

# **DESIGNING AN INNOVATIVE COMMUNICATIVE TEACHING SYLLABUS IN FRENCH FOR NIGERIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

BY

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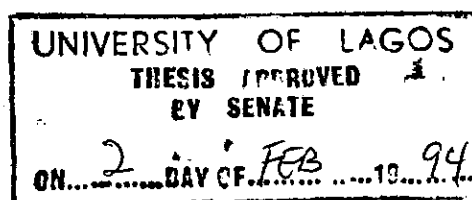
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## DEDICATION

### THIS WORK IS DEDICATED TO

The Loving memories of:

My Late Father, Senior Apostle Ebenezer Adebayo Adelola.  
*28th October, 1908 - 9th April, 1987*

And

My Late Mother-in-Law, Mrs. Elizabeth Hammond (J.P.)  
*16th April 1914 - 26th April 1987.*

**SCHOOL OF POST-GRADUATE STUDIES**  
**UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS**

SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES  
UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS

CERTIFICATION

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE THESIS  
DESIGNING AN INNOVATIVE COMMUNICATIVE TEACHING  
SYLLABUS IN FRENCH FOR NIGERIAN SECONDARY  
SCHOOLS

SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES  
UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF

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IS A RECORD OF ORIGINAL RESEARCH CARRIED OUT BY

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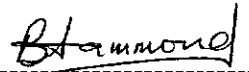
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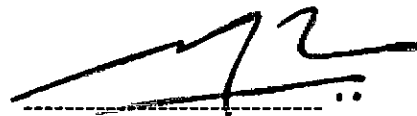
## DECLARATION

### DESIGNING AN INNOVATIVE COMMUNICATIVE TEACHING SYLLABUS IN FRENCH FOR NIGERIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

I declare that the above named thesis has been composed by me, the work of which it is a record has been done by me, and it has not been accepted in any previous application for a higher degree.



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*Supervisor.*

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## ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to investigate some crucial environmental and curricular phenomena in foreign language teaching and learning and then propose and validate an innovative communicative syllabus for French instruction in Nigerian Secondary Schools.

Questionnaires and checklists were used in this comparative, descriptive and analytic study. Also, a one group pre-test, post-test design was used for the experimental study.

Research was carried out in Educational settings in Strasbourg (France), London (England) and Lagos, Akwa-Ibom and Plateau States (Nigeria). A pilot study was also conducted in Yaounde (Cameroon).

14 languages educators in Strasbourg; 37 in London, 55 in the three states of Nigeria and 812 JSS II & III pupils learning French from 8 selected schools in the three states of Nigeria, served as the subjects. The main outcome measures were to design and validate a communicative syllabus for French learning, characterised by carefully selected topics, settings, objectives, language functions and tasks with appropriate language contexts and contents based on prior identification of learner's needs.

Response rate to the questionnaires was generally very good (98%). In comparing the opinion of teachers in England and Nigeria on the justified inclusion of French in schools' curriculum and whether the learners were well considered, significant relationship in their responses was noticed at  $p < 0.05$ .

Opinions on other curriculum matters such as human/material resources as well as

other educational constraints differed significantly with 61% favourable (English) as against 56% favourable (Nigerian) responses. In studying and analysing the syllabus in use, the English one shows that a degree of consideration was given to basic need of language learners on issues like the number of topics and the range and type of tasks required of learners at different levels of performance. The Nigerian one shows that a degree of conformity is imposed in terms of format, text and test types with mandatory exponents. It was found that when a communicative syllabus based on the identification of learners' needs was used, learners' enthusiasm was rekindled as the benefits of relevance and situational use of the French language was brought into focus. 33 (82.5%) of pupils in the experiment were positively affected as their communicative performance improved systematically at ( $p = 0.0002$ ).

The social, economic and political benefits derived from learning French as a foreign language are obvious. People in and out of school like the language but there appears to be a lot of inadequacies in the pragmatics and pedagogy of foreign language instructions. Teachers need to be made constantly aware of new trends in foreign language teaching and especially identify with the ideas of communicative approach to language teaching, while developing schemes that make learning more meaningful to their pupils. More research needs to be carried out.



## TABLE OF CONTENT

Title .....	i
Dedication .....	ii
Certification .....	iii
Declaration .....	iv
Acknowledgement .....	v
Abstract .....	vi
Table of Content .....	viii
List of Tables .....	ix
List of Figures .....	x
<b>CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION</b>	
General Perspectives on Foreign Language Education --	1
On Fundamental Language Skills .....	5
Listening Skill .....	6
Speaking Skill .....	7
Reading Skill .....	8
Writing Skill .....	9
On Teachers and Learners .....	10
The Teacher .....	10
The Learner .....	11
Background To The Problem .....	12
The Problem .....	16

The Purpose Of The Study -----	17
Reasearch Questions -----	18
Rationale For The Countries Selected:	
Contextual and Theoretical -----	20
England -----	20
Nigeria -----	23
France -----	24
Cameroons -----	26
Significance of the Study -----	27
Definition of Terms -----	28
 <b>CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE</b>	
Introduction -----	30
Development in Language Studies -----	31
A Psycholinguistic View -----	32
A Sociolinguistic View -----	36
Communicative Language Teaching -----	39
Communicative Language Teaching and Syllabus Designs -----	40
Syllabuses And The Content of Foreign Language Learning --	47
Syllabus Typology -----	51
(i) The Formal Syllabus -----	51
(ii) The Functional Syllabus -----	52

## CHAPTER 3 DESIGN AND PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY

Introduction .....	55
Population And Sample .....	55
The Subjects .....	56
The Design Of The Study .....	56
Research Instruments .....	58
Types or Description of Instruments .....	58
Questionnaire .....	58
I.    The French Teacher Questionnaire (FTQ) -	58
II.   The Parents Questionnaire (PQ) .....	58
III.  The Pupils Need Identification Questionnaire (PNIQ) --	59
IV.   Check-List .....	60
V.    Observation Schedule .....	61
Validation of The Instruments .....	61
Translation of The Questionnaire Into French .....	62
Procedures for Data Collection .....	63
Content Analysis .....	64
The Quasi - Experiment .....	65
Data Analysis Technique .....	66
The Questionnaires .....	66
The Checklist .....	67
The Experiment .....	67
Anecdote Method .....	67

McNemar Test .....	68
The Research Questions .....	68
Phase I .....	71
The Pilot Study: Results And Discussion: .....	71
Theoretical Bases Of The Survey .....	71
Pilot Study Data Analysis .....	75
Statistical Description Of Data .....	76
Discussions .....	76
Limitation Of The Study .....	77
 <b>CHAPTER 4 MAIN STUDY: RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS OF PHASES II, III &amp; IV</b>	
Introduction .....	78
Discussion of Tables 1 - 5 .....	84
Discussions of Tables 7, 8, 9 .....	90
Phase II French Syllabus Design Prespecifications .....	93
i) Nigeria .....	93
ii) Britain .....	93
Discussion of Tables 10, 11, 12, 13 .....	98
Phase III Pre-Design Specifications: Learning Needs Identification And Analysis --	102
Discussions of Tables 14, 15, 16 .....	106
Discussion of Table 18 .....	112

Phase IV Critique of Tentative Design Specification (Teacher Assessors) -----	115
Phase V Design Trial - Testing: Quasi-Experiment -----	117

## **CHAPTER 5 PHASE VI**

### **THE PROPOSED COMMUNICATIVE TEACHING SYLLABUS FOR FRENCH IN NIGERIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS ----- 122**

Introduction -----	122
Aims -----	123
Areas of Communication -----	124
Language Tasks/Skills -----	125
Defined Objectives -----	125
Content -----	126
Language Functions/Notions -----	127
Structure And Grammar -----	127
Assessment -----	128
Specific Objectives (At Student Level) -----	128
Note To Teachers -----	132
Syllabus Content: Sensitization/Promotional Unit (A) -----	135
Units 1 - 14 -----	135

## **CHAPTER 6 SUGGESTION AND CONCLUSIONS -----164**

Introduction -----	164
The National Involvement -----	165
The Teacher -----	167
The Learner -----	168

Materials And Other Resources -----	169
Design And Production -----	171
Assessment -----	171
Conclusion -----	173
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY -----</b>	<b>175</b>
<b>APPENDICES -----</b>	
Appendix A - Teacher Questionnaire -----	
Appendix B - Parent Questionnaire -----	
Appendix C - Pupil Questionnaire -----	
Appendix D - Cover Note From Council of Europe Official -----	
Appendix E - Teacher Assessors Questionnaire -----	
Appendix F - Questions Used During Quasi-Experiment -----	
Appendix G - Assessment Sheet (Observation Schedule) -----	
Appendix H - Some Useful Notions -----	
Appendix I - Letters From Home And Abroad For Permission To Do Research ---	
(1) From National Universities Commission -----	
(2) From School of Postgraduate Studies, University of Lagos -----	
(3) To University of London, England -----	
(4) To The Council of Europe Strasbourg, France -----	
(5) From University of London, Kings College -----	
(6) From Birkbeck College, University of London -----	
(7) From The Council of Europe -----	

## LIST OF TABLES

1.	Table A: Subject of the Pilot Study -----	57
2.	Table B: Distribution of Pilot Study Respondents -----	74
3.	Table C: Description of the Number of Responses in Pilot Study Questionnaire Items -----	75
4.	Table D: Analysis of Responses to Pilot Study -----	75
5.	Table E: Statistical Description of Data (Opinion of respondents) -	76
6.	Table I: Description of the Category Showing the Number and Percentages of Responses to Items on the Teacher Questionnaire (TQ) in England --	79
7.	Table 2: Opinion of 20 French Teacher in London Concerning Curricular Issues in Percentages -----	80
8.	Table 3: Description of the Showing Number and Percentage of Responses to Items on the Teacher Questionnaire (TQ) in Nigeria ----	80
9.	Table 4: Opinion of 55 French Teachers in Nigeria concerning Curricular Issues in Percentages -----	81
10.	Table 5: Statistical Descriptions Showing the Group Standard Deviation of Categories between Two Groups of Teachers (In England and Nigeria) -----	81
11.	Table 6(a): Chi-square Test of Independence Calculation of co-efficient of contingency between responses of English and Nigerian Teachers to the different categories -----	82
12.	Table 6(b): Summary of $X^2$ Tests of Items Showing Significant Relationships in the responses of the groups of Teachers -----	83
13.	Table 7: Description of Categories showing the Number and Percentages of responses to items on the Parent Questionnaire (PQ) in France, England and Nigeria -----	86
14.	Table 8(a): Chi-Square Test of Independence Calculation of Co-efficient of Contingency between responses of French, English and Nigerian Parents in different Categories -----	87

15.	Table 8(b):	Results Showing the Opinion of Parents in France, England and Nigeria in Item Categories 1 - 25 in Percentages -----	90
16.	Table 9:	Summary $X^2$ Test of Independence Showing the Calculation of Co-efficient of contingency between Responses of Parents in France, England and Nigeria on Item Categories 1 - 25 -----	90
17.	Table 10:	Description of English and Nigerian definition of General Aims of French Learning in Secondary School Syllabus -----	95
18.	Table 11:	Description of the components included in Syllabus Content for England and Nigeria -----	96
19.	Table 12:	Description of the Components included in Syllabus context for England and Nigeria -----	97
20.	Table 13:	Description of the Components included in Syllabus for Assessment Objectives in England and Nigeria -----	97
21.	Table 14:	Names of Schools and Number of Pupils Need Identification Questionnaire (PNIQ) -----	102
22.	Table 15(a):	Percentage of JSS II Pupils Responses to Item 8 on Questionnaire -----	104
23.	Table 15(b):	Percentage of JSS III Pupils Responses to Item 8 -----	104
24.	Table 16(a):	Summaries of the Responses of JSS II to Critical Item 12 -----	105
25.	Table 16(b):	Summaries of the most Significant Responses of JSS III Pupils to Critical Item 12 -----	106
26.	Table 17(a):	Number of Pupils in JSS II & III with High Level difficulty in the Four Language skills -----	108
27.	Table 17(b):	Number of Pupils in JSS II & III with Medium Level difficulties in the Four Language Skills -----	109
28.	Table 17(c):	Number of Pupils in JSS II & III with Low Level difficulties in the Four Language skills -----	110
29.	Table 18:	Summary of Figures in Tables 17a, b, & c Showing significant differences (with $X^2$ Values) -----	112
30.	Table 19:	Sign - Test used during the Design Trial - Testing -----	118



31. Table 20 (i) Description of Language Behaviour Demonstrated as well as Performance Grades awarded to Pupils in Pretest and Post-test --119
- (ii) Summary of Figures in Table 20 and McNemar Test for significance of Change ----- 120

## LIST OF FIGURES

- (1) Graphic Representation of the Data in Table 20 ----- 122

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Quite a number of ideas have influenced the learning and teaching of languages. Syllabuses for language courses have also been organised around these insights.

For a very long time, structural linguistics dominated the language field. Since language was believed to consist of hierarchically organised strata, linguistic units such as phonemes, morphemes and syntactic patterns were a natural feature of language lessons.

The Chomskyan revolution, with new insights into transformational grammar did little to change the way language was presented for pedagogical purposes. Language teaching still focused on sentence - level syntax. These views that have influenced the grammatical syllabus, (vigorously criticized by Brumfit (1980), have led to approaches that have yielded negative results for language learners.

The ideas of Hymes (1966), a sociolinguist, brought about new perspectives into language teaching and learning. Distinction was made between linguistic competence and communicative competence. Consequently, the goal of language instruction shifted to the development of students' communicative competence. The real uses of language, especially, its social uses, became the new priority and emphasis is now placed on the fact that language is learnt most effectively by using it in realistic situations.

Some of the problems facing language programme design are seen to be embedded in the oftentimes lofty, mystical and sophisticated claims and justifications made for foreign language study, that usually have no credibility with students as they tend to embrace

rationales that are too narrow or expediency-based. Like Richterich (1983), Omaggio (1983) believes that the identification of the role of foreign language as the basis of school goals and student's needs may result in a more cohesive language programme which accommodates diversity and uses time efficiently. In other words, language syllabus design must take into consideration what components of language will be included in a given syllabus in the right proportion and with the right emphasis, from the "function words" (i.e., articles, prepositions, conjunctions, auxiliary verbs, etc.) which are constantly used by all native speakers of any language, to the unlimited reservoir of "Content" words which must be chosen with due consideration to the learner's needs.

While syllabus design has been identified as one of the major issues in communicative language teaching (Savignon, 1987), syllabus designers nowadays like Coste (1976), Wilkins (1981) and others, have looked to language functions to provide content and sequence in teaching materials while more emphasis is placed on functional approaches (Van Ek, 1975) to language learning.

The apparent failure of the teaching method concept has resulted in the search for other avenues to create a new approach to conducting language teaching. Whereas language researchers have shown that certain pedagogical factors cannot be overlooked in an effective design for foreign language studies, new frames of reference are being created for language teaching which emphasise the importance of drawing on linguistic studies, developmental psychology, study of socio-cultural context, and other related fields.

Admittedly, language learning has long been accepted world wide in its own right as a dynamic educational experience, apart from its vocational value. It is therefore not

surprising that education decision makers view as a matter of priority, certain considerations about curriculum design and the examination of processes rather than products involved in second language learning.

Furthermore, the insistence that schools must provide an education which is suited to the needs of the modern world has led to a fresh appraisal of the value of various subjects (including foreign languages) in the curriculum. Instructively, a national system of education lays special emphasis on those aspects of training which are particularly needed at the national level. The problems and purposes of education have in general become somewhat similar in most countries although solutions to them are influenced by differences of tradition and culture.

Learning to communicate in a modern foreign language is not at all the same thing for people in different places. Moreover, communicative needs in the foreign language vary considerably from country to country depending on the social, economic or political influences in a country at a given time.

Syllabus design is only a part of a larger and perhaps more urgent issues in foreign language teaching and learning and although syllabus definitions still vary a good deal, theory, research and classroom experience which we shall examine later, have added immensely to the wealth of innovative proposals.

## **GENERAL PERSPECTIVES ON FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION**

The general picture portrayed in language education and especially foreign language learning shows that the language teaching enterprise has perhaps not been adequately

equipped and staffed enough to achieve results which are acceptable. Even language teachers seem to have failed to agree on what those results ought to be. Whereas some are satisfied with reading - translation goals, where learners are required to talk about the language in  $L_1$  and decode written materials from the foreign language into the  $L_1$ , others lay more emphasis on communicative competence. Those who favour the latter goal advocate the teaching of all four language skills - listening, speaking, reading and writing and insist that foreign language should be learned in such a way that the student is able to communicate directly in the target language, if foreign language study is to have any significant educational value as dictated by contemporary needs. These exigencies imply that at least a limited attainment of bilingualism is expected of the learner. Much as the idea of Bilingualism (Beardsmore, 1981; Kwofie, 1985) within the framework of foreign language education raises some practical questions, the minimum essentials needed to achieve the goals of foreign language instruction are what this work emphasises.

Teaching of foreign language requires consideration of some basic principles which those concerned with language teaching cannot afford to overlook. One recognises the constraints of foreign language study, and that only a sound theory of language will provide the principled basis for a particular approach to language study.


With the great range of possible 'best' methods that have over the years been offered for language teaching, it becomes apparent if not certain that there cannot be one 'best' method. This is in view of the fact that there are too many variables at work in the foreign language classroom involving basically the TEACHER, TEACHING the LEARNERS in an ENVIRONMENT. Language teaching in the classroom is an operation done in an

artificial environment; therefore, language learning in this situation cannot be left to chance. Moreover, the limited time available has to be used in a way as to afford the maximum opportunity needed for experience of the language.

With communicative competence as the desired goal now required in language learning, the awareness that it is the learner who learns the language for a personal reason, puts those responsible for language studies in such a position that they need to recognize the needs and interests of the learner. The success of any programme depends very much on this realisation. It is not surprising that the common practice in language education is to determine the objectives of foreign language teaching and learning and then take the pragmatic steps that are necessary to attain them. Consequently, the general insistence on the learning of the fundamental skills appears to point to the way forward. The traditions that have influenced the way in which foreign languages are being taught have long been in conflict. While one does not reject the tradition which views language as a mental discipline, one cannot overlook the intellectual gain provided by learning about language, through the facts about languages which linguists have provided.

## **ON FUNDAMENTAL LANGUAGE SKILLS**

There is the general insistence that a foreign language must be learned in such a way that the learner is able to communicate directly in the target language. There is the awareness however, that an individual who learns a language does so for his own personal reasons and all learners do not necessarily seek or need the same level of performance ability or even the same set of linguistic skills. But communicative competence or



proficiency in language learning (Omaggio, 1983) requires that the learner 'knows' a language at various stages of competence. The ability to describe what a learner can do with the language at each of these various stages will not only facilitate the measurement of outcomes against a common metric but it will also help to predict accurately how well a learner can handle a variety of needs in different situations. Questions asked will then relate to "*knowing*" a language within a framework that identifies clearly the content of the foreign language that is studied, allowing learners to gain functional mastery of the important elements of a language, i.e., Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, Vocabulary including cultural skills as they apply to the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, that are essential for communication.



### Listening Skills

The ultimate goal of the listening skill derives from the ability to identify, recognise, comprehend new sound or combination of familiar words when spoken at normal speed, and with normal intonation and rhythm, in a way which makes utterances comprehensible to native speakers. The following skills are involved in the teaching - learning process and output levels:-

**Phonology:** The requirement will be the ability to hear all the meaningful sound contrasts of the  $L_2$  or foreign language when it is spoken at normal speed in complete utterances.

**Morphology:** Hearing all the changes of meaning that have been caused by modification of words when the language is spoken in the complete and correct  $L_1$  manner.



**Syntax:** Hearing the L<sub>2</sub> or foreign language without being confused by usual or unusual, syntactical arrangements.

**Vocabulary:** Hearing and understanding words in their normal conversational context.

**Culture:** Learner (Listener's) ability to detect nuances of meaning relating to social attitudes and traditions in specific situations. This is a much overlooked but growing area of emphasis today (Valdes, 1986).

### **Speaking Skill:**

The goal here is to recognize familiar word and apply them to new situations using L<sub>1</sub> and intonation intelligently, intelligibly and appropriately.

An organismic communication model supplied by Carrol (1953) provided an insight into interpersonal communication through speech -

Intensive behaviour of speaker ----> Encoding behaviour of speaker ----> MESSAGE  
----> Decoding behaviour of Hearer ----> Interpretive behaviour of Hearer.


Speaking Skill involves these elements of language:

**Phonology:** The ability to produce correctly all the significant sounds and intonation patterns of the L<sub>2</sub> in a manner acceptable to the speakers of the language.

**Morphology:** Expressing one's ideas orally using appropriate grammatical forms.

**Syntax:** Expressing one's ideas orally using word order which is characteristic of the spoken language.

**Vocabulary:** Acquiring an active oral age, maturity, level and capacity of the learner, as well as the one which is acceptable and appropriate for communication in the modern world.




**Culture:** Using culturally acceptable forms which are appropriate to the age, social standing, occupation etc., of the person spoken to. Also revealing some knowledge of the heritage of those whose language is spoken.

### **Reading Skill**

This aims at perfecting a language skill which results in reading directly without having to use constantly a bilingual vocabulary list. This is often regarded as an artificial development invented by men in its use of graphic symbols to denote sounds.

The following are elements of language involved in the reading skill:



**Phonology:** It is concerned here with the ability to associate the appropriate graphic symbols with the sounds for which they stand.

**Morphology:** Drawing meaning directly from the printed text through recognition of changes in meaning caused by modifications in structure.

**Syntax:** This has to do with the ability to read directly in the foreign language without being confused by word - order arrangements.

**Vocabulary:** The ability to recognize a wide range of vocabulary items in context and to sense the differences between spoken and written vocabulary and between contemporary and older literary forms, words and expressions.

**Culture:** In relation to culture, the speaking skill will require that the learner is able to read practically everything from newspapers, magazines, to classical literature. This assumes a basic knowledge of the social, political and economic position of the country in which the language is spoken.

## **Writing Skill:**

Like the Reading Skill and unlike the Listening and Speaking Skills (which are spontaneous), the writing skill is artificially invented to put down, with the use of materials (pen, paper, chalk, Blackboard, etc.) those graphic symbols which stand for the sounds of a language. The ultimate goal here is to be able to express an idea idiomatically and freely in writing.

The Writing Skill and Elements of Language comprise:

**Phonology:** This derives from the ability to reproduce graphically, the conventional symbols which stand for the particular sound of the language being transcribed.

**Morphology:** Expressing one's own idea in writing using appropriate grammatical forms.

**Syntax:** The ability to express an idea in writing, putting down the appropriate word in the right order to the foreign language.

**Vocabulary:** Ability to express one's ideas in written symbols using words that are appropriate to the occasion.

**Culture:** This relates to the ability to use the correct and acceptable style according to the nature of what is being written.

These elements of language, seen in their relationship with fundamental language skills to be acquired are essentials for communication which syllabus design and instruction in foreign language education must aim at.

## ON TEACHER AND LEARNERS

**The Teacher:** The role of a foreign language teacher is a rather complex one. It is very well recognised that there are too many variables at work in the foreign language class. The "Teacher" concept in itself is complex. It includes many considerations such as:

The teacher's personality/knowledge.

The teacher's teaching experience.

The teacher's orientation as regards beliefs about, and attitude towards his subject, etc.

Because of this multiple variables, it is impossible to expect all teachers to teach in the same way. Even when objectives that are stated seem to coincide with others, it has been found (Rivers, 1968) that the teacher as an individual has a different priority of objectives followed by different techniques for achieving the objectives. Language is such that since we do not utter the same things over and over again, teachers constantly have to cope with novelty. With this fact in mind, the role of the language teacher is best defined at times as that of an *"onlooker"* having to set up pair or group work or still, have himself acting as a "Partner" in much the same way as does the parent in  $L_1$  acquisition. While the 'onlooker' role encourages acquisition by ensuring that the learner is left free to find his own root in a facilitative rather than prescriptive manner, the latter *"partnership"* role probably allows the teacher to participate (performing) in activity with the learner, as an equal partner and not the one who supplies *"Correct behaviour"*, (Teaching image).

A model supplied by Hornsey (1982) shows what a diligent language teacher must be aware of in order to be able to cope professionally with his task. Recognising that he is the **Teacher** (personality, experience, orientation), who **teaches** (environment, organisation, available resources, etc.) the **Learner** (Age, needs, aims and interests) the **Language** (Difference between languages and different aspects of language).

More than anything else, it is thought rather worthwhile for any language teacher to keep himself current with the new development in his field through extensive reading. The language teacher himself is an authority in his field because it is he who encounters varied situations in a language class and as a teacher \researcher (Stenhouse, 1975) he is in a better position to recognize those factors and influences that affect language and devise a technique that will best enhance the objective that he has set out to achieve for the benefit of his pupils.

### **The Learner**

Much attention has been focused lately on the learner: his aims, needs and interests. It has been mentioned earlier that there is the recognition that in language learning, it is the Learner who wishes to learn a particular language for a particular reason. It becomes only rational that learning may not take place except the learner is interested and motivated (Hawkins, 1979). Data from philosophical, psychological and sociological findings as well as from other related disciplines (Van Els, 1984) have provided useful insights into those aspects of human beings that are relevant for pedagogical considerations. As far as

language learning is concerned, factors such as learners' age, needs, aims, and interests have been found to be necessary in designing a programme for effective language learning.

As communicative competence and language proficiency (Omaggio, 1983) are the catch phrases in foreign language teaching and learning today, realizing the exigencies of these concepts cannot but pose complex problems with regards to the myriad of interests that will most certainly accrue from teaching a class of so many individual learners, each with his own aims and interest in the foreign language he has chosen to learn.

How can a teacher cater for a class of learners where each learner has a different rate of progressing, including a variety of abilities, aptitudes and objectives in language learning? There are suggestions however, that the learners have to be given the opportunity to make their own subconscious selections of items to be acquired based on what they individually find communicatively useful at each stage of their development (Rod Ellis, 1982). How the ideas of communicative competence for each learner will be met will largely depend on the resourcefulness and diligence of the teacher and experience of the designer of a language programme.

## **BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM**

Over the years, there have been frustrating continual decline in the number of Nigerian candidates offering foreign language (French) at School Certificate Level. The seriousness of this unpleasant situation is further highlighted by equally gloomy observations made by foreign language teachers in other countries as regards attainment in foreign language studies.

While in the 50s Connant reported a deplorable state of affairs with regards to foreign language studies among American pupils; a report in 1979 by a President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies referred to the state of a 'scandalous incompetence' of Americans. Reports from English Secondary Schools also show that too few pupils were studying any foreign language at all. A British leader remarked in the Times Education Supplement: *"Modern Languages have been acknowledged as the great disaster area of British education for so long now"*. (5th February, 1982).

Since French displaced Latin in the early sixties in Nigerian Secondary Schools it became a compulsory subject from classes 1 - 111. Since 1971, there has been an alarming increase in drop-out rate in the number of pupils who continue their study of French beyond class 111 (Obayan, 1974; Sonuga, 1984). The few that offer French as a foreign language in their School Certificate Examination perform poorly (NAPT, 1975 - 1978; WAEC, 1981 - 1984). This has caused national concern among those involved with the study of this foreign language in our secondary schools, as well as policy makers. The bane of foreign language studies has always been linked with badly prepared programmes that are also badly executed and invariably badly evaluated. A thorough study of the existing French syllabus for secondary schools shows that a degree of conformity has been imposed in terms of format, text and test types. Although emphases have been laid upon improved teaching technique as a means of achieving better performance and despite the proliferation of supposedly 'better' approaches to the teaching of foreign languages, the problem of high drop-out rate persists and there are evidences to show that French is not yet a favourite of many Nigerian secondary school pupils (Obayan, 1980). This is not surprising as it is

stipulated even as a matter of policy that French be offered in the JSS to all pupils only *"where the appropriate facilities exist"*. Regrettably, facilities for effective French teaching do not exist in majority of the secondary schools in Nigeria.

As a matter of fact, with regards to curriculum in foreign language, there is constantly the recurring question of "foreign language studies for what?" and for the seemingly justifiable reasons often given in support of the inclusion of foreign language studies in the school curriculum, the task of achieving an acceptable standard in foreign language acquisition gets more and more arduous. It is argued nowadays that decisions taken with regards to foreign language studies are conditioned by social, economic, political and cultural factors which are not often quite obvious. The inclusion of foreign languages in a school curriculum, then, would have been attributed to external influences and other social phenomena. Also, recent emphasis on technology and intellectual awareness highly influence the status accorded foreign language issues in terms of purpose and the methods used in achieving these ends. In recent studies, Aniche (1986) recognises a rising positive awareness among Nigerian secondary school French learners, of the utility of the foreign language; while Owhotu (1988), suggests an intensification of more efficient counselling on the part of the French teachers. It is thought that French language teaching and learning would be made more interesting if the appropriate measures are taken to harness the enthusiasm shown by learners. Very many schools include in the curriculum of compulsory education the study of at least one foreign language.

