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Introduction

This book has been written to help anyone in the area of foreign language teaching who is engaged in designing, running or taking part in any of the following kinds of professional activities:

1. teacher education courses, especially in developing countries;
2. in-service training programmes;
3. supervision/inspection programmes;
4. advisory programmes for teachers;
5. management and administration posts which involve some element of staff development;
6. professional self-development programmes.

The book should also be of interest to anyone in the area of foreign language teaching who is involved in thinking about the processes by which professional competence is developed and improved.

The ideas and activities suggested here are the outcome of over twenty years' experience in EFL teaching and teacher education. One of the purposes of the book is to provide something very practical, and indeed many of the suggestions and activities could be put into effect immediately. It should, however, be made clear that the purpose of this book is **not** to suggest the specific content of teacher education inputs, nor even to advocate a particular approach to classroom teaching. Experience suggests that most teacher educators are not short of ideas in these areas: and in any case this need is being met in other publications. The larger purpose of this book is to put various activities and inputs **within the framework of a coherent approach to foreign language teacher education.** All too often foreign language teacher education is a series of 'bright ideas' and/or isolated individual initiatives, so that the resulting learning experience for the trainees can be fragmented and even, in the broadest sense, incoherent. If the present book provides some practical suggestions for foreign language teacher education or supervision, and at the same time affords some food for thought about the larger context of teacher education of which such activities could form a meaningful part, then it will have achieved its main objectives.

Please note that, in cases where the sex of the person being referred to is not known, 'she' has been generally used throughout the book.

'Personal review' sections

The idea of these sections is to help you to think about the issues that have been raised in each chapter, and also to help you to personalise what you have read by relating it to your own situation. Most of the topics will be 'open-ended' – there is no one answer to them, because the answers will depend on your response as an individual. Some of the topics will invite group discussion, so that you and some like-minded colleagues or fellow-trainees can perhaps get together and gain the benefit of one another's experience and insights.

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1 Teacher education: Some current models

1.1 Overview

It is normal for teaching to be considered as a 'profession' and for teachers to consider themselves as 'professional' people. I suggest that there are indeed advantages to be gained in looking at teaching as a profession among other professions. But what are the implications of this, especially for teacher education and development? How has professional education traditionally been organised? How *should* it be organised? In this chapter, I will consider three different models of professional education and I will suggest that the 'reflective model' is one which combines within it certain strengths which exist only separately in the other two models that will be considered.

1.2 Language teaching and teacher education

The late twentieth century has been called 'the age of communication', and with some justification. The world is very rapidly turning into the 'global village' which has often been predicted. As the pressure to communicate increases, the divisions of language are felt even more keenly. So language teaching, especially of the great world languages, which are seen as international channels of communication, becomes ever more important.

With the explosion in language teaching there has been an increased demand for language teachers and the consequent need to train these teachers. Thus, many of us who started our careers as language teachers find ourselves in the position of being trainers of language teachers, or in some way responsible for the professional development of language teachers. Parallel with this change, there has been the growing feeling that all of us as language teaching professionals can, and even must, take on the responsibility for our own development. Everywhere there are signs that members of the profession are willing to shoulder that responsibility.

This is without doubt a tremendous professional challenge, but also, to many people, a daunting one. Some of us may see ourselves as

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operating outside our area of expertise, in the domains, perhaps, of specialists in 'education' or in 'the psychology of learning'. Where does one begin?

This book suggests one path towards 'beginning'. It tries to present a coherent framework of ideas for considering foreign language teacher education and development.

