CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1   Introduction and objectives

This chapter has three aims:

S   to present and discuss the results of the quantitative analysis of the questionnaires completed by respondents with regard to the student profile (part I), the ALTFC itself (part II) and the post-course evaluation (part III) in order to address the main aim and second secondary aim of this study as outlined in Chapter 1 (par. 1.2);

S   to identify problem areas in the current ALTFC and find possible solutions by taking the current trends in translator training into consideration, thus addressing the first secondary aim of this study (Chapter 1, par. 1.2); and

S   to generate possible solutions to the problem areas identified, as well as improved ALTFC models based on the findings.

The results of the *Survey for the revision of the African language translation facilitation course at D Lang* will be discussed first.

4.2   Results of the *Survey for the revision of the ALTFC at D Lang*

Before the actual questionnaire results will be discussed, some background information on the three ALTFCs held in 2000 will have to be given.

4.2.1   Background information

The three ALTFCs held from 3 May to 2 June, 2 August to 1 September and 11 October to 10 November 2000 were attended by eight, nine and 14 candidates, respectively. One candidate of the August course fell ill during the course and could not complete it. He therefore did not fill in parts II and III of the questionnaire. Moreover, the number of respondents answering certain questions may differ because respondents overlooked or refused to answer questions.

Despite extensive explanations, some respondents also had a problem with multiple answers when asked to number their choices in order of preference. Almost half the respondents circled various answers without prioritising them. Wherever applicable, this will be indicated. First the rated answers will be analysed separately and then rated and unrated answers will be looked at together. The

percentages will be mostly rounded up or down to two digits. This is the reason why in some instances the various percentages do not always add up to a hundred but may fluctuate between 99 and 101. This specifically applies to the combined analysis of rated and unrated answers where there are relatively many options to choose from.

The questions in the various parts of the questionnaire will not always be dealt with in consecutive order since the structure of the questionnaire was guided by a different set of principles than the analysis of the information. For example, more sensitive questions appear towards the end of the questionnaire once students are more at ease and thus more inclined to supply certain information (see Chapter 3, par. 3.3.2.4). Moreover, the results of one question may also shed more light on the results of another question although they may not necessarily be related topic-wise. However, the number of the question dealt with will be given in brackets (e.g. Q11) for reference purposes and to avoid confusion.

Furthermore, as each course had its own dynamics and challenges, some of the questions of parts I and II of the questionnaire were first analysed separately according to courses and then together (see Chapter 3, par. 3.2.2.5). However, only those results will be shown separately that indicate course-specific tendencies. The questions in part III were not analysed separately because group dynamics were no longer expected to have an influence on the results due to the time period that had elapsed since attending the course.

First, the results of part I, i.e. the student profile, will be presented and examined in detail. Parts II and III will follow and the relevant conclusions will be drawn.

4.2.2   The results of the student profile (part I)

One of the more interesting findings of part I of the questionnaire (Q11) is that 24 out of the 31 respondents (77%) have matric, five completed standard 9, one had a standard 8 qualification and one was still studying for the N3 (technical matric). The percentage of respondents with matric was surprisingly high and very encouraging. It indicates that the majority of candidates received some formal language training, including English, to the highest school level. Candidates can thus be expected to have some general knowledge, which is important when translating texts on a wide variety of subjects (see Chapter 3, par. 3.2.5). The above results are illustrated in Figure 4.1:

Figure 4.1: Level of education
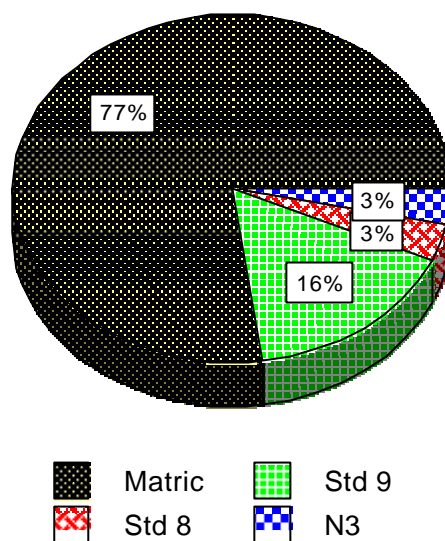
In contrast, only nine of the respondents (29%) had or were still busy with some tertiary education mainly in the form of certificate and diploma courses (Q12). Interestingly enough, their respective fields of study did not include languages. Language(s) therefore seem(s) to be a sideline rather than their main focus of study or, by implication, career development.

Another important revelation is that 23 of the 31 respondents (74%) had no translation experience prior to attending the ALTFC (Q9). Of the eight respondents (26%) with prior translation experience, two stated that as part of their routine work they mainly translated instructions and one did mainly speeches (Q10). The documents mentioned by the remaining five students included the above plus routine letters, daily orders, minutes and duty sheets. Although the number of students with translation experience is too low to show any definite trends the fact that none of the students gave the same document combination could indicate that the translation requirements in the DOD are indeed varied and unit- or section-specific.

The lack of prior translation experience raises the question why so many members (in uniform) and employees (civilians) of the DOD attended the ALTFCs if they were not required to translate in their work environment (Q14). Fourteen of the 31 respondents (45%) gave as their single answer that they were always interested in new courses. In addition to the 14 respondents, five who gave more than one answer, usually under *other*, had also circled the above. This increases the percentage of candidates attending the ALTFC because they are interested in new courses, to 62%. When consolidating the *other* category five respondents (16%) said that they wanted to know more about the African languages, with one also wanting to improve his English. One student each attended the course because they wanted to further their careers, have more skills and saw the course advertised. Only one

respondent circled that he had no other work at the moment. This is interesting since there had been a suspicion at D Lang that the last number would be higher.

Based on the most prominent reasons given, it therefore seems that most candidates attend the ALTFC out of interest rather than need. Moreover, some respondents seem to equal translator training with language training, which is in line with the misconception discussed in Chapter 2 (par. 2.1.1) even though language training inevitably takes place in translator training.

Language-wise (Q1), most of the candidates seem to have been exposed to mainly one language as a child since 27 out of the 31 respondents (87%) who completed the questionnaire indicated that as a child they first learned one African language. Three respondents gave more than one language but prioritised them respectively with Xhosa first, English second and Zulu third, Venda first, Tsonga second, as well as Sotho first, Tswana second, English third and Afrikaans fourth. Only one respondent could not limit him-/herself to one language without prioritisation but only listed African languages. One can therefore say that as children all 31 respondents learned an African language first.

The above trend continues in question 2 with regard to what language respondents mostly speak at home. Out of the 31 respondents, 27 (87%) speak only one African language and four (13%) two African languages at home. Only two respondents grew up speaking one language but now speak a different language at home. This means that 29 (94%) respondents still speak the language they learned as a child in their families, including those who speak two languages at home.

The fact that most respondents circled one language in questions 1 and 2 means that most of them are compound bi- or multilinguals (see Chapter 2, par. 2.3.3). This suggests that most candidates will identify themselves more strongly with one African language and therefore feel more comfortable and competent in that language. This is also corroborated by the fact that candidates gave one language of preference with regard to African-language texts for the translation workshops and were on the whole very reluctant to switch to another African language for their STs when no suitable text on a certain topic could be found in that specific African language (see Chapter 3, par. 3.3.3.1).

However, the picture changes radically when it comes to the language mostly spoken to their colleagues (Q3). Only 12 of the 31 respondents (39%) indicated one language, with three of them speaking only English, while 19 felt that they could not restrict themselves to only one language although it had been pointed out to them that the question referred to the language *mostly* spoken. Two respondents speak six languages when among their colleagues, three speak five, two speak four, six speak three and six two. All 19 respondents with multiple choices included English and only 7 of the 19 Afrikaans.

Once it was realised that respondents struggle to limit themselves to one language the respondents of

the August and October/November courses were asked to number their choices, with 1 being the language most frequently used, if they were absolutely not able to limit themselves to one language. It is interesting to note that out of the 13 respondents who circled more than one language nine indicated an African language and only four English. This means that at least 21 of the 31 respondents (68%) speak an African language most frequently among their colleagues (bearing in mind that the May course did not prioritise multiple choices).

When it comes to the language mostly frequently spoken to their superiors (Q4) the shift away from the African languages is even more pronounced. Fourteen of the 31 respondents (45%) said mostly English, three an African language and two Afrikaans. Four of the 12 respondents who indicated two languages did not rate their choices. All four mentioned English and Afrikaans. Of the eight who rated their choices, six put English and two an African language first. It therefore seems that at least 20 of the 31 respondents (65%) speak mainly English, 5 (16%) an African language and 2 (6%) Afrikaans to their superiors. In order to make the above figures more accessible, they are presented in table form in Figure 4.2:

Figure 4.2: Language exposure of ALTFC candidates

Language exposure	1 African language	English	Afrikaans	Multiple unrated	Row totals
as a child	31	0	0	0	31
at home	31	0	0	0	31
among colleagues	18	3	0	10	31
with superiors	5	20	2	4	31
Total	85	23	2	14	124

Regarding the language mostly spoken to superiors, one would have expected the official African languages to be more prominent, especially against the background of transformation in the DOD. However, since English was indicated as the most important language for communication with superiors one wonders whether this is already a direct result of the fact that English has been chosen as the thread language in the DOD (see Chapter 1, par 1.1.1.1).

Question 5 about the language in which respondents feel most comfortable with regard to comprehension, speaking, reading and writing also delivered some surprises. The May course had to repeat page four of the questionnaire because some respondents circled more than one answer in questions 6 and 7, e.g. they indicated that they wrote English/Afrikaans well and satisfactorily. While in the first round seven respondents indicated one language with regard to question 5 (four of them

English and three an African language) and one respondent two languages (Siswati and English), only two respondents settled for one language in the second round. One respondent felt equally competent in seven languages, one respondent in five, three in three and one in two, with all of them including English. Even after discussing the phenomenon in class, most respondents felt that the results of the second round were more accurate.

However, owing to the fact that the respondents of the courses in August and October/November reacted more in line with the first round of the course in May the first-round results were used for the analysis. This decision also seems justified in view of the fact that most of the respondents are compound and not coordinate bilinguals, i.e. their mother tongue should be their strong language unless they have been completely immersed in another language. The latter could be the reason why seven respondents gave English as the language in which they felt most comfortable.

As a result, 24 of the 30 respondents (80%; one omitted Q5) feel most comfortable in one language, with 17 in an African language and seven in English. Three of the six respondents with more than one language did not rate their choices. Of the three who rated their choices all rated an African language first. This means that at least 20 of the 30 respondents (67%) feel most comfortable in an African language with regard to comprehension, speaking, reading and writing and seven (23%) in English. It is also interesting to note that all the respondents with multiple choices included English.

The results of question 5 are particularly interesting in connection with questions 6 and 7. 29 (94%) of the respondents preferred English to Afrikaans, one respondent preferred Afrikaans and one could not make up his mind by circling both. The low rating of Afrikaans is also reflected in the respondents' assessment of their own command of Afrikaans (Q8), with one of the respondents only indicating his speaking capability and leaving *reading* and *writing* out. The assessment is presented in Figure 4.3:

Figure 4.3: Command of Afrikaans

Afrikaans	Good	Satisfactory	Bad	Row totals
Speaking	6 (19%)	12 (39%)	13 (42%)	31 (100%)
Reading	8 (27%)	15 (50%)	7 (23%)	30 (100%)
Writing	2 (6%)	17 (57%)	11 (37%)	30 (100%)
Total	16	44	31	91

While the respondents' assessment of Afrikaans tended towards the *satisfactory* or *bad* category, the *bad* category was never circled with regard to English. The respondents' level of English competence is illustrated in Figure 4.4. However, it must first be mentioned that one respondent omitted the question

and one only circled *speaking* (percentage out of 30) and left out *reading* and *writing* (percentage out of 29).

