needs, and instructional materials. (Richards, J., Ho, B. & K. Giblin, 1996, p. 244)

The 1996 CELTA Syllabus summarises the minimum objectives for candidates by stating that they will:

1. Develop an awareness of language and a knowledge of the description of English and apply these in their professional practice;
2. Develop an initial understanding of the contexts within which adults learn English as a foreign language, their motivations and the roles of the teacher and the learner;
3. Develop familiarity with the principles and practice of effective teaching to adult learners of English; Develop basic skills for teaching adults in the language classroom;
4. Develop basic skills for teaching adults in the language classroom;
5. Develop familiarity with the appropriate resources and materials for use with adult learners of English for teaching, testing and for reference;
6. Identify opportunities for their own future development as professionals in the field.
Candidates are internally assessed, based on the continuous assessment of their teaching, with the course tutor keeping ongoing records during the course and weekly summaries as appropriate. All courses are moderated by an assessor who visits the course, checks standards by observing teaching practice and looks at written work. Cases of disagreement or complaint can be referred to the TEFL Unit at UCLES.

Written work of up to 3000 words is also required. Three types of assignment are required: work on the language system of English; ‘reflection on classroom teaching and the identification of action points’ (UCLES, 1996); and exploration of English learning and teaching with a focus on adult learners and their context and on learning materials.

(UCLES, 1997, p.5)

The course is intended to be “an introductory course for candidates who have little or no previous experience of teaching languages” (UCLES 1996, p. 5), although it is not uncommon for experienced teachers (either with no previous training or coming from another educational subject) to come on the course in order to acquire a qualification. Nevertheless,

one has to look at the certificate being aimed at pre-service teachers. They don’t have the basic tools of the trade. That means that the aims and objectives of that certificate are to introduce people to the profession. They are not in a position to review their established practice and learn from it. So the process is slightly different [from the Diploma] because it has to support their learning and their introduction to the profession.

(Murphy-O’Dwyer, L. & D. Willis, 1996, p. 153)

“Most people who have done an initial four-week teacher training course at some stage of their career in EFL have strong memories of the experience”, writes Jeremy Harmer (1988, p. 10). Commenting on the content of nine interviews he had made with former trainees, he remarked:

What is impressive, listening to these tapes, is the degree of involvement in the course that trainees feel – sometimes fourteen years later… the most immediately obvious characteristic of the interviews was the similarity of many of the comments and reactions – whether the interviewers had done the course in the early 70s or nearer the present.

(ibid., pp. 11-12)

On my own courses over the years I have heard different trainees state again and again that the CELTA was the most impressive learning experience they had ever had; significantly, among those who have made this comment are teachers who had previously undertaken teacher training in another subject or in education in general: “The input was better than any
teacher training that I’ve had. On my PGCE I had some very good teacher training on the course, and a lot of it out of the school, but I think this is better” (trainee involved in this research). The next section will present some reasons for the impact that the CELTA has on so many who take it.

2.2.1. The impact of the CELTA on trainees

Being aware of Kolb’s cycle of Experiential Learning (1984; see the following chapter on Experiential Learning), I began wondering if John and Brita Haycraft had deliberately designed their course following Kolb in order to benefit all types of learners, and provide the richest learning experience possible. When I interviewed him, John Haycraft denied having followed that model, but stated that what Kolb was talking about is what occurs in piano tuition and carpentry:

… this is my idea that it belonged, not to theory or linguistics, particularly, so as not to talk about linguistics, Latin and Greek, but it belongs essentially to putting things in seriously as language learning. The whole thing about language learning was that it was practice that taught you, just as piano playing taught you to play the piano… Teaching practice taught you to teach. So it was more on that line, more simple lines, direct lines with those parallels of carpentry and piano playing applied originally to learning English and then transferred to teaching English that interests me. (Haycraft, J., 1995, p.2)

Whether consciously intended to follow experiential learning theory or not, the course does, in fact, include concrete experience (being involved in the course and in teaching), reflective observation (reflecting on teaching, giving feedback, writing, observing experienced teachers), abstract conceptualisation (input and written assignments), and active experimentation (putting new insights immediately into practice).

For me it was a complete change of orientation. The course was my first … putting into practice on a daily basis what you’re learning … I can’t compare it with anything else I’ve done where you’re given something and you immediately go off and use it. So it’s like here is a way to do something, try it, bit nervous, and you go into the classroom and you’re actually trying it within half an hour sometimes. (Harmer, J., 1988, p. 13)

In his book Flow: The Psychology of Happiness (1992), Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi describes what he calls optimal experience, or happiness, in this way:

In his book Flow: The Psychology of Happiness (1992), Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi describes what he calls optimal experience, or happiness, in this way:
As our studies have suggested, the phenomenology of enjoyment has eight major components. When people reflect on how it feels when their experience is most positive, they mention at least one, and often all, of the following.

1. The experience usually occurs when we confront tasks we have a chance of completing.
2. We must be able to concentrate on what we are doing.
3. The concentration is usually possible because the task undertaken has clear goals.
4. [the experience] provides immediate feedback.
5. One acts with a deep but effortless involvement that removes from awareness the worries and frustrations of everyday life.
6. Enjoyable experiences allow people to exercise a sense of control over their actions.
7. Concern for the self disappears, yet paradoxically the sense of self emerges stronger after the flow experience is over.
8. Finally, the sense of the duration of time is altered; hours pass by in minutes, and minutes can stretch out to seem like hours.

The combination of all these elements causes a sense of deep enjoyment that is so rewarding people feel that expending a great deal of energy is worthwhile simply to be able to feel it. (ibid., p. 49)

Statements 1 to 4 are factual, and are true of the CELTA. Statements 5-8 are more subjective, but are ones my colleagues and I have heard repeatedly over the years.

Another explanation for the fulfilment which trainees derive from the course is that of a sense of belonging. “There was this bonhomie – this sharing… everyone had the same problem: what do I do now, how do I do it” (Harmer, J., 1988, p. 15). In learning how to talk about teaching, and learning to talk like an ELT teacher, trainees are also attaining membership in what Freeman (1997) labels communities of practice and explanation. A community of practice is created when people become united in doing a common event, undertaking or task. A community of explanation occurs when social facts and common ways of perceiving are shared. A very simple example has to do with jargon; trainees learn that they can use a term like “L1” with each other and with other ELT professionals, whereas outside this new community it has no meaning.

Reuven Feuerstein (1980), in examining the theory of mediation, has also identified that “a sense of belonging” is optimal for successful completion of learning tasks, although it
was not one of the three features which he considers to be essential for all learning tasks, which are:

- Significance
- Purpose beyond the here and now
- Shared intention

The other nine are important and helpful, but they do not necessarily apply to all tasks. These are:

- A sense of competence
- Control of own behaviour
- Goal-setting
- Challenge
- Awareness of change
- A belief in positive outcomes
- Sharing
- Individuality
- A sense of belonging (Williams & Burden, 1997)

Although each of these 12 items is relevant to the CELTA, the perspective has now changed from looking at the course itself to how it impacts on the individual. It will be shown later that goal-setting, for example, tended to be initiated by those trainees in my own study who got the higher grades. The next section will look at the individual, and what he/she brings to the learning to teach process.

### 2.3 What trainees bring to the learning process

Teachers of EFL/ESOL come into the field from diverse routes. Some may have done one-to-one teaching for paying guests in their homes, or been substitute teachers at peak times in local holiday resorts. Others may have finished post-graduate teacher training courses or be refugee teachers from other subjects. Many, once they have found that TEFL is enjoyable or offers respite from unemployment, redundancy or sundry other hard knocks, take a preliminary qualification or certificate.

(Woodward, 1996, p. 4)

This might seem to indicate that teaching is an activity that can be pursued by most anyone and, in fact, research and opinion articles abound concerning this speculation. One of the most quoted studies on teachers is *Schoolteacher: A Sociological Study* by Dan Lortie (1975) because of the term he coined: the apprenticeship of observation.
Those who teach have normally had sixteen continuous years of contact with teachers and professors. American young people, in fact, see teachers at work much more than they see any other occupational group; we can estimate that the average student has spent 13,000 hours in direct contact with classroom teachers by the time he graduates from high school.

(ibid., p. 61)

Unlike an actual apprenticeship, however, “there seems relatively little basis for assuming that students make cognitive differentiations and thoughtful assessments of the quality of teaching performances” (ibid., p. 63). It is more a matter of imitation. Moreover, Lortie claims that memories of teaching are asymmetrical, since they formulate a conception of teaching based on perceptions as students, not teachers.

Tabachnic and Zeichner’s 1984 study of changes in teaching perspectives during a 15-week practicum supported Lortie’s latent culture perspective (that established values and orientations persist despite the efforts of training institutions), but the study challenged it by suggesting a view of student teacher socialisation that is more negotiated and interactive. Their findings suggest that what student teachers bring to their teaching experience (“the apprenticeship of observation”) gives direction to their learning to teach, but does not totally determine the outcome of the process.

Calderhead and Robson (1991) followed twelve student primary teachers through the first year of their B.Ed. course in England, and also found that the student teachers held particular “images” (ibid., p. 3) of teaching, mostly derived from their experiences in schools as pupils, which were sometimes highly influential in their interpretation of the course and of classroom practice, but that these images varied considerably among individuals.

The views expressed above might seem to imply that the effects of training are “washed out” by a teacher’s previous school experience. Other writers have developed the view that what teachers know and believe about teaching cannot be separated from who they are as people and what they do in their classrooms. Connelly & Clandinin (1988) studied teachers’ narratives from biographies, journals and interviews, and made the claim that “personal practical knowledge” is embedded and inseparable from teachers’ practice, because it aids them in responding to new situations, and that this knowledge is reformulated through experience and reflection.
What seems to be required, therefore, is to make this personal practical knowledge conscious to the trainee, in order that trainees might recognise for themselves how much they are bringing into this new learning experience. This theme will be continued in the section on teachers’ thought processes.

2.4. **Are good teachers born or made?**

The above discussion was concerned with the background that accompanies potential teachers into their training, but what influences the choice to become a teacher in the first place? In a comparison of the academic and social backgrounds, and the bases for career decisions of teaching and non-teaching majors at a large U.S. university, Book, Freeman and Brousseau (1985) discovered that students choosing teaching as a career had this in common:

1. They were as academically competent as their non-teaching counterparts.
2. They were more concerned about helping others.
3. They were less concerned about salaries.

Appel (1995) presents another reason: educational influence: “after all, educators are the persons who have chosen as a profession to effect, through their person, changes in other persons” (*ibid.*, p. 46). He mentions this in the context of a continuum, with empathic understanding at one end and the imposition of will on the other, and implying that the desire to become a teacher does not automatically imply that one will become a good teacher.

Penny Ur (Meddings, 1997) was interviewed on the topic of whether in her opinion good teachers are born or made. Ur preferred to use the term ‘T-factor’ to ‘born teacher’, and chose to consider first the qualities of a good teacher. They include:

- The ability to ‘sense’ when the learner is right.
- The ability to transform – to appropriately communicate knowledge.
- The ability to design and administer ‘learning-rich’ activities – as opposed to mere testing.
- The ability to identify when learning is or is not happening.
- Getting a ‘buzz’ from student achievement.  

(*ibid.*, p. 16)
In seeking to find out whether teachers themselves thought it was possible for these very special qualities to exist before training, Ur asked the following two questions first to a group of trainees and then to a more experienced group: “Is there such a thing as a born teacher?” and “Are you a born teacher?” In the first group over 90% answered ‘yes’ to both questions. In the second group, 80% answered ‘yes’ to the first question, but replies to the second question were evenly divided between ‘yes’, ‘no’, and ‘don’t know.’ Most of the teachers in the survey felt training was invaluable, but less significant than experience.

She [Ur] suggested that while it may be possible to identify the T-factor in an abstract sense, it is not always possible to recognise which teachers possess it, or will make the most of it, at an early stage. (ibid.)

Some studies have looked at the various stages that trainees proceed through when learning how to teach. Williams, S. (1997) followed six CELTA trainees as they evolved from first focusing on the teaching situation, followed in subsequent weeks by a focus on content, then technique, then awareness (thinking about what the students need). The Reflection Books in my own research revealed that individual trainees pass through these stages at different speeds. Richards, J., et al, 1996, on the CELTA course in their study identified three focii: teacher-centred, curriculum-centred and learner-centred, but also found that the facility to shift between focii was related to the trainees’ rate of progress on the course. Allwright (1995) wonders if some trainees just figure out the system earlier. He wonders if they learn to teach quicker because they are used to cracking all sorts of codes, and that this might be linked with previous academic success.

Results from my research do indicate that there are differences in the personal qualities of the people in my study who got the higher grades. The point must be made, though, that my research focused on individuals who “cracked the code” of learning to teach while on the CELTA; it is implying neither that these trainees were the only ones in the study who were “born” to teach, nor that trainees who get lower grades on the CELTA will not “make” excellent teachers in the future. The next section will look at the literature which seeks to explain what influences there are on the thinking processes of trainees as they learn to teach.
2.5 Teachers’ thought processes

Donald Freeman has been one of the leading advocates for the need to understand how one becomes a teacher. He has stated that training has generally been based on two misguided premises: that teaching is the execution of activity in classrooms, and that it involves shaping that activity according to certain broadly held beliefs of effective classroom pedagogy. The alternatives he proposed were that teaching involves both thinking and doing, and that the effects of teacher education lie less in influencing how teachers behave than in recasting how they think about what they do in classrooms (Freeman, 1991a).

Freeman (1991b) also found that becoming articulate in the discourse shared by a professional community, and thus being able to express their thinking to that community and others, enabled the four teachers in his study to develop their conceptions of practice. His research focused less on the teachers’ behaviours than on what they did to “construct a mental life.”

While it is not alone in doing so, teacher thinking relies on a cognitive research paradigm which assumes that what people say reflects to some measure what they are thinking. Thus tracking how individuals use language about teaching is taken to provide, in conjunction with observational data, a valid account of how their thinking is operating. It is important to be clear however that this is not necessarily a categorical claim that their language represents their thought. Rather it is an inference that, as their ways of using language to talk and write about teaching shift, it is reasonable to assert that their internal processes are shifting as well. (ibid., p. 10)

Gebhard (1990) also discovered the relationship between language and change. He collected his data on how student teachers change by joining the practicum as a student teacher himself. Five of the seven subjects in his study changed their teaching in the following ways over the course of the sixteen-week practicum: in the setting up and carrying out of activities, in the use of classroom space, in the selection of content and in the treatment of students’ language errors. His findings suggest that what contributed most to these changes was the interaction with peers in the form of dialogue:

Talk also afforded student teachers chances to raise ‘cognitive questions’ (Smith 1975; Curran 1978) – questions the student teachers did not know they had until they had the opportunity to ask them. Student teachers also
gained new insights through the responses they got to their questions. When these responses were in the form of alternative ways to teach, the student teachers were also given the means through which to make decisions about how to change their teaching behavior. (Gebhard, J., 1990, p. 126)

Another study looking at how shared professional language develops, and also from the participant-observer point of view, was made by Philips (1982), when she enrolled in law school in order to understand how law students acquire the language of lawyers. She suggested “that one does not typically learn the verbal use of special terminologies from reading alone. One must have access to contexts in which the terms are verbally used, and participate in those contexts” (ibid., p. 194), and that therefore the transmission of knowledge follows the lines of interaction.

Karen Johnson (1992), looking at this process of change in terms of reflection, believes that teachers who reflect on their teaching, either through journals or more formal reflective experiences as part of their teacher training, often become more aware of not only how they teach, but why they teach the way they do. Bailey, K., et al, (1996) came to the same conclusion. They learned from their experience with an autobiography assignment that it was a powerful tool for reflection because it provided the framework for them to examine systematically their emerging teaching philosophies and goals. Similarly, in a meta-analysis of nearly 200 research studies on staff development, Showers, Joyce & Bennett (1987) listed the following as their number one finding:

What the teacher thinks about teaching determines what the teacher does about teaching. In training teachers, therefore, we must provide more than ‘going through the motions’ of teaching. (ibid., p.79)

For the purposes of this chapter, it is worth noting that the relatively recent paradigm known as Teacher Thinking (Clark and Peterson, 1986) is becoming more accessible for language teacher educators through writers such as Freeman and Johnson. The latter has usefully divided the Teacher Thinking research into the following four categories:

**Learning to Teach.** This research chronicles the developmental process involved in learning to teach and concludes that teachers' lifelong learning experiences, prior experiences as students, memories of former teachers, conceptions of teachers and teaching, and knowledge of subject matter have a
significant impact on how teachers organise instruction and represent the curriculum to students.

**Teachers' Decision Making.** This research focuses on the cognitive information processing that teachers use to identify problems, attend to classroom cues, formulate plans, make interactive decisions, and evaluate alternative courses of action. This research attempts to describe the cognitive information processing and resulting instructional actions that teachers consider during interactive teaching.

**Teachers' Beliefs.** This research is based on the assumption that teachers' beliefs influence both perception and judgement, which in turn affect what teachers say and do in classrooms. In addition, teachers' beliefs play a critical role in how teachers learn to teach; that is, how they interpret new information about learning and teaching and how that information is translated into classroom practices.

**Teachers' Knowledge.** This research examines what teachers know and how they use that knowledge to plan and carry out instruction. Teachers' knowledge encompasses personal knowledge, classroom knowledge, curricular knowledge, knowledge of students and knowledge of the institutional contexts within which they work.

(Johnson & Johnson, 1998)

Johnson makes a distinction, however, between Teacher Thinking and Teachers’ Pedagogical Reasoning. Both attempt to understand the cognitive processes of teaching, but while the former looks at what teachers think before, during and after teaching, the latter focuses on how they think. The aim is to understand the practice of teaching through the reason that determines that practice (Johnson, 1998).

2.6. **Conclusion**

This chapter began with one dilemma that has long been part of teacher education, that of the theory-practice imbalance, and has ended with the statement above that even “going through the motions” of teaching is insufficient, because teaching is more a matter of cognition than behaviour. This chapter also attempted to describe how the CELTA has furthered these two debates. The following chapters leave the institutions of teacher education behind in order to look at how individuals process their learning differently.
Chapter Three

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

This chapter introduces and explores the Experiential Learning Cycle. It discusses its functions, describes some of the relevant research, and makes conclusions about what makes the CELTA such a rich learning experience.

3.1. The Experiential Learning Cycle

We currently interpret experiential learning as the process whereby people, individually and in association with others, engage in direct encounter and then purposefully reflect upon, validate, transform, give personal meaning to and seek to integrate their different ways of knowing. Experiential learning therefore enables the discovery of possibilities that may not be evident from direct experience alone.

(Susan Weil, as quoted in Boud & Walker, 1991)

Experiential learning has already been referred to, in the context of enquiring whether John and Brita Haycraft, in designing the original teaching course which has evolved into the CELTA of today, had intentionally chosen the Experiential Learning model. The concept of experiential learning was central to my study for two reasons: the course itself was experiential, and one of the learning styles instruments which I used (the Honey Mumford Learning Styles Questionnaire) was based on the Experiential Learning Cycle.

“Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience.” This statement by David Kolb (1984, p. 38) is central to the aim of the Experiential Learning Cycle, for which Kolb is usually credited. It was Lewin, 1951, however, who originally stated that if learners were to be optimally effective they needed four different kinds of abilities:

1. concrete experience abilities (CE): involving oneself fully, openly and without bias in new experiences
2. reflective observation abilities (RO): reflecting and observing new experiences from many perspectives
3. abstract conceptualisation abilities (AC): creating concepts that integrate observations into logically sound theories
4. active experimentation abilities (AE): using theories to make decisions and solve problems

(from Kolb, 1984, p. 30)

This was plotted onto the now well-known cycle:

Figure 3.1: The Experiential Learning Cycle (after Kolb, 1984)

The cycle can be used in three ways: to describe an individual’s experience, to describe the experience itself, and to focus on learning styles. Thus one can look at a course like the CELTA, and describe being involved in the course itself (CE); the reflective aspects such as feedback, reflection books and reflective writing assignments (RO); theorising from input and from the experience of the course (AC); putting it into immediate practice in TP (AE); and then continuing the cycle with the benefit of the knowledge and experience newly gained. However, the cycle can, for different individuals and different learning situations, begin at any point, and go in any direction.

One can also look at an individual trainee’s experience of that course, and note how his/her individual learning styles impact on different parts of the cycle to enable some aspects to provide a richer experience than others. A reflective person, for example, will learn most easily from that aspect of the course, and have to work harder at others. Likewise, a person who thrives on constant new ‘concrete experiences’ will require patience to extract full learning from one experience before going on to the next.
There are, therefore, two meanings of the term experience. One is subjective and personal (the experience of joy and happiness) and the other is objective and environmental (20 years in teaching).

The essential point, which will be developed in this chapter, is that it is the combination of all four of the elementary learning forms that produces the highest level of learning. Kolb, therefore, would describe the ideal learning experience as being:

- **affectively complex**, such that the learner experiences what it is actually like to be a professional in the field under study. Expressing feelings is encouraged, feedback is important, and the tutor is both a colleague and a role model. The learners are engaged in activities that mirror/simulate their future. (concrete experience)
- **perceptually complex**. The primary goal is to understand something. The process is important, and there are no best solutions. The tutor is a facilitator or mirror. (reflective observation)
- **symbolically complex**, trying to solve problems where there is a right solution. Jargon, symbols, theorems, protocols, and graphics are important. The learner is asked to recall via memory. The tutor is a timekeeper, a taskmaster, the enforcer of events. Decisions are made by the tutor before the course begins. (abstract conceptualisation)
- **behaviourally complex**, applying new knowledge to practical, “real-life” problems. The tutor is a coach, an advisor. Success is based on how well something works. (active experimentation)  

Dewey (1933), an important early writer about experiential learning, echoed this belief that an effective learning experience was a rich one by stating that it was necessary:

...first that the pupil have a genuine situation of experience - that there be a continuous activity in which he is interested for its own sake; secondly, that a genuine problem develop with this situation as a stimulus to thought; thirdly, that he possess the information and make the observations needed to deal with it; fourthly, that suggested solutions occur to him which he shall be responsible for developing in an orderly way; fifthly, that he have opportunity and occasion to test his ideas by application to make the meaning clear and to discover for himself their validity.  

(ibid., p. 174)
An even earlier writer on experiential learning was Confucius. In *The Doctrine of Mean*, he described the road to learning: Study extensively, enquire accurately, reflect carefully, discriminate clearly, practise earnestly (as quoted in Mulligan, 1991).

### 3.1.1. The functioning of the cycle

Kolb (1984) built on to Lewin’s model in order to analyse how the total organism functions: perceiving, feeling, thinking and behaving.

It is surprising that few learning and cognitive researchers other than Piaget have recognized the intimate relationship between learning and knowledge and hence recognized the need for epistemological as well as psychological inquiry into these related processes.

(Kolb, 1984, p. 37)

The cycle below, **Figure 3.2.**, is relabelled with terms that Kolb used to describe the structural foundations of the (experiential) learning process.

![Figure 3.2: The structural foundations of the experiential learning process](image)

*Figure 3.2: The structural foundations of the experiential learning process* (after Kolb, 1984)

The top and bottom depict the grasping, or *prehension* of the experience, described as the abstract/concrete dialectic. *Apprehension* is described as reliance on the tangible, felt qualities of the immediate experience, and *comprehension* is the conceptual interpretation and symbolic representation. In contrast, the two sides of the cycle depict the *transformation* aspects of the experience, the active/reflective dialectic. These are *intention*, or internal reflection; and *extension*, the active, external manipulation of the external world.
The central idea here is that learning, and therefore knowing, requires both a grasp or figurative representation of experience and some transformation of that representation. The simple perception of experience is not sufficient for learning; something must be done with it. Similarly, transformation alone cannot represent learning, for there must be something to be transformed, some state or experience that is being acted upon. (ibid., p. 42)

Using the terms from Lewin’s cycle, Kolb described the transformation that occurs by moving through the cycle.

- \( CE \Rightarrow RO = \textit{divergent knowledge} \) (grasped concrete experience transformed via reflection)
- \( AC \Rightarrow RO = \textit{assimilative knowledge} \) (experience grasped through theory and transformed via reflection)
- \( AC \Rightarrow AE = \textit{convergent knowledge} \) (experience grasped through theory and transformed via experimentation)
- \( CE \Rightarrow AE = \textit{accommodative knowledge} \) (concrete experience transformed via experimentation)

Similarly, learning styles can be described in terms of how experience is grasped and transformed into knowledge, and these become Kolb’s four basic learning style types:

The **Diverger** is best at Concrete Experience (CE) and Reflective Observation (RO). Greatest strength is imaginative ability and awareness of meaning and values. Able to view concrete situations from many perspectives and organise many relationships into a meaningful ‘gestalt’, with the emphasis on observation rather than action. Generates and brainstorms ideas. Interested in people. Tends to be imaginative and feeling-oriented.

The **Assimilator**’s learning abilities are Abstract Conceptualisation (AC) and Reflective Observation (RO). Reasons inductively, creates theoretical models, and assimilates disparate observations into an integrated explanation. Less concerned with practical applications; likes a theory which is logically sound and precise. More concerned with abstract concepts than people.

The **Converger**’s dominant learning abilities are Abstract Conceptualisation (AC) and Active Experimentation (AE). Greatest strengths are problem solving, decision making and practical application of ideas. Does well in IQ tests with single correct answer or solution to question or problem. Uses hypothetical-deductive reasoning to focus on specific problems. Relatively unemotional, prefers to deal with things than people. Opposite strengths to the Diverger.
The **Accommodator** has the opposite learning strengths to the Assimilator. Best at Concrete Experience (CE) and Active Experimentation (AE). Greatest strength is doing things. Carries out experiments, enjoys new experiences and is adaptable. Tends to be a risk-taker. Solves problems in an intuitive trial-and-error manner, relying on other people for information rather than on own analytic ability. At ease with people, but sometimes seen as impatient and pushy. (adapted from Kolb, 1984)

Piaget had used some of these terms to describe different ways that people process information, but with a different emphasis.

Piaget saw cognitive development as essentially a process of *maturation* within which genetics and experience interact. The developing mind is viewed as constantly seeking *equilibration*, i.e., a balance between what is known and what is currently being experienced. This is accomplished by the complementary processes of *assimilation* and *accommodation*. Put simply, assimilation is the process by which incoming information is changed or modified in our minds so that we can fit it in with what we already know. Accommodation, on the other hand, is the process by which we modify what we already know to take into account new information. Working in conjunction, these two processes contribute to what Piaget terms the central process of cognitive *adaptation*. This is an essential aspect of learning, and one that is particularly relevant to the learning of the grammar of a new language. (Williams & Burden, 1997, p. 22)

Many writers have enlarged on the Experiential Learning Cycle. What they all have in common is starting from having an experience. It is interesting to note here that traditional teacher training programmes start from the bottom of the cycle, with abstract analysing and theorising, whereas the CELTA starts at the top, with the concrete experience of teaching being central to the learning.

### 3.2. **A description of some of the experiential learning research**

This section will describe some of the research findings in the field of experiential learning theory. Honey and Mumford will be discussed fully in the chapter on Research Design.
3.2.1. Kolb and his Learning Style Inventory (LSI)

In the early 80s Kolb served as a freshman (first year) advisor to undergraduates at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.I.T.), and noticed that two or three students in each group faced the awkward realisation at the end of their first year that a career in engineering was not quite what they had imagined it to be.

It was only later that I was to discover that these shifts represented something more fundamental than changing interests - that they stemmed in many cases from fundamental mismatches between personal learning styles and the learning demands of different disciplines … Thus, if students with a particular learning style choose a field whose knowledge structure is one that prizes and nurtures their style of learning, then accentuation of that approach to learning is likely to occur. (Kolb, 1984, pp. 163,164)

In a different study of 343 seniors at M.I.T., using various research instruments including the LSI: Learning Styles Inventory (predecessor of the Honey and Mumford Learning Styles Questionnaire), Kolb and Goldman (1973) had discovered that a person could be changed as much by his/her choices of experiences as by the experiences themselves, in a process known as accentuation. Thus engineering/science students become more analytical and arts students more creative.

Plovnick (1974) used the LSI to study medical students’ choice of medical speciality. There were significant relationships between the LSI scores and specific choices made: **divergers** chose psychiatry, **assimilators** chose academic medicine, **convergers** chose medical specialities, and **accommodators** chose medicine and family care.

At Alverno College in the United States, an educational institution which is committed to the principles of Experiential Learning theory and practice, results from longitudinal studies (Mentkowski and Strait, 1983) confirmed that even though some students entered the university with predominant preferences for some learning styles over others, they showed equal preferences for the four learning styles two years later. As a result of this, they were able to enter more specialised professional programmes having already experienced multiple learning modes.

Liam Hudson’s (1966) work on **convergent** and **divergent** learning styles predicted that people with undergraduate majors in the arts would be **divergers** and that those who major in the physical sciences would be **convergers**, with social-science majors falling between these
two groups. His instrument was the LSI, and the results from 583 undergraduates confirmed that their choice of college majors:

a) reflected their previous learning type;
b) had intensified that learning type;
c) had been maintained by their peer group of professionals.

3.2.2. **Lewin and T-group Theory**

Although the scope of Lewin’s work was vast, he is perhaps best known for the laboratory-training method called T-groups, which is the cornerstone for most modern organisation development efforts. The “T” in T-group is for training. The “discovery” of this method of learning resulted from a training programme in which researchers were collecting extensive observations and recordings of the group’s activities. A small group of the trainees asked to attend the researchers’ meetings, which was reluctantly accepted by the researchers. The expectation was that the trainees would be silent observers of the discussions, but one illuminating clarification from the trainees led to another, and the trainees themselves found that their own learning expanded through the researchers’ observations, with the result that these evening meetings became part of the programme for everyone and the most significant learning experience of each day for both researchers and trainees.

Thus the discovery was made that learning is best facilitated in an environment where there is dialectic tension and conflict between immediate, concrete experience and analytic detachment. By bringing together the immediate experiences of the trainees and the conceptual models of the staff in an open atmosphere where inputs from each perspective could challenge and stimulate the other, a learning environment occurred with remarkable vitality and creativity. (Kolb, 1984, p. 9)

Without this unintended interaction, the trainees would primarily have been the ones to have had the concrete experience and active experimentation, and the researchers would have done most of the reflecting and theorising. The richness of the experience for everyone involved lay in completing the full Experiential Learning Cycle.
3.2.3. Cutler: National learning styles of executives studying English

In the domain of English language learning, Cutler (1996) was interested in finding out if generalisations could be made about national learning styles. His instrument was the Learning Styles Questionnaire (LSQ) designed by Honey and Mumford. He tested the learning styles of 194 students from 17 countries attending short intensive ELT courses for executives. On the LSQ, Kolb’s learning styles modify to Activist (concrete experience), Reflector (reflective observation), Theorist (abstract conceptualisation) and Pragmatist (active experimentation). These were his results:

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<tr>
<th>HIGH SCORE</th>
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Table 3.1: Experiential learning styles of executives studying English (Cutler, 1996)  
* Figures for the U.K. from other research.

Although Cutler is not entirely satisfied with the LSQ as an accurate cross-cultural instrument, and is well aware that he is dealing with averages and a relatively small sample, he does quote McClean’s (1995) identification of a number of key differences between national education systems, such as that in Latin European countries knowledge is ‘Rational Encyclopedic’, with the focus on facts; and in Germany and Scandinavia facts are important, but so are practical applications.
A further bias is to be found in the fact that these students were studying at the Executive Centre of International House London, where the clientele are generally sent by their companies. It is often the case that these individuals are sent to London because they are particularly valued by their employers for personal qualities that may not be typical of their nationality type. It is interesting, as an example, to note that the Swiss executives scored lowest in the Reflector category, which is the opposite of their usual stereotype.

Cutler has usefully considered how these four learning styles relate to ELT, but they are also applicable to learners of teaching. He describes Activists as learners who throw themselves into role-playing exercises and competitive teamwork tasks or discussions, and become exasperated by detailed explanations and error correction. Reflectors like to stand back, watch, listen, and above all think before they communicate. Theorists thrive when what is being taught is part of a theory, model or concept, with grammar particularly appreciated. A high Pragmatist scorer will generally ignore grammar completely and learn best when what is being studied is intimately connected with a real problem or need in his/her life. The challenge for a tutor is to help to make learners aware of their learning styles and the advantages of expanding them.

3.2.4. Russell: The Experiential Learning Cycle in teacher training

This study was done on fifteen participants, including pre-service trainees, teachers in their first year of teaching, and several teachers with a number of years of experience, although this article focuses on one novice and one experienced teacher. Russell (1988) was interested in the relationship between theory and practice. As has been pointed out above that teacher training courses have traditionally tended to enter the Experiential Learning Cycle from the bottom (theory) position, Russell learned that this is less effective, because it is only after teachers have become competent in the classroom that they are able to criticise and question their performance and start to relate theory to their own actions.

The picture that emerges in each instance suggests that learning to teach is not a two-step process of (i) learning theory; and (ii) putting theory into practice. Yet our culture in general and our universities in particular use the phrase ‘theory into practice’ so easily and freely that it would be surprising if those electing programs of teacher education did not see their own learning as a two-step process. (ibid., p. 32)
Learning is more effective when “the relationship between theory/research and practice can be one in which the two are alternative phases of a single activity, not two independent domains linked by a tenuous act of faith” (Russell, 1987, p. 130).

3.3. **Conclusions and implications**

Learning styles vary from individual to individual, and different learning situations can appeal to different learning types, with the result that the learning that takes place among any group participating in the same learning situation will be uneven. It has been shown above that the CELTA, intentionally or not, effectively exploits the full Experiential Learning Cycle, which may suggest why so many trainees describe the course as an extremely rich experience and one of their most effective learning experiences.

There are four major types of learning styles attributed to Experiential Learning. The next chapter will build on this and discuss other individual differences.
Chapter Four

INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

This chapter contrasts Individual Differences and Learning Styles. Motivation is presented as a major factor and influence on learning. Cognitive styles and strategies are also considered. The chapter concludes with a presentation of different types of learning styles, including multiple intelligences.

4.1 Individual differences defined

In attempting to describe the ways in which individuals differ in their approach to and strategies for learning, the term ‘individual differences’ is most often used in books about theory and research, while ‘learning styles’ is a popular term used in books for teachers and students. The literature on individual differences, or ID, concerns itself with such topics as motivation and cognitive style. That on learning styles, or LS, more often refers to the left and right hemispheres of the brain and, more recently, seven kinds of intelligence (Gardner, H., 1983), and includes strategies for improving learning. Broadly speaking, then, the literature on ID describes what learners bring to the learning process, while the LS literature deals more with how learners process their learning.

4.2. Individual differences: Motivation

In seeking to understand the different kinds of motivation of the CELTA trainees, it is useful to look at motivation from three perspectives: internal factors, external factors and influences on motivation during the learning process itself. I would like to begin by comparing integrative and instrumental motivation, because it is a dichotomy that compares some internal and external factors. The studies by Gardner and Lambert (1972) focused on motivation for learning a foreign language, but it is not difficult to transfer their concepts to learning to teach. In the language learning context, an integrative orientation was described as “reflecting a sincere and personal interest in the people and culture represented by the other group” (ibid., p. 132). Learners with this orientation identify positively with the native
speakers of the studied language, are intrigued by their culture and want to participate with them in it. They may also enjoy learning the language for its own sake. An *instrumental* orientation concerns itself with the practical value and advantages of learning a new language, such as taking an exam or needing to survive or work in another culture. In the context of learning to teach, *integratively* motivated trainees are sincerely and personally interested in their students and in the language, and *instrumentally* motivated trainees are excited about employment possibilities.

*Integrative* motivation is firmly based in the personality of the learner, whereas Gardner and Lambert hypothesised that an *instrumental* motive “is less effective because it is not rooted in the personality of the learner, and therefore, more dependent on fallible external pressures” (Skehan, 1989, p. 52). As will be seen from my data, most trainees decide to take the CELTA for *instrumental* reasons such as desiring to get a job in a foreign country. In reaction to their experiences on the course, however, for many trainees this motivation transcends itself in varying degrees into identifying with the students and wanting to help them, and this *integrative* orientation influences the time it takes to be effective in the classroom. In other words, the trainees who got the higher grades in my research tended to be *integratively* motivated, although not necessarily exclusively.

4.2.1. **Internal factors**

Williams and Burden (1997) list nine internal factors that influence motivation:

1. Intrinsic interest of activity
2. Perceived value of activity
3. Sense of agency
4. Mastery
5. Self-concept
6. Attitudes
7. Other affective states
8. Developmental age and stage
9. Gender

The last two, although certainly relevant, were not part of my particular research, and as for ‘other affective states’, the topics of feedback, anxiety and stress will be covered later in this
chapter under Influences on Motivation. Attitude was discussed in the previous section. The first five above are discussed immediately below.

4.2.1.1. **Intrinsic interest of activity**

An activity that generates its own interest and enjoyment, not requiring any other reward, is said to be *intrinsically* motivating.

> It is presumably the subjective feeling of enjoyment that is responsible for the continuation of the activity; it is this feeling that constitutes the intrinsic reward. (Csikzentmihalyi 1978, p. 213)

Hebb (1959) suggested that both humans and animals seek a level of “optimal arousal” at which they function best. (Subsequent studies, such as by Berlyne (1960) and Hunt (1965) confirmed that even rats were motivated by curiosity and novelty rather than just food and survival.) This level of optimal arousal will vary from person to person. There were those on the CELTA courses who were constantly or even increasingly engaged and excited (mostly those who got the higher grades), while others eventually found themselves over-stimulated and could not sustain their initial level of interest.

Ushioda (1996), in describing *intrinsic* learning motivation, lists a number of positive features:

- It is self-sustaining because it generates its own rewards;
- It leads to voluntary persistence at learning;
- It focuses on skill development and mastery;
- It is an expression of personal control and autonomy in the learning process.

*(ibid., pp. 20-21)*

Teaching, for those who love it, certainly satisfies these criteria.

4.2.1.2. **Perceived value of activity**

The personal relevance of the learning is also an area that differs in degree among trainees. Obviously, the experience of becoming a teacher is not valued equally by all. In addition, the amount of personal relevance is something that expands and shrinks as the
course progresses, especially in relation to the trainees’ successes. This also concerns the anticipated value of the outcomes, whether it concerns grades or an increased awareness of what being a teacher in the real world will be like.

4.2.1.3. A sense of agency

A number of researchers investigating cognitive approaches to motivation have proposed that the sense people have of whether they cause and are in control of their actions, or whether they perceived that what happens to them is controlled by other people is an important determinant in motivation. These factors are a part of what is known as a sense of agency. (Williams & Burden, 1996, p. 127)

In elaborating on this factor, Williams and Burden speak of the locus of causality, the locus of control and the ability to set appropriate goals. The first considers the sense people have of whether they are the cause of their actions or the “pawns” of others (de Charms, 1984); the second considers whether the individual is in control of what he/she is learning; and the third has to do with performance vs. learning goals. “Put simply, with performance goals, an individual aims to look smart, whereas with learning goals the individual aims at becoming smarter” (Dweck & Leggett, 1988, p. 291).

Performance vs. learning goals is very much an issue for trainees. When they first start the course, they are most often concerned with their performance: looking like a teacher (Williams, S., 1997); and it is a complicated process to transfer their awareness from themselves to meeting the students’ needs.

The substantial research on locus of control led Findley and Cooper (1983) to conclude that feeling in control of events is associated with greater academic achievement.

Those with a high internal locus of control show strong tendencies to seek information and use it appropriately in problem-solving tasks, to be active and assertive and to exhibit a high degree of exploratory behaviour and excitement about learning. (Williams & Burden, 1996, p. 101)
As will be shown later, trainees who did well on the CELTA courses in this study asked more questions and made greater use of their tutors. In addition, they insisted on knowing where they stood more frequently, certainly in relation to grades, but also on how they could become more effective in the classroom.

4.2.1.4. Mastery

Mastery here includes feelings of competence, awareness of developing skill and mastery in a chosen area, and self-efficacy. McClelland et al (1958) developed a *need achievement theory* which suggests that different levels of the need to achieve are based on previous learning experiences. Skehan (1989) describes “achievers” as people who, because of those past experiences, expect the world to contain reasonable challenges, and who enjoy responding to such challenges. “Low achievers” have had discouraging or unsuccessful learning experiences. They prefer challenges and tasks, according to McClelland et al (1958), which are either excessively demanding, or very easy, in order to justify failure in the former and disparage very likely success in the latter.

The term *self-efficacy for learning* can be linked to self-confidence, referring as it does to “students’ beliefs about their capabilities to apply effectively the knowledge and skills they already possess and thereby learn new cognitive skills” (Schunk, 1989, p. 14). Some authors differentiate between an innate drive towards mastery and the need to achieve, describing the first as succeeding for its own sake and the second in order to be better than other people. This is generally referred to as *effectiveness motivation* (White, 1959; Harter, 1978).

4.2.1.5. Self-concept

*Self-concept* has been defined as “the totality of a complex and dynamic system of learned beliefs which each individual holds to be true about his or her personal existence and which gives consistency to his or her personality” (Purkey & Novak, 1984). It can be said to encompass *self-image* (the particular view that we have of ourselves), *self-esteem* (the evaluative feelings associated with our self-image), and *self-efficacy* (our beliefs about our capabilities in certain areas or related to certain tasks). A large body of research has demonstrated consistently the existence of a positive relationship between high self-esteem
and academic achievement (Burns, 1982), although it is not always clear which is the cause and which the effect, and there are problems with measuring something as complex as self-image.

Carl Rogers (1969) made the distinction between our actual view of ourselves and our ideal view, and suggested that the discrepancy between the two contributes to our levels of self-esteem. My research concerned itself with this. The Repertory Grid I used, for example, attempted to tease out the distinction between the trainees’ actual and ideal views of themselves, and to observe whether these views changed as the trainees developed in their ability to teach.

Another source for information on the self-esteem of the trainees in my study is to be found in their Reflection Books. In these some trainees chose to include their personal definitions and judgements of success and failure, and especially of their increasing awareness. Another relevant concept here, one which is also found in the data, is the social comparison theory (Kynch et al., 1981; Damon & Hart, 1982), the basic premise of which is that we are all pre-disposed to compare ourselves with others (although not to the same degree) and to develop our self-concepts as a result.

Although this will be occurring in all walks of life, it has particular relevance to the classroom situation because the amount and kind of positive or negative feedback that learners receive in class from the teacher and their peers will affect their sense of achievement, their motivation to achieve more and the establishment of their self-efficacy in that area.

(Williams & Burden, 1997, p. 98)

The issue of feedback is discussed below.

4.2.2. External factors

The external factors included in this section are Attribution Theory and the Resultative Hypothesis.
4.2.2.1. Attribution Theory

As early as 1944 Heider began to develop his central idea that it is how people perceive events, rather than the events themselves, that influences their behaviour. His ideas were expanded by others, in particular Weiner (1980), whose contribution can be helpfully summarised in Table 4.1. below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locus of Control</th>
<th>Internal</th>
<th>External</th>
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<tr>
<td>Stable</td>
<td>Ability</td>
<td>Task Difficulty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unstable</td>
<td>Effort</td>
<td>Luck</td>
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Table 4.1: An attributional analysis of causes (Weiner, 1980)

The locus of control dimension contrasts causes which reside within the individual (ability and effort) and causes which are outside (task difficulty and luck). Ability and task difficulty are thought to be relatively unmodifiable, whereas effort and luck may possibly change on another attempt to perform a task. Some people are more disposed to an ‘effort’ interpretation, others more to an ‘ability’ explanation, while others may find either dependent on the particular situation. Ushioda (1996, p. 14) offers this example: “…if two students both fail to complete a problem-solving task but student A believes she is no good at this kind of task, while student B believes she has simply used the wrong approach, we can easily predict that student B will be better motivated to try again.” If potential success is believed to be attributed to factors within one’s control, there is a greater likelihood that the individual will be a manager of his/her learning. It is this behaviour that seems to be consistent in those who got the higher CELTA grades in this study.
4.2.2.2. Resultative Hypothesis

Following on from intrinsic motivation, discussed above, the resultative hypothesis suggests that for some people it is success which provides the motivation to continue, rather than the desire for success which provides the initial motivation.

Those learners who do well experience reward, and are encouraged to try harder: learners who do not do so well are discouraged by their lack of success, and, as a result, lack persistence. Motivation would be a consequence rather than a cause of success. (Skehan, 1989, p. 49)

In language learning there have been studies that have clearly indicated this motivation-as-consequence of success pattern (Burstall, 1975; Hermann, 1980). There has also been criticism of these studies (Gardner, 1980) because of their lack of generalisability, leaving the motivation-as-cause still a valid option. More research needs to be done in this area. It is an interesting question as it concerns teacher education; because of this factor it is difficult for tutors early in the course to predict their trainees’ capability of achievement. Success spurs some trainees on to a surprising amount of increased effort, and the potential for this is not always immediately perceived from first impressions of personalities alone. It is clear from my research that those trainees who had never taught before, and subsequently did well on the course, had found success motivating (see Focus Group: Appendix A), but it is still uncertain why some trainees experience success at the beginning of the course (generally those who have had some teaching experience) and do not make the anticipated progress. It would seem that for them, success had not been sufficiently motivating, and that other factors had influenced the pace of their progress.