It does not pretend to provide a detailed 'how-to-do-it' of practical tips, although it does claim to have very practical outcomes. Without some kind of coherent intellectual framework, practical tips and bright ideas will not necessarily lead to any effective result. This book is therefore concerned, in the first instance, with exploring some fundamental questions on the nature of teaching and teacher training, and *then* to see how the answers to these questions lead naturally to the consideration of certain techniques and approaches. The book does not purport to have invented a revolutionary new approach to teacher education, but rather seeks to present a coherent rationale of current good teacher education practice, which has already been tried and tested in many educational contexts. It is written from the perspective of a language teacher trainer, but part of the argument is just as applicable to teacher development. The distinction made between 'teacher training or education' on the one hand and 'teacher development' on the other is one that has been made by several writers (for example, Edge, 1988). The distinction is that training or education is something that can be presented or managed by *others*; whereas development is something that can be done only by and for *oneself*. Some writers have also gone on to distinguish between 'training' and 'education', but these terms will be used interchangeably in this book.

1.3 A note on the 'Personal reviews'

I will suggest later in this book that one of the crucial factors in the success of learning anything depends on *what the learners themselves bring to the learning situation*. As psychologists studying learning development have discovered, no learning takes place in a vacuum: it is, rather, a matter of how a learner interacts with what is to be learned in a particular situation. Since anyone reading this book, almost by definition, brings to it a wealth of experience derived from their own personal and professional history, the book will attempt to tap into these personal resources by suggesting topics for 'Personal review'. These can be handled on an individual basis, but most would be richer as learning resources if done on a group basis. They may, however, be skipped if you are in a hurry as the text can usually be interpreted without them.

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PERSONAL REVIEW

Think of any teacher education programme (or indeed any training programme), however brief, in which you were involved as a trainee. Make two columns on a sheet of paper, and list the STRENGTHS and WEAKNESSES of the programme. If you can, compare your list with those of other colleagues. What are the common features? Where do you disagree? What conclusions might you draw from this about how teacher education should be organised?

1.4 Teaching and other professions

Unless you have been luckier than most people, your 'Personal review' will have thrown up some personal training experiences that were less than satisfactory. Whenever I have asked experienced teachers from a wide variety of countries to do this exercise, complaints have most commonly focussed on the perceived gap between *theory* and *practice*. What is the best way of handling this issue?

I personally feel that one of the most instructive ways of approaching this problem is by stepping outside the narrow confines of our own profession, and comparing and contrasting it with other professions, as has been done, for example, by Barnett, Becher and Cork (1987) in their article 'Models of professional preparation: pharmacy, nursing and teacher education'. When one does this one discovers that the problems of theory and practice are not solely found in teaching, but are of constant concern to almost every profession.

PERSONAL REVIEW

Compare the way that teachers in your country are trained with the training of any other profession that you know about. What are the similarities and differences? Do you think that teacher educators have anything to learn from these other professions?

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1.5 Professions and professionalism

What exactly do we mean by referring to someone as a 'professional'? Which occupations are professions and which are not? 'Professional' is one of those terms which has acquired a whole cluster of overlapping meanings. One common distinction occurs when we speak of a professional player of sports or professional artists who do what they do as a way of making a living. These can be contrasted with amateurs, who practise their sport or art for the love of it. In this sense, it's possible to be an 'amateur' and still be very good: you just don't get paid for it. Sometimes, on the other hand, people use the adjective 'professional' to describe something that has been well done, whereas 'an amateur job' is something that has been badly done. 'Professional', and even 'profession', are therefore 'loaded' words sometimes: they can carry value judgements about the worth of the person or activity referred to.

Originally, the word 'profession' had religious overtones as in 'a profession of faith' (a statement of what one believes in); it also had the sense of dedicating oneself to a calling (today we might call it a 'vocation'). Some professions (medicine, for example) have never lost this sense of a special kind of dedication to the welfare of others. Those engaged in a profession also 'professed' to have a knowledge not available to the public at large, but a knowledge that could be of great public use. This specialised knowledge might be based, for example, on scientific discovery: again, medicine is the most obvious example.

