

Language, levels and learning: Unit standards and the assessment of foreign languages¹

Roger Peddie

ABSTRACT

This article examines the conceptual basis and the practicality of a unit standards approach to the assessment of foreign languages in a school setting. It first presents a brief historical account of the commonly found goals of foreign language teaching, then analyses the possible expression of these goals in terms of a unit standard approach. This analysis suggests that there are several approaches through which learning outcomes for foreign languages may be "arranged", and that all of these potentially offer a reasonable degree of reliability in both assessment and subsequent reporting. The article then demonstrates that each of the approaches has problems relating to curriculum definition and to validity, particularly when communication skills are seen as a major goal of a foreign languages programme. The article concludes by arguing that, while a unit standards approach for foreign language learning can be developed, it will almost inevitably represent a conventional learning sequence and/or an agreed progression of learning outcomes, both of which have little to do with what were initially claimed as the advantages of a unit standards approach. At the same time, the article notes that other methods of setting assessment goals for foreign languages tend to suffer from most of the same weaknesses as those exposed here.

Introduction

This article examines some of the issues relating to the learning of foreign languages raised by the development of a new "framework" for qualifications in New Zealand, building in part on the earlier more general critiques of Peddie (1993) and Crombie (1995). By "foreign" languages is meant languages which are not currently spoken to any extent in the particular New Zealand community in which the learners live. They may be languages of trade (such as Korean or Japanese), languages of international importance (such as Spanish or Arabic), or languages with a rich heritage of history, culture and literature (such as Latin or Russian). It is obvious even from these examples that some languages may be all of these things, and a "community" language as well. The primary purpose for learning a specific language will, however, determine to a large extent the way it is regarded and the goals set within the school curriculum.

By "framework" is meant a systematic approach to classifying qualifications. All nationally recognised qualifications are mapped onto a series of levels, each of which supposedly has a different and progressively more demanding set of defining criteria. In New Zealand, the recently developed framework has eight levels, with the first approximately equivalent with learning

outcomes which might be expected in the third year of secondary school; and the eighth level equivalent to post-graduate study (cf. later discussion).

The article opens with an historical look at the goals of foreign language learning in New Zealand, culminating in a brief outline of what are now the widely accepted goals in the school setting. The next section examines the extent to which such goals can be "translated" into a format suitable for a unit standards approach to learning and assessment. This is followed by an analysis of issues raised by three possible approaches, and a brief look at current draft unit standards in languages. The article concludes by noting that other systems of assessment are perhaps equally faulty in their approach to foreign language learning and assessment.

Goals of foreign language learning

The goals of foreign language learning in schools in New Zealand have arguably varied only in emphasis over the past 150 years. In the first European secondary schools, which opened in the second half of the nineteenth century, it seems clear that the goals of learning Latin and Greek were mainly related to reading, writing, translating and grammatical expertise, together with some knowledge of history and culture. On the other hand, the teaching of languages like Italian (for girls), was aimed rather at conversational skills (Cumming & Cumming, 1978). The second Director-General of Education, George Hogben, when revising the curriculum around the turn of the century, argued that languages should be spoken (Butchers, 1930). This was a clear reaction to what had become a most formal approach, with the emphasis on what later became known as the grammar-translation approach (Murdoch, 1943).

Despite the enthusiasm of Hogben, and anecdotally of a minority of language teachers, the emphasis in secondary schools and even in universities remained formal: reading, writing and translation skills, backed by a demonstrable understanding of the grammar of the language, together with some knowledge of limited aspects of culture. Examinations reflected this emphasis. The writer's personal experience as a learner in the 1950s and early 1960s was - to modern thinking - depressingly similar in both Latin and French. It is true that, by the end of five years of secondary study in these languages, the writer could read and write much more (and more accurately!) in French than in Latin, but in the case of both languages he could discourse with gusto about such vitally important matters as gerundives, the preterite and the subjunctive, adverbial clauses, the dative case, and could recite vast quantities of the forms of "irregular" verbs.

