A Study of CELTA Trainers' Understanding and Operationalisation of CELTA Assessment Criterion 2g: "providing appropriate practice of language items"

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A Study of CELTA Trainers' Understanding and Operationalisation of CELTA Assessment Criterion 2g:
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Abstract

This mixed-methods study investigated CELTA trainers' understanding of criterion 2g: "*providing appropriate practice of language items*". Open- and closed-ended methods were used to obtain qualitative and quantitative data. The initial phase consisted of semi-structured interviews (N=50). The data was coded and triangulated with input from experienced CELTA trainers (n=3) and experts in Applied Linguistics (n=3) to create a Likert-scale questionnaire, subsequently piloted by a focus group (N=4) in the second phase of the study. In the third phase, the final version of the questionnaire was distributed online in order to obtain quantitative data (N=521). Both sets of data indicated disparity of opinion, while the qualitative data was valuable in providing insight into differences in operationalisation. The disparity which emerged strongly suggests that criterion 2g is unreliable. A discussion of the pedagogical significance of these findings is provided.

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Glossary and List of Abbreviations

assessor	Used exclusively here for a CELTA moderator. Some CELTA trainers are also appointed by Cambridge as assessors. Each course is visited for one day by an assessor. While trainees' work is internally assessed by the course tutors, a sample is moderated by an external assessor during the visit, which takes place in the latter stages of the course. CELTA assessors need to train on CELTA courses regularly to remain an assessor.
Cambridge	The examinations board responsible for the administration and ratification of the CELTA. Starting out as UCLES (University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate), it was later known as Cambridge ESOL, then Cambridge English Language Assessment, and presently Cambridge Assessment English.
CELTA	Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, the official designation of the course since 1996.
CELT-P	Certificate in English Language Teaching – Primary.
CELT-S	Certificate in English Language Teaching – Secondary.
Cert TEALS	Certificate in Teaching English as a Life Skill.
CertTESOL	Trinity College London Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.
CETF	Cambridge English Teaching Framework.
CF	Corrective feedback.
CTEFLA	Certificate in Teaching English as a Foreign Language to Adults, the official designation of the course from 1983 to 1996.
Delta	Diploma in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.
Demo lesson	Trainees are required to observe experienced teachers teaching lessons (six hours in total). These lessons are taught by the tutors and/or teachers working at the centre. A lesson taught specifically for the benefit of trainees (i.e. not part of one of the courses at the school), is often referred to as a *demo* lesson.
ELT	English Language Teaching.

Glossary and List of Abbreviations

FCE	First Certificate in English, a proficiency examination provided by Cambridge. Now designated as B2 First.
Formative indicator	A particular facet or instance of a construct/dimension of a construct.
ICELT	In-Service Certificate in English Language Teaching.
IH	International House.
Input session	A session (e.g. workshop) in which a CELTA tutor inputs syllabus content.
ISLA	Instructed Second Language Acquisition.
L1	Mother tongue.
L2	Second (or third etc.) language learnt.
N	The total number of participants in a study.
n	A subset of the total number of participants in a study.
PPP	Presentation-Practice-Production.
RQ	Research question.
RSA	The Royal Society of Arts, which was responsible for the administration and ratification of the CTEFLA (see p.1) from 1983 to 1988. However, given that the RSA brand was well known, the course was designated as the RSA/Cambridge CTEFLA until 1996.
SLA	Second Language Acquisition.
SLTE	Second Language Teacher Education.
SPSS	Statistical Product and Service Solutions.
SSI(s)	Semi-structured interview(s).
TBL	Task-Based Language Teaching.
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language.
TKT	Teaching Knowledge Test.
TP	Teaching Practice; each trainee is required to teach a total of six hours, e.g. 8 x 45-minute lessons (thus TP1 to TP8).

Glossary and List of Abbreviations

TP points	Guidance written by a TP tutor for trainees to help them prepare for their lessons. These include references to published materials and suggestions from the tutor. TP points tend to be more detailed in the earlier stages of the course.
trainer	A Cambridge-approved CELTA trainer, who may also be a CELTA assessor.
tutor	A trainer working on a CELTA course. There are usually two tutors per course: a *main course tutor* and an *assistant course tutor*. Candidates must be observed by a minimum of two tutors.
μ	Mean value.
σ	Standard deviation value.
$\approx$	Approximately equal to.

1 Introduction

1.1 The focus of this dissertation

The term *practice* has multiple meanings in the field of Second Language Teacher Education (SLTE). In the broadest sense, there is the obvious contrast between *practice* and *theory*. More specifically, SLTE practices are informed by various theories about:

- the nature of language and the mechanisms underlying Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

- the role of instruction, cognition and interaction in SLA

- effective teacher education

Central to the topic of this dissertation is a type of *practice* related to the second category above, and which DeKeyser (2007a) broadly defines as "specific activities in the second language, engaged in systematically, deliberately, with the goal of developing [learners'] knowledge of and skills in the second language" (p.1). Included in DeKeyser's broad definition are *targeted activities designed to develop use of specific linguistic features*[1] (Thompson, 2018: 31). These are commonly used by trainee teachers during their Teaching Practice (TP) within the framework of the Cambridge Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Language (CELTA), a pre-service English Language Teaching (ELT) qualification generally considered an industry benchmark in the ELT commercial sector (Leung, 2009: 51; Morgan, 2015: 151; Senior, 2006: 37-8; Stanley, 2013: 6).

There are currently 41 CELTA assessment criteria (appendix A). Criterion 2g relates to the type of practice mentioned above, i.e. successful candidates at *Pass* level should show convincingly that they can demonstrate professional competence as teachers by:

- ***providing appropriate practice of language items***

However, it is not the practice activities *per se* which are important here. Instead, the aim of this study is to examine the types of practice which CELTA trainers consider as appropriate,

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[1] Unless specified, the collective term *practice* hereafter refers to any activity with this specific aim.

in an attempt to shed light on the belief system of this particular profession. As such, this dissertation foregrounds CELTA trainers' understanding and assessment of practice.

1.2   Reasons for choice of topic

Firstly, the view that practice has a beneficial role in *instructed* SLA (ISLA) is intuitively appealing. Whatever goals a learner may have in learning a second language (L2), it seems axiomatic that practice is one of the key means by which such goals are achieved. Such a hypothesis should be empirically testable. It might even seem reasonable to expect that there are well-attested empirical findings from SLA research regarding which types of practice are ideal. However, although people have been learning second languages since time immemorial, SLA is a relatively young field of enquiry (R. Ellis, 2006b: 18; Long, 1990: 59). Despite numerous theories and studies, we still do not have "a uniform account of how instruction can best facilitate language learning" (R. Ellis, 2006b: 18). As for practice, there are "tentative answers" (DeKeyser, 2018a: xv).

Secondly, *assessment* is central to both my roles as a CELTA trainer and assessor[2]. I am also an English language teacher. The practice activities I value and use with my students are generally the same practice activities which, as a tutor, I encourage CELTA trainees to use with their students. These choices express my own theoretical convictions, whether explicit or implicit. From experience, such convictions have not always been in harmony with those of my fellow tutors and teachers, as well as those of my trainees and students. Moreover, it has been somewhat of a revelatory experience to consider them in light of the theories and research data I have studied and analysed during this Master's course. These factors have provided the impetus for an investigation of my fellow trainers' beliefs about practice and how this informs the way they train and assess trainees, against the backdrop of SLA theories and research. In a way, this study is a rather elaborate form of an action research project, with the aims of (i) furthering my own professional development as a teacher educator and (ii) adding to the knowledge base on SLTE.

1.3   Organisation of dissertation

This dissertation consists of seven chapters. In the next chapter, I provide an overview of the CELTA course. In chapter three, I outline relevant theoretical views and findings from

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[2] See *trainer*, *tutor* and *assessor* in glossary.

empirical research, both in relation to practice in ISLA and the assessment of practice within the CELTA framework. The issues discussed in chapters two and three form the basis of my three research questions. Chapter four describes the data collection and analysis methods used for this study. Chapters five and six present and discuss the findings respectively; some recommendations are made in the latter. In the concluding chapter, I consider what the findings of this study suggest about the concept of a one-month entry-level training course.

2. The CELTA course

The first International House (IH) teacher training course, the precursor to CELTA, was launched in London in June 1962; it lasted two weeks and cost eight guineas, approximately £145 in today's money. Trainees taught ten-minute lessons and received feedback not only from each other and the TP tutor, but also the volunteer TP students. At the end of the course, they received a report with a summary of their ability and one of four grades: *Outstanding*, *Good*, *Moderate* and *Below Average* (Haycraft, 1998: 194-5; Pulverness, 2015: 11-3). The approach to language teaching used on the course reflected the zeitgeist of the time: the use of Situational Language Teaching in British ELT to deliver a structural syllabus, and the use of oral drills to eliminate errors caused by mother tongue (L1) transfer and habituate learners to new structures. As John Haycraft, co-founder of IH, explains:

> The crux was to suggest ways of teaching a beginners' class with different nationalities, in English. Without translating, new words had to be taught with pictures, mime, or blackboard drawing, or real objects brought into class. Practice was done through repetition drills and acting out little situations. Writing came last… We produced pithy teaching formulas that trainees could use to tackle the foreign students' problems with English grammar, introduced stage by stage (Haycraft, 1998: 193-4).

Not only has the approach to teaching (and practice) on CELTA moved beyond audiolingual methodology, the approach to assessment has become more rigorous, with the introduction of assessment criteria in 1996 (Cambridge, personal correspondence, December 19, 2019), reflecting the need for greater accountability in relation to evaluation of trainees (Pulverness, 2015: 24) and the trend in general education towards standardisation of assessment (Galaczi & Swabey, 2015: 117; Morgan, 2015: 147).

Currently the CELTA is available in three different formats: *full-time* (usually four weeks); *part-time* (from a few months to approximately a year); *blended* (jointly produced with IH London)[3]. Continuous assessment of TP is now one of two assessment components. Candidates are required to teach a total of six hours with classes at two (sometimes three)

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[3] In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, CELTA centres have been given permission to run *fully online* courses.

levels of ability. TP encompasses *planning*, *teaching* and *self-evaluation*. Candidates must be observed and assessed by a minimum of two tutors in total. Unlike the first IH courses, TP feedback does not incorporate comments from the TP students. The other assessment component comprises four written assignments. Both components are integrated and contribute to one of four possible grades: *Pass A*; *Pass B*; *Pass*; *Fail*. Candidates' work is internally assessed by tutors and moderated by an external assessor. Through a process of reviews and consultations, the original CELTA assessment criteria have evolved into the current 41. As noted, the approach to assessment has become much more rigorous, arguably necessary given the qualification's increased status. Compared to its modest precursor in 1962, today the CELTA:

- is the most widely taken initial qualification of its kind (Cambridge, 2020a), with around 15,000 candidates each year (Bolitho & Rossner, 2020: 61)

- is widely available, with approximately 1500 courses offered at over 300 centres in over 70 countries (Cambridge, 2015, 2020b)

- is highly regarded by employers, as shown by a study of 600 advertisements for ELT jobs in over 60 countries, in which nine out of ten employers in the UK and seven out of ten employers worldwide specifically asked for this qualification (Cambridge, 2015, 2020b; Harrison, 2018)

3 Literature review

3.1 Using a competency-based framework: possible issues

Galaczi & Swabey (2015) make the important point that assessment criteria "need to be explicitly based on an accepted theory or framework and to clearly and accurately conceptualise and operationalise that framework" (p.117). With respect to trainers' operationalisation of criterion 2g, two areas are particularly relevant: (i) standardisation of assessment and (ii) the role of practice in ISLA. In relation to the former, CELTA draws on a *competency-based* framework for assessment purposes. Originally, this type of framework was based on behaviourist principles which defined course content as "an inventory of discrete behavioural skills" (Roberts, 1998: 14). However, the notion of teacher competencies now encompasses *subject knowledge*. With respect to practice, relevant *behavioural skills* would include giving clear instructions, monitoring learners' performance and providing feedback, while *subject knowledge* would include explicit understanding of the specific linguistic feature(s) to be practised and awareness of difficulties learners may have. These are important components of a teacher's toolkit. However, the use of competencies which also serve as *assessment criteria* may force trainees to adhere to descriptions of teaching which do not resonate with them (Graves, 2009: 122). For trainers, a list of criteria can result in a tick-box approach to assessment (Delaney, 2015: 99). Also, too heavy a focus on standard procedures may perpetuate the idea that there is one best way to teach (Allwright & Hanks, 2009: 35) and prevent exposure to alternative teaching strategies and exploration of the contexts in which these might be useful (Johnson, 1997: 781; Roberts, 1998: 17; Stanley, 2013: 197). Furthermore, it is difficult to see how a one-size-fits-all approach might also accommodate language learners' views of how they would like to be taught and the type of practice they would like to have. This brings us to the second area above: practice in ISLA.

3.2 ISLA: relevant theories and research findings

3.2.1 CELTA and the Cambridge English Teaching Framework (CETF)

In what is clearly an attempt to set benchmarks, all Cambridge teaching qualifications are linked to the CETF, which describes four stages of teacher development (see *figure 1*). Each

stage is matched to a set of teacher competencies in five aspects of subject knowledge and behavioural skills: *Learning and the learner*; *Teaching, learning and assessment*; *Language ability*; *Language knowledge and awareness*; *Professional development and values* (Cambridge, 2019a: 2-10). CELTA straddles the *Foundation* and *Developing* stages. The CETF is of interest here as it makes specific reference to relevant ISLA *theories* and *concepts*, including *behaviourism*, *noticing*, *implicit/explicit learning*, *interlanguage* and *task-based language teaching (TBL)*; see appendix B. Given the lack of theoretical consensus for any one methodology, it is not surprising the CELTA syllabus does not recommend the adoption of a specific framework (Ferguson & Donno, 2003: 29). Cambridge stipulates that the level of *trainee understanding* in relation to these theories and concepts should be in the range from *basic* to *reasonable*; see appendix C. Evidence of what exactly is meant by this can be found in *The CELTA Course*, the only Trainee Book (Thornbury & Watkins, 2007a: 34-8) and Trainer's Manual (2007b: 37-40) endorsed by Cambridge.

The chapter on accuracy practice begins with a discussion of two real-life learning experiences and their parallels with language learning: (i) volleying repeatedly at the net during a tennis lesson (i.e. repeated practice of a part of something in isolation before attempting to integrate it into existing skills); (ii) learning to cook, not through lessons, but by experimenting and getting advice (i.e. practice in a more holistic sense, aided by positive and negative feedback). There is also a discussion of drills, and the point is made that while these were originally used to form good language habits, they are now possibly justified as a way of fixing formulaic language in working memory. Other pertinent points are made, e.g.:

- In first language acquisition, fluency precedes accuracy, whereas in ISLA, the focus has traditionally been on accuracy preceding fluency.
- Fluency can be prioritised through TBL, in which planning time can have a positive effect on the performance of a task.
- Learners often do not acquire language presented by the teacher, at least not immediately, and learning a rule is different to being able to put it to use under time pressure where the focus is fluency.
- Errors are systematic and evidence of a learner's developing L2 system, unlike mistakes, which are slips of the tongue.

Clearly, the discussions are rather limited in terms of depth. (This is not surprising given the timeframe of the course and its predominant focus on the practical.) These issues are

discussed in more detail below. As the focus of this dissertation is on instruction designed to develop *explicit* language awareness, *non-interventionist* positions such as Krashen's (1981: 1, 1985: 2-3) *Input Hypothesis*[4] are not included.
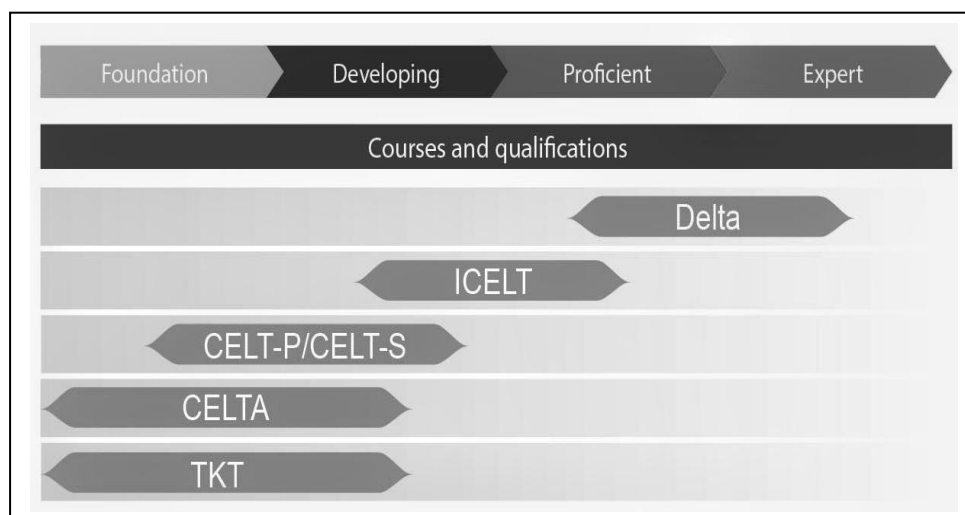
Figure 1   Cambridge qualifications linked to the CETF (Cambridge, 2018c: 22).

3.2.2   Explicit instruction and practice

Topic 2 of the CELTA syllabus is concerned with development of *trainees'* explicit language awareness, necessary in enabling them to develop *learners'* explicit knowledge of language (e.g. *rule use*), as indicated by section 2.7 (appendix D). One of the means by which learners' knowledge can be developed is through the kind of practice implied by criterion 2g (subsumed under section 2.7). *Explicit* knowledge (of lexical units and grammar rules) is conscious knowledge that the individual can verbalise, whereas *implicit* knowledge is unconscious and intuitive, thus non-expressible (Dörnyei, 2009: 143; R. Ellis, 2009: 11).

We know that:

- these two types of knowledge have separate memory systems and are stored in different areas of the brain (N. Ellis, 2008: 1). While infants automatically acquire their L1 during meaningful communication with caretakers, adults have a limited capacity for acquisition of implicit L2 knowledge in communicative contexts. Therefore, as N. Ellis (2008) explains, "adult attainment of L2 accuracy usually requires additional resources of explicit learning…[such as] consciously guided

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[4] This hypothesis is also untestable (Long, 2015: 323) and not supported by evidence (Pienemann, 1989: 57; Swain, 1985: 246).

practice [emphasis added] which results, eventually, in unconscious, automatized skill" (p.1). Relevant here are information processing theories, which distinguish between linguistic *representatio*n (i.e. knowledge) and *access* (i.e. processing) (Ortega, 2009b: 83-4). The former, which comprises three types of knowledge (*grammatical*, *lexical* and *schematic*), has to be accessed and retrieved whenever needed for use in comprehension or production. The retrieval of such knowledge involves either *automatic* or *controlled* processing. The former requires little effort, uses up few cognitive resources and can run in parallel with other automatic routines, while the latter is intentional, requires a lot more effort, allows self-regulation and cannot run in parallel (it is serial). Real-time comprehension and fluent use of a L2 not only draws on automatic processing, but also on implicit knowledge (N. Ellis, 2005: 308; R. Ellis & Shintani, 2014: 23; Philp, 2009: 194). The absence of automatic routines in a novel problem domain (e.g. a new language) means that a learner has to rely on controlled processing and explains why learners "experience a painful dissociation between what they 'know' in terms of rules and what they can 'do' with the L2 in real situations of use" (Ortega, 2009b: 99). Experienced teachers will be aware of the tradeoff between accuracy and fluency during the third stage of a *Presentation-Practice-Production* (PPP)[5] lesson, i.e. learners focusing on one at the expense of the other (Hedge, 2000: 164-5).

- although accuracy practice exercises feature prominently in coursebooks, as well as grammar (R. Ellis, 2002: 162; Fortune, 1998: 68) and vocabulary practice books[6], little evidence can be found to support the use of such exercises (R. Ellis & Shintani, 2014: 110), especially mechanical practice (Lightbown & Spada, 2013: 159; VanPatten & Wong, 2003: 415), in preparing learners for spontaneous use of language under real operating conditions. Leaver, Rifkin & Shekhtman (2004) argue that mechanical manipulation of form results in a split between form and meaning and that this "is unnatural, since structure is part of meaning-making" (p.129). According to R. Ellis & Shintani (2014: 25), not only do these exercises typically result in output which is limited in terms of length and complexity, they also do not afford learners opportunities for the kind of sustained/pushed output that theorists (e.g. Swain, 1995: 127) argue is necessary for interlanguage development. Relevant here is *transfer-*

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[5] Typically used as a structuring device in coursebook units (J. Anderson, 2016: 17; Mares, 2003: 135; Masuhara & Tomlinson, 2008: 31; Nitta & Gardner, 2005: 7; Waters, 2009: 321).
[6] See McCarthy & O'Dell (1994) and Yates (2006).

appropriate processing theory, i.e. the view that learners can better remember what they have learnt if the cognitive processes which are active during learning resemble those that are active during subsequent retrieval (Lightbown, 2008: 27). Therefore, while there is converging evidence that explicit instruction leads to greater gains than implicit instruction, as shown by meta-analyses (Goo, Gisela, Yilmaz & Novella, 2015: 465; Norris & Ortega, 2000: 464; Spada & Tomita, 2010: 263), it is also important to remember the point made by Lightbown & Spada (2013) that knowledge which is acquired through explicit instruction "may be easier to access on tests that resemble the learning activities rather than in communicative situations" (p.110). This is relevant because in 83%, 90% and 66.6% of the studies included in the respective meta-analyses above (Goo et al., 2015: 470), gains were measured by requiring learners to engage in explicit memory tasks which tapped decontextualised language use (R. Ellis, 2015: 417), e.g. metalinguistic knowledge tests in the form of gap-fills.