Figure 4.4: Command of English

English	Good	Satisfactory	Bad	Row totals
Speaking	15 (50%)	15 (50%)	0	30 (100%)
Reading	19 (66%)	10 (34%)	0	29 (100%)
Writing	15 (52%)	14 (48%)	0	29 (100%)
Total	49	39	0	88

The majority of the respondents thus seemed quite content with the English language as well as their command of English since half or in some instances more than half of them thought that they spoke, read and wrote English well. This ties in with the results of question 5 where many respondents indicated that they felt comfortable in English.

However, the English assessment test which the respondents of the courses in May and October/November were asked to write on the first day of the ALTFC indicated that the above confidence was not entirely justified. The English assessment test helps D Lang's English section to group respondents into the beginners, intermediate and advanced English courses. Unfortunately, the respondents of the August course could not be evaluated with regard to their English since the English section was reviewing its English assessment test and refused to use the old test in the interim.

Out of the 22 candidates sitting for the test, 17 (77%) would have only qualified for the beginners course, 4 (18%) for the intermediate course and only one (5%) for the advanced course. Even if one looks at the courses separately, the percentages stay more or less the same. Six respondents (75%) of the May course and 11 (79%) of the October/November course would have been allocated to the beginners course. These results are illustrated by Figure 4.5:

Figure 4.5: Course allocation according to the English assessment test

English assessment test	May	October/November	Row totals
Beginners Course	6 (75%)	11 (79%)	17
Intermediate Course	1 (12.5%)	3 (21%)	4
Advanced Course	1 (12.5%)	0	1

Total	8 (100%)	14 (100%)	22

When the above figures were analysed during the first half of 2002 and the results turned out rather interesting, it was decided to look at the English assessment results of the ALTFC candidates of the August course in 2002 in order to see whether the above trend would continue. It turned out that of the 12 candidates seven (58%) would have qualified for the English beginners course and five (42%) for the English intermediate course. Although these figures are slightly better than in the former two ALTFCs, the English capability of still more than half the candidates was at a beginners' level. Figure 4.6 will show the percentage results of the three courses first individually and then in combined form:

Figure 4.6: Results of English assessment test
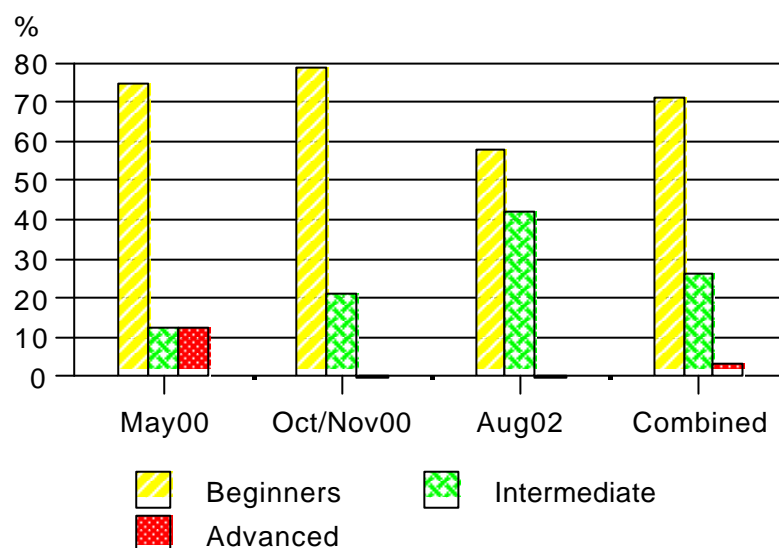
Although the above number of candidates tested is too small to supply definite values the figures give an indication that there seems to be a discrepancy between the candidates' perceived and their actual English capability. Incidentally, this is also a finding reported by Coetzee-Van Rooy and Verhoef (2000: 163-182) in their study on the perception of the English proficiency among Southern Sotho speakers.

The above is also of interest in view of the fact that out of the 31 candidates attending the ALTFCs in 2000, 21 (68%) had not attended any other courses at D Lang (Q13). Two candidates had attended the English beginners course, three the English intermediate course and three the English advanced course. The remaining candidates had attended the Instructors' course (i.e. training to teach their own mother tongue at their unit) and the African Language Interpreting Facilitation Course, which should only be attended after completing the ALTFC. Since all D Lang courses are advertised in one signal at the beginning of the year candidates would have been aware that English courses were also presented.

However, only eight candidates had felt that their English needed some attention prior to attending the ALTFC.

The discrepancy between the teachers' and respondents' perception of the English proficiency of ALTFC candidates is further shown by the fact that in part II of the questionnaire (Q29) only two out of the 29 respondents (7%) felt that too little time had been spent on the *Language skills* module. 20 (69%) said that adequate time had been spend and seven (24%) too much time. One student left the question out. This part of the questionnaire is filled in at the end of the ALTFC when respondents should have a more realistic idea about their problem areas with regard to English. More research will have to be carried out on this issue of perceived/real English competence in future ALTFCs.

Based on the results discussed so far, a student profile can be compiled. It shows that the average candidate attending the ALTFC at D Lang has matric but no tertiary education and no prior translation experience. Although most of the candidates claim to be multilingual they seem to have an affinity to one African language, which could be interpreted as their strong language. All respondents prefer English to Afrikaans, so none of them is put at a disadvantage with regard to the thread language. Although no English experts, most respondents seem to be widely exposed to English at their workplace when communicating with colleagues and superiors, as well as rather being content with their level of English competence. Moreover, most respondents seem to attend the ALTFC out of interest and not professional necessity.

As a consequence of such a student profile, the possibility of more practical work should perhaps be investigated since most of the candidates do not have any translation experience. Teachers will not be able to rely on examples based on the candidates' experience and will have to structure classes accordingly.

Moreover, while the relaxed attitude of candidates about their English may be based on the fact that their level of competence is sufficient for their working environment, a decision will have to be taken on whether it will suffice for the tasks they are intended to fulfil once they have completed the ALTFC. The candidates' English capability, or lack thereof, could either have an impact on the *Language skills* module, which may have to be extended, or the selection process according to which candidates will be nominated for the course (at present there are no selection criteria). One could, for example, investigate the viability of the English section at D Lang or the language practitioners at the General Support Bases (GSBs) testing candidates prior to their nomination for the course. Only candidates having a specified command of English would then be accepted for the ALTFC (see par 4.3.3 below).

As has been shown above, some of the findings of part I were confirmed in part II of the questionnaire, which gave candidates the opportunity to comment on the individual course modules, as well as the

course as a whole. The results of part II will now be discussed in more detail.

4.2.3   Candidates' opinions on the existing ALTFC (part II)

Part II of the questionnaire showed that the overall reception of the ALTFC was positive. Respondents were very appreciative when asked to describe the course in their own words (Q49) and used adjectives like *interesting*, *helpful*, *good*, *instructive*, *important*, *excellent* and *wonderful*. Many said that they had learned a lot about language, languages, including their own mother tongue, and translation. One respondent even said that the course had been an eye-opener. Furthermore, two respondents suggested that the course should be accessible to all South Africans to promote the equality of all languages, linguistic and cultural tolerance and thus unity.

The above is also reflected in the answers to questions 44-47. The results of these questions are presented in Figure 4.7. The percentages given next to the figures reflect the responses with regard to the question asked, while the percentages presented in the bottom row reflect all the answers given in Figure 4.7.

Figure. 4.7: Results of Q44-Q47

	VERY MUCH SO	TO SOME EXTENT	NOT REALLY	NOT AT ALL	ROW TOTALS
Q44 Would you say that in general the ALTFC has heightened your awareness of how language works?	27 (90%)	2 (7%)	1 (3%)	0	30 (100%
Q45 Would you say that the ALTFC has helped to improve your overall language capabilities?	25 (83%)	5 (17%)	0	0	30 (100%)
Q46 Would you say that the ALTFC has prepared you to tackle the translation tasks at your unit in a more professional manner?	27 (90%)	3 (10%)	0	0	30 (100%)
Q47 Would you say that the ALTFC has prepared you to tackle the translation tasks in a more confident manner?	27 (90%)	2 (7%)	1 (3%)	0	30 (100%)
TOTAL	106	12	2	0	120
PERCENTAGE	88%	10%	2%	0%	

Figure 4.7 clearly illustrates that the overwhelming majority of respondents benefited greatly from the ALTFC from a linguistic as well as translational point of view. If the categories of *very much so* and *to some extent* are collapsed the number of positive responses is as high as 98%. This means that even

if respondents do not translate once they get back to their units, the course will not have been in vain since their overall language capability has improved. This is an asset in any work environment.

Morever, according to the results of questions 46 and 47 the ALTFC seems to succeed in producing more confident and professional translators, which, of course, is one of the main objectives of the ALTFC. Whether it is really true will be seen when candidates put what they learned during the ALTFC into practice. The results of part III of the questionnaire should shed more light on this issue (see par 4.2.4 below).

The question about the duration of the ALTFC (Q43) also delivered some surprises. Despite some complaints during the courses about the length of the ALTFC, 19 of the 30 respondents (63%) indicated that it should last four weeks. While this result in itself was encouraging, it was even more so when seven respondents (23%) indicated that the course should last six weeks. When the two categories are collapsed, it can be said that 87% of the respondents would like the course to last at least for four weeks or longer. Two respondents each indicated *three weeks* and *two weeks*. These results are interesting against the background of a general feeling at D Lang that the ALTFCs should be shortened to three weeks like, for example, the English courses. This met with some resistance from the ALTFC facilitators because they already struggle to pack the relevant material into the four weeks.

In order to establish whether the material was indeed considered relevant by the respondents and in view of the fact that four respondents said in question 49 that not enough material had been presented during the ALTFC, the results of the individual modules will now be discussed in more detail. ***Introduction to translation***, as the more controversial module according to ALTFC facilitators, will be analysed first.

This module is the most theoretical of the five and there was some concern that the material presented was perhaps too academic and complicated to make sense at the level of the ALTFC. There was especially some uncertainty about the quotes section (Q15-17). However, 27 of the 30 respondents (90%) found the quotes section very helpful in understanding linguistic concepts (against three *generally helpful*). Moreover, the same number (90%) completely agreed that the section gave them a better understanding of what translation is about (three generally agreed). Again 27 respondents (90%) said that the quotes section should remain part of the module. The three respondents who wanted the section removed (incidentally all of them from the October/November course) felt that it was too theoretical, boring and incomprehensible.

The overwhelming support for the quotes section seems to indicate that candidates are interested in the field of translation in general and not just the specific translation task on hand. It supports the approach that more intricate concepts (e.g. semantic, pragmatic and stylistic equivalence) can be explained and

understood at a more basic level. The above findings are also in line with Mackenzie (1998: 17) who wrote that even though the history and theory of translation might not produce better translators it increased the "translator's self-awareness, commitment and professionalism".

The response to the questions on text analysis came as another surprise (Q19-21). Despite the somewhat doubtful faces during classes, 27 of the 30 respondents (90%) completely agreed that text analysis can help in preparing the translation task (three respondents generally agreed). Moreover, 20 respondents (67%) completely agreed that text analysis, especially according to Nord (see Chapter 2, par. 2.2.1), could give them the necessary confidence to change a text in terms of the translation brief, with nine generally agreeing and one completely disagreeing. Question 21 showed similar results as question 20. 20 of the 30 respondents (67%) circled *very much so* with regard to whether they think that text analysis had given them a better understanding of how different types of texts are written. Eight (27%) said *to some extent* and two (6%) *not really*.