Unfortunately throughout the first half of the present century, other skills and areas of understanding were much less well developed. In the most widely taught foreign language, French, conversational skills were (with rare exceptions) almost entirely lacking, as was any genuine understanding about the life of teenagers in France. In Latin, there was little taught about the lives of common Roman people, less about those of servants and slaves, and nothing about the variety of common spoken forms of the language - though a few of the formal speeches of Cicero were the subject of close attention.

In the period 1960-80, significant changes took place. Particularly with regard to modern languages like French, German and Japanese (introduced in the mid-seventies), the goals of teaching and assessment became at once broader, but in some ways less manageable. By the end of this period, listening and speaking were seen as central aims in the new communicative approaches. The French Course Statement for the secondary school Sixth Form Certificate (1989) is a good example. It gives the following general aims for language learning:

- A1 To extend and develop students' ability to communicate in French.
- A2 To offer students a positive and enjoyable experience through which they gain a greater understanding of themselves and their world.

- A3 To deepen students' awareness and understanding of the life and culture of French-speaking peoples.
- A4 To increase students language experience and foster a desire for further language learning.

As argued some years previously (Peddie, 1990), these goals are not well-articulated with the ten more specific Objectives which follow. These Objectives were grouped under four main headings: Listening and Speaking, Reading, Writing, and Cultural Aspects. Thus, while most teachers may well foster (for example) positive attitudes towards and knowledge about language learning, and perhaps help students to a greater understanding of their world, there is nothing contained in the Objectives which will ensure that they do this. Even more importantly here, there has been nothing in the prescription of externally conducted school examinations in New Zealand which could lead to any form of assessment of such matters, even though they are regularly claimed by language teachers to be significant and valuable goals in language classes.²

Foreign language goals and unit standards

For some years prior to the emergence of the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF), and its unit standards approach, several leading educators belonging to the New Zealand Association of Language Teachers (NZALT), had been arguing for a "levels" approach to language learning.

In the 1970s, for example, the well-known language teacher educator Jim Madden argued that the current School Certificate approach both penalised foreign language learners and was wasteful of learners' talents (Madden, unpublished paper, 1973). He noted that the scaling system used in the norm-referenced School Certificate penalised languages students who, demonstrably a high-scoring group by their other results, were clearly deserving of much better marks. He and others argued that one way to remedy this would be to set in place a series of graded goals for foreign language learners. Results at the end of the fifth form (now Year 11), could be reported in terms of the grade/level achieved, thus giving appropriate rewards to the faster, more intelligent learners, and yet a sense of real achievement to those who moved at a slower pace.

In the late 1980s, French was one of the subjects selected for a two-year development trial of grade-related criteria, with teachers using exemplars of marked work to guide their own assessments. One major problem of this method was that the grade related criteria regularly used comparative terms like "some", "a reasonable amount" and "most", leaving the teacher to decide whether the level of language itself was appropriate for the assessment task (Peddie, 1990). While this trial involved only one "level" in the sense now commonly used in the NZQF, it is important for this article to note that each grade in effect constituted a different "level", and that there were some problems of interpretation of what these levels might be (op.cit.).

It is too far beyond the stretch of imagination to propose that Madden and/or some of his colleagues were present in ethereal form at some restaurant where a few of the early key players of the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA), may perhaps in an idle moment have drawn a levels system on a spare napkin. Yet in essence, Madden was proposing an updated version of the older behavioural objectives approach of people like Mager (1962), which, like the grade-related criteria approach, was a precursor of the NZQF system. The difference in the NZQF approach was the rigidity with which "unit standards" were to be developed.

It is assumed that a NZQF/unit standards approach will be relatively familiar to readers.³ What now follows is an exploration of how foreign language goals and learning might in theory be accommodated within such an approach.

First, it has regularly been claimed that a unit standards approach defines the learning outcomes, but not the actual curriculum, nor the teaching approach (e.g. NZQA, n.d.). This is immediately problematic for a number of the normal goals of foreign language teaching. A learning outcome such as "demonstrates knowledge of the contemporary life patterns of teenagers in

France" does leave a good deal to the teacher, even with a helpful "range" statement such as: typical metropolitan lifestyles of teenagers attending secondary schools; common sports, pastimes, leisure activities (etc., etc.). This can still be seen as an open-ended and highly contestable area of definition for teachers.

