CHAPTER VI

SOME ISSUES OF DISSEMINATION - CONCLUSION
6.1 Issues of Dissemination: An Introduction

What has gone into the discussion of the model of language so far, at many points obliquely implies certain definite directions for dissemination - directions towards the teacher training aspect of dissemination, learner training, textbook and syllabus making by central bodies, and evaluation among others.

Any direct reference to dissemination was avoided - due to a respect for the seriousness that was seen to be involved in the issue; it would just not be fair to treat them as subsidiary matters, which they could easily become in a thesis of this present kind where the whole-hearted concentration is in developing an idea. An oblique kind of attention is all the project team itself could afford to pay to them while the teaching was on. And I offer them here as such, mainly in two areas viz., teacher training and evaluation.

As I talk about teacher training, I talk not only about the methodology for the teacher (which indicates teacher's responsibility as a caretaker-interlocutor, in cultivating a certain attitude in the learners about their own responsibilities) but the use of a textbook (which subsumes the status
of centralised textbook and syllabus asked by my model) and teacher's role in evaluation (which again indicates the concept of evaluation itself in this particular scheme).

6.2 The Concept of Interaction - Its Centrality

In order to do all these, initially I pick up an idea I hinted at in Chapter V while discussing methodology, an idea which distinguishes pedagogic methodology and languaging strategies as micro- and macro-methodology (see pp. 330-337).

This is not an idea which sprang up at that stage, where it was mentioned in Chapter V. By implication arguments have been leading up to it so to say throughout the thesis. For instance, in Chapter III in the discussion of Allwright, and later very much more extensively in Chapter IV, the argument with regard to notion of interaction has been throwing up this idea about interactive creation as a reality construction activity and its epistomological overtones in my scheme.

6.2.1 'Interaction' as Methodology - Question of Content, Method and Objectives in a Language Teaching Context

Let me start then, once again, with the concept of interaction. It obviously involves, 1. experiences to interact (or use language with); within the experience, a focussing of an aspect, determines the kind of activity to be engaged with the experience; 2. next comes the choices of
steps in the activity; and finally 3. the outcome of the activity. The notion of interaction, the act of language use involves all these; Content for interaction (1), steps in the interaction (2), what comes out of the interaction (3). All these can be said to be the components of the process of interaction.

Pedagogically as has happened in certain current ELT practices when this is made into the method for teaching language competence distinguished as separate from the process, experiences become the content inside the classroom while language (defined as core, a grammar inclusive of communicative and linguistic core) becomes the content outside the classroom. The steps in an activity, become the steps of the interactive activity, while what happens in the business of making a lesson go forward, as the pedagogic methodology has to be decided upon to go with the content. As experiences become only the pseudo-content inside the classroom (only a methodological ploy) while there is no doubt about grammar items (linguistic or communicative or a 'bit' of an integrated 'language core') being the content of the act of teaching; likewise, the steps in the interaction need not be considered very crucial at all. For the teacher what matters is, how she offers the experiences and activity to the learner. And in this, the steps in the interaction itself is conveniently
convertible into methodology; such a conversion is made for the teacher to cope with the progress of the lesson (see Chapter IV, pp.233-234).

And finally the outcome for the classroom interaction, might be a solution to a problem; but for the teaching of language, it is grammar construction or the grammar of a language which is the real outcome. Thus there is a definite distinction between the process of interaction components and the product components - and the former, is a means to the latter.

The 'outside' the classroom content and objectives are very important factors here. And in the anxiety to decide upon them through the methodological tool of interaction and its components (as has happened with content and objectives, i.e., experiences lead to linguistic content, and meaning outcomes lead to language objectives) the steps in the interactive process is made into the outside the class language teaching technique.

So much for what I could call the general picture that teaching efforts with interaction as the methodological variation afford us.
6.2.2 Interaction in a Different Role: My Scheme of Teaching

In my model of language teaching I arrive at very different conclusions about content, methodology and objectives in relation to the components of interaction.