The above results are particularly encouraging when bearing in mind that candidates were only exposed to the most elementary concepts of text analysis and that text analysis is not necessarily easy to explain to, and neither easy to be implemented by, people without a linguistic background. Moreover, the results are important in view of the fact that translation facilitators in the DOD may have to become more versatile and increasingly change the ST type in TL, i.e. produce summaries (see stipulations of draft 9 in Chapter 1, par. 1.1.1.1) or simplified versions of more complex texts.

The questions on the presentation of *Introduction to translation* (Q22, Q23) will be discussed at a later stage together with the questions on the presentation of the *Translation strategies*, *Language skills* and *Translation aids* modules. Since these questions are structured identically it seems more practical to deal with them in combined form.

Regarding the *Translation strategies* module, 26 of the 29 respondents (90%; one omitted Q26) said that this module had made them more conscious on how to overcome non-equivalence at word level and above word level, with two respondents circling *to some extent* and one *not really*. Since this is what the module is all about the above percentage is very encouraging.

The percentages were somewhat lower with regard to whether *Translation strategies* had sensitised them to the fact that vocabulary (Q24) and grammatical categories (Q25) differed across languages. Regarding the former, 17 respondents (57%) circled *very much so*, 11 (37%) *to some extent* and 2 (6%) *not really*. Regarding grammatical categories, 22 of the 30 respondents (74%) indicated *very much so*, 6 (20%) *to some extent* and 2 (6%) *not really*.

These figures could either be interpreted to mean that some respondents had already been aware that

vocabulary items and grammatical categories differ between languages, with respondents being more aware of vocabulary differences than grammatical differences, or that *Translation strategies* has only helped to some extent to remove their doubts about these differences. However, if the *very much so* and the *to some extent* categories are collapsed, 28 of the 30 respondents (93%) indicated that they had been to at least so some extent sensitised to vocabulary and grammatical differences across languages. This means that the overwhelming majority did learn something.

The third module to be discussed is ***Language skills***. Question 29 about the time spent on language tuition during the ALTFC has already been discussed under the student profile (see par 4.2.2 above) and will be mentioned only briefly. 28 of the 30 respondents (93%) felt that adequate or too much time had been spent on language tuition and only two respondents (7%) indicated *too little time*. Both respondents said that idioms, fixed expressions and vocabulary should receive more attention, with one of them adding also style (Q30). These responses are of course not representative enough to give teachers clues as to the material to be included in *Language skills*. The results of the English assessment tests may still provide a more realistic picture.

In contrast to *Language skills*, respondents were far more forthcoming with regard to which area of the ***Translation aids*** module should receive more attention (Q35). This question must also be seen against the background that with about six periods (nine hours) *Translation aids* is the shortest module of the ALTFC. The various translation aids can therefore only be mentioned but not really discussed in detail. Respondents were asked to circle as many answers as applicable and number the answers chosen at the end of the item in order of priority, with one being the most important.

Five of the 30 respondents felt that none of the areas needed more attention and five respondents did not number their answers in order of priority. For the first analysis, these10 respondents will be left out. 11 of the 20 respondents (55%) who rated their answers indicated *types of dictionaries*, four (20%) *institutions* that supplied language and translation-related services, three (15%) *computers* and two (10%) *parts of the dictionary*. These figures will be illustrated in Figure 4.8:

Figure 4.8: Rated "Translation aids" responses
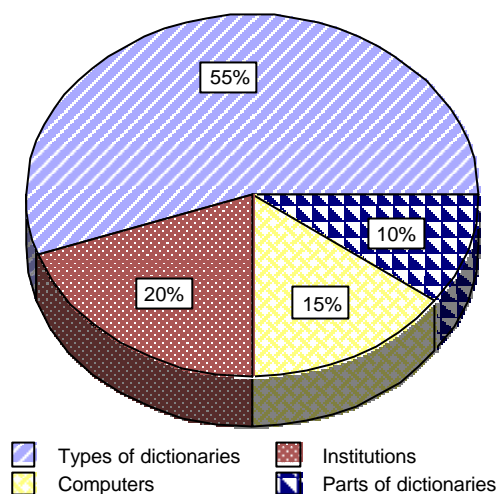
The percentage of *types of dictionaries* is surprisingly high, especially in view of the fact that dictionaries were the only area dealt with in more detail. The lack of interest in computers, again, could be due to the fact that many ALTFC candidates do not seem to have their own computers at work and thus might consider more detailed information on the subject matter premature.

However, the percentages change and the margins narrow considerably when all the 64 answers given by the 30 respondents are taken into consideration (without rating). Figure 4.9 is illustrating the unrated responses:

Figure 4.9: Unrated "Translation aids" responses
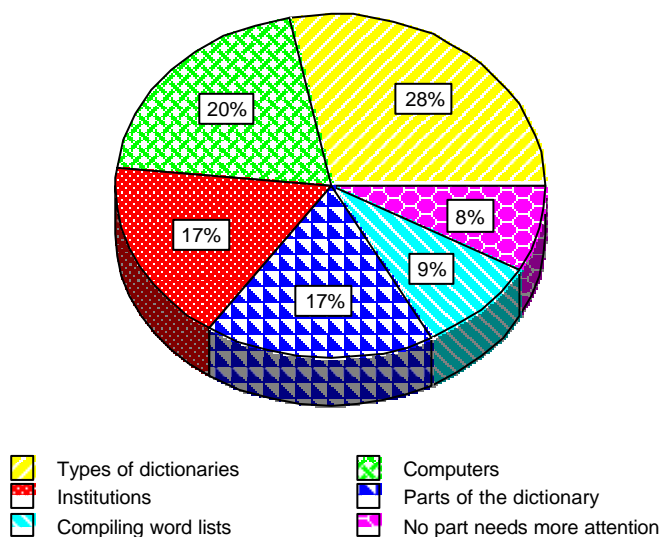
Based on Figure 4.9, one could say that 83% of the respondents would make it a priority to learn more about the various types of dictionaries and spend more but equal time on computers, parts of the dictionary and institutions.

The findings of question 35 are also interesting with regard to the results of question 33. Twenty of the 30 respondents (67%) circled *very much so* when asked whether *Translation aids* had made them more critical with regard to the dictionaries they used. Eight (27%) indicated to *some extent*, one *not really* (3%) and one (3%) *not at all*. First of all, it should be mentioned that question 33 was not intended to just refer to types of dictionaries but also, for example, to the publishing date or macro- and microstructural considerations (see Chapter 3, par. 3.2.3). The question should therefore have been more differentiated. For example, "has the *Translation aids* module increased your awareness that there are different types of dictionaries that can be used for a translation task?" or "has the *Translation aids* module increased your awareness that even dictionaries of the same type can differ?"

Moreover, when answering question 33, respondents might have had the budgetary constraints at their units in mind and felt that they could not afford to be more critical of the dictionaries they used since they would not be able to purchase better ones. The same applies to bilingual African language/English dictionaries. Candidates are often lucky to find one useful dictionary for their respective language combination. This lack of choice adds to the frustration of some candidates (see Chapter 3, par. 3.2.3).

However, almost all respondents agreed that they had benefited from the outings to the libraries, i.e. the National Library of South Africa and the Community Library at Sammy Marks Square. Twenty nine of the 30 respondents (97%) circled *very much so*, with one *not really*, when asked whether the guided tours of the libraries had increased their awareness of the type of information they could get there. Apart from the fact that an outing is always a nice break from the classroom routine, few candidates seem to be members of a library and therefore unaware that community libraries do not only cater for pleasure reading but also have a reference section and can be instrumental in obtaining material from other libraries for them.

Before continuing with the *Workshops* module, the results regarding the presentation of the modules discussed so far, i.e. *Introduction to translation* (Q22, Q23), *Translation strategies* (Q27, Q28), *Language skills* (Q31, Q32) and *Translation aids* (Q36, 37), have to be analysed. Figure 4.10 will first show the number of respondents who answered either *yes* or *no* to the question on whether the various modules could be improved.
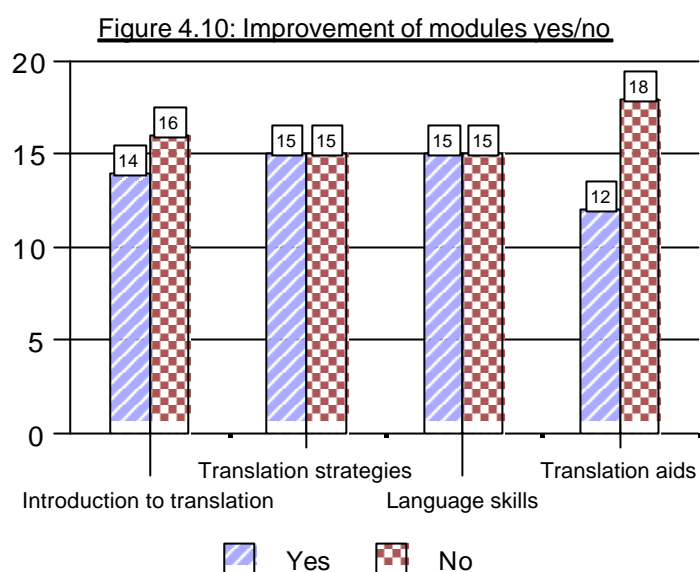
Figure 4.10: Improvement of modules yes/no

Figure 4.10 shows that half or just less than half of the respondents felt that there was room for improvement with regard to the presentation of the various modules. The suggestions for improvement will be shown in Figure 4.11 below. Respondents were allowed to give multiple answers. The number of answers does therefore not match the number of respondents supplying suggestions. Moreover, in order to make the table clearer the possible responses (R) were abbreviated as follows:

R1 = more examples
R2 = more repetition
R3 = less repetition
R4 = more teacher enthusiasm
R5 = more student involvement
R6 = other

Figure 4.11: Suggested improvements regarding the presentation of modules

Module	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	Row total
Introduction to translation	6	0	0	5	4	1	16
Translation strategies	7	2	0	2	6	0	17
Language skills	7	4	0	1	6	1	19
Translation aids	3	3	0	1	3	3	13
Total	23	9	0	9	19	5	65
Percentages	35	14	0	14	29	8	

The *other* category regarding the *Introduction to translation* module suggested substituting the discussion of theory quotes with practical translations, regarding *Language skills* using work done by professionals and regarding *Translation aids* researching more translation aids, visiting more libraries and using material related to the respondent's environment.

It must also be mentioned that none of the eight respondents of the August course made any suggestions for improvement with regard to the *Translation strategies* module. However, seven of the eight May-course candidates (88%) and eight of the 14 November/October candidates (57%) felt that there was room for improvement.

Figure 4.11 thus shows that of the 65 responses circled 23 (35%) concerned more examples, 19 (29%) more student involvement, 9 (14%) more repetition and 9 (14%) more teacher enthusiasm. *More examples*, *more repetition* and *more student involvement* fall under the time-constraint problem, bearing in mind that the majority of respondents considered four weeks to be the right duration of the course.

The 29% in favour of more student involvement are also interesting in the light of ALTFC facilitators complaining that it is not always easy to elicit responses from candidates. When questions are generally put to candidates, it is normally the same candidates supplying answers with the rest remaining quiet. However, it is a very sensitive issue to ask certain candidates directly since not all candidates are comfortable with speaking up in class, partly because of the difference in translation and linguistic experience, as well as military ranks. Having candidates prepare questions individually or in groups before answering them in class is again time consuming.

The result on teacher enthusiasm was also rather enlightening. There are only two language practitioners facilitating the ALTFC, with one of them doing four of the modules. It may therefore very well be that candidates tire of listening to the same person for such a lengthy period of time. The facilitator is often in class the whole day, tiring and thus not necessarily at her best, especially when bearing in mind that she still has to attend to any urgent translations or queries from inside or outside the DOD. Furthermore, it is not always easy to adjust to the new dynamics of every ALTFC.