First, this leaves open, and deliberately so, the precise nature of the content to be studied. Yet the breadth, depth and detail of the content will make a significant difference to the degree of difficulty experienced by the students, and hence to the "level" of work required. Second, range statements like those noted above give rise to some interesting issues of both reliability and validity. To what extent are the lives of teenagers structured and moulded by their society, their class, their gender and the schools they attend? Where is up-to-date information on such matters available to foreign language teachers in New Zealand? How is it possible for teachers to be fully aware of the extent to which the contemporary political scene in France, and in the European Community, cultural shifts due to Americanisation, the impact of multinationals like McDonalds, and recent developments in post-modern thinking, have (or have not) affected life in France for the French teenagers of today?

One answer to such questions is to prescribe in considerable detail what students are expected to know in a unit standard devoted to "contemporary teenage life in France". Yet the study of French teenagers should not be just a matter of remembering lists of facts, but rather a means to an end, the end being greater understanding of a different pattern of teenage lifestyle. It might be noted as a not-so-trivial aside that providing assessable learning outcomes for this is parallel to the problem which faces unit standard writers in a number of other subject areas - anywhere, in fact, where such awkward things as understanding, attitudes, feelings and values might be considered to be worthy learning outcomes, rather than just "skills" or facts. A second answer to the question of what is to be taught, would be to rely on the national moderator or the moderation system as a whole, or perhaps the (national) French Adviser to convey to teachers what needs to be known and understood.

Logistics apart, both of these answers result in a much closer definition of the taught curriculum, which NZQA insists is the preserve of the teacher (Hood, personal communication, 1995).⁴ Yet if one important goal is to establish equivalent levels of competence for the same unit standards throughout the school system, it is reasonable to argue that there could (again) be serious issues of both reliability and validity if individual teachers are left alone to determine what is worth knowing. In terms of reliability, there are already studies indicating that closely defined unit standards and even common tasks do not necessarily result in common judgements of competence (Wolf, 1995).

Moreover, if the curriculum is actually determined through the workings of (in particular) a moderation system, then the unit standards approach itself is forcing the existence of that curriculum through the teachers' and moderators' interpretations of what the unit standards actually require. Put more simply, unless there is a separate and tightly prescribed syllabus, unit standards will determine the curriculum content.

Perhaps closer to the ideal of a unit standards approach, then, is to look at what was previously done in foreign language curricula, where most of the focus was on the language itself. Following earlier lines, teachers would simply be required to ensure that "appropriate" cultural understandings and positive attitudes were developed through the selection of syllabus-defined topics for the external examinations. Teachers could then use their own methods to teach about the culture. If cultural knowledge and understanding assessed against unit standards were then to be claimed to be equivalent across settings, however, the same problems noted above will reappear.⁵

To move to what seems safer ground, it is assumed here that the four language skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening are normally the current major goals of a foreign language programme at secondary school. Given the recent emphasis (to be applauded) on communication skills, and especially on oral communication, the language skills of listening and speaking will be used to illustrate the argument.

Much - though not all - of what will be said in terms of these skills is equally applicable to reading and writing. It should be noted also that an interesting parallel exists between the different pairs of skills. Learning to write in French without learning to read is arguably absurd, but simply learning to read has its own justification.⁶ Similarly, attempting to learn to speak without any skill in listening would appear to be extremely foolish, but listening for understanding (for the enjoyment of, say, French opera or French films), can be justified as a useful skill in its own right.

What, then, are the ways in which language goals in listening and speaking can be "translated" into appropriate learning outcomes for unit standards? There appear to be at least three defensible approaches: to specify the language outcomes by listing the grammar and/or vocabulary which must be known; second, to specify certain common situations and/or language topics which must be competently dealt with (e.g. "at the supermarket", "families"); and third, to specify language levels by describing the ways in which students might respond to broadly defined situations through language functions (e.g. "explaining", "questioning").⁷ Each of these is now subject to critical examination.