Languaging for me is meaning-making which is again interactive creation of the moment of execution. Thus meaning (outcome) is constituted in languaging and conversely language is constituted in meaning-making. Hence there is no difference between process (performance) and product (competence) for me. There is only process (a doubly dynamitised process at that as we shall see below). Content in the form of experiences (content in process of meaning-making) and content in the form of language core (product language content) is not there; steps of meaning-making are steps of languaging (and they again have a qualitatively different influence on the pedagogic steps for the teacher for the progress of the lesson) and finally meaning outcomes are language outcomes.

Next since everything is process or interaction (or interactive creation or meaning-making or languaging), all the components of the interaction are all dependent upon the moment of the same interaction or languaging - none of them is fixed - they have to be created.
Lastly since this process or interaction also involves personal investment of the interlocutor for me, the interaction content, methodology and outcome (which is the only content, methodology and outcome as we have seen) has to be created in deference to the uniqueness of the interlocutor.

6.2.3 A Qualitative Difference - An Argument

There are clearly two aspects here: the activity of meaning-making and the activity of the pedagogy of language teaching, which is a translation of a stand on language acquisition. In my scheme the two activities get merged into one within an overarching paradigm of reality construction. Thus the pedagogical activity of teaching in the abstract or teaching any other subject or teaching language, come within the paradigm of reality construction, not by analogy (alone) but logically and inevitably as I have shown time and again in the preceding two chapters.

Thus meaning-making is not different from languaging, and from learning and teaching (a language or a second language or any other 'discipline' as such) and meaning-making as a process is of supreme importance. In my scheme what happens is the overall impact of creative process of reality construction which overwhelms pedagogy in any area including language teaching, subsumes language teaching content, objectives and methodology
under the creative creation of the moment umbrella and makes for the same non-definiteness about inside the classroom components and outside the classroom components. Whereas in other teaching efforts (like the ones mentioned by Allwright and which seem to me to be the extent to which process or interaction has been incorporated into language teaching to date), the separation of meaning and language is maintained, and two apparently different conceptualisation of interaction as meaning-making and the pedagogic process for language core acquisition (which reflects language acquisition stands) seem to exist. However, in actuality this latter in the end as I have shown in Chapter IV ends up by making even interaction as meaning-seeking only a rigid core getting effort and not a spontaneous process (as in CTP) or interactive syllabus creation as creation of a standard core as in the case of Allwright's conceptualisation of interaction in learning, but which interactive creativity does not extend to language core.

Here then, the overall impact of a content-process, language-meaning division paradigm, and the standardisation of (language) core (and presumably any other 'core') and its supreme importance makes even process static - and pre-specifiable.

I shall not labour this point any further. All these have been already argued for.
This is the train of ideas running across my thesis, which also was seen to be operating in the phenomenon of the micro- and macro-methodology referred to in the last chapter while discussing methodology being created by learners in the project.

The drift of these ideas had to be caught here, and a reiteration of principles of my scheme made, as necessary to the thinking about teacher training or of any other question of dissemination of the ideas of the project, which is the concern of this chapter.

6.3 Interactive Creation as a Reality Construction Model - Obvious (not-so-obvious) Impact

But before I engage with this main concern, an important question is thrown up by this re-capitulation and it seems imperative that it is answered at this point. When the interactive creation model was mobilised inside the classroom as a syllabus it revealed when only coming to the methodology part of the mobilisation that there could be two kinds of methodology micro- and macro-, micro being the steps in a meaning-making activity and macro, the necessary pedagogic movements of a language classroom; and the quality and the dynamism of the former decided and subsumed the latter's nature and dynamism. This was seen to be the result of the
overall impact of the model of interactive construction of reality.

Why was such a division of two kinds, the subsuming of one under the other, the resultant dynamism and deference to the model easily obvious in content, the content of meaning-making and the content of a language syllabus; and like-wise, meaning-outcomes of activities, and objectives of language teaching?

For one, since languaging and meaning-making are considered simultaneous activities the content of meaning-making and language both go by the term 'experience' - and hence the status of double-acting that experience is assigned in the scheme is not immediately obvious. There were other reasons - I shall talk about them below in the next section.