Thus, in 'profession' we have a kind of occupation which can only be practised after long and rigorous academic study, which should be well rewarded because of the difficulty in attaining it and the public good it brings, but which is not simply engaged in for profit, because it also carries a sense of public service and personal dedication. Little wonder that many occupations would wish to be called 'professions'! Fortunately, it is not necessary here to take on the invidious task of deciding which occupations should be called professions and which should not. All that has to be said is that any occupation aspiring to the title of 'profession' will claim at least some of these qualities: a basis of scientific knowledge; a period of rigorous study which is formally assessed; a sense of public service; high standards of professional conduct; and the ability to perform some specified demanding and socially useful tasks in a demonstrably competent manner.

1.6 How is professional expertise acquired?

I would like now to return to the basic issues of professional education and training. How do those engaged in the professions (be they lawyers, doctors, teachers, pharmacists, nurses or whatever) develop their profes-

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sionalism? I would like to suggest that there are currently three major models of professional education which have historically appeared on the scene in the following order:

1. The craft model
2. The applied science model
3. The reflective model

I will describe each of these in turn.

1.7 The craft model

In this model, the wisdom of the profession resides in an experienced professional practitioner: someone who is expert in the practice of the 'craft'. The young trainee learns by imitating the expert's techniques, and by following the expert's instructions and advice. (Hopefully, what the expert *says* and *does* will not be in conflict.) By this process, expertise in the craft is passed on from generation to generation. This is a very simple model and may be represented thus:

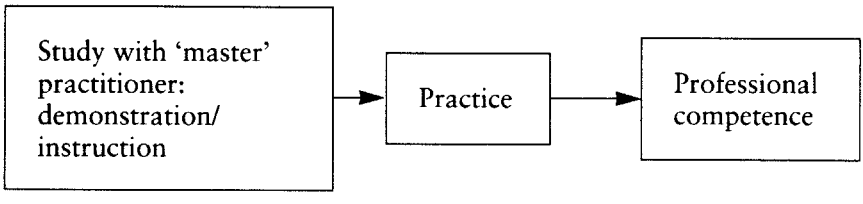

Figure 1.1 The craft model of professional education

According to Stones and Morris (1972:7), this was how teaching practice was traditionally organised until about the end of the Second World War in 1945: 'The *master* teacher told the students what to do, showed them how to do it and the students imitated the master.' Stones and Morris disparagingly categorise this method of professional training as being identical to the system whereby new workers on an assembly line in a factory learned to do routine tasks. This training procedure was called 'sitting with Nellie', Nellie being an experienced worker who had been doing these routine tasks for years.

Stones and Morris rightly point out that this technique is basically conservative and depends, for whatever effectiveness it might have, on an essentially static society. In contemporary society, on the other hand, the one thing we can be sure of is that in ten years' time things will be very different from what they are now. Schools today exist in a dynamic society, geared to change. The concept of the venerable old master teacher is difficult to sustain in an educational context of new methodologies and new syllabuses, where the raw recruit from a College of

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Education may be, *in some ways*, better informed than the practising teacher.

Yet the craft model of professional development cannot be dismissed out of hand, and was revived in the mid 1970s by the influential educationalist Lawrence Stenhouse (1975:75). Stenhouse picked up an analogy made by Atkin (1968), in which the latter compares teaching to the craft of metallurgy (making metals). Atkin points out that craftsmen in metallurgy have been successfully making metals for many hundreds of years, with apprentices learning from masters. However, the science of metallurgy has not yet fully succeeded in explaining everything that goes on in this process. Atkin asks whether teaching is not at least as complex as metallurgy.

There is clearly an important truth here, which I will come back to again when I discuss the shortcomings of the 'applied science' model in the next section. Good teaching is an undeniably complex activity, and there is no guarantee that it will ever be fully predictable in a logical way according to 'scientific' principles. On the other hand, the critique which Stones and Morris made of the view of teaching as *primarily* a craft still stands. That view is basically static and does not allow for the explosion of scientific knowledge concerning the very bases of how people think and behave, to say nothing of the tremendous developments in the subject areas which teachers teach. In the case of language teachers, one thinks of the revolutions in the study of linguistics which have taken place in our lifetime, quite apart from the creation and rapid growth of totally new disciplines such as psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics. These considerations bring us naturally on to the view of teaching and other professions as 'applied sciences'.