- psychological factors such as *motivation*, although dynamic, can have a bearing on the progress learners make (Dörnyei, 1998: 121; Hedge, 2000: 24; Johnson, 2008: 133; Lightbown & Spada, 2013: 156; Long, 1990: 66). As Bley-Vroman (1990) asserts, "(i)nstruction which is consonant with student goals is more successful" (p.8). In a study involving 2,321 high school students, 91% rated accuracy as "very important" and 86.04% considered mechanical gap-fill and transformation exercises generally quite useful (Jean & Simard, 2011: 474-6). Interestingly, they also considered such exercises as boring. Given that certain learners expect controlled practice and that classroom time is often limited in ISLA, one possible strategy is to make this type of practice meaningful and communicative. Another possibility is *processing instruction* (VanPatten, 1996: 60; 2015: 122-3), whereby teachers firstly help learners make form-meaning connections through *comprehension-based* practice of new linguistic items, e.g. learners choosing pictures which correspond to sentences read aloud by the teacher in order to differentiate between active/passive constructions[7]. This type of practice is supported by: (i) Schmidt's (1990: 132) hypothesis that learners cannot learn forms they do not consciously *notice* in comprehensible input; (ii) studies showing its effectiveness in developing L2 knowledge (Leow, 2007: 29; Shintani, Li & Ellis, 2013: 322; VanPatten & Wong, 2003: 413). Another possible advantage lies in the observation that adult learners often find themselves under pressure to produce

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[7] See Thornbury (1999: 105-8) for a sample lesson.

fluent and accurate output before they are ready to do so, possibly leading to a sense of inadequacy and frustration (Lightbown & Spada, 2013: 93). Comprehension-based practice "can avoid overtaxing learners' processing resources" (Leow, 2007: 27).

- *skill acquisition theory* (J. R. Anderson, 1995: 308-10; DeKeyser, 2015: 95-103) provides *post hoc* support for PPP. This theory holds that the learning of a variety of cognitive and psychomotor skills exhibits similarity from initial representation of explicit knowledge to its controlled processing during initial use, to eventual automatic and spontaneous performance after large amounts of practice. The existence of explicit knowledge thus plays a causal role in the development of implicit knowledge (rather than the former 'turning into' the latter). Central here is the *power law of learning* (Newell & Rosenbloom, 1981: 28), i.e. in situations as varied as learning how to write computer programs and learning how to roll cigars, reaction time and error rate decrease as a function of practice, reflecting a qualitative change in knowledge-retrieval mechanisms. Learning how to play chess and learning a L2 share similarities in the sense that explicit knowledge is useful and can be automatised if practice involves *real operating conditions* (DeKeyser, 2007b: 292). Not only is a large amount of practice necessary, it is important that learners receive both *comprehension* and *production* practice (DeKeyser, 2009: 131). As for PPP, "it is important to go to stage 3 as soon as possible, just as it is important to go from stage 1 to stage 2 as soon as possible" (R. DeKeyser, personal correspondence, June 30, 2020). However, it must be said not all acquisition reflects the power law and not all practice leads to acquisition (Newell & Rosenbloom, 1981: 14), while L2 knowledge does not have to originate in an explicit form (Pienemann, 1998: 41; R. Ellis, 2008: 481). As N. Ellis (2005) asserts, "(m)any aspects of a second language are unlearnable – or at best are acquired very slowly – from implicit processes alone" (p.307). For example, because the article system in English is complex, abstract and notoriously difficult, it may be better to leave learning to exposure in the input (Lightbown & Spada, 2013: 193), as well as corrective feedback (CF). However, "what may be difficult for one learner may not be difficult for another learner" (Spada, 2011: 232), e.g. *grammatical sensitivity* can facilitate explicit learning (DeKeyser, 2005: 15; Robinson, 2007: 276-7; Skehan, 2002: 90).

- learners go through systematic/predictable stages in interlanguage development which take time and are impervious to instruction (R. Ellis & Shintani, 2014: 24; Lightbown

& Spada, 2013: 56; Long, 2009: 380; Ortega, 2009a: 98; Pienemann, 1989: 53; Skehan, 1996: 19). In other words, acquisition does not reflect the sequence in which preselected items are taught. SLA, whether naturalistic or instructed, is "a developmental, organic process that follows its own internal agenda" (Foster, 1999: 69). Instruction can speed up acquisition, but not skip stages (N. Ellis, 2005: 307; R. Ellis & Shintani, 2014: 95); see *figure 2*. Also, during restructuring of internal representations, learners backslide and produce errors not seen before, in a process called U-shaped behaviour (Long, 2015: 22; Ortega, 2009a: 95). Thus, (i) evidence of learners' accuracy gauged through controlled practice exercises may be illusory, whereas (ii) errors may be evidence of progress.

Developmental sequences of negation	
Stage 1	No bicycle.
	I no like it.
	Not my friend.
Stage 2	He don't like it.
	I don't can sing.
Stage 3	You can not go there.
	He was not happy.
	She don't like rice.
Stage 4	It doesn't work.
	I didn't went there.

Figure 2   Developmental stages of negation in SLA (Lightbown & Spada, 2013: 48-9), based on research by Schumann (1979) & Wode (1978). The stages overlap, with backsliding to earlier forms.

- the extremely rapid retrieval of language[8] which characterises fluent speech is made possible by a vast store of formulaic chunks available to the speaker (Pawley & Syder, 1983: 205; Sinclair, 1991: 110). Thanks to corpus analysis, we know that these chunks "make up a good percentage of English" (Schmitt, 2000: 96-7). Relevant here is Levelt's (1989: 9) model of speech production, which accounts for the conceptualisation of an utterance and its subsequent grammatical and phonological encoding as a *lexically* driven process. Also, incipient interlanguage is *agrammatical*, i.e. learners in the early stages of L2 development "rely on a memory-based system of lexical sequences" (R. Ellis, 2006a: 91). As such, communicative/interactive drills

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[8] On average, words are produced at the rate of 1 every 400 milliseconds in fluent L1 speech (Levelt & Schriefers, 1987: 395).

such as *Find someone who* (Thornbury, 2017: 88), which focus on the pragmatic function of ready-made chunks could be considered as helpful practice for beginner learners; see *figure 3*. Paradoxically, despite what we now know about conventionalised word sequences, it seems that the structuralist approach to teaching persists in ELT (R. Ellis & Shintani, 2014: 55; Foster, 2001: 75; Laufer & Nation, 2012: 167), one reason being the pressure to test knowledge of verb structures (Kramsch, 2015: 462). (Although this issue merits discussion, it is outside the scope of this dissertation.) Laufer & Nation (2012: 173) argue that the teaching of conventionalised word sequences should replace much of what is included in grammar teaching.

WHO'S GOT WHAT?

1 ……………………… has got a Ferrari.
2 ……………………… has got twenty cats.
3 ……………………… has got ten children.
4 ……………………… has got an elephant.

Figure 3   An interactive drill (lexical phrase and open slot) which can be made *communicative* through the inclusion of a goal, e.g. learners finding out what they have in common (Gatbonton & Segalowitz, 2005: 331), and more pertinent if learners decide what should go in the open slots. Extract from Eales with Cunningham & Moor (2005: 119).

- explicit instruction can also be *reactive*, i.e. a teacher drawing learners' attention to forms as they arise incidentally during communicative tasks[9]. *Immediate* feedback may present learners with psycholinguistic data optimal for acquisition because the relevant form is highlighted when "the desired meaning-to-be-expressed is still active" (N. Ellis, 2008: 4)[10]. Long (1998: 41-6) coined the term *focus on form* to refer to this

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[9] DeKeyser (2018b: 28) sees a role for a *preemptive* approach, i.e. practice of preselected target structures in a meaning-focused task; see example in *appendix E*. However, if such structures lie beyond a learner's developmental stage, avoidance is likely (R. Ellis, 2018: 114). Also, learners working on the same activity may be preoccupied with different language items (Prabhu, 1987: 70)

[10] However, drawing on evidence from research, Loewen & Sato (2018: 290) recommend that teachers use a variety of feedback types (e.g. immediate and delayed).

type of explicit focus when embedded in communicative tasks which serve as the units of instruction (i.e. TBL), and *focus on forms* to refer to presentation and practice of preselected items. He argues that the former is more effective than the latter as it is more congruent with a learner's interlanguage, and that interactive tasks promote *negotiation of meaning*, i.e. learners producing comprehensible input while resolving communication breakdowns (1983: 188), but this is by no means a given (Foster, 1998: 18; Foster & Ohta, 2005: 417-9). TBL provides learners with opportunities for (i) meaningful, *learner-centred* interaction especially if tasks are based on a *needs analysis* of what the learners need to be able to *do* in the new language (Long, 2015: 6) (ii) greater variety of input as well as opportunities to produce and respond to a wide range of communicative functions (Lightbown & Spada, 2013: 67). Mackey, Abbuhl & Gass (2012: 11-4) summarised the findings of nearly 100 empirical studies designed to ascertain the effectiveness of *focus on form* and found there is a robust link between TBL/explicit CF and the development of lexis and grammar. A recent meta-analysis (Bryfonski & McKay, 2019: 621) also revealed an overall positive and strong effect of TBL in L2 development. Evidence also exists that (i) *planning time* (which allows learners to access their explicit knowledge) helps enhance fluency during performance of a task (Foster, 1996: 131; Foster & Skehan, 1996: 313, 1999: 234) (ii) *task repetition* helps learners to change their focus "from processing the message content to working on formulations of the message" (Bygate, 2001: 44). Communicative tasks recreate real-world cognitive processes, while repetition activates and reactivates the same set of processes (Segalowitz, 2010: 176).

Given the findings discussed above, the numerous criticisms concerning the use of synthetic syllabuses in ELT (Bruton, 2002: 281; R. Ellis, 2003: 29; Lewis, 1993: 3; Long, 2015: 21; Long & Crookes, 1991: 6; Masuhara & Tomlinson, 2008: 31; Skehan, 1998: 92) are not surprising. Indeed, the argument that research has gone in one direction and coursebooks in another (Jordan & Gray, 2019: 441; Long, 2015: 24; Waters, 2009: 321) seems largely justified. This is an issue which also merits discussion, but is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Having looked at some of the key issues surrounding the complex issue of practice in ISLA, we now turn to the *assessment* of practice within the CELTA framework.

3.3   Criterion 2g

Candidates at Pass level need to demonstrate professional competence as teachers by:

- providing appropriate practice of language items

Cambridge provides 3 examples of what candidates need to do to achieve this criterion:

- o provide as much practice in context as possible
- o ensure the practice is appropriate to the target language
- o stage practice activities logically

A number of other criteria are also relevant given their link to this construct, whether the link is *explicit* in the descriptors (e.g. 4g, 2b, 2c, 5e etc.) or *implied* (e.g. 4b, 4c etc.); see appendix A.

There are a number of possibly problematic issues with regard to the *operationalisation* of this criterion:

- Clarity of the construct:
  - o In what is seemingly an attempt not to be overly prescriptive, Cambridge does not stipulate what exactly is meant by the *competence descriptors*. While a certain degree of tutor variability is to be expected, the rather broad definitions possibly increase recourse to subjective interpretation of the construct, influenced by factors such as intuition, personal preferences and previous teaching and learning experiences. Nevertheless, it is assumed here that the wording of the construct (i.e. *'practice of language items'*; *'target language'*) promotes a *focus-on-forms* approach.
  - o Law, Wong & Mobley (1998) warn of "the conceptual and practical problems of declaring a construct as multidimensional without specifying the relations between the dimensions and the overall construct" (p.742). This may be applicable to criterion 2g and its three dimensions. For example, is the overall construct a simple sum of the three dimensions? Is evidence of only one or two of the dimensions sufficient for a candidate to meet criterion 2g? Is the list exhaustive or are other dimensions possible? What are possible instances (i.e. *formative indicators*) of the dimensions?
- Validity of the construct and overlap with other criteria:

    While the techniques listed under criteria 5b and 5g (see p.90) are observable *behavioural skills*, to what extent are the descriptors for criterion 2g examples

of *classroom-based competence*, given that trainees' decisions about *amount*, *type*, and *sequence* of practice are mostly made during the *planning* stages of a lesson? Criteria 4a-4c and 4f-4k (see pp.87-8) would seem to be equally or possibly more relevant. While Cambridge does highlight 4a-4c and 4i-4k as *key teaching practice criteria* for Topic 2 (see bottom of appendix D), how do tutors *operationalise* this overlap?

- Consistency of interpretation:

    This is related to the two areas above as the degree of clarity, validity and overlap is likely to have a bearing on consistency of interpretation, i.e. the *reliability* of the construct. However, Galaczi & Swabey (2015) make the valid point that variability in tutor judgements is "not something that necessarily needs to be (or can be!) eliminated" (p.115).

- The possibly implicit message about *learner goals*, *needs* and *preferences*:

    The criteria related to these areas (1a–1c; see p.88) are not included in the *key teaching practice criteria* for Topic 2 (see bottom of appendix D). It seems reasonable to assume that decisions about *amount*, *type*, and *sequence* of practice should be based primarily on *learner goals*, *needs* and *preferences*. The description of Topic 2 suggests otherwise. Furthermore, it seems reasonable to assume that judgements about the appropriateness of practice should also be based on the impact on learners. To what extent is this impact *observable*, particularly in a short lesson, and who is best placed to evaluate it and by what means? As already noted, evidence of accurate answers may be illusory. Should learner feedback be considered when assessing appropriateness of practice?

Evidence supporting or contradicting these issues is expected to emerge in the current study.

3.4   Cambridge's interpretation of criterion 2g

Although Cambridge does not stipulate what exactly is meant by the descriptors, two sources provide clues. The first one is *The CELTA Course*, which, as previously noted, is officially endorsed by Cambridge: "[providing] full coverage of the CELTA syllabus… written in collaboration with Cambridge… so trainers and trainees can be sure the content is appropriate" (Cambridge University Press, 2020). The information about vocabulary practice seems somewhat limited; it includes 3 activities described by the authors (Thornbury &

Watkins, 2007b: 27) as "relevant and useful"; see *a*, *b* and *c* in *figure 4*. However, a number of activities designed to practise structures and formulaic chunks are also included in subsequent chapters. These are discussed and evaluated, with concrete takeaways for trainees. For example, *activities*:

- can be form- or meaning-focused
- can be comprehension-based or involve written/oral production
- can be graded (and sequenced) according to level of challenge
- can be sequenced from written to oral (as the former allows for thinking time)
- can be sequenced from controlled to free(r), or the reverse
- which focus on accuracy can be enhanced through one or more of the following characteristics: *interaction; communication; personalisation; context; repetition; fun*
- which target free(r) oral practice are *purposeful* if there is a communicative outcome, *productive* if a good amount of oral practice is generated, *predictable* if the language needed to do the activity can be anticipated or if the activity (e.g. *information gap*) can be manipulated to elicit specific language
- such as writing of sentences/texts to practise specific language are a *justifiable* form of practice, but unlikely to be communicative

F Practising vocabulary

Work in groups. Discuss the differences between the three practice activities (a–c) below.

1 What level is each activity suitable for?
2 Which activities could be set for homework?
3 How long would each activity take to do?
4 Which skills (reading, writing, listening or speaking) does each activity practise?
a The learners discuss transport problems and developments in their own countries.
b Learners work in small groups. The teacher gives each group a set of cards with one of the target words written on each card. One learner must take a card and can use mime, drawings, definitions, relationships with other words, or any other means to elicit the word from the other members of her group.
c The teacher prepares a gap-fill exercise and the learners have to complete the sentences with the target words and phrases. For example: An accident on a motorway often leads to long .... (answer: *traffic jams*).

Figure 4   Vocabulary practice activities (Thornbury & Watkins, 2007a: 24)

There is a noticeable attempt by the authors not to be overly prescriptive. For example, they make the additional and essential point that activities "need to be sequenced according to the

2018

6 Read the rules (A–B). Then look at the sentences (1–6) and decide if one or both intensifiers are correct.

A We can use intensifiers *very*, *really* and *extremely* with gradable adjectives to make the meaning stronger.

B We can use intensifiers *really* and *absolutely* with non-gradable adjectives to make the meaning stronger.

1 Kelly Holmes must be *really/absolutely* ecstatic about her success.
2 A(n) *extremely/very* big sports centre near here has just opened.
3 If you want to get to the top in athletics, it's *really/extremely* vital to get yourself a professional trainer.
4 Whenever he plays football, he comes back *really/absolutely* starving.
5 She was *absolutely/extremely* exhausted at the end of the race.
6 I love running. I'd be *really/very* devastated if I had to give it up.

Using an adjective that has been used today, tell a partner a story about yourself using that adjective.

2019

8 a Choose the correct words in *italics*.

1 Sushi is a Japanese dish made with *raw/rare* fish.
2 *Beat/Stir* the mixture slowly every five minutes.
3 Ugh! This soup is much too *savoury/salty*.
4 First, you *slice/chop* the onion into cubes.
5 I don't eat many cakes and biscuits. I find them too *sweet/sour*.
6 Fill a large saucepan with water and *bake/boil* the pasta for ten minutes.
7 Macaroni cheese is my favourite *dish/plate*.
8 The *cook/cooker* has broken. I need to buy a new one.
9 In Britain at Christmas, it's traditional to *bake/roast* a turkey in the oven.
10 Oh no! I've put chicken in the soup and Diane is a *vegetarian/vegetable*.

Put students into pairs/groups.
Ask them to tell each other the answer to these questions:

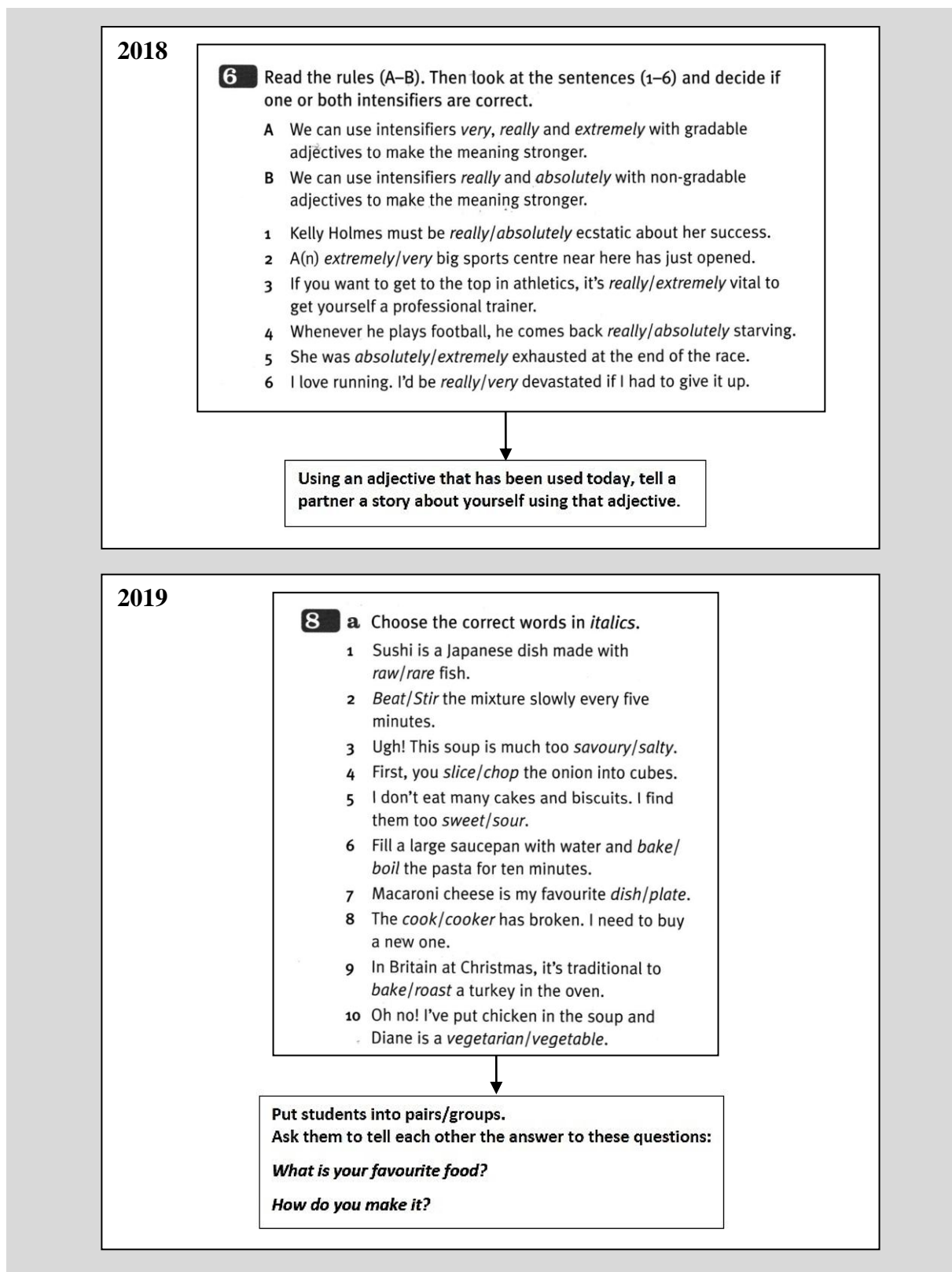*What is your favourite food?*

How do you make it?

Figure 5 The *controlled-to-freer* sequence in the 2018 and 2019 standardisation lessons. Both controlled practice exercises (Crace with Acklam, 2011: 94; 109) are *comprehension-based*.

21

needs and preferences of the learners" (p.40). However, in relation to *lesson planning*, the following information is provided to the trainee: "You will usually be given a section of a coursebook, or a specific language item… to teach" (2007a: 177). Although this acknowledges the *modus operandi* on CELTA courses, such an approach is not necessarily consonant with learners' needs/goals. Also, although PPP is included as a possible lesson format, it comes with the following advice for the trainer: "You may like to stress that this is one model for a lesson plan, and is not the only way that grammar teaching could be approached" (p.36). The point is also made that it is perhaps unrealistic to expect learners to be presented with language and to integrate it only 30 or so minutes later. It is interesting to consider this advice in light of the annual online *standardisation of trainers*[11], the second source of information regarding how Cambridge interprets criterion 2g. One of the tasks requires trainers to grade a video-recorded lesson. The point above that PPP should not be presented as the only model for the teaching of *grammar* contrasts with the content of the 2018 and 2019 sample lessons (intended as examples of clear *Pass* lessons), in which PPP is used in both lessons for the teaching of *vocabulary* (see *figure 5*). Also, the practice activities used in those lessons provide an indication of what is considered acceptable by Cambridge. Evidence of the extent to which tutors' understanding of practice reflects the explicit and possibly implicit messages above is expected to emerge in this study.

3.5   Scrutiny of the CELTA assessment criteria

Not many studies have subjected the CELTA assessment criteria to scrutiny. There are published summaries of three studies (Delaney, 2015; Galaczi & Swabey, 2015; Thaine, 2004). As for *fugitive literature*, it is certainly possible that there are more unpublished dissertations and conference papers about this subject than the four (Coney, 2019; Douglas, 2018; Down, 2019; Marshall, 2017) included in this chapter. None of the aforementioned had as the *primary focus* the way trainers' understanding of practice interacts with their operationalisation of criterion 2g. However, most[12] provide information pertinent to this study.