Specifying the language outcomes

In one sense, this is the obvious solution. If the learning outcomes relate to an agreed list of (graded) vocabulary and grammatical constructions, then the "curriculum" can rest with teachers, both in terms of how this material is taught and what teaching methods and techniques are employed. Nevertheless, there are a number of problems in using this approach.

First, there is the obvious but challenging question: how will the vocabulary list and the list of grammatical constructions be established? A simple answer for vocabulary might be in terms of frequency of use, data which is in fact available for some (though not all) languages). But is that the most appropriate approach for teenage learners of the language as a foreign language? While all would presumably agree that high frequency words like "a, the, to, for, she, it" and the like should be known by learners of English language, there would soon be considerable debate over what should be learned next, as the needs of second language learners and foreign language learners would arguably differ. General frequency lists are probably quite appropriate for those learning a language as a second language, one which is widely spoken in the geographical area where they are learning. Such lists may not be suited to learners of a foreign language, where this is not the case and where the purpose for learning may suggest a different order of words to be learned. Specific corpus information would need to be developed, a task now made much easier by modern computer-based searches.

Similar issues occur with listing grammatical constructions. By way of illustration, traditional texts (and teaching) avoided the use of French subjunctive until at least the third year of secondary school. The common explanation was that the subjunctive was too difficult to introduce earlier. Yet the new audiolingual texts which appeared from the early 1960s often contained "subjunctives" (unexplained) in very first dialogues. This is because the present subjunctive for a widely use class of verbs in French is the same in form as the present tense, and learners might commonly use it without difficulty, and without requiring any specific teacher explanation. If a list of grammatical constructions is to be based on "frequency", moreover, then the serious question needs to be asked - as it was indirectly for vocabulary - frequency for and in what?

What emerges from the preceding paragraphs is that, even if actual teaching concerns are set aside, there is no clearly agreed or "objective" way of determining which vocabulary or which grammatical constructions should be taught/learned and in which order. Someone, or some group needs to make the decision that, for a "level one" unit standard, these are the words and the grammatical constructions which must be known in order for competency to be ascribed. Furthermore - and not pursued in this article - someone or some group also needs to decide whether oral skills should be developed at the same rate as reading and writing, and whether the more active

skills (speaking and writing) ought to be developed at the same rate as the receptive skills of listening and reading.

Specifying situations or linguistic functions

Perhaps a more promising approach is to prescribe the situations in which a student is meant to communicate, or to indicate the linguistic patterns which need to be covered. While these two approaches are quite different in terms of how a curriculum might be developed, they are dealt with simultaneously here as the issues around each are very similar. This is because in neither approach does the actual language (vocabulary and grammar), tend to be specifically prescribed.

In both cases, in fact, the problem is that the "level" of required language is not easily defined. Take for example, a unit standard which specified something like; "demonstrates the ability to make everyday purchases at the butcher or another common food outlet." In one sense, this is straightforward. The language teacher would know that what is required is that the student can: greet the salesperson, indicate what "everyday" items they require, check the price, check that the amount charged is appropriate, and offer appropriate closure/farewells. A moment's thought will show that this set of basic requirements can be performed at a wide range of levels of fluency and complexity, and that presumably the teacher would have to know what is appropriate for the unit standard in question, and thence the level - even if helpfully detailed range statements are offered.

Similarly, if the linguistic function to be learned is "explanations", then there is a very wide range of linguistic constructions which might be used by the learner. Using English as an example, learners might be deemed competent for saying "I missed the bus", to explain a late arrival, or they might be expected to produce phrases like, "Well, I slept in because I went out late last night - and the alarm didn't go off - then I had an unexpected phone call, and because of all that I missed the bus." The point here is that a learning outcome for "explanations", along with a reasonably detailed range statement, could still leave almost completely open the language "level" a teacher might teach for a particular unit standard.