PERSONAL REVIEW

Before we go on to consider the applied science model, try to reflect on your own position in this question: is teaching a craft or a science? It may help you to consider this question if you take a sheet of paper and make two columns. Put CRAFT and SCIENCE as the headings for the two columns, and under the appropriate heading put those aspects of the profession that you consider 'craft-like' and those you consider 'scientific'. If you are working in a group, how does your list compare with those of other colleagues? What are the implications for teacher education?

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1.8 The applied science model

The critique which will be presented here of the 'applied science' and 'reflective' models is basically that put forward by the American sociologist Donald A. Schön in his various writings, notably *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action* (1983) and his later book *Educating the Reflective Practitioner* (1987). While largely following Schön's critique, I have taken the liberty of substituting what I think are either more transparent or more convenient terms than those used by Schön. His term for what I have here called the 'applied science' model is 'technical rationality', and in the area of what I have called the 'reflective' model he uses a cluster of terms such as 'reflection-in-action,' reflection-on-action,' 'reflective action,' 'reflective practice' and others.

The applied science model is the traditional and probably still the most prevalent model underlying most training or education programmes for the professions, whether they be medicine, architecture, teaching or whatever. This model derives its authority from the achievements of empirical science, particularly in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Within this framework practical knowledge of anything is simply a matter of relating the most appropriate means to whatever objectives have been decided on. The whole issue of the practice of a profession is therefore merely *instrumental* in its nature.

It might be helpful at this point to consider some concrete examples from engineering and teaching. In engineering, the objective might be to build a bridge across a gap of a certain width, and capable of bearing a certain load. Using their scientific knowledge of the load bearing and other qualities of various materials, the engineers involved can choose appropriate materials. Using this mathematical/scientific knowledge, they can proceed with the most effective design in terms of the shape and length of the bridge, how it is to be supported and so on.

Many writers on education would analyse teaching problems in a similar way, that is, using scientific knowledge to achieve certain clearly defined objectives. I have already quoted Stones and Morris (1972) who rejected the craft model in favour of a more 'scientific' approach. If the objective is that of maintaining discipline, for example, these authors point out that: 'the important area of classroom and group management has received detailed empirical study, and a body of theoretical and practical knowledge has been amassed which begins to put the problems of *discipline* on a scientific footing . . .' (Stones and Morris, 1972:14). Using examples of empirical research in various areas, the authors reject 'unscientific and mystical' approaches to teacher education, arguing that teaching problems can be solved by the application of empirical science to the desired objectives.

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A crude schematisation of the applied science model of professional education might look like Figure 1.2. It will be seen that, in its extreme form, this model is essentially *one-way*. The findings of scientific knowledge and experimentation are conveyed to the trainee by those who are experts in the relevant areas. Thus, trainee teachers who are concerned with maintaining discipline might receive instruction

