

**Towards A German Grammar Programme For
Post-Leaving Certificate Students at Dublin City
University**

An Action Research Approach.

by

**Annette Simon, Diplom-Übersetzerin, Universität des Saarlandes,
Saarbrücken, Germany**

A Thesis submitted
to Dublin City University
in candidacy for the degree of PhD.

Supervisor: Professor Michael Townson

School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies

Dublin City University

March 1999

Volume 2 of 2

Table of contents

Volume 1

<i>Introduction</i>	<i>i</i>
1. Conceptual and Methodological Framework of the Present Research	1
1.1 The Conceptual Framework	2
1.2 The Methodological Framework	10
2. Determining Factors in Instructed Second Language Acquisition - A Review of the Literature	13
Introduction	14
2.1 The Role of Motivation in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning - Introduction	16
2.1.1 Motivational Framework Construction in Second Language Acquisition and Psychology	17
2.1.1.1 Empirical Studies of Motivational Theories	26
2.1.1.2 Motivational Frameworks of Particular Relevance for Practitioners in the Area of Foreign Language Pedagogy	30
2.1.1.3 The Relationship between Extrinsic Motivation, Classroom Instruction and External Evaluation	34
2.1.2 Conclusions	41
2.2 Approaches to Instructed Language Learning - Introduction	44
2.2.1 Classroom-based Instruction and L2 Acquisition	46
2.2.1.1 Studies on the Effect of Formal Instruction, Practice and Corrective Feedback on Language Acquisition and Performance Accuracy	69
2.2.2 Conclusions	75

2.3 Learning Strategies with Specific Regard to the Acquisition and Application of Grammar	77
3. The Irish Education System, the Development of German in Ireland and the German Second Level Syllabi	84
Introduction	85
3.1 An Introduction to the Irish Second and Third Level Education System	86
3.1.1 Second Level Education	86
3.1.2 Third Level Education	88
3.1.3 A Brief Introduction to Third Level Entry Requirements - the Points System	89
3.2 Language Policy in Ireland	94
3.2.1 Primary Level	94
3.2.2 Second Level	95
3.2.3 Third Level	96
3.3 The History of German as a Subject in Irish Second Level Institutions	97
3.3.1 The Pre-1983 Syllabi for Modern Languages	97
3.3.2 The Pre-1983 Status of German	99
3.3.3 Determining Factors in the Take-up of German	101
3.3.4 Making German Available on a Wider Scale/The Spread of German	104
3.3.5 The Current Situation	107
3.4 Some Aspects of Teacher Training and Teacher Qualification	109
3.5 The German Syllabi and Examinations - Introduction	113
3.5.1 The 1983 Intermediate Certificate/Junior Certificate Syllabus	114
3.5.2 The 1983 Leaving Certificate Syllabus	115
3.5.3 The 1995 Leaving Certificate Syllabus	120
3.6 Conclusions	125

4. The Role of German Grammar in Second Level Teaching and Learning from the Teachers' Perspectives	126
Introduction	127
4.1. Subjects and Data Collection	128
4.2 Results regarding the 1983 Syllabus and Examinations	129
4.2.1 The Status of German Grammar in the Teaching of a Communicative Syllabus	130
4.2.2 Methodological Approaches with regard to the Teaching of Grammar	133
4.2.3 The Treatment of Individual Grammar Points	136
4.2.4 Teachers' Perceptions of Student Attitude and Difficulty with regard to German Grammar	141
4.3 Results regarding the 1995 Syllabus and Examinations	146
4.4 Conclusions	154
5. The Role of German Grammar in Second Level Teaching and Learning from the Learners' Perspectives	158
Introduction	159
5.1 Subjects and Data Collection	160
5.2 Results Regarding Learner Attitudes, Competence and Performance	162
5.2.1 Students' Language Learning Background and their Affective and Cognitive Attitudes with regard to German Grammar Learning	163
5.2.2 Some Aspects of Students' Language Awareness and Metalinguistic Knowledge	176
5.2.3 Levels of Accuracy in Learners' Written Production	187
5.3 The Chief Examiner's Report of the 1995 Higher level Leaving Certificate Examination for German	195
5.4 Conclusions	197

6. The Role of German Grammar at University Level from the Lecturers' Perspectives	203
Introduction	204
6.1 The Role of Grammar in First-Year Post-Leaving Certificate Courses	206
6.2 Conclusions for the German Grammar Programme at DCU	212
7. Design and Implementation of the German Grammar Programme for Post-Leaving Certificate Students at DCU	215
Introduction	216
7.1 Aspects of Linguistic and Pedagogical Grammars	221
7.2 The Pedagogical Syllabus	225
7.3 The Design of the Wider Pedagogical Programme	238
7.3.1 Strand One: The Common Core Programme	240
7.3.2 Strand Two: The Individualisation of the Programme	245
7.4 The Implementation of the Syllabus and the Overall Programme	247

Volume 2

8. The Effect of the Grammar Programme on Selected Aspects of Grammar Learning	249
Introduction	250
8.1 Subjects and Data Collection	252
8.2 Research Results for the Beginning of Semester One (October 1996)	255
8.2.1 Aspects of Students' Affective, Cognitive and Metacognitive Grammar Learning Experiences	256
8.2.1.1 Learners' Educational Backgrounds	257
8.2.1.2 Learner Motivation and Attitudes towards Grammar Acquisition	259
8.2.1.3 Confidence Levels regarding Grammar Acquisition and Usage	264
8.2.2 Students' Awareness of their Grammar Acquisition Responsibilities	266
8.2.3 Aspects of Linguistic and Metalinguistic Knowledge Levels	270
8.2.3.1 Students' Perceptions of their Linguistic and Metalinguistic Knowledge Levels	271
8.2.3.2 Students' Actual Linguistic and Metalinguistic Knowledge Levels	277
8.2.4 Levels of Accuracy in Free-Style Written Production	283
8.3 Research Results for the End of Semester Two (May 1997)	287
Introduction	287
8.3.1 Students' Perceptions regarding the Effect of the German Grammar Programme on the Transition between Second and Third Level	289
8.3.1.1 Learner Attitude towards Grammar Acquisition and Application	291
8.3.1.2 Confidence Levels regarding Grammar Acquisition and Application	297
8.3.1.3 Students' Reaction to the Programme's Emphasis on Selected Learning Strategies	301
8.3.2 Levels of Student Awareness of Learning Responsibilities and their Implementation	321
8.3.3 Metalinguistic and Linguistic Knowledge Levels	333
8.3.3.1 Metalinguistic Knowledge Levels	334

8.3.3.2 Some Aspects of Combined Metalinguistic and Linguistic Knowledge Levels	339
8.3.4 Levels of Accuracy in Free-Style Written Production	358
8.4 Summary and Conclusions for the German Grammar Programme	365
9. Conclusions and Future Outlook	371
<i>Bibliography</i>	380
<i>Appendices</i>	
<i>Appendix A</i>	<i>A1-A9</i>
<i>Appendix B</i>	<i>B1-B4</i>
<i>Appendix C</i>	<i>C1-C9</i>
<i>Appendix D</i>	<i>D1-D9</i>
<i>Appendix E</i>	<i>E1-E17</i>
<i>Appendix F</i>	<i>F1-F4</i>
<i>Appendix G</i>	<i>G1-G7</i>
<i>Appendix H</i>	<i>H1-H9</i>
<i>Appendix I</i>	<i>I1-I8</i>

Chapter Eight

The Effect of the Grammar Programme on Selected Aspects of Grammar Learning

Introduction

As outlined in Chapter Seven, the German grammar programme responded to a perceived and documented need to assist students in the achievement of a number of linguistic objectives as well as one wider educational aim with regard to the acquisition and usage of German grammar. The three linguistic objectives were as follows:

1. Students should be able to display terminological knowledge of commonly used terms.
2. Students should be able to display rule knowledge in defined areas as well as an understanding of the underlying system of German grammar (i.e. analytical competence).
3. Students are expected to apply correctly in free production (oral and written) a set of morphosyntactic structures. They must achieve specified minimum percentage rates in order to pass the examinations at the end of semester two. It will be remembered that this is the only one of the course aims which is explicitly examined and assessed under current DCU examinations regulations.

The wider educational aim required students to demonstrate an awareness of their own grammar learning responsibilities as well as giving an indication of their ability to use that awareness to inform practice.

The German grammar programme was designed in order to ease transition on a socio-affective, as well as a cognitive and metacognitive level. As was stated in Chapter Two, according to instrumentality and goal-setting theories, individuals need to perceive their engagement with a particular task as personally valuable and meaningful, and as likely to yield positive results (cf. Oxford and Shearin, 1994). Research has also shown that, unless learners are committed to the learning effort, either through intrinsic interest or through the internalisation of extrinsic goals, tasks are likely to be perceived as externally forced upon them, commonly resulting in a decrease in willingness to engage with the subject matter. As was pointed out in Chapter Seven above, commitment to the specific learning task at hand necessitates an awareness that grammar is not an optional extra but an integral part of efficient and effective communication.

An aspect of equally crucial importance for the L2 acquisition process is the learner's need for psychological security (cf. Oxford and Shearin, 1994). According to

motivational theories, learners who are consistently frustrated by their perceived ineffectiveness are unlikely to persist at the learning task. Any instructional programme must thus attempt to keep anxiety levels down by consistently building up learner confidence levels.

As was also pointed out above, the development of a range of strategies in the affective, cognitive and metacognitive domain should be an integral part of any language programme (cf. Section 2.3).

8.1 Subjects and Data Collection

Subjects taking part in the research were first year students in the academic year 1996/7 who were enrolled in the following degree courses: 'Applied Languages (AL)', 'International Marketing and Languages (IML)' and the newly established 'International Business and Languages (IBL)'¹.

Two cross-sectional sets of investigations were conducted in order to establish the effect the grammar programme had on certain aspects of grammar acquisition. One was conducted at the beginning of semester one, in October 1996, and the other at the end of semester two, in May/June 1997. The project was non-experimental in the sense that there was no control group. No control group was used since it was considered unethical to withhold from 'real-life' students the grammar exposure which was judged to be crucial for those students' chances of linguistic progress and success.

Just as in the 1995 research, both quantitative and qualitative research instruments were employed in the two sets of investigations:

1. *Questionnaires* were used in order to ascertain levels of motivation, confidence, learner responsibility, strategy use and linguistic/metalinguistic knowledge. While at the end of the year there were two separate sets of questionnaires, due to logistical difficulties beyond the control of this researcher, it was not possible to administer more than one questionnaire in October 1996². It will, however, be argued that the alternative data collection had no adverse effect on the validity of the data itself (more in Section 8.2.3 below).

The number of students who filled in all three sets of questionnaires is 69, or 87% of the entire student population in the three abovementioned degree courses. Out of the 69 students, 24 were AL students (19 studying French and German, henceforth ALFG and 5 studying German and Spanish, henceforth ALGS), 21 were IML students (12 IMLFG

¹ For logistical reasons it was not possible to carry out an evaluation of the programme among the 'Applied Computational Linguistics' students who had been included in the 1995 investigation.

² Time-tabling difficulties meant that all groups could only be assembled twice in week one. In the first class, the survey regarding educational background, attitudes, confidence and metalinguistic knowledge levels was conducted, while in the second class the written production took place. The section of the questionnaire testing combined metalinguistic and linguistic knowledge levels was thus postponed to the beginning of week two. When it again proved to be impossible to gather all students who were supposed to be involved in this research, it was decided that this aspect was to be tested in the course of the interviews. These were subsequently conducted as planned.

and 9 IMLGS) and 24 IBL students (14 IBLFG and 10 IBLGS). The vast majority of students filled in all three questionnaires during class time, but a small number (9%) filled in the October 1996 questionnaire in their own time. The questionnaire contained both multiple choice and open-ended questions (see Appendix G for a copy of the questionnaire).

Prior to the dissemination of all three questionnaires, a trial run was conducted among 14 students of 'Physics with German' and 'Chemistry with German'. There were no subsequent alterations to the questionnaire designs. Similar to the 1995 questionnaires, students were asked to put down their names, so that questionnaire results could be correlated to other aspects of the research. While it might be argued that this could lead to a lack of critical openness, especially in learners' evaluation of the grammar programme, this was in fact not the case. Students were urged to be honest in their answers, to feel free to voice any constructive criticism and to suggest any changes which they believed might be of benefit to future students. As will become obvious below, results would suggest that they did not hold back with their criticism.

Furthermore, revealing their identity at the end of the year probably made little or no difference to the students, since they would have been aware that the course teacher was so familiar with their handwriting that, were she sufficiently interested in identifying particular learners, she would have no problem in doing so. Results obtained at the end of the following academic year, in May 1998, when students were not asked to reveal their identities in the end-of-year evaluation, would confirm the above observation.

2. *Free-style production* was used in order to establish morphosyntactic accuracy levels in written performance. 72 students, or 91% of the student population took part in this aspect of the research. The only difference compared with the above group figures is that the number of ALGS students increased to 8. The October 1996 written production took place in class, while the June 1997 production formed part of the end-of-semester two module examination.

3. *Interviews* were conducted with selected students in order to expand on issues raised in the course of the questionnaires. As pointed out above, interviews were also used in order to establish initial levels of linguistic and metalinguistic knowledge. Thus, while

all students were interviewed for the purpose of identifying and discussing learner strengths and weaknesses, as well as the use of specific learning strategies (cf. Chapter Seven above), some 25 students, or 36% of the overall student cohort, were also interviewed for research purposes. The interviews referred to in this chapter all focus on the latter issue and not on individual strengths and weaknesses. Out of the 25 students interviewed, 7 were ALFG students, 3 ALGS, 4 IMLFG, 3 IMLGS, 5 IBLFG and 3 IBLGS. These figures represent approximately a third of the total student cohort in each group. All those interviewed also filled in the three sets of questionnaires. Interviews subsequently took place between the learner and the researcher. A range of questions previously put to students in the questionnaire served as a guide but students were also encouraged to make whatever additional comments they wished. At the beginning of the year, the researcher took notes while talking to the student. At the end of the year, interviews were taped with the learner's prior permission and subsequently transcribed.

4. There was also some informal *observation* of learners by the course teachers in order to verify (where necessary) results obtained from other elicitation instruments. Records were kept of class attendance and the handing up of written homework.

Percentage rates in the questionnaires are calculated out of 69. Those in free production are calculated out of 72 and those in the interviews out of 25. All tables show both percentage rates and absolute figures. Similarly, in the discussion percentage rates will be used alongside absolute figures. Since percentage rates are rounded off, not all totals add up to exactly 100%.

Section 8.2 presents and discusses the findings for research carried out at the beginning of semester one, while Section 8.3 focuses on the end of semester two results. Finally, Section 8.4 summarises the findings of Chapter Eight and draws some conclusions for the German grammar programme.

Before presenting and discussing the findings, it should be stressed that the evaluator was again at all times conscious of the 'Hawthorne effect' (cf. Lynch, 1996).

8.2 Research Results for the Beginning of Semester One (October 1996)

The data collected at the beginning of semester one served two purposes. Firstly, it was to enable the teacher to discuss with students their strengths and weaknesses and to set up, in joint consultation, a learning programme for each individual student (the *pedagogical* goal). The data was also to provide a point of reference for both the research carried out in October 1995 and the research data to be collected at the end of semester two (the *research* goal). Thus both interviews and questionnaires focused to some degree on aspects which had been investigated in the October 1995 questionnaire and which had informed the design of the German grammar programme at DCU. The rationale behind this was to examine if the new student cohort differed significantly from the previous one. Any major changes may have necessitated an adjustment of the DCU grammar programme³. Since a comparison of results for October 1995 and October 1996 revealed that they were very similar and often identical (cf. Section 8.2.1 below), it was decided to proceed with the programme as planned.

Section 8.2.1 presents results regarding selected aspects of students' socio-affective, cognitive and meta-cognitive grammar learning experiences, while Section 8.2.2 investigates students' awareness of their grammar acquisition responsibilities. Aspects of linguistic and metalinguistic knowledge levels are examined in Section 8.2.3. Results for these three sections were ascertained by questionnaire and interview, while results for the final section regarding accuracy levels, Section 8.2.4, were obtained in written production.

³ As was indicated in Chapter Six, the lowering of standards was not considered a desirable option. The only possible alterations would have been to make the programme more demanding (if students displayed greater knowledge than expected) or to adjust the methodology (e.g. conduct classes through German).

8.2.1 Aspects of Students' Socio-Affective, Cognitive and Metacognitive Grammar Learning Experiences

This part of the research seeks to establish the socio-affective, cognitive and metacognitive conceptions and needs of the present student cohort. There are three subsections: Section 8.2.1.1 investigates issues of learners' educational backgrounds. Section 8.2.1.2 examines learner motivation and attitudes towards grammar acquisition and application, while Section 8.2.1.3 ascertains confidence levels with regard to the two latter aspects.

8.2.1.1 Learners' Educational Backgrounds

In the questionnaire, students were asked to indicate, on a scale from 1 to 5, the degree of emphasis which was put on the following aspects of language learning at their secondary school⁴. The results are shown in table 8.1 below. Reference will be made in particular to the items in bold.

Table 8.1 (out of 69 subjects)

Degree of emphasis	No emphasis at all		Little emphasis		Fairly strong emphasis		Strong emphasis		Very strong emphasis	
	rel	abs*	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs
Skill										
Writing	3	2	3	2	26	18	35	24	33	23
Accuracy	3	2	7	5	32	22	42	29	16	11
Reading	0	0	14	10	30	21	43	30	13	9
Vocabulary	1	1	12	8	32	22	32	22	23	16
Grammar	1	1	19	13	32	22	26	18	22	15
Listening	0	0	9	6	43	30	31	21	17	12
Fluency	1	1	28	19	33	23	32	22	6	4
Speaking	3	2	30	21	41	28	14	10	12	8
Pronunciation	10	7	35	24	30	21	16	11	9	6
Learning things off by heart	7	5	43	30	28	19	16	11	6	4
Developing one's own ideas	22	15	38	26	19	13	14	0	7	5
Role play	16	11	33	23	30	21	20	14	1	1
Project work	61	42	22	15	9	6	7	5	1	1
Literature	35	24	41	28	16	11	7	5	1	1

*rel = relative (percentage) figure, abs = absolute figure

These results largely confirm those obtained in the 1995 questionnaire (cf. Chapter Five above).

Similarly, in the interviews students indicated, just as they had done the previous year, that *written work* and *grammar* had been geared largely towards the Leaving Certificate examination and that sample papers had featured prominently in the classroom. With regard to the strong to very strong emphasis on *accuracy* (which had not been listed in the 1995 questionnaire), students also stated that it was stressed mostly when preparing for those parts of the examination which required accuracy. Much of the written output

⁴ This question was an expanded version of a question asked in the October 1995 questionnaire.

was primarily constructed with the help of set phrases which had been learnt off by heart.

When asked to indicate whether their knowledge of the German grammar system was based on analytical or on memory-based learning (cf. Skehan, 1994), the vast majority of students confirmed that it was memory-based. A number of students whose teachers had emphasised grammar strongly to very strongly referred to the kind of instruction they had received as 'patchy', stating that they found it difficult to detect the rationale and meaning behind the tables they were given to learn off by heart. On the other hand, there were three students (from the same school, taught by the same teacher) who praised the coverage grammar had been given by their teacher since it had provided them with just that information. Their teacher had insisted on giving learners certain grammar explanations since, in the words of one of the students, "she said we might need them for university, if not for the Leaving Certificate". One other student who had been educated in a Dutch secondary school, acknowledged that her teacher constantly emphasised the need to view grammar as an integral part of language at all times. Approximately a third of the students admitted that, while grammar had been given what they considered to be thorough coverage, they themselves had not grasped it, pointing out that they had nevertheless managed to score fairly good results in the Leaving Certificate⁵.

An examination of individual group results in the questionnaire revealed that 25% of IMLFG students and 42% of ALFG felt that little or no grammar work had been done at school, while the corresponding figures for all other groups were 10% or less.

⁵ One student who achieved a B1 conceded that she never even attempted the 'cloze test' (which, as was pointed out in Chapter Two above, was the part of the exam testing, above all, grammatical knowledge) because she was "clueless".

8.2.1.2 Learner Motivation and Attitudes towards Grammar Acquisition

In order to ascertain general learning motivation levels, learners were asked, in the questionnaire, to indicate if their chosen degree course was their first choice. Answers are shown in table 8.2

Table 8.2

Group	Yes		No		Students whose alternative first choice does <u>not</u> include German	
	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs
ALFG	68	13	32	6	16	3
ALGS	20	1	80	4	20	1
IMLFG	58	7	42	5	17	2
IMLGS	67	6	33	3	11	1
IBLFG	93	13	7	1	0	0
IBLGS	80	8	20	2	0	0

Alternative first choices not involving German included *Psychology and French, Clinical Speech, Psychology, Physical Education and Physiotherapy.*

As is obvious from the table, figures vary considerably. While virtually all IBLFG had been granted the course of their choice, 80% of ALGS (4 students) had not. A look at the entry requirements sheds some light as to why this may be the case. While the number of points needed to get into IBLFG was 480, the number of points required for ALGS was between 375-390: in view of the high entry requirements for IBLFG - which exceed those of any other DCU course involving that language combination - students who managed to get that number of points were virtually guaranteed the course of their first choice. Several students who were denied their first choice indicated that it had, in fact, been IBLFG.

However, the percentage rate of those whose alternative first choice did not include German was not that significant. Those students with non-first choices who were interviewed (3) stated that they were quite content with their courses once they had started.

In the interview, students were also asked to indicate why they had decided on the particular course for which they were enrolled. Answers are shown in table 8.3 below.

Table 8.3 (multiple answers possible)

Statement	Answers	
	rel	abs
I like languages	88	22
I went on school exchanges/trips abroad	36	9
I am good at languages	32	8
It enhances career prospects	28	7
I had a very good teacher	24	6
I like to travel	20	5
I would like to live/work abroad	16	4
I lived abroad/I have family links	12	3
Qualified reasons	16	4

As is obvious from the above table, the overwhelming majority of students (88% or 22 in absolute figures) would appear to be intrinsically motivated. 'Liking languages' was often stated to be the result of having spent time abroad, either on school exchanges or on holidays. An aptitude for languages and favourable career prospects would appear to be important to a sizeable percentage of learners, while the personality of their second level teachers was judged to be instrumental in their decision by approximately a quarter of all learners.

There was, however, also a small minority of students who cited qualified reasons for their choice of course. Thus one student admitted that she was following her parents' wishes (although she also happened to like learning German). Another one indicated that, although she disliked German because of the way it had been taught at school, she did not want to learn another language *ab initio* and therefore had decided to continue learning this language. Yet another student stated that she had no idea what she wanted to, "all I knew was that I wanted to go to college". A fourth student admitted that she intensely disliked German, and German grammar in particular, but had chosen the subject (AL in this case) for career purposes.

In the questionnaire, students were also asked to state which aspects of language learning they enjoyed and which ones they did not enjoy. Answers are presented in table 8.4.

Table 8.4

Aspect	I enjoyed this aspect		I did not enjoy this aspect		No answer	
	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs
Listening	78	54	10	7	12	8
Reading	78	54	16	11	6	4
Speaking	78	54	9	6	13	9
Writing	70	48	16	11	14	10
Pronunciation	49	34	32	22	19	13
Fluency	42	29	9	6	49	34
Role plays	38	26	32	22	30	21
Vocabulary learning	38	26	33	23	29	20
Developing one's own ideas	29	20	28	19	43	30
Accuracy	26	18	28	19	46	32
Grammar	23	16	65	45	12	8
Project work	20	14	28	19	52	36
Learning things off by heart	16	11	54	37	30	21
Literature	14	10	35	24	51	35

Accuracy and grammar are both aspects which were enjoyed by less than 30% of learners (18 and 16 respectively). However, while the number of students who explicitly stated that they did not enjoy accuracy was also below 30%, the equivalent figure for grammar was 65% (45). This makes grammar the least popular aspect of language learning, a result which was echoed in the course of the interviews. The considerable gap between the two percentage figures would also indicate that students view the issue of accuracy and grammar as quite separate aspects of language learning. While the affective difficulty many have with regard to the latter is voiced readily, attitudes towards the former may be more ambiguous and are certainly less pronounced (as the relatively high figure of 46% of students (32) who did not answer this particular question underlines). As regards the issue of enjoyment within individual groups, 11 out of 12 (92%) of IMLFG students stated that they had derived no enjoyment from involving themselves with grammar, while only 1 ALGS student (20%) stated the same. Figures for the other groups were much closer to the average of 65% (45).

In the questionnaire, students were invited to make any comments they wished in relation to this question. As expected, most comments related to the answers they had previously given with regard to grammar, with students attempting to explain the source

of their problem with this aspect. The difficult nature of German grammar, the lack of grammar exposure at second level and the inadequacy of grammar explanations were all mentioned in this connection. Several students pointed out that, since all classroom work had been exclusively geared towards the examinations, not much time was spent, for instance, on project work.

Students were asked an additional set of questions regarding their affective and cognitive attitudes towards the status of grammar and grammar learning. First of all, in the questionnaire, students were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements. Their answers are shown in table 8.5.

Table 8.5

Statement	Agree		Disagree		Neither/nor		No answer	
	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs
a. I find German grammar interesting	38	26	38	26	20	14	4	3
b. I find German grammar fairly easy	28	19	65	45	7	5	0	0
c. I find German grammar difficult	58	40	32	22	6	4	4	3
d. I find German grammar impossible to learn	13	9	72	50	12	8	3	2
e. Unless you are good at grammar you will never be good at a language	41	28	43	30	10	7	6	3
f. For me, grammatical accuracy is less important than being fluent in a language	30	21	57	39	10	7	3	2
g. I do not want to learn grammar, I just want to be able to communicate	4	3	90	62	6	4	0	0

The items in this table were almost identical with those put to students in the 1995 questionnaire. Most of the results did also not differ significantly from those established in that earlier questionnaire.

As regards student attitudes towards the nature of grammar, they are very similar to those expressed the previous year, with the number of students who claim to find German grammar interesting up slightly (by 10%). However, there would appear to be a clear discrepancy between the answers given in this question and those given in the previous question about enjoyment of grammar learning: while in the previous question only 23% (16) had stated that they enjoyed grammar, 38% (26) claimed to find German grammar interesting in this question. When asked about this discrepancy in the interviews, several students explained that while they did not like the way grammar had been tackled at school, they thought it possible that it could be potentially interesting if dealt with differently (e.g. without being exclusively exam-focused).

Less than half of all learners view grammar as an integral part of the language, as indicated by the responses to the statement "Unless you are good at grammar you will never be good at a language". This would confirm the hypothesis, made on foot of the 1995 findings, that many learners view 'general language skills' as separate from 'grammatical abilities'. This view is again evident in the second last statement ("For me, grammatical accuracy is less important than being fluent in a language"). While a majority disagreed with this statement, a sizeable minority of 30% (21) agreed. That this does not equate a complete abandonment of grammatical knowledge and that students hold the belief that grammar must be important in some instances, is demonstrated in the following statement where virtually all students (and more than last year) disagreed with the statement "I do not want to learn grammar, I just want to be able to communicate in German". Results thus confirm those from October 1995: while students would appear to display a positive cognitive attitude towards grammar learning and usage, in practice they fail to see the ultimate rationale behind it (other than being needed for dedicated grammar exercises and when asked to be accurate in language production). This again underlines the view, that, to the majority of learners, grammar does not constitute an integral part of language. Further confirmation of this conception can be drawn from responses given in connection with table 8.7 in Section 8.2.2 below.

8.2.1.3 Confidence Levels regarding Grammar Acquisition and Usage

In the questionnaire, students were asked about which of the aspects listed in the previous section they felt confident and which areas they felt required a special effort on their part. Their answers are presented in table 8.6.

Table 8.6 (out of 69 students)

Aspect	Confident		Not confident		No answer	
	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs
Listening	65	45	12	8	23	16
Reading	65	45	7	5	28	19
Pronunciation	61	42	17	12	22	15
Vocabulary	59	41	25	17	16	11
Speaking	49	34	42	29	9	6
Writing	46	32	41	28	13	9
Learning things off by heart	41	28	26	18	23	16
Grammar	32	22	64	44	4	3
Accuracy	26	18	58	40	16	11
Developing one's own ideas	26	18	46	32	28	19
Role play	26	18	42	29	32	22
Fluency	20	14	64	44	16	11
Literature	16	11	58	40	26	18
Project work	12	8	58	40	30	21

It would appear there is no direct causal relationship between the degree of skill coverage (cf. table 8.1 above) and student confidence. For example, although pronunciation is one of the least emphasised aspects, almost two-thirds of students stated that they have no problem with it. On the other hand, figures for *grammar* would suggest that even those who stated that their teachers had placed a strong to very strong emphasis on it (48%) do not all feel confident about using grammar - only 32% overall (22) do, while 64% (44) state that they do not. The discrepancy is even more striking in the case of *accuracy*: 58% (40) stated that it was stressed to a considerable degree at second level, but only a total of 26% (18) feel confident about it. Results thus underline the difficulties learners in the 1995 research reported to have with regard to these two aspects. *Fluency* is another aspect with obviously poses problems - just as with regard to grammar, 64% of students (44) stated that they did not feel confident about it. This makes fluency and grammar the two least confidence-inspiring aspects of the entire list

above, with accuracy not far behind. As for group differences, the number of IMLFG students who confessed that they do not feel confident about grammar is substantially higher than that for other groups - 83% (10) stated this was the case, compared to 20% of ALGS (1). Other groups were again fairly close to the average of 64% (44). Finally, it should be pointed out that results regarding *grammar* correspond to those shown in table 8.5 when approximately the same number of students stated that they found grammar either easy (28% or 19 in absolute figures) or difficult (65%/45).

The questionnaire also investigated confidence levels vis-a-vis specific grammar items, the results of which will be discussed in Section 8.2.3 below.

The main findings which were established in this section and are of relevance to the objectives of the DCU grammar programme are as follows:

1. Since any changes in results compared to the 1995 results were insignificant, no immediate programme changes appeared to be required.
2. The majority of students in the present student cohort displayed a negative affective attitude towards German grammar acquisition and application (cf. tables 8.4 and 8.5).
3. Although students' cognitive attitude appeared positive, a large number of students failed to see the ultimate rationale behind the role of grammar in the overall language acquisition process and in language usage (cf. table 8.5 above, cf. also interview results presented in table 8.7 below).
4. Confidence levels with regard to grammar and accuracy were fairly low (cf. table 8.6 above; cf. also results regarding metalinguistic knowledge levels in Section 8.2.3 below).

Points two through four above thus constituted clear challenges to the DCU grammar programme objective of easing the transition for learners from second to third level German grammar learning.

8.2.2 Students' Awareness of their Grammar Acquisition Responsibilities

In the interviews, students were asked about the differences they expected between second and third level language learning *in general*. 64% (16) stated that they expected to have to work more independently and to make decisions themselves rather than having them made for them, and 24% (6) said that they expected to achieve higher language levels than before. Two students said they did not expect to be given any more lists of vocabulary to be learnt off by heart. Two others stated they had no idea what differences there might be. These results would indicate that, in theory at least, most students were aware of some of the major changes expecting them at university. However, even though students would appear to have been alerted, in the course of their second level education, to the prospect of being asked to make their own decisions regarding language learning at third level, results in the teacher survey (cf. Chapter Four above) suggested that the average learner lacks practical experience as regards the implementation of this aspiration.

In the questionnaire, students were asked to indicate what - if any - they thought were the major differences between the level of grammatical knowledge they had achieved at school and the level expected at university. Table 8.7 shows the answers. 3% of students (2) gave multiple answers with regard to the anticipated third level grammar knowledge.

Table 8.7

Statements	Answers	
	rel	abs
Regarding second level:		
• Only superficial and minimum amount of grammatical knowledge is required	32	22
• Grammar is exclusively geared towards the Leaving Certificate	19	13
Regarding third level:		
• More in-depth knowledge	• 33	23
• More accuracy	• 29	20
• Guessing will be replaced by knowledge	• 17	12
• More terminological work	• 4	3
• More independent work	• 4	3
• Grammatical knowledge will help you to become more fluent	• 3	2
No major differences expected between the two levels	7	5
No answer	10	7

Almost a third of all students stated that at second level they were able to get by with a minimum and superficial level of grammatical knowledge, while 19% (13) believed that grammar teaching at that level was exclusively geared towards the Leaving Certificate examination. These results confirm results presented both in Chapter Three and in Section 8.2.1.1 above. The main expectations with regard to third level are the in-depth knowledge to be acquired and increased accuracy levels. 17% (12) indicated they believed that guessing would no longer be acceptable. Terminological knowledge and independent work were mentioned as two features which were not stressed much at second level but would be at university. A small number of students did not anticipate any major differences between the two levels.

The above answers indicate that, by and large, most students were well aware of the differences between the two levels and of the importance attached to grammar learning at third level. Thus, the majority of learners would appear to be prepared for the need to acquire more in-depth knowledge as well as having to pay more attention to matters of accuracy. However, as was pointed out in Chapter Three as well as in connection with results shown in table 8.5 above, the question remains as to what use learners see for their grammatical abilities, considering their view that grammar can be separated from language in most communicative language use. When asked what rationale they saw behind the acquisition of grammatical knowledge in the interview, students confirmed that they considered its main purpose as contributing to high levels of accuracy. Two thirds out of the 25 students interviewed expressed this particular view, while the remaining third pointed out that grammar was important for efficient and/or fluent communication. Accuracy is thus clearly regarded by a majority of learners as a goal in itself and not as an essential component of all-round linguistic competence.

As emerged in the course of the interviews, even those students who were aware of the increased grammar challenges at third level did not necessarily have any concrete ideas as to how these challenges should be met. Thus, only 32% (8) of those interviewed stated that they had expected a separate grammar class on entry into university, while the remaining two-thirds either stated explicitly that they did not expect a grammar class or said that they did not know what to expect in this regard. These findings thus confirm those from October 1995 when the majority of learners proved to be equally vague.

On the other hand, the following two quotes would appear to indicate that at least a small minority of students recognised the exact nature of the different functions of grammar in the two settings. Thus, one IBLFG student stated: "I feel that grammar at third level is more detailed rather than school and I feel after reading this [the list of grammatical concepts referred to above, my explanation] that grammar is not just done to get you by an exam but to broaden your understanding and fluency in a language". Another IBLFG student had this to say: "I think that we will be aware of all the possible grammar rules in German. We will feel more confident using grammar rules. We should be able to form any particular sentence we want to instead of looking for easier, less complicated alternatives. In school we learnt that if we didn't know how to form a sentence we should look for alternatives. In college I think we will know enough grammar to write whatever we want to".

In the questionnaire, students were also asked for their conceptions on how to best organise grammar learning at third level. They were again asked to agree or disagree with a given list of statements. Answers are shown in table 8.8 below.

Table 8.8 (out of 69 students)

Statement	Agree		Disagree		Neither/nor		No answer	
	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs
There should be a separate grammar class at third level	67	46	22	15	7	5	4	3
The best way to learn grammar is to be given the rule by the teacher	46	32	30	21	23	16	1	1
The best way to learn grammar is to figure out a rule oneself and then verify that it is correct	35	24	42	29	19	13	4	3
All grammar should be explained through English (or Irish)	65	45	16	11	16	11	3	2
Students should be made familiar with grammar terminology	81	56	6	4	6	4	7	5
I want to be corrected when making a mistake in								
• my written German	97	67	3	2	0	0	0	0
• my spoken German	93	64	4	3	3	2	0	0

As with part one of these statements (cf. table 8.5 above), findings were similar to the 1995 questionnaire results.

Although results in the interviews had suggested that, prior to their entry into DCU, many students had no clear conception of how grammar acquisition should be handled,

when asked if they agreed with the concept of a separate grammar class the majority of students indicated that they did⁶. On the one hand, this may be surprising, considering that students were clearly conscious of the increase in their own responsibility for the learning progress upon entry into third level. On the other hand, their agreement may be seen as a call for guidance on a subject matter with which the majority of learners have grave difficulty in grasping.

Just as in October 1995, most students were also in favour of grammar being discussed in English or Irish and an overwhelming majority favoured the concept of familiarising students with grammar terminology. Students also made it clear that they wished to be corrected when making a mistake. The only major difference between these results and results for the 1995 questionnaire emerged with regard to deductive rule explanation: while in the 1995 questionnaire there had been a clear majority in favour of the deductive approach (67%/58 in absolute figures), this number was down to 46% (32) for the present student cohort. Figures for the inductive approach did not vary considerably from the previous questionnaire.

As regards the wider educational aim of the programme of requiring learners to demonstrate an awareness of their own learning responsibilities by the end of semester two, the above results indicate that, in theory at least, students were already aware of increased third level demands in this respect on the outset. However, as emerged in the course of the year with regard to the increase in grammatical challenges of which students were apparently aware (cf. table 8.7), a general awareness of duties does not necessarily manifest itself in actual implementation skills. Put differently, *knowing* that one has to assume more responsibility and *acting accordingly* can be quite separate issues.

⁶ Unlike in October 1995, students who were asked this question in October 1996 were not aware that there would be a separate grammar class.

8.2.3 Aspects of Linguistic and Metalinguistic Knowledge Levels

As was indicated above, the research sought to establish both students' *perceptions* of their linguistic and metalinguistic knowledge levels as well as *actual* levels. Section 8.2.3.1 looks at the first aspect, while Section 8.2.3.2 investigates the latter.

8.2.3.1 Students' Perceptions of their Linguistic and Metalinguistic Knowledge Levels

Students were asked, in the questionnaire, to indicate their level of familiarity and confidence with regard to a range of German grammar concepts. A total of 75 items were listed; students were asked to tick one or more of the following categories:

- "I have never heard of this concept"
- "I know what the term means"
- "I do not feel confident about using this feature"
- "I feel confident about using this feature".

Students were also asked to provide an example if they thought they knew the concept⁷.

Results:

Note: Since not all features were consistently marked by students, the total percentage points do not add up to 100.

All items are listed in ascending order within each percentage range.

Table 8.9: 'I know this concept and I feel confident about using it', plus correct example(s)

Percentage range		<u>Concept</u>
rel	abs	
0	0	complement, transitive verb, intransitive verb, verbal phrase, present participle, indicative, subjunctive, noun phrase, possessive pronoun, negative pronoun, indefinite pronoun, word formation, word formation of adjectives, prepositional object, mood
1 - 9	1 - 6	pronoun, compound noun, demonstrative article, word formation of nouns, finite verb, non-finite verb, prefix, suffix, weak noun, uncountable noun, interrogative article, auxiliary verb, agreement
10 - 19	7 - 13	adverb, superlative, article, comparative, declension of articles, adjective, position of the verb, imperative, passive, past tense/preterite, relative pronoun, weak verb, conjugation of verbs, pluperfect tense
20 - 29	14 - 20	regular verb, perfect tense, past participle, position of the verb in subclauses, which verbs take which case, adjectival ending, personal pronoun, tenses, strong verb, negative article, possessive article
30 - 39	21 - 27	cases, indefinite article, plurals of nouns, object, preposition, position of the verb in main clauses, definite article, irregular verb, gender of nouns, future tense, reflexive verb
40 - 49	28 - 34	conjunction, position of the verb in questions, subject, separable/non-separable verbs
50 - 59	35 - 41	modal verb, infinitive, present tense

⁷ Although the questionnaire itself limited the provision of an example to those concepts students indicated they knew, before filling in the questionnaire students were informed that they were also to provide an example for those concepts about which they felt confident.

Table 8.10: 'I know this concept and I am confident about using it', without any example

Percentage range		Concept
rel	abs	
0	0	prepositional object
1 - 9	1 - 6	verbal phrase, finite verb, non-finite verb, noun phrase, cases, demonstrative article, indefinite pronoun, mood, complement, intransitive verb, transitive verb, possessive article, infinitive, uncountable noun, indicative, negative pronoun, negative article, which verbs take which case, indefinite article, weak noun, modal verb, comparative, compound noun, word formation, superlative, conjugation of verbs, past participle, preposition
10 - 19	7 - 13	imperative, article, declension of articles, definite article, reflexive verb, conjunction, prefix, gender of nouns, irregular verb, plurals of nouns, past tense/preterite, present tense, interrogative article, pronoun, perfect tense, pluperfect tense, agreement, possessive pronoun, suffix, subject, auxiliary verb, personal pronoun, word formation of adjectives, position of the verb, subjunctive, adjective, future tense, object, passive, present participle, strong verb, weak verb, regular verb, separable/non-separable verb, word formation of nouns, adjectival ending, tenses
20 - 29	14 - 20	position of the verb in questions, relative pronoun, position of the verb in subclauses, adverb, position of the verb in main clauses

Table 8.11: 'I know this concept and I am confident about using it', plus incorrect example

Percentage range		Concept
rel	abs	
0	0	infinitive, finite verb, non-finite verb, conjugation of verbs, tenses, present tense, mood, indicative, noun phrase, gender of nouns, interrogative article, uncountable noun, pronoun, indefinite pronoun, adjectival ending, conjunction
1 - 9	1 - 6	complement, article, imperative, subjunctive, plurals of nouns, irregular verb (cf. comments under *4, table 8.1 above), declension of articles, weak noun, compound noun, definite article, personal pronoun, verbal phrase, reflexive verb, negative article, separable/non-separable verbs, auxiliary verb, prefix, suffix, word formation of adjectives, indefinite article, modal verb, pluperfect tense, position of the verb, position of the verb in questions, position of the verb in main clauses, preposition, prepositional object, position of the verb in subclauses, demonstrative article, relative pronoun, adjective, superlative, adverb, comparative, word formation, word formation of nouns, possessive article, cases, strong verb, subject, transitive verb, intransitive verb, which verbs take which case, negative pronoun, agreement, passive, future tense
10 - 19	7 - 13	object, weak verb, possessive pronoun, perfect tense
20 - 29	14 - 20	regular verb
30 - 39	21 - 27	past tense/preterite, present participle, past participle

Table 8.12 : 'I do not feel confident about this feature'

Percentage range		Concept
rel	abs	
0	0	present tense, verbal phrase
1 - 9	1 - 6	complement, prepositional object, pronoun, uncountable noun, noun phrase, position of the verb, infinitive, intransitive verb, transitive verb, weak noun, tenses, spelling in general, the use of capital letters, articles, mood, past participle, position of the verb in questions, separable/non-separable verbs
10 - 19	7 - 13	superlative, adverb, compound noun, position of the verb in main clauses, non-finite verb, finite verb, word formation, modal verb, regular verb, conjugation of verbs, subject, conjunction, irregular verb, comparative, adjective, object, present participle, negative article, possessive article
20 - 29	14 - 20	preposition, negative pronoun, definite article, indicative, the cases, demonstrative article, weak verb, strong verb, suffix, prefix, indefinite pronoun, interrogative article, imperative, relative pronoun, indefinite article, possessive pronoun
30 - 39	21 - 27	auxiliary verb, declension of articles, future tense, personal pronoun, agreement, past tense/preterite, 'Umlaute', negation, word formation of nouns, perfect tense, reflexive verb, word formation of adjectives
40 - 49	28 - 34	position of the verb in subclauses, subjunctive, which verbs take which case, adjectival ending, plurals of nouns, gender of nouns, pluperfect tense, passive

Table 8.13: 'I have never heard of this concept'

Percentage range		Concept
rel	abs	
0	0	cases, subject, object, tenses, present tense, future tense, position of the verb, adjective, the use of capital letters, spelling in general, separable/inseparable verbs
1 - 9	1 - 6	weak verb, irregular verb, regular verb, article, infinitive, reflexive verb, modal verb, perfect tense, conjunction, which verbs take which case, preterite, position of the verb in main clauses, past participle, position of the verb in questions, definite article, pronoun, preposition, 'Umlaute', gender of nouns, plurals of nouns, negation
10 - 19	7 - 13	passive, word formation, present participle, relative pronoun, adjectival ending, adverb, position of the verb in subclauses, personal pronoun, strong verb
20 - 29	14 - 20	possessive pronoun, indefinite article, possessive article, noun phrase, conjugation of verbs, pluperfect tense
30 - 39	21 - 27	word formation of adjectives, agreement, declension of articles, word formation of nouns, mood, negative article
40 - 49	28 - 34	auxiliary verb, prepositional object
50 - 59	35 - 41	superlative, suffix, comparative, negative pronoun, prefix, imperative
60 - 69	42 - 47	subjunctive, demonstrative article, interrogative article, verbal phrase, indefinite pronoun
70 - 79	48 - 54	compound noun, intransitive verb, indicative, transitive verb
80 - 89	55 - 62	complement, weak noun, finite verb, non-finite verb
90 - 99	63 - 69	uncountable noun

An analysis of the above results allows for the following categorisation:

Category I

The following concepts would appear to be quite unproblematic, as indicated by a fairly high percentage level in table 8.9 - 'I know this concept and feel confident about using it', plus correct example - and accordingly low levels in tables 8.10 to 8.13:

*Present tense, infinitive, modal verb, conjunction, separable/non-separable verb, position of the verb in questions, subject*⁸.