4.3. Influences on motivation during learning

I would like to consider two main influences here: the effect of feedback on the trainees’ motivation, and also that of anxiety or stress caused by the course. The reactions to both were experienced differently by those who did well on the course.
4.3.1. Feedback

Although, previous to my research, “there has been no research at all on feedback provision, i.e., the possibility that different learner types respond differentially to different types of feedback provision” (Skehan 1989, p. 135), there has been research on the broader area of reinforcement. Lepper and Hoddell (1989) have demonstrated clearly, in multiple studies over several decades on both school children and adults, that motivation is increased by informational rather than controlling feedback (such as a tangible reward, but also with a comment like “well done!”). Although praise certainly may make a learner feel good momentarily, it could be accepting standards below what he/she is capable of, and does not give any indication of how to improve in the future. As will be seen in the data from Reflection Books, and in particular from those in the Focus Group, some trainees who were doing “well” on the course, and were told so, found it frustrating not to get more specific feedback which would challenge them even further. Praise may also refer to standards which are not clear to those who do not receive a “well done” and could make them feel that their success is, therefore, in someone else’s hands. Praise, too, may be viewed as providing information about one’s personal competence, and this can get entangled with one’s self-concept, with a consequential effect on motivation.

4.3.2. Anxiety

Stress caused by anxiety is generally thought as something to be avoided or reduced. Scovel (1978), however, found that some anxiety (relative to no anxiety) may be beneficial and energising. If you consider this optimal stress at the top of a bell curve, the symptoms for being over-stressed and under-stressed are generally the same at equal points but going in different directions from the peak (Goleman, 1995). However, the amount of stress that is needed to be at the top of the peak varies greatly from individual to individual. Spielberger (1962) has reported findings suggesting that the influence of anxiety changes as a function of ability level, in tune with the findings from my study. Anxiety can also be caused by low achievement and fear of failure.
Bailey (1983), in referring to learning English, enumerates other possible sources of anxiety.

a. Comparison of oneself with other students, either for their performance, or for their anxiety levels.

b. One’s relationship with the teacher, either in relation to one’s perception of the teacher’s expectations or one’s need to gain the teacher’s approval.

c. Tests

d. Comparison with oneself, and one’s own personal standards and goals.

She also mentions competitiveness as a negative influence on the sources above, and one’s feelings of solidarity and friendship with one’s classmates as a positive influence on them.

On my Guided Discussion Questionnaire (see Appendix B) one of the enquiries was how the trainees’ learning on the course had been influenced by:

a) intensity
b) changes in sleeping and eating patterns
c) ability to concentrate
d) support from outside the course (such as a parent who is a teacher)
e) other (please specify)

This question was meant to reveal the trainees’ reactions to the stress on the course. I was not surprised to hear repeatedly (on the recordings), by trainees who had done well on the course, that by and large they had found the stress stimulating.

4.4. **Cognitive style and strategies**

I will refer here to cognitive style as it concerns individual differences. More will be said on cognitivism in the chapter on Personal Construct Psychology. First of all, a distinction is made in the literature between cognitive and metacognitive strategies. The former is concerned with mental processes directly concerned with the processing of information in order to learn, whereas the latter involves stepping outside of the processing and looking at it from the outside. Metacognitive strategies include an awareness of what one is doing and what strategies one is applying, as well as knowledge about the actual process of learning. It can also be said, in this context, that a metacognitive strategy includes knowing what one
does not know. The main point to make is that metacognitive awareness is important for effective learning (Williams & Burden, 1997). As O’Malley et al (1985), in the context of language learning, put it:

This line of research suggests that transfer of strategy training to new tasks can be maximized by pairing cognitive strategies with appropriate metacognitive strategies. Students without metacognitive approaches are essentially learners without direction or opportunity to review their progress, accomplishments, and future directions. (ibid., p. 561)

4.4.1. Field Independence

Field independence is a construct that is hypothesised to reflect the way individuals perceive and organise the world. The most widely used test of field independence/dependence in language learning studies is the Embedded Figures Test (Witkin, Oltman, Raskin and Karp, 1971). In it a subject has to find a target shape embedded in a more complex pattern. People who do “well” on the test are able to separate the figures from ground and therefore theoretically able to separate the essential from the inessential. These “field-dependent” individuals are thought to be more people-oriented and outgoing. “Field-independent” learners, in contrast, are more impersonal and detached, cerebral and object-oriented.

Field-dependent learners, it is proposed, as a result of their person-orientation, will be more inclined to interpersonal situations, wanting contact with other people and engaging in verbal interaction with them. This should lead to greater communicative competence, greater conversational resourcefulness, greater negotiation skill, etc., all of which should be beneficial for exposure to language and therefore language development through interaction. (Skehan, 1989, pp. 111-112)

Although the context here is language learning, the hypothesis that trainees who are more people-oriented will learn more quickly how to help learners is one that has been pervasive in my research. As for the test itself, Williams and Burden (1997, p. 91) warn their readers that “these constructs are being measured by an obscure test of visual perception which is currently little used by professional psychologists, and which appears to bear little relation to
learning style.” They argue for a constructivist approach to understanding individual differences:

What is sometimes forgotten in research into individual differences is that the characteristic selected is in fact no more than a researcher’s best effort at conceptualising what the particular trait involves. This becomes what psychologists term a hypothetical construct, ... There is no such thing as 'intelligence' or 'field dependence' or 'motivation' but it can sometimes be convenient to treat such entities as if they do exist so that we can construct tests to measure them. Unfortunately, the outcome of that testing procedure can then come to represent in people’s minds the meaning of that construct. For example, for many years the only definition of intelligence that was offered in many psychological textbooks was that ‘intelligence is what intelligence tests measure’. (ibid., p. 89)

4.4.2. Risk-taking

McClelland et al (1953) developed a theory of achievement motivation which looks at the fact that for some people the likelihood of achieving goals is considered a medium-risk task, based on their past history with such tasks and challenges. This theory proposes that these people are successful learners. As a result, they are more likely to show the kind of patience that is needed to engage in the cumulative learning activities that lead to longer-term success.

The term tolerance of ambiguity (Brown, 1987) also describes the tendency in some learners to remain patient so that their learning will fall into place, even though there are still gaps. This is a concept that the trainees in this study were exposed to in an article by Sheerin (1989), and which they subsequently wrote about in the assignment which is one of the research instruments in this study.

4.4.3. Group processes

Hadfield (1992) listed what she sees as characteristics of a successful group. I have listed the ones below which seem relevant to this context:
• Members have a definite sense of themselves as a group.
• There is a positive, supportive atmosphere; members have a positive self-image which is reinforced by the group, so that they feel secure enough to express their individuality
• Members of the group listen to each other and take turns.
• The group is tolerant of all its members; members feel secure and accepted.
• Members co-operate in the performance of tasks and are able to work together productively.
• The members of the group trust each other.
• Group members are able to empathise with each other and understand each other’s points of view even if they do not share them.

(from Williams & Burden, 1997, p. 195)

I have included this under cognitivism because there is evidence in my data that the way in which different trainees thought about being in a group influenced their experience of learning while in that context. The issue of how the trainees perceived themselves in solitude also became significant in my data.

4.5. **Learning styles and categories of intelligence**

As mentioned in the opening paragraph to this chapter, the literature which refers to *learning styles*, as opposed to that of *individual differences*, is usually written more for students and teachers, and also for the general public. Sheerin (1989) groups the psychological differences between language learners into two categories:

• Cognitive abilities and language learning aptitude
• Learning styles:
  • auditory, visual, [she does not mention kinesthetic in her article, but this was mentioned on the course]
  • left brain (“favouring logical, analytic thinking”)
  • right brain (“favouring creative, lateral thinking”)

The reference to left and right brain is based on brain hemispheric research, which has become oversimplified as it has become popularly accepted. It remains, however, a useful
metaphor for learners to describe their individuality and for trainees to become aware of the uniqueness of each of their students.

According to Sternberg (1992), there are three basic types of intelligence: analytic, creative, and practical. This division can also be useful for learners in describing their particular psychological strengths. Language teachers generally need to possess all three. One particularly memorable trainee, as a contrasting example, was marvellously creative and practical in her teaching, but because she lacked the ability toanalyse her lessons and the learning outcome of her students, she was unable to be effective.

Neuropsychologist Howard Gardner has become popular in recent years for expanding our concept of intelligence. He began with seven separate intelligences which lead to different types of adult accomplishment:

1. Linguistic (poet, writer)
2. Musical (composer, performer)
3. Logical-mathematical (mathematician, scientist)
4. Visual-spatial (architect, sculptor, pilot)
5. Bodily-kinesthetic (dancer, athlete, surgeon, instrumentalist)
6. Interpersonal (understanding other people)
7. Intrapersonal (knowledge of self, personal philosophy)

(as summarised in Healy 1994, p. 200)

Christison (1996) and Wingate (1996) have devised questionnaires for ELT students, in order for them to become aware of their different intelligences. I have drawn from both to enlarge on the seven categories for the context of trainees learning to teach. The numbers are from Christison and the bullets from Wingate:

**Verbal/Linguistic**

1. I like to read books, magazines and newspapers.
2. I consider myself a good writer.
4. I can remember people’s names easily.
6. I have a good vocabulary in my native language.
   • I learn more from listening to the radio or a spoken-word cassette than from TV or films.
• My conversation includes frequent references to things that I’ve heard or read.

Musical
1. I can hum the tunes to many songs.
• I can tell when a musical note is off-key.

Logical/Mathematical
3. I like to put things into categories.
6. I ask many questions about how things work.
• I believe that most things have a rational explanation.
• I like finding logical flaws in things that people say and do at home and work.
• I feel more comfortable when something has been measured, categorised, analysed, or quantified in some way.

Spatial/Visual
6. I enjoy putting puzzles together.
• I often see clear visual images when I close my eyes.

Bodily/Kinesthetic
• I find it difficult to sit still for long.
• My best ideas often come to me when I’m out for a walk, a jog, or doing some physical activity.
• I need to practise a new skill by doing it rather than simply reading about it or seeing a video that describes it.

Interpersonal
1. I am often the leader in activities.
2. I enjoy talking to my friends.
3. I often help my friends.
4. My friends often talk to me about their problems.
5. I have many friends.
• I prefer group sports to solo sports.
• When I’ve got a problem, I’m more likely to seek out another person for help than attempt to work it out on my own.
• I enjoy the challenge of teaching another person, or groups of people, what I know how to do. [bold is mine]
• I feel comfortable in a crowd.
In choosing statements from Christison’s and Wingate’s lists that were most applicable to the context of trainees learning to teach, it can be seen that the kinds of intelligence most represented are Verbal/Linguistic, Interpersonal and Intrapersonal. It could thus be hypothesised that the trainees who would respond to learning to teach most naturally would be those who were able to express themselves articulately, had ample people skills and enjoyed personal interactions, and were able to benefit from solitude and reflection.

4.6. Summary

CELT A trainees are motivated for many reasons. The two most basic are wanting to get a teaching job (instrumental motivation) and being inspired by identifying with and wanting to help their students (integrative motivation). The former is less effective (Skehan, 1989), because it is more dependent on external pressures, while the latter is more firmly rooted in personality factors. Trainees find the course itself intrinsically motivating, even while the perceived value of the experience may expand and shrink. The sense of agency, or how much control individuals have over their learning experience, is relevant to expectations of success. Some trainees are natural achievers, and some are confident that the knowledge and abilities they already possess will be applicable to the new experience of teaching.

As for external factors, trainees may attribute their success, or lack of, to such factors as ability, task difficulty, effort and luck, but it is their perception of events rather than the events themselves that affect motivation. Influences during learning such as feedback and anxiety are also perceived individually, often influenced by issues of self-confidence. Some
trainees are naturally people-oriented (*field dependent*), while others are more object-oriented (*field independent*). The same risk can be considered high, medium or low by different trainees and this will influence the amount of motivation required to meet it, as well as the expectations of success. The advantages and disadvantages of being *in a group*, too, are perceived uniquely.

Data exploring the Individual Differences described above that influence motivation on the courses in my study are described fully in the chapters on Results and Discussion. The section entitled Focus Group (Appendix A) contains examples from six trainees. The next chapter looks in depth at reflection as both a particular learning style and as a contributor to the process of learning.
Chapter Five

REFLECTION

In this chapter reference will be made first to those whose thinking and publications have influenced the current paradigm of reflection in education, and will offer their definitions of reflection. Arguments will be presented for and against encouraging reflection on pre-service teacher training programmes, and mention will be made to some programmes which are seeking to develop the ability to reflect in its trainees. In addition, the literature and some studies which have used dialogue journals as a means of encouraging trainees to reflect while they are learning how to teach will be reviewed.

5.1. How has reflection been defined?

The notion of reflective teaching is a dominant paradigm in teacher education programmes around the world, including ELT teacher education programmes (Richards, 1998). It is generally thought that reflection is something worthwhile and that it will lead to more effective teaching.

The current enthusiasm for reflective teaching may be partly explained in terms of an attempt to understand more fully what is distinctive about teachers’ professional development and to come to terms with its complexity. It might also be partly explained in terms of a reaction against current trends in many Western countries towards an increasing centralization in the control of education.

(Calderhead and Gates, 1993, p. 1)

One does not need to look very deeply into the literature, however, to discover that those who use the term “reflection” are not all operating from the same definition. There is nevertheless one underlying theme in all of the definitions, and that is that reflection is an intra-personal process (Canning, 1990) through which personal and professional knowing can occur (Siles and Aspinall, 1990).
Those who seek to trace the tradition of reflection may refer back to Tolstoy, Schutz, Vygotsky, Lewin, Piaget, Wittgenstein and Hawkins (Schön, 1988), as well as Herbart, F.C. Bartlett and Ausubel (Shulman, 1988). No literature review can be complete, however, without mentioning the contributions of Dewey and Schön, described below. Other definitions will follow theirs, including a discussion of what is meant by the term critical reflection.

5.1.1. Dewey

Dewey observed in 1904 that preparing teachers to be critically reflective about their practice might be more important in the long term than focusing on mastery of the techniques and skills that form the mainstay of much teacher education practice (Richards, 1998, p. 152). He defined reflection as “active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends” (Dewey, 1933, p. 9). He also described the cognitive processes that take place when one reflects, which he equated more or less to thinking, outlining a process which is conscious and systematic. He described this process by stating that, in order for it to happen, it was necessary:

1. that the pupil have a genuine situation of experience – that there be a continuous activity in which he [sic] is interested for its own sake
2. that a genuine problem develop with this situation as a stimulus to thought
3. that he possess the information and make the observations needed to deal with it
4. that suggested solutions occur to him which he shall be responsible for developing in an orderly way
5. that he have opportunity and occasion to test his ideas by application to make the meaning clear and to discover for himself their validity

*ibid.*, p. 174

Dewey stated that individuals needed to proceed through three steps of reflection: 1) problem definition; 2) means/ends analysis; and 3) generalisation. He proposed that the process is initiated by a ‘felt difficulty’ which often requires a preliminary exploration of the problem. An example might be that a teacher observes that the students have not mastered a certain skill as had been expected; applying the three steps of reflection above will enable
the teacher to generalise systematically about this problem. According to Dewey, the
teacher at this time needs to suspend judgement in this effort to diagnose the situation
accurately. One problem with this model is that it tends to over-emphasise the procedures of
logical thinking, with little attention to feelings.

More useful for the reflective process, therefore, was his belief that the attitudes of open-
mindedness, responsibility and wholeheartedness were prerequisites for suitable reflective
action. By open-mindedness he meant attention to all possible alternatives; responsibility
involves the careful consideration of the consequences to which an action leads; and
wholeheartedness refers to the fact that the previous two are taken as central in the life of the
reflective teacher (Knowles, 1993; LaBoskey, 1993; Grant and Zeichner, 1984).

“For Dewey and most writers who have built on his writings, reflection has become the
component of thought that is most intelligent and responsible. Reflection is often portrayed
as a type of rational analysis and contrasted to intuitive thought. In effect, reflection is
defined as something one does deliberately and deliberatively” (Clark & Yinger, 1987, p.
100). Thus, Zeichner and Liston (1987), in describing the aims of their student-teaching
programme at the University of Wisconsin, draw on Dewey:

Utilizing Dewey’s (1933) concept of reflective action as the organizing
principle of its curriculum, the program literature expresses a desire to
develop in student teachers those orientations (towards open-mindedness,
responsibility, and whole-heartedness) and skills (of keen observation and
reasoned analysis) which lead to reflective action. (ibid., p. 24)

5.1.2. Schön

Donald Schön’s interpretation of reflection as co-occurring with action rather than being
retrospective to it was different from that of Dewey’s. The professional literature on teacher
education appropriated this new conceptualisation of reflection following the publication of
Schön’s The Reflective Practitioner (1983). His terms “reflection-in-action” and “reflection-
on-action” are referred to in virtually all of the writing on reflection from that date. The first
term, which brings a radically different interpretation of reflection from that of Dewey,
refers to reflection which is intimately bound up in action:
Reflection-in-action consists in on-the-spot surfacing, criticizing, restructuring, and testing of intuitive understandings of experienced phenomena; often it takes the form of a reflective conversation with the situation. (Schön, 1983, p. 241)

In contrast, “reflection-on-action” is necessarily distanced from action in order to gain greater clarity. “The task of the reflective practitioner is to make this tacit or implicit knowledge explicit by reflection on action, by constantly generating questions and checking our emerging theories with both personal past experience and the reflections of others” (Williams and Burden, 1997, p. 54). Kemmis (1985) describes this as one of the main thrusts of the movement towards teachers as action researchers.

Clark and Yinger (1987) state that Schön depicted an important part of the activities of the professional as a ‘reflective conversation’ with the immediate problem situation; it is necessary, therefore, in order to understand the practice of professionals, to understand their reflection-in-action. Additionally, Clark and Yinger derived the following propositions from Schön’s research:

1. Not only can we think about things we do, we can think about doing something while doing it. This reflection in action is central to the art through which practitioners cope with divergent situations of practice.
2. Reflection-in-action draws upon implicit and situation-grounded (‘action-present’) cognitions instead of the more explicit and deliberative cognitions associated with reflection on action.
3. Professional problem-solving draws upon a repertoire of practical knowledge that generates exemplars (e.g., cases, telling examples) or generative metaphors for understanding new phenomena.
4. Professional problem-solving often proceeds by reframing the initial problem, inquiry within the imposed frame, and reflection on the ‘back-talk’ produced by this inquiry.

(ibid., pp. 98-99)

Schön’s fundamental contribution to teacher education has been to provide an alternative to the previously dominant framework of technical-rationality: “The skill of the teacher was thought to be rooted in the mastery of technique, which in turn is grounded in ‘basic sciences’ … The model of technical rationality was exemplified in teacher education by the rise of competency-based models of training, and behavioural systems for evaluating teacher
effectiveness.” (ibid., p. 96) In contrast, reflection is seen as a process and method of informing practice with reason, a vehicle for promoting changed behaviours and practices, and a means of improving foresight (Schön, 1983).

5.1.3. Other contributions

There are some basic assumptions associated with reflective inquiry. One is that reflection does lead to better action (Noffke and Brennan, 1988; Schön, 1983). Another is that it is necessary to reflect in order to be an effective teacher (Grant and Zeichner, 1984). An opposing view suggests that effective teachers act primarily on intuition, spontaneously rather than reflectively. “Grant and Zeichner (1984) suggest, however, that teachers who are described as effective may act spontaneously and intuitively but reflect prior to and after their actions. To reflect during action is more difficult. These views mirror Schön’s position” (Knowles, 1993).

Thornbury (1991b), in considering Schön’s reflection-in-action, suggests that it is a misnomer, and that attention-in-action, or problem-setting-in action would be more appropriate and less ambiguous labels for a process that is neither deliberative nor retrospective. Freeman (1989) writes about a similar phenomenon when he describes a teacher’s awareness as “the capacity to recognize and monitor the attention one is giving or has given to something” (ibid., p. 33). “Awareness may be immediate, or it may be delayed, occurring sometimes later when something or someone triggers it (ibid., p. 34).

Awareness is needed to bring back what is known and work on it again to change it, make it more conscious, more precise, more useful and connected with other … knowledge. (Gattegno, 1976, p. 4)

It is this concept of awareness which I have found most helpful in analysing the quality of the reflections of the trainees in my own study. Through awareness, it is possible for cognitive processes and affective influences to synergise. Williams, M. (1997) echoes this belief, in questioning the nature of reflection:

… whether it is a purely cognitive, rational process, or whether it involves feelings such as care, passion or upset, or broader issues such as political or moral orientation. Many writers, e.g., Atkins and Murphy (1993), Von
Wright (1992) see reflection as inextricably bound up with notions of self and the analysis of one’s own feelings, thus going beyond mere cognition. Such a view links reflection to another major psychological perspective, humanism, which sees an individual’s feelings and emotions and their view of self as an important aspect of any learning. Learning that involves feelings as well as cognition is more likely to be pervasive. (ibid., p. 8)

5.1.4. Critical Reflection

In attempting to describe the content of reflective thinking, Van Manen’s (1977) three levels of reflection are often cited, which were derived from earlier work by Habermas (1973). They are technical, practical and critical reflection. The first is described above in the section on Schön, when it was stated that his fundamental contribution was to provide an alternative to technical rationality, because reflection at the technical level does not include questioning or criticising the goals one wishes to achieve. Practical reflection includes a discussion of strategies, outcomes, goals and assumptions. Zeichner and Liston (1987) refer to this level as educational, rather than ‘practical’. With its personal-growth-centred orientation, it is linked to value commitments, with the focus of reflection “on the educational rationales for actions within the classrooms” (ibid., p. 158). Critical reflection includes both of the other levels, but emphasises additional considerations of the moral and ethical dimension as well as locating the analysis of action within wider socio-historical and politico-cultural contexts (Noffke and Brennan, 1988; Zeichner and Liston, 1987).

Other writers use the term critical reflection in a much more general sense. “Reflection or ‘critical reflection’, refers to an activity or process in which an experience is recalled, considered, and evaluated, usually in relation to a broader purpose. It is a response to past experience and involves conscious recall and examination of the experience as a basic for evaluation and decision making and as a source for planning and action” (Richards, 1991, p. 4). Bartlett (1990) sees critical reflection as moving from ‘how to’ questions about instructional techniques to ‘what’ and ‘why’ questions:

Asking ‘what and why’ questions gives us a certain power over our teaching. We could claim that the degree of autonomy and responsibility we have in our work as teachers is determined by the level of control we can exercise over our actions. In reflecting on the above kind of questions, we begin to exercise control and open up the possibility of transforming our everyday classroom life. The process of control is called critical reflective teaching. (ibid., p. 205)
“General conclusions are that most student teachers can and do develop technical and practical abilities to reflect, while few show evidence of critical reflection” (Stanley, 1995). Methods which are currently used to help teachers develop a critically reflective approach to their teaching, such as action research, case studies, ethnography and journal writing, are far more likely to be used by experienced teachers.

One criticism of the Van Manen model is that it de-emphasises the importance of acquiring skills (the technical side) in teaching. Shulman (1988) cautions us against hierarchies and dichotomies, which Dewey was also against:

It is least helpful … to divide the world of practice and theory into two distinctive camps – technical rationality and reflection-in-action – and then assign virtue to only one of the sides. This strategy can only yield the circumstances Dewey (1958) bemoaned in Experience and Nature where progressive educators defined their missions by a process of rejection, denying the value of any approaches to teaching that could be defined as traditional. Either-or thinking may be rhetorically effective, but in practice it is limiting and provincial.
(Shulman, 1988, p. 33)

It is this tendency, certainly in the language teaching profession, to reject “out-dated” approaches and embrace new ones that can be said to be responsible for the current popularity of incorporating reflection into learning, but also for its criticisms, which will be discussed below.

5.2. Reflection in pre-service teacher training programmes?

A number of studies have observed that pre-service trainees do not show behaviour which is congruent to a reflective approach to teacher education. Calderhead (1987) reported that his pre-service teachers were unable to answer questions like, “How well did I teach?” “What were the effects of my teaching?” “How else might I have taught the lesson?” “How will I do it next time?”, since these require knowledge of alternative approaches, typical student behaviour and criteria for judging. In the same study he found that the beginning teachers’ evaluations were typically superficial and pragmatically-
oriented. Kennedy (1993) found a wide gap between the judgements of the trainees she studied and their trainers. No doubt influenced by such studies, some ELT educators (Jeffries, 1994; Kerr, 1994) have argued, as a result, that reflection is a skill which would be more constructively taught at the in-service level, after the trainees have established teaching routines and have more experience on which to reflect.

Johnson (1992) is also realistic about what actually takes place on training courses, but has a different conclusion. She used stimulated recall to determine how pre-service teachers perceived and responded to student input, and found that the teachers’ actions were directed by unexpected student responses and the desire to maintain the flow of instructional activities. She insists, however, that this is evidence in favour of helping trainees to learn how to reflect on their teaching:

The findings of this study highlight the cognitive demands placed on preservice ESL trainees and support the need for second language teacher preparation programs to provide opportunities for preservice ESL teachers to understand the dynamics of how they think and act as they learn to teach. (ibid., p. 507)

As was stated in Chapter Two, trainees come on courses with definite images of what comprises good and bad teaching after an estimated 13,000 hours of observing teachers at work (Lortie, 1975). Other research studies have consistently shown that, regardless of the underlying conception of teaching or the philosophy of the course, teacher education programmes are a “low-impact enterprise” (Zeichner and Grant, 1981). Johnson (1988) argues that teachers’ pre-existing views of teaching and learning are so pervasive that unless directly challenged, any attempt to alter teaching styles is ineffectual. The key phrase here is directly challenged. Reflection must be done deliberately and deliberatively (Clark & Yinger, 1987), if it is to be effective.

5.3. The process of learning to reflect

As was mentioned in the previous section, not all educators agree that encouraging reflection in pre-service teacher education is worthwhile. This section will report on the consequences of reflection in some teacher education programmes, and describe other programmes in which trainees were actively taught the skills of reflection, as opposed to merely taking part in programmes in which reflection was a component.
Valli (1992) identified seven major universities in the United States which were teaching reflection as a cornerstone to their teacher education programmes. Contributions to this publication from Australian, European, and New Zealander authors also report teacher education programmes in their countries which are aiming to develop teachers as reflective practitioners (Hatton & Smith, 1995; Smyth, 1989; Korthagen, 1985, 1988). Calderhead and Gates, editors of the collection Conceptualizing Reflection in Teacher Development, (1993) write that a common feature emerging from the papers in that volume is that “there appears to be a developmental process in becoming reflective. In the early stages of preservice education, student teachers need to develop a vocabulary for talking, writing and thinking about practice and, at this stage, simply being able to describe practice may well be a significant achievement” (ibid., p. 9).

In Parker, (1983), a study on developing in-service teachers’ interactive decision making (IDM), it was discovered that reflection is a process that begins with awareness. A control group was given information only to read about IDM, while the experimental group was engaged in a nine-week treatment of reflection and role-taking activities focusing on IDM. Both groups then conducted lessons in their own classrooms, with data on their IDM collected in stimulated recall interviews. Parker writes this about the experimental group:

These teachers were, it appeared, responding to the guided reflection by becoming students of their own interactive decision making. As a group, they quickly became aware of the myriad decisions they were making and the components of their decision making process. They were eager to share discovered patterns...It appears that, once explicit, the cognitive activity is brought under scrutiny and a developmental process ensues. (ibid., p. 224)

It also appears that different types of people respond differently to being required to reflect. Green and Tanner (1998) in piloting the reflective tasks for their book Tasks for Teacher Education: A Reflective Approach, found that reactions were mixed, and often emotional. Some trainees found the tasks intriguing, while others found the demands of being asked to be reflective threatening. The conclusions from Korthagen’s (1985) study are also that student teachers differ in the degree to which they prefer to learn via reflection. He calls learning via reflection internal orientation, and proposes that those with internal orientation reflect naturally, whereas those with external orientation prefer to learn through
external direction, from a supervisor or a book, for example. Korthagen addresses this range by making two suggestions: one, that externally oriented students should be allowed to learn the art of reflection gradually (the strategy of gradualness: Make haste slowly), and two, that students should be made explicitly aware of the problem of different learning orientations. Not very surprisingly, Korthagen hypothesised, on the basis of interviews from a Repertory Grid, that teacher educators only understand the way reflective students learn, possibly because they themselves have a reflective style (Korthagen, 1988). More will be said about Korthagen’s repertory grid study in the next chapter.

LaBoskey (1993) found that another way in which student teachers vary is in their pre-intervention beliefs, particularly in the degree of orientation toward growth and inquiry. In attempting to categorise the novice teachers in her study, she described a continuum with a ‘Common-sense Thinker’ at one end and a ‘Pedagogical Thinker’ at the other, the characteristics of which follow:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common-sense Thinker</th>
<th>Pedagological Thinker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>self-orientation</td>
<td>student-orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>short-term view</td>
<td>long-term view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reliance on personal experience in learning to teach</td>
<td>differentiates teacher/learner roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>metaphor of T as transmitter</td>
<td>metaphor of teacher as facilitator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unaware of need to learn; feeling of already knowing much from having been in classrooms as a student</td>
<td>open to learning; growth-oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>acknowledgement of need for conclusions to be tentative; need for feedback and triangulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>means/ends thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>strategic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>imaginative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>grounded in knowledge of self, students and subject matter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Those who enter teaching not yet as Pedagogical Thinkers, but with a fairly strong inquiry orientation, LaBoskey labels Alert Novices; those without are Common-sense Thinkers. The latter, however, “when provided with very powerful reflective experiences that directly challenge misconceptions, may develop the capacity for pedagogical thinking” (ibid., p. 25).
As Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann (1985) observe, one of the aims of reflective teacher education is to transform Common-sense Thinkers into Pedagogical Thinkers. Since Pedagogical Thinkers engage in reflection as a matter of course, assignments should also help Common-sense Thinkers to develop general and lasting intrinsic motivation.

( ibid., p. 33)

In an attempt to find solutions to the problems of 1) transforming a non-language teacher into a teacher of ELT to adults; and 2) monitoring teaching practice effectively, Swan (1993) initiated an eight-step programme for the student teachers in her study in which the first six steps preceded actual teaching practice. These included reflecting on their own concepts of good teaching practice and videoing other teachers, with group reflection part of each step. The interesting aspect of this study is that the student teachers were instructed to approach their tasks as if they were experts, supervisors, or both, thus creating observation guidelines to be used when they started their own teaching. The student group generally regarded the procedure as sound and well-thought-out. “Most felt that while their awareness had definitely increased, practice was still lagging behind. Some were convinced, and rightly so, that time would be the crucial factor in the process of development” (ibid., p. 247). The one who did not welcome this opportunity said that his preferred learning style was to be told what to think. This is an example of someone with what Korthagen (1988) refers to as external orientation, mentioned previously.

Clark (1988) reveals an interesting by-product of the various research studies into how experienced teachers think:

While not intended by the researchers as professional development activities, the journal keeping, clinical interviews, stimulated recall sessions, and articulation of beliefs and implicit principles of practice have instigated a new awareness among a few teachers. These techniques and the genuine human interest in understanding that accompany their use may constitute professional development activities of the broadest kind….In sum, reflection by teachers makes a difference.

( ibid., p. 9)

It has been mentioned that some ELT educators (Jeffries, 1994; Kerr, 1994) have argued that reflection cannot be taught effectively at the pre-service-service level, because trainees need more experience on which to reflect. Another argument is that reflecting cannot be
taught or learned within the context of supervision because of the inhibiting influence of the power imbalance (Copeland, Birmingham, De la Cruz & Lewin, 1993; Feiman-Nemser & Floden, 1986). A longitudinal study undertaken by Stanley (1995) presents another view. This study, which traced the development of six teachers and one teacher supervisor (herself) as they struggled to learn and deepen their understanding of what it means to be reflective in both affective and cognitive ways, examined the relational and interactive ways in which reflection can be successfully taught within the supervisory relationship experienced in teaching practice. Her findings present three new contributions to the field of teacher education and the literature of reflection:

1. the importance of the capacity to engage with and to sustain the process of reflection,
2. the relational and interactive dimension of learning and teaching reflection
3. the concept of the spheres of reflection (thinking, teaching, practising).

In other words, quality in reflection is affected by the degree of commitment, by the nature of the reflective relationship engaged in, and by the sphere being reflected upon. More will be said about this interesting study in the section on dialogue journals, but a unique feature of her study was that she herself kept her own journals, which were part of the dialogue process with the teachers under her supervision.

5.4. **Using dialogue journals as a tool for reflection**

In this section I intend to describe different ways in which dialogue journals have been used. (One reason for this is to support my later conclusions that it is the nature of the dialogue itself that influences the quality of the learning.) Although the written exchanges between the tutors and trainees in my own study are referred to as *reflection books*, for the purposes of the literature review I use the term *dialogue journal* here, because this term has become generic, and refers to more than just the teacher education context. (Some of the authors below call them diaries.)

The name ‘dialogue journal’ was coined in 1979 by educational psychologist Jana Staton and sixth-grade teacher Leslee Reed to describe Reed’s practice of writing freely back and forth, every day, with each of her students.
The basic ground rules of dialogue journal writing – that the writing be interactive, frequent, sustained, open-ended, not corrected, private and somehow durable and accessible – set the stage for five more complex qualities that characterize many, if not all, dialogue journal exchanges. These five qualities set the genre apart dramatically from other kinds of scholastic writing and classroom interaction and give it its compelling power as a teaching tool.

1. The focus of the interaction is on real communication, not on form.
2. Along with the privacy of the writing, the absence of corrections makes dialogue journals relatively nonthreatening to most students.
3. Because the journals are individualized and largely student generated, they can capture and sustain remarkably high student interest.
4. Teacher and student can act as relatively equal partners in the discourse, temporarily stepping out of their customarily hierarchical relationship.
5. The genre encourages students to express in writing a wide variety of language functions.

Finally, the dialogue evolves over time, beginning with relatively simple, factual subjects and then moving on to topics of greater intimacy and sharing...Dialogue journal writing differs from oral conversation in that both participants have ample time to think about what they want to say between turns and to review what has already been said before responding. (Peyton & Staton, 1991, p. 4-5,8)

Number five above is more relevant for ELT exchanges, and it is number four that causes the most concern for those who argue against using reflection on teacher education courses in which the partner on the receiving end of the reflections is also the person who makes the final assessment.

Knowles (1993) states three main rationales for using dialogue journals, all based on the theme of the learning that can occur as a result of teacher-student dialogues. They are paraphrased below:

1. There are strengths to teacher educators and preservice teachers developing close working relationships, and this occurs when each is immersed in the other’s development and learnings. Mentorship is both a powerful role-modelling technique and a more direct way to share new and established understandings of classrooms and schools.
2. Intensive dialogical interactions serve an assessment function. The weaknesses and strengths of prospective teachers may more readily come to the fore, enabling purposeful individualized attention to experienced difficulties (see Bullough & Gitlin, 1989). Commentaries by writers who trust readers are likely to portray difficult events and problems, important for avoiding ‘mis-educative experiences’ (Dewey, 1938).

3. Professors of teacher education, like the preservice teachers under their tutelage, have their own scripts, or internal dialogues, about learning to teach and working in classrooms.

(ibid., p. 81)

These statements are not without controversy, particularly the second, which mentions both assessment and trust. It is my experience that by making this contradiction known to the trainees right from the first day of the course, and returning to it often, the trainees are not under a misconception. The tutors are there to be exploited as aids to learning, and the trainees are encouraged to make use of this relationship to the degree that each feels comfortable. The third statement addresses the fact that tutors can use dialogue journals as a form of individualised instruction.

On my courses, the trainees write immediately after each time they teach. These are *initial reflections*. The tutor who watched the lesson responds immediately. The trainee then writes *further reflections* at home on the same lesson, to which the tutor responds the next day. The purpose of this dual reflection is to enable emotional reactions to be dealt with immediately, and more considered reflections to come with distance. In not all dialogue journal reports that I have come across does the trainee get a response each time he/she writes. In the Thornbury (1991b) study of 12 CELTA (CTEFLA, at that time) trainees, the “diaries” were handed in to the main tutor three times during the course. In the Braham (1996) model, the CELTA tutors never see the “diaries”. The trainees consult their diaries in order to write two 1000-word essays of reflections and conclusions on the language learning and teaching process, and the tutor reads and responds to this. In both, the trainees are instructed to focus on their teaching, although Braham encourages them to reflect as well on other aspects of the content and their learning on the course, and Thornbury (1991a) intends to incorporate this into his model. Not having personally experienced these two approaches, I cannot evaluate them other than to state that it is my observation, founded on
research, that trainees benefit from the frequent dialogic interaction on my courses. This would be a fruitful area for further research.

Richards and Ho (1998) describe another way of responding to journals on their MA programme. The trainees write once or twice a week. At the end of each journal entry, two or three reflective questions about their entry are posed. They then bring these journals to class each week during the tutorial session, and the trainees read each other’s journal entries and discuss the questions they raised. The Richards and Ho report refrains from commenting on this procedure; the purpose of the study of the programme was rather to analyse whether the contents could be classified as critically reflective. The 32 teachers in their study asked a total of 348 questions over the period of a ten-week semester, and the findings were that “the majority of the questions the teachers posed were not very reflective, since they tended to deal with questions concerning teaching techniques and procedures rather than deeper dimensions of teaching. Only 19% of the questions the teachers asked seemed to transcend the technicalities of teaching” (ibid., p. 158). The questions were classified according to the five phases of reflectivity identified by Bartlett (1990, adapted from McTaggert & Kemmis, 1983):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Mapping:</td>
<td>What do I do as a teacher?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Informing:</td>
<td>What is the meaning of my teaching? What did I intend?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Contesting:</td>
<td>How did I come to be this way? How was it possible for my present view of teaching to have emerged?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Appraisal:</td>
<td>How might I teach differently?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Acting:</td>
<td>What and how shall I now teach?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The trainees tended to focus on Acting. In addition, the researchers also observed that individual trainees evidenced very few changes in their abilities to reflect as a result of keeping the journals, and that those who were critically reflective had been so from the beginning. From this study Richards and Ho concluded that:
… journal writing can provide an opportunity for teachers to write reflectively about their teaching, though in itself it does not necessarily promote critical reflection. Teachers differ in the extent to which they can write reflectively, and some initial training in reflective writing may well be necessary as a preparation for journal writing.

(Richards & Ho, 1998, p. 167)

It is probably the writings of Bailey (1983, 1990) (as well as personal appearances) that have encouraged teachers of ELT most to experiment with dialogue journals. She advocates yet another model:

1. The diarist provides an account of personal language learning or teaching history.
2. The diarist systematically records events, details, and feelings about the current language experience in the diary.
3. The diarist revises the journal entries for the public version of the diary, clarifying meaning in the process.
4. The diarist studies the journal entries, looking for patterns and significant events. (Also, other researchers may analyze the diary entries.)
5. The factors identified as being important to the language learning or teaching experience are interpreted and discussed in the final diary study. Ideas from the pedagogy literature may be added at this stage.

(Bailey, 1990, p. 218)

As can be seen, her model promotes a ‘diary study’. The purpose of rewriting the diary for public use is to involve the trainee in the process of clarifying meaning and marshalling thoughts. “…simply writing diary entries does not yield the maximum potential benefit of the process. In order to really learn from the record, the diarist should reread the journal entries and try to find the patterns therein” (Horner, 1991, quoting Bailey). It is worth noting that Bailey also recommends that each writing session should comprise the same amount of time as the event being reflected upon.

Horner (1991) uses a modified version of this model on his Diploma courses, except that the rewriting for public viewing is encouraged but optional. The tutor may never see the journal, and Horner therefore has no control over whether the trainee is actually keeping a journal. I have heard this comment from colleagues of mine at International House also, who used to “require” that journals be kept for the trainees’ own good, but who also wanted to allow the trainees to keep them private. In these cases, it is usually only the trainee or
student who finds journal-writing comfortable and interesting who will find the motivation to sustain them.

Numrich (1996) studied 26 diary studies by novice ELT teachers. She also modified the Bailey model. Each participant wrote a) a personal language learning history, b) diary entries during a 10-week teaching semester, and c) an analysis of their diaries. Again, there was not a regular reader; at the end of the ten weeks the trainees chose one entry to share with others on the course. Four general categories emerged from her data:

1. The preoccupations of novice teachers with their own teaching experience
2. The transfer (or conscious lack of transfer) of teaching methods/techniques used in the teachers’ own L2 learning
3. Unexpected discoveries about effective teaching
4. Continued frustrations with teaching. (ibid., p. 134)

The Thornbury (1991b) study analysed the journals in terms of length, complexity, discourse function and concerns. Unlike in my own study, in this study comparison with grades was done only incidentally, and was not a variable. The six external readers had their own criteria for rating the journals. The results were that the highly rated journals contained more complex syntactical structures, and a significantly greater number of non-factual statements than those rated as low, as predicted. They were not significantly longer, however, nor was there a significantly greater number of references to the process of learning how to teach, which were surprises. What was suggestive but not significant was the number of references to goals and learning outcomes, and references to the learners. Interestingly enough, the ‘highly rated journals’ were not all written by the trainees with the top grades, and vice versa.

Waldspurger (1996) gave a questionnaire to 64 MA TESOL students who had kept dialogue journals, and got these results:

94% The teacher’s written feedback was useful
92% Helped me think more deeply about teaching philosophy/style
91% The teacher’s written feedback made me feel positive and secure about my ideas and opinions
88% I would consider having my future ESL students keep journals
77% Helped me feel positive and secure about my ideas/opinions
75%  Journals are effective learning strategies  
64%  Improved my critical thinking skills  
63%  Improved my teaching creativity  
59%  I may continue to keep a professional journal  
34%  Improved my writing skills  
9%  Journal writing is a chore; boring

The content of these journals, however, was on the trainees’ reading and learning on the course, not about their own teaching, so there was not the same emotional element that so often exists in relation to one’s ‘performance’. Nevertheless, the fact that their journals were read and responded to by their tutors provided considerable learning support, as may be seen by the top percentages. In contrast, the Richards and Ho (1998) study, in which the journals were not read by their tutors, came up with these evaluations: 71% of the trainees found it useful, 25% reported that they found it fairly useful, and 4% thought that it was not useful.

Dialogue journals are used in a programme at City University of New York to provide peer support for the student teachers during the lonely teaching practicum, when they are sent to different schools. They respond to each other's journals, and then the weekly entries and responses are taken away by the tutor, who adds her own responses. Positive indicators of peer help identified by the study were:

- offering emotional support
- determining students’ needs
- learning about the curriculum and public school culture
- providing opportunities for reflection

(Dong, 1997)

The previously mentioned Stanley study was undertaken to inquire into how it feels to attempt to be reflective. It also examined the teaching of reflection during supervision. Stanley (1995) wanted to know what helped or hindered teachers’ development and in what way the supervisory relationship could catalyse the learning and implementation of reflective teaching. A unique feature was the vulnerability and learning motivation of the tutor, who also kept her own journal, which was part of the dialogue with her student teachers. Among her insights were the following:
Gloria and Lenore offer insights into an initial paradigm shift that is necessary for reflective work. If a teacher locates power and authority outside of herself, her internal reflective conversations will be shaped by external authorities. Until she develops an inner voice which can express her own point of view as well, she will not trust or value her own opinion of her work. *(ibid., p. 131)*

The reflective conversations are zones of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978) in which I am attempting to attune myself to the teacher’s learning in such a way that she can take the next step in her learning. *(ibid., p. 177)*

Stated in other words, the ability to reflect implies a readiness to trust one’s own judgements and therefore a capacity to influence one’s own development (which are certainly essentials in a good teacher), but that this process can be accelerated by engaging in reflection with someone in a mentor role.

As can be seen from the various models above, the dialogue journal is used in different ways in teacher education. What characterises each is the intention of the tutor directing the process to provide learning support, (whether indirectly or directly) and the conviction that the ground for future teacher development can and needs to be prepared right from the beginning.

I, myself, have been using dialogue journals in both teacher training and ELT for at least six years, and find them an invaluable tool for many reasons, not least of which is in developing trust between my students/trainees and myself, and for discovering how best I can help them. None of the educators quoted above use dialogue journals in precisely the way I do, and did in this study; I will elaborate on my procedure in the chapter on Research Design. It might be useful to state here, though, that although the three CTEFLA courses which contributed the data for my own study did not have as a specific aim to teach the trainees reflective skills, the tasks which they were given as part of the syllabus made graduated demands on the process of reflecting as follows:

1. They were asked on their application to consider past learning experiences.
2. Links were made regularly between themselves as learners on the course and the students they were teaching.
3. The concept of individual differences was introduced early in the course and recycled frequently.
4. In their Reflection Books (dialogue journals), the trainer kept to the trainee’s agenda as much as possible, keeping to his/her learning pace when suggesting new challenges.
5. The weekend essays focused first on their experience of the content of the course so far, then on their observations of other teachers, and finally on themselves as learners during the course.
6. In preparing for the mid-course tutorial, trainees were asked to describe how they were developing.

Nevertheless, my intention was to observe how the trainees differed in their reflections, in order to discover if there was a relationship between being able to reflect sensitively and articulately with corresponding differences between rates of learning how to teach.

5.5 Chapter summary

At the turn of the century Dewey stated that preparing teachers to be critically reflective might be more important in the long term than focusing on techniques. Schön offered us an alternative to technical reflection by introducing the concepts of reflection in and on action. Others have moved us in the direction of intuition, awareness, and linking cognition with feelings. Critical Reflection is a term now used by many educators to indicate a level beyond technical and practical reflection, asking ‘what’ and ‘why’ questions about one’s teaching, not just ‘how’. Some educators debate that it is best to reserve reflection for in-service courses, while others believe that reflection must be part of the process of learning to teach. There is a building awareness that the ability to reflect is a skill that can and needs to be taught, because not all people are naturally reflective. Dialogue journals are a means of encouraging trainees to reflect on their teaching and/or learning; they are becoming popular and there is a variety of different procedures employed by various educators.