This leaves only the **Workshops** module (Q38-Q42) for discussion. Twenty seven of the 30 respondents (90%) completely agreed that during the workshops the practical application of more theoretical translation concepts had been sufficiently demonstrated (three generally agreed). This amazingly high percentage shows that facilitators have successfully shown that translation theory need not be a thing apart but can well be helpful in and have its practical application to translation (see Chapter 3, par. 3.2.1.1-4).

The majority of respondents (25; 83%) also agreed that the texts translated during the workshops were relevant to their translation environment (Q39). One respondent circled *yes* but added that not enough texts had been discussed to clarify issues related to his environment. Four respondents (13%) felt that the texts translated had not been relevant to their work situation. When asked which types of texts would have been more adequate in their opinion (Q40), two respondents each circled legal and technical texts, routine letters, speeches and minutes. Although respondents were asked to rate their multiple answers in order of importance three of the four failed to do so.

Facilitators were rather surprised about the above result because of the shortage of similar military-relevant texts for translation in the official African languages. Interesting was also the request for more technical texts, a request which may be difficult to meet since technical texts in the African languages are notoriously difficult to come by and would most likely be based on an English ST. Moreover, technical translations from English into the African languages would be rather difficult for candidates at ALTFC level because there is as yet very little standardised technical terminology in the African languages.

Some of the sentiments in question 40 were also reflected in question 42. One of the 18 respondents (60%) who believed that the workshops needed improvement said that more military and general texts should be translated and one suggested that mother-tongue African language teachers must be employed to guide respondents in vocabulary decisions (see par. 4.31 below). However, the majority of respondents indicated that texts should be dealt with in more detail (8 respondents), i.e. one period per text is not enough, and that the presentation should be more structured (8 respondents).

One of the reasons why some respondents may have thought that the workshops should be more structured could be based on the fact that facilitators rely heavily on the candidates' input and cannot always predict the outcome of a workshop session. Moreover, candidates seem to look for definite solutions to their translation problems and are not yet comfortable with motivating their own solutions. They do not seem satisfied with only a discussion but want to have their work corrected. While this can be accomplished with regard to translations into English, it is a definite problem regarding translations into the African languages (see Chapter 3, par. 3.2.5 and par. 4.31 below).

Furthermore, some respondents can be rather outspoken and try to *force-feed* their approach to the class, which can result in heated debates. The same applies to language rivalries where candidates from one language group ridicule the candidates from another. Although teachers try to channel such behaviour not all candidates are comfortable with it.

By moving from the structured responses on the various modules to the comments by the respondents on the individual modules in their own words (Q48), it was found that the answers to question 48 do not markedly differ from those to question 49 about the ALTFC as a whole (see this paragraph above).

In quantifying their answers, several respondents said that they had found all modules helpful, instructive and interesting and learned many new things.

However, respondents also identified various areas that needed attention. On the one hand, several respondents felt that more information was required and that the courses should therefore be longer. One respondent suggested that there should be a more advanced follow-up course. This indicates that some candidates realised that there was more to translation than they initially thought and felt a need to learn more about translating since the ALTFC gave them an idea of what translation can entail. Candidates probably also learned for the first time that translation was not necessarily something you could automatically do if you spoke two or more languages but a whole field of study supplying, *inter alia*, possible guidelines, methods and strategies.

On the other hand, respondents felt that more practical work should have been done and that the practical work should have been assessed in more detail. This means that respondents want more feedback on their own work. As a result, they would like to see more African language teachers, which should be substituted with African language translation teachers/facilitators, to assess their translations. This is a problem ALTFC facilitators have been aware of all along. However, the realities at the African Language section of D Lang make it a rather difficult problem to solve (par 4.3.1 below).

The above has shown that despite the identification of some problem areas, respondents are rather enthusiastic and appreciative about the ALTFC at the end of the course. However, will they still remember what they have learned during the course in a few months' time? Will they use what they learned during the course in their working environment? Most important of all, will they translate once they return to their units? These are some of the questions that will be addressed in the following paragraph, the post-course evaluation.

4.2.4   Post-course evaluation (part III)

One of the big concerns regarding this part of the study was whether candidates could still be traced eight to ten months after they had returned to their units and whether they would be willing to fill in the last part of the questionnaire. It was therefore a great relief when after many telephone calls and a lot of prodding 27 of the 30 candidates attending the ALTFCs in 2000 returned their questionnaires. Two candidates had been transferred to different units with the new telephone numbers provided by their old units proving incorrect and one candidate simply did not fax back the questionnaire despite several telephone conversations.

Regarding the questionnaire, part III was structured in such a way that respondents had to answer in the first question (Q50) whether they had performed any translation tasks since returning to their

respective units. If not they could skip questions 51-57, which refer to the application of the knowledge and skills acquired during the ALTFC, and continue with the more general questions.

In answering the first question, 14 of the 27 respondents (52%) indicated that they had performed translation tasks at their units since their return form the ALTFC, with seven of them (50%) having translated every *now and again*, four (29%) *often* and three (21%) *very often* (Q51). One of the respondents commented in Q61, where respondents are encouraged to comment in their own words, that he had not been used as a translator at all because he had been attending various courses since leaving the ALTFC and had not been back to his unit. Another respondent who had also indicated that he had not performed any translation tasks commented that he had performed interpreting tasks. Interestingly, he said that he used his newly acquired skills to overcome interpreting problems and as a result received very good feedback.

Assuming that the eight respondents with translation experience (par. 4.2.2 above) continued translating, six respondents actually started translating as a result of the course. Although this figure seems at first somewhat disappointing it is not bad when bearing in mind that the main motivation for candidates to attend the ALTFC was an interest in new courses rather than translation as such. Moreover, D Lang does not have any control over the African language translation facilitators and it is entirely up to their units to make use of them.

The above links up with question 58 as to whether their superiors know that they are available for translation tasks. 20 of the former respondents (74%) indicated that people at their units knew that they were available for such tasks and two (7%) indicated that some people knew. Two (7%) said that they did not know whether people knew and three (11%) that people at their units did not know. It was encouraging to learn that the majority of respondents had advertised themselves at their units with regard to their translation facilitation abilities.

One of the reasons why still not more translation facilitators were used could lie in the fact that the number of translation tasks required at the various units may differ considerably, especially those routine tasks intended to be performed by former ALTFC candidates. Another reason could be the appointment during 2000 of about 30 language practitioners at the various General Support Bases (GSBs), which replaced the former commands. These language practitioners are supposed to perform language-related tasks, e.g. translation, interpreting, editing and language training either by themselves or outsource the tasks within the DOD or, depending on the nature of the task and with the approval of D Lang, to the private sector. Many of the translation tasks could have gone directly to those language practitioners.

However, the respondents most interesting for the purpose of this study are the 14 who have been

involved in translation work since their return from the ALTFC. Although the number of respondents with translation experience is too small to be truly representative it is still believed that their answers will give an indication as to which areas of the ALTFC have been most useful and which need more attention, whether the material presented during the ALTFC was with the hindsight of experience still considered to be useful and what type of documents respondents receive for translation.

Regarding the type of documents respondents had *mostly* translated (Q52), there was again a problem with the rating. Only nine respondents rated the documents in order of priority, with the rest indicating several types of documents. Of the nine respondents who rated the documents, five circled *daily orders*, two *speeches* and two *instructions* first.

However, by looking at all the 35 answers circled, nine (26%) indicated *instructions*, eight (23%) daily orders, six (17%) routine letters, five (14%) speeches and four (11%) minutes. In the *other* category, one respondent each (3%) added information bulletins, sworn statements and letters from insurance companies. The rated and unrated responses are illustrated in Figure 4.12:

Figure 4.12: Document types for tanslation
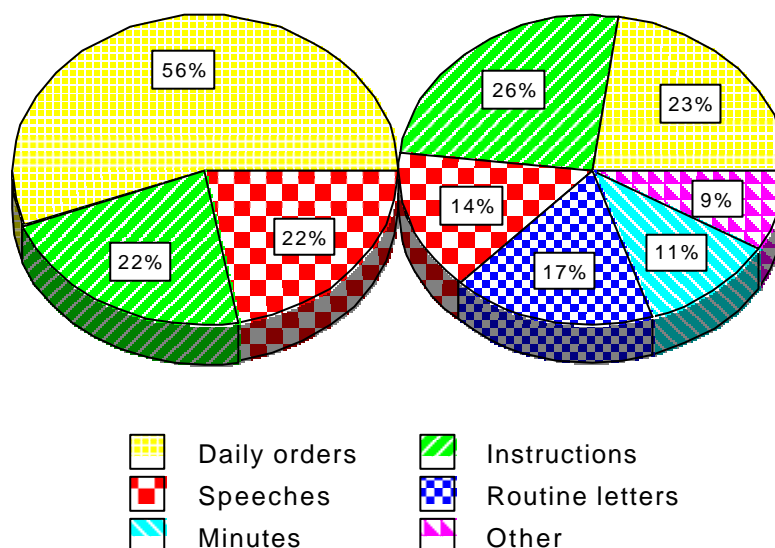
Rated and unrated resonses

Figure 4.12 shows that *instructions* and *daily orders* top the list and should be considered when selecting the material for the workshops. The problem again lies in the fact that most of the above documents are originally written in English and would have to be translated into the respective African languages, with the issues surrounding the evaluation of African-language translations having already been discussed in detail (see Chapter 3, par. 3.2.5 and par. 4.3.1).

Question 53 enquires about the relevance of the course material. Nine respondents (64%) felt that the material presented in the ALTFC, including the texts presented for translation, was relevant to their working environment. Two circled *to some extent* (14%) and three (21%) *not really*. This figure is encouraging when bearing in mind that candidates come from different units all over the country and thus from differing working environments.

When asked which aspects of the ALTFC they had found *most* useful (Q54) two respondents each of the eight rating the answers indicated translation strategies (25%), theory (25%) and text analysis (25%), with one each circling text type exercises (13%) and workshops (13%). When all 61 answers circled are taken into consideration the percentages differ considerably because all options were circled and the number of respondents choosing the various responses only fluctuates between seven and eleven, the only exception being dictionaries which was added by one respondent in the *other* category. While most respondents indicated at least three categories two respondents circled all of them.

Looking at the different options, 11 respondents (18%) indicated translation strategies, 10 (16%) African language tuition, eight each (13% each) text-type exercises, workshops, text analysis and English tuition, seven (11%) theory and one (1%) dictionaries. These rated and unrated responses are illustrated in Figure 4.12:


Figure 4.13: Most useful ALTFC aspects
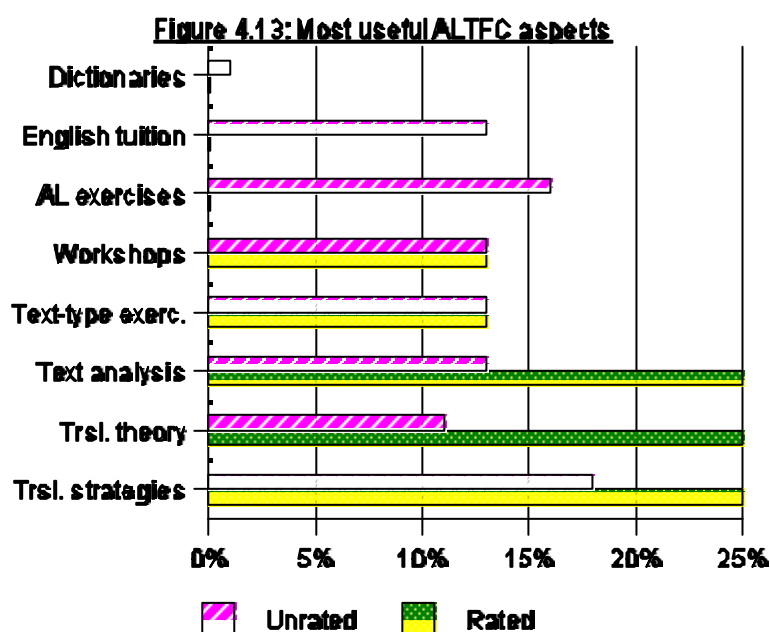
The results shown in Figure 4.13 seem to suggest that all categories listed contained something useful for certain respondents. However, respondents mainly kept to the listed options and hardly commented in the *other* category. One is therefore left to wonder whether additional options, such as dictionaries,

parts of the dictionary, etc. would have got a similar response.