Category II

The following concepts are problematic, for a number of reasons:

1. Fairly low to medium percentage levels in table 8.9, and medium scores in one or more of the other tables:

Indefinite article, future tense, definite article, the cases, object, irregular verb, position of the verb in main clauses, preposition, possessive article, negative article, strong verb, tenses, personal pronoun, regular verb, conjugation of verbs, weak verb, relative pronoun, adverb.

2. Misplaced confidence on the part of the students (as indicated by medium to high scores in table 8.11 - 'I know this concept and I feel confident about using it', plus incorrect example), e.g. *past tense/preterite, present participle, past participle.*

3. Lack of confidence among learners (cf. table 8.12), e.g. *'Umlaute', negation, word formation of nouns, perfect tense, reflexive verbs*⁹, *word formation of adjectives, position of the verb in subclauses, subjunctive, which verbs take which case, adjectival endings, plurals of nouns, gender of nouns, pluperfect, the passive.*

4. Terminology is unknown to learners (cf. table 8.13), e.g. *word formation of adjectives, agreement, declension of articles, word formation of nouns, mood, negative*

⁸ What needs to be borne in mind with regard to this category is that both familiarity and rule knowledge may be fairly limited. Thus while many students will be familiar with the concepts listed above, their level of familiarity is most likely confined to the kind of knowledge required for the Leaving Certificate, e.g., in the case of modal verbs, knowing that 'they are used together with another verb', or, in the case of 'conjunctions', knowing that they include 'weil' and 'daß', defining the subject as 'the agent' or 'the doer' (a definition which is obviously misleading in some cases).

⁹ The high percentage of answers in both table 8.9 ('I know this item and I feel confident about using it', plus correct example) and in table 8.12 ('I do not feel confident about this feature') would indicate that, while students might know the infinitive of these verbs, e.g. 'sich waschen' they may not necessarily feel confident about the conjugation or indeed about identifying which verbs are reflexive and which are not.

article, auxiliary verb, prepositional object, superlative, suffix, comparative, negative pronoun, prefix, imperative, subjunctive, demonstrative article, interrogative article, verbal phrase, indefinite pronoun, compound noun, intransitive verb, indicative, transitive verb, complement, weak noun, finite verb, non-finite verb, uncountable noun. A number of terms (usually headings) were virtually disregarded in this question, (e.g. *position of the verb, adjective, pronoun*).

The use of capital letters and spelling in general are not viewed as problematic by students themselves.

Overall, answers to this question confirmed the expectations which had previously been formed with regard to student knowledge and confidence levels. Most concepts would thus appear to be problematic to a fairly sizeable number of learners, for different reasons. Firstly, the majority of students are not familiar with much of the actual terminology, a result confirming findings in Chapters Four and Five above. Secondly, many students may recognise that their rule knowledge is limited and their confidence levels are accordingly low. On the other hand, a number of students overestimate their rule knowledge, not realising that concepts they believe are familiar to them are in fact not. For instance, the concept of *past participles* is a source of some contradiction: while students do not seem to perceive it as difficult, in reality they do not know, firstly, what the term encompasses and, secondly, as error analyses conducted in the course of the years confirmed, how to form the past participles of even the most commonly used regular or irregular verbs.

As regards the use of terminology at second level, 52% of students (13) in the interviews stated that only the most basic terminology was used, while 40% (10) said that their teacher had not used much terminology. Two students (one of them the student who had attended secondary school in Holland) said that their teacher had familiarised them with even the more complex terminology. A number of students stated that they were not even familiar with the most basic grammar terminology in English, thus confirming a point previously made by second level teachers (cf. Chapter Four above).

These results would suggest that metalinguistic knowledge levels are virtually unchanged compared with the previous year.

A number of students commented that this questionnaire made them realise the limitations of their metalinguistic and linguistic knowledge.

8.2.3.2 *Students' Actual Linguistic and Metalinguistic Knowledge Levels*

While the previous question sought to establish, above all, students' perceptions of linguistic and metalinguistic knowledge levels as well as their confidence levels, this question focused exclusively on the issue of actual knowledge levels, both metalinguistic and linguistic.

As was pointed out above, logistical difficulties made it impossible to ascertain these levels by questionnaire. However, those students who were interviewed (36%), were, in the course of the interview, tested with regard to their linguistic and metalinguistic knowledge levels. While owing to time constraints in the interviews, students were not asked the full range of questions they would have been asked in the questionnaire, most questions were put to them. Since interview results regarding the other aspects under investigation (motivational and confidence issues, learner responsibility and accuracy levels) matched questionnaire results at all times (cf. Sections 8.2.1 and 8.2.2 above as well as Sections 8.2.4, 8.3.1, 8.3.2 and 8.3.4 below), it must be deduced that interview results regarding linguistic and metalinguistic knowledge levels provide a fairly accurate indication of the kind of results that would have been achieved on administration of the questionnaire.

In view of the small numbers involved in most of groups interviewed (three groups of three students, one each of four, five and seven), there will be no presentation of individual group results - only totals out of 25 will be presented. Questions focused on *verb and tense formation*, *valency*, issues of *gender* and *number* as well as *word order*, *conjunctions*, *prepositions* and *adverbials*.

In the first question on *verb and tense formation*, students were asked to provide the first person singular preterite and perfect forms of three verbs.

Results for all three verbs are shown in table 8.14.

Table 8.14 (out of 25 students)

Verb	<i>ich werde</i>		<i>ich darf gehen</i>		<i>ich reserviere</i>	
Answers	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs
Correct preterite form	44	11	36	9	76	19
Correct perfect form	52	13	12	3	40	10
Both correct preterite and perfect form	36	9	4	1	40	10

The verb 'reservieren' in its preterite tense is best known. The most common error with regard to the preterite form of 'werden' and 'dürfen' was the use of the Umlaut, while the most commonly named incorrect form of the perfect form of 'werden' was 'ich bin worden'. As regards the perfect form of 'ich darf gehen', no less than 13 different incorrect versions were given.

In the second question, students were asked to provide the correct form of the subjunctive for the following sentences:

Sentence 1: Ach, wenn ich doch nur genug Geld _____! (Ich habe aber nicht genug Geld)

Sentence 2: Ach, wenn ich doch nur reich _____! (Ich bin aber nicht reich)

32% of students (8) provided the correct answer for the first sentence and 24% (6) for sentence number two.

The low rate of correct responses for both verbs did not come as a surprise since the subjunctive was not a common feature in the 1983 Leaving Certificate programme. Only students with fairly high accuracy levels in the essays were able to provide a correct answer to both questions.

There were two parts to the next question on *valency*. In part one, students were asked which element decides which other elements are required in a given clause. In part two, students were to be given a text and asked to underline in each clause the elements that decide which *complements* are required. 16% of students (4) provided the correct answer to the first part, but no-one attempted to answer the second part, stating that they were not familiar with the concept of *complements*. Results thus confirm that the

concepts of both *verb valency* and *complements* do not receive much attention at second level.

Next, students were asked to name two very common verbs that require two nominative cases. 32% (8) named one verb correctly and none named two. The verb most commonly named was the verb 'sein'. The majority of students stated they did not know the answer to this question (56%/14).

The next question presented students with three verbs and asked them to state if these verbs required an accusative object, a dative one or both. The verbs were 'erklären', 'passen' and 'verpassen'. Answers are shown in table 8.15.

Table 8.15

Verb	Correct answer 'erklären'*1		Correct answer 'passen'		Correct answer 'verpassen'*1	
	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs
Answers	44	11	20	5	32	8

*1 Answers accepted as correct were 'accusative' or 'dative plus accusative'.

While the most commonly named incorrect answer for 'erklären' was the dative case, it was the accusative case for the verb 'passen'. 36% of students (9) were not familiar with the verb 'verpassen' and therefore did not provide any answer.

The next question asked students to state the case which the vast majority of verbs require if a verb takes only one object. 32% of students (8) provided the correct answer, with 52% (13) stating they did not know. Students were also asked what a dative object normally refers to, in a clause that contains both a dative and an accusative object. 36% (9) answered this question correctly, while 56% (14) said they did not know.

Students were then asked to state in which case the subject of a sentence is placed. This question is one for which students would have been expected to be prepared for in the course of their senior cycle German classes. 68% (17) answered this question correctly which, in view of the percentage rates for other answers, is quite high indeed.

Turning to issues of *gender* and *number* next, students were asked to provide the correct gender and plural forms for a number of very commonly used nouns. Answers are shown in tables 8.16 and 8.17.

Table 8.16 (Gender)

	Correct gender 'Problem'		Correct gender 'Jahr'		Correct gender 'Arbeit'		Correct gender 'Zeit'	
	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs
Answers	64	16	72	18	72	18	76	19

Table 8.17 (Number)

	Correct plural 'Problem'		Correct plural 'Jahr'		Correct plural 'Arbeit'		Correct plural 'Zeit'		Correct plural 'Freund'		Correct plural 'Studentin'	
	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs
Answers	68	17	44	11	16	4	24	6	48	12	48	12

Again, students were expected to be familiar with these items from the Leaving Certificate (with the exception of the plural forms for 'Zeit' and 'Arbeit'). It should also be noted that the guessing factor plays a potentially important part. While all scores for gender were well above the fifty percent mark, the rate of correct answers for number varied considerably. As expected, the plurals for 'Arbeit' and 'Zeit' are not well known. However, more than half the students also had difficulty identifying the correct plural form of the nouns 'Jahr', 'Freund' and 'Studentin'. The most commonly named incorrect gender for 'Problem' was 'die'. As regards plural forms, many students stated that 'Zeit' and 'Arbeit' did not have a plural (52%/13 in absolute figures), while in most of the incorrect answers for 'Jahr' an 'n' was added on, as was the case with the plural form of 'Problem' and 'Freund'.

The next question regarding gender asked students to name three noun endings that always indicate a feminine gender, two that indicate masculine gender and one that is always neuter. Answers are shown in table 8.18.

Table 8.18

	1 correct answer feminine		2 correct answers feminine		3 correct answers feminine		1 correct answer masculine		2 correct answers masculine		Correct answer neuter	
	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs
Answers	12	3	28	7	8	2	0	0	0	0	36	9

Feminine noun suffixes seem to be memorised best - some 48% of students (12) delivered at least one correct answer here, with 'heit' being the most commonly named, followed by 'keit' and 'ung'. Neuter suffixes come next at 36% (9), while masculine

suffixes received no correct answers. The most commonly named neuter suffix was 'chen'.

Next, students were asked to judge if the following sentence was grammatically correct and to briefly explain their answer:

"Das Mädchen kann er nicht so gut sehen".

All students were of the opinion that the sentence was incorrect, naming as their reasons that 'er' should be 'ihn' or 'ihm'. This indicates that the word order rules with which they are familiar from their second level German classes are limited to the SVO word order, not allowing for a change in the order for purposes of stress.

Turning to *conjunctions*, *prepositions* and *adverbials* next, and the first question which was put to students asked them to state what effect certain conjunctions and adverbials have on word order, while the second question asked students to provide the correct cases for a given list of prepositions (students were reminded to name both cases for double track prepositions). Answers are shown in tables 8.19 and 8.20 respectively.

Table 8.19 (Conjunctions and adverbials)

Answers <u>Conjunction/adverbial</u>	Correct		Incorrect/No answer	
	rel	abs	rel	abs
'wenn'	88	22	12	3
'aber'	76	19	24	6
'trotzdem'	48	12	52	13
'denn'	72	18	28	7

This was another question for which high rates of correct responses were expected. However, while the conjunctions 'wenn', 'aber' and 'denn' would appear to be fairly well known to students, far fewer are sure about the effect the adverbial 'trotzdem' has on word order. Most of the 52% (13) who provided an incorrect answer stated that the verb had to go to the end of the clause. The 28% (7) of incorrect answers for the conjunction 'denn' are made up of both students who stated that the verb should go to the end and those who said that it caused an inversion. The most common incorrect answer with regard to the conjunction 'aber' was that it caused an inversion.

Table 8.20 (Prepositions)

Answers Preposition	Correct		Incorrect/No answer	
	rel	abs	rel	abs
aus	88	22	12	3
auf	56	14	44	11
gegen	44	11	56	14
trotz*	64	16	36	9
zwischen	40	10	60	15

* Both dative and genitive were accepted as correct answers.

The preposition 'aus' is by far the best known of the prepositions, followed, with quite a gap, by 'trotz'. Out of the 44% (11) who provided an incorrect answer for the preposition 'auf', most stated that it took the accusative but failed to mention the dative, while the majority who did not state the correct case for 'gegen' said it took the dative. As regards incorrect answers for the preposition 'zwischen', which was highest at 60% (15), most stated it took the accusative without mentioning the dative, while the remaining students maintained the opposite or claimed it was followed by the genitive.

Students were also asked to name the relevant rules regarding government of prepositions (i.e. how they knew by which case a preposition was followed). 16% (4) stated that they had not discussed prepositions in detail in their second level German class and therefore resorted to guessing the case of most prepositions. 28% (7) stated that some prepositions took the accusative and some the dative, depending on whether they were used in connection with motion or rest. The majority of 56% (14) correctly stated that the majority of prepositions take fixed cases while a small number take either the accusative or the dative, depending on motion and rest.

Results confirm that the majority of school-leavers are not familiar with concepts such as *verb valency* and *complements*, nor with departures from SVO word order. However, other aspects which students would have encountered in their secondary schooling were also shown to cause difficulty. Examples are the use of *Umlaute on verbs* (cf. results for the verb 'werden' in table 8.14), *noun plurals* (cf. table 8.17) and the government of certain *prepositions* (cf. table 8.20). All three features were previously identified as problematic in Chapter Five above. There are thus clearly a number of gaps to be bridged as regards the levels of metalinguistic and linguistic knowledge expected from students by the end of semester two.

8.2.4 Levels of Accuracy in Free-style Written Production

72 students took part in this aspect of the research at both the beginning of the year and at the end of semester two. Out of these 26 were AL students (19 ALFG and 7 ALGS), 21 IML students (12 IMLFG and 9 IMLGS) and 25 IBL students (14 IBLFG and 11 IBLGS).

The essay topic was identical with that in October 1995 ("Meine 4 Jahre an DCU - Hoffnungen und Erwartungen"). However, this time essays were written during class time and although students were under no time pressure, they were again reminded that the purpose of the exercise was to establish their level of accuracy in written German. The recommended length of the essays was again 300 words.

Results

General findings regarding fluency, message communication and complexity of structures used are virtually identical with those made with regard to the 1995 results (cf. Chapter Five above) and will therefore not be repeated in this context. Since the types of errors for all three categories (lexical, grammatical and orthographic) are also very similar to those made by the previous student cohort (cf. again Chapter Five above), they will not be listed either. Thus tables 8.21 to 8.24 merely show the percentages for each error category.

Table 8.21: Lexical errors (total number of errors: 141*)

<u>Category</u>	<u>%</u>
Verbs	43
Adjectives and adverbs	40
Nouns	17

* counted as 1 error

The most striking result here is that the overall number of lexical errors is half that of 1995. As regards differences in the distribution of errors, the percentage of verbal errors has gone up from 34% to 43%, while the number of noun errors has gone down considerably by 12%.

Since the 1996 grammatical error count included a new item (*punctuation*, and more specifically, *the use of commas*), and since this item accounted for an overall 10% of the total error count, two tables will be shown for the error analysis results 1996¹⁰. First, table 8.22 presents the percentages for grammatical errors *without* punctuation errors, to allow for a comparison between the 1995 and 1996 results. Table 8.23 includes punctuation errors. Finally, table 8.24 shows the orthographic errors.

Table 8.22: Grammatical errors *excluding* punctuation errors (total number of errors: 860)

Category	%	
	1996	(1995)
I. Verbal phrase		
1. Valency of the verb	7	(9)
2. Verb and tense formation; use of the tenses	17	(16)
3. Verb/noun agreement	5	(6)
Total % number of errors in verbal phrase	29	(31)
II. Noun phrase		
1. Gender of nouns	10	(12)
2. Declension of nouns, articles and pronouns **; use of articles	13	(10)
• plurals	7	(8)
3. Formation, declension and comparison of adjectives and adverbs * ¹	12	(11)
Total % number of errors in noun phrase	42	(41)
III. Prepositional phrase		
Government of prepositions	11	(8)
IV. Syntax		
1. Word order of the verb in main clauses	4	(5)
2. Word order of the verb in subclauses	3	(3)
3. Word order of adverbials; word order surrounding infinitive clauses	3	(3)
Total % number of syntax errors	10	(11)
V. Particles		
Prepositions	4	(4)
Conjunctions	3	(3)
Total % number of errors involving particles	7	(7)

Other errors accounted for less than 1%.

As is obvious, the results are very similar indeed: the overall percentage number in each category (verbal phrase, noun phrase etc.) is virtually unchanged.

¹⁰ Punctuation was included since, in particular ignorance about the use of commas, is considered responsible for the confusion many learners regularly display with regard to valency issues (i.e. the inability to discern the beginning and the end of phrases in a sentence).

Table 8.23 shows the distribution of grammatical errors *including* punctuation errors.

Table 8.23: Grammatical errors (total number of errors: 959*)

<u>Category</u>	<u>%</u>
I. Verbal phrase	
1. Valency of the verb	8
2. Verb and tense formation; use of the tenses	15
3. Verb/noun agreement	4
Total % number of errors in verbal phrase	27
II. Noun phrase	
1. Gender of nouns	9
2. Declension of nouns, articles and pronouns **; use of articles	12
• plurals	6
3. Formation, declension and comparison of adjectives and adverbs	10
Total % number of errors in noun phrase	37
III. Prepositional phrase	
Government of prepositions	9
IV. Syntax	
1. Word order of the verb in main clauses	4
2. Word order of the verb in subclauses	2
3. Word order of adverbials; word order surrounding infinitive clauses	2
Total % number of syntax errors	8
V. Particles	
Prepositions	3
Conjunctions	3
Total % number of errors involving particles	6
VI. Punctuation - incorrect omission or addition of commas	10

*All errors were counted as 1, with the exception of punctuation errors which were counted as 0.5.

Other errors accounted for 3%.

Table 8.24: Orthographic errors (total number of errors: 179*)

<u>Category</u>	<u>%</u>
1. Incorrect use of capital letters	60
2. General spelling	40

* counted as 0.5 of an error

The total number of orthographic errors was up slightly at 179, compared to 160 in 1995. The distribution of errors was almost identical. The total number of grammatical (including punctuation) and orthographic errors amounted to 1,138. As table 8.25

below shows, the mean was 14.56, an increase of more than two points compared to the figure of 12.29 in 1995. However, when the figures for punctuation are removed, the mean was down to 13.20. Table 8.25 also revealed considerable differences in individual group performances.

Table 8.25

Group	Mean	Standard Deviation
IMLFG	16.95	7.04
ALFG	16.18	7.63
IBLGS	14.95	5.17
ALGS	14.64	4.24
IBLFG	11.78	5.10
IMLGS	11.77	3.80
Total	14.56	6.19

As is obvious from the table, there is a difference of 5% between the group with the highest error percentage, IMLFG, and that with the lowest, IMLGS. When comparing these results with findings regarding the emphasis of grammar teaching in the second level classroom (cf. table 8.1 above), it emerges that the two groups with the highest error count are those with the highest number of students claiming that there had been little or no emphasis on grammar in their classes (25%/3 of IMLFG and 42%/8 of ALFG). As is also evident from table 8.25, the standard deviation in those two groups is by far the highest of all groups involved, indicating the heterogeneity within those groups as is evident in the vast differences in individual learner performances.

Results regarding accuracy levels were correlated with Leaving Certificate German results which had previously been established in the questionnaire. There was an absolute correlation.

According to existing examination regulations regarding accuracy levels in written production, a total of 33% (24) would have failed to meet the minimum requirements if the above performances had been displayed in the written examination at the end of semester two.

8.3 Research Results for the End of Semester Two (May 1997)

Introduction

Results from Section 8.2 confirmed that there were considerable gaps between *existing* knowledge and performance levels and those *expected* at the end of semester two. As has been pointed out repeatedly, it was the aim of the German grammar programme to help students bridge those gaps and to ease the transition with regard to the acquisition and application of German grammar by providing socio-affective, cognitive and metacognitive assistance. As was also pointed out, the two pivotal elements of the programme were the grammar class on the one hand, and the individualised programme with a strong emphasis on individual learner responsibility on the other. This section seeks to establish to what degree previously outlined objectives were achieved by the end of semester two and what roles those two components played. It could, of course, be argued that, due to the lack of a control group, it is not possible to attribute all results regarding the issues investigated below solely to the existence of the grammar programme. However, in view of the programme's prominence in the overall German language course and in view of learner reaction to it, there is a strong case for assuming that the programme had a crucial impact on all aspects of students' grammar acquisition.

The six groups of learners involved in this research were taught by four different teachers: one person taught the ALFG group, one ALGS, one both IBLFG and IMLFG and one both IBLGS and IMLGS. With the exception of IBLGS and IMLGS students who were taught together, all groups were taught separately. Each teacher saw her group for two hours a week, one of which was referred to as the 'general language class' and the other was the grammar class, since it had grammar as its main focus. However, as was pointed out in Chapter Seven above, issues of grammar were also raised regularly in the general language class. With the exception of IMLGS and IBLGS who were taught in a double period, the two classes took place at different times during the week.

So, what effect did the programme have on socio-affective, cognitive and metacognitive aspects of the transition between second and third level?

Section 8.3.1 looks at students' perceptions regarding the effect of the German grammar programme on the transition between second and third level. There are three subsections: 8.3.1.1 examines learner attitudes towards grammar acquisition and application, while 8.3.1.2 investigates confidence levels. Subsection 8.3.1.3 focuses on students' reaction to the programme's emphasis on selected learning strategies. Sections 8.3.2 to 8.3.4 investigate the effect of the programme with regard to the four course aims: Section 8.3.2 looks at the issue of learner responsibilities, 8.3.3 at linguistic and metalinguistic knowledge levels and, finally, Section 8.3.4 examines accuracy levels in free-style written production.

8.3.1 Students' Perceptions regarding the Effect of the German Grammar Programme on the Transition between Second and Third Level

Two aspects which were previously pointed out as being of particular importance for the easing of the transition between second and third level from a motivational point of view are the adoption of a positive attitude towards the learning task as well as learners' belief in their own effectiveness (i.e. learner confidence). With regard to the first point, results in Section 8.2.1 showed that the vast majority of learners displayed a negative affective attitude at the beginning of the year (cf. tables 8.4 and 8.5) and, while apparently being convinced of the need to engage in grammar learning, they seemed unsure as to the exact purpose of the acquired grammatical knowledge (cf. discussion in connection with table 8.7). Results in the same section also indicate that, by and large, the present cohort of learners lack confidence as regards both their grammar acquisition and application abilities (cf. table 8.6; cf. also discussion in Section 8.2.2).

As was also pointed out above, the development of specific strategies in various areas of the socio-affective, cognitive and metacognitive domain is obviously of crucial importance in order to help students develop a sense of self-efficacy (i.e. control over the learning situation). Strategies which received particular emphasis in the course of the German grammar programme are as follows:

1. in the *metacognitive* domain:

- regular production output practice, both in class and as part of homework
- monitoring of output by paying particular attention to matters of accuracy
- requirement for learners to act on corrective feedback

2. in the *cognitive* domain:

- in-class development of analytical skills in order to help students build up their declarative knowledge levels
- use of analytical skills, both in initial production and in reaction to feedback
- recall of explicit knowledge in reception and production

3. in the *affective/social* domain:

- encouragement to ask clarifying questions
- group work.

Other strategies were not so much discussed and/or emphasised as part of the common core programme but considered on an individual basis, once they had been identified by learners in their diaries.

As regards the use of analytical skills, both in the metacognitive and the cognitive domain, interview results in Section 8.2.1 confirmed that their development is not widely practised in Irish secondary schools.

There were thus a number of clear challenges presenting themselves to the grammar programme. The following section examines students' perceptions of whether or not these challenges were met.

Results were obtained by questionnaire and interview. For copy of the questionnaire see Appendix H.

8.3.1.1 Learner Attitude towards Grammar Acquisition and Application

The first question in the questionnaire asked students how they felt about their degree course after one year. Answers are shown in table 8.26.

Table 8.26

Answers	Very happy		Happy		Quite happy		Not happy	
Group	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs
ALFG	0	0	53	10	32	6	16	3
ALGS	20	1	60	3	20	1	0	0
IMLFG	8	1	58	7	33	4	0	0
IMLGS	11	1	56	5	33	3	0	0
IBLFG	29	4	43	6	29	4	0	0
IBLGS	0	0	40	4	60	6	0	0
TOTAL	10	7	51	35	35	24	4	3

As can be seen from the table, the vast majority of students claim to be (fairly) content with their chosen courses, including those who had indicated, both in the questionnaires and the interviews at the beginning of the year, that their respective course had not been their first choice. An examination of the remainder of the questionnaires revealed that the 16% (3) of ALFG students who stated they were not happy with the choice of their degree course were nonetheless satisfied with their German course component as well as with the German grammar class. All had put down that particular course as their first choice.

The next question in the questionnaire investigated the specific issue of learner attitudes towards grammar acquisition and application.

Students were asked to state if they agreed or disagreed with the same set of statements (with one exception) regarding their attitudes towards the status of grammar and grammar learning as at the beginning of the year. Answers are shown in table 8.27. Figures for 1996 are also shown.

Table 8.27

Answers	Agree				Disagree				Neither/nor				No answer			
	'97		'96		'97		'96		'97		'96		'97		'96	
Statement	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs
a. I like learning German	97	67			0	0			3	2			0	0		
b. I find German grammar interesting	39	27	38	26	35	24	38	26	26	18	20	14	0	0	0	0
c. I find German grammar fairly easy	23	16	28	19	62	43	65	45	10	7	7	5	4	3	0	0
d. I find German grammar difficult	61	42	58	40	29	20	32	22	9	6	6	4	1	1	4	3
e. I find German grammar impossible to learn	4	3	13	9	80	55	65	45	13	9	12	8	3	2	10	7
f. Unless you are good at grammar you will never be good at a language	74	51	41	28	19	13	43	30	4	3	10	7	3	2	6	4
g. For me grammatical accuracy is less important than being fluent in a language	32	22	30	21	54	37	57	39	13	9	10	7	1	1	3	2
h. I do not want to learn grammar, I just want to be able to communicate in German	7	5	4	3	88	61	90	62	4	3	6	4	1	1	0	0

The first statement put to students sought to ascertain motivational levels with regard to the overall learning of German at DCU. As figures indicate, almost all students stated that they liked learning German. Since this question had not been put to students in October 1996, no comparable data are available. However, the above figures would suggest that the German course at DCU has at the very least not had a deleterious effect on students' motivation.

As regards statements b. - d., no major changes have occurred between October 1996 and May 1997. As is obvious from statement b., the aim of enhancing learners' positive *affective* attitude towards grammar has most definitely not been achieved. The vast

majority of learners thus continue to have little or no intrinsic interest in grammar acquisition. It was, however, encouraging to see that the number of students who found German grammar impossible to learn has decreased from 13% to 4% (9 to 3). As regards the very slight decrease in the number of students who stated that they found German grammar easy, it was interesting to observe that figures for all the French/German language combinations had in fact risen slightly while the German/Spanish combination had fallen, an observation which will be discussed in some detail below.

The biggest change has obviously taken place with regard to statement f. ("Unless you are good at grammar you will never be good at a language"). The number of those who agreed with this statement at the end of semester two has risen from 41% to 74% (28 to 51). Figures rose strongest in those groups in which, at the beginning of the year, they had been lowest: IMLFG (+50%/6), IMLGS (+56%/5) and ALGS (+60%/3). As one of the declared objectives of the grammar programme was to help students recognise the importance of grammar in all instances of receptive and productive language use, this was a most significant increase indeed (although it may not have been exclusively achieved as a result of the grammar programme). However, there would appear to be a slight contradiction between it and statement g. ("For me grammatical accuracy is less important than being fluent in a language") with which some 32% (22) agreed. When several of the students who had agreed with both statements were asked to expand on their responses in the interviews, it emerged that all but one had associated the accuracy vs. fluency dichotomy with spoken, not written German. A few students took this opportunity to express their keen interest in doing more oral work, pointing out that it had not received sufficient attention in the course of year. While all except the one student mentioned above insisted that agreement with the last statement by no means signified a lack of awareness of the importance of accuracy on their part, they admitted that, in the initial stages at least, they were personally prepared to make concessions on their accuracy levels for the benefit of fluency when speaking the language. Most were quick to add that they believed accuracy would develop with practice. These statements thus must be seen as an expression of the difficulty many students experience with regard to oral competency: because students would not have practised this skill much at school (of the present cohort, 28% (19) had stated that fluency had received little

emphasis at school, cf. Section 8.2.1 above) and because they have to speak up in front of a group of people who are effectively strangers to them, nervousness makes many choose fluency as an objective over accuracy in order to cope with that initial difficulty. The particular difficulties many learners experience when speaking the foreign language were previously pointed out in Chapters Two (cf. Horwitz and Horwitz, 1986) and Four. The above explanations are also fully consistent with results from October 1996 with regard to learner confidence levels - grammar, fluency and accuracy were the three aspects which were named by the largest number of students as those aspects of language learning and language use about which they did not feel confident. Thus, rather than viewing these students' choice as an account of giving preference to functional language use over structural language use, it is important to acknowledge that, although learners are by and large aware of the need for accuracy, the conflicting demands placed on them in language production (cf. R. Ellis, 1994b in Chapter Two above) means that many learners have difficulty in putting that awareness into practice and in converting explicit into implicit knowledge. In other words, while the issue of grammatical accuracy may well be very much on students' minds, they are initially forced to make choices which, they hope, with increased practice will gradually become less and less necessary as their accuracy levels improve.

As regards statement h. ("I do not want to learn grammar, I just want to be able to communicate in German"), an examination of the remainder of the questionnaire and, in particular the elaboration of answers, surprisingly revealed that three out of the five students who agreed with that statement (four IMLGS students and one IBLGS student) were in fact positive about the grammar programme. Since two out of these three students were among the students who were interviewed, they were asked to explain this apparent contradiction. Both replied that while they had found the class beneficial in first year, they were anxious to see more emphasis on the practice of spoken German in second year. One other possible explanation for this unusual combination of agreements was provided by a fairly strong student in the questionnaire when she indicated that while she herself may not necessarily have required this kind of grammar exposure for her own progress, she clearly recognised the beneficial effect it had on many others in her group who were in need of a structured approach. One of the two students who agreed with the above statement and whose attitude towards the grammar

class was on the whole fairly negative was also interviewed. When asked why he agreed with the statement at the end of the year, having disagreed at the beginning, he stated that while he had got away with not having much grammar at second level, in the course of his year at DCU he had realised that he had a lot of catching up to do but would prefer to continue to survive without grammar because it involved too much work¹¹.

Answers to the next question confirm the previous results with regard to the changed cognitive attitude towards grammar acquisition and application. In the questionnaire, students were asked if they regarded a sound grammatical knowledge as important. 99% (68) stated that they did. However, as was pointed out both in the October 1995 and October 1996 research, learners would appear to be unsure as to what exact purpose their grammatical knowledge served, other than having to be applied in dedicated grammar exercises and whenever accuracy was specifically requested (cf., for example, the discussion on results in table 8.7 above). Students were therefore asked to expand on their above answers which 91% (63) did. Their responses are shown in table 8.28.

Table 8.28 (multiple answers possible)

Grammatical knowledge . . .	Answers	
	rel	abs
is important for efficient and smooth communication	35	24
is needed in order to achieve high fluency levels	26	18
forms the basis of the language	22	15
helps you become more confident	16	11
is needed to be accurate	9	6

As the first three answers indicate, the vast majority of learners would appear to recognise that grammar is an integral part of language, not an optional extra and that functional language use should not be divorced from structural language use. The importance of grammar for high *fluency* levels was specifically mentioned by more than a quarter of the students. These figures compare favourably with percentage rates from the interviews at the beginning of the year, when only one third of those interviewed had stated that grammar was important for any of these goals. Two-thirds of students had

¹¹ An examination of the student's end-of-semester two written production showed that his performance was well above the maximum error rate allowed.

then said that the main purpose of grammatical knowledge was to help achieve high levels of accuracy, whereas that number was down to 9% (6) at the end of the year. These results were confirmed elsewhere (cf., for example, table 8.47 below). Many of those who stated that their explicit knowledge helped them develop increasing self-confidence added that this was so because knowing about structures took the guesswork out of language use, again a point reiterated throughout the research. Thus students' positive cognitive attitudes seemed reinforced in that more learners appeared clearer as to the actual purpose of grammatical knowledge.

To sum up, while there has been no increase in students' affective attitudes (i.e. the number of students who find grammar interesting has remained virtually unchanged), their cognitive attitudes towards one of the key aspects of the course have improved considerably. Thus more learners than previously would appear to have taken on board the view that, if they want to become good at a language, they cannot do so without becoming good at grammar, irrespective of their lexical and pragmatic repertoire and abilities. The internalisation and integration of this externally set goal into the students' own value system has, of course, been considered as crucially important - as was pointed out previously, unless students are convinced that their engagement with a particular task is personally valuable and meaningful, they are unlikely to persist in their efforts.

8.3.1.2 Confidence Levels regarding Grammar Acquisition and Application

The need for psychological security was stressed above as being significant if learners are to persist at a given task. Students were therefore asked in the questionnaire to indicate how confident they felt about their overall grammatical knowledge at the end of year one at DCU by selecting their answer from a given list of answers. Answers are shown in table 8.29.

Table 8.29

Statement	Answers	
	rel	abs
Very confident	4	3
Confident	23	16
More confident than at the beginning of the year	62	43
Not very confident	10	7
Not confident at all	0	0

In October 1996, the figure of those who stated that they were confident about their grammatical knowledge was 32% (22), while at the end of the year only 27% (19) indicated that this was the case, a decrease by 5% (3). However, a comparison revealed that of the 5%, only one student who, at the beginning of the year had claimed that she was confident, at the end of the year stated that this was no longer the case¹², while the others all indicated that they were more confident than at the beginning of the year. The figure of 64% (44) who, at the beginning of the year, had indicated they were definitely not confident, has gone down to 10% (7). An examination of answers for other aspects of the research revealed that these 10% included a third of the 16% of students (11) who, later on in the research, either openly admitted or indicated indirectly that they were not happy with the German grammar programme. The remaining 4% of students (3) were all positively disposed towards the class. Comparisons between all these

¹² Interestingly, the same student had also indicated at the beginning of the year that she found German grammar easy whereas at the end of semester two this was apparently no longer the case. Thus, in the case of this student, the perception of grammar as being fairly easy (which she must have formed in the course of her second level education), was not borne out at third level, resulting in a loss of confidence.

students' accuracy levels at the beginning of the year and at the end showed that these had not changed much, some learners having improved slightly, while others were less accurate but not to a significant degree.

The overall increase in confidence levels established in this question was confirmed in other questions where this aspect was continuously stressed as one of the most beneficial of the entire grammar programme (cf. table 8.33 as well as the elaboration of student answers elsewhere). It could, of course, be argued that any grammar instruction will inevitably result in increased confidence levels since presumably at least some matters will become clearer to at least some students. However, experience in previous years, when there was no dedicated grammar class and grammar issues were dealt with on an ad hoc basis in the language class, has shown that this is not necessarily the case.

In a related question, students who had indicated that they were either *very confident* or *confident* were asked to state the origin of that confidence by ticking the appropriate box. Table 8.30 shows their answers.

Table 8.30

Statement	Answers	
	rel	abs
My confidence stems from . . .		
• both the grammar teaching you received at school and the grammar classes at DCU	20	14
• primarily from the grammar teaching at school	7	5
• primarily from the grammar class at DCU	0	0

While grammar tuition at school obviously played a central part in bringing about learner confidence in their grammatical knowledge, the DCU programme was also perceived as contributing positively to confidence levels, as is evident from the 20% of answers above (14).

Those who were not confident were invited to expand on their answers in connection with the overall evaluation of the grammar class further below. All except one student complied.

Students were also asked to name three aspects about which they now felt more confident than at the beginning of the year and three aspects about which they still did

not feel confident. Answers are shown in table 8.31 below. Some students named fewer than three aspects (especially with regard to items about which they did not feel confident), while a few named more than three items about which they now felt confident.

Table 8.31

Item	More confident		Still not confident	
	rel	abs	rel	abs
I. Verbal phrase				
1. Verb formation	49 ^{*1}	34	42 ^{*2}	29
2. Tense formation	26	18	12	8
3. Mood formation	7	5	33 ^{*3}	23
4. Verb-noun agreement	0	0	3	2
5. Valency				
• Government of verbs	26	18	9	6
• "cases" ^{*4}	23	16	14	10
II. Noun phrase				
1. Declension				
• of adjectives	23	16	25	17
• of pronouns	13	9	7	5
• of articles	12	8	7	5
• of plurals	6	4	6	4
2. Gender	10	7	3	2
3. Other aspects of the noun phrase	6	4	16	4
III. Government of prepositions	4	3	3	3
IV. Syntax	28	19	9	6
1. Conjunctions and their effect on syntax	12	8	3	2
VII. Spelling	9	6	3	2
VIII. Miscellaneous (terminology, punctuation etc.)	4	3	3	2
No answer	6	4	12	8

*1 The single most frequently named item was the *formation of regular and irregular verbs* (16%/11).

*2 27% of these named the *passive* which had not even been touched upon.

*3 26% named the *subjunctive* which was never going to receive detailed coverage and which was only dealt with superficially.

*4 The answer is obviously too vague to decide whether students were referring to the case system or the declension of cases or a combination of both. Since it is assumed that the system was the less well known of the two aspects at the beginning of the year, the item was included under valency.

Notwithstanding the percentage rates for two items which were either not covered at all in the grammar class (the passive) or not covered in any great detail (the subjunctive) and were included by a sizeable number of students in the list of items about which they still did not feel confident, answers show that confidence levels with regard to the verbal phrase have gone up quite considerably. Almost fifty percent of students (34) stated that they felt more confident about the aspect of *verb formation* and the issue of *verb valency* and the *case system*.

As regards the noun phrase, the biggest increase in confidence levels occurred with regard to adjectival endings, the figure for which was up by 23% (16), although 25% (17) stated that they still lacked confidence regarding this feature. Another area with regard to which students stated a significant increase in confidence levels is that of *syntax*, including the use of conjunctions (+40%/27).

Students were asked, with regard to areas in which they lacked confidence, to indicate if they knew how to go about working on these points. 86% of students (59) answered that they did, while 4% (3) stated they did not. 10% (7) did not answer this question (about three quarters of these had not indicated in the previous question that there were any points about which they felt not confident and therefore obviously did not answer this follow-on question).

It would thus appear that, according to the learners' own perceptions, the grammar programme contributed to an increase in learner confidence levels.

8.3.1.3 Students' Reaction to the Programme's Emphasis on Selected Learning Strategies

The following question sought to establish what specific impact the German grammar programme had students' affective, cognitive and metacognitive conceptions and needs. In the questionnaire, students were again asked to agree or disagree with a list of given statements. Answers are shown in table 8.32. Figures for 1996 are also shown.

Table 8.32

Answer Statement	Agree				Disagree				Neither/nor				No answer			
	'97 rel	'97 abs	'96 rel	'96 abs	'97 rel	'97 abs	'96 rel	'96 abs	'97 rel	'97 abs	'96 rel	'96 abs	'97 rel	'97 abs	'96 rel	'96 abs
a. It is a good idea to have a separate grammar class at third level	100	69	67	46	0	0	22	15	0	0	7	5	0	0	4	3
b. Grammar classes should be conducted mainly through English	81	56	65	45	13	9	16	11	6	4	16	11	0	0	3	2
c. Students should be made familiar with grammatical terminology	80	55	81	56	13	9	6	4	7	5	6	4	0	0	7	5

The number of students who approve of the concept of a grammar class at third level is up by more than 30% (21) compared to the beginning of the year. It could, of course, be argued that this was one of the most obvious opportunities for students to agree with a statement in order to please the course designers. However, answers to subsequent questions as well as overall comments would suggest that students were honest in their agreement with at least the concept of a separate grammar class, if not with every aspect of implementation of the current class.

Although question b. was phrased slightly differently in the previous questionnaire¹³, the vast majority of students would appear to have welcomed the fact that grammar classes were conducted primarily through the students' native tongue. The rate for the role of terminology is unchanged. As will become obvious further down, the type of terminological knowledge introduced in class did not meet with universal approval.

¹³ The previous wording was "All grammar should be explained through English or Irish".

The next question in the questionnaire asked students to state if they had found the grammar class mainly helpful or mainly unhelpful. 96% (66) stated they had found it mainly helpful and 4% (3) indicated they had not. An examination of the answers in the remainder of the questionnaire showed that, while most of the aforementioned 96% of students (66) were indeed disposed positively to very positively towards the class, an additional 12% of students (8) turned out to be critical to a degree that would question the overall level of benefit they purport to have drawn from the class. Out of these, half (= 6%/4) were students who claimed to have covered grammar extensively at second level and who could be classified as fairly strong to strong students. Although not openly opposed to the class, these students did not appear to feel the urgency of its existence for themselves. Further investigations showed that, with regard to two of these students, the class content was indeed a mere revision of items that had been covered in some detail at school, while the other two revealed gaps of which they themselves were obviously unaware, as evident in both their explicit knowledge levels and accuracy levels in performance. Of the other students, three (= 4%) clearly appreciated the concept of a grammar class but criticised that the current one was not basic enough, leaving them trailing behind the rest of the class. The principal criticism of the remaining student concerned not the content, but the classroom methodology. To sum up, while 96% of students (66) claimed to have found the class mainly helpful, the actual percentage figure of those whose overall attitudes towards it were genuinely positive is closer to 84% (58).