As it is a characteristic of experienced teachers that they do reflect on their teaching (although to differing degrees), it is my belief that the process of learning to teach is accelerated in a beginning teacher who is able to reflect. The data from my research substantiates this hypothesis, as will be seen in the chapter on Results.
Chapter Six

PERSONAL CONSTRUCT THEORY

and

THE REPERTORY GRID

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce to the reader the methodology of the repertory grid, which was one of the main data collection methods used in this study. The background to the repertory grid lies in the work of George Kelly and his personal construct theory. This theory and that of constructivism, in as much as they are relevant to the repertory grid, will be discussed in the next section. The sections following will describe the actual construction of a repertory grid and present examples of some research projects that used repertory grids to gather data.

6.1. Background

The repertory grid was inspired by the work of George Kelly (1955, 1963). Fundamental to this technique is Kelly’s theory that people create their own ways of seeing the world in which they live, through the use of a system of personal constructs. For example, a person who construed the opposite of gentle as aggressive would certainly have a different view of reality from a person who construed the opposite as successful. Kelly used his theory in the context of therapy to help people readjust to stress, because just as people can make themselves miserable with their own thinking, it is also possible for them to achieve a happier state by reconstructing their views of reality, but in order to do this they need to become aware of what their personal constructs are. The instrument which he developed for helping his clients to understand what their personal constructs were is called the repertory grid, and it has become popular in both quantitative and qualitative research. The value of this branch of psychology is that the focus is the client’s reality. The therapist is not leading the client anywhere, because there are no right or wrong answers. The repertory grid is used as a device for the client to increase self-comprehension.
Constructivism has grown mainly out of the work of the Swiss developmental psychologist Jean Piaget. Kelly’s personal construct psychology is encompassed in it.

One of the most enduring aspects of Piaget’s work has been his emphasis upon the constructive nature of the learning process. In contrast to more traditional views which see learning as the accumulation of facts or the development of skills, the main underlying assumption of constructivism is that individuals are actively involved right from birth in constructing personal meaning, that is their own personal understanding, from their experiences. (Williams & Burden, 1997, p.21)

Since repertory grids are used in the present study, it is important to discuss the options available for their construction. In the next section I will describe how a repertory grid is designed, how it operates, and what was unique about the one I used.

6.2. Constructing a repertory grid

Many data collection methods contain the unavoidable bias of the researcher. For example, a questionnaire already defines its content by the questions it asks; an attitude scale or personality test already contains pre-selected content items for the subject to react to. In contrast, a repertory grid starts contrast-free, and can thus be used to explore personal meaning on any topic (Thomas & Harri-Augstein, 1985).

The grid is perhaps best looked on as a particular form of structured interview. Our usual way of exploring another person’s construct system is by conversation. In talking to each other we come to understand the way the other person views his world, what goes with what for him, what implies what, what is important and unimportant and in what terms they seek to assess people and places and situations. The grid formalises this process and assigns mathematical values to the relationships between a person’s constructs. It enables us to focus on particular subsystems of construing and to note what is individual and surprising about the structure and content of a person’s outlook on the world. Yet the information it gives us is not novel or some peculiar product of our “scientific method”. It is a formalised version of the kind of information we are always seeking about each other, the kind of understanding we are always in process of gaining about each other. (Fransella & Bannister, 1977, p. 4)

A grid is not a test. “It has no specific content and its validity can only be talked about in the sense that we can question whether or not it will effectively reveal patterns and relationships in certain kinds of data” (ibid., p. 92). It is basically a method of quantifying
and analysing relationships between the categories used by a respondent in a sorting task (Adams-Webber, 1979). It is the process of doing this task that enables individuals to understand the worlds they have constructed around themselves.

In its original form each respondent is shown a list of role titles, chosen by the therapist as potentially meaningful, such as father, boss, kindergarten teacher, grandfather, spouse, Prime Minister, etc., up to a total of, say, twenty. These are called elements. Three of the elements are selected and the respondent chooses two which are alike for whatever reason in his/her own judgement. The respondent is then asked to assign a word to that pair which describes in what way they are alike, and then a contrasting word which describes what the third is that is unlike to the pair. The two words might be authoritarian and flexible, for example. These words are called constructs. The process continues, making a suitable number of triadic combinations, and collecting more constructs. It is possible then to build a grid, with the elements across the top and the constructs down either side. Table 6.1. below shows a partial example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Grandparent</th>
<th>Boss</th>
<th>Spouse</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Авторитарий</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Aggressive</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.1: Partial example of a repertory grid

The next step is to consider each of the elements in terms of all of the paired constructs, so grandfather, like all of the others, must be considered with the constructs of authoritarian and flexible, and assigned a value somewhere between them. Authoritarian might have a value of 3 and flexible might be 1, with something in between as 2, and not relevant as 0. This technique is called rating, and it is the one that I used in my research. Another possibility is ranking, in which all of the elements would be lined up, with the most authoritarian on top, and the most flexible at the bottom.

As mentioned above, there are no right or wrong answers in a repertory grid. The aim is for the interviewer to learn as much as is possible about the reality of the respondent, and to help the respondent know him/herself better.
Quite a literature has developed over the question whether or not supplied or provided constructs give the same answers as do elicited constructs. For some purposes, it is best to supply construct labels, at least in part. People may not give you constructs which you have reason for suspecting are very important to them. This is particularly so in the field of clinical work. You may be testing out an idea about why a person is behaving as she is. It may be vital for you to supply her with certain constructs which will then be given personal meaning by being related to those elicited from her. (Fransella & Bannister, 1977, p. 19).

There is also the question of expediency. In my own research, because I was also responsible for the learning of my “subjects”, it was important for me that the instruments I was using were also part of the learning process of the trainees, and with four out of the five instruments I chose this was possible. The Repertory Grid, however, collected information which, although the trainees found it interesting (when I handed it out at the end of the course), had no obvious application to the work that they needed to do on the course. I therefore made filling in the grid strictly voluntary, and supplied relevant constructs myself to save them time. More is said about this process in the chapter on Research Design.

The data from this research will be discussed in the chapter on Results, but I would like to state here that in interpreting a repertory grid it is important not to look on construct systems as if they were simple, logical patterns, nor to use formats which conceal contradiction:

Thereby we forget that contradiction is both the source of personal disaster and personal growth. Jung in his *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* said, “I am astonished, disappointed, pleased with myself. I am distressed, depressed, rapturous. I am all these things at once, and cannot add up the sum.”

(quoted in Fransella & Bannister, *ibid.*, p. 116)

6.3 **Some examples from the literature of relevant projects using repertory grids**

The five studies below all used a repertory grid. What they had in common was trying to help teachers to understand their own construct systems, whether for their own sakes, their students’, or in order for administrators to make the implementation of change more positive for the staff.
Olson, 1981, described a project in Canada in which the Schools Council Integrated Science Project was initially seen by teachers as increasing the diffuseness of their work. The innovator of the Project used a repertory grid to help him learn the language of the teachers so that he could use it to evolve ways to express the new ideas he wished to advance.

The practical language used by teachers reflected their concern about their personal influence in the classroom; the theoretical language of the project assumed that mental processes in the minds of the students were central to the work of the classroom. The incommensurability of the two languages created dilemmas for teachers initially. These dilemmas were resolved, in the end, through a process of “translation”. The teachers translated the innovative design and intended teacher pupil relationships, which were based on issued of cognition, into familiar terms based on the exercise of personal influence. (ibid., p. 260)

The teachers in the study said that the clinical interviews based on the grid had helped them probe their own thoughts, some of which they had not been aware. The end result was having the wording of the Project modified by these same teachers so that it was clearer to them what was to be accomplished and how it was to be done.

Munby (1982), in a study which attempted to find out what the beliefs and principles were of one teacher, decided to use a repertory grid, because he did not believe he would have got the results he wanted from simply asking her, the reason being that, “It is necessary to recognize that individually we may not be the best people to clearly enunciate our beliefs and perspectives since some of these may lurk beyond ready articulation” (ibid., p. 217). He used a repertory grid in the following way: he asked the teacher to list all that he might see if he came into her class the following week (elements) and then asked her to group them any way she wished (constructs) onto a grid. This was followed by a one and a half hour interview which enabled her deep principles to emerge, five of which are listed below:

1. Caring for the students genuinely is as important as is the Language Arts curriculum itself, if not more so.
2. The conduct of teaching and learning is purposeful and mannerly.
3. Learning in Language Arts requires considerable activity.
4. Teaching and learning involves developing open and candid relationships.
5. Seventh graders are insufficiently mature to make fully valid judgments. (ibid., pp. 222-223)
As a result of using the repertory grid, the interviewer was able to understand how deeply these principles influenced his subject’s thinking as a teacher.

Anning (1988) noticed that teachers on LEA in-service courses using Open University Curriculum in Action materials were finding the question, “What were the pupils learning?” particularly difficult. She was fascinated by the gap between the consummate practical skills shown on videotapes and their inability to articulate the professional knowledge they were demonstrating. Using pre-task interviews and questionnaires to analyse the teachers’ pre-active thinking, stimulated recall to look at their interactive thinking, and a repertory grid to elicit their post-active thinking, Anning worked with the teachers using the above data to help them to become more articulate in describing what their students were learning. The conclusions were that “teacher theory is inherent in their practice and that is it through their practice that it is constantly reformulated and tested. Hence the variations in teacher beliefs will be dependent upon their varying professional experiences as well as the context in which they are working” (ibid., p. 132).

Korthagen (1988), mentioned in the last chapter, wanted to discover more about how teacher educators viewed the quality of reflection in their student teachers. Five instruments were used, including a repertory grid, in which the teacher educator was given three cards with the names of three students. He was then asked to mention one quality (construct) in which one of the students differed from the other two. Then, by assigning a score from one to five, he rated each student for all the constructs mentioned. The repertory grids were used as a basis for interviews with the teachers. The results showed a homogeneous ‘team view’ that reflective teaching was indeed a fundamental goal, but they also revealed that this goal was often abandoned or that the teachers were sometimes at a loss to know how to attain it with certain students. On the basis of the interviews, the researchers arrived at the hypothesis, previously mentioned, “that teacher educators only understand the way reflective students learn, possibly because they themselves have a reflective style” (ibid., p. 45).

Teasdale (1997) used a repertory grid format to determine whether teachers used different constructs in their evaluation of English Mother Tongue children and English Additional Language children. Constructs of potential use in scoring children’s English (such as confidence, fluency, and accent) were first elicited from teachers. Teachers were then guided to score pupils in relation to videos of pupil performance. The data strongly
suggested that teachers account for the language behaviour of the two groups in markedly
different ways, and implied that assessment criteria is less important than the behaviour of
the raters.

6.4 Conclusions

The five studies above have in common an attempt to understand how teachers think. A
repertory grid is different from a test that can be scored. It is the means for arriving at the
identification of thought processes, but it is usually the discussions that are provoked as a
consequence of the grid, rather than the grid itself, which provide the content and insights.
In my study, however, the grid did stand on its own without the discussions, partly for
practical reasons, but mainly in order to be able to compare the constructs of the trainees, to
observe whether these constructs changed as a result of learning how to teach, and to
triangulate this data with that from the other instruments.

This is the end of Part One: Literature Reviews. The chapters in Part Two present and
discuss the research instruments and data from my own study.
PART TWO

Chapter Seven

INITIAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS
AND
PILOT STUDIES

My original line of enquiry centred on first one and then two research questions:

- Do some trainees learn gradually and others only after a “breakthrough moment” has been experienced? If so, why?
- What is the nature of the change that takes place in a trainee during the CELTA?

When I began my research I knew that I wanted to achieve two goals. I wanted to learn as much as possible about the personality traits and ideal learning conditions for those trainees who did well on the CELTA and who seemed to develop and change the most. I also wanted to establish which data collection methods were most revealing about CELTA trainees.

My original focus on “breakthrough moments” was inspired by a particular trainee whom I will refer to as Harold (see Appendix C for the case study on Harold). At mid-course Harold was given a warning that he might fail. At the final grading meeting his tutors discussed the possibility of giving him a “B”. This is an unusual sequence of occurrences, and it led to my wanting to identify more cases in which a breakthrough moment had led to accelerated learning. After considerable research, using pilot instruments, I was able to conclude that breakthrough moments were not significant for trainees who got higher grades on the course, and that Harold’s experience had not been typical. In the process of discovering this, however, I learned a tremendous amount about doing research, and was able to select and design the most appropriate instruments for my final research.

The original pilot instruments also attempted to capture the nature of the change that occurs during the course for CELTA trainees by comparing them with first-year teachers,
experienced teachers, and trainees on a two-week course designed for pre-university students taking a “Gap Year” from their studies in order to work as teaching assistants abroad. I also systematically studied the week-by-week changes for trainees of all grades undergoing the CELTA. The amount of data gathered on the nature of change was enormous, but in gathering and analysing this pilot data I usefully discovered that the focus of my enquiry needed to be considerably narrower.

This chapter will describe the eight original pilot studies from which I was able to select and refine my final research instruments. Some of these instruments I found useful enough to serve as research instruments in my actual study, while others I rejected for reasons listed below. It was in the process of learning from running these pilots and analysing the data from them that I settled on final research questions. This chapter will be followed by a much lengthier one on Research Design, which will describe and analyse the chosen instruments in considerable detail. The pilot research instruments are in Appendix C, with the exception of those which were used unchanged in the final research. Those are in Appendix B.

7.1. **Original pilot instruments**

a. The Honey Mumford Learning Styles Questionnaire  
b. A written assignment focusing on the trainee's learning styles during the course  
c. Oral, small-group interviews with trainees at the end of their fourth week on the course  
d. Whole “Reflection Books” photocopied for study  
e. A written questionnaire of my own design on learner styles  
f. Oral interviews with teachers now in the profession who had done well on their CELTA courses  
g. A feedback form sent out by International House six months after the end of each course, on which I was allowed to include one question about "breakthrough moments"  
h. A case study of one trainee who had experienced a dramatic breakthrough moment

I was already familiar with three of the instruments (the Honey Mumford questionnaire, the written assignment and Reflection Books) from past CELTA (CTEFLA) courses I had run and knew them to be valuable sources of information. The small-group interviews with trainees and the questionnaire of my own design were my first attempts at writing
questionnaires. Two others, the interviews with post-CELTA (CTEFLA) teachers and the feedback form, I recognised as resources available at International House which could be exploited usefully. The case study was an attempt to accumulate all of the documentation available on one individual trainee and to use it to follow his development. At this early stage I was expecting that the various instruments would complement each other by confirming some of the same findings but from different angles.

I will give a brief description of each below.

a. The Honey Mumford Learning Styles Questionnaire

I had been giving out this questionnaire for years to CELTA (CTEFLA) trainees to try out if interested. The intention was for it to help to sensitise the trainees to their own learning styles. I did not, therefore, look at nor tabulate any results. For the purposes of research, however, I started using it more systematically. The intention was eventually to cross-reference learning styles with experience (or lack) of breakthrough moments.

This 80-item questionnaire leads to a learner profile based on four types: Activist, Reflector, Theorist and Pragmatist. It was inspired by Kolb’s Experiential Learning Cycle (see Chapter Three). A fuller description of the Honey Mumford questionnaire is to be found in the chapter on Research Design and a copy of the questionnaire itself is in Appendix B.

b. A written assignment focusing on the trainee's learning styles during the course

In this assignment, written during the last weekend of the course, the trainees described the process of their learning on the course, making these essays a rich source of information. In the pilot I analysed 30 essays in order to extract categories, which gave me valuable practice in grounded theory (extracting categories from the data itself, as opposed to creating categories and then looking for evidence of them; see Smith, Harre & Van Langenhove, 1995). The article and assignment rubric are in Appendix B.
c. Oral, small-group interviews with trainees at the end of their fourth week on the course

These “guided interviews”, as they were later labelled, probed into the trainees’ experience of the course as well as their possible experience of breakthrough moments. The format was to divide each group of fifteen trainees into three groups, and put them in three different rooms, each with a tape recorder, but without an interviewer present. In the pilot study, in order to determine what kind of questionnaire would eventually work best, I decided to provide three different slants to the questionnaire. Two of the questionnaires were identical (“group questionnaire 1a”); one of them, however, was given out several days in advance so that the individuals in that group could reflect on their answers. On these two versions I asked directly about "breakthrough moments." The third questionnaire (“1c”) was quite different, and dealt with impressions and descriptions of the course week by week. The aim of this version was to discover if there were learning patterns over time that would reveal insights. Copies of all three of these questionnaires are in Appendix C.

d. Whole "Reflection Books" photocopied for study

Reflection Books are dialogue journals written between individual trainees and the tutor who observed each teaching practice. The rubric for writing in Reflection Books is in Appendix B. Briefly, trainees write in their book immediately after teaching, and pass it to their tutor for comments. At home, and following a feedback session, the trainees write further reflections, which are handed in to the same tutor the next day for more comments. In this piloted version I was trying to capture the nature of change that occurred during the course, with grade and week as the variables, according to what trainees revealed about themselves in their writing.

e. A written questionnaire on learner styles

This was a questionnaire that I wrote myself. It was my first attempt to find out what proportion of trainees identified with learning styles popularly referred to as belonging to either the left or the right side of the brain, and to glean information about their other preferred learning styles (experiential, reflective, theoretical, active/passive), past language learning experience, gradual versus sudden insight, and age. I gave this out to seven
CTEFLA (CELTA) courses one month and was later able to correlate the findings with the grade each had received. For comparison purposes I also gave the same questionnaire to course participants on the RSA/UCLES Diploma course (now the Cambridge/RSA DELTA), to 18-year-olds on our two-week “Gap Year” teacher-assistant training course, and to the course leaders of the seven CTEFLA courses in order to see if there was any correlation between the learning styles of the tutors and the trainees on their courses who got the best grades. A copy of this questionnaire is to be found in Appendix C.

f. Oral interviews with teachers now in the profession who had done well on their CELTA courses

I interviewed teachers who were relatively recent CTEFLA graduates. The ones I chose were all teaching at my school, for the simple reason that they were accessible. These teachers included some who had just finished their courses and others whom I had trained within the previous two years, all of whom had received “A”s or “B”s on the course. (Out of curiosity, I also interviewed some teachers who had just finished their Diplomas.) I asked these teachers to describe what the course had and had not prepared them for, if they had had any "breakthrough moments" during or since, what their results on the Honey Mumford questionnaire had been (if I had trained them), and what they were concerned about now in their teaching. I considered, in the piloting of those interviews, that my eventual research tool might be a qualitative study of, say, six individuals, starting when they were on the course and then following them for a certain period. A sample transcript in note form of one of these interviews is in Appendix C.

g. A feedback form sent out by I.H. London six months after the end of each course on which I was allowed to include one question about "breakthrough moments"

The question which I was able to have added to the regular feedback form sent to trainees six months following their CELTA (CTEFLA) course was: “Did you experience any ‘breakthrough moments’ during the course? If so, what were they, and what caused them?” I received 31 responses.
h. A case study of one trainee who had experienced a dramatic breakthrough moment

This is the case study on Harold, on whom I had formulated my original hypothesis that “breakthrough moments” had an influence on accelerated learning. It contains information from Harold’s initial application form, his Reflection Book, written answers to questions set to prepare him for his tutorial, weekend essays, forms asking for feedback on the course both at mid-term and at the end, and the pilot of the Guided Discussion. The case study, to be found in Appendix C, is chronological and is a combination of Harold’s own words and my perceptions.

7.2. Issues which arose as a result of the pilot studies

Of the eight research instruments which were part of my pilot studies, I selected four, later adding a fifth (the Repertory Grid). The three which I rejected were: my own first questionnaire on learning styles, oral interviews with post-CELTA teachers, and the question included on the IH feedback form about breakthrough moments. Three instruments from the pilot studies I kept on but altered after piloting: the small-group Guided Discussion interviews, the case study and the Reflection Books. Two others I used unchanged: the Honey Mumford Learning Styles Questionnaire and the written assignment on learning styles. My reasons for selecting, adapting and rejecting are explained below.

7.2.1. Instruments which I piloted and then rejected

With the written questionnaire of my own design on learner styles, most of what I found out was how not to write a questionnaire, which was extremely useful. In trying to code the data with the help of the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, 1992) computer software for analysing quantitative data, I realised how important it is to receive simple, precise answers. When, for example, trainees were unable to choose between two categories, they sometimes ticked both, which caused problems in computer analysis. In some cases the information I was seeking was meant to be a yes or no, but the subjects found this too limiting and instead gave me qualitative information. I learned that I needed to
design instruments each of which would elicit either quantitative or qualitative data, but not both. As a result, my final study included three qualitative and two quantitative instruments, since by then I had recognised the value of being able to triangulate different kinds of sources. I also learned that the scope of my research needed to remain focused on one type of subject (a trainee in the process of actually undergoing the CELTA), and that doing a comparison study with trainers, Diploma candidates, or “Gap Year” trainees, although useful at a later date, would not be feasible at this stage of our understanding of achievement on initial teacher training in ELT.

From the oral interviews with teachers now in the profession who had done well on their CTEFLA courses I discovered that it is not the people who do well on the course who have profound breakthrough moments. As my original research question dealt exclusively with "breakthrough moments" though, and these teachers who had done well (and as such had been given jobs at International House London, making them easy to follow) had not experienced any of the magnitude I was looking for, this needed to be rethought. As with the pilot study just mentioned, I also came to appreciate that comparing current trainees with novice teachers would be a useful project for another time.

As for the feedback form sent out by International House six months after the end of each course, on which I was allowed to include one question about "breakthrough moments", it was interesting to note that it was those trainees who were dissatisfied about their lack of job success who tended to send them back. Also, their responses to my question were not exactly what I was looking for, as they rather described what they had learned as a whole on the course. The content was certainly interesting in its own right. Nevertheless, I rejected this feedback question as a possible instrument because the data was not sufficiently focused. This aspect of the pilot study, like the two above, was looking at post-CELTA (CTEFLA) subjects. The three instruments together helped me to discover the wisdom and greater feasibility of studying trainees who were all at the same point (relatively) in their development.
7.2.2. **Instruments which I kept on, but altered after piloting**

After the first use of the three Guided Discussion questionnaires, I made some changes. I created a “1b” questionnaire (which is the one I chose for my final research) which asked about “sudden insights” rather than breakthrough moments, because I was beginning to realise that a “breakthrough moment” was neither a universally understood concept nor could it be relied upon to be perceived in the same way. I also found no significant differences in giving one group a questionnaire in advance, so abandoned that step in the next pilot.

Questionnaire 1b went through two more small changes before the final version. In the section on “three factors” I added “personalities of the tutors.” By that I meant the particular teaching style as well as personality characteristics. I was curious to see if I could find similarities between the particular trainee and the tutor(s), and if there were any correlations between a positive finding and grade. (In the final study, however, the inclusion of this factor did not provide any useful information, because it was never chosen as one of the most important factors, and therefore not discussed more than in passing.) The second small change was to exchange the question about stimulants (which was treated as a kind of joke) to one about support from people outside the course, such as parents who were teachers. Questionnaire 1b.2 is in Appendix B.

The Focus Group (in Appendix A) is the development of that first case study. Because the majority of my results are centred on what is held in common by the members of each grade group, the Focus Group returns to the individual experience for six trainees. The six were chosen because they were as close as it is possible to get to being true novices, it being assumed that their emerging talent could thus only be ascribable to the course itself and to their own personal characteristics. Four were “B”s, and two were Strong Passes (“SP”s). The reason for choosing the latter was to reinforce “B”ness by their differences and similarities. In addition to the Focus Group being contained in its own section, comments about and from the Focus Group are to be found interspersed throughout the dissertation whenever examples were deemed useful.

The format for using Reflection Books remained the same as in the pilot, in that the gathering of this data remained the same, but my method of analysis between the pilot and
the final study varied considerably. In the pilot study, in which I analysed 19 books, I was able to extract 40 categories for describing the content, and to cross-reference the results with the trainee’s age and previous experience. These categories emerged from what the trainees wrote about, but were very much construed according to what I wanted to learn about the process of their learning during the course. In tabulating the results, I documented the week in which each category was first mentioned by each trainee, because my working title at that time was “The Nature of Change that Occurs for Trainees on the CELTA” and I was trying to capture the rhythm of the changes that took place. For example, one category was *Mentions the Students*. I would tick whether this took place in Week One, Two, Three and/or Four. The grid on which these data are organised by week appears at in Appendix C.

In this process I discovered that it was far more revealing *whether* a category was included or excluded than *when* it had been mentioned. This pilot, therefore, resulted in my choosing to abandon the research question on the nature of change and choose to focus on what the actual differences were between those who got the top grades and those who did not. In the final study, with the help of a computer software package for analysing qualitative data called NUDIST (QSR NUDIST: Non-numerical Unstructured Data Indexing, Searching and Theorizing, 1993), I was able to create an elaborate network for coding and cross-referencing information from the Reflection Books and the other qualitative instruments.

7.2.3. **Instruments which I piloted and then used unchanged in my final research:**

I found that both the Honey Mumford Learning Styles Questionnaire and the written assignment focusing on the trainees’ learning styles during the course were rich in data, easy to administer and straightforward to code. The manner of analysis expanded as I learned more techniques for analysing data, but was not different in nature from the pilots. They were therefore used in largely unchanged format.
7.3. **Conclusions**

The above pilot studies gave me useful experience in different ways of obtaining data, with the strengths and pitfalls of each. In addition I was able to determine whether it would be fruitful to continue with the same research questions, while others presented themselves.

My first assumption had been that breakthrough moments resulted in an acceleration of the learning process, resulting in the higher grades. This assumption proved to be unfounded. It was useful to come to this dead end, because I then realised that what I was hoping most to discover from my research was how trainees who got the top grades were different from the others. It emerged in the pilot studies that most trainees who do very well on the course have at least one factor in common: their learning takes place gradually, with each piece of information and insight building upon what has been processed before. They do not have dramatic "breakthrough moments" but rather a continuous process of accumulating insights. The process of discovering this was illuminating and educative.

My next focus was to try to capture the nature of the change that took place for all of the trainees during the course, but this eventually proved too broad. This, too, I discovered from my pilot studies.

It already began emerging in the pilot data that it was the combination of the different types of learning offered on the course that provided the intensity that resulted in accelerated learning, although the richness of the experience did seem to pivot around having real classes to teach. Based on the data from these pilot studies, I was able to propose a general hypothesis that the CELTA is effective because the learning is richly varied. This hypothesis will be addressed further in the chapters on Results and Discussion.

At the conclusion of these pilot studies I was committed to new research questions:

- Why do some trainees on the CELTA do well and others not?
- What are the characteristics of the learning that take place?
- What is it about the course that usually makes it so effective?
Several years later, when it came time to write the results of my research in dissertation form, it became obvious that two other questions had been present all along:

- Are the factors which characterise people who do well on the CELTA causes or symptoms?
- Are teachers born or made?

The next chapter will describe the research design eventually used.
Chapter Eight

RESEARCH DESIGN

This chapter contains three main sections. The first describes the subjects who participated in my research, the second describes the role of the researcher, and the third describes the five research instruments used, their procedures and rationale.

8.1 Subjects

The research took place at International House London between Monday, July 8 and Friday, September 27, 1996. There was a total of 44 subjects on three consecutive CTEFLA courses. Of these, 34 of the trainees were British, four were American, five were from other countries in Europe, and there was one trainee from South Africa.