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[11] Surprisingly, although compulsory for assessors, "there is no requirement for trainers to do the standardisation" (Cambridge, personal correspondence, April 16, 2019). Information regarding the number of trainers who participated in the 2018 and 2019 standardisations is not available to the public (Cambridge, personal correspondence, December 20, 2019).
[12] The results of the Delaney (2015: 97-107) study, although very interesting, are not included here as they relate to issues linked to the operationalisation of criteria 5m and 5n.

Thaine (2004: 339) investigated the way some of the criteria were interpreted and operationalised by trainers (N=14) working at six centres in New Zealand. The study was based on 16 of the 22 criteria in the January 2000 CELTA syllabus (appendix F). Although practice was not the main focus of any of the criteria, it was implied by some of the descriptors, e.g.

- focusing on appropriate specific language and/or skills **(5)**
- identifying errors and sensitively correcting students' oral language **(9)**
- identifying errors and sensitively correcting students' written language **(10)**

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews. The trainers were asked the following questions:

- What does each criterion mean to you?
- What trainee activity(-ies) in teaching practice do you look for in order to decide *if* the criterion has been met?

Results showed that only seven of the 16 criteria were interpreted consistently (see # in appendix F); how such a conclusion was reached is not clear as the primary data no longer exists (C. Thaine, personal correspondence, February 13, 2019). The findings related to the first criterion listed above are interesting. Unsurprisingly, trainers attributed all manner of competencies to this criterion, such as language analysis, task setting, choice/staging of activities appropriate to either skills or language lessons. Thaine (2004: 340) therefore concluded that this criterion was very complex and unreliable as it was too densely packed, i.e. it encompassed too great a variety of competencies. As nine of the criteria were considered problematic, a revision of the evaluation instrument was suggested in order to improve its clarity, validity and reliability. A substantial revision was made in 2003, with the addition of new criteria, including 2g (Cambridge, 2003: 20-2).

Down (2019: 19) conducted a partial replication of Thaine's research. Her study (N=31) was based on 24 of the 41 criteria in the current syllabus (i.e. 1a–5k). Results showed that only two criteria were interpreted with high consistency by the participants, 5 with reasonable consistency, and 17 with low consistency[13]. Thus, results were similar to Thaine's as over half of the criteria were not interpreted consistently. Criterion 2g had *low consistency* of interpretation even though all but two of the trainers interpreted it in terms of the PPP

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[13] *High consistency* was defined as ≥25 participants, *reasonable consistency* as 20-24 and *low consistency* as <20 (Down, 2019: 19).

framework, i.e. controlled practice (usually gap-fill exercises) followed by free(r) (speaking) practice (2019: 24-5). However, there was considerable variation in the way trainers expected trainees to use this framework when teaching grammar lessons. This highlighted a more fundamental concern: the rigid adherence to PPP, regardless of its suitability for the learners, possibly resulting in "display lessons rather than real teaching" (p.36). Similar observations had previously been made by Richards (1998: 48) and Roberts (1998), the latter describing such lessons as "a set of pedagogic clones" (p.208). Down also found that the adherence to PPP was accompanied by a marked variation in trainers' expectations and acceptance of alternatives to the framework. These findings illustrate the possible disadvantages of a competency-based framework, as discussed in section 3.1.

Overall, Down (2019: 35-6) recommended a substantial overhaul of the evaluation instrument in order to further reduce overlap/ambiguity, through (i) weighting and more logical ordering of the criteria (ii) rewording of ambiguous descriptors/examples (iii) restructuring of the criteria. These results, as well as those obtained by Thaine, are interesting in light of a survey conducted in March 2013 (Galaczi & Swabey, 2015: 121). Trainers (N=149) were asked to respond to the statement "I have a clear understanding of the [42] assessment criteria [in the 2010 syllabus]" by choosing an option on a 1-5 point scale, i.e. 1=Do not understand; 5=Fully understand. Results showed that the proportion of respondents who chose 4 and 5 ranged between 91.3% and 100%. While these results may seem reassuring, a couple of points need to be made. Firstly, asking respondents to rate their understanding of a large set of criteria (rather than interpreting each criterion separately) provides at best a very superficial measure of *reliability*. Secondly, the fact that trainers believe they have a clear understanding of criteria does not mean they mostly interpret them in the same manner, as shown by the discoursal analysis in the studies by Thaine and Down. However, based on feedback from participants, Galaczi & Swabey noted that the criteria were possibly "over-articulated" (p. 122) and also recommended a simplification of the instrument through clearer organisation and weighting. Given these recommendations, the following study is particularly relevant.

Through the use of a questionnaire, Coney (2019) asked trainers (N=46) which of the current assessment criteria they considered most/least important in relation to improving *student* (not trainee) learning. Informed by trainer feedback and Coney's own literature review of effective teaching, a revised evaluation instrument was constructed, consisting of ten *Primary*

Assessment Criteria, ranked from P1 (most important) to P10, and six *Secondary Assessment Criteria* (similarly ranked from S1 to S6) (2019: 77-88). Notably, the area selected as the most beneficial for student learning was *"appropriate practice"*[14], designated as criterion P1; see *figure 6*. (Criterion P2 was *"language feedback"*.) In addition, Coney's revised instrument uses *performance descriptors* for each criterion; Katz & Snow (2009: 67) assert that a major benefit of using these (rather than a *checklist*, as is the case with the current instrument) is that clear expectations are set out for trainers and trainees.

Criterion	Requires Improvement	Satisfactory	Good	Outstanding
P1: Appropriate practice	No practice is provided, or is significantly lacking in relevance or involvement.	Practice is provided, but may lack some challenge, relevance or authenticity, or does not always involve all learners. Practice involves some opportunity for personalisation.	Practice is personalised, involving and mostly relevant to learner communicative needs. Practice includes an element of challenge in terms of accuracy, fluency or complexity. There is at least one activity which integrates meaningful communication with the production of target forms.	Practice is personalised, involving and clearly relevant to learner communicative needs. Successful practice requires effort, and promotes relevant aspects of accuracy, fluency and complexity. Practice prioritises integration of meaningful communication with the production of target forms.

Figure 6   Performance descriptors for criterion P1 in Coney's (2019: 77) proposed evaluation instrument. The ratings resemble the original CELTA grades (see p.7).

In order to measure *reliability*[15], trainers (n=36) were then asked to rate a videoed lesson (PPP) using either the existing or revised instrument. Generally, trainers agreed that the controlled practice was rather teacher-led and the freer practice ineffective. However, with the existing instrument, different criteria were used to refer to practice (e.g. 2g, 3b, 4g), whereas with the revised instrument, criterion P1 was used with a higher degree of consistency. Interestingly, in both cases the criteria were rated differently, i.e. 2g and P1 were rated both positively and negatively. Overall, both instruments displayed a similar high degree of inter-

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[14] Interestingly, in a survey (N=85) conducted by Marshall (2017), criteria 4i (ability to analyse target language) and 2e (ability to clarify target language) were identified by trainers as two of the most important criteria in relation to *trainee* learning.

[15] "An assessment is considered reliable if two or more [trainers] use the same evaluation instrument in the same conditions (e.g., same teacher, same classroom, same students, same content) and come to the same/similar conclusions" (Galaczi & Swabey, 2015: 114).

rater reliability. Given the topic of this dissertation, the revised instrument is interesting because of its predominant focus on *student learning* and the importance accorded to *practice* in ISLA. The instrument also acts on the recommendations by Galaczi & Swabey and Down that the criteria be weighted and reorganised, making it simpler and less unwieldy. (The fact that participants responded favourably to it is not surprising.) In subjecting criterion 2g to scrutiny, the current study contributes to the existing, but limited research on the CELTA evaluation instrument.

3.6   Assessment of TP from the perspective of trainees

This section seeks to illustrate the issues raised in section 3.1 through examples of trainees' experiences. Brandt (2006) conducted a study of pre-service courses (e.g. CertTESOL and CELTA). Although the study involved both trainers and trainees (N=95), the main focus was on trainees' experiences. Of the ten issues which emerged in relation to TP (the area of greatest concern for the participants), four are particularly relevant here:

- The importance of a good relationship with tutors in order to achieve a good grade:

  > Given the limited time available, trainees felt pressured to perform techniques according to their tutors' preferences. Also, the change of TP tutors meant that trainees felt an urgent need to familiarise themselves with the new tutor's preferences. One trainee described the way she tried to maximise her chances of success by becoming a compliant technician: "[The tutor] seems to approve of drilling – so my plan was to drill, drill, drill" (p.358).

- The difficulty experienced by trainees while trying to comply with tutors' expectations when these seemed counter-intuitive:

  > For example, one trainee commented: "I was never comfortable with ritualized techniques for drilling… Some of these things had, for me, an element of a 'performing monkey' to them" (p.358). As a consequence of being placed in a subordinating position, trainees experienced anxiety and frustration[16].

- The tension between assessment and development:

  > Trainees equated TP with assessment. As one trainee explained: "It was very much a case of identifying the hoops and then jumping through them. […] It would have been nice to make mistakes and not feel that by doing so you were

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[16] Davies (2016: 14) and Leal Castañeda (2016: 16) also found that the divergence between CELTA trainees' beliefs and certain techniques can be problematic.

being pushed closer to the brink of failure" (p.358). Related to this was the perception that tutors applied the criteria inconsistently. According to one trainee, "Tutors took differing views and it sometimes seemed that they rarely if ever communicated amongst themselves. What one tutor would find acceptable and worthy of compliments, another might condemn" (Brandt, 2008: 40).

- The role of language learners in TP:

> The trainees' overwhelming impression was that TP students were not the main focus of their teaching. One graduate wrote: "I viewed [them] as tools for me to use to improve my teaching techniques" (p.360). Trainees felt that they were expected to prioritise demonstration of techniques in TP at the expense of focusing on learners' needs (Brandt, 2007: 4). This was consistent with the trainers' view that the main focus was trainees' learning rather than that of language learners, and that this message was contradictory. The fact that both trainers and trainees felt that pre-service courses distract the latter from attending to their learners' needs is not desirable to say the least.

It is interesting, but not surprising that assessment of TP was linked to tutor subjectivity. The belief that there was a correlation between final grades and displays of techniques (thought to be) preferred by tutors shows how *summative* grading of an individual's achievement can impinge on *formative* feedback designed to foster teacher development[17]. In effect, the course becomes *prescriptive* if trainees feel they need to resort to impression management (Roberts, 1998: 208). As lesson frameworks are prioritised (Miall, 2017: 42), trainees are required to "conform to a very narrow view of classroom techniques" (Grundy & Ur, 2017: 33). Stanley (2013) argues that "by attempting to codify a universal notion of context-free 'effective teaching', CELTA-type courses do not equip teachers to respond in principled ways to contextual novelty" (p.197). A Director of Studies/trainer describes the implications for CELTA graduates:

> Teachers come to us within 6 months of completing their CELTA... [some] use everything on the page without seeming to know why - it's just the next thing in the sequence. They're generally looking for a controlled and a freer practice for

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[17] In an attempt to address this issue, Coney (2019: 62) proposes an end to the grading of individual lessons. Furthermore, in a survey (N=54) conducted by Douglas (2018: 45), 56% of trainers stated that they did not include references to criteria in their written TP feedback; one of the reasons cited was the belief that feedback should prioritise *formative* guidance, rather than *summative* assessment

every lesson, regardless of whether that would be the most appropriate thing for those students (S. Millin, personal correspondence, April 26, 2020).

These observations provide an interesting contrast to the results of a survey of stakeholders (e.g. centres, candidates (n=1,500), trainers (n=240), employers) which showed that there was little appetite for change: 87% of candidates felt the course had prepared them very well for teaching and 83% of trainers were happy with the course content (Harrison, 2018). Evidence supporting or contradicting key issues raised in sections 3.5 and 3.6 is expected to emerge in the current study.

4 The study

4.1 Research questions

There are two major aims to this study. The first is to investigate trainers' understanding of the 2g construct. To this end, two research questions were formulated:

RQ1: How consistent are CELTA trainers' interpretations of criterion 2g?

RQ2: How transparent is the multidimensional aspect of the construct?

The results obtained for these questions provide the basis for a third question:

RQ3: What factors influence trainers' understanding of practice?

4.2 Method
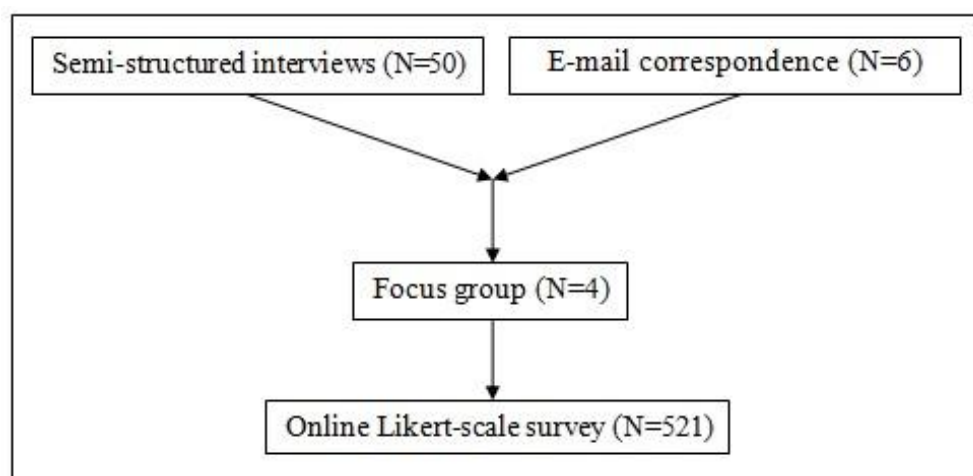
Figure 7   The three-phase approach used in this study.

A mixed-methods approach to data collection (*figure 7*) was used for this study. In the first phase, semi-structured interviews (SSIs) were used to obtain qualitative data. One reason for using SSIs in mixed-methods research is as a tool to "conduct some in-depth reconnaissance before designing a large-scale survey" (Adams, 2015: 494), which was the case with the current study. The interview questions were modelled on the ones used by Thaine (see p.23).

However, the follow-up question *Why?* was added in order to elicit data about moderating factors in trainer cognition:

- What does criterion 2g mean to you? *Why?*
- What trainee activity(-ies) in teaching practice do you look for in order to decide if the criterion has been met? *Why?*

(The consent form, which provides information regarding compliance with ethics requirements, is included in appendix G.) All the SSIs were conducted on Skype with the webcam disabled; Oppenheim (1992: 73) states that when a key aim of an interview is to obtain insights into beliefs, motives and ideas, it is important for the interviewer to avoid non-verbal [and verbal] cues which might influence the respondent. Audio recordings of the interviews were made using the Audacity application software. Parallel to the SSIs, experienced CELTA trainers and experts in Applied Linguistics were contacted by e-mail and asked to suggest items for a Likert-scale survey. The suggested items were then compared to the key themes which emerged from the analysis of the transcriptions of the SSIs. This triangulation of *emic* and *etic* perspectives informed the drafting of 28 items and a six-point Likert-scale questionnaire.

The questionnaire was pilot-tested by a focus group in the second phase of the study. Given that a large focus group can result in "trivial responses, shortened answers, and less elaboration on critical details simply because of time constraints" (Krueger & Casey, 2015: 511), small-scale piloting was chosen. An audio recording of the focus group interview was made and transcribed, and feedback from the participants contributed towards a revised questionnaire consisting of 15 items and a seven-point scale (appendix H). For example, the *'neutral'* option in the pilot questionnaire was eliminated as it distorted responses; one of the reasons the focus group participants chose this option on a number of occasions was because they did not know enough about the issue to form an opinion. Thus, a *'don't know'* option was included in the final version.

In the third phase of the study, the findings from the first two stages (represented by the 15 items) were then tested on a larger scale to obtain quantitative data. The questionnaire was distributed online via SurveyMonkey. Respondents were not given the possibility of elaborating on their answers (i.e. by including comments) while completing the questionnaire.

4.3   Participants

The first phase:

> 50 CELTA trainers (participants I1 to I50) based in 23 countries took part in the SSIs. Experience in terms of number of years as a trainer ranged from fewer than 12 months (seven trainers) to over 30 years (three trainers). 34% of the trainers (n=17) were also assessors. Participants were recruited via e-mail and the closed Facebook group for CELTA/Delta trainers.

The second phase:

> The focus group consisted of four CELTA trainers (participants F1 to F4), one of whom was also an assessor. For convenience, recruitment was limited to trainers working at the same centre as the researcher. Experience ranged from seven to 31 years.

The third phase:

> 521 respondents based in 57 countries completed the questionnaire: this is likely a robust sample size[18]. Around 26% of the respondents were based in the UK (n=134). The sampling unit included current (n=510) and former (n=11) trainers; included in the latter group were those who had recently retired, changed career etc. Experience ranged from fewer than 12 months to 45 years. Around 35% of the respondents were also assessors (n=184). Potential respondents were contacted through Cambridge's official mailing list for CELTA trainers, the closed Facebook group mentioned above, as well as direct messages via LinkedIn and e-mail.

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[18] This assumption is based on the number of CELTA trainers (N=437) who took part in the 2013 standardisation (Galaczi & Swabey, 2015: 133). It was not possible to obtain from Cambridge the total number of verified trainers worldwide as this is "sensitive competitor information" (Cambridge, personal correspondence, April 21, 2020).

5   Results

5.1   SSIs: identification of key themes

The 15 key themes which emerged and served as the basis for the Likert-scale questionnaire are shown in *figure 8*.

Construct: *providing appropriate practice of language items*

    Q3   Criterion 2g only applies to controlled practice of target language
    Q4   Criterion 2g also applies to free(r) practice of target language

Dimension 1: *provide as much practice in context as possible*

  Formative indicators:

    Q7   Thematic linking of stages
    Q8   Sentence-level context
    Q9   Real-life situations
    Q16   Controlled practice with communicative purpose

Dimension 2: *ensure the practice is appropriate to the target language*

  Formative indicators:

    Q6   Error-free output of target language via controlled practice
    Q10   Practice limited to target language only
    Q12   Emphasis on output practice
    Q15   Oral pattern practice of target language
    Q17   Use of target language in free(r) practice fostered by task design

Dimension 3: *stage practice activities logically*

  Formative indicators:

    Q5   From controlled to freer(r)
    Q11   From comprehension-based to production-based
    Q13   From form-based to meaning-based
    Q14   From oral to written

Figure 8   The 15 *formative indicators*[19] which emerged for criterion 2g.

## 5.2   Findings: quantitative and qualitative data

In this section, qualitative data from the SSIs and focus group interview is used in conjunction with the results from the Likert-scale questionnaire (μ = mean; σ = standard deviation) by way of providing insight into trainers' views and the way they operationalise such views.

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[19] See p.18 and glossary.

5.2.1 Applicability of criterion 2g

Q3 Criterion 2g only applies to controlled practice.

Answered: 521   Skipped: 0
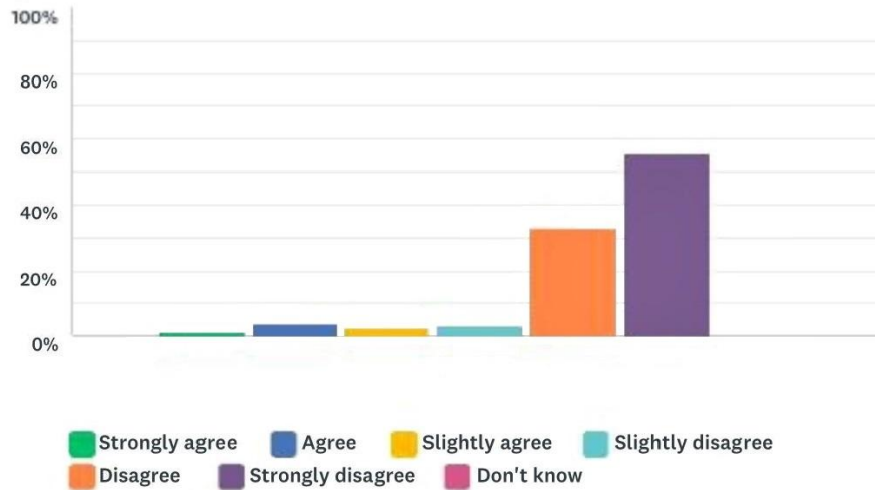
STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	SLIGHTLY AGREE	SLIGHTLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
1.73%	3.65%	2.50%	3.07%	33.01%	55.47%	0.58%	
9	19	13	16	172	289	3	521

Figure 9   Results for Q3: μ ≈ 1.7; σ ≈ 1.1

Q4 Criterion 2g also applies to free(r) practice.

Answered: 521   Skipped: 0
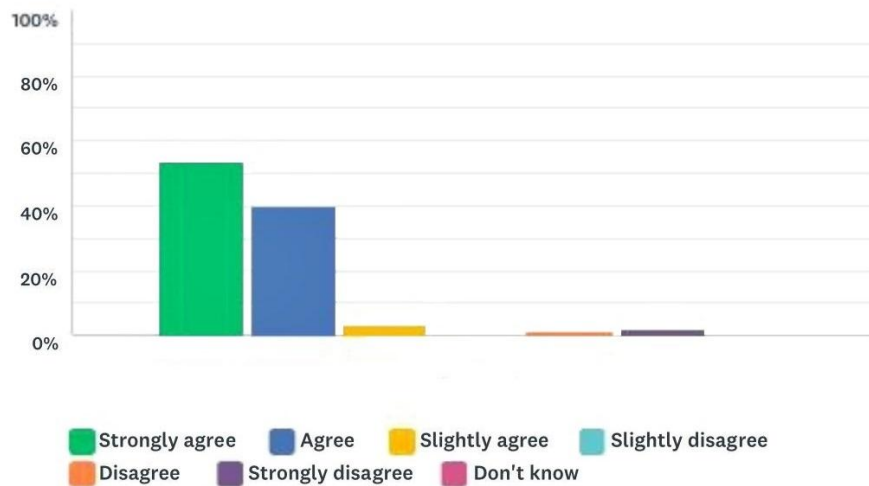
STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	SLIGHTLY AGREE	SLIGHTLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
53.93%	39.73%	3.07%	0.38%	0.77%	1.92%	0.19%	
281	207	16	2	4	10	1	521

Figure 10   Results for Q4: μ ≈ 5.4; σ ≈ 0.9

33

35 questionnaire respondents agreed with the statements for Q3 and Q4, i.e. criterion 2g *only* applies to controlled practice and it *also* applies to free(r) practice. In addition, 12 respondents disagreed with both statements, i.e. criterion 2g does *not only* apply to controlled practice and it does *not* apply to free(r) practice. These results are rather surprising, particularly the former. However, results for both Q3 and Q4 clearly show that many respondents apply criterion 2g to both types of practice, even if finer-grained controlled/free(r) distinctions exist[20].