Students were also given a list of statements and asked to tick those with which they agreed. Students were told they could tick as many items as they liked. List a. contained aspects which students may have found helpful about the grammar class while list b. contained aspects which they may not have found helpful. While list b. had originally been intended to be used by those students who found the grammar class mostly not helpful, and those who found it helpful were supposed to make critical comments further down in the questionnaire, the list was also used by 49% of the latter (34)¹⁴. Students thus used column b. as an opportunity to voice points of criticism of the class while approving of it overall, as became obvious in the remainder of questionnaire. The number of answers given by those 49% of students (34) in list

¹⁴ This problem had not been anticipated since it had not arisen in the course of the trial run.

a. outnumbered those in list b. by 2:1, in the case of IMLGS and IBLGS, 3:1, in the case of ALFG, ALGS and IMLFG, and 4.5:1 in the case of IBLFG. In other words, the number of class aspects which were perceived as positive far outweighed those which were perceived as negative. This was also the case for the 12% of students (8) who in the remainder of the questionnaire proved to be quite negative about the programme. Tables 8.33 and 8.34 show the results for lists a. and b. respectively. Students were also asked to make any additional comments they wished; 41% (28) did.

Table 8.33 (List a.)

Statement	ALFG		ALGS		IMLFG		IMLGS		IBLFG		IBLGS		Total	
	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs
I learnt rules of which I was not aware	89	17	80	4	100	12	89	8	93	13	70	7	88	61
I would not have been able to figure out all grammar points by myself	68	13	100	5	75	9	78	7	93	13	70	7	78	54
It helped me become more confident in my use of German	74	14	80	4	92	11	67	6	71	10	70	7	75	52
I got an overview of German grammar	74	14	80	4	67	8	89	8	43	6	40	4	64	44
It was a constant reminder of the importance of grammar	74	14	20	1	67	8	22	2	71	10	90	9	64	44
Although I knew most of the rules, the grammar class was a good chance to be reminded of certain grammar points	47	9	40	2	58	7	44	4	57	8	80	8	55	38
It gave me the basis for work I did outside the class	53	10	40	2	42	5	33	3	86	12	30	3	51	35
Although I knew most of the rules, the grammar class it was a good chance to revise the grammar	37	7	40	2	58	7	78	7	43	6	60	6	51	35
I did not do much grammar at school	42	8	40	2	50	6	44	4	36	5	30	3	41	28

As is obvious from the above answers, the class was perceived as helpful on all three levels under investigation, socio-affective, cognitive and metacognitive. Among the 88% of students (61) who claimed that they learnt rules of which they had not previously been aware were those who, on the evidence of their answers in the remainder of the questionnaire as well as their performance throughout the year, would

have to be considered as having possessed a fairly sound grammatical knowledge prior to entry into DCU. More will be said about this point below. A clear majority in each group also stated that they would not have been able to figure out all the grammar points by themselves. As an examination of students' expanded answers showed (see below), the primary beneficial effect of the class with regard to rule knowledge was not so much that learners' declarative knowledge had been extended (although it had) but that they had grasped the rationale behind rules, thus allowing them to apply these rules in an analytical and structured manner in their language use. These comments were reiterated by students who were interviewed.

A clear majority in each group stated that the class had helped them become more confident in their use of German, thus reiterating earlier statements discussed in Section 8.3.1.2. It should be pointed out in this context, that out of the IMLFG group which, at the beginning of the year, had by far the highest number of students stating that they did not feel confident about German grammar, 92% of students (11) stated that the grammar class had increased their confidence in the overall use of German. As regards having gained an overview of German grammar, a majority of students in four out of the six groups indicated that the class had indeed helped them in this respect, while in the other two groups (IBLFG and IBLGS) slightly less than 50% stated that this was the case (6 and 4 respectively). The next point ("It was a constant reminder of the importance of grammar") was again judged to have been a beneficial aspect by a clear majority in four groups, but was rated very lowly in both ALGS and IMLGS (20%/1 and 22%/2 respectively). Figures also varied considerably for the next item ("It gave me the basis for work I did outside the class"). IBLFG and ALFG are the only groups from which a majority of students stated that they saw this as a benefit of the class. The average figure of 51% (35) is a disappointing result, considering the emphasis which teachers had put on the importance of independent work. This point will be considered in more detail below. As regards the two statements starting with "Although I knew most of the rules, ...", it should be noted that many students would appear to have ignored the first part of this clause, as became obvious when approximately 40% (11) of those who had stated that they had not done much grammar at school ticked one or both of these statements.

With regard to the last item, it is interesting to note that, at the beginning of the year, only 20% of students (14) stated that they had not done much grammar at school, whereas at the end of the year a further 14 students realised that what they had considered as a 'fairly strong'/'strong'/'very strong' emphasis on grammar at second level was, with hindsight, less strong than they had perceived it to be at the end of the senior cycle. Alternatively, they may just have realised that there is much more to grammar learning than they had assumed. The increase occurred in five out of the six groups, with figures for ALFG students unchanged from the beginning of the year.

As was pointed out above, judging by the comments of the 41% of students (28) who made additional comments, the single most important benefit would seem to have been the clarification of fuzzy notions in the course of the grammar classes. Almost half of these 41% of students stated that aspects of German grammar which had previously confused them and about which they had been unclear were explained in such a manner that allowed them to understand the underlying structures and to gain insights into how the system worked. As two students put it in the interviews, because of the grammar class "grammar makes more sense". All 41% are among the 88% (61) listed in table 8.33 above who stated that they learnt rules of which they had not previously been aware. As was pointed out in relation to table 8.33 above and as also became evident from results presented below, this in turn contributed to a sense of increased confidence among many students. Other answers, given by individual students, stressed that the grammar class had provided not just the basis, but also the motivation for work outside the classroom (16%/11), that it had familiarised learners with previously unknown terminology and that their grammar knowledge had been expanded considerably. Several students pointed out that the non-threatening atmosphere in class had encouraged them to ask questions (one of the social strategies whose use was constantly encouraged) without feeling inadequate. A few students also mentioned as helpful the fact that the class had provided and encouraged constant practice and one student pointed out that it had helped her learn not just from the teacher but also from other students (e.g. how to recall and apply rules etc.).

As pointed out above, contrary to the instructions in the questionnaire, 49% of students (34), most of whom were clearly satisfied with the grammar class on the whole, used list b. to voice their points of criticism. Table 8.34 shows their answers.

Table 8.34 (List b.)

Statement	Answers	
	rel	abs
I did not understand what was being explained because of the terminology	30	21
I did not understand what was being explained because I myself did not put enough work into it	23	16
I did not understand what was being explained because we went through things too fast	20	14
Other people knew so much more than me	16	11
Most points had already been covered at school	12	8
I did not understand what was being explained because I was afraid to ask questions	4	3

Other items in this list which were not ticked by any learner were:

- My grammar is fine/I have no problem with grammar
- I could have gone over the rules by myself
- I did not understand what was being explained because of the examples used
- I did not understand what was being explained because the rules were not explained clearly

As is obvious from the table and as will be confirmed even more emphatically further below, grammatical terminology constituted a major difficulty for a substantial number of students. An examination of the remainder of the research results reveals that a third of those students who confessed to finding terminology a genuine burden are students who both have a good to very good knowledge of terminology (as demonstrated in Section 8.2.3) and high accuracy levels in production output (as indicated in Section 8.2.4). Thus, their aversion of terminology would not appear to have adverse effects on actual knowledge or performance levels. Its use, however, creates considerable psychological barriers which could have a potentially discouraging effect on their motivation. Helping students to overcome this aversion thus continues to be a challenge for course designers and teachers.

Looking at the results for the statements regarding not having put enough work into the grammar aspect of the course and the criticism that things were rushed, it is interesting to note that two-thirds of those who criticised the latter also mentioned the former. This is a clear indication - although one of which learners may not be aware - that, unless students apply themselves and work on a regular basis, the pace of the grammar class will more than likely be perceived as being too fast. As regards the statement of "Other

people knew so much more than me", an examination of the remainder of the questionnaire showed that, with one exception, students who had given this answer were quite weak in their overall performance. However, when comparing the results for this question with student answers regarding their overall level of confidence regarding German grammar (as reported above), it emerges that two thirds of these students feel more confident about their knowledge levels at the end of the year than at the beginning. The four percent who stated that they had been afraid to ask questions also stated that they had not put enough work into the course which might at least partly explain their insecurity.

Students were again asked to make any additional comments they wished. Four out of the 49% of students (34) who had criticised individual aspects did so (= 6% overall). Terminology was again mentioned as a problem, as was the view that the grammar class had not always been basic enough. One difficulty which was reiterated by a significant number of students in the IMLGS and IBLGS class in various parts of the questionnaire and in the interviews concerned the issue of time-tabling. The groups (who were taught together) had their double period German class at the end of what was considered to be a fairly strenuous day (four hours of lectures in a row, an hour for lunch at 1 pm, followed by a double period of German from 2-4 pm). According to the two members from that group who brought up the difficulty in this connection, class discussions about this problem had shown that the majority of students were simply too exhausted to gain maximum benefit from the grammar class.

As was also pointed out above, four percent of students stated that, overall, they had not found the grammar class helpful. These students were, first of all, asked to indicate their answers in the list of given statements and then also make additional comments if they wished. All named as one of the difficulties the perception that other people knew more than themselves. They also said that they did not understand what was being taught because rules were not explained clearly and because they did not put enough work into the class themselves. Two out of the three students also criticised that the pace had been too fast while one stated that she did not understand what was being explained because she was afraid to ask questions. In an elaboration on their answers, two of the three students reiterated that they were out of their depth because of a combination of factors such as not having done much grammar at school, not putting in

the work themselves, a high degree of insecurity, all of which resulted in not being able to keep up with class events. In the interview one student also pointed out that she "freaked" when she saw the list of terminology in the October 1996 questionnaire. Another student added that she regularly lost concentration after the first thirty minutes.

As mentioned above, students who had approved of the grammar class were originally supposed to voice their criticism under a heading which now followed and which read "I found the grammar class helpful but ...". 61% (42) out of the 96% of students who had found the grammar class mainly helpful used this opportunity to air their criticism. The main points of criticism are shown in table 8.35.

Table 8.35 (multiple answers possible)

Statement	Answers	
	rel	abs
There was not enough practice in the classroom	19	13
The pace of the class was sometimes too fast	10	7
The class was sometimes too basic	10	7
The class was sometimes not basic enough	7	5
The terminology was off-putting	7	5
There was not enough time to go over the material outside the classroom	4	3
Students should have been encouraged to do more work outside the classroom	4	3
Not enough examples were provided	4	3
Too much homework was given	4	3
Not enough homework was given	3	2
Not enough work was put in by students themselves	3	2
Applying explicit knowledge in free production is the main problem	3	2

The lack of in-class practice (which, as was pointed out in Chapter Seven, could not be increased for time reasons) is thus the most frequently named negative aspect of the class. As is also obvious from the answers, apart from those students who were identified as being indirectly negatively disposed because they perceived the class as not being sufficiently basic (4%/3), a number of additional students confessed to finding it difficult to keep up with the class pace and to take in the content at the level at which it was explained. These results were confirmed by students in the interview who, with reference to their classmates, observed that some of them had been struggling throughout the year. Although the class had been designed in such a manner that allowances had been made for the lack of in-depth knowledge of even the most basic concepts, some students still failed to grasp these basics. On the other hand, several

other students stated that, for them, the class was at times not sufficiently advanced, with one student adding that this was the case only at the beginning of the course. These students were not identical with those students, mentioned above, who had indirectly let it be known that, for them, the overall class had not been sufficiently challenging. Interestingly, records showed that, with two exceptions, class attendance of those students who either criticised the occasional lack of challenge or the overall non-challenging nature of the grammar class was most regular throughout the year. A number of students who pointed out that they sometimes perceived the class as too basic also stated that they appreciated the class as a consolidating class in which they were familiarised with some new structures. Both aspects, revision and acquisition of new rules, were also stressed as positive in the interviews, by these and other strong students. When asked to give examples of the new features they had learnt in the interview, students named the use of 'werden', adjectival endings and relative clauses¹⁵. Thus, the concept of valency was by no means the only course novelty, not even for fairly strong students. A number of strong students also recognised, both in the questionnaire and in the interviews, the benefit of the class for those who had not shared the same grammar background as themselves and who, in some cases, were not familiar with what is commonly considered to be 'the basics'¹⁶. Two students in the interview described the significance of the grammar class as giving all students, regardless of their backgrounds, "a fair chance". As one of them put it: "Some people did grammar at school, others didn't, so when the teacher explains things in an actual class, you know that at least everybody is exposed to the same grammar teaching. What you do with that information is up to you". The other student added that exposing everybody to the same rule knowledge was important because all students were expected to reach similar standards.

As regards the remaining answers, not surprisingly, terminological knowledge was again mentioned as a nuisance, rather than recognised as a necessary and ultimately useful tool. Some of the other answers would suggest that designers and teachers are in a no-win situation - should they have asked students to do more work outside the

¹⁵ One student stated that she always used the nominative case in relative clauses.

¹⁶ In the interview, a very strong student admitted that she burst into a laughter when, at the beginning of the year, a fellow student told her that she was unfamiliar with the declension of the definite article ("she had never heard of 'der', 'den', 'dem!").

classroom or less, should they provide more homework or less? There are, of course, no easy answers to any of the above issues. However, all responses were carefully considered in the revision process for the current programme.

In a final question relating to the content and implementation of the grammar class, all students were asked to make any comment they wished with regard to the class. 33% (23) of all 69 students responded to that request. Answers are shown in table 8.36.

Table 8.36 (multiple answers possible)

Statement	Answers	
	rel	abs
The grammar class worked well	12	8
The grammar class consolidated my knowledge	7	5
The examples given were helpful	6	4
The handouts were useful	4	3
The class was well structured	3	2
The grammar class should be continued throughout the course	3	2
Individual students should be made answer questions, not just the entire class	3	2
The class was well-placed on the time-table	1	1
The student presentations were good	1	1
Using a grammar book would be better since the handouts are easily lost	1	1
Two hours of language classes per week are not enough	1	1
The explanations were clear	1	1
The class gave directions on how to study and how to improve language skills	1	1
The lecturer should always check that students have grasped the rules	1	1

12% (8) of the entire student cohort expressed their satisfaction with both the content and the implementation of the class. 7% (5) overall stated that, although the class for them had been mainly a revision class, they had enjoyed it nonetheless because it had consolidated the knowledge acquired at school.

Returning to the issue of terminology, which had been identified as a source of difficulty in table 8.34, this difficulty was further confirmed in the answers to the next question in the questionnaire. Students were asked how important for them personally a sound knowledge of terminology was. Answers are shown in table 8.37.

Table 8.37

Statement	ALFG		ALGS		IMLFG		IMLGS		IBLFG		IBLGS		Total	
	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs
Important	89	17	80	4	67	8	67	6	64	9	60	6	72	50
Not important	11	2	20	1	17	2	33	3	36	5	40	4	25	17
No answer	0	0	0	0	17	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2

Although the majority of students would appear to have accepted that terminological knowledge is of importance to them personally, a sizeable minority disagrees¹⁷. Support among students of 'Applied Languages' is strongest. This is perhaps not surprising, in view of their exclusive dedication to language studies (as opposed to the interdisciplinarity of degrees such as IML and IBL). Table 8.38 shows the arguments students named either for or against the item.

Table 8.38

Arguments named by those <u>in favour</u>	Answers	
	rel	abs
Terminological knowledge is needed		
• as a metalanguage	23	16
• to improve the general grammar awareness/to have a basis for understanding rules	16	11
• for independent work/research	14	10
• if you want to teach the language	4	3
Terminological knowledge in one language helps when learning other languages	6	4
Arguments named by those <u>against</u>		
Understanding the concept is more important than knowing the terminology	13	9
Terminology is confusing	6	4
Terminology is just the fancy jargon	3	2
It is only important if you want to teach the language	3	2
No answer	12	8

Those who have identified arguments in favour of having a sound terminological knowledge would appear to have taken on board the rationale for the need of terminological knowledge put forward in the grammar class, i.e. that, by and large, this kind of knowledge is not conceived as an end in itself but a useful tool in the analysis and discussion of declarative knowledge as well as in the pursuit of independent work. However, as answers from those arguing against it demonstrate, a considerable number of learners still perceive terminology as an unnecessary burden which, to them, diverts attention away from the real issue, the grammar itself. It should perhaps be emphasised at this point that none of the lecturers involved in teaching these groups considered their

¹⁷ The number of students who in a previous question had agreed that terminology was important was slightly higher than in this question (80%/55, cf. table 8.32).

own use of terminology in the classroom as excessive and none used terms which were not listed in table 6.1. But, it would appear, even basic terminology in moderate doses exceeds the acceptance levels of quite a number of students. The above arguments were reiterated by students in the interviews.

Turning to another issue, as was pointed out in Chapter Seven above, the original programme had envisaged that students take over some of the classes and go through grammar topics with their peers, with the teacher watching from the sideline. As was also pointed out, due to logistical difficulties, this scheme was eventually only introduced in one group, ALFG. Members of that group were asked in the questionnaire for their reaction to the scheme. Choosing from a list of answers, the overwhelming majority (79%/15 out of 19) stated they found student-led classes 'helpful' or 'as helpful as the teacher's presentations'. 11% (2) said they found them 'less helpful' and five percent each (1 student each) found them 'not helpful' and 'more helpful than the teacher's presentations'. Responses would certainly encourage an introduction of the scheme on a wider scale.

As was pointed out in Chapter Seven above, regular production output constituted an essential element of the grammar programme. This was to foster the use of analytical skills and explicit rule knowledge which, it is hoped, will become proceduralised with regular practice (cf. Section 2.3 above). Written assignments were given on a weekly basis in order to help students proceduralise previously acquired knowledge and strategies. In the questionnaire, students were asked for their reaction to the marking of written assignments, both in the diaries in semester one and in the essays in semester two. As will be remembered, errors in student work were marked and subsequently to be corrected by students themselves. In semester two, students were only allowed to hand up a new piece of work if they had handed up corrections of the previous work. Students were asked to indicate if they found this system helpful, confusing or not helpful and also to state if they were not sure of their opinion. Responses to this question are shown in table 8.39.

Table 8.39

Statement	ALFG		ALGS		IMLFG		IMLGS		IBLFG		IBLGS		Total	
	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs
Helpful	100	19	60	3	67	8	56	5	71	10	40	4	71	49
Not sure	0	0	40	2	8	1	22	2	14	2	30	3	14	10
Confusing	0	0	0	0	17	2	11	1	7	1	10	1	7	5
Not helpful	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	1	0	0	20	2	4	6
No answer	0	0	0	0	8	1	0	0	7	1	0	0	3	2

There is clear overall support for the scheme, although there are noticeable differences between individual groups. The scheme was better received among students studying French/German language combinations than among those studying German and Spanish. Students were asked to give reasons for their answers. Responses are shown in table 8.40.

Table 8.40 (multiple answers possible)

Categories	Answers	
	rel	abs
<p>1. Helpful because</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you had to confront your mistakes and weaknesses • you learnt from your mistakes and subsequently tried to avoid making them again • it helped you understand your grammar mistakes • I became more aware of grammar rules • you are constantly revising your grammar • I tried out new structures in essays • it makes you try to avoid errors in the first place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45 • 26 • 19 • 4 • 4 • 4 • 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31 • 18 • 13 • 3 • 3 • 3 • 3
<p>2. Not sure *1 because</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • time pressure and workload were enormous • sometimes the source of the error was unclear • I did not learn from my mistakes this way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 • 3 • 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 • 2 • 1
<p>4. Confusing because of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • terminology used • time pressure and workload 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 • 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 • 1
<p>5. Not helpful because of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • time pressure and workload 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3

*1 Half of those students who stated they were not sure did not give reasons for their answers.

As was pointed out in Section 2.3, asking students to use their explicit grammatical knowledge is rather futile if students are not convinced of the need to monitor their accuracy levels and to act on feedback in the first place. It would appear from the above answers that the current student cohort recognised the importance of both objectives (i.e. the need to monitor and the need to react to feedback). Students would appear to have appreciated the way in which the scheme obliged them to reflect on their grammar errors, rather than allowing them to gloss over them. These results thus confirm research theories presented in Chapter Two where the importance of regular and suitable feedback regarding an individual's performance was stressed by both *need theories* (cf. Oxford and Shearin, 1994) and *goal-setting theories* (cf. Locke et al., 1981). However, it is unclear whether the 45% of students (31) who stated that it helped them confront their weaknesses and mistakes saw the primary benefit of the scheme as alerting them to error occurrences after they had produced their work or increasingly during production output (as originally intended by the course designers). The rationale behind the scheme may thus need to be emphasised even more strongly in future. Several students in the interview confirmed the usefulness of the system, with one strong student pointing out that it had finally forced her to pay attention to matters which at second level she used to ignore, such as, for instance, plural endings. Time pressure was the main reason quoted by those who stated they did not benefit from the scheme.

Results to the previous questions were confirmed subsequently when, in another question in the questionnaire, learners were asked to state how they applied their knowledge of grammar when speaking, writing, reading, listening in German. Learners were provided with a list of answers from which to choose and were also invited to make additional comments. Their answers are shown in table 8.41.

Table 8.41 (multiple answers possible)

Statement	ALFG		ALGS		IMLFG		IMLGS		IBLFG		IBLGS		Total	
	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs
I try to recall grammar rules	89	17	80	4	67	8	56	5	93	13	50	5	75	52
I go by the 'sounds/looks right' principle	16	3	80	4	33	4	67	6	29	4	50	5	38	26
I do not think about grammar at all	5	1	20	1	17	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	4
No answer													6	4

The majority of students claim to at least try to recall grammar rules in language use, a result confirmed in the interviews when students stated that they tried to use whatever knowledge they had acquired in the grammar class in their productive and, to a lesser extent, their receptive skills. However, some of those interviewed added that constantly remembering explicit rules was so novel that it took some getting used to. Some also pointed out how difficult it was to change one's habits after five years of "getting away with murder", grammatically speaking.

Almost 40% of students (26) stated that they rely on their intuition, half of whom clarifying that they did so mainly when *speaking* the foreign language and/or when they were unsure of the rules. This is confirmation of the observation made in connection with table 8.27 above that, to many learners, oral production is such a daunting task that it cannot easily be married with accuracy, at least not in the initial stages.

19% of students (13) indicated that they used a combination of grammar rule retrieval and intuition at all times, while 6% (4) stated that they did not think of grammar at all. All 6% specified that this was the case with regard to *receptive skills*, while one indicated that she also did not think about grammar in her oral production. 13% of students (9) made additional comments with regard to the issue of transfer. Most stated that they referred back to notes and books, whenever possible, while others indicated they tried to remember previous examples or rules that had recently come up in class.

In order to assess the overall impact of the grammar programme in the transition between second and third level, students were asked, in the questionnaire, if they believed that they would benefit from this year's grammar class in the long run, for instance, by using some of the class notes for revision. Students were asked to expand on their answers. Answers for the first part of the question are shown in table 8.42.

Table 8.42

Statement	ALFG		ALGS		IMLFG		IMLGS		IBLFG		IBLGS		Total	
	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs
Yes	100	19	80	4	100	12	100	9	100	14	70	7	94	65
No	0	0	20	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	30	3	6	4

The ALGS student who answered 'no' to this question commented that while she would definitely benefit from the class in the long run, she found the notes not useful and would have preferred to work from a book such as *Hammer's German Grammar and Usage*. The 30% of IBLGS students who answered in the negative are made up of three of the students who were either openly or indirectly negatively disposed to the entire programme. All three focused on the notes, stating that they lacked detail and structure as well as being full of awkward and confusing terminology. One student commented that classes had not been given in note-taking form and it was therefore impossible to recall what was being done. It would appear that he was unaware of the handouts which had formed a regular feature of most classes. When examining the attendance list, it emerged that this student had attended less than a third of all grammar classes. Interestingly, the number of 'no' answers does not include two of the students who had previously openly admitted that they had not found this year's grammar class helpful. One of these two stated that the class had made him realise that he needed to work much harder at his grammar.

Table 8.43 shows the reasons named by those who answered 'yes'.

Table 8.43 (multiple answers possible)

Reasons	Answers	
	rel	abs
1. The class notes are useful		
• for reference and clarification purposes, especially in written production	49	34
• for revision	29	20
2. The class provided a solid grounding in grammar	29	20
3. The class made me realise the importance of grammar	17	12
4. The class consolidated my knowledge	12	8
5. I learnt many new points of grammar	10	7
6. The class made me more confident	10	7
No answer	7	5

The class notes would appear to have been well received by a majority of students. Most of those who commented on the notes stated that they found them very clear and to the point. Points 2. and 3. confirm that a sizeable number of learners appreciated the remedial nature of the class as well as recognising the role of grammar in the overall language learning process, while the consolidation and the acquisition of knowledge were also emphasised by some students. Several students added again that the class had made them more confident in their use of German. Two students also indicated that the terminology they learnt in the course of the year would be invaluable to them in the long run. One student merely stated that "any help is always gratefully (sic) accepted". Finally, students were also asked what advice they would give to the course designers. 39% of students (27) took this to refer to the entire German language course. Out of these, 25% (17) suggested some changes to certain aspects of that course, such as the selection of topics, the content of the civilisation class, the introduction of more language classes etc.. A small number of students proposed that a stronger emphasis be put on oral work (= 3%/2), suggesting that an oral practice class could alternate with the grammar class every second week or that the grammar class could be divided up into half grammar, half oral work. 14% (10) suggested that not only should the German course structure remain exactly as is, but it should also be copied by one of the other language departments. The way grammar had been handled was singled out as the main positive aspect by these students. Other, specifically grammar-related comments are listed in table 8.44.

Table 8.44

Statement	Answers	
	rel	abs
The grammar class should remain exactly as it is (including the homework and correction system)	29	20
The grammar class should start with the very basics	6	4
There should be more in-class practice	6	4
Introduce a 'grammar clinic'	3	2
There should be more emphasis on grammar work outside the classroom	3	2
Give more advice on grammar books	1	1
Use less terminology at the beginning	1	1
Give students an introduction to the terminology using English grammar	1	1
Give more essay	1	1
Keep reminding students of their weak points	1	1
Reassure students to contact lecturer if they have a problem	1	1
Either use Hammer grammar or put handouts in a book so that people don't lose them	1	1
Have one revision class for students in second year but after that it is up to the students themselves	1	1
Be a bit clearer as to what all the photocopied notes are for	1	1
Assign a German student for a group of 3 Irish students	1	1
Bear in mind our workload	1	1
There should be more emphasis on grammar	1	1

As is obvious from the range of responses, students chose to comment on quite a number of issues about which they had strong feelings. All recommendations for course modifications were carefully considered in the overall programme assessment.

The interviews confirmed that the German grammar programme was perceived by the majority of those interviewed as being most helpful in the transition between second and third level education. A third indicated that they themselves (and others) had appreciated the grammar course as having provided learners with both a structure and clear aim towards which they knew they had to work both inside and outside the classroom. According to these students, the grammar class had ensured that regular learning took place, allowing learners to get into a rhythm. As one student put it: "You know where you stand in German, you can measure your progress". This view was echoed by a number of students studying the French/German combination. Many of these students stressed that the grammar instruction received in German was perceived as positive compared to their other language where there was little emphasis on explicit grammar instruction and where students were expected to work on their grammar skills by autonomous learning means.

All students were asked if the class should not have been devoted to some other language learning aspect, and if they should not have been asked to work on their

grammar independently, now that they were at university. The weaker students stated categorically that they would not have been able to work through grammar without the help of a tutor since they needed both 'expert' explanation and the opportunity to clarify matters by asking questions. Other students said that, while, in theory, they could have worked on revising and improving on their grammatical skills by themselves, in practice they would in all likelihood not have done so. The argument put forward by these students was summed up by one of them who observed that "grammar is the kind of thing that, if you were to do it on your own, you just wouldn't do it. You also need to be reminded of it all the time, otherwise you forget how important it is". However, far from viewing the grammar class as an extension of the spoon-feeding to which they had grown accustomed at second level, students stated that they were also aware that the onus to study and improve ultimately rested with them. Thus the concept of the class acting as a guideline and pivotal point, but not as sufficient in itself was clearly recognised, in theory at least (as students were equally quick to admit). That this recognition did not automatically translate into practice became obvious elsewhere (cf. tables 8.48 and 8.49).

To sum up, the majority of students would appear to have perceived most aspects regarding the content and implementation of the grammar programme as helpful, while a minority was either unhappy with certain elements or with the class in general.

Among the main benefits would appear to have been the following:

1. on a *metacognitive* level:

- the structured guidance to grammar acquisition and application
- the provision of regular output practice

the corrective feedback system

2. on a *cognitive* level:

- the clearing up of 'fuzzy notions' regarding German grammar and the use of analytical skills in working out structures logically

the recall of grammar rules in production

The single most unpopular aspect of the programme on both a cognitive and metacognitive level was the use of terminology.

Students stressed repeatedly that the assistance received on a cognitive and metacognitive level had a positive knock-on effect on another aspect which was considered to be of crucial importance, the building up of confidence levels.

As regards the use of specific social/affective strategies, the opportunity to ask clarifying questions was named by some students as positive, while group work did not appear to have been recognised as a major facilitating factor, thus confirming observations made in Section 2.3 above.

8.3.2 Levels of Student Awareness of Learning Responsibilities and their Implementation

As was pointed out previously, the acceptance of responsibility for one's learning progress must be seen as one of the ultimate aims of all third level education. This section examines to what extent the subjects under examination have not only accepted the above goal of assuming responsibility but what steps they have taken in order to implement this aspiration.

At the beginning of the year, the majority of students had indicated in the interviews that they were well aware of the increased responsibility for their own language learning progress awaiting them at third level. Results to the next question confirm that, in theory at least, students have fully taken on board that task. Students were asked to name the two parties they believed were responsible for their language learning progress. Answers are shown in table 8.45.

Table 8.45

Statement	Answers	
	rel	abs
Firstly myself, secondly the lecturer	81	56
Firstly the lecturer, secondly myself	10	7
Responsibility is shared between myself and lecturer	4	3

The next question sought to establish if students felt that, in their first year at DCU, they had learnt how to go about working on their language skills independently and efficiently. Students were asked to tick one of the responses shown in table 8.46.

Table 8.46

Statement	Answers	
	rel	abs
Yes	28	19
Not yet but getting there	65	45
No	3	2
I knew how to go about this from my secondary school	4	3

Students who answered 'yes' were then asked to state where they had developed their independent learning skills, whether in both their language classes, mainly in their

German language class or mainly in their other language class. 12% (8) stated that they learnt it in both their language classes, while 7% (5) stated it was mainly in their German class. 1 student indicated that it was mainly in the other language class that she had learnt about independent work and 12% (8) did not answer this question.

Thus, as expected, for many students the transition from being spoon-fed at second level to adapting to the need to take responsibility of their learning efforts proved to be fraught with difficulty. Not surprisingly, therefore, a majority of students stated that they were only beginning to find their feet after one year at third level. In the interviews, most students reiterated the difficulty of knowing that you have to assume responsibility and actually proceeding to take charge. However, a small number (16%/11) also pointed out that they had expected things to be a lot more traumatic and that both class sizes and lecturers' assistance had done much to make the transition smoother than anticipated.

At the beginning of the year the majority of students had also indicated that, in theory at least, they were prepared for the increased grammatical challenges awaiting them at third level. In order to assess whether the expected challenges were borne out, students were again asked, in the questionnaire, what they thought had been the biggest differences between the level of grammatical knowledge required at second level and at third level. Answers are shown in table 8.47, with answers for 1996 also showing. 12% (8) gave multiple answers with regard to third level.

Table 8.47

Statements	Answers			
	'97 rel	abs	'96 rel	abs
Regarding second level:				
• Only superficial and minimum amount of grammatical knowledge is required	25	17	32	22
• Grammar is exclusively geared towards the Leaving Certificate	10	7	19	13
• Fluency is more important than accuracy	7	5	0	0
Regarding third level:				
• More in-depth knowledge	• 35	• 24	• 33	• 23
• More accuracy	• 26	• 18	• 29	• 20
• Guessing has been replaced by knowledge	• 23	• 16	• 17	• 12
• Grammar helps you in all aspects of language use	• 14	• 10	• 3	• 2
• More terminological work	• 10	• 7	• 4	• 3
• More independent work	• 10	• 7	• 4	• 3
Not much difference between second and third level	6	4	9	6
No answer	1	1	10	7

Bearing in mind that an additional 9% of students (6) made multiple comments compared to October 1996, these results are not dissimilar to the previous findings and therefore further proof that, in theory at least, learners had been aware of the increased grammatical challenges about to be placed on them by third level and had implicitly accepted those increased demands. However, one striking feature in student answers to this question in May 1997 was the greater use of intensifying adverbs when describing the differences. Thus, there was a marked increase in the use of adverbs such as 'far', 'much' and 'a lot' compared to the October 1996 survey, indicating that perhaps the changes were even greater than had been anticipated. For instance, students stated that 'far more in-depth knowledge' was required at third level and accuracy was 'much more important'. They also prefaced their remarks by saying that there were 'major differences' between the two levels. 4% of students (3) stated that they felt they were assumed to know much more than they did.

As regards the statement that guessing has been replaced by knowledge, several students stated that being more familiar with grammatical rules and knowing the rationale behind certain those rules had allowed them, in both language reception but above all in production, to increasingly work out the correct structures logically and to make informed choices, rather than going by the 'sounds right' or 'looks right' principle. There was also a small increase in the number of students who explicitly recognised that grammar is meant to serve as a tool for effective language use.

As was also pointed out at the beginning of the year, while students appeared to be aware of the increased grammatical challenges at third level, many initially seemed to have no more than vague notions as to how this increase should be achieved and signalled that they required guidance (cf. table 8.8). Students were therefore asked to state what steps they had actually taken, in their first year at university, in order to work on their grammar knowledge and application. Students were again asked to choose from a given list. Answers are shown in table 8.48

Table 8.48 (multiple answers possible)

Statement	ALFG		ALGS		IMLFG		IMLGS		IBLFG		IBLGS		Total	
	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs
I attended (almost) every class	89	17	100	5	75	9	67	6	93	13	60	6	81	56
I did the homework for the grammar class	89	17	60	3	67	8	67	6	100	14	60	6	78	54
I used the TV in SALLU	37	7	80	4	58	7	67	6	57	8	80	8	58	40
I worked through a grammar book myself	42	8	60	3	58	7	44	4	36	5	10	1	41	28
I did exercises outside the class	53	10	60	3	33	4	22	2	14	2	0	0	30	21
I used the computer programmes in SALLU	32	6	60	3	42	5	0	0	36	5	10	1	29	20
I worked together with another student	26	5	20	1	0	0	11	1	7	1	10	1	13	9
No answer													1	1

Some of the answers regarding *class attendance*, *homework* and *working through a grammar book* were qualified by students adding 'in semester two' (for all three aspects) or 'sometimes' (for the latter two aspects), again an indication that many students need more time than others to cope with the transition from second to third level. An examination of attendance records verified students' answers with regard to their class attendance claims. There was also general agreement among course teachers that those who claimed they had done regular homework for the grammar class, had indeed appeared to be well prepared in class. All other aspects were obviously not directly verifiable, although the relatively high number of students who used the TV in the self-access centre (SALLU) would appear realistic, as does the relatively low figure of 30% of learners (21) who claimed to have done exercises outside the class (cf. also the results for a similar question regarding independent work in table 8.33 above). The pivotal role the grammar class would appear to have played in students' grammar acquisition efforts was thus again confirmed.

It could be argued at this point that the mere existence of the grammar class was counterproductive to the wider educational programme aim of encouraging students to take on more responsibility themselves. According to this argument, there was no incentive for students to seize the initiative, as everything was handed to them on a plate

in the grammar class. This interpretation would appear to be confirmed by the above result regarding the call for regular engagement in grammar exercises outside the classroom context which the vast majority of students apparently have disregarded, thus failing to demonstrate independent learning abilities. Charges of this kind are, however, unjustified, for two reasons. Firstly, as was pointed out in Chapter Two above, autonomy is not determined by physical location but denotes "geistige Unabhängigkeit" (Rösler, 1998: 4). One of the defining characteristics of third level learning is that learners have choices regarding their learning behaviour. Thus, while they have the choice to attend class and to carry out written assignments, by the same token the opposite is also true. Therefore, if learners experienced the grammar programme as helpful (which most would appear to have done), then their decision to attend that class and to carry out written assignments must be seen not as acts by passive recipients but as deliberately applied learning strategies.

Secondly, a look at students' overall assessment load in the second semester (i.e. the semester in which an increasing number of students at least *realised* the need to put in extra work, although they may not have acted on this realisation) revealed that there was an abundance of deadlines to be met throughout the semester. Therefore, whatever independent learning time had been allocated in the course design to the practising of German grammar was abandoned by learners for the sake of devoting time to more pressing matters, such as assessments in other subjects. Learners reduced their German grammar efforts to class attendance and to carrying out specific assignments. Thus, the decision not to devote more time to German grammar issues was not so much indicative of a lack of learner awareness of their responsibilities as being dictated by delivery pressure. It could, of course, be argued that this in itself was a sign that students lack time-management skills which are a vital component of independent learning skills. However, it could be argued with equal validity that learners' assessment load was quite simply excessive and must be reduced if the main focus of learning is to be redirected from the product onto the process (cf. discussion of this aspect with regard to second level in Chapter Three above). Viewed in this light, the majority of students (although obviously not all) probably applied themselves to the best of their abilities by attending the grammar class and carrying out specific assignments. Put differently, given the enormous assessment pressure, there is a strong possibility that many students would

not have engaged in grammar work at all, had it not been for the grammar class and the assignment of written homework (cf. confirmation for this in student interviews above). However, the fact that less than a third of learners engaged in work outside the grammar class nonetheless poses a difficulty, not in terms of a lack of learner responsibility, but as regards the proceduralisation of declarative knowledge (the importance of which was emphasised in Chapters Two and Seven). The lack of *in-class* practice was previously criticised by students in connection with the implementation of the grammar class (cf. tables 8.35 and 8.44). This dilemma will be discussed in more detail in the final section of this chapter.

Students were next asked to add to this list all other activities which helped them improve their grammar knowledge in the course of the year. 28% (19) named the following additional measures:

- revision of Leaving Certificate notes (9%) (6)
- revision of DCU course notes (7%) (5)
- written work as a basis for improving grammar (6%) (4)
- reading of magazines (4%) (3)
- contact with native Germans (1%) (1)
- additional help from parent who is a German teacher (1%) (1)

A look at the 9% (6) of IBL and IML students who stated that they had revised their Leaving Certificate notes revealed that all but one of these students were among the strongest in each group. The fact that these students keep using notes which they obviously experienced as helpful confirms the importance of course notes as a point of reference. A comparison with answers regarding the usefulness of DCU course notes for future reference, as presented in table 8.43 above, showed that one of the students who used her Leaving Certificate notes as a source of reference said she found the DCU notes "not immensely helpful", while all others were positive about them.

The next question in the questionnaire sought to establish how students assessed their grammar learning effort in year one and which additional measures, not mentioned in the previous question, they might employ. Students were asked, what, if anything, they

would do differently next year as regards improving their grammar (provided it needed improving). Answers are shown in table 8.49.

Table 8.49 (multiple answers possible)

Statement	Answers	
	rel	abs
1. Regarding continuous revision outside the classroom		
I would do more thorough and more regular revision work outside the class	65	45
2. Regarding practice		
I would do more exercises	17	12
I would do more/ all the homework	4	3
I would include it more in my essays/use newer structures in my essays (rather than look for an easier alternative)	3	2
I would try and practise my grammar more, especially when speaking	1	1
3. Regarding the use of reference books		
I would work through a (few) grammar book(s)	12	8
I would study the grammar points from a book in English first	1	1
Other		
I would learn the terminology as it comes up	3	2
I would go to more grammar classes	3	2
Find a native German speaker	3	2
Spend more time working with members of my class	3	2
I would like to think about grammar in more detail when I read German texts so as to see it in use and to learn from that	1	1
Make myself write shorter sentences as confusion over word order is less likely	1	1
Structure the rules for myself	1	1
Speak German to myself	1	1
Try to get the grammar as correct as possible	1	1
Try and use the computers in SALLU	1	1
I am now taking grinds and possibly also next year	1	1
Work harder	1	1
Concentrate on a single topic and not leave it until I have it off to perfection	1	1
No answer	1	1

As is evident from the above answers, most students realise that they did not put in the work outside the classroom. While this seems a rather obvious point to make - it could be argued that it is all very well for students to come to this realisation when it is too late - it is unlikely that these answers were simply put down because students assumed that a certain degree of self-flagellation was required. As was pointed out previously, the heavy assessment load undoubtedly took its toll even among the most dedicated and diligent of students. It came as no surprise then that many learners quoted time pressure as one reason as to why many of the 'good intentions' listed above did not materialise this year. In the case of those studying a German/Spanish language combination another reason was the enormous workload put on them by the *ab initio* language. Many of these learners confessed, in the interview, that their own work and that of

others in the class had primarily focused on that language. Thus, while attending class, handing up and correcting homework, and generally trying their best to keep up with German, they found that, invariably, they had concentrated to a large degree on the new language. At the same time they pointed out that, had it not been for the grammar class, they would have neglected their German language skills to an even greater extent.

A number of students expressed the hope that it would be easier to do work outside the classroom in year two since they had now been given the basis from which to proceed more independently. Since, as answers to the previous question showed, class attendance and the handing up of homework had been satisfactory with regard to the vast majority of students, these two strategies were not included by many in the list of their planned changes.

The second last in this series of questions again sought to elicit student conceptions regarding learner responsibilities. Students were asked what advice they would give to next year's first year students. Table 8.50 shows their answers.

Table 8.50 (multiple answers possible)

Advice	Answers	
	rel	abs
1. Regarding class attendance/ participation and assignment of work		
• Go to the classes	• 59	• 41
• Do all the work you are given	• 20	• 14
• Do not be afraid to ask questions	• 10	• 7
2. Regarding revision and other class-related work		
• Work regularly from the beginning	• 45	• 31
• Make time for revision and exercises outside the classroom	• 30	• 21
• Be prepared for a lot of work	• 9	• 6
• Do not let something go until you understand it	• 6	• 4
• Use all the facilities available to you	• 6	• 4
• Buy a good German grammar book	• 4	• 3
• If you are weak at something, practise it and pay particular attention to it	• 4	• 3
• Have a good filing system for all the handouts	• 3	• 2
• Use your own initiative and try out different approaches to learning the language	• 3	• 2
• Apply what you have learnt in the grammar in class in your work	• 1	• 1
• Realise your weaknesses	• 1	• 1
Other:		
• Do not be disheartened by difficult grammar or terminology - it takes a while but it does come	1	1
• Acquaint yourself with the terminology at the start of the year	1	1
No answer	1	1

Class attendance is thus confirmed by a majority of students as an essentially beneficial step to improving one's grammar. Some students pointed out that classes should be

attended with a positive attitude, with one student giving the following piece of advice: "Do not look on grammar as boring and difficult - approach it with an open mind - you may be surprised!".