8.1.1. Grades

The 44 trainees received the following grades:

```
“A” = 0
“B” = 19
Strong Pass = 7
Pass = 12
Weak Pass = 4
Fail = 1
“IHC” = 1
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Three of these grades require immediate comment. UCLES awards four grades only. The strong pass (“SP”) and weak pass (“WP”) categories above are ones which are not printed on the certificate which the trainees receive, and are not recognised by UCLES, but have been agreed on by the tutors in their final grading meeting, and therefore influence the wording on the report which is written by International House to accompany the UCLES certificate. Additionally, the tutors, when asked by future employers, will communicate that those who were unofficially considered “SP”s had done “well” on the course. The “IHC”
stands for International House Course, a parallel certificate which is awarded to a non-native speaker who is accepted onto a CELTA, but in the end although the teaching is of a sufficient standard to pass the course, the English is below the standard required.

In October 1996, after my data had all been collected, the course changed slightly. At the time of my research the CELTA was called CTEFLA (Certificate in Teaching English as a Foreign Language). In becoming the CELTA, the syllabus was modified (UCLES, 1997) and the wording to describe the grades was altered. In 1996, the following wording was in operation:

The Certificate in the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language to Adults is awarded to candidates who have satisfactorily fulfilled all the requirements of the scheme. They will have shown potential for further development after the course, an awareness of language learning problems and of classroom techniques. In terms of a performance profile:

(a) The candidate has demonstrated an awareness and understanding of adult learners, of language, and of basic principles of language learning.

(b) The candidate has demonstrated a practical working knowledge of English and of materials for learning/teaching English.

(c) The candidate has demonstrated an ability to plan appropriately for parts of and for complete lessons within a sequence of lessons.

(d) The candidate has demonstrated an ability to manage classes effectively and to provide appropriate presentation, practice, and production activities.

(e) The candidate has demonstrated a willingness and an ability to benefit from teaching practice feedback and to work effectively with colleagues.

(f) The candidate has demonstrated the capacity to develop as a teacher.

Successful candidates at this level will continue to need guidance from their employers to help them to develop their potential and broaden their range of skills as teachers.

Certificates at ‘Pass B’ level are awarded to trainees who have demonstrated a level of achievement significantly higher than that required to pass in both language awareness and classroom approaches. It may be expected that they will continue to need a degree of guidance, once employed.

Candidates awarded certificates at ‘Pass A’ level will have demonstrated an overall excellence and a degree of independence that will allow them to work
with much less guidance than is generally required by teachers at this level of qualification.  

(UCLES, 1995/1996a, p. 11)

It may be wondered why there were no “A”s awarded on the three courses I ran. In order to explain this lack of “A”s, it must be highlighted here that tutors considered an “A” a mark of excellence in teaching. Someone with an “A” was expected to be able to teach a full timetable from the Monday following the course, and not only to cope, but to continue to be considered excellent. Since the CTEFLA (now the CELTA) was a preliminary qualification, such a high standard after four weeks was rare. The “B” grade, therefore, was frequently the top grade, and is very highly regarded. The following table indicates the distribution of grades worldwide from 1989 to 1996:

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<th>Total no. Courses</th>
<th>Total no. Entries</th>
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<th>“A”</th>
<th>Fail</th>
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<td>7418</td>
<td>4798</td>
<td>1803</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>64.70%</td>
<td>24.30%</td>
<td>2.30%</td>
<td>4.90%</td>
<td>2.90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.1: CTEFLA distribution of grades worldwide: 1989-1996  
(UCLES,1995/1996b, Appendix 3)

As can be seen in Table 8.1, the number of “A”s remained consistently low during the last seven years of the CTEFLA. It must be noted here, however, that my research took
place on CTEFLA courses. With the revised CELTA wording for grades, copied below, it is not unreasonable to expect that the percentage of “A”s will increase in the future.

Please note, in the paragraph below, taken from the Grades of Award section of UCLES’ Syllabus & Assessment Guidelines for Course Tutors & Assessors, January 1997, the new CELTA wording, particularly the lack of the word ‘excellence’ when describing an “A”.

The Certificate will be awarded to candidates who meet the course requirements and whose performance meets, or exceeds, the criteria in all three assessment components.

A Pass is awarded to candidates whose performance overall in the teaching practice and on the written assignments meets the specified criteria. They will continue to need guidance to help them to develop and broaden their range of skills as teachers in post.

A Pass (Grade B) is awarded to candidates whose performance on the written assignments meets the specified criteria and who have demonstrated in their teaching practice a level of achievement significantly higher than that required to meet pass-level criteria in relation to:
  • classroom teaching skills.
They will continue to need some guidance to help them to develop and broaden their range of skills as teachers in post.

A Pass (Grade A) is awarded to candidates whose performance on the written assignments meets the specified criteria and who have demonstrated in their teaching practice a level of ability and achievement significantly higher than that required to meet pass-level criteria in relation to:
  • planning for effective teaching;
  • classroom teaching skills;
  • awareness of teaching and learning processes.
They will benefit from further guidance in post but will be able to work independently.

Candidates who fail to meet criteria in some or all assessed components will be awarded a Fail. (ibid., p. 15)

As mentioned above, with “A”s being so rare, a “B” was considered, in practical terms, the top grade. There was a high percentage of “B”s on the three courses I ran for the
purposes of this study (43.18%, when the worldwide percentage that year was 24.30%). I am unable at this time to give a researched explanation for this except to state anecdotally that International House London has the reputation of being the leader in the field, which tends to attract candidates whose level of motivation prompts them to pay extra for quality. From this it can be hypothesised that the calibre of student at I.H. London is high. Another observation is that candidates who choose a course in the summer are often more informed of their immediate career prospects in ELT (September/October is the main starting period for language institutes abroad), which might imply self-selection, with a consequent influence on motivation. Yet another hypothesis is that my trainees, knowing my intense interest in their development, became more aware of their own learning and thus made more progress than they might have otherwise. All of the above are hypotheses only and would benefit from rigorous research. It must be emphasised, nevertheless, that each course is assessed by an outside assessor, and that the grades are objectively awarded. (The Hawthorne and Halo Effects are discussed below under Role of the Researcher.)

8.1.2. **Grades, ages and teaching experience**

The youngest trainees were 21 and the oldest was 61. The average age was 31.84, with the largest clusters at the ages of 22, 23 and 30. The information below indicates their ages and teaching experience divided by grade. Teaching experience is described and coded below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Experience Code:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0  = none,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1  = a little, not relevant,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  = a little, relevant,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  = some, not relevant,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  = some, relevant,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5  = experienced, not relevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6  = experienced, relevant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

("relevant" = language teaching (not literature, literacy, nor study skills),
"a little" = less than a year
"some" = about a year
"experienced = more than a year)
### Table 8.2: Dispersal of trainees by grade, average age and average teaching experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADE</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>AVERAGE AGE</th>
<th>AVERAGE TEACHING EXPERIENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“B”</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>29.63</td>
<td>3.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“SP”</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>32.00</td>
<td>2.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“P”</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>28.50</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“WP”</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>48.75</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“F”</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>=26</td>
<td>=4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“IHC”</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>=52</td>
<td>=0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
<td><strong>31.84</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.1.2.1. **Grades, ages and teaching experience: Discussion**

Factors which reduce the generalisability of the figures above include the following:

1. In the “WP” category there were only four trainees, so it cannot be generalised from this that older trainees do less well. In fact, those who got the average grade (“P”), were on average younger than those who got “B”s and “SP”s.

2. The experience averages are misleading because of the range. In the “SP” experience category, for example, this broke down as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Trainees</th>
<th>Experience Code (see 8.1.2. above)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the “P” experience category there was a similar pattern:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Trainees</th>
<th>Experience Code (see 8.1.2. above)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This was also true with the “WP”s:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience Code</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The point being made here is that there are not enough numbers in each of these three grades to give a clear enough picture of experience, although the consistency of 50% of no experience in each is interesting.

In the “B” category, however, we find the following:

Experience Code 0 = 15.79%
Experience Code 0-2 = 31.58%

Given the low numbers in the other categories, I hesitate to conclude that the people who got “B”s in general had a significant amount of more experience, although if we total all of the non-“B”s (including the one fail, but excluding the “IHC”, as she didn’t get a grade which can be calculated in the same way), we find the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience Code</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>45.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>54.17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is for this reason that the focus of my study is on those trainees who had little or no experience yet got “B”s. They made up 13.95% of the total. The number who got “B”s but had had no previous experience at all total 7%. There were exactly three, and I decided to consider one other who, in code 1, had had very little, non-relevant experience. These four are included in the Focus Group, located in Appendix A. I also decided to consider two others who were in the “SP” category, with no experience, because the “SP” grade is a borderline grade, one about which there would have been considerable discussion during the final grading meeting (the transcripts of tutors negotiating grades are part of the data in the Focus Group material).
8.1.3. **Number of trainees who participated in each instrument**

The following displays the number of research instruments included in each grade category:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SP</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>WP</th>
<th>IHC</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honey Mumford</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27(101)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repertory Grid</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection Books</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner Styles</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided Discussion</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 8.3: Number of trainees in each instrument**

The reason for the different totals is explained fully in the section below entitled Role of the Researcher. Briefly, though, there was a total of 44 trainees. The last two instruments listed in Table 8.2 were requirements of my course itself, and so I was easily able to collect data from everyone, with their knowledge (there was one absentee on the day of the Guided Discussion). The data from the first three instruments, however, were contributed by volunteers; because of their personal nature I felt it necessary to ask their permission to use them in my research. Many trainees expressed their regret at forgetting to bring in the documents, there being so much else on the course that needed remembering. It is, of course, significant that more “B”s remembered.

The 101 figure for the Honey Mumford Questionnaire is not from my own courses alone. As it is an easily administered instrument, I was able to enlist the aid of colleagues who were also running CTEFLAs in order to get a much larger sample. The figure of 27, therefore, was from my own trainees in the three courses in my study. The larger number includes these 27.

8.2 **Role of the researcher**

I was the main course tutor on all three CTEFLA (CELTA) courses in my study. I had learned during the various pilot studies that I needed to be close to the trainees in my actual
research study in order to fully understand the data I was receiving from them. Freeman (1996) makes the point that it is vital to know the story in order to tell it; in order to be able to analyse data effectively, the researcher must be acquainted with the subject matter in question.

When talking about research, people often think of validity as synonymous with objectivity. In the conventional view detachment and distance are supposed to come in large part through one person (the researcher) studying others (the teacher and the students). In teacher-research this relationship is recast since the teacher is the researcher...These hyphenated functions of teaching and researching together offer the potential for unique insights into the complexity of classroom teaching and learning.

(Freeman, 1998, p. 55)

Nevertheless, three potential problems were created by this situation. The first was that my being the person who was ultimately responsible for deciding their grades might influence the information that they gave me. The second was that my research instruments might impinge on their learning time. The third was that my opinion of each trainee might bias my interpretation of the data.

The first potential problem was dealt with by introducing the issue to the trainees. I made them a solemn promise not to look at the data until after their grades had been assigned, and this statement was reiterated during the course. The second problem was overcome by choosing instruments that had educational value and would further their development as teachers. As mentioned before, Reflection Books, the Learning Styles Assignment and the Honey Mumford questionnaire had all been regular parts of my pre-research courses; previous feedback had indicated that the trainees found them useful learning activities. From its first pilot, the Guided Discussion had also received constructive feedback from trainees. The Repertory Grid, however, I realised would not fall into this category, and I therefore made time for this outside of class hours and invited volunteers to participate. The subjects were thus self-selected. I also invited volunteers to let me photocopy their Reflection Books and Honey Mumford results, because the contents were personal. The only two instruments, therefore, on which I have data from all 44 trainees (apart from one absentee) are the Guided Discussion, which served as an end-of-course consolidation and summary session for the trainees, and the Learning Styles Assignment, which was a requirement of the course.
The third potential problem, that my opinion of each trainee would bias my interpretation of the data, was a dilemma in one sense but a tool in another. When coding and interpreting the data, I was only too aware of both the final grades and my opinions of each as a learner, as a teacher and as a person. In my sincere desire to learn the truth about what makes “B”s different from others, though, combined with the extensive coding made possible with the QSR NUDIST (1993) software for organising qualitative data, it should be possible for me to state that my data are as contamination-free as is humanly possible. Nevertheless, my considerable acquaintance with each trainee’s manners of thinking and interpreting experience helped me greatly in the analysis of the qualitative data.

There is also the potential influence, discussed above, that the trainees’ knowledge of being involved in a research study provided extra awareness and motivation which influenced their learning. This is a variable known as the Hawthorne Effect, which was first noted by Mayo, Roethlisberger, and Dickson in their study at the Hawthorne branch (Chicago) of the Western Electric Company. The researchers observed that when they were present, the production of workers increased, regardless of the conditions that were imposed (Brown, 1954). Another variable that is related to the subjects’ attitudes is called the halo effect. This effect is due to the tendency among human beings to respond positively to a person they like (Brown, 1988). This was mentioned in 8.1.1. above when attempting to account for the high percentage of “B”s on the three courses.

I was aware of these two effects when I was conducting my research, and am aware that the influence of them on my subjects may well be that they provided extra awareness and motivation which influenced their learning. When the teacher is the researcher, however, and when that teacher normally (even when not conducting research) exudes her love for her work, it would be unrealistic to attempt to minimise the benefits of using the Hawthorne and halo effects as aids to learning for the sake of gathering research. The fact remains that the agreement to award “B”s to 19 out of the 44 trainees in my study was unanimously decided in each case by three course tutors and an external assessor.
8.3. **Research instruments**

There were five research instruments used in my study. Section 8.3.1 will describe those which were analysed quantitatively, and Section 8.3.2 will describe the qualitative instruments. Although most research projects and researchers place their emphasis on either quantitative or qualitative methods, partly out of conviction but also because of training and the nature of the problems studied (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), the two types of methods can be used effectively in the same research project (Strauss, Bucker, Enrlich, Schatzman, & Sabshin, 1964). In quantitative research, researchers for the most part are concerned with testing the relationships among variables, or determining how they cluster. They must know before beginning a study what the variables of interest are. In contrast, qualitative research is interested in discovering relevant categories and the relationships among them, in order to put together categories in new, rather than standard, ways (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 49).

Consider the canons of reproducibility and generalisability. Reproducibility in quantitative research means that the data is capable of being replicated. “However, probably no theory that deals with a social/psychological phenomenon is actually reproducible, insofar as finding new situations or other situations whose conditions exactly match those of the original study, though many major conditions may be similar” (ibid., p. 250). Likewise, qualitative studies are generalisable to a specific situation only. It was my intention to study in depth the social/psychological phenomena taking place with 44 subjects involved in a specific situation. The experience of those particular individuals is not reproducible. It did seem possible, however, to quantify certain kinds of information such as their scores on questionnaires dealing with their learning styles and personal constructs at specific times during the course.

The intention in comparing different kinds of data, such as quantitative and qualitative, and using different methods, such as questionnaires and dialogue journals, is to see if they corroborate one another. This form of comparison is called *triangulation*, a term which derives from navigation, where different bearings give the correct position of an object (Silverman, 1993, p. 156). In describing the advantages of observational work, Denzin (1970) stated that “the participant observer is not bound in his field work by pre-judgements about the nature of his problem, by rigid data-gathering devices, or by hypotheses” (ibid., p. 216). The disadvantages include the following:
Its focus on the present may blind the observer to important events that occurred before his entry on the scene. Confidants or informants in a social setting may be entirely unrepresentative of the less open participants. Observers may change the situation just by their presence.

Denzin suggested that a more general practice of ‘method triangulation’ could serve to overcome partial views and present something like a complete picture (Silverman, 1993, p. 157). Certainly a challenge in using triangulation, though, is dealing with the quantity of data collected and discovering logical pathways for inter-analysis.

8.3.1. **Quantitative instruments**

The two instruments in this section are the Honey Mumford Learning Styles Questionnaire and a Repertory Grid. The statistical software package used for calculating the means and standard deviations on these two instruments was SPSS 4.0 (1992).

8.3.1.1. **The Honey Mumford Learning Styles Questionnaire**

The Honey and Mumford Learning Styles Questionnaire was first administered in 1982, and the data which has been collected since then is based on 3500 subjects. It follows the Experiential Learning Cycle, which it credits to Kolb (see Chapter on Experiential Learning above), but focuses on the type of learner identified in the four positions of the circle rather than on experience itself.

![Figure 8.1: The Honey Mumford Learning Styles categories](image)

The aim of the Honey Mumford Learning Styles Questionnaire is to help people identify their dominant learning styles in order to actively develop strategies to improve the styles which are weak.
The questionnaire has 80 items, which is 20 for each learning style. In the chart below it can be seen that there are five bands. Band 1 is a very strong preference. Thus, a person who chose 18 out of the 20 questions describing a Reflector learning style would be classified as having a very strong preference. The numbers in each band vary because of the mean for each. That is, in the U.K. more people scored high as Reflectors, so people filling in this questionnaire would need to score a higher number of positive responses in that category to be included in Band 1 than in the Theorist category.

The general norms for the U.K. are displayed in the following chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activist</td>
<td>13-20</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>7-10 (mean 9.3)</td>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>0-3 (SD=2.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflector</td>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>15-17</td>
<td>12-14 (mean 13.6)</td>
<td>9-11</td>
<td>0-8 (SD=3.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theorist</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>14-15</td>
<td>11-13 (mean 12.5)</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>0-7 (SD=3.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pragmatist</td>
<td>17-20</td>
<td>15-16</td>
<td>12-14 (mean 13.7)</td>
<td>9-11</td>
<td>0-8 (SD=2.9)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.4: Honey Mumford Learning Style general norms for the U.K.
(from Honey & Mumford, 1992, p. 72)

On the three courses in my study, this questionnaire was given out on the Tuesday of the second week, following an input session on learning styles. I asked for volunteers to let me have copies of their results, receiving 28 out of 44. In addition, colleagues who were also running courses at the time of my study were kind enough to give out the questionnaire, so I was able to collect an additional 73, for a total of 101. The results are discussed in the chapters entitled Results and Discussion.
This section will describe the Repertory Grid used in this study and how it was used. For a discussion of the development and rationale of repertory grids in general, please see Chapter Six: Personal Construct Theory. A distinction discussed in that chapter is between *elicited constructs* and *supplied constructs*. In an earlier section of this chapter, Role of the Researcher, I explained that as I had felt unable to include the Repertory Grid exercise as an educational component of the syllabus of the CELTAs on which I was teaching (and doing research), this took place outside of input hours; for the same reason I made a decision to have *supplied constructs*, rather than going through the process of eliciting them from each individual trainee. Although the Repertory Grid had not been one of the piloted instruments, there had been an extensive process of choosing the supplied constructs, as well as the elements, using colleagues, friends and a conference audience (Barduhn, 1996).

The elements were chosen (*A favourite teacher, Myself as a learner, Myself as a teacher, My ideal self, Myself in a group, Myself in solitude, Myself as a child, Myself as an adult*) in an attempt to capture different aspects of the individual’s concept of self. The *constructs* sought to identify the range of that concept. Thus, when considering *Myself in a group*, the trainee needed to consider a continuum from, for example, *leader* to *follower*, and identify him/herself as being either one, something between the two, or neither.

As mentioned above, volunteers from each of my courses were invited to partake in a research exercise outside of class hours. This took place on the Thursday evening of Week One. I gave some background to help the subjects understand the format, but left it to them to interpret the constructs in their own ways. I collected their grids afterwards. Subsequently, at the end of the course, I gave out blank copies of the same grid to the same volunteers and asked them to fill them in, in order to see if there had been any changes in their constructs as a result of the course. I then made copies for each participant of both of their grids, reserving the originals for myself and reminding them that they would not be looked at until after all grades had been decided.
The actual system of filling in the grid was to assign one of four numbers to each box. The constructs on the left were all assigned the number three and the constructs on the right the number one. The trainees were instructed to start with a favourite teacher and decide whether they thought of themselves as closer to a leader (number 3), a follower (number 1), or something in between (number 2). If none of those choices was appropriate, then zero was chosen.

The Repertory Grid was filled in during Week One and then again in Week Four by the same trainees, but they were not given a copy of the Week One grid until the second one had been completed, so they were unable to make decisions based on their Week One thinking. Three sets of calculations were done on each trainee, the third being the changes between Weeks One and Four. Means were then calculated on the group as a whole, with grades as the independent variable. It was therefore possible, for example, to make statements about how “B”s viewed themselves in a group in comparison with Passes, both at the beginning and at the end of the course, using eight sets of constructs. See Chapter Nine, Results, for the full presentation of data.

### 8.3.2. Qualitative instruments

The research instruments which were analysed qualitatively were the Learning Styles Assignment, the Reflection Books, and the Guided Discussion. The software package used
The analysis of these essays took place in four stages. Each of the 44 first had to be typed in a format that could be read by NUDIST, a software package for analysing qualitative data. I then looked for categories following a grounded theory approach, rather than choosing a priori categories before looking at the data (Freeman, 1998), keeping these categories aside until the same process had been followed with my other two qualitative instruments (the Reflection Books and Guided Questionnaire).
The data was then coded for introduction into NUDIST. All three sets of data were then analysed together, and cross-referenced with grades. NUDIST allows a researcher to attach data to an infinite number of “nodes”, which are hierarchically organised into an elaborate tree diagram, although the metaphor used is actually the family. For example, to the Learning Styles node I chose to attach the following “children”: reflection, cognition, solitude, factors, autonomy, motivation and memory. They in turn had other generations of “children” attached.

It is then possible to use the NUDIST programming to do multiple and simultaneous searches and cross-references. The process of creating nodes and choosing where to place them on this tree, however, is entirely at the design of the researcher, lending itself elegantly to a grounded theory approach.

The tradition of grounded theory starts with and develops analyses from the point of view of the experiencing person. Such studies aim to capture the worlds of people by describing their situations, thoughts, feelings and actions and by relying on portraying the research participants’ lives and voices. Their concerns shape the direction and form of the research. The researcher seeks to learn how they construct their experience through their actions, intentions, beliefs and feelings.

(Smith, Harre & Van Langenhove, 1995, p. 31)

A simplified model of Glaser and Strauss’ (1967) famous account of grounded theory involves these stages:

- An initial attempt to develop categories which illuminate the data
- An attempt to ‘saturate’ these categories with many appropriate cases in order to demonstrate their relevance
- Developing these categories into more general analytic frameworks with relevance outside the setting.

(Silverman, 1993, p. 46)

In this way, theory springs from data and the emergent theory guides future data collection. This approach was suitable because of the second-order perspectives of nearly all of the data, where first-order research is about what people do and second-order research looks at how people perceive what they do.

In the first, and by far most commonly adopted perspective, we orient ourselves towards the world and make statements about it. In the second perspective, we orient ourselves towards people’s ideas about the world (or their experience of it). Let us
call the former first-order and the latter second-order perspectives.
(Marton, 1981, p. 178)

It is important to realise that this perspective cannot be simplified by saying that first-order research is objective and second-order is subjective. “Both perspectives are based on assigning meanings to what is observed or experienced. The difference is that first-order perspectives use categories and forms of description that others outside the situation can verify if they employ the same ones, while second-order perspectives use the categories and forms of description the people in the situations use themselves…Thus second-order perspectives capture, as Marton says, people’s ideas about the world (or their experience of it) while first-order perspectives label that world” (Freeman, 1998, p. 66).

Much of the content of what the trainees wrote about in the Learning Styles Assignment expressed their second-order perceptions of the learning that had occurred during the time of the course. In addition, previous learning experiences of all sorts were recalled.

8.3.2.2. Reflection Books

In the literature this form of diary is generally referred to as a dialogue journal (see chapter on Reflection). The way they were used on the courses in this research is the following. Every trainee would write twice about each of their teaching slots: (1) immediately after teaching they wrote "initial reflections" and then handed the book to the tutor who had observed that particular lesson for his/her comments on what the trainee had written; (2) the trainee then would then go home and, in a less excited frame of mind write "further reflections" which the tutor would see and comment on the next day. This system replaced the "crit sheets", traditional on both CTEFLA and CELTA courses, which are written by the tutor while the trainee is teaching and then handed to him/her as a description and/or judgement of that day's teaching. It is believed by the tutors who use the "Reflection Book" system that it develops in the trainees the ability to better assess their own lessons and to work out for themselves whether their teaching is effective and why. These books are private, but more than half of the trainees (27 out of 44) on my courses volunteered to let me copy them.
The procedure for analysis was the same as is described above under Learning Styles Assignment, using NUDIST. The data was additionally coded by week, and labelled as to whether the written comment in the Reflection Book was an initial or a further reflection. The tutors' comments were not analysed for the purposes of this study, although this might prove an interesting body of data to explore at another time.

8.3.2.3. **Guided Discussion**

These discussions were, in fact, reactions to a questionnaire. All of the trainees took part in this exercise. Each course had 14 or 15 participants, so they were divided into three groups of five trainees each. Each group of five was then taken to a quiet room, where they were instructed in how to record their conversation. They had been assured that I would not listen to the tapes until after the grades had been decided.

Three versions of this questionnaire had been piloted (see chapter on Pilot Studies). The one chosen (CTEFLA Group Questionnaire 1b.2, in Appendix B) is the one that had attracted the richest data. There were four questions, dealing with their learning on the course, sudden insights, motivation and affective factors.

On the first question they were asked to choose three out of 11 factors that had helped them learn the most on the course. In my explanation to the trainees of the rationale behind this form of questionnaire, I admitted that I was less interested in their reaching a consensus than I was in listening to the process they went through in trying to reach an agreement, so that they should remain aware of the time and be sure to spend some time on the other questions as well. Other questions sought information about whether their learning had taken place gradually or in sudden flashes, whether their motivation had been influenced by their post-course plans, and how their learning on the course had been influenced by such factors as intensity and support.

Being easily able to recognise my own trainees’ voices on the tape meant that it was a simple matter to cross-reference grades with comments. The data was analysed using NUDIST, as in the two qualitative sections immediately above, with much of the data contributing to shared nodes, providing triangulation. What was unique about this
instrument for gathering data was that because it elicited responses to direct questions from all 44 subjects, I was more easily able to formulate generalisations. For example, in the Learning Styles Assignment and in their Reflection Books trainees may have chosen to mention, of their own volition, what they planned to do after the course, but the relevant question on the Guided Discussion Questionnaire (“Do you think your motivation on the course was influenced by having a clear idea of what you plan to do with this Certificate?”) collected responses from everyone. Individual responses which emerged from the other instruments on the same topics thus became increasingly relevant.

The data from these research instruments will be presented in the next chapter: Results.
Chapter Nine

RESULTS

This chapter is divided into two major sections: quantitative data and qualitative data. The first section gives the results from the Honey Mumford Learning Styles Questionnaire and the Repertory Grid. The qualitative data section presents the data from the Reflection Books, Guided Discussion, and the Learning Styles Assignment. Although there is some cross-referencing, the major discussion on triangulation will be dealt with in the next chapter: Discussion.

Here is a reminder of the research questions:

- Why do some trainees on the CELTA do well and others not?
- What are the characteristics of the learning that take place?
- What is it about the course that usually makes it so effective?

Two further questions which emerged from the data itself were:

- Are the factors which characterise people who do well on the course causes or symptoms?
- Are teachers born or made?

9.1. **Quantitative Data**

The data for this section was derived from two instruments: The Honey Mumford Learning Styles Questionnaire and a Repertory Grid. Out of a total of 44 subjects, the following numbers, divided by grade, indicate the number that participated in the two quantitative instruments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SP</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>WP</th>
<th>IHC</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honey Mumford</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(101)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repertory Grid</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 9.1:** Numbers of subjects in the quantitative research instruments, divided by grade
As the Honey Mumford Questionnaire is an easily administered instrument, I was able to enlist the aid of colleagues who were also running CTEFLAs in order to get a much larger sample. The figure of 27, therefore, was from the three courses in my study. The larger number includes these 27.

9.1.1. The Honey Mumford Learning Styles Questionnaire

The results of this questionnaire should indicate which of the following learning styles are dominant:

- **Activist**
- **Pragmatist**
- **Reflector**
- **Theorist**

![Figure 9.1: The four Honey Mumford Learning Styles](image)

The general norms for the U.K. are displayed in Table 9.3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Band 1: very strong preference</th>
<th>Band 2: strong preference</th>
<th>Band 3: moderate preference</th>
<th>Band 4: Low Preference</th>
<th>Band 5: very low preference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activist</td>
<td>13-20</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>7-10 (mean 9.3)</td>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>0-3 (SD=2.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflector</td>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>15-17</td>
<td>12-14 (mean 13.6)</td>
<td>9-11</td>
<td>0-8 (SD=3.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theorist</td>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>14-15</td>
<td>11-13 (mean 12.5)</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>0-7 (SD=3.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pragmatist</td>
<td>17-20</td>
<td>15-16</td>
<td>12-14 (mean 13.7)</td>
<td>9-11</td>
<td>0-8 (SD=2.9)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 9.2: Honey Mumford Learning Styles norms for the U.K.**
(from Honey & Mumford, 1992, p. 72)

According to Table 9.2, a score of 14 in the Activist category would classify one as having a very strong preference, whereas in the Reflector category a score of 14 would indicate only a moderate preference. It is for this reason that it is useful to look at raw scores for patterns
from one grade to another, but one needs to look at preference categories to understand the flow of dominance from very strong to very low.

9.1.1.1. Data from 101 trainees

The data on the following tables were collected from 101 trainees from various courses, including the ones taught by me. By looking at the larger data set first, it was expected that certain generalisations could be made. Note that there are more grades included on these tables than there will be on tables dealing with my own trainees because the data for this instrument from my own courses did not include any “A”s nor any fails.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SP</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>WP</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honey Mumford 101 Totals</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.3: Total number of Honey Mumford subjects, divided by grade

This is the code used in the tables below. It is important to remember that “1” is high and “5” is low.

1 = Very strong preference
2 = Strong preference
3 = Moderate preference
4 = Low preference
5 = Very low preference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HM: ALL COURSES</th>
<th>Activist</th>
<th>Reflector</th>
<th>Theorist</th>
<th>Pragmatist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(mean)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“A”</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“B”</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Pass</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Pass</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak Pass</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.4: Honey Mumford preference scores from 101 trainees

Table 9.4 above shows into which preference band the raw score fell. Further comparisons are possible by stating how strong the raw score was within the band, whether it was high (h), mid (m) or low (l), as in Table 9.5 below:
Table 9.5: Honey Mumford preference scores for 101 trainees, with high, medium and low indications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HM: ALL COURSES</th>
<th>Activist</th>
<th>Reflector</th>
<th>Theorist</th>
<th>Pragmatist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(mean)</td>
<td>3 (h)</td>
<td>3 (l)</td>
<td>4 (h)</td>
<td>4 (m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“A”</td>
<td>4 (h)</td>
<td>2 (h)</td>
<td>1 (m)</td>
<td>3 (h)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“B”</td>
<td>3 (h)</td>
<td>3 (m)</td>
<td>4 (h)</td>
<td>4 (m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Pass</td>
<td>3 (h)</td>
<td>3 (m)</td>
<td>4 (h)</td>
<td>4 (h)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Pass</td>
<td>2 (m)</td>
<td>3 (l)</td>
<td>4 (m)</td>
<td>4 (l)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak Pass</td>
<td>3 (m)</td>
<td>3 (l)</td>
<td>4 (m)</td>
<td>4 (m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>3 (m)</td>
<td>4 (m)</td>
<td>5 (h)</td>
<td>4 (m)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The emerging patterns above are also reflected in the raw data scores:

Table 9.6: Honey Mumford raw scores for 101 trainees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HM: ALL COURSES</th>
<th>Activist</th>
<th>Reflector</th>
<th>Theorist</th>
<th>Pragmatist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(mean)</td>
<td>10.4554</td>
<td>12.9703</td>
<td>9.9604</td>
<td>10.5743</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“A”</td>
<td>6.0000</td>
<td>17.5000</td>
<td>10.1750</td>
<td>14.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“B”</td>
<td>10.4500</td>
<td>13.1000</td>
<td>10.4211</td>
<td>11.3158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Pass</td>
<td>10.5789</td>
<td>13.4211</td>
<td>10.4211</td>
<td>11.3158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Pass</td>
<td>11.3462</td>
<td>12.6154</td>
<td>8.9615</td>
<td>9.4615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak Pass</td>
<td>9.3077</td>
<td>12.2308</td>
<td>9.6923</td>
<td>10.5385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>9.0000</td>
<td>9.0000</td>
<td>7.0000</td>
<td>10.0000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These are the patterns:

Activist: The scores increase regularly from “A” to Mid Pass (but not beyond: they then decline)

Reflector: The scores decrease regularly (with a slight reversal from “B” to “SP”)

Theorist: The scores could be chunked into three categories (“A” alone; “B”’s with “SP”’s; Mid and Weak Passes with Fail) to show a regular decrease

Pragmatist: No significant pattern

The results from these 101 trainees indicate that those among them who got higher grades on the course were more reflective and more theoretical than the mean, even though those were not the strongest bands for anyone. Table 9.7 shows the learning styles patterns by grade:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>4th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Activist</td>
<td>Reflector</td>
<td>Theorist</td>
<td>Pragmatist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Theorist</td>
<td>Reflector</td>
<td>Pragmatist</td>
<td>Activist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Activist</td>
<td>Reflector</td>
<td>Theorist</td>
<td>Pragmatist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>Activist</td>
<td>Reflector</td>
<td>Theorist / Pragmatist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Activist</td>
<td>Reflector</td>
<td>Theorist</td>
<td>Pragmatist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP</td>
<td>Activist</td>
<td>Reflector</td>
<td>Theorist / Pragmatist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Activist</td>
<td>Reflector / Pragmatist</td>
<td>Theorist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.7: Total Honey Mumford preferences ranked by grade (101 subjects)

9.1.1.2. Results from my own courses only

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SP</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>WP</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honey Mumford: My Own Courses</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.8: Number of Honey Mumford subjects on my own courses, divided by grade

Table 9.9. below shows the preference scores for the trainees on my own courses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HM: MY COURSES</th>
<th>Activist</th>
<th>Reflector</th>
<th>Theorist</th>
<th>Pragmatist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(mean)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“B”</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Pass</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Pass</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak Pass</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.9: Honey Mumford preference scores from my own courses

There is little variation from the relevant chart with 101 subjects; the two cases which are different are indicated by shading. Table 9.10 below looks at preferences more carefully:
The only pattern here (remembering that 2 is a stronger preference than 4) is with Pragmatist, in which the “B”s had a lower preference than any of the others. Also, if one compares the overall categories of the “B”s with the Mid Passes, the former is lower in all cases, i.e., the Mid Passes were more active, more reflective, more theoretical and more pragmatic. Again, the shading indicates differences from the previous set of tables containing scores from the larger sample of 101 trainees.

Table 9.11 above shows the actual figures. If one were not to consider the Honey Mumford profile based on general norms for 3500 people, and just look at the raw figures, there does seem to be a pattern in this sample of lower scores for the “B”s in the Activist, Reflector and Pragmatist categories, and a lower score than the mean in all categories.

The same conclusions cannot be drawn from looking at the results from the 101 sample and the sub-sample of my own trainees (who comprise 27 of the 101 in the larger study). Given that the data from all of the other instruments concerns my own trainees only, what is useful to learn from this instrument is that those “B”s in the sub-sample above scored highest in Activist, followed by Reflector,
then Theorist, then Pragmatist, and that 13 of the 19 “B”s on my courses are represented.

The order of preferences for this group of 27 trainees, nevertheless, is very close to what was discovered with the 101 sample, shown in Table 9.12 below:

"Grade" | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | 4th
---|---|---|---|---
Mean | Activist | Reflector | Theorist | Pragmatist
B | Activist | Reflector | Theorist | Pragmatist
SP | Reflect | Activist | Pragmatist | Theorist
P | Activist | Reflector | Pragmatist | Theorist
WP | Activist | Reflector | Pragmatist | Theorist

| Table 9.12: Honey Mumford preferences ranked, by grade, from my own courses |

The differences are in bold. It is interesting to note that the “SP”s on my courses differed from the larger sample, and that the “B”s remained the same.

9.1.1.3. **Honey Mumford: Some conclusions**

It would seem that people wishing to join the teaching field are Activists, although having said that, the actual score in most cases falls only in the Moderate Preference band. The “B”s in both the large sample and my own courses followed the same pattern: Activist, Reflector, Theorist, Pragmatist. Although this has been revealed to be a common pattern in this study, on my own courses each of those bands for the “B”s was lower than the mean, which was not true in the larger sample.

Having analysed the data from the Honey Mumford Learning Styles Questionnaire, I wish to express some reservations about using it as an instrument for learning about how teachers reflect. To begin with, the questions themselves differ in interpretation from the Experiential Learning Cycle. The interpretation of a Reflector on the Honey Mumford LSQ is uniquely that of someone who plans carefully before taking action. The descriptions of all four learning styles are part of the questionnaire itself, which is in Appendix B, but here is how Honey Mumford describes a reflector:

Reflector likes to stand back to ponder experiences and observe them from many different perspectives. They collect data, both first hand and from others, and prefer to think about it thoroughly before coming to any conclusion. The thorough
collection and analysis of data about experiences and events is what counts so they tend to postpone reaching definitive conclusions for as long as possible. Their philosophy is to be cautious. They are thoughtful people who like to consider all possible angles and implications before making a move. They prefer to take a back seat in meetings and discussions. They enjoy observing other people in action. They listen to others and get the drift of the discussion before making their own points. They tend to adopt a low profile and have a slightly distant, tolerant unruffled air about them. When they act it is part of a wide picture which includes the past as well as the present and others’ observations as well as their own. (Honey and Mumford, 1986)

A person whose reflective style includes reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action (in our context that would be during and after teaching, which are common activities for experienced teachers), might score very low in this questionnaire’s Reflector category. (See Chapter Five for an elaboration on these concepts of Schön’s).

9.1.2. The Repertory Grid

This section is intended to reveal the construct choices of 19 out of 44 of the trainees in my study. The construct pairs to choose from were:

- leader - follower,
- simple - complicated,
- interacting with people - interacting with mind,
- independent - dependent,
- individual - part of a group,
- struggling – comfortable,
- positive image – negative image,
- viewed from outside – viewed from inside.

The elements were:

- my favourite teacher,
- myself as a learner,
- myself as a teacher,
- my ideal self,
- myself in a group,
- myself in solitude,
- myself as a child,
- myself as an adult.

The analysis starts with the leader-follower construct, relating it to each of the elements, such as myself as a teacher, myself in solitude, etc. The results from the first week are compared with the fourth (last), and any changes noted. The filling in of a repertory grid
was discussed in Chapters Six and Eight, but here is a brief overview. In listing the constructs, the first mentioned is the pole with the number ‘3’ assigned (leader, in the first case) and the second mentioned construct (here, follower) has the number ‘1’. Other possible scores are ‘2’, when the subject feels that the construct for that particular element is somewhere between the two constructs, and ‘0’, when the subject doesn’t feel that either construct is applicable. Table 9.13 below shows the actual Repertory Grid used in this study, with the first row filled in as an example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A favourite teacher</th>
<th>Myself as a learner</th>
<th>Myself as a teacher</th>
<th>My ideal self</th>
<th>Myself in a group</th>
<th>Myself in solitude</th>
<th>Myself as a child</th>
<th>Myself as an adult</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leader</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interacting with people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struggling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive image</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viewed from outside</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.13: The Repertory Grid used in this study

There were 21 trainees from my own CTEFLA courses who participated in the Repertory Grid exercise.

Number of Repertory Grid Subjects:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“B”</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Pass</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Pass</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak Pass</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A brief comment needs to be inserted here about the two Weak Passes. As will be seen in the data, these two “WP"s sometimes interrupt patterns which seem to ascend or descend neatly through the other grades. This might be explained by the fact that there were only two of them and that their choices could, therefore, be idiosyncratic rather than typical. It
happens that both of them were men in their mid-forties, which may or may not be relevant. The fact remains that these two tended to interrupt otherwise tidy patterns. Nevertheless, it must be kept in mind that none of the numbers being analysed by SPSS were large, and that the claims to generalisability are limited.

The intention in this chapter is to present the data, pointing out significances for the reader. There are eight sections, one for each pair of constructs. For example, the first pair is leader – follower. Tables are presented showing the general mean and the mean for each grade. Patterns are shaded. Following each table is a prose explanation intended to highlight these patterns. Each pair of constructs has a table for Week One, Week Four and Changes (from one week to the other). At the conclusion of these eight sections there is a summary and a summary table (9.1.2.9.), with the fullest description reserved for Chapter Ten: Discussion.

9.1.2.1. Leader (3) to Follower (1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lead-Follow Week One</th>
<th>favourite teacher</th>
<th>self as a learner</th>
<th>self as a teacher</th>
<th>ideal self</th>
<th>self in a group</th>
<th>self in solitude</th>
<th>self as a child</th>
<th>self as an adult</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(mean)</td>
<td>2.4762</td>
<td>1.7619</td>
<td>2.2381</td>
<td>2.1905</td>
<td>1.8571</td>
<td>1.6190</td>
<td>1.6667</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“B”</td>
<td>2.3750</td>
<td>1.6250</td>
<td>2.6250</td>
<td>2.1250</td>
<td>1.6250</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>1.7500</td>
<td>2.1250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Pass</td>
<td>2.6000</td>
<td>1.8000</td>
<td>2.2000</td>
<td>2.4000</td>
<td>2.4000</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>1.8000</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Pass</td>
<td>2.6667</td>
<td>1.8333</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>2.3333</td>
<td>1.8333</td>
<td>1.5000</td>
<td>1.6667</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak Pass</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>1.5000</td>
<td>1.5000</td>
<td>1.5000</td>
<td>2.5000</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>1.5000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.14: Repertory Grid results. Leader (3) to Follower (1): Week One

Leader-Follower, Week One patterns: In Table 9.14 above it can be seen that at this point in the course “B”s were different from the others in the categories of favourite teacher and self as learners, both of which incline towards the follower pole. Those categories more inclined towards the leader construct are self as teacher, in solitude, and self as adult. The closest score to leader (3) is in self as a teacher. The two categories with the lowest scores (i.e., follower) are self as a learner and self in a group.
Table 9.15: Repertory Grid results. Leader (3) to Follower (1): Week Four

Leader-Follower, Week Four patterns: In five categories (see shaded boxes above) the “B”s tend towards the leader construct in a regular pattern up from the lower grades. The scores for both favourite teacher and self as a teacher are identical, both very close to the leader pole.

Table 9.16: Repertory Grid results. Leader (3) to Follower (1): Changes.

Leader- Follower, Changes - patterns: “B”s moved even closer to the leader construct for six of the eight elements. The biggest moves for the “B”s were in the way they viewed themselves in a group and in solitude, and there was also a big jump in the favourite teacher category. Please note that the full presentation of the Repertory Grid data will be followed by a summary of findings.
9.1.2.2 Simple (3) to Complicated (1)

**Table 9.17: Repertory Grid results. Simple (3) to Complicated (1): Week One.**

Simple to Complicated, Week One patterns: “B”s have half their categories slightly above the middle road between simple and complicated, and half slightly below, with *self as a child* being seen as the most complicated. Their highest simple scores are for *self as a learner* and *self as a teacher*. In those two categories there is also a regular pattern, with their peers moving closer to the complicated pole the lower their grades are. “B”s also see themselves as significantly simpler than their peers in the *self in solitude* category (with the Weak Passes as a dramatic contrast).

**Table 9.18: Repertory Grid results. Simple (3) to Complicated (1): Week Four**

Simple-Complicated, Week Four patterns: What is interesting here is that all of the grades, by the end of the course, were rating themselves as both simple and complicated in equal measures. The “B”s, it seems, have become more complicated, the Passes simpler, and the Weak Passes kept their original opinion. There is a regular pattern in the *favourite teacher* category with the higher grades finding that role model increasingly simple.
Table 9.19: Repertory Grid results. Simple (3) to Complicated (1): Changes

Simple-Complicated, Changes - patterns: There are no regular patterns here through the grades, but it is worth pointing out that the “B”s have gone through more of a complicating process than any of the others, except for the “WP”s. Their view of self in a group, however (like most of the others), has become simpler. Self as a child has also become somewhat simpler.

9.1.2.3. Interacting with People (3) to Interacting with Mind (1)

Table 9.20: Repertory Grid results. Interacting with People (3) / Mind (1): Week One

People – Mind, Week One patterns: Except in one category (solitude) “B”s tend more towards the interacting with mind construct than the mean, with regular patterns in the self as learner and as an adult categories. It is interesting that the “B”s appear to think of solitude as having so much more to do with people than the others (except for the two “WP”s).
People – Mind, Week Four patterns: It is interesting to note that the “B”s have come away from the idea that solitude has anything to do with other people!

Table 9.21: Repertory Grid results. Interacting with People (3) / Mind (1): Week Four

People – Mind, Changes - patterns: As pointed out before, the “B”s have now got a more isolated concept of their solitude, whereas their colleagues seem to be peopling their solitude more (with students, colleagues?). The biggest change for “B”s is in a more populated childhood, but in general the other grades have made greater changes in the people-mind interaction constructs.

9.1.2.4. Independent (3) to Dependent (1)

Table 9.22: Repertory Grid results. Independent (3) to Dependent (1): Week One

Table 9.23: Repertory Grid results. Independent (3) to Dependent (1): Week One
Independent to Dependent, Week One patterns: Here the “B”’s emerge as viewing themselves significantly more independent in four important categories: self as a teacher, in a group, in solitude, and in viewing their favourite teacher. Interestingly, as learners they consider themselves more dependent than the mean. If one looks at the Weak Passes, however, the pattern falls apart, but it has already been shown that it is not uncommon for these two Weak Passes to resemble the “B”’s more than the other passes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent-Dependent Week One</th>
<th>Changes</th>
<th>favourite teacher</th>
<th>self as a learner</th>
<th>self as a teacher</th>
<th>ideal self</th>
<th>self in a group</th>
<th>self in solitude</th>
<th>self as a child</th>
<th>self as an adult</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(mean)</td>
<td>.1948</td>
<td>.5108</td>
<td>.4545</td>
<td>.0628</td>
<td>.3723</td>
<td>-.0259</td>
<td>-.3225</td>
<td>.0303</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“B”</td>
<td>.1250</td>
<td>.3611</td>
<td>.4306</td>
<td>.1528</td>
<td>-.0139</td>
<td>-.2083</td>
<td>-.5694</td>
<td>.0194</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Pass</td>
<td>.4000</td>
<td>.6000</td>
<td>.8000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>.4000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>-.2000</td>
<td>-.2000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Pass</td>
<td>.1667</td>
<td>.6667</td>
<td>.5000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>1.1667</td>
<td>.1667</td>
<td>-.3333</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak Pass</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>.5000</td>
<td>-.5000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>-.5000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>.5000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.24: Repertory Grid results. Independent (3) to Dependent (1): Week Four

Independent-Dependent, Week Four patterns: Again disregarding the Weak Passes, there are four regular patterns, but they are different from in Week One. All of the trainees in this study, it seems, had decided after the experience of the CELTA that their favourite teacher was even more independent than they had thought. The “B”’s still think of themselves as more dependent learners than the others, but everyone has moved towards the independent construct. The “B”’s looked more independent in self in a group than the others in Week One; they have changed their minds little, but everyone else has moved considerably towards the independent construct. The same pattern persists in the self in solitude category, with everyone moving a little more towards the independent pole, but a new pattern can be seen now in the self as a child category which didn’t exist in Week One.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent-Dependent Week Four</th>
<th>Changes</th>
<th>favourite teacher</th>
<th>self as a learner</th>
<th>self as a teacher</th>
<th>ideal self</th>
<th>self in a group</th>
<th>self in solitude</th>
<th>self as a child</th>
<th>self as an adult</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(mean)</td>
<td>.1948</td>