Data from the interviews provided insight into trainers' rationale for controlled practice. Below are the two most commonly cited reasons (see also pp.57-8):

- opportunity to boost learner confidence prior to free(r) practice:

   … developing automaticity, getting the feel of the new language, getting more confidence in using language (I5)

   … substitution drills have their place… it's to do with building learners' confidence… giving them an opportunity to get their tongue and teeth around the language (I23)

   … it will give learners confidence, it would scaffold further ventures (I41)

- opportunity to check understanding (and clarify further); in effect, controlled practice was subsumed under language clarification:

   … it's debatable whether controlled practice has any real use, but I think it does because it's your testing stage to see whether they've got it (I3)

   I see it as checking… some [controlled practice activities] are more like checking the success of the clarification (I15)

   … where does checking end and practice start? (F3)

   … when [trainees] are monitoring and they're doing feedback on the controlled practice, it gives them a really clear indication of how effective their clarification was (I30)

   I usually tell trainees that feedback to the controlled practice is the stage that will make or break the lesson, that's where I decide if the lesson is a pass or whether more is needed to pass the lesson (I21)

For some trainers, controlled practice (rather than freer) seemed more suitable for certain language items by virtue of their complexity:

   … contrasting tenses like *present perfect continuous* versus *present perfect simple* is such an intuitive kind of decision, and it's very difficult to extract a kind of reliable thing that can be applied in real time (I11)

   … let's say the aim is to teach *articles*, then I think controlled practice suits that aim better (I27)

---

[20] Ur (1996: 84), for example, lists seven types of grammar practice, from accuracy work to free discourse.

Other trainers preferred to view controlled practice as *performance rehearsal*:

> … if the freer practice was complaining about a bad holiday, then if it was *extreme adjectives*, I'd like to see the controlled practice provide scaffolding for the freer practice, so [learners] would say, *"Was the pool small?" "Small? It was absolutely tiny!" "Was your room dirty?" "Dirty? It was absolutely filthy!"* (I31)

> … if the trainee's planning a spoken freer practice, then I like the controlled practice to somehow set it up, so for example if the freer practice is an interview task, then I like the controlled practice to maybe look at questions around that interview. Also if the freer practice is spoken, I like the trainees to have a spoken element to the controlled practice (I21)

There was variability in terms of the types of controlled practice trainers considered appropriate:

> … and then after that perhaps some kind of discrimination task where the learners are expected to choose between two structures (I40)

> I don't particularly like discrimination activities, I like the students to actually practise the language, write it down or say it out loud, it facilitates retention, right? (I21)

> … if the main aim is to practise *present perfect* or whatever, if they've had controlled practice, for me that would be enough (I19)

> … if there's a gap-fill that just gets people to construct *present perfect* sentences or whatever, I wouldn't really count that as practice (I27)

One way of mitigating inconsistency of assessment is through tutor standardisation prior to a course (see p.40).

As for free(r) practice, *overlap of criteria* emerged as a key issue:

> … there's a crossover sometimes between freer practice of the target language and fluency practice of speaking, in which case I would stick 2g and 3b together (I8)

> … thinking of all the centres where I've worked, being reliant on quite prescriptive lesson structures, 2g is a criterion I use to refer to controlled practice… and freer practice, rightly or wrongly, I more often use 3b (I15)

> … if the clarification is a very heavy clarification and instructions to the task are very heavy-handed in their attempt to get students to use the language, then I'd say it's more 2g. If the clarification stage is smaller and more of a supporting role and students are encouraged to more freely express their ideas and only turn to that language should they struggle, then I'd say it's more 3b (I7)

> … an interesting thing about [this criterion] is what a huge range of totally different activities with different purposes it covers, and probably for that reason I

often find that I don't use 2g very much. I'm much more likely to use 2d, 2e and 3b[21] (I5)

Another key issue related to free(r) practice was CF. The commonly held view was that this should be *delayed*:

> … delayed error correction post-freer practice is really important… that's what the students appreciate most, they actually see that the teacher was paying attention: *"Ah, this is what I said, this is what I should've said, or this is how I pronounced it and this is how I should pronounce it"* (I30)

> … students get more out of delayed error correction after freer practice than they do out of spending five minutes filling in an exercise (I2)

Some trainers viewed *form-* rather than message-oriented CF as a more reasonable expectation:

> … we only expect trainees to tackle target language, we don't necessarily expect them to be able to deal effectively with language they haven't prepared for (I10)

A small percentage of trainers emphasised the usefulness of *immediate* CF:

> … online corrections given at the point [the error] has been made is more powerful than several minutes later when the person can't really recall what was actually said (F4)

Others emphasised that CF could also be provided:

- prior to performance:

> I'd expect trainees to include time for students to think about how they're going to use the target language… if it's *narrative tenses* and they're thinking of a frightening experience, they need to think about when they might use the *past continuous* and the *past perfect* in the planning stage. While monitoring, I'd expect them to do some on-the-spot correction (I24)

- between successive iterations of a task/activity:

> … the students do a freer activity, practising a particular structure, then a bit of error correction, praise of language, then they do the same activity again… then feedback, same as before… then the same activity again… (I22)

However, the following response was fairly representative:

> … what happens in CELTA lessons is presentation drags on far too long and the practice is rushed and the feedback to practice is tokenistic (I27)
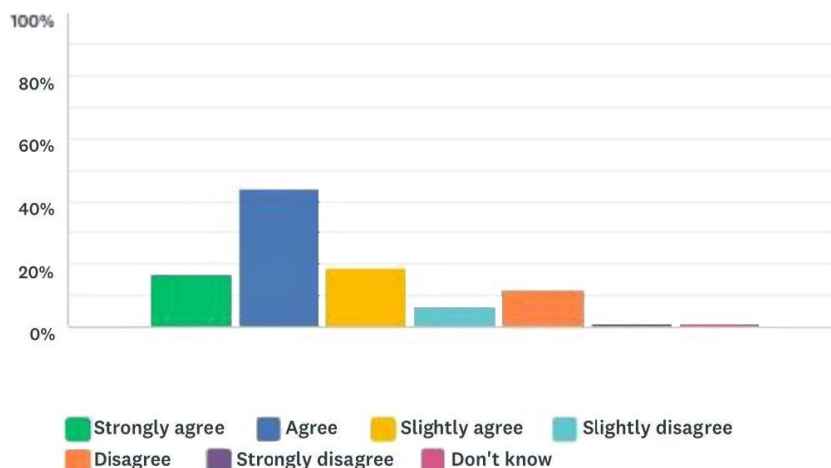
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[21] See pp.89-90.

5.2.2   Dimension one: "provide as much practice in context as possible"

Q7 Practice in context means that practice stages should be linked thematically to other stages of the lesson.

Answered: 521   Skipped: 0

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	SLIGHTLY AGREE	SLIGHTLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
16.89%	43.95%	18.43%	6.72%	12.09%	1.15%	0.77%	
88	229	96	35	63	6	4	521

Figure 11   Results for Q7: μ ≈ 4.44; σ ≈ 1.26

The results above generally support the SSI findings, with a higher percentage of questionnaire respondents than that of SSI participants equating 'practice in context' with *thematic linking of stages*. Interviewees explained their views mostly by referring to:

- use of schematic knowledge:

  … once we've opened that schema of travel or shopping or hobbies, then we get the language, then we practise it (I13)

  … to abandon that [context] halfway through the lesson and introduce another whole different thing that we haven't done any activating for, is often difficult for students (I22)

- previous learning experience:

  I see that as important, as a student myself in German classes it really helps to have that sort of thread or coherence (F3)

While some trainers viewed thematic linking of stages as essential, those who were less exigent felt this was challenging for trainees to achieve given that it was not reflected in coursebook materials. As such, it was generally felt only stronger candidates could be reasonably expected to adapt materials successfully in order to "stick to the same context" or

"incorporate a lot of context into practice". However, the key issue in terms of operationalisation was *inconsistency of lesson grading*:

> … if [practice] is well conducted classroom-management wise, but is completely decontextualised, completely meaningless because there's absolutely no relevance to the learners in the real world or it has no communicative purpose, I'll be totally ok with that cause we're talking about a candidate who's been in the classroom for only like four and a half hours (I47)

> I may definitely [fail a lesson] in the final stage of the course if there was context set and then the controlled practice focused on a different context and then the freer practice went on to focus on a different context again… that would demonstrate that the trainee hadn't picked up the methodology in terms of what a language lesson involves (I44)

> I think the context can change in a lesson, I think there's some value to practising and transferring your new knowledge to a different context, that's another way of challenging learners (I43)

As discussed in section 3.3, the *multidimensional* aspect of a construct may lack transparency for trainers, as the following comments also suggest:

> … are those [three dimensions][22] just exemplification of what you might mean or is that officially what it means according to Cambridge? (F4)

> … this is Craig Thaine's interpretation and I don't know if I put huge store by the *'context'* thing… it's a little bit ambiguous (I41)
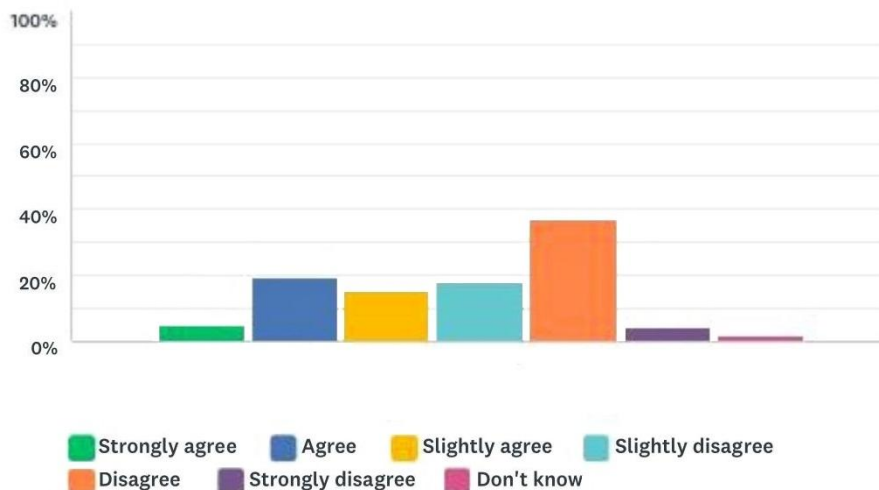
> To be honest when I read that, it was the first time I noticed it really, the *'in context'* (I1)

---

[22] See *figure 8*.

Q8 Controlled practice based on discrete sentences (e.g. filling in blanks/transforming active to passive voice/unscrambling jumbled sentences) is not practice in context.

Answered: 521   Skipped: 0

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	SLIGHTLY AGREE	SLIGHTLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
4.61%	18.81%	15.74%	18.23%	37.24%	4.03%	1.34%	
24	98	82	95	194	21	7	521

Figure 12   Results for Q8: μ ≈ 3.22; σ ≈ 1.36

Interviewees who considered practice based on isolated sentences as contextualised practice interpreted 'context' as *information/clues*. The following comments were representative:

> … a collection of sentences, where the context was clear that it was either finished in the past or connected to the present, and then the students have to decide: do I need to now put it into *past simple* or *present perfect*? (I30)

> … it's usually at sentence-level in a lot of coursebooks… as [trainees] are following a coursebook, quite often you do what's in there (I46)

Arguments *for* or *against* this type of practice were linked to:

• previous learning experiences:

> … it has to be a meaningful exchange, so not just making up sentences. In my Hungarian class we did that all the time: introduce a bit of language and then we're making up lots of sentences all of a sudden (I5)

> I'm not a huge fan of uncontextualised gap-fills, the fact that I don't remember them very clearly from my own learning days suggests they weren't very memorable (I34)

39

- authenticity

    I suppose there is context in a sentence, but I think ideally the best kind of practice is in context that is more than sentence level because that's more realistic. I view it as rehearsal for how they might use the target language outside the classroom (I24)

    I don't like jumbled-up sentences because they are so far removed from anything that learners have to do in everyday life (I11)

- consideration of learners' L1/needs:

    … in Turkey I encouraged [trainees] to use a lot of putting-words-in-order activities, the syntax of the language is completely different (F3)

- summative assessment:

    … if trainees provide any practice at all, even if it's just a gap fill, then I'd tick that box (I17)

    … if the practice stops at students rephrasing *active* phrases into the *passive*, then they've only done a very controlled, rather unnatural activity. Because CELTA standards are not extremely high, I might still tick the box (I16)

    Those isolated sentences or gap-fills, often they satisfy the needs of assessment in a training course by providing [controlled practice]… satisfying the criteria, I think, isn't the same thing as being a good teacher (I15)

Also relevant was the issue of tutor variability, with tutors becoming aware of differences after the changeover to a new TP group, e.g.:

    … there are even trainers out there who allow *'write three sentences about yourself'* or something like that, really decontextualised old school, so that's a bit hard for me when I get [trainees who have been shown that approach to practice] in my group (I7)

As discussed in section 3.5, the pressure of having to adapt to a new tutor's preferences can result in trainees becoming compliant technicians; this issue was acknowledged:

    … candidates are very savvy in knowing what the tutor is looking for… they know, and I think fair play to them, if the tutor is a big fan of matching tasks, they'll tend to focus on that (I19)

While trainers acknowledged that some tutor variability was to be expected, it was also felt that better consistency of assessment hinged on tutors having an awareness of each other's expectations:

    … within our department we've been saying: *"As long as tutors working on* [the same course] *agree"* ... in a way Cambridge are allowing for differences, but at the same time we want standards (I42)

    … [at this centre] we [standardise] because we've been getting some freelancers in (I49)

Q9 Practice in context means that practice should mimic situations in which the target language would be used naturally.
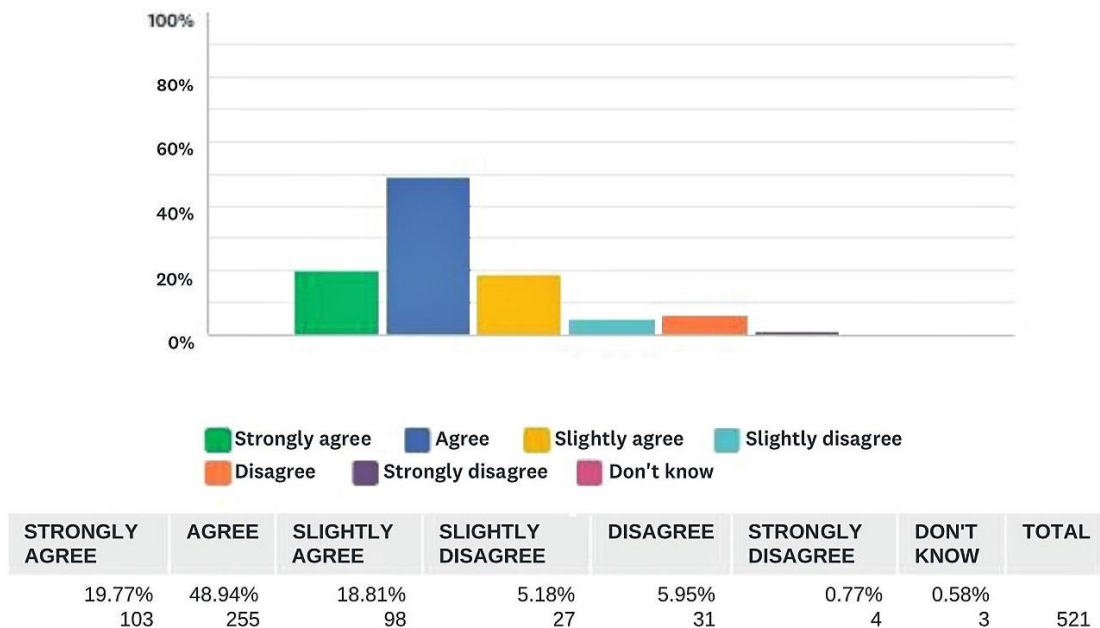
Answered: 521   Skipped: 0

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	SLIGHTLY AGREE	SLIGHTLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
19.77%	48.94%	18.81%	5.18%	5.95%	0.77%	0.58%	
103	255	98	27	31	4	3	521

Figure 13   Results for Q9: μ ≈ 4.69; σ ≈ 1.08

It is interesting that views with a general consensus do not necessarily emerge during SSIs; the questionnaire data above does not reflect the SSI data at all. Rod Ellis interpreted *dimension one* as follows: "*context* refers to the idea of ensuring the exercise is contextualized in terms of a situation. In other words not just pure mechanical type exercises" (R. Ellis, personal communication, April 18, 2019). Only a small number of *interviewees* interpreted *dimension one* in this manner, with *thematic linking of stages* (Q7, p.37) the most popular interpretation. Obviously, both views can co-exist, so it is not surprising that a number of *questionnaire respondents* agreed with the statements for Q7 and Q9.

The key difference which emerged from the SSI data was related to applicability, i.e. some trainers included *controlled practice* in their interpretation:

> 2g is a criterion I use to refer to controlled practice… we try to replicate what situations in the world [the language] is naturally used, where it will be useful to [learners] when they encounter those situations (I15)

> I would prefer some kind of information gap… if our learners were given lots of gap-fills, they wouldn't know how to apply that to their own situations and it would be less engaging (I49)

Most trainers, however, mainly had free(r) practice in mind:

> *… 'in context'*, this is definitely where freer practice comes in, trying to communicate real meanings, and in order to do that you need a context because of course language is socially situated (I40)

This was in large measure an acknowledgement of the coursebook-driven nature of TP:

> I think very often what happens with coursebooks in lessons is some of the exercises are only gap-fills, it's: *"Oh, let's just do one exercise from the book"* (I48)

> … all of the CELTAs I've worked on have been coursebook-based, so whatever is in the coursebook is a starting point and [trainees] might take that activity and edit or change it (I2)

> … often it's what's in the book… there's not enough time or the need to reinvent the wheel (I39)

Again, comments suggested *dimension one* of the construct[23] lacked clarity:

> … as much practice in context… this *'as much'* is as long as a piece of string (I22)

> … who writes these things? I don't know, I think it could be appropriate to the situation, but it's pretty vague (I46)

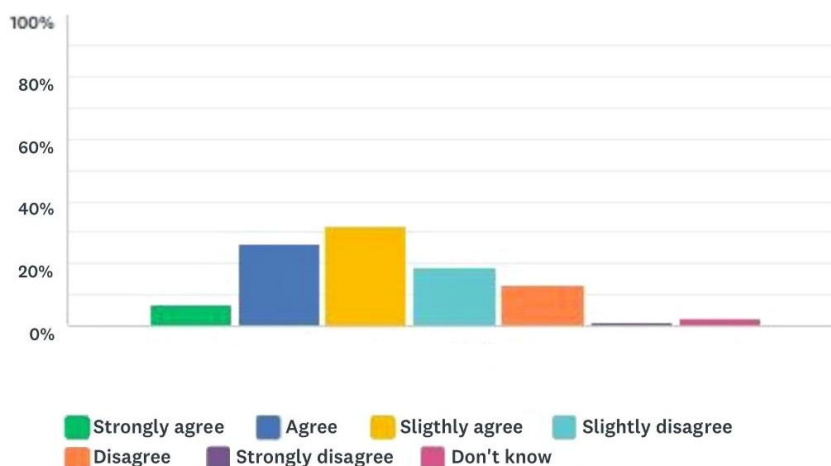> … *'provide as much practice in context as possible'*, so is it as much practice as possible, or as much of the practice that you have should be in context? (F4)

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[23] See *figure 8*.

Q16 Controlled practice should be communicative (i.e. learners giving or getting information, giving opinions…)

Answered: 521   Skipped: 0

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	SLIGTHLY AGREE	SLIGHTLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
6.53%	26.30%	31.86%	18.81%	13.05%	1.15%	2.30%	
34	137	166	98	68	6	12	521

Figure 14   Results for Q16: $\mu \approx 3.91$; $\sigma \approx 1.29$

The statement above is possibly consonant with the one for Q9 (p.41). However, the specific reference to *controlled practice* may have influenced questionnaire responses. As already discussed, the type of controlled practice used in TP is highly influenced by coursebook content. However, trainer attitude also plays a role; SSI data showed that some trainers shared the following view:

> I don't think accuracy and communicative purpose are necessarily mutually exclusive (I12)

Nevertheless, the general expectation was that only stronger trainees could be expected to adapt materials to add a communicative dimension to controlled practice:

> … for weaker trainees if they're quite happy to do the next exercise in the book and a little freer practice, then absolutely fine. For the better ones, I'd challenge them to adapt the gap-fill, make it communicative (I31)

> I would expect a very strong CELTA candidate to try and make [controlled practice] more communicative, but you know, just controlled written practice is often a good starting point (I20)

Types of activities were discussed, e.g.:

> … it was basically a bunch of clues in the target language about people who were going to stay in a hotel and according to the clues they had to work out who was

rooming with who… that was much more interesting for them because they were finding out where their room was and who their roommate was (I13)

However, not all trainers would view the activity above as an example of controlled practice, and this may have had a bearing on questionnaire responses. As noted, finer-grained distinctions exist, e.g.:

> … oral practice, but with some accuracy focus, such as information gap activities, maybe using questionnaires, *find someone who* activities, so moving into semi-controlled practice, perhaps some semi-controlled role-play using prompts (I5)

A number of trainers questioned the usefulness of controlled practice exercises such as gap-fills. The following comments were representative:

> … students can fill in exercises until they're blue in the face, but still haven't got the first idea how to use it in speaking or writing (I2)

> … students probably haven't benefitted much if the practice is exclusively of that kind of conscious, slow manipulation display (I15)

> … so many [learners] say, *"Well, I can do these controlled practice activities, I can do gap-fills and I can get everything correct"* but actually when it comes to what they're going to want to replicate in real life, that's another issue (I29)

These comments are also consonant with *transfer-appropriate processing theory* (see pp.12-3), arguably relevant in the discussions of Q9 (see p.41) and Q16.

Finally, the following comments pertain to the fostering of higher-order processes and are particularly relevant here:

> I worked in a centre last year that had two *input sessions*[24] on practice activities… I'd never seen that before, they actually had an input session focused on adapting activities to make them communicative. I thought that was quite nice, rather than just looking at the coursebook and going, *"Right, there's my controlled practice."* (I19)

> … most books, that's their default exercise, a gap-fill… jumbled sentences… we have a session devoted to making those a little bit more interesting and hopefully either communicative or at least interactive in some way (I1)

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[24] See glossary.