Infact, the command of a foreign language has become a necessary part of general education although the situation of foreign language learning at the school level has not



taken into consideration other factors concerning a purely pragmatic view of foreign language learning. At this level of education, the learners do not have obvious or well defined purposes for learning a foreign language. Meanwhile, teaching programmes have inevitably reflected examination requirements which only the more linguistically able pupil could cope with. Also, the languages taught are still often irrelevant to present day needs with emphasis on written work which are often presented within unreal and inappropriate situations; resulting in situations where pupils can write correct responses without understanding or making use of the language creatively. Newmark's (1966) remarks about this trend are most appropriate and quite true of the Nigerian secondary school learner of the French language. "The student may know the structures that the linguist teaches (yet) he cannot know that the way to get his cigarette lit by a stranger when he has no matches is to walk up to him and say one of these utterances: *"Do you have a light?" "Got a match?"* and not one of the equally well-formed questions: *"Do you have a fire?"* or *"Do you have illumination?"* or *"Are you a matches owner?"*.

Language teaching and learning now is such that this former tradition is being questioned while teachers and syllabus designers have started to ask questions about Content and Methodology. They want to know what the likely language needs of the learners are as well as what the learners will want to do linguistically in certain specific situations and how to harmonize the teaching process with teaching outcomes.

## THE PROBLEM

The debate about languages in the curriculum has often been presented in terms of conflict between idealistic aspirations and empirical reality.

The main dilemma today in language teaching has been detected as having much to do with the question of how the real aims of teaching a language can best be served in the case of each individual pupil, i.e., the adaptation of a language learning situation to the particular need of the pupils.

The myriad of language teaching techniques which have through the years been offered as possible alternatives to efficient and effective teaching and learning of a foreign language have met little success. The persistently poor performance within the school system remains a matter of grave concern especially for those involved in policy decisions on foreign language issues, i.e., educational policy makers, linguists and teachers alike. Although a major issue in foreign language learning, the concept of syllabus design is only recently being given the attention that it deserves. Whereas the NERC has claimed a design for JSS French curriculum that should make the language more interesting to Nigerian pupils and make work easier for the teachers, and whereas the WASCE results of 1981-1984 show 73, 66.43, 77.15 and 57 percent pass respectively, majority of these students who passed in the P<sub>7</sub> & P<sub>8</sub> grades displayed considerable communicative incompetence in their oral performances. A lot of factors may have affected the results but it may be rightly assumed that while these students have a good systemic knowledge of the French language, they lack the required knowledge of language functions in socially acceptable ways. Another perhaps much more significant fact is that a great number of learners are both aware of the utility

of the French language and have shown remarkable preference for the language over and above their national languages or mother tongue (Aniche, 1986; Owhotu, 1988). Examinations generally do not help matters as they test the wrong things and teaching programmes reflect examinations requirement that only cater for a minor category of learners (the able ones who could cope with manipulation of structures). The majority of learners who might make considerable efforts to learn a foreign language often have at the end of it all nothing much to show for their efforts. Language courses which reward participants only at the end of term or session does not offer much motivation for those pupils who decide to drop the subject after studying it for only a few years of their secondary education. This has implications for consideration of other ways of structuring the language teaching programme whereby learners would benefit at whatever level they decide to stop learning the foreign language. Much has to be done in the areas of catering for individual interests and capabilities of students. The problem is reducible to two questions: how does the curriculum process harness the potentials that lie fallow and what would be the specific role of syllabus design?

## **THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

If after twenty-five centuries of language studies (Kelly, 1969), successive language revolutions, particularly over the last hundred years have achieved so little, the need for review cannot be over emphasised. In view of the frustrating experience in foreign language teaching and learning in Nigerian Secondary Schools, the researcher is setting out to investigate:

- i) How foreign language teaching is practised elsewhere in order to help determine crucial environmental and curricular phenomena involved and then,
- ii) Propose and validate an innovative communicative syllabus for French Language instruction on the basis of the identification of communicative needs of learners.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study has been prompted by the perceived need for an improvement in French teaching and learning through the development of a viable meaning-based communicative syllabus. The following general and specific questions lend direction to the study:-

- 1) **General:** Why is the study of foreign languages necessary and what consideration have been given questions relating to the principles of curriculum and syllabus design and processes of implementation in various settings? The general research question covers sub questions as:
  - i) What is the nature and function of foreign language?
  - ii) What are the justifications for their inclusion in schools' curriculum?
  - iii) What are the aims and objectives of foreign language learning?
  - iv) Who learns the foreign language?
  - v) Who teaches the foreign language?

vi) In what conditions do teaching and learning take place?

vii) What is the state of syllabus design?

2) **Specific:** What is the role of syllabus design in communicative foreign language learning in various countries?

i) Are there any deficiencies in the existing syllabus that have made it difficult for Nigerian pupils learning French to develop the required communicative competence? If so, in what ways is it possible to effect a change in the existing French syllabus so that communicative ability can be achieved by Nigerian secondary school pupils learning French?

ii) Will the identification of the Nigerian learner's needs help in taking alternative decisions about the features of a desirable communicative teaching syllabus?

iii) What would be the attitude of Nigerian teachers of French and learners to an innovative syllabus for teaching language as communication?

iv) How significantly will a validated syllabus design proposal affect the communicative performance of French learners in the Nigerian secondary school?

## **RATIONALE FOR THE COUNTRIES SELECTED: CONTEXTUAL AND THEORETICAL**

The increasing insistence that schools must provide an education which is suited to the needs of the modern world has led to a fresh appraisal of the value of the various subjects in the curriculum. Although the case for foreign language learning in most countries is generally still rather poorly argued, the status accorded language education on schools time-table implicitly emphasize its importance in the social, political, economic and technological advancement of most developed and developing nations. The countries selected for this study have their peculiar linguistic situations which are relevant to curricular issues in foreign language education. These countries could be tackling problems whose solution may be operationally similar to the kind of problems or questions now implicit in every discussion concerning education in general and foreign language studies in particular; such as the maintenance of closer links between what is learnt at school and the world of work and adult responsibility; including also the continuous reappraisal of curriculum at all levels with attempts to cater for both community and diversity.

**ENGLAND:** Might be seen almost as a linguistically homogeneous society. Moreover, Britain's membership of the E.E.C. since 1973 brought an awareness on the importance of Modern Language studies in British education and this might have some implications for curriculum development and implementation in foreign language studies. This country recommends a curriculum that is not dominated by the basic skills.

"A broad common curriculum adjusted to differing abilities and aspirations and designed to ensure a *"Balance Education"*

Of significant interest and importance to this study is the fact that the English Government has identified some four school subjects including Modern language as occupying "Key positions" in the school curriculum. (Although some critics have argued that by according "Key positions" to some subjects everything else has been pared away to a minimum. Allan Hornsey (1982) however argues in favour of the position accorded Modern language (French) and makes clear distinctions between "assertions" made by advocates of modern language studies and "*justifications*" for including modern languages in school curriculum. Whereas advocates "*assert*" that French should be studied because of:-

- (a) the opportunity it offered to the training of mind as Greek and Latin did,
- (b) the developing science of phonetics which gave the subject an appearance of rigour,
- (c) the opportunity it offered as regards contact with a major European cultural tradition,
- (d) its importance as a diplomatic tool
- (e) the assumed advantage parents saw in it especially for their daughters
- (f) the boost it offered to the morale of English schools in the 50's and 60's.

Hornsey proposes a more rational way of viewing the inclusion of Modern language in the school curriculum. This he suggests must be by "JUSTIFICATION" rather than by "ASSERTION". Therefore, the justifications for learning French in (British) schools will be because of:-

- (a) the personal, social, professional and political relationships of secondary school pupils that will be established through speech and writing as they enter an adult world that is dominated by language.
- (b) the quality and quantity of language involvement which vary from person to person. Language encounters therefore are enriched by one's ability to express and to grasp meanings. The development of the essential skills for these expressions can occur through a rich experience of language and an awareness of what it means to speak.
- (c) the industrialised world we live in which entails a mobility that necessitates a variety of language encounters. So, the language experience must be broad and deep if one must avoid the risk of becoming captives in one's own language habits and assumptions.



Clearly, these justifications emphasize the power of speech and the necessity to acquire meaningful habits in this respect if the inclusion of modern language school curriculum is to be worth its while.

**NIGERIA:** is a pluri-linguistic nation with more than two hundred and fifty languages spoken among the various ethnic groups. Only recently, the National Policy on Education made the study of at least one Nigerian language compulsory for all secondary school students and at least a pass is also required in any chosen Nigerian language as a prerequisite for higher education. This policy is so vigorously pursued that all Nigerian secondary schools teach at least one or several Nigerian languages where the necessary facilities exist. Like in England, Nigeria National Policy recommends the adoption of a "broad-based" curriculum adapted to learners' differing abilities and aspirations and also designed to ensure an "all-round" education. With regard to foreign language education, Adekunle (1976) remarks that in terms of the language needs of the average citizen of any country in the world, the national policy on language education should make provisions for the following areas of communication -

- i) Internal communication for various daily activities.
- ii) Scientific/technical communication for technological and professional activities.
- iii) International communication geared towards diplomatic activities.

The aims of foreign language studies as expressed in the document **National Secondary Education Curriculum Workshop** (9th - 23rd September, 1973; Report of the Language Group) stipulates that the main contribution of the French language to the Secondary School Curriculum in Nigeria is to serve as window unto the international world and to encourage contacts on a social, intellectual and economic basis with the neighbouring Francophone countries, thereby *"assisting both the individual development of the pupil as well as his relations to a wider Society"*.

Brann (1972) states that since the early 50's in Nigeria, French has progressively displaced Latin in the secondary school as the "academic" language required from classes I - III and has indeed become a required subject in most schools across the country. A major reason is that it is regarded in policy term as a tool that allows cross-communication between anglophone and francophone countries of West-Africa. One can readily observe the need for this through activities with association like the O.A.U., ECOWAS, e.t.c.

Not surprisingly, various syllabuses were proposed and materials were written on the basis of these assertions/justification which formed the curriculum guidelines for French language study in Nigerian Schools. (See Appendix - National Curriculum for JSS FRENCH).

**FRANCE:** is another homogeneous society where French is widely spoken. Apart from being the home front of the language with which this study is concerned, it has been alleged (King 1979), that an approach to learning by way of experiment and experience does not appeal very much to French educators. They want a short cut to the 'principles' or at least

to the theoretical part of the curriculum which can be mastered intellectually and stored in the mind for passing competitive examinations which lead to good jobs.

The main contribution that the selection of this country makes to this comparative study is the existence of institutions within France that have created a setting for vocational studies especially for secondary school French teachers. Thus, CREDIF (Centre for Research Study and for Diffusion of French), is an institution especially set up for the teaching of French as a Foreign language. Remarkably, this centre has evolved significantly in the use of Audio-Visual technology for the teaching of French language having been influenced by the projects of the Council of Europe, (situated in France) which has successfully formulated and disseminated the idea of communicative approach to language teaching worldwide.

The preoccupation of this institution it is claimed, is in the integration of a methodological conception which is defined categorically in the direction of meaningful and effective pedagogy for the teaching of French language as regards the choice of linguistic themes and contents, choice of objectives to attain, hypothesis or teaching and learning conditions as well as the choice of appropriate teaching methods and techniques.

This centre addresses itself to pedagogical research and the application of their results. It looks at issues concerning the production of pedagogical materials in France which will be convenient to all French language learning. French teachers from other foreign countries have benefited from the concentrated effort of this centre as regards the emphasis and promotion of a number of teaching methods where trainee teachers have been initiated to their purposes and uses. Also, contents of programmes have been diversified

with consideration for the multiplicity of the theories of teaching methods available and how to find solutions to the myriad of problems that face foreign language teachers and learners. Michael Debane (1972) expressed the strong desire of CREDIF to achieve the objective of diffusing the French language thoroughly; through efficient and effective teaching and taking also into consideration the problems encountered by foreigners in France irrespective of their social status. CREDIF for instance, has researched on how to adapt children of immigrant workers to the French system of education. Results of such works may have significant bearing as regards the design of programmes for effective French learning and teaching in Foreign countries.

## **CAMEROON**

The merger of West Cameroon with East Cameroon on the 11th of February 1961 made the linguistic situation in the Cameroon a peculiarly distinctive one. Whereas the official language of Eastern Cameroon is French (apart from other indigenous languages), Western Cameroon which was formerly a part of Nigeria used English as official language. The question then of harmonizing educational programmes for the benefit of the two sections take precedence over and above other recommendations but as far as foreign language is concerned, some educators have opined that only on the strength of their linguistic abilities should pupils be admitted into bilingual schools. The traditional monolingual institutions are therefore open for pupils who do possess linguistic abilities for foreign languages. Topa (1972) emphasises the innumerable hurdles that have to be surmounted. Frantic efforts are being made to reconcile the linguistic differences caused

by the merger by intensifying the learning of the two official languages, French and English. The problems in the Cameroons would appear then to be more administrative and organisational than pedagogical. Although opinions have been expressed over issues involved in foreign language learning, the question, for instance, of setting examination questions to parallel classes, in two different languages (B.E.P.C. and Baccalaureat in the East and G.C.E. "O" and "A" levels in the West) becomes more problematic, if the system is to be free from accusations of making some of her pupils victims of the linguistic situation in the country.

#### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In nearly all countries (King, 1979; Hans, 1967), the government is charged with the responsibility for defining the major part of formal education. While some countries have placed great emphasis on intellectual powers as the ideal end-product of education, others have concentrated on 'culture' or intellectual powers as the ideal end product of education, others have concentrated on technological success or citizenship or individual self-expression. These ideas affect decisions taken generally in education and as it concerns foreign language studies, curriculum design and implementation might focus on those aspects which each country's system thinks it best to promote. By looking at different systems, we are able to break down provincialism and alert ourselves to possibilities not to be found in Nigeria.

While relating traits of educational system to other features of society, we might be helped to develop a better functional interpretation and application of foreign language

education in Nigeria. Further significance of this study lies in the evolving style and commitments of foreign language education in the school curriculum than in any similarities or contrasts they may reveal between different national systems.

Moreover, the idea of communicative language learning inevitably implies some changes in syllabus design as well as material production and teacher training programmes. The findings of this study should help education policy makers, course-book writers and teachers to produce effective packages of worthwhile learning activities for the implementation stages.

As Nigeria adopts the 6-3-3-4 system of education, it becomes imperative that Nigerian secondary school pupils learn one or two other Nigeria languages apart from their own mother-tongue. This means that second language learning is an integral part of the school curriculum. If communicative competence is the objective, the findings of this study should also be of help to all those concerned with effecting success.

Across the Nigerian border, of particular significance comparatively is the fact that this work should also inspire differential syllabus design in the curriculum for French teaching in the Cameroon (especially for the benefit of the anglophones) where it was observed that the bilingual status did not permeate curriculum context in schools.

## **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

**Syllabus:** Savignon (1987) describes syllabus as a taxonomy of features that are to be presented for teaching and learning. In this sense, syllabus can be regarded as merely a list of item. Savignon went further to say that a language syllabus only describes the desired

outcomes of a second language curriculum without saying much about how those outcomes are best achieved.

**Syllabus Design:** When language was viewed as consisting of hierarchically organised strata, the structural design permeated language programmes. Phonemes, morphemes and other syntactic patterns were drilled into lessons in a carefully graded sequence. The introduction of the distinction between linguistic competence, (unconscious knowledge of language structure) and communicative competence (knowledge of the appropriate Use of language in meaningful and purposeful situations; Hymes, 1971) marked the start of syllabus designs that focus on notions and functions of a language. Consequently, syllabus designs concern questions such as, what the likely language needs of the learners are, and what language learners want to Do linguistically in certain specific situations. Syllabus designs are now seen as being concerned specifically with selection and grading of content for purpose of communication. Various views of this concept are presented in Nunan (1988: 5 - 7).

**Teaching Syllabus:** As distinct from the testing syllabus which Bird and Dennison (1987: 16) refer to as simply a reference for the examination setter and teacher, the teaching syllabus must be a programme of classroom practice that should offer a situation where learners can negotiate meaning in relevant context, thereby, allowing the learner the flexibility to perform beyond the restrictions of the usually explicit lists presented for learning in the testing syllabus.

**Communicative Approach:** This has to do with language teaching that involves the learners in a way that makes them create and use the language they are learning in meaningful and purposeful situations. This approach allows for the negotiation of meaning which language is all about.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **Introduction**

In this chapter, the researcher reviews literature on language learning in general and foreign language learning in particular with special emphasis on the development of syllabi and programmes which should bring about efficient and effective foreign language learning. Various views of language and how these have affected teaching and learning will be highlighted. Whereas, traditional views as espoused by the Skinnerian Stimulus/Response theories resulted in the audio-lingual approach to learning, (with the pre-occupation of linguistic studies emphasising surface structure, drills, patterns, reinforcement, mastery learning, etc.), recent concerns for language learning focus on the fact that language consists of form, function and meaning (Semantic structure) which must be included in any language instruction that has communicative competence as its goal. The contributions of Chomsky, Krashen, Hymes and Halliday among other language experts with regards to these views be focused upon in this review.

In communicative syllabus design, questions are being asked about how language as acquired and performed as well as what is meant by, and how to achieve language competence through linguistic (structural and lexical) and extra-linguistic (contextual and cultural selection). These questions have considerable important implications for communicative syllabus design which is the main thrust of this work. Many communicative



syllabus design have been proposed. These include the analytic notional/functional design (Wilkins, 1976), Topic/Situational design (Coste, 1975; Van EK, 1975; Munby, 1978; Krashen and Terrell, 1983; Yalden, 1987), Process Syllabus (Breen, 1987; Nunan, 1988: 40). They suggest building a course around the uses or functions of a language.

Attention has also been given in this chapter to psycholinguistic theories of language as articulated by Penfield (1959), Krashen (1981), and Selinker (1972) as well as sociolinguistic theories of Hymes (1973), Halliday (1985), Brumfit (1978a), Schumann (1978b), and Ellis (1982), as they are expected to be included in most analysis of communicative competence (Widdowson 1984: 8) that is commonly used today.

## **DEVELOPMENT IN LANGUAGE STUDIES**

The importance of a theory of language as an essential basis for language course is in the explanations that are given about the patterns of natural language in terms of the use that their speakers make of them. Such theory can provide the basis for an exploration of the needs of teachers and learners as users of language, since its main focus is upon language as a medium through which human beings interact in their society.

A common factor shared by the numerous revolutions in the teaching of modern languages is that they are influenced by different views held about the nature and role of language, what language is, and what it does.

## A Psycholinguistic View

The Skinnerian revolution (1957) of the Stimulus/Response fame brought about practice where linguistic competence was emphasised in language learning. Believing that linguists had provided grammatical and lexical meaning of words that have been very well described, the disciples of this school of thought, who saw language learning as habit formation, popularised the practised where meanings of words and sentences were taught in isolation rather than within the sketches of discourse. Pattern drills, repetitions and various forms of reinforcement were used in the language classroom with the belief that "overlearning" will bring about automaticity in learning the target language.

However, the observations of Mackey (1965), Roulet (1980), and Spolsky (1978) revealed that the contributions of linguistics or any other source discipline could not be directly applied in the foreign language learning because of the factors involved in  $L_1$  transfer and  $L_2$  complexity (Pica, 1984: 689 - 704). Despite the immense contributions to guided second language teaching, these disciplines have not treated all aspects of the language learning process. However, it is admitted that language descriptions are of more direct use to language teaching than some other linguistic data, although, these too need to be adapted, using didactic criteria in the actual teaching process. Meanwhile, the classical conception that modern language study is directed towards the cultivation of the intellect caused teaching to be directed mainly towards training pupils to concentrate, analyse and reflect.

Chomsky was soon to shake the Skinnerian concept of language learning upon which behaviourists based the audio-lingual approach. The Piagetian principle of functional assimilation interprets that repetition in language is not motivated by the desire to

communicate, but by the need to exercise verbal schemes. The Chomskyan view of language learning therefore challenged the thought that encourage repetitions, pattern-drills and reinforcement, arguing, that it is not possible for language to be acquired through habit formation. Language learning was a complex phenomenon which couldn't be learnt within a short time.

Chomsky's (1959) Universal Transformational Grammar, propounded that human beings must possess some innate capacity which enable them to detect patterns in language and it should be this process that helps learners to acquire, little by little, the grammar of the native language. While sharing Chomsky's view, Corder (1977) suggested also that it could be possible that learners naturally adhere to some form of "in-built" capability. These views of language acquisition as a process of rule formation had some tremendous implications for learning. The learner is believed to be actively involved in the cognitive process of creative construction which is very natural to him. Whereas the view is still shared today, that learners are responsible for their own learning, critics of Chomsky were quick to point out that language learning had more to it than just rule-formation.

They argued that whereas linguistics reveal facts about language and language USE, there are other disciplines like psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics where theories seek to understand social structures and speech situations that reveal facts about language and language USE as social phenomena. The critics however add that the fact remains that Linguistics play an important role in defining the object of foreign language teaching with regards to language use and language skill. In fact, Corder (1978), Mackey (1965) and Ellis (1982) among others state that linguistic theories are also relevant to the organisation of

foreign language teaching and learning process as, the descriptions produced by linguists may help to improve the content of teaching while they also contain suggestions for grading course content on the basis of their structure and organisation. A good example being Fries' (1962) Word-Count, where the relative frequency of words in English is counted for the purpose of assisting the teaching of reading. Elaborating this position, Michael and Gougenheim (1959) based the *Francais Fundamental* on the spoken language, making a new departure from the dominance of the written language. With 1,500 words that are thought to be most frequently used in day to day communication, this 'Scientific Grammar' (FF<sub>1</sub> & FF<sub>2</sub>) maintain grammatical forms and constructions that are employed in the spoken language.

Further arguments, (Rivers, 1968) and also Savignon (1987: 19), in favour of linguistic theories is that when one considers that the objective of foreign language teaching are rarely to achieve a native or near-native level, it is clear that foreign language teaching is selective by nature and therefore needs only just a part of what scientific grammars have to offer by way of providing information about which linguistic elements are better or more efficient in language use and which one is easier to learn, or, fit into the learning process.

Widdowson (1973) appears to suggest however, that whereas it is admitted that a good deal about language learning is known on a descriptive level, there is not yet a good general theory concerning the conditions under which learning takes place. Neither is there a general theory of language behaviour that would help in the selection of essential components of a foreign language teaching system. The information gathered from the description of language (offered by linguists), determined teaching procedures as in the

Grammar/Translation Method. Research data consisting mainly of written texts and objectives for foreign language teaching as emphasised by the traditional method were limited to written language and reading skills. Likewise, the organisation of language teaching (Breen, 1987: 85 - 87) as represented in this method was inspired by the classical linguistic tradition which stressed the learning of rules (often formulated) in theoretical grammars. Hence, theories that were not tested specifically for learning in classroom situations, as well as the lack of proven theories, make it almost impossible for practitioners in this field to understand fully the process of learning of a second or foreign language. The implications of these for programme designs lie in the fact that with regards to the principal question of **what** to teach and **how** to teach, various linguistic models that were put forward have contributed differently (both qualitatively and quantitatively) that it may seem difficult to single out one model that could be regarded as the best one for all aspects of foreign language studies. According to Stern (1983:186) pedagogical grammar alone is insufficient in itself as curriculum for a second language course, yet, designers of the protosyllabus constructed their programmes on the basis of the following organisational principles: Focus, Selection, Subdivision and Sequencing, etc. (Breen, 1987: 85).

The Chomskyan (1965) era of linguistic competence and linguistic performance contributed greatly to the various ways in which language was taught. Chomsky's claim that linguistic competence was mentalistic (having to do with the knowledge that the speaker possesses of language), and, his definition of linguistic performance as what the speaker does with the language, influenced to a large extent the ways in which language was presented for learning. However Chomsky's apparent concern for language learning and acquisition,

which emphasised the structural and psychological aspects of the language system brought his view under strong criticisms.

Sociolinguists challenged Chomsky's claims especially on account of what exactly constitute language competence. It is understood that when learners acquire a second language, the internalised rules which are worked upon and organised into a system, constitute their competence; whereas, the actual use of this organised system to understand and produce utterances constitute the language performance. Chomsky and his disciples take competence as being entirely linguistic, laying emphasis on the structural and psychological aspects of the language system. Like Stern (1983: 186), Brumfit (1981) had posited that since language is an extension of man's personality, the sentence-level structure teaching does little to account for the range of unpredictable purposes for which language is used in day to day communication. Yalden (1983) also supported the view that if language is being taught as communication, then it is unpredictable, hence, unsystematizable. It requires therefore, the availability of a language environment in which learning must take place.

#### **A Sociolinguistic View:**

Hymes (1971) popularised the notion of communicative competence, arguing that Chomsky's linguistic competence and performance neither consider language Use nor the aspect of social interaction characteristics of language phenomenon. Rivers (1968) criticized the non-meaningful drills "en passant" that psycholinguistic theories encourage while Hawkins (1981) stressed that exchange in foreign classrooms are not "speech acts" since they

are not uttered with intension. The sociolinguistic perspective therefore seeks to understand social structures and speech situations in order to categorize and describe relevant features of a speech situation which correlate with different linguistic forms. Yalden (1983) for instance, pointed out that language use gives other aspects of the language system equal or greater weight; emphasising that there are components other than the purely linguistic ones that are to be considered when talking about communicative language.

The prominence given to the notion of communicative competence popularised by Hymes (1971) and supported by Halliday (1973) and others, caused language learning for communication to be seen, not as mere "Skill development" but as an activity that is purposeful, that requires participants and, an adequate context within which it can meaningfully be transacted.

While Hymes (1971) explains that communicative competence consists of knowledge of linguistic rules as well as knowledge of how these rules are used to communicate meaning, Halliday (1973: 145) even went further to say that the distinction made by Hymes between the idealized use is unnecessary for the study of language in a social context. Because of his concern with speech acts, Halliday emphasised strongly that it is only when language is in use that all its functions are operating at the same time.


Both Hymes and Halliday's views of language affect the concept of proficiency following from a discourse theory in which communication is viewed as the matrix of linguistic and sociolinguistic knowledge. The involvement of the learner in discovering the meaning potential of language by participating in discourse is regarded as the main concern. Cherry (1979: 122) reiterates the point that the structure of language is a reflection of the

functions it serves when she said that through communicating with other people, children accomplish actions in the world and develop the rules of language structure and use. In other words, language can be learnt through communication. This theory is however criticized in view of the fact that it fails to consider the nature of the learner strategies that are responsible for second language acquisition. However, this view is found relevant with regards to other factors concerning the processes of language teaching and learning.

Perhaps one of the most prominent views in second language acquisition is Krashen's (1976) theory of how human beings use language. This view diverted lots of scholars' attention to the fact that teaching a language requires a more functional approach. Krashen's (1981 - 1982) acquisition/learning variable derived from his monitor theory. This important contribution stipulates that acquisition has the characteristic of happening unconsciously. Language is acquired as a result of participating in natural communication. Learning, on the other hand, happens consciously through the study of the properties of language. Thus, the learner calls up the knowledge of the new language he has stored (through conscious and formal learning), acts upon, and modifies the utterances generated from the acquired (unconscious) knowledge when he wants to use the language in actual performance.


Mutual intelligibility is what communication competence refers to the ability to negotiate meaning (Savignon, 1987: 17). It is therefore not surprising to find that today, in discussing language teaching and learning, effective communication is thought to be the major central issue as well as the required and product. This implies then that the notion of communication needs to be included in the process of learning. The theoretical insights





of Chomsky, Hymes, Halliday, Krashen and others cited above have thus helped to provoke diverse developments in communicative approaches to second language teaching and learning, some of which will be discussed next.

### **Communicative Language Teaching**



The contributions that theories of language have made especially to language didactics have been discussed earlier. The communicative approach to language teaching was a direct consequence of the assertions made in certain quarters (Johnson & Morrow, 1981; Littlewood, 1981: 19) for example, that student motivation will be greatly enhanced if they are made to feel that they are performing or practising some function within a language context while working on communicative skills, instead of regurgitating accumulated knowledge of vocabulary and lexical structures. The main thrust of communicative language teaching is therefore seen as interaction between speaker and listener, i.e., teacher and pupils/pupils and their peers while negotiating meaning.

A common problem in understanding the communicative approach is that many take the term to mean exclusive reliance on the output of the learner. Mackey (1965) explained that communication is not just the message that a sender intends to transmit. The receiver of the message too has to be able to interpret the message meaningfully.