<td>.5108</td>
<td>.4545</td>
<td>.0628</td>
<td>.3723</td>
<td>-.0259</td>
<td>-.3225</td>
<td>.0303</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“B”</td>
<td>.1250</td>
<td>.3611</td>
<td>.4306</td>
<td>.1528</td>
<td>-.0139</td>
<td>-.2083</td>
<td>-.5694</td>
<td>.0194</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Pass</td>
<td>.4000</td>
<td>.6000</td>
<td>.8000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>.4000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>-.2000</td>
<td>-.2000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Pass</td>
<td>.1667</td>
<td>.6667</td>
<td>.5000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>1.1667</td>
<td>.1667</td>
<td>-.3333</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak Pass</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>.5000</td>
<td>-.5000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>-.5000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>.5000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.25: Repertory Grid results. Independent (3) to Dependent (1): Changes
Independent-Dependent, Changes - patterns: (see discussion under Week Four also). The surprise here is that nearly everyone appeared to have decided that childhood was a more dependent period than they had thought at the beginning of the course. All of the grades have moved in the direction of independent learners, but the “B”s less than the others, rather significantly, and the “B”s alone have moved closer to dependence both in a group and in solitude. The ideal self pattern is really too little to be significant; the ideal self category in general tended to reveal little of significance regardless of the constructs.

9.1.2.5. Individual (3) to Part of a Group (1)

Table 9.26: Repertory Grid results. Individual (3) to Group (1): Week One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indiv-Group</th>
<th>favourite teacher</th>
<th>self as a learner</th>
<th>self as a teacher</th>
<th>ideal self</th>
<th>self in a group</th>
<th>self in solitude</th>
<th>self as a child</th>
<th>self as an adult</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week One (mean)</td>
<td>2.3810</td>
<td>2.1429</td>
<td>1.9524</td>
<td>2.0952</td>
<td>1.5714</td>
<td>2.3810</td>
<td>2.1429</td>
<td>2.2857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“B”</td>
<td>2.3750</td>
<td>2.1250</td>
<td>2.1250</td>
<td>2.1250</td>
<td>1.8750</td>
<td>2.6250</td>
<td>2.2500</td>
<td>2.3750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Pass</td>
<td>2.4000</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>1.8000</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>1.8000</td>
<td>2.4000</td>
<td>1.8000</td>
<td>2.4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Pass</td>
<td>2.5000</td>
<td>2.3333</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>2.1667</td>
<td>1.1667</td>
<td>2.1667</td>
<td>2.3333</td>
<td>2.1667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak Pass</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>1.5000</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.27: Repertory Grid results. Individual (3) to Group (1): Week Four

Individual to Group, Week One patterns: Two patterns emerge: in both solitude and when in a group the “B”s tended to view themselves as more individual than their peers. (There is also a pattern with favourite teacher, going the other direction, but the differences are very little.)
Individual-Part of Group, Week Four patterns: All of the patterns from Week One disappeared and there were no new ones. It will be noticed, though, that the “B”s became even more individualistic in groups and in solitude.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indiv-Group Changes</th>
<th>favourite teacher</th>
<th>self as a learner</th>
<th>self as a teacher</th>
<th>ideal self</th>
<th>self in a group</th>
<th>self in solitude</th>
<th>self as a child</th>
<th>self as an adult</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(mean)</td>
<td>.1645</td>
<td>.2207</td>
<td>.1840</td>
<td>.1321</td>
<td>.5195</td>
<td>.3463</td>
<td>.1298</td>
<td>.0840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“B”</td>
<td>.0694</td>
<td>.2083</td>
<td>-.1250</td>
<td>-.0139</td>
<td>.3472</td>
<td>.2639</td>
<td>.0833</td>
<td>-.1528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Pass</td>
<td>.2000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>.4000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>.2000</td>
<td>-.2000</td>
<td>-.2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Pass</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>.3333</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>.5000</td>
<td>-.1667</td>
<td>.1667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak Pass</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>.5000</td>
<td>1.5000</td>
<td>.5000</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.28: Repertory Grid results. Individual (3) to Group (1): Changes

Individual - Part of Group, Changes - patterns: There are no regular patterns here. A general statement might be made about the fact that 36 of the 40 cells show an increase in individuality (and three of the five that show a slight tendency towards a group orientation belong to the “B”s).

9.1.2.6. Struggling (1) to Comfortable (3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strugg-Comf Week One (mean)</th>
<th>favourite teacher</th>
<th>self as a learner</th>
<th>self as a teacher</th>
<th>ideal self</th>
<th>self in a group</th>
<th>self in solitude</th>
<th>self as a child</th>
<th>self as an adult</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“B”</td>
<td>1.2381</td>
<td>1.8095</td>
<td>1.8095</td>
<td>1.0952</td>
<td>1.7143</td>
<td>1.6190</td>
<td>1.8571</td>
<td>1.7143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Pass</td>
<td>1.6250</td>
<td>1.6250</td>
<td>1.7500</td>
<td>1.2500</td>
<td>2.2500</td>
<td>1.8750</td>
<td>1.5000</td>
<td>1.6250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Pass</td>
<td>.8000</td>
<td>1.8000</td>
<td>1.8000</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>1.6000</td>
<td>1.2000</td>
<td>1.6000</td>
<td>1.8000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak Pass</td>
<td>1.1667</td>
<td>1.8333</td>
<td>1.6667</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>1.1667</td>
<td>1.6667</td>
<td>2.1667</td>
<td>1.6667</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.29: Repertory Grid results. Struggling (3) to Comfortable (1): Week One

Struggling to Comfortable, Week One patterns: In half of the categories (favourite teacher, ideal self, self in solitude, self in a group) the “B”s have a more struggling concept, and it is interesting that there is quite a dramatic difference in the self in a group category. The “B”s are more comfortable than the others in the self as learner and self as a child categories. The Weak Passes certainly reveal themselves as more complicated than their younger peers on this grid: They have half of their responses between the midway
and struggling pole, whereas by far the majority of the others’ responses are between the midway and comfortable pole.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strugg-Comf Week Four</th>
<th>favourite teacher</th>
<th>self as a learner</th>
<th>self as a teacher</th>
<th>ideal self</th>
<th>self in a group</th>
<th>self in solitude</th>
<th>self as a child</th>
<th>self as an adult</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(mean)</td>
<td>1.3182</td>
<td>1.6364</td>
<td>1.7273</td>
<td>1.3636</td>
<td>1.8182</td>
<td>1.5000</td>
<td>1.9091</td>
<td>1.5909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“B”</td>
<td>1.4444</td>
<td>1.6667</td>
<td>1.6667</td>
<td>1.4444</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>1.5556</td>
<td>1.7778</td>
<td>1.8889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Pass</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>1.8000</td>
<td>1.8000</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>1.6000</td>
<td>1.2000</td>
<td>1.8000</td>
<td>1.4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Pass</td>
<td>1.5000</td>
<td>1.6667</td>
<td>1.5000</td>
<td>1.6667</td>
<td>1.6667</td>
<td>1.6667</td>
<td>1.8333</td>
<td>1.3333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak Pass</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>2.5000</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>1.5000</td>
<td>3.0000</td>
<td>1.5000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.30: Repertory Grid results. Struggling (3) to Comfortable (1):
Week Four

Struggling-Comfortable, Week Four patterns: The differences are no longer so great. The only category in which the “B”s differentiate themselves is in self as an adult, where they see themselves as more struggling than the others, but still closer to the comfortable pole. Now it is certainly only the Weak Passes who have any scores closer to the struggling pole.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strugg-Comf Changes</th>
<th>favourite teacher</th>
<th>self as a learner</th>
<th>self as a teacher</th>
<th>ideal self</th>
<th>self in a group</th>
<th>self in solitude</th>
<th>self as a child</th>
<th>self as an adult</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(mean)</td>
<td>.0801</td>
<td>-.1731</td>
<td>-.0822</td>
<td>.2684</td>
<td>.1039</td>
<td>-.1190</td>
<td>.0520</td>
<td>-.1234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“B”</td>
<td>.1806</td>
<td>.0417</td>
<td>-.0833</td>
<td>.1944</td>
<td>-.2500</td>
<td>-.3194</td>
<td>.2778</td>
<td>.2639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Pass</td>
<td>.2000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>.2000</td>
<td>-.4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Pass</td>
<td>.3333</td>
<td>-.1667</td>
<td>-.1667</td>
<td>.6667</td>
<td>.5000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>-.3333</td>
<td>-.3333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak Pass</td>
<td>.0500</td>
<td>-1.5000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>.5000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>-.5000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.31: Repertory Grid results. Struggling (3) to Comfortable (1):
Changes

Struggling-Comfortable, Changes - patterns: What is immediately remarkable here is the lack of change in this set of grids from the beginning to the end of the course, something which has not been evident before. The biggest change is how much more comfortable the Weak Passes feel about themselves as learners. The “B”s have become more comfortable with themselves in groups and in solitude. Everyone else in those two areas either stayed the same or got closer to struggling.
9.1.2.7. Positive Image (3) to Negative Image (1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive-Neg Week One</th>
<th>favourite teacher</th>
<th>self as a learner</th>
<th>self as a teacher</th>
<th>ideal self</th>
<th>self in a group</th>
<th>self in solitude</th>
<th>self as a child</th>
<th>self as an adult</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(mean)</td>
<td>2.6190</td>
<td>2.3810</td>
<td>2.2381</td>
<td>2.7143</td>
<td>1.9048</td>
<td>2.2381</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>2.3333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“B”</td>
<td>2.7500</td>
<td>2.5000</td>
<td>2.5000</td>
<td>3.0000</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>2.5000</td>
<td>2.3750</td>
<td>2.3750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Pass</td>
<td>2.3333</td>
<td>2.1667</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>2.3333</td>
<td>1.5000</td>
<td>1.8333</td>
<td>1.6667</td>
<td>2.1667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak Pass</td>
<td>2.5000</td>
<td>2.5000</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>3.0000</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.32: Repertory Grid results. Positive (3) to Negative (1): Week One

Positive to Negative, Week One patterns: The “B”s are more positive than the mean in every single category, and they give themselves the top score of 3 for their ideal self, with favourite teacher also coming very close. There are regular decreasing patterns through the grades in the categories of self as teacher, ideal self, and self as a child. The Strong Passes are also closer to the positive than the negative pole in each category. The Mid-Passes have one of the lowest scores on the grid for self in a group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive-Neg Week Four</th>
<th>favourite teacher</th>
<th>self as a learner</th>
<th>self as a teacher</th>
<th>ideal self</th>
<th>self in a group</th>
<th>self in solitude</th>
<th>self as a child</th>
<th>self as an adult</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(mean)</td>
<td>2.8182</td>
<td>2.2727</td>
<td>2.3636</td>
<td>2.8182</td>
<td>1.9091</td>
<td>2.3636</td>
<td>2.0455</td>
<td>2.0909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“B”</td>
<td>3.0000</td>
<td>2.4444</td>
<td>2.5555</td>
<td>2.8889</td>
<td>2.1111</td>
<td>2.4444</td>
<td>2.3333</td>
<td>2.1111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Pass</td>
<td>2.8000</td>
<td>2.6000</td>
<td>2.4000</td>
<td>3.0000</td>
<td>2.2000</td>
<td>2.6000</td>
<td>2.2000</td>
<td>2.4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Pass</td>
<td>2.8333</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>2.1667</td>
<td>2.5000</td>
<td>1.5000</td>
<td>2.1667</td>
<td>1.8333</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak Pass</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>1.5000</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>3.0000</td>
<td>1.5000</td>
<td>2.0000</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>1.5000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.33: Repertory Grid results. Positive (3) to Negative (1): Week Four

Positive-Negative, Week Four patterns: The “B”s are still more positive than the mean in each category, although the Strong Passes are even more positive than the “B”s in five categories. There are regular decreasing patterns through the grades in the categories of favourite teacher, self as teacher and self as child.
Table 9.34: Repertory Grid results. Positive (3) to Negative (1): Changes

Positive-Negative, Changes - patterns: There are nearly as many non-changes between Weeks One and Four here as in the last set of grids (struggling-comfortable had 11; here there are 8). The surprising category is self as an adult, in which all groups became more negative by the end of the course. The Weak Passes became more negative in half of their categories.

9.1.2.8. Viewed from Outside (3) to Viewed from Inside (1)

Table 9.35: Repertory Grid results. Outside (3) to Inside (1): Week One

Outside to Inside, Week One patterns: It must be pointed out that this pair of constructs was the one that the trainees related to the least, so frequent choices of 0 would have brought the scores down considerably (which makes it fascinating that the self as adult category is the one that attracted the highest viewed from outside scores). The idea behind this pair of constructs was to tease out whether when thinking of themselves as a teacher, for example, they were looking through their own eyes, having a subjective experience, or were looking on themselves from outside, with an objective perspective. However, it is not in the least imperative that everyone who fills in a repertory grid have the same interpretation of what the constructs mean. There is one pattern worth noting above. In the favourite teacher category, the higher the grade, the more objective the view.
Outside-Inside, Week Four patterns: It is entirely possible that the trainees’ concept of what this pair of constructs meant was not the same as it was in Week One. There are some patterns. As in Week One, there is a regular cline at favourite teacher, but now added to that one are self in a group and self as an adult. In each case the higher grades show an increasingly outside view. The score of 2.5000 for self as a learner with the Weak Passes is the highest score on the grid, and should be contrasted with their having the lowest scores in nearly every other category.

Outside-Inside, Changes - patterns: There is one category worth noting: in self as a teacher everyone moved closer to the outside pole. It’s difficult to generalise with this last set of grids, because the interpretation of what the constructs meant might have varied considerably from person to person.

9.1.2.9. The Repertory Grid: A summary

It is possible to draw a few conclusions from this data about “B”s, although it is impossible to make sweeping statements because of the limited number of participants in this study. There were only eight “B”s who did this Repertory Grid exercise.
Nevertheless, by comparing the “B” result with the mean scores, one can see that there are a considerable number of differences.

Table 9.38 shows in which ways a “B” is closer to a particular construct than the mean, while remaining within the dominant construct. In other words, what are not included are the constructs in which the mean is closer to the pole being considered. An example can be given with the leader-follower constructs and the element favourite teacher, in which the mean score is 2.4762, and the “B” score is 2.3750. In this case the “B” inclines more towards the follower construct, but is still definitely on the leader side of the cline with a score above 2.0. Only situations in which the “B” has a score closer to the construct in which it finds itself are indicated on the chart below, the reason being that I wish to make clear statements about which construct was actually chosen. Constructs in parentheses are for cases when the “B” is inclining in a different direction from the mean, yet the “B” score is only 2.0. In this case the construct in parentheses indicates the direction it is inclining towards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>favourite teacher</th>
<th>self as a learner</th>
<th>self as a teacher</th>
<th>Ideal self</th>
<th>self in a group</th>
<th>self in solitude</th>
<th>self as a child</th>
<th>self as an adult</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leader – Follower</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wk 1</td>
<td>follower</td>
<td>leader</td>
<td>follower</td>
<td>(leader)</td>
<td>leader</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wk 4</td>
<td>leader</td>
<td>(leader)</td>
<td>leader</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Simple – complicated</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wk 1</td>
<td>simple</td>
<td>simple</td>
<td>simple</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>complicat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wk 4</td>
<td>simple</td>
<td>simple</td>
<td>simple</td>
<td>complicat</td>
<td>complicat</td>
<td>complicat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>People - mind</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wk 1</td>
<td>mind</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(mind)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wk 4</td>
<td>people</td>
<td>people</td>
<td>people</td>
<td>mind</td>
<td>(people)</td>
<td>(mind)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Independent - dependent</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wk 1</td>
<td>independ</td>
<td>depend</td>
<td>independ</td>
<td>independ</td>
<td>independ</td>
<td>independ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wk 4</td>
<td>independ</td>
<td>independ</td>
<td>independ</td>
<td>independ</td>
<td>independ</td>
<td>independ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual – group</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wk 1</td>
<td>individual</td>
<td>individual</td>
<td>individual</td>
<td>individual</td>
<td>individual</td>
<td>individual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wk 4</td>
<td>(group)</td>
<td>individual</td>
<td>individual</td>
<td>individual</td>
<td>individual</td>
<td>individual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comfortable - struggling</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>comfort</td>
<td>comfort</td>
<td>struggle</td>
<td></td>
<td>comfort</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wk 4</td>
<td>comfort</td>
<td>(struggle)</td>
<td>comfort</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Positive– negative</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wk 1</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td>(positive)</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wk 4</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outside– inside</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wk 1</td>
<td>outside</td>
<td>inside</td>
<td>inside</td>
<td>(outside)</td>
<td>inside</td>
<td>inside</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wk 4</td>
<td>(outside)</td>
<td>inside</td>
<td>outside</td>
<td>inside</td>
<td>inside</td>
<td>inside</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 9.38:** Constructs that “B”s are closer to than the mean
“B”s have got more dominant scores than the mean in 88 out of 128 cases (68.75%). There are two ways of analysing this chart: vertically considers the chosen constructs for each element, and horizontally views which elements have got clearly chosen constructs. The dominant constructs are **positive** (16/16 cases), **independent** (11/16 cases) and **individual** (9/16 cases). As for the elements, if one looks at *self as a teacher*, it appears that “B”s, compared with their peers, consistently considered themselves as **leaders**, **simple**, **independent**, **comfortable** and **positive**. *Self in solitude* is dominant in **leader**, **independent**, **individual**, **positive** and **viewed from inside**. The most change can be viewed in *self in a group*, in which the constructs fluctuated the most between Weeks One and Four.

This analysis of the data leaves one with an impression of a “B” as being more self-confident and optimistic, both at the beginning and at the end of the course. Although not surprising in itself, this is a potent conclusion because it is corroborated by the qualitative data, which follows.

9.2. **Qualitative data**

Qualitative data were gathered from three instruments. Some of this data were also susceptible to quantitative-type analyses. These were the following, here divided by grade and number of participants in each.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SP</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>WP</th>
<th>IHC</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflection Books</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Styles Assignment</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided Discussion</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 9.39: Numbers of subjects in the qualitative research instruments, divided by grade**

The data from these three instruments were pooled into shared categories. In addition, it proved useful to look at the Reflection Books separately for categories particular to that
context. There were also direct answers to the first two questions on the Guided Discussion instrument, which will be summarised. This section begins, therefore by presenting some data specific to those two instruments, followed by the general headings of Trainee Background, Learning Styles, and Learning to Teach.

9.2.1. Reflection Books

It must be kept in mind that that more than half of the Reflection Books which were voluntarily given to me to photocopy came from “B”s. That, of course, is significant (they did not know at the time what their results were), but it does make it very difficult to make generalisations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Reflection Books Analysed</th>
<th>Total Trainees on 3 Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IHC</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.40: Number of Reflection Book subjects, divided by grade

9.2.1.1. Voices

The Reflection Books generated a large amount of data. It would have been possible to categorise them in a variety of useful ways. The one which I chose was inspired by the work of Stanley (1995). In analysing the content and style that the teachers in her study used when communicating with her in their dialogue journals, Stanley identified four different “voices” that they used:

- a values and feelings voice
- a contextual voice
- a voice which expressed the students’ perspective
• a relational voice which was embedded in the supervisory relationship

I found evidence of all four of Stanley’s voices, as well as discovering others, but find it convenient to use her four categories to hold them all.

Freeman (1991) has also written about voices. He made observations about how the language of the teachers in his study developed as their knowledge and awareness developed. He concluded that until they had the language to express new concepts, the concepts were not entirely conscious. However, once identified, these new concepts were tools at their disposal. He also identified different “voices” that indicated the perspective the trainees were speaking from. For example, I found a few examples of trainees writing about the role of a teacher in a very non-personal, prescriptive way and I was curious as to whose voice was coming through: their tutors’?, their own from the perspective of having been students?, their own emerging teacher voice?, society’s?, etc. Only three trainees used this kind of voice, and all three were “B”s.

This section, therefore, is organised in terms of the four voices identified by Stanley. “A Contextual Voice” will have the following sub-sections: self-direction, and ability to self-assess. The four voices sections will be followed by a summary.

9.2.1.1.1. **A values and feelings voice**

I collected statements from 14 of the 27 trainees expressing a strong attitude, sometimes a change of attitude. They were all either positive (“a useful learning experience”) or when negative were expressing determination and the belief that the problem could be overcome. Of the 14, nine were “B”s (60% of the total of “B”s in the Reflection Book study), two were “SP”s (40%), one was a “P” (25%), two were “WP”s (100%), and 0% Fail.

I was curious whether feelings got expressed differently or more frequently depending on the grade, but did not find anything of significance. In fact, the percentage of the “B”s who expressed their feelings at all were lower, but it must be kept in mind that
there were considerably fewer writers in the lower grades, so it would seem unwise to
generalise. (See the last section of this chapter for trainees’ feelings about the course
itself.) There are summaries and examples of feelings expressed in Reflection Books by
the Focus; here are some other examples:

Week One:

- *I think we all felt pretty unconfident and nervous at first, but that quickly
  passed when we realised what a friendly, enthusiastic group we had and
  they even laughed at some unfunny jokes – always a good sign.*  **Pass**
- *Oh my God!  I thought I’d got everything well prepared, but I was not
  happy with my ability to explain state verbs (I was in too much of a
  state).*  “**SP**”
- *[initial reflections:] I feel like crying.  [further reflections:]  I feel calm
  now.  **“B”**

Week Three

- *I was surprised that I had time to do all of my tasks, but I think it was
  because the students understood quite a lot.*  **Pass**
- *I still feel angry with myself over the timing.  Tomorrow I will write
  myself a note about the time I should finish.  Just can’t seem to pull
  everything in at once.*  “**SP**”

Week Four

- *I perhaps wasn’t as sensitive to the students as I should have been, due
  to it being my last chance, etc.  Of course I realise that is wrong but it’s
  very difficult not to think of yourself.*  “**F”**

9.2.1.1.2.  *A contextual voice*

As was mentioned in Chapter Four, it is important for students to have metacognitive
approaches (to be able to talk about their cognitive processes) in order for them to be able
to review their progress, accomplishments and future directions (O’Malley et al, 1985).
Under “a contextual voice” I have grouped comments that trainees made on their own
development and process, including their awareness during the teaching itself and their
ability to transform this awareness into future goals.  These two sub-categories below are
self-direction and ability to self-assess.
9.2.1.1.2.1. **Self-direction**

“B”’s tended to set their own goals for what they wanted to work on in their next lesson, or even after the course, whereas some of the weaker trainees tended to use the Reflection Book as a sort of confessional, and they remained stuck in the lesson they had taught, as opposed to directing insights learned towards future teaching. (There were, however, only five “B”s and two “SP”s who were methodical about this, not needing to get this direction from their tutors. Two of these were Horatio and Bill, in the Focus Group.)

The actual language used by the trainees seemed to express the direction of their thoughts, so I counted the number of times in the Reflection Book each trainee (a) referred to taking insights learned **forward** to future lessons, (b) mentioned what they **should have** done differently, and (c) wrote of how they **could have** improved what had taken place. My intention was to discover if people who had done well on the course were more constructive looking (“forward looking” and “could have”) than regretful (“should have”). Table 9.42 shows the results (the six members of the Focus Group are written in bold capital letters):
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Should have</th>
<th>Could have</th>
<th>Forward</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“B”</td>
<td>HORATIO</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AB</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CM</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>CM</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>CARLA</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HA</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AGNES</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JN</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>JR</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>*1 or 3</td>
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<td>MB</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JR</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SYLVIA</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VL</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YC</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“P”</td>
<td>ALM</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GC</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PB</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“WP”</td>
<td>CJ</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DBE</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“F”</td>
<td>FK</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.41: Reflection Books: Frequency of three discourse functions
*although LBV used the words “could have” thrice, all three cases concerned the same lesson

I’ll mention column 3 first (“forward looking”). Although it is not expressed on the chart above, I also looked at when the forward looking took place, and found that only five trainees did this during all four weeks, all five of whom were experienced teachers. It might be supposed, then, that having a forward looking reference indicates being able to put this training course into a larger perspective, at the same time considering both past
experience and the knowledge that this new experience will be applicable in an expected future. It is significant, therefore, when trainees with no experience are also able to do this.

I then counted the actual number of “forward looking” references, and came up with an average of 3.03. The number of “B”s who surpassed this totalled only 40%, the “SP”s 60%, and “P”s 25%, and the low numbers of the other two grades did not make it seem worthwhile to include them. However, if we consider the “B”s and “SP”s together, they come to 47%, whereas the other grades all combined come to only 28%.

I considered one other factor. I divided the “forward looking” responses into three categories:

a. intention to do better  
b. intention to try something specifically mentioned again  
c. reference to a future lesson or teaching

I thought that (c) above might indicate experience and/or a larger perspective, as mentioned previously, and found familiar-looking results: “B”s = 47%, “SP”s = 60%, all others = 25%. Of these, four are in my Focus Group: Horatio, Carla, Sylvia and Peter.

I was expecting “should haves” to occur less frequently than “could haves” and found that this only occurred in seven out of the 27 cases. I then looked to see in how many cases the combination of “could haves” and “forward looking” totalled at least double the “should haves” and found a slightly more interesting result:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bs</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPs</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ps</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPs</td>
<td>(1 of the two cases)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>(0 of the one case)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bs and SPs together = 52%
Ps, WPs and F together = 28%

Two included in the 52% are in the Focus Group. My summaries of their Reflection Book entries (as well as a great deal more information about them) can be found in Appendix A. There is evidence of their tendency to look forward throughout the data.
9.2.1.2.2. Ability to self-assess

In this category I wanted to find out if the lower grades either did not self-assess or did it differently. First of all, 23 of the 27 trainees assessed themselves in their Reflection Books (the three who did not, interestingly, were two “B”s and one “SP”). I then looked at who started off in Week One assessing their own lessons, and came up with 75% “B”s, 60% “SP”s, 0 “P”s, both “WP”s, and not the Fail, which looks significant.

Trainees wrote about thoughts that occurred while they were actually teaching, particularly ones that then caused them to deviate from their plans. Some of their writing indicated insights that occurred while teaching and explained when they were experimenting. Fourteen trainees described their thought processes while teaching, as a result of which they decided to deviate from their plans. Nine of these were “B”s (60%), four were “SP”s (80%), and one was a “WP”. Of those, I counted the ones that were already describing this process in Week One. There were four “B”s and three “SP”s. Of those, Horatio and Agnes are in the Focus Group.

Fifteen trainees described “breakthrough moments” (sudden realisations, not necessarily profound or dramatic ones, that resulted in change in perspective or behaviour) that could be roughly slotted into three categories:

a. having to do with the students, such as realising that information can be got from them, or issues of focus and learner autonomy
b. planning issues, especially anticipating problems
c. performance issues, especially regarding Teacher Talking Time

Of the 15, nine were “B”s (60% of the total 15), four were “SP”s (80% of the total five), and there was one “P” and one “WP”. In the three categories above, those who described (a) above were all “B”s and “SP”s (Horatio, Agnes and Sylvia are in this group); in (b) three were “B”s and one “P”; and (c) was spread. Also of interest is that five trainees had their “breakthrough moments” in Week One, and these were all “B”s and “SP”s (including Agnes and Sylvia).

Some trainees have the confidence and attitude to experiment during the course, whereas many will begin this stage after the course ends. Of the five trainees who
mentioned the word experiment, four were “B”s and one “SP”. Horatio and Peter were two of the five.

9.2.1.1.3. A voice which expressed the students’ perspective

The “B”s did not mention their students more often than the other grades did in their Reflection Books. It may be wondered, therefore, why I have included this voice. Although the students’ perspective was expressed by all the grades in this instrument, in the other two qualitative instruments (the Learning Styles Assignment and Guided Discussion) there was a significant difference in the quantity of comments about students from “B”s. The data attached to this “node” was considerable, therefore, and will be interpreted in a later section.

9.2.1.1.4. A relational voice embedded in the supervisory relationship

In Week One, eight of the 15 “B”s were already using “you” when writing to their tutor in the Reflection Book. Two of the “SP”s were doing this, and none of the other grades. Five of the “B”s were already addressing the tutor by name, as opposed to no “SP”s, one “P”, no “WP”s and no Fails. By the end of the course all of the 15 “B”s were writing directly to the tutor, all of the “SP”s, one “P”, one “WP” and no Fails. Obviously, that means that only five of the trainees whose Reflection Books I read had failed to do this. It is unfortunate that I do not have a more representative sample, because it is clear to me by the actual relational voice used that most of the “B”s were really “using” their relationships with their tutors as a tool for learning. For example, nine of the 14 “B”s asked their tutors questions in their Reflection Book about their teaching, all of the “SP”s, and no “P”s, one “WP” and no Fails. I also looked at how many asked their tutor for more information about their progress/grade and found these results: five “B”s, two “SP”s, and one “P”, but the “B”s started asking sooner. The “P” did not ask until Week Four, whereas the “SP”s asked in Week Three and the “B”s in Weeks Two and Three. It would seem that the “B”s felt it was their natural right to be kept informed of their progress.
Some trainees expressed the effect writing in their Reflection Book had on them. The kinds of comments that trainees from the lower grades wrote or said (not just in Reflection Books) were that it was a sort of confessional, that it was a place to get the tutors’ opinions and get questions answered; the “B”s mentioned that it was the only place on the course that was private, that its value lay in being in dialogue with the tutors, and that it gave support. Three trainees who were experienced teachers before coming on the course mentioned that they wanted to use Reflection Books with their students or that they wanted to continue keeping their own teaching journals. Several “B”s said that they didn’t always find the further reflections useful because everything had been said or realised either in feedback, with their peers over a beer, or during the teaching itself.

9.2.1.2. **Summary of tendencies of a “B” or “SP” as evidenced in their REFLECTION BOOKS**

The calculations in the sections above were quantifiable. Looking at the data as a whole, however, it is possible to give in outline form the tendencies of a typical “B” or “SP” as follows:

a. forward looking
   - sets goals for self for next time (with bullets or numbers!)
   - writes “I’ll work on that” (the *will* is significant: weaker trainees use *should have*)
   - writes “if I taught it again I would…” (weaker trainees look backward and stay there)

b. expands the role of the tutor
   - asks the tutor questions
   - asks for additional feedback
   - acknowledges the tutor as the reader
     - uses his/her name
     - acknowledges a relationship (weaker trainees use the Reflection Book as one would a Confessor)

c. knows how to find out if the students have learned

d. tends to be hard on self because of high expectations (there is energy behind the negativity, not depression)

e. expresses concern and good intentions
Examples of each of the above are to be found in the full descriptions of the six members of the Focus Group, and the whole subject will be discussed at a more interpretive level in Chapter Ten: Discussion.

9.2.2. Guided Discussion

Briefly, there were five trainees in each Guided Discussion group. All of the groups had an hour to discuss a questionnaire, and the discussion was taped. There were four questions. The first two questions had direct answers, which are summarised below, following the actual questions. (Answers to the other two questions dealt with motivation and affective factors, topics for which there were data from other instruments also, and so they are considered together in sections below.)

**Question 1:** *If you can, try to pick from the following just THREE factors which you think helped you learn the most on this course:*

- a. input from tutors
- b. observation of experienced teachers
  (including video)
- c. your TP group
- d. reactions from your students
- e. reflecting
- f. TP
- g. feedback
- h. praise/criticism
- i. Something you’d known
  before the course began
  which suddenly became clear
- j. personalities of the tutors
- k. other (please specify)

The instructions given to the trainees informed them that I was less interested in consensus than I was in having their discussions on tape, so only four of the nine groups settled on a top three. These were **TP, input and feedback,** although there was discussion even in those groups about wanting to combine more with feedback, such as praise/criticism and reflection. The other groups all focused on these same top three, and although they didn’t commit themselves, there is little doubt that these three answers were given the highest consideration. Their discussions were rich; much of what they had to say I have included in other categories discussed below.
The inclusion of **input** surprised me. I had long hypothesised that input was subservient to the more experiential sources of learning on the course, having been an untrained but effective teacher myself for many years. It may well be that with hindsight and subsequent experience the trainees’ perspective on this might change. This would be an interesting topic for later research.

**Question 2: Did your learning take place gradually or in sudden flashes?**

It may be recalled that this question evolved from my original preoccupation with “breakthrough moments.” My impression as I was listening to the tapes was that the trainees were cooperating with the questionnaire by looking for answers, but that in few cases had they previously considered these flashes as momentous. The kinds of flashes described were using concept questions, forgetting that they were being observed, figuring out how to elicit, how to drill, realising why “Do you understand?” is not a useful question, comprehending what ‘aims’ meant, switching the focus onto the students, being able to use the phonemic script, and realising that the techniques would be relevant for children’s classes.

They also talked about when these flashes occurred. Some said they took place during reflection, others from what someone (such as a tutor) had said to them, observing experienced teachers and each other, and watching videos. Several mentioned the excitement they had felt when one of their peers suddenly seemed to make huge progress in their teaching (Agnes, in the Focus Group, was one mentioned). Two experienced teachers mentioned that learning the name of something (‘rapport’, ‘guided discovery’) they had known about before meant that they could now use it.

One trainee who got a “B” (Peter, of the Focus Group) mentioned that once his flashes occurred, they became permanent and would be there for next time, but otherwise he learned gradually. Another “B” said that she would not refer to her learning as having occurred in flashes, but she said that she had learned very, very quickly because it was all crammed in so tightly. These comments justified my decision, following my pilot research, to steer my focus away from “breakthrough moments” in trying to understand the influences on accelerated teacher learning.
9.2.3. **Trainee background**

The two previous sections described some of the data from two qualitative research instruments: the Reflection Books and the Guided Questionnaire. These two instruments had their own “nodes” in the NUDIST hierarchy. In addition, there were a great many other nodes which I created using a grounded theory approach (see section 8.3.2.1.), and data from all three qualitative instruments were collated together. The rest of this chapter is devoted to common categories that emerged from them (the third qualitative instrument is the Learning Styles Assignment). The main subject headings are 9.2.3. Trainee Background, 9.2.4. Learning Styles, and 9.2.5. Learning to Teach.

This particular section will have three parts. They are: past language learning experience, memories of former teachers, and pre-CELTA teaching experience.

9.2.3.1. **Language learning experience**

Seventeen trainees commented on their past language learning experiences. Most of these (15) described themselves either as good language learners or described the conditions in which they can be good. This is not surprising, because those who have had positive experiences are more likely to make connections between becoming a language teacher and having been a language learner. More “B”s than other grades commented on this category (seven), but not enough to be relevant.

9.2.3.2. **Former teachers**

Only three trainees (two “B”s and one “SP”) commented on past teachers that they remember and/or who influenced them. Carla, in the Focus Group, wrote:

> When I think back to my pre-"O" level school days, and try to drum up 'in class' memories (involving learning as opposed to messing around with my friends), two particular teachers spring to mind. Mrs Callister, my French teacher and Mr. Sinclair, my maths teacher both absolutely loved their subject. They taught with joy and enthusiasm which made their classes a pleasure and helped the material stick in my mind. I had no particular
motivation to learn French or Maths over any other subject at that 'compulsory' stage in my education, yet I was more successful in these two areas and subsequently carried the maths through to degree level. I have always wondered about the nature v. nurture aspects of ability - how much is due to the learner and how much to the teacher, but a combination of natural ability, desire and sheer luck in who taught me seems to be an acceptable balance in answering the question.

Peter, also in the Focus Group, wrote:

The one comment which unified nearly everyone of my teachers from the age of seven onwards was, that I had a great deal of potential but that my concentration span and behaviour in the class left a lot to be desired. I thrived under specific teachers rather than in particular subjects. It is interesting to look back with hindsight and examine my successes and failures and see a line that clearly defines the reasons behind my mixed reviews! Teachers who lectured and expected the pupil to stay silent found me disruptive and the teachers who tried to catch the interest of their pupils and encouraged discussion and participation in the classroom found me a pleasure to teach. I don't think that this is any great coincidence.

9.2.3.3. Pre-CELTA teaching experience

Trainees with previous teaching experience made references and connections between that and their current learning. Many mentioned what had been added to their repertoire, such as new tips on opening strategies, using pairwork, changing groupings, drilling, classroom gestures, using concept questions and lesson planning. One trainee (a “B”) said,

There are some things I felt that I do just naturally because they work or because I like to do them and then, but I didn't know any of this methodology, so it's been neat in cases like, oh! There’s a word for 'rapport' or whatever.

Others wrote that they became aware of bad habits, either through learning in input new, more efficient ways of doing things, or through being observed. There were reassurances, though, as well, and validations that what they were used to doing was considered useful or even still current. Several expressed that they were pleased to be able to use their previous teaching strengths as a foundation to build on. A number, particularly those who had been teaching without having been trained, expressed that they knew exactly what they needed or wanted to learn before starting the course.
Some found the transition from a very different kind of teaching context difficult to manage, particularly when they had considered themselves “good” before. For most trainees who had had previous teaching experience, it was uncomfortable being observed after having been used to the privacy of their own classrooms.

9.2.4. Learning Styles

There are five main categories collected under the heading of learning styles. They are motivation, activist/pragmatist, reflector, theorist and other personality factors. Chapter Four looked at Individual Differences/Learning Styles in terms of motivation, cognitive styles and strategies, and kinds of intelligences. The sub-headings in this section also consider the learning style types discussed in Chapter Three: Experiential Learning. The data sources here are mainly the three qualitative instruments (Reflection Books, Guided Discussion and Learning Styles Assignment), but with a few references also to Honey Mumford scores and Repertory Grid information.

9.2.4.1. Motivation

This category yielded a great many contributions because it was one of the questions on the Guided Discussion Questionnaire, so everyone mentioned it, mostly in the context of why they had decided to take the course or what influenced their motivation during it. With so much data, patterns could be detected more readily. This is what emerged:

Motivation for taking the course:
- having paid a lot of money
- wanting a piece of paper (the Certificate)
- certainly intending to teach afterwards
- probably intending to teach afterwards
- (not intending to teach afterwards)

Motivation affected during the course by:
- inner motivation
- seeing a practical purpose
- the tutors
- the course itself
In addition, seven trainees (all “B”s) said that their motivation developed into a vocation, as the experience of the course itself transcended their original reasons for wanting to take it. Including this one, four patterns can be observed:

- Those who described their initial motivation as developing into a vocation were all “B”s.
- Those who described the tutors as motivators were all “B”s.
- Those who described the course itself as motivating were overwhelmingly all “B”s and “SP”s.
- Those who mentioned future teaching as a reason for taking the course were mostly “P”s.

9.2.4.2. **Activist/Pragmatist**

As was described in the Experiential Learning chapter, an Activist learns best through new experiences, and a Pragmatist through putting new knowledge into practice. This section looks at comments from trainees about learning by being able to experience, as part of the course input, what it is like to be a language student. Such pragmatic learning experiences, it might be assumed, would appeal to Activists, and Pragmatists would eagerly put the new techniques experienced into immediate practice. Most of the trainee contributions regarding their experiences during the course will be revealed in the Learning to Teach section below, but there were two kinds of learning experiences on the course which will be mentioned here, and those are the ones in which they played the role of students. The trainees were placed in the role of beginning language students for one lesson in either Swahili, Hungarian or Turkish in order that they could experience trying to understand and produce a language that was completely new to them. It is interesting that more “B”s and “SP”s mentioned this experience (13) than the “P”s and “WP”s (seven). Their comments included that the experience had taught them more about what it felt like to be a student, that it had taught them teaching techniques, and that it had made them aware of their own learning styles. Regarding these three categories of comments there were some patterns amongst the grades: The “B”s focused on insights gained concerning their students and their teaching, the “SP”s focused on their students and their own learning styles, and the others showed no patterns.
Tutors sometimes put trainees in the role of ELT students during teaching demonstrations in class, in order for them to be able to experience a new technique from the student’s point of view. Comments about this kind of experience were similar to the ones about learning a new language: They mentioned students, teaching and learning styles; but here there was one addition: comments about their own learning. Again, more “B”s and “SP”s commented on this experience (11) than “P”s (6), and “WP”s. As for the demonstrations themselves, only three trainees mentioned these, the Fail, a “WP” and a “P”. These, with the lower grades, particularly found “bad demos” useful for their learning (how not to do something).

9.2.4.3. **Reflector**

The bulk of the data about the reflective abilities and perspectives of the trainees is presented in the section entitled Reflection Books. Section 9.2.1.2. is a summary of the tendencies of a “B” or “SP” as evidenced in their Reflection Books. The purpose of this brief section, therefore, is to mention the trainees’ own perceptions. Of the ten people who chose in the three qualitative instruments either to describe themselves as Reflectors or to mention their scores on the Honey Mumford Learning Styles Questionnaire as being high in the Reflector category, eight got “B”s on the course, and one got an “SP”. The fact that there were not more is not entirely surprising, because what was understood by the term reflection on the courses in my research differed from the Honey Mumford definition, as was mentioned in the Research Design chapter.

9.2.4.4. **Theorist**

Because of the input on the course and the general popularity of classifying people into types, trainees commented readily on their perceptions of themselves. It is not surprising that it is the ones who labelled themselves as ‘left-brained’ learners who chose to analyse their brains. Of the 14 people who made contributions to this category, only two of them described themselves as ‘right-brained’, although four of the others elaborated on the influences from the other half of the brain. Of the 12 who described themselves as mostly
left-brained, half of those got “B”s, and half of those same “B”s described their learning styles as left-dominant but with plenty of right influences.

Thirteen of the trainees described their learning style using the labels of visual, aural and kinesthetic. Those who did well on the course are the ones who talked about physical manipulation or ordering. Several of these people referred to themselves as visual learners, but when they went on to say more, it emerged that what they were describing was kinesthetic. Here are some examples of this from the Learning Styles Assignment from some “B”s:

- I find that my most effective method for learning grammar is to lay the rules out very meticulously using many different colours, etc. I almost never refer to this record in the future. I believe it is the time spent laying out the information which reinforces it.
- The act of writing makes use of my kinesthetic learning style – moving my hand and eyes across a page somehow drills the concepts into my brain.
- ..., having new concepts and ideas presented visually is sometimes not enough. Manipulation of them often improves learning for me, so being actively involved in a variety of ‘hands on’ activities and discovery techniques has been extremely effective.

Many trainees wrote about the need to write things down. There seemed to be two reactions to, basically, taking notes: one that it is a positive aid to learning, and the other that learning is frustrating without it. Trainees have also written about how the course has expanded their ideas about taking notes as just one of many learning styles, making them more sympathetic both to their own process and to their students.

There seemed to be some correlations between the habit of reading and success on the course. In the Learner Styles Assignment particularly, trainees referred to Jeremy Harmer, Jim Scrivener, Adrian Underhill, Tony Buzan, Earl Stevick, H. Douglas-Brown, Sue Sheerin, David Kolb, Honey and Mumford, Kraminger and Huberty, and James Fatt, as well as claiming that extra reading accelerated their learning. Of the ten trainees who mentioned the reading they had done, nine got “B”s. This would seem to suggest that their learning was taking place on more than one level, and that they were curious to know more than was offered on the course by following up leads or even initiating their own.
Six trainees mentioned memory. One “SP” contributed five different references to it. His, and that of the other “B”/”SP” contributors, mentioned techniques that the tutors had used during class to make learning memorable, such as creating relevance or using emotional content. The “WP” contributor spoke of his poor memory. The “P” contributor talked about helping her students’ memories.

Eight trainees mentioned aims or logic. Seven indicated that they needed to understand the logic or the aim of a learning activity/situation in order to benefit from it. The eighth, Horatio (“B”) in the Focus Group, stated that he is able to create his own aims. Carla (“B”), another in the Focus Group, stated the opposite.

9.2.4.5. Other personality factors influencing learning style

Two sub-categories of Learning Styles will be addressed here: solitude/independence, and the influence of other people on learning.

9.2.4.5.1. Solitude/Independence

Because this was a significant item on the Repertory Grid, with “B”’s showing a unique reaction to the elements, this is an important category for triangulation. I was able to collect comments from 29 trainees regarding solitude, references to individual learning, individuality and being alone. Their comments seemed to fall into seven sub-categories:

a. needing time to reflect before group work
b. needing time to reflect after learning
c. needing time to reflect before being able to process more
d. needing to work/think alone, not in a group
e. preferring group work to working alone
f. needing a combination of group work and solitude
g. feeling frustrated, either at not having enough time to reflect or being unable to think well when alone because of the course

Slightly more than half of these comments came from “B”’s, and they expressed the full range except for letter F above: needing both. This does triangulate with the Repertory Grid
evidence, which is that the “B”s tended to have more “complicated” thoughts about their solitude.

Seventeen different trainees talked about their relationship with time. No particular patterns emerged, but the topics could be narrowed down to five:

- time of day preferred for studying
- “shoulds” for changing how they use their time
- pressure as a positive factor
- bemoaning lack of time
- the need for short, but regular or intensive, learning sessions

Perhaps what is significant here is that the “B”s contributed fewer comments about time compared to the total number in the other grades than often seems to be the pattern (seven out of 17). Perhaps “B”s are less concerned with time than with other matters?

Three trainees referred directly to learner autonomy, self-reliance and self-analysis as underlying aims of the course. The three were two “B”s and an “SP”.

9.2.4.5.2. The influence of other people on learning

There were eight contributions about the value of encouragement, four of which were from “B”s. They spoke primarily of encouragement from their tutors, how this had helped their learning, that it helped them to improve and was confidence building. Most of the other comments about the influence of others on learning concerned working with peers.

9.2.4.5.2.1. Positive reactions to working with peers

This, like Solitude, is an important category for triangulating with the Repertory Grid results, in which “B”s were shown to be significantly different in their attitude towards being in a group. There was a large response to this category in the qualitative data. The trainees spoke of 17 reasons that they felt positive about their experiences of working in groups. By groups they meant pairs and groups during input, working with their TP group
and being in the whole group. I was able to divide their responses into basically two perspectives:

- working in groups provided better learning
- working in groups created positive feelings

The first included such aspects as providing support and encouragement to help them learn, finding a small group more productive than working alone or being part of the whole group, learning from the variety of outlooks, finding working with different partners useful, that it helped clarify knowledge and solve problems, that it provided good models for teaching, that it was motivating, and that it enabled stronger/faster trainees to help weaker/slower ones.

The good feelings included belonging to an “in” group, feeling safe, that it was enjoyable or exciting, that it felt good to all be in the same boat, and that they were lucky in the particular people in their group. It is the “B”s who tended to focus on the positive feelings and the “P”s who focused on the help it gave them in learning.

9.2.4.5.2.2. Negative reactions to working with peers

It was not possible to make the same dichotomy as in the Positive category as nearly all of the comments here were about when working in groups hindered their learning. I collected nine different reactions and it is interesting that the “B”s only mentioned these three:

- a group that is working dysfunctionally decreases one’s motivation
- it depends on whom you’re paired with
- it’s sometimes a problem for the group when the “B” “takes over”

The “P”s and “WP”s had other concerns:

- some tasks need more thinking time alone
- working in a group allows one to be lazy
- it can be intimidating
- it can be unproductive
- it depends on the topic
It would appear that “B”’s derived pleasure from being in a functional group, but that other groups sometimes held them back, whereas “P”’s and “WP”’s were more concerned about the help that they did or did not receive from being in a group.

9.2.5. Learning to Teach

The categories in this section are input, feedback and assessment, teacher observation, affective factors, personal development, and general comments on the course. These categories, as with the other sections and sub-sections in this chapter, were identified as a result of using a grounded theory approach to data collection and analysis.

9.2.5.1. Input

“Input” is one of the nodes I created within the NUDIST programme as a sub-category of Teacher Learning. Comments about learning from their tutors during their own classroom time as trainees were attached to this node. What is remarkable about the information on this node is that 18 out of the 26 comments came from “B”’s. I wonder if this, like using “you” in Reflection Books by most “B”’s, means that people who respond best to a teaching course are the ones who are most aware of their own teachers.

The positive comments were that the sessions were practical, the tutors were great, this is where they learned most, there was a lot of variety, there was a high standard and they were practical. Negative comments were that some sessions were more useful than others, there was too much to take in, and it will take time to process it all. The leading positive comments by “B”’s were that the teachers were great and that input was where they learned most. The negative comments by “B”’s were that there was too much to take in, it will take time to process, and some sessions were more useful than others.
9.2.5.2. Feedback and assessment

There was a large number of comments on feedback, because it was one of the questions on the Guided Discussion Questionnaire; all of the trainees voted feedback as one of the top three contributors to their learning (but insisted it be combined with praise and criticism). Most of the comments spoke of the feedback as being fair, constructive, careful of egos, and balanced. Opinions varied as to whether it was a good or a bad thing to have three different tutors watching them teach over the month, depending on individual reactions to the value of differing approaches or priorities. The only two items of significance dealt with the time of feedback (at the end of the day), and whether more was wanted. It was “P”s alone who found it difficult to take in feedback because of being tired, and “B”s and “SP”s alone who felt that they would have appreciated more time spent on feedback or receiving more detailed comments than they got.

As for assessment, there were no particularly striking patterns here, because reactions to how they felt about being assessed were so varied. It is possible to say, though, that purely negative reactions did not occur in the “B” and “SP” grades, while purely positive reactions did not occur in the “WP” and “F” grades. This is certainly logical. Nearly half of all the reactions were that they didn’t like being assessed but found it invaluable.

I had wondered about the effects of personal attention, including having tutorials. All of the responses but one were positive, though, and not particularly enlightening, except that the comments came from one “P” and six “B”s. The one negative comment came from an “SP” who was an experienced Latin teacher and had not made enough adjustment to be able to get a better grade; he felt that he should have had more attention to help him make the transition to such a different kind of teaching.

9.2.5.3. Observing experienced teachers