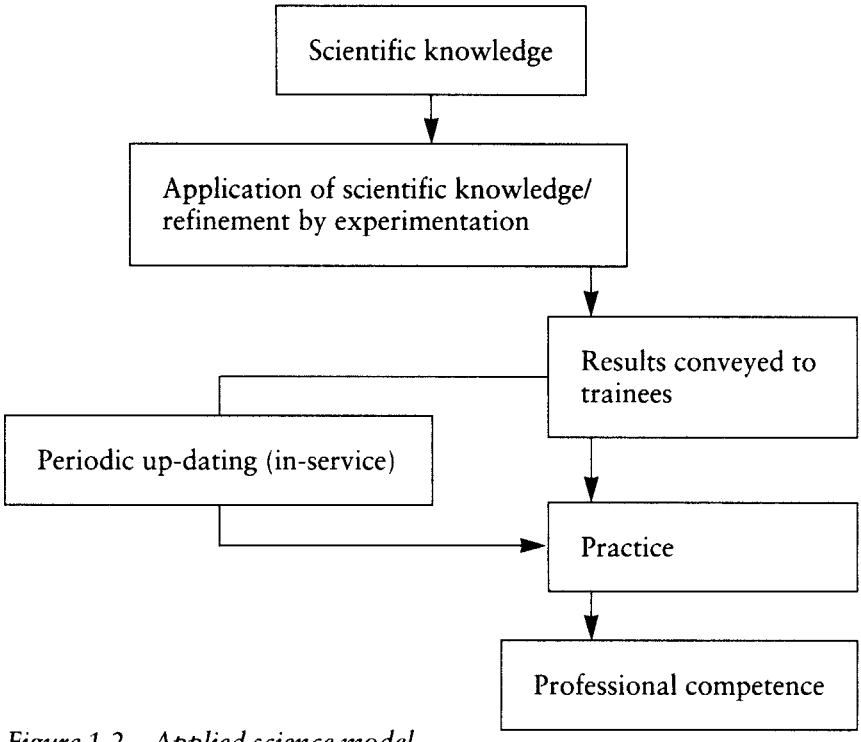

Figure 1.2 Applied science model

from a psychologist on what has been discovered about behaviour modification. It is up to the trainees to put the conclusions from these scientific findings into practice. If the trainees fail, it is perhaps because they haven't understood the findings properly, or because they have not properly applied the findings, or whatever.

It might be, of course, that the problem is not solved because there is something wrong with the scientific knowledge or experimentation base. Indeed, almost by definition, as the professional science develops it brings about changes in the practice element. However, these changes can be established only by those expert in the knowledge or experimental base, and not by the 'practitioners' themselves (i.e. by those actually engaged in the day-to-day practice of the profession). It is possible, of course, for some of the practitioners to become 'experts', but they usually do this by leaving their offices, studios, consulting rooms or

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classrooms and becoming academics in universities or other institutions of professional education.

This tendency for the experts to be well removed from the day-to-day working scene is more pronounced in teaching than in some other professions. In medicine, for example, a surgeon may have a high academic reputation while at the same time be engaged in the daily performance of surgical operations; General Practitioners, on the other hand, will generally look to other experts for professional updating. Even in such a hard-headed profession as Business Management, there tends to be a fairly clear divide between the 'thinkers' and the 'doers'.

1.9 Separation of research and practice

So we come to another significant way in which teacher education has imitated the development of other professions. This is the almost complete separation between research on the one hand and practice on the other. This separation exists in all major aspects of the two activities. It is true of the people who do the work, the personnel. Researchers and practitioners are usually different people. It is true of the locale, the place where the professional education is done. Usually, professionals acquire their qualifications by leaving, at least temporarily, their place of work. It is also true in terms of the methods of working: the expertise of the trainer is often very different *in kind* from that of the practitioner. Looking at the historical development of what I have here called the applied science model, Schön says (1983:36): 'It was to be the business of the university-based scientists and scholars to create the fundamental theory which professionals and technicians would apply to practice . . . But this division of labour reflected a hierarchy of kinds of knowledge which was also a ladder of status.'

If you think of teacher education, you will probably agree that there is much truth in this. With regard to personnel, professionals who leave the classroom almost never return to it on any long-term basis. With regard to locale, the University Departments of Education and Colleges of Education are physically separated from the schools, apart from the occasional 'demonstration school'. It is true, however, that with the development of agency-based in-service (ABIS), the separation is less complete than it used to be. In ABIS, the trainers operate not within their own base, whether it is a university or college, but within the 'agency' (school, class or department) by which they have been invited to share their expertise. For example, the head of the Modern Languages Department might invite along a university tutor to demonstrate some techniques to develop, say, listening comprehension. This kind of situation tends to put the situation more firmly under the control of the 'clients' (in this case, the modern language teachers), which probably

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