Respondents could also choose from a variety of options in question 55 as to why they found those particular aspects useful. The rated evaluation differed somewhat from the unrated one. In the rated evaluation, three out of the eight respondents (38%) circled *created awareness of on non-linguistic problems*, two each (25% each) *created linguistic awareness* and *gave practical advice on how to tackle translation tasks* and one (13%) *improved my English proficiency.*

The unrated response, in contrast, shows that out of the 55 answers circled 13 respondents (23%) indicated *gave me practical advice on how to tackle translation tasks*, 11 (20%) *created an awareness of non-linguistic problems*, 10 (18%) *improved my English proficiency*, eight each (15% each) *created linguistic awareness* and *helps me to find relevant information*, as well as 5 (9%) *confidence booster*. Again respondents only used listed responses and did not comment in the *other* category. Moreover, the problem with the unrated answers is that the options in question 55 cannot be matched to the options chosen in question 54. This would have been easier if all the options had been rated. Figure 4.14 illustrates the above rated and unrated responses.

**Figure 4.14: Why aspects are considered useful**
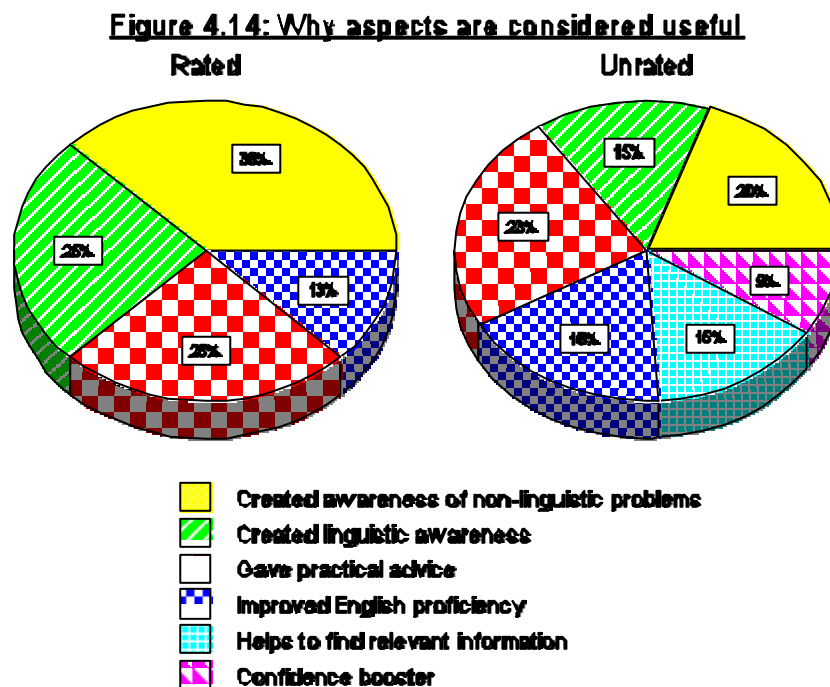
However, it is very encouraging that out of 14 respondents 13 circled that certain aspects of the course had given them practical advice on how to tackle translation tasks and all 14 respondents agreed by circling *very much so* that the ALTFC had given them guidelines to translate more confidently (Q56).

Supplying practical advice and making candidates more confident with regard to translating are, of course, among the main reasons for presenting the ALTFC. In this respect the course has been rather successful.

Interesting is also the fact that 10 respondents out of the 14 said that their English proficiency had improved. Looking at the same aspect but taking a wider view, 23 out of 26 respondents (88%; one left the question out) circled *very much so* with regard to whether the translation facilitation course had improved their overall language capabilities (Q59). Three respondents indicated *to some extent*. This seems to support the argument that translation may well have a place in second language teaching, especially for adults, if it is not merely a testing device and authentic and relevant texts are chosen in combination with clear translation briefs (see Menck 1991: 474-483 for a discussion on translation as a fifth training objective in foreign language training, apart from comprehension, speaking, reading and writing, to contribute to communicative competence and intercultural understanding).

When asked how the ALTFC could be improved, bearing in mind their recent translation experience (Q57), the seven candidates who rated their answers responded as follows: *more text analysis* and *more practice* were suggested by two respondents each and *proper African language tuition*, *more terminology exercises* and *less theory* were circled by one respondent each. In the 54 unrated responses, 12 referred to *more emphasis on text types* (22%), 11 (20%) *more practice*, 10 (22%) *proper African language tuition*, seven each (13% each) *more text analysis* and *more terminology exercises*, five (9%) *more English tuition* and two (4%) less theory. Since the rated values do not show a definite trend Figure 4.15 will only illustrate the unrated responses.

Figure 4.15: ALTFC improvement suggestions
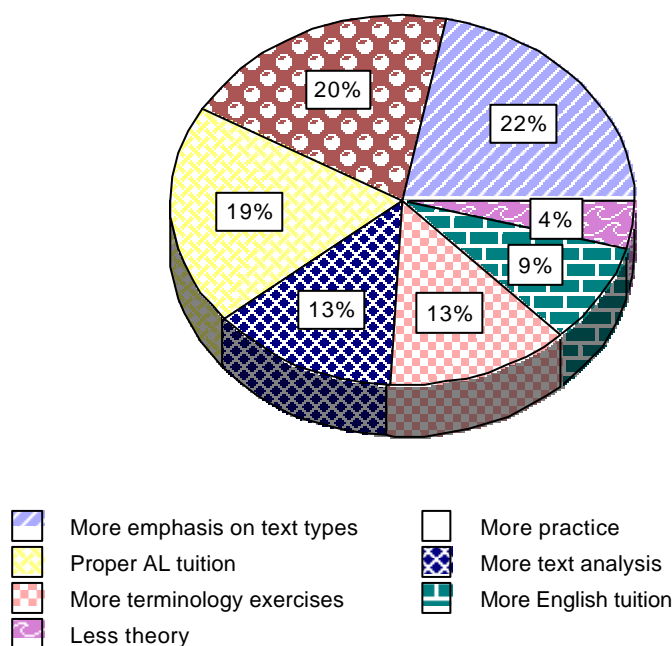
The above unrated results were in some instances rather surprising. For example, the fact that 12 out of the14 respondents circled *more emphasis on text types* shows that candidates need more information on the fact that not all texts are written in the same way and that certain text types have distinctive characteristics from a linguistic as well as a structural point of view. While *more practice* is not really surprising, the fact that 10 out of 14 respondents would like proper African language tuition, is. It is often automatically assumed that African language speakers know their language intimately. However, especially against the background that most of the respondents speak more than one language among their colleagues and superiors (see par. 4.2.2 above) the individual language boundaries may become blurred and interference take place. Moreover, the level at which a language is spoken within the family differs markedly from the level required for work purposes where various specialised fields and subjects may have to be covered or discourse is more formal. This is particularly true in view of the fact that ALTFC candidates are not language experts.

Incidentally, only 5 of the 14 respondents would have liked more English tuition in the class. This is in line with the responses given in parts I and II of the questionnaire but does not seem to reflect the real nature of the respondents' English capability. Furthermore, it was also encouraging to see that only two respondents circled *less theory*, the theory part being one of the more uncertain aspects of the course according to ALTFC facilitators.

Since the duration of the ALTFC was also cause for discussion at D Lang as well as among candidates the question as to the right duration of the ALTFC was again asked in part III (Q60). Twelve of the 26 respondents (46%) who answered the question (one omitted it) indicated four weeks and 11 (42%) six weeks. Three respondents (4% each) said *twice four weeks*, *eight weeks* and *three months*, respectively. This means that all 26 respondents wanted the ALTFC to last at least four weeks or longer. Compared with part II (Q43), the percentage of respondents who thought six weeks was the right course duration increased from 23% to 42%, with the percentage of respondents indicating four weeks decreasing from 63% to 46%. The option ALTFC facilitators had toyed with, namely twice for three weeks was not chosen at all. It thus seems that four to six weeks is the preferred duration of the ALTFC, with the course being presented continuously and not being divided into two courses.

A lot of the above is also reflected in question 61 where respondents commented in their own words on the ALTFC and their experience as translation facilitators. Their comments are very similar to those of the open questions in part II of the questionnaire. Even with hindsight, respondents are on the whole very appreciative of the course and feel that it has helped them to translate better and more confidently. Even though just over half the respondents attending the ALTFC actually have done translation jobs since returning to their units, several respondents said that more people in the DOD should attend the course

since it promoted multilingualism, as well as linguistic and cultural tolerance. Apart from the translation aspect, respondents felt that they had benefited from a linguistic point of view and that their horizon had been broadened.

Having thus analysed and compared all three parts of the questionnaire, the relevant conclusions will have to be drawn. This will result in a better understanding of the ALTFC's positive aspects and problem areas, bearing in mind the type of candidate attending the course.

4.2.5 Summary

Despite some shortcomings of the tripartite questionnaire, especially with regard to the rating of responses, the analysis of the tripartite questionnaire revealed some very informative and interesting results. The information obtained from the various parts is to some extent complementary and overlapping.

The student profile revealed that the majority of ALTFC candidates are compound bi- or multilinguals, having first learned an African language. Most of them are monolingual in their families, speaking an African language, but bi- and multilingual among their colleagues at work (including English). In comparison with Afrikaans, English is the language preferred by most respondents and mainly used when communicating with their superiors. From an educational point of view, most respondents have matric but no tertiary education. Moreover, very few respondents have any translation experience prior to the ALTFC and attend the course because they want to broaden their horizons rather than become professional translators.

Apart from the student profile, the analysis also indicated the positive aspects as well as problem areas of the ALTFC as experienced by the candidates. On the positive side, translation theory was surprisingly well received and considered helpful for the actual translation process. Furthermore, respondents felt that the theory had been sufficiently applied and pointed out during the practical translation exercises. Apart from making them more confident in their approach to translation, the majority of respondents also reported an improvement in their overall language capability. Moreover, the ALTFC as a whole was very well received and the efforts made appreciated. More than half the respondents had translated at least every now and again after the return to their units.

On the more critical side, four main problem areas could be identified by quantifying the various comments. These problem areas comprise feedback on practical work, teacher enthusiasm, the candidates' English capability and the time factor. The time problem arises from the candidates request for more examples, more student involvement and more repetition, while maintaining the ALTFC's duration of four weeks. This tends to be compounded by the fact that it often takes time to elicit a

response from the candidates. The above requests tie in with the student profile and the candidates' lack of translation experience before coming to the ALTFC.

Regarding the feedback problem, candidates feel that the oral discussion of their translation work is not sufficient and would like to see more detailed and individual feedback. While this can be accomplished with regard to translations into English by commenting in writing on all translations, translations into the African languages pose a problem due to the realities at D Lang.

Teacher enthusiasm seems the least problematic of the four areas since it was only mentioned by 14% of the respondents. However, ways and means will have to be identified to sustain the enthusiasm of ALTFC facilitators, and thus candidates, for the four-week duration of the course (see par. 4.3.4 below).

The fourth problem, i.e. the candidates' English proficiency, differs from the other three in that it is not perceived to be a problem by the candidates but rather the ALTFC facilitators. There seems to be a marked discrepancy between the candidates' assessment of their English capability and the results of the English assessment test. The fact that most of the respondents would have only qualified for the English Beginners course shows that they have a serious English deficiency that will have to be addressed. Even though respondents do not have to be perfect, their command of English for African language translation facilitation purposes should be of such a nature that comprehension and text production, i.e. successful communication, are not impeded.