It is true that an astute unit standard writer could prescribe in fairly minute detail the constructions and patterns which would be required in terms of a specific learning outcome; but if this totally constrained the ability of the teacher to construct a genuine "curriculum", then the claims of the NZQA unit standards approach can again be called into question. Similarly, it is true that the moderation system could, over time, clarify what was deemed to be the appropriate level and extent of language to be taught. In neither case, however, does there appear to be an objective way of determining whether the language forms selected will be at the "right" level.

A levels-based unit standards approach: examples

While the main thrust of this article is to argue that there are no obvious ways in theory to create objective unit standards in foreign languages, it would be remiss not to consider what is in fact being considered by NZQA at the time of writing. Yet this section is brief, both because final versions of unit standards in this area were not yet available, and because two or three examples suffice to show that the difficulties associated with the Sixth Form Certificate grade-related criteria have more or less been repeated in the recent developments (cf. Peddie, 1990).

The draft unit standards in international languages, and the more recent drafts in French (NZQA, 1997) show that NZQA have held to their policy of "not prescribing curriculum" in these unit standards, thus forcing teachers to develop a common curriculum/content base through the moderation process or other collective means. In the draft Unit Standard, French, 201; Listening, Element One is "Identify main points from spoken texts in less familiar contexts." The sole performance criterion effectively restates the Element, while the Range Statement simply notes the number of points to be identified (at least four per text). The preliminary Special Notes defines "less

familiar" as referring "to topics and settings that may be outside the personal experience of the learner but have been introduced in class."

It is easy to be critical if the Unit Standard is itself supposed to be setting the standard. Virtually any level of language would be appropriate, and any topic which had been "introduced" could be used. Clearly, teachers will determine the types of language, the topics, the vocabulary and grammar from the French syllabus, a point made explicit in the Special Notes. It is arguably the case, however that the standards will come from teacher experience both in teaching at this level (sixth form/Year 12), and through the moderation system. The Unit Standard does not set the standard, nor is it even credible as a "learning outcome". Interestingly enough, it does not even attempt to define topics or situations, although there is a very limited expression of language functions by use of terms like "transactional conversation".

Similar comments could be made of the draft International Languages Unit Standard 203A Speaking, where the purpose is to "give a short talk to a known audience in (language) to convey information and ideas on a less familiar topic, and respond in (language) to questions relating to the information and ideas expressed". The two Elements effectively recast this purpose into giving the talk and responding to the questions. The draft Unit Standard French 202A Speaking and Listening, uses terms like "unpredictable component", this one being defined as "implies that the conversation will allow for spontaneous, unrehearsed language". In both cases, a knowledge of the syllabus, some experience in teaching at this and other class levels and the moderation process would all seem to be necessary to set the standards.

To reach any sort of reasonable comparability, the moderation process itself may also need to be subject to further refinement. The judgements used could depend in part on exemplars of "correctly" assessed work as suggested by Jessup (1995). The use of exemplars, however, has already been shown to be only partially effective (Peddie, 1990). Furthermore, there is the risk that some teachers may adopt the exemplars as a model to aim for, again potentially limiting curriculum choice.

Discussion

Despite what has been indicated in the previous two sections, a levels-based unit standards approach is definitely possible, if by that is meant the inclusion of the whole process and context of teaching to unit standards. There clearly are "language domains" which are more common in the speech of teenagers than others, and there are common words, verb forms and structures which most teachers would agree are necessary at a very early stage of language learning. Even if the extent of such agreement would be likely to show a steady decline as the learning progressed through from the first years, it has long been possible for teachers to prepare students for the older, traditional examinations in the third, fourth and fifth years of secondary school - and without any strong arguments being raised over what was set down as the material to be learned. More recent syllabi do tend to detail vocabulary and (especially) grammatical structures (e.g. Spanish in the New Zealand Curriculum, 1995).