5.2.3   Dimension two: "ensure the practice is appropriate to the target language"

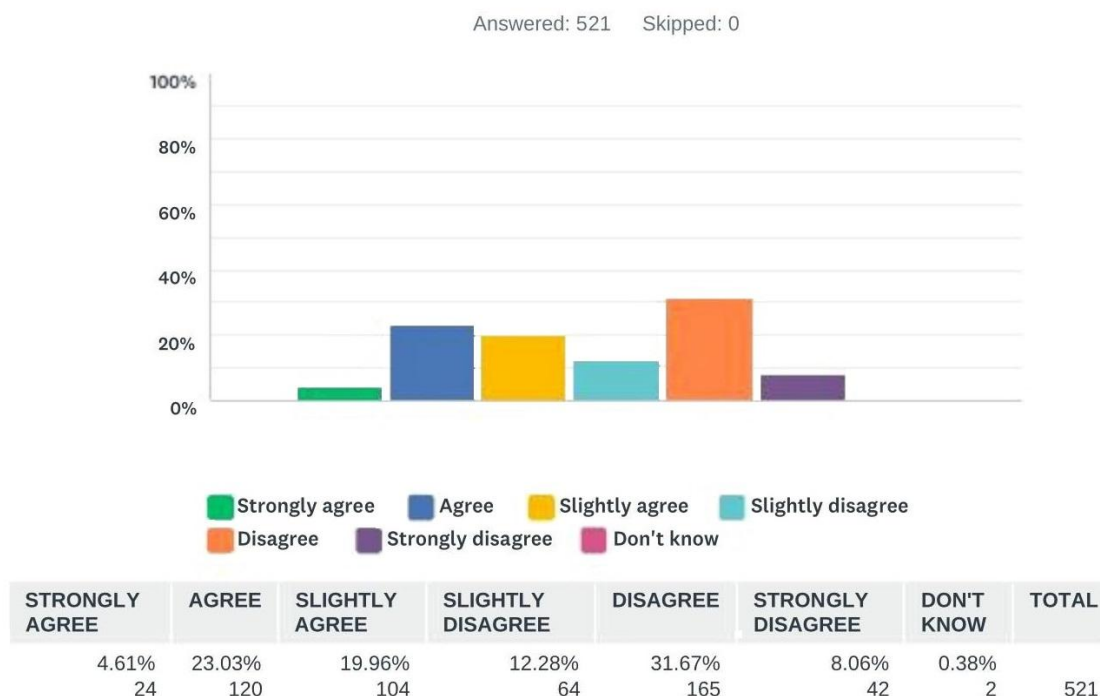## Q6 Controlled practice activities should be designed to minimise the chances of learners making mistakes.

Answered: 521   Skipped: 0

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	SLIGHTLY AGREE	SLIGHTLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
4.61%	23.03%	19.96%	12.28%	31.67%	8.06%	0.38%	
24	120	104	64	165	42	2	521

Figure 15   Results for Q6: μ ≈3.32; σ ≈ 1.44

The type of practice implied in the statement above would include oral drills, originally intended to help learners automatise language through mechanical manipulation of form. It would also include written controlled practice involving repetitive manipulation of verbs in brackets, transformation of passive-voice sentences to active-voice etc. However, some questionnaire respondents found the statement ambiguous[25]. Also relevant are trainers' differing interpretations of controlled practice, e.g. some interviewees expected this type of practice to be *communicative*. These factors may have influenced responses, which lacked consensus overall; this item had the highest standard deviation.

As already discussed, many interviewees considered controlled practice useful in fostering learner confidence (see p.34) even if, based on experience, they did not expect displays of accuracy during controlled practice to be immediately transferrable to free(r) practice. Thus, such confidence may be illusory from a learner's perspective (as discussed on p.15).

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[25] The researcher was informed of this via e-mail correspondence.

Trainers' expectations regarding accuracy were influenced by the following considerations:

- psycholinguistic factors:

   I always remember the quote from Spada that the students will use not what you're teaching them (I4)

   … we know the third person -*s* will go on being a problem for ever, even question forms and negatives (I8)

- the role of testing/coursebooks:

   … changing passive into active or active into passive I think is utterly pointless. Although I suppose if you were doing the FCE[26], there might be a point to it (I23)

   … practice very often takes the form of something like a gap-fill… coursebooks like to have things with definite answers. I'm not sure publishers distinguish between teaching, helping learning and testing (I5)

- reflection on previous experiences:

   … a really important part of learning languages is having that opportunity to make mistakes and get feedback (I37)

   I learnt [Thai] at an English university… we only had controlled practice… after a 4-year degree we could barely string sentences together, we had zero fluency. And combined with the overcorrection of the accuracy work, to this day I'm still battling against hearing my teacher's voice jumping in and correcting me (I34)

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[26] See glossary.

Q10 In terms of language items, practice should focus only on the target language for the lesson.

Answered: 521   Skipped: 0
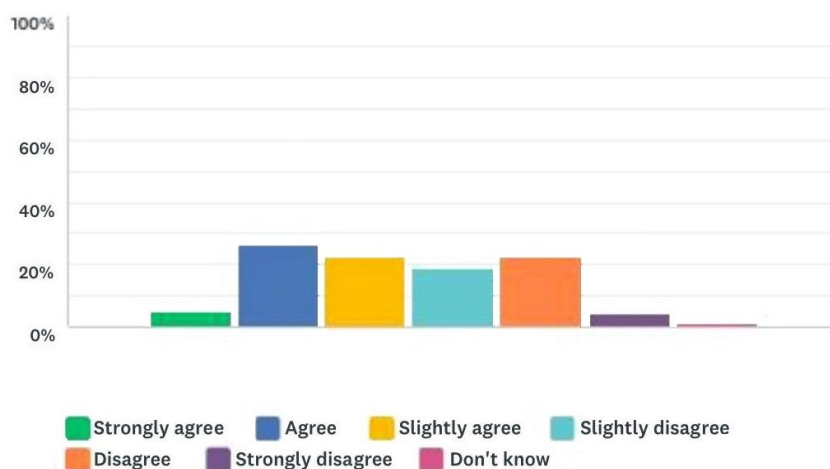
STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	SLIGHTLY AGREE	SLIGHTLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
4.99%	26.30%	22.65%	18.62%	22.26%	4.22%	0.96%	
26	137	118	97	116	22	5	521

Figure 16   Results for Q10: μ ≈ 3.6; σ ≈ 1.33

The use of the collective term *practice* may have had a bearing on responses. It is arguably easier to agree with the statement above with only *controlled practice* in mind, e.g.:

> … making sure that the practice, particularly controlled practice, only practises what they've taught them (I2)

In relation to *dimension two*, interviewees expected coherence in terms of:

- *signification*[27]:

  > … practice activities need to focus only on the grammar being taught, if the trainee has taught *present continuous* for temporary situations and one of their practice activities is getting students using *present continuous* for future, then I'd say they haven't met the criterion (I18)

- forms:

  > … let's say you're teaching *going to* versus *will*, interrogative as well as affirmative, and the controlled practice doesn't cover all the forms you've taught, I'd say that wasn't appropriate practice (I23)

  > … if they've taught eight words, then I want to see if the students can use the eight words, not a loose smattering (I28)

These were the most popular interpretations of *dimension two* according to the SSI data.

---

[27] The meaning which a language item has as an element of the language system (Widdowson, 1972: 16-7).

A small percentage of trainers viewed coherence in terms of *value*[28], e.g.:

> … providing learners with meaningful practice of language, focused on the use of the language items for communicative purposes (I12)

Some trainers viewed free(r) practice of target language as an opportunity for learners to also access their existing lexicon:

> … say you were teaching the *present perfect continuous*, and you use a context like somebody's work life, *he's been working in a company for five years*, then I think the practice activities should relate to work, so [learners] can reuse vocabulary (I3)

> … often having one context through the whole lesson is beneficial for learners because they don't have to suddenly learn new vocabulary (I22)

Opinions varied regarding the clarity of *dimension two*, as well as its relation to the overall construct[29]:

> … this descriptor of *'appropriate practice'* is so wide, so broad, it's a whole gamut of activities... I'm just expressing frustration with the criterion (I41)

> … with a lot of CELTA lessons, candidates do their clarification and then the practice is about completely other stuff… I'd mark that down, I'm not saying it would be unmet because it's only one part of the criterion (I40)

> I'd fail a lesson if [learners] are just practising something that's completely not what was presented (I46)

> I think [the overall construct] *'providing appropriate practice of language items'* and the second [dimension] *'ensure that practice is appropriate to the target language'* are basically the same (I33)

> … [dimension two] could be ensuring use of the target language is not contrived… I've probably been interpreting in my own fashion for years… maybe I need to think again about some of these [dimensions] (I49)

> … what's *'practice appropriate to the target language'*? I think that's a very subjective definition… *'appropriate'* to me means the practice doesn't require linguistic resources beyond their level (I48)

> I'm not confident my interpretation matches [Cambridge's] at all actually and it's one of those things I might go and ask the more experienced trainers about, *"What does 'appropriate' mean?"* (I45)
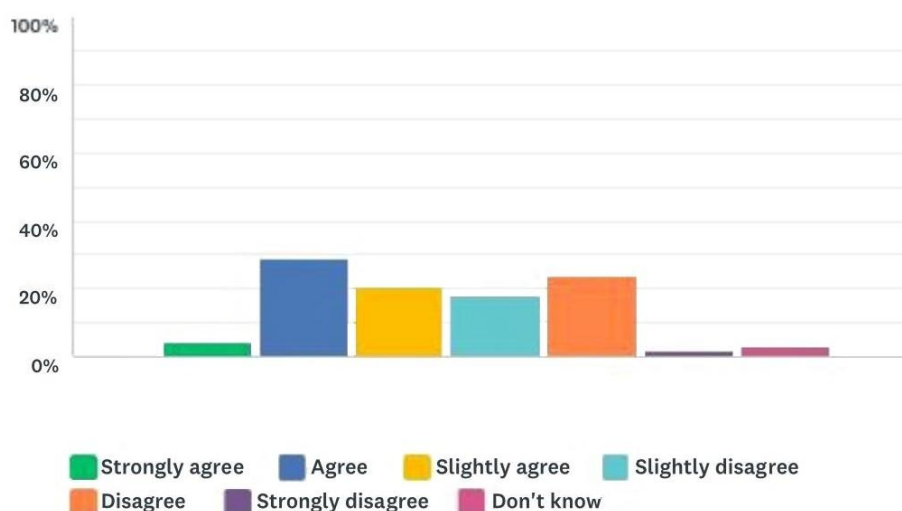
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[28] The meaning which a language item has when it is actually put to use in acts of communication (Widdowson, 1972: 16-7).
[29] See *figure 8*.

Q12 Controlled practice should be mainly production-based, not comprehension-based. (See definitions in previous question.)

Answered: 521   Skipped: 0

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	SLIGHTLY AGREE	SLIGHTLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
4.61%	28.98%	20.35%	18.23%	23.61%	1.34%	2.88%	
24	151	106	95	123	7	15	521

Figure 17   Results for Q12: μ ≈ 3.68; σ ≈ 1.29

The lack of consensus may partly reflect respondents' expectations of what trainees are realistically able to include in a short teaching slot, rather than comprehension-based practice not being seen as valuable (see also Q11, p.61):

> … when you're introducing language you need to have receptive practice then productive practice… quite difficult to lay as a ground rule for a 45-minute lesson (I34)

> … in a 45-minute TP, most trainees end up with a written controlled practice and a spoken freer practice (I2)

> … in a 45-minute lesson, if they can do controlled written practice and slightly freer oral practice, I'd normally be quite happy (I8)

However, controlled practice was seen by a number of trainers as a more realistic goal:

> … there is usually just one controlled practice cause there's just not enough time (I14)

> I think a lesson could be to standard with only one controlled practice activity (I10)

> … if the only practice they got was circling an either/or, I'd find that a bit problematic. I think a gap-fill where they have to write something is not great practice, but you can say the student has somehow used the target language (I1)

49

Some trainers maximised practice opportunities for learners by dividing PPP lessons among trainees:

> … sometimes language lessons are split between candidates… the first could do the clarification, the second a series of practice activities (I7)

> … it's hard in 45 minutes, so often you need the first trainee to do the presentation and then the second to provide the practice (I46)

However, a possible drawback was acknowledged:

> … but then you have the problem the second teacher's really dependent on the first teacher (F4)

Q15 Drilling grammar (e.g. pattern practice such as substitution drills) serves no useful purpose.

Answered: 521   Skipped: 0
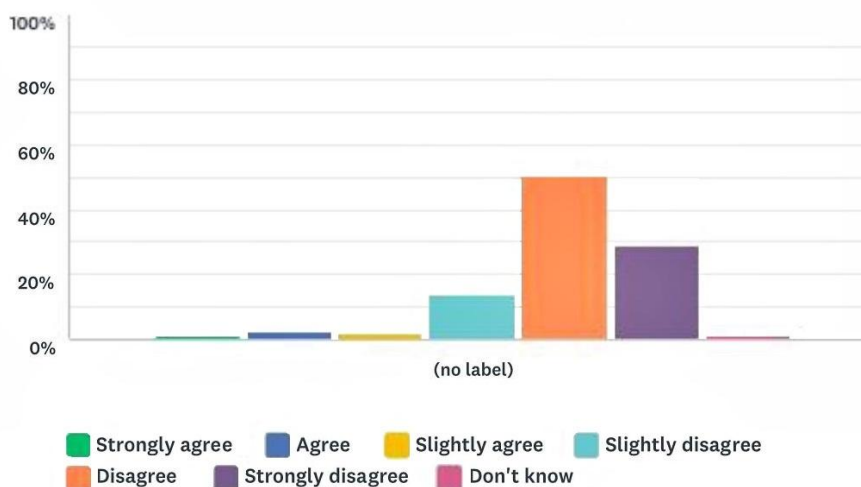
STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	SLIGHTLY AGREE	SLIGHTLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
0.96%	2.69%	1.92%	14.01%	50.67%	28.79%	0.96%	
5	14	10	73	264	150	5	521

Figure 18   Results for Q15: μ ≈ 2.01; σ ≈ 0.95

The results show that respondents view oral pattern practice as beneficial. However, SSI data revealed that trainers have differing views of what constitutes oral pattern practice:

> I'm quite a fan of drilling, I must admit: *Find someone who*[30] I'm a fan of, any sort of mingling activity (I46)

> *Find someone who* is a nice freer task to practise *present simple* (I6)

> I think there's confusion over oral practice automatically being freer practice… I'd say that most *Find someone who's* are not freer practice (I7)

> … it could be a disguised drill, a *Find someone who* drill (I42)

> … substitution drills have their place… they're behaviourist… nothing to do with meaning, it's more to do with just manipulating the form (I23)

> If you're wanting to include drilling as controlled oral practice, you can turn it into a short communicative task (I20)

The key issue which emerged from the SSI data was *overlap of criteria*:

> … drilling, I wouldn't really call that 2g, I think that's part of 2d[31] (I5)

> … a substitution drill, I would see that more as 2e (I31)

---

[30] See *figure 3*.
[31] See p.89.

I don't think Cambridge intends 2g to cover drilling (I34)

I see drilling as part of clarification and not practice (I26)

I actually don't call drilling controlled practice… I put that under 2e actually (I8)

So covered in 2g for me could be form-focused drills, a substitution drill (I40)

This is where 2g and 2e are problematic, because where does drilling fall into that? (I2)

However, some of the differences of opinion evident in the SSI data can be explained by the distinction between *simple repetition* and *pattern practice* drills:

I think most of the drilling that I tend to focus on is repetition. So it's more part of the presentation stage: model, choral, then individual (I28)

Reasons for/against the use of drills were based on:

- consideration of learners (confidence/linguistic level/L1 transfer)

… you drill so they have better fluidity and feel confident (I41)

There's a lot of lower-level students [in Thailand], they need the repetitive output in order to really get better in their use of language. So with elementary students I encourage a lot of substitution drilling (I15)

… in Germany, in Hungary, where students' pronunciation is not that problematic, you have a tendency to put drilling on the backburner (I21)

I love drills… especially [with] lower-level students to give them confidence before they move on to a freer practice activity (I37)

- previous learning experiences:

What [learners] need is to get their mouth around the phrases as much as possible over and over so that they have the physical memory of saying whole chunks right, because that's how I learned to speak in French (I24)
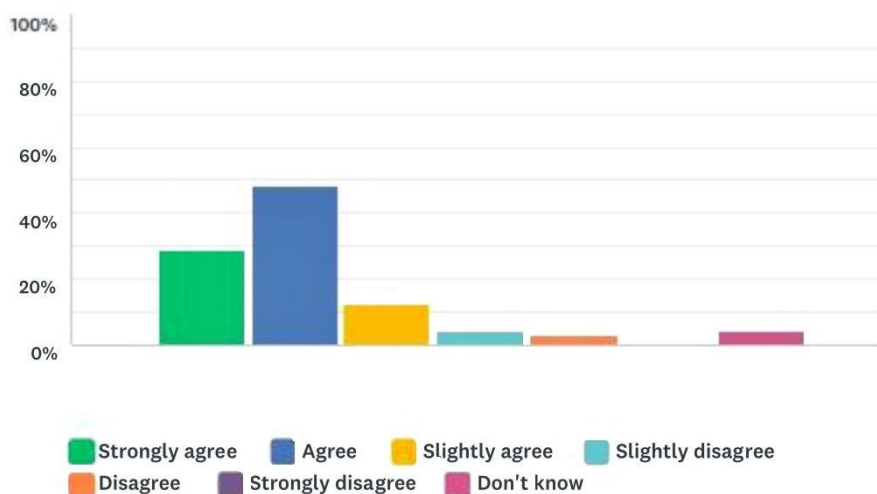
- personal predilections:

… substitution drills for example, I just find them so boring (I47)

I personally do a lot of drilling because I really like phonology, it's something I'm interested in (I6)

Q17 Free(r) practice is more effective when it elicits use of the target language by design rather than teacher prescription (i.e. through instructions).

Answered: 521   Skipped: 0

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	SLIGHTLY AGREE	SLIGHTLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
28.60%	47.98%	12.48%	4.03%	2.88%	0.19%	3.84%	
149	250	65	21	15	1	20	521

Figure 19   Results for Q17: μ ≈ 4.99; σ ≈ 0.95

These results also reveal a consensus not reflected in the SSI data. The coursebook-driven nature of TP may offer an explanation here, i.e. although respondents generally prefer output of target language to be the result of task design, SSI participants acknowledged that this was unrealistic given the design of free(r) practice activities in coursebooks:

> I've seen many tasks which are very successful in terms of student engagement and task achievement, but zero use of the target language (I24)

> … when trainees follow coursebooks, I often find there's very little interesting practice, very often it takes the form of something like a gap-fill… and then it goes straight from there into a free conversation with the hope the language will be used. Well, it may or may not happen (I5)

Relevant here is the point made by Loschky & Bley-Vroman (1990: 162) that learners can get by with strategic competence rather than structural competence in communicative tasks. Some trainers argued for inclusion of *planning time* prior to an activity as a way of mitigating the above (e.g. see I24, p.36). Others viewed adaptation of materials as key:

> If the final communicative task is *'tell your partner a story about when you were young'*, it's very easy to do that without using the *past continuous*. But if the students are asked to tell the story of *'how'* and *'where'* they met their best friend,

it's much more difficult to tell that story without using the *past continuous* to give the context at the time (I10)

SSI data revealed that some trainers viewed classroom management skills as key in fostering use of target language. The following responses were representative:

> … if the teacher doesn't insist, *"Please use this grammar"*, then they have a 10-minute activity where they just talk, but don't necessarily use the target language. I think then the criterion is not fully met… if trainees see that students are not using the target language at all, I'd expect them to prompt the students to use the target language (I25)

> If the trainee encourages [the learners] to [use the target language] and they don't, it might usually mean two things: (i) the freer practice task wasn't set up the right way (ii) they didn't get enough controlled practice (I36)

However, a number of trainers preferred a non-interventionist approach:

> I certainly don't want trainees to ask the students to use the target language in a communicative task because I feel that goes against the idea that it's supposed to be communication (I10)

> … when the students leave the classroom, nobody will tell them in an authentic situation, *"Ok, now use the plural form or now use exponents of agreement"* (I12)

> … a teacher could insist on [learners using the target language], but then the teacher would be micromanaging the interactions… then it would no longer be freer practice in my view… in my experience it negatively affects tasks when teachers start interfering in that way (I11)

> … trainees focus so much during freer practice on learners using the target language that it makes it very stilted and quite unnatural (I19)

A small percentage of trainers acknowledged the role of *developmental stages*[32]:

> … if the students are ready in terms of their developmental stage to use this language, then we can expect they'll end up using it, not because they were told to, but because it's useful for the task (I10)

> … even though you flag up all this useful language, *"I want you to say this"*… nine times out of ten they don't because it's too early for them to incorporate it into their everyday speech (I41)

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[32] See *footnote 9.*

5.2.4   Dimension three: "stage practice activities logically"

Q5 Controlled practice should precede free(r) practice when the target language is new.