With the main problem areas identified, possible solutions must be found. This will be the aim of the next section.

4.3   Discussion of possible ALTFC improvements

The analysis of the three parts of the questionnaire (see previous section) revealed some weaknesses of the ALTFC with regard to feedback on practical work and the time available for more examples, more student involvement and more repetition as requested by the candidates. Moreover, it was found that the candidates' English capability and teacher enthusiasm also have to be addressed. These four problem areas will be dealt with in turn, starting with feedback on practical work.

4.3.1   Feedback on practical work

The feedback problem on practical work mentioned by many respondents arises from the fact that the written work is mostly discussed in class and only translations into English are occasionally collected and checked by the ALTFC facilitators. One of the reasons for not checking all the translations is the

ALTFC facilitators' process-oriented approach to translator training where they try to concentrate more on how candidates arrived at a certain solution and not on the final solution itself (see Chapter 2, par 2.2.2). Another reason is the fact that while the ALTFC is in progress the ALTFC facilitators still have to be available for emergency translations or language training in their respective languages (with some of the language courses running over several months). This leaves them little time for time-consuming translation evaluations. Moreover, there is no uniform evaluation system in place.

However, since candidates seem to be in need of more detailed individual feedback facilitators should collect all the translations done by candidates, look at them and not only correct binary and non-binary mistakes but also comment in writing on a candidates' major strengths and weaknesses. For this purpose, a uniform and detailed translation evaluation key must be adopted and implemented.

Such an evaluation system could be based on the marking system used by the Department of Linguistics (Translation Studies) at the University of South Africa (Unisa; see Appendix E). At Unisa, practical translation work is evaluated according to a five-point scale that divides translation skills into five categories, i.e. (1) accuracy, (2) choice of vocabulary, terminology and register, (3) cohesion, coherence and organisation, (4) grammar, spelling and punctuation and (5) annotations for an annotated translation or comments on translation problems. While items 2-5 are self-explanatory, accuracy is divided into *minor errors* and *major errors*. Minor errors include mistranslations with the meaning of a word being lost, omission of words that contribute only slightly to meaning and inclusion of translation alternatives instead of the student translator making a choice. Major errors refer to misinterpretations and gross mistranslations where, for example, whole paragraphs are left out, the omission of important words or information and insertion of information that does not occur in the ST.

Each of these 5 categories requires a mark on a scale from A to E and numbers allocated from, for example, +8 to -8. Depending on the category, A and +8 would indicate that the translation showed an excellent command of the text or that the language and register were entirely appropriate to the subject matter and intention of the ST while E from -5 to -8 would show an inadequate grasp of the information with major misinterpretations or several clumsy renderings which seriously distort the message (see Appendix E).

For the purposes of the ALTFC, the categories are reduced from five to four, with category 5, i.e. annotations for an annotated translation being omitted. ALTFC candidates are never asked for annotated translations and only comment orally on their translation problems since they cannot be expected to reflect formally and in writing on their translations. Moreover, the marking scales are reduced from five to three, with the extremes on both ends of the scale being left out since candidates at the level of the ALTFC cannot be expected to be excellent in the various categories and should not be discouraged by negative comments. In addition, the points being allocated are made uniform for each category from +4

to -4. The simplified marking scales for the various categories then look as follows:

Category 1: Accuracy of translation

(Transfer of information, including dates, names, figures, etc.)

Grade		Points
A	Good command of text with some shifts and changes in emphasis or minor inaccuracies present.	+4 to +2
B	Adequate command of text. Occasional mistranslation but no serious errors or omissions that distort the text.	+1 to -1
C	Inadequate grasp of information, serious misinterpretations leading to false transfer of information and serious omissions.	-2 to -4

Category 2: Vocabulary, idiom, register

Grade		Points
A	Vocabulary, terminology and idiom are appropriate throughout. Register mainly appropriate.	+4 to +1
B	Broadly appropriate. Some peculiarities but will not impair overall acceptability of the text. Some incorrect choice of register and idiom.	0
C	Several inappropriate/clumsy renderings which impair or distort the message.	-1 to -4

Category 3: Cohesion, coherence, organisation

Grade		Points
A	Well-organised with good structure and coherence.	+4 to +1
B	Structure is sound but there may be some awkwardness.	0
C	Inappropriate structural features. Incoherence occurs. Often too close to original resulting in a stilted translation.	-1 to -4

Category 4: Technical points

(presentation, grammar, spelling, punctuation)

Grade		Points
A	Some minor technical errors.	+4 to +1
B	Correct in major technical elements, with errors not distorting the translation.	0
C	Some major errors making translation less (-1 to -2) acceptable or unacceptable (-3 to -4).	-1 to -4

The points for each category are recorded on a marking sheet (see Appendix E for the Unisa sample). They are then added up and converted into percentages according to the following formula:

$$\frac{x + 16}{32} \times 100\%$$

The conversion table will thus look as follows:

-3 = 41%	+1 = 53%	+5 = 66%	+ 9 = 78%
-2 = 44%	+2 = 56%	+6 = 69%	+10 = 81%
-1 = 47%	+3 = 59%	+7 = 72%	+11 = 84%
0 = 50%	+4 = 63%	+8 = 75%	+12 = 88%

This modified translation evaluation system will allow candidates to monitor their progress regarding practical work. It will show them their strong areas, as well as the areas that need more attention. Morever, it will enable ALTFC facilitators to mark translations uniformly and consistently.

Apart from the accuracy category, it should not be too difficult to implement this evaluation and thus feedback system with regard to translations into English since both ALTFC facilitators are competent in English and have a background in translation studies. However, the problem cannot be as swiftly solved when it comes to translations into the African languages (see Chapter 3, par. 3.2.5 and par. 4.2.2 above).

The feedback problem with regard to the African languages is twofold: firstly, D Lang does not have language practitioners in all the official African languages and secondly, few language practitioners in the official African languages have a formal translation background. However, one possible way to overcome this problem would be to look further than just D Lang and investigate to what extent the language practitioners at the GSBs (General Support Bases) throughout the country have some formal training in translation studies and would be willing and capable to correct and comment on the

candidates' translations. These language practitioners cover just about all the official African languages and could thus be instrumental in alleviating the feedback problem.

For this purpose, the language practitioners would have to be issued with the translation brief, the above evaluation scale and a marking sheet in addition to the ST and translation. Once the purpose of the translation brief and the translation evaluation scale have been explained, even language practitioners without a formal translation background should be able to assess a translation step by step. By returning the translation as well as the marking sheet to the candidates, candidates will see in which areas, i.e. accuracy, vocabulary, register, cohesion, text organisation, etc., they did well and which areas need more attention.

Based on the above, using the language practitioners at the GSBs to evaluate the candidates' translations into the African languages seems feasible. However, a critical factor in this respect will be the speed with which language practitioners return the translations and the marking sheets since feedback should be given while candidates still remember the problems they encountered and the strategies they used. This promptness will depend on the work load of a language practitioner at a certain point in time as well as the number of candidates for a specific language combination. Language practitioners may not only receive one but several translations, which could considerably disrupt their work schedule for the duration of the ALTFC.

The above proposition was put to the language practitioners attending the DOD Language Practitioners' Work Session from 10 to 11 May 2002. These work sessions provide a platform for DOD language practitioners from all over the country to inform each other about the latest events at their respective units, seek opinions on how to solve certain problems or learn about the latest developments in the language field, not only from DOD language practitioners but also experts from outside the DOD. Although the language practitioners could not be briefed in detail at that stage they agreed in principle to assist in the evaluation task. This issue will be further pursued at the next DOD Language Practitioners' Work Session in the first half of 2003.

Since the feedback regarding the various translations into the official African languages will to a large extent depend on the cooperation of the individual language practitioners feedback might be more successful in certain African languages than in others. However, D Lang and the ALTFC facilitators in particular should put the above suggestions to the test in order to find out to what extent they can help to alleviate, if not solve, the feedback problem with regard to translations into the African languages. Moreover, cooperation with the language practitioners at the GSBs may also give ALTFC facilitators an idea as to the respective African-language competence of a candidate. This would be rather interesting, especially in view of the fact that a considerable number of candidates requested more proper African language tuition (see par. 4.2.4 above).

The above discussion has shown that the availability of the language practitioners at the GSBs, i.e. the time they have available to produce feedback, may pose a problem. The time factor will be at the centre of attention in the next section.

4.3.2   The time factor

The time factor is a problem in that candidates wanted more examples, more student involvement and more repetition while maintaining the course duration of four weeks (see par. 4.2.3 and 4.2.4). Repeating the material more often or getting candidates more actively involved in an increased number of exercises would, in itself, not be a problem if more time was available. The main emphasis in this section will therefore be on how to make more time available for the above improvements without extending the course.

One way of saving time would be by giving homework. Although this is not always popular candidates could, for example, prepare all the texts for the workshops in their spare time and not, as has been the case so far, during the workshop periods. Since candidates finish classes at three 'o clock this should not be too much of a burden, especially when texts and translation briefs are given a couple of days in advance. Such a measure would immediately release about 6 periods, which translates into 12 hours.

In the same vein, the translation of collocations, fixed expressions and idioms during *Translation strategies* could also be done at home. Although this would only result in about one extra period more collocations, fixed expressions and idioms could be given for translation and then discussed in more detail in class.

Another possible way of making more time available would be by looking at the *Translation aids* module. Since monolingual, translation and technical dictionaries are dealt with in some detail during this module and considerable frustration is caused by the fact that several of the dictionary types discussed do not yet exist in many of the official African languages (see Chapter 3, par. 3.2.3), the module could perhaps be removed from the ALTFC. The actual translation aids relevant to translations into and out of the official African languages could then be worked into some of the other modules.

For example, the difference between monolingual and translation dictionaries could be discussed when dealing with non-equivalence at word level and above word level during the *Translation strategies* module. Candidates can be asked as to where they would look if they were not sure about the meaning of a fixed expression or idiom or if they wanted to find a translation equivalent for a particular word. Candidates can also be alerted to the fact that it is not always possible to find a translation equivalent because it may not exist. The absence of a translation equivalent necessitates knowledge of how to apply certain translation strategies since translators normally do not have a problem when a ready equivalent

exists in the TL. Moreover, if *paraphrase* is used as a translation strategy to overcome non-equivalence, where can such a paraphrase be found (i.e. in a monolingual dictionary)?

Similar questions can be asked with regard to grammar and non-equivalence at grammatical level. Candidates can be alerted to the fact that although some grammatical information is supplied in a good dictionary, a good grammar book is to be consulted if detailed guidance on grammar is needed. The type of grammar books available in English and in the respective African languages could then be discussed. Moreover, the existence, or lack as it may be, of comparative grammars in the respective language combinations could be investigated. ALTFC facilitators could continue by adding that, for example, experts or institutions can be consulted if no satisfactory solution is found in the dictionaries or grammar books.

The workshops are also ideal for talking about translation aids since examples from the texts candidates actually work with can be used to illustrate certain issues. While the above concerns can be repeatedly raised and answered as non-equivalence occurs at different levels during translation, candidates will become more aware of the various translation aids available and that different problems require different translation aids. Candidates will thus realise that translation dictionaries are only one of several means to consult and do not always provide the information required since they may be outdated or do not cover the specific subject field. Moreover, words have a meaning potential that can only be realised within a text.

Furthermore, during the workshops or the preparation at home, for that matter, candidates could be asked to compile word lists containing the technical vocabulary occurring in the texts they are translating. A separate word list could also contain all the words candidates did not know and could not find. The reason for keeping such a word list separate is that candidates must learn that all unknown words are not necessarily technical terms. Combining this type of exercise with the workshops also seems useful in that candidates can use the same text for more than one exercise.