Stern (1981), in attempting to reveal more of the misconceptions in this approach pointed out that not one, but two distinctive communicative approaches exist. Often, the practice is to think that the linguistic and psycho-pedagogical factors are one. The linguistic factor, which has led to needs analysis, various functional/notional syllabuses, and controlled

language input among others have not only brought new insight into the learning process. Similarly, the psycho-pedagogical factor which is concerned mainly with integrated skill development as well as concern for language acquisition, also brings into focus, the learners and the process of language learning. The implication of these for communicative language are obvious. For example, Maurice (1987: 7-12) has warned that it is not a simple task to make a transition from the traditional to the communicative classroom. Moreover Brumfit (1984), Long and Porter (1985: 24), Larsen-Freeman (1987: 7) and the Council of Europe have emphasised that new roles and responsibilities will be demanded in this new approach by both teachers and pupils.

### **Communicative Language Teaching and Syllabus Designs**

While it is widely accepted that successful communication should be a product of language teaching and learning, and once the notion of "Meaning" is also considered, the communicative curriculum must focus on matters of negotiation and interpretation between speaker and hearer, writer and the reader. The myriad of spontaneous interpersonal activities that people participate in from day to day become the focal point as purpose, participants, content and context are woven into the process of communication.

The traditional view of language learning that brought about teaching procedures that encouraged repetitions, pattern drills and regurgitations of rules were dropped in favour of another trend that emphasises the functional use of language. Current views of language teaching favour a more functional approach (Krashen 1981). Likewise, Ellis (1986: 13-16)

points out that the formal approach relies on learner's ability to synthesize units of language which they have learnt.

Widdowson, (1983) had advised that the notion of communicative competence emphasises not the grammatical rules of usage but the use to which language is put in order to accomplish some kind of communicative purpose. In stressing the behavioural aspect of language, Wilkins (1976) was advocating an analytic notional/functional syllabus over a Synthetic/Structural one. Wilkins too recognised an organisation in terms of the purposes for which learners are learning a particular language. However, Wilkins' proposal was criticized on account of the supposedly insufficient relationship that appears to exist between notions and functions. Whereas Wilkins suggests notions as the superordinate category entailing functions, other developments (Van Ek, 1975; Coste, 1976; Council of Europe, 1971; Johnson, 1982; Breen, 1987: 90) abandon the notional subdivision and use topics, situations or other themes that reflect the social functions of language as the primary category for organising a syllabus.

Like Munby (1987), Ullmann (1981) also considered the sociolinguistic analysis of language use in social events when he described a model for syllabus design that includes a separate component for communicative activities in language learning, culture and general language education.

Contributing to these developments, Omaggio (1983: 330 - 341) also pointed out that the kinds of language performance or proficiency that are required to meet purposes, necessarily need a semantic, meaning-based syllabus. Emphases here, are placed on design programmes for language learning that have the properties of outlining typical grammatical

features that should be mastered, and functional tasks that are to be performed in appropriate contexts and situations.

Kwofie (1985: 19) suggested that in view of the sociolinguistic factor relating to French in Africa, relevant register that reflects African realities should be included in French programmes that have been drawn for teaching and learning here. Breen's (1984: 47 - 60) advocacy of the process syllabus stems from his view that this syllabus type has a particular characteristic that allows for decisions and alternative procedures, activities and tasks at all levels of the syllabus for the language classroom group. His view is shared by Candlin (1984: 29 - 46) who claims that a good syllabus must take into consideration the importance of learning experiences, subject matter content as well as the fact that learners negotiate their own objectives and routes while learning a language for communication purposes.

It was also in response to the theory of communicative competence that Van Ek (1975) developed a popular framework (The Threshold Level) that emphasises the selection of topics and specifications of what learners should be able to do with regard to the topics. His much favoured idea has influenced the design developed in this study, not because it has greatly influenced the theory and practice of foreign language especially in Europe but because it continues up till the present time to serve as a guideline for foreign language teaching and learning. It concentrates attention on the social function of language while also viewing its grammar and vocabulary as a means of achieving communicative goals.

The importance of this model to the notion of communicative language learning lies in the fact that it takes into consideration the major aims and objectives of foreign language

teaching, so much so, that the topics selected are made to serve to establish direct contacts in the target country while also helping to fulfil the roles that the learner is supposed to play.

This model stipulates that the objective for foreign language learning in compulsory education should be such that :-

- (a) The great majority of people will be able to reach it.
- (b) It will correspond to a level of proficiency.
- (c) It will make oral communication possible with children or adults in the language studies.
- (d) It is based on the exploitation of everyday real-life situation.
- (e) It includes a methodological initiation which would facilitate the continued study of the language and also make it possible to acquire an understanding of the learning process so that these may be profitably applied to the study of other languages.

As a guideline for syllabus design, this model seeks to recognise the purpose for which one uses language as involving the listening, speaking, reading, writing or indeed various combinations of these. The broad outlook then of the idea of communication is not restricted only to conversation alone but for all sorts of language-using activities such as listening for information, reading for pleasure, playing games, writing letters, etc.

Therefore the language functions which the learner will have to fulfil and the notions he

should be able to handle are determined on the basis of the functions, settings, roles and topic in the target language. Whereas it may seem impossible to determine which topics learners will be most likely to deal with in a foreign language, developing such lists of topics could be done on the basis of common-sense, intuition, introspection and experience of programme developers (Van Ek, 1975).

In fact, advocates of communicative teaching and the principle of "learning by doing" (Breen, 1987: 90) have criticized the concept of "notional syllabus" (emphasised by the T/Level), as "minimalist" approach while contending that it is devoid of cultural content and also that it took little or no account of the development of strategies of communication. The merit of this model however is in the opportunity it offers as basis for planning where users have a "*free hand*" in amending it in the light of their understanding of the needs of their learners. That the Threshold level incorporates systems of values, beliefs and attitudes in its treatment of functions and notions, confirm that it takes into consideration, the culture of a people as expressed in its pattern of day-to-day living. And if it is agreed that the Threshold Level has not taken into account a number of factors as regards the drawing up of a teaching syllabus, (like, for instance, the time and resources available, the learners prior knowledge, the order in which learning objectives should be tackled and the processes and methods by which the goal should be approached), this model appears to be an indispensable tool for use in syllabus construction. It is not a syllabus in itself although what it has to offer is valuable for monitoring progress, checking what has been learnt and knowing important aspects have been left out.

The Threshold idea is vividly illustrated by Russell (1970) with a view to directing perception of the level of language teaching required by foreign learners, as follows:-

At the Threshold Level	At the Breakthrough Level	At the Specialist or Professional Level
1) They will be temporary visitors to a foreign country	Visits of longer duration involving periods of study or work in office or factory	Frequent visitor or permanent resident for one or more years
2) They will have few or no contact with foreigners in their own country	They will have frequent contact with foreigners in own country arising out of 1 above.	Extensive contact arising from No. 1 above
3) Contacts with native speakers will be superficial, transient and concerned with practicalities	Contacts with native speakers will be more personal and intimate closer relationships	Contacts will be personal and, in addition, will have professional contact

4)	They will primarily need only a basic level performance in the foreign language	They will need a higher level of linguistic competence, involving concept formation.	Specialist areas of language, involving technical language as appropriate.
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The rationale behind the adoption of this syllabus type is in the fact that it represents a concern with communicative competence with the main objective of proving the learner with various ways of coding the things which they wish to achieve through language learning. Also, the need to improve the old methodology (seen to be synonymous with the formal syllabus) has prompted the adoption of the functional syllabus. The concern for meaningfulness as an important element in the language experience which this syllabus emphasises is another reason for its current popularity.

There are no adequate descriptions of language functions as well as how they are realised. Furthermore, until now there are no workable guidelines for the selection and sequence of functions from among quite a number of possibilities that exist. In spite of this, it is important to understand that whether a syllabus is structurally or functionally based, it represents only a list or a taxonomy of the language features which are to be presented. A foreign language syllabus describes the desired outcome a foreign language curriculum while it says little about how that outcome is best attained.



The opportunity it affords in the area of material developments through functional analysis makes the functional approach to syllabus design even more popularly explored. Assessment of learners needs in terms of language functions have also led to important discoveries in communicative language teaching (Richterich, 1983; Yalden, 1984). However, a communicative language classroom should be such that allows learners to experience as well as to analyse language and a combination of the structural and functional approaches to syllabus design is advocated. The component of a communicative syllabus must include an appreciation of the learner as a physical, psychological and social human being with interests that extend far beyond those of the classroom in order to make informal decisions regarding programmes, methods and materials, while the foreign language learning experience involves the whole learner in his affective, physical as well as cognitive aspect.

### **Syllabuses and the Content of Foreign Language Learning**

The relationship between syllabus and curriculum as Shaw (1977) puts it, appears to be of great relevance in the planning of a modern language education. Syllabuses are distinctive in the way they represent language knowledge and capabilities. They also express different views on the nature of language, how language should be presented through teaching and how it should be worked upon learning. Most of the responsibility for the syllabus falls on the teacher while decisions on the curriculum are a prerogative of policy makers. If one can reasonably expect the teachers to improve their intervention, the achievement by pupils of high standards of communicative competence will ultimately depend on decisions made by the policy makers.

While this is so, it has been realised that there is a great difference between what students want and what they are getting (Shaw 1977).

Teachers have always taken the decisions on what learners will learn and in what order they will learn those things believing that a careful selection and ordering of the teaching material and methodology will facilitate learning. Candlin (1984: 29 - 46) had explained that any syllabus should be viewed as a 'retrospective' (i.e. flexible enough to encourage classroom interaction and production of creative responses) record rather than a 'prospective' plan. However, the features of language textbooks have always been such that content is organised in a way that the features of language to be learnt are presented in an order which should correspond to the order in which the learner is capable of acquiring them. Such practices have been found to be presumptions while the learner also is being taken too much for granted. Can acquisition and learning be fostered by the same syllabus materials and methodology? According to Krashen (1977a), it is almost certain that different approaches will be needed for achieving success in those two different kinds of knowledge, i.e., the knowledge required for acquisition and that required for learning.

It appears that a syllabus design for communicative competence in foreign language teaching should look into designing syllabus for learning and another for acquisition. As such, syllabus for acquisition will then have to consider two possibilities in terms of:


- i) Presenting language items in the same order in which a learner naturally acquires them - (But do we really know what the natural order of acquisition is?). This

pertinent question seems to point to the fact that any syllabus based on acquisition order is deemed to be incomplete and include steps that are "ingrammatical".

- ii) What could the 'check-list' proposal (Yalden, 1983) contribute to syllabus design?


The fact remains that unless there is a way the teacher's or textbook writer's scheme matches the learners own way of learning, (learner strategies) one cannot be sure that the teaching content will contribute directly to language learning (Ellis, 1986: 164). The theoretical and practical difficulties of designing a syllabus for acquisition not - withstanding, teachers and designers alike are aware that an initial planning phase is necessary as the situation today moves in a learner-centred direction.

Whereas teachers, textbooks authors or curriculum planners are usually fascinated by a well-arranged grammatical progression, learners on the contrary are usually not interested in which particular point of grammar they are expected to isolate from a text. Results of studies (Neuner, 1986) have shown that young learners are more attracted by the "foreign world" that they see in the text and are fascinated too by the situations and settings shown as well as the personalities who appear in those scenes in their activities, etc. It appears then that pupils devote their attention to things other than to those which are supposed to be learned, like for instance, venturing into the "real stuff" by relating and comparing what he sees in his textbook to his own imaginative world. Hence, the contents of a text that is far removed from learners own knowledge and experience would appear to scare learners while a text that contains only bits and pieces of the things with which learners are familiar may bore them.




For these reasons, current literature emphasizes that the content of a "suitable" text or material for foreign language teaching and learning should:

- a) Relate to personal experience,
- b) Neither be too far remote nor too close or identical with pupil own socio-cultural experience or general knowledge,
- c) Stimulate the pupils' imagination,
- d) Be neither too abstract nor too specific especially at the beginners level.



Ellis (1986) suggested that even language teaching materials are not adequate enough for 'acquiring' competence in language learning because they do not allow for the 'naturalness' of environment required for language acquisition. On the basis of this, learners are to be given the opportunity to make their own subconscious selections of items to be acquired, based on what each individual finds communicatively useful at each stage of their development. Even the most explicit and implicitly formulated objectives are of no use where the content of instruction fails to take into consideration the fact that a good text matters greatly in shaping the learner's mind and attitudes when teaching him about the foreign world.

Designers of the protosyllabus have been known to construct syllabus on the basis of four main organising principles, i.e., Focus, Selection, Subdivision and finally Sequencing and these principles virtually define what a syllabus is. Breen's (1987: 85 - 89) detailed description of each of these organising principles shows that the **Focus** is on certain aspects




of the target language knowledge. Where one focuses on the linguistic system, phonological, lexical or grammatical features of the language, another may prefer to give priority to the use of language in varying situations. It is this priority that most directly reflects the objectives which the plan sets out to serve.

The **Selection** of contents for teaching and learning emphasises areas like particular structures, sets of functions or a series of communication events.

These selected contents are then **Subdivided** into manageable units for the final stage of **Sequencing** which involves the making out of the content along a path development.

### Syllabus Typology



The two categories of syllabus, i.e., the Formal and the Functional (and indeed other alternative syllabuses; Breen, 1986) realise these principles in different ways.

#### i) The Formal Syllabus

The **FOCUS** here is on the knowledge of the systematic and rule-based nature of language itself. It is said to give priority to **how** the text of language is realised and organised (in speech and writing) and gives only supportive role to the meanings or ideas conveyed through language (ideational knowledge) and to the ways in which humans behave socially with language (interpersonal knowledge). It focuses on accuracy or correctness in how the learner produces the new language and typically proposes that language skills be worked upon in a sequence from the receptive to the productive.

With the view that language is hierarchical in nature **SUBDIVISION** of what is to be learned is done from larger language units into smaller ones. While the criteria for **SEQUENCING** or grading relates directly to the language itself using the criterion of linguistic complexity. Rules, structures or language forms that are "simple" are presented first before going to the "complex". Some also map out the new language on the basis of frequency of occurrence of linguistic features (e.g., *français fondamental*) in daily use of the language.

The popularity of the formal syllabus type, which also accounts for its continual use in language learning and teaching rests in the fact that it is very well established, having been informed by a long tradition of linguistic analysis. Learners are presented with a subject matter which is systematic and rule governed. Also, because the linguistic system is analyzable in certain ways, it is possible to include it in a plan for teaching the system which may make it easier for learners to uncover how the new language works.

This directly addresses our wish to bring more informed order conceptually and methodologically into the foreign language classroom (French) within the Nigerian school setting especially.

## ii) **The Functional Syllabus**

Unlike the formal syllabus that emphasises what learners are to learn in the target language, the functional syllabus with its **FOCUS** on communicative experience (practice), emphasises what learners are expected to **DO** with the language they are learning. This syllabus is strongly influenced by sociolinguistics and recently, pragmatics. It is concerned

with the analysis of language in **USE** and how people behave with language social groups in certain social situations. Competence in language does not now mean only knowledge of the code and knowledge of the convention of social use of the code but also knowledge of particular conventions of meaning shared with other users of the code. Hence the priority given to the social purposes as well as the learners capacity to be correct in the interpretation and production of linguistic exponents which realise particular uses of language and which express specific concepts. Proficiency is seen in the light of accuracy and appropriateness of **USE** of the four language skills.

Being categorical in the way it identifies main types of language purposes in sets and sub-sets, **SELECTION** and **SUB-DIVISION** of content is done with the realisation that some super ordinate functions contain their own subordinate functions.

These functions are further specified in the way they may be realized in various ways through the language code.

The fact that the Functional Syllabus presents language in terms of major and subordinate categories of uses of language does not make it move from finite knowledge (basis) but from general sets of functions to more specific ones. **SEQUENCING** thus is from the general to the particular.

Breen's explanation of each of the organising principles of the Formal and Functional Syllabus may have increased one's understanding of the features of these syllabuses and how they are realised for pedagogical plans. It cannot be said however, that structural pedagogic plans that have been based on the ones provided by descriptive linguistic are inadequate for designing syllabuses. Their major defects appear to be endemic in the nature of the

description given to the formal system which places much emphasis on structure at the expense of meaning and purpose.

Whereas Widdowson (1972), illustrates how traditional teaching procedure based on the formal syllabus may obscure facts about the use to which language may be put; and Halliday (1973) argues that in fact, language structures cannot be understood as a system unless there is reference made to use; suggesting also, that structure should be taught in relation to 'Use', Johnson (1982: 66 - 69), urged for multidimensionality in syllabus designs. Johnson (1982: 116) argues that rather than replace the structural/formal syllabus (which teaches the "rules of grammar"), the functional syllabus (which teaches the 'rules of Use') in fact, adds to it. He stressed moreover, that different syllabus types may be better suited to giving different sorts of information and practice and that the structural syllabus may be used as a vehicle for providing grammatical information and practice that should aid effective communication. Nevertheless, if being able to communicate adequately required much more than being able to form grammatically correct sentences, the functional approach combines the technique of when to use a systemic knowledge of language with the appropriate situation in which it should occur. Savignon (1987: 19), suggested that the wisest methodologists are perhaps those who propose a combination of structural and functional approaches to syllabus design. Only when human utterances are studied (formal), with due consideration to linguistic contexts in which they are made (function), can there be any insight into the essential skills of communication.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **DESIGN AND PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter describes the methodology used in both the preliminary and the main studies of this research as well as the samples and instruments used. The research questions that are expected to lend direction to this study are all explained too. The method of collecting and analysing data gathered for the study are described.

To a large extent, this study is a descriptive one. It however, warrants an element of experimentation. A lot of fact finding is involved and the value of this lies in the realization that the findings should result in the formulation of important principles of knowledge as well as suggest certain solution to problems concerning the design of foreign language (French) syllabus for Nigerian Secondary Schools.

A quasi-experimental (ex-post facto) design is employed to validate the proposed syllabus for its implementation stage.

#### **Population and Sample**

The needs in this research suggest that varied aspects of existing syllabus packages be studied in situations where French is learnt. This would include school systems in some other countries. In order to achieve the maximum likelihood of this work being acceptable and utilised by those involved with foreign language education in Nigeria, the population

in this study was drawn from three other countries apart from Nigeria.

They are: The Republic of Cameroon, England and France. The rationale for the selection of these countries has previously been defended in this work (Chapter 1). A non-probability sampling procedure was employed for the study.

### **The Subjects**

The total number of subjects was 909. Subjects included in the main, those who are involved with foreign language teaching and learning. A few parents, whose children learn French in secondary schools also participated in the study. Table I provides the details.

### **THE DESIGN OF THE STUDY**

Being rather multifaceted this study demanded a stage by stage execution in the following phases:-

- Phase I: Pilot - Study: of the Cameroons
- Phase II: Comparative STUDY VISIT: Comparison of practices and experiences of France and England in using various forms of 'communicative' syllabi in their school systems;
- Phase III: Needs identification of the Nigerian learner of French, in Lagos, Akwa Ibom, and Plateau States: and design of innovative communicative French syllabus.
- Phase IV: A critique by experienced classroom teachers and administrators, of the proposed syllabus designed as a consequence of the exercises carried out in Phase III.

**TABLE A: SUBJECTS**

COUNTRIES	TEACHERS & EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATORS	PARENTS	PUPILS	REMARKS
Cameroon	46	-	-	PILOT STUDY
Nigeria	145	50	617	-
France	-	14	-	Educational system is stiff. Researcher was not permitted to get into schools. Officials of the Council of Europe were used in their capacity as parents whose children study French in Schools. Most of these have once been classroom teachers and many are nationals from other countries.
England	20	17	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>617</b>	<b><u>909</u></b>

Phase V: A trial - Test of the proposed communicative teaching syllabus using some JSS pupils from a selected school in Lagos.

Phase: VI Final draft of proposed communicative teaching syllabus.

## **RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS**

This study has prompted the use of various instruments. Some were research-built and others, were adapted from well tested sources.

### **TYPES AND DESCRIPTION OF INSTRUMENTS**

#### **QUESTIONNAIRES**

Several types of questionnaire were developed for use in this research.

##### **1: The French Teacher Questionnaire (FTQ)**

This was also filled by Educational Administrators (who were once classroom teachers). It was designed to seek the opinions of these categories of respondents on different issues in Foreign language (French) teaching and learning, that are central to syllabus design for communication.

The questionnaire was filled in by respondents in England and Nigeria. It contained eighty-three (83) items in all. Twenty (20) items sought opinions about the justification for including French language in schools' curriculum. Fifty-five (55) items sought information about pedagogical, human and material issues namely: the learners (18 items), the teachers (18 items) and teaching materials (19 items). Eleven (11) items sought information on the organisation of schools' curriculum and teaching programmes.

##### **II: The Parents' Questionnaire (PQ)**

This instrument was used to seek parents' opinion on their general awareness of language situation especially as this concerns the future of their children learning French

in secondary Schools. The need for this separate instrument for parents arose during the course of the pilot-study when French teachers in the Cameroon who did not have teaching qualifications and could not answer questions on pedagogical issues, expressed a strong desire to fill relevant parts of the questionnaire in view of their awareness of how they might well be involved in, and influence the education of their children learning foreign languages in secondary schools. This questionnaire became especially useful in France where the researcher could not penetrate the stiff bureaucratic wall of French educational system to get to the teachers. Here 14 parents at the Council of Europe, (majority of them are qualified language teachers) whose children learn French or other European languages as foreign languages filled in this questionnaire. Here again the questionnaire had been modified in view of the fact that some questions were found not to apply to the European situation (e.g., items 10, 18 and 20).

### **III: The Pupils' Need Identification Questionnaire (PBIQ)**

This instrument was used for analysing the language needs of 617 JSS II and III pupils learning French in some Nigerian secondary schools. This questionnaire was central to the design of the proposed syllabus in this study. The communicative approach to language learning is that which involves the learner in the creation and use of meaningful and purposeful utterances in the target language and it is in view of this, that the questionnaire becomes indispensable. There were twenty-three (23) items on this questionnaire filled by JSS II & III pupils in Lagos, Akwa-Ibom and Plateau States of Nigeria.

Generally, the information gathering process using these questionnaires went beyond the identification of mere personal data of subjects. It involved a fairly comprehensive profile of prospective learners in terms of educational purposes and settings, interactions and instrumentality including also, course design constraints.

#### **IV: Check List**

This instrument was adapted from Richterich (1983) and Clark and Hamilton (Syllabus Guidelines, 1984) for the purpose of content-analysis of existing syllabi on foreign language (French).

The argument that the suitability and adequacy of communicative foreign language syllabus packages should be viewed within certain parameters which cannot be overemphasised. This instrument was used to ascertain the qualities and quantities of syllabus contents, definition of general goals of foreign language instructions, (aims & objectives), language functions emphasised, and context as specified in the programmes of some of the various French syllabuses examined.

The instrument was adapted to suit the existing state of French learning in Nigerian schools as to fulfil a compromise between what is 'ideal' and what is feasible and available for French teaching in our schools. Moreover the guidelines provided by Richterich (1983) and Clark and Hamilton (1984) are regarded as a compendium of ideas that designers can choose from in order to develop their own materials. The core requirements for achieving effective communication, i.e., communicative areas and activities, tasks, objectives, functions,

skills, and structures were not compromised. Topics, settings and resources might have been modified to reflect realities of the situation of foreign language learning in Nigeria.

## **V: Observation Schedule**

An observation schedule developed by the researcher was used in this study to record some language phenomena as exhibited by the group of pupils learning French who took part in the quasi-experiment. After the exercise carried out in phase three (3) of this study, i.e., critique of the proposed syllabus by teacher assessors, aspects of the reviewed syllabus were used for the experiment. As this study focuses mainly on the attainment of higher degrees of mastery of language through syllabus design, thorough consideration was given to the stages involved in the acquisition of language through content selection.

## **Validation of the Instruments**

For the purpose of evaluating instruments in terms of the relevance of the items to the problem of the study and consequently its contribution to the nation's foreign language education policy, the content validity or appropriateness of the questionnaires was checked by the following:-

- i. The researcher's supervisor
- ii. An inspector general of pedagogy in the Ministry of Education, Yaounde, Cameroon.
- iii. The Head of Foreign Language Department, Burntwood School, London S/W

10.

- iv. A senior official in the Documentation Centre for Education in Europe at the Council of Europe in France.

Also an extensive literature review of well-tested and recognised research instruments guided the construction and adaptation of other instruments used for this study.

- v. A pilot study was conducted in the linguistically peculiar setting (see rationale for selection) of the Republic of the Cameroons.

The instruments were trial-tested on a few subjects in the Cameroon to check for clarity and ambiguity. On the basis of this trial - test, some items were either dropped completely or revised. In Europe, it was observed that some of the items, e.g., 15, 16, 17 & 60 on the TQ and item 10 on the PQ might not be relevant to the situation there considering their socio-economic advantage. On the basis of this, a covering note was written and attached to the questionnaires which read "*Given the Nigerian background to the questionnaire, you may find it necessary to add to the YES/NO/NOT SURE Option, possibilities of a fourth, NOT RELEVANT*". This note, written on the advice of Mr. Wilson Barrett of the Directorate of Education, Culture and Sport, Council of Europe in Strasbourg, France, was also signed by him for the purpose of authentication.

#### **Translation of the Questionnaire into French**

Both English and French speaking countries were involved in this study. It was necessary for the questionnaires, TQ & PQ, to have French and English versions so that the



subjects in the different countries where the study was conducted (especially the pilot study in the Cameroon) were not placed at any disadvantage. The translated versions were checked and corrected by appropriate bilingual experts so as to retain the necessary notions in both languages.

### **Procedures for Data Collection**

This study being comparative/descriptive/and quasi-experimental in nature, required that a number of different procedures should be used for collecting data. The population and sample selection is extensive, so also are the instruments used. Research visits were made to the Cameroon (pilot), England, France and some states in Nigeria. Here, some schools, educational institutions and documentation centres were visited.

The need to ascertain National requirements in modern languages required a practical objective of producing a language learning map. To this end, an examination of the existing French syllabuses in Nigeria, Cameroon and England was embarked upon. This exercise revealed some illuminating practices, the results of which are explained in Chapter Four. In the different countries, the researcher was assisted in assembling required data by the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) in Lagos, Nigeria, Centre for Information, Language Teaching and Research (CILT) in London, England, and Ministere de L'Education Superieure et de Recherche Scientifique (MESRS) in Yaounde, Cameroon. Also, useful information was gathered from the documentation centre of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, France.

Care was taken to explain as explicitly as possible to all respondents the manner for completing the surveys in each of the cases. It is hoped that the similarities in the circumstances of the choice of the subjects of this study, in view of their relationship with French teaching and learning, provide the required framework within which the respondents in the different categories were likely to respond to the survey items.

### **Content Analysis**

For the purpose of content analysis, the units to be analysed were defined according to the categories determined by acceptable syllabus specifications. A form designed for this purpose is used for classifying and recording the units with the view of getting reliable and valid data. A Proposed Syllabus Assessors Selection Questionnaire (PSASQ) was designed to select teacher assessors that would criticize the proposed syllabus. The need for this arose in view of the possibility that not all French teachers might have had the opportunity of studying in any great detail, the current French syllabuses used in secondary schools here. At a meeting convened by the National Association of French Teachers (NAFT), in Lagos March 1990, fifty-two (52) teachers were randomly selected and the questionnaire were administered, filled and returned on the spot. The objective of this questionnaire was to help the researcher in selecting teachers that would assess the proposed syllabus. Only teachers who were familiar with or had an adequate knowledge of any of the syllabuses currently in use would be competent to assess the proposed syllabus. From the responses to the questionnaire, ten (10) teachers were eventually chosen as competent assessors on the basis of their adequate knowledge of some of the syllabuses used in our schools. Their

critique of the proposed syllabus would help the researcher to review it before using the syllabus in the trial-test.

Another 12 - item questionnaire, Proposed Syllabus Questionnaire (PSAQ) was filled by the teacher assessors. The researcher met each of the ten assessors differently at convenient times and a session of not less than two hours (for each assessor) was spent explaining the format, content and methodology of the attached samples of the proposed syllabus which were to guide them in comparing with the one they are currently using; for the purpose of achieving objective criticisms.

All questionnaire were administered to the subjects concerned after due permission had been sought and granted. Care was taken to explain as clearly as possible to the respondents how to complete the questionnaire.

**The Quasi-Experiment:** This was performed in order to validate the proposed syllabus. A modified form of the counter balanced experiment design was employed. An intact French class of forty (40) JSS II pupils was used. These same pupils served as their own control in the experiment. To measure communicative competence in a way appropriate to the new demands of communicative language syllabus design, it is necessary to use tests that measure an ability to use language in an effective way and which also ensures the attainment of communicative goals. With this in mind, the researcher decided to use the conversation method and record pupils' communicative performances in an anecdote form. The principles and descriptors used as indices are stated objectives, language context and language functions. The language behaviours to be observed were fluency,

comprehensibility, average comprehensibility and at the other extreme end, incomprehensibility (i.e., complete lack of communication). The topic chosen (food) in the home setting had been taught in the traditional manner and open-ended questions (see appendix) were asked. This served as the pre-test. Pupils were scored on the rating scale (see appendix) according to their performances in this pre-test. The conversations (four minutes per pupil) involved only the researcher and a pupil at a time. Like in the pre-test, pupils were asked the same questions (in the post-test after the lesson that had emphasised the communicative approach. The experiment lasted six weeks.