Others made the point that mere attendance was not sufficient but that learners needed to pay attention as well. In their additional comments, one student gave as her explanation for the importance of class attendance "because you will learn something new in every single one", while another one stated that attendance was beneficial "even if you think you know all the grammar". Another one explained that, in her view, "the classes are really important if you aren't great at it from school. But they are still useful for revision and you can answer questions that others can't and you can explain it to them". Students were also quite emphatic about the need to work regularly from the beginning, a piece of advice many of the present cohort would appear not to have followed for themselves or have discovered (too) late.

Some of the comments regarding the workload included the following: "Don't look at it as if you are only doing 3 hours of German a week, that's a big mistake", "It's a tough course but if you do all the work you'll manage" and "Do german (sic) if you like loads of work". A number of students pointed out that in the long run, the hard work would pay off; one added "it's your education and you should put some effort into it".

The number of different answers was 23 which underlines the difference in students' conceptions as to how to best organise their language learning. The multitude and length of the answers also indicate that students are aware of the significance of the learner's own contribution and responsibility with regard to the learning process - in theory at least. Many of the above recommendations will be included in future course booklets, since it is hoped that incoming students might be more receptive to advice from experienced peers than to that given by the teacher.

In the questionnaire, students were also asked if there should be a grammar assessment at the end of the year. Answers are shown in table 8.51.

Table 8.51

Statement	ALFG		ALGS		IMLFG		IMLGS		IBLFG		IBLGS		Total	
	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs
Yes	68	13	40	2	58	7	33	3	14	2	30	3	43	30
No	32	6	60	3	42	5	67	6	71	10	70	7	54	37
No answer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	2	0	0	3	2

Students are clearly split on this issue, with enormous differences between individual groups. Thus, while only 14% of IBLFG (2) favour the introduction of such an assessment, a majority of 68% ALFG (13) support the notion.

Students were again asked to give reasons for their answers. Responses of those in favour of an assessment are shown in table 8.52, responses of those against it are presented in table 8.53. 3% of students (2) did not answer this question.

Table 8.52 (multiple answers possible)

Arguments in favour of an assessment	Answers	
	rel	abs
It will make students learn their grammar	30	21
Grammar is so important	10	7
It is a good way of measuring student progress	6	4
This is how the course designers find out if the class is worthwhile	3	2
So that students can demonstrate their grammar knowledge	1	1

Table 8.53

Arguments against a grammar assessment	Answers	
	rel	abs
Grammar is marked in other aspects of the course anyway	43	30
Students do not need the pressure of another assessment/the workload would be too much	10	7
Grammar is an integral part of language	6	4
Grammar learning is something everybody can do at their own pace only	3	2
It is up to students themselves to learn the grammar	3	2
"Because I would fail - I don't feel confident enough with my grammar yet"	1	1

Most of the arguments put forward in favour of a grammar assessment suggest that a very sizeable number of students, especially in the ALFG group, would have preferred the pressure of an examination to having to make decisions about their grammar acquisition themselves. This underlines earlier statements made by students regarding

their ability to work independently (cf. table 8.46) where the majority of learners stated that they are not fully confident about this aspect yet. On the other hand, an equally large number of students seemed to realise that engaging in grammar work will pay off without the immediate pressure of a dedicated grammar assessment.

To sum up results for this section, as was pointed out at the beginning of this section, each investigation of attitudes brings with it the danger of the Hawthorne effect. There is, however, ample evidence in the present investigation - students were sufficiently critical in their replies and comments - to allow the conclusion that respondents were truthful in their overall acceptance of the grammar course. This openness in responses reflects the good relations all teachers reported to have built up with their classes in the course of the year. According to the teachers, the rapport had resulted in a classroom atmosphere where student suggestions and constructive criticism were regularly encouraged and noted.

Overall results for Sections 8.3.1 and 8.3.2 indicate that the majority of students would appear to have a positive cognitive attitude towards the learning and usage of grammar (although they are still no more intrinsically interested in the subject matter), as well as having gained in confidence by grasping the underlying structures which make up the German grammar system. According to the students' own perceptions, the programme thus helped them on an affective, as well as a cognitive and metacognitive level.

As regards the issue of increasing learner independence, it would appear that the grammar programme provided the pivotal point for learners' engagement with grammar. Although class-independent follow-up work and other initiatives indicating an increasing degree of autonomous learning behaviour were not seen through to the extent envisaged by course designers, it is doubtful that an absence of the grammar class would have yielded more positive results in this respect. On the contrary, it would appear that, had students been left to their own devices, many would not have known where to start brushing up on their grammar or how to go about it, while others would not have had the discipline to do so. The net result would have been that students had no engagement with grammar, either as part of a structured programme or as part of their independent learning approach. This is further proof that students must be guided towards becoming increasingly independent, rather than being thrown into the deep end.

While the overall programme reception was indeed positive, criticism of individual aspects as well as the plethora of suggestions for alterations indicate that the course was far from perfect. Although many of the answers are indicative of the heterogeneity of most classrooms, prompting the inevitable reply that it is impossible to please everyone, all comments were obviously very carefully considered in the revision process.

Particular attention was given to what continues to present one of the single biggest stumbling blocks on the road to proceduralisation, the lack of practice. The use of terminology was another issue which was addressed in the revision process. Subsequent programme alterations will be outlined in the final section of this chapter.

Responses also clearly show that certain groups had difficulty, not with the grammar programme as such, but with other learning aspects which hampered their efforts. Thus it is no coincidence, that, with one exception, the 10% of students (7) who stated that they did not feel confident about their level of grammatical knowledge as well as 10% (7) of the overall 16% (11) who were not happy with the grammar programme were all from the IMLGS and IBLGS class. Considering that both learners and class teacher reported to have enjoyed good class relations, the difficulty these groups experienced with regard to the grammar learning process must be seen as a clear indication of the double burden of having to cope with, firstly, the demands placed on learners by their *ab initio* language and, secondly - and possibly even more significantly -, the unfortunate time-tabling situation which took a considerable toll on many learners' concentration and energy levels.

8.3.3 Metalinguistic and Linguistic Knowledge Levels

As was pointed out in Section 7.4 above (implementation of the syllabus), not all items received the kind of coverage that had initially been intended. However, the diminished coverage did not have a crucially negative impact on the overall implementation of the programme. Naturally, none of the 'neglected' items were tested in Section 8.3.3.

Errors made with regard to any of these features in the essays at the beginning of the year and at the end of semester two were also disregarded in both error counts (cf. Section 8.2.4 above and Section 8.3.4 below).

There are two subsections to this section: Section 8.3.3.1 examines some aspects of metalinguistic knowledge levels, while 8.3.3.2 looks at combined metalinguistic and linguistic knowledge levels. Results were obtained by questionnaire (for a copy of the questionnaire see Appendix I).

8.3.3.1 Metalinguistic Knowledge Levels

In the questionnaire, students were asked two questions regarding terminological knowledge. The first question asked students to define a number of grammar terms and to provide an example for each term in German. Students were also requested to indicate when they were not familiar with a specific term. All terms listed in this and the following question had been covered repeatedly in class¹⁸.

In October 1996, the items listed below had all been identified as problematic concepts, since only a minority of students had managed to provide correct examples for them. As regards items 1.- 4., no correct examples had been provided at all. Furthermore, items 1.-5. and item 11. were among those which a majority of students indicated they had never come across before.

Table 8.54 shows the results.

Table 8.54

Answers	Correct ¹		Incorrect ²		Not familiar		No answer	
	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs
1. Intransitive verb	28	19	41	28	6	4	26	18
2. Complement	41	28	29	20	7	5	23	16
3. Transitive verb	41	28	32	22	7	5	20	14
4. Subjunctive	41	28	10	7	10	7	39	27
5. Compound noun	48	33	10	7	12	8	30	21
6. Weak verb	59	41	33	23	4	3	3	2
7. Auxiliary verb	65	45	17	12	4	3	13	9
8. Adverb	68	47	17	12	1	1	13	9
9. Strong verb	67	46	25	17	4	3	4	3
10. Agreement	70	48	12	8	1	1	17	12
11. Imperative	88	61	4	3	1	1	6	4

¹ This category included the provision of either one of the following combinations: a correct definition plus a correct example, a correct definition and no example, no definition and a correct example and an incomplete definition plus a correct example.

¹⁸ The only exception being the *passive*. However, this item was covered in all translation classes.

*2 This category included the provision of either one of the following combinations: a correct definition plus an incorrect example, an incorrect definition plus a correct example, an incorrect definition and no example, an incorrect definition and an incorrect example, an incomplete definition and no example and an incomplete definition plus an incorrect example.

*3 Both adjectival agreement and subject-verb agreement were accepted as correct answers.

Terms were better known this time round, across the board. Although a majority of students still have difficulty with the concept of *intransitive verbs*, the number of correct examples rose by almost 30% (19). Figures for the other items for which no correct examples had been provided in the previous test (*complement*, *transitive verb* and *subjunctive*) were up by more than 40% (28). While figures for *auxiliary verb* and *adverb* rose significantly (from below 20% to well above 60%/ 45 and 47 respectively), definitions provided here were largely incomplete (as they had been in both the October 1995 and October 1996 research). The most significant improvements occurred with regard to the last two items in the list, *agreement* and *imperative*, both of which had been below 20% (14) in the 1996 test.

The second question investigating metalinguistic knowledge levels asked students to provide an example of certain terms in German (students were specifically asked not to provide a definition). Learners were again asked to indicate when they were not familiar with certain items.

As with the previous question, all items had been identified as problematic, for the same reasons as were outlined above.

Results are shown in table 8.55. Figures for correct examples provided in the 1996 test are also provided.

Table 8.55

Answers	Correct				Incorrect		Not familiar '97		No answer '97	
	'97		'96		'97		'97		'97	
	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Term										
1. Verbal phrase	7	5	0	0	43	30	22	15	28	19
2. Weak noun	12	8	3	2	25	17	28	19	35	24
3. Present participle	14	10	0	0	65	45	7	5	14	10
4. Noun phrase	17	12	0	0	9	6	26	18	48	33
5. Uncountable noun	20	14	3	2	4	3	43	30	33	23
6. Pluperfect tense	39	27	17	12	26	18	10	7	25	17
7. Suffix	41	28	3	2	13	9	16	11	30	21
8. Declension of articles	45	31	10	7	9	6	20	14	26	18
9. Interrogative article	46	32	4	3	9	6	19	13	26	18
10. The passive	48	33	13	9	25	17	4	3	23	16
11. Demonstrative article	52	36	3	2	3	2	16	11	29	20
12. Past participle	54	37	22	15	45	31	0	0	1	1
13. Relative pronoun	64	44	16	11	19	13	3	2	14	10
14. Regular verb	67	46	20	14	30	21	1	1	1	1
15. Prefix	70	48	3	2	6	4	7	5	17	12
16. Negative article	86	59	26	18	4	3	4	3	6	4
17. Possessive article	86	59	28	19	6	4	1	1	7	5
18. Personal pronoun	86	59	25	17	7	5	1	1	6	4
19. Irregular verb	94	65	38	26	0	0	3	2	3	2

Results show that some of the items which were problematic at the beginning of the year still caused difficulty at the end. Thus, concepts such as *verbal phrase*, *weak noun*, *present participle*, *noun phrase* and *uncountable noun* are still only known to 20% (14) of students or less (items 1.-5.). There has also been only a relatively small increase in knowledge levels with regard to the *pluperfect tense* (item 6.). Likewise, although the number of correct examples provided has gone up by 32% (from 15 to 37), almost half the students (31) still provided an **incorrect** example for the concept of *past participle* (item 12.). Increases of approximately 50% occurred with regard to *demonstrative article* (up by 49%, from 2 to 36), *irregular verb* (up by 56%, from 26 to 65), *possessive*

article (up by 58%, from 19 to 59), *negative article* (up by 60%, from 18 to 59), *personal pronoun* (up by 62%, from 17 to 59) and *prefix* (up by 67%, from 2 to 48). There was quite a striking difference between the number of correct examples for regular verbs and those for irregular verbs (67%/46 compared to 94%/65). Many of the examples quoted under the former actually belonged to the latter category, hence the relatively high number of incorrect answers (30%/21). Figures for the concepts of *prefix* and *suffix* also varied considerably: while *suffix* is still only known to 41% of students (28), 70% (48) provided a correct example for *prefix*. Both the greater increase for *irregular verbs* and *prefix* are most likely due to the stronger emphasis which was put on these two concepts in the classroom, compared to *regular verbs* (i.e. the 'default form') and *suffix* (which did not receive as much coverage as had been hoped).

An examination of group results for these two questions revealed enormous differences between individual groups (cf. table 8.56 below), a pattern which was to continue through most of the investigation. The total number of points allocated to question one was 22 (one point each for a correct definition and a correct example), while 19 points (one point for each item) were allocated to question two. The total allocation of points between the two questions was thus 41.

Table 8.56 (out of 100%)

Group	Mean question 1	Mean question 2	Mean questions 1 and 2
ALGS	64	55.80	60.20
IBLFG	61.92	57.21	59.64
ALFG	56.42	58.89	57.36
IMLFG	39.91	42	41.16
IBLGS	44.80	34.20	39.80
IMLGS	32.55	37.44	34.77
Total	50.42	49.01	49.72

As regards question 1, the scores for both ALGS and IBLFG are almost twice that of IMLGS. Both IML groups and IBLGS are well below the average, in both each individual question and overall. There is thus a considerable gap of more than 16% in the overall result between the top three groups and the three remaining groups. While there is little difference between IMLFG and IBLGS, IMLGS clearly lags behind even these two. ALGS performs best on question 1 and on questions 1 and 2 together, with

IBLFG and ALFG following closely behind in the overall score. The results for AL students had been expected to be fairly high, as it was assumed that the nature of their studies would lead them to attribute more importance to metalinguistic knowledge than would be the case in other groups. However, overall scores even for those above the average are not quite as high as would have been expected after the emphasis that had been put on metalinguistic knowledge in the course of the teaching. This must be taken as further confirmation of the previously reported difficulty which students have with regard to this issue (cf. tables 8.34 and 8.37 above).

8.3.3.2 *Some Aspects of Combined Metalinguistic and Linguistic Knowledge Levels*

Unlike in October 1996, when, for reasons outlined above, the kind of linguistic and metalinguistic knowledge under investigation in this section was ascertained in interviews, the end of semester two investigation was conducted by questionnaire. The questionnaire contains four questions which were not put to students in the October 1996 interviews. Two of these belong to part I, while the other two form part II. For all other questions, figures for 1996 are shown in brackets.

As will become obvious, results for some of the questions reveal enormous differences between individual groups. Where these major differences occur, results for each group will be shown whenever possible.

Unless otherwise stated, each correct answer was allocated one point, with a total of 120 points achievable. Since the 1996 results were calculated out of a total of only 25 students, there will be no conversion into absolute figures.

Results

Part I

In the first question, students were asked to provide the first person singular preterite and perfect forms of three verbs. As regards the second verb (*ich darf gehen*), it should be noted that, while this item was discussed in the context of modal verb formation, this discussion was not conducted in great detail. Under the original syllabus, the *formation of the perfect tense involving modal verbs* was to have been covered more extensively under verbal phrase, part II ("double infinitive"). However, as was pointed out in Chapter Seven above, this part of the syllabus was never implemented, due to time constraints.

Results for all three verbs are shown in table 8.57.

Table 8.57

Verb	<i>ich werde</i>			<i>ich darf gehen</i>			<i>ich reserviere</i>		
	1997 rel	abs	1996 rel	1997 rel	abs	1996 rel	1997 rel	abs	1996 rel
Correct preterite form	64	44	44	48	33	36	87	60	76
Correct perfect form	72	50	52	14	10	12	62	43	40
Both correct preterite and perfect form	55*	38	36	12	8	4	59	41	40
No answer preterite	7	5		10	7		7	5	
No answer perfect	7	5		29	20		6	4	

*ALFG: 74%; IMLGS 33%

The overwhelming majority of students provided the correct preterite form for the first person singular of the verb 'reservieren' (87%/60), while a clear majority provided the correct preterite form for the verb 'werden' (64%/44). Figures were considerably lower for the preterite form of the phrase 'ich darf gehen', and, as expected, students performed poorly regarding the same item in the perfect tense¹⁹. Figures were also lower for the perfect tense of 'ich reserviere' than for the preterite, although a majority still provided the correct form, while the number of correct answers for the perfect tense of 'ich werde' was higher than that for the preterite. Overall, a majority of students provided correct answers regarding both tenses for 'werden' and 'reservieren'. 2 AL and IBL students each, but no IML student got all 3 verbs right in both tenses. While there were no significant differences between individual groups regarding 'ich darf gehen' and 'ich reserviere', the gap was more considerable as regards 'ich werde': while 74% ALFG students (14) scored on both preterite and perfect form, the figure for the weakest group, IMLGS, was 33% (3).

A comparison with 1996 figures shows that the biggest improvement has taken place with regard to the perfect tense of the verb 'ich reserviere', as well as with regard to the verb 'ich werde', where figures for both correct preterite and correct perfect tense forms were up by about 20%. Improvement on the other two verbs has been less significant.

¹⁹ The number of different incorrect forms for the perfect tense amounted to thirty.

In the second question, students were asked to provide the correct form of the subjunctive for the following sentences:

Sentence 1: Ach, wenn ich doch nur genug Geld _____! (Ich habe aber nicht genug Geld)

Sentence 2: Ach, wenn ich doch nur reich _____! (Ich bin aber nicht reich)

Answers are shown in table 8.57.

Table 8.57

Correct answers	'hätte'			'wäre'		
	1997		1996	1997		1996
	rel	abs	rel	rel	abs	rel
ALFG	84	16		79	15	
ALGS	60	3		60	3	
IMLFG	67	8		58	7	
IMLGS	44	4		33	3	
IBLFG	64	9		57	8	
IBLGS	60	6		40	4	
Total	67	46	32	58	40	24

While a total 58% of students (40) provided the correct subjunctive form of the verb 'sein', 67% (46) provided the correct form of 'haben'. Compared with 1996, both figures have more than doubled. ALFG scored highest on both verbs while IMLGS scored lowest.

There were two parts to the next question on verb valency. In part one, students were asked which element in a clause decides which other elements are required in a given clause. Answers are shown in table 8.58.

Table 8.58

Answers	Correct answer (‘the main verb’)			Incorrect answer			No answer		
	1997		1996	1997		1996	1997		1996
	rel	abs	rel	rel	abs	rel	rel	abs	rel
ALFG	68	13		32	6		0	0	
ALGS	60	3		40	2		0	0	
IMLFG	33	4		33	4		33	4	
IMLGS	22	2		22	2		56	5	
IBLFG	57	8		36	5		7	1	
IBLGS	30	3		30	3		40	14	
Total	48	33	16	32	22		20	14	

Slightly less than fifty percent of the overall answers to this question were correct (33). However, since only 16% of students had been able to provide a correct answer to this question at the beginning of the year, the increase of 32% is not negligible. A look at individual group performances reveals again considerable differences. Thus, ALFG 's score of 68% (13) is three times as high as the lowest score, that of IMLGS at 22% (2). Groups which scored below the overall average of 48% also include IMLFG and IBLGS.

In part two of this question, students were presented with a text and asked to underline in each clause the elements that decide which complements are required.

The text read as follows:

Viele junge Leute beschwerten sich, daß die ältere Generation sie einfach nicht verstehen will. Sie sagen, sie haben noch nie in ihrem Leben das machen können, was sie wollen. Dabei übersehen sie jedoch, daß ihre Eltern die gleichen Probleme mit ihren Eltern hatten, als sie jung waren.

Table 8.59 shows the answers to this question.

Table 8.59

Group	ALFG		ALGS		IMLFG		IMLGS		IBLFG		IBLGS		Total	
	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs
sich beschwerten	53	10	40	2	17	2	11	1	50	7	10	1	33	23
verstehen	26	5	20	1	0	0	0	0	7	1	0	0	10	7
sagen	37	7	20	2	8	1	0	0	36	5	20	2	23	16
machen	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	1	0	0	3	2
wollen	26	5	40	2	0	0	11	1	29	4	0	0	17	12
übersehen	37	7	40	2	0	0	11	1	43	6	10	1	25	17
hatten	37	7	20	2	8	0	11	1	21	3	0	0	19	13
waren	32	6	20	2	8	0	11	1	36	5	0	0	20	14
No answer to this part of the question	16	3	20	2	33	4	78	7	7	1	50	5	30	21

In both the IMLGS and the IBLGS groups, there was an exceptionally high number of students who did not even attempt to answer this question, pushing the total percentage up to 30% (21). But even groups with above average scores in the first part of the question (ALFG, ALGS and IBLFG), performed rather poorly on some of the verbs, although they at least attempted to provide answers. Thus, although the rate of correct responses has obviously improved compared to 1996 when no student attempted to answer this question, it would appear that even those who know the 'theoretical answer' to the issue of valency are still ill equipped to provide practical evidence of that knowledge. However, two 'reverse' cases were also recorded, whereby students whose answers to the previous question had been 'tense' and 'main clause' managed to underline 6 out of 8 verbs correctly.

In the next question regarding valency, students were asked to name two very common verbs that require two nominative cases. Answers are shown in table 8.60.

Table 8.60

Answer	1 correctly named verb		2 correctly named verbs		1 or 2 correctly named verbs			No answer to the entire question	
	rel	abs	rel	abs	1997	1996	rel	rel	abs
Group	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	rel	abs
ALFG	21	4	58	11	79	15		21	4
ALGS	40	2	60	3	100	5		0	0
IMLFG	33	4	33	4	66	8		33	4
IMLGS	22	2	0	0	22	1		78	7
IBLFG	22	3	64	9	86	12		14	2
IBLGS	30	3	20	2	50	5		50	5
Total	26	18	42	29	68	47	32	32	22

While in October 1996 a total of 32% of students named one verb correctly and none named two, this time a majority of 68% (47) students provided at least one correct example and 42% (29) out of these named two. All ALGS managed to provide at least one correct example. As is obvious from the table, a majority of IMLGS students again did not attempt to answer this question (78% or 7 out of 9) and not one student in that group provided two correct examples. Both it and the IBLGS group also remain clearly below the average when it comes to providing either one or two correct examples. The

verb 'sein' was the most commonly listed verb (listed by 65%/45 of students), followed by 'werden' (36%/25).

The next question asked students if three given verbs required an accusative object, a dative one or both. The verbs were 'erklären', 'passen' and 'verpassen'. Answers are shown in table 8.61.

Table 8.61

Answers	Correct answer 'erklären'			Correct answer 'passen'			Correct answer 'verpassen'			No answer	
	'97 rel	abs	'96 rel	'97 rel	abs	'96 rel	'97 rel	abs	'96 rel	1997 rel	abs
ALFG	63	12		42	8		47	9		11	2
ALGS	80	4		20	1		80	4		0	0
IMLFG	58	7		50	6		67	8		0	0
IMLGS	11	1		22	2		44	4		22	2
IBLFG	71	10		50	7		50	7		0	0
IBLGS	40	4		40	4		60	6		20	2
Total	55	38	44	41	28	20	55	38	32	9	6

More than half of all students provided correct answers for two of the three verbs ('erklären' and 'verpassen'), while 41% (28) were able to name the correct case for the verb 'passen'. This is also the verb where the most significant improvement took place between October 1996 and May 1997. Only IBLFG and IMLFG reached above average scores for all three verbs. IMLGS again performed very poorly on the supposedly best known of these three verbs, 'erklären': only 1 student (11%) provided the correct case(s) for this verb.

The next question asked students to state the case which the vast majority of verbs require if a verb takes only one object. Answers are shown in table 8.62.

Table 8.62

Answers	Correct answer (‘accusative’)		
Group	1997		1996
	rel	abs	rel
ALFG	84	16	
ALGS	60	3	
IMLFG	83	10	
IMLGS	56	5	
IBLFG	100	14	
IBLGS	70	7	
Total	80	55	32

All 14 IBLFG students answered this question correctly. The high total as well as percentage figures for individual groups would suggest that this rule of thumb has been well memorised: the number of correct answers increased by 48% between the beginning of the year and the end of semester two.

Students were next asked what a dative object normally refers to, in a clause that contains both a dative and an accusative object. Answers are shown in table 8.63 below.

Table 8.63

Answers	Correct answer (‘partner/usually a person’)			No answer	
Group	1997		1996	1997	
	rel	abs	rel	rel	abs
ALFG	53	10		21	4
ALGS	40	2		0	0
IMLFG	33	4		50	6
IMLGS	33	3		56	5
IBLFG	79	11		7	1
IBLGS	40	4		10	1
Total	49	34	36	25	17

At 79% (11 out of 14), IBLFG again scored by far the highest result. Although almost half of all students would appear to recognise what the dative case expresses, many still do not. What is striking, once more, is the high number of ‘no answers’ among IMLGS students and this time also among the IMLFG group (56%/5 and 50%/6 respectively).

Next followed a question which asked students to state in which case the subject of a sentence is placed. Answers are shown in table 8.64.

Table 8.64

Answers	Correct answer			No answer	
	1997		1996	1997	
	rel	abs	rel	rel	abs
ALFG	89	17			
ALGS	60	3			
IMLFG	75	9			
IMLGS	67	6			
IBLFG	93	13			
IBLGS	90	9			
Total	83	57	68	4	3

The mean of 83% (57) is one of the highest scored in the entire questionnaire, following an increase of 15% between October 1996 and May 1997.

The next question asked students to provide the correct gender and plural for a number of very commonly used nouns. Answers are shown in tables 8.65 and 8.66.

Table 8.65 (Gender)

Answers	Correct gender 'Problem'			Correct gender 'Jahr'			Correct gender 'Arbeit'			Correct gender 'Zeit'		
	1997		1996	1997		1996	1997		1996	1997		1996
	rel	abs	rel	rel	abs	rel	rel	abs	rel	rel	abs	rel
ALFG	89	17		68	13		68	13		84	16	
ALGS	100	5		100	5		40	2		60	3	
IMLFG	83	10		83	10		92	11		67	8	
IMLGS	78	7		100	5		67	6		78	7	
IBLFG	100	14		79	11		86	12		100	14	
IBLGS	80	8		80	8		60	6		70	7	
Total	88	61	64	75	52	72	72	50	72	80	55	76

Table 8.66 (Number)

Answers	Correct plural 'Problem'			Correct plural 'Jahr'			Correct plural 'Arbeit'			Correct plural 'Zeit'			Correct plural 'Freund'			Correct plural 'Studentin'		
	'97 rel	'96 abs	'96 rel	'97 rel	'96 abs	'96 rel	'97 rel	'96 abs	'96 rel	'97 rel	'96 abs	'96 rel	'97 rel	'96 abs	'96 rel	'97 rel	'96 abs	'96 rel
ALFG	95	18		63	12		16	3		16	3		63	12		68	13	
ALGS	100	5		80	4		20	1		20	1		40	2		60	3	
IMLFG	92	11		58	7		25	3		33	4		42	5		67	8	
IMLGS	89	8		67	6		11	1		44	4		33	3		44	4	
IBLFG	100	14		71	10		36	5		36	5		86	12		79	11	
IBLGS	80	8		50	5		60	6		40	4		30	3		40	4	
Total	93	64	68	64	44	44	28	19	16	30	21	24	54	37	48	62	43	48

Apart from the question on definite articles (cf. table 8.68 below), this was the only question which all students attempted to answer. The average for the answers regarding *gender* was well above fifty percent, with the gender for the noun 'Problem' known best. As regards comparisons with the beginning of the year, the only major improvement that has taken place is with regard to that noun (i.e. 'Problem'), the number of correct answers for which increased by 24%. The number of correct answers with regard to its plural form has also increased by approximately the same margin. The only other major increase in this category has been in connection with the noun 'Jahr'. The lesser used plurals of 'Zeit' and 'Arbeit' are still far from being widely known and the very small increase of 3% (2) in the number of correct answers for the plural form of 'Freund' confirms the difficulty that many students have with this form even after it has been repeatedly pointed out. IBLFG by far outperforms all other groups, being the only group whose average scores are either above or, in one case, within 2% points of the average scores for both gender and number. IMLGS performed far better on this and the previous question than on most of the other questions.

The next question asked students to name three noun endings which always indicate a feminine gender, two which indicate masculine gender and one which indicates a neuter gender. Answers are shown in table 8.67.

Table 8.67

Answers	1 correct answer feminine			2 correct answers feminine			3 correct answers feminine			1 correct answer masculine			2 correct answers masculine			Correct answer neuter		
	'97 rel	'96 abs	'96 rel	'97 rel	'96 abs	'96 rel	'97 rel	'96 abs	'96 rel	'97 rel	'96 abs	'96 rel	'97 rel	'96 abs	'96 rel	'97 rel	'96 abs	'96 rel
ALFG	5	1		11	2		58	11		5	1		37	7		47	9	
ALGS	40	2		20	1		20	1		0	0		20	1		40	2	
IMLFG	0	0		33	4		25	3		0	0		0	0		33	4	
IMLGS	0	0		33	3		0	0		0	0		0	0		11	1	
IBLFG	36	5		14	2		43	6		7	1		0	0		64	9	
IBLGS	0	0		40	4		20	2		0	0		0			30	3	
Total	12	8	12	23	16	28	33	23	8	3	2	0	12	8	0	41	28	36

The ranking order is identical with that in October 1996. Thus feminine noun suffixes are known best - some 68% of students (48) provided at least one correct answer here. Neuter suffixes are next at 41% (28), while masculine suffixes received only 17% (10) of correct answers (all AL students, with one exception). Compared to 1996, the number of students who know at least one feminine suffix was up by 18%, with the majority this time being able to name three correct suffixes. The figure for masculine suffixes was up by 15%, while the one for neuter suffixes was up only 5%.

The next two questions were not put to students in October 1996 and there are therefore no comparative data available. Students were asked to decline a. the *definite article* in all cases and b. *personal pronouns*. Since there were no major differences between individual groups, only total figures will be presented. Tables 8.68 and 8.69 show the results.

Table 8.68

Answers	Correct		Incorrect	
	rel	abs	rel	abs
Masculine accusative	99	68	1	1
Masculine dative	93	64	7	5
Masculine genitive	83	57	17	12
Feminine accusative	96	66	4	3
Feminine dative	97	67	3	2
Feminine genitive	93	64	7	5
Neuter accusative	97	67	3	2
Neuter dative	88	61	12	8
Neuter genitive	86	59	14	10
Plural accusative	94	65	6	4
Plural dative	75	52	25	17
Plural genitive	75	52	25	17

As is obvious from the table, most forms of the definite article would appear to be well known, with the dative and genitive plurals registering the lowest score at 75% (52). An overall 61% of students (42) got all the answers right, while 10% of students (7) delivered half or less than half the correct answers.

Table 8.69 (Personal pronouns)

Pronoun/Answers	Correct		Incorrect		No answer	
	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs
1st person singular						
1st person singular, accusative	91	63	1	1	0	0
1st person singular, dative	90	62	1	1	1	1
2nd person singular						
2nd person singular informal, accusative	92	63	1	1	0	0
2nd person singular formal, accusative	13	9	6	4	74 ¹	51
2nd person singular informal, dative	88	61	3	2	1	1
2nd person singular formal, dative	14	10	1	1	77 ¹	53
3rd person singular						
3rd person singular masculine, accusative	57	39	36	25	0	0
3rd person singular feminine, accusative	46	32	23	16	23	16
3rd person singular neuter, accusative	41	28	16	11	36	25
3rd person singular masculine, dative	59	41	29	20	4	3
3rd person singular feminine, dative	49	34	20	14	23	16
3rd person singular neuter, dative	30	21	25	17	38	26
1st person plural						
1st person plural, accusative	77	53	10	7	6	4
1st person plural, dative	72	50	10	7	10	7
2nd person plural						
2nd person plural informal, accusative	72	50	14	10	6	4
2nd person plural formal, accusative	17	12	4	3	71 ¹	49
2nd person plural informal, dative	71	49	9	6	13	9
2nd person plural formal, dative	17	12	3	2	72 ¹	50
3rd person plural						
3rd person plural, accusative	51	35	33 ²	23	9	6
3rd person plural, dative	45	31	41	28	7	5

With the exception of seven percent of students, all attempted to answer this part of the question.

Overall, the best known concepts are those of the first person singular and second person singular informal, in both accusative and dative (all around 90%/61-63). These are followed by the first person plural and second person plural informal in both cases (all above 70%/49-53). There is a strikingly high number of 'no answers' regarding the formal form of the second person (cf. ¹) - even students who filled in all or most other forms correctly failed to deliver these forms, either due to an oversight or because they were unfamiliar with the forms. As regards the third person forms, masculine forms are slightly better known than both feminine and plural forms: 57% (39) and 59% (41) of learners respectively provided the correct accusative and dative masculine forms, as

opposed to 46% (32) and 49% (34) for the feminine forms and 51% (35) and 45% (31) for the plural forms. At 41% (21) and 30% (21) results for neuter pronouns are lower still. One very common mistake was the mix-up of personal and reflexive pronouns (cf. *2) - even otherwise very strong students made this mistake.

Next, students were asked to judge if the following sentence was grammatically correct and to briefly explain their answer:

"Das Mädchen kann er nicht so gut sehen".

One point each was allocated for the correct answer and an appropriate explanation. Answers are presented in table 8.70.

Table 8.70

Answer	Correct answer and correct explanation			Correct answer, irrelevant explanation		Incorrect answer and explanation		No answer	
	'97 rel	'97 abs	'96 rel	1997 rel	1997 abs	1997 rel	1997 abs	1997 rel	1997 abs
ALFG	47	9		16	3	37	7	0	0
ALGS	40	2		0	0	40	2	20	1
IMLFG	8	1		0	0	50	6	42	5
IMLGS	0	0		22	2	56	5	22	2
IBLFG	21	3		0	0	79	11	0	0
IBLGS	20	2		10	1	40	4	30	3
Total	25	17	0	9	6	51	35	16	11

63% of ALFG (12) recognised that the sentence was in fact grammatically correct, with 47% (9) out of those 63% being able to provide an appropriate explanation. On the other hand, only 1 IMLFG student got the answer right (8%). 48% out of the overall 51% percent who stated that the sentence was incorrect said that 'er' should have been 'ihn'. Thus, although the number of students who recognised the existence of flexible word order has increased by 25% (17), the vast majority of students are still not aware of this option in the German language.

The next question asked students to state what effect certain conjunctions and adverbials have on word order. Since there were no considerable differences between individual groups, totals are given for both conjunctions and adverbials on the one hand (cf. table 8.71) and the following question on prepositions on the other (cf. table 8.72).

Table 8.71 (Conjunctions and adverbials)

Answers	Correct			Incorrect			No answer	
	1997 rel	abs	1996 rel	1997 rel	abs	1996 rel	1997 rel	abs
'wenn'	94	65	88	6	4	12	0	0
'aber'	90	62	76	9	6	24	1	1
'trotzdem'	68	47	48	29	20	52	3	2
'denn'	77	53	72	23	16	28	0	0

Rules regarding the effect of the conjunctions 'wenn' and 'aber' on word order were named correctly by almost all students (94% and 90% respectively/65 and 62), and figures for 'denn' have improved by 5% . The rate for 'trotzdem' has increased most, having gone up by 20%.

Students were next asked to provide the correct cases for a given list of prepositions (students were reminded to put down both cases for double track prepositions).

Table 8.72 (Prepositions)

Answers	Correct			Incorrect			No answer	
	1997 rel	abs	1996 rel	1997 rel	abs	1996 rel	1997 rel	abs
aus	90	62	88	9	6	12	1	1
auf	59	41	56	33	23	44	7	5
gegen	65	45	44	28	19	56	6	4
trotz	77	53	64	13	9	36	10	7
zwischen	45	31	40	42	29	60	13	9

The biggest increases compared to October 1996 occurred with regard to 'gegen' where the number of correct answers is up by 21%, and 'trotz' (up 13%). The increases for 'auf' and 'zwischen' were extremely small (up 3% and 5%). Students gave the same type of incorrect answers with regard to these two as they had done at the beginning of the year, failing to mention one of the two cases.

Students were then asked to name the relevant rules regarding government of prepositions. Again, answers did not vary significantly from group to group; therefore totals only will be presented. Answers are shown in table 8.73.

Table 8.73 (Two points were allocated for each correct answer)

Answers	Correct and complete answer ^{*1}			Partially correct (but incomplete) answer ^{*2}			No answer		
	1997 rel	abs	1996 rel	1997 rel	abs	1996 rel	1997 rel	abs	1996 rel
Answers	75	52	56	10	7	28	14	10	16

*1 I.e. most prepositions have fixed cases but nine can take either the dative or the accusative - they take the accusative when there is motion towards a goal and the dative when there is motion within an enclosed space or rest.

*2 This includes statements which name the rest/motion distinction and the subsequent use of the accusative or dative but fail to mention that there are prepositions with fixed cases.

The number of students who were able to provide correct rules was up by almost 20% compared to October 1996. At the beginning of the year, no student had specified the use of the accusative and the dative with double-track prepositions to the extent that they did this time (i.e. including the concept of motion towards a goal as opposed to motion with an enclosed space and state of rest).

Part II

As was pointed out above, no comparative data are available for this or the next question.

Students were asked to identify the function of elements in the following text. Answers are presented in table 8.74.

76 Jahre liegen vor einem Neugeborenen in Deutschland, wenn es sich aus dem Mutterschoß gekämpft hat. Diese statistisch zugemessene Lebenszeit erscheint einerseits bedrückend begrenzt, andererseits unvorstellbar lang für den, dem sie bevorsteht: Das Phänomen Zeit ist paradox. Nie zuvor lebten Menschen so lange wie heute, kaum jemals zuvor haben sie ihre Existenz mit so vielen Aktivitäten gefüllt. Und doch: Je stärker wir die Zeit fesseln, desto schneller scheint sie zu entkommen. Dabei erleben wir nur knapp zwei Drittel unserer Lebensspanne bei vollem Bewußtsein. Den Rest, **26,7** Jahre, verschlafen wir. Ganze 15 Jahre vergehen dabei im Traum: Je nach Alter füllen diese imaginären Abenteuer zwischen 5 und 25 Prozent unserer Schlummerzeit.

Zu eigener Verfügung stehen uns insgesamt etwa **15,6** Jahre. In dieser mehr oder weniger selbstbestimmten „Freizeit“ ließe sich alles Erdenkliche bewirken – zum Beispiel der Bau einer kellergroßen Modelleisenbahn oder die Komposition einer Oper nach der anderen. Doch nach all der Mühsal im Haushalt, die immer noch gut **13,6** Jahre eines Frauenlebens verschlingt (Männer kommen nur auf 5,4 Jahre), und nach fast **8,2** Jahren Männerarbeit fürs tägliche Brot (Frauen sind nur knapp 3,9 Jahre erwerbstätig) ist Neigung und Energie für kreatives Tun offenbar gering. Die meisten greifen in ihrer Freizeit nach der Infrarotbedienung: Rechnet man die Stunden vor dem Bildschirm zusammen, hat am Ende seines Lebens jeder Deutsche fast **6** Jahre lang ferngesehen. Nur lebensnotwendige Tätigkeiten können der Hingabe an den Flimmerkasten einigermaßen Konkurrenz machen:

Source: *Geo*, no. 2, 1997

Table 8.74

<u>Line/Concept</u>	Correct answer		Incorrect/ambiguous answer		Most common incorrect/ambiguous answers	No answer	
	rel	abs	rel	abs		rel	abs
5 adverb	17	12	55	38	adjective: 19% subject complement: 9% complement: 7% present participle: 7%	28	19
8/9 sie	55	38	42	29	ihre Existenz: 20% Menschen: 14%	3	2
18/19 Jahre	19	13	74	51	uns: 46% Verfügung: 17%	7	5
19/20 adverbial of time	10	7	49	34	subject: 10%	41	28
26-29 subject	17	12	25	17	subject complement: 10%	58	40
31-33 jeder Deutsche	20	14	61	42	man: 45%	19	13
34-36							
a. dative object	7	5	45	31	subject: 32%	48	33
b. accusative object	29	20	23	16	dative object: 10%	48	33

The 'no answer' column includes the three percent of students (2) who gave no answer to the entire question.

As is obvious from the table, the overall number of correct answers is very low, with the exception of line 8/9, where 55% of students (38) identified the subject correctly. However, as with other questions, there were considerable differences between individual group performances. IBLFG scored by far best on three out of nine occasions (lines 5, 8/9 and 26-29), with ALFG and ALGS outperforming the other groups in lines 19/20 and 34-36 ('accusative object').

As is evident from the high number of incorrect answers for lines 31-33, there is a significant number of students who do not know the difference between a subclause that is not introduced by a conjunction and a main clause (cf. *¹). Less than 10% of students (7) identified half or more than half of the structures correctly.

Results would suggest that this type of exercise which requires analytical skill students are not accustomed to from their secondary school teaching continues to cause major difficulty to the vast majority of learners.

The final question asked students to identify eleven grammatical mistakes in a text. Students were asked to underline the mistakes, number them, explain why the forms are wrong and provide the correct version. Students were given an example illustrating how to proceed. The text is as follows (in brackets are the numbers corresponding to the numbers in table 8.75 below):

Evita: Tango totalitär

Es gibt Filme und Trailer, also kurze Filme, die für Filme werben. Der Film Evita dauern (1) zwar 135 Minuten, aber dennoch ist der Film keinen (2) Film, sondern ist (3) er mehr wie ein Trailer, in dem für Eva Peron Werbung gemacht werde (4).

Sie würde (5) unehelich geboren, ist mit 15 Jahren mit ein (6) Tangospieler nach Buenos Aires gegangen, ist durch die Seifenopern im Radio berühmt worden (6), hat dann der (7) faschistische (8) General Juan Peron geheiratet, und hat die Armen (9) Geld und Kleidung geschenkt - das ist eigentlich ein Leben, dem (10) es nur ins Kino (11) gibt.

Source: *Der Spiegel*, no. 2, 1997 (amended version)

One point each was allocated for the correct identification and explanation on the one hand and the appropriate correction on the other. Answers are shown in table 8.75.

Table 8.75

Answer	Correctly identified and correct version delivered		Correctly identified but no correct version delivered		Correctly identified but incorrect version delivered (or correct version for incorrect reason)		Not identified	
	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs	rel	abs
Mistake number								
(1)	78	54	0	0	0	0	16	11
(2)	25	17	4	3	9	6	57	39
(3)	22	15	0	0	6	4	67	46
(4)	30	21	1	1	13	9	49	34
(5)	55	38	4	3	1	1	33	23
(6)	55	38	4	3	3	2	32	22
(7)	48	33	9	6	1	1	36	25
(8)	17	12	1	1	22	15	54	37
(9)	20	14	1	1	7	5	65	45
(10)	33	23	6	4	16	11	39	27
(11)	7	5	0	0	0	0	87	60

6% of students (4) gave no answer to the entire question.

The highest number of correct answers was provided for mistake number one, subject-noun agreement (78%/54), followed by mistakes numbers five and six (indicative preterite form of 'werden' as opposed to subjunctive on the one hand, and dative form of the definite article (55% each/38)). Next comes number seven, the past participle of

'werden' in connection with another verb (48%/33) and mistake number ten, relative pronoun in the accusative as opposed to the dative (33%/23). 30% of students (21) identified mistake number four, the indicative present tense of 'werden'. The other mistakes were identified by less than a quarter of the students, with a mere 7% (5) recognising that, in the instance of the last mistake, the dative and not the accusative should have been used. The lack of identification with regard to the last feature is particularly worrying - it would appear that students either walked into the old trap of putting everything into the accusative after 'es gibt' or that they failed to see the difference between dative and accusative after the double-track preposition 'in'. There were also quite a number of features that students *erroneously* identified as being incorrect.