Impact of the Language Model on 'Content'

Let us go back a little here, and see how choices in the three areas of experiences, steps in an activity and meaning outcomes, were made. The learner-training I have been talking about for interaction to happen had to start from experience-choice go on to meaning-seeking choices for capturing meanings and finally the outcomes arrived at. Due to constrictions already discussed experiences and most of the time the meaning-seeking also had to be set up. Yet from the beginning
choices at the third level were present; and this is what led later to the learner expressing 'wishes' in the other two areas. Thus the micro--macro-interaction and subsuming of the latter in the former was visible mainly and initially in methodology only. This subsuming, mainly was indicative of the predominance of the languaging model, as meaning-making, one of interactive creation of reality in the whole scheme of teaching. Yet such a predominance was seen in other ways, in the over-riding centrality of such a language model in 'content' selection side of the plan also demonstrating that the influence is not confined to methodology alone, but is all pervasive. The content in the tentative plan, could firstly be only experiences (and tasks) and secondly as far as possible less formalised experiences affording relatively more freedom of task choice.

It is in this term 'less formalised' experiences that the clue for experiences and tasks themselves, occupying the content in a languaging model of interactive creation, being different, comes in. Let me explain. On the surface it looks like experiences and tasks are experiences and tasks. But this is the surface feature of it alone. The terms experiences and tasks and the experiences like in the field of Geography like map-reading, or science as they exist in any classroom due to their pre-conceptualisation predigestedness about them, carry interpretational and conceptual biases.
But in my scheme where languaging or personal meaning-making and reality construction is the pre-dominant ideal, these experiences are treated differently in an attitude towards them developed as a result of an analysis of their dimensions such as formalisation, pre-interpretation, degrees of formalisation, etc. The preference in the experiences taken up as content in the tentative plan was for less formalised experiences (and corresponding dissociation of experience from meaning-focus) thus setting the scene for possible choices of the moment when it came to this aspect of the content i.e., interaction coming in at this level itself or process feature of 'flux', sustained here also.

This kind of conceptualisation of experiences made for a definite stand on what could be regarded as valid as experience even in a tentative plan - they had to be experiences which were as minimally formalised as possible. Even when formalisation was seen as inevitable, totally formalised ones which strictly made for only one kind of associated meaning-type and one kind of strategies or process to arrive at one core outcome were avoided as leading to unrelenting unitariness. Structures and vocabulary 'rules' or any analytic system like language grammar did not find a place in the content aspect of the line of intention plan for this reason.
At no point in the project was this ideology of personal creation for the learner forgotten. So ultimately, what is revealed is the over-riding power of the ideology of personal choices and reality construction not only in deciding what the macro-methodology would look like, but also what the pedagogic content-experiences would look like. In fact, this term macro-methodology can now be seen to be replaced by pedagogic methodology and since even this having less of the traditional connotations of transmission or generalisability about them or even if it had it, the bias being incidental as would be formalisation in experiences and commonality in objectives. The attitude to macro-methodology i.e., when the decided steps there were not taken, the willingness of the teacher to abandon it, reiterates this incidental value assigned to these because of the scheme.

Consequences of the Collapsing of the Reality Construction and Language Models

This shows how it is not just an enacted syllabus as an analogical paradigm application that I have been seeking. The enacted syllabus, this analogical consequence of the paradigm of interactive creation, is more importantly, and most crucially a logical consequence of languaging considered as meaning-making or interactive creation of the moment.
Hence it could have only macro-methodology which was not transmission, and not predictive or pre-stating of the strategies as methodology, and experiences with a clear eye to its degrees of formalisation and finally objectives not pre-stated even as meaning-outcomes.4

This was the pre-plan (tentative - the actual syllabus being dependent upon the personal creation of the moment), thus not influenced by any kind of systematisation or generalisation in methodology and likewise in experiences-content. The degree of formalisation of experiences was dependent upon personal choices. That such choices were within only less or minimally formalised experiences is the influence of the ideology of the project (see Note 2 about ideological paradox above).

Thus though the pedagogic syllabus as interactive creation of the moment could have a (tentative) content in the form of experiences-tasks; language items etc., to be selected and regulated by the major interlocutors of the process of syllabus-making, viz., the learner(s) and the teacher, my languaging model makes it imperative that only experiences and tasks with the background conceptual connotation that I have postulated for (even) the (tentative) content to be brought into the classroom - from which the learners, make a choice.5 Such conceptualisations about experiences,
methodology, etc., or conceptual distinctions between language pedagogy and interactive content, methodology and objectives are not foregrounded in traditional ELT syllabuses because they are not needed in their scheme.