Trainees are required to spend eight hours observing experienced teachers. Of the 44 trainees on the three courses, 31 responded to this category; it was one of the Guided Discussion questions, and also sometimes mentioned in their assignment. The positive comments were that it was helpful, that it enabled them to see theory in action, and that they were able to borrow techniques to use in their own teaching. Negative comments were that the classes were sometimes “show” classes, and
that they were variable depending on the teacher. Comments on the training videos similarly were very positive or claimed that they were too artificial, and some trainees said they were too tired to take them in. Other interesting comments were that they would have liked to be able to see their own tutors teach an ELT class, and some said that they also learned as much from watching their peers as they did from the experienced teachers.

Of significance is that the comments about learning from peers all came from “B”s and one “SP”, and it was all “B”s who described the live classes or the videos as artificial. It was also mostly “B”s who wanted to see their own tutors teach.

9.2.5.4. Affective factors

There were comments on the effects of interacting with students, working closely with the other four teachers in their TP groups, and being stressed.

9.2.5.4.1. Interacting with students

I would have expected those who got the higher grades to have mentioned their students more often in the data, so I was surprised in the Reflection Books that there was the same number of references to students from “B”s as the other grades, but this pattern did not hold true with the other two instruments: there were 26 comments about students from “B”s, seven from “SP”s, 11 from “P”s, three from “WP”s, none from the Fail.

I collected 18 different kinds of comments, and then grouped them into three: feelings about the students, how the students influenced the trainees’ learning, and when students made it difficult. “B”s had comments in all three areas, but had twice as many about feelings. They were the only ones, in fact, who talked about the pleasure they derived from being able to help; it is this need or desire to help others that so often seems to attract people to the ‘helping professions’ (teaching, nursing, social and police work).
9.2.5.4.2. Working closely with other trainees in the teaching practice (TP) group

There were 21 comments on the learning experienced through being in a TP group by “B”s and “SP”s, as opposed to nine from all the other grades. This would seem to indicate that the higher grades were more conscious of being in a group. This has been suggested before. The positive comments centred on how much they had learned from each other, and how helpful it was to have that support system. Negative comments suggested that their peers were not courageous enough in giving critical feedback, and they complained that it got harder to observe each other attentively as they got used to each other’s teaching styles or tiredness set in.

9.2.5.4.3. Stress

What I was curious about was whether those who got good grades found the stress a positive factor in their learning, and this proved true. Twelve of the 15 “B”s and “SP”s who responded described their reaction to stress on the course as either positive or said that it got easier, whereas only two out of 14 in the “P” and lower grades described their reaction to the stress on the course in a positive way. Comments about being tired occurred in all grades. Some of the affective factors included not being able to get enough sleep at night (not just being tired), the heat in July, the noise from traffic, the pressure of being an experienced teacher but not doing better than the beginners, being homesick, overload and being unable to concentrate.

9.2.5.5. Personal development

Fifteen trainees communicated that their knowledge of themselves had increased as a consequence of being on the course. They mentioned that their own teaching had changed, that their idea of teaching had changed, that they had learned to self-assess, that they had developed personally, and that their knowledge of their own learning styles had increased. No particular patterns emerged, although eight of the 15 were “B”s, and one an “SP”. Of those in the Focus Group, Carla said she had learned to self-assess, and Peter and Agnes said that their ideas of teaching had changed.
I wanted to find out which trainees actually expressed, on one of these three research instruments, that they had derived pleasure from the course. These were the percentages:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>58%</td>
<td>Bs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43%</td>
<td>SPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Ps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>WPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Out of the six members of the Focus Group, all four “B”s and one of the two “SP”s are in the percentages above.

9.2.5.6. **Comments from trainees about the course**

Multiple data sources do not convey the individuality of the learning. Here are some individual comments about the course which, it is hoped, will communicate something of the who the real people in my study were. These direct quotations from the trainees about the course are divided by grade into two groupings: positive and negative. Comments from the Focus Group are in bold.

9.2.5.6.1. **Positive**

What is immediately apparent in the comments below is that the “B”s tend to address the benefits to them of the course (being fully engaged, the challenge, a safe place to experiment) and mention that the benefits were more than expected; the “SP”s describe their satisfaction with the course; and the other, more varied, comments from the other grades somehow indicate that the experience is not being looked at retrospectively yet. Also, as has often been the case, the “B”s have more to say than the others.

“B”s

- “The whole course provided a very safe environment in which to try out new ideas.”
- “Actually, I knew I wanted to do this course. For about a year now.” (Agnes)
- “Seeing if you could do it was a challenge.”
- “It has made me think, you know, what other sort of courses are there like this?”
• “You get so sort of absorbed into the course that everything else just stops, and you don’t realise what, you know, what you’re going to do on Monday, let alone …” (Horatio)
• “The course doesn’t aim to make you into a teacher in a month, but to expose you into a huge range of ideas which you can later experiment as you practise teaching.”
• “…the input…was better than any teacher training that I’ve had. On my PGCE … I had some very good teacher training on the course, and a lot of it out of the school, but I think this is better.”
• “I think this is highly professional, the input and the tutors are highly professional … I sort of always thought of teaching TEFL teaching as something not quite as good as teaching, and it was just absolutely not so.”

“SP”s
• “From the image, and what I’d read and what my friends had told me, it’s exactly what I expected, and what I was hoping…”
• “Even for people who don’t teach I’d say come and try it.”
• “Over the past three weeks I’ve found the variety of teaching techniques refreshing – a welcome progression from the ‘me teacher, you pupil’ approach of my school days.”
• “But they [the tutors] don’t want to turn you directly into them; they want you to find your best …”

“P”s
• “I think it’s much healthier having a [different] tutor each week.”
• “There was a lot of personal development on the course.”
• “We have been given a lot of information and constructive advice with regard to teaching after the course.”

“WP”s
• “Well, the reason I came to I.H. in the first place was I asked around … and they all immediately said, ‘Oh, there’s only one place and that’s I.H. There are others … but I.H. is the one. You won’t get in, of course.’”

Fail
• [on why it is a good idea to have a different TP tutor each week] “And take bits of their advice, and mix it all up, I suppose.”

9.2.5.6.2. Negative

Here the “B”s are expressing their regret that there wasn’t sufficient time on the course to learn even more, and they are looking towards future teaching, while the others are
describing difficulties they had had. It is interesting that a similar comment about wishing for more grammar is made by both a “B” and a “WP”, but the latter expresses it passively (“I had expected to be taught …”) and the “B” gives an analysis of what he sees as an unwise emphasis.

“B”s

• “Already at the very early stages of the course I developed a slight uneasiness about the almost sole concentration on the course on ‘hows’ as opposed to ‘whats’ of teaching. In a very Dadaist way form seemed to overrule content."
• “I sometimes wonder how some of us will be able to cope in a real teaching situation, that is teaching a 20 to 25 hour week. How on earth can one consider all the certainly helpful guidelines in preparation for so many hours when a single 35-minute lesson takes some people up to five hours to prepare? Looked at from this point of view it seems questionable whether the course can give any evidence about the ability of participants to cope with a future teaching situation.”
• “I think one disappointment, but at the same time I don’t know if it is physically possible, but it would be nice to get more actual teaching practice. I thought we’d be teaching everyday.” (Peter)
• “I think actually the sessions where we had to divide up the timetable are probably what I found hardest ... It’s a skill which we have to learn, but one which is not necessarily relevant to the way we are going to be teaching.”

“SP”s

• [on people who take the course with no intention of becoming teachers] “Yeah, but I do know people who’ve done it. Nothing better to do, do that.”
• “I didn’t see the point in going back to 35-minute slots, in the third week.” (Bill)
• “It’s difficult plucking lessons from a book with no lead-in lesson or follow-up as in school – I lost the feeling of continuity where you can pick up on something from the lesson before or plan for a further treatment of something.”

“P”s

• “I mean what you do in a 55-minute lesson you could probably do in about two two-hour sessions in any other lesson, but you’ve got a point to prove that you can teach something in this lesson.”

“WP”s

• “I had expected to be taught much more English grammar.”

This ends the chapter on Results. The following chapter will discuss these results.
Chapter Ten

DISCUSSION

This chapter will contain four sections. The first will summarise the data from the chapter on Results. The second will correlate answers to my research questions with the already existing literature. Implications will be presented in the third section, and the fourth section will contain ideas for further research.

10.1. **A summary of results**

The previous chapter detailed all of the findings from the research, but what is there that can be said most significantly about “B”s? This section will attempt to summarise what appear to be clear indications about the people in my study who got “B”s, in the following areas: people issues, reactions to the course itself, and learning styles.

10.1.1. **People issues**

The people issues that will be addressed are being in a group, interacting with students, and voices.

10.1.1.1. **Being in a group**

On the Repertory Grid, the element *self in a group* was the one in which “B”s showed the most number of changes by far from Week One to Week Four in relation to the mean. As well as indicating that they did the most changing during the course, this could also suggest that their awareness of their position in groups was heightened as a result of their experiences on the CELTA.
Of all the comments about learning taking place from being in a TP group, 70% came from the “B”s and “SP”s. It was only “B”s, however, who mentioned that actually watching their peers teach was an aid to their own learning. This, again, is an indication of awareness.

As for the more general experience of working in groups, such as in discussing and solving tasks in input, while it was the other grades who said that working with peers promoted better learning, the “B”s claimed that working with peers promoted positive feelings. This seems to be a statement about independence, that tasks can easily be solved alone but that it is enjoyable to do so in groups. When working in groups was less successful, the “B”s stated that it depended on with whom one was paired, that dysfunctional groups decreased one's motivation, and that it was sometimes a problem for groups when one of them (a future “B”) "takes over." These comments were unique to “B”s.

All of these statements are corroborated by the results of the Repertory Grid. They indicated that the “B”s were more positive, independent and individualistic than the mean. Over the period of the course, the “B”s’ themselves changed in their Repertory Grid scores for the element self in a group in the following ways: They inclined in the directions of leader, complicated, interacting with mind, comfortable, positive, viewed from outside, and individual. The greatest amount of change was towards leader, individual and interacting with mind. This would seem to indicate that “B”s were pro-active when working with other people.

10.1.1.2. Interacting with students

Although in the Reflection Books comments about students were dispersed equally among the grades, this was not so in the other instruments, in which 55% of the comments came from “B”s (“B”s represented 43% of the total number of trainees in the research). It was only “B”s who expressed the pleasure of being able to help the students, and they were the only ones who mentioned sudden insights that were related to the students, such as realising that information could be obtained from the students themselves about what they needed. The “B”s seemed to have experienced a richer content in their classroom relationships with the students.
10.1.3. **Voices**

In the Reflection Books “B”s tended to use their relationship with the tutors as a tool for learning. They wrote directly to the tutors using "you" (eight of the 15 “B”s in the Reflection Book study were already doing this in Week One), and they asked more questions about their teaching, rather than using the Reflection Books as a sort of confessional. They also asked more questions about their progress, as soon as Week Two in some cases.

10.1.2. **The course itself**

In the Guided Discussion, the majority of the comments about input came from “B”s. This might imply, like using "you" in the Reflection Book, that people who respond best to a teaching course are the ones who are most aware of their teachers. It was mostly “B”s who expressed a wish to see how their own tutors would teach ELT students, and only “B”s who described some of the live classes and videos as artificial.

In describing the course, the “B”s had more to say than the others, as usual, and tended to describe what were to them the benefits of the course, such as the challenge, being fully engaged, having a safe place to experiment. Their negative comments expressed regret that there wasn't sufficient time on the course to learn even more, whereas the other grades described difficulties they had had.

10.1.3. **Learning Styles**

Those who did well on the course talked about physical manipulation or ordering, but even those who described themselves as visual revealed themselves to be kinesthetically motivated (examples given in the Results chapters). “B”s differed also in the learning styles of motivation, cognitive processes, solitude, feelings and attitudes, and reflection, described below.
10.1.3.1. Motivation

Seven trainees (all “B”s) said that their motivation for taking the CELTA had developed into a vocation, that the original reasons had been transcended by the experience of the course. Those who described their tutors as motivators were all “B”s, and those who described the course itself as being motivating were all “B”s and “SP”s.

10.1.3.2. Cognitive processes

In the Reflection Book 60% of the “B”s described their thought processes while teaching that caused them to deviate from their plans. Of the seven who in Week One were already writing about this, four were “B”s and three were “SP”s. The word experiment was mentioned by four “B”s and one “SP”, and no others. In their academic writing, nine of the ten trainees who referred to references from their outside reading were “B”s.

10.1.3.3. Solitude

On both Week One and Week Four results of the Repertory Grid, “B”s scored higher than the mean in the constructs of Leader, Independent, Individual, Positive and Inside, and on the Week Four Grid in Complicated and Interacting with Mind as well. “B”s, who usually had more to say/write than the others about everything, contributed a minority of the comments about time, indicating perhaps that they were more comfortable with their time management skills than other trainees.

10.1.3.4. Feelings and attitudes

Aside from the fact that 58% of the “B”s mentioned the pleasure they were deriving from the course, “B”s referred less frequently to feelings than did the other grades, but they made more comments regarding attitude, such as a strong attitude about something or a change of attitude. These comments were either positive or, when negative, expressed determination and belief that a problem could be overcome.
Stress is a reality on the CELTA, but people react differently to it. Twelve of the 15 “B”s and “SP”s who mentioned stress said it was either a positive influence or that it decreased as the course progressed, a view held by only two trainees in other grades.

10.1.3.5. Reflection

Although “B”s in the raw scores on the Honey Mumford Learning Styles Questionnaire scored highest in the Reflector category, once preference categories (in relation to the national norms) are calculated, “B”s indicate only a moderate preference for Reflector, and in fact it becomes the lowest relative preference amongst the four possible learning styles. One reason for “B”s scoring low in this category can be explained by looking at the questions on the questionnaire, and it emerges that they are all concerned with reflecting before making a decision. Skilled teachers need to possess this kind of reflective skill, but being able to make quick decisions is also vital. Yet another kind of reflection important in teaching is being able to assess past actions accurately and sensitively. It thus becomes logical that a talented teacher would score low as a Reflector if this is defined only as lengthy analysis before taking action.

There is evidence that the “B”s in my study were able to engage in reflective activities with a thoroughness that was unique to them. For example, it was “P”s alone who said that they were sometimes unable to attend in feedback because of tiredness, whereas “B”s and “SP”s alone claimed that they would have liked longer feedback sessions or more detailed comments from their tutors. As for the experience of being assessed, there were no purely negative reactions to this from “B”s and “SP”s, and no purely positive reactions from the “WP”s and “F”. Already in Week One, 75% of the “B”s were endeavouring to assess their own teaching, rather than relying exclusively on the tutor’s opinions. In referring to their teaching, 74% of the comments about taking lessons learned from experience and projecting them into action for future lessons came from “B”s and “SP”s, as opposed to 26% from the other grades. These facts seem to suggest that the “B”s and “SP”s were eager to examine and learn from experience.
10.2. **The research questions**

The previous section looked at the different characteristics of the learning that takes place on the CELTA (one of my research questions) divided by grade. This section will continue that theme, but focus more on the literature previously reviewed in this dissertation in relation to some of my other research questions. There are two sub-sections:

- What is it about the CELTA that usually makes it so effective?
- Are the factors which characterise people who do well on the CELTA causes or symptoms? In other words, are good teachers born or made?
- What are the characteristics of the learning that can take place?

### 10.2.1. **What is it about the CELTA that usually makes it so effective?**

It has already been stated that many trainees insist, regardless of where they took the CELTA or who the teachers were, that they learned more on this course than in any other educational experience in their lives. As a result of my research, it is possible to explain this pervasive opinion. First of all, the CELTA departs from a history of ‘technical rationality’ in teacher training which assumed that instruction in educational theory alone would produce good teaching. It was John and Brita Haycraft’s strong conviction that it is practice that teaches one how to teach, and they designed the original course accordingly, coincidentally following Kolb’s Experiential Learning Cycle (see Chapter Three) of **concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation** and **active experimentation**, making it a rich learning experience which can appeal to nearly every kind of learner.

Another way of accounting for the effectiveness of the course would be to look more closely at the nature of the positive feelings that emerge. In describing what he refers to as **optimal experience**, Csikszentmihályi (1992) lists its eight major components (see Chapter Two). He found that people describing positive experiences will list at least one of the following, yet all eight can be said of the CELTA:

1. The experience usually occurs when we confront tasks we have a chance of completing.
2. We must be able to concentrate on what we are doing.
3. The concentration is usually possible because the task undertaken has clear goals.
4. [the experience] provides immediate feedback.
5. One acts with a deep but effortless involvement that removes from awareness the worries and frustrations of everyday life.
6. Enjoyable experiences allow people to exercise a sense of control over their actions.
7. Concern for the self disappears, yet paradoxically the sense of self emerges stronger after the flow experience is over.
8. Finally, the sense of the duration of time is altered; hours pass by in minutes, and minutes can stretch out to seem like hours.

The combination of all these elements causes a sense of deep enjoyment that is so rewarding people feel that expending a great deal of energy is worthwhile simply to be able to feel it. (ibid., p. 49)

As is one of the eight requirements above, the CELTA has clear tasks for each day. Because the course is short in duration it is possible to visualise completion of all that is expected. The goals are fixed, both for the course itself and the practice teaching, and even though some trainees struggle with the concept of aims in teaching, they are never in doubt that each teaching practice session requires a measurable goal.

It is possible to fully concentrate because it is made clear to trainees on several occasions that their entire focus must be on the CELTA during the month of the course, that it would be preferable to suspend all outside obligations, including social. This is accepted by all, with few exceptions. A new social life is temporarily created amongst the trainees, facilitated by the fact that suddenly all issues of time and topic and the need to unwind are held in common. Time takes on a new dimension (number eight above), with trainees often on very different sleeping and eating schedules from their norm, frequently planning lessons during very odd hours. The outside world is suspended.

Each day’s teaching is followed by feedback (number 4 above). Feedback is also provided via comments (not just grades) on written assignments, there are tutorials with the main course tutor and, on the courses that took part in my research, trainees and tutors engage in dialogue through Reflection Books. Unlike some examinations in Britain in which there is a considerable delay before students learn of the outcome, CELTA trainees usually learn their grades on the Wednesday following each course.

Considering the issue of control, as the course progresses, trainees make more decisions for themselves: over timetabling, for example. As they become more comfortable with
teaching, they are able to be more spontaneous in response to the students, and thus to feel more in control. They are also able to look forward in the near future to being autonomous teachers able to close the door of their own classroom to observers. The CELTA is seen as a passport to be able to work anywhere in the world. In a more than a metaphoric sense, the CELTA expands the trainees’ world.

Feeling a strengthened sense of self after the flow experience is over is not a sensation experienced by all trainees, but as has been stated before, trainees generally agree that it was one of the most significant learning experiences of their lives. Also, a large proportion of those who got the highest grades stated that they found the stress on the course exhilarating. They finish the course on a high, rather than with a sense of exhaustion.

The issues above in relation to the CELTA resonate also in Feuerstein’s (see Chapter Two) three features which he considers essential for all learning tasks: significance, purpose beyond the here and now, and shared intention. Less crucial but also important and helpful are: a sense of competence, control of own behaviour, goal-setting, challenge, awareness of change, a belief in positive outcomes, sharing, individuality and a sense of belonging. It is this latter that relates to what Freeman (1997) labels a community of practice (created when people become united in doing a common event, undertaking or task) and a community of explanation (occurring when social facts and common ways of perceiving are shared). It is interesting that Csikszentmihalyi’s research into the phenomenology of enjoyment does not consider the influence of being accepted into a group which shares common goals and experiences. Although the trainees in my study did explain when working in a group was not entirely beneficial, there were numerous responses that indicated that they found that working in groups provided better learning and created positive feelings.

10.2.2. \textbf{Are the factors which characterise people who do well on the CELTA causes or symptoms? In other words, are good teachers born or made?}

One way of addressing this question is to go back to the interview-based predictions of achievement that were made \textit{before} they started the course. Of the 19 “B”s in my study, the trainers who interviewed them had predicted that 14 would do well. That’s a success rate of 74\% for the interviewers. The five incorrect predictions were based on doubts about
the ability to analyse language yet, significantly, the personalities of all five were described glowingly. Of the seven “SP”s, the percentage of accurate predictions was only 43%, and in each case it was due to an incorrect assessment of personality (possibly because the trainee had not interviewed well). All four “B”s in the Focus Group impressed the trainers who interviewed them. The interviewers predicted that all four would do well. Here is a summary of the interviewers’ comments [“LA” stands for ability to analyse language]:

- A really lovely man, fun, used to hard work, sensible, good ideas.
- Positive, thoughtful, sensible, intelligent, LA good, bit theoretical. Prediction: very good.
- Friendly, bit nervous, retiring in a group? Excellent LA, hardworking, explains.
- The perfect course participant. Prediction: very good.

It must be kept in mind that the Focus Group is comprised of six trainees (four “B”s and two “SP”s) who had never taught before (in Chapter Eight statistics were presented to show that the typical trainee has had a little teaching experience before enrolling on the CELTA). It was not their knowledge which impressed the interviewers, therefore, but something about their personalities and common sense.

Ur (see Chapter Two) suggests that it is not always possible to recognise “T-factor” (her term for what others call born teachers) at an early stage, but she is willing to describe what “T-factor” looks like in an experienced teacher. Of these specific qualities which she lists, there is evidence in the data from the Reflection Books in my study that such qualities can be developed within a brief four-week training course. These are:

- The ability to design and administer ‘learning-rich’ activities – as opposed to mere testing.
- The ability to identify when learning is or is not happening.
- Getting a ‘buzz’ from student achievement.

Many trainees have these qualities by the end of the course; “B”s get them sooner, and it appears from my research that it is their pre-dispositions that accelerate this process. There is also evidence in my research that “B”s are more positive, more independent, more individualistic, and more able to engage in reflective activities, all of which could be added to Ur’s “T-factor” list.
Allwright’s (1995) query about whether some trainees just figure out the system earlier, that they are accustomed to academic success, is worth considering. If we suppose that the four “B”s in the Focus Group might be typical, their academic achievements include an M.A. in Classical Literature; an M.Phil. in process in the History of Medicine; a B.Sc. Honours in Statistics; and a B.A. in Politics, Economics and Languages. All four were good writers. Two of them have teachers in their families. Nevertheless, there is not a direct correlation between academic success and success on the course, as some of the most frustrated trainees are ones who are accustomed to achieving in their studies, but they cannot manage to move beyond a Pass on this course. Having said that, it must be stated that evidence from the Reflection Books indicates that most of those who got the top grades matter of factly believed, right from the beginning of the course, that they could do well on it, and this is related to the confidence derived from successful previous experiences. They could be described as achievers (Skehan, 1989), a phenomenon which is also linked to self-confidence.

Book, Freeman and Brousseau (1985) discovered that students choosing teaching as a career were as academically competent as their non-teaching counterparts, but had certain other characteristics in common, one of which was being more concerned about helping others. As was stated in the summary of results above, it was only “B”s who expressed the pleasure of being able to help the students, and they were the only ones who mentioned sudden insights that were related to the students, such as realising that information could be obtained from the students themselves about what they needed.

This wanting to help others is only occasionally mentioned on a trainee’s application or at interview. The majority of all trainees come on the course for instrumental reasons: wanting to work in an interesting country. The transition to (or addition of) integrative motivation develops during the course as a result of working with real students, according to evidence from the Reflection Books. The course becomes intrinsically motivating to most trainees, but to varying degrees. There were those on the CELTA courses who were constantly or even increasingly engaged and excited (mostly those who got the higher grades), while others eventually found themselves over-stimulated and could not sustain their initial level of interest.
The substantial research on *locus of control* led Findley and Cooper (1983) to conclude that feeling in control of events is associated with greater academic achievement. As has been mentioned several times already, trainees who did well on the CELTA courses in this study asked more questions and made greater use of their tutors (they described their tutors as motivators and the course as motivating). In addition, they insisted on knowing where they stood more frequently, certainly in relation to grades, but also on how they could become more effective in the classroom. They tended to prefer informational rather than controlling feedback; when told they were doing “well” on the course, some of the achievers found it frustrating not to get specific feedback which would challenge them even further.

Reaction to stress seems to separate those who did well on the course from the others. There is substantial evidence in my data that the former had found the stress of the course stimulating. In the two years since I collected my data, I have tested this out numerous times by asking trainees I am not working with about their reactions to the intensity of the course. Their answers validate my hypothesis, which is then invariably confirmed by their tutors: Those who do well on the course are energised by the stress. It also appears that they are less constrained by limitations of time.

Metacognitive awareness is important for effective learning (Williams and Burden, 1997; O’Malley *et al.*, 1985). Metacognitive strategies include an *awareness* of what one is doing and what strategies one is applying, as well as *knowledge* about the actual process of learning. This includes knowledge of what one does not know. “B”s tended to set their own goals for what they wanted to work on and were more forward looking than the others. In assessing their own lessons, 75% started doing this in Week One, contrasted with 60% of the “SP”s and 0% of the Passes. As for describing thought processes that occurred while they were actually teaching, particularly thoughts that then caused them to deviate from their plans, 14 of the 15 trainees who wrote about this in their Reflection Books were “B”s and “SP”s. “B”s showed more awareness of what could be learned from their peers. They were also more pro-active with their solitude.

The question “Are good teachers born or made?” makes certain assumptions about set personality types, and I would therefore like to suggest that the word “born” is not useful in this argument. There does seem to be substantial evidence in my data that trainees who do
well on the CELTA, by the time they enrol on the course, have been influenced by their life experiences in ways that make them respond to becoming communicative language teachers with a greater potential for success. The implications of this will be discussed later in this chapter.

10.2.3. **What are the characteristics of the learning that can take place?**

I have chosen to reformulate this research question for this section with the addition of the word “can.” The reason for this is that the bulk of my findings point to the fact that, although the CELTA is effective, the trainees who did well on the course did so largely because of their pre-dispositions. My intention, therefore, is to identify the characteristics of the learning that can take place so that more trainees with less immediately recognisable potential will be able to realise it.

In Chapter Five, Reflection, the findings from a number of studies were presented to indicate that teacher training is a low-impact enterprise, that the images of good and bad teaching that trainees have from childhood are so entrenched that pre-service teacher training courses have little effect. Accordingly, on a CELTA, the biggest initial challenge for most trainees is to accept communicative language teaching, in which the teacher does not stand at the blackboard and impart knowledge. Yet in order to pass the course, this transition must be made, and the fact that approximately 92% of trainees pass this course indicates that the CELTA is not a low-impact experience. (It must be mentioned, however, that the writers of the above-mentioned studies (Calderhead, 1987; Johnson, 1992; Lortie, 1975; Zeichner and Grant, 1981) were all speaking of pre-service courses in which theory precedes practice, unlike the CELTA.)

How does the transition from imitating past teachers to becoming a teacher who reasons occur? LaBoskey (1993) found that student teachers varied in their pre-training beliefs, particularly in the degree of orientation toward growth and inquiry. She labelled them *common-sense thinkers* and *pedagogical thinkers*, in which the latter already had a student-orientation, were able to conceive of a teacher as a facilitator, were able to take a long-term view, and were growth-oriented (for the complete list, see Chapter Five). They reflect as a matter of course. My data verifies that some trainees are already *pedagogical thinkers*
when they begin the CELTA. I am also suggesting that it is often possible to identify these people at interview. LaBoskey has a third category: alert novices, those who enter teaching with a fairly strong inquiry orientation, which provides the facility for making the transition to a pedagogical thinker. However, even common-sense thinkers, if provided with very powerful reflective experiences that directly challenge misconceptions, may become pedagogical thinkers.

Korthagen (1985) also proposes that student teachers can be divided according to the degree to which they prefer to learn via reflection. He describes those who reflect naturally as having an internal orientation (those without it prefer to be told what to think), and he suggests this difference can be addressed first by allowing those who do not reflect naturally to learn the art of reflection gradually, and secondly by making all students explicitly aware of the problem of different learning orientations.

Experienced teachers must be reflective in their work. The process of learning how to teach can be accelerated when trainees begin the process of learning how to reflect from the very beginning. The next section will discuss the implications of this statement.

10.3. **Implications**

Some of my most respected colleagues at International House London got neither an “A” nor a “B” on their CELTA (or whatever name it was going under at the time), yet they are enormously talented teachers and teacher trainers. Getting a good grade on the CELTA merely indicates that the process of being aware and of being able to reflect has already begun, with the result that the initial stages of learning how to teach are accelerated. Those of us who have been in the profession for many years and still love it know that learning how to teach is never a finished product.

The primary aim of my research was not simply to raise the statistics of the number of trainees getting “A”s and “B”s on the CELTA, which is, after all, only a four-week preparatory course. My intention was to find out more about the nature of learning how to teach. Research into the worlds of professionals suggests that they are characterised by complexity, uncertainty, instability, uniqueness and value conflict (Arkoff, 1979).
… if the teacher’s role is considered to be to ‘deliver a given curriculum’ then certain consequences flow from this in terms of the knowledge, skills and attitudes best suited to such a (technician) task. If, however, the teacher’s role is considered to be to ‘diagnose learner needs, design cycles of learning, and contribute to educational decision-making … then a very different kind of preparation is needed which might be supported by a more critical and reflective approach. (Tann, 1993, p. 54)

Donald Freeman (1992a) believes that the central challenge of teacher education today is to understand how teachers conceive of what they do and how they adopt new ways of understanding and behaving. This cannot be achieved simply by exposing teachers to research or theory, but requires teachers to construct their own theories of teaching, drawing on their knowledge, skills, and training, as well as their actual accumulating experience of teaching. This is a process that needs to be initiated from the beginning.

…learning to teach is a process that continues throughout a teacher’s career and no matter what we do in our teacher education programs and no matter how well we do it, at best we can only prepare teachers to begin teaching. Consequently, teacher educators must be committed to helping prospective teachers internalize the dispositions and skills to study their teaching and to become better at teaching over time, that is, to help teachers take responsibility for their professional development.

(Zeichner, 1992, p. 297)

My research has demonstrated that being reflective during the process of learning to teach does make a difference. Stanley (1995) suggests that the ability to reflect implies both a readiness to trust one’s own judgements and also, therefore, a capacity to influence one’s own development, and that this process can be accelerated by engaging in reflection with a mentor. Her study proved that reflection can be taught within the context of supervision, which has been one of the main arguments against incorporating reflection onto the CELTA, where the mentor is also a person who decides on grades.

Kerr (1994) presents another argument against asking trainees to be reflective during pre-service teaching training. This is that there is emotional pressure for trainees to criticise their own work without clear knowledge of the criteria. The solution to this is to take the sole focus of reflection away from teaching practice, suggests Fraenkel (1997), and to give parallel training in how to reflect, the skills of which are:
• Making explicit the underlying criteria, attitudes, assumptions and beliefs
• Collecting and recording evidence about one’s own teaching:
  • Observing
  • Collecting data
  • Describing
  • Evaluating findings
  • Assessing effectiveness
  • Identifying inconsistencies
  • Exploring alternatives
  • Generating alternative courses of action
  • Generating alternative attitudes, beliefs, assumptions
• Applying insights gained from this process to one’s own teaching

These skills should be part of teacher training. Reflective activities are helpful to those who already possess reflective capacities, but are not as effective for those who are not already skilled in this way; it is these other trainees who will benefit from learning how to reflect.

My research also indicates that writing in a dialogue journal is a significant tool for increasing awareness about one’s teaching, but that its effectiveness is greatly increased when there is a true dialogue occurring. Asking trainees to keep a journal which is not responded to, only occasionally responded to, or not read regularly by the same person(s) does not serve the same developmental function as when there are regular, ample opportunities for questions to be asked and answered, from both parties. Again, one of the eight major component experiences of optimal experience (Csikszentmihali, 1992) is immediate feedback. My research additionally suggests that the effectiveness of this tool would be increased if trainees were encouraged to write directly to the reader (addressing him/her by name and with “you”), rather than using the books as a confessional. It is important also that the contents of the writing do not duplicate information coming from another source, such as a teaching practice report (“crit sheet”); otherwise the exchanges cannot be expected to rise above the superficial.

My second proposal for changing the way we train teachers is to put awareness at the top of the agenda. One way of doing this on a CELTA is to make it clearer than the Cambridge/RSA syllabus would indicate, that it is not sharpness of techniques and knowledge of language that are the main criteria for getting an “A” or a “B”. This dissertation presents a large quantity of information about people who do well on the
CELTA; I would like to suggest that trainers come clean with trainees about what actually gets discussed in grading meetings when we are trying to decide the grade of trainees who are on the “P”/”B” or “B”/”A” borderlines: it is the people skills, self-awareness and ability to communicate that decide us in the end. Likewise, the trainers need to acknowledge more officially amongst themselves that these qualities are crucial, and to modify their teaching approaches accordingly.

10.4. Suggestions for further research

The most obvious area for further research is on reflection. As is true of anything that becomes faddish in our profession, publications, workshops and conferences on reflection abound at the moment. Ever on the watch for new ideas in teaching, teachers and trainers may be superficially integrating reflection into their teaching without understanding its true potential. Research needs to be done on more programmes in which reflection is used as a developmental process, rather than a new technique. We need more empirical evidence that it is possible for reflection to be taught to trainees who are not already natural reflectors before they begin the CELTA. If the implication is, as I believe it to be, that being reflective accelerates the process of learning to teach, programmes with a greater commitment to developing reflective teachers might in the first instance produce higher grades, but it is urgent that we learn more about the process of becoming reflective and not just the results. It is equally important that the knowledge obtained through such research be made available to the classroom teacher: at teaching conferences, for example, as opposed to only in research journals.

Much more can be learned from the tutors themselves. It is researchers who are also teacher educators themselves who have the most to contribute. Even small research projects can advance our knowledge base. One obvious means of discovering more about how tutors regard the development of their trainees, for example, is to record more grading meetings, and to use such recorded data as the basis for research. It would be valuable to analyse the language used as well as the concepts presented, and also to look at how grades are negotiated. [I might mention here that it does seem important that we remain alert to the possibility that the concept of “doing well” on the course might become less rigid as a result of the change in the wording describing grades on the new CELTA (as opposed to
CTEFLA) syllabus (see Chapter Eight). I have been informed personally by UCLES (Poulter, 1998) that it is implied that the CTEFLA concept of grades continues, so it is curious that the descriptions were changed.] It would be helpful if more research findings could be incorporated into the CELTA in such a fashion that trainees could achieve more of a metacognitive awareness of the learning possible on the course.

It would be useful for more rigorous research to be undertaken in following the careers of post-CELTA teachers in order to understand how their development was influenced by the course. The real failures are the trainees who pass the course but are unable to continue developing after it ends. More needs to be known about the first years for language teachers. The success stories, the ones who have learned how to be reflective teachers, return two or more years later to get the Diploma, which is the next qualification. What is it that kept alive their motivation to keep developing as teachers, when so many others dropped out? It should certainly be possible to do longitudinal studies on teachers from the time they finish their CELTAs, using interviews and stimulated recall techniques on their teaching to observe how their thinking changes as they develop from novice to experienced teachers.

Evidence has been presented in this research study that potential “B”s are identified at interview more often than not, but that there is no similar correlation for the other grades. If we were better able to identify pedagogical thinkers, alert novices, and common-sense thinkers at interview, we might be able to intervene earlier to help each to reach his/her potential. We need more rigorous research about which techniques that we currently use at interviews are reliable, and how to reach the information that does not present itself. It has been stated that the Honey Mumford Learning Styles Questionnaire is not an adequate instrument for learning about the kinds of reflective abilities needed by teachers; a new questionnaire could be designed which would present a more complete portrait, and this could be piloted for use at the interview stage.

Before my research little was known about why some trainees do well and others not. I sincerely hope that my contributions have furthered our knowledge base and awareness, but there is so much more to discover about how teaching is learned. There is still more to learn, for example, about why some trainees start out well, but don’t make the progress anticipated. Why is their success not sufficiently motivating for them, as it is for those
others who make more progress? Further study along the lines suggested by the present research could be applied to learning more about these trainees, and to providing a greater understanding of how English language teachers learn to teach.
Appendix A

FOCUS GROUP

Introduction

The Focus Group is comprised of six trainees, four of whom got “B”s and two “SP”s. Comments about this group have been interspersed throughout the dissertation whenever it proved useful to give examples from those who had done well on the course. This Appendix presents a quantity of information available for each of these trainees, consistently organised, most of it in their own words (in italics) or their tutors’ (in quotation marks or in dialogue). All five research instruments are included when available. The trainees’ names have been changed. It was not seen necessary to change the tutors’ names.

The information for each of these six trainees is as follows:

A.1. Education
A.2. Teaching Experience
A.3. Work Experience
A.4. Reasons for taking the course
A.5. Interviewer’s comments
A.6. Tutors’ comments about his/her progress
   (including weekly progress reports, tutors’ handover meetings, the
   final grading meeting and the final report)
A.7. Reflection Book
   (summarised each week by me)
A.8. Learning Styles Assignment
   (including Self Description and Beliefs about Learning)
A.9. Group Discussion comments
A.10. Honey Mumford scores
A.11. Repertory Grid results
   (both Week One and Week Four)

Each trainee is completely represented in turn. The section labels above are coded for each trainee, so Education for Horatio is labelled A.1.H., and Teaching Experience for him is labelled A.2.H. The same two sections for Agnes are A.1.A. and A.2.A. The four “B”s, in turn, are: Horatio (H), Agnes (A), Peter (P) and Carla (C). The two “SP”s are Sylvia (S) and Bill (B).
FOCUS GROUP: HORATIO (H)
Grade “B”

A.1.H. Education

Horatio’s previous education included nine GCSEs (five As and four Bs), three “A” levels (three Bs), and a First Class BA (Hons) in History from London University. In addition, at the time of the course he was reading for an M.Phil in the History of Medicine. His only foreign language was French, his skills in which he described as ranging from elementary (speaking and writing) to lower intermediate (reading). He was 23 at the time of the course.

A.2.H. Teaching Experience

He had had no experience in language teaching. His one teaching experience came when he was selected to teach one experimental class for first year undergraduates on Medieval History while he was at University College London. He had also run debating workshops for new students at UCL.

A.3.H. Work Experience

He had had several jobs as a research assistant, had worked in an office and for an educational charity.

A.4.H Reason for taking the course

I would like to gain practical experience of teaching since I am considering this as a career. I believe that the best place to undertake such a course is International House, because of its high reputation for language teaching. I hope that I have the relevant and desirable qualities for an EFL teacher, many of which were gained from my extra curricular activities as a student and from professional experience. I have good communication skills, patience, flexibility, creative flair, a sense of humour, and most importantly, enthusiasm.
A.5.H. **Interviewer’s Comments**

“A really lovely man, fun, used to hard work, sensible, good ideas.”

A.6.H. **Tutors’ comments about his progress**

**Week One**

Progress Report:

“Clear planning - thinks from students’ point of view. Takes on board comments made in TP and acts on them; thinks carefully about what he’s done and what he’s going to do. Confident manner in class.”

Handover Meeting:

“Horatio is brilliant. Horatio is an absolute natural. He knows what you’re going to say before you say it, you know, in feedback, or if he doesn’t then he picks it up immediately and the next day he’s done it. I mean, but everything, you know when you get people who ... he gives me the feeling that he’d be brilliant at whatever he does.”

**Week Two**

Progress Report:

“Preparation: Your lessons were thoroughly prepared, with careful attention to anticipated problems and solutions and very clear staging and aims. You consulted a number of sources. Your materials were well-presented and useful. The quantity of activities, however, needs to be looked at. Execution: You worked well with the students using a variety of techniques to present and practise, with considerable emphasis on meaning and relevance. The students were fully engaged, and the focus was student-centred. You need to work now on providing assistance for students who cannot communicate because of accent, preferably with the help of the other students.”

**Week Three**

Progress Report:

“Planning: Thorough, conscientious, good language awareness and good analysis of coursebook materials and aims. You’ve made progress in limiting and prioritising aims appropriately for the available time. Good staging. Execution: You’ve adapted well to the lower level and established a good rapport with the students. You’ve made progress in clarifying meaning and in providing sufficient
practice. Work on really listening to students, on more thorough drilling, highlighting and correction. You’re very aware of your strengths and weaknesses.”

Handover Meeting:

“Horatio is looking very good. His planning is excellent, and this week he really got to grips with limiting his aims, and teaching one thing thoroughly. His execution is lovely. He’s really with the students and very thorough, very good in the way he sets things up, so I think he’s well on course for a “B”. He asked me on Friday, in fact I was in the bar, they did their twenty minute ( ) down there, and then I did feedback down there, and then I wanted to talk to James, ( ) but everyone else went, ‘Carrie, how am I doing?’ Anyway, Horatio said, ‘Have I done anything this week to make it impossible for me to achieve more than a pass?’, and I said, ‘No.’ And he said, ‘What do I need to do to achieve more than a pass?’, and I said, ‘You need to pay attention to those points I made in your last Reflection Book.’ Basically, what he needs to do is to listen more thoroughly and correct more, because what he tends to do is let things pass, but at the wrong stages. If it’s controlled practice then he should be in there and guiding more and being more attentive to accuracy.”

Week Four

Grading Meeting:

S-J: “Yeah. And Horatio we're happy to give a "B" to.”
C: “Absolutely.”
SW-J: “Very.”

Final Report:

“Horatio was an effective teacher, who made good progress throughout the course. He was a hard-working, pleasant member of the group, who made perceptive contributions to discussion. He quickly grasped the techniques and ideas discussed, and showed considerable potential. He had a calm, confident manner which enabled him to establish a good rapport with his students. His classroom management was effective. His lesson preparation was thorough, and incorporated clear, logical staging. He paid careful attention to anticipated problems and solutions. His overall aims and those of individual stages were clear. He was able to look at language from the students’ point of view. He had good ideas and created materials which involved his students effectively. He provided a good variety of activities. His lessons were well-organised and his classroom management was efficient. He used a range of teaching techniques appropriately. He taught the meaning of new language effectively but he needs to work further on providing sufficient practice. He showed a good grasp of a variety of techniques and made great efforts to increase the clarity of his instructions. He was able to anticipate problems accurately and dealt with difficulties as they arose.
Although Horatio could tend to be rather self-critical, he was perceptive of his strengths and weaknesses and receptive to suggestions."

A.7.H. **Reflection Book** (summarised by me)

It should be noted here that Horatio never got into the habit of addressing his entries to the tutor who was to read them, nor did he sign off; however, he did direct specific questions to the reader.

**Week One**

He was immediately aware of the students, and wrote after his first lesson that he needed to do less ‘teaching’ himself and to get the students to participate more, and confessed that he ‘was more concerned with getting through the lesson and coping than the success of the contents’. He wrote, however, that in spite of this, and considering it was so early in the course, he had enjoyed the students’ responses and participation. By his second lesson he was already pleased with how much he had increased student participation, but aimed to do better.

He had this to say about control:

>Personally, I felt happier standing at the front because of the feeling of control that one gets as a result, which, when first embarking on a ‘career’ in EFL teaching, is quite important - or at least I have found this to be the case! However, as mentioned in the ‘feedback’ session, it is important to experiment...

Starting from that first week, he was already focused on achieving his aims, and setting objectives for himself for each following lesson. He would then achieve them.

**Week Two**

The fact that he believes success entirely within his abilities is reflected in comments such as:

- This will be rectified over the week.
- I understand the rationale behind it.
- I will endeavour to make better use of it in the future.
- This is obviously no excuse, and, hopefully will not happen again. It was a salutary tale to me.
- I will watch this in the future.
- I’ll learn by mistakes.
- I’ll keep working on these.
On Monday, Week Two, he starts his practice of listing his objectives for the next lesson. These include techniques to master (checking instructions, ‘to be stricter with myself with regards to the timing’, refining concept questions, language grading), with frequent reference to the students:

- ... think about how much the students speak and I speak, and the ratio between us
- ... to be more reactive to the students (even though the point may be outside my lesson plan!!)
- ... to have less [sic] activities, and let the students do the work; and not be frightened to ‘slow down’.

He refers to the students by name when describing what had gone on in his classes.

**Week Three**

Horatio experiences some frustration this week because he is trying more things out and not always getting them right. He also had to adjust to a new class, which meant a lower level as well as different students, and going back to shorter lessons (with the previous class he had built up to 55 minute slots; the new class started with 20 minutes per teacher). The quality of his reflections indicates that he is doing a lot of thinking and trying to solve problems. His objectives become more articulately expressed as they become more complex:

… to be more attentive to exactly what the students are saying - especially if it is connected closely with the target language - consequently, to correct more, and more effectively, so the students are made aware of ‘native’ speech; think about the methods of correction; keep focusing on simple, achievable aims and how I should reach them in class.

These concerns are often those that trainees have in the last week of the course, if at all.

**Week Four**

His first class of this week he describes as a ‘truly depressing experience’, and he writes at great length about it, both in the initial and the further reflections, working out exactly how he could have changed it into a more successful experience for the students. He is clearly angry and disappointed with himself, but still manages to find hope:

- My only, minor, mitigating piece is that it was the first time I did a 55 minute lesson with the elementary group. Each time, it is like beginning again (i.e., managing time and groups). Although, hopefully, experience will change this.
I achieved one aim of my lesson yesterday - to experiment with competition games in class.

A.8.H. Learning Styles Assignment

Self-description

- Personally, I am quite disciplined compared to others, albeit a little fatalistic in that I realise a task has to be completed and thus will ensure that it is completed.
- I believe I have a near balance between the left and right sides of my brain, although with a slight emphasis on the logical and analytical aspects. I favour learning by instruction, by observation and writing during a class - even if the information is subsequently provided in a handout. This action of writing helps me to personalise, internalise and memorise the information during the class.
- Outside of the classroom, unless I am revising for an exam, I prefer to work with a piece of moving instrumental music in the background. The music motivates me to work and focus my mind on the task at hand.
- I prefer working in late evening since the ‘atmosphere’ at this time gives me a focus and time limit for my work. In a class situation, I prefer to listen and speak only when challenged - directly by the teacher or by the topic being discussed.
- I do not like being chosen by the teacher to contribute through fear of embarrassment among my peers. Consequently, I am more productive in pair or group work because it is less formal and less threatening. However, now that I have had some experience of teaching, I believe that it is important to select a student to contribute since it keeps the class listening to each other and makes them consider the particular point at hand.
- I prefer group work when making a vocal contribution whereas in a class situation I look to the teacher for confirmation of imparted knowledge.
- I enjoyed the demonstration classes where we, as trainees, were made to feel like EFL students. I found the Swahili, Turkish and the should/shouldn’t have class to be particularly useful, not only because they incorporated many different activities, but also because the teacher provided a ‘correct’ model which we could adapt. I learnt by example in this instance.
- In addition to the input lessons, the homework and videos have consolidated what I have learnt during class.
- I have also benefited from the positive suggestions of a friendly TP group.
- I could improve my learning strategies by being better at time management. This would allow more flexibility in examining texts other than general coursebooks in the library.
- Initially I was sceptical about the use of the feedback books. However, they have been very useful in providing an opportunity to focus attention on my aims and actions and how these could be improved.
Horatio’s beliefs about learning

- The learning style of a particular individual reflects their upbringing, educational system and culture, which can be very different from those of the EFL teacher. It is important to utilise these different experiences and interests in a class to ensure that the learning process is as enjoyable and successful as possible for all concerned.
- Learner motivation is very important in undertaking a particular piece of work.
- In almost every input session a wide variety of techniques have been used in order to impart a designated aim. This variety allowed the trainees to excel as individuals in the learning process.
- The methods were stimulating, applicable and directly helpful for our own teaching methods. However, above all, through these methods the learning process was made interesting and relevant to me as a student.

A.9.H. Group Discussion

Some insights from/about Horatio emerged from this particular instrument. Here he commented that ‘if you’ve got a problem you want to solve either you go to one of your colleagues or the tutors’, indicating that he knew he could get help. He also agreed with another trainee who stated that she particularly related to Susan’s (my) ‘style, which was sort of psychological.’

Here he stated that what he appreciated about the Reflection Book was that it gave him a second chance: ‘say you did a bad class, well you explain about it and you say, ‘I know I did a bad class, and I know what I did wrong, it’s because X, Y and Z.’ Sort of thing. And if I was doing it again I would do it like this.’ He also mentioned that he found the first reflections less useful than the second, because if he had had a strong reaction to the class, either positive or negative, he wouldn’t then have been in the mood for assessing it.

As for how getting the Certificate influenced his motivation, he said:

I mean, I was thinking before about jobs before I came on the course. But I don’t know if it particularly influenced my motivation as such. I mean, I just wanted to get the Certificate, full stop, whether I was going for a job or not really, specially since you paid the money.

The discussion of that particular group then got sidetracked onto what facilities I.H. provides for trainees, and Horatio was vociferous in detailing exactly what could be done better and precisely how.
A.10.H. **Honey Mumford**

Activist 5 low preference  
Reflector 18 very strong preference  
Theorist 15 strong preference  
Pragmatist 8 very low preference

A.11.H. **Repertory Grid**

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<th>Week One</th>