As regards individual group differences, IBLFG outscored the weakest group, IMLGS, by more than a third on items 4., 5., 6. and 10. The average score for IBLFG students in this exercise was also almost 2.5 times as high as that of IMLGS. However, overall scores even for IBLFG and that of the next nearest group, ALFG, were slightly below fifty percent, suggesting that there are still quite a lot of gaps to be filled even in these groups. Thus, just as with the previous question, results strongly suggest that much more work is needed in all groups regarding this type of exercise in the semesters to come.

To sum up this section, it would seem that some degree of improvement in certain areas of learners' metalinguistic and linguistic knowledge has taken place between the beginning of the year and the end. As indicated by results in tables 8.54 and 8.55, more students would appear to be familiar with a greater range of concepts as well as having improved on other aspects. As Section 8.3.3.2 shows, figures for all questions put to students in both October 1996 and May 1997 were up in the latter investigation. However, there can also be little doubt about the continuing problems in the above areas. Firstly, some of the above improvements must be described as very modest. Results also show that the highest overall scores were achieved on questions with which the majority of students would be expected to be familiar from their Leaving Certificate preparation (cf., for example, results in tables 8.65, 8.66, 8.68, 8.69 and 8.71). Secondly, even though metalinguistic knowledge levels have gone up with regard to certain concepts, other, equally stressed features are still not known to the majority of

learners. Thirdly, and perhaps most significantly, results for questions involving the use of analytical skills (which had formed one of the central cognitive tenets of the course) showed that figures regarding the successful use of these skills were among the lowest in the entire investigation (cf., for example, tables 8.58, 8.59 and 8.70 as well as tables 8.74 and 8.75). This is a clear indication that analytical abilities are by no means as developed as the course designers would have envisaged at the outset, or indeed as perceived by students themselves (cf. Section 8.3.1 above). Thus, although a large number of learners had stated that their grasping of the underlying grammar system in the course of year one had allowed them to approach grammar acquisition and use in a much more logical and structured manner, this perceived increase in their abilities did not manifest itself convincingly in this part of the research.

While the above observations are unquestionably valid with regard to overall performances, it also emerged in the course of the investigation that there were again considerable differences between individual group performances. Table 8.77 shows the different scores for individual groups as well as for the overall student cohort for Section 8.3.3.2, while table 8.78 shows the combined results for both this and the previous section (8.3.3.1).

Table 8.77 (out of 100%)

Group	Mean	Std D
IBLFG	60.57	11.09
ALFG	53.89	16.34
ALGS	47.20	11.34
IMLFG	44.91	12.80
IBLGS	44.20	11.69
IMLGS	36.77	15.04
Total	49.56	15.27

As has been evident throughout the analysis of results for individual questions, IBLFG outperformed the other groups, leading the nearest following group, ALFG, by almost 7%, while at the other end of the scale IMLGS is even slightly further removed from the nearest group above it. There is fairly little difference between the scores for ALGS, IMLFG and IBLGS. The standard deviation of 15.27 is again high, with the one for ALFG being particularly high at 16.34.

Table 8.78 (out of 100%)

Group	Mean	Std D
IBLFG	60.42	10.60
ALFG	54.84	16.83
ALGS	50.60	11.76
IMLFG	44.00	11.61
IBLGS	42.90	9.94
IMLGS	36.22	11.79
Total	49.62	14.95

There is no change in the ranking order compared to the previous table. However, scores for ALGS go up by 3.5%, a reflection of their good terminological knowledge levels. At 16.83, the standard deviation for ALFG is even higher than for the previous set of results.

Correlation results revealed a correlation between both terminological and linguistic/metalinguistic knowledge levels on the one hand and class attendance on the other, as well as between the former and engagement in the written assignment scheme. Both correlations were of absolute significance.

To sum up, results for this section would suggest that the majority of improvements which took place with regard to grammatical knowledge levels could not be described as dramatic, although some groups would appear to have benefited from the programme to a greater extent than others.

8.3.4 Levels of Accuracy in Free-style Written Production

As was pointed out above, the only one of the linguistic aims explicitly examined by current DCU examination regulations was the degree of accuracy which students produced in their end-of-semester two examinations (both oral and written). The rules laid down for the end of semester two, post-Leaving Certificate module, state that, in order to pass the written examination, the percentage rate for morphosyntactic errors must not exceed between 15% and 20%. Production accuracy was examined in the essays which formed part of the end-of-semester two written examination. Students were asked to choose from three essay topics. Topics were as follows:

1. Stellen Sie sich vor, es ist 23.00 Uhr und Sie sitzen in der U-Bahn in Berlin. Neben Ihnen sitzt ein türkischer Junge und vor Ihnen sitzen 2 Neo-Nazis. Nach einiger Zeit beginnen die Neo-Nazis, die ziemlich viel getrunken haben, den türkischen Jungen zu beschimpfen. Ausser Ihnen und den 3 Jungen ist niemand im Abteil. Was würden Sie tun? Geben Sie Gründe für Ihre Reaktion an.

2. In wenigen Wochen finden in Irland Wahlen statt. Und wie immer werden viele der Wahlberechtigten nicht wählen. Mehr und mehr Leute fordern daher, dass alle Bürger vom Staat dazu gezwungen werden sollten, ihr Wahlrecht auszuüben, z. B. dadurch, dass bei Nichtausübung des Wahlrechts eine Geldstrafe bezahlt werden muss. Was halten Sie von diesem Vorschlag?

3. Biergärten sind überall in Deutschland beliebte Orte für ein gemütliches Zusammentreffen in der Freizeit. Soll man etwa bei schönem Wetter sein Bier in einer verräucherten Kneipe trinken? Problematisch wird dieses Vergnügen jedoch für diejenigen, die in der Nähe des Biergartens ihr Zuhause haben. Stellen Sie sich vor, Sie bereiten sich auf eine Bürgerversammlung vor, wo das Biergarten-Problem mit Anwohnern und Kneipenbesitzer diskutiert werden soll. Schreiben Sie einen Diskussionsbeitrag für diese Versammlung.

The recommended length of the essay was 300 words.

Results

Tables 8.79 to 8.81 present the results for the three categories established previously, *lexical errors*, *grammatical errors* and *orthographic errors*. With the exception of the punctuation and orthographic errors which were counted as 0.5 of an error, all errors were counted as 1. The number in brackets indicate the October 1996 figures.

Table 8.79: Lexical errors (total number of errors: 164)

Category	%	
	1997	1996
Verbs	37	(43)
Adjectives and adverbs	30	(40)
Nouns	32	(17)

The total number of errors has gone up from 141 to 164 - not a considerable increase, but an increase nonetheless. There are probably several reasons for this (time pressure, nervousness), the most likely one being the nature of the topics. These have to be seen as more demanding than the topic at the beginning of semester one, prompting students to use more sophisticated vocabulary. The biggest increase was in the number of noun errors which almost doubled between the beginning of semester one and the end of semester two. The fall in the number of adjectival errors is due to an overall decrease in the use of adjectives (this decrease also accounts for the very slight fall in the number of grammatical errors regarding this item, as shown in table 8.80 below).

Table 8.80: Grammatical errors (total number of errors *: 842)

Category	%	
	1997	1996
I. Verbal phrase		
1. Valency of the verb	8	(8)
2. Verb and tense formation; use of the tenses	12	(15)
3. Verb/noun agreement	5	(4)
Total % number of errors in verbal phrase	25	(27)
II. Noun phrase		
1. Gender of nouns	12	(9)
2. Declension of nouns, articles and pronouns; use of articles	11	(12)
• plurals	6	(6)
3. Formation, declension and comparison of adjectives and adverbs	9	(10)
Total % number of errors in noun phrase	38	(37)
III. Prepositional phrase		
Government of prepositions	5	(9)
IV. Syntax		
1. Word order of the verb in main clauses	4	(4)
2. Word order of the verb in subclauses	4	(2)
3. Word order of adverbials; word order surrounding infinitive clauses	3	(2)
Total % number of syntax errors	11	(8)
V. Particles		
Prepositions	3	(3)
Conjunctions	3	(3)
Total % number of errors involving particles	6	(6)
VI. Punctuation - incorrect omission or addition of commas	8	(10)

*including punctuation errors

Other errors accounted for 7%, with the *government of nouns* accounting for 3% of errors.

Table 8.81: Orthographic errors (total number of errors: 124)

Category	%
1. Incorrect use of capital letters	55
2. General spelling	45

As is evident from the above tables, a comparison between overall student performances at the beginning of semester one and the end of semester two shows fairly little change. There are only few items whose percentage rates vary by 2% or more.

The number of errors made in connection with *tense formation/use of the tenses* dropped by 3%, due to the fact that, in all three essays, the main tense used was the present tense. Thus errors which had been made in the 1996 essay, especially in the formation of the perfect tense, could be avoided this time.

The 3% increase in the number of *gender* errors is consistent with the increase in the number of lexical noun errors: students obviously used nouns with which they were not familiar and/or whose gender was unknown to them.

The biggest reduction in errors was achieved in the *government of prepositions*. Here, the number of errors went down from 9% to 5%. Unlike the drop in *tense formation* errors, this decrease was not due to avoidance of that feature.

The overall errors in the area of *syntax* increased, from 8% to 11%. This again is a sign of the more complex nature of the task put to students at the end of semester two. The use of *subclauses* was up by 100% (as was the number of syntactic errors made in this area) and the overall length of sentences, accompanied by the increased use of *adverbials*, as well as the use of *infinitive constructions*, had also increased substantially, contributing to the 3% error increase.

Finally, the number of errors regarding the use of commas was down by 2% and the number of orthographic errors decreased from a total of 179 to 124, with a significant decrease in the number of errors involving *capital letters* (from 110 to 68). While the figure for *verb-noun agreement* was up slightly (by 1%), it should be noted that the choice of subject used in the 1997 essays varied considerably, compared to 1996, when the main subject used was 'ich'.

An analysis of group results revealed that there were again significant differences between individual groups with regard to the various features. For instance, while the number of *gender* errors were halved in ALFG, they doubled in IMLFG and tripled in IMLGS. As regards the increase in errors in the use of *subclauses*, these were primarily due to the increase in errors made in ALFG and ALGS, even though the use of *subclauses* had risen across the board. While the error count regarding the *government of prepositions* was down in all groups, with the exception of IMLGS, it decreased most significantly in IBLFG and IMLFG. Both the percentages for errors in the use of *commas* and *capital letters* were down across the board, while *spelling* errors decreased primarily in the two AL groups. The differences in increases and decreases obviously came as a surprise since discussions with those teaching the above groups at the end of semester two had revealed no difference in emphasis when dealing with the various grammar points in class. Yet there can be little doubt (and this will be underlined by the

results shown in table 8.82) that there were considerable differences between individual groups.

Table 8.82 shows a comparison of the error percentages for each group as well as the total in both 1996 and 1997.

Table 8.82: Error percentages

Group	Mean		Difference	Standard Deviation	
	1996	1997		1996	1997
ALFG	16.18	11.89	- 4.29	7.63	5.53
IMLFG	16.95	13.91	- 3.04	7.04	5.45
IBLFG	11.78	9.14	- 2.64	5.10	3.88
IBLGS	14.95	14.63	- 0.32	5.17	4.69
ALGS	14.64	15.28	+ 0.64	4.24	4.89
IMLGS	11.77	12.83	+ 1.06	3.80	4.63
Total	14.57	12.56	- 2.01	6.19	5.17

As is evident from table 8.82, the overall mean in 1997 amounted to 12.56, compared to 14.57 in October 1996. Given the cut-off error rate of 15% - 20% which must not be exceeded in order to fulfil the morphosyntactic course requirements, this mean is obviously still quite high. However, it should be remembered that the topics on which students were asked to elaborate were considerably more demanding than the topic put to them at the beginning of the year. As was pointed out above, syntactic constructions on the whole had become more complex, although a small minority of students still adhered to very basic structures (but see comments regarding accuracy levels among these students below). As was also pointed out, the requirement to vary sentence structures contributed to a significant increase in the number of errors involving subclauses. With the exception of three students, there was also far less reliance on set phrases and learnt-off chunks of text. Another point to bear in mind is that the standard deviation of 6.19 is also high, underlining the differences in individual student performances.

As regards the considerable differences in performance improvements between individual groups, the number of errors in the three groups involving a German/ French language combination decreased by between 2.6 and 4.2, while groups studying the combination that is regarded as the more demanding (i.e. German/Spanish) did either not improve significantly, in the case with IBLGS, or fared slightly worse than in

October 1996, such as ALGS and IMLGS. The group average for ALGS at the end of the year is thus within the 15% - 20% cut-off band, while IBLGS are very close to that band. In the case of IMLGS, it should be noted that this group had the lowest error count in October 1996 and that in the overall comparison with other groups it still comes third, after IBLFG and ALFG. It should also be pointed out that, in view of the high averages of both ALFG and IMLFG at the beginning of the year (16.18 and 16.95 respectively), it was hardly surprising that their error count should have decreased more than that of other groups. On the other hand, considering the more demanding task at the end of semester two, it could equally have gone up. Also, the fact that IBLFG - which had the second lowest error count at the beginning of the year - managed to reduce that count even further should be seen as confirmation that the programme yielded a more positive result in some groups than in others. In terms of overall error rates, IBLFG and ALFG have the lowest rates at 9.14 and 11.89 respectively. The differences in performances between October 1996 and May 1997 are starkest when looking at individual student performances. Thus, 13% of students (9) whose error count had been above the mean of 14.57 in October 1996, managed to reduce this count by between 50% and 70%. Perhaps not surprisingly, they were all part of the German/French language combination. Although, as was noted above, some students still used very basic syntactic structures, accompanied by lexical and syntactic repetitions, by the end of semester two, they showed much higher levels of accuracy.

As was stated in Chapter Seven above, the current programme was, from the outset, considered as a stepping stone, laid down in order to help students become, with time, increasingly accurate. No dramatic improvements in terms of error reduction had been expected by the end of the second semester of year one, especially in view of the greater complexity of topics from which students were asked to select and the inevitable increase in nervousness due to the examination situation. A look at the overall results for the entire student cohort would confirm that the changes that took place do indeed not constitute a significant *overall* improvement. At the same time, when examining the performances of individual groups and, even more so, of individual students it becomes evident that accuracy levels have, in fact, risen quite substantially in many cases. As regards the course aim of easing the transition between second and third, results show

that, according to current exam regulations, a total of 33% (23) would have failed to meet the minimum accuracy requirements in October 1996, while this number had fallen to 17% (12) in May 1997. Although there is a lack of immediate improvement in accuracy levels across the board, R. Ellis' *delayed effect hypothesis* gives rise to hope that even those students who have not yet increased those levels will improve their performances with increased practice.

Returning to the relationship between explicit knowledge levels on the one hand and accuracy levels in written production on the other, correlation results confirmed the strong interface hypothesis. There was an absolute correlation between the number of errors in the essay and students' linguistic and metalinguistic knowledge levels²⁰.

Correlation results also revealed a correlation between accuracy levels and attendance, significant at the 98% level, as well as an absolute correlation between accuracy levels and engagement in the written assignment scheme.

The differences between the German/Spanish groups and the French/German were confirmed in t-tests carried out with regard to production accuracy, terminological knowledge and linguistic/metalinguistic knowledge levels.

²⁰ Results reveal, however, two major surprises. First of all, IMLFG performed much better regarding accuracy levels than would have been expected after the results on explicit knowledge levels where performances were more or less on a par with IBLGS and even slightly below those for ALGS. The second surprise is the poor performance of ALGS regarding production accuracy. However, it has to be remembered that the overall high mean for this group for metalinguistic and linguistic knowledge levels is due, in particular, to the good performances on *terminological* knowledge: as regards combined metalinguistic and *linguistic* knowledge levels, rates were considerably lower, with little difference between this group and IBLGS or IMLFG performances.

8.4 Summary and Conclusions for the German Grammar Programme

The principal aim of the grammar programme was to ease the transition from second to third level with regard to the acquisition and application of German grammar. Results for all the aspects under investigation would suggest that this aim was achieved with greater success for some aspects and learners than for others. As regards the only aim which is explicitly examined under current DCU examination regulations, accuracy levels by the end of semester two had increased to an extent that allowed 50% more students to fulfil the grammatical course requirements and stay below the cut-off rate than would have qualified at the beginning of the year. Two important motivational achievements were the more positive cognitive attitude towards grammar acquisition and the increase in confidence levels which learners overall reported at the end of semester two. Results would suggest that the programme contributed not so much to a *restructuring* of learner interlanguage as to familiarising students with the concept of *structuring* their language representations in the first place. However, while the vast majority of learners declared that they were positively disposed towards the overall approach and implementation of the programme, the considerable differences between individual groups and individual learners with regard to both knowledge and performance levels would suggest that the scheme yielded more immediately positive cognitive and metacognitive results in some groups than in others. There are also certain aspects which would appear not to have worked out quite as envisaged in most groups. One of the biggest concerns continues to be the relatively low levels of learners' overall analytical abilities. Results in Section 8.3.3 revealed quite a gap between students' increased positive perceptions and their actual competence levels. Thus, while the clearing up of 'fuzzy notions' and the increase in analytical abilities had been stressed as being among the most helpful aspects of the grammar class by a large number of students, the evidence in Section 8.3.3 fails to support these contentions. Other problematic issues - although not necessarily one affecting all students - include many learners' obvious aversion to the use of terminological use and knowledge and the lack of practice opportunities. There would also appear to be a clear need to create more challenging tasks for the stronger students as well as a need to assist weaker students to an even greater extent.

A specific problem which would appear to have affected many, if not most members of IMLGS and IBLGS groups this year was the unfortunate time-tabling situation. Thus, while the majority of students from these groups stated that they welcomed both the concept and the approach of the grammar programme, they also described the fact that the class took place at the end of what was for them an exhausting day as a strain which prevented them from gaining the maximum benefit. The difficulties which students studying this language combination experience anyway (i.e. the problem of dedicating sufficient time to both their languages) were thus compounded. It is therefore perhaps not surprising that, in terms of overall group performances, results for IMLGS and IBLGS students were lower than those for all other groups in Section 8.3.3, while results for all German/Spanish combinations were below the German/French combinations in Section 8.3.4.

As regards the issue of learner responsibility, results would suggest that learners, while recognising that responsibility, greatly appreciated the programme's guidance through what is perceived by most as a daunting subject matter. As was pointed out previously, if learners are asked to work on the development of their declarative and procedural knowledge with little or no structural assistance, they are unlikely to engage in these tasks. Thus, rather than viewing learners' overall support for the grammar programme as a call for continued spoon-feeding, it should be seen as an appreciation of the kind of guidance, on both content and procedural matters, which, it is hoped, will increasingly allow learners to live up to the expectations placed on them by third level language studies.

As regards the consequences of the present research for the future structure of the grammar programme, the following conclusions have been drawn:

1. The separate grammar class is to be continued. Considering the disparity of students' second level educational background, all students must, upon entry into university, receive, as a student quoted above put it, "a fair chance". The grammar class will thus continue to offer, firstly, the structural framework the course organisers are convinced is needed for performances that are not just fluent but also increasingly accurate. Secondly, it will continue to offer the kind of guidance which, it is hoped, will eventually enable learners to work independently.

2. Other core elements of the programme, such as regular output practice and corrective feedback will also be maintained, for two reasons: both elements were perceived as beneficial by the vast majority of the present group of subjects, and the theoretical position adopted by proponents of the strong interface was confirmed by the correlation figures. There will, however, be an added emphasis on the need for error *prevention* as opposed to error *correction*. One way of encouraging the prevention of errors which is currently being practised is by asking students to sit down together when writing essays, making diary entries etc. and conferring with each other about grammar issues before writing things down. Students are also asked fairly frequently to produce short pieces of written work in class, with small groups of two or three producing one piece in consultation with each other. It is hoped that this methodology will help learners to get into the habit of taking time to reflect before the actual production process begins.

3. As was pointed out in Chapter Seven above, since the changeover from communicatively oriented to analytical language use proved to be more troublesome than had been anticipated, the syllabus progression did not go quite according to plan. In view of the considerable degree of difficulty which many students displayed with regard to grasping fundamental structures, and in view of the continuing display of a lack of consideration for matters of accuracy among many students, it was decided that the syllabus is to be amended as follows: firstly, certain items, such as the *declension of demonstrative and interrogative pronouns, the formation of nouns and adjectives, the comparison of adjectives*, are to be given less in-depth coverage in future. Other aspects, such as *possessive pronouns, prepositional adjectives, relative pronouns with a preposition, the passive, the double infinitive and the past conditional* are not to be dealt with at all in year one of the various degree courses. Furthermore, the distinction between *complements* and *adverbials* is to be dropped since it has not proved to be of pedagogical value²¹ (cf. Fischer, 1990 and Brons-Albert, 1990, both of whom claim that there is no need for the introduction of this distinction; cf. also Weinrich who does not make that distinction). As regards other amendments, the introductory test has also been revised. The second year syllabus has been modified in order to ensure that it takes over where first year left off. That syllabus also provides for the revision of certain elements. A fourth year syllabus has yet to be designed.

²¹ The distinction actually proved to be a source of significant confusion for the majority of students.

4. A most pressing issue to be solved in the immediate future is that of helping learners to improve their analytical skills. It is obvious from the above results that the use of these skills needs to be both emphasised and practised even more than has been the case so far. This involves increasing the practice of those skills within the grammar class itself, as well as extending the analysis more frequently to the non-grammar classes.

5. The terminology barrier needs to be overcome. This involves, first of all, helping more students to develop at least a positive *cognitive* attitude towards the use of terminology (if not a positive affective attitude). It also involves increasing actual knowledge levels. It has been decided that, wherever possible, the terms to be used in the German grammar class will be introduced and clarified using exclusively English examples first.

6. A crucial issue which arose out of the learner evaluation of the grammar programme is the frequent complaint of a lack of practice opportunities. Recently acquired rules were applied briefly in class and again as part of homework but were rarely reinforced in the study periods which are attached to language modules for those exact purposes. Considering the very narrow time-frame in which those involved in the German language module are forced to operate, the solution to this problem is unlikely to lie in an increase in in-class practice. Instead, lecturers must impress on learners even more emphatically than has been the case so far the use of study periods. Students also need to be reminded that the study periods for each module are not transferable and are to be used for that module only. In other words, the two hours of non-classroom based time allocated to the German language module are to be used for activities involving that language only and must not be cut short because of pressing assignments in other subjects. This kind of mature attitude towards one's studies will inevitably take time to develop. Even though learners know in theory that no subject is ever to be neglected because of exam pressure in other subjects, it may be that learners' study patterns, in their first year at least, need to be externally guided to a greater extent than previously practised. To this purpose, the two study periods allocated to the German language course will in future be scheduled into both students' and lecturers' time-tables. Rooms will be allocated for group work or individual study and students will be informed that lecturers will make themselves available on a regular basis (although not necessarily for every study period) to help with queries. Another possible way of 'edging on' students

which is currently conducted by some lecturers is the introduction of regularly held informal grammar tests, including questions on grammar terminology. These tests are short (5-10) and test a variety of items previously covered in the grammar classes, thus giving learners a reliable indication of their present knowledge levels. Some of these tests are taken up, others are not. Since poor performances in those tests are a source of some embarrassment to most learners, they provide an external incentive for students to engage in the subject matter on a regular basis without entailing the anxiety which accompanies official tests. They thus act as a kind of "enforced" learner self-assessment. Although it could be argued that this methodology is counterproductive to the concept of a more independent and process-oriented learning approach, it may also turn out to be just the kind of guidance from which learners benefit initially but will be able to dispense with once they have grown accustomed to the concept of studying with a view to preparing for longer term objectives, such as end-of-semester examinations.

6. More time will be spent on the discussion of grammar books which are available in the library. Learners will be taken through the list of recommended books (see Appendix F) and will be advised to familiarise themselves with those books with a view to eventually buying the one that suits their individual needs best. Although the course notes continue to play an important part, it is recognised that they do not fulfil the postulate of completeness.

7. Strong students need to be challenged more than they have been so far.

Heterogeneity is evidently a major problem and this investigation has primarily focused on students whose grammatical knowledge and performance levels were in need of significant improvement (i.e. the majority of students). However, those with fairly good entrance levels need to be catered for as well. The possibility will be investigated of setting up work groups in which 'strong' students tutor weaker ones, thus turning them - with their permission - into 'advisers' to whom weaker ones can turn. The student-as-teacher scheme is also to be introduced in all classes.

8. One language combination which continues to be plagued by considerable difficulties is the Spanish-German language combination. The call for more practice outside the classroom may be particularly difficult to heed for those studying an *ab initio* language alongside their intermediate German language. Results confirm the anecdotal evidence gathered in the course of the years that students have great difficulty in improving their

linguistic skills in one language, while at the same time concentrating on a language which they have taken up from scratch. Considering the already daunting workload of groups with an ab initio language, it seems futile to expect these students to put in more extra work outside the classroom. At the same time, the workload in the classroom should not be increased either, if an overload is to be avoided. 'Watering down' the grammar programme is also not a viable option since all the items that were covered under the actual (although not the originally envisaged syllabus) are considered to be of such a basic nature that their importance must be impressed on students as early on as possible. It was pointed out in Chapter Three above, that a paradox exists with regard to the entry points required for the German/Spanish language combination. Thus, while it would appear to be more demanding than the French/German combination, the points required for entry into university are actually lower than the latter, due to the lower demand. The findings of this dissertation would strongly support the demand discussed in Chapter Three above that the points system be thoroughly revised. Finally, it should be noted that, with the beginning of the academic year 1997/1998, the overall assessment load for the above degree courses was lowered. This development should help alleviate some of the time pressure problems referred to above.

Chapter Nine

Conclusions and Future Outlook

The aim of the grammar programme under investigation in this thesis was to facilitate the transition between second and third level with regard to the acquisition of German grammar. The facilitation was to take place on a socio-affective, cognitive and metacognitive level.

An examination of the background against which German language is taught in Irish second level institutions showed that, in the course of the 1980s, German developed from a language which was learnt by a small elitist minority of students to a subject whose popularity soared in the late 1980s before levelling off in 1993/4. The rise in numbers was triggered by a change in the second level modern languages syllabi and in the examination regulations. This change was supported by the determined backing from Irish educational and politico-economic institutions who rallied in order to make German a more prolific language at second as well as at third level.

As regards second level curricular requirements under the communicative approach, both the 1983 and the 1995 senior cycle syllabi have been shown to be ambitious and demanding in view of the limited allocation of time second level teachers are given in order to train learners in a considerable range of skills. Much as many teachers would like to spend more time on certain aspects, including grammar acquisition, there are cogent reasons as to why, at the end of the day, they decide against it. As was pointed out above, teachers are acutely aware of the fact that their students' prime interest is to achieve the maximum number of points in the Leaving Certificate examination. Since the correct application of a very limited number of grammar concepts in a very limited context will secure high marks in that examination, and since learners are generously rewarded for displaying a reasonably good range of vocabulary and for making frequent use in their free-style production of set idiomatic expressions, much classroom energy and time is devoted to the development of those particular aspects, at the likely expense of in-depth grammar learning. In actual fact, the range of skills to be covered allow for little in-depth treatment of *any skill*, and, strictly speaking, skimming the surface is all second level teachers can humanly be expected to manage. In particular, those teaching mixed ability classes as well as those teaching large size classes may never be in a

position to spend what could be considered sufficient time on the skills to be trained¹. As regards the specific issue of grammar teaching, according to the teachers interviewed in the course of this research, a sizeable number of their colleagues would also appear not to possess the necessary grammatical knowledge themselves and can therefore not be expected to adequately familiarise their learners with even the most basic aspects of the target language. To sum up, while second level provides learners with some degree of skill in some areas, in-depth structural grammar knowledge would appear to be the inevitable casualty of both the first and the present communicative syllabus. While the primary focus of attention in this thesis has been on the action *third level* might consider in order to ease the transition for school-leavers, and while it is fully recognised that second and third level pursue very different educational aims, some changes at second level might nevertheless be warranted. Those involved in educational establishments are only too aware that the way students develop at second level has a crucial bearing on how they behave at third level, reflected in, for instance, their attitude towards having to assume responsibility for their own actions, or the way they organise their studies, to name but two examples. It is at second level (building on, obviously, primary level education) that many of the foundations which are crucial for successful further studies are laid. However, many of these tasks are neglected due to time pressure and other pressures. The way things stand at this moment in time, both the curricular and structural/institutional demands which are placed on language teachers at second level beg the question how much actual learning (as opposed to exam preparation) as well as learning how to learn can realistically be expected to take place. Considering some of the factors it is certainly no small feat that many teachers still manage to 'produce' students with outstanding linguistic skills as well as an awareness of their own responsibilities in the learning process. As was pointed out above, many teachers are only too well aware of the difficulties that students with little appreciation of the importance of accuracy and at least a minimal degree of structural knowledge encounter at third level. They are conscious of the impact which their teaching has on a student's chances of accomplishment at third level, knowing that students who enter

¹ Thus oral skills are often neglected until schools receive the role plays and picture sequences which form the oral part of the Leaving Certificate examination and which are supposed to be practised (i.e. learnt off by heart) in the run-up to the examination.

college equipped with at least a basic understanding and knowledge of the grammar system are at an invaluable advantage throughout their third level studies.

An analysis of the present research would suggest that the following changes in educational planning and syllabus design at second level might be particularly beneficial to those students who continue their language studies at third level:

1. In its briefing session to principals and vice-principals in 1994, the Department of Education and Science recommends that, funds permitting, Higher and Ordinary level students be taught separately. The only institution which can ensure that those funds are available to all schools is the Department itself.

2. On a more radical note, separate syllabuses could be established for Leaving Certificate Higher and Ordinary level, with the Higher level syllabus introducing more in the way of grammar foundation and analytical skills. This move obviously presupposes a change in the university entrance system. If the points system remained as it is at present, the same number of students would opt for the Higher level as is currently the case, since, it will be remembered, a C3 in that paper yields as many points as an A1 in the Ordinary level examination.

3. The call by Fischer and Schewe (forthcoming) to extend the initial training period for second level teachers would appear worth considering. There is also a clear need in any educational environment to provide continuous linguistic and methodological training for all teachers. Institutions and individuals such as the German Teachers' Association, the Goethe Institute and the German inspectors at the Department of Education and Science have made tremendous contributions in this respect. However, chronic lack of educational funding seriously jeopardises standards. The obvious consequence of regular monetary shortcomings is an over-reliance on the dedication of individual teachers to their jobs. For instance, as a rule teachers do not get any time in lieu for attending GDI seminars twice a year on a Saturday or other events which they feel they need to attend in order to keep up to date with German cultural, political, economic and linguistic developments: most activities undertaken in this area are done on an entirely voluntary basis with virtually no official recognition. More funding for in-service training is therefore essential. The introduction of time in lieu, along the lines of a 'Bildungsurlaub' might also be considered.

4. Changes in the points system might eventually allow all teachers - not just language teachers - to spend more classroom time on familiarising their students with the concept of independent learning.

5. The CEB 1987 recommendation of a cross-curricular approach to *language awareness* at second level (including English and Irish) and on *forms of assessment* to include learner self-assessment and continuous assessment might be reconsidered.

6. The practice of asking poorly qualified teachers to guide learners through the acquisition process of a second language which, even under the most advantageous circumstances, constitutes a most daunting task must be stopped since it can only be described as a fundamentally unjust and irresponsible act vis-a-vis all parties concerned.

To return to the impact of the changed situation at second level on third level, regardless of the underlying reasons for curricular and other changes at second level, there can be little doubt that the introduction of the functional-notional syllabus and the concomitant changes in weightings in the Leaving Certificate examinations have brought about a marked shift in school-leavers' competences. As a consequence, the majority of first year university students no longer possess the kind of in-depth grammatical knowledge which in the past had allowed third level lecturers to focus primarily on lexical and pragmatic aspects of language learning as well as on the finer points of grammar. These curricular changes at second level have thus caused major adaptational difficulties for third level institutions which now found themselves confronted with the question as to how to best respond to this situation. Most German departments at third level decided, in the course of the last decade, that they had little choice but to reconsider their expectations and instructional starting points, noticeably with regard to the teaching of structural L2 properties and matters of accuracy in productive language use. Lecturers at DCU decided that there was a clear need to devise a programme which would actively assist students in acquiring and applying the kind of grammatical knowledge expected at third level. This programme formed the central part of the present investigation. Its objectives were to facilitate the second to third level transition on a socio-affective, cognitive and metacognitive level. More specifically the programme sought to help students

1. to achieve the accuracy standards which are required in order to pass the second semester written and oral examinations
2. to develop rule knowledge in defined areas as well as an understanding of the underlying system of German grammar (= analytical competence)
3. to acquire terminological knowledge of commonly used terms
4. to demonstrate an awareness of their own grammar learning responsibilities.

As became apparent in the previous chapter, results with regard to the achievement of the four aims were mixed. As regards accuracy standards, there was no drastic reduction in individual error categories and in some student groups the error count remained static or even rose slightly. Other groups managed to lower their overall error levels, and accuracy levels among some 16% of learners improved by between 50% and 70%. There was little evidence that cognitive-analytical skills had progressed to the extent that had been initially envisaged. Similarly, the level of terminological knowledge reached by the end of the year was far from satisfactory. Findings would suggest that the most positive results were yielded on an affective level on the one hand and a cognitive-motivational level on the other: responses suggest that the programme contributed to an increase in learners' grammar learning confidence levels by dispelling fuzzy notions which they had previously held about a variety of grammar concepts. The vast majority of students also acknowledged the communicative function of grammar. By expressing a positive cognitive attitude towards the role of grammar acquisition in the overall language learning process, they indicated that they had internalised a crucial course goal. It is hoped that, with continuous practice, this grammar learning motivation will be increasingly accompanied by the regular recall of grammar rules and the application of analytical skills in both receptive and productive language use. Since, as was pointed out in Chapter Two above, conflicting attitudes towards the learning task (e.g. a *positive* cognitive attitude vs. a *negative* affective attitude) are ultimately undesirable, it is also hoped that goal internalisation, growing confidence and increasingly successful language use will eventually result in the type of motivation all education aspires to achieve: intrinsic motivation.

As regards the fourth aim above, while students recognise the need to become increasingly independent, putting that realisation into practice has proved to be rather difficult.

The lessons which were drawn from the current research for the structure of the German grammar programme were also outlined in the previous chapter. Thus, the German language programme will continue to be characterised by a considerable grammar component, while obviously not neglecting other aspects of the language, nor indeed the opportunity to put the grammar acquired into practice in other parts of the course. The regular provision of output practice and corrective feedback also continue to be emphasised as part of that programme. The original syllabus has had to be shortened in view of the difficulty which the majority of students displayed with regard to even the most fundamental aspects of the L2 structure. Thus, some of the aspects which were included in the first year syllabus have now been moved into the second year grammar syllabus.

The main aim remains to help students improve their metalinguistic and linguistic knowledge levels, especially their cognitive-analytical skills. For this purpose, more emphasis than has been the case up to now will have to be placed on the practice of those skills in the other German language classes and courses. A closely related challenge is the development of a more positive cognitive attitude amongst all students regarding the need to familiarise themselves with basic terminological knowledge.

As regards the issue of increased learner responsibility, it was pointed out above that autonomy in language learning and classroom-based instruction are not two mutually exclusive concepts. Thus, the decision to expose the present target group to instructed grammar learning does not contradict the aspiration to encourage all learners to become increasingly independent in their learning approach. Rather, it would appear that the grammar class has provided learners with the kind of guidance that may be indispensable in their working towards increasing autonomy, both on a content matter level and as regards the identification of the most suitable learning approaches.

With regard to overall linguistic standards of university graduates, the present research would suggest that it is a fallacy to believe that if only third level introduce a substantial grammar component in their courses, standards will return to the high levels which were the norm under grammar-translation. While programmes such as the one which formed

the focus of this research may be able to raise awareness levels of the communicative function of grammar, avert fossilisation in some areas with some students and contribute to some increase in accuracy levels, it will have become obvious that they are essentially of a remedial nature. Thus, unless certain changes are implemented at second level, levels of accuracy and thus true proficiency standards among the majority of third level graduates are likely to remain well below those which were achieved prior to the introduction of the communicative approach. It may of course be that educational policy makers look at this fall in standards as easily being offset by the advantages that the communicative approach is purported to have brought about for the employment prospects of young people with 'communicative' (as opposed to true) linguistic proficiency. In Ireland, like in many other countries, there is now a considerable cohort of students for whom employment opportunities in telemarketing, teleservices etc. are opening up on a daily basis. If the 'communicative' type of student continues to be economically more desirable, the true linguist will very rapidly become a phenomenon of the past while programmes such as the one under investigation in this research will turn into an anachronism.

Future Research

Since the grammar programme investigated in this dissertation was based on long-term objectives, all aspects examined and discussed above - socio-affective, cognitive and metacognitive issues - will have to be re-examined in the subjects' final year in 1999/2000². That investigation will have to raise retrospective questions about the role of the grammar class in both students' grammar learning process and their overall language learning process. Only then will it be possible to reach definite conclusions with regard to the success or failure of the grammar programme.

The requirement for syllabus development does not end with semester two but transcends into the second and also fourth year of the abovementioned degree courses. While a second year syllabus has already been drawn up and taught, the fourth year syllabus is currently being devised. No evaluation of the second year syllabus has taken place to date.

² For logistical reasons they could not be investigated in the students' second year of study.

The above research investigated the effect of the 1983 syllabus only; initial results of the diagnostic surveys held in October 1997 (i.e. with the first Leaving Certificate cohort to be taught under the 1995 senior cycle syllabus) suggest that not much change in grammatical competence or performance levels is to be expected from that syllabus. However, this anecdotal evidence needs to be verified. Ideally, research among the new cohort should be carried out on both a cross-sectional and longitudinal basis. For instance, the abovementioned criteria (effect of the programme on socio-affective, cognitive and metacognitive aspects of language learning) could be investigated among the same student cohort in those students' first, second and final year of study.

In view of the fact that some lecturers are currently practising what was above referred to an "enforced" learner self-assessment by conducting regular informal tests, it might also be worthwhile investigating whether this methodology has any beneficial effect on students' learning efforts outside the classroom. Another area of investigation is the extent to which students make use of time-tabled study periods, the choice of work they undertake during those periods and the effect this has on both their accuracy and overall proficiency standards.

Finally, permanent monitoring of educational policies at second level is required since any changes with regard to examination marking schemes, examination methods (such as changes in the oral examination) etc. are likely to have repercussions for third level. As regards this last issue, there would also appear to be a strong case for more frequent information exchanges between practitioners at those two levels. When in 1998 the Association of Third-Level Teachers of German was founded, it was decided that one of the subcommittees was to focus on second-level links. This forum may well turn out to provide the appropriate platform where ideas could be shared and concerns could be voiced and discussed, to the potential benefit of all those involved in the teaching and learning of German in Ireland.

Bibliography

Alderson, J.C., C.M. Clapham and D.A. Steel, 1996, "Metalinguistic Knowledge, Language Aptitude and Language Proficiency", Working Paper Series no. 26, Centre for Research in Language and Education, University of Lancaster, Lancaster

Ames, C., 1986, "Effective motivation: the contribution of the learning environment", in: R. Feldman (ed.), *The Social Psychology of Education: Current Research and Theory*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp 235-256

Ames, C., 1992, "Classrooms: Goals, Structures and Student Motivation", *Journal of Educational Psychology*, vol. 84, pp 261-271

Ames, C. and J. Archer, 1988, "Achievement Goals in the Classroom: Students' Learning Strategies and Motivation Process", *Journal of Educational Psychology*, vol. 80, pp 260-267

Anderson, J.R., 1982, "Acquisition of Cognitive Skill", *Psychological Review*, vol. 89, no. 4, pp 369-406

Au, S.Y., 1988, "A critical appraisal of Gardner's social-psychological theory of second-language (L2) learning", *Language Learning*, no. 38, pp 75-100

Aufderstraße, H., H. Bock and J. Müller, 1998, *Themen neu 2 - Workbook*, Max Hueber Verlag, Ismaning

Bahr, A., K.R. Bausch, B. Helbig, K. Kleppin, F.G. Königs, and W. Tönshoff, 1996, *Forschungsgegenstand Tertiärsprachenunterricht - Ergebnisse eines empirischen Projekts*, Universitätsverlag Dr. N. Brockmeyer, Bochum

Bates, E. and B. MacWhinney (eds.), 1989, *The Crosslinguistic Study of Sentence Processing*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Bausch, K.R., H. Christ and H.-J. Krumm (eds.), 1992, *Fremdsprachenunterricht und Sprachenpolitik als Gegenstand der Forschung*, Universitätsverlag Dr. N. Brockmeyer, Bochum

Bausch, K.R., H. Christ and H.-J. Krumm (eds.), 1995, *Handbuch Fremdsprachenunterricht*, Francke Verlag, Tübingen and Basel

Bausch, K.R and H.-J. Krumm, 1995, "Sprachlehrforschung", in: Bausch et al. (eds.), pp 7-13

Beretta, A., 1993, "'As God said, and I think, rightly ...', Perspectives on Theory Construction in SLA: An Introduction", *Applied Linguistics*, vol. 14, no. 3, pp 221-224

Bialystok, E., 1978, "A Theoretical Model of Second Language Learning", *Language Learning*, vol. 28, pp 69-84

Bialystok, E., 1990, *Communication Strategies: A psychological analysis of second-language use*, Blackwell, Oxford etc.