As I pointed out earlier, these distinctions are not recognised in current syllabuses because there is no ideological aim about outcomes having to be divergent.

And in its turn outcomes need not be divergent if 'commonality' and 'conformity' or a belief in the existence of a core is the informing principle.

These are the arguments already implied in discussions on the CTP (which comes nearest to my project in that it has experiences and tasks and interaction as major notions) in Chapter IV.

Correspondingly while experiences and tasks are not conceptually dimensionalised, the kinds of experiences in a project like CTP can be optional since 'meaning pre-occupation' can be pre-occupation with aspects of grammar of a language in the format of a puzzle. This kind of optionality is ruled out in my scheme. In methodology the consequence would be to systematise and generalise methodology (as pedagogic)
or systematise reality construction or meaning-making strategies as (language) pedagogic methodology (as I claim happens in 
CTP). Next, the meaning outcomes/objectives can be pedagogically pre-stated as an option. Or pre-stating and post-stating 
of objectives exists as a pedagogic choice/decision.

In my scheme objectives which are meanings or outcomes are 
constitutive and the move is for personal 'divergence' in 
them. Hence neither pre-stating nor post-stating is possible. 
(I shall come to the implication of these for evaluation a 
little later.)

The matter (as always) hinges then, upon personal creations 
of the moment, an expansion of meaning making or meaning 
exploration which again can be characterised by the process-
interaction.

Pedagogically (whether in teaching language or any other 
subject) we seem to need, content, methodology and objectives, 
or outcomes. Before we could decide what they might be, 
(experiences and tasks or 'core' of a subject, teacher with 
written text, or teacher orally communicating etc., meaning/
solution outcomes or core of any subject), the influence of the 
languaging model of meaning-making and reality construction 
was seen in, content having to be experiences, and experiences
having to be less formalised and so excluding certain experiences as not being the right kind, methodology having a definite bias towards not including obviously transmission ones like drilling for instance, and objectives as meaning-outcomes and these outcomes as being left open in their non-specification and so on. Again this same language model also ensured that a plan consisting of presumably these three pedagogical components remain tentative. Hence even the less formalised experiences are not the content; the content was a construct which was an interactive creation of the moment (at least after a while - after the learners were 'trained' to make choices). Likewise, methodology and objectives. This was the final emergence - the actual content, methodology and objectives being created by personal creative acts of the moment or the actual constructs in these three areas being personal creations of the moment, i.e., interaction. All of them being interaction and interaction having been shown to have three dimensions (experiences to interact with, along with an appropriate meaning focussing, strategies of the activity and meaning outcomes) content, methodology and objectives by the same token are all these three aspects, i.e., (see figure 25, p.368).
This is the collapsing of the language-pedagogic and the languaging as meaning-making, I have been talking about results in. The languaging as micro (i.e., interactive creation principle in languaging as reality construction) affect the macro (pedagogic, language or any other discipline) and makes it micro (i.e., a communicative (languaging) meaning-making and reality construction effort), a dynamic less formalised hence open to plurality content, methodology and objective.

6.4 Teaching Issues: An Understanding of Interaction

Looking at it all in the light of what the teacher has to do, for the teacher everything is contained in the one notion - Interaction. What can be offered as 'directions' for a teacher here is that she should ensure interaction (or the personal creative act of the moment). But this notion of interaction as we have seen is a heavily loaded term for me. An understanding of interaction involves connotations of meaning-exploration, the status of an objective code or core, meaning and its relationship with language, negotiation and exploitation and so on and so forth.
Again it entails in terms of the pragmatics of teaching, the use of a textbook, its status, the role of the 'centralised' syllabus, the teacher as the meaning - or syllabus maker, evaluation etc. Let us turn to these issues now.

6.4.1 The Textbook and the Notion of Interaction

At the outset, very briefly, what is a textbook? The content might be in the physical form of a textbook materials yet for one thing they are a manifestation of a tentative plan, and though they might contain experiences and tasks they are only dimensions of interactive creation. As inherently interaction, then these experiences and tasks (materials) have to be treated with attention to the underplaying needed of the formalisation of them as much as possible.