<th>A favourite teacher</th>
<th>Myself as a learner</th>
<th>Myself as a teacher</th>
<th>My ideal self</th>
<th>Myself in a group</th>
<th>Myself in solitude</th>
<th>Myself as a child</th>
<th>Myself as an adult</th>
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<td>Interacting with people</td>
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Table A.1: Horatio’s Week One Repertory Grid

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<th>Myself as a learner</th>
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Table A.2: Horatio’s Week Four Repertory Grid
. FOCUS GROUP: AGNES (A)

Grade “B”

A.1.A **Education**

Agnes was raised in her native country of Greece. There she got four “A” level equivalents. Her higher education took place in Britain, where she achieved a BA in Ancient and Modern Greek, and an MA in Classical Literature. Previous to entering university she had passed the Cambridge Proficiency. In addition to fluent Greek and English, she speaks basic French. Agnes was 25 at the time of the course.

A.2.A. **Teaching Experience**

Agnes had taught English informally to family and friends, and Modern Greek to fellow students, but had had no training.

A.3.A. **Work Experience**

She has worked as a freelance translator, cashier, receptionist and telemarketing operator.

A.4.A. **Reason for taking the course**

a) I want to follow the course because I want a good, formal training (and qualification) in teaching English. I want to increase my language awareness, become familiar with teaching methods and develop skills in planning lessons. Ultimately, I want to teach English in Greece.

b) I believe my nature is suited to teaching; I have good language skills (in both English and Greek) and a strong academic background. I am understanding and have good interpersonal and communication skills. I also believe I am hard-working, imaginative and adaptable.

A.5.A. **Interviewer’s Comments**

“Friendly, bit nervous, retiring in a group? excellent LA, hardworking, explains.”
A.6.A. **Tutors’ comments about her progress**

**Week One**

Progress Report:

“Preparation: The hours you put into planning were very much in evidence in the thoroughness of presentation and your ability to answer students’ questions simply and clearly. You adapted the coursebook material well. Execution: You came across as confident of the language. You were encouraging and friendly. Be careful about doing work yourself that the students could be doing (defining, explaining). You helped with accuracy. Well-organised boardwork.”

Handover Meeting:

“Agnes is a worrier. She’s spent hours and hours planning her lessons, and she does it extremely well, and then she wants to commit suicide afterwards, but what happens in the middle is: she’s a good teacher, and she’s charming, and she looks friendly and relaxed and on top of the whole thing, but that’s not the way she’s feeling. And now her grandmother’s just died over the weekend, so, I think what we need to do is help her have more fun, because she’s just good, but if she’s going to be tortured the whole time, then there’s no point in being a teacher.”

**Week Two**

Progress Report:

“Planning: Could be a little more detail on plan, though it’s clear you’ve planned thoroughly and anticipated difficulties in depth. You need to mention in aims if you’re spending a long time on something. Execution: Handing over more to students now, though sometimes still you try to do the work for them! Staging and instructions improved over the week.”

**Week Three**

Progress Report:

“Preparation: Your planning is very thorough and the activities you devise are appropriate to your students. Execution: Your manner is very good and you have made great improvements in controlling how much you speak. You need to keep working on making meaning absolutely clear.”

Handover Meeting:

“Agnes borderline “B”. Because her big problem before was how much she spoke, and not being directive enough at the same time, kind of talking while everyone else was talking, and then she made huge improvements in the lesson I saw on Friday.”
Because she’s really going for a “B”. She really wants a “B”. Her language analysis is great.”

Week Four

Grading Meeting:

S-J: I think Agnes did very well last week. She has, her two long lessons this week, neither of them was a "B" lesson.
SW-J: Okay.
S-J: However! I'd still like to discuss her as a potential "B".
SW-J: Um Hm.
S-J: And the reasons for that, well, you tell us why you thought she was a "B" last week and I'll tell you, I'll react to that.
SW-J: I thought because she listened to everything that we said and improved it, because her language analysis was very strong.
S-J: Yes.
SW-J: And because, she asked, she said, ‘What have I got to do?’ And she was very focused, she didn't just say, ‘Okay, so that wasn't very good, fine.’ She said, ‘What have I got to do?’ And I said, "Improve this." And she went and improved it. I said, "Improve ( )" and she went and improved it. I said, "Make sure that you drill vocabulary." And she did it.
S-J: Um hm.
SW: She did two very good lessons.
S-J: Yeah.
C: And you said she really got to grips with her babbling.
SW-J: Yeah! I mean, she had it written on the back of her hand.
C: ‘Don't babble.’
SW-J: ‘Don't babble.’ Yeah! And you saw her look down, and she was… I think the thing that impressed me was that she was totally aware, of what she was doing, especially the second lesson. She knew what she was doing, yet she was looking at the students to see what to do next.
S-J: Yeah, she's good at that.
C: She was, yeah!
S-J: Sorry.
SW-J: No, it was just that, it could have been very easy for her in her second lesson to write this plan and to do it and to steam roller through the students, but she didn't. She kept thinking about what she was doing and thinking about the students, you know, and she kept them, they worked so hard and they loved it.
S-J: Yeah. She does do that. She gets them to work hard, yeah. Yeah. Umm. Her first lesson that she taught this week, it was 45 minutes of teacher-focus, even though on her plan it looked differently, in fact it was an eliciting and they were well-prepared and stuff, but it was still her, and given that one thing that she really wanted to work on was student-centred activities, that was a bit of a problem. Didn't spend enough time on meaning. But, but, she, she actually explained her way out of it. And one of the things that she was doing was she, was she, there was a lot of, the activities were not relevant and they were not meaningful, but it was because she was, she was bending over backwards not to get them, have them talking about deaths, and so she was doing things like having them talk about
Snoopy the Dog, you know, so that was something, but she picked up on, she could explain that well, and I'm sure she's, she's taken on board comments I've made about that, you know, that people have whole histories, not just the trauma part, and you can't not allow their whole histories into the classroom. Umm, and the last one, there were little things that didn't look "B"ish, like her board work is absolutely nothing special whatsoever, I mean it's a jotting pad. It's not a mess, but I often think "B"s know how to organise board records, and they're thinking about what the students are writing down, and they're responsible for that as well; it's not just, you know, something that you tack on with it. Umm, (silence) yeah. But there were lots of student-centred activities. So it wasn't a "B" lesson, but it had some very good bits in it, and she really picked up on from what was the problem with the first one and fixed it on the second one, as you said the other day as well, you would, you think she is completely reliable; she could start a job on Monday and you know she'd take it seriously and she would be responsible.

C: But other things that differentiate "B"s from Passes are: how much support would she need? Not much, from what it sounds like.
SW-J: Um Hm.
S-J: Yeah.
C: It's somebody who has to be significantly better than a pass in terms of language analysis and, what's the other thing?
S-J: Her L.A. is superb.
C: Language analysis and,
S-J: You said, you said it the other day.
C: Did I?
S-J: Yes.
SW-J: Is someone going to tell me?
C: Well, gap on the tape, for you to fill in, but when we had a brainstorming meeting once about, you know, what's an "A", what's a "B", bla bla bla, I know, I think this is in the actual RSA guideline, someone who is significantly better in terms of language analysis and teaching skills.
S-J: ( ) sensitivity to the students. Umm. Written work. All of her essays were, they got the highest marks from me.
C: Right. Well, I think, I think,
S-J: And I think she'd be an asset to an I.H. school,
SW-J: Yeah.
S-J: I mean she's Greek; she's been here for six years or something. I think ...
C: Yeah.
S-J: Yeah? Is that all right? Happy?
C: Happy.
SW-J: Good. And we're going to make somebody happy, aren't we.
C: Yeah, yeah. That's nice.

Final Report:

“Agnes was an effective teacher who made good progress throughout the course. She was a hard-working member of the group who made perceptive contributions to discussion. She quickly grasped the techniques and ideas discussed, and showed considerable potential. Her written work was very good. She had a pleasantly relaxed and friendly classroom manner which enabled her to establish a very good rapport with her students.
Her lesson planning was thorough and systematic, and incorporated clear, logical staging.
Her overall aims and those of individual stages were generally clear.
Irene was particularly good at analysing language carefully and appropriately. She learnt to be selective for students.
She had good ideas and created materials which involved her students effectively.
She involved her students in useful learning activities, but occasionally needed to think more about how to exploit her activities to give maximum student practice.
Agnes’ lessons were well-organised and she held the attention of her students. She developed a good range of techniques and used these appropriately.
She learnt how to illustrate rather than explain the meaning of new language.
She showed a good grasp of the techniques and was developing her range of approaches.
She was sensitive to students’ problems and used a range of correction techniques effectively.
Agnes commented perceptively on her teaching and was always receptive to comments and suggestions put to her.”

A.7.A.  Reflection Book (summarised by me)

Week One

Agnes was fixated that first week with trying to give the students as much as she could. It was a conflict for her to step back and leave the students on their own, because she felt she wasn’t doing her duty. In addition, she was worried that the students might think she didn’t know enough, which was partly caused by being a non-native speaker of English, but not entirely. It was probably also cultural, because, in fact, her knowledge of grammar was superior to that of her native-speaking colleagues, who hadn’t studied it so thoroughly as she had. This conflict was very stressful for her.

Week Two

Agnes started off the week with this comment, ‘Today was a first experience. Both of my previous lessons were on grammar so my classes were very teacher-centred. It was hard just sitting and not participating but I’ve learnt that they have to do the work themselves so they understand better.’ This is also when she started writing a greeting to the tutor at the beginning of each reflection, and asking direct questions, often about the ways in which she would have re-ordered the lessons. She referred to the students
repeatedly, commenting on their reactions and responses. She also expressed her gratitude to the tutor for having helped her with insights and suggestions.

**Week Three**

She started off the week feeling the usual frustration from changing levels and students, but this developed into confidence as she was able to identify what she could change for the next lesson. She started setting herself objectives and was able to achieve them. Being told that she tended to ‘waffle’ was insightful for her, and she identified a problem she’d had since the beginning: fearing silences during grammar lessons. This awareness was a breakthrough for her.

**Week Four**

Only the first of the two last lessons she taught were reflected upon in her book. She was very discouraged by this lesson, because she was so focused on achieving her main aim and being sensitive to the students, which was what she had been striving to do on the course, that she couldn’t understand why the students were not responding.

**A.8.A. Learning Styles Assignment**

**Self-description**

- *Analysing my personal learning style is complicated by the fact that I went to school in Greece, where traditional teaching methods were used almost exclusively. The class was totally teacher-centred; a textbook was followed rigidly in all subjects and memorisation was encouraged and praised. Acquiring knowledge rather than learning skills was the main and maybe only aim. I did well at school in Greece and possibly learnt a lot of useful information, so it is unfair to condemn these methods wholeheartedly. When I came to university in England, however, I struggled initially because the Greek system had not engendered a critical faculty in me; in other words, this system had given me fish but had not taught me how to catch them.*

- *In some ways I feel privileged to have experienced both systems and to have adopted techniques that suit me from both. I believe that combination is most effective; the traditional systems offer facts, the more progressive ones give you a context. What is important for me in order to learn is to have the facts in a context. In the course of my studies both in England I have discovered certain things that help me learn. I learn best when there is no pressure, when it is my own choice not someone else’s; I prefer short but intense study periods; theory and practice I find*
useless on their own but invaluable together; above all, I need to be interested in a subject in order to learn or find out about it.

- A large part of the course has been self-directed in that it has taught me how to learn to be an effective teacher rather than just how to be a teacher.
- Attention was also paid to the students as individuals; we had personal tutorials and feedback sessions where individual problems were diagnosed - I felt comfortable and reassured in the written feedback because my personal questions and problems were discussed and acted upon.
- There was also an element of more traditional teaching; at times we were given a list of do’s and don’ts. I found that useful in that it gave us the benefit of other people’s experience in what does not work - there is no point in reinventing the wheel.
- ... we were often given the context before the theory in that we were given an activity in an input session and then guided to discover and discuss the theory that underlied that activity. I found this last technique particularly effective because it stimulated curiosity ... This curiosity is then immediately satisfied by the theory which follows and the theory makes sense because it’s been provided with a context. I felt that the curiosity generated interest and motivation in what was going to follow and at the same time a need was created, a gap for the theory to be slotted into.
- [re a balanced approach] I feel this was extremely suitable for me because I have a general need for balance and variety, especially when I am learning. At times, I am able to receive and understand information taught using traditional, teacher-centred methods, but there have been times when I was tired, or my interest was waning, and I found that games and group activities stimulated my learning.
- I am aware that I haven’t been very critical of the course in this essay. This is simply because I have thoroughly enjoyed every aspect of it, and I feel that in three weeks, I’ve learnt more than I ever expected to. The only thing that maybe hindered my learning sometimes, was unnecessary stress due to tiredness, but even that proved useful in that it made me aware of yet another aspect of a teacher’s life.

Agnes’ beliefs about learning

- Some ‘humanistic’ approaches were used; the course was clearly designed to be enjoyable as well as hard work and this is a factor which I believe stimulates effective learning.
- The observation classes were perhaps an attempt at getting us to learn subconsciously, from more experienced teachers; we would thus acquire knowledge of teaching rather be formally taught it.
- ... because students are individuals and not the same things work for everyone, every time, adopting a balanced approach in teaching methods will ensure that all of the students get taught regardless of their particular learning preferences.
A.9.A. **Group Discussion**

Agnes wanted to know from the other people in the group if they had found that advice from the three different tutors had conflicted. She seemed to have found this stressful, because she wanted clear messages about what was the right thing to do. Later, when they were all discussing how the intensity of the course had affected them, Agnes said that for her the most stressful week had been the fourth.

Regarding her purpose for taking the course, she said:

Actually, I knew I wanted to do this course. For about a year now. ... In a way though, I think, even if it didn’t have, I mean, now I know I want to go to Greece, and I knew that a few years ago, but I think that even if that wasn’t my intention anyway, I would have been motivated for this course because it’s been quite interesting. I mean the motivation was not only because I needed it for later, but because I really enjoyed it.

**Comments about Agnes from her colleagues**

Two of the people in Agnes’ TP group mentioned her progress, one in his Group Discussion, and the other in both his Reflection Book and his Assignment. They had both been inspired and motivated by Agnes’ apparent breakthrough one weekend, which resulted in tremendous improvement in her teaching.

A.10.A. **Honey Mumford**

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### A.11.A. Repertory Grid

#### Table A.3: Agnes’ Week One Repertory Grid

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<th>Myself as a learner</th>
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FOCUS GROUP: PETER (P)
Grade “B”

A.1.P. **Education**

Peter got two “A” levels (History and Maths) and two “A/S” levels (French and Philosophy). His very recent BA was in European Studies, which he described as a mixture of Politics, Economics and Languages. His third university year was spent in Italy and Hungary at universities there. His languages include “advanced level” Italian, good French, and basic German and Hungarian. Peter was 22 at the time of the course.

A.2.P. **Teaching Experience**

During his half year in Italy he helped tutor two children, and he had conversation exchanges with Italian students. Previously he had been a swimming instructor to 11 year old beginners.

A.3.P. **Work Experience**

During summers and vacations he worked in chemist stores, and had spent two summers as a waiter in the French Alps.

A.4.P. **Reason for taking the course**

I believe a career in English language teaching offers a great deal of variety and enjoyment and the travel opportunities it offers interest me greatly. I want to pass the enthusiasm I have for languages onto others and believe that to give your students and yourself your best a RSA/UCLES in TEFL is vital. I think I would be suited to TEFL as I have experienced learning a new language several times and so understand how disorientating and difficult it can be. I feel the variety of methods I have experienced mean I can offer flexibility and originality and my time at university and abroad has given me the confidence needed to teach.

A.5.P. **Interviewer’s Comments**

“The perfect course participant. Prediction: very good.”
A.6.P.  Tutors’ comments about his progress

Week One

Progress Report:

“You’ve established a good rapport with the students and already understand the importance of a student-centred focus. You organised your activities smoothly. Strengths: ideas, willingness to try things which are new to you. To work on: identifying a main aim. Preparing students thoroughly for practice activities. At this stage you seem to have a good deal of potential.”

Handover meeting:

(slightly paraphrased) “The interesting thing about Peter is that although he has no experience, he’s experimenting. He’s essentially trying out things that he liked when he was a language learner, to see how they feel as a teacher, and he didn’t always get it right, but the fact is that he’s trying. He’s not very good at reflection, but just because he’s lazy. I don’t think he’s used to reflecting. He’ll sit down and he’ll be so caught up watching other people that I end up saying, ‘Peter, Peter, you know, it’s almost 6.00. I need to comment on your book’ and then he forgets it, but actually in feedback you can see that he’s very good at this assessing, so I don’t know if he’s ever going to get into the Reflection Book or not.”

Week Two

Progress Report:

“Your overall and stage aims are clear. Logical staging. Materials fine, good ideas. Language awareness: you show you are researching well - keep it up. Class management good: make sure you don’t become too teacher-centred, though. Dealing with meaning, form and pronunciation: fine, you’re working on this and it has looked good. Providing practice: this is an area to work on - you plan for practice but don’t always get there - make sure you do! Self-evaluation: you’re pretty much aware of what has happened and why. Keep working on the next question - how could I have avoided it? Strengths: you’re keen to experiment, you show evidence of really taking on things from input, and your rapport is great. To work on: handing over to students and taking a back seat. Lots more practice. Don’t get sidetracked. At this stage you’re doing fine.”

Handover Meeting:

(slightly paraphrased) “Peter, X and Y are really having a good time, really enjoying it, learning enormous amounts, and showing they’re learning enormous amounts. Peter tends to just enjoy himself so much that he forgets to do any teaching. He gets so carried away, and the students are so involved and so happy that you feel really bad in feedback saying [he hasn’t met his aims] because mostly he hasn’t, but I see it as a problem that he can overcome. His last lesson was
will-going to, which he’d made his own tape for, his own conversation to illustrate the language point, and it was okay. It was full of plans and intentions, and then he managed to do a massive, heavy presentation on the board, most of which the students knew, and he kept talking about predictions and things, so it wasn’t perfect by any means, but he was very happy with it because he did sort of get through things, but he doesn’t give them much practice. That’s the main thing I’ve been working on, handing over to the students more. As I say, he’s enjoying it so much that he wants to get in there, but he’s looking very good. I mean he’s working hard, trying all these new ideas all the time, that kind of thing, so he’s all right. [A question later in that meeting: ‘Before you go on, these three, are they close to “B”s?” ‘Oh yes, yes. I would say.’”

Week Three

Progress Report:

“All round good progress. **Work further on checking questions, asking not telling, monitoring everyone.** Self-evaluation: very good. At this stage: good.”

Handover Meeting:

“Peter is very good. He’s made progress in everything, really. He tries things out, he has terrific fun. The only thing with him is he really needs to ask, not tell, checking questions. He’s very, very clear, and he gives marvellous little clear definitions or demos, but he still hasn’t got into the thing of checking it, and he’ll teach it marvellously, but he won’t do any checking. But I’m only talking about vocabulary here; I’m not talking about concept, so. He gets hung up with monitoring one student. There’s one very exigent student in that class, and he sort of forgets about everyone else and sort of gets locked in with this guy, but apart from that he also is a “B”, I think.”

Final Grading Meeting

[The discussion began with my informing my co-tutors that Peter was in the middle of a truly extreme family trauma.]

S: And Peter, he says, ‘**Oh, I’m like my father, you know, I can put things aside.**’ And that’s what he’s been up with, against, is not allowing himself to freak out, because on a level, you see I was the first one he’s talked to about it, and then it turned out that his peers were around him as well, his TP group, who were horrified, and I realised he hadn’t talked to them, he hadn’t talked to anybody, nobody on the course, and he’s always, you know, laughing alone and just living on a completely different level. So given that, I’m extremely impressed!

S: Anyway, I saw him, his last lesson, you saw him last week, and you were extremely impressed with him. (J: Yes, I was, yes.) His last lesson was not a “B” lesson. There were lots of good things in it, if we decide to give him a “B” I, you know, will have no problems, but I think we just need to talk about the fact that -

H: I felt there was no doubt when,
J: I really feel that he’s a natural teacher, and he was somebody who, is this ..
S: Yeah, he was teaching ordinals, and he had lots of lovely activities and he really
looked on accuracy and drilled this class, but he didn’t deal with meaning. Ever.
And he didn’t know the answers to the exercises he gave them. You know, things
like that are not “B” material. But I think given that he’s got so much going on, you
know, it was a good lesson. There were just some important things that were
missing.
H: He’s very capable.
S: He’s not great in his written work. He’s got better at reflecting; he got better at
his essays as well, but he’s not much of a writer, no.
J: I just feel he had so much going, really,
S: Oh I felt that way in Week One.
J. In Week Three it was just like tick, tick, tick, tick, you know. And the things I’m
picking him up on are so minimal, like that he drilled a sentence that was too long,
you know, that his prompts were rather scrappily written, I mean, it’s that sort of
level of very nitpicking, because I thought he was really excellent. I mean, I would
feel quite unhappy at him just getting a pass.
S: That’s fine with me.

Final Report:

“Peter was an enthusiastic member of the course who made good progress
throughout the course. He participated actively in discussion. He quickly grasped
the techniques and ideas discussed, and showed considerable potential.
Peter had a friendly, lively manner with students and was able to establish a very
good rapport.
His lesson preparation was thorough and systematic, and incorporated clear, logical
staging.
His overall aims and those of individual stages were generally clear.
He learnt to analyse grammar thoroughly and to predict students’ difficulties
realistically.
He had good ideas and created materials which involved his students effectively.
He learnt to incorporate student-centred activities into his lessons and to ensure that
students had sufficient opportunity to practise the language he had presented.
Peter’s lessons were well-organised and he had the attention of his students. He
developed a good range of techniques and used these appropriately.
He used imaginative situations to present new language, although at times he
needed to pay greater attention to meaning.
Peter showed a good grasp of the principles and a variety of teaching techniques.
He was sensitive to students’ problems and, by the end of the course, was
integrating a range of correction techniques into his lessons.
Peter commented perceptively on his teaching and was always receptive to
comments and suggestions put to him.”
A.7.P. Reflection Book (summarised by me)

Week One

Right from the start Peter was very aware of the students, and was already departing from his plan in reaction to what was going on with them, although he realised that this meant not getting through his material. His decisions were based on not condescending to the students, and being sensitive to them. He was enjoying himself.

Week Two

He is increasingly concerned that his lessons get out of control. He was leaving out essential stages in his plan, and not being thorough enough. He sees that the students are enjoying themselves, and this makes it difficult for him to push them along, but he’s always aware with hindsight what would have helped them learn more effectively. He begins asking direct questions of the reader of his reflections, and wants to know specifically how he is doing and what specifically he can do to improve.

Week Three

He is aware that his plans are too ambitious, and sometimes feels that his lessons are going well nevertheless, and that he is mastering some techniques, and at other times feels discouraged. He refers to the students by name, and cares very much about what they are learning.

Week Four

He was angry with himself that his last lesson was unsuccessful because he hadn’t prepared thoroughly enough.
A.8.P. **Learning Styles Assignment**

**Self-description**

- The one comment which unified nearly every one of my teachers from the age of seven onwards was that I had a great deal of potential but that my concentration span and behaviour in the class left a lot to be desired. I thrived under specific teachers rather than in particular subjects. It is interesting to look back with hindsight and examine my successes and failures and see a line that clearly defined the reasons behind my mixed reviews! Teachers who lectured and expected the pupil to stay silent found me disruptive and the teachers who tried to catch the interest of their pupils and encouraged discussion and participation in the classroom found me a pleasure to teach. I don’t think that this is any great coincidence.
- I am an activist, I learn best from ‘doing’. The most obvious example is my experience of languages. My French and Italian followed similar patterns, I am unwilling to learn vocab. lists and grammar tables, it is not until I have spent time in the country where the language is spoken that it takes off.
- When I learn I cannot learn by rote, I have never created a strategy to overcome this, the only way I take in information is to understand and become involved in the subject. I never really got to grips with Chemistry for this very reason! That is not to say that I don’t use logical strategies to aid learning. I find that my most effective method for learning grammar is to lay the rules out very meticulously using many different colours etc. I almost never refer to this record in the future. I believe it is the time spent laying the information out which reinforces it.
- One of my greatest problems is that my attention span is very short, I get distracted too easily in lessons in which we were lectured by the teacher, I need fluid, changing lessons to keep my attention on the work. I have found the methods used on the course very effective in this respect. In general, the techniques helped my learning style a great deal.
- Heavy concentration on peer teaching through pair and group work and the various feedback techniques is of considerable help to me. I mentioned earlier, that I understand things best if I have had to actively seek out the answers. The tasks used to teach a certain topic allow us to experience first hand the actual method being taught, so that we can evaluate the advantages and disadvantages according to each of us found it.
- The fluid nature of the lessons meant that my concentration is constantly on the subject, movement from pair work to group work to class discussion, with various activities used to excite and stretch us stops my mind wandering and ensures that the subject is well understood and [?] into my memory.
- I have never had any formulated learning strategies, revision was always very haphazard and I never really found out what techniques suited me best.
- I am a mixture between a visual and an aural learner.
- As far as learning how to improve my teaching I feel that getting into the classroom, experimenting and working on the feedback is my best technique. I am very interested in looking into ‘Mind Maps’ by Tony Buzan as I have been told that they’re a very effective learning strategy.
• As far as helps and hindrances are concerned over the last week I enjoyed the cultural awareness class a great deal and am really beginning to enjoy my teaching as it’s coming together now.

• I am having a bit of difficulty at the moment as my family was hit late last week with a crisis and so that is occupying a great deal of my thoughts, my mind is wandering even more than usual: however, my enjoyment of the course is relatively undiminished. I just wish I had some more teaching practice before I have to go out and teach on my own!

Peter’s beliefs about learning

All of the beliefs expressed in his assignment were about his own learning styles.

A.9.P.  **Group Discussion**

Peter expressed disappointment that he wasn’t able to watch the videos, but his living situation during the course prevented this. He mentioned that he had learned a great deal from watching his own colleagues teach, that he was constantly taking notes while they taught. Although he didn’t choose Reflection as one of his top three, he felt that mulling things over both before and after was very much part of his learning strategies. He wished that he could have taught even more on the course, because he learned so much from it. Regarding input, he wondered, ‘Why haven’t I been taught like this in the past? Why don’t they do this at school?’ He felt that he learned gradually on the course, but that there were flashes when he realised he had internalised something and could use it in his own teaching. He stated that, although his tutors had been telling him all along to give the students more practice, the advice had been seeping in and didn’t truly emerge until Week Four.

He did not feel that the course was excessively challenging in comparison with having been in the Royal Marine Reserves; in fact, he felt somewhat disappointed and kept waiting to be overwhelmed by the intensity that had been spoken of so much.

A.10.P.  **Honey Mumford**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Learning Style</th>
<th>Preference</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Activist</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflector</td>
<td>5 very low preference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theorist</td>
<td>11 moderate preference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pragmatist</td>
<td>13 moderate preference</td>
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### A.11.P. Repertory Grid

Circumstances prevented Peter from handing in his Week One grid.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week Four</th>
<th>A favourite teacher</th>
<th>Myself as a learner</th>
<th>Myself as a teacher</th>
<th>My ideal self</th>
<th>Myself in a group</th>
<th>Myself in solitude</th>
<th>Myself as a child</th>
<th>Myself as an adult</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Independent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
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<tr>
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Table A.5: Peter’s Week Four Repertory Grid
FOCUS GROUP: CARLA (C)

Grade B

A.1.C. **Education**

Carla got three “A” levels. Her Bsc Honours was in statistics. Her languages included Italian (very good speaking and reading, average writing), French and Spanish (both basic in speaking and reading). One parent is a teacher and a brother is an English teacher. At the time of the course she was 30.

A.2.C. **Teaching Experience**

She had given private tuition in Maths at “A” level, and had given group demonstrations in SCUBA diving.

A.3.C. **Work Experience**

She listed no previous work experience on her application, while describing her ‘present occupation’ as temporary office worker. It is not clear how she had spent her post-university years.

A.4.C. **Reasons for taking the course**

A)  
- I am a big fan of the English language 
- *I like the idea of ‘the classroom’ as my work environment* 
- *I like to have fun and work at the same time* 
- Enjoy working with people 
- *I want to ‘give something back’ to society*

B)  
- *I love people.* 
- *I am very patient.* 
- *I’m not worried about making a fool of myself if it gets the job done.*

A.5.C. **Interviewer’s comments**

“Positive, thoughtful, sensible. Intelligent, LA good, bit theoretical. Prediction: very good.”

A.6.C. **Tutors’ comments about progress**
Week One

Progress Report:

“You can still elicit more from students and be careful not to use capital letters for individual words. You also need to work on setting clearer tasks. You showed an understanding of the stages of a writing lesson and you conducted this competently, listening well to what students said and establishing a nice rapport. You also provided good changes of focus from speaking to writing/working in pairs, individually and mingling. Pace - good.”

Week Two

Progress Report:

“Your manner is very encouraging and the students enjoy your lessons. However, you need to be more selective about what you want to teach and you need to ensure that you give the students adequate practice of the language you’ve taught. Try to incorporate more correction into your lessons. Try to use the board to focus students’ attention on the new language. Try to incorporate skills work into your language lessons.”

Week Three

Progress Report:

“Preparation: much more thorough planning this week, and very good ideas and materials. Your personalised activities have been particularly effective. Try planning boardwork ahead of time. Execution: your skills are really developing: drilling, correction, conveying and checking meaning, grading. You listen well to students and give them the help they need. Keep working on vocal energy.”

Grading meeting

B: Carla I think is a “B”.
SB: “She made a big leap from Week Two to Week Three. She had JW the second week when you were away, and JW is quite technique-bound, but she said Carla was fantastic in execution, but she wasn’t preparing anything, she wasn’t anticipating problems, and that kind of thing, and I just saw her do a complete turnaround which she was doing very thoroughly. I mean she was making mistakes; there were some things she hadn’t anticipated thoroughly enough, but it was not a problem by the third week. At all.

[There was little discussion, because everyone was so clear that she was a “B”.]
Final Report:

“Carla was an effective teacher who made good progress throughout the course. She made perceptive contributions to discussion and her written work was good. She quickly grasped the techniques and ideas discussed, and showed considerable potential. Carla had a calm, confident manner and quickly established a good rapport with her students. Her lessons were well-prepared and her staging was logical. Her overall aims and those of individual stages were generally clear. She analysed grammar thoroughly and predicted students’ difficulties realistically. She had good ideas and developed materials that involved her students effectively. She provided good activities which were varied and student-centred. Her classroom management skills were good and she motivated students well.

**She taught the meaning of new language effectively but needed to pay more attention to the pronunciation.**
She developed a range of techniques which was appropriate to the levels she taught. She was sensitive to students’ problems and dealt well with difficulties as they arose.
Carla was a perceptive teacher whose comments were always constructive.”

A.7.C. Reflection Book (summarised by me)

[Carla was not given to writing a lot in her Reflection Book, and in fact stated (see Group Discussion below) that she did not find them very useful, but she wrote succinctly. She asked questions of the reader, but did not personalise the relationship.]

**Week One**

She felt that she was approachable, but was not wholly confident of being able to maintain control of the class, and felt she would have to get used to being considered a person of authority – ‘an usual role for me.’ She had been concerned about alienating certain members of the class or making them uncomfortable, and was pleased that not only had this not happened, but she felt she understood some of the personalities much better.

**Week Two**

Carla was quick to take information on board from the input and general feedback sessions, and was already working on reducing her Teacher Talking Time, striving to teach the students not just follow her plan, and eliciting more from the quieter students. She was enjoying herself, but felt her lessons were ‘riddled with problems.’
Week Three

She continued being very aware, including for finer points which trainees are not often aware of at this stage in the course: pronunciation, providing sufficient practice according to the students’ needs at the moment. She was not, however, feel particularly confident, and was spending hours planning lessons that she was not certain would be successful.

Week Four

Her last entry is Initial Reflections on her last lesson only. In it she expressed dissatisfaction with all the minor points that went wrong.

A.8.C. Learning Styles Assignment

- When I think back to my pre-“O” level school days, and try to drum up ‘in class’ memories (involving learning as opposed to messing around with my friends), two particular teachers spring to mind. Mrs Callister, my French teacher and Mr. Sinclair, my maths teacher both absolutely loved their subject. They taught with joy and enthusiasm which made their classes a pleasure and helped the material stick in my mind. I had no particular motivation to learn French or Maths over any other subject at that ‘compulsory’ stage in my education, yet I was more successful in these two areas and subsequently carried the maths through to degree level. I have always wondered about the nature v. nurture aspects of ability - how much is due to the learner and how much to the teacher, but a combination of natural ability, desire and sheer luck in who taught me seems to be an acceptable balance in answering the question.

- In order to learn effectively, I know I have to have material presented to me in a thorough and logical way. If rules are involved I want to know them (including any exceptions), although I also recognise that some variety in teaching approaches as well as humour also help. I then like to go away and digest new material on my own.

- On the occasions that I have made the extra effort to consult other references on a subject and backed up the material with the wider picture, I have noticed the learning to be accelerated.

- I believe this to be due to the fact that I find it very hard to learn things by just accepting them. I need to fully understand how and why; so purpose is also important for me. As an example, I could never accept why, at school we were made to learn ‘arts’ material by heart. I hated (and usually failed) learning to recite poetry but I could easily muster the effort to learn all the worlds’ capital cities or all the various enzymes required to digest proteins and starches. There was good reason. (Now, as I look back, I am amused at myself as I would love to be able to reel off ‘The Ancient Mariner’ and find nothing more captivating than hearing a musical recital where the musician is not following a score).

- In general, looking back over the last 3 weeks of the CTEFLA course, what strikes me is how well planned it was. Considering the vastness of what could be taught, I found
everyday was well set out and balanced between input sessions and TP. At first I thought that 2 hours a day of input wasn’t enough but upon reflection, any more would have been too much to handle in addition to the various homework assignments and the stress of TP preparation. The input sessions have focussed on aspects of language I hadn’t even thought about and the experiential knowledge shared by our tutors was invaluable.

- Overall the various training approaches have taught me the value of methodical planning, which I still need to work on to improve my teaching. I also have to better anticipate problems and apply effective solutions.
- Another useful thing I have learnt is how much of a taskmaster I am to myself. I definitely need to relax and celebrate those times when I actually get it right!
- Apart from our quality tutors, I have also been helped in my motivation to learn by being exposed to the students, who are so hard working and eager to study.
- It’s refreshing to have spent this time at IH and its ‘go get it’ academic atmosphere. The library has been an enormous help with its vast stock of books, tapes, visual aids and videos.
- On the downside, I do feel that whilst I enjoyed meeting all my fellow trainees, our class was a little large. On a few occasions quite a bit of input time was wasted with various characters being rather contrary for no particular reason.
- Finally, I found myself running low on stamina towards the end of week 3. I don’t know how much this is the case for most of my colleagues but the last time I used my brain for formal study was over 2 years ago.
- It has been very stressful but very enjoyable and one of the best courses I’ve ever followed.

Carla’s beliefs about learning

[The Assignment dealt with her own learning style only.]

A.9.C. Group Discussion

In trying to choose her top three, Carla praised observing other teachers and having three different tutors on the course to learn from. Regarding reactions from the students, she said, ‘That’s been brilliant.’ She didn’t find Reflection Books very useful. She found the videos quite dry and the library brilliant. She stated that it was important to have done her course at I.H., partly because it has so many schools around the world, but also because of the quality: ‘I think mentally they’ve got I.H. reputation at stake. You go to some school somewhere and say, ‘I’m from I.H.’ they have to take into account, ‘Oh! I.H. they ain’t that hot any more.’ (That’s what I’m teaching today: ‘Ain’t that hot.’)’

She had found the course stressful and felt exhausted. She had spent hours planning each lesson, and felt that the combination of having started the course without having had a break, and not having done anything academic for two years had been against her.
An interesting quality of Carla’s shows up in this tape in the way she supports the others and helps them tell their stories. In spite of her stated exhaustion and insecurity, she always came across in input and with her students as calm, organised and supportive. Unlike other “B”s, she did not engage as much with the tutors in her Reflection Book, and did not volunteer to be part of the extra-curricular research instruments, although she did agree willingly whenever asked.

A.10.C. *Honey Mumford*: Not available

A.11.C. *Repertory Grid*: Not available
FOCUS GROUP: SYLVIA (S)

Grade SP

A.1.S. **Education**

Sylvia got her “A” levels in English and History. She graduated with a 2.2 BA (hons) in English and History. She spoke Italian at an advanced level, with reading and writing at a beginner level; and basic French. At the time of the course she was 30.

A.2.S. **Teaching Experience**

*Although I have no professional training, I do have experience of teaching English dating from ten years ago when I spent six months on a kibbutz in Israel. Many of the volunteers spoke English as their second language, with varying degrees of proficiency and I enjoyed helping them to improve their grammar and conversation. On my way back from Israel I spent a month in Italy where I helped Italian friends improve their English. Over the past ten years my contact with non English speakers has grown, as many foreign friends stay with me whilst on English language courses, or on holiday in London.*

A.3.S. **Work Experience**

Assistant Publicity Officer with the BBC News and Current Affairs.

A.4.S. **Reason for taking the course**

*A) The experience I have had in helping foreign friends learn English has shown me that I need to learn a technique that will enable me to teach the language in a more methodical manner. The TEFLA course at I.H. has an excellent reputation, both in the UK and abroad, and since I have decided to take a one-year career break to live in France, I felt this to be a chance to teach English professionally.*

*B) I believe I have the characteristics to make a good English language teacher – patience, enthusiasm for the subject, an easy going nature and an ability to communicate well. Working in a publicity department with producers who work under great pressure means patience and sensitivity are essential when dealing with them. As with all publicity work, the ability to ‘sell’ the product – in my case BBC programmes – rests on being able to convince people of your point. I feel this ability would stand me in good stead when teaching adult students.*

A.5.S. **Interviewer’s Comments**
“Bubbly, good in a group. Bit scatty? LA needed help but got there.”

A.6.S. **Tutors’ comments about her progress**

**Week One**

Progress Report:

“Preparation: your lessons were logically staged, and the activities organised well. Don’t forget to let students check answers in pairs before reporting back to you. Execution: Your instructions were clear. You came across as warm, friendly, and interested in the students. Guard against being overly-supportive, though; they need a critical ear from you too. You did a good job of getting students to interact.”

Handover Meeting:

“Sylvia’s never taught before; she’s a natural teacher. She’s already got the rapport down pat, interested in the students, gets things going. She’s got a lot to learn, from the course, about how to teach, but she’s got some lovely things going on already.”

**Week Two**

Progress Report:

“Preparation: You’ve recognised the need to plan in more detail – to specify exactly what language you’re planning to teach and to anticipate students’ difficulties more precisely. Progress in logical staging. Execution: students-centred, good interaction. More thoroughness needed when teaching new language and providing controlled practice.”

**Week Three**

Progress Report:

“Preparation: Your planning is continuing to improve, Sylvia. You still need to work on the clarity of your aims and the staging of your lessons. Execution: Again, the clarity of the language you present and that of your classroom management are improving but you need to continue working on this.”

Handover Meeting:

“Sylvia's kind of woolly and fuzzy around the edges, but she's, you know, a solid pass. There's nothing wrong with her, it's just, please do something, please tell the students to do something and then get them to do it, and then when they do it, check they've done it, all the time. You know. Her planning is much better, but it's clarity in everything …there's a little bit of fuzziness in her planning. There's a little bit of
fuzziness in her language analysis, and her presentations are a little bit woolly. Do you know what I mean? And her personal aim is clarity. Because we've talked about it every single day, whether she's been teaching or not.”

Week Four

Grading Meeting:

SB: Sylvia I've thought from the beginning was kind of a born teacher. She was always working well with the students, and had a lot of rapport, and was the first person to start saying, getting them to listen to each other, and making that kind of thing happen. Umm, she interacts with their personalities ( ), she's very genuine, really genuine. Umm, and that I really, really like about her. She praises the students, there are genuine student-centred stages on her plan, and she executed them and they worked, there was a good working atmosphere. Um, I only saw her once this week. It was a very good lesson.
S-J: You saw her four times last week.
C: She taught three days in a row, didn't she. Which was a bit difficult for her. I think she was a bit s---led (?) by her group, though, I think she, you know
SW-J: I think she suffers quite, in comparison, to some of the
C: But I also think that some people in that group wouldn't dream of doing something that they didn't want to do. I think Sylvia got pushed into it. So she was saying to me, on Friday, in the bar, sorry, 'Oh, I feel a bit, you know, I wish I hadn't had to do my first long lesson this week; I wish I'd had more time to do it.’ And I said, "Oh well the tutors know that, you know. We take that into account, if you've taught three days running.”
S-J: Well, she's pretty stressed out. She's leaving immediately for Italy. That's put a lot of pressure on her, for various reasons. So, we're just trying to work out whether she's a mid-pass or a strong pass. I think she's got tremendous potential. And that looks like a strong pass to me.
C: Fine.
SW-J: I'm happy with that.

Final Report:

“Sylvia was an effective teacher who made good progress throughout the course. She was a hard-working member of the group who made perceptive contributions to discussion. She quickly grasped the techniques and ideas discussed, and showed considerable potential. She had a pleasantly relaxed and friendly classroom manner which enabled her to establish a very good rapport with her students. She learnt to plan well-staged lessons. Her aims became clearer as the course progressed and she became more aware of how to achieve them.

She analyses language carefully and appropriately. On occasions she needed to ensure that student practice activities reflected the thoroughness of her analysis.
She had good ideas and created materials which involved her students effectively. She provided good activities, but at times needed to think more about how to prepare students more thoroughly for practice activities.
She used a range of teaching techniques with increasing confidence and had good classroom management skills. She presented new language clearly, conveying and checking meaning well. She showed a good grasp of the techniques and was developing her range of approaches. She was sensitive to students’ problems and, by the end of the course, was integrating a range of correction techniques into her lessons. Sylvia commented perceptively on her teaching and was always receptive to comments and suggestions put to her.”

A.7.S. Reflection Book

[Sylvia did not personalise her relationship with the reader, and only ever asked one question in the Book.]

Week One

She was very aware of the students right from the beginning, mentioning them by name. ‘It’s all about them - the students - not me, so I mustn’t be too ‘precious’ about my position as teacher. Overall I thought today was a good learning experience. Picked up tips from watching Mark and Claudia teach - both in different, but impressive, styles, and from the feedback session.’ She was aware that it would be appropriate to depart from her lesson plan at times, and was working on this.

Week Two

Her conflict between meeting the students’ needs of the moment and sticking to her plan continued, and she wrote with awareness of her ‘negative’ points, but she was enjoying herself.

Week Three

She was feeling demoralised that week, planning too much and not feeling she was achieving her aims. She was able to see, however, what worked with the students and understand why.

Week Four (no entry)
A.8.S. Learning Styles Assignment

Self-description

- Before I began the CTEFLA course, I had not analysed my own learning style in any great depth.
- Through being taught techniques that make learning easier for others, I have been able to decipher that my own learning style is mainly visual rather than auditory. I found I need to write information given to me onto paper in order to absorb and learn it properly, or to highlight or underline key words to enable me to memorise them.
- I have also realised that I learn more easily and enjoyably when working within a group or as part of a pair. If I work alone my attention tends to wander, while as part of a group, responsibility for learning is shared between teammates.
- When I am in a learning situation my main strategy is to have some conclusive aim - either practical or personal - that can be reached after the study is completed. If I feel the learning will be of no use to me I find it very difficult to apply myself effectively. Motivation and learning therefore must go hand in hand if I am to achieve my goal.
- I found the tutors’ use of a scenario, built with the aid of pictures or photographs, a good motivator. Many students - including myself - find grammar lessons heavy going, but if their interests have been stimulated either visually or orally, they are more likely to absorb the underlying grammar point.
- I have found that during the CTEFLA course my learning curve has reached its peak. There has been so much information to absorb that I realise it will be a while before I am able to digest it all. Maybe if the course was spread over a longer period I would be able to learn in a less frenetic manner.
- I have also found that working in intense (for English standards!) heat has tended to slow me down somewhat, although neither of the above have hindered my enjoyment of the three weeks so far.

Sylvia’s beliefs about learning

- The course has made me aware that the teaching technique needs to be matched to the student - in other words, no one technique will suit everyone.
- Many students - including myself - find grammar lessons heavy going.

A.9.S. Group Discussion

One reason that Sylvia appreciated having three tutors, was that ‘you are going to relate to one in particular, aren’t you, you’re bound to, and you can sort of see in them a style that you prefer.’ She stated that each tutor had his/her own hobbyhorses, but that their
intention was not to turn the trainees into clones of them. She felt that criticism was delivered ‘not in a horrible way’ and that the tutors always had something good to say.

She had had to spend hours on planning her grammar lessons, but felt that the techniques she learned to use had helped make them clearer for her students. ‘...grammar...I didn’t know anything before, so it all became clear. Elicit, concept questions, I mean all that.’ She came back to this with the topic of breakthrough moments: ‘Or what about in your teaching, when you think, oh God, you actually forget you’re being observed, and something just clicks...you find yourself doing it without realising it and suddenly you think, God, that concept question just slipped out there. That was a flash.’

Regarding input she said, ‘I find it difficult to learn from people that I haven’t got any kind of rapport with ...I just find I kind of switch off if they’re not interested in me...but I have a problem with concentration.’

She said it was self-motivating just to be on course, and that the intensity, for her, created a pace that swept her along with it. She described herself as exhausted, but because the course had been all consuming, she hadn’t had a chance to drift off.

A.10.S. **Honey Mumford**

Not available

A.11.S. **Repertory Grid**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week One</th>
<th>A favourite teacher</th>
<th>Myself as a learner</th>
<th>Myself as a teacher</th>
<th>My ideal self</th>
<th>Myself in a group</th>
<th>Myself in solitude</th>
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Table A.6: Sylvia’s Week One Repertory Grid

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Table A.7: Sylvia’s Week Four Repertory Grid
FOCUS GROUP: BILL (B)
Grade “SP”

Note: Some of the documentation on Bill is missing, but what is available is plentiful.

A.1.B. Education

At the time of writing his application (which is unavailable) he was studying for a BSc in Psychology. He listed his languages as French and German. He had travelled a great deal with his parents. At the time of the course he was 21.

A.2.B. Teaching Experience

None

A.3.B. Work Experience

Video editing

A.4.B. Reason for taking the course

(Application not available.)

A.5.B. Interviewer’s Comments


A.6.B. Tutors’ comments about his progress

Week Two

Handover Meeting:

“Bill is very, very bright and extremely ambitious. I suspect all of that is ahead of his actual ability during these four weeks, but he is trying really hard. He wants to do well, both to get a good grade and also because he’s accustomed to doing well
on things and he just feels, ‘If I put in a lot of hard work I’ll get there.’ He has a lot of good qualities to him, he’s just, some things he’s still figuring out.”

**Week Four**

**Grading Meeting:**

SB: Okay. Bill.
B: Bill? He was ( ) a pass last week.
SW: I’d like Bill to get a “B”. Because he works very hard.
SB: All right. Convince us.
SW: Right. He’s very thorough. He’s very keen and enthusiastic. He plans well, and in the last lesson I saw him doing he involved the students and he checked and he did a “B” lesson. It may be only one,
B: Did he present language?
SW: And how about vocal energy and getting across to the students?
B: Did he present language?
SW: Yeah, yeah. He got things across. He had, did things wrong. He, he, sometimes he didn’t listen to the students. You know, some of them were saying, “I’ve got a earache” cos he had that written up. Instructions were great, mingling exercises. He didn’t get around to getting students to use the language, so I suppose pass. [laughter]
B: My main criticism of him last week was that he didn’t provide a clear enough context to economically present the language. It was sort of, he was sort of doing two things at the same time. First he told them, almost told them what the target language was, and then he did something that looked like a Guided Discovery, so he wasn’t logical with what he did in terms of presenting. He, from the first lesson to the second lesson we talked about how he basically had to focus on language and be much more thorough with it, and he worked on his instructions, and his instructions got better, and he was very thorough with language, but he wasn’t economical with it at all, and the context wasn’t clear to students, so he wasn’t, it took too long to get across to them. That was worrying.
SW: Okay. I think he’s quite employable.
SB: But his last lesson was a “B”? You said.
SW: Just about. Yes. I think it’s because I thought he was going to be a “B” from the start. And then I’ve come back to it.
SB: Did you think he was going to be a “B” or did you know that he really wanted it and was willing to work for it?
SW: I thought he was going to be. I thought he was going to be something like Horatio from last month.
B: I mean he’s definitely, as you say, he’s definitely got the motivation and, but he didn’t, he, improved on classroom management, the way I saw him. I just, he presented language with you: what did you think of his getting meaning across?
SW: Okay. The problem that I’ve seen, this week, was that he didn’t get to, giving the students enough practice, but he’s aware of his problems.
B: That wasn’t really a problem last week with him, or that wasn’t the main thing.
SW: I mean, he’s a strong pass or a weak “B”. And I thought I’d hit, go high and see
SB: Well, what does he want to do?
SW: He wants to work for I.H.
SB: Immediately?
B: Well he talked about, to me, about going to China.
SW: Ah, he's started thinking about working for I.H.
SB: Well they all are. Kezia has sold them that getting into the I.H. network, even though she doesn’t focus on I.H. anymore, maybe it’s more significant. Even Chris! He wrote on his feedback form, his form for Teacher Selection, “I hadn’t really thought about it, but now I am.”
SW: Well, after our last feedback, Bill wrote me one, two, three, four, five, six, seven pages of final observations, things like that, ending up ‘I want to teach in I.H. institute, as I have found the atmosphere here to be very supportive.” Manipulative! “It is one of the principle reasons that I have strived to get a grade “B”.’
B: Okay. My first feedback to him focused on boardwork, clearer snappier presentation, dealing with form, function and phonology, that he wasn’t thorough enough. And he didn’t provide any written practice. He responded and he did provide controlled written practice. His problem was, I felt, context leading to meaning. ( ) feedback, and he would interrupt students when they were working on their own. And he gave some strange rules. He sort of gave them rules, but ‘sometimes we do and sometimes we don’t.’ And that meaning went ( ) at one point. I didn’t think that was, I didn’t think his presentation was a ( ).
B: Pass.
SB: His written work is excellent, and he’s very good in input.
SW: I think the way that I keep seeing people is, if they came off the plane in Poland, how happy would I feel?
SB: Yes. Well, it’s a fairly useful measurement.
SW: And I would be happy with him. His teaching’s all right, he’d fit in well to a staffroom, he’d work ever so hard.
SB: Okay, now, the thing is that  we’ve put in, in the meeting last week we said he was a pass, so I would have to call the assessor - I don’t mind doing that - but I would have to have, you know, clear reasons why we’ve changed our mind. And one of the reasons is you say he taught a “B” lesson, that he was working up to it. If somebody’s working up to it and they teach a “B” lesson at the end I think that’s fair enough. We just need to decide
B: Would he come up to the, I’m just worried, if he was to teach, let’s say he has to go in and teach a very difficult grammar point, will he be able to do that?
SB: I don’t know, because I saw him teach ‘wish’ with that contrastive analysis from the board.
B: That’s a hell of a lesson, isn’t it.
SB: I should never have allowed it to happen. I mean nobody did that well.
B: X, of all people, is the person who got that one.