Bialystok, E., 1994a, "Analysis and Control in the Development of Second Language Proficiency", *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, vol. 16, pp 157-168

Bialystok, E., 1994b, "Representation and Ways of Knowing: Three Issues in Second Language Acquisition", in: N. Ellis (ed.), pp 549-569

Bialystok, E., 1994c, "Towards an explanation of second language acquisition", in: G. Brown, K. Malmkjaer, A. Pollit and J. Williams (eds.), *Language and Understanding*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp 117-138

Bialystok, E., 1995, "Why we need grammar: Confessions of a cognitive generalist", in: Eubank et al. (eds.), pp 55-61

Bialystok, E., 1997, "The structure of age: in search of barriers to second language acquisition", *Second Language Research*, vol. 13, no. 2, pp 116-137

Bialystok, E. and M. Sharwood Smith, 1985, "Interlanguage is not a state of mind: An evaluation of the construct for second-language acquisition", *Applied Linguistics*, vol. 6, pp 101-117

Bimmel, P., 1995, "Lernstrategien im Deutschunterricht - Funktionen und Vermittlungsfragen", *Fremdsprache Deutsch, Special Issue (Fremdsprachenlerntheorie)*, pp 16-21

Bley-Vroman, R., 1988, "The Fundamental Character of Foreign Language Learning", in: Rutherford and Sharwood Smith (eds.), pp 19-30

Bock, H., K.-H. Einfeld, H. Holthaus, U. Schütze-Nöhmke, 1995, *Themen neu 1 - Workbook*, Max Hueber Verlag, Ismaning

Boggiano, A.K. and T.S. Pittman (eds.), 1992, *Achievement and motivation - A social-developmental perspective*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Brenner, H.R. and H.R. Jentsch, 1988, *Grammatik zum Üben, Ein Arbeitsbuch mit Regeln und Übungen für Fortgeschrittene*, Burris Druck, Schwerte

Broderick, M., H. Ridley and E. Sagarra, 1991, "German in Ireland", in: Rott and Wille (eds.), pp 1-4

Brons-Albert, R., 1990, "Valenzmodell vs. traditionelle Grammatik für den DaF-Unterricht", in: Gross and Fischer (eds.), pp 43-57

Brumfit, C.J., 1996, "Themes and implications" (Final plenary, CILT Research Forum 1996), in: P. Wright (ed.), *Current research into language teaching and learning in the UK (1993-1995)*, CILT, London, pp 3-18

- Buczowska, E. and R.M. Weist, 1991, "The Effects of Formal Instruction on the Second-Language Acquisition of Temporal Location", *Language Learning*, vol. 41, no. 4, pp 535-554
- Bushell, A., 1995, "Language learning and the 'weak' advanced student", *Language Learning Journal*, vol. 12, pp 38-39
- Bygate, M., A. Tonkyn and E. Williams (eds.), 1994, *Grammar and the Language Teacher*, Prentice Hall International, New York etc.
- Campbell-Schotsaert, M.I., 1994, *Übung macht den Meister - Post-Primary German Grammar*, Folens, Dublin
- Canale, M. and M. Swain, 1988, "Some theories of communicative competence", in: Rutherford and Sharwood Smith (eds.), pp 61-84
- Carroll, S., 1995, "The irrelevance of verbal feedback to language learning", in: Eubank et al. (eds.), pp 73-88
- Carroll, S., Y. Roberge and M. Swain, 1992, "The role of feedback in adult second language acquisition: Error correction and morphological generalizations", *Applied Psycholinguistics*, vol. 13, pp 173-198
- Carroll, S. and M. Swain, 1993, "Explicit and Implicit Negative Feedback", *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, vol. 15, pp 357-386
- Chamot, A.U. and J.M. O'Malley, 1993, *The CALLA Handbook: How to Implement the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach*, Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA
- Chamot, A.U. and J.M. O'Malley, 1994, "Language Learner and Learning Strategies", in: N. Ellis (ed.), pp 371-392

Chomsky, N., 1980, "On Cognitive Structures and Their Development: A Reply to Piaget", in: Piattelli-Palmarini (ed.), pp 35-52

Clahsen, H. and P. Muysken, 1986, "The availability of universal grammar to adult and child learners - the study of the acquisition of German word order", *Second Language Research*, vol. 2, pp 93-119

Clement, R. and B. Kruidenier, 1983, "Orientations in second language acquisition: 1. The effects of ethnicity, milieu and target language on their emergence", *Language Learning*, vol. 33, pp 273-291

Cohen, A.D., 1998, *Strategies in Learning and Using a Second Language*, Longman, London etc.

Coleman, J., 1995a, *The evolution of language learner motivation in British universities, with some international comparisons*, in: R. Wakely, A. Barker, D. Frier, P. Graves and Y. Suleiman (eds.), *Language teaching and learning in higher education*, CILT, London, pp 1-15

Coleman, J.A., 1995b, *Progress, proficiency and motivation among British university language learners*, Occasional Paper No. 40, Trinity College Dublin, Centre For Language and Communication Studies, Dublin

Coleman, J.A., 1996a, "A comparative survey of the proficiency and progress of language learners in British universities", in: R. Grotjahn (ed.), *Der C-Test. Theoretische Grundlagen und praktische Anwendungen*, Band 3, Universitätsverlag Dr. N. Brockmeyer, Bochum, pp 367-399

Coleman, J.A., 1996b, *Studying languages - A survey of British and European students*, CILT, London

Cook, V.J., 1991, *Second Language Learning and Language Teaching*, Edward Arnold, London etc.

Cook, V.J., 1994, "The Metaphor of Access to Universal Grammar in L2 learning", in: N. Ellis (ed.), pp 477-502

Cook, V.J. and M. Newson, 1996, *Chomsky's Universal Grammar: An Introduction*, Blackwell, Oxford etc.

Corder, S.P., 1967, "The significance of learners' errors", *International Review of Applied Linguistics*, vol. 5, no. 4, pp 161-170

Corder, S.P., 1981, *Error Analysis and Interlanguage*, Oxford University Press, Oxford

Cox, S., E. O'Sullivan and D. Rösler, 1990, *Business - Auf Deutsch*, Klett Edition Deutsch, München

Crookes, G. and R. W. Schmidt, 1991, "Motivation: Reopening the research agenda", *Language Learning*, vol. 41, pp 469-512

Csikszentmihalyi, M., 1975, *Beyond boredom and anxiety*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco

Csikszentmihalyi, M., 1993, *The evolving self: A psychology for the third millennium*, Harper Collins, New York

Csikszentmihalyi, M. and K. Rathunde, 1993, "The Measurement of Flow in Everyday Life: Toward a Theory of Emergent Motivation", in: J.E. Jacobs (ed.), *Developmental Perspectives on Motivation, Nebraska Symposium on Motivation 1992*, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, NE Jacobs (ed.), pp 57-97

Curriculum and Examinations Board, 1987, *Languages, A Report by the Board of Studies*, CEB, Dublin

Deci, E.L. and R.M. Ryan, 1985, *Intrinsic Motivation and Self-determination in human behavior*, Plenum Press, New York

Deci, E.L. and R.M. Ryan, 1992, "The initiation and regulation of intrinsically motivated learning and achievement", in: Boggiano and Pittman (eds.), pp 9-36

DeKeyser, R., 1994, "How implicit can adult second language learning be?", *AILA Review*, vol. 11, pp 83-96

DeKeyser, R., 1997, "Beyond Explicit Rule Learning - Automatizing Second Language Morphosyntax", *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, vol. 19, pp 195-221

Der Spiegel, no. 2, 1997

Dickinson, L., 1995, "Autonomy and Motivation - A Literature Review", *System*, vol. 23, pp 165-174

Dörnyei, Z., 1990, "Conceptualizing Motivation in Foreign-Language Learning", *Language Learning*, vol. 40, no. 1, pp 45-78

Dörnyei, Z., 1994, "Motivation and Motivating in the Foreign Language Classroom", *The Modern Language Journal*, vol. 78, no. 3, pp 273-284

Dörnyei, Z., 1997, "Psychological Processes in Cooperative Language Learning: Group Dynamics and Motivation", *The Modern Language Journal*, vol. 81, no. 4, pp 482-493

Doughty, C., 1991, "Second Language Instruction Does Make a Difference - Evidence from an Empirical Study of SL Relativization", *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, vol. 13, pp 431-469

Dreyer, H. and R. Schmitt, 1985, *Lehr-und Übungsbuch der deutschen Grammatik*, Max Hueber Verlag, München

Dreyer, H. and R. Schmitt, 1994, *A Practice Grammar of German*, Verlag für Deutsch, Ismaning

Du Plessis, J., D. Solin, L. Travis and L. White, 1987, "UG or not UG, that is the question: a reply to Clahsen and Muysken", *Second Language Research*, vol. 3, pp 56-75

Durrell, M., 1991, *Hammer's German Grammar and Usage*, Edward Arnold, London etc.

Durrell, M., 1993, "Can we Teach Grammar to Students?", in: Harden and Marsh (eds.), pp 56-74

Durrell, M., K. Kohl and G. Loftus, 1996, *Practising German Grammar, A Workbook*, Edward Arnold, London etc.

Ehrman, M.E., 1996, *Understanding Second Language Learning Difficulties*, Sage Publications Inc., Thousand Oaks, CA etc.

Ellis, N. (ed.), 1994a, *Implicit and Explicit Learning of Languages*, Academic Press, London etc.

Ellis, N., 1994b, "Implicit and Explicit Language Learning - An overview", in: N. Ellis (ed.), pp 1-31

Ellis N., 1995, "Consciousness in Second Language Acquisition: A Review of Field Studies and Laboratory Experiments", *Language Awareness*, vol. 4, no. 3, pp 123-146

Ellis, R., 1986, *Understanding Second Language Acquisition*, Oxford University Press, Oxford

Ellis, R., 1989, "Are Classroom and Naturalistic Acquisition The Same? A Study of the Classroom Acquisition of German Word Order Rules", *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, vol. 11, pp 305-328

Ellis, R., 1990, *Instructed Second Language Acquisition*, Blackwell, Oxford etc.

Ellis, R., 1992a, *Second Language Acquisition and Language Pedagogy*, Multilingual Matters, Clevedon etc.

Ellis, R., 1992b, "On the Relationship between Formal Practice and Second Language Acquisition: a Study of the Effects of Formal Practice on the Acquisition of German Word Order Rules", *Die neueren Sprachen*, vol. 91, no. 2, pp 131-147

Ellis, R., 1993, "The Structural Syllabus and Second Language Acquisition", *TESOL Quarterly*, vol. 27, no. 1, pp 91-113

Ellis, R., 1994a, *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*, Oxford University Press, Oxford

Ellis, R., 1994b, "A Theory of Instructed Second Language Acquisition", in: N. Ellis (ed.), pp 79-114

Ellis, R., 1995, "Interpretation Tasks for Grammar Teaching", *TESOL Quarterly*, vol. 29, no. 1, pp 87-105

Ellis, R., 1998, "Teaching and Research: Options in Grammar Teaching", *TESOL Quarterly*, vol. 32, no. 1, pp 30-60

Ely, C., 1986, "Language Learning Motivation: A Descriptive and Causal Analysis", *The Modern Language Journal*, vol. 70, no. 1, pp 28-35

Engel, D. M. and F. Myles, 1996, "Grammar Teaching: The Major Concerns", in: Engel and Myles (eds.), pp 9-19

Engel, D. M. and F. Myles (eds.), 1996, *Teaching Grammar: Perspectives in Higher Education*, CILT, London

Engel, U., 1972, "Regeln zur >Satzgliedfolge<. Zur Stellung der Elemente im einfachen Verbalsatz", *Sprachen der Gegenwart*, pp 17-75

Engel, U., 1988, *Deutsche Grammatik*, Julius Groos Verlag, Heidelberg

Engel, U. and H. Schuhmacher, 1976, "Kleines Valenzlexikon deutscher Verben", *IdS Forschungsberichte*, no. 31, Tübingen

Eubank, L. (ed.), 1991, *Point Counterpoint - Universal Grammar in the Second Language*, John Benjamins, Amsterdam etc.

Eubank, L., L. Selinker and M. Sharwood Smith, 1995, "The current state of interlanguage: introduction", in: Eubank et al. (eds.), pp 1-10

Eubank, L., L. Selinker and M. Sharwood Smith (eds.), 1995, *The Current State of Interlanguage*, John Benjamins, Amsterdam etc.

Fandry, C. and J. Somerville, 1994, *Brennpunkt*, Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., Surrey

Felix, S., 1985, "More evidence on competing cognitive systems", *Second Language Research*, vol. 1, pp 47-72

Felix, S., 1991, "The Accessibility of Universal Grammar in Second Language Acquisition", in: Eubank (ed.), pp 89-103

Felix, S., 1995, "Universal Grammar in L2 acquisition: Some thoughts on Schachter's Incompleteness Hypothesis", in: Eubank et al. (eds.), pp 139-151

Felix, S. and W. Weigl, 1991, "Universal grammar in the classroom: the effects of formal instruction on second language acquisition", *Second Language Research*, no. 7, pp162-180

Fischer, K., 1990, "Dependenz-Verb-Grammatik und kontrastive Analyse", in: Gross and Fischer (eds.), pp 9-42

Fischer, J. and M. L. Schewe, (forthcoming), "Deutschunterricht und Germanistik in der Republik Irland", in: L. Götze, G. Helbig, G. Henrici, H.-J. Krumm (eds.), *Handbuch Deutsch als Fremdsprache*, de Gruyter, Berlin etc.

Flink, C., A.K. Boggiano, D.S. Main, M. Barrett and P.A. Katz, 1992, "Children's achievement-related behaviors: the role of extrinsic and intrinsic motivational orientations", in: Boggiano and Pittman (eds.), pp 189-214

Flynn, S. and S. Manuel, 1991, "Age-Dependent Effects in Language Acquisition: An Evaluation of "Critical Period" Hypotheses", in: Eubank (ed.), pp 117-145

Fodor, J., 1983, *Modularity of Mind*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA

Gardner, R.C., 1985, *Social Psychology and Second Language Learning: The Role of Attitude and Motivation*, Edward Arnold, London etc.

Gardner, R.C., 1988, "The Socio-Educational Model of Second-Language Learning: Assumptions, Findings, and Issues", *Language Learning*, vol. 38, no. 1, pp 101-126

Gardner, R.C. and W. Lambert, 1972, *Attitudes and Motivation in Second Language Learning*, Newbury House, Rowley, MA

Gardner, R.C. and P.D. MacIntyre, 1991, "An Instrumental Motivation in Language Study - Who says it isn't effective?", *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, vol. 13, pp 57-72

Gardner, R.C. and P.D. MacIntyre, 1992, "A student's contributions to second language learning. Part I: Cognitive variables", *Language Teaching*, vol. 25, pp 211-220

Gardner, R.C. and P.D. MacIntyre, 1993a, "On the Measurement of Affective Variables in Second Language Learning", vol. 43, no. 2, pp 157-194

Gardner, R.C. and P.D. MacIntyre, 1993b, "A student's contributions to second-language learning. Part II: Affective variables", *Language Teaching*, vol. 26, pp 1-11

Gardner, R.C., P.C. Smythe, R. Clement and L. Glikman, 1975, "Second-Language Learning: A Social Psychological Perspective", *Canadian Modern Language Review*, vol. 32, pp 198-213

Gardner, R.C. and P.F. Tremblay, 1994a, "On Motivation, Research Agendas, and Theoretical Frameworks", *The Modern Language Journal*, vol. 78, no. 3, pp 524-527

Gardner, R.C. and P.F. Tremblay, 1994b, "On Motivation: Measurement and Conceptual Considerations", *The Modern Language Journal*, vol. 78, no. 4, pp 359-368

Gardner, R.C., P.F. Tremblay and A.M. Masgoret, 1997, "Towards a Full Model of Second Language Learning: An Empirical Investigation", *The Modern Language Journal*, vol. 81, no. 3, pp 344-362

Gass, S.M. and C.G. Madden (eds.), 1985, *Input in Second Language Acquisition*, Newbury House, Rowley, MA

Geo, no. 2, 1997

Gesellschaft der Deutschlehrer Irlands, 1988, *Bulletin*, GDI, Dublin

Gnutzmann C. and F.G. Königs (eds.), 1995, *Perspektiven des Grammatikunterrichts*, Gunter Narr Verlag, Tübingen

Goethe Institute, 1998, *Informationen für Deutschlehrer*,
<http://www.goethe.de/gr/dub/despv.htm>

Götze, L., 1979, *Valenzstrukturen deutscher Verben und Adjektive. Eine didaktische Darstellung*, Max Hueber Verlag, München

Götze, L., 1985, "Grammatik? - Ja! Aber welche?", *Zielsprache Deutsch* 4, pp 11-14

Götze, L., 1991, "Grammatik und Kommunikation - ein Widerspruch?", *Deutsch als Fremdsprache*, no. 28, pp 161-163

Götze, L., 1996, "Grammatikmodelle und ihre Didaktisierung in Deutsch als Fremdsprache", *Deutsch als Fremdsprache*, no. 3, pp 136-143

Grebe, P., H. Gipper, M. Mangold, W. Mentrup, C. Winkler, 1973, *Duden - Grammatik der deutschen Gegenwartssprache*, Bibliographisches Institut - Dudenverlag, Mannheim etc.

Green, P.S. and K.H. Hecht, 1992, "Implicit and Explicit Grammar: An Empirical Study", *Applied Linguistics*, vol. 13, no. 2, pp 168-184

Green, J.M. and R. Oxford, 1995, "A Closer Look at Learning Strategies, L2 Proficiency, and Gender", *TESOL Quarterly*, vol. 29, no. 2, pp 261-297

Gross, H. and K. Fischer (eds.), 1990, *Grammatikarbeit im DaF-Unterricht*, iudicium Verlag, München

Grotjahn, R., 1991, "The Research Programme Subjective Theories: A New Approach in Second Language Research", *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, vol. 13, pp 187-214

Grotjahn, R., 1995, "Erforschung einzelner Problembereiche des Fremdsprachenunterrichts: Forschungsmethoden und Forschungsertrag", in: Bausch et al. (eds.), pp 457-461

Gschossmann-Hendershot, E.F., 1983, *German Grammar*, McGraw-Hill, New York etc.

Halliday, M.A.K., 1973, *Explorations in the Functions of Language*, Edward Arnold, London etc.

Harden, T. and C. Marsh (eds.), 1993, *Wieviel Grammatik braucht der Mensch?*, iudicium Verlag, München

Häussermann, U. and H.-E. Piepho, 1996, *Aufgaben-Handbuch - Deutsch als Fremdsprache, Abriß einer Aufgaben-und Übungstypologie*, iudicium Verlag, München

Hawkins, J.A., 1986, *A Comparative Typology of English and German*, Croom Helm, Beckenham, Kent

Hawkins, R. and R. Towell, 1996, "Why teach grammar?", in: Engel and Myles (eds.), pp 195-211

Hayes, J. and D. Hayes, 1993, *Zur Sache! 3*, C.J. Fallon, Dublin

Hayes, J. and D. Hayes, 1993, *Zur Sache! 4*, C.J. Fallon, Dublin

Helbig, G., 1982, *Valenz - Satzglieder - semantische Kasus - Satzmodelle*, VEB Verlag Enzyklopädie, Leipzig

- Helbig, G., 1991, "Grammatik und kommunikativer Grammatikunterricht",
Fremdsprachen Lehren und Lernen, vol. 20, pp 7-24
- Helbig, G., 1994, "Das Verhältnis von Sprachwissenschaft und
Fremdsprachenunterricht im Wandel der Zeiten", in: U. Hirschfeld, J. Fechner and H.-J.
Krumm (eds.), *Deutsch als Fremdsprache in einer sich wandelnden Welt* (X.
Internationale Deutschlehrertagung, Universität Leipzig, August 2 - 7, 1993), iudicium
Verlag, München, pp 83-95
- Helbig, G., 1982, *Valenz - Satzglieder - semantische Kasus - Satzmodelle*, VEB Verlag
Enzyklopädie, Leipzig
- Helbig, G., 1991, "Grammatik und Kommunikativer Grammatikunterricht",
Fremdsprachen Lehren und Lernen, vol. 20, pp 7-24
- Helbig, G. and J. Buscha, 1981, *Deutsche Grammatik - Ein Handbuch für den
Ausländerunterricht*, VEB Verlag Enzyklopädie, Leipzig
- Helbig, G. and W. Schenkel, 1975, *Wörterbuch zur Valenz und Distribution deutscher
Verben*, VEB Bibliographisches Institut, Leipzig
- Henrici, G., 1986, "Gegen Ausschließlichkeitsansprüche in der Erforschung des
Erwerbs von Fremdsprachen", in: K.R. Bausch and F.G. Königs (eds.),
*Sprachlehrforschung in der Diskussion. Methodologische Überlegungen zur
Erforschung des Fremdsprachenunterrichts*, Gunter Narr Verlag, Tübingen
- Hermann, G., 1980, "Attitudes and Success in Children's Learning of English as a
Second Language: The Motivational vs. the Resultative Hypothesis", *English Language
Teaching Journal*, vol. 34, pp. 247-254
- Hirschfeld, U., 1998, *"Simsalabim" - Phonetik im Anfängerunterricht der
Sekundarschule*, Unpublished manuscript, GDI spring seminar Dublin

Horwitz, E.K., M.B. Horwitz and J. Cope, 1986, "Foreign language classroom anxiety", *Modern Language Journal*, vol. 70, pp 125-132

Horwitz, E.K. and D.J. Young, 1991, *Language Anxiety - From Theory and Research to Classroom Implications*, Prentice Hall International, New York etc.

Hulstijn, J.H., 1990, "A comparison between the information-processing and the analysis/control approaches to language learning", *Applied Linguistics*, vol. 11, pp 30-45

Hulstijn, J.H., 1997, "Second Language Acquisition Research in the Laboratory - Possibilities and Limitations", *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, vol. 19, pp 131-143

Hulstijn, J.H. and R. de Graaff, 1994, "Under what conditions does explicit knowledge of a second language facilitate the acquisition of implicit knowledge? A research proposal", *AILA Review*, no. 11, pp 97-112

Hulstijn, J.H. and W. Hulstijn, 1984, "Grammatical Errors as a Function of Processing Constraints and Explicit Knowledge", *Language Learning*, vol. 34, no. 1, pp 23-43

Hymes, D., 1972, "On communicative competence", in: J.B. Pride and J. Holmes (eds.), *Sociolinguistics*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, England, pp 269-293

Institute of Education, *Exambrief - German Leaving Cert*, Annual publication in the 'Irish Independent' newspaper, Dublin

Irish Department of Education, 1979, *Rules and Programme for Secondary Schools 1979/80*, The Stationary Office, Dublin

Irish Department of Education, 1983, *Notes for Teachers in connection with the revised syllabuses in Leaving Certificate German for examination in 1985 and after*, Department of Education, Dublin

Irish Department of Education, 1994, *Inservice for phase 1 Leaving Certificate subjects: Briefing sessions for principals and vice-principals*, Department of Education, Dublin

Irish Department of Education, 1995a, *White Paper: Charting our Education Future*, Department of Education, Dublin

Irish Department of Education, 1995b, *The Leaving Certificate German Syllabus*, Department of Education, Dublin

Irish Department of Education, 1996a, *Brief Description of the Irish Education System*, Department of Education, Dublin

Irish Department of Education, 1996b, *Rules and Programme for Secondary Schools 1987/88 to 1996/97*, Department of Education, Dublin

Irish Department of Education, 1996c, *Leaving Certificate Examination 1995 German - Higher Level and Ordinary Level Chief Examiner's Report*, Department of Education, Dublin

Irish Department of Education, 1997a, *Leaving Certificate Examination 1997 (German) - Supplementary guidelines for the written examinations*, Department of Education and Science, Dublin

Irish Department of Education and Science, 1997b, *Education Bill*, Department of Education and Science, Dublin

James, C., 1994, "Explaining Grammar to its Learners", in: Bygate et al. (eds.), pp 203-214

James, C., 1998, *Errors in Language Learning and Use - Exploring Error Analysis*, Longman, London etc.

Johnson, K., 1996, *Language Teaching and Skill Learning*, Blackwell, Oxford etc.

Jung, L., 1979, "Didaktische Grammatik als Modell zwischen Linguistik und Fremdsprachenunterricht", in: K.R. Bausch (ed.), *Beiträge zur Didaktischen Grammatik. Probleme, Konzepte, Beispiele*, Scriptor Verlag, Königstein/Ts., pp 45-60

Karmiloff-Smith, A., 1992, *Beyond Modularity*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA

Kars, J., U. Häussermann and J. Hime-Everschor, 1993, *German Elementary Grammar, The English Version of 'Grundgrammatik Deutsch'*, Verlag Moritz Diesterweg, Frankfurt

Kasper, G., 1995, "Der Fremdsprachenlerner", in: Bausch et al. (eds.), pp 466-470

Kellerman, E., 1985, "If at first you *do* succeed ...", in: Gass and Madden (eds.), pp 345-353

Kennedy, F. and K. Schröder, 1991, "Foreign Language Learning Experience, Foreign Language Learning Motivation and European Multilingualism", in: Rott and Wille (eds.), pp 16-29

Kleppin, K., 1995, "Fehler als Chance zum Weiterlernen", *Fremdsprache Deutsch, Special Issue (Fremdsprachenlerntheorie)*, pp 22-26

Kleppin, K. and F.G. Königs, 1993, "Grundelemente der mündlichen Fehlerkorrektur - Lernerurteile im (interkulturellen) Vergleich", *Fremdsprachen Lehren und Lernen*, vol. 22, pp 76-90

Königs, F.G., 1992, "'Nicht von oben und nicht nur von unten'. Überlegungen zum Verhältnis von Fremdsprachenpolitik und Sprachlehrforschung", in: Bausch et al. (eds.), pp 87-95

Königs, F.G., 1995, "Fehlerkorrektur", in: Bausch et al. (eds.), pp 268-272

Krashen, S.D., 1987, *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*, Prentice-Hall International, New York etc.

Krashen, S.D., 1994, "The Input Hypothesis and Its Rivals", in: N. Ellis (ed.), pp 45-77

Krumm, H.-J., 1992, "Sprach(en)politik als Dimension von Fremdsprachenunterricht und Sprachlehrforschung", in: Bausch et al. (eds.), pp 97-107

Krusche, D. and R. Krechel, 1984, *Anspiel - Konkrete Poesie im Unterricht Deutsch als Fremdsprache*, Inter Nationes, Bonn

Larsen-Freeman, D. and M. H. Long, 1991, *An introduction to second language acquisition research*, Longman, London etc.

Lightbown, P. and N. Spada, 1990, "Focus-on-Form and Corrective Feedback in Communicative Language Teaching - Effects on Second Language Learning", *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, vol. 12, pp 429-448

Little, D., 1990, "Autonomy in language learning. Some theoretical and practical considerations", in: I. Gathercole (ed.), *Autonomy in Language Learning*, CILT, London, pp 7-15

Little, D., 1995, "Learner autonomy: some steps in the evolution of theory and practice", Paper presented at the Annual General Meeting of the Irish Association for Applied Linguistics (IRAAL), March 29

- Locke, E. and G. Latham, 1990, "Work Motivation and Satisfaction: Light at the End of the Tunnel", *Psychological Science*, vol. 1, pp 240-246
- Locke, E., K.N. Shaw, L.M. Saari and G.P. Latham, 1981, "Goal Setting and Task Performance: 1969-1980", *Psychological Bulletin*, vol. 90, pp 125-152
- Lofmark, C., 1990, "Grammatikunterricht an einer britischen Hochschule: Ein Bericht", in: Gross and Fischer (eds.), pp 171-179
- Long, M.H., 1988, "Instructed Interlanguage Development", in: L.M Beebe (ed.), *Issues in Second Language Acquisition: Multiple Perspectives*, Newbury House, Rowley, MA, pp 115-141
- Long, M.H., 1990, "Maturational Constraints on Language Development", *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, vol. 12, pp 251-285
- Long, M.H., 1996, "The Role of the Linguistic Environment in Second Language Acquisition", in: Ritchie and Bhatia (eds.), pp 413-468
- Lorigan, M.E., 1992, *The Role of External Grammatical Knowledge in L2 Learning: A Communicative Perspective - An Empirical Study of University Level Learners*, Unpublished M.Phil thesis in Applied Linguistics submitted to Trinity College, Dublin
- Lynch, B.K., 1996, *Language Program Evaluation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- MacWhinney, B., 1997, "Implicit and Explicit Processes", *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, vol. 19, pp 277-281
- MacWhinney, B. and J. Anderson, 1986, "The Acquisition of Grammar", in: I. Gopnik and M. Gopnik (eds.), *From Models to Modules - Studies in Cognitive Science from the McGill Workshops*, Ablex Publishing Corporation, Norwood, NJ, pp 3-25

- McDonough, S.H., 1986, *Psychology in Foreign Language Teaching*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London
- McDonough, S.H., 1995, *Strategy and skill in learning a foreign language*, Edward Arnold, London etc.
- McLaughlin, B., 1987, *Theories of Second-Language Learning*, Edward Arnold, London etc.
- McLaughlin, B., 1990, "Restructuring", *Applied Linguistics*, vol. 11, no. 2, pp 113-128
- McLaughlin, B. and R. Heredia, 1996, "Information-Processing Approaches to Research on Second Language Acquisition and use", in: Ritchie and Bhatia (eds.), pp 213-228
- McLaughlin, B., T. Rossman and B. McLeod, 1983, "Second Language Learning: An Information-Processing Perspective", *Language Learning*, vol. 33, pp 135-158
- McNamara, M.J. and D. Deane, 1995, "Self-Assessment Activities: Toward Autonomy in Language Learning", *TESOL Journal*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp 17-21
- McNiff, J., 1988, *Action research: Principles and practice*, Routledge, London
- Meisel, J.M., H. Clahsen and M. Pienemann, 1981, "On Determining Developmental Stages in Natural Language Acquisition", *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, vol. 3, pp 109-135
- Mitchell, R., 1994a, "Grammar, Syllabuses and Teachers", in: Bygate et al. (eds.), pp 90-104
- Mitchell, R., 1994b, "Foreign Language Teachers and the Teaching of Grammar", in: Bygate et al. (eds.), pp 215-223

Müller-Küppers, E., 1991, *Dependenz-/Valenz- und Kasustheorie im Unterricht Deutsch als Fremdsprache*, Fachverband Deutsch als Fremdsprache, Regensburg

Multhaup, U., 1997, "Mental Networks, Procedural Knowledge and Foreign Language Teaching", *Language Awareness*, vol. 6, nos. 2&3, pp 75-92

Munby, J., 1978, *Communicative Syllabus Design*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Naiman, N., M. Fröhlich, H.H. Stern and A. Todesco, 1996, *The Good Language Learner*, Multilingual Matters, Clevedon etc.

National Commission for the Teaching of Modern Continental Languages, 1983, *The Problems of Diversification*, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, 1993, *Culture and Communication - Foreign Languages in the Primary School Curriculum*, NCCA, Dublin

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, 1994, *Assessment & Certification in the Senior Cycle - Issues and Directions*, NCCA, Dublin

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, 1995a, *The 1994 Leaving Certificate Examination: A Review of Results*, NCCA, Dublin

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, 1995b, *Leaving Certificate German (Draft) - Guidelines for Teachers*, NCCA, Dublin

Nemser, W., 1971, "Approximative systems of foreign language learners", *IRAL*, vol. 9, no. 2, pp 115-223

Nunan, D., 1989, *Understanding language classrooms*, Prentice Hall International, New York etc.

Nunan, D., 1991, "Methods in Second Language Classroom-Oriented Research", *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, vol. 13, pp 249-272

Nunan, D., 1995, "Closing the Gap Between Learning and Instruction", *TESOL Quarterly*, vol. 29, no. 1, pp 133-158

Odlin, T. (ed.), 1994, *Perspectives on Pedagogical Grammar*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Oller, J.W., Jr., 1981, "Research on the measurement of affective variables: Some remaining questions", in: R.W. Andersen (ed.), 1981, *New dimensions in second language acquisition research*, Newbury House, Rowley, MA, pp 14-27

O'Malley, J.M. and A.U. Chamot, 1990, *Learning Strategies in Second Language Acquisition*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Oxford, R.L., 1990, *Language Learning Strategies - What Every Teacher Should Know*, Newbury House, Rowley, MA

Oxford, R.L., 1992/3, "Language Learning Strategies in a Nutshell: Update and ESL Suggestions", *TESOL Journal*, pp 18-22

Oxford, R., 1994, "Where Are We Regarding Language Learning Motivation?", *The Modern Language Journal*, vol. 78, no. 4, pp 512-514

Oxford, R. and J. Shearin, 1994, "Language Learning Motivation: Expanding the Theoretical Framework", *The Modern Language Journal*, vol. 78, no. 1, pp 12-28

Paris, S.G. and J.C. Turner, 1994, "Situated Motivation", in: P.R. Pintrich, D.R. Brown and C.E. Weinstein, *Student Motivation, Cognition and Learning*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Hove, Sussex

Perlmann-Balme, M. and S. Schwalb, 1997, *em - Hauptkurs - Deutsch als Fremdsprache für die Mittelstufe*, Max Hueber Verlag, Ismaning

Piaget, J., 1955, *The Language and Thought of the Child*, Meridian, New York

Piaget, J., 1979, *The Development of Thought*, Viking, New York

Piaget, J., 1980, "Schemes of Action and Language Learning", in: Piattelli-Palmarini (ed.), pp 164-167

Piattelli-Palmarini, M., 1980, *Language and Learning*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London

Pienemann, M., 1985, "Learnability and Syllabus Construction", in: K. Hyltenstam and M. Pienemann (eds.), *Modelling and Assessing Second Language Acquisition*, Multilingual Matters, Clevedon etc., pp 23-75

Pienemann, M., 1989, "Is Language Teachable? Psycholinguistic Experiments and Hypotheses", *Applied Linguistics*, vol. 10, no. 1, pp 52-79

Pienemann, M., 1992, "COALA - A computational system for interlanguage analysis", *Second Language Research*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp 59-92

Pienemann, M. and M. Johnston, 1985, "Towards an explanatory model of language acquisition", Paper presented at the 1985 Los Angeles Second Language Research Forum, UCLA, February 22-24

Pienemann, M., M. Johnston and G. Brindley, 1988, "Constructing an Acquisition-Based Procedure for Second Language Assessment", *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, vol. 10, pp 217-243

Pittman, T.S. and A.K. Boggiano, 1992, "Psychological perspectives on motivation and achievement", in: Boggiano and Pittman (eds.), pp 1-5

- Politzer, R.L. and M. McGroarty, 1985, "An Exploratory Study of Learning Behaviors and Their Relationship to Gains in Linguistic and Communicative Competence", TESOL Quarterly, vol. 19, no. 1, pp 103-123
- Poulisse, N., 1996, "Strategies", Studies on Language Acquisition, no. 12, pp 135-163
- Raasch, A., 1995, "Grammatische Terminologie aus der Lehr-und Lernperspektive oder: Der ununterbrochene Kreislauf", in: Gnutzmann and Königs (eds.), pp 167-179
- Rall, M., U. Engel and D. Rall, 1977, *DVG für DaF*, Julius Groos Verlag, Heidelberg
- Reimann, M., 1996, *Grundstufen-Grammatik für Deutsch als Fremdsprache*, Max Hueber Verlag, Ismaning
- Ridley, H., T. Harden, and M. Smith, 1993, "Bestandsaufnahme: Deutsch in Irland", in: Harden and Marsh (eds.), pp 9-18
- Ridley, J. and E. Ushioda, 1997, "Using qualitative research methods to explore L2 learners' motivation and self-perceptions", TEANGA, no. 17, Irish Association for Applied Linguistics (IRAAL), Dublin
- Ritchie, W.C. and T.K. Bhatia (eds.), 1996, *Handbook of Second Language Acquisition*, Academic Press, London etc.
- Roberts, L., 1992, "Attitudes of Entering University Freshmen toward Foreign Language Study: A Descriptive Analysis", The Modern Language Journal, vol. 76, no. 3, pp 275-283
- Robinson, P., 1997, "Generalizability and Automaticity of Second Language Learning under Implicit, Incidental, Enhanced, and Instructed Conditions", Studies in Second Language Acquisition, vol. 19, pp 223-247

Rösler, D., 1992, *Lernerbezug und Lehrmaterialien DaF*, Julius Groos Verlag, Heidelberg

Rösler, D., 1993, "The Role of Grammar in the Language Component of a University German Degree Course", in: Harden and Marsh (eds.), pp 87-97

Rösler, D., 1994, *Deutsch als Fremdsprache*, J.B. Metzler Verlag, Stuttgart

Rösler, D., 1998, "Autonomes Lernen? Neue Medien und >altes< Fremdsprachenlernen", *Informationen Deutsch als Fremdsprache*, no. 1, pp 3-20

Rogers, M., 1996, "What's theory got to do with it?", in: Engel and Myles (eds.), pp 21-43

Rogers, P. and J. Long, 1982, *Alles Klar - German grammar through cartoons: demonstration and practice to examination levels*, Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., Surrey

Roos, E., 1995, "Grenzen der Grammatik. Grammatische Regeln im Grenzbereich zwischen Lexik/Phraseologie und Syntax", in: Gnutzmann and Königs (eds.), pp 249-265

Rott, I. and K. Wille (eds.), 1991, *German in Ireland*, Goethe Institute, Dublin

Ruane, M., 1990, *Access to Foreign Languages*, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin

Rubin, J., 1987, "Learner Strategies: Theoretical Assumptions, Research History and Typology", in: A. Wenden and J. Rubin, *Learner Strategies in Language Learning*, Prentice Hall International, New York etc.

Rug, W. and A. Tomaszewski, 1993, *Grammatik mit Sinn und Verstand*, Klett Edition Deutsch, München

- Rumelhart, D.E. and J.L. McClelland, 1986, "On Learning the Past Tenses of English Verbs", in: J.L. McClelland, D.E. Rumelhart, and the PDP Research Group (eds.), *Parallel Distributed Processing: Explorations in the Microstructure of Cognition, Vol. 2: Psychological and Biological Models*, MIT Press, Cambridge, pp 216-271
- Rutherford, W. and M. Sharwood Smith (eds.), 1988, *Grammar and Second Language Teaching*, Newbury House, Rowley, MA
- Ryan, R.M, J.P. Connell and W.S. Grolnick, 1992, "When achievement is not intrinsically motivated: a theory of internalization and self-regulation in school", in: Boggiano and Pittman (eds.), pp 167-188
- Savignon, S. J., 1972, *Communicative Competence: An Experiment in Foreign-Language Teaching*, Center for Curriculum Development, Philadelphia
- Schachter, J., 1991a, "Issues in the Accessibility Debate: A Reply to Felix", in: Eubank (ed.), pp 105-116
- Schachter, J., 1991b, "Corrective feedback in historical perspective", *Second Language Research*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp 89-102
- Schmidt, R., 1990, "Das Konzept einer Lerner-Grammatik", in: Gross and Fischer (eds.), pp 153-161
- Schmidt, R.W., 1990, "The role of consciousness in second language learning", *Applied Linguistics*, vol. 11, pp 129-158
- Schmidt, R.W., 1993, "Awareness and Second Language Acquisition", *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, vol. 13, pp 206-226
- Schmidt, R.W, 1994, "Implicit Learning and the Cognitive Unconscious: Of Artificial Grammars and SLA", in: N. Ellis (ed.), pp 165-209

Schmidt, R.W. and S. Frota, 1986, "Developing basic conversational ability in a second language: a study of an adult learner of Portuguese", in: R. Day (ed.), *Talking to learn: Conversation in Second Language Acquisition*, Newbury House, Rowley, MA, pp 237-326

Schröder, K., 1991, "The Vocational Need For German and Other Languages. A Look At the Irish Scene", in: Rott and Wille (eds.)

Scovel, T., 1991, "The Effect of Affect on Foreign Language Learning: A Review of the Anxiety Research", in: Horwitz and Young (eds.) (reprinted version of the 1978 paper), pp 15-23

Selinker, L., 1972, "Interlanguage", *International Review of Applied Linguistics*, vol. 10, pp 209-231

Selinker, L., 1992, *Rediscovering Interlanguage*, Longman, London etc.

Sharwood Smith, M., 1988, "Notions and Functions in a Contrastive Pedagogical Grammar", in: Rutherford and Sharwood Smith (eds.), pp 156-170

Sharwood Smith, M., 1993, "Input Enhancement in Instructed SLA - Theoretical Bases", *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, vol. 15, pp 165-179

Sharwood Smith, M., 1994, *Second Language Learning: Theoretical Foundations*, Longman, London etc.

Sharwood Smith, M., 1996, *The Garden of Eden and beyond: on second language processing*, Occasional Paper No. 44, Trinity College Dublin, Centre For Language and Communication Studies, Dublin

Singleton, D., 1992, "Education towards language awareness in Ireland", *Language Awareness*, vol. 1, no. 1

Singleton, D. and E. Singleton, 1992, *University-level learners of Spanish in Ireland*, Occasional Paper No. 35, Trinity College Dublin, Centre For Language and Communication Studies, Dublin

Skehan, P., 1989, *Individual Differences in Second Language Learning*, Edward Arnold, London etc.

Skehan, P., 1994, "Second-Language Acquisition Strategies, Interlanguage Development and Task-based Learning", in: Bygate et al. (eds.), pp 175-199

Spada, N. and P. Lightbown, 1993, "Instruction and the Development of Questions", *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, vol. 15, no. 2, pp 205-224

Sperber, H., 1989, *Mnemotechniken im Fremdspracherwerb*, iudicium Verlag, München

Spolsky, B., 1989, *Conditions for Second Language Learning*, Oxford University Press, Oxford

Strong, M., 1984, "Integrative Motivation: Cause or Result of Successful Second Language Acquisition?", *Language Learning*, vol. 34, no. 3, pp 1-14

Swain, M., 1985, "Communicative Competence: Some Roles of Comprehensible Input and Comprehensible Output in its Development", in: Gass and Madden (eds.), pp 235-253

Swan, M., 1994, "Design Criteria for Pedagogic Language Rules", in: Bygate et al. (eds.), pp 45-55

Tarone, E., 1988, *Variation in Interlanguage*, Edward Arnold, London etc.

- Tarone, E., 1990, "On Variation in Interlanguage: A Response to Gregg", *Applied Linguistics*, vol. 11, no. 4, pp 392-400
- Terrell, T.D., 1991, "The Role of Grammar Instruction in a Communicative Approach", *The Modern Language Journal*, vol. 75, no. 1, pp 52-63
- Tesniere, L., 1982, *Elements de Syntaxe Structurale*, 2nd edition, Editions Klincksieck, Paris
- The Irish Times, 21.6.1988
- The Irish Times, 19.8.1995
- The Irish Times, 21.1.1997
- The Irish Times, 6.1.1998
- Tönshoff, W., 1995, "Entscheidungsfelder der sprachbezogenen Kognitivierung", in: Gnutzmann and Königs (eds.), pp 225-246
- Tomasello, M. and C. Herron, 1988, "Down the Garden Path: Inducing and correcting overgeneralization errors in the foreign language classroom", *Applied Psycholinguistics*, vol. 9, pp 237-246
- Tomasello, M. and C. Herron, 1989, "Feedback for language transfer errors - The Garden Path Technique", *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, vol. 11, pp 385-395
- Tonkyn, A., 1994, "Introduction: Grammar and the Language Teacher", in Bygate et al. (eds.), pp 1-14
- Towell, R. and R. Hawkins, 1994, *Approaches to Second Language Acquisition*, Multilingual Matters, Clevedon etc.

Townson, M. and A. Musolff, 1993, "From Caterpillar to Butterfly or: What Happens in the Chrysalis?", in: Harden and Marsh (eds.), pp 30-46

Trahey, M. and L. White, 1993, "Positive Evidence and Preemption in the Second Language Classroom", *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, vol. 15, pp 181-204

Ushioda, E., 1993, "Redefining motivation from the L2 learner's point of view", *Teanga*, no 13, Irish Association for Applied Linguistics (IRAAL), Dublin

Ushioda, E., 1996, *Learner autonomy 5: The role of motivation*, Authentik Language Learning Resources Ltd., Dublin

Valette, R.M, 1991, "Proficiency and the Prevention of Fossilization - An Editorial", *The Modern Language Journal*, vol. 75, no. 3, pp 325-328

Van Ek, J.A., 1975, *The Threshold Level in a European unit/credit system for modern language learning by adults*, Council of Europe Press, Strasbourg

Van Ek, J. A., 1976, *Significance of the Threshold Level in the Early Teaching of Modern Languages*, Council of Europe, Strasbourg

Van Ek, J.A. and J.L.M Trim, 1990, *Threshold level 1990*, Council of Europe Press, Strasbourg

Van Lier, L., 1988, *The classroom and the language learner*, Longman, London etc.

Van Lier, L., 1996, *Interaction in the Language Curriculum*, Longman, London etc.