Answered: 521   Skipped: 0

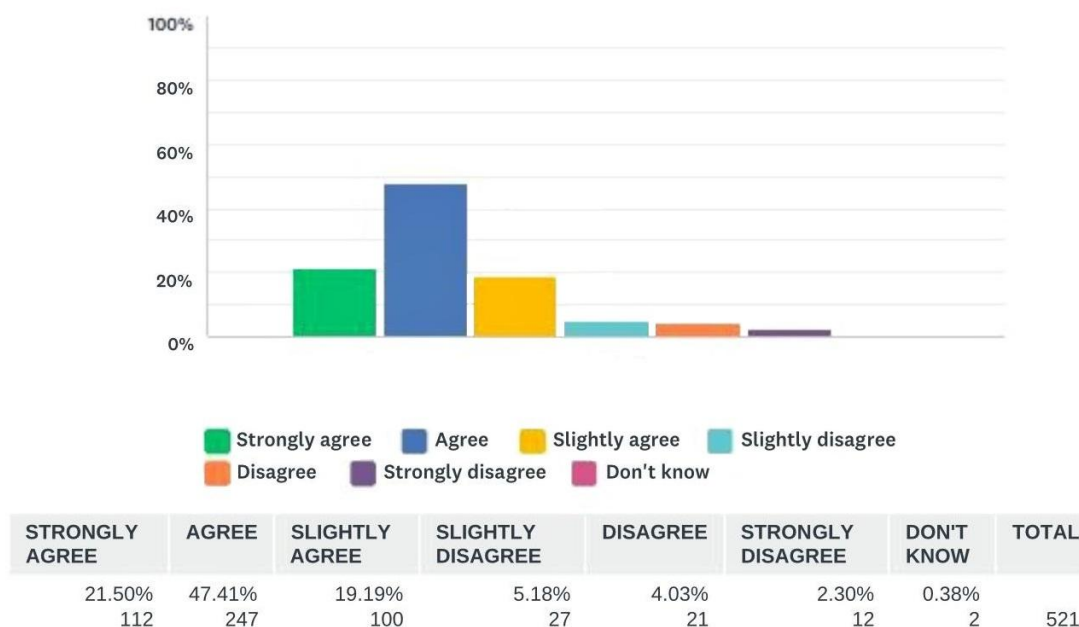| STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	SLIGHTLY AGREE	SLIGHTLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
21.50%	47.41%	19.19%	5.18%	4.03%	2.30%	0.38%	
112	247	100	27	21	12	2	521

Figure 20   Results for Q5: $\mu \approx 4.71$; $\sigma \approx 1.15$

These results are generally consistent with the SSI data. In fact, all interviewees interpreted *dimension three* in terms of the *controlled-to-freer-practice* sequence, despite differing interpretations of PPP:

> I see PPP much more like, you know, situational presentation (I23)

> I very rarely do PPP, I'm more for *guided discovery*… you have a text which embeds the language and then [trainees] help the students notice the language in the text… controlled and freer practice would come after guided discovery (I48)

> … text-based presentation is PPP… it's PPP with a richer context (I28)

> I find it hard to see the difference between guided discovery and PPP (I33)

However, there was a lack of consistency regarding operationalisation, with:

- some interviewees expecting trainees to cover all three stages in a 40- or 45-minute teaching slot, e.g.:

> ... I mean it depends on the lesson, but *'provide as much practice as possible'* would be for them to move from restricted to freer, around three activities I'd get them to aim for in a 45-minute lesson (I40)

- others being more open to the possible omission of the third stage; see p.49

- others preferring to divide PPP lessons among trainees; see p.50

Thus, SSI data supported Down's (2019: 35-6) findings that while PPP is viewed as the exemplar for language-focus lessons, trainers have differing expectations regarding its implementation.

SSI data also provided insight into how trainers' differing expectations might influence their assessment of lessons:

> … [a former colleague] really hates it when trainees clarify to death… actually, I think clarification is way more important than practice (I21)

> … over time I've come to think that practice is probably more important than the presentation stage although I'm well aware that on CELTA we're more or less steered towards giving importance to explicit clarification (I27)

> … if they make it to presentation and not to practice, I'd say that's a fail lesson to me, because we don't have any evidence of whether or not learners have acquired the language through presentation (I26)

> I've worked in centres where trainees would fail because they hadn't provided practice. But I wouldn't [fail them]… at entry level I'm looking for very little to tick that box (I17)

> So in terms of meeting the standard and being a fail lesson, I think one controlled practice activity is probably enough [to pass] (I10)

> … in November I did give a trainee a below standard because they were just focusing on controlled practice… too much controlled practice and not enough freer practice (I29)

> I'd say we wouldn't even necessarily let them pass without freer practice (I14)

> I wouldn't necessarily [expect freer practice] because I think it's just unrealistic and I think it's one of the things that we as trainers sometimes overlook (I33)

> … in a 40-minute lesson I want them to have at least 20 minutes left on the clock when they get to the freer speaking practice (I50)

> … in week four I would definitely expect not just controlled practice but freer practice (I24)

> … at our centre, we tell trainees: *"When you get to week three[33], practice becomes one of the criteria for assessment. So until that stage, if you don't manage to provide practice, that's ok"* (I12)

> … very early on in the course, around TP3, if there was no practice in a language lesson, that would be a *fail* lesson for me. I tell trainees early on, *"No practice, no point."* … if they're not getting any practice in, I think they're doing a disservice to the learners (I40)

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[33] Usually TP5; see 'TP' in glossary.

The pervasiveness of PPP was attributed to the following reasons:

- Coursebook-driven nature of TP:

  … all the CELTA courses that I've worked on, it's generally *"Ok, what coursebook are we using?"* (I29)

  We still use [PPP] because most books organise themselves around a grammatical syllabus or a broadly PPP-oriented paradigm… teachers need to learn how to use coursebooks, because that's still the reality in most teaching situations (I28)

- Practicality and face validity:

  … it's the starting point… if you've done a course like CELTA, you start off using PPP because you're trying to master twenty things at once, you need something solid to work with. And it's a perfectly reasonable basis. And then only later you start to think, *"Why am I doing it like this? Why couldn't I do it in a different way?"* (I16)

  Coursebooks use PPP cause it's a framework everyone knows and is very easy to sell… it's easy for new teachers to use, it's very simple to understand, students who have been studying for a while understand the framework as well, so they feel very comfortable with it (I37)

  I suppose the way we've also been taught in the past… there's an expectation there in terms of that's the way I was taught (I42)

- CELTA paradigm:

  I suppose there is a doctrine in CELTA that you would start with more controlled practice and then you would move to freer practice (I11)

  … on CELTA courses lessons are roughly the PPP model. I think it would be nice to get away from, but it's sometimes quite difficult. I have very mixed feelings about it actually (I5)

- Result of 'apprenticeship':

  I suppose because that's what we've been trained to do (I33)

Trainers' use of analogies when rationalising the *controlled-to-freer-practice* sequence provided insight into underlying beliefs, e.g.:

  We can't bake before we sift the flour (I13)

  … if you're repairing a car engine, you make sure you've got the basics right before you're let loose on the whole thing in a freer way (I35)

  ... I suppose it's the scaffolding and then taking it away, like taking away the training wheels (I46)

  … there's a logic behind it… I often use the metaphor *'training people to play tennis'*, so you practise your serve, you practice your backhand, but inevitably you'll end up with a game where you use all the structures you've got (I41)

Some trainers explicitly referenced *skill acquisition theory*, e.g.:

> … coming from a karate background which is full of drills, I mean the analogy is only useful insofar as you can compare language learning with other forms of procedural knowledge. But if you make that assumption, I can see a very clear parallel between simply drilling a very specific act and then slowly integrating that into more general freer activities (I11)

However, a small percentage of trainers also voiced doubts and concerns:

> The problem with PPP for me is more on the level of a syllabus (I28)

> … so this idea of skill acquisition… it's quite interesting to see how far that applies to language learning because in most areas they encourage you to break down the skill into little bits and practise it and build it up. I wonder, perhaps language has so many more small parts compared to other areas which have bigger parts you can practise (I43)

> … controlled practice seems to be something that lends itself to an explicit consideration of the rules… we seem to implicitly be assuming that this will help them to later use it in free conversation. Whether or not that's the case seems to be an open question (I11)

Data from the interviews also revealed the following key issues:

- The dissonance between TP and TP students' needs as a consequence of coursebook-driven teaching:

> … [at our centre] for TP7 and 8, trainees need to decide what to teach. And one of the biggest challenges for them is coming up with appropriate material… they come in and ask, *"So what do I teach? So now I'm on my own I don't know what to teach."* [We say] *"Why don't you do a needs analysis, why don't you go and ask a few of the students what they want to learn?"* And they're like, *"I don't know how to handle this."* And then eventually we get asked, *"Can I go back to the coursebook and just choose something from it?"* And we say, *"Well, ok, if you think you need do that, do it."* And this is what most of them do (I26)

- The possible tension between summative assessment and formative development, best summed up in the exchange below:

> F4: So for the C1 students, *"Oh no, not another lesson about conditionals"*, because trainers think, *"Ok, I know they're going through the motions, but I need to see that they're able to do this."* And so, within the constraints of CELTA, we set up these sort of pretend lessons, right?
> F1: Jumping through hoops.

- The limited (or lack of) time for free(r) practice when trainees are allocated all three stages of a PPP lesson for their 45-minute teaching slot:

> I don't think there would be a huge amount of time for freer practice. But freer practice doesn't have to take a long time, it can be a two-minute discussion (I9)

… the freer practice we see is often five minutes of production at the end… it's a shame (I15)

I don't think you can go on to freer practice in 45 minutes, because the trainee is still painting by numbers, right? (I23)

- The repercussions of too heavy a focus on controlled practice (see also p.44):

… students can do controlled practice till the cows come home… I was working with Kazakh teachers… they were very good at doing controlled practice activities because that's what they'd done in the old Soviet system for years, but what they couldn't do is communicate with fluency… they really struggled (I37)

- Relevant planning and classroom-based competencies and overlap of criteria:

… there does tend to be a lot of overlap with other criteria… if practice activities are staged logically, I should be able to see that from the lesson plan, which is a separate set of criteria. And I guess what the teacher's doing as well, again this is overlap with other criteria… are they monitoring, are they supporting, is there a clear feedback stage? (I37)

… when you look at staging an activity *per se*… making sure instructions are clear and that they [demonstrate] and then monitor the activity to identify issues, they can intervene… and collect information for feedback (I21)

I suppose *'staging activities logically'* is linked to instructions first of all… if the task is complex… the students have time to prepare and brainstorm, do it, get feedback on content and then on language (I24)

- differing interpretations of the relation between the overall construct and its dimensions[34]:

… the third [dimension] is the most important, staging it logically (I26)

… the first [dimension] is the most important for me, where it says *'provide as much practice in context as possible'* (I48)

I think the [dimension] that's most important to me is [the second]… ensuring that the *'practice is appropriate to the target language'* (I36)

Given the fairly systematic adherence to PPP, a question that might be asked is how trainers feel about other frameworks. Some interviewees made a case for the use of TBL, e.g.

… there's no predicting what might be acquired and actually the advantage of a task-based approach is that you're casting your net wide, you're exposing learners to a variety of different forms (I28)

However, most trainers felt that TBL was too challenging for trainees:

I think for the weaker trainees it's better to control the language agenda. I think TBL would be too much, I mean the real in-at-at-the-deep-end TBL, cause I think they lack the expertise to react to students' language (I27)

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[34] See *figure 8*.

I would love to see more of [TBL] but maybe it's using methodology that's too much for a CELTA trainee to take on at that stage (I29)

Comments indicated the tendency was to opt for a weaker version of TBL in TP, i.e. task-supported practice of preselected linguistic items (see *appendix E*), which was mostly associated with one coursebook:

… the *Cutting Edge* books, they have a lot of different kinds of TBL tasks, with the functional language that they have to feed in to the students (I30)

Inclusion of preselected linguistic items was a requisite for criterion 2g to be seen as applicable:

… there's different ways of approaching task-based... looking at the second [dimension], it mentions *'target language'*. I suppose if you're going to judge them on practice of a target item which they haven't clarified explicitly, that might be more problematic (I34)

However, comments also revealed that the pervasiveness of PPP had repercussions on the uptake of task-supported practice, let alone TBL:

I have a bit of a thing about task-based learning, I don't like it for the very fact that the TP students can do the task without using the target language. You know, that's a fundamental flaw (I33)

It's very hard for people to get their head around when you're so used to PPP: *"What is the language item?"* (I28)

I was trying to tell the trainees how task-based learning works, but I kind of failed, it went over their heads. They were more familiar with PPP (I26)

… what's the book that's mostly task-based learning? Is it *Cutting Edge*? I remember trying to use it on a CELTA and it was really challenging, like a square peg in a round hole for trainees (I7)

Given the perceived challenge for trainees, most trainers felt task-supported practice was best left to the latter stages of the course, e.g.:

… we introduce task-based on day one of week four (I47)

However, the following suggestion was pertinent:

… if something's difficult and useful, perhaps you want to start it earlier rather than later, or at least give them more than one go at it (I43)

Q11 Comprehension-based practice (e.g. identifying incorrect sentences; identifying pictures which correspond to sentences read aloud by teacher) should precede production-based practice (e.g. filling in blanks; drills) when the target language is new. (These definitions are also used in Q12.)
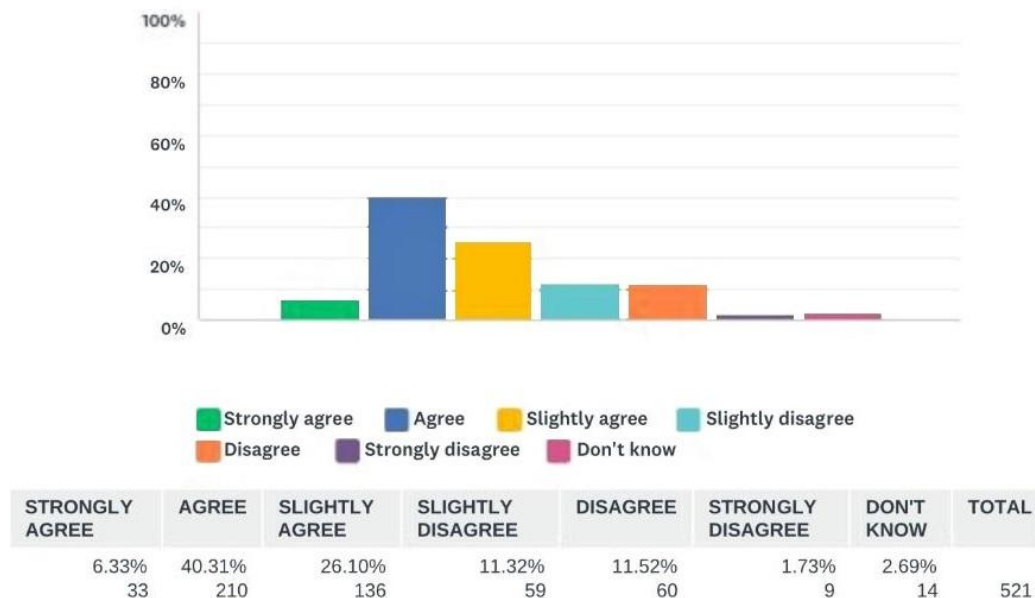
Answered: 521   Skipped: 0

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	SLIGHTLY AGREE	SLIGHTLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
6.33%	40.31%	26.10%	11.32%	11.52%	1.73%	2.69%	
33	210	136	59	60	9	14	521

Figure 21   Results for Q11: $\mu \approx 4.14$; $\sigma \approx 1.19$

As previously discussed (see Q12, p.49), SSI data revealed that although some trainers viewed comprehension-based practice favourably, they viewed production-based practice as a more realistic expectation given the limited timeframe of the TP slots. Also, as already noted, some trainers felt *'checking of understanding'* would be a more accurate label for certain controlled practice exercises, especially comprehension-based practice:

> … one example sequence would be where the first task has a more receptive format… with the aim of checking the success of the clarification, it's a formal check of explicit knowledge (I15)

However, a number of trainers also considered production-based practice as more valuable. By way of illustrating variability of opinion, below are some of the reasons cited *for/against* comprehension-based practice or certain types of exercises:

> … if I was learning a language, I'd want to make sure I had the chance to process it before speaking, maybe that's just me personally (I44)

> … there might be reasons for doubting whether immediate [production-based] practice of something new is actually beneficial anyway… why should 45 minutes necessarily have [production-based] practice in it? (F4)

Well, [comprehension-based practice] is noticing, isn't it? I mean it's student-centred at least… I'm not a massive fan, but I think it's something that can be used (I42)

… [exercises] where they have to find errors, and it's a group of errors nobody in the room has made, I don't like that because the coursebook material is written for some abstract group of students (F4)

I consider productive practice of language generally more valuable than receptive practice. It might be more challenging, but the benefits for longer term learning should be stronger (I43)

… for lexis something like a gap-fill isn't very useful, I like something for retention, so that might be some form of categorisation activity (I28)

… what annoys me is trainees will devise an activity whereby the students just have to recognise the vocabulary rather than use it. So it's really only passive recognition rather than active production of the vocabulary (I33)

… so circle the correct tense, the problem with that is they could guess, whereas if they actually have to write the correct tense, you either know it or you don't (I46)

As discussed in section 3.2.2, both *comprehension-* and *production-based* practice are useful.

Interestingly, the controlled practice exercises used in the sample lessons for the 2018 and 2019 CELTA standardisations were only *comprehension-based* (see pp.21-2).

Q13 Practice of form (e.g. pronunciation, grammatical structure) should precede practice of meaning.
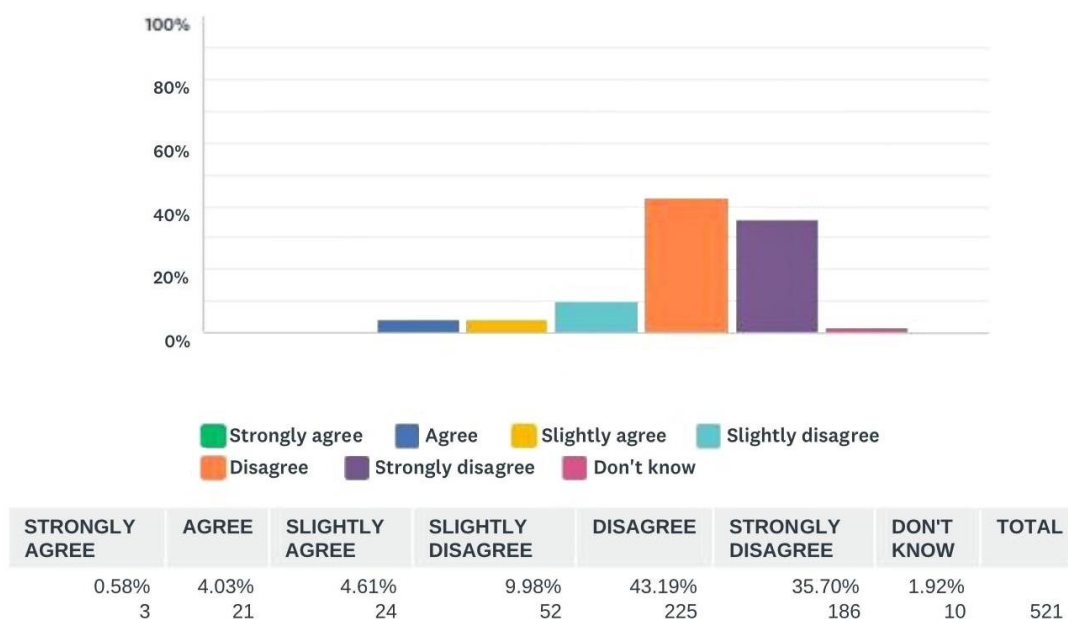
Answered: 521   Skipped: 0

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	SLIGHTLY AGREE	SLIGHTLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
0.58%	4.03%	4.61%	9.98%	43.19%	35.70%	1.92%	
3	21	24	52	225	186	10	521

Figure 22   Results for Q13: μ ≈ 1.98; σ ≈ 1.06

The data shows that respondents generally think practice of meaning should precede practice of form. Only a small percentage of SSI participants made a case for the reverse sequence, which was linked to 'degree of difficulty':

> … with an elementary group, if it's a new piece of language, I don't mind a series of controlled tasks that get more challenging… making form decisions in one task… in the next task they have to make form and meaning decisions (I7)

> … the *past simple* and *present perfect*… I'd want learners to be a bit more comfortable with the form first (I8)

> … depending on the level, you might have a controlled practice exercise which focuses on form before they get into more challenging controlled practice activities that also address meaning (I10)

> … if you're contrasting *"will"* for spontaneous decisions and *"going to"* for plans, then I think it's valid to have two separate controlled practice activities, one to practise spontaneous decisions and one to practise plans… particularly at a lower level… and a third practice activity where they have to decide on the correct form (I33)

Some trainers prioritised manipulation of form when meaning was obvious, e.g.:

> … a gap-fill where the verbs are in parenthesis and they just have to put them in the past tense (I7)

With something like *comparatives* or *superlatives*, generally students don't have a problem with meaning, but form is a problem so you probably want more form-focused activities (I31)

A small number of interviewees expressed reservations about mechanical manipulation of form, e.g.:

… going back to the *present continuous*, if you've got the form up on the board, you don't need to understand the meaning to do the gap-fill… you could give it to me in Hungarian and I'd do it… I'd encourage the trainees to include some focus on meaning too (I17)

However, as previously noted (see p.46), some trainers acknowledged that the testing of verb structures in exams justified mechanical manipulation of form in the classroom. Only one trainer *explicitly* acknowledged and lamented the structuralist approach to teaching:

It's in the materials and it's in the CELTA… I think trainees think that language is all grammar… I think there's just a massive overemphasis on grammar in coursebooks still (I45)

Q14 Oral practice should precede written practice.

Answered: 521   Skipped: 0
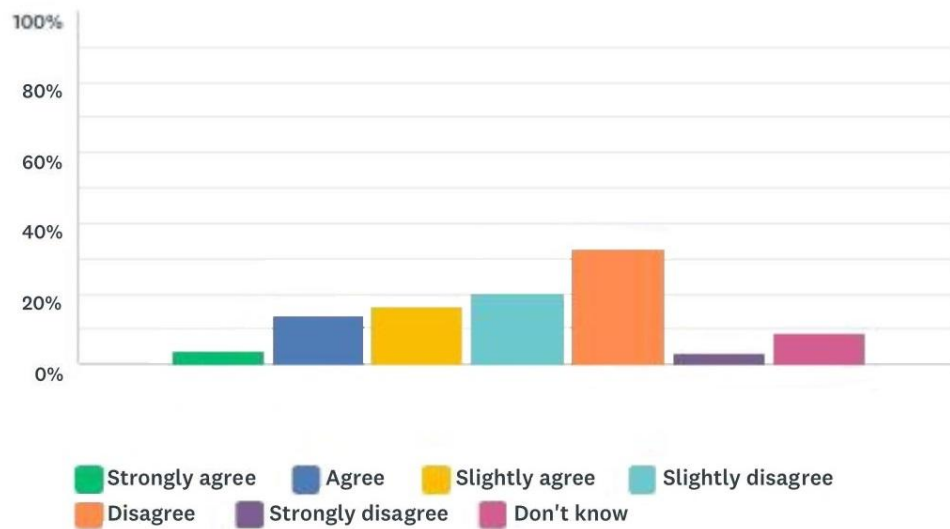
Legend
■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Slightly agree ■ Slightly disagree
■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	SLIGHTLY AGREE	SLIGHTLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
3.65%	13.82%	16.70%	20.54%	33.21%	3.07%	9.02%	
19	72	87	107	173	16	47	521

Figure 23   Results for Q14: μ ≈ 3.18; σ ≈ 1.27

The *oral-to-written* sequence reflects the audiolingual instructional sequence, evident in the following SSI responses:

> So logical staging is clearly the degree of control… so a very controlled listen and repeat and then class practice and then pairs practice and then some written consolidation (I41)

> … after the presentation maybe a substitution drill to make sure students are able to construct the sentences. And then moving on to some kind of written exercise (I16)

The results above generally reflect the SSI data. The interviewees who felt written practice should precede oral practice (a sequence which is reflected in coursebooks) argued that practice in the written mode placed less pressure on learners, e.g.:

> … in terms of grading, it's a matter of going from the least challenging to the most challenging… from one where they've got the least choice to the one where they have the most choice… normally written would come before oral (I8)

> I think it makes more sense to first have a look at it in writing, experiment a little bit, it just gives them more time, they can think about the language a little bit more before you ask them to use it (I14)

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From written to spoken is a useful way of scaffolding [practice]… in terms of how much is demanded of the learners, so less demand at the beginning moving to more demand (I20)

Interestingly, the number of respondents who chose 'don't know' was significantly higher for this item (n=47) than for the other items in the questionnaire. These respondents had between one and 41 years of experience (average ≈ 12 years) and almost a third (n=14) were also assessors. Thus, lack of experience can be excluded as a factor. The use of the collective term *practice* may have caused ambiguity as many interviewees did acknowledge that the sequence in coursebooks was normally from *controlled written* practice to *free(r) oral* practice (e.g. see I5, p.53).