SB: (to SW) No, you weren’t here probably that week. No, it’s, nobody could have done that well. He thought about it, he, you know, spent a lot of time, he anticipated lots of problems, and it was a mess. His practice activities were interesting, and he had an interesting presentation. He had a class that hadn’t gelled, and so nothing worked anyway.
B: He had done a lot of pre-planning on what he was going to do with ‘some and any’ but that was ( ) the assessor (?) it wasn’t logical, the way he did it.
SB: So what did he teach this week?
B: Headaches.
SW: Yeah. I’ll write him a Strong Pass report.
SB: Yeah?
SW: Yeah.
SB: Does he want to go to Poland?
SW: It’s been mentioned.
SB: I think the whole class wants to go to Poland, actually! You must have done a selling job!
SW: Kielce is going to be over-subscribed.
B: All right!
SW: No, fine.
SB: A good report, yeah.

Final Report:

“Bill was an enthusiastic member of the course who made good progress. He participated actively in discussions and his written work was of a good standard. With further guidance and experience he should become a very capable teacher of English as a Foreign Language.

He had a friendly classroom manner and successfully overcame his initial nervousness. He involved and motivated his students well. His lesson planning was thorough and systematic and incorporated clear, logical staging. He now needs to ensure that his students are always given the opportunity to practise the language he has presented in communicative, meaningful situations.

Although he sometimes tried to cover too much in the time available, his overall aims, and those of individual stages, were generally clear. He learnt to look at language more from the students’ point of view. He should continue to work on ensuring that the language the students practise is natural.

He had good ideas and involved his students effectively. He provided some good activities and is aware of the need to ensure that there are sufficient student-centred activities in his lessons. He acquired a range of basic teaching techniques and was willing to experiment with different approaches. He made efforts to vary the pace of his lessons. He learnt to use clear situations to present new language and to convey and check meaning effectively. He showed a good grasp of the techniques and was developing his range of approaches.

He grew more sensitive to students’ problems and anticipated them well at the planning stage. Bill was very keen to improve and was aware of his strengths and weaknesses. He was very receptive to suggestions.”

A.7.B. Reflection Book (summarised by me)

Week One

Bill started from his very first reflection making long lists of negative and positive points, and in his Further Reflections listed each comment made by both colleagues and
tutor. By the end of the week he was setting himself personal objectives for the following classes. His main concerns were control (he dreamed of having X’s ‘natural air of authority’), achieving his aims, perfecting all the techniques, managing the class smoothly, and responding accurately to the students. He was already stating what he would have and should have done differently. He mentioned the students by name.

**Week Two**

This week he started off with personalising his communication for the reader (“Hi Susan”) and begging for pointers. He was critical of himself in great detail, but constructively: he wanted to get it right, both for his natural ambition and because he wanted to help the students. He was enjoying himself and his successes. By the end of the week he asked directly what his chances were of getting a “B”: ‘I know I have a tutorial on Friday but I want to achieve a grade B so I was hoping you could think of EXACTLY what I would need to change before then (or work on) and give me a brief indication now in the boxes provided. Thanks, Bill.

____________ on course
____________ could be on course, but with a lot of change
____________ give up now’

**Week Three**

Hi Bjarne, I am glad that you noticed the energy in my lesson as it was one of the areas that I was trying to work on. As I made it clear to you I am aiming to get a grade B so I will be very clear about what I feel I need to do and what I should stick with. I am very appreciative of your approach as up to now it has not been made obvious what skills I need to improve and how I can improve them. I respond well to attentive criticism and I am glad that you seem to have this approach. Please feel free to flick through the book previous to this page as my comments and the responses to them may help you. I think that I do have the potential to be a ‘grade B’ teacher but I just need to know exactly what to improve to get there.

It is interesting to note that he did not mention individual students by name even once this week. He was envisioning a lesson as something which could be perfect, if he could just get it right. He writes copiously, and by the end of the week had made a breakthrough: ‘I think with my focus on the ‘B’ and not the students I ignored a lot of my instincts to try and exhibit my new found skills. This is what annoyed me the most.’
Week Four

His last reflection was the longest yet, listing and analysing everything that had gone on in his last class and then summarising the whole month.

I seem to have changed rapidly over the four weeks not only in a general sense of feeling like a teacher but also in specific areas such as control, clarity and economy. I am very glad however that I have not lost the quality of attending to the students’ needs. In the first couple of weeks this presented itself naturally. In the third week however because I concentrated so hard on my teaching I failed to cater to the needs of some of my students. This shocked me as I never considered this might be a problem. I feel that now as I have grown comfortable in the role of a teacher the balance has been re-addressed and now I can be sensitive to my students again.

At times it reads like a job application:

I appreciate that all of these skills will come with practice and I look forward to being able to have the teaching practice to modify as well as use these skills. I want to teach at an I.H. institute as I have found the atmosphere here to be very supportive... This is one of the principle reasons that I have strived to get a ‘grade B’ as my overall assessment. I feel that a number of my skills have reached that standard and I hope that I can work for I.H. in the future.

A.8.B. Learning Styles Assignment

Self-description

- I am very conscious of the style of learning I am used to but equally aware of the kind of learning I suit. My dilemma is that I have grown accustomed to a style of learning which does not match the type of learner I am.
- ...my ‘natural’ style is an active approach to learning. Being involved with a task means that I am able to identify it aiding not only my memory but also my ability to engage with the concepts behind the task. This active form of learning also means that I am able to mentally deconstruct a task so that I can determine its underlying structure. I enjoy exploring these structures, manipulating and broadening their usage.
- Contrasted with this is my need for note-taking. Having recently graduated I am used to noting down large quantities of information and preparing it for later recollection.
- I needed to be involved with every example of Swahili and, unlike others who were trying to keep a record of the language in their minds, I wanted to perfect my spoken Swahili before establishing a written record.
- The most helpful element of the course for my note-taking style was the use of my feedback [reflection] book. I had a record not only of how I thought my teaching
went but also a record of how, according to my tutor, the lesson could have been changed. This gave me the opportunity of focusing on, and thereby improving, any aspect of my teaching.

- It also meant that the ideas behind my teaching could be analysed and become consolidated. Unlike the input sessions, my notes for the feedback book were highly detailed which meant that, through continual analysis, my conceptual understanding of how to become a teacher could be re-interpreted and reinforced.
- I now aim to address not only my differences in learning but also the differences in learning for my students. Hopefully through understanding how to cater for myself I can better understand the needs of my students.

His beliefs about learning

- The active elements of the course focus on an analysis of the lesson structure either before or during the lesson itself. This encourages analytical thought about the benefits of the various parts of an EFL lesson and subsequently a greater understanding of the underlying framework of the lesson.
- Another part of the course that catered for the active learner, was the emphasis on placing the trainee in the position of an EFL student....it had the effect of forcing you to change your perspective.
- Therefore not only is drilling important for the students but it also ensures the teacher is alert to the proficiency of the whole class.
- Clearly not every aspect of the course demanded active learning. Some parts suited the passive learner, the note-taker.
- As the facility of note-taking was not available for the input sessions, any ideas discussed were not reinforced and therefore a number of sessions were required to clarify the ideas.

A.9.B. Group Discussion

‘I find it hard distinguishing between input from tutors and feedback. And also praise and criticism. Because I think criticism is the essential part of feedback, so I don’t quite see what the distinction is, but that was absolutely the most important thing on the course for me.’ He found group feedback unnecessary, and would have rather had 1:1 feedback after each lesson. Far from finding any of the tutors too critical, he didn’t feel he got enough pointers: ‘I would have preferred in feedback more detailed notes: ‘I think you’re okay at the moment, let’s see how it goes.’ No. That’s not what I wanted. I wanted: ‘This was wrong, this was wrong, this was right, carry on.’’
He said this about breakthrough moments,

Some areas went just like that (snap). Suddenly it was like, ‘Oh, so that’s why you use this technique, and that’s why you do that.’ And other ones, like controlled clarity, that just took a long time to really, I think the ones where you needed the practice in order to get it right.

Later he said,

It is very hard balancing the sort of theoretical theory and the practice, because a lot of it, there’s still stuff I know I shouldn’t be doing, in theory, but it’s going to take a while before I really start doing it and really realise how I can use it and how useful it is, because you can’t be told to do something and then just go out and do it. You need to really understand it before you can use it.

There were no comments about stress, other than the fact that he planned lessons even on the train. His last statement on the tape was, ‘I enjoyed it.’

A.10.B. Honey Mumford

Activist 13 very strong preference
Reflector 16 strong preference
Theorist 10 low preference
Pragmatist 8 very low preference
A.11.B. Repertory Grid

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Table A.8: Bill’s Week One Repertory Grid

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Table A.9: Bill’s Week Four Repertory Grid
APPENDIX B: Research Instruments

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT ON LEARNING STYLES

1. Read the short extract overleaf, entitled, “Learners are Individuals.”

2. Write a brief description of your own learning style and preferred learning strategies.

3. Think back over the various training approaches that you have experienced this week (activities in input, seminars, oral and written feedback techniques, etc.). Assess a variety of these in terms of how they appeal and are effective to you as a learner. Note down, too, any ways in which you think you could improve your learning strategies.

4. What other factors have helped or hindered your learning (and enjoyment of the course) in the last week?
LEARNERS ARE INDIVIDUALS

Influenced by humanistic psychology, educators have recently emphasized the fact that students are individuals with different needs, styles and interests, and that we as educators and fellow human beings should take account of these differences in the provision made for their learning.

1. Psychological differences
There are psychological differences between students. They differ in their cognitive abilities and language learning aptitude: some people learn languages more quickly and easily than others. They differ in their learning styles, i.e., in their preferred ways of processing information: some are predominantly auditory channel learners while others are visual learners; in some students the left brain is dominant (favouring logical, analytic thinking), while in others the right brain holds sway (favouring creative, lateral thinking), and there are many other possible differences.

2. Study habits
Individuals also differ in their study habits, in their likes and dislikes of particular learning tasks and activities, in their preferred skills and in their general problem-solving strategies. Rodgers ‘Strategies for individualized language learning and teaching’ (1978) includes the following in his list of individual differences:

- Students learn through different media (textbooks, films, games, physical activities, etc.)
- Students learn through different styles of content/process organization (deductive, discovery, learning by doing, memorization, etc.)
- Students perform differently in different group arrangements (working alone, peer tutoring, small group activities, whole class instruction, etc.)
- Students’ learning efficiency varies differentially according to time of study (longer versus shorter study periods, morning versus afternoon, beginning of class period versus end of class period, first term versus last term, etc.)
- Students’ learning efficiency varies differentially according to place of study (in-class study, library study, laboratory study, home study, etc.)

3. Personality differences
Individuals clearly differ enormously also in their personalities, beliefs and attitudes. The list of personality and affective variables appears endless. Just three of the possible variables are:

- The degree of introversion/extroversion (extroverted people tend to be more sociable and outgoing, which some researchers believe to be desirable qualities for language learning)
- The degree of tolerance of ambiguity (Naiman et al. Find that this tends to be a hallmark of a good language learner)
- The degree of ethnocentricty, i.e., the degree to which one is bound to the central tenets or more of one’s culture (good language learners tend to have a low degree of ethnocentricty).

4. Motivation
Perhaps the most discussed and examined difference among students is the varying degree of motivation to learn a language. This is bound up with attitudes towards the target language and culture, and also related to individual goals and achievement orientation. What is certain is that, especially among adults, there are many different reasons why an individual may wish to learn a foreign language. Some institutional settings may favour one kind of motivation but may be a frustrating and demotivating setting for students with a different kind of motivation.

5. Different purposes
Students have different purposes in learning English. They may be responding to the needs of their job or occupation (future or actual). They may be responding to the necessity of studying in an English-speaking environment or they may be preparing for public examinations in English. They may be learning English because they are immigrants in an English-speaking culture, or they may want to learn English in order to visit an English-speaking country as a tourist. All of these are very specific language-learning purposes. The varied demands of ESP (English for Specific Purposes) students inevitably involve at least some degree of individualization.

6. Summary
The evidence for the existence of psychological, personality, and motivational differences between students is overwhelming and it is this, perhaps, more than anything which provides one of the strongest reasons for introducing some measure of individualized instruction in order to cater for, and indeed exploit, these differences. Instruction consisting of one diet for all aimed at a class of, say thirty, will almost certainly not constitute a completely suitable diet for any one of the individuals in that class.

LANGUAGE TEACHING

In addition to psychological and motivational differences, language teachers know to their cost that students differ in the order in which they acquire ‘bits’ of the language. Many classes are made up of individuals who have followed different syllabuses, and/or have been taught different things by different methods. Even in a class where all individuals have had the same diet from the start, there will be differences in what has been acquired and what not. This manifests itself in the fact that different students, even in a monolingual group, make different sorts of errors.

Errors are no longer regarded as evidence of failure on the part of the student but as valuable evidence for the state of their interlanguage. Many teachers now regard themselves as diagnosticians as well as clinicians, pin-pointing the source of errors and instigating remedial action. This capacity for specific diagnosis of a student’s errors is pointless unless the remedial action is directed towards the student and his or her error, i.e., individualized. After all, doctors would not administer insulin to an entire hospital ward because one of the patients was diabetic.

LEARNING STYLES QUESTIONNAIRE © Honey and Mumford 1986

This questionnaire is designed to find out your preferred learning style(s). Over the years you have probably developed learning ‘habits’ that help you benefit more from some experiences than from others. Since you are probably unaware of this, this questionnaire will help you pinpoint your learning preferences so that you are in a better position to select learning experiences that suit your style.

There is no time limit to this questionnaire. It will probably take you 10-15 minutes. The accuracy of the results depends on how honest you can be. There are no right or wrong answers. If you agree more than you disagree with a statement put a tick by it (✔). If you disagree more than you agree put a cross by it (x). Be sure to mark each item with either a tick or cross.

1. I have strong beliefs about what is right and wrong, good and bad.
2. I often act without considering the possible consequences.
4. I believe that formal procedures and policies restrict people.
5. I have a reputation for saying what I think, simply and directly.
6. I often find that actions based on feelings are as sound as those based on careful thought and analysis.
7. I like the sort of work where I have time for thorough preparation and implementation.
8. I regularly question people about their basic assumptions.
9. What matters most is whether something works in practice.
10. I actively seek out new experiences.
11. When I hear about a new idea or approach I immediately start working out how to apply it in practice.
12. I am keen on self discipline such as watching my diet, taking regular exercise, sticking to a fixed routine, etc.
13. I take pride in doing a thorough job.
15. I take care over the interpretation of data available to me and avoid jumping to conclusions.
16. I like to reach a decision carefully after weighing up many alternatives.
17. I’m attracted more to novel, unusual ideas than to practical ones.
18. I don’t like disorganised things and prefer to fit things into a coherent pattern.
19. I accept and stick to laid down procedures and policies so long as I regard them as an efficient way of getting the job done.
20. I like to relate my actions to a general principle.
21. In discussions I like to get straight to the point.
22. I tend to have distant, rather formal relationships with people at work.
23. I thrive on the challenge of tackling something new and different.
24. I enjoy fun-loving, spontaneous people
25. I pay meticulous attention to detail before coming to a conclusion.
26. I find it difficult to produce ideas on impulse.
27. I believe in coming to the point immediately.
28. I am careful not to jump to conclusions too quickly.
29. I prefer to have as many sources of information as possible – the more data to think over the better.
30. Flippant people who don’t take things seriously enough usually irritate me.
31. I listen to other people’s points of view before putting my own forward.
32. I tend to be open about how I’m feeling.
33. In discussions I enjoy watching the manoeuvrings of the other participants.
34. I prefer to respond to events on a spontaneous, flexible basis rather than plan things out in advance.
35. I tend to be attracted to techniques such as network analysis, flow charts, branching programmes, contingency planning, etc.
36. It worries me if I have to rush out a piece of work to meet a tight deadline.
37. I tend to judge people’s ideas on their practical merits.
38. Quiet, thoughtful people tend to make me feel uneasy.
39. I often get irritated by people who want to rush things.
40. It is more important to enjoy the present moment than to think about the past or future.
41. I think that decisions based on a thorough analysis of all the information are sounder than those based on intuition.
42. I tend to be a perfectionist.
43. In discussions I usually produce lots of spontaneous ideas.
44. In meetings I put forward practical, realistic ideas.
45. More often than not, rules are there to be broken.
46. I prefer to stand back from a situation and consider all the perspectives.
47. I can often see inconsistencies and weaknesses in other people’s arguments.
48. On balance I talk more than I listen.
49. I can often see better, more practical ways to get things done.
50. I think written reports should be short and to the point.
51. I believe that rational, logical thinking should win the day.
52. I tend to discuss specific things with people rather than engaging in social discussion.
53. I like people who approach things realistically rather than theoretically.
54. In discussions I get impatient with irrelevancies and digressions.
55. If I have a report to write I tend to produce lots of drafts before setting on the final version.
56. I am keen to try things out to see if they work in practice.
57. I am keen to reach answers via a logical approach.
58. I enjoy being the one that talks a lot.
59. In discussions with people I often find I am the realist, keeping people to the point and avoiding wild speculations.
60. I like to ponder many alternatives before making up my mind.
61. In discussions with people I often find I am the most dispassionate and objective.
62. In discussions I’m more likely to adopt a ‘low profile’ than to take the lead and do most of the talking.
63. I like to be able to relate current actions to a longer term bigger picture.
64. When things go wrong I am happy to shrug it off and ‘put it down to experience’.
65. I tend to reject wild, spontaneous ideas as being impractical.
66. It’s best to think carefully before taking action.
67. On balance I do the listening rather than the talking.
68. I tend to be tough on people who find it difficult to adopt a logical approach.
69. Most times I believe the end justifies the means.
70. I don’t mind hurting people’s feelings so long as the job gets done.
71. I find the formality of having specific objectives and plans stifling.
72. I’m usually one of the people who puts life into a party.
73. I do whatever is expedient to get the joy done.
74. I quickly get bored with methodical, detailed work.
75. I am keen on exploring the basic assumptions, principles and theories underpinning things and events.
76. I’m always interested to find out what people think.
77. I like meetings to be run on methodical lines, sticking to laid down agenda, etc.
78. I steer clear of subjective or ambiguous topics.
79. I enjoy the drama and excitement of a crisis situation.
80. People often find me insensitive to their feelings.

**LEARNING STYLES QUESTIONNAIRE - SCORING**

You score one point for each item you ticked (□). There are no points for items you crossed (x). Simply indicate on the lists below which items were ticked.
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LEARNING STYLES – GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS

Activists

Activists involve themselves fully and without bias in new experiences. They enjoy the here and now and are happy to be dominated by immediate experiences. They are open-minded, not sceptical, and this tends to make them enthusiastic about anything new. Their philosophy is: ‘I’ll try anything once’. They tend to act first and consider the consequences afterwards. Their days are filled with activity. They tackle problems by brainstorming. As soon as the excitement from one activity has died down they are busy looking for the next. They tend to thrive on the challenge of new experiences but are bored with implementation and longer term consolidation. They are gregarious people constantly involving themselves with others but, in doing so, they seek to centre all activities around themselves.

Reflectors

Reflectors like to stand back to ponder experiences and observe them from many different perspectives. They collect data, both first hand and from others, and prefer to think about it thoroughly before coming to any conclusion. The thorough collection and analysis of data about experiences and events is what counts so they tend to postpone reaching definitive conclusions for as long as possible. Their philosophy is to be cautious. They are thoughtful people who like to consider all possible angles and implications before making a move. They prefer to take a back seat in meetings and discussions. They enjoy observing other people in action. They listen to others and get the drift of the discussion before making their own points. They tend to adopt a low profile and have a slightly distant, tolerant unruffled air about them. When they act it is part of a wide picture which includes the past as well as the present and others’ observations as well as their own.

Theorists

Theorists adapt and integrate observations into complex but logically sound theories. They think problems through in a vertical, step-by-step logical way. They assimilate disparate facts into coherent theories. They tend to be perfectionists who won’t rest easy until things are tidy and fit into a rational scheme. They like to analyze and synthesize. They are keen on basic assumptions, principles, theories, models and systems thinking. Their philosophy prizes rationality and logic. ‘If it’s logical it’s good’. Questions they frequently ask are: ‘Does it make sense?’ ‘How does this fit with that?’ ‘What are the basic assumptions?’ They tend to be detached, analytical and dedicated to rational objectivity rather than anything subjective or ambiguous. Their approach to problems is consistently logical. This is their ‘mental set’ and they rigidly reject anything that doesn’t fit with it. They prefer to maximize certainty and feel uncomfortable with subjective judgements, lateral thinking and anything flippant.

Pragmatists

Pragmatists are keen on trying out ideas, theories and techniques to see if they work in practice. They positively search out new ideas and take the first opportunity to experiment with applications. They are the sort of people who return from management courses
brimming with new ideas that they want to try out in practice. They like to get on with things and act quickly and confidently on ideas that attract them. They tend to be impatient with ruminating and open-ended discussions. They are essentially practical, down to earth people who like making practical decisions and solving problems. They respond to problems and opportunities ‘as a challenge’. Their philosophy is: ‘There is always a better way’ and ‘If it works it’s good’.

© Honey and Mumford 1986
# REPERTORY GRID

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1. If you can, try to pick from the following just THREE factors which you think helped you learn the most on this course:

   a. input from tutors
   b. observation of experienced teachers (including video)
   c. your TP group
   d. reactions from your students
   e. reflecting
   f. TP
   g. feedback
   h. praise/criticism
   i. something you’d known before the course began which suddenly became clear
   j. personalities of the tutors
   k. other (please specify)

2. Did your learning take place gradually or in sudden flashes? Can you give any examples?

3. Do you think your motivation on the course was influenced by having a clear idea of what you plan to do with this Certificate?

4. How would you say your learning on this course was influenced by any of the following:

   a. the intensity
   b. changes in sleep and eating patterns
   c. your ability to concentrate
   d. support from outside the course (such as a parent who is a teacher)
   e. other (please specify)
**REFLECTION BOOK: Some Guidelines**

**WHY?**

The purpose of your Reflection Book is for you to have a record of your progress and development as a teacher on this course, to record insights you gain into the process of teaching and learning, and to identify and work on your own personal aims for individual lessons. The Reflection Book provides a direct line of communication between you and your TP tutor. It is also a place where you can record your thoughts away from the busy atmosphere and daily demands of the course, where you can have time to reflect on what happened in teaching practice and feedback, and draw all these together. The Reflection Book is yours to take away at the end of the course, and will be read only by your TP tutors.

**HOW OFTEN?**

After every lesson that you have taught.

**WHAT?**

**DAY ONE:**

Briefly comment on the following points:

- How does what happened today differ from your expectations (if at all)?
- How did you feel about working with the students today?
- Anything which is worrying you or which you’d like to add.

**FROM DAY TWO ON:**

Immediately after teaching, during TP, you need to write down your Initial Reflections on the lesson you have just taught. These should be fairly brief (about half a page), and can be done along the following lines:

- Two things I felt went well in the lesson
- Two things I would do differently next time

Your Reflection Book is then passed to your TP tutor, who will respond briefly in writing. TP feedback will then deal more fully with these and any other points.

At home that night, you need to write down some Further Reflections based on what you learned about your lesson that day. These could be based on the following:

- What were your aims in the lesson? Were they achieved?
- Would you do anything differently if you taught this lesson again? If so, what? And how would you change it?
- What are your personal objectives for the next lesson? Make a short list of these in your Reflection Book and try to keep them in mind for your next lesson.
- Anything else you want to say.

Your TP tutor will then read this the following day and respond to any comments or queries.
APPENDIX C: Pilot Study Instruments

The earliest questionnaire on learning styles, of my own design:

Hello!

I’m doing some research on CTEFLA trainees. If you feel so inclined, I’d be grateful if you could take a few minutes to fill in this questionnaire for me. If you’d rather not put your name on it, that’s okay with me.

1. Does either (or both) of these definitions describe you?
   ______ analytical and rational
   ______ intuitive and creative

2. Is one (or more) of these your preferred learning style?
   ______ through doing
   ______ through studying
   ______ through being told by someone experienced
   ______ through learning with others
   ______ through reflection

3. How many languages have you learned:
   ______ in classes only
   ______ living in the country where it is spoken

4. Do you usually learn things:
   ______ through a gradual process
   ______ in sudden flashes

5. How old are you? __________

6. Name (optional) __________

Thank you very much!

SUSAN BARDUHN
November 1994
The Guided Discussion questionnaires used in the pilots:

CTEFLA GROUP INTERVIEW-QUESTIONNAIRE (1a)

1. I’m interested in those moments when “the penny drops”, so to speak, when something suddenly becomes really clear, when you’ve had a breakthrough. Has this happened to you during this course?

2. If so, can you say something about it:
   - What was the breakthrough?
   - When did it happen?
   - Why do you think it happened at that time?
   - What do you think led up to it?

3. What THREE factors from the list below do you think were most responsible for that sudden insight?
   
   a. input from tutors
   b. observation of experienced teachers (including video)
   c. your TP group
   d. reactions from your students
   e. reflecting
   f. TP
   g. feedback
   h. praise/criticism
   i. something you’d known before the course began which suddenly became clear
   j. other (please specify)

4. Do you think your motivation on this course was influenced by having a clear idea of what you plan to do with this Certificate?

5. How would you say your learning on this course was influenced by any of the following:
   
   a. the intensity
   b. changes in sleeping and eating patterns
   c. your ability to concentrate
   d. increased/decreased use of stimulants/depressives (i.e., cigarettes, alcohol)
   e. other (please specify)

6. If you have time, I’d appreciate any comments you’ve got on the wording or content of any of these questions. Thanks very much.
1. If you can, try to pick from the following just THREE factors which you think helped you learn the most on this course:
   a. input from tutors
   b. observation of experienced teachers (including video)
   c. your TP group
   d. reactions from your students
   e. reflecting
   f. TP
   g. feedback
   h. praise/criticism
   i. something you’d known before the course began which suddenly became clear
   j. other (please specify)

2. Did your learning take place gradually or in sudden flashes? Can you give any examples?

3. Do you think your motivation on the course was influenced by having a clear idea of what you plan to do with this Certificate?

4. How would you say your learning on this course was influenced by any of the following:
   a. the intensity
   b. changes in sleep and eating patterns
   c. your ability to concentrate
   d. increased/decreased use of stimulants/depressives (i.e., cigarettes, alcohol)
   e. other (please specify)
CTEFLA GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE (1c)

1. Do you remember Day One? What impressions do you have now of that day?

2. What impressed you most about Week One?

3. In which ways was Week Two different?

4. Week Three is often the most stressful week. In spite of that, what do you think you learned most about teaching during that week?

5. How would you describe this final week?

6. If you can, try to pick from the following just THREE factors which you think helped you learn the most on this course:
   a. input from tutors
   b. observation of experienced teachers (including video)
   c. your TP group
   d. reactions from your students
   e. reflecting
   f. TP
   g. feedback
   h. praise/criticism
   i. something you’d known before the course began which suddenly became clear
   j. other (please specify)
The I.H. Feedback form, sent to trainees six months after finishing their course:

INTERNATIONAL HOUSE, TEACHER TRAINING
106 PICCADILLY, LONDON WIV 9FL

TO: Teachers recently trained at IH London
FROM: Jane Comyns Carr, Director of Studies

I would be very grateful if you could complete and return this form to the address above. The feedback you give us will provide useful information for future teacher training courses.

Are you working as an EFL teacher now? YES/NO

If YES:

a) Where are you teaching? _______________________________________________

b) How did you find the job? ______________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________

c) How well do you feel that the CTEFLA course prepared you for this teaching job?

_______________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________

If NO:

Please tick one and comment below:

a) Have you not had the opportunity to use the qualification yet?

b) Have you had difficulty finding work?

c) Have you decided not to continue with EFL teaching?

_______________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________

Finally: Did you experience any “breakthrough moments” during the course? If so, what were they, and what caused them?

_______________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________

Thank you for your help.
A PROFILE OF HAROLD, CTEFLA TRAINEE

An example of the written and spoken comments available for study

Harold is one of the best examples I have come across of how a Breakthrough Moment can dramatically affect one's ability to succeed on the CTEFLA. Having a mother as a teacher, Harold had grown up respecting the need to work hard in order to learn anything, and had recently graduated from university with an Honours degree in Economics, but his usual approach to studying was not having its usual results on this particular course, and by the end of the second week (mid-course) Harold was warned in tutorial that his teaching was not of the standard required to pass the course.

Although it was easy to like Harold because of his unaffected charm, as a trainee he came across as shy and somewhat slower than his colleagues at grasping new material. It was a surprise, therefore, for me to read his assignments and Reflection Book and learn how methodical and logical his learning style was, and how articulately and astutely he was able to describe his own learning process.

Harold’s story is told below, mostly in his own words, with annotations and some quotations from his tutors. The following documentation from several sources: his initial application form (AF), his Reflection Book (RB), written answers to questions set to prepare him for his tutorial (PT), weekend essays (WE), forms asking for feedback on the course both at mid-term and at the end (FB), and a taped recording of him and four other colleagues discussing a questionnaire I'd given them near the end of the month about their learning on the course (RQ). Harold’s comments are typed in italics; written comments about or to him by his tutors are written in quotation marks.

On his application form Harold stated that he had never had a successful language learning experience because of what he described as poor teaching:

*The fact that I do not speak a foreign language to any degree of proficiency can be blamed, in part, on my experience of learning languages at school.*
The lessons were structured in a way which failed to capture any interest. Such a lack of interest resulted in lack of enthusiasm for a language and consequently the continuation did not occur. I believe that there was simply too much dependence placed on ploughing our way through a thick textbook. Learning a language can be complicated enough without the method of teaching being hard work as well. Continuous reliance on a single textbook makes the language appear static. Learning a language is by itself a dynamic exercise and should be taught in a dynamic way.

I know the role of the teacher is of paramount importance. It involves the use of teaching and social skills if a course of lessons is to be a success. It requires the ability to be able to listen to people, where they are having difficulties, what problems they are encountering. If these skills are matched with a planned and well-structured set of lessons then I believe that this will provide a course which is to the benefit of all who take part in it. (AF)

In describing another unsuccessful learning experience, a quantitative methods course, he again faults the teacher:

i) I was never told from the beginning what the purpose of the course was, its aims, etc.
ii) The course content was neither put across in an accessible way nor supported by worked examples.
iii) It was difficult to communicate with the lecturer, who seemed unable to realise that many students were unhappy with the subject. (AF)

However, when asked to describe a successful learning experience, learning to drive, he focuses on himself as a learner:

i) Instructor understood that I was learning and placed himself in the position of the learner.
ii) Instructor knew where my weak points were and had the patience to deal with them.
iii) We continuously built on what had been learnt previously, thus giving the lessons a logical and coherent structure. (AF)

This contrast between what teachers do that empowers learners or discourages them is what Harold fails to internalise until his Breakthrough Moment.

In his interview Harold was described as quiet and formal, but very committed. The interviewer thought Harold showed only fair potential, and that he would not be strong under pressure. His poor spelling was noted, as was the fact that the skills he had picked
up as a volunteer in his mother's primary school classroom would be useful. When asked on his application form to state why he thought he would be suited to teaching English, he wrote:

I would like to follow this course specifically at International House because of its sound reputation - a reputation I feel I would be able to uphold due to my ability to communicate well with others. I am suited to teaching English as I think I possess the required patience, personality and enthusiasm. I am able to put in the necessary hard work both during the course and when in a teaching post. (AF)

WEEK ONE

As is typical for most trainees during the first week of the course, Harold was concerned with teaching his plan rather than the students:

Undoubtedly main problem was time management. I shall have to define the stages of the lesson more clearly. More analysis of the stages of the lesson, not just on paper the evening before but in my head when I am teaching. This way I can adapt the lesson accordingly if it is clear that time will not allow all the stages to be covered. As time started draining away however my mental plan of the lesson evaporated and the structure became less clear, even though before the lesson started I had carefully written out each stage clearly. (RB)

Trainees often tend to equate teaching with giving a good performance, particularly in the first week, as does Harold:

Not enough pauses - almost a fear of silence - feeling that the time always had to be filled with talking
Had to refer/look down at notes rather than concentrating on students
I was carrying too much junk, need to plan my teaching "objects" better (RB)

Harold does express that he is aware of his students:

Concentrating on myself rather than the students as individuals.
By the end of the lesson I thought the group worked well together.
I was pleased with the way they worked in groups of three.
I found the first few minutes - trying to make conversation whilst waiting for others rather awkward. I suppose at this stage our minds are so busy thinking about our lesson plans that polite 'chit-chat' may inevitably come across as being false and 'clumsy'. (RB)
Nevertheless, comments by that week's Teaching Practice (TP) tutor in both his Reflection Book and on his Weekly Summary (quoted below) give advice which, although not untypical for most trainees at this point in the course, signify through quantity and directness that Harold already needs to address some important issues:

“Harold is well-motivated and comes across as quite focussed in the class. He has some good ideas for activities in the class which involve students. He needs, though, to make progress in a number of areas:

1. Defining the main aim of the lesson and getting on to it early on
2. Looking at new language from the students' points of view
3. Reducing the amount he talks and increasing the amount the students speak in the class:
   - avoiding making running commentary on the lesson
   - illustrating rather than explaining the language
   - speaking naturally, avoiding "over-correct", slightly stilted language
4. Maximising student oral practice”

That weekend, in his essay summarising the week, Harold shows that he has not yet made any links between the learning that he is doing on the course and the learning that could be taking place with his own students. He expresses the concept of learning theoretically, and from a largely visual point of view:

On a short course when there is a lot of information and knowledge to be understood in a very limited amount of time it becomes extremely important for the student to be able to distinguish each and every day in a clear and organised way. Failure to do so would result in the rapidity and continuity with which the course flows overtaking the student's capacity to comprehend new information in a structured fashion. Knowledge, particularly newly acquired knowledge, can only be fully understood and remembered if it is set in the context of that which had been previously learnt. Only by 'seeing' new knowledge, new facts, new methods, new ideas in the environment in which they exist can we fully comprehend them. Equally, it is only by being able to see with our 'mind's eye' that which we have learnt previously, that we can develop a context and an environment of the knowledge we are gathering. (WE)
WEEK TWO

During the second week Harold begins to get worried. He doesn't understand why his lessons don't turn out the way he expects them to:

The day before TP my lessons look great; there are good ideas in them, activities which I know the students will enjoy and benefit from. However, when it comes to the moment of planning the time for TP and giving the TP lesson, what is produced in the time I have with the students isn't what I intended; the lesson doesn't go according to plan. (FB)

He can see exactly what is going wrong, but he doesn't know how to prevent this from happening:

Main problem with this lesson was that I did too much whilst I gave the students too little to do. The exercise I gave them to do in groups worked extremely well and I should have stuck to my plan more rigorously by pressing on with the rest of the exercises. Instead I glued myself to the board and told the students about English without getting them to use it enough. I spent ages preparing an exercise that, because I took up the time lecturing the students, didn't even get time to use. As a result that which I told them about the infinitive without the TO wasn't put into practice - they didn't use the infinitive without the TO. (RB)

Harold obviously cares about his students and wants to help them.

I worry that I don't sound 'friendly' enough towards the students. Slight nerves do give me a tendency to speak with an unpleasant affected or 'plumy' accent. Today I felt that this was less evident - I was more aware that as we were dealing with a slightly more difficult topic my responsibility was to help and guide the students so that they knew more on leaving the room than they did on entering it. (RB)

Three things happened at this point in the course which resulted in his being able to translate his good intentions and ideas into effective learning for his students:

1. He observed two professional teachers with their own classes.

2. He was told in tutorial that it wasn't certain that he would pass the course.
3. He was presented with an image which spoke to him.

Each will be discussed in turn below.

1. Live observations

In his essay that weekend, describing what he had learned from the live observations, Harold wrote:

*The lessons which I have observed this week were of vital importance in my development ...For the first time it became possible to understand the purpose and rationale of much of what we have covered during our group discussions after TP. At a number of key points during the lesson I could see why something was done, or wasn't done, and was able to relate it back to my experience of TP. It was as though the theory of what we have learned during our lessons became animated in a way that it couldn't do by TP alone.*

*Often during my reflections on TP I think it is possible to say that I was so concerned with what to teach and so preoccupied with pedantic points that were of no importance to the students that I did not pay sufficient considered attention either to how we have been taught to teach or how I actually taught during TP. For me the lesson observations this week were, perhaps, more beneficial than average. They gave me a 'breathing space' during which I could see the principles of a lesson, experience its dynamism and see how the teacher always got the students to do as much of the work and talking themselves.* (WE)

2. A Fail Tutorial

UCLES strongly encourages us to be clear with all possible fail candidates. It is stressful for both the tutor and the trainee to have to discuss this possibility after only two weeks of teaching experience. The danger is that this further loss of self-confidence will inhibit the trainee from feeling motivated to keep trying. In most cases, however, the fear of not getting a Certificate at the end of this expensive course pushes the trainee to do things differently. This was true of Harold:

*Well, my famous, or infamous, Breakthrough Moment was over the weekend. The first two weeks of TP hadn't gone well. They were okay, but they could have gone a lot better, because the ideas were there in the lesson*
I'd thought about them carefully and about what to do and how to do it, and then I'd give the lesson, and it was just completely different to what I'd thought it was going to be, and I knew that there was something that was going wrong. I'd understood all the input sessions and principles and student-centred practice, and I knew the theory about it, but putting it into practice just wasn't working.

...It was definitely the turning point. The first and second weeks were a bit dicey and then the third and fourth were very good, so something did definitely happen, just a subtle sort of change. Not a moment, but a weekend. I didn't do any work over the weekend. Oh, I think we had to write the essay, but that was that. I didn't bother myself with books. I didn't take home any files or papers, and I tried to do very little, because it was quite serious... I just had to think about what was going wrong, because I knew, more than anybody, more than Susan or Nick, that something was not working... I knew that something had to change. (RQ)

3. An Image

In the tutorial I asked Harold a question. I asked him to describe the room in which he planned his lessons, and then I asked him where the students were while he was preparing their lesson. When he got the point that he was planning his lessons without realistically imagining how his students would react, I offered a suggestion. I suggested that, whenever he planned a lesson for his students, he visualise each one sitting somewhere in his room so that the whole class was in there with him. As it turned out, this image was a powerful one for Howard, and changed the way he planned his lessons from then on.

I think it was a concept thing. I was just concentrating too much on the theory of teaching and the principles of the input sessions without actually thinking about the students as people or as individuals. And so from that weekend on things have gone reasonably well. I try to write the lesson plans looking at it from the students' point of view and how they would approach it, because all I'd written on the application form about my previous experience with language learning, and the faults of it, I was just putting into practice! No one had ever looked at it from my point of view. They were people who knew how to speak the language and they were just trying to tell you how to speak it and use it. And so that was really the Breakthrough Moment. (RQ)
WEEK THREE

The challenge for all trainees in the third week is that they change students and have to teach a different level. In this case Harold went from teaching an intermediate class of students that he had just come to recognise as individual learners, to an unknown group of beginners. Harold made the transition smoothly. The comments in his Reflection Book indicate not only his new focus on the students, but also increasing self-confidence:

The students had plenty of opportunities to go through what was covered yesterday and during the first lesson today with Sally whilst still having different exercises to do so it didn't come across as repetition. Must be careful not to assume too much from students, i.e., yesterday much of what we covered on many of the items of clothing was either new or quite unfamiliar to the students.

When teaching I knew exactly the stages/parts of the lesson, which makes it so much easier, i.e., not always referring back to notes.

The haze which surrounded me during the first two weeks has dispersed. This week felt much clearer and 'fresher'; next week, I think that this will be in evidence in both my style and approach to teaching, just as it has been this week. Thank you for your help and support! (RB)

In the Weekly Summary the tutor let Harold know clearly that he was out of the woods:

“I'm so pleased you've made progress this week, Harold. Your aims have been crystal clear and your very imaginative activities have led to a logical mastery of them. You anticipated problems students would have and prepared them. Students got in plenty of practice, although the focus was still on the teacher. Your manner and pace are motivating.

To work on next week:

1. Student-centred focus. You still need many more S-S activities.
2. You've done a fair amount of grammar and vocabulary: try to include skills work, too.

Enjoy it!”

In his last essay, written on the weekend between Weeks Three and Four, Harold described the changes that had taken place in him since the beginning of the course:
In the three weeks that I have been studying TEFL at International House an unexpected development has clearly and quite suddenly taken place in my whole approach to learning. The change is subtle but I believe it carries profound implications which will undoubtedly affect the way I perceive myself as both a teacher and a learner. Indeed I feel that this is really the first time that I have truly tried to view something from a learner’s perspective.

Even when I was at school or university I didn’t stop for a moment to think of myself as being a learner; there was new material to learn and I must somehow try to learn it. It was, I now almost feel guilty to say, with this conception of learning that I approached TEFL.

I am now relieved to say that this approach is banished and never to be called upon again.

Within the space of two or three weeks - almost without realising it at the time - I have learnt to conceive the position of the learner, whether it be myself or those who I am teaching. Can anybody really quantify the magnanimity of such an occurrence? I don't think they can! It is such a liberating experience that any attempt to form a boundary around it would be doomed to failure.  

WEEK FOUR

The quality of his reflections and the awareness of his students was remarkably different during his last week of the course:

Well. It all seemed to start O.K. but something didn't click with the Queeny exercise. Andrei, Mohsen, Henrique, Karim, Mladen and Letizia did very well, but I feel as though I allowed myself to get bogged down with those who struggled, and they were only two students out of the 10 who were doing the exercise. Those who could do it enjoyed it. Five minutes into the break 3 or 4 were still in their seats. Much of what was in the text was covered last week, i.e., travel, clothes, feelings, etc. Given that they were all working well on this exercise (the silence was almost unnerving!) I didn't want to drag them away from it anyway. It built well on the first exercise, so to rush on to another just to squeeze it in would have been a mistake.  

(RB)
Conclusion

The three tutors on the course spent some time discussing what grade to give Harold. In the two weeks since his Breakthrough Moment he had made so much progress that it was conceivable that he might get a "B", but in the end we decided on a strong Pass, feeling that he needed a few more opportunities to solidify that progress. No one was in any doubt that he would one day become a very fine teacher.

On his end-of-course evaluation form Harold described his experience as a student on the course:

- I was told the course would be very hard and it was. With regards to the course content, I think it would be difficult to convey an accurate account to any applicant.
- The most useful session I can think of is the one which dealt with the rapport between students and teacher.
- I think the balance of activities was perfect every week. The activities appeared always to be well thought out, well organised and highly efficient at getting a point across to us. Many of the activities were also inspirational and gave rise to many ideas for activities during TP.
- Feedback after TP is essential. Personally, however, I cannot say that it led directly to any change in my teaching style. I felt as though I knew where I had been right or wrong. The most useful feedback sessions were the ones where I observed without teaching. It was interesting to see if I thought the same as the tutor.
- The level of professionalism and organisation still continues to impress me. Both tutors, particularly Susan, were wonderful throughout the course. I can't thank her enough for the help and support she has given me. I learnt more in 4 weeks than I did in 3 years of a degree. It was the most challenging, but ultimately the most rewarding course I have taken. (FB)

The story of Harold illustrates the development of a learner who had some trouble in the beginning. What was it really that led to such a dramatic change in his ability to teach effectively? It was made clear to me when I saw, on some pages the trainees had photocopied for each other with their addresses and one teaching tip to share, that Harold had written as his one, simple, essential teaching tip to pass on to others, this:

*Plan a lesson from the group's perspective, not yours.*
A sample of one of the oral interviews done with teachers now in the profession who had done well on their CTEFLA/CELTA course

Tim

June 1995 CTEFLA, Grade “A”
Interviewed three weeks into his first month of post-CTEFLA teaching, at I.H. London

Q: In what ways do you think the course prepared you for what you’re doing now?
A:

- I’d already been in front of a class of people, therefore not thrown in at deep end completely.
- Now each day I try out 2-3 things that remember from course
- I have an a) approach, b) set of principles, i.e., communication is good.
- Since I hadn’t taught before, all my ideas about teaching came from that course.
- In one sense teaching now is just an extension of the course, because I taught on the CTEFLA on Friday, IH the next Tuesday.
- The difference is that no one is telling me how to improve, so in that respect things have got more difficult.
- The main difficulty is getting together enough materials for three hours.
- Before I used to think deeply about each stage, because I only taught 1 ½ hours over five days. Now this is not possible.
- Before I had the luxury of focusing on one part of grammar: “I’ll learn all about it first, then teach it.” Now everything is a great deal faster.
- Now I’m using resources around me: a) people, b) books.
- People: “Go and look in that book; that exercise works really well.” Everyone else is more experienced than I am.
- On the course time went really slowly, because each day was so full; now time has speeded up incredibly. I don’t know quite why that is, but there is definitely a different sensation of time. My thought processes connected with teaching are also going a great deal faster:
  - What I’m going to teach, how it fits in
  - Research
  - Write lesson plan
Now, the evening before I think, browse through a few books to get a rough overview. In the morning at home I work through it properly. Then for 2 ½ hours I bounce ideas off people and look for activities. One day I was ill, so hadn’t thought. I spent half an hour thinking on the train and an hour at school, but that’s as quick as it goes. I don’t mind at all, because I’m learning about English. The next time I do Mid Intermediate I’ll have lots of chunks of lessons that I know went well.

Q: On a questionnaire given on your course, you said you hadn’t had any
breakthrough moments during the course.

A:

- Learning was a gradual process, building on other things, coming back to a whole circle: do something then go back to it, adjust how you think about it, and think about it some more. Something like a breakthrough moment might occur when sitting in the classroom and seeing someone do something or doing it yourself, then thinking about it afterwards and either
  a. It didn’t work at all and I could see exactly why and all the input on “you don’t do this and you should try and do this” and then it becomes all a lot clearer, or
  b. Something worked really well and I think that’s great, and seeing that it was great and knowing why it was great and knowing also because of all the smiling faces and then talking to each other.

So in a sense you had all this input … if in the morning it was clearly related to what you were doing in the afternoon, but when all that input was actually applied, it was then that everything actually made sense in relation to what you’re learning to do, which is teach, so when you actually come to teach then everything slots into place, and there are definite realisations. I won’t call them breakthrough moments; you kind of suddenly completely understand why you have to grade your language, and if someone doesn’t, and everyone’s looking at the teacher and going, “What are they talking about?” and then it strikes you. You can’t fail to understand that if you don’t grade your language you’re in trouble. The input clarifies a great deal, and you see why.

- There’s lots of talk of rationale in input, too. I mean, you did tell us why we do particular things and you see that clearly when you come to teach. But I wouldn’t say that all of a sudden it all slotted into place in that sense. It just kind of built on each other.

Q: And since? Any sudden insights, flashes of learning that changes suddenly?

A:

- I’m quite a reflective person generally, so the first 1 ½ weeks all my time was either sleeping, preparing for lessons, teaching and then wanting to put all that aside and not think about it at all for a bit before having to do it again, so there hadn’t been a great deal of time to reflect, but recently there has been because things are taking less time.

- One thing that happened a few days ago was I was looking at the timetables that went into the first two weeks. I had been learning quite a lot from the course and I will still go back and I suddenly thought, hold on a moment …[a long spiel on how he’d prefer to go from function to structure rather than the coursebook’s structure to practice and how Roger had turned him on to Community Language Learning].

Q: How has it come about that you felt the need to switch things around?

A:

[The students had told him about the structures they wanted, so that’s what he gave them, then compared it with the timetable I’d given for Executive teaching, and he noticed all the functional focus, so that kind of came from the course, but
also actual teaching. His desire was to make the classroom situation less like a class.]

Q: Honey Mumford?
A:
- I had done it at age 14, and got a really high Reflector score, followed by Theorist and Activist, but now it was more balanced.

Q: What do you want to come to terms with now in your teaching?
A:
- The main sensation is that I developed a great deal from the beginning of the course to the end. [me: “You got an ‘A’!”] Yes, I got an “A”, but I aimed to give good lessons within the limitations that I wasn’t actually teaching very much, and also I was teaching the ideal students. I feel like in a sense now I’m starting all over again. Now I’m a teacher, not a practice teacher, and I’m only doing 15 hours a week, and I’ll be doing more than that, so now I’m in the space that I know what it’s really like to be a teacher, and up to now there hasn’t been time for me to go back and look at all my notes – I’ve plucked things out of my notes. At the weekend I want to go off and do other things, to clear my head a bit. Therefore I’m now able to give okay lessons at three hours a day in Mid Intermediate, but I want to give better lessons.
- The other thing is I don’t have anyone criticising my lessons, and it’s very hard to criticise your own lessons. I don’t have time, an enormous amount of time, to sit down and think, well I don’t say what happened in that lessons, what could have gone better; I’m too busy looking to the next one, but now I’ve got to the point where I can think what I’d do differently and so I start coming back to the same areas. I go up one step and I’ve got to go up more steps.

Q: What do you mean by “better” lessons? What are they?
A:
- Well, more student-centred; it’s harder now to work out the aim of each stage, the aim of each week, as we had time to do on the course, so now I want better integrated lessons, smoother, less bitty, over one or two weeks: What is my syllabus? So now it’s just day to day. So, more systematic, more coherent, less TTT (with Mid Int, unlike beginners, I can babble on).

Q: How are they reacting to you, your students?
A:
- They react quite well, actually, and I’ve become a lot more of a performer than I was. Not in a bad sense, but I’m happy to do dramatic things to convey meaning. I try to keep it very informal and relaxed. When students smile they learn better. ..... I can tell immediately when the students don’t understand me.
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