Van Patten, B. and T. Cadierno, 1993, "Explicit Instruction and Input Processing", *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, vol. 15, pp 225-243

- Varilly, M., 1991, "The Eighties: Towards Diversification in Language Learning", in: Rott and Wille (eds.), pp 5-9
- Vygotsky, L.S, 1978, *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA
- Weinert, R., 1995, "The Role of Formulaic Language in Second Language Acquisition: A Review", *Applied Linguistics*, vol. 16, no. 2, pp 180-205
- Weinrich, H., 1993, *Textgrammatik der deutschen Sprache*, Duden Verlag, Mannheim
- Weydt, H., 1993, "Was soll der Lerner von der Grammatik wissen?", in: Harden and Marsh (eds.), pp 119-137
- White, L., 1987, "Against Comprehensible Input: the Input Hypothesis and the Development of Second-Language Competence", *Applied Linguistics*, vol. 8, pp 95-110
- White, L., 1991, "Second Language Competence versus Second Language Performance: UG or Processing Strategies", in: Eubank (ed.), pp 167-189
- White, L., 1996, "Universal Grammar and Second Language Acquisition: Current Trends and New Directions", in: Ritchie and Bhatia (eds.), pp 85-120
- White, L, N. Spada, P. Lightbown and L. Ranta, 1991, "Input Enhancement and L2 Question Formation", *Applied Linguistics*, vol. 12, no. 4, pp 416-432
- Widdowson, H. G., 1978, *Teaching Language as Communication*, Oxford University Press, London
- Wolff, D., 1995, "Zur Rolle des Sprachwissens beim Spracherwerb", in: Gnutzmann and Königs (eds.), pp 201-224

Woods, R., 1990, "Die veränderte Rolle der Grammatik im universitären Deutschunterricht in Großbritannien", in: Gross and Fischer (eds.), pp 181-197

Zimmermann, G., 1995, "Einstellungen zu Grammatik und Grammatikunterricht", in: Gnutzman and Königs (eds.), pp 181-200

Zobl, H., 1985, "Grammars in search of input and intake", in: Gass and Madden (eds.), pp 329-344

Zorach, C. and C. Melin, 1990, *English Grammar For Students of German*, The Olivia and Hill Press, USA

Appendix A

Second Level Teachers' questionnaire, February 1996
(regarding 1983 syllabus)

The answers given in this questionnaire will be used for Educational research purposes only. Your name or the name of your school will not be disclosed to a third party.

Name:

School:

N.B. All questions relate to Higher Leaving Certificate German. **Please feel free to comment on anything that you would like to expand on.**

1.a. Please indicate on the scale below the degree of emphasis which you put on the following aspects of German language learning in your Leaving Certificate classes:

	no emphasis at all	little emphasis	fairly strong emphasis	strong emphasis	very strong emphasis
reading	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
listening	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
writing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
speaking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
grammar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
vocabulary acquisition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
pronunciation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

b. If you were able to teach German language free of exam pressure or constraints such as time and class size would you shift the emphasis in any way? Yes No

If the answer is yes, please indicate in which direction those shifts would take place.

	more emphasis	less emphasis
reading	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
listening	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
writing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
speaking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
grammar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
vocabulary acquisition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
pronunciation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. As regards the language proficiency of Leaving Certificate students, please indicate on the scale below how important an aim you consider grammatical accuracy compared to overall linguistic fluency?

	very important	important	fairly important	of little importance	of no importance whatsoever
Grammatical accuracy is	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. What is your approach regarding the correction of errors (both written and oral)? Please tick the appropriate box.

a. *written*

I correct

all errors	most errors	the most blatant errors	very few errors	no errors
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

b. *oral*

I correct

all	most	the most blatant	very few	none
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. What do you consider a serious grammatical mistake? Please tick.

<u>Type of error:</u>	<i>Serious mistake?</i>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
• <i>gender of nouns</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>declension of nouns</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>government of</i>			
nouns		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
adjectives		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
verbs		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
prepositions		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>adjectival endings</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>pronouns</i>			
personal		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
possessive		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
reflexive		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
interrogative		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>formation of</i>			
regular verbs		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
irregular verbs		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
modal verbs		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
auxiliary		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
separable and non-separable		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
past participles		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
the imperative		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
the conditional		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>verb-noun agreement</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>position of the verb</i>			
in main clauses		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
in subclauses		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
in questions		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>conjunction</i> (eg 'wenn/als')			<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>			
• <i>the difference between preposition, conjunction and adverbial</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>the passive</i> (ie the use of 'werden')		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>'Umlaute'</i> on			
adjectives		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
nouns		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
verbs		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>negation</i>			
the difference between 'nicht' and 'kein'		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
position of 'nicht' in a sentence		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. When explaining German grammar, do you use

- | | Yes | No |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. a grammar book | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. the grammar section in the text book | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. your own notes/handouts? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If the answer to a. or b. above is yes, please state which book(s) you are using:

6. Do you recommend a reference book for German grammar? Yes No

If the answer is yes, please state which book(s) you recommend:

7. Do you

- a. set time aside for explicit grammar teaching
- b. deal with a point of grammar as it arises, eg in the context of a reading comprehension or a piece of writing
- c. do both a. and b. ?

If you set time aside please indicate how much time.

- Up to 5 minutes per item
- Up to 10 minutes per item
- Up to 15 minutes per item
- More than 15 minutes per item

(Please specify: _____)

8. Do you

- present students with a new grammar rule yourself
- let students figure out a new rule by themselves
- do a mixture of the above two ?

9. Do you do follow-up grammar exercises? Yes No

If the answer is yes, do you do these exercises

in class

as part of homework

both in class and as part of homework?

How much time do you spend on follow-up exercises?

up to 10 minutes per new rule

up to 20 minutes per new rule

more than 20 minutes

Other (please specify): _____

10. Do you explain grammar

through English

through Irish

through German

through a combination of the languages listed above?

11. To what extent do you use grammar terminology? Please tick.

I use grammar terminology

constantly

frequently

rarely

never

12. Please state which attitude the majority of your students display towards German grammar.

They find it

boring

interesting

a necessary evil

challenging

fairly easy

difficult

very difficult

impossible

13. a. Please indicate the degree of coverage of the following points of grammar you yourself give using the scale below or the degree you expect those items to have been covered previously using the same scale.

SCALE: 1= 2= 3= 4= 5=
 no superficial fairly thorough very
 coverage coverage thorough coverage thorough
 at all coverage coverage coverage coverage

Cover yourself

Expect students to have covered
in previous classes

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A. <i>gender of nouns</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B. <i>the cases</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C. <i>word formation</i> | | |
| 1. adjectival endings | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. comparative/superlative | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. strong/weak nouns | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. plural of nouns | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D. <i>pronouns</i> | | |
| 1. personal | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. possessive | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. relative | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. interrogative | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| E. <i>verb formation (for tense formation see F.)</i> | | |
| 1. regular | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. irregular | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. reflexive | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. separable and non-separable | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. auxiliary | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. modal | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. formation of the imperative | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. formation of the conditional | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| F. <i>tense formation</i> | | |
| • present tense | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • preterite | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • present perfect | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • pluperfect | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • future | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| G. <i>position of the verb</i> | | |
| 1. in main clauses | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. in subclauses | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. in questions | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| H. <i>Word order (Time, Manner, Place)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I. <i>conjunctions</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| J. <i>prepositions</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| K. <i>negation</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| L. <i>the passive</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

b. Using the list above, please indicate the three areas that in your experience students find most difficult as well as the three they find easiest.

Most difficult

1.

2.

3.

Easiest

1.

2.

3.

13. If you are willing to discuss your answers to this questionnaire or any other matters pertaining to the subject with me please tick the box.

Thank you very much for your co-operation.

Appendix B

Second level teachers' questionnaire, October 1997
(regarding 1995 syllabus)

9. What is the perception of German among your Leaving Certificate students? Please tick.

- a. German is as difficult as other modern languages
- b. German is more difficult than other modern languages
- c. German is less difficult than other modern languages

10. Please state how important in your grammar teaching to Higher Level Leaving Certificate students the following grammatical items are:

Item	very important	important	fairly important	not so important
verb formation				
tense formation				
subject-verb agreement				
the most commonly used verbs and their cases				
prepositions and their cases				
gender of the most commonly used nouns				
plurals of the most commonly used nouns				
capital letters on nouns				
declension of articles				
declension of pronouns				
adjectival endings				
Umlaute				
word order				

11. Do you believe that a student can get an A or a B1 or 2 in the Leaving Certificate Higher level without having a good knowledge of the basics of German grammar (eg without being able to use the items under 10. correctly in most instances)?

yes no

12. a. How would you rate the following essay by a Leaving Certificate Higher level student? Please circle your answer.

Aufsatz: *Meine Zeit in der Schule und meine Erwartungen an die Universität*

Seit 5 Jahre habe ich Deutsch in die Schule gelernt und ich muß ehrlich zugeben, daß ich das Fach in die Schule ganz prima fände. Ich habe mich immer sehr gut mit meine Lehrerinnen und die andere Studentin verstanden und obwohl wir hätten viele Arbeit, wir hätten viel Spaß gemacht auch. Ich habe ein Brieffreundin in Gelsenkirchen, eine Stadt im "Ruhrpott", die mir jedes Monat ein langer Brief geschrieben hat. Für das Zeit an die Universität ich hoffe, einen guten Zeit ins dritte Jahr zu haben, wann ich im Ausland fahre. Ich freue mich sehr darauf, fremden Kulture und verschiedenen Leuten kennenlernen. Hoffentlich klappt alles. Drück mir die Daumen!

very good good fairly good fairly poor poor

b. If this were an essay by one of your Leaving Certificate students which mistakes would you bring to his/her attention? Please underline those mistakes.

13. Which aspect in the transition from second to third level German do you believe is the single most difficult aspect with which students are asked to cope?

Thank you very much for your co-operation!

Appendix C

Student questionnaire, October 1995

The following questionnaire is designed to provide the German Language Course co-ordinator with information that will help to facilitate the transition from secondary school to university. It is important that you take time in answering all questions and ask for clarification if needed.

The information given in this questionnaire will be used for Educational Research purposes only. At no time will your name be disclosed to a third party.

Name: _____

For which DCU course are you enrolled? ACL 1 AL 1 IML 1

Which secondary school did you attend? _____

With questions 1 and 2 we would like to find out about your learning experience with German.

1. Please indicate, using the scale from 1 to 5 below, the degree of emphasis which was put on the following aspects of language learning at your secondary school.

SCALE:	1= no emphasis at all 2= little emphasis 3= fairly strong emphasis 4= strong emphasis 5= very strong emphasis
---------------	---

listening

reading

writing

speaking

grammar

pronunciation

vocabulary learning

2.a. Did you use a grammar book for your German language class?

Yes No

If the answer is yes, please state the name of the book(s).

b. Did you find this book/these books useful? Yes No

Please give reasons for your answer.

With questions 3 and 4 we would like to find out how you think German and English compare with one another.

3. German is often said to be quite a difficult language to learn. Do you agree with this? What do you find particularly difficult about German? What do you find easy?

4. As regards vocabulary, grammar, spelling, pronunciation and other aspects of language learning, what features do English and German share and where do they differ radically?

Shared features:

Differing features:

With questions 5 and 6 we would like to find out what you think about German grammar learning.

5. Please indicate, using the a scale from 1 to 5 below, whether you agree or disagree with the following statements:

SCALE:	1= strongly disagree 2= disagree 3= neither agree nor disagree 4= agree 5= strongly agree
---------------	---

- I enjoy learning languages
- I enjoy learning German
- I find German grammar interesting
- (German) grammar is a necessary evil
- I find German grammar fairly easy
- I find German grammar impossible to learn
- The best way to learn a language is to learn the grammar first. The rest will follow automatically
- Unless you are good at grammar you will never be good at the language
- The best way to learn grammar is to be presented with a rule followed by exercises
- The best way to learn grammar is to figure out a rule for oneself, verify it and then do exercises
- Grammar should be taught explicitly in a grammar class
 - at secondary level
 - at third level
- All grammar should be explained through English or Irish
- Students should be made familiar with grammar terminology
- Grammar should be taught in the context of a listening or reading comprehension, when speaking or writing the language but not in a grammar class
- I do not want to learn grammar, I just want to be able to communicate in German
- Grammatical correctness is not as important as being able to speak and write fluently
- I want to be corrected when making a mistake in my written German
- I want to be corrected when making a mistake speaking German

6. Language learners (in any foreign language) often remark that they know a particular rule by heart but that when it comes to applying the rule in a 'non-grammar' context (e.g. an essay) the rule does not seem to present in their minds. Can you confirm this from your own experience and if so, have you any explanation as to why this might be the case?

With questions 7 to 9 we would like to see how familiar you are with grammatical terminology.

7. This question concerns terminology that you may have come across in any of your language classes, be it English, Irish, German or any other.

Please give definitions of the following grammar terms and give one example for each item in either English or German.

1. a verb:

2. an auxiliary verb:

3. a modal verb:

4. the imperative:

5. a past participle:

6. a noun:

7. a personal pronoun:

8. an adjective:

9. a conjunction:

10. a preposition:

11. an adverb:

12. a subject:

13. an object:

14. a subclause:

8. Please read the following text and provide the grammatical terms for the words that are underlined.

Rotkäppchen (nach James Thurber)

Eines schönen Nachmittags wartete ein wilder¹ Wolf in einem finsternen Wald darauf, daß ein² kleines Mädchen mit einem großen Korb voll mit vielen Lebensmitteln für seine Großmutter³ vorbeikommen würde. Endlich kam⁴ auch das kleine Mädchen und der⁵ böse Wolf fragte es⁶: "Bringst du diesen⁷ herrlichen Korb zu deiner⁸ lieben Großmutter?" Das kleine Mädchen sagte ja, und⁹ der Wolf fragte mit¹⁰ einer weichen Stimme, wo denn die liebe Großmutter wohnt. Das kleine Mädchen hat¹¹ es ihm gesagt¹² und er ist schnell¹³ in den tiefen Wald gelaufen. Als¹⁴ das Mädchen die Tür des alten Hauses seiner Großmutter öffnete, sah es jemanden in einer weißen Nachthaube im großen Bett¹⁵ liegen. Das Mädchen¹⁶ war noch keine 3 Schritte auf das Bett zugegangen¹⁷, da sah es, daß nicht seine alte Großmutter, sondern der böse Wolf darin lag, denn selbst in einer weißen Nachthaube sieht ein böser Wolf¹⁸ einer Großmutter nicht ähnlicher als der Metro-Goldwyn-Löwe dem Präsidenten der Vereinigten Staaten. Deshalb nahm das kleine Mädchen einen schweren Revolver, den¹⁹ es immer dabei hatte, um sich²⁰ sicherer zu fühlen, aus seinem Korb und schoß den bösen Wolf tot.

Moral: Es ist heutzutage nicht mehr so leicht wie früher, einem kleinen Mädchen etwas vorzumachen.

(jemandem etwas vormachen - to fool someone)

- 1= _____ 11= _____
 2= _____ 12= _____
 3= _____ 13= _____
 4= _____ 14= _____
 5= _____ 15= _____
 6= _____ 16= _____
 7= _____ 17= _____
 8= _____ 18= _____
 9= _____ 19= _____
 10= _____ 20= _____

9. Have another look at the text and answer the questions below.

Eines schönen Nachmittags **wartete**^I ein wilder Wolf in einem finsternen Wald darauf, daß *ein kleines Mädchen*^I mit einem großen Korb voll mit vielen Lebensmitteln für seine Großmutter vorbeikommen **würde**^{II}. Endlich kam auch das kleine Mädchen, und der böse Wolf **fragte**^{III}. es: " **Bringst**^{IV} du *diesen herrlichen Korb*² zu deiner lieben Großmutter?" Das kleine Mädchen sagte ja, und der Wolf fragte es mit einer weichen Stimme, wo denn die liebe Großmutter wohnt. Das kleine Mädchen sagte es *ihm*³. und er lief schnell *in den tiefen Wald*⁴. Als das Mädchen die Tür des alten Hauses *seiner Großmutter*⁵. **öffnete**^V, sah es jemanden in einer weißen Nachthaube im großen Bett liegen. Das Mädchen war noch keine 3 Schritte auf das große Bett zugegangen, da **sah**^{VI}. es, daß nicht seine alte Großmutter, sondern der böse Wolf darin lag, denn selbst in einer weißen Nachthaube **sieht**^{VII}. ein böser Wolf einer Großmutter nicht ähnlicher als der Metro-Goldwyn-Löwe dem Präsidenten der Vereinigten Staaten. Deshalb **nahm**^{VIII}. das kleine Mädchen einen schweren Revolver *aus seinem Korb*⁶. und schoß den bösen Wolf tot.

a. Cases

Please state for each of the following items what case they are and why this particular case has been used.

1. *ein kleines Mädchen*
2. *diesen herrlichen Korb*
3. *ihm*
4. *in den tiefen Wald*
5. *seiner Großmutter*
6. *aus seinem Korb*

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

b. Word order

Please state why the following verbs appear in their particular place in the sentences above.

I. wartete: _____

II. würde: _____

III. fragte: _____

IV. bringst: _____

VI. sah: _____

VII. sieht: _____

VIII. nahm: _____

With question 10 we would like to see if you can identify and explain certain grammatical mistakes.

Please identify any grammar mistakes in the **first paragraph** of the text below by underlining them. Then have a look at the **second paragraph** and give reasons as to why the words that are underlined constitute a mistake.

Die liebe Familie

Man kann sich seine Familie leider nicht auszusuchen. Wir haben alle schon erlebt, daß unsere Familie uns furchtbar auf die Nerven gehen. Wie oft hat jeder schon gehören: "Du mußt nicht ausgehen, bis du hast deine Hausaufgaben gemacht!" Oder: "Du werdest nie eine gute Beruf erlernen!" Oder: "Andere Eltern wurden nicht so tolerant sein wie wir!" Den Streß am größten gibt es immer morgens bevor der Schule.

Ich finde, es müßte ein Gesetz geben, der¹ sagt, daß jede Person sich seine² Eltern aussuchen kann. Wenn einem solchen³ Gesetz existierte, es könnte⁴ natürlich passieren, daß einige Menschen, die bei die andere⁵ nicht sehr beliebt sind, für immer und ewig bleiben⁶ allein. Das wäre auch nicht richtig. Es wird schon eine guter⁷ Grund dafür geben, daß die Dinge so sind, wie sie sind.

Mistake No.:

Reason why this is a mistake:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

Last but not least: If you were put in charge of organising German grammar learning (at both secondary and third level), what would your recommendations/suggestions be? (Answers such as 'Scrap it altogether' will not be accepted ...)

Thank you very much for your co-operation.

Appendix D

Third level lecturers' questionnaire, October 1997

The answers given in this questionnaire will be used for Educational research purposes only.
Your name will not be disclosed.

Name:

Please feel free to comment on anything that you would like to expand on.

1.a. Please indicate on the scale below the degree of emphasis which you put on the following aspects of German language learning in your First Year Language classes:

	no emphasis at all	little emphasis	fairly strong emphasis	strong emphasis	very strong emphasis
reading	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
listening	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
writing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
speaking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
grammar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
vocabulary acquisition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
pronunciation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. What do you think should be the overall learning outcomes of the First Year German language course (i.e. what should students be able to do by the end of Year One)?

3. As regards the language proficiency of First Year language students, please indicate on the scale below how important an aim you consider grammatical accuracy compared to overall linguistic fluency?

	very important	important	fairly important	of little importance	of no importance whatsoever
Grammatical accuracy is	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. What is your approach regarding the correction of errors (both written and oral)?
Please tick the appropriate box.

a. *written*

I correct

all errors	most errors	the most blatant errors	very few errors	no errors
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

b. *oral*

I correct

all	most	the most blatant	very few	none
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. What do you consider a serious grammatical mistake from a First Year student? Please tick.

<u>Type of error:</u>	<i>Serious mistake?</i>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
• <i>gender of nouns</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>declension of nouns</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>valency</i>			
of nouns		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
adjectives		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
verbs		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>government of prepositions</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>adjectival endings</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>pronouns</i>			
personal		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
possessive		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
reflexive		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
interrogative		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>formation of</i>			
regular verbs		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
irregular verbs		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
modal verbs		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
auxiliary		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
separable and non-separable		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
past participles		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
the imperative		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
the conditional		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>verb-noun agreement</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>position of the verb</i>			
in main clauses		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
in subclauses		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
in questions		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>conjunction (eg 'wenn/als')</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>the difference between preposition, conjunction and adverbial</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>the passive (ie the use of 'werden')</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>'Umlaute' on</i>			
adjectives		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
nouns		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
verbs		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• <i>negation</i>			
the difference between 'nicht' and 'kein'		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
position of 'nicht' in a sentence		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Do you use a grammar book to explain German grammar? Yes No

If the answer is yes, please state which one(s): _____

7. Do you

- a. set time aside for explicit grammar teaching
- b. deal with a point of grammar as it arises, eg in the context of a reading comprehension or a piece of writing
- c. do both a. and b. ?

If you set time aside please indicate how much time.

- Up to 5 minutes per item
- Up to 10 minutes per item
- Up to 15 minutes per item
- More than 15 minutes per item

(Please specify: _____)

8. Do you

- present students with a new grammar rule yourself
- let students figure out a new rule by themselves
- do a mixture of the above two ?

9. Do you do follow-up grammar exercises? Yes No

If the answer is yes, do you do these exercises

- in class
- as part of homework
- both in class and as part of homework?

How much time do you spend on follow-up exercises?

- up to 10 minutes per new rule
- up to 20 minutes per new rule
- more than 20 minutes

Other (please specify): _____

10. Do you explain grammar

- through English
- through Irish
- through German
- through a combination of the languages listed above?

11. To what extent do you use grammar terminology? Please tick.

I use grammar terminology

- | | |
|------------|--------------------------|
| constantly | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| frequently | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| rarely | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| never | <input type="checkbox"/> |

12. Please state which attitude the majority of your students display towards German grammar.

They find it

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| boring | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| interesting | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| a necessary evil | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| challenging | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| fairly easy | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| difficult | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| very difficult | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| impossible | <input type="checkbox"/> |

13. Please indicate the degree of coverage of the following points of grammar you yourself give using the scale below **or** the degree you expect those items to have been covered at secondary level using the same scale.

SCALE:	1= no coverage at all	2= superficial coverage	3= fairly thorough coverage	4= thorough coverage	5= very thorough coverage
---------------	--------------------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------------------------	----------------------------	------------------------------------

Cover yourself

Expect students to have covered
at secondary level

A. <i>gender of nouns</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. <i>the cases</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. <i>word formation</i>		
1. adjectival endings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. comparative/superlative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. strong/weak nouns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. plural of nouns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D. <i>pronouns</i>		
1. personal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. possessive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. relative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. interrogative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E. <i>verb formation</i>		
1. regular	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. irregular	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. reflexive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. separable and non-separable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. auxiliary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. modal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. formation of the imperative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. formation of the conditional	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F. <i>position of the verb</i>		
1. in main clauses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. in subclauses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. in questions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G. <i>conjunctions</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
H. <i>prepositions</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I. <i>adverbials</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
J. <i>the difference between G, H and I</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
K. <i>tense formation</i>		
• present tense	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• preterite	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• present perfect	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• pluperfect	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• future	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
L. <i>negation</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M. <i>the passive</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. What assistance do you offer weak disinterested students with regard to the studying of German grammar?

15. If you are willing to discuss your answers to this questionnaire or any other matters pertaining to the subject with me please tick the box.

Thank you very much for your co-operation.

Appendix E

Curriculum for the German grammar class

1. Verbal phrase - part one:

- 1.1 Subject-verb agreement
- 1.2 Verb inflection, tense formation and use of the tenses
- 1.3 Some special verbs
- 1.4 Mood
- 1.5 Position of the verb in the sentence- verbal bracket
- 1.6 Valency of the verb

Introduction

Brainstorming session - students are asked what they know about German verbs. Concepts such as regular and irregular verbs, separable verbs, modals etc. will be mentioned which can be put into the order in which they will be covered in the coming sessions. All of the terminology for the verbal phrase (cf. Table 6.1 above) will be introduced this way.

Main aspects to be pointed out/action:

1. The starting point for the grammar class are words/groups of words and how they are combined to make up sentences. The *verb* is the pivotal element in the sentence by virtue of, firstly, its position and, secondly, determining which elements are required. It is always the main verb which determines the necessary elements (e.g. in the sentence 'ich habe ihn gesehen' it is the verb 'sehen' that decides that the

accusative is required here, not the verb 'haben'). Possibly use the analogy of the bunch of keys, presented in Tesniere, 1982: 129¹.

2. Some facts:

- Every sentence has to have a verb - with the obvious exception of utterances such as 'danke', 'bitte', 'ja', 'nein'.
- Approximately 99% of sentences also have a subject (two of the exceptions being rare constructions such as 'mich friert' and passive constructions such as 'hier wird gearbeitet').
- Some verbs take one object, others two (eg 'ich habe einen CD Spieler gewonnen' - 'sie hat ihm den Schlüssel bereits gegeben').
- Some verbs require other elements - some examples: 'fahren' requires a complement of direction, e.g. 'wir sind schnell in die Stadt gefahren'; 'stehen' and 'liegen' require a complement of place, e.g. 'das Buch liegt auf dem Sofa'; 'sein', 'werden' and 'bleiben' require a subject complement, e.g.: 'er wird sicher ein guter Vater'.

The verb is at the heart of every sentence - (almost) every sentence has one, therefore it makes sense to start analysing linguistic features by concentrating on the verb first; another reason for looking at the verb first is that it is easy to identify.

1.1 Subject-verb agreement

N.B. This feature accounts for a significant number of errors and merits some close attention in terms of both explanation, practice and constant pointing out.

Main aspects to be pointed out/action:

1. There has to be agreement between the verb and the subject in terms of person (1st, 2nd and 3rd) and number (singular and plural), e.g. 'ich mache', 'die Häuser sind', 'das Spiel beginnt'.
2. Frequent errors include the use of collective nouns such as 'die Familie', 'die Jugend', 'die Polizei' as well as 'die Mehrheit der jungen Leute' in combination with a plural noun - collective nouns in German are followed by a singular verb, e.g. 'die Familie macht nicht mit' and 'die Jugend von heute ist faul'.
3. The difference between finite and non-finite verbs. Unlike finite verbs, non-finite verb forms (i.e. infinitive and participles) do not change².

1.2 Verb inflection, tense formation and use of the tenses

¹ Quoting Fourquet, Tesniere explains how the centre key ring in a bunch of keys could be used to explain the central position of the main verb on which all other elements are dependent.

² Unless, obviously, they are used as adjectives preceding a noun.

Main aspects to be pointed out/action:

1. Verb formation: with regard to most verbs, four forms must be known in order to conjugate all possible verb forms - *the infinitive, 3rd person singular present tense, 3rd person singular preterite and past participle* (cf. Engel, 1988). From now on there will be no more strong verbs - all new verbs in German are weak verbs, e.g. 'surfen', 'joggen', 'emailen', 'recyclen/recyceln' etc..

2. Tense formation:

- There are two simple tenses, the *present* and the *preterite*, and four complex ones: the *perfect*, the *pluperfect*, the *future* and the *future perfect*; conjugate some strong verbs in all tenses.
- The future tense is formed by using a form of *werden*, not *wollen*, as many students seem to think (more on the conjugation of *werden* below).
- Because of the well-known problems that students have with the formation of the *perfect* tense and *past participles*, special attention has to be paid to this particular grammatical item (cf. Hammer's German Grammar and Usage, 1991). The formation of regular verbs, including verbs ending in '-ieren' needs to be discussed. Provide students with a list of irregular verbs based on the one presented in 'Grammatik zum Üben', pp 210-216 and inform them that these are the irregular verbs which they are expected to use correctly by the end of semester two.
- *haben* or *sein* in the perfect? *sein* is used with verbs of movement ('ich bin selbst gefahren', 'sie sind uns am Hafen begegnet'), verbs expressing a change of state ('wir sind schon um fünf Uhr aufgewacht'; likewise 'einschlafen', 'passieren/geschehen/zustoßen'), and with 'bleiben', 'sein', 'werden'. There are a number of verbs which can take both *sein* and *haben*, e.g. the verb 'fahren': *haben* is used when there is a direct object, e.g. 'ich habe das Auto selbst gefahren' (cf. German Elementary Grammar, p. 27, for a list of these verbs).

3. The use of tenses (cf. Hammer's German Grammar and Usage, 1991: 278-291)

- According to Hammer's German Grammar and Usage, the *present tense* is used to refer to present, habitual or 'timeless' actions, to the future and sometimes to the past ('narrative present'), e.g. 'ich koche gerade Kaffee', 'der Wecker klingelt jeden Morgen um 6 Uhr', 'Deutschland liegt in der Mitte Europas', 'morgen gibt es Fisch'; invent a short story to illustrate the narrative past.
- As regards the difference between the *preterite* and the *perfect tense*, the latter is the preferred tense for referring to actions the effect of which is still felt in the present, e.g. 'es hat heute nacht geschneit' and 'sie hat sich das Bein gebrochen'. The past tense is more commonly used when actions are reported that belong to the past and where there is little or no reference to the present, e.g. 'ich hatte Angst und deswegen ging ich immer schneller'. Other than that, the difference is mainly one of written versus spoken language use.
- The *present tense*, and not the *perfect*, is normally used when referring to an action which started at some point in the past and is still going on in the present ("up-to-now sentences", p. 279), e.g. 'ich

lerne seit 5 Jahren Deutsch' or 'sie wohnen seit 10 Monaten dort'. However, the perfect is used in negative statements such as 'ich habe ihn seit Jahren nicht gesehen'.

- The *pluperfect* is used for actions that happened prior to other actions in the past; it is often accompanied by the conjunction 'nachdem', e.g. 'nachdem wir den Abwasch gemacht hatten, durften wir rausgehen'. Unlike Hiberno-English, the pluperfect is used extensively in German.
- The *future* is hardly ever used to refer to future events (the *present* is used instead) - it is most likely to be used in order to convey the concept of intention or prediction, e.g. 'der Zug wird wie immer Verspätung haben'.

1.3 Some special verbs

Main aspects to be pointed out/action:

1. *haben* and *sein* as auxiliaries and as full verbs (cf. German Elementary Grammar, p. 30-33)

2. *werden* as an auxiliary for the formation of the future tense and for assumptions in the past, present and future; *werden* as a full verb in the present, preterite, perfect and pluperfect (German Elementary Grammar, p. 40/41) (special attention has to be paid to this verb because students constantly confuse it with forms such as 'wäre' etc.); *werden* as an auxiliary to form the passive will be covered under point 6.1 below, 'The passive'.

3. *Modal verbs* - wollen, dürfen, können, sollen, müssen, mögen; the "semi-auxiliary" (nicht/nur) brauchen (Hammer's German Grammar and Usage, p. 252).

- The 3rd person singular is identical with the 1st person singular, e.g. 'ich darf - sie darf'.
- Their formation in connection with another verb in the present, preterite and perfect³, e.g. 'wir müssen mitgehen', 'wir mußten mitgehen', 'wir haben mitgehen müssen' (not 'gemußt').
- Modals can also be used as full verbs - discuss their use and their formation in the perfect tense ('gewollt', 'gesollt', 'gekonnt' etc., e.g. 'Als Kind mußte ich immer um 7 Uhr ins Bett. - Ach, das habe ich nie gemußt. or 'Du wolltest doch Tee, oder? - Nein, ich habe Kaffee gewollt'. It is always correct to use a modal verb in connection with another verb but a modal verb often cannot be used on its own, e.g. 'Elke kann Chinesisch' vs. '~~kannst du mir das Salz?~~' (cf. German Elementary Grammar, p. 40 and Hammer's German Grammar and Usage, p. 330/331).
- No *zu* with modal verbs (N.B. this is a very common source of error); one exception to this rule is the semi-auxiliary (*nicht/nur*) *brauchen*.
- The difference between *sollen* and *sollten* - the latter corresponds to the English 'should'.

4. Separable and non-separable verbs (cf. German Elementary Grammar p.27-29 for the 3 categories; cf. also Hammer's German Grammar and Usage, p. 495ff on the meaning of prefixes; cf. Grammatik mit Sinn und Verstand, p.47ff for a list of basic verbs and their most common prefixes). The formation of

³ Only briefly touch upon the use of the double infinitive - it will be dealt with in more detail under verbal phrase, part II.

separable verbs in infinitive clauses, e.g. 'wir haben nicht vor, heute abend auszugehen'; the past participles of separable verbs, 'endlich habe ich einmal ausgeschlafen'. Point out the importance of stress, e.g. 'übersetzen' (past participle: 'übersetzt' - to translate) and 'übersetzen' (past participle: 'übergesetzt' - to cross a river).

5. The two verbs *kennen* and *wissen* (cf. German Elementary Grammar, p. 42-45 on their formation and use).

1.4 Mood - part I

Main aspects to be pointed out/action:

1. Apart from the *indicative*, there are two other moods, the *subjunctive* and the *imperative*. Use of these depends on whether what is to be expressed is a fact (in which case the indicative is used, e.g. 'ich gehe zum Arzt'), a possibility (subjunctive, e.g. 'ich könnte zum Arzt gehen') or an order (imperative, e.g., 'geh zum Arzt!').

2. Formation and use of the *imperative* (German Elementary Grammar, p. 59/60).

3. The *subjunctive*:

- The 'present' conditional of modal verbs as well as the verbs *haben*, *sein* and *werden*; all other verbs are to be circumscribed using a form of *würde*, e.g. 'sie würde am liebsten ins Theater gehen'⁴.
- *Indirect speech*: students are not required to actively use the subjunctive in indirect speech until the third semester but they should be alerted to the existence of the subjunctive fairly early on. Students can be easily confused by text items such as: 'sie sagt, sie habe noch nichts von der Stadt gesehen', given that the form for the third person singular they would have learnt is: 'sie hat' and not 'sie habe'.

1.5 Position of the verb/verbal bracket (including conjunctions)

Main aspects to be pointed out/action:

1. There are three basic positions for the verb (cf. Hammer's German Grammar and Usage, p. 454/455):

- **Verb first place** = yes-no questions, e.g. 'regnet es?'; imperative, 'vergib das nicht!'; some subclauses without conjunction (e.g. conditional without *wenn*, as in 'kommt sie heute nicht, kommt sie morgen').
- **Verb second place** = main clauses, e.g. 'danach sprach keiner mehr'; clauses with coordinating conjunctions, e.g. 'aber wir wußten nichts davon'; w-questions, e.g. 'wann ist das denn passiert?'.
• **Verb final place** = subordinate clauses with a conjunction, e.g. 'ich habe gehört, daß das Essen dort nicht gut ist'.

2. Identification of main clause and subclause - which clause makes sense on its own and which does not. The different types of clauses (main clauses, subordinate clauses, infinitive clauses) as well as the role of

⁴ The conditional forms of all other verbs will not be introduced until semester three.

commas and punctuation will have to be dealt with in quite some detail because of their importance, firstly, for the word order and, secondly, because of their impact on valency (more below).

- The main coordinating and subordinating conjunctions (for an extensive list see German Elementary Grammar, p. 134-154; the 'modern' use of *weil* and *obwohl* in spoken German; include *um...zu* and *damit*). Go through both subclause and main clause to demonstrate the changes in the verb placement, e.g. 'obwohl der Plan nicht der beste war, wurde er dennoch angenommen'. Also, give examples of coordinating conjunctions after which the word order changes because another element is added: 'es regnete und natürlich hatte keiner Lust, zu Fuß zu laufen'. The difficulty with conjunctions is two-fold: with some, students are unsure about their effect on word order (especially *denn* and *da*⁵) and with others students know the rules and it is a matter of getting them to apply those rules consistently in free-style production (e.g. *weil*, *obwohl*, *daß* etc.).
- *Infinitive clauses*: verbs followed by an infinitive clause versus verbs which follow modal verbs - the use of *zu*, e.g. 'wir hofften, noch etwas länger bleiben zu können' vs. 'wir wollten gerne noch etwas länger bleiben'. Infinitive clauses are not usually enclosed (this is a major source of errors on word order): thus it is correct to say, for example, 'ich habe versprochen, meine Hausaufgaben heute abend zu machen' but not 'ich habe meine Hausaufgaben heute abend zu machen versprochen (cf. Hammer, p. 482 (b)).
- Punctuation, especially the use of commas (cf. German Elementary Grammar, p. 226-231 for the main rules regarding punctuation): commas are part of the grammar - unlike English, no comma is used after adverbials of time or place at the beginning of the sentence (e.g. 'um 6 Uhr am nächsten Morgen fuhr der Zug weiter').

1.6. Valency of the verb

Valency can be divided into morphosyntactic and semantic valency. As Fischer (1990) points out, for English native speakers learning German as their L2, the former is of more crucial relevance as it is in this area that the vast majority of errors are made. However, semantic valency must be indicated in cases of ambiguity between L1 and L2 (e.g. to eat - 'essen' and 'fressen')⁶. Both dative and accusative objects will also need to be given some semantic definition as a rough guideline for identification/comprehension purposes (see below), although this does not remove the necessity of noting down and learning the syntactic valency of each verb.

Subjects are not introduced as complements but as constituent parts of 99% of German phrases. Phrases without a subject such as 'mich friert' and passive construction such as 'hier wird gearbeitet' or 'ihm wurde sofort geholfen' are introduced as exceptions to the rule. As Brons-Albert (1990) points out, although

⁵ *da* constitutes a particular difficulty since it is used as a conjunction as well as an adverbial of time and place - the difference between 'da' as a conjunction and 'da' as an adverbial should be explained since it has repercussions on word order

⁶ For a detailed discussion of semantic valency see Helbig, 1982 and Müller-Küppers, 1991.

there are no semantic or pragmatic reasons to attribute a special role to the subject⁷, there is one strong syntactic argument in its favour and that is the agreement between it and the verb.

Main aspects to be pointed out/action:

1. Always note valency (cf. Rall et al., 1977: 83ff for examples⁸) when writing down new structures. All valency indications should be accompanied by examples, e.g. 'sie hat mir einen Hund geschenkt'.
2. Apart from the verb and the subject, there are certain other elements that, depending on the verb, could be obligatory - without them the sentence would be grammatically incomplete or incorrect. These elements are called **complements**. They are not to be confused with **adverbials/adverbs** which merely give additional semantic information but are not strictly necessary in the grammatical sense (e.g. in the clause 'er verließ am frühen Morgen das Haus', 'das Haus' is a complement without which the sentence would be grammatically incomplete, while 'am frühen Morgen' provides vital additional information but could be left out grammatically).
3. Reiterate that it is always the main verb and not the auxiliary or the modal verb which determines the valency, e.g. in the clause 'die Kinder haben dem alten Mann geholfen', it is 'helfen' that decides that a dative object is required - the verb 'haben' has no effect on valency.
4. The following are the most basic types of complements (loosely based on German Elementary Grammar, p. 11-12):

1. S + V, e.g. 'Das Konzert beginnt'.
2. S + V + Subject Complement⁹, e.g. 'Sigrid wird Fußballspielerin'. 'Hermann ist ein ausgezeichneter Student'. 'Susie und Adelheid werden schnell rot'. 'Richard ist wie ein Vater zu ihm'. The main verbs in this category are: *sein, bleiben, werden, scheinen, gelten als* - nouns following these verbs are always in the nominative case. Put differently, these verbs require two nominatives.
3. S + V + Accusative Object, e.g. 'Sie hat zwei Schwestern'.
4. S + V + Dative Object, e.g. 'Das Stück hat mir bestens gefallen'.
5. S + V + Genitive Object, e.g. 'Sie beschuldigten die Täter eines schlimmen Verbrechens'.
6. S + V + Prepositional Object, e.g. 'Er wartet auf seine Freunde'.
7. S + V + Direction Complement, e.g. 'Sie geht in die Stadt'.
8. S + V + Place Complement, e.g. Das Bild hängt an der Wand'.

5. Discuss in some detail the function, distribution and the frequency of cases (leaving aside prepositions for the moment):

⁷ Quoting Engel (1972), she states that since the subject introduces the topic in no more than 60% of sentences, subject and topic cannot be equated. Similarly, as Engel (1988) observes, there are sufficient exceptions to the rule of thumb that the subject equals the agent to force an abandonment of that rule.

⁸ For example, 'sich freuen auf + A'; 'geben + dat + acc'; 'schenken (symbol for human being) D (symbol for object) A'; j-m etwas (A) verpassen.

⁹ There are only few verbs requiring an *object complement*, one being the verb *nennen*, e.g. 'Sie nannte ihn einen Lügner'.

- The *nominative* - the most basic form, the form that is entered in dictionaries. It is used to express the subject; the subject has to agree with the finite verb, e.g. 'die Kinder meiner Schwester benehmen sich unmöglich'. A subject can be very long and can consist of an entire clause¹⁰.
- The *accusative* - expresses the idea of 'goal', 'target' or 'object'; if there is only one object in sentence this is usually it (e.g. 'die Götter bestrafte ihn schwer').
- The *dative* - expresses the idea of a 'partner' to whom or for whom something is done - this partner does not have to be a human being but often is. The dative is frequently used in combination with the accusative, e.g. 'sie schenken ihm einen neuen Computer'.
- The *genitive* - it is most frequently used to denote possession and is the equivalent of the English 'of', e.g. das Haus *meiner Schwester*.
- Students should abandon the notions of 'direct' and 'indirect' object and refer to these objects by case instead. 'Direct/indirect' is usually only used when there are two objects in a sentence but even then identification along the direct/indirect paradigm may be difficult because the object might be in the genitive, e.g. 'der Richter beschuldigte ihn eines schweren Verbrechens'; also, some verbs that take a direct object in English, take an 'indirect' object in German, e.g. 'danken' and 'helfen'.
- Discuss some common verbs and their valency.

6. How to look up the valency of verbs in a dictionary, using one English-German (Collins) and one all-German dictionary (Langenscheidts Fremdwörterbuch): verbs requiring an accusative object are often marked v. t. = transitive verb while other verbs are marked in the dictionary as v. i. = intransitive verb, meaning they do not take an accusative object. Alternatively, verbs might be marked as *j-n* (for verbs taking the accusative) or *j-m* (for verbs taking the dative) or *reflexive*.

6. Once the concept of valency has been introduced, it needs to be emphasised again and again - explaining it once will not be sufficient.

2. Noun phrase

Introduction: see introduction for verbal phrase.

2.1 Definition of nouns; gender and number of nouns

2.2 Declension of nouns and determiners; use of determiners

2.3 Pronouns

2.4 Adjectives and adverbs

2.5 Comparison of adjectives and superlatives

2.6 Formation of nouns and adjectives

¹⁰ English knows long subjects as well, e.g. 'The seemingly impossibility of finding a solution to one of the most daunting tasks to have faced the country and which had already defeated the minds of some of the best people in government was enough to depress even the most optimistic'.