5.3   Research questions

Construct: *providing appropriate practice of language items*		σ	μ
Q3	Only controlled practice of target language	1.10	1.70
Q4	Also free(r) practice of target language	0.90	5.40
Dimension 1: *provide as much practice in context as possible*			
Formative indicators:		σ	μ
Q7	Thematic linking of stages	1.26	4.44
Q8	Sentence-level context	1.36	3.22
Q9	Real-life situation	1.08	4.69
Q16	Controlled practice with communicative purpose	1.17	3.91
Dimension 2: *ensure the practice is appropriate to the target language*			
Formative indicators:		σ	μ
Q6	Error-free output of target language via controlled practice	1.44	3.32
Q10	Practice limited to target language only	1.33	3.60
Q12	Emphasis on output practice	1.29	3.68
Q15	Oral pattern practice of target language	0.95	2.01
Q17	Use of target language in free(r) practice due to task design	0.95	4.99
Dimension 3: *stage practice activities logically*			
Formative indicators:		σ	μ
Q5	From controlled to freer(r)	1.15	4.71
Q11	From comprehension-based to production-based	1.19	4.14
Q13	From form-based to meaning-based	1.06	1.98
Q14	From oral to written	1.27	3.18

Figure 24   Standard deviation (σ) and mean (μ) values calculated using SPSS software and based on:
strongly agree = 6; agree = 5; slightly agree = 4; slightly disagree = 3; disagree = 2; strongly disagree = 1; don't know = missing value

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RQ1: how consistent are CELTA trainers' interpretations of criterion 2g?

Approximately half of the questionnaire items had consistency of responses; the smaller the standard deviation, the greater the consistency. In addition, the SSI data revealed disparity of operationalisation in terms of what trainers expect and consequently how they assess trainees (see pages 35, 38, 54 and 56). The overall disparity of interpretation and operationalisation strongly suggests that criterion 2g is unreliable.

RQ2: how transparent is the multidimensional aspect of the construct?

The SSI data suggests that the relation between the overall construct and its three dimensions lacks clarity for trainers (see pages 38, 42, 48 and 59), particularly as different dimensions are prioritised. Although dimension three is interpreted mostly in terms of the PPP framework (see p.55), this is undermined by variability of operationalisation.

RQ3: what factors influence trainers' understanding of practice?

The findings show that the two most influential factors are reflection on own experience and dialogue with peers:

> Mostly what I've observed, what I've gotten from my mentors and my own practice in the classroom (I26)

> … in terms of practice my thinking has quite developed over time through experience doing CELTA and also lots of reading (I43)

> I've worked with a lot of other people… I've put together my opinions over time just by talking to many different people (I7)

> I learned from (my training supervisor) and we discuss things in the trainers' room, it's always with the same people… I was thinking at some point I'd like to work in different centres (I6)

Some interviewees also mentioned the yearly standardisation:

> … we were rather shocked by the standardisation, which basically meant, *"What on earth do you to do to fail?"* That's what we were asking ourselves. So that kind of did recalibrate my standards a little bit (I16)

More notably, qualitative data also revealed that what trainers value with respect to practice can have little or no bearing on the way they assess practice. For example, some trainers felt it necessary to suspend their personal theories because of the entry-level nature of the course:

> Ideally of course a well-designed lesson is based on emerging language that you've heard previously. But that's Delta stuff (I10)

CELTA can be a bit of a dilemma for me, the way I teach and the way trainees teach can be quite different, and then if I'm doing a demo lesson[35] for trainees, it can be a bit different to what they're expecting, or I try and make it more what they're expecting and I feel a bit strange (I43)

… the more I think about it, the more I recognise gulfs between what I believe is valuable and ultimately what we end up doing on the course (I28)

I think that coursebook material is much more important on CELTA for practice… whereas in real life, I often think that the best practice activities that you have are the ones that are actually student-centred and student-driven (I7)

The comment regarding *student-driven* practice is especially pertinent. The expectation was that trainees should adapt material allocated by the tutor in order to make it more relevant for their students. The type of adaptation most commonly cited was *personalisation* of practice:

And I think it really has to be relevant to students' interests… to students' lives. It should ideally be personalised (I37)

Practice should be personalised, for example, students writing questions for each other or true and false sentences about themselves using target language (F2)

… if a trainee is able to adapt, think about the students and fit the activity so that it's more contextualised, more related to them, maybe then that could constitute a higher grade trainee, more a B or an A, because they've got a good awareness of learners (I29)

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[35] See glossary.

6   Discussion and recommendations

In 1996, the Head of the TEFL Unit at Cambridge made the following assertion:

> I know that people are often quoted as talking about the 'RSA[36] lesson' and… (i)t may also be the case that this 'RSA' lesson is perceived as basically PPP. Now we have done nothing to encourage this belief. In fact, we try hard to counter it. But it may be that the perception is none the less there. That's one of the major reasons for the review we are in (Murphy O'Dwyer & D. Willis, 1996: 151-2).

The review in question was part of a consultation process which led to the introduction of assessment criteria that same year. Given the assertion above, it is not surprising that criterion 2g (introduced in 2003) is worded in a way which highlights *key considerations* (i.e. the three dimensions) while also allowing for *flexibility of interpretation*. Hitherto its introduction, none of the CELTA assessment criteria focused explicitly on practice.

The findings of this study show that trainers interpret criterion 2g in terms of *planning* and to a lesser extent *classroom-based* competencies, resulting in overlap with other criteria, i.e. all three dimensions are viewed essentially as planning competencies, but only dimension three (*stage practice activities logically*) is also interpreted by some trainers in terms of teaching skills (see second bullet point, p.59). While previous studies (section 3.5) have identified overlap between criteria as a source of inconsistency of interpretation, it cannot be said that this is problematic in relation to criterion 2g. For example, whether or not tutors view an appropriately staged PPP lesson as evidence of criterion 4b and the set-up and management of the practice activities as evidence of criteria 5b, 5i and 5j, the advantage of the current system is that it allows tutors to explicitly reference pertinent aspects of planning and teaching skills by using more fit-for-purpose criteria. As the Thaine study showed, some criteria were unreliable because trainers attributed all manner of competencies to them.

However, certain issues merit discussion. While the quantitative data indicated consistency of opinion with respect to some items, the SSI data provided valuable contextual information

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[36] See RSA and CTEFLA in glossary.

regarding what trainers actually expect and how they operationalise criterion 2g. This is not surprising given that certain questionnaire statements can be viewed as idealised accounts of practice which need to be tempered by the realities of an entry-level course. On the other hand, for some respondents the statements would have seemed restrictive: "I disagreed in most categories! I don't really like anything prescriptive and always look for exceptions or something different!" (J. Gore, personal correspondence, November 4, 2019). Thus, one of the difficulties in completing the questionnaire used in this study is that decisions about choice, adaptation and sequencing of practice activities are also *context-specific*.

As noted, tutors base their decisions about which coursebook materials to assign to trainees for TP on assessment considerations, rather than the needs of the language learners. This is to some extent understandable. Given the limited TP opportunities for trainees, tutors try to ensure they teach an appropriate range of lesson types in order to meet course requirements. Coursebooks are thus used to provide ready-made materials which will further consolidate understanding of lesson templates, such as PPP, which findings show is the exemplar for language-focus lessons:

> … later when you get into the classroom you can start experimenting… but I think
> at the beginning the training should be structured and standard (I35)

The findings also show that trainers expect some adaptation of materials (particularly from stronger trainees) in order to make practice more pertinent. However, it does seems somewhat incongruous for trainers to assign materials to trainees which are not based on actual learner needs/goals and at the same time urge them to ensure their lessons are learner-centred, often through the use of pair work and personalised practice, arguably cosmetic gestures here.

In addition, the coursebook-driven nature of TP is a key factor in the strong adherence to PPP, given that this framework is widely used to structure units in synthetic syllabuses. Another factor is the strong emphasis in the CELTA syllabus on development of explicit linguistic knowledge (e.g. verb structures[37]). Also, the framework is consonant with the view held by many trainers that language learning resembles *skill acquisition*. Thus, it is likely 'the CELTA lesson' will continue to be perceived as PPP (certainly with respect to language-focus

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[37] Worthy of mention here is the research project conducted by Naismith (2017: 276-80), which incorporated the use of corpus tools on a CELTA course. The findings showed that this is a realistic and effective way of improving trainees' *lexical* awareness (e.g. conventionalised word sequences and frequency) and assisting in lesson planning.

lessons). However, relevant here is Down's (2019: 36) observation that a rigid adherence to this framework can lead to display lessons rather than real teaching, an issue acknowledged by interviewees. In this light, Stanley's (2013: 197) assertion that the course attempts to codify a universal notion of context-free 'effective teaching' seems justified.

How can trainers mitigate the aforementioned issues? With respect to the possible mismatch between *TP points*[38] which are established in a top-down manner (i.e. *a priori* linguistic goals set by the tutors), and actual learner needs and goals, it is useful to look at two interesting examples of how trainers have tried to address this. Gaughan (2015) provides trainees with communicative tasks for their TP in week 1 so that they can practise evaluating learner output and identifying linguistic needs. The findings are then pooled and serve as the basis for the planning of language-focus lessons. In an action research project, Stansfield & Meade-Flynn (2016: 17) added a 20-minute slot at the end of TP each day for trainees to discuss their lessons with the learners. The tutors, who were not present during these discussions, found that feedback from the learners helped to inform decisions about the content of subsequent lessons. They were thus able to dispense with TP points after week one.

These are excellent strategies, but they also highlight the absence of a key prerequisite of a language course: *needs analysis*. Unfortunately, it is generally not feasible for tutors to conduct needs analysis prior to the start of a course, particularly given the time constraints. (Also, the assessment agenda may not necessarily be in harmony with the agenda of the learners.) Nevertheless, the absence of needs analysis not only accentuates the artificiality of TP, it also provides trainees with a flawed model for teaching whereby coursebooks should define the teaching process. (For an example of the possibly implicit message, see I26 on p.58.) One possibility would be for tutors to conduct needs analysis during their *demo lesson*[39] on the first day of the course and then, together with the trainees, use the findings to choose materials for lessons. This would not only provide trainees with a model of how to conduct needs analysis, it would also place TP on a more principled footing. In this light, it would seem fitting for Cambridge to add a descriptor about learners' needs to the 2g construct.

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[38] See glossary.
[39] See glossary.

As for PPP, trainers may need to re-evaluate whether the inclusion of all three stages in a single lesson is actually beneficial for either trainees or learners. For the former, there is the inevitable pressure of having so much ground to cover in a short teaching slot; the findings of this study suggest that practice, particularly of the free(r) kind, is often limited when trainees are assigned all three stages. As for the learners, in order for knowledge to become automatised, large amounts of quality practice are necessary. As noted in section 3.5, it is important for the teacher to move to the Production stage as quickly as possible. Therefore, while the findings indicate that many trainers' views are consonant with *skill acquisition theory*, the way PPP lessons are at times implemented produces outcomes which are somewhat at odds with this theory. The suggestion by a trainer (Wood, 2020) that a *flipped* approach be used for *blended* PPP lessons is relevant here, with the Presentation and Practice materials covered by the students prior to the lesson so that valuable class time can be devoted to the Production stage. This suggestion is especially pertinent given that many centres have had to resort to fully online courses due to the circumstances of Covid-19.

The findings also show that most trainers find the strong version of TBL too challenging for trainees to implement. Most view task-supported practice of preselected linguistic items as a more realistic goal, even though this is also considered by trainers as challenging for trainees when viewed through the PPP prism. Again, needs analysis has particular relevance here in discerning the communicative needs of learners in order to guide selection of pertinent tasks[40]. As with PPP lessons, different trainees could be allocated different sections of a task-supported-practice lesson (see appendix E). One teaching slot entirely devoted to the final communicative task would facilitate inclusion of planning time and task repetition, as well as more opportunities for explicit CF. In addition, although the timeframe of the course makes it difficult for such pedagogic strategies to be considered in more depth, it would be worthwhile for tutors to consider including more than one input session devoted to practice, given that this area is often subsumed under lesson frameworks. For example, input sessions on critical selection and adaptation of practice activities informed by needs analysis could be included to foster higher order processes.

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[40] Watanabe (2006: 93) provides an interesting account of how open- (i.e. handwritten comments) and closed-ended (i.e. a Likert-scale survey) methods were used to conduct a needs analysis with Japanese high school students.

The aforementioned recommendations may seem ambitious for a short pre-service course. Traditionally, the main focus of CELTA has been on the practical, with development of theories and critical thinking left to Delta (Parrott, 2015: 210; Roberts, 1998: 211). Trainers acknowledged as much during the SSIs. However, it is important to remember that only around 5% of CELTA graduates eventually go on to take the Delta and that for some teachers the CELTA is the only ELT qualification they ever acquire (Bolitho & Rossner, 2020: 61). One possibility would be to increase the number of course hours to allow for more in-depth exploration of important issues as well as more assessed TP opportunities. However, given that longer courses[41] are of little economic interest (Krummenacher, 2019: 220) and that there is little appetite for change, the challenge for trainers within the current constraints is to maximise opportunities for truly transformative learning without overwhelming trainees.

Finally, there is the issue of consistency of interpretation of criterion 2g. The findings show that trainers would welcome some guidelines from Cambridge regarding the three dimensions. However, more guidelines might make the construct even more prescriptive given that dimension three is already mostly interpreted in terms of the PPP framework. A possible way forward may lie in the proposals by Galaczi & Swabey and Down, and adopted by Coney in his study (i.e. a simplification of the assessment instrument with clearer organisation and weighting of criteria). Another possibility would be to make the yearly standardisation compulsory for *all* trainers (with less emphasis on PPP lessons[42]). Would such changes have a significant impact on trainers' understanding of practice? This is doubtful. Ultimately, the onus is on trainers to constantly seek and create opportunities for their own professional learning so that in relation to practice they are more or less on the same page. This would enhance reliability of assessment.

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[41] For example, the Cert TEALS (see glossary) provides each trainee with a minimum of 12 hours of teaching practice (Cardoso, 2016: 19).
[42] The sample lesson used for the 2020 CELTA standardisation is, once again, an example of a PPP lesson.

7   Conclusion

Our understanding of practice has evolved considerably since the first IH course in 1962, where a key aim was to equip trainees with a survival kit of audiolingual techniques. It is therefore of some concern that well over half a century later, cohorts of trainees are arguably still being shown a narrow view of classroom techniques with respect to practice. In the context of summative assessment, the strong adherence to PPP is bound to result in more display lessons delivered by compliant technicians. Such a process echoes the behaviourist principles which underpinned the CELTA precursor. This is not surprising given that the approach to assessment has become much more rigorous for a course which has basically maintained its central tenets, while also trying to stay apace with the latest developments in ISLA. This is not to say that trainees do not find the course useful and that trainers are dissatisfied with course content (see p.28). However, the current format makes it difficult to go beyond coursebook-driven methodology. While this is not anathema to some, to others it means having to suspend their personal beliefs: "I'm complicit in the propagation of PPP as a paradigm" (I28). As we now know much more about how practice can foster L2 acquisition, it seems contradictory to adopt, in effect if not in intent, a narrow approach. On the contrary, it seems paramount to embrace a broad concept of practice (DeKeyser, 2010: 157; Mackey, Abbuhl and Gass, 2012: 14). Whether this would be feasible with the current course format seems doubtful given the findings of this study. However, in order for the course to remain relevant in the future, this is an issue which should really be addressed.

Word count: 19,298

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The current 41 CELTA assessment criteria for teaching practice (Cambridge 2018a: 26-30).

Notes to help you prepare for tutorials: the following are examples of what you need to do to show that you have achieved the assessment criteria.

- *prepare and plan for the effective teaching of adult ESOL learners by:*

TOPIC 4 – PLANNING AND RESOURCES FOR DIFFERENT TEACHING CONTEXTS

4a   identifying and stating appropriate aims/outcomes for individual lessons
- o   write clear aims
- o   know the difference between main and subsidiary aims

4b   ordering activities so that they achieve lesson aims
- o   sequence the activities/stages of a language focus lesson in one of the ways you have learnt on the course so that aims are achieved
- o   sequence the activities/stages of a skills lesson in one of the ways you have learnt on the course so that aims are achieved

4c   selecting, adapting or designing materials, activities, resources and technical aids appropriate for the lesson
- o   choose materials, tasks and activities from coursebooks and other sources that meet your aims
- o   create extra materials and tasks when appropriate
- o   adapt texts so they are easier or more relevant for your learners
- o   adapt tasks so that they present either more or less challenge for learners

4d   presenting the materials for classroom use with a professional appearance, and with regard to copyright requirements
- o   make sure your handouts are legible for students
- o   remember to put a copyright label on photocopies

4e   describing the procedure of the lesson in sufficient detail
- o   indicate what the learners will do so it is clear to someone reading the plan
- o   indicate what the teacher will do so it is clear to someone reading the plan

4f   including interaction patterns appropriate for the materials and activities used in the lesson
- o   identify and state interaction patterns for each stage of the lesson in the procedure of the lesson plan, for example teacher-student, students work in pairs, students work in groups

4g   ensuring balance, variety and a communicative focus in materials, tasks and activities
- o   ensure that there is a balance between teacher input and student practice
- o   ensure that there is a balance between teacher-led activity and student-centred activity
- o   ensure that there is a variety in terms of activity type in the lesson, for example, oral as well as written practice**,** listening as well as oral practice
- o   ensure that there is variety in terms of materials, tasks and activities in the lesson

4h   allocating appropriate timing for different stages in the lessons
- o   divide the procedure into clear stages in your lesson plan and indicate how long you think each stage will take

4i   analysing language with attention to form, meaning and phonology and using correct terminology
- o   show that you can analyse language in detail for any language focused on in a lesson
- o   show how the form will be clarified on the board
- o   indicate how the concept will be established and checked
- o   indicate significant aspects of pronunciation relating to this language

4j anticipating potential difficulties with language, materials and learners
- o list on the lesson plan cover sheet any potential problems for learners with language: form, meaning, pronunciation
- o list on the lesson plan cover sheet any potential problems for learners with tasks

4k suggesting solutions to anticipated problems
- o show on the lesson plan coversheet how you plan to deal with potential problems with language and tasks

4l using terminology that relates to language skills and subskills correctly
- o write aims for skills lessons which relate to developing receptive and productive skills and subskills – e.g. developing skim reading skills, listening for gist

4m working constructively with colleagues in the planning of teaching practice sessions
- o liaise and co-operate willingly and constructively with your peers in supervises lesson preparation

4n reflecting on and evaluating their plans in light of the learning process and suggesting improvements for future plans
- o discuss and note the strengths and weaknesses of your lesson plan after your lesson
- o address weak areas in the planning of future TP lessons

- **demonstrate professional competence in the classroom by:**

TOPIC 1 – LEARNERS AND TEACHERS AND THE TEACHING AND LEARNING CONTEXT
1a teaching a class with an awareness of the needs and interests of the learner group
- o find out from learners and peers about the needs and interests of learners
- o use this information for selecting materials and activity types where appropriate
- o use this information when setting up pair and group work and dealing with learners in open class where appropriate

1b teaching a class with an awareness of learning preferences and cultural factors that may affect learning
- o find out from learners and peers about the cultural backgrounds of learners
- o use this information for selecting materials and activity types where appropriate
- o use this information when setting up pair and group work and dealing with learners in open class where appropriate

1c acknowledging, when necessary, learners' backgrounds and previous learning experiences
- o find out from learners and peers about the learning backgrounds of learners
- o find out about the linguistic strengths and weaknesses of learners
- o use this information for selecting materials and activity types where appropriate
- o use this information when setting up pair and group work and dealing with learners in open class where appropriate

1d establishing good rapport with learners and ensuring they are fully involved in learning activities
- o build a positive classroom atmosphere
- o interact naturally with learners before, during and after the lesson
- o maintain eye contact
- o ensure that learners are involved in the lesson during teacher-fronted and learner-centred stages of the lesson

TOPIC 2 – LANGUAGE ANALYSIS AND AWARENESS

2a   adjusting their own language in the classroom according to the learner group and the context
- use simple language to give instructions and when explaining
- keep your simplified model natural
- allow learners opportunity to speak by keeping teacher talk to an appropriate level

2b   identifying errors and sensitively correcting learners' oral and written language
- show an awareness of student errors
- correct learners' language sensitively during controlled oral practice activities
- give feedback on oral errors after a communicative task
- correct learners' language sensitively during controlled written practice activities
- correct freer written tasks set in class or set for homework

2c   providing clear contexts and a communicative focus for language
- provide a context for language by means of text, situation or task using visual aids and realia as appropriate
- ensure there is a clear link between the context and the target language
- ensure that the **context** provides learners with sufficient opportunity for communicative practice

2d   providing accurate and appropriate models of oral and written language in the classroom
- choose natural examples of language from context
- ensure new language models are natural and accurate when drilling
- highlight the target language clearly
- ensure language used on the board and on worksheets is correct in terms of spelling and punctuation

2e   focusing on language items in the classroom by clarifying relevant aspects of meaning and form (including phonology) to an appropriate depth
- clarify the meaning of language in language-based lessons by using one of the ways you have learnt on the course, e.g. concept questions, timelines or a learner-centred task
- clarify the form of language in language-based lessons by using one of the ways you have learnt on the course, e.g. using the board or a learner-centred task
- clarify the pronunciation of language in language-based lessons in one of the ways you have learnt on the course, e.g. finger highlighting, highlighting on the board