#### **DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUE**

**The Questionnaire:** Following the completion of the surveys, a systematic qualification of responses was done. For each type of the questionnaires, a specific number of responses from a given list of items indicated the strength of opinion of the respondents in order to permit a convenient way of tabulating and counting. The scoring procedure employed is the method of Summated Ratings (Likert Type). This is used for the data obtained by the questionnaires and in each these are interpreted using the mean score of the norm group. The descriptive aspect of this work requires the researcher to obtain pertinent information concerning communicative syllabus design. This study is therefore partly restricted to fact finding although with the aim of providing important information to assist in decision making in foreign language policies. In view of this, the study did not proposed to test hypothesis, neither did it deal with many variables underlying the achievements or failures of pupils. However, a weighted scoring of 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 was adopted to represent the Likert-

type five point scale: SA, A, U, D, SD and the YES/NO/NOT SURE respectively for the statements favouring particular points of view as set out in the questionnaire. In the main, totals of the data obtained by type of questionnaire used in this study were converted into percentages. Calculation of contingency co-efficient of correlation was made in some cases to suggest probability of relationships among certain data. Also, Chi-square statistics are computed.

**The Checklist:** Data collected from the checklist were analysed by the use of standard scales because of the values that are to be rated in the specimens under study, i.e., in documents/statements and syllabuses. Grids were used to record and analyse observations here. A Tick ( ) or a cross (X) was used where appropriate to indicate respectively (on the Grid) which facts were/were not emphasised or included in the different specimens studied.

**The Experiment:** Having set up the categories of language parametres expected, the anecdote method (Koul, 1984: 168-9) was used in recording the observed data which was analysed in terms of listing of observable language performances of pupils.

### **Anecdote Method**

The '*Anecdote Method*' is known in research to be particularly useful for describing naturalistic behaviour. It has been used in this study to collect relevant data on the communicative performance of the subjects in the quasi-experiment, whose language performances were assessed on the bases of specified language (performance) categories as

described in the assessment sheet. (See Appendix).

Seven levels of language performances were listed although these were further contracted under four headings for easy scoring. The scores 3,2,1,0 were awarded respectively for fluent; comprehensible; averagely comprehensible and incomprehensible Language performances. The sign-test:

$$Z = \frac{(x + 5) - \frac{1}{2}N}{\frac{1}{2}N}$$

was used to test the assumption of the variables under investigation, i.e., that the communicative approach would not have a systematic significant difference in the language performances of the pupils. The McNemar Test (Koul, 1984: 332-4) for significance of change was also employed.

### **The McNemar Test**

These subjects had also served as their own controls, therefore requiring the use of the McNemar test for significance of changes, in their language performances before, and after treatment. A positive sign (+) was recorded where a subject's communicative performance improved and a negative sign (-) was used where a subject failed to show any improvement after the treatment was given. The sign (0) denotes where a subject was not affected at all by the treatment (whether positively or negatively).

### **The Research Questions**

This study has been prompted by the disturbing observation that despite the emergence of new trends that should facilitate foreign language teaching and learning,

communicative competence is far from being achieved by Nigerian secondary school French language learners.

The following research questions were asked in order to lend direction to the conduct of this study.

- (1) **General:** Why is the study of foreign language necessary and what considerations have been given to basic questions relating to the principles of curriculum and syllabus design and processes of implementation in various settings? The general research question covers such sub-question as:
  - i) What is the nature and function of foreign language?
  - ii) What are the justifications for their inclusion in schools' curriculum?
  - iii) What are the aims and objectives of foreign language learning?
  - iv) Who learns the foreign language?
  - v) Who teaches the foreign language?
  - vi) In what conditions do teaching and learning take place?
  - vii) What is the state of syllabus design?
- 2) **Specific:** What is the role of syllabus design in communicative foreign language learning in various countries?
  - i) Are there any deficiencies in the existing syllabus that have made it difficult for Nigerian pupils learning French to develop the required communicative competence? If so, in what ways is it possible to effect a change in the existing French syllabus so that communicative ability can be achieved by Nigerian secondary school pupils learning French?

- ii) Will the identification of the Nigerian learner's needs help in taking alternative decisions about the features of a desirable communicative teaching syllabus.
- iii) What would be attitude of Nigerian teachers of French and learners to an innovative syllabus for teaching language as communication?
- iv) How significantly will a validated syllabus design proposal affect the communicative performance of French learners in the Nigerian secondary school?



## **PHASE I**

### **THE PILOT STUDY: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **THEORETICAL BASES OF THE SURVEY**

The pilot study has helped in ascertaining the validity and reliability of the tools used as well as helping to see the extent to which responses fulfil the objectives of this research.

The Cameroon was chosen due to the fact that it has a particular linguistic situation which is advantageous to the conduct of a study such as this. In a political set-up which came into being in 1961, the Republic of Cameroons became a country where both English and French are used as official languages simultaneously. This situation has inevitably affected the educational system, which is now striving to incorporate into its programmes, new language education demands in order to be able to tackle the challenges occasioned by this change. Institutions like the Ecole Billigue d'Application has been set up to meet this demand. Regrettably, as at the time research was conducted, reliable sources from the Ministry of Education (French Unit) in Yaounde, as well as official documents reviewed, revealed that a definite syllabus for French learning as a foreign language (for the anglophone speaking Cameroonians) was yet to be designed. The French syllabus examined for this research was the one used in the whole of Cameroon secondary schools (whether bilingual school or not) for teaching and examination purposes. However, the Teachers' Questionnaire (TQ) was completed by the subjects who took part in the study. It has been mentioned that a translated version was filled by the francophone Cameroonian French Teachers.

The syllabus examined set out the following details:-

1. General objectives - (Four are set out; three in relation to the pupils).
  - 1) Capacité de communiquer et de s'exprimer avec clarté et aisance.
  - 2) d'exprimer en une langue correcte, sa personnalité, sa culture et de comprendre les cultures étrangères.
  - 3) Mettre à la disposition de l'élève des techniques et des méthodes nécessaires dans les activités pratiques de la vie journalière.

And the fourth, concerning the Teacher:

- 4) Guider, orienter le travail des élèves; Motiver en chaque enfant un effort continu de dépassement de soi.

II. a) Specific Objectives for the different classes or levels -

- 6<sup>e</sup>, 5<sup>e</sup>, 3<sup>e</sup> & 4<sup>e</sup>. (Premier cycle)

- 2<sup>e</sup> & 1<sup>er</sup> (Second cycle).

There is however no sharp distinction between the language objectives in the first and second cycles except at the level of complexity of the courses taken.

The specific objectives stated (a<sup>6e</sup> - f); (5<sup>e</sup> a-g) and, (3<sup>e</sup> + 4<sup>e</sup>, a - d) emphasise the language skills to be taught, i.e., listening, speaking, reading and writing.

b) Exercices et Methodes - These emphasize:

(i) Lecture suivie et dirigée

(ii) Lecture expliquée

(iii) Grammaire

(iv) Exercices de vocabulaire

- (v) Exercices portant sur l'orthographe
- (vi) Exercices de rédaction (Type, Préparation et Correction)
- (vii) Exercices de diction et de récitation

The purpose of this exercise, apart from enriching the language map within which this study is conducted, was to establish a framework for comparing various syllabuses in a logical order.

A taxonomy later developed (adapted from Richterich, 1983; Clark & Hamilton, 1984) by the researcher for classifying communicative language syllabus specifications revealed that the syllabus in use for French learning in the Cameroons, did not specify language content, context, functions and aims in any comprehensive details. This suggests the need for a review of language learning programmes in schools there.

The figure below explains the distribution of the respondents who took part in the survey. Also, the results of the data analysed from the Teachers' Questionnaire is presented. From the initial one hundred and eleven (111) items on the questionnaire, twenty-eight were deleted. Three out of these were to have been similar to other items previously given in the questionnaire. The other twenty-five items, were removed on the basis of the difficulty they posed to teachers, who, through apparent lack of in-service training facilities (in the researcher's opinion) could not recall the various methods in use for French learning. The "*ecclectic method*" for example was a strange term heard for the first time by all the teachers who filled the questionnaire. However, since the focus of this study is on the attainment of a higher degree of mastery of language through content selection (the what), the part of

**TABLE B**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF PILOT STUDY RESPONDENTS**

Name of School/Institution	Designation of Respondents	Number of Respondents	Remarks
1. (Ministry of National Education Yaounde)	Inspector General & Language Education	2	Both of whom have been classroom Teachers. One is a Frenchman, the other a Francophone Cameroonian
2. Lycee Bilingue de Yaounde (LBY)	French Teachers	8	Mainly comprising HSC pupils. As at Feb. 1988, lower secondary only up to Form II.
3. College Bilingue d' Application (CBA) Yaounde.	French Teachers	3	Those who wish to continue their education go to LBY after completing Form V.
4. Lycee Generale Leclerc (LGL) Yaounde	French Teachers	9	Oldest secondary school. Up to HSC level. Over 2,000 pupils
5. College Vogt. Yaounde	French Teachers	2	Private Mission School
6. CES III Yaounde	French Teachers	4	
7. Ecole Normale Superieure	Student Teachers	13	NCE Student Teachers.
8. ENS	Lecturer,	1	French Lecturer
9. Others	Total	4 <u>46</u>	Ecole Normale Superieure. (ENC)

language learning which emphasises methodology (The How), could only be subordinated in this case.

**TABLE C**  
**PILOT-STUDY DATA ANALYSIS**

QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS	DESCRIPTION	NO OF RESPONSES	% OF RESPONSES
Nos 1 - 20	Justification for L <sub>1</sub> Teaching and Learning.	882	23.63
Nos 21 - 38	Opinions about Learners	757	20.28
Nos 39 - 56	Opinions about Teachers	818	21.92
Nos 57 - 75	Opinions about Materials & Text-books	819	21.95
Nos 76 - 83	Organisation of Language Curriculum	456	12.22
TOTAL		3,732	100%

**TABLE D**

QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS	DESCRIPTION	% FAVOURABLE	% UNFAVOURABLE	% UNDECIDED	TOTAL
Nos 1 - 20	Justifications	65.76	17.69	16.55	100%
Nos 21 - 58	Learners	48.75	30.25	21.00	100%
Nos 39 - 56	Teachers	50.12	34.35	15.53	100%
Nos 57 - 75	Materials & Textbooks	45.05	40.54	14.41	100%
Nos 76 - 83	Organisation of Curriculum	59.21	23.68	17.11	100%

**TABLE E**  
**STATISTICAL DESCRIPTION OF DATA**  
**OPINION OF RESPONDENTS**

ITEMS	DIMENSION INVESTIGATED	No.	GROUP MEAN	GROUP STD. DEV.
1 - 20	Justification for Foreign Language Teaching/Learning	20	3.68	0.86
21 - 38	About Learners	17	3.28	0.95
39 - 56	About Teachers	18	3.18	0.92
57 - 75	Material & Textbooks	18	3.09	0.90
76 - 83	Organisation of the Curriculum	10	3.50	0.89

## DISCUSSION

It is interesting to know that the study of French in secondary schools is seen as a worthwhile educational activity. It is not surprising that majority favoured its inclusion in the school curriculum while steps were taken at national level to draw a scheme (syllabus) of instruction that should lead to an effective realization of French learning in the Cameroon. Apart from the fact that French is an official language (and English too) in the Cameroon, there are still educational authorities that are clamouring for the learning of indigenous Cameroon languages in schools there. Although many favoured the view that learners' interests are adequately considered, the results for those who think otherwise and those that were not sure of this position out-number them. Some argued that there were far too many institutional constraints to agree that learners (especially the anglophone) will be able to make the most of French language learning. These constraints put together,

might have affected the responses where it appears that the phenomena which combine to indicate a direction in the pragmatics and pedagogy of French learning are still struggling to withstand the test of time.

#### **LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The researcher cannot lay claim to the fact that there are no gaps in the picture that this researcher has been able to draw especially with regards to the different sources of information. Some settings have more advantages than others in financial, human and material resources in tackling curricular problems in foreign language studies. This fact might have influenced some aspects of this study.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **MAIN STUDY: RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS OF PHASES II, III, & IV**

#### **Introduction**

In this chapter, the results of the findings of this study which of necessity, employed various types of research tools are presented and discussed.

The six research questions raised (see Chapter III) subsume three main phases in the execution of this study:

- (A) The comparison of practices in other countries. (Comparative investigation and the identification of similarities and contrasts in the settings investigated.
- (B) Needs identification/design prespecifications
- (C) The tentative design of communicative language syllabus as well as
- (D) A critique of this by teacher Assessors. Chapters IV and V will present the results of the fifth and sixth phases:
- (E) A trial testing of the proposed syllabus and the results of this exercise, and
- (F) The final communicative teaching syllabus.

The results of each of the phases are now presented.



## PHASE II

### A. Results of the Comparative investigation:

**TABLE I**

**Description of the category showing the number and Percentages of  
Responses to items on the Teacher Questionnaire (TQ) in ENGLAND.**

QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS	ITEM CATEGORY	NO OF RESPONSES	% OF RESPONSES
1 - 20	Justification for Foreign Language Teaching and Learning.	400	24.09
21 - 38	Opinion about Foreign Language Learner.	340	20.48
39 - 56	Opinion about Foreign Language Teachers.	360	21.69
57 - 75	Opinion about Foreign Materials and Textbooks.	360	21.69
76 - 83	On the organisation of Foreign Language Curriculum.	200	12.05
TOTAL		1,660	100

**TABLE 2**  
**Opinion of 20 French Teachers in London Concerning**  
**Curriculum Issues (Categories above) in Percentage.**

CATEGORIES	OPINION EXPRESSED			TOTAL %
	FAVOURABLE	UNFAVOURABLE	UNDECI- DED	
Justification	67	12	21	100
Learners	29.41	59.41	11.18	100
Teachers	45.28	45.56	9.16	100
Materials & Textbook	46.67	45.83	7.50	100
Curriculum Organisation	61	30	9	100

**TABLE 3**  
**Description of the category showing the Number and Percentage of**  
**Responses to Items on the Teacher Questionnaire (TQ) in NIGERIA.**

ITEMS	CATEGORY	NO. OF RESPONSES	% OF RESPONSES
1 - 20	Justification for Foreign Language Teaching and Learning.	1,100	24.09
21 - 38	Opinion about Foreign Language Learners	935	20.48
39 - 56	Opinion about Foreign Language Teachers	990	21.69
57 - 75	Opinion about Foreign Language materials and Textbooks	990	21.69

76 -83	On the Organisation of Foreign Language Curriculum	550	12.05
	<b>TOTAL</b>	4,565	100

**TABLE 4**  
**Opinion of 55 French Teachers in Nigeria concerning Curriculum Issues (Categories above) in Percentages.**

Categories	OPINIONS EXPRESSED			TOTAL %
	Favourable	Unfavourable	Undecided	
Justification	67.09	22.55	10.36	100
Learners	42.25	46.31	11.44	100
Teachers	44.24	41.72	14.09	100
Materials & Textbooks	46.36	42.93	10.71	100
Curriculum Organisation	53.27	36.73	10	100

**TABLE 5**  
**Statistical Descriptions showing the Group Mean and Group Standard Deviation of Categories between two group of Teachers (In England and Nigeria).**

Categories	No. of Items	ENGLAND NO = 20		NIGERIA: NO = 55	
		Group Mean	Group Std. Dev.	Group Mean	Group Std. Dev.
Justification	20	3.89	0.77	3.69	0.83
Learners	18	2.64	0.88	3.00	1.00
Teachers	18	2.95	0.83	3.06	1.01
Materials & Textbooks	19	3.01	0.83	2.91	0.95
Organisation of Curriculum	8	3.50	0.87	3.17	0.84

TABLE 6a

**Chi-square Test of Independence.**  
**Calculation of Co-efficient of Contingency between responses of**  
**English and Nigerian Teachers to the different Categories.**

Categories	0	E(fe)	$\frac{(0 - E)^2}{E}$	X <sup>2</sup> Value	Level of Significance
Justification for language Teaching and Learning (Items 1 -20)	268	268.3	0.00		
	48	78.9	12.10		
	84	52.8	18.44		
	738	737.7	0.00		
	248	217.1	4.40		
	114	145.2	6.70		
			<u>41.64</u>	<u>41.64</u>	0.05
Foreign Language Learners (Items 21-38)	100	132.0	7.76		
	202	169.3	6.31		
	38	38.7	0.01		
	395	363.0	2.82		
	433	465.7	2.30		
	107	106.3	0.00		
			<u>19.20</u>	<u>19.20</u>	0.05
Foreign Language Teachers (Items 39-56)	163	160.3	0.04		
	164	153.9	0.66		
	33	45.9	3.62		
	438	440.7	0.02		
	413	423.1	0.24		
	139	126.1	1.32		
			<u>5.90</u>	<u>5.90</u>	0.05

Materials and Textbooks (Items 57 - 75)	168	167.2	0.00	<u>3.29</u>	0.05
	165	157.3	0.38		
	27	35.5	2.03		
	459	459.8	0.00		
	425	432.7	0.14		
	106	97.5	0.74		
			<u>3.29</u>		
Organisation of the curriculum (Item 76-83)	122	1	1.15	<u>3.63</u>	0.05
	60	69.9	1.40		
	18	19.5	0.11		
	293	304.3	0.42		
	202	192.1	0.51		
	55	53.5	0.04		
			<u>3.63</u>		

**TABLE 6b**

**Summary of X<sup>2</sup> Tests of Items showing significant relationships in the responses of groups of Teachers.**

ITEM CATEGORIES	DF	CRITICAL VALUES	OBTAINED VALUES	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE
Justification	2	5.991	41.64	0.05
Learners	2	5.991	19.2	0.05
Materials and Textbooks	2	5.991	3.29	0.05
Curriculum Organisation	2	5.991	3.63	0.05
Teachers	2	5.991	5.9	0.05

## **Discussion of Tables 1 - 5**

The facts that decisions taken about foreign language in secondary schools in most countries are influenced by social, political and economic considerations has been emphasised in an earlier chapter in this work.

Teachers are considered as the prime implementers of curriculum decisions and the opinions expressed by those who took part in this survey has helped to highlight the situation of foreign language studies in the secondary school curriculum. That foreign language (French) studies is beneficial to the individual and the society in which he lives has been widely demonstrated in the highly favourable response given by both English and Nigerian teachers of French. It is however surprising that an almost equal number of teachers in the two settings (33% England and 32.91% Nigeria respectively) tend not to agree fully that the inclusion of French in the schools' curriculum is justified.

Despite the obvious increase in international interactions, it is believed in some quarters that English has become an entrenched international language and the need for English people to learn other foreign languages for purposes of daily interactions becomes unnecessary. This supposed claim to the supremacy of the English language (Allan Hornsey, 1982) is however constantly being rejected as there are other foreign nationals that have refused to communicate in any language other than theirs despite their knowledge of the English language. For instance, some Nigerians may share this complacent opinion of universality of the English language (which happens to be the official language here).

Some also claim that Nigeria has more than enough ethnic languages to cope with let alone bother with a foreign French language that is perhaps not useful to more than ninety percent of her population.

One looks beyond the social, economic and political benefits of foreign language learning. The educational value of bilingualism is an additional benefit that should justify the inclusion of French learning in Nigerian secondary schools.

Consideration for learners becomes more and more emphasised in pedagogical issues. In many cases also, especially with regards to language learning, the teachers are said to be central to pedagogical matters since they are believed to be major actors that make things happen in the teaching process, while resources are expected to be put to maximum efficient use by both teachers and learners.

The summary presented in Tables 2 and 4 show the extent to which French teachers in England and Nigeria differ in their opinion regarding the welfare of learners in foreign language learning. Whereas less than 30% of English respondents believe that the learners' welfare (both psychological, sociological and pedagogical) are adequately considered, over 42% of their Nigerian counterparts say learners are adequately considered in their foreign language studies. Incidentally, this is the category where the widest divergence of opinion is expressed. Generally, Nigerian teachers appear to have responded in a manner which suggests a reluctance to respond "as expected" considering the fact that poor teaching resources and conditions for learners are always decried. On the other hand, their responses, despite obvious inadequate conditions may be termed as their reiteration of the fact that most of the time, it is the learners that do not show enough interest in learning the

foreign language. After all, an almost equal number of teachers (in both settings) expressed similar opinions in favour of the provision of adequate consideration for teachers and teaching resources.

**TABLE 7**

**Description of the Categories showing the Number and Percentage of responses to Items on the Parent Questionnaire (PQ) in France, England and Nigeria.**

ITEMS	CATEGORIES	NUMBER & PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES.		
		FRANCE	ENGLAND	NIGERIA
1 - 6	Language situation in Mono/Family (Bi/Multilingualism)	(24) 84	(24) 102	(24) 300
7 - 12	Worthwhileness of , Foreign Language Learning	84 (24)	102 (24)	300 (24)
13 - 19	Teaching and Learning Condition	98 (28)	119 (28)	350 (280)
20 - 25	Parents Willingness to Participate In Children's Foreign Language Learning	84 (24)	102 (24)	300 (24)
TOTAL		350(100%)	425(100%)	1,250(100%)

\*Figures in Parentheses represent the Percentage of responses.



**TABLE 8a**  
**Chi-Square Test of Independence.**  
**Calculation of Co-efficient of Contingency between responses of**  
**French, English and Nigerian parents to different categories.**

CATEGORIES	O	E(fe)	$\frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$	X <sup>2</sup> Value	Level of Significance
Language Situation in the Family (items 1 - 6)	58	64.1	0.58		
	26	19.0	2.58		
	0	0.9	0.9		
	63	27.9	2.85		
	34	23.1	5.14		
	5	1.1	13.83		
	250	229.0	1.93		
	50	67.9	4.72		
	-	3.1	<u>3.1</u>		
			<u>35.63</u>	<u>5.63</u>	<u>0.05</u>

Worthwhileness of Foreign Language Learning (Items 7- 12)	65	74.3	1.16		
	17	7.8	4.92		
	5	1.9	5.06		
	80	90.2	1.15		
	16	9.4	4.63		
	6	2.3	5.95		
	285	265.4	1.45		
	15	27.8	5.89		
	-	6.8	<u>6.8</u>		
			<u>37.01</u>		
				<u>37.01</u>	<u>0.05</u>

Teaching and Learning Conditions (Items 13-19)	42	60.0	6.45		
	40	24.4	9.97		
	16	11.4	1.86		
	72	75.3	0.14		
	23	29.6	1.47		
	23	13.9	5.96		
	245	221.6	2.47		
	78	87.0	0.93		
	27	40.7	<u>4.61</u>		
			<u>33.86</u>	<u>33.86</u>	<u>0.05</u>
Parents' Willingness to Participate in Children' Foreign Language Learning	47	57.9	2.05		
	14	15.9	0.23		
	23	10.2	16.06		
	62	70.3	0.98		
	20	19.3	0.03		
	20	12.4	4.66		
	226	206.8	1.78		
	58	56.8	0.03		
	16	36.4	<u>11.43</u>		
			<u>37.25</u>	<u>37.25</u>	<u>0.05</u>

**TABLE 8b**

**Results showing the opinions of Parents in France,  
England and Nigeria on Items Categories 1-25 in Percentage.**

**RESPONSES IN PERCENTAGES**

ITEMS	FAVOURABLE			UNFAVOURABLE			UNDECIDED			TOTAL %
	FRA	ENG	NIG	FRA	ENG	NIG	FRA	ENG	NIG	
1-6	69.05	61.76	83.33	30.95	33.33	16.67	-	4.91	-	100
7-12	77.38	78.43	95	16.67	15.69	5	5.95	5.88	-	100
13-19	42.86	60.78	70	40.82	19.61	22.29	16.32	19.61	7.71	100
20-25	55.95	44.54	75.33	16.67	41.18	19.34	27.38	14.28	5.33	100

**TABLE 9**

**Summary  $X^2$  Test of Independence showing the Calculation of co-efficient of contingency  
between responses of Parents in France, England & Nigeria on Item Categories 1-25**

Items	DF	Critical Values	Obtained Values	Level of Significance
1 - 6	4	9.488	35.63	0.05
7 - 12	4	9.488	37.01	0.05
13 - 19	4	9.488	33.86	0.05
20 - 25	4	9.488	37.25	0.05

**Discussion of Tables 7, 8, 9**

Tables 7, 8 and 9 summarise the responses to the items in the groups considered. Parents are thought to be getting increasingly concerned with the education of their children. It is clearly seen from the result of this survey in which parents were involved that in many families more than one language is spoken. The figure of 83% of bilingualism claimed in

the case of Nigerian parents is not surprising as there are very high incidents of intertribal marriages. Apart from this there is a lot of movement of people from one geographical area to the other rendering most towns and even villages in Nigeria cosmopolitan. As a result, very many Nigerians nowadays speak more than one language and as many of the parents attested, they are quite happy with this multilingual development.

The figures of over 69% for France and 61% for England may seem surprising considering the fact that these countries and especially England is thought to be rather homogeneous linguistically. The figure for France may be explained in view of the fact that majority of parents who filled the questionnaires work at the Council of Europe where all officials are of necessity bilingual. Most of these also intermarried and welcome the fact that their offsprings speak as many languages as possible.

People are getting to realize more and more, the importance and the benefits of multilingualism and the overwhelming figures of 77% (65/84), 78% (80/102) and 95% (285/300) recorded by France, English and Nigerian parents respectively on the worthwhileness of foreign language learning is not totally surprising.

The result of the opinion expressed on items 13 - 19 are not totally surprising. Except one is professionally involved, it is possible (as in the case of the parents in England (about 61%) and Nigeria (70%) who responded) to think that just anyone can learn or teach a language' provided that in the case of the teacher, he can speak and understand the language he is teaching even without any pedagogic training. The 40.82% (40/98) who opined differently in France might all have been officials of the Council of Europe (Majority

of them had been language teachers) who appreciate the pedagogic implications of teaching and learning languages.

In their responses to items 20 - 25, (whether parents are willing to encourage their children to learn French in school), the Nigerian parents with a staggering figure of 75.33% (226/300) express their willingness to do just that, helping the children with their homework and allowing them to take part in club and extra curricular activities which may even entail their coming home late from school.

Some of their European counterparts felt that it was governments' and Schools' responsibility to make sure that their children are effectively taught French. In England 55.46% were not too keen on spending the little time they have got on helping children with French homework. Many however said they would encourage extracurricular activities.

## **PHASE II**

### **FRENCH SYLLABUS DESIGN PRE-SPECIFICATIONS**

Description of the findings from analysis of the English and Nigerian French syllabuses used in secondary schools:

- I. **Nigeria:** Only one major kind of syllabus is prepared for the Nigerian Secondary Schools, by The Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.

- (a) National Curriculum for Junior Secondary School
- (b) National Curriculum for Senior Secondary School Volume 4.

Other Languages: English

French

Arabic

The other one being, The West African Examinations Council: Regulations and Syllabuses for the Senior School Certificate Examination Nigeria. Features of this particular syllabus make it appear purely as an Examination rather than a Teaching Syllabus.

The National Curriculum for JSS & SSS was used in this study for the Nigerian setting. This document in all may just about fill (14) fourteen printed pages of full-scalp paper.

- II. **Britain:** Various syllabuses are offered by five consortia in Britain.

- (a) MEG - Midland Examining Group
- (b) SEG - Southern Examining Group

- (c) NEA - Northern Examining Association
- (d) LEAG - London and East Anglian Group
- (e) WJEC - Welsh Joint Education Committee.

The SEC (Secondary Examinations Council) monitors all the schemes and syllabuses to ensure that they all comply with the National Criteria.

The London and East Anglian Group syllabus was used in this study for the English setting. This document comprised 74 pages of A4 typing sheets.

The syllabuses enumerate basically the same requirements for the teaching and learning of French and other European Languages as they are all monitored by the SEC to ensure complicity with the national criteria. The London and East Anglian Group Syllabus was chosen for this study because the British subjects used in this research are from schools in london.



**TABLE 10**

**Description of English and Nigerian Definition of General Aims of French Learning in Secondary School Syllabus.**

CATEGORY OF AIMS		ENGLAND	NIGERIA
1.	To develop ability for practical communication.	✓	✓
2.	Formation of study skill	✓	✗
3.	Formation of Language skills and ability required for work	✓	✓
4.	Formation of skills required for leisure.	✓	✗
5.	Development of Insight into culture and civilization.	✓	✓
6.	Development of language awareness and learning.	✓	✓
7.	Provision of enjoyment and intellectual stimulation.	✓	✗
8.	Development of positive attitude to language learning and cultural tolerance.	✓	✓
9.	Promotion of skills of analysis, memorisation, e.t.c.	✓	✓

**KEY**

✓
✗
✓^

Emphasised in syllabus

Not emphasised in syllabus

Partially emphasised.