Similarly the method (pedagogic) if contained in the plan (or the textbook) at all, is again inherently interactive creation. Altogether the whole status of the textbook changes from an implied demand to be implemented faithfully in terms of experience or methodology to an invitation for the teacher and the learners to interpret, i.e., use the flexibility allowed and juggle around with choices of experience, task etc., and thus, interactively create meanings (for the learner) and syllabus (for the classroom).
An ability to improvise on exercises and method has always been considered a desirable part of a teacher's competence. But the emergent syllabus 'foregrounds' this and makes this the crux of the classroom and not just the difference between a creative teacher and an 'ordinary' teacher. It demands a high degree of professionalism from the teacher. As in an interaction-creation language syllabus the learner is invited to improvise freely and create her/his own reality and language, so in an enacted syllabus the teacher (and the learners) are invited to improvise and create their own syllabuses (in the form of retrospectively captured syllabus statements consisting of content and method unique to their situation).

The job of the textbook then is to provide experiences (as varied as possible yet not hoping to be exhaustive) and to a lesser degree of variation task types, and the teacher's job to be alert to the learner's choices and her own freedom to follow-up the learner's choice rather than the description of the textbook. The textbook should not be allowed to become any thing beyond an aid to the build-up (or jogging the memory) of knowledge about the world for the teacher herself; and similarly in the area of task only as a sampling of the innumerable meaning possibilities.
In the treatment of the textbook (with its implied methodology) then, the teacher is to understand basically interaction.

6.4.2 Evaluation and Interaction

Going to the next question I have set for myself here, viz., evaluation, I will recall what I said at the end of section 6.3 about pedagogic and languaging components. Since the (pedagogic) objectives in the tentative plan, (seen as meaning outcomes in a meaning-exploration process) are interactively created they are diverse/plural, dynamic/changeable and personal, there is no question of there being any kind of measurement of them against a norm/standard. That is, an evaluation procedure cannot say whether the outcome has been achieved - (pre-specification being ruled out) or whether the post-described outcomes are good or bad (which is once again dependent on (pre-) norm assignment, which is ruled out again). The meaning outcomes (the pedagogic objectives) have to be taken in their own terms.

All that can be asked is whether interaction (the overarching term made available by the languaging principle) has occurred.

This would make the question for every class a question about the occurrence of interactive creation of the four dimensions of the interactive act, the experiences, tasks, strategies and outcomes.
Again this interaction itself cannot be judged as being 'good' or 'bad' interaction, even in terms of pragmatic meaning-seeking or mathetic/poetic meaning-seekings (with all the attendant experience, task-strategies and outcomes) since the acknowledgement and acceptance of (individual) learner choices makes non-standardisation and hence plurality of the type of meaning-seeking also an integral principle. This does not mean that there are no ways at all to check 'progress'.

But demonstrating how this checking is done, brings in the goal of the learning/teaching endeavour and the merging of the pedagogic and the languaging in the languaging meaning-making model, and in that the obliteration of such distinctions as objectives (immediate outcomes pedagogically) and aims and goals (long-term outcomes). Thus, since it is a range - in interaction creation in terms of pragmatic, mathetic and poetic that is aimed at, - over a period of time - it is this range in interaction which is the ultimate criterion for evaluation - and incidentally and interestingly, and consistent with the thesis on language/meaning-making, - the evaluation of the project as well as the learner.

The method of such evaluation is not a separate inducement of behaviour through pre-planned tasks (of testing) but the maintainance of personal records of each learner in order to
guage specific learner's progress (this is an important word here - it is always progress which is looked for, and not mastery) in languaging again as it was for the project itself - how rich in range of meaning-choices was the criterion for satisfaction in a class, and how rich in range over a period of time was the criterion for the whole course.

In one sense, a description of classroom teaching was a description of progress of the project and the learner(s). Again teaching was evaluation, as evaluation would be teaching again. This is exactly how it happened in the project. There were never separate testing hours during the course. At the end of the semester or at the end of a year, when the administration demanded learners' marks in the subject, the teacher spent time over the daily records she maintained, and gave a 'grade' to each learner based upon the learner's work throughout the semester or year.