By working some components of the *Translation aids* module into *Translation strategies* and the *Workshops*, at least four periods, i.e. six hours, can be made available for additional examples, more repetition and more student involvement. If the approximately 12 hours (eight periods) saved by giving homework are added an extra 18 hours (12 periods) could be obtained by introducing the above measures. Bearing in mind that the actual classes of the ALTFC cover about 81 hours or 54 periods, considerable time can be saved.

Since most of the material dealt with in *Introduction to translation*, *Translation strategies* and *Language skills* is practised during the *Workshops* module, it seems sensible to spend most of this extra time on the workshops (see par. 4.4 below for the various course models), especially since they are

designed to get candidates maximally involved by discussing their own work not only with the facilitator but also among themselves. However, the extent to which candidates will participate in the discussions will depend to a large extent on their confidence in expressing themselves. Since all classes are conducted in English this will translate into their confidence to express themselves in English. This leads to the third problem area, which is the candidates' English proficiency or, as it seems, lack thereof.

4.3.3 The candidates' English proficiency

As has been discussed above (par. 4.2.2), ALTFC candidates themselves seem to be rather satisfied with their command of English while the English assessment test showed that the majority of candidates would have been classified at beginners' level. Since a reasonable command of English is essential even for the scaled-down purposes of the ALTFC, i.e. emphasis on the communicative value of the translation with a candidate's English not needing to be perfect as long as the message is intelligible, measures will have to be introduced to overcome the problem and ensure a higher standard of English at the ALTFCs.

With regard to increasing the standard of English at the ALTFC, three options come to mind. Firstly, it could be considered to introduce an applicant's English proficiency as a selection criterion for being nominated for the course. Although no selection criteria have been applied so far it seems reasonable to choose future candidates on the basis of their English capability to alleviate the problem outlined above. Before attending the ALTFC, members (in uniform) and employees (civilians) of the DOD could sit for the English assessment test at their unit, with the language practitioner at the respective GSB supervising the assessment. Only applicants who would, for example, qualify for the Intermediate English Course would then be nominated for the ALTFC. Applicants with lower results could be referred to the respective English courses and encouraged to attend the ALTFC once their English has improved.

Apart from automatically lifting the standard of English by only admitting applicants having a certain English competence, members and employees of the DOD would also get a more realistic idea of their English competence at an earlier stage. Ideally, the English capability of members and employees should be tested on entering the DOD so that corrective action can be taken right from the beginning since it is unlikely that their career will progress beyond a certain point without a certain command of English. After all, the language of command, control, communication and training is English according to the stipulations of the DOD Language Policy (see Chapter 1, par. 1.1.1.1). Moreover, the English assessment test can be used to point out to applicants that a certain level of English competence is indispensable if they want to benefit from the ALTFC.

However, such a selection criterion may reduce the number of ALTFC candidates drastically since out of the 22 ALTFC candidates sitting for the assessment test in 2000 (the August course was not tested) only five would have qualified if the intermediate level was taken as a cutoff point (or ten out of 34

candidates in the extended sample; see par. 4.2.2 above). As a result, the number of ALTFCs presented at D Lang might drop from two to three courses to one course per year. This drop in the number of ALTFC candidates, and thus courses, would probably be temporary since the number of candidates can be expected to again increase as the English proficiency in the DOD improves. Furthermore, a nomination for the ATLFC would become more prestigious since only those who have achieved a certain level of English proficiency would qualify.

Secondly, a more intensive and systematic language training could be offered during the course to partially overcome the English problem at the ALTFC. Although it would be difficult to significantly increase the number of periods set aside for *Language skills* because of the time constraint discussed above (see par. 4.3.2) time could, for example, be used more efficiently by giving homework. While the classes are used to explain certain concepts, rules and principles practising these concepts and rules could be done by candidates during their spare time. The amount of homework given should, of course, be coordinated among ALTFC facilitators. Time could also be saved by moving certain elements of *Language skills* to other modules. For example, since the DOD Language Policy is already mentioned in the introduction or welcoming speech right at the beginning of the ALTFC it could perhaps be moved from *Language skills* to the introduction and dealt with in more detail there.

Moreover, it should be investigated to what extent parts of the more structured courses of D Lang's English section could be worked into the ALTFC. The English section has teaching material readily available at all levels of English training and could supply ALTFC facilitators with valuable material and ideas on how to approach English training for ALTFC purposes. Closer cooperation should also be sought with the English section regarding the actual teaching of English during the ALTFC. Especially once the English section is fully staffed, it should be enquired whether the English teachers would be willing to help out during the courses. Since the facilitators of the English section are naturally more experienced with regard to teaching English than the ALTFC facilitators candidates would greatly benefit. In addition, this would solve the problem of a certain fatigue settling in as a result of candidates being exposed to only two facilitators for four weeks (see par. 4.2.3 above and par. 4.3.4 below).

Thirdly, comparative reading of specific text types in the L1 and L2 should be actively encouraged for improved results with regard to text production. This type of exercise will not only be beneficial with regard to the candidates' English but also their proficiency in the African language(s). As has been shown in Chapter 2 (par. 2.3.3), most of the proponents of the skills- and competence-led approaches to translator training have comparative reading of specific text types and text production in their syllabi. Using parallel texts (*parallel* used in Neubert's sense as quoted in Chapter 2, par. 2.3.3) is an acknowledged way to increase vocabulary, the L1 and L2 proficiency and getting familiar with text types, stock phrases, expressions, etc. As a result, candidates tend to produce translations that have less interference from the ST, are more idiomatic and read more like an original.

Moreover, this approach has shown very promising results with regard to translations into the L2 (see Weatherby (1998) in Chapter 2, par. 2.3.3). In the DOD context, this is rather important since prospective African language translation facilitators will also have to translate into English, which according to part I of the questionnaire is the L2 for most candidates. From this type of exercise, ALTFC candidates will not only benefit with regard to their translation tasks but also with regard to producing certain text types, such as memoranda, official letters, etc., in English. The quality of the documents produced in the DOD in terms of the Conventions of Service Writing (CSW) and the English in which they are written has been a concern at D Lang for some time. Text-type-specific reading and writing exercises would address both problems at the same time.

However, although the above approach would probably produce the best results with regard to the quality of translations both into English and the African languages it will have to form part of the long-term solution since it will take time to collect a comparative reading corpus in the various African languages and English. Unlike Vienne's (1998: 113-114) personal *textaries* of translators (see Chapter 2, par. 2.3.3), which contain only original and not translated texts, a corpus of parallel texts for ALTFC purposes would also have to include translations since there are not yet enough original texts in the African languages to cover DOD-specific text types and subject fields. ALTFC candidates must therefore be sensitised to the fact that they may deal with a translation and thus encounter translationalese (see the discussion in Chapter 2, par.2.2.1 and Chapter 3, par. 3.2.5). Regarding English original documents, it will have to be established to what extent it is possible to only use texts written by English mother-tongue speakers since many DOD documents are actually written by second- or third language English speakers.

Moreover, the corpus of parallel texts would have to be kept central at D Lang and be far more comprehensive than suggested by Vienne (1998). It would have to include texts in English and the official African languages covering all aspects of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) and the DOD in order to accommodate all candidates. In addition, similar texts will have to be available in the various languages in order to keep the workshops coherent. However, texts from such a corpus would not only make the ALTFC workshops more relevant since such texts were probably submitted for translation at one stage but could also be issued to DOD language practitioners on request when tasked to translate documents pertaining to a certain subject field.

Such a corpus of parallel texts can of course not be compiled by the language practitioners of D Lang alone but will need the input of all the language practitioners in the DOD. Again feelers were put out at the DOD Language Practitioners' Work Session from 10 to 11 June 2002 to gauge to what extent DOD language practitioners would be prepared to cooperate and assist in the collection of relevant texts and translations. The response was largely positive but no concrete arrangements were made for the corpus compilation. The viability of establishing a work group for corpus compilation will have to be investigated

and the details for the practical implementation sorted out. For example, such a comprehensive corpus would require an intricate filing system and considerable space. These will be items on the agenda for the next DOD Language Practitioners' Work Session in 2003.

In the interim and on a far smaller scale, Fraser's (1996: 1996: 131) *contextualised brainstorming* could be implemented to improve text production (see Chapter 2, par. 2.3.3). By asking candidates to brainstorm the TL vocabulary of a certain subject field in class before starting the translation exercise in that subject field, candidates will be guided in the right direction with regard to the appropriate terms, phrases and register. They can tap into a whole pool of ideas and options and do not have to generate all the vocabulary themselves. Although Fraser (1996) uses this technique for translation into the L1, i.e. in her case English, there is no reason why it should not work before translating into the African languages, especially among candidates speaking the same language or belonging to the same language group.

As is shown by the above discussion, of the three options suggested to deal with the English proficiency of ALTFC candidates, two can be implemented in the short to medium term, i.e. introducing the results of the English assessment test as a selection criterion when nominating candidates for the ALTFC and involving the English section at D Lang in the ALTFC. The third option will most likely be the most successful but can only be realised in the long-term. Involving the English section in the ALTFC could also form a partial solution to the one remaining problem area, which is teacher enthusiasm.

4.3.4   Teacher enthusiasm

As has been shown in paragraph 4.2.3 above, *teacher enthusiasm* seems to be the least problematic of the four problem areas since it only comprised 14% of the responses as to how the various modules can be improved. However, it is still a comment worth considering since ALTFC facilitators are often not even aware of their flagging dedication.

One of the ways to sustain *teacher enthusiasm* throughout the four-week duration of the course would be to relieve the workload of ALTFC facilitators by bringing in more language practitioners to help facilitating the course. Soliciting the help of English teachers at D Lang as described in paragraph 4.3.4 would be a step in this direction. It would release the ALTFC facilitators for the translation-specific parts of the course, i.e. translation theory, translation strategies and the practical translations. Moreover, a module like *Translation aids* could be presented by any language practitioner at D Lang once they have familiarised themselves with the material since the facilitation of this module does not really require a translation background.

Another possibility that should be investigated is giving candidates more group work. While candidates

are working in groups, ALTFC facilitators will get the time to deal with other urgent matters which otherwise might have distracted them or to simply recharge their batteries. With the energy levels restored, they may be more inspired and thus better able to project enthusiasm during the classes. The extent to which group work is feasible, however, will largely depend on the number of candidates with the same language combination, especially where transfer exercises are concerned. It may thus not always be possible to group candidates.

However, the best way to address teacher enthusiasm is for the ALTFC facilitators to assess their own presentation in class more critically. By being aware of a possible problem, ALTFC facilitators should make a conscious effort to make the classes less routine and thus more interesting for themselves. This does not mean that the material as such has to be changed but rather the presentation of the material. ALTFC facilitators must also be sensitised to the fact that the group dynamics differ from course to course and respective adjustments have to be made.

4.3.5   Summary

Based on the results of the *Survey for the revision of the ALTFC at D Lang* four problem areas were identified, which include feedback on practical work, the time factor, the candidates' English proficiency and teacher enthusiasm. The discussion of the four problem areas has shown that some of the suggestions or measures to improve the situation are relatively easy to implement and can be accomplished in the short-term, such as introducing the results of the English assessment test as the selection criteria for ALTFC nomination and contextualised brainstorming with regard to improving the standard of English at the ALTFC or giving the candidates homework to save time during the classes.

Other measures will need some preparation and coordination and will only be feasible in the medium term. More intensive English training by involving the English section at D Lang, including more language practitioners in the ALTFC or merging the *Translation aids* module with *Translation strategies* to alleviate the current ALTFC facilitators' workload would fall into this category.