2.1 Definition of nouns: gender and number of nouns

Main aspects to be pointed out/action:

1. Definition of a noun: a word is a noun if it can take an article (*der, die, das*) - all nouns take capital letters, e.g. 'der Gedanke', 'die Meinung', 'das Glück'.
2. Very few nouns have a natural gender (e.g. 'die Frau' and 'der Mann', but: 'das Mädchen') - most genders are completely arbitrary (e.g. 'der Palast', 'die Villa', 'das Haus'; 'der Löffel', 'die Gabel', 'das Messer'). Gender and number of nouns therefore have to be learnt with the noun¹¹. Point out groups of words with a particular gender (e.g. days of the week, the months of the year and the seasons are always masculine, as are cars, e.g. 'der Juli', 'der Opel'; trees, numbers, ships and planes are feminine, e.g. 'die Eiche', 'die drei', 'die Titanic', 'die Boing 747'). Only introduce one or two of the categorical rules regarding gender¹², e.g. *-chen* always indicates a neuter noun, e.g. 'das Mädchen'; *-ismus* indicates that the noun is masculine, e.g. *der Kapitalismus* while *heit/keit, ung* indicate a feminine noun, e.g. 'die Freiheit', 'die Gemütlichkeit', 'die Zeitung'. Some nouns have two genders (e.g. 'der/das Pony', 'der/die Leiter', 'der/das Teil', 'der/die Mark', 'das/die Steuer') and a few even three ('der/das/die Band'), notwithstanding regional variations.

2.2 Declension and use of determiners

While the basic function of cases was introduced under *valency*, this point focuses on aspects of *declension* of both nouns and determiners.

Main aspects to be pointed out/action:

1. In English, the function of nouns can only be expressed with the help of word order or prepositions. Unlike English, German can also make use of *cases* (English only uses cases for pronouns, such as *him/his*). In German, if a noun is accompanied by an article or an adjective, the ending of either tells us the case of the noun. The placement of many (not all) of the elements is a question of emphasis, not of grammatical accuracy¹³. The existence of a case system allows for more flexibility and means that many elements can appear in various places in the sentence. This is why it is so important to know the gender and declension of articles, nouns and adjectives. For example, the sentence 'ich schenke meinem Bruder zu Weihnachten einen Pullover' can be rendered in a number of different ways, such as 'meinem Bruder schenke ich zu Weihnachten einen Pullover' (emphasising that it is the brother who is given a jumper, not

¹¹ Cf. Engel, 1988 and Götze, 1996

¹² Teachers were to be advised that, alternatively, they could introduce the technique provided in the teachers' notes. This technique can be found in Sperber (1989: 152 - "aus ... wird...").

¹³ Cf. Hawkins, 1986.

the sister or parents etc.), or 'zu Weihnachten schenke ich meinem Bruder einen Pullover' (emphasising that it is for Christmas that the brother is given the jumper, not for his birthday).

2. The main determiners in the nominative case: the *definite article*, the *indefinite article*, the *negative article*, the *demonstrative article*, the *possessive article*¹⁴; the *interrogative article*.

3. Decline the most common nouns, such as 'Freund', 'Jahr', 'Student', 'Leute', 'Leben', 'Arbeit' with the *definite* and, in the singular, also with the *indefinite* article. Also decline one weak noun.

4. According to 'Hammer's German Grammar and Usage', English and German agree in 85% cases, as regards the use of definite, indefinite and no articles. Exceptions can be found in 'Hammer's German Grammar and Usage', p. 60. One exception which is not quoted in 'Hammer' but is a frequent source of error is 'die Universität ist ganz anders als die Schule' - learners often leave out the definite article in both instances. Proper names do not usually take an article; however, articles are used to refer to celebrities, e.g. 'die Callas', and, in the south of Germany in particular, in spoken German, e.g. 'die Sophie', 'der Hans' (cf. Weinrich, 1993).

5. The difference between *kein* and *nicht* (cf. Hammer's German Grammar and Usage, p. 108/109).

2.3 Pronouns

Main aspects to be pointed out/action. (for declension and use of all pronouns listed below, except *indefinites*, cf. German Elementary Grammar, p. 97 -120):

1. *Personal* pronouns - they do not just refer to persons but to objects, ideas etc., to whatever nouns they replace. It is for this reason that a pronoun must agree with the gender of the noun it replaces.

2. *Demonstrative* pronouns (2 types - 'der'¹⁵ and 'dieser').

3. *Interrogative* pronouns (including 'wer', 'wen' and 'was für ein' - in the latter, the case following the preposition 'für' is not determined by 'für' but by the accompanying verb).

There is no formal difference between *demonstrative* and *interrogative pronouns* and the respective determiners.

However, there is a formal difference between the pronoun and the determiner of the next two:

4. *Possessive* pronouns (e.g. 'das ist kein Spielzeug' - 'das ist keins')

5. *Indefinites* (Grammatik zum Üben, p. 152 - 155):

- (k)einer, (k)eine, (k)eins
- *man* (einen, einem) - used frequently in German in translation for the English *you* or *they*, as in 'they say it's not true' or 'as a politician you ought to be on your guard all the time'
- *jeder* vs *alle*, *alles* vs *alle* (singular vs. plural)
- *jemand* (often mixed up with 'jeder') vs *niemand*.

¹⁴ In groups with a French/German language combination, reference should be made to the difference between the two languages, seen as it is a major source of confusion (sa, son versus ihr etc./sein etc.)

¹⁵ *Der* is introduced as a demonstrative although there is an equally convincing case for introducing it as a rhematic personal pronoun, as done in Weinrich (1993).

6. *Reflexive* pronouns.

7. *Relative* pronouns (excluding relative pronouns with prepositions which will be covered under *Prepositional phrase* below):

- Their purpose is to give additional information about a noun.
- Unlike English, relative pronouns cannot be left out in German (e.g. 'The girl I saw yesterday' has to be rendered as 'das Mädchen, das ich gestern sah').
- *daß* is a conjunction, not a relative pronoun.
- Relative pronouns are determined by, firstly, *gender*, secondly, *number* and, thirdly, *case* demanded by the *verb in the relative clause*.
- Forms of pronouns: in most instances, relative pronouns are identical with the forms of the definite article. However, in the genitive and in the dative plural forms deviate.

Points 2.- 6. should be dealt with only briefly. The main points of focus are 1. and 7.

2.4 Declension of adjectives

Main aspects to be pointed out/action:

1. The difference between *adjectives* and *adverbs*: *Adjectives* provide more information about a noun or pronoun while *adverbs* tell more about adjectives, verbs, other adverbs or an entire sentence. Examples: Er ist ein wirklich (adverb) ruhiger (adjective) Mensch.

Er geht schnell (adverb).

Sie geht besonders schnell (both adverbs).

Adverbs are not declined; *adjectives* are declined when they appear in front of a noun and when the noun is implied (e.g. 'dieser Wein hier ist ein besonders guter').

2. Adjectival endings:

Gender and case are either marked in the article or in the adjective. If the article is marked, the adjective does not need to be marked, e.g. 'hier gibt es das leckere Eis'; when there is no article, the adjective is marked, e.g. 'das war aber ein großer Fehler'

(cf. table in German Elementary Grammar, p. 87). In order to produce the correct adjectival ending, *gender/number, case and form* must be known.

3. *Countable* and *non-countable nouns* - when there is no article, 'viel' and 'wenig' are not declined in the singular, e.g. 'viel Arbeit' and 'wenig Zeit' (cf. Hammer's German Grammar and Usage, p. 114/5 (c) and (d)).

2.5 Comparison of adjectives

Main aspects to be pointed out/action:

1. The formation of regular and special forms (cf. German Elementary Grammar, p. 82 -85); the use of *-er* for all comparative forms (instead of *mehr*).
2. The declension of comparatives and superlatives preceding nouns (e.g. 'ich habe einen noch schnelleren Wagen', 'sie nennen einen viel wichtigeren Grund'; 'sie ist doch die wichtigste Person').

2.6 Formation of nouns and adjectives

Main aspects to be pointed out/action:

1. Formation of *nouns - prefixes and suffixes*; (cf. Hammer' German Grammar and Usage, p. 487 - 492; for compound nouns cf. German Elementary Grammar, p. 184/5; for adjectives used as nouns, e.g. 'die/der Angestellte', cf. Hammer's German Grammar and Usage, p. 124/125; for the 'Fugen-s' cf. 'Business auf Deutsch', p. 33);
2. Formation of *adjectives* (cf. Hammer's German Grammar and Usage, p. 492 - 495, sections 22.3.1. (a), (c), (g) and 22.3.2 (b); cf. German Elementary Grammar, p.185 for compound adjectives). Mention the formation of adjectives from participles (both present and past).

3. Prepositional phrases

- 3.1 Government of prepositions
- 3.2 Prepositional objects
- 3.3 Prepositional adverbs (da-/wo-)
- 3.4 Government of nouns and adjectives

3.1 Prepositions and their cases

Main aspects to be pointed out/action:

1. In all previous instances, it was the verb that has been shown to decide which *case* is to be used (e.g. *accusative* or *dative*, as in 'sie fanden den Ball sofort' and 'wir haben ihnen noch gar nicht dafür gedankt'). In *prepositional phrases* the case is determined by the preposition, plus, in the case of two-track prepositions, by the verb, e.g. 'der Zug fährt in die falsche Richtung', 'Zug steht auf dem gleichen Gleis'. Where the case is determined by preposition only, it is irrelevant whether or not there is movement involved, e.g. 'ich gehe zu meinen Freunden' - the preposition *zu* always takes the dative case.

2. The most important prepositions (German Elementary Grammar, p. 123 - 134) - prepositions cannot be translated literally from one language to the next, they must be learnt as an integral part of the verb (e.g. 'denken an' (to think of), 'bestehen aus' (to consist of), 'sich interessieren für' (to be interested in)).
3. Double-track prepositions: accusative for motion towards a goal, dative for motion within an enclosed area or rest.

3.2 Prepositional objects

Main aspects to be pointed out/action:

1. As regards two-track prepositions, the cases for prepositional objects have to be learnt individually (cf. the previous point). However, there are some prepositions which always take the same case, for instance, 'über' takes the accusative, e.g. 'sie hat sich über die CD gefreut' and 'vor' takes the dative, e.g. 'sie fürchten sich vor der Dunkelheit'; 'auf' usually (but not always) takes the accusative, e.g. 'wir warten auf das Christkind' (cf. Hammer's German Grammar and Usage, p. 371 - 380).

3.3 Prepositional adverbs (da-, wo- compounds) (cf. Hammer's German Grammar and Usage, p. 48ff; Grammatik zum Üben, p. 156)

Main aspects to be pointed out/action:

1. When referring to a specific, concrete object, either a prepositional adverb or a personal pronoun can be used, e.g. 'danke für die Kassette - ich habe mich sehr über sie/darüber gefreut'. However, the personal pronoun must be used when referring to persons, e.g. 'die Kinder gehen mit ihr (~~damit~~)'.
2. Prepositional adverbs must be used for abstract ideas, e.g. 'wie findet ihr den Plan? seid ihr damit einverstanden?'.
3. Prepositional adverbs are used to refer to the whole sentence, e.g. 'wir haben 1000 Mark gewonnen - darüber freuen wir uns natürlich riesig'.
4. A prepositional adverb is used to connect the main clause with either an infinitive clause or a subclause, e.g. 'ich soll dich daran erinnern, die Schuhe abzuholen' and 'ich soll dich daran erinnern, daß du die Schuhe abholst'.
5. A prepositional adverb can replace a relative pronoun with a preposition (see below).

3.4 Relative pronouns with prepositions

Main aspects to be pointed out/action:

1. Relative clauses with a preposition or a prepositional adverb (cf. Hammer's German Grammar and Usage, p. 89/90)

3.5 Government of nouns and adjectives

Main aspects to be pointed out/action:

1. Nouns with prepositions (cf. Grammatik zum Üben, p. 96).
2. Cases with adjectives (cf. Hammer's German Grammar and Usage, p. 127-130).
3. Adjectives with prepositions - 'auf' and 'über' always take the accusative when used with adjectives (cf. Hammer's German Grammar and Usage, p. 131/132).

4. Adverbials

Firstly, point out the difference between *adverbials* vs. *adverbs*: *adverbials* can consist of an entire noun phrase, e.g. 'am nächsten Morgen', prepositional phrase or subclause whereas an *adverb* is one word only, e.g. 'heute'. Secondly, point out the importance of adverbials (and conjunctions) for text cohesion.

4.1 Adverbials and complements

Main aspects to be pointed out/action:

1. (Very briefly) discuss the main types of adverbials: *time*, *place*, *manner*, *direction* ('hin', 'her'; cf. Hammer's German Grammar and Usage, p. 134-149 and p. 211-217)
2. As was explained under point 1.6 (valency), there are certain other elements that, depending on the verb, may be obligatory in sentence. Complements are those elements which are required to make a sentence grammatically complete and correct. They are not to be confused with adverbials/adverbs which merely give additional semantic information but are not strictly necessary in the grammatical sense. (cf. Hammer's German Grammar and Usage, p. 349/350). In prepositional phrases involving two-track prepositions, the concept of *adverbials of time and place* seem to be particularly problematic (see examples below).

Examples of errors regarding the use of adverbials of time and place (taken from error analysis 1995):

1. Ich möchte eine gute Zeit in das erste Jahr haben.
2. Ich hoffe, daß ich gute Noten in meine Examen bekomme.
3. In die 4 Jahre hier hoffe ich, viele Leute zu treffen und kennenzulernen.
4. Ich möchte Fremdsprachen auf die Uni studieren.
5. In die 4 Jahre DCU möchte ich mein Deutsch und Französisch verbessern.
6. Ich möchte meine Fertigkeiten in meine 2 Sprachen entwickeln.

7. Aber erst muß ich die Prüfungen in das erste Jahr bestehen.
8. Vor das Examen setze ich mich unter viel Druck.
9. In mein drittes Jahr hier muß ich ins Ausland fahren.

In all of the above clauses, an overgeneralisation is made with regard to the use of the accusative case: in sentences 1. to 7., the presence of a transitive verb would appear to have prompted many students to put not only the object complement into the accusative case, as required, but also all other elements, including adverbials of time and of place.

In clause 8., the accusative case of the direction complement is extended to the adverbial of time. No distinction is made between complements on the one hand and adverbials on the other in any of the clauses. Unless boundaries between these two are clear, the correct case cannot be selected.

3. As regards the selection of cases in expressions of time, the rule of thumb is that if there is no preposition, the accusative is usually used¹⁶, e.g. 'nächsten Sommer', 'letztes Jahr', and if there is a preposition, it is always followed by the dative, e.g. 'meine Prüfungen im ersten Jahr'.

4. Both adverbials of place and place complements answer the question 'wo?' and are followed by the dative, e.g. 'wie findest du das Haus an der Ecke', 'ich wohne in einer Kleinstadt', while direction complements answer the question 'wohin?' and are followed by the accusative, e.g. 'wir fahren morgen früh in den Urlaub'.

4.2 The difference between adverbials, conjunctions and prepositions

Main aspects to be pointed out/action:

1. The most commonly used *adverbials* and their semantic equivalents in terms of *prepositions* and *conjunctions*, e.g. 'vorher' (adverb), 'vor' (preposition), 'bevor' (conjunction) (cf. Grammatik zum Üben, p. 176 for an overview and examples).

5. Word order

Main aspects to be pointed out/action:

1. The basic word order rules in the 'Mittelfeld' (cf. overview in Hammer's German Grammar and Usage, p. 469)
2. The position of *auch* (cf. Hammer' German Grammar and Usage, p. 177/178) - unlike the English 'as well' or 'too', it hardly ever appears at the end of the clause.
3. The position of *nicht*: if *nicht* negates the entire clause, it appears after objects and all adverbs except those of manner, and before adverbs of manner and all other complements. In any other position, *nicht*

¹⁶ Notwithstanding expressions in the genitive case, such as 'eines Nachmittags'.

immediately precedes the particular word or phrase it is supposed to negate, e.g. 'ich habe nicht den Schirm gesucht, sondern die Regenjacke' (cf. Hammer's German Grammar and Usage, p. 478/479).

6. Verbal phrase - part two

6.1 The passive

Main aspects to be pointed out/action:

1. Use of the passive: the passive allows the speaker to refer to an activity without revealing who is carrying out that activity, e.g. 'heute werden immer weniger Bücher gelesen' (cf. Hammer's German Grammar and Usage, p. 292). The passive is often used when the source of the action is not known or when for some reason the speaker does not want to name the source, e.g. 'mehr als 100 Arbeiter wurden entlassen'.
2. Formation of the passive - the verb *werden* in all its tenses has to be repeated, as a full verb and as an auxiliary; introduce the verb *lassen* as another way to form the passive (German Elementary Grammar, p. 42/43)

6.2 Mood - part II (the 'past' conditional)

Main aspects to be pointed out/action:

1. The 'past' conditional (cf. Grammatik zum Üben, p. 195).

6.3 The double infinitive (cf. A Practice Grammar of German, p. 97)

Main aspects to be pointed out/action:

1. Revise modal verbs used with another verb in the perfect tense. Add *hören*, *sehen* and *lassen* to the list of verbs, e.g. 'wir haben sie leider nicht sehen können'.
2. Word order in subordinate clauses with a double infinitive, e.g. 'es ist klar, daß die Mutter sie hat beschützen wollen'.

Appendix F

List of reference works for students and lecturers

Some reference books that might be useful (R = rules; E = selected exercises) (N.B. Not all of the points below will be covered in the grammar class)

	Reference book					
	Hammer's German grammar (R)	Practicing German Grammar (Hammer workbook) (E)	German Elementary Grammar (R)	Schaum's German grammar (R+E)	A practice grammar of German (Dreyer-Schmitt) (R+E)	English grammar for students of German (terminology)
Grammar point						
1. Verbal phrase						
1.1 Subject-verb agreement and 1.2 Verb conjugation, tense formation, use of tenses	Chapter 12, p. 221 ff and Chapter 14, p. 278 ff	p. 81 (1, 2), p. 82 (3), p. 84 (6), p. 85 (7)//	p. 17 - 27 (rules) p. 239 - 245 (exercises)	p. 95 - 125	Chapter 6, p. 34ff and Chapter 12, p. 56ff	verb, p. 26 infinitive, p. 77 conjugation, p. 79 auxiliary v., p. 92 tense, pp 87, 90 strong/weak v., p. 74 past participle, p. 98
1.3 Some special verbs a. haben, sein, werden b. modals c. separable/non-separable verbs	Chapter 12, 12.2.4, p. 229/230 Chapter 12, 12.2.3, p 228/9 and Chapter 17, p. 327ff Chapter 22, 22.4, p.495 ff	p. 86/7 (10)// p. 138 (4, 5), p. 139 - 144 (7 - 14)// p. 82 (4), p. 87 (11), p. 195 - 198 (6 - 8)//	p. 30-32 and p. 40/41 p. 34 - 40 p. 27 - 29	p. 125 - 145	Chapter 18, p. 94ff and Chapter 20, p. 111ff Chapters 7, 8, and 9, p. 43ff	modal v., p.95 separable/non-separable v. , p. 200
1.4 Mood a. imperative b. subjunctive - the conditional	Chapter 12, 12.1.1, p. 222 ff Chapter 16, 16.3, p. 317ff	p. 124 (1)// —	p. 59/60 p. 51 - 53	p. 145 - 158	Chapter 11, p. 53ff	mood, p. 118 imperative, p. 119 subjunctive, p. 122
1.5 a. Position of the verb b. conjunctions c. infinitive clauses	Chapter 21, p. 453ff Chapter 19 p. 383ff Chapter 13, 13.2, p. 249ff	p. 181/2 (6), p. 183 (8) p. 184 (9, 10), p. 191 (22)// p. 162 - 164 (1 - 3), p. 164/5 (5), 177 (2)// p. 89 - 90 (1 - 3), p. 93 - 94 (9 - 11)//	p. 134 - 154 p. 186 - 205; p. 216 p. 47ff	p. 195 - 205	Chapters 23 - 32, 127ff and Chapter 34, p. 168 - 170 Chapter 16, p. 80ff and Chapter 33, p. 165 - 168	conjunction, p. 212 clause, p. 218
1.6. Valency of the verb	Chapter 18, p. 347 ff	p. 147 (1), p. 149 (4), p. 160/1 (18)//	p. 9 - 14			transitive/intransitive v., p. 27

	<u>Reference book</u>					
	Hammer's German grammar	Practising German Grammar (Hammer workbook)	German Elementary Grammar	Schaum's	A practice grammar of German (Dreyer-Schmitt)	English grammar for students of German
Grammar point						
2. Noun phrase 2.1 <i>Gender, number, weak nouns</i>	Chapter 1, p. 1 ff	p. 1 (1), p. 3 (5, 7), p. 4 (8), p. 5 - 7 (10 - 12), p. 8 -9 (15 - 17), p. 10/11 (19), p. 13 (23, 24)//	p. 68 - 71; p. 74	p. 1 - 14	Chapters 1, 2 and 3, p. 13ff	noun, p. 4 gender, p. 7, 225 number, p. 11 agreement, p.15
2.2 a. <i>The cases</i> b. <i>determiners/articles</i>	Chapter 2, p. 26ff Chapter 4, p. 57ff and Chapter 5, p. 74ff	—	p. 72 - 80	p. 15 - 27	Chapter 14, p. 62ff Chapters 1, 2 and 3, p. 13ff	article, p. 14 possessive a. , p. 181 interrogative a., p. 185 declension, p. 23 case, p. 18 subject/object, p. 21, 43
2.3 <i>Pronouns</i> a. personal pronouns b. other pronouns (relat., demon., reflex)	Chapter 3, p. 41 ff Chapter 5, p. 74 ff	p. 8 (15), p. 22 (10), p. 29 (1), p. 31 (5), p. 150 (6)// p. 52 (14, 15), p. 151 (7)//	p. 98/99 p. 65 - 67 p. 100 - 118	p. 179 - 194	Chapter 4, p. 28ff Chapter 10, p. 50ff Chapter 35, p. 170 - 175 Chapter 37, p. 191ff	pronoun p. 47 personal p., p.50 possessive p., p. 136 reflexive p., p. 139 interrogative p., p. 147 relative p., p. 155
2.4 a. <i>Adjectives and adverbs</i> b. <i>comparison of adjectives</i> c. <i>formation of nouns, formation of adjectives</i>	Chapter 6, p. 117 ff Chapter 8, p. 150 ff Chapter 22, 22.2, p. 487ff Chapter 22, 22.3, p. 492ff	p. 12 (22), p. 16 (1), p. 17 (3), p. 20 (7), p. 21 (9), p. 60 (8), p. 61 (10), p. 61/2 (11), p. 151/2 (8)// p. 71 - 73 (1 - 4)// p. 194 (1, 2)//	p. 81 - 90 p. 182 - 185	p. 47 - 81	Chapter 39, p. 204ff Chapter 40, p. 215ff Chapter 41, p. 220ff	adjective, p. 169 adverb, p. 189 comparison, p. 175

	Reference book					
	Hammer's German grammar	Practising German Grammar (Hammer workbook)	German Elementary Grammar	Schaum's	A practice grammar of German (Dreyer-Schmitt)	English grammar for students of German
Grammar point						
3. Prepositional phrases			p. 123 - 134	p. 33-45		prepositions, p. 192
3.1 <i>Government of prepositions</i>	Chapter 20, p. 403ff	p. 168 - 170 (3 - 6), p. 171 (8), p. 173/4 (12)//			Chapter 57, p. 269ff	
3.2 <i>Verbs and prepositions/ prepositional objects</i>	Chapter 18, 18.6, p. 371ff and Chapter 5, 5.4.4, p. 89 (relative pronouns)	p. 47 (8), p. 153 (10)//		p. 183	Chapter 13, p. 60ff Chapter 15, p. 72ff Chapter 35, p. 176ff	
3.3 <i>Prepositional adverbs (da-/wo-)</i>	Chapter 3, 3.5, p.48ff and Chap. 5, 5.4.4, p. 89/90 and Chap. 6, 6.6.2, p. 132/3	p. 32 (6), p. 47 (7), p. 49 (10), p. 90/1 (4), p. 158 (16)//	p. 113/4	p. 184 p. 193		
3.4 <i>Government of nouns and adjectives</i>	Chapter 6, 6.6, p. 130ff	p. 26 (19), p. 29/30 (2), p. 44 (3), p. 45/6 (5), p. 65 (14), p. 172 (9)//			Chapter 44, p. 226 - 228	
4. 1 + 4.2 <i>Adverbials</i>	Chapter 7, p. 134ff	p. 66 - 67 (1 - 3)//	p.153 - 154 and p. 156 - 170 p. 15		Chapter 22, p. 118ff	
4.3 <i>Word order of adverbials</i>	Chapter 21, p. 466 ff	p. 185 -186 (11 - 13), p. 188 (17), p. 190 (21)//				
4.4 <i>Negation</i>	Chapter 5, p. 108/9	p. 53 (16, 17), p. 189/190 (19)//	p. 206 - 208	p. 173 - 177		
5. Verbal phrase, part two						
5.1 <i>The passive</i>	Chapter 15, p. 292ff	p. 114 (3), p. 115 - 116 (5 - 7), p. 118 (10), p. 119 - 120 (12, 13) p. 121/2 (16)//	p. 61ff	p. 160-166	Chapter 19, p. 103ff and Chapter 45, p. 228ff	active and passive voice, p. 204
5.2 <i>The subjunctive</i>	Chapter 16, p. 306ff	p. 125/6 (4), p. 127 (6, 7), p. 128 (8, 9)//	p.50ff	p. 158-160	Chapter 52, p. 245ff	subjunctive, pp 122, 132
5.3 <i>Double infinitive</i>	Chapter 13, 13.3.2, p. 261/2	p. 136 - 137 (1 - 3)//				

Appendix G

Student questionnaire, October 1996

Introductory survey for first year German language students at DCU

The purpose of this survey is to establish your language learning background, your attitude towards German, aspects that you feel confident about and aspects that may require some extra effort. The survey will not be marked and will not contribute to any examination.

Name: _____

Course: ACL AL IML IBL

Part I - background information

1. Please state the result you got in your Leaving Certificate German examination: _____

2. Was the course for which you are currently enrolled your first choice? yes ___ no ___

If the answer is 'no', please state what your first choice was: _____

3. a. Please indicate, using the scale from 1 to 5 below, the degree of emphasis which was put on the following aspects of language learning at your secondary school.

SCALE:	1= no emphasis at all 2= little emphasis 3= fairly strong emphasis 4= strong emphasis 5= very strong emphasis
---------------	---

- | | | | |
|------------------------|-------|---------------------------------|-------|
| a. listening | _____ | h. developing your own ideas | _____ |
| b. reading | _____ | i. learning things off by heart | _____ |
| c. writing | _____ | j. role playing | _____ |
| d. speaking | _____ | k. project work | _____ |
| e. grammar | _____ | l. literature | _____ |
| f. pronunciation | _____ | m. accuracy | _____ |
| g. vocabulary learning | _____ | n. fluency | _____ |

b. Which of the above aspects do you feel *confident* about and which areas do you feel require a special effort on your part? Please circle your answers by using the list above.

Points I feel confident about: a b c d e f g h i j k l m n

Points I do not feel confident about: a b c d e f g h i j k l m n

c. Which of the above aspects of language learning did you *enjoy*? Which ones did you not enjoy? Please circle your answers.

Points I enjoyed: a b c d e f g h i j k l m n

Points I did not enjoy: a b c d e f g h i j k l m n

Comments (you may give reasons for your answers if you wish):

4. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements:

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Neither/nor
a) I find German grammar interesting			
b) I find German grammar fairly easy			
c) I find German grammar difficult			
d) I find German grammar impossible to learn			
e) Unless you are good at grammar you will never be good at a language			
f) There should be a separate grammar class at third level			
g) The best way to learn grammar is to be given the rule by the teacher			
h) The best way to learn grammar is to figure out a rule oneself and then verify that it is correct			
g) All grammar should be explained through English (or Irish)			
i) Students should be made familiar with grammar terminology			
j) I do not want to learn grammar, I just want to be able to communicate in German			
k) Grammatical accuracy is less important than being able to write and speak a language fluently			
l) I want to be corrected when making a mistake in			
• my written German			
• my spoken German			

5. With this question we would like to find out about your knowledge of German grammar terminology and how familiar you feel you are with German grammar. Please indicate how confident you feel about the following features which may or may not have been covered at your school. Answer as sincerely as possible. Do not underestimate the knowledge that you have acquired at school - after all it got you through a tough LC exam! Also, do not feel intimidated by the number of terms that are unknown to you. We expect - and our experience has proved this - that almost everyone will have gaps in this area.

<i>Grammar point</i>	<i>I have never heard of this concept</i>	<i>I know what I do not feel confident about using this feature</i>	<i>I feel confident about using it</i>	<i>Example in German (if you think you know it)</i>
(1) The cases				
a) which verbs take which case				
b) complements				
c) transitive verbs				
d) intransitive verbs				
e) subject				
f) object				
(2) Verbal phrase				
a) infinitive				
b) finite verb				
c) infinite verb				
d) past participle				
e) present participle				
f) strong verb				
g) weak verb				
(3) Conjugation of verbs (<u>not tense formation</u>)				
a) regular				
b) irregular				
c) reflexive				

d) agreement
e) separable/non-separable
f) auxiliary
g) modal
h) the passive
(4) Tenses
a) present tense
b) past tense/preterite
c) perfect tense
d) pluperfect tense
e) future tense
(5) Mood
a) indicative
b) imperative
c) subjunctive
(6) Position of the verb
a) in main clauses
b) in subclauses
c) in questions
(7) Noun phrase
a) gender of nouns
b) plurals of nouns
c) declension (ie knowing the <u>form</u> of articles in different cases)
d) compound nouns
e) weak nouns

f) uncountable nouns
(8) Articles
a) definite
b) indefinite
c) possessive
d) negative
e) demonstrative
f) interrogative
(9) Pronouns
a) personal pronouns
b) relative pronouns
c) possessive
d) negative
e) indefinite
(10) a) adjectives
b) adjectival endings
c) adverbs
d) comparative
e) superlative
(11) Word formation
a) of nouns
b) of adjectives
c) prefix
d) suffix
(12) Prepositions (their meaning and the case they are followed by)

a) prepositional object
(13) conjunctions (their meaning and the effect they have on word order)
(14) negation (kein, nicht, nichts)*
(15) Umlaute*
(16) the use of capital letters*
(16) spelling in general*

6. What - if any - do you think are the major differences between the level of grammatical knowledge that you have achieved at school and the level expected at university?

Thank you very much for your co-operation

Appendix H

Student questionnaire no.1, May 1997

This questionnaire is part of a research project that is currently being conducted in the School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies. The first part (i.e. the part you have in front of you) is an evaluation of the weekly grammar class in GE 130 and GE 140. We urge you to be honest in your answers, to feel free to voice any constructive criticism and to suggest any changes which you believe future students might benefit from. However, one thing you should bear in mind when filling in this questionnaire is that, in view of serious time constraints, the grammar course was not designed as a practice session but was instead intended to give students an overview of the main features of German grammar in order to provide a basis for individual follow-up study. Practice in class was therefore kept to an absolute minimum since it was always intended to take place largely outside the classroom.

It should take you about 20-25 minutes to fill in the questionnaire. All the data gathered in this questionnaire will be used for educational research purposes only and the information will be treated in strictest confidence. At no time will your name be disclosed to anybody outside the research team.

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

Name: _____

Part I : *With part one we would like to find out about your general attitude towards your degree course.*

1. How do you feel about your degree course after having done it for one year?

Very happy happy quite happy not happy

2. Who do you believe is responsible for your language learning progress?

Firstly: _____ Secondly: _____

3. Do you believe that in your first year at DCU you have learnt how to go about working on your language skills independently and efficiently?

Yes not yet but getting there No

I knew how to go about this from my secondary school

If your answer is 'yes', please state where you learnt how to learn independently?

a. in both my language classes

b. mainly in my German language class

c. mainly in my other language class

Part II: *With this part we would like to find out about your attitude towards the German grammar class and your confidence regarding certain skills and grammatical features.*

1. Please state how confident you are about your overall grammatical knowledge by ticking the appropriate box.

I am

a. very confident b. confident c. more confident than at the beginning of the year

d. not very confident e. not confident at all

2. If you ticked either box **a.** or box **b.** please answer the following question (again by ticking the appropriate box) :

Does your confidence stem from

- a. both the grammar teaching you received at school
and the grammar classes at DCU
- b. primarily from the grammar class at DCU
(including homework etc.)
- c. primarily from the grammar teaching at school

d. other (please state): _____

2.b. If you ticked letters **d.** and **e.** please expand on your answer under question 5. b. which will appear later in the questionnaire.

3. At the beginning of the year you were asked to indicate which grammar points you did not feel confident about.

a. Name 3 points that you did not feel confident about then and that you feel more confident about now.

b. Name 3 points that you still do not feel confident about.

As regards the points you do not feel confident about, do you know how to go about working on these points?

Yes No

4. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Neither/nor
a. I like learning German			
b. I find German grammar interesting			
c. I find German grammar fairly easy			
d. I find German grammar difficult			
e. I find German grammar impossible to learn			
f. Unless you are good at grammar you will never be good at a language			
g. It is a good idea to have a separate grammar class at third level			
h. Grammar classes should be conducted mainly through English			
i. Students should be made familiar with grammatical terminology			
j. I do not want to learn grammar, I just want to be able to communicate in German			
k. For me grammatical accuracy is less important than being fluent in a language			

5. Please indicate if you found the grammar class

- mostly helpful
- mostly not helpful

Please tick the box if you agree with the following statements (you may tick as many boxes as you like):

a. I found the grammar class **helpful** because

I did not do much grammar at school

I got an overview of German grammar

I learnt rules I was not aware of

it helped me become more confident in my use of German

although I knew most of the rules the grammar class it was

a. a good chance to revise the grammar

b. a good chance to be reminded of certain grammar points

it was a constant reminder of the importance of grammar

I would not have been able to figure out all grammar points by myself

it gave me the basis for work I did outside the class

Other: _____

b. I found the grammar class **not helpful** because

most points had already been covered at school

my grammar is fine/I have no problem with grammar

I could have gone over the rules by myself

other people knew so much more than me

I did not understand what was being explained

because of the terminology

because of the examples used

because the rules were not explained clearly

because we went through things too fast

because I was afraid to ask questions

because I myself did not put enough work into it

Other:

I found the grammar class **helpful** but ...

Any other comments:

(ALFG only) 5. How did you find the occasional student presentations

- helpful
- not helpful
- as helpful as the teacher's
- more helpful than the teacher's
- less helpful than the teacher's

6. What are the biggest differences between the level of grammatical knowledge required at second level and at third level?

7. Do you believe that the following two points are important for you personally?

- a. a sound knowledge of grammar rules yes no
- b. a sound knowledge of terminology yes no

Please give reasons for your answers.

8. Apart from conversation classes/oral work it was written work that was emphasised very strongly, in Semester 1 in the diaries and in Semester 2 in the essays. In Semester 2 you were asked to hand up essays on a regular basis which you were then asked to correct yourselves. You were only allowed to hand up a new piece of work if you had previously handed up corrections. How did you find this system?

- helpful not sure confusing not helpful

Comments:

9. How do you apply your knowledge of grammar when speaking, writing, reading, listening?

I

try to recall grammar rules

go by the 'sounds/looks right principle'

do not think about grammar at all

other: _____

10. a. What did you do to work on your grammar knowledge and application this year? Please tick all the answers that apply to you.

I attended (almost) every class

I did the homework for the grammar class

I worked through a grammar book myself

I did exercises outside the class

I worked together with another student

I used the computer programmes in SALLU

I used the TV in SALLU

other: _____

b. What, if anything, would you do differently next year as regards improving your grammar (if it needs improving) ?

11. Do you believe that you will benefit from this year's grammar class in the long run, e.g. use some of the class notes for revision? Yes No

Please give reasons for your answer.

12. a. What advice would you give to next year's first year students?

12. b. What advice would you give to the course designers?

13. Should there be a grammar assessment at the end of the year? Yes No

Why?/Why not?

Appendix I

Student questionnaire no. 2, May 1997

Part II: Terminology *With this part we would like to find out how familiar you are with grammar terminology.*

1. a. Please define the following terms and give an example for each term in German.

Term	Example
1. complement	
2. transitive verb	
3. intransitive verb	
4. imperative	
5. subjunctive	
6. indicative	
7. auxiliary verb	
8. agreement	
9. strong verb	
10. weak verb	
11. weak noun	
12. uncountable noun	
13. compound noun	
14. adverb	

b. Give an example for each of the following terms in German.

Term	Example in German
1. verbal phrase	
2. regular verb	
3. irregular verb	
4. past participle	
5. present participle	
6. preterite	
7. perfect tense	
8. pluperfect tense	
9. the passive	
10. finite verb	
11. non-finite verb	
12. noun phrase	
13. declension of articles	
14. prepositional object	
15. word formation of adjectives	
16. word formation of nouns	
17. prefix	
18. suffix	
19. demonstrative article	
20. interrogative article	
21. negative article	
22. superlative	
23. comparative	
24. indefinite pronoun	
25. personal pronoun	
26. relative pronoun	

Part III: Rule knowledge: *With this part we would like to know how familiar you are with grammatical rules.*

1. Verbs

1. Provide the preterite and the perfect forms of the following verbs:

<i>Present</i>	<i>Preterite</i>	<i>Perfect</i>
ich werde	_____	_____
ich darf gehen	_____	_____
ich reserviere	_____	_____

2. Unreal wishes - complete by providing the appropriate verbs:

Ach wenn ich doch nur genug Geld _____! (Ich habe aber nicht genug Geld)

Ach wenn ich doch nur reich _____! (Ich bin aber nicht reich)

3. a. When deciding which elements are grammatically required in a clause, which part of the clause do you look at? _____

b. Underline in each clause below the elements that tell you which complements are required:

Viele junge Leute beschwerten sich, daß die ältere Generation sie einfach nicht verstehen will. Sie sagen, sie haben noch nie in ihrem Leben das machen können, was sie wollen. Dabei übersehen sie jedoch, daß ihre Eltern die gleichen Probleme mit ihren Eltern hatten, als sie jung waren.

2. Nouns/cases

1. Which 2 very common verbs require two nominative cases?

2. Do the following verbs require a dative object, accusative object or both?

erklären: _____

passen: _____

verpassen: _____

3.a. If a verb takes only one object, which case do the vast majority of verbs require in this instance? _____

b. If there is a dative and an accusative object in a clause, what does the dative object normally refer to ? _____

4. In which case is the subject of a sentence placed? _____

5. Provide the gender and plural of the following nouns:

	gender	plural
Problem:	_____	_____
Jahr:	_____	_____
Arbeit:	_____	_____
Zeit:	_____	_____
Freund:	////////	_____
Studentin:	////////	_____

6. Which nouns are

- always feminine? Those ending in _____, _____ and _____
- always masculine? Those ending in _____ and _____
- always neuter? Those ending in _____

7. Declension of articles and pronouns

Please complete the following tables.

a. Definite article

	<i>Article</i>			
<i>Case</i>	<i>Masc. sing</i>	<i>Fem. sing</i>	<i>Neut. sing</i>	<i>Plural</i>
Nominative: Das ist/sind...	der (Mann)	die (Frau)	das (Kind)	die (Leute)
Accusative: für...				
Dative: mit				
Genitive: trotz				

b. Personal pronouns

	Pronoun					
Case	1st pers sing	2nd pers sing	3rd pers sing	1st pers plur	2nd pers plur	3rd pers plur
Nom.: Wer ?	ich	Du/Sie	er/sie/es	wir	Ihr/Sie	sie
Acc.: Wen?						
Dat.: Wem?						

8. Is the following sentence grammatically correct?

Das Mädchen kann er nicht so gut sehen. Correct Incorrect

Briefly explain your answer.

3. Conjunctions, prepositions and adverbials

1. What effect do the following conjunctions and adverbials have on word order?

wenn: _____

aber: _____

trotzdem: _____

denn: _____

2. Which cases do the following prepositions take?

aus: _____

auf: _____

gegen: _____

trotz: _____

zwischen: _____

3. What are the two golden rules for dealing with prepositional phrases? How do you know which case a preposition is followed by?

4. Function of various elements in a sentence

Look at the text below and answer the following questions relating to the underlined passages in the text.

76 Jahre liegen vor einem Neugeborenen in Deutschland, wenn es sich aus dem Mutterschoß gekämpft hat. Diese statistisch zugemessene Lebenszeit erscheint einerseits bedrückend begrenzt, andererseits unvorstellbar lang für den, dem sie bevorsteht: Das Phänomen Zeit ist paradox. Nie zuvor lebten Menschen so lange wie heute, kaum jemals zuvor haben sie ihre Existenz mit so vielen Aktivitäten gefüllt. Und doch: Je stärker wir die Zeit fesseln, desto schneller scheint sie zu entkommen. Dabei erleben wir nur knapp zwei Drittel unserer Lebensspanne bei vollem Bewußtsein. Den Rest, **26,7** Jahre, verschlafen wir. Ganze 15 Jahre vergehen dabei im Traum: Je nach Alter füllen diese imaginären Abenteuer zwischen 5 und 25 Prozent unserer Schlummerzeit.

Zu eigener Verfügung stehen uns insgesamt etwa **15,6** Jahre. In dieser mehr oder weniger selbstbestimmten „Freizeit“ ließe sich alles Erdenkliche bewirken – zum Beispiel der Bau einer kellergroßen Modelleisenbahn oder die Komposition einer Oper nach der anderen. Doch nach all der Mühsal im Haushalt, die immer noch gut **13,6** Jahre eines Frauenlebens verschlingt (Männer kommen nur auf 5,4 Jahre), und nach fast **8,2** Jahren Männerarbeit fürs tägliche Brot (Frauen sind nur knapp 3,9 Jahre erwerbstätig) ist Neigung und Energie für kreatives Tun offenbar gering. Die meisten greifen in ihrer Freizeit nach der Infrarotbedienung: Rechnet man die Stunden vor dem Bildschirm zusammen, hat am Ende seines Lebens jeder Deutsche fast **6** Jahre lang ferngesehen. Nur lebensnotwendige Tätigkeiten können der Hingabe an den Flimmerkasten einigermaßen Konkurrenz machen:

Source: *Geo*, no. 2, 1997

Line

- 5: What function does 'bedrückend' have? _____
- 8/9: What is the subject of the clause starting with 'kaum...'? _____
- 18/19: What is the subject of the clause starting with 'Zu ...'? _____
- 19/20: What function does 'In dieser mehr oder weniger selbstbestimmten Freizeit' have? _____
- 26-29: What function does 'Neigung und Energie für kreatives Tun' have?

- 31-33: What is the subject of the main clause? _____
- 34-36: What function do 'der Hingabe (= devotion) an den Flimmerkasten' and 'Konkurrenz' (=competition) have?
'der Hingabe'= _____ 'Konkurrenz'= _____

5. Identification of grammar mistakes

The following texts contains 11 grammar mistakes (N.B. no vocabulary mistakes). Identify them by underlining them, then number them, explain why the forms are wrong and provide the correct version.

Example (not in text):

Auch dieser Urlaub hat¹ wie jeder Urlaub zu schnell vorbeigegangen.

1. 'hat' should be 'ist' because the verb 'vorbeigehen' forms the perfect tense with 'sein'

Evita: Tango totalitär

Es gibt Filme und Trailer, also kurze Filme, die für Filme werben. Der Film Evita dauern zwar 135 Minuten, aber dennoch ist der Film keinen Film, sondern ist er mehr wie ein Trailer, in dem für Eva Peron Werbung gemacht werde.

Sie würde unehelich geboren, ist mit 15 Jahren mit ein Tangospieler nach Buenos Aires gegangen, ist durch die Seifenopern im Radio berühmt worden, hat dann der faschistische General Juan Peron geheiratet, und hat die Armen Geld und Kleidung geschenkt - das ist eigentlich ein Leben, dem es nur ins Kino gibt.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____