**TABLE 11****Description of Components included in the Syllabus Content for England and Nigeria.**

SYLLABUS CONTENT	ENGLAND	NIGERIA
1. Topics	✓	✓
2. Settings	✓	✗
3. Language tasks defined	✓	✓^
4. General notions	✓	✓^
5. Language function	✓	✓^
6. Grammar & Structure	✓	✓
7. Communication Strategies	✓	✗
8. Vocabulary List	✓	✓
9. Criteria for Assessment	✓	✓^
10. Grade Descriptions	Basic/Higher	JSS/SS

**TABLE 12**

**Description of the components included in Syllabus Context for England & Nigeria.**

SYLLABUS	CONTEXT	ENGLAND	NIGERIA
1. Visit to French Country		✓	✓
2. Host to French Personality		✓	✓
3. Establishing and Maintaining contact with the French		✓	✓
4. Exploring one's own interest in French		✓	X

**TABLE 13**

**Description of the Components included in the Syllabus for Assessment Objectives in England & Nigeria.**

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES	ENGLAND	NIGERIA
<b>LANGUAGE SKILLS</b>		
1. Listening. (Understanding of the Spoken Language)	✓	✓
2. Speaking. (Oral expression)	✓	✓
3. Reading. (Understanding of the Written Language)	✓	✓
4. Writing (Production of Languages in Writing)	✓	✓

### Discussion of Tables 10, 11, 12, 13

Education in the main, remains the business of Governments in most parts of the world. Language education, like all other subjects in the curriculum is assessed at the end of secondary schooling. It is in the interest of all pupils who stand to be assessed that there usually is a National Criteria that directs the ideal end of a particular type of education. The emphasis laid on language learning lies in the need for teachers to guide learners to develop skills of practical communication, as well as having lasting and beneficial effects on the individual and the nation.

The basic question that are asked nowadays in order to give direction to communicative syllabus design are:

- (i) What are the Likely language needs of learners?
- (ii) What will the learners want to do linguistically in certain specific situations?

These questions have prompted the definition of some important component parts of a language syllabus summarised by Tables 10, 11, 12 and 13.

The instruments used for this part of the research, (Syllabus Guidelines, Policy Statements, School Syllabuses) emphasise the need for these components to be well incorporated if communicative language learning is to be effectively achieved. From the descriptions in the tables, it appears that some of these components have not been well addressed in the French Syllabus for Nigerian Secondary Schools. As a matter of fact, there is no known publication regarding a comprehensive statement of Policy for Modern Languages in the Nigerian Schools' Curriculum.

Meanwhile the Department of Education and Science (Welsh Office) in Britain has a 17 page publication of a statement of policy concerning modern languages dealing comprehensively on issues that may enhance the teaching and learning of modern languages and presenting proposals for a better future for foreign language education.

The apparent coldness of the Government towards modern language teaching and learning in Nigeria may have contributed to the lack of thoroughness witnessed in the writing of modern language syllabuses for our schools. Those components that are found not to have been properly defined in our foreign language syllabus deserve more serious attention if the national criteria for modern language learning is to be met and the aims of French language learning are to be effectively achieved in our schools.

It is not surprising that fluency in French speaking and understanding still eludes our secondary school leavers who have studied French for five to six years seeing the deficiencies as presented in Tables 10, 11 and 12 even though the assessment objective (Table 13) emphasises the four language skills that should be mastered by learners. When compared with the syllabus used in England, (Table 11), the content of instruction as stated in the French Syllabus used in Nigeria appears scanty and incomplete. Content is significantly important when learning about the foreign world or indeed, about the world with which the learner is familiar because, the content matters a lot in shaping the mind and attitude of the learner. Elaborately formulated objectives can do little to help the learner achieve communicative competence if the content of instruction is inadequate. Whereas the Curriculum for Language Education in Nigeria states that effective results can be achieved through foreign language instructions from teacher to pupils via the **Content** of instruction,

the scanty and inappropriate topics, Grammar/Structure and Vocabulary list included in the content of the French syllabus for secondary school pupils in Nigeria shows that learning may not achieve any significant success here. This position is further highlighted by the features of the French syllabus in the National Curriculum for JSS/SS Vol. 4. For instance, under the topics listed for the first three years of French learning (i.e., Years 1, 2, & 3) are:

*Greetings, Expressing feelings, Home features  
description, Home activities discussion, school  
environment description/discussion, letter writing,  
Hopes for the future, Revision, Needs and Wants.*

From the above, some facts emerge. First, there is a misconception of the Language Phenomenon. Those "Topics" listed above are indeed Language Functions that could be realised in a variety of ways depending on appropriately chosen topics and settings (see proposed syllabus). The fact that functions have been misconceived as Topics suggests that every other step that might be taken in such a syllabus could be faulty, thereby seriously damaging the intentions conceived for a successful foreign language teaching and learning.

Other features of the syllabus have consequently been erroneously, inappropriately and haphazardly stated that it is not so surprising that French learning does not record any appreciable degree of success in our schools. An appropriate syllabus should include all language components whereby learners will be able to experience the French language and the foreign world in all its ramifications. Owhotu (1988) had suggested that this could be realized through a well integrated content.

Moreover, it is very important that the context in which French is studied be such that will indicate how the individual perception and actions of the learners can be focused on cultural and social concepts with which they are confronted when they are dealing with a foreign world. This aspect too has not been given the desired consideration in the existing syllabus. The question of choosing "*suitable*" texts for French learning that relate to pupils personal experience (both familiar & unfamiliar elements) while enabling him to deal with different experiences, cannot be successfully addressed with the scanty attention given to context in our syllabus.

### PHASE III: PRE-DESIGN SPECIFICATIONS

#### LEARNER NEEDS IDENTIFICATION AND ANALYSIS

JSS II pupils from eight (8) secondary schools responded to Pupils Need Identification Questionnaire while only five (5) out of those schools presented JSS III pupils who also filled the questionnaire.

Table 14 describes the composition of these pupils in their respective schools.

PUPILS				
S/N.	NAME OF SCHOOLS	JSS II	JSS III	TOTAL
1.	Estate Secondary School, Mushin	54	54	108
2.	Grammar School, Oshodi	50	41	91
3.	Apostolic Church Grammar School, Ketu	50	30	80
4.	Ilupeju Secondary School, Obanikoro	54	54	108
5.	Government Secondary School, Afaha Eket	39	27	66
6.	Community Secondary Commercial School, Ikot Uso Ekong. Eket	36	-	36
7.	Federal Government College, Jos	49	-	49
8.	St. Louis College, Jos	<u>29</u> <u>361</u>	- <u>206</u>	<u>29</u> <u>567</u>

The average age of the JSS II pupils was 12 while the pupils in JSS III average 13 years in age. Apart from the 3.88% (22/567) who had done French before in their private primary schools, most of the JSS II had only done over one year of French while the JSS



III pupils had only about two years of French learning. All these pupils are Nigerians from different parts of the country.

The answer to item 6 on the questionnaire (what language do you speak in your family?) revealed that most of these pupils are bilingual in a most interesting way. While majority of the pupils (78%) who go to school in Lagos spoke Yoruba in the family, the pupils from Eket (96%) spoke Ibibio/Efik including English. It is in Jos that the most remarkable incident of multilingualism was recorded. This is not surprising as Jos is a rather cosmopolitan town. 38% of them spoke Yoruba/Hausa/English and another local language. 28% claim they speak Igbo/Hausa and English. There were also a few instances where pupils claimed they speak the three main Nigerian languages.

Asked for their reasons for learning French, the high percentage of JSS II & III pupils who thought French would be useful to them in their future careers and those who claimed to have a general interest in the language (82.27%) & (81.5%) indicate that even pupils at those tender ages are aware of their future responsibilities and are convinced that the knowledge of French will help them through. The few that only studied French in order to pass their exams are probably those who do not think French is relevant to their future careers.

Tables 15 a & b show the percentage of pupils (JSS II & III) responses to item 8.

**TABLE 15a**

**Pupils reasons for learning French.**  
**Pupils responses in Total Percentage.**

**JSS II****SCHOOLS & NUMBER OF RESPONSES**

CATEGORY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL %
1. Relevance of French to Future Career	24	29	31	34	21	17	17	14	(187) 51.8
2. Passing Exams only	-	11	12	14	6	5	14	2	(64) 17.73
3. Because of General Interest in French	30	10	7	6	12	14	18	13	(110) 30.47
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>(361)100</b>

**TABLE 15b****JSS III****SCHOOLS AND NO. & PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSE**

CATEGORY	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL	%
1. Relevance of French to future Career	32	19	17	26	13	(107)	51.9
2. Passing Exams only	13	9	2	5	9	(38)	18.5
3. Because of General Interest in French Language	9	13	11	23	5	(61)	29.6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>(206)</b>	<b>100%</b>

Another relevant item 12 sought to know what language skill the pupils will like to be able to perform best in the language they are learning.

**TABLE 16a & b:-** Summarises the most significant responses.

**TABLE 16a**

**JSS II**

**SCHOOLS & NO. & PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES**

CATEGORIES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL
1. Understanding spoken language	19	29	19	16	3	11	14	9	(130) 36.01
2. Speaking French	9	1	10	9	10	13	10	-	(62) 17.18
3. Reading French	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	(3)0.83
4. Writing French	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(0)0.00
5. All of the above	24	20	21	28	16	12	25	20	(166) 45.98
6. None of the above	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(0)0.00
	54	50	50	54	39	36	49	29	(361) 100.00

TABLE 16b

JSS III


## SCHOOLS &amp; NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES

CATEGORIES	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL %
1. Understanding	18	16	2	10	9	(55) 26.70
2. Speaking	17	5	-	3		(25) 12.14
3. Reading		1	-	2	1	(4) 1.94
4. Writing			-	10	4	(14) 6.80
5. All of the Above	19	19	28	29	4	(99) 48.05
6. None of the Above	-	-	-	-	9	(9) 4.37
	54	41	30	54	27	(206)100.00

## Discussion Tables 14, 15, 16a &amp; b


In general, there were more numerous preferences to perform best in the oral aspect of language learning. When considered in its totality, the 53.19% and 45.98% of JSS II and 38.84% and 48.05% in JSS III who opted for oral competence and complete knowledge of the language skills show an overwhelming interest of pupils wishing to be able to communicate well in French.

That almost half of the pupils in JSS II & III wish to be able to perform best in all the four language skills put together might suggest that at this level a differentiation of objectives for language learning may be unnecessary. All pupils should be taught all the language skills. Tables 16a & 16b summarize the categories which were found to be significantly different in each of the two groups. The tables show that the least number of preferences between JSS II & III pupils occur in the reading, and writing of French. Nine



JSS III pupils suggested that they did not wish to learn French at all . This response given by only 9 pupils in school 5 may be linked to the same 9 responses in the same school 5 on an earlier item where this same figure claimed they are learning French only because they wanted to pass their exams in it.

A remarkable result was recorded in the items that relate to pupils' perception of the French language. In response to item 20 *"How interesting do you find the French language?"* 74.8% (270/361) of the JSS II pupils and 75.2% (155/206) of the JSS III pupils declared that French was an interesting subject. This result is supported by a similar response to item 20 *"Is it a good idea to teach French language in Nigerian Secondary Schools?"* 90.6% (327/361) of JSS II pupils from all the eight schools and 90.3% (186/206) of the JSS III pupils from five schools said that they supported the idea. However, institutional constraints seem to have militated against the enthusiasm shown by these pupils. Majority of these pupils claimed that they do not have adequate language teaching equipment in their schools. Many indicated that the 1 - 2 periods (in most cases) a week of French learning was inadequate.



More problems, according to pupils response arise due to insufficient provisions for extra-curricular activities. There are no French clubs in most of the schools and about 98% of all pupils have never been on excursions to any French country. Only in a few cases have pupils been out to other schools in Nigeria to take part in inter-school or inter-state French activities.

Specific Items 23.

TABLE 17a

The Categories showing significant differences in Levels of difficulty,  
in the Four Language Skills. (Revealed by Number of Pupil Responses)

HIGH LEVEL DIFFICULTY

JSS II

SCHOOLS

CATEGORY OF SKILLS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL
Listening	27	24	22	15	16	11	19	2	136
Speaking	30	30	23	14	23	17	24	11	172
Reading	19	20	10	24	20	13	21	10	137
Writing	16	19	12	13	16	16	13	8	113
TOTAL	92	93	67	66	75	57	77	31	558

**JSS III**

CATEGORY OF SKILLS	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
Listening	26	4	6	5	22	63
Speaking	28	20	7	17	23	95
Reading	17	14	1	7	19	58
Writing	17	21	4	17	19	78
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>294</b>

**TABLE 17b****MEDIUM LEVEL DIFFICULTY****JSS II****SCHOOLS**

CATEGORY OF SKILLS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL
Listening	14	20	16	27	17	15	25	22	156
Speaking	5	9	13	19	10	9	20	12	97
Reading	16	8	9	12	11	10	18	13	97
Writing	11	9	11	13	16	7	27	11	105
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>455</b>

**JSS III**

CATEGORY OF SKILLS	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
Listening	22	30	17	35	2	106
Speaking	16	8	9	25	2	60
Reading	12	11	12	38	5	78
Writing	13	8	14	25	5	65
TOTAL	63	57	52	123	14	309

**TABLE 17c****LOW LEVEL DIFFICULTY****JSS II**

CATEGORIES OF SKILLS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL
Listening	8	3	10	11	6	10	5	5	58
Speaking	15	8	8	19	6	10	5	6	17
Reading	17	16	28	16	8	13	10	6	114
Writing	24	18	21	26	7	13	9	10	128
TOTAL	64	45	67	72	27	46	29	27	377



**JSS III**

CATEGORY OF SKILLS	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
Listening	5	5	6	14	3	33
Speaking	10	10	14	11	2	47
Reading	25	13	17	8	3	66
Writing	22	10	11	12	3	58
Total	62	38	48	45	11	204

**TABLE 18**  
**Summary of figures in Tables 17a, b, c, showing significant**  
**differences in item 23 in JSS II & III (With X<sup>2</sup> Values)**

Language Skill	Category of Difficulty	No(%) resp ----- JSS II	No(%)resp ----- JSS III	X <sup>2</sup> Values
LISTENING	High	No = 361	No = 206	df = 2 at
	Medium	136(30.67)	63(30.58)	0.05 levels
	Low	156(43.21)	156(43.21)	) 3.76
		58(16.06)	58(16.06)	)
SPEAKING	High	172(47.65)	95(46.12)	)
	Medium	97(26.86)	60(29.13)	) 0.46
	Low	77(19.67)	47(22.82)	)
READING	High	137(37.95)	58(28.16)	)
	Medium	97(26.86)	78(37.86)	) 8.70
	Low	114(31.58)	66(32.04)	)
WRITING	High	113(31.30)	78(37.86)	)
	Medium	105(29.08)	65(31.55)	) 3.98
	Low	128(35.46)	58(28.16)	)

### Discussions

The figures in Tables 18 show areas where significant differences occur in each of the two groups of respondents. It may be seen here that the highest percentage of 47.67 and 46.12 for the two groups indicate that the skill pupils find most difficult is the speaking skill. This result is of significant importance as it confirms the lack of communicative competence which this work has set out to find possible solutions to through the development of an adequately designed communicative syllabus. This is not to say that mastery of the speaking skill alone is enough for complete and accurate communication, especially for interpersonal

communication where it is important for the speaker and listener to have mutual understanding between them.

It is interesting though to note that quite an appreciable number of pupils in the two groups, 156/361 and 106/206 respectively, find it neither too difficult nor too easy coping with listening.

Of note is the almost parallel response of the groups indicating that pupils have great difficulty with listening, reading and writing skills. While the greatest number of pupils admitted that they find dictation rather difficult, the results only go to confirm relationship between these three skills where mutual understanding is crucial between the Reader and the Listener who is consequently the Writer in such a circumstance. The rather high percentage of pupils who claim they have little difficulty in writing skill might be those for whom composition is relatively easy. It must be noted however that composition usually does not attract as much severe penalty (scoring-wise) as dictation, hence, the pupils' perception of dictation as a very difficult aspect of language learning. Whatever way one looks at it, it seems clear that oral accuracy as well as contextual appropriateness (Yalden, 1983; Savignon, 1983) are parts of the language whole which a communicative syllabus design must foster.

The widest divergence of opinion is noticed in the pupils' responses to the Reading Skill. As high as 31.58 percent and 32.04 percent respectively claim they find reading rather easy. This seems indicative of the fact that pupils may relate reading here to merely pronouncing words without attaching the necessary importance to meaning; because, if their claim were right, one would have expected an almost similar response to the Listening skill

considering the fact that these two skills are both receptive. One suspects that the reason that only 16.06 percent and 16.02 percent respectively say they find the Listening skill easy, suggest that most of the meaning is lost to the pupils as they listen to the speaker of French.

There appears to be a significant relationship suggesting that pupils share similar deficiencies in the active and receptive roles they play with regards to French language learning. Pupils must be in control of the **RECEPTIVE** role they play as hearers or readers since they must discover the meaning that a speaker or a writer wants to convey. Likewise, in assuming the **ACTIVE** roles of speakers and writers, it is important to develop in these pupils the ability to choose what is appropriate to the context and is also purposeful.

Communicative competence is guaranteed only when these skills are well mastered and the pupils also have the ability to manipulate linguistic forms adequately.

## PHASE IV

### CRITIQUE OF TENTATIVE DESIGN SPECIFICATION

#### (TEACHER ASSESSORS)

Fifty-two (52) teachers were randomly selected to fill in questionnaires. 73 percent (38/52) of these claim they use the Federal Ministry of Education Science and Technology National Curriculum for JSS/SSS as syllabus for French teaching in their schools. 19 percent (10/52) say they use the West African School Certificate syllabus while about 6 percent (3/52) out of the 8 percent (4/52) who claim they do not use either of the mentioned syllabuses say they plan their own teaching scheme themselves.

Below are the responses of the final ten (10) teachers who were chosen to criticize the proposed syllabus to specific items 8,10, 11 and 12.

Further comments/suggestions (item 13) given by some of these teachers are shown in the appendix.

Critical Item	Content	Yes	No	Not Sure	TOTAL
8.	This syllabus is rather difficult to understand and use for communicative teaching	-	10	-	10
10.	This syllabus is different from the one I used before	8	2	-	10

11.	I prefer the syllabus I am using because it is simpler to understand and use for communicative language teaching	1	8	1	10
12.	This syllabus can help me plan a good scheme of work teaching language	10	-	-	10

These results appear to confirm few facts about the possible effectiveness of the newly proposed syllabus. The simplicity of it is confirmed by 100 percent of the assessors while 80 percent agree that the design is new. The possibility of it being acceptable for use in French language classrooms is further strengthened by the response of 80 percent of the assessors who do not think that the syllabus they are currently using is good enough for teaching communicative language. The assessors' response to this particular item further supports their earlier agreement in item 8, that the proposed syllabus might be easier to use for communicative French teaching.

That all the teacher assessors (100 percent) agree that the proposed syllabus can help them plan a good scheme of work for teaching language testifies to the flexibility of the proposed syllabus.

Although not all the teacher assessors agree on whether this syllabus focuses on the linguistic system of a language, 100 percent agree that it emphasises what learners are

expected to do (i.e., focus on language USE) with the language they are learning. Teachers may still not be clear about the fact that even though language USE must be emphasised during language teaching, without reference to USAGE (linguistics/grammar), communicative competence may not be wholly achieved (Mumby, 1977; Yalden, 1983; Nunan, 1987).

## **PHASE V**

### **DESIGN TRIAL - TESTING: QUASI - EXPERIMENT**

The sign-Test was used to test the assumption that the proposed communicative syllabus used for teaching French to a class of Forty (40) JSS III pupils will not have a systematic significant effect on the language performance of these pupils.

The result is presented below:

TABLE 19

Pupils S/N	Scores Pretest	Scores Post test	Direction of Difference			Sign
1						
2	0	1	SC	>	SE	+
3	1	2	SC	>	SE	+
4	0	1	SC	>	SE	+
5	0	1	SC	>	SE	+
6	1	2	SC	>	SE	+
7	0	1	SC	>	SE	+
8	0	1	SC	>	SE	+
9	1	2	SC	>	SE	+
10	0	0	SC	=	SE	0
11	0	1	SC	>	SE	+
12	1	1	SC	=	SE	0
13	0	1	SC	>	SE	+
14	1	2	SC	>	SE	+
15	1	1	SC	=	SE	0
16	1	2	SC	>	SE	+
17	0	0	SC	=	SE	0
18	0	1	SC	>	SE	+
19	1	2	SC	>	SE	+
20	0	1	SC	>	SE	+
21	1	2	SC	>	SE	+
22	1	1	SC	=	SE	0
23	0	1	SC	>	SE	+
24	0	1	SC	>	SE	+
25	1	2	SC	>	SE	+
26	0	1	SC	>	SE	+
27	1	2	SC	>	SE	+
28	0	1	SC	>	SE	+
29	1	2	SC	>	SE	+
30	0	1	SC	>	SE	+
31	0	1	SC	>	SE	+
32	0	1	SC	>	SE	+
33	1	2	SC	>	SE	+
34	1	1	SC	=	SE	0
35	0	1	SC	>	SE	+
36	0	1	SC	>	SE	+
37	1	2	SC	>	SE	+
38	0	1	SC	>	SE	+
39	0	1	SC	>	SE	+
40	1	2	SC	>	SE	+
	0	0	SC	=	SE	0



**KEY**

SC = Post Test

SE = Pretest

+ = Positive

- = Negative

0 = No Effect

**TABLE 20**

**Description of language behaviour demonstrated as well as the performance grades awarded and those scored by various number of pupils in the Pretest and Post-test**

Categories of Language Behaviour		Description of Grades	Scores Awarded	Number of Pupils	
				Pretest	Post-test
1.	Fluently and correctly giving and seeking information.	A1 & A2 (Distinction)	3	0	0
2.	Comprehensible: Correct sentences and answers. Self Correction (Partly incorrect language and message content).	C3 & C4 (Credit)	2	0	0
				0	13
3.	Incorrect/ Errant answer repetitions Hesitation Enthusiasm	P5 and P6 (PASS)	1	0	6
				17	18
4.	Non-Verbal Gestures Incomprehensible Silence/No message conveyed at all.	F	0	23	3
TOTAL				40	40

Summary of Figures in Table - 20

**GRADES AND NUMBER OF PUPILS SCORING**

	Distinction	Credit	Pass	Fail	Total
Pretest	0	0	17	23	40
Post-test	0	13	24	3	40
<b>TOTAL</b>	0	13	41	26	80

**McNemar Test for Significance of Change**

	Before		TOTAL
After	0(A) 3(C)	4(B) 33(D)	4 36
	3	37	40

$$X^2 = \frac{[(A - D) - 1]^2}{A + D}$$

$$X^2 = \frac{[(0 - 33 - 1)]^2}{0 + 33} = 35.03$$

Critical Value of 3.84 for a two-tailed test at 0.05 levels for 1 df.

The obtained value of 35.03 exceeds the critical value. It is therefore concluded that pupils' language performance improved after using the proposed communicative syllabus design to teach French. Table shows that (42.5%) out of the class of 40 pupils fell into category 3 of the language behaviour they were able to demonstrate. The rest (57.5%) could not convey any message at all. Although the figure rose by 17.5% after the post test, bringing the number of pupils who fell into category 3 to 24, six of them (25%) were found to have moved to the P5 grade while 18 (75%) remained in the P6 grade.

At pretest 42.5% of the total number of 40 pupils managed to fall into the P6 grade.

The most remarkable result of this experiment was noticed where 13 (32.5%) of the pupils improved their language performance to the C4 grade. It is noticed that at present, none of the pupils demonstrated any language behaviour that deserved more than the P6 grade.

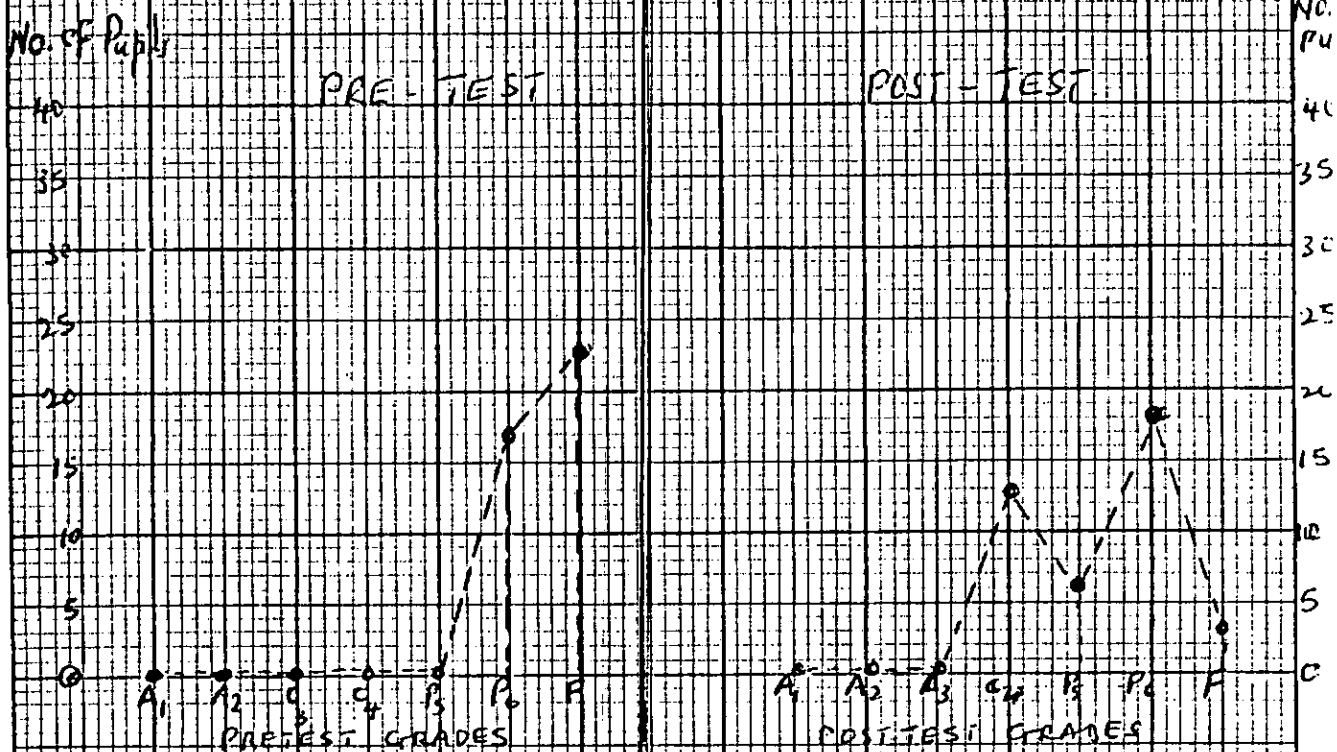
While 33 (82.5%) of the pupils were positively affected by the treatment, 7 (17.5%) were neither better nor worse off than they were before the treatment. Unexpected things happen in a language classroom and this might have been one of such cases where some learners cannot be bothered about learning languages.

The significance of difference further tested by

$$Z = \frac{(x + .5) - Y2N}{\sqrt{N}}$$

was found to be 0.0002 where the value of ( $P = 0.01$ ) indicates that the proposed communicative syllabus used to teach French to this group of French learners had a systematic significant effect on the pupils since their language performance was found to have improved.

The efficacy of an adequately designed communicative syllabus in improving the communicative competence of learners cannot be over emphasised; especially when it has been fully demonstrated that language function, (the USE to which language is put in everyday activities) are central to effective communication.



GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION OF DATA IN TABLE 20

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **PHASE VI**

#### **THE PROPOSED COMMUNICATIVE TEACHING SYLLABUS FOR FRENCH IN NIGERIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

##### **Introduction**

The National Criteria (The National Workshop on National Secondary Education Curriculum 1973, 1984) suggest that the main contribution of French language to the secondary curriculum in Nigeria are:-

- To serve as a window onto the international world;
- To encourage contacts on a Social, Intellectual and Economic basis with the neighbouring francophone countries; thereby, assisting both the individual development of the pupil as well as his relations to a wider society including also pupils' vocational development and further education. Emphasis is also placed on the need to develop skills of practical communication in this foreign language with due regards for authenticity, relevance and usefulness of the subject matter in the world of work outside the classroom.

A framework that respects these criteria has been considered in designing the proposed syllabus. This framework describes communication areas and activities, tasks and events that learners can try to perform in the language they are learning. Teachers too can

make up their own schemes of work in a way that French teaching is made relevant, successful and enjoyable to learners.