Thus, by adapting the more traditional syllabus material, it is possible to develop a levels system of unit standards using one (or more) of the approaches critiqued earlier in this article, and to have the same fairly widespread teacher agreement that the resulting curriculum is appropriate. Furthermore, through on-going iterations of assessments and moderation, it would also be possible to ensure that there was a reasonable degree of inter-assessor equivalence, and thus a similarly reasonable degree of reliability in the system. This fits in well with the approach to competency-based education recently advocated by Harris et al. in Australia (1995).

Validity

What such an approach and more traditional syllabi and curricula are less successful in doing is presenting a good case for validity. This failure is linked to the nature of validity itself. First, it is the outcomes (in this case the resulting curriculum and the outcome of the assessments), which will be more or less valid. Second, the basis of validity lies in its notion - to borrow a phrase favoured by NZQA - of being "fit for purpose". It is worth adding that NZQA have consistently pushed for better validity rather than reliability, perhaps echoing the belief of English proponents of unit standards like Jessup (who visited NZQA in the early 1990s), that a high level of validity would effectively eliminate the need to focus on reliability (Steadman, 1995: 208-10).

The purpose being discussed here is to teach students communicative skills, specifically, to listen and speak in a foreign language. The unit standards will define the kinds of outcomes to be achieved at each level and the teachers, through the syllabus and the moderation system, will in time develop an understanding of the actual content in terms of language to be understood, and spoken. Is the result of all that a valid approach?

That could be checked in several ways. First, we could establish the concurrent validity of such an approach by selecting a sample of students deemed competent at different levels, and having the students from each level converse with the same group of (standard dialect) native speakers. If the native speakers agreed that students from each higher level were "better" than those in lower levels, then a form of construct validity would have been established. The difficulty of choosing a suitable group of native speakers is glossed over here, but it should be noted that their views on things like conversational range might in fact differ if they came from rural as opposed to urban areas, or from higher rather than lower socioeconomic groups. It should also be noted that the non-native speakers' ability to convey a message may be considerably enhanced if they have paralinguistic skills, such as gesture, facial expression and the like.

The content validity could be established by checking word and structure frequency lists, although as argued earlier, these might have to be adjusted both for the age group and for the fact that the students are foreign language learners. The former adjustment would seem to be much more necessary than the latter, and that adjustment would in fact create difficulties. In theory, a teenage language use frequency list could be drawn up, but the rapidity with which teenage slang changes in both cultures could create a real-time difficulty. It would be easier to define the sorts of situations in which teenagers might reasonably be expected to operate, and to give a broad indication of language forms for that situation.

In practice, however, validity is more likely to be established by a mixed approach. Teachers would probably widely agree with the notion that some things are more difficult than others, and that some words and expressions are far less used than others. With years of syllabi, teaching materials and, especially, (supposedly) graded textbooks to reinforce these beliefs, a common pattern would quickly emerge.⁸ Arguably, this is more a form of face validity than anything else, though some aspects of content validity would be embedded into common beliefs.

Conclusion

Assessment methods will typically be more or less valid depending on the purpose for which the assessment is being used. That point is still too often overlooked. If the purpose of using a unit standards approach to assessment in foreign languages is to measure student achievement more accurately and objectively, then that purpose will not be realised to the extent that the rhetoric of such an approach has been proclaimed. At the same time, this article recognises that a reasonably reliable unit standards approach in foreign language learning can be constructed over time, using a well-designed moderation system as a form of on-going clarification of both content and standards. Here, as was the case in more traditional approaches, successive "levels" will develop

from a mix of increasingly precise linguistic knowledge, conventional beliefs and understanding, classroom experience and an interactive system of moderation.

The real issue in all approaches to date is that of validity. This in turn arises from an apparent failure to accept that the goals of foreign language teaching need to be much more clearly defined, and well before any particular assessment method is proclaimed as ideal.