I do not feel competent enough at this stage to discuss this with any further amount of terminological sophistication. (For a very interesting discussion of such issues, with the necessary sophistication see R. Mathew (1985), where she discusses formative/summative evaluation; the qualitative difference in connotation she postulates for process evaluation as against formative evaluation, the arguments she uses along with task illustrations seem convincing to me to go with the kind of model of languaging I have presented.)
6.5 Dissemination and the Teacher: Concluding Remarks

To sum up, all this means that the teacher has to understand interaction or meaning-making and in that one notion is content, methodology and objectives (traditionally the pedagogic constructs) for the teacher.

Yet what does an understanding mean in terms of teacher-training? I would suggest here, that interactive-creation demands that the teacher also be not told what interaction means and 'teaching' language as a tool, not in quantamising knowledge about interaction, but in situations of teaching practice allow the idea to emerge. Here I would hold up as an example the encouragement to interact to self-choose as provided for the learners without there being any exhortations to them to choose experiences be divergent about meaning-seeking etc. What I am tentatively putting forward as an idea for teacher training is, a model of creative inservice teacher training, where the textbook with its implied use as a line of intention/Plan could play a crucial role.6

I will not say anything further here on this topic, since obviously, if what I say has to become more than speculation a vigorous argumentation backed and extended by practical work in teacher-training courses have to be gone through.
6.6 A Final Word

As a final word, the whole project and the thesis development, I would like to submit has been an exercise in a personal meaning-seeking endeavour. The 'final word' about interactive-creation of the moment has not been uttered; nor has the project offered the syllabus for teaching language on the basis of this model.

The project (the classroom lessons as described above) is one interpretation of the idea of interactive creation. The same teacher doing it with another set of learners, would produce in coalition with the learners therein, a different set of content, methodology and objectives - at the moment of the teaching/learning effort.

Likewise, the thesis development is the attempt to capture an elusive idea, through arguments articulated with the aid of vocabulary culled from literature in several disciplines, refined and extended in the teaching, and in this writing at a later date; and the refinement goes on.

That is the dynamism of meaning I have been arguing for.

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NOTES

1. It should be clear after the illustrations through discussion of lessons that we saw in Chapter V that such an overall impact of the model might not have been *obvious*, but not absent. They were definitely at work in the teaching project. So the following discussion is only by way of an offering of additional evidence for such model-effects.

2. This led to an apparent paradox in the project: on the one hand, if the learner's attention was caught by the puzzling out of the one answer of the language rule (as in the case of the learner already referred to in e.g., p.329 in Chapter V) the teacher went ahead and gave the rules. This was the freedom for the learner to decide upon the meaning he/she wanted to latch on to in keeping with the 'lead from behind' policy of language acquisition. The fact that there were very few learners who asked for such grammatical explanations and most of them all the time were only too happy pursuing meanings from other experiences like riddles and stories and maps and so on, seems actually to reiterate the point I am trying to make. Was this latter fact due to actual 'choice' or due to the fact that there were no materials (experience) available in the form of substitution tables and grammar exercises, for them to focus on these?

3. For instance, the macro-methodology or pedagogic methodology never had Drilling or Substitution-tables, Filling-in-blanks, copying etc.
4. See Allwright in Chapters III and IV, whose concept of 'interaction' offers a choice in these areas; and also Prabhu who I consider in practice makes interaction itself rigid and hence 'pseudo'. Both these I consider a consequence of competence/core and performance/process dichotomy that they favour. See further below.

5. The ideological bias is to invite as much as possible, value-free conceptualisation. This is not to deny the value of 'values' but to recognise its inevitability, acknowledge it, and to get a proper perspective on it. It has to be remembered that the 'given' was not totally kept away - the learners were getting a fill of it in the socialising and pragmatic classroom behaviour demanded of them. The proper perspective on the 'given' mentioned above, however did as far as possible keep the 'phatic' or the 'parroting' in languaging/meaning-making and syllabus making to the minimum. For the latter, see Note 17 in Chapter V.

6. This seems an interesting idea to pursue; setting up parallels to language capacity in teaching as teaching capacity and so on.

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