The framework relies on these considerations:-

- (a) A valid construction of the syllabus where authentic communication tasks are presented, which reflect day to day use of the French language outside the classroom.
- (b) The world of the learners. Their needs/wants/interests.
- (c) Learners' background, motivation and experience.
- (d) Worthwhileness and attainability of objectives for secondary school French learners.
- (e) Institutional constraints in Nigerian Secondary Schools with regards to time-tabling, human and material resources.

## AIMS

The most fundamental aim of learning a modern language such as French by Nigerian secondary school pupils should be to develop the skill to use French language effectively for purposes of practical communication. This therefore calls for emphasis at whatever level on -

- (1) The Use of the French language for purposes of practical communication. Other aims include:-
- (2) Development of the language skills and attitudes required to equip learners to deal with the business of everyday life in another country and helping foreigners living in Nigeria to do so.

- (3) Initiating Nigerian pupils into the culture and civilisation of French speaking countries while also enabling them to exchange information and ideas with young people and adults, communicating their thoughts and feelings to people who speak a different language.
- (4) Helping the Nigerian learner develop a wider and deeper awareness of the nature of language and language learning that will also enhance intellectual stimulation and positive attitudes towards the foreign language studied for crucial thoughts and analysis.

#### **Areas of Communication**

- Language is used in various daily interactions of seeking, giving, recording, and exchanging information, etc. in the classroom/school/outside; between peers and adults in formal, semi-formal and informal situations.
- Language is used in pleasure and leisure activities of
  - viewing (TV., Cinema, etc.)
  - listening (Radio, Lectures, Debates, etc.)
  - reading (for pleasure/at leisure)
  - songs
  - games, etc.
- Language is used for carrying out various communication tasks of listening, speaking, reading and writing in various settings and on various topics.

- Language is used for realizing language functions and notions in various contexts as appropriate to topics and settings in various situations.

### **Language Tasks/Skills**

Language tasks that are emphasised in this syllabus for the purpose of achieving effective practical communication are:-

- (a) Aural Comprehension - The understanding of the spoken language;
- (b) Ocular Comprehension - The understanding of the written language;
- (c) Oral Composition - As in the ability to express clearly;
- (d) Graphic Composition - The production of the language in writing.

### **Defined Objectives**

In this syllabus the defined objectives are emphasised under the following:-

- (i) **Roles:-** to be played by learners. (social and psychological roles regarding the fact that language is a social phenomenon and the roles assumed will depend on factors such as the learners' age, needs as well as society needs. In formal (with Unknown Adults), Semi formal (with Known Adults) and Informal (with Peers) situations.
- (ii) **Settings & Topics:-** When people communicate in a language they often talk about something, somebody, somewhere, etc., and topics and settings have been chosen, that reflect the realities of life that the Nigerian Secondary School French learner is exposed to and with which he is familiar, so as to enhance and encourage both transactional and interactional tasks when communicating.



- (iii) **Cultural Awareness:-** One of the objectives of language learning is to foster understanding between peoples of different cultures by making learners aware of and sympathetic towards other people's way of life. Though various means e.g., penpals, visits, school exchanges, films, videos songs, poems, visuals, etc teachers can set up **direct experiences** of the foreign way of life and make pupils reflect upon these experiences. (An attempt at realizing this objective is reflected in the synthesizing/promotional Unit (A) of the proposed syllabus. There are a myriad of ways by which teachers can set up direct experiences (despite the constraints here) of the foreign way of life as all these cannot be incorporated in any particular syllabus. It should be recognized that some tasks are more specific and closely related to certain settings and topics than others as is shown under content.

## **Content**

The physical settings and topics (contexts for communication) in which and with which people are expected to deal become central to communication. There are areas of social life that are common to school pupils of the age for which this syllabus is designed. A "*Common Core*" of topics and settings which relate to school, home, services, foreign countries, world of work and leisure, etc. are presented here. This is a flexible and inexhaustible combination of topics and settings that are naturally interrelated and which can be used in a variety of ways.

## Language Functions/Notions

This is simply described here as the 'use' to which the French language is put in daily activities such as in greeting people; introducing self and others; asking for Information, Apologising, Warning, Advising, Persuading, Complaining, Describing, Explaining, Disagreeing/Agreeing, etc. The user of this syllabus will notice that in using any of the Topics and Settings in contexts of practical communication these functions are indispensable:-

- Giving and seeking information;
- Expressing opinion and finding out about intellectual attitudes;
- Making judgement and evaluation;
- Getting things done;
- Socializing.

All these functions have general applications and may be put to use for all the language skills earlier mentioned.

## Structure and Grammar

Language structures cannot be fully understood as a system unless there is reference made to "Use". In this case it is important to teach the "*Rules of Grammar*" in relation to the "*Rules of Use*". So, both structure and function are different faces of the same coin. Although not all structures are equally important for the purpose of practical communication, some structures may be required for understanding only (e.g., when listening

or speaking in a test situation or when reading and writing French tests) whereas others will need to be used only productively.

### **Assessment**

When communicative tasks have been set, it is necessary to assess tasks on the same principles as the syllabus from which they are derived. Since emphasis here is on effective communication, the tasks which pupils are expected to carry out during a particular lesson (SEE LANGUAGE TASKS/SKILLS) must be clearly and adequately assessed to show how well the learner has been able to carry out the communicative tasks described in the objectives of the lesson. One of the problems with testing is that communicating well in a language relies on attitudinal attributes. There is no general accepted agreement on a psychological theory to account for communicative competence that does not lend easily to reliable measurement. Therefore, what can be feasibly done is to try to present communicative activities that reflect authentic real life communication. One can then design tests that will give the learner the opportunities to show what he can do with the language he has studied. It is also advisable to think of the level of mastery that is aimed at (See Appendix for the Assessment Rating used for Pupils during Experiment).

### **Specific Objectives (At Student's Level)**

Language is used in a number of unpredictable circumstances. Also, the language associated with particular given topics (and there are very many of these) cannot be reasonably said to be more or less difficult than the language associated with given settings.

In communicative language learning what one sets out to achieve as much as possible is the understanding of the spoken and written language as well as the ability to communicate in these areas (spoken & written). Obviously, many tasks are appropriate to a number of language levels and it is possible to introduce many varied types of language in dealing with a particular language task. For instance, a particular task may require the use of simple personal background at a lower or a much more complicated psychological attitudes and opinions at a higher level. The way and manner language is introduced often dictates the level of complexity for the users of the language. Let us consider these utterances - the first, in considering a topic relating to the "*Weather*" and the second "*Food*".

- 1) It is pouring ) Message = It is  
It is raining cats and dogs ) raining heavily.  
The heavens have let loose )
- 2) I am very hungry ) Message = The speaker  
I am starving ) is very hungry.  
I am famished )  
I could eat an elephant )  
I have the appetite of a wolf )

A language learner that uses apparently the simplest form of utterances in these instance cannot be said to have communicated less sense (or message) than the learner who chooses to use the more complex form of the utterances that convey the same message.

What can reasonably be said is that one learner has demonstrated a higher level of proficiency in the language than the other, having progressed through a higher level of conceptualisation or inter-language. In the light of the common-core objectives, (whether at a higher or a lower level) the learners are expected to be able to perform the four language skills efficiently. Therefore at JSS level, it is proposed that learners demonstrate:-

#### **For Speaking Skill**

- The ability to answer impromptu questions from peers and strangers:
- The ability to seek information from people (as presented in Topics & Settings):
- The ability to give information to people (as presented in Topics & Settings):
- The ability to perform tasks required as presented in the topics and settings in which these occur.

#### **For Listening Skill**

- The ability to understand specific details in conversations with others.
- Ability to grasp and extract relevant information from announcements, verbal instructions, requests, statements and conversations.

#### **For Reading Skill**

- The ability to understand written instructions, signs and notices publicly displayed.
- The ability to understand and extract relevant information written on simple pamphlets guides, in letters and simple compositions.

### **For Writing Skill**

- The ability to convey graphically short messages to people like on postcards, sheets of paper, etc.

All these tasks will be expected to be performed according to the topics and settings in which they occur. (See syllabus content). It should be borne in mind again that these topics and settings are naturally interrelated and this flexibility could allow learners to engage in tasks other than those listed under prescribed topic or setting.

### **At the SS Level**

Demonstration of all tasks and expectations at the JSS Level but at higher levels of conceptualisation like - identifying, drawing conclusions, eliciting opinions, conveying information, etc. Also with emphasis on tasks of more complex nature with longer durations and depth.

Luckily the sequential selection of topics and settings characterised by this syllabus has been based upon information given by the pupils and teachers themselves. This has helped in drawing from general to particular needs of the learners. The given topics and settings contain areas within which language learners can possibly find themselves in the courses of their daily interactions with others. Teachers and pupils can advantageously manipulate the vast resources at their disposal to enrich this syllabus where a particular area, which is of interest to them is not included here.

The flexible nature of this syllabus is one of its many advantages which makes it an indispensable tool for communicative language learning. Levels are defined here according to the role that learners are expected to play together with a reasonably predicted degree of the language required in the task that has been set for the learners to perform. To this effect, lists of language structures and vocabulary have been suggested. (see the threshold level for levels as the case may be). The progression in levels is determined either by the addition of topics, by the recycling of previous topics, by more tasks set, or by a combination of these.

#### Note to Teachers

(A) Although this proposed syllabus is well defined, it is not possible that **all** the words and structures that learners will meet in subsequent communication contexts would have been included in the syllabus. It is believed that with ample knowledge of the communicative strategies to adopt, teachers can help learners to cope with unknown words that they are most likely to come across in communicating. Teaching strategies for communication are of two main types.

1. Strategies for **Understanding** utterances (as during reading and listening)
2. Strategies for **Producing** utterances (as during speaking and writing).

In designing this syllabus due consideration has been given to choice of topics and settings which should be of high interest to learners. Appropriate cultural contexts were also considered. Hopefully, teachers will be able to obtain or develop materials with adequate level of linguistic component for their pupils' standard. Needless to remind teachers of

those important steps that should be taken to ensure effective teaching of the different topics, i.e.,

- Presentation (of background knowledge through previews, pretests and /or class discussions)
- Explanation of text
- Simulations and Dramatizations
- Exploitation of the cultural, linguistic and thematique aspect of the text.
- Fixation (Through all forms of adequate exercises, e.g., (substitution tables, dialogue, exercises, questions and answers, completion of flow charts and open - ended stories, comparing, commenting, etc.

(B) Here are some suggestions for communication strategies that may be used for achieving required communication skills (Understanding and Production). Help learners to know how:

- To ignore words that are not particularly required for successfully completing a language task.
- To use visual and verbal contexts.
- To recognise grammatical elements and categories and use them effectively.
- To make use of social and cultural contexts
- To make use of common patterns within the target language.
- To recognise and make use of similarities in sounds by:-
  - Anticipating what people may say or write about.
  - Predicting occurrences, intentions of speakers or writers



- Inferring from contexts
- Interpreting mimes, gestures and facial expressions.
- Using L<sub>1</sub> knowledge to infer meanings in L<sub>2</sub> or target language and create words to convey their own meanings.
- Deducing meaning from common patterns within the target language (roots, stems, prefixes, affixes, suffixes, derivations, etc.).

e.g., Prefixes "*re*" - commencer - recommencer. lire - relire, etc.

"*Pre*" - dire - prédire, voir - prévoir, etc.

"*Mi*" - temps - mitemps, lieu - milieu, etc.

"*im*" and "*in*" possible - impossible, connu - inconnu, etc.

Other strategies that can aid production are: pointing and demonstration (non-verbal: comme ça, ici, etc., gestures, drawing, using synonyms and describing physical properties by use of colours, shapes, sizes, materials, etc.

**Function Words:** Prepositions, Auxiliary verbs, etc. have no meaning in isolation although they are very essential for communication. These are to be taught in early stages of language learning.

**Content words:** Nouns, adjectives, verbs, etc. are innumerable and interchangeable. These can be learnt effectively through extensive reading.

## **SYLLABUS CONTENT**

### **SENSITIZATION/PROMOTIONAL UNIT (A)**

#### **TOPIC:**

**FRANCE AND ITS PEOPLE**

#### **CONTENT:**

- (I) Home/Family life (meal times, leisure periods, etc.
- (II) Festivals
- (III) Religion
- (IV) Agriculture
- (VI) Meals, Foods, Drinks, Restaurants, etc.
- (VII) Leisures/social life: sports, theatres, cinemas, etc.
- (VIII) School
- (IX) Transportation system: seaports, airports, metro, bus, taxi, traffic, etc.
- (X) Shops and markets.

#### **SETTING:**

One or more of (i) to (x) preferably during first three periods of beginners French class. (An adequate coverage of all the contents I - X should introduce learners to France and aspects of life of the people who live there.

#### **LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS:**

Seeking information, Expressing thought/opinion and feelings;

**OBJECTIVE:**

Pupils should be able to appreciate other cultures and reflect upon other peoples way of life. They should be able to demonstrate the ability to appreciate the differences and similarities in foreign cultures and theirs. Pupils should be able to seek information on different aspects of the foreign culture.

**LANGUAGE TASK:-**

Listening.

**LINGUISTIC STRUCTURES:-**

Present tense. Comparisons (Adjectives/Adverbs, Nouns, Pronouns, etc.

**VOCABULARY LIST:-**

Appropriate registers for the particular setting chosen.

**INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS:(Where feasible and available)**

- Films and video tapes/visuals.
- Map of France (showing vegetation, relief etc.
- Pictures (These are indispensable)
- Some real life objects.
- Appropriate texts/French songs.

**ASSESSMENT:**

See prescribed assessment; attain objective as closely as possible.

<b>TOPIC:</b>	Personal Identification
<b>Setting:</b>	At home/public places
<b>Language Function:</b>	Giving information about self and others and seeking information from others with regards to identifying.
<b>Objective:</b>	Pupils should be able to demonstrate the ability to introduce/talk about themselves. They should be able to introduce one person to the other.
<b>Language Tasks:</b>	<p>Oral/listening</p> <p><b>Role Plays:</b> Identifying people on pictures/photographs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Playing lost but found</li> <li>- Looking for jobs</li> <li>- Announcing the arrival of friends/relations, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Linguistic Structures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Sentences using the verb "<i>etre</i>" followed by an adjective or a substantive.</li> <li>* Sentences using the verb "<i>Avoir</i>", e.g., <i>Il a les yeux bleus.</i></li> <li>* Interrogatives (Note intonation) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Qui êtes - vous?</i></li> <li>- <i>Comment vous appelez - vous?</i></li> <li>- <i>Qu'est-ce qu'elle fait?</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>* Negatives/Affirmatives</li> <li>* Some verbs of the three regular groups in the present tense.</li> </ul>

**Vocabulary List:**

Inexhaustible but relating to

- : Name
- : Home Address
- : Telephone Number
- : Age & Birthday
- : Nationality
- : Occupation
- : Physical Appearance
- : Likes & Dislikes
- : Marital Status, etc.

**Instructional Materials:**

Family photographs

- : Pictures
- : Dummy Telephones (or real ones if possible)
- : Zodiac Signs
- : Appropriate Texts

**Assessment:**

See prescribed assessment. Attain objectives.

(2)

<b>Topic:</b>	<b>Finding Ones Way</b>
<b>Setting:</b>	Town/Country/Village etc
<b>Language Function:</b>	Seeking and giving information
<b>Objective:</b>	Pupils should be able to demonstrate the ability to *Ask where a place is, *Ask the way to a place, *Attract the attention of a passerby. *Ask how far or how nearby a place is and how to get there by bus/train/foot, etc. *Give indications of directions. *Show appreciation (Thank).
<b>Language Tasks:</b>	Oral/listening  <b>Role Plays:</b> *Seeking specific buildings and places of interest *Inviting friends out *Playing the lost visitor in a town and asking/explaining direction to motor parks, train stations, cinema, hotels, etc. *Playing policemen and visitor to a town *Other simulations.
<b>Linguistic Structure:</b>	*Preposition and adverbs *Personal pronouns (indirect object) + en, y, on, etc. *Relative pronouns qui, que *Interrogatives *Negatives and Affirmatives *Verbs of the three regular groups in the present tense.

Passe compose, future as well as imperatives of some verbs.

\*Other appropriate irregular verbs.

**Vocabulary List:**

Relating to -Names of Places, roads, streets, avenues, theatres, cinemas, restaurants, etc.

\*Time

\*Date, Number

\*Tickets

\*Directions a gauche a droite, devant, derriere, Pres de, etc.

**Instructional Materials:**

P i c t u r e s   o f   b i g   T o w n s / s m a l l  
villages showing Roads, Important Buildings such as Churches,  
Mosques, Shops, Theatres, etc.

\*Appropriate Texts.

**Assessment:**

See prescribed assessment.

Attain objective as closely as possible.

(3)

<b>Topic:</b>	Shopping
<b>Setting:</b>	Shops/Market/Supermarkets
<b>Language Function:</b>	Asking/seeking information, expressing opinion, etc. (or choose appropriate functions from list provided).
<b>Objectives:</b>	Pupils should be able to carry out simple shopping activities like asking for items to buy, checking prices, specifying quantities and qualities, accept or reject an object, etc.
<b>Language Tasks:</b>	<p>Oral/listening</p> <p><b>Role Plays:</b> Buyers/Sellers.</p> <p>Asking for items, buying them. Negotiating prices, paying and receiving change and also checking the change. Requesting that an article be gift-wrapped or changed. Asking for a refund. Asking for times and days and hours of opening and closing, etc.</p>
<b>Linguistic Structure:</b>	<p>Structure related to demands</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- je veux</li><li>- vous avez</li><li>-il ya</li><li>-combien coute?</li></ul>



Structures related to type of objects and items sold. Adjectives and compliments of nouns. Possessive and demonstrative adjectives, verbs of the three main groups, e.g., demander, proposer, offrir, commander acheter, vendre, etc.

**Vocabulary List:**

Relating to exits/entrances, names and numbers of stalls and other locations in the shop/markets. Names of articles (household, and everyday use objects)

Money

Souvenirs/presents

Reductions/discounts, etc.

**Instructional Materials:**

Pictures of shopping centres/markets with people buying and selling different goods. Appropriate texts.

**Assessment:**

See prescribed assessment.

(4)

<b>Topic:</b>	Food and Drink
<b>Setting:</b>	Home/Restaurant? Canteen
<b>Language Functions:</b>	Getting things done/Asking for information or (choose appropriate function from list provided)
<b>Objectives:</b>	Pupils should be able to demonstrate ability to identify and order some foods and drinks, perform some cooking through the use of certain recipes/read menus, serve some dishes. Lay tables, etc.
<b>Language Tasks:</b>	Oral/Listening/Reading
<b>Activities:</b>	<b>Role Plays:</b> Customers/Services.
<b>Simulations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Family meal times etc.</li><li>- Ordering drinks/food for self and others.</li><li>- Asking for bills and paying as well as</li><li>- Checking for errors in bills and payments.</li></ul> Reading simple recipes and mixing ingredients for foods and drinks, refusing a dish, etc.
<b>Linguistic Structures:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>*Structures relating to demands</li><li>*Affirmatives/Negatives</li><li>*Verbs - vouloir, pouvoir, prendre, etc.</li><li>*Interrogatives</li><li>*Partitive articles du, dela, des.</li></ul>

\*Other quantitatives - un peu de ....

quelque

un verre de

un kilo de

\*Prenominals "en" with the verb avoir, y avoir, etc.

**Vocabulary lists:**

Relating to appropriate notions

\*Names of foods/vegetables/fruit/grains

\*Names of kitchen tools

\*Names of cooking utensil

\*Names of drinks - minerals, beverages, milk, etc.

\*Taste

\*Crockeries

\*Breakfast/lunch/supper

\*Times of day/hours

\*Purchases

\*Menu/Time table etc.

**Instructional Materials:**

Menu

Recipes

Timetables

Foods

Drinks, etc.

**Assessment:**

See prescribed assessment.

<b>Topic:</b>	Accommodation
<b>Setting:</b>	Hostels/Hotels
<b>Language Functions:</b>	Asking/Giving and Seeking Information, Expressing Opinions.
<b>Objective:</b>	Pupils should be able to find out about reservations and bookings for accommodation and request for services. They should be able to give some personal details about themselves.
<b>Language Tasks:</b>	Oral/Listening/Reading. <b>Role Play:</b>
<b>Hotel:</b>	Reserving or booking. specifying room types, bed, etc. Indicating length of stay and departure dates, etc.
<b>Hostel:</b>	Students arriving, asking for bed, rooms, keys, checking meal arrangements. Giving personal details. Simulations - meeting the warden, asking question, etc.
<b>Linguistic Structures:</b>	Related to language usage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prenominal verbs</li> <li>- Auxiliaries pouvoir et savoir</li> <li>- C'est pour</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prepositions</li> <li>- Comparisons.</li> </ul>
Expressing Opinions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ça me plaît beaucoup</li> </ul> <p>Negatives/Affirmatives.</p> <p>Appropriate verbs in the three regular groups in the present tense and where appropriate in other tenses.</p> <p>Interrogative, etc.</p>
Vocabulary List:	<p>Appropriate register related to the topic - Lingeries, date, timetabling, opening/closing hours, ruler and regulations, Notions of Time and space, etc.</p>
Instructional Materials:	<p>Pictures</p> <p>Real objects</p> <p>Appropriate texts</p>
Assessment:	<p>See prescribed assessment.</p>

(6)

<b>Topic:</b>	Public Transport/Travel.
<b>Setting:</b>	Railway Station/Motor parks/Bus stops.
<b>Language Function:</b>	Seeking Information. Discussing events.
<b>Objective:</b>	Pupils should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the procedures of travelling in various public transports using the appropriate registers for the appropriate modes of transportation. Pupils should also be able to discuss different transportation means.
<b>Language Tasks:</b>	<p>Oral/Listening</p> <p><b>Role Play:</b> e.g., Going to school in private cars/public transport etc. Enacting travelling procedures e.g., packing luggages, going to the station/taxi park, asking for departure/arrival times. Buying tickets, asking for conveniences, looking for seats in the train, asking if a seat is vacant or occupied, etc.</p> <p>Others simulations.</p>
<b>Linguistic Structures:</b>	<p>Some interrogative forms. Negative/Affirmative sentences.</p> <p>Verbs of the three regular groups. e.g., arriver, trouver, donner, etc. In the présent/passe composé/future and imparfait.</p> <p>Comparisons.</p>

**Vocabulary List:**

Each mode of transport has its peculiar registers although the procedures for departure/arrival and other aspects may have some common usages. It is suggested here that the teacher prepares the appropriate register for the particular mode of transport used bearing in mind the most important notions in each means of transportation e.g., embarking/landing/taking off/arriving departing, late, early, cancellations, breakdown, fuel, diesel, tyres, engine lights, mechanics, etc.

**Instructional Materials:**

Appropriate texts,

Songs

Pictures

**Assessment:**

See prescribed assessment.

(7)

<b>Topic:</b>	Public Entertainment.
<b>Setting:</b>	Cinema/Station/Theatre/Village square.
<b>Language Function:</b>	Expressing thought/opinion/feelings. Getting things done.
<b>Objectives:</b>	Pupils should be able to invite others out, organize a 'rendez-vous' and appreciate events.
<b>Language Tasks:</b>	Oral/Listening  <b>Role play:</b> Simulations Exercises, e.g., Comparing teams, Describing events, reporting events.
<b>Linguistic Structure:</b>	Present, future and imperative of relevant verbs from the three main groups.  Affirmatives/Negatives  Interrogatives, Commands.  Comparisons (Adjectives and Adverbs)  Conditional tense.  Some Idiomatic expressions  Exclamations, etc.
<b>Vocabulary List:</b>	Adequate and appropriate registers for a particular chosen setting as different events go on in the different settings.
<b>Instructional Materials:</b>	Pictures of famous footballers/sportsmen/women, actors, etc.  Appropriate Texts.
<b>Assessment:</b>	See prescribed assessment.



(8)

<b>Topic:</b>	Family & Daily Routine.
<b>Setting:</b>	At home.
<b>Language Function:</b>	Getting things done. giving and seeking information.
<b>Objective:</b>	<p>Pupils should demonstrate the ability to describe events and objects at home and state and ask others about family affairs. They should be able to give and seek information about other members of the family and also talk about family pets, friends, etc.</p>
<b>Language Tasks:</b>	<p>Oral/Listening</p> <p><b>Role play:</b> Playing family life. Father/Mother/Kids doing different chores. Giving orders, songs, etc.</p>
<b>Linguistic Structure:</b>	<p>Structures that are related to demands in the Affirmative/Negative/Interrogative.</p> <p>Direct speeches, Imperatives, Adverbs, Adjectives, Prepositions.</p> <p>Verbs 'Avoir' and 'être' including verbs from the three main groups in the present tense. Expressions like "<i>avoir besoin de</i> ... "</p>
<b>Vocabulary List:</b>	<p>Concerning names of people, Relations, Animals.</p> <p>Various locations in the house, e.g., rooms and amenities, garage and tools, lounge and furniture, garden and tools, kitchen utensils.</p>

Types of jobs done at home

Times of waking/sleeping

Meal times, etc.

**Instructional Materials:** Real life objects  
Appropriate textes  
Games.

**Assessment:** See prescribed Assessment.

(9)

<b>Topic:</b>	Yearly Festivals
<b>Setting:</b>	Christmas/Easter/Ramadan/Birthday/Marriage, etc.
<b>Language Functions:</b>	Getting things done, Expressing feelings.
<b>Objective:</b>	Pupils should be able to describe current/past and future events and express their views about them and also identify the main festivals in the year. They should also be able to give account of and compare current and past events, and express a wish for future events.
<b>Linguistic Structure:</b>	<p>The future tense</p> <p>Conditional - 'si'...present/future.</p> <p>si imparfait/conditional present</p> <p>si plus que parfait/conditional present or past.</p> <p>* Causal sentences (c'est parceque --- que)</p> <p>* Modalities (a mon avis, considerer, etc)</p> <p>(certitudes and probabilities.</p> <p>l'imparfait)</p> <p>'The subjunctive - "il est possible que ...."</p> <p>"il n'est pas sur qu'il vienne"</p> <p>'notions - , avant, c' est ainsi, maintenant, etc</p> <p>Affirmatives/Negatives in présent, passé composé and imparfait.</p>

	Adverbs
	Prepositions.
<b>Language Tasks:</b>	Oral/Listening/Writing
<b>Activities</b>	<p>Story telling</p> <p>Describing past events</p> <p>Celebrating Birthday, etc.</p> <p>Songs: Christmas, Easter, Ramadan/Id el Fitri/Id el Mulud, etc.</p> <p>Simulations</p> <p>Descriptive essays.</p>
<b>Vocabulary:</b>	<p>The appropriate registers for the different festivals and events should be used.</p> <p>Notions of time, date, sequence, etc.</p>
<b>Instructional Materials:</b>	<p>Songs, Pictures, Films, etc.</p> <p>Magazines, Appropriate texts.</p>
<b>Assessment:</b>	As prescribed.

<b>Topic:</b>	Health
<b>Setting:</b>	Hospital/Clinic/Healing Homes.
<b>Language Function:</b>	Getting things done Expressing Feeling, etc.
<b>Objective:</b>	Pupils should be able to ask or advise about health and safety and carry out simple first aid routines. They should also be able to identify parts of the body and refer to pains.
<b>Language/Tasks</b>	Oral/Listening/Reading
<b>Activities</b>	Role plays: Patient/Doctor/Nurse Simulations. Asking for help in the event of sickness or accident: getting the ambulance, etc. Referring to pain in parts of the body. Giving simple instructions on prescription and taking of medicines.
<b>Linguistic Structures:</b>	Articles (definite, indefinite, partitive, possessive, demonstrative, etc). * Adjectives * Sentences in the Affirmative/Negative. Interrogatives and commands. Verbs of the three regular groups

Pre-nominal verbs.

Infinitive, imperative, reflective present/past/future proche tenses.

Expressions - "*C'est dommage*", etc.

**Vocabulary List:**

Adequate and appropriate registers related to simple medical terms: Doctor, Hospital, Nurse, Accident, Injections, Illness, etc.

Names of some diseases and medicines, simple related idiomatic expressions.

**Instructional materials:**

Pictures, Appropriate texts.

**Assessment:**

See prescribed assessment.

<b>Topic:</b>	School.
<b>Setting:</b>	School/Classroom/Staff room/Laboratory.
<b>Language Function:</b>	Getting things done Expressing opinion.
<b>Objective:</b>	Pupils should be able to identify their own school and be able to describe its features and nature adequately.
<b>Language tasks:</b>	Oral/Listening
<b>Activity:</b>	Conversation/Discussion.
<b>Role play:</b>	Headmaster Prefects Teachers Pupils
<b>Linguistic Structure:</b>	Adjectives, Adverbs (Comparisons & Agreements) * Conjunctions * Verbs of the three regular groups in present tense. * Verbs 'Avoir' and 'Etre' * Personal/relative/possessive pronouns * Sentences in the Affirmative/Negative * Position of Adjectives, Adverbs, etc.