2f   showing awareness of differences in register
- show awareness of formal, neutral and informal language
- show awareness of how language changes according to the different contexts in which it is used

2g   providing appropriate practice of language items
- provide as much practice in context as possible
- ensure the practice is appropriate to the target language
- stage practice activities logically

TOPIC 3 – LANGUAGE SKILLS, READING, LISTENING, SPEAKING AND WRITING

3a helping learners to understand reading and listening texts
- o follow teaching procedures you have learnt on the course for a receptive skills-based lesson
- o ensure an appropriate focus on developing receptive skills and subskills

3b helping learners to produce oral and written language
- o follow teaching procedures you have learnt on the course for a speaking skills-based lesson
- o ensure an appropriate focus on developing speaking skills and subskills
- o ensure a communicative focus in speaking activities
- o provide learners with opportunities to practise writing in language-focused and skills lessons
- o ensure an appropriate focus on practising writing skills and subskills

TOPIC 5 – DEVELOPING TEACHING SKILLS AND PROFESSIONALISM

5a arranging the physical features of the classroom appropriately for teaching and learning, bearing in mind safety regulations of the institution
- o arrange the furniture and equipment in the classroom to suit different types of activity

5b setting up and managing whole class and/or group or individual activities as appropriate
- o give clear instructions for pair, group, individual and plenary work
- o organise the learners in pair, group, individual and plenary work
- o give an example or demonstration of the task if appropriate

5c selecting appropriate teaching techniques in relation to the content of the lesson
- o recognise different lesson types (skills based, language focus based) and follow teaching procedures you have learnt on the course to achieve the aims of different types of lesson

5d managing the learning process in such a way that lesson aims are achieved
- o ensure that the activities and tasks help achieve the aim of the lesson
- o ensure there is an appropriate balance between teacher-fronted and learner-centred activities
- o be sufficiently directive when appropriate
- o keep a low profile when appropriate
- o know when to intervene or not

5e making use of materials, resources and technical aids in such a way that they enhance learning
- o use games, puzzles, pictures, realia, audio material to help learners learn and provide practice
- o use technical aids (OHP, video projector or sound system) so that they are clear to all

5f using appropriate means to make instructions for tasks and activities clear to learners
- o use simple language to give instructions for tasks and activities
- o give instructions at an appropriate stage of the lesson
- o give an example or demonstration of the task if appropriate
- o check that learners have understood instructions for tasks and activities

5g using a range of questions effectively for the purpose of elicitation and checking of understanding
- o use questions for
  - setting context
  - building up information
  - assessing learners' prior knowledge
  - checking meaning of language items
  - checking understanding of instructions

5h   providing learners with appropriate feedback on tasks and activities
- o   give learners time to check the answers to tasks in pairs
- o   provide feedback on both the content of activities and the language used in them
- o   use a variety of techniques in order to give feedback on activities

5i   maintaining an appropriate learning pace in relation to materials, tasks and activities
- o   keep teacher language and explanation to a minimum
- o   allow time for learners to complete tasks without allowing activities to go on too long
- o   be aware of when learners are ready to move on to the next stage of the lesson

5j   monitoring learners appropriately in relation to the task or activity
- o   listen to learners attentively but unobtrusively during stages of the lesson
- o   know when to intervene in learner-centred activities
- o   be aware of when learners are ready to move on to the next stage of the lesson

5k   beginning and finishing lessons on time and, if necessary, making any relevant regulations pertaining to the teaching institution clear to learners
- o   ensure that you are in the classroom in good time to begin your lesson on time
- o   ensure that your materials are prepared in good time to begin your lesson on time
- o   ensure that you finish your lesson on time and that you do not exceed your allotted time
- o   ensure your learners are aware of start and finish times as required
- o   ensure you pass on any relevant administrative information to learners when required

5l   maintaining accurate and up-to-date records in their portfolio
- o   update your CELTA 5 booklet each day
- o   file TP and assignment documents (in the correct order) in your portfolio each day

5m   noting their own strengths and weaknesses in different teaching situations in light of feedback from learners, teachers and teacher educators
- o   complete a written self-evaluation for each TP lesson noting your strengths and weaknesses
- o   incorporate feedback from others in future TP lessons

5n   participating in and responding to feedback
- o   evaluate your own lessons and your colleagues' lessons critically but constructively in TP feedback
- o   suggest strategies for improving weak areas
- o   respond positively to comments, suggestions and criticism made by peers and tutors on your lessons
- o   Make constructive suggestions on your peers' teaching

This is an adaptation of a document devised by Craig Thaine at Languages International, Auckland and Graeme Holiday at Waiariki Institute of Technology, Rotorua, New Zealand.

Category 1 of the Cambridge English Teaching Framework includes specific references to relevant theories, concepts, frameworks, e.g. *constructivism*, *behaviourism*, *implicit/explicit learning*, *noticing*, *information processing*, *TBL*, etc. (Cambridge 2019a: 2).

Framework components

Each category and sub-category of the framework is made up of components. The explanations below set out what is meant by these components in the framework. They are intended to be indicative of the key principles and concepts relevant to each component and are not meant to be comprehensive.

1. Learning and the Learner

The following areas of knowledge and competence are grouped under the heading 'Learning and the Learner', and are important in that they provide a conceptual and theoretical basis on which teachers consciously or unconsciously develop their personal understandings of teaching and learning.

Learning theories; this refers to:

- general learning theories (i.e., constructivism, humanism, behaviourism, social-constructivism)
- concepts (such as multiple intelligences, motivation, scaffolding, experiential learning, higher-order thinking skills, meta-cognition, stages of cognitive development, etc.), and factors which affect these
- demonstration of practical application for language learning and teaching.

FLA and SLA; this refers to:

- theories of first (FLA) and second language learning (SLA)
- concepts (such as critical period, noticing, interlanguage, immersion, information processing, implicit/explicit learning, comprehensible input, etc.)
- classroom SLA research findings (with regard to L1 transfer, corrective feedback, individual differences, similarities and differences between first language acquisition in an immersion environment and additional language acquisition in a classroom environment, etc.)
- demonstration of practical application for language learning and teaching.

Language-teaching methodologies; this refers to:

- approaches and methods for teaching language (i.e., communicative approach, task-based learning (TBL), audio-lingual, grammar-translation, etc.)
- concepts (such as explicit teaching, discovery learning, noticing, error correction, L1 interference)
- demonstration of practical application for language learning and teaching.

Understanding learners; this refers to:

- concepts such as learning preferences, multiple intelligences, learning strategies, special needs, affect
- differences in types of learners and teaching contexts (such as young learners vs. adults, monolingual vs. multilingual classes, large classes, beginners vs. advanced learners, mixed-ability classes, etc.)
- demonstration of practical application for language learning and teaching.

APPENDIX C

CELTA straddles the *Foundation* and *Developing* stages of the Cambridge English Teaching Framework. The competencies shown below (Cambridge 2018b: 3) relate to category 1 (*Learning and the learner*). CELTA-level understanding of the relevant theories and concepts linked to this category (see Appendix B) should range from *basic* to *reasonable*, as indicated below.

Stages	Foundation	Developing
1. Learning and the learner		
Learning theories	• Has started to develop a basic understanding of general learning theories and language-learning concepts, and is aware of some key terms. • Lesson plans and classroom practice may demonstrate some of this understanding.	• Has a reasonable understanding of general learning theories and many of the key language-learning concepts, and has started to use some of the key terms. • Lesson plans and classroom practice demonstrate some grasp of the connection between the theories and concepts and student learning.
FLA and SLA	• Has started to develop a basic understanding of theories of first and second language learning, key language-learning concepts, and classroom SLA research findings, and is aware of some key terms. • Lesson plans and classroom practice may demonstrate some of this understanding.	• Has a reasonable understanding of theories of first and second language learning, key language-learning concepts, and classroom SLA research findings, and has started to use some of the key terms. • Lesson plans and classroom practice demonstrate some grasp of the connection between the theories and concepts and student learning.
Language-teaching methodologies	• Has started to develop a basic understanding of approaches and methods for language teaching and language-learning concepts, and is aware of some key terms. • Lesson plans and classroom practice may demonstrate some of this understanding.	• Has a reasonable understanding of approaches and methods for language teaching and language-learning concepts, and has started to use some of the key terms. • Lesson plans and classroom practice demonstrate some grasp of the connection between the theories and concepts and student learning.
Understanding learners	• Has started to develop a basic understanding of concepts such as intercultural competence, learning styles, multiple intelligences, learning strategies, special needs, affect and differences in types of learners and teaching contexts, and is aware of some key terms. • Lesson plans and classroom practice may demonstrate some of this understanding.	• Has a reasonable understanding of concepts such as intercultural competence, learning styles, multiple intelligences, learning strategies, special needs, affect and differences in types of learners and teaching contexts, and has started to use some of the key terms. • Lesson plans and classroom practice demonstrate some grasp of the connection between the concepts and student learning.

APPENDIX D

There are 5 CELTA syllabus topics in total. Criteria 2a - 2g fall under section 2.7 of Topic 2 (Cambridge English 2019b: 7); these criteria, along with criteria 4a-4c and 4i-4k, are the *key assessment criteria* for this topic (see bottom line).

TOPIC 2 – Language analysis and awareness

Ref	Syllabus content	Learning outcomes *Successful candidates are able to:*	Assessment
2.1	Basic concepts and terminology used in ELT to discuss language form and use	understand key terminology used in ELT to talk about language and apply this terminology to planning and teaching	Assignment: *Language related tasks* Language analysis for teaching
2.2	Grammar Grammatical frameworks: rules and conventions relating to words, sentences, paragraphs and texts	a. understand a range of the rules and conventions relating to words, sentences, paragraphs and texts b. demonstrate a basic working knowledge of how the verb phrase and the noun phrase are formed and used in English, for example: – tense and aspect – voice – modality, including the expression of hypothetical meaning – finite and non-finite forms – the adverbial element – countability	
2.3	Lexis Word formation, meaning and use in context	a. understand basic principles of word formation and lexical meaning, for example: – meaning and definition – pronunciation – spelling – affixation and compounding – synonymy and hyponymy b. understand the effect on word choice of factors such as: – co-text (e.g. collocation) – context of situation (style)	
2.4	Phonology The formation and description of English phonemes Features of connected speech	a. demonstrate a working knowledge of the sounds of English b. understand some features of connected speech, for example: – linking – assimilation and elision – word and sentence stress – intonation patterns	
2.5	The practical significance of similarities and differences between languages	identify some significant differences between their own language and a foreign language, and demonstrate in practice their understanding of the relevance of some of these differences for the teacher and learner	Assignment: *Focus on the learner*
2.6	Reference materials for language awareness	use a range of reference material to analyse and describe language for teaching purposes	Assignment: *Language related tasks*
2.7	Key strategies and approaches for developing learners' language knowledge	use strategies, approaches and techniques to develop learners' language knowledge, for example inductive and deductive presentations	Teaching practice

Topic 2 assessment

Key assignment

See *Language related tasks* on page 17.

Key teaching practice criteria

See pages 15 and 16 for criteria 4a–c, 4i–k and 2a–2g.

An example of task-supported practice. Extract from *Cutting Edge Intermediate* (Cunningham & Moor, 1998: 42-3).

Part B Task

Design a set of stamps of famous people

Task link: describing people
Real life: filling in an application form

Personal vocabulary

Useful language

Making suggestions
"What about ... (Pelé)?"
"Perhaps we should choose ..."

Using reasons
"I think we should choose ... because ..."
"I think ... would be better because ..."
"... is someone who has (achieved a lot / done a lot to help others, etc.) ..."

Agreeing and disagreeing
"Yes, I agree."
"Sorry, but I don't agree."
"Perhaps you're right, but ..."

Preparation for task

1 Work in groups. The people in the pictures below are all internationally famous. Where do they come from and what are they famous for? Look at pages 133–134 for more information on these people if necessary.

2 Check the meaning of the words and phrases in **bold** in your mini-dictionary or with your teacher. Then choose a famous person from the pictures who:

a has very **strong principles**.
b is **exceptionally talented**.
c is very **courageous**.
d has made a lot of people happy.
e has **achieved** a lot in his / her life.
f has **suffered** for what he / she **believes in**.
g has done a lot to help other people.
h is someone you really **admire**.

(pictures of famous people with labels: Bill Gates, Madonna, Pelé, Steffi Graf, Mother Teresa, Mikhail Gorbachev)
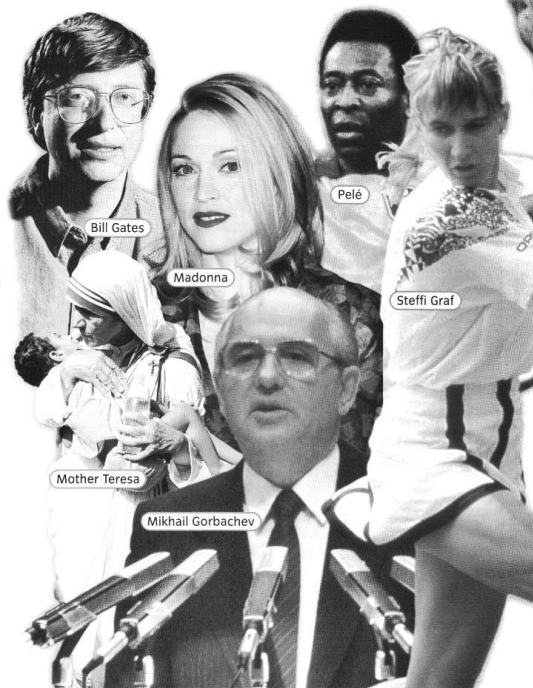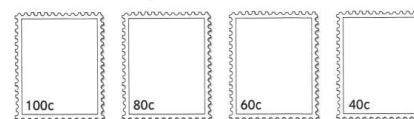
Task

1 Your government has decided to issue a set of stamps of famous people. You are on the committee which decides who to put on the stamps and why. Work in groups of three or four. First decide on a title for your set of stamps.

Either: choose one of the following titles.
- Great (Spanish, French, etc.) men and women of the twentieth century
- Great political leaders / sportsmen and women / writers / scientists / philosophers / musicians / artists / actors

or: choose a title of your own.

(four stamp outlines labelled: 100c, 80c, 60c, 40c)

(pictures of famous people with labels: Aung San Sui Kyi, Nelson Mandela, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Stephen Hawking)

2 Work on your own. Decide:
- which four people you want to put on the set of stamps.
- which stamp each person will go on (the person you admire most should go on the 100c stamp and so on).

Think about how you will justify your choice to the other students in your group. Ask your teacher about any words or phrases you need and write them in the *Personal vocabulary* box.

3 Look at the sentences / phrases in the *Useful language* box. Work in groups again. Present and explain your suggestions to the rest of the group. Listen to the other students and decide together on the best four people.

4 a) You are going to present and explain your choice to the rest of the class. Spend a few minutes thinking about what you will say. What do they think of your decision?

b) Listen to the other groups' decisions and say what you think of the choices they have made.

Optional writing

Write a brief description of a person you really admire (one of the people you have been discussing or someone you know personally). Include:
- brief biographical details
- the person's achievements
- your impressions of what kind of person he / she seems to be
- why you particularly admire

APPENDIX F

The 22 assessment criteria for teaching practice from the January 2000 CELTA Syllabus (Cambridge 2000: 7). The numbered criteria are the ones which formed the basis of Thaine's (2004: 345) study.

By the end of the 6 hours teaching practice, successful candidates, at pass level, should show convincingly and consistently that they can:

Plan for the effective teaching of adult learners by:
- identifying appropriate learning outcomes;
- selecting and/or designing tasks and activities appropriate for the learners, for the stage of the lesson and overall lesson objectives;
- adapting materials for use with a particular group;
- presenting materials for classroom use with a professional appearance and with regards to copyright requirements;
- anticipating potential difficulties with language and tasks.

Demonstrate classroom teaching skills by:
- establishing rapport and developing motivation **(1) #**
- adjusting their own language to meet the level and needs of the learners **(2)**
- giving clear instructions **(3)**
- providing accurate and appropriate models of language **(4) #**
- focusing on appropriate specific language and/or skills **(5) #**
- conveying the meaning of new language with clear and appropriate context **(6)**
- checking students' understanding of new language **(7)**
- clarifying forms of language **(8)**
- identifying errors and sensitively correcting students' oral language **(9)**
- identifying errors and sensitively correcting students' written language **(10) #**
- monitoring and evaluating students' progress **(11) #**

Demonstrate an awareness of teaching and learning processes by:
- teaching a class with the sensitivity to the needs, interests and background of the group **(12) #**
- organising the classroom to suit the learners and/or the activity **(13) #**
- setting up and managing pair, group, individual and plenary work **(14) #**
- adopting a teacher role appropriate to the stage of the lesson and the teaching context **(15)**
- teaching in a way which helps to develop learner self-awareness and autonomy **(16) #**

Criteria showing inconsistency in interpretation in Thaine's study. The others showed consistency in interpretation.

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

<u>**Title of project:**</u>
CELTA tutors' interpretations of assessment criterion 2g, namely what constitutes <u>appropriate language practice</u>.

The study aims to discern the validity of the construct definition below through an analysis of tutor interpretations.

Criterion 2g   providing appropriate practice of language items

- *provide as much practice in context as possible*

- *ensure the practice is appropriate to the target language*

- *stage practice activities logically*

The study also aims to investigate factors which influence tutors' views of language practice and to assess possible implications of any differences in interpretation.

You are invited to participate in an interview conducted by me, Gui Afonso Henriques, under the supervision of Professor Pauline Foster of St. Mary's University, Twickenham.

You are invited to respond to the following questions during the interview:

- *What does criterion 2g mean to you? Why?*

- *What trainee activity(-ies) in teaching practice do you look for in order to decide if the criterion has been met? Why?*

A summary of the results and a selection of anonymous quotes will be included in a dissertation, forming part of an MA in Applied Linguistics and English Language Teaching.

For further information, please contact me at: 176209@live.stmarys.ac.uk
You can also contact my supervisor at: pauline.foster@stmarys.ac.uk

You have been invited to take part because you are a CELTA tutor. You can refuse to take part and you can withdraw from the project at any time. If you agree to take part, your answers to the above-mentioned questions will be recorded. There are no risks involved. The information you provide may appear anonymously in my MA dissertation, where you would be identified by a number or letter. The interview should take no longer than 30 minutes.

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS FORM TO KEEP TOGETHER WITH A COPY OF YOUR CONSENT FORM

CONSENT FORM

Name of participant: _____

Title of the project: CELTA tutors' interpretations of assessment criterion 2g (*appropriate language practice*).

Main investigator and contact details: Gui A. Henriques
email: 167209@live.stmarys.ac.uk

Supervisor: Professor Pauline Foster

1. I agree to take part in the above research project. I have read the Participant Information Sheet which is attached to this form. I understand what my role will be in this research, and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.
2. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the research at any time, for any reason and without prejudice.
3. I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded.
4. I am free to ask any questions at any time before and during the study.
5. I have been provided with a copy of this form and the Participant Information Sheet.

Data Protection:

I agree to the University processing personal data which I have supplied. I agree to the processing of such data for any purposes connected with the Research Project as outlined to me.

Please write your name here (print) ……………………………………………………………..

Signature: Date………………………….....................

_____

If you wish to withdraw from the research, please complete the form below and return to the main investigator named above.

Title of Project…………………………………………………………………………………………………

I WISH TO WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY

Name (print)   ……………………………………………………………..

Signed ………………………………………………………..   Date…………………………......................

St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

CELTA tutors' interpretations of assessment criterion 2g

Study conducted by Gui Afonso Henriques, MA student (Applied Linguistics & ELT).

This is a survey designed to investigate tutors' interpretations of criterion 2g:
Providing appropriate practice of language items
• *provide as much practice in context as possible*
• *ensure the practice is appropriate to the target language*
• *stage practice activities logically*
(CELTA 5 p.28)

You have been invited to complete this survey because you are a CELTA tutor. Should you agree to take part, please be assured that your responses will remain anonymous.

The survey should only take around 10 minutes. You may opt out of the survey at any time.

Please note that I am NOT interested in what you think Cambridge means by the descriptor above (in bold) and examples of what trainees need to do (bullet points). I am interested in how well the 15 statements in the survey correspond to your own beliefs.

Aggregated data for each statement will appear in my MA dissertation.

Thank you very much for your help.

For further information, please contact me at:
167209@live.stmarys.ac.uk

You can also contact my supervisor at:
pauline.foster@stmarys.ac.uk

OK

* 1. Please tick the boxes below which apply to you.

☐ CELTA tutor

☐ CELTA assessor

☐ Delta tutor / assessor

☐ Holder of Master's / PhD in an ELT-related field

* 2. Please answer both questions below by typing in the textboxes.

In which year did you start working as a CELTA tutor?	
In which country are you based?	

* 3. Criterion 2g only applies to controlled practice.

Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

* 4. Criterion 2g also applies to free(r) practice.

Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

* 5. Controlled practice should precede free(r) practice when the target language is new.

Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

* 6. Controlled practice activities should be designed to minimise the chances of learners making mistakes.

Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

* 7. Practice in context means that practice stages should be linked thematically to other stages of the lesson.

Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

* 8. Controlled practice based on discrete sentences (e.g. filling in blanks/transforming active to passive voice/unscrambling jumbled sentences) is not practice in context.

Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

* 9. Practice in context means that practice should mimic situations in which the target language would be used naturally.

Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

* 10. In terms of language items, practice should focus only on the target language for the lesson.

Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

* 11. Comprehension-based practice (e.g. identifying incorrect sentences; identifying pictures which correspond to sentences read aloud by teacher) should precede production-based practice (e.g. filling in blanks; drills) when the target language is new. (*These definitions are also used in Q12.*)

Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

* 12. Controlled practice should be mainly production-based, not comprehension-based. (*See definitions in previous question.*)

Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

* 13. Practice of form (e.g. pronunciation, grammatical structure) should precede practice of meaning.

Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

* 14. Oral practice should precede written practice.

Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

* 15. Drilling grammar (e.g. pattern practice such as substitution drills) serves no useful purpose.

Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

* 16. Controlled practice should be communicative (i.e. learners giving or getting information, giving opinions...)

Strongly agree	Agree	Sligthly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

* 17. Free(r) practice is more effective when it elicits use of the target language by design rather than teacher prescription (i.e. through instructions).

Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

DONE