

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

9.1 INTRODUCTION

The syllabus proposed in this study takes into account a number of factors. These are: ESL in the primary school; approaches to syllabus design; task-based approaches; current syllabuses in use, and the realities of the South African situation. A framework for a task-based syllabus was advanced and a task-based syllabus for ESL in South African primary schools was proposed.

This chapter summarises the main features of the proposed syllabus, points out the limitations of this study and makes recommendations for further research.

9.2 THE PROPOSED SYLLABUS

The format of the proposed task-based syllabus in this study is based mainly on that of the Target Oriented Curriculum (TOC) currently in use in Hong Kong. The TOC is the most teacher-friendly example of a task-based approach to language teaching, and provides a comprehensive approach to task-based language teaching and learning.

The features of the proposed syllabus may be summarised as follows:

- it is in line with Outcomes-based education;
- it makes provision for a generic profile of the pupils for whom the syllabus is intended, i.e. primary school pupils at English MOI schools and schools that teach English as a subject only;
- it describes the aims of the course in terms of target dimensions. These dimensions indicate the purposes for using English in the primary school. The syllabus necessitates teachers to consider the purposes, processes and products of

learning;

- the syllabus uses tasks as units of organisation. The task-based approach to language learning has proved to be effective in contexts similar to those of South Africa. The syllabus provides extensive support regarding the constitution of learning tasks. These guidelines may assist teachers in writing tasks suitable to their own contexts;
- it provides guidelines regarding teaching and learning opportunities. Teachers may benefit from the extensive examples included, which indicate how the syllabus can be implemented in an integrated manner and how lesson planning can be implemented in an integrated way, and
- the syllabus provides assessment guidelines that may assist teachers in planning formative and summative assessment.

The syllabus is a general one, aimed at a diverse group of primary school pupils from different backgrounds. It is aimed at improving proficiency in English and advancing learning and education. As the results of ESL teaching and learning at primary schools in South Africa have been disappointing, it is hoped that this study may make a contribution in this field.

9.3 LIMITATIONS

This study has a number of limitations. These are:

- the syllabus proposed here can only be evaluated after implementation;
- assessment criteria need to be implemented in order to refine them, and
- the survey that was conducted is limited in concentrating on some primary schools in especially the North West Province of South Africa. The survey depended on students' observation of classroom activities. It did not provide a reliable assessment of these activities, however. Teachers' methodological preferences could be deduced only in general terms.

9.4 FUTURE RESEARCH

A number of implications for future research can be pointed out:

- i) template materials and resources for a task-based approach to language teaching for South Africa need to be researched;
- ii) the ways of thinking, reporting information, investigating etc., concepts and vocabulary that are needed for English MOI schools need to be researched and refined;
- iii) differentiation in task-based language teaching needs to be refined;
- iv) assessment in task-based language teaching needs to be researched so that it is valid and reliable, and
- v) the participation of teachers in syllabus development needs to be researched.