**Vocabulary:**

Names of people/objects.

Also, notions of space, time, colour, sequence, etc.

**Instructional Materials:**

Real objects

Appropriate texts

**Assessment:**

See prescribed Assessment.



<b>Topic:</b>	People
<b>Setting:</b>	Home/Public places
<b>Language Function:</b>	Socializing: Asking/giving information. Getting things done Expressing opinions
<b>Objective:</b>	Meeting people suggests socializing, so pupils should be able to introduce and describe self and others. They should be able to show courtesy, affection, respect, etc.
<b>Language Tasks:</b>	Oral/Listening
<b>Activities:</b>	Role play: Conversation. Friends meeting, introducing and describing Identifying people in pictures. Simulations.
<b>Linguistic Structure:</b>	Verb 'être' - "c'est .... Adjectives and Substantif Verb 'Avoir' - 'il a ... Interrogative sentences - Qu'est - ce que? Qui - ce? à qui?, comment vous appelez - vous? Negative sentences

Verbs of three regular groups.

Present tense.

**Vocabulary:**

Notions chosen as appropriate to a particular setting.

Different registers for      Bankers  
   Doctors  
   Lawyers  
   Engineers  
   Actors etc.

in their different places of work.

**Instructional Materials:**

Pictures

Poems

Songs

Appropriate texts.

**Assessment:**

See prescribed Assessment.

<b>Topic:</b>	Weather
<b>Setting:</b>	Different Climatic Conditions as witnessed for example, in Africa or in Europe. Hot weather/Cold weather/Foggy weather.
<b>Language Function:</b>	Expressing opinion Criticizing Appreciating Seeking/giving information.
<b>Objectives:</b>	Pupils should be able to describe or comment on different weather conditions in different places, especially with respect to different seasons. They should also demonstrate the ability to understand simple predictions about the weather.
<b>Language Tasks/Activities:</b>	Oral discussions Descriptions
<b>Linguistic Structures:</b>	Quel temps fait-il? Adjectives, Adverbs Verb "faire" Phrases such as - 'il fait beau temps'

'il fait mauvais temps'

'il fait du vent'

'il pleut .....

Partitives

l' Imparfait, présent, passé composé

Affirmatives, negatives, interrogatives, other relevant  
verbs chosen from the three regular groups -

dormir, sortir, rester,

se coucher, prendre, etc.

**Vocabulary:**

Register and Notions pertaining to weather especially -  
heatwaves, snow, fog, storms, wind, harmattan, rain,  
sunshine, also centigrade, fahrenheit, etc.

The four cardinal points - East, West, North and South  
locations.

**Assessment:**

See prescribed assessment.

<b>Topic:</b>	Careers
<b>Setting:</b>	Professions/Occupations/Vocations
<b>Language Functions:</b>	Giving and seeking information Expressing opinion.
<b>Objective:</b>	Pupils should be able to name as many professions/occupations as possible. They should be able to express their preferences among the various professions/occupations and express their view and say what they would like to become in future.
<b>Language Tasks/Activities:</b>	Oral simple conversation/discussions.
<b>Linguistic Structures:</b>	le futur le conditionnel si présent/futur; si imparfait/conditionnel présent. si - plus que- parfait/conditionnel. le présent/le passé composé. Expressions such as 'c'est parce-que ..... que" Modalities of appreciation and disagreement. - "à mon avis, permettre, entraîner, etc.
<b>Vocabulary:</b>	Notions appropriate to different professions/occupations.

**Instructional Materials:**

Songs

Real life objects used in some professions

Pictures

Appropriate texts.

**Assessment:**

See prescribed assessment.

## CHAPTER 6

### SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

#### Introduction

That the study of foreign languages has a general educational value apart from providing an additional tool for communication cannot be overstated. However, while recommending the teaching and learning of French in our Nigerian Schools in such terms, one admits that research sources for statements about the advantages accrued from this are not easy to identify. This is so because there is virtually no empirical research done into the cognitive, conceptual and affective/attitudinal effects of learning foreign languages in general and not all the aims of foreign language studies lend themselves easily to assessment.

Meanwhile, the language curriculum is a complex combination of classroom teaching as well as classroom assessment of learning of which syllabus design is only a part. Other component parts include resources in form of materials and equipment, methodology and evaluation schemes for assessing pupils' performance. The suggestions that are put forward here will concern foreign language learning in general while specific recommendation will be made for foreign language syllabus design which is the focus of this study.

The major participating components in ensuring a successful pursuance of foreign language policies for teaching and learning are:

- 1) The National Involvement
- 2) The Teachers/Course Book Writers
- 3) The Learners
- 4) Material Resources as well as Conducive environmental and curricular conditions.

#### **(1) The National Involvement**

Except there is a clear and concrete national interest in the issue of foreign language teaching and learning, the downward trends witnessed in this area of the Nigerian School's curriculum will persist almost to the event of a national catastrophe. Our national policy on education does not consider foreign language learning as more than an elective subject in our secondary schools. Little wonder there is not a single line of policy statement available regarding foreign language study in Nigeria. Ironically, the nation does not tarry in flaunting her involvement in, and commitments to international organisations like the ECOWAS, where two-thirds of the member states are francophone.

For the much needed co-operation, exchange of ideas and funds for research to sustain foreign language learning there should be a national policy statement addressing the issues of:

- The lasting and beneficial effects of foreign language learning on the prosperity and well-being of the individual as well as the nation.
- The availability and take-up of provision where the present position of foreign language teaching and learning in our schools are emphasised and effective policies for the future are made.



- Which foreign languages are to be taught in the light of their relevance to the social, economic and political well-being of the nation.
- The successful expression of the principles of breadth, balance, relevance and differentiation in both content and teaching methods.
- The production of a comprehensive syllabus guideline that has emerged from the works of competent foreign language teachers which has been based on well-ground theory of foreign language learning.
- Setting up of National Information Centre for foreign language teaching and learning that would have the facilities for storing information materials and creating additional resources to enhance foreign language studies. This centre could also be a forum for organising national seminars.
- Involving of various interest groups (not just teachers and education officers) in a way that will joggle their awareness and motivate them to the extent of collecting valuable ideas that should help in making concrete decisions for foreign language learning.

This national involvement should eventually attract international interest to the extent of organising exchange teachers' programmes from different French speaking countries (and giving bursaries to Nigerian French teachers to attend annual courses or international language conferences). These ideas may sound lofty but the need for a continuous flow of information has never been so felt and efforts to establish personal links will go a long way in promoting international co-operation with regards to French learning in Nigeria. The

Government's efforts at establishing French language villages in some parts of the Federation is a step in the right direction.

### **The Teachers**

Whilst the consideration for learners continues to be the topmost priority, there is no doubt that the effectiveness of learning depends very much on the effectiveness of teaching. Teachers are indispensable agents in the learning process who have to make it work.

It is then necessary that teachers be motivated, encouraged, educated and trained not as transmitters of textbook materials, but as exploiters of appropriate activities for learning and developers of syllabuses and materials appropriate to changing or varied needs. The Nigerian French language teachers' presence has often generally been ignored with regards to decision making in foreign language instruction. And yet, it is his recommendation in the light of the experiences that are revealed to him in his language classroom, that must be viewed as most important for effective outcome.

This image of a "*Medium*" carrying the content of teaching to the pupils is often too prevalent in the practices of French teachers. In the opinion of the researcher, this hinders the teachers from relying on their own intuitive decisions about the various observations they make with different pupils at given stages of their learning. This attitude obscures to a large extent, the valuable wealth of data made available to teachers in their foreign language classrooms. Teachers should be given a freer hand in making their classrooms

into a natural communication environment so that learners can benefit more from the principles of training in the appropriate communicative skills through fluency activities.

### **The Learners**

Not all Nigerian secondary school learners of French are going to be authors. Some may wish to write articles and read textbooks in French. Others may require just enough French to enable them write letters to foreign friends and read newspapers. It is inevitable though, that majority should find themselves as tourists, foreign students and immigrants, journalists, diplomats and participants in international conferences, or as technocrats within the francophone presence in Nigeria, and high level bilingual professionals. This will require from them the ability to communicate orally and also understand people with whom they come in contact.

As Brann (1973) argues, acquiring an instrumental skill in a foreign language is a waste of time as most learners may never have the opportunity to use the language given the situational constraints here. They will be discouraged by having to learn something which has no obvious relevance to them in anyway.

Another related factor as Neuner (1987) remarks, is that foreign language learners in schools do not always feel any need for the language they are learning. The results of this study though, shows that secondary school French teachers in Nigerian schools definitely have their idea as to why they should be learning French. The problem is that there is no real way of telling the depth of this feeling. Whereas objective needs are not necessarily felt by the individual learners, subjective needs are. Procher (1980) explains further that

*"Pour un apprenant scolaire l'avenir adulte est toujours incertain, aleatoire, et meme seulement potentiel. Cet apprenant ne peut donc avoir qu'une conscience floue de ses besoins langagiers".*

It is hereby suggested that foreign language learning should be made more interesting to learners by motivating and exposing them to the real educational values of foreign language through the acquisition of language "awareness". It is also necessary for those involved in foreign language instruction, (for the sake of sustaining learners' interests) to evolve a means of defining a series of short-term goals defined in performance terms, that should enable the learners to advance in knowledge and skill. When one goal builds upon the one before it in gradual but concise progression, learners may derive more joy in their achievements and find less frustrations as in the practice where tests and examinations require learners to fulfil a range of possible attainments in foreign language learning to which grades are eventually awarded. If as theory suggests, the individual learner is to benefit from the foreign language he/she is learning, it will be through exposure to language learning experience that has strong communicative orientation and teachers should make the situation possible, where learners attempt to communicate and understand communication in the target language so as to help him adopt new patterns of behaviour as evident in the cultural ideas they are now in contact with.

### **Materials and other Resources**

One of the crucial educational factors considered in foreign language needs is the availability of suitable materials for teaching. There are no known documents explaining

the principles and philosophy of language schemes. It is hereby suggested that those who are concerned with foreign language education make available and utilize detailed papers that deal on all aspects of the theory and practice of the schemes.

This could be help in producing teaching materials centrally and avoid the type of inadequacies witnessed in the foreign language curriculum now. Teachers workshops should be organised where materials as well as tests are produced, demonstrated and discussed as done in other educational systems.

Teachers are the only people who can reasonably give accounts of what actually goes on in their language classrooms. Such accounts should be published in language teachers books or journals to be disbursed to schools where other teachers can learn from the experience of their colleagues and enrich the development of materials and other resources which are obviously needed for French teaching and learning in Nigeria.

Another relevant aspect in teacher participation for successful French learning in Nigerian secondary schools is the often neglected role of French in Career Guidance for their pupils. New roles are inevitably spelt for teachers who have to consider pupils' world of work.

There is the need for classroom teachers to promote the French subject. Remarking the utility of French in present day Nigeria, Owhotu (1987) points out that there is hardly a professional in Nigeria today that does not come in one form of contact or the other with international business, political, economic and educational agencies and institutions as well as visitors and colleagues during the course of their practices.

For future Nigerian professionals to cope effectively with the linguistic demands of their various chosen careers, Owhotu rightly suggests, that teachers, through a carefully planned and effectively implemented awareness/promotional programmes of guidance, help their pupils to be better equipped for future demands.

### **Design and Production**

As for syllabus design and production, this aspect of communicative language teaching has only recently started to receive attention. Consequently, teachers have continued to take the syllabus as an exclusive document for teaching, thereby, obscuring the difference between methodology and syllabus. The division between these two lies in the fact that while syllabus specifies the knowledge to be acquired, the methodology provides the conditions for its behavioural realisation.

Teachers are to be made aware of this dichotomy. Especially as the language syllabus is only a list of features to be presented for teaching, teachers should be alert to its role as the descriptor of the desired outcome of the foreign language curriculum, which says little about how that outcome is best achieved.

### **Assessment**

This brings into focus the greatest single issue in communicative syllabus design which is that of assessment. Teachers have been used to consider formal accuracy (as emphasised by traditional test types) as the most important element in language production. This view has to change as teachers should be introduced to the new modes of assessment required

by this syllabus type that emphasises performance with a higher premium on oral performance than ever before.

A concept that is not always understood by teachers is that of language functions which is the concern of the communicative language syllabus. Many teachers still allow their classroom teaching to be unnecessarily dominated by preparation for examinations to the detriment of participatory evaluation. The greatest concern of communicative language teaching should be that the majority of learners succeed and it is suggested here that teachers make use of pupils' progress cards. Such cards should contain a limited list of language functions which pupils should perform; marks could be awarded on the successful performance of each task. Pupils have been noticed to be highly motivated when they are scored according to the tasks they have been able to carry out using the language they are studying.

The use of open-ended type of questions is highly recommended for allowing learners to exploit the vast linguistic possibilities at their disposal attempting to convey meaning. The researcher suggests an assessment card for each pupil that describes the objectives of a particular unit, and scores the pupils' performance levels on communicative ability, range of structures, grammatical accuracy and appropriacy, pronunciation, speed and length of utterances. This should allow both teacher and pupils to know at what level of performance improvement is required and the number of pupils requiring group or individual attention at particular levels of performance.

Most importantly, teachers are to be involved in syllabus productions and revisions. Their role as the indispensable agent in the learning process makes this imperative. As a multi-lingual society, Nigeria needs more research into the pragmatics and pedagogy of bilingualism. The results of such research could be extended to foreign language instructions.

### Conclusion

Syllabus production is only a part of the complex combination referred to as the language curriculum. As the area is just beginning to receive some attention, this research has attempted to highlight the problems and prospects of a communicative French syllabus design in the light of the deficiencies observed in practices in Nigeria.

In an attempt to draw valuable lessons for French teaching and learning in Nigerian secondary schools, the researcher has studied French language syllabus designs of other countries while seeking information through various channels (including the identification of learners needs) that should further enhance decision making for achieving good results in communicative language teaching and learning. From the results gathered, some of the problems in this area have been highlighted and the researcher has attempted to infer possible solutions for a potentially more viable and result-oriented foreign language curriculum in our schools through an innovative teaching syllabus design.

This research however does not claim to have found the "*pill*" that should solve the problems encountered in the foreign language instruction because of inadequate syllabus designs. In fact, perspectives in foreign language learning are numerous and this current



trend, i.e., the communicative approach should not be taken to be the final answer to language problems. Although our efforts at testing the design have proved positive and should have considerable predictive validity, the assumptions underlying all innovations and this design will be validated in the long term by experience and further research.

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APPENDIX A  
QUESTIONNAIRE

"An innovative syllabus design for a viable  
communicative foreign language programme in Nigerian  
Secondary Schools

The researcher, (Mrs Bola Hammond) is a PhD student  
in the Department of Curriculum Studies (French),  
University of Lagos.

A very large majority of foreign language learners in  
secondary schools loose interest in this subject after  
the first few years of learning. This work has set out  
to find out if the programmes designed for foreign  
language learning inhibit learners from achieving  
the necessary skills needed for appropriate and  
effective communication.

The information gathered from the questionnaire you  
are about to fill may be of great value to decision  
makers, coursebook writers, teachers and learners  
of foreign language (French in particular) in evolving  
better programmes that should make teaching and  
learning more meaningful.

Thank you very much.

PERSONAL DETAILS (DETAIL PERSONNEL)

COUNTRY:- .....

Name and address of school or institution (Nomet adresse  
decole):- .....

Name and address of office (Nomet adresse de bureau):.....

Sex (Sexe):- .....

Age (age):- .....

Qualification:- .....

Profession:- .....

Teaching experience (in years), Experience Pedagogique  
(nombre d'annee):- .....

Teaching subject (speciality) matiere enseignee  
(specialite):- .....

Position/functions:- .....

INSTRUCTIONS: There are five columns marked SA(Strongly Agree); A(Agree); U(Undecided); D(Disagree) and SD(Strongly Disagree). Please tick ( ) the appropriate column that best explains your opinion about the following statements:-

OPINIONS ABOUT THE JUSTIFICATION FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING	5	4	3	2	1
	SA	A	U	D	SD
1) There is always the need for one to understand and speak a foreign language.					
2) Foreign language learning improves the intellect.					
3) Foreign languages aid the learner's cultural development.					
4) Foreign languages aid a better understanding of the learners own first language.					
5) A person is likely to secure a good job if he understands and speaks a foreign language					
6) Knowledge of a foreign language is a very important diplomatic tool for better international relations.					





	5	4	3	2	1
	SA	A	U	D	SD
18) The future of foreign language in this country is very bright.					
19) The future of foreign languages in this country hangs in the balance.					
20) Learning of at least one foreign language must be made compulsory by policy makers.					
(A) <u>OPINIONS ABOUT PEDAGOGICAL ISSUES</u> <u>THE LEARNERS:</u>					
21) For successful mastery of a foreign language, learning must start before the age of five years.					
22) Foreign language learning can only be successfully achieved after the age of ten years.					
23) If learning is to be successful, teaching of a foreign language should not be embarked upon after the age of eighteen.					
24) A learner that has no feeling for a foreign language cannot learn it successfully.					
25) A bilingual learner stands a better chance of learning a new foreign language more successfully than a monolingual.					
26) Girls are more successful at learning a foreign language than boys.					
27) Only if a foreign language fulfils a particular learner's need can it be successfully learnt.					
28) A learner that has to be taught more than one new language at a time ends up being confused and not mastering any language well.					

	5	4	3	2	1
	SA	A	U	D	SD
29) Different learner's have different levels of difficulties while learning foreign languages.					
30) Every learner need the same level of proficiency in the foreign language studies.					
31) All school pupils must study a foreign language.					
32) Learners attitude to foreign language study in this country is favourable.					
33) Learners of foreign languages are well motivated in this country.					
34) Learners are allowed to make decisions on foreign language programmes in this country,					
35) Foreign language learners in this country attain a high rate of success in the language studied.					
36) Learners of foreign languages in this country drop the subject at the slightest opportunity.					
37) The availability of teaching materials motivates and encourages learners in this country to learn foreign languages successfully.					
(B) <u>THE TEACHERS:-</u>					
38) Only teachers that have been trained to teach a particular language must engage in teaching it.					
39) All foreign language teachers should speak the target language fluently.					
40) In this country all foreign language teachers speak the target language fluently.					

	5	4	3	2	1
	SA	A	U	D	SD
41) A foreign language teacher cannot teach effectively unless he is a native speaker of that language.					
42) Foreign language teachers should adhere strictly to prescribed textbooks for teaching.					
43) Teachers should be given a free hand in choosing what to teach in a language class.					
44) A foreign language teacher cannot teach effectively without adequate knowledge of psychology of foreign language teaching.					
45) The foreign language teacher should be aware of his pupils language needs.					
46) It is possible for foreign language teachers to meet individual language needs during a language lesson.					
47) Majority of teachers of foreign languages in this country are untrained.					
48) There are as many trained as untrained teachers in the school system.					
49) The training period of foreign language teachers in this country is very adequate.					
50) Foreign language teachers are overworked.					
51) In this country, Inservice training of Foreign Language teachers is compulsory.					
52) Foreign language teachers in this country generally seize the opportunity to improve their skills and knowledge.					

	5	4	3	2	1
	SA	A	U	D	SD
53) Foreign language teachers are well paid in this country.					
54) Foreign language teachers deserve extra allowances.					
55) Foreign language teachers in this country are paid extra allowances.					
<u>OPINIONS ON FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEXTBOOKS AND MATERIALS</u>					
56) Foreign language textbooks should emphasize all the language skills.					
57) Textbooks for teaching foreign language must be graded.					
58) Textbooks must be illustrated.					
59) Textbooks that do not provide accompanying workbooks are not well suited for foreign language learning.					
60) The majority of language textbook used in schools here are imported.					
61) Language textbooks used here are produced locally.					
62) Foreign language textbooks used in schools are pre-selected by the Ministry of Education.					
63) Foreign language Textbooks produced locally contain too many foreign elements that are far removed from learners experiences.					
64) Parents of pupils buy all foreign language textbooks used in schools.					
65) Foreign language textbooks used in schools are provided free to pupils.					
66) A well-equipped language laboratory is situated in your school for foreign language learning.					

	5	4	3	2	1
	SD	A	U	D	SD
67) Laboratory for foreign language learning is situated outside the school.					
68) All learners have easy access to the language laboratory.					
69) Materials for foreign language learning provided free by the government.					
70) Teachers prepare their own materials for foreign language teaching.					
71) Local publishers produce a large quantity of assorted textbooks for foreign language learning.					
72) Children should be allowed to take home textbooks provided by the government.					
73) Foreign language textbooks are generally in short supply.					
D) <u>OPINIONS ON ORGANISATION OF THE CURRICULUM</u>					
74) Foreign language study is compulsory in schools in this country.					
75) Language camps and foreign excursions are essential to language competence.					
76) Most schools in this country do organise excursions and language camps.					
77) School teaching conditions are generally adequate for foreign language learning in this country.					
78) The time allocated for foreign language learning in schools is generally too few,					
79) Foreign language lessons must be held daily in schools.					

	5	4	3	2	1
	SA	A	U	D	SD
80) It is important to give home-work regularly in the foreign language studied.					
81) Speech in foreign language learning is the decisive factor therefore most language lessons should be devoted to speech training.					
82) Possession of a foreign language is compulsory for admission to higher education in this country.					
83) There is a strong need to promote technical and vocational content in the foreign language curriculum in this country.					

## QUESTIONNAIRE

### **EVALUATION D'UN PROGRAMME D'ETUDE EFFICACE POUR L'ENSEIGNEMENT ET L'APPRENTISSAGE DU FRANCAIS (LANGUE ETRANGERE) AU NIGERIA**

Une grande majorité d'apprenants étrangers du second cycle perdent l'intérêt dans le français après les 2 premières années d'enseignement. Ce travail a pour but de rechercher si le programme fixé pour l'enseignement des langues étrangères empêche les apprenants d'obtenir les meilleures compétences requises pour une communication juste et efficace.

Les informations réunies pour le questionnaire ci-joint devraient être d'une grande importance pour les décideurs, écrivains, formateurs, enseignants et étudiants des langues étrangères (le français en particulier), afin de tirer de meilleurs programmes capables de rendre l'étude et l'enseignement plus significatives.

#### PART I

##### (DETAIL PERSONNEL)

Pays.....  
(Nom et adresse d'école) .....  
(Nom et adresse de bureau) .....  
Sex.....  
Age.....  
Qualification.....  
Profession.....

Expérience pédagogique (nombre d'année) .....  
 Matière enseignée (spécialité) .....  
 Fonctions .....

## PART II

Lisez les phrases suivantes et signalez la réponse qui décrit mieux votre opinion: Mettez ou (-) ou (+).	Oui	Non	Pas d'opinion
1) Il est toujours nécessaire de comprendre et de savoir parler une langue étrangère.			
2) L'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère aide à améliorer l'intellect.			
3) L'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère aide le développement culturel des étudiants en langue.			
4) L'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère aide les étudiants en langue à mieux comprendre leur langue maternelle.			
5) Pour s'assurer d'un avenir économiquement stable l'on doit comprendre et savoir parler une langue étrangère.			
6) Une langue étrangère sert comme langue internationale de culture et de diplomatie.			
7) L'étude d'une langue étrangère doit être obligatoirement recommandée dans le cadre des études secondaires.			
8) Les pays dont les peuples comprennent et parlent une langue étrangère progressent très rapidement.			
9) La sécurité nationale d'un pays dépend de la capacité de ses populations à comprendre et à savoir parler une langue étrangère.			



	Oui	Non	Pas d'opinion
10) Pour établir une amitié profonde avec les voisins, il faut comprendre une langue étrangère.			
11) L'individu qui comprend et qui parle une langue étrangère a confiance en soi.			
12) Le développement des aptitudes pour bien s'exprimer arrive quand on apprend une langue étrangère.			
13) Pour avoir l'esprit large et pour bien connaître autrui, l'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère est bien indispensable			
14) La décision que prend le gouvernement sur l'apprentissage des langues étrangères dans le cadre des études secondaires est positive.			
15) Les langues coloniales (l'anglais, le français etc...) doivent être remplacées par les langues nationales.			
16) Les langues coloniales aussi bien que les langues locales doivent être préservées.			
17) Quelques-unes des langues nationales ont été adoptées dans ce pays comme langues officielles.			
18) L'avenir des langues étrangères dans ce pays est prometteur.			
19) L'avenir des langues étrangères dans ce pays n'est pas certain.			
20) Ceux qui prennent les décisions doivent demander à tout le monde d'apprendre au moins une langue étrangère.			

**OPINIONS: LA SITUATION PEDAGOGIQUE ET LES APPRENANTS:**

- 21) Pour bien maîtriser une langue étrangère, l'apprentissage doit commencer avant l'âge de cinq ans.
- 22) L'étudiant en langue apprend mieux une langue étrangère à l'âge de dix ans
- 23) L'on ne peut pas apprendre avec efficacité une langue étrangère quand on a plus de dix-huit ans.
- 24) Pour apprendre une langue étrangère effectivement, l'étudiant en langue doit avoir un penchant pour la langue.
- 25) Un étudiant en langue bilingue apprend mieux une autre langue étrangère que le voisin monolingue.
- 26) Les filles ont plus d'aptitudes pour apprendre une langue étrangère que les garçons.
- 27) Un étudiant en langue n'arrive jamais à apprendre la langue effectivement si elle n'a pas d'intérêt pour lui.
- 28) Un étudiant en langue qui veut apprendre plusieurs langues étrangères à la fois finit par être confondu et finalement n'en maîtrise aucune.
- 29) Chaque élève a son niveau de difficultés lorsqu'il apprend une langue étrangère.
- 30) Tous les étudiants en langue ont besoin de la même habileté.
- 31) Tous les élèves doivent apprendre une langue étrangère.
- 32) Les attitudes des étudiants en langue étrangère dans ce pays sont favorables.

Oui

Non

Pas  
d'opi  
nion

	Oui	Non	Pas d'option
33) Les étudiants en langue dans ce pays sont bien motivés.			
34) Les étudiants en langue dans ce pays peuvent prendre des décisions sur le programme d'étude.			
35) Les étudiants en langue dans ce pays réussissent bien dans la langue étudiée.			
36) Les étudiants en langue dans ce pays profitent de la moindre occasion pour laisser tomber cette matière.			
37) Les étudiants en langue dans ce pays sont bien motivés et encouragés d'apprendre la langue parce que les matériels pour l'enseignement sont disponibles.			
<b>B. <u>LES ENSEIGNANTS</u></b>			
38) Seuls les professeurs de français qui ont reçu une formation pédagogique doivent enseigner la langue étrangère.			
39) Tous les professeurs de français doivent parler couramment la langue.			
40) Dans ce pays, tous les professeurs de français parlent couramment cette langue.			
41) Le professeur d'une langue étrangère ne peut pas enseigner avec compétence si ce n'est pas sa langue maternelle.			
42) Les professeurs d'une langue étrangère ne doivent utiliser que les manuels recommandés pour l'enseignement de cette langue.			
43) Les professeurs doivent choisir eux-mêmes ce qu'ils voudraient enseigner dans la classe de langue.			
44) Sans une connaissance profonde de la psychologie le professeur de français ne peut pas bien enseigner la langue.			

	Oui	Non	Pas d'opinion
45) Le professeur de français doit être au courant des besoins linguistiques des enseignés.			
46) Les professeurs d'une langue étrangère satisferont les besoins de chaque élève pendant les cours de langue.			
47) La plupart des professeurs de français dans ce pays n'ont reçu aucune formation pédagogique.			
48) Les professeurs de français dans ce pays qui ont reçu une formation sont aussi nombreux que ceux qui n'en ont pas.			
49) La durée d'étude pour la formation des professeurs de langue étrangère dans ce pays est adéquate.			
50) Le travail des professeurs de français dans ce pays est trop pénible.			
51) Dans ce pays, les professeurs de langue étrangère sont obligés d'assister aux stages.			
52) Les professeurs de français dans ce pays profitent des stages ou des séminaires pour améliorer leur niveau.			
53) Les professeurs de français dans ce pays ont un salaire élevé.			
54) Les professeurs de langue étrangère dans ce pays doivent recevoir des émoluments.			
55) Les professeurs de langue étrangère ici reçoivent des primes.			
<b><u>OPINIONS SUR LES MANUELS ET LES MATERIELS</u></b>			
56) Les manuels pour l'enseignement d'une langue étrangère doivent mettre l'accent sur les aptitudes que doivent apprendre les enseignés.			