Notes

1. The author wishes to thank Marilyn Lewis for her helpful notes on a draft of this article, and Bill Lennox (NZQA) and Jim Madden who assisted the author with both comments and unit standards material.
2. Over a period of twelve years, the writer was Research Officer (and Executive Member) of the New Zealand Association of Language Teachers. Such claims were often made in discussions about languages policy in New Zealand.
3. As noted in the Introduction, the NZQF has eight "levels". Learning outcomes in a subject area are expressed in a formal way through what are known as "unit standards", each of which is worth a number of "credits" at one of these levels in the NZQF. Qualifications comprise an agreed set of unit standards and are gained when the approved number of credits has been awarded. To gain credit for a unit standard, the learner must show (pre-defined) competence in each and every learning outcome.
4. David Hood was at the time Chief Executive Officer of NZQA.
5. It is worth noting at this point that this article does not even touch on the major problem of assessment task equivalence. Elley (e.g., 1995) has written widely on that topic.
6. Indeed, up until the 1950s and 60s, for a B.A. degree at some New Zealand universities, where a student had not successfully completed at least one course in a language other than English, a reading knowledge in a foreign language was required to complete the B.A. Questions and answers about what was read were entirely in English.
7. It should be noted that this is not a typology of language teaching methods; nor does this classification overlook the fact that the major goal of current language teaching is communicative competence.
8. This tends to understate the problems facing a new or inexperienced teacher. As argued by Peddie (1990), on-going teacher development is needed, but particularly in the early years of teaching.

References

- BUTCHERS, A. G. (1930) *Education in New Zealand*. Dunedin: Coulls, Somerville, Wilkie. CROMBIE, W (1995) 'The New Zealand National Curriculum: Assessing Language Competence', in R. Peddie & B. Tuck (eds.), *Setting the Standards: Issues in Assessment for National Qualifications*. Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.
- CUMMING, I & CUMMING, A. (1978) *A History of State Education in New Zealand, 1840-1975*. Wellington: Pitman.
- ELLEY, W. (1995) 'What is Wrong with Standards-Based Assessment?' in R. Peddie & B. Tuck (eds.), *Setting the Standards: Issues in Assessment for National Qualifications*. Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.
- HARRIS, R., GUTHRIE, H., HOBART, B. & LUNDBERG, D. (1995) *Competency-Based Education and Training: Between a Rock and a Whirlpool*. South Melbourne: MacMillan Education Australia.
- JESSUP, G. (1995) 'Outcome based Qualifications and the Implications for Learning', in J. Burke (ed.) *Outcomes, Learning and the Curriculum: Implications for NVQs, GNVQs and other qualifications*. London: Palmer Press.
- MADDEN, J. F. (1973) 'An Investigation into the performance and attitudes of pupils who sat the 1972 Audio-Lingual French papers.' Unpublished paper.
- MAGER, R. F. (1962) *Preparing Instructional Objectives*. Belmont (Calif.): Fearon. MURDOCH, J. H. (1943) *The High Schools of New Zealand. A critical survey*. Wellington: NZCER/Whitcombe & Tombs/Oxford University Press.

- NEW ZEALAND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION. (1989) *Sixth Form Certificate 1989; Course Statement, French*. Wellington: The Department.
- NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY. (no date, c.1993) *An Introduction to the Framework*. Wellington: The Authority.
- NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY. (1997) (Unpublished) *draft unit standards: International Languages Ccvisultation Draft*, 202B, 203A; French (21 April, 1997) 201, 202A.
- PEDDIE, R. (1990) *Assessing Alone: An Evaluation of the Sixth Form Certificate French Moderation Trial*, 1989. Report to the Department of Education. Auckland, The University of Auckland.
- PEDDIE, R. (1993) '*Standards, levels, grades and merit: a critical analysis.*' Paper delivered at the National Assessment Research Forum conducted by the Competency- Based Training Working Party of the Vocational Education, Employment and Training Advisory Committee, Sydney, 1-2 April, 1993.
- Spanish in the New Zealand Curriculum*. (1995) Wellington: Learning Media.
- STEADMAN, S. (1995) 'The Assessment of Outcomes' in J. Burke (ed.) *Outcomes, Learning and the Curriculum: Implications for NVQs, GNVQs and other qualifications*. London: Palmer Press.
- WOLF, A. (1995) *Competence-Based Assessment*. Buckingham: Open University Press.