	Oui	Non	Pas d'opinion
57) Les manuels pour l'enseignement d'une langue étrangère doivent être adaptés au niveau des élèves.			
58) Les manuels doivent être illustrés.			
59) Les manuels qui n'incluent pas les cahiers de travaux pratiques ne sont pas bons pour l'enseignement.			
60) La plupart des manuels utilisés dans les écoles ici viennent de l'étranger.			
61) Les manuels employés dans les écoles ici sont publiés localement.			
62) Les manuels utilisés ici sont recommandés par le Ministère de l'Education.			
63) Les manuels édités localement contiennent trop d'éléments étrangers qui ne permettent pas aux élèves de comprendre les leçons.			
64) Les parents des élèves achètent tous les manuels utilisés pour l'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère ici.			
65) Les manuels sont fournis gratuitement par le gouvernement.			
66) Dans cette école, il y a un laboratoire de langue qui est bien équipé.			
67) Le laboratoire de langue est situé en dehors de cette école.			
68) Tous les étudiants peuvent avoir libre accès au laboratoire.			
69) Les matériels pour l'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère sont fournis gratuitement par le gouvernement.			
70) Les professeurs fournissent les matériels qu'ils utilisent pour l'enseignement d'une langue étrangère.			

	Oui	Non	Pas d'opinion
71) Les éditeurs locaux fabriquent une large quantité de manuels pour faciliter l'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère ici.			
72) Les élèves peuvent amener chez eux les manuels de français fournis par le gouvernement.			
73) Les manuels ne sont pas généralement suffisants.			
<u>OPINIONS SUR L'ORGANISATION DU</u> <u>CURSUS/PROGRAMME</u>			
74) Dans ce pays, l'étude d'une langue étrangère est obligatoire dans les écoles.			
75) Pour acquérir une compétence effective, il faut organiser des stages linguistiques et des excursions.			
76) La plupart des écoles dans ces pays organisent des stages linguistiques et des activités périscolaires.			
77) Les conditions de l'enseignement, des langues étrangères dans ce pays sont généralement adéquates.			
78) Généralement, le nombre d'heures d'enseignement d'une langue étrangère ici n'est pas suffisant.			
79) Toutes les écoles ici doivent suivre un cours de langue étrangère tous les jours.			
80) Il est très important de donner des devoirs aux élèves régulièrement dans la langue étudiée.			

	Oui	Non	Pas d'opinion
81) Le facteur le plus important dans l'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère, c'est de savoir utiliser les phrases appropriées à un contexte donné; car il doit y avoir beaucoup d'exercices oraux dans une classe de langue.			
82) Pour pouvoir aller à l'université dans ce pays les élèves doivent obligatoirement comprendre une langue étrangère.			
83) Le contenu du programme (en ce qui concerne l'étude de la langue étrangers) dans ce pays met l'accent sur les besoins techniques et vocationels.			

Dear Parents,

The researcher, Mrs Bola Hammond, is a PhD student in the Department of Curriculum Studies (French), University of Lagos. The purpose of this work is to find out if the programmes designed for foreign language (French) learning inhibit learners from achieving the necessary skills needed for appropriate and effective communication making pupils dislike and discard this subject.

The information gathered from the questionnaire you are about to fill may be of great value to decision makers, coursebook writers, teachers and learners of French language in evolving better programme that should make teaching and learning more meaningful, hopefully, to the delight of parents.

Thank you very much.

PART 1

Personal Details. Please fill in the information below.

Country: .....  
Home Address: .....  
.....  
Office Address: .....  
Age: .....  
Sex: .....  
Qualification: .....  
Profession: .....  
Number of Children: Boy(s)..... Girl(s) .....



Please answer the following questions by ticking (✓) the appropriate column that best explains your view.

NO	QUESTIONS	YES	NO	NOT SURE
1)	Do you speak only your mother-tongue?			
2)	Do you speak more than one language?			
3)	Do you talk to your child(ren) only in your mother-tongue?			
4)	Do you communicate with your child(ren) in other languages?			
5)	Does the idea that you speak more than one language please you?			
6)	Would you like your child(ren) to speak more than one language?			
7)	Do you think that bilingualism affects children adversely?			
8)	Would you like your son to learn French or any other Foreign language at school?			
9)	Would you like your daughter to learn French or any other foreign language at school?			
10)	Do you think speaking and understanding a foreign language will improve your child(ren)'s status in the society?			
11)	Do you think speaking and understanding a foreign language will make your child(ren) secure good jobs?			
12)	Would you agree that a foreign language (French) is a very important diplomatic tool for better international relations?			
13)	Should only trained language teachers teach French in schools?			
14)	Should anyone who speaks and understands French teach it in schools?			
15)	Would you feel unhappy if your child(ren) performed badly in their foreign language studies?			
16)	Would you agree that the only way your child(ren) could avoid the risk of becoming captive of their own language is by broadening their language experience through learning a foreign language?			
17)	Rather than learn a foreign language, would you prefer your child(ren) to learn their own local languages?			

QUESTIONS	YES	NO	NOT SURE
18) Would you agree if the government of your country made foreign language (French) studies compulsory for all school pupils?			
19) Do you agree that a person that must learn a foreign language properly and effectively must start before the age of five?			
20) If there are no facilities for foreign language learning in your child(ren)'s school, will you be prepared to contribute to make sure these are available no matter the cost?			
21) If your child(ren) brought foreign language home-work from school, would you try to help or seek help if he were in difficulty?			
22) Would you like your child(ren) to be very good speakers of French language?			
23) Would you prefer your child(ren) to understand and speak only a few french words just for day-to-day conversation?			
24) Would you allow your child(ren) to go on excursions to francophone countries?			
25) Would you allow your child(ren) to join French clubs or attend language camps even if it meant coming home late at times?			

APPENDIX C

French Language Teaching and Learning

Needs Identification Questionnaire

(Forms II, and III)

Dear Student,

Please answer the following questions correctly and honestly.

Fill in your answers to some questions and in other questions you may place a tick ( ) against the answer of your choice.

1. Name of school: .....
2. Class: .....
3. Age: .....
4. Sex: ☒ Male ☐ Female
5. Nationality: .....
6. What language do you speak in your family?

Hausa ☒  
Igbo ☐  
Yoruba ☐  
English ☐  
Others ☐ (please name the language).

7. For how long have you been learning French?

Number of years .....

8. What are your reasons for learning French?

- You think it will be useful in your future career ☐
- You only want to pass your French exams in School ☐
- You have a general interest in the language ☐

9. What would you like to be when you grow up?

- Teacher ☐
- Doctor ☐
- Engineer ☐
- Lawyer ☐
- Businessman/woman ☐
- Others (please name it) ..... ☐

10. How much will you need to use French in your future career?

Regularly ☐

Occasionally ☐

rarely ☐

never ☐

11. Where would you like to work when you grow up?

- In a government office ☐

- In a private Company ☐

- In your own privately-owned business ☐

- In school as of French Teacher ☐

12. What would you like to be able to do best in French?

- Understand the Language ☐

- Write letters in French ☐

- Read French books and newspapers ☐

- Speak French fluently ☐

- All of these ☐

- None of these ☐

13. You would like to continue learning French only up to:

J.S.S. level ☐

S.S.S. level ☐

University ☐

14. What equipment does your teacher use during your French lessons?

- Tape recorders ☐

- Film Projectors ☐

- T.V./V. deo ☐

- Others ☐ (Please name them) \_\_\_\_\_

- None of these. ☐

15. How many students are there in your French Class?

- 15 - 25 ☐

- 26 - 40 ☐

- 41 - 55 ☐

- Above 55 ☐

16. How many periods of French do you have each week?

- 1 - 2 periods ☐

- 3 - 4 periods ☐

- 5 - 6 periods ☐

- above 6 periods ☐

17. Do you think the number of periods is enough?

YES ☐

NO ☐

Not Sure ☐

18. Do you have a French Club in your School?

YES ☐

NO ☐

Don't know ☐

19. How often do you go on French excursions to neighbouring French Countries?

- Regularly ☐

- Occasionally ☐

- Rarely ☐

- Never ☐

20. How interesting do you find the French language?

- very interesting ☐

- interesting ☐

- fairly interesting ☐

- not interesting ☐

- very uninteresting ☐

21. Is it a good idea to teach French Language in Nigerian Secondary Schools?

YES ☐

No ☐

Not Sure ☐

22. What problems do you have in learning French? (Please rank 1st - 5th in order of difficulty).

- Insufficient number of periods ☐

- Lack of teachers ☐

- Lack of books ☐
- Lack of equipment ☐
- Lack of interest ☐

25. How do you find the following?

	Very Difficult	Difficult	Not so difficult	easy	Very easy
Understanding Spoken French	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speaking French Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Writing French words and Sentences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Understanding written French	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
French spellings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dictation in French	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading French lines and passages.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

APPENDIX D

The attached questionnaire has been prepared by Mrs Bola Hammond, a PhD student of the University of Lagos.

The questionnaire has been designed for use in Nigeria in relation to the teaching of French. Mrs Hammond would, however, be interested to receive, for comparative purposes, answers to her questionnaire from a selection of non-Nigerian parents.

If you have five minutes to spare, would you complete the questionnaire and return it to me so that I can pass it on to Mrs Hammond before she leaves for London on Friday, 18 March 1988.

Given the Nigerian background to the questionnaire, you may find it necessary to add to the YES/NO/NOT SURE answer possibilities a fourth NOT RELEVANT.

*Wilson Barrett*

W.F. BARRETT

14.iii.88

# APPENDIX E

## QUESTIONNAIRE

Please fill in the questionnaire where necessary and indicate your choices by ticking (✓) the answer that best describes your view of the questions:

1. Name .....
  2. Profession : .....
  3. Teaching Experience (Number of Years) .....
  4. Name of School (where you are currently teaching) .....
  5. Subject taught .....
  6. Class taught .....
  7. Do you own any copy of a French syllabus?  
YES NO NOT SURE
  8. Which one of these do you own:
    - (a) National Curriculum for JSS, (Other Languages) by the Federal Ministry of Education Science & Technology
    - (b) National Curriculum for Senior Secondary Schools (Other Languages)
    - (c) WAEC - Regulations and Syllabuses for the JSS examination Nigeria
    - (d) WAEC - Regulations and Syllabuses for the SSC examination (Nigeria)
    - (e) All of these
    - (f) None of these
  9. If you do not own any of the documents in question 8 which one of them have you seen and studied before?  
a b c d e or f
  10. Which one of the documents in (8) do you use in your school?  
a b c d e f
  11. In your opinion what type of syllabus would you say the documents in question (8) is
    - (a) Grammatical syllabus (i.e it emphasises the teaching of grammar & structure of French Language)
    - (b) Functional syllabus (i.e it emphasises the teaching of Functions of a Language.. Language in Use.
    - (c) None of the above
    - (d) All of the above
  12. Do you plan your own scheme of work without the use of any of those documents in question (8)  
Yes No Not Sure
- Thanks for your co-operation.



QUESTIONNAIRE ( TEACHER ASSESSORS)

Instructions:

- (A) Please study the syllabus design (Grid) carefully. Then examine the aspect developed. (both attached). All the topics and settings in the Grid have been developed by the researcher along the same line although different Topics and settings determine the objectives, language functions, linguistic structures, role plays e.t.c. as the case may be. Circumstances would not permit the whole package to be released.
- (B) Could you indicate your choices on the questionnaire by ticking ( ✓ ) the answer that best describes your view of that question.

1. Profession ..... TEACHING ..... ( TRANSLATOR ) .....
2. School where you teach .. COLLEGE ..... ( GRAMMAR ) .....
3. Subject taught ..... FRENCH .....

Having studied the attached scripts, -

4. The focus of this syllabus is on the linguistic system i.e Lexical and grammatical features of a language
- YES NO NOT SURE
5. This syllabus emphasises what learners are expected to do with the language i.e Focus on Language function USE.
- ( YES NO NOT SURE
6. The selected content are sequential thereby allowing learners to go from general to particular.
- ( YES NO NOT SURE
7. It is understood that the topics and settings are interrelated and can be flexibly used.
- ( YES NO NOT SURE
8. This syllabus is rather difficult to understand and use for communicative teaching.
- YES NO NOT SURE

9. The four language skills can be effectively taught using this syllabus.

YES

NO

NOT SURE

10. This syllabus is different from the one I used before.

☒ YES

NO

NOT SURE

11. I prefer the syllabus I am using because it is simpler to understand and use for communicative language teaching.

YES

☒ NO

NOT SURE

12. This syllabus can help me plan a good scheme of work for teaching language.

☒ YES

NO

NOT SURE

13. Any further suggestions or comments for the improvement of this syllabus?

1. The Syllabus has a good detailed breakdown quite between
2. It should however be expanded at the Graphic Component level
3. I would love to have a copy if and when available
4. It should be specified what level/ess/ess this syllabus is applicable to
5. However it follows / has traces of following closely the Curriculum ~~for~~ recommended by the government

It's a good work!

QUESTIONNAIRE (TEACHER ASSESSORS)

Instructions:

- (A) Please study the syllabus design (Grid) carefully. Then examine the aspect developed. (both attached). All the topics and settings in the Grid have been developed by the researcher along the same line although different Topics and settings determine the objectives, language functions, linguistic structures, role plays e.t.c. as the case may be. Circumstances would not permit the whole package to be released.
- (B) Could you indicate your choices on the questionnaire by ticking ( ☒ ) the answer that best describes your view of that question.

1. Profession ..TEACHING.....(VICT. PRINCIPAL)...
2. School where you teach ..MARYLAND COMP. SEC. SCH. TICC
3. Subject taught ..FRENCH.....

Having studied the attached scripts, -

4. The focus of this syllabus is on the linguistic system i.e Lexical and grammatical features of a language

YES

NO

NOT SURE

5. This syllabus emphasises what learners are expected to do with the language i.e Focus on Language function USE.

YES ☒

NO

NOT SURE

6. The selected content are sequential thereby allowing learners to go from general to particular.

YES ☒

NO

NOT SURE

7. It is understood that the topics and settings are interrelated and can be flexibly used.

YES ☒

NO

NOT SURE

8. This syllabus is rather difficult to understand and use for communicative teaching.

YES

NO ☒

NOT SURE

9. The four language skills can be effectively taught using this syllabus.

YES

NO ✓

NOT SURE

10. This syllabus is different from the one I used before.

YES ✓

NO

NOT SURE

11. I prefer the syllabus I am using because it is simpler to understand and use for communicative language teaching.

YES

NO

NOT SURE

12. This syllabus can help me plan a good scheme of work for teaching language.

YES ✓

NO

NOT SURE

13. Any further suggestions or comments for the improvement of this syllabus?

- 7
1. This is an excellent attempt to make the teaching of French easy + more meaningful.
  2. The linguistic structure/linguistic structure is not enough detailed. For new teachers of French.
  3. The content is quite comprehensive.
  4. There is no indication of what should be taught when + how.
  5. There is no room for the teaching of French literature to give more insight into the French culture.
- No reference is made to any recommended text book. Do you have any intention of writing a text book to go with the syllabus. (For the benefit of the students)

QUESTIONNAIRE ( TEACHER ASSESSORS)

Instructions:

- (A) Please study the syllabus design (Grid) carefully. Then examine the aspect developed. (both attached). All the topics and settings in the Grid have been developed by the researcher along the same line although different Topics and settings determine the objectives, language functions, linguistic structures, role plays e.t.c. as the case may be. Circumstances would not permit the whole package to be released.
- (B) Could you indicate your choices on the questionnaire by ticking ( ✓ ) the answer that best describes your view of that question.

1. Profession Teaching.....
2. School where you teach The Apostolic Church Gram Sch Ketu.....
3. Subject taught French.....

Having studied the attached scripts, -

4. The focus of this syllabus is on the linguistic system i.e Lexical and grammatical features of a language

YES

NO

NOT SURE

5. This syllabus emphasises what learners are expected to do with the language i.e Focus on Language function USE.

YES

NO

NOT SURE

6. The selected content are sequential thereby allowing learners to go from general to particular.

YES

NO

NOT SURE

7. It is understood that the topics and settings are interrelated and can be flexibly used.

YES

NO

NOT SURE

8. This syllabus is rather difficult to understand and use for communicative teaching.

YES

NO

NOT SURE

9. The four language skills can be effectively taught using this syllabus.

YES

NO

NOT SURE

✓

10. This syllabus is different from the one I used before.

YES

NO

NOT SURE

✓

11. I prefer the syllabus I am using because it is simpler to understand and use for communicative language teaching.

YES

NO

NOT SURE

✓

12. This syllabus can help me plan a good scheme of work for teaching language.

YES

NO

NOT SURE

✓

13. Any further suggestions or comments for the improvement of this syllabus? *None. The syllabus is very comprehensive + straight forward.*

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

QUESTIONNAIRE ( TEACHER ASSESSORS)

Instructions:

- (A) Please study the syllabus design (Grid) carefully. Then examine the aspect developed. (both attached). All the topics and settings in the Grid have been developed by the researcher along the same line although different Topics and settings determine the objectives, language functions, linguistic structures, role plays e.t.c. as the case may be. Circumstances would not permit the whole package to be released.
- (B) Could you indicate your choices on the questionnaire by ticking ( ✓ ) the answer that best describes your view of that question.

1. Profession ..... *Teaching* .....
2. School where you teach *Ikeja High School S.R.A Ikeja* .....
3. Subject taught ..... *French* .....

Having studied the attached scripts, -

4. The focus of this syllabus is on the linguistic system i.e Lexical and grammatical features of a language

YES ✓

NO

NOT SURE

5. This syllabus emphasises what learners are expected to do with the language i.e Focus on Language function USE.

YES ✓

NO

NOT SURE

6. The selected content are sequential thereby allowing learners to go from general to particular.

YES ✓

NO

NOT SURE

7. It is understood that the topics and settings are interrelated and can be flexibly used.

YES ✓

NO

NOT SURE

8. This syllabus is rather difficult to understand and use for communicative teaching.

YES

NO ✓

NOT SURE

9. The four language skills can be effectively taught using this syllabus.

YES ☒

NO

NOT SURE

10. This syllabus is different from the one I used before.

YES

NO ☒

NOT SURE

11. I prefer the syllabus I am using because it is simpler to understand and use for communicative language teaching.

YES

NO ☒

NOT SURE

12. This syllabus can help me plan a good scheme of work for teaching language.

YES ☒

NO

NOT SURE

13. Any further suggestions or comments for the improvement of this syllabus?

1. The table is not explanatory enough
2. An explanatory note may be written under it
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



## APPENDIX F

### EXAMPLES OF OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS USED DURING THE QUASI - EXPERIMENT

Instructions:- Listen carefully to the questions and answer in simple but accurate french sentences.

Introductory Questions:-

A. Bonjour X(name) Comment vas-tu ce  
Matin?

Est-ce que tu es content (e) ce matin?  
pourquoi?

Questions from the Lesson - Avant le diner.

(France Afrique Book 2. by J. de Grandseigne.)

1. Est - ce que tu aimes bien manger? Alors  
qu'est - ce que tu as mange ce matin?
2. Qui prepare le repas chez toi?
3. Est - ce que tu aides ta mere dans la cuisine?  
comment prepare ton repas favori?
4. Est - ce que tu vas souvent au marche?  
Qu'est - ce que tu achetes?
5. Avant le diner, comment est-ce que tu prepares  
la table?
6. Qu'est - ce que tu dis a quelqu'un qui mange?
7. Qu'est - ce que tu fais apres le diner?

# APPENDIX G

## ASSESSMENT OF PUPILS' ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE

### ASSESSMENT SHEET:      RATINGS

CATEGORIES	GRADES	SCORES
Fluent as an educated native with perfect accent, grammar, structure, etc.	A <sup>1</sup>	3
Good spoken french and comprehension of conversation with no errors although slight non-native accent observed	A <sup>2</sup>	
Good comprehension of topic but leaves teacher to initiate conversation. A few times of using words and tenses incorrectly. Pronunciation not clear at times.	C <sup>3</sup>	2
Understands what was being said but asks for clarification occasionally Also pauses too long while searching for right answers which were a little too short although intelligible	C <sup>4</sup>	
No sign of understanding of topic many times Requires the simplest form of questions to which responses were in only one or two words. Does not yet know much of French words, tenses etc. so conversation was tedious	P <sup>5</sup>	1
Almost no understanding of french at all Sometimes one-word answer. Pupil couldn't be understood. Always wanting clarification. Almost no conversation at all.	P <sup>6</sup>	
Complete lack of verbal communication Even gestures were little understood. No conversation at all.	F	0

#### KEY

Characteristics of A<sup>1</sup>, A<sup>2</sup> language Performance Fluently and correctly giving and seeking information.

Characteristics of C<sup>3</sup>, C<sup>4</sup> language Performance comprehensible. Self correction (Partly incorrect language and message content) correct sentences and answers.

Characteristics of P<sup>5</sup>, P<sup>6</sup> language performance Incorrect/ Errant answers, repetitions, Hesitation (enthusiastic)

Characteristics of F language performance non-verbal gestures/ incomprehensible, silence/no message conveyed.

## APPENDIX H

### SOME USEFUL NOTIONS

#### (1) MATERIALS & OBJECTS:

e.g. Assiette  
bois  
en cuir/en coton, etc.  
verre  
Cailliant  
Papier  
Or e.t.c.

#### (2)

##### SIZES

Large  
énorme  
petit  
grand  
grandeur  
Petitesse  
Mince, gros, e.t.c.

#### (3)

##### ACTIONS (Personal Characteristics of People)

Actif  
Paresseu(x) se  
Sympathique  
Timide  
Gentil  
Sévère

Charmant

Mal, Mauvais

Bon

Amusant

Agréable

POSITIONS

Sur

derrière

devant

près de

enface de

dans

au milieude

deuxieme

premiers, etc

SHAPES

rond

carré

rectangular

TIME & SPACE

à quelle heure

la vide

Une demie heure  
heure

munuit, minute

après midi

soir, siorée

matin, matinée

midi e.t.c.

TASTE & SMELL

bon

dégoutant

délicieux

âpre

odeur

goûter

ça sent bon

sale

sucré

agréable etc.

COLOUR

blanc

noir

rouge

rose

gris

foncé

bleu

de quelle couleur

clair

APPENDIX I

NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES COMMISSION



NATIONAL ASSEMBLY COMPLEX  
TAFAWA BALEWA SQUARE  
P.M.B. 12694  
LAGOS, NIGERIA

ablegrams: UNICOMM LAGOS

Telephone:

Our Ref:

Our Ref: NUC/ES/410

SECRETARIAT

17th November 1987

Mrs. B. Hammond  
Department of Curriculum Studies  
University of Lagos  
Lagos.

Mrs. B. Hammond

Visitation for Partial Study in England,  
France, Togo and Cameroun  
Ph.D(Curriculum/French).

Please refer to your letter of 13th November, 1987  
requesting for clearance on the above-mentioned subject.

We hereby confirm non-availability of facilities for  
the aspect of the course to be pursued by the applicant in  
any of the Nigerian Universities.

*[Signature]*  
W. S. Sotimirir  
For: Executive Secretary

SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES  
UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS  
INTERNAL MEMORANDUM

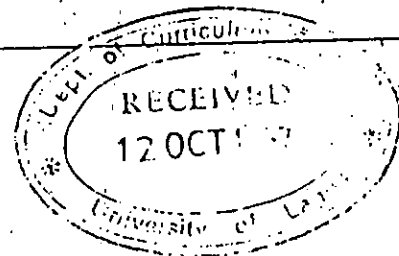
Ref No. SPGS/017/Vol.I

From Deputy Registrar (SPGS)

To: Head, Dept. of Curriculum Studies

Mrs. Bola Hammond

Date 12th Oct. 1987



Application for Partial Study Elsewhere,  
Re: Mrs Bola Hammond, Ph.D (Curriculum/French)  
Candidate

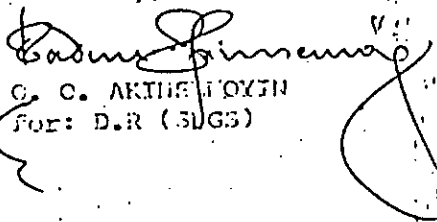
Please reference my memo, SPGS/017/Vol.I of 15th March, 1987 in respect of the above, I am directed to inform you that the Board of Postgraduate Studies' approval of Wednesday 18th March, 1987 is actually for partial study in the following places:

- i. England
- ii. France
- iii. Cameroun
- iv. Togo

and not London as mentioned in letter under reference.

This letter supercedes the earlier one on the same subject.

Congratulations.

  
G. C. AKINTOYE  
For: D.R (SPGS)

1st July, 1986.

The Director,  
Centre For Applied Linguistics,  
BIRKBECK COLLEGE  
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON,  
MALET STREET,  
LONDON, WC1E7HX.

Dear Sir,

MRS BOLA HAMMOND: PHD CANDIDATE:

PROPOSED STUDY VISIT TO INSTITUTIONS FOR  
APPLIED LINGUISTICS/FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

The above named Mrs. B. Hammond is a Ph.D. candidate working under my supervision. Her research interests embrace a comparative/evaluative study of 'Aspects of Curriculum design and Implementation in Foreign language Education'. She will be focussing her attention on both the secondary school Curriculum and the communicative, functional design for adult learners of French in particular.

Your institution has been selected as one of the centres Mrs. Hammond should visit with a view to collecting much needed data and experience for her work. She intends undertaking study visits to a few other European and African Centres.

We should therefore be very grateful if you could provide us with the following information:

1. Is Mrs Hammond welcome to visit your Centre, and if so, could you provide the necessary guidance so as to enable her make her study-visit meaningful?
2. When, in the coming academic year (1986/87) will Mrs. Hammond's proposed visit be, most appropriate or convenient?
3. How much money-in your local currency - will she need to cover costs for about a fortnight's stay (living expenses, materials etc.)?

We look very much forward to hearing from you and do hope that we shall enjoy your full and kind cooperation in this matter.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Dr. Victor B. Owhotu.

1st July, 198

The Director of Education,  
Culture and Sport,  
COUNCIL OF EUROPE,  
STRASBOURG,  
France.

Dear Sir,

MRS BOLA HAMMOND: PHD CANDIDATE:  
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Yours faithfully,

Dr. Victor B. Owhotu.





# UNIVERSITY OF LONDON KING'S COLLEGE

Tel. 01-836 5454

STRAND LONDON WC2R 2LS

PROFESSOR E. J. KING, M.A., Ph.D., D.Lit.

Please reply to:  
40 Alexandra Road  
EPSOM, Surrey  
ENGLAND

24th July 1986

Dr. V.B. Owhotu  
University of Lagos  
Faculty of Education  
Department of Curriculum Studies  
LAGOS  
NIGERIA.

Dear Dr. Owhotu,

Thank you for your letter of the 11th July, enclosing a copy of your letter to Birkbeck College.

I would have been delighted to help Mrs. Hammond when she visits England early in October; but I shall be in Italy attending two conferences and having a holiday from the end of September to late October. Nevertheless, I hope that Mrs. Hammond will have an interesting and profitable series of visits.

Yours sincerely,

Edmund J. King  
Emeritus Professor of Education  
in the University of London

8/8/86

BIRKBECK COLLEGE

University of London

Malet Street, WC1E 7HX

Department of Applied Linguistics  
and Language Centre

43 Gordon Square, WC1H 0PD

01-580 6622

Dr. V. B. Owhotu  
UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS  
Department of Curriculum Studies  
Faculty of Education  
LAGOS, NIGERIA

04.03.88

Dear Dr. Owhotu,

Mrs. Bola HAMMOND / Study Visit

Thank you for your letter of 22.02.88, in which you inform us that Mrs Hammond is now able to commence her study visit to this country. As our initial correspondence regarding this visit was in July 1986, we should be grateful if Mrs Hammond would fill in another registration form and return it to us immediately. The personal statement on page 3 should contain a fairly full description of her current activities and should clearly indicate the areas which she wishes to concentrate on while visiting us. If she has a recently updated c.v., a copy should be attached.

Dr. Michel Blanc has now retired and will therefore not be able to supervise Mrs Hammond, but another member of our academic staff will be pleased to be of assistance during her stay.

The only clear restriction on the advisability of dates for the visit is that the College will be closed for the Easter break from Thursday, March 31 until Tuesday, April 5. Please inform us of the precise dates of Mrs Hammond's visit, so that we can make the appropriate arrangements for her to use College facilities while she is here.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

*Paul Meara*

Dr. Paul Meara

# COUNCIL OF EUROPE

SECRETARIAT GENERAL

AIRMAIL

Please quote: CR  
MV/jb

Strasbourg, 9 March 1988

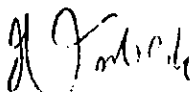
Subject: Study visit of Mrs. B. Hammond

Dear Dr. Owhotu,

Thank you for your letter of 22 February 1988.

This is just to confirm that the visit of Mrs. Hammond some time during March is acceptable to us. We have informed the French Embassy in Lagos accordingly, asking them to grant the visa.

Yours sincerely,



Michael VORBECK  
Head of the Section for Educational  
Research and Documentation

Dr. V. B. Owhotu  
University of Lagos  
Department of Curriculum Studies  
Faculty of Education  
LAGOS  
Nigeria