Involving the language practitioners at the GSBs in the translation evaluation process, will, in turn, fall between the medium to long-term category since the speed with which this measure can be implemented will depend on the individual language practitioners and their experience. Compiling a corpus of parallel texts, however, will definitely fall into the long-term category. It will take considerable time to get the process under way from a logistic point of view and to get an ALTFC-relevant corpus with similar texts in the various official African languages and English. Moreover, this process will never be completed because new texts will have to be added on a continuous basis to keep the corpus relevant within a changing DOD environment.

Having dealt with suggestions on how to improve the ALTFC, the next step will be a discussion on how these suggestions can be reflected in a new ALTFC model. This will be the objective of the next section.

4.4   Towards an improved ALTFC model

Before discussing possible changes to the ALTFC, those parts of the course that will be maintained must first be justified in terms of the literary overview and the results of the *Survey for the revision of the African language translation facilitation course at D Lang*. By using the existing ALTFC model (see Appendix B), the various modules and their components will be dealt with.

The *Introduction to translation* module will remain largely the same since its components seem in line with the functional approach to translation adopted by many scholars on translation teaching (see Chapter 2, par. 2.2.2). Accordingly, *the communication model and the translator* (see Chapter, 3, par. 3.2.1.1) expounds in condensed form on translation as intercultural/interpersonal communication and translation as cultural transfer (see Chapter 2, par. 2.2..2.1 and 2.2.2.2). It shows translators their position in the two separate but interlinked communication cycles, as well as the implications for the translator as a result of this position (see Chapter 3, par. 3.2.1.1).

Still with the functional approach *Skopos theory and text analysis*, briefly deals with skopos theory (see Chapter 2, par. 2.2.2.3) and then concentrates on Nord's model of translation-oriented text analysis (see Chapter 2, par 2.3.1 and Chapter 3, par. 3.2.1.4). The usefulness of Nord's model was emphasised when 90% of candidates completely agreed that text analysis can help in preparing the translation task, with 97% responding positively (the *completely agree* and *generally agree* categories were collapsed) regarding text analysis making them more confident to change a text in terms of the translation brief (see par. 4.2.3 above).

Another component of the *Introduction to translation* module that will remain because of overwhelming support by the respondents is the quotes section. 90% of respondents found this section very helpful in understanding linguistic concepts and completely agreed that it gave them a better understanding of what translation is about (see also Chapter 2, par. 2.3.2 for the practical application of translation theory and par. 4.2.2 above). However, while the quotes section will remain there is no reason why the quotes should not be changed periodically to keep up with trends in the field of translation and make the section more interesting, also for ALTFC facilitators.

The *Translation strategies* module in essence will also remain unchanged for the time being since it deals with transfer strategies in Nord's narrower sense (see Chapter 2, par. 2.3.1 and 2.3.3). This module may become redundant once the corpus of parallel texts is in place and candidates become so engrossed in text-type-specific TL material with a view to TT production that separate transfer skills will

no longer be needed because translation almost becomes automatic. However, depending on the ALTFC model finally adopted (see par. 4.4 below) parts of the *Translation aids* module will be worked into *Translation strategies*. Although the difference between monolingual and translation dictionaries will be added, it should not change the *Translation strategies* module in a major way.

The *Language skills* module will retain its number of periods since a definite need for English tuition was identified (see par. 4.2.2 and 4.3.3 above). However, the emphasis may shift to more formal grammar and vocabulary exercises at the expense of the DOD language policy and the SATI code of ethics (see Chapter 3, par. 3.2.4). This will be particularly true if no selection criteria for nominating candidates are introduced.

Furthermore, the conduct of the classes with regard to the workshops will remain process-oriented because of the variety of language combinations in class (see Chapter 2, par 2.3.2). It will remain an oral discussion of processes and strategies used by candidates to overcome problems. However, the qualitative side will be taken care of by evaluating the translations of all the candidates by means of the uniform evaluation system (see par. 4.3.1 above). This will add to the workload of the ALTFC facilitators but not affect the actual classes.

Having discussed the components of the ALTFC that will be retained because they worked in the existing ALTFC and are in line with general translator training practice, the focus will now shift to possible ALTFC models which will incorporate various measures to improve the current course. The models will be viewed according to short-, intermediate- and long-term solutions, starting with immediate measures.

4.4.1   Model 1: Introduction of homework

MODULE	CONTENT	PERIODS* TAUGHT
Introduction to translation	– Language Policy of the DOD – The communication model and the translator – Some thoughts on translation (discussion of relevant quotes) – Text types and translation methods – *Skopos* theory and text analysis	10
Translation strategies	S Non-equivalence at word level S Non-equivalence above word level S Grammatical equivalence S (Textual equivalence - only mentioned but not dealt with in detail)	10

Translation aids	S	Dictionaries • Dictionary structure • Monolingual dictionaries • Translation dictionaries • Technical dictionaries	8
	S	Compilation of word lists	
	S	Other (computers, experts, etc.)	
Language skills	S	Comprehension	16
	S	Vocabulary	
	S	Grammar	
	S	Aspects of text linguistics	
Workshops	–	SATI code of ethics	10
	S	Discussion of practical translations	
	S	Text-type-specific exercises	

In model 1, the syllabus is largely the same as that of the existing ALTFC (see Appendix B) but the number of periods has been redistributed. Moreover, in *Introduction to translation*, the two sub-headings under text analysis have been turned into main headings, i.e. *Text types and translation methods* and *Skopos theory and text analysis*. This will not affect the material presented under those headings but the headings were felt to be more descriptive of the content. Moreover, the compilation of word lists in the *Translation aids* module, which is optional in the current ALTFC and dependent on the time available, was added in model 1 because of the additional time allocated to *Translation aids*. Other additions include a brief overview of the DOD Language Policy in *Introduction to translation*, a brief discussion of SATI's code of ethics during the *Workshops* module (see Chapter 3, 3.2.4) and aspects of text linguistics in *Language skills*. The latter will discuss very basically the linguistic devices that turn phrases and sentences into a text, e.g. reference, conjunction, lexical cohesion, etc. This section will differ from *Translation strategies II* of model 3 (par. 4.4.3 below) in that it deals with only certain aspects of the latter and in less detail. The above additions, however, should not take up too much time since in one form or other they were already part of the existing ALTFC without being specifically mentioned in the course programme.

By giving homework, especially in the *Workshops* module, about six periods can be easily released because the system worked on one workshop period for preparation and one for the discussion of the translations (see Chapter 3, par. 3.2.5). This comes down to eight periods actually being used for the discussion of the candidates' work in class. Despite the fact that the number of periods has been reduced, more translations or exercises can be done because the new model will leave the *Workshops* module with two extra periods for discussions. Moreover, text-type-specific exercises were added to the module since not all exercises carried out during the workshops are translations.

The six periods released are then re-distributed to the other modules. *Introduction to translation* and *Translation aids* get two extra periods, with *Translation strategies* only getting one because in this module one period will be released due to homework (i.e. translation of idioms/fixed expressions). In effect, *Translation strategies* will thus also get two extra periods. The one remaining period goes to *Language skills*. Since it already covers at least one period a day the number of periods is considered to be sufficient, especially once the selection criterion for ALTFC nomination is in place and the candidates' standard of English is higher right from the start of the ALTFC.

The above redistribution of periods can be easily implemented since it does not involve any additional language practitioners and just a bit more extra work. However, it will accommodate the need for more examples, more student involvement and more repetition. These needs will also be addressed in the next model.

4.4.2 Model 2: Introduction of homework plus the distribution of *Translation aids* module

MODULE	CONTENT	PERIODS TAUGHT
Introduction to translation	– Language policy of the DOD S The communication model and the translator S Some thoughts on translation (quotes) S Text types and translation methods S *Skopos* theory and text analysis	10
Translation strategies	S Non-equivalence at word level (including a brief discussion of monolingual and translation dictionaries) S Non-equivalence above word level S Grammatical equivalence S (Textual equivalence - only mentioned but not discussed in detail)	12
Language skills	S Comprehension S Vocabulary S Grammar S Aspects of text linguistics	16
Workshops	– SATI code of ethics S Discussion of practical translations S Text-type-specific exercises S Compiling of word lists S Microstructural requirements of a translation dictionary	16

This model is based on model 1 but with the periods of the *Translation aids* module worked into *Translation strategies* and *Workshops* on the basis of two and six periods, respectively. The components of the *Translation aids* module do not disappear completely but are dealt with more informally. Moreover, only those components will be dealt with that are relevant with regard to the official African languages. This means that technical dictionaries, for example, can be left out since few technical dictionaries exist in the African languages. The same applies to dictionaries based on historical principles or etymological dictionaries. Although the inclusion of the relevant components in the *Translation strategies* and *Workshops* modules seems at first disruptive in the above model it was shown in paragraph 4.3.2 that this can be accomplished logically.

Apart from a reduced *Translation aids* module, models 1 and 2 are very similar with regard to the material presented and the problems addressed. Both models offer short-term solutions to the time factor problem expressed in the need for more examples, more student involvement and more repetition. This means that no fundamentally new content is added to the existing material but that more exercises will be done and more examples used.

If new contents were to be added one would have to look at a new course format, for example by dividing the ALTFC into two parts of three weeks each. Despite the fact that this option was not favoured by respondents (see par. 4.2.3 above), it is an option that D Lang should consider seriously since it would bring the ALTFC into line with the other courses presented at D Lang. Moreover, it would address the time factor as well as the requests for a follow-up course. This option will therefore be investigated next.

4.4.3   Model 3: Course format twice for three weeks

ALTFC PART I:

MODULE	CONTENT	PERIODS TAUGHT
Introduction to translation	– Language policy of the DOD S The communication model and the translator S Some thoughts on translation (quotes) S Text types and translation methods S *Skopos theory* and text analysis	10
Translation strategies (I)	S Non-equivalence at word level S Non-equivalence above word level S Grammatical equivalence	10
Language skills (I)	S Comprehension S Vocabulary S Grammar	10

Workshops (I)	S Discussion of practical translations S Text-type-specific exercises	9

ALTFC PART II:

MODULE	CONTENT	PERIODS TAUGHT

Translation aids	S Dictionaries
	       • Dictionary structure
	       • Monolingual dictionaries
	       • Translation dictionaries
	       • Technical dictionaries
	S Creating terms in LLDs
	S Other (computers, experts, etc.)
		14

Translation strategies (II)	How to obtain: S Textual equivalence S Pragmatic/communicative equivalence	5
Language skills (II)	S Comprehension S Vocabulary – Grammar	10
Workshops (II)	S Discussion of practical translations S Compiling word lists S Text-type-specific exercises	10

Each part of this model consists of 39 periods, excluding the first day of the course which is reserved for arrival and the last day for clearing out. The two parts combined result in 24 extra periods. Except for *Introduction to translation*, these periods were distributed among the remaining four modules. It was felt that the 10 periods allocated in model 1 to *Introduction to translation* was adequate and that the theory presented was sufficient for a course at the level of the ALTFC.

The *Translation aids* module in this model has been moved to part II and the component *Creating terms in LLDs* (languages of limited diffusion) added. This component seems rather important since translators working in languages of limited diffusion, such as the official African languages, may well be forced to create new terms and terminologies since the terminological and documentation services as well as the standardisation of terms in the African languages are often still in their infancy (see Chapter 3, par. 3.2.3 on word lists).

In this component one could use, for example, the six strategies provided by Godman and Veltman (1990: 198-199; following Halliday) for developing new terms. They include reinterpreting existing words, creating new words out of native stock, borrowing words from foreign languages, calquing (i.e. the translation of a complex expression and institutionalising the translation), creating locutions (e.g. relative humidity), and creating new words out of non-native stock. Mtintsilana and Morris (1988: 111-

112) further include deideophonisation, where terms are based on sounds associated with the object or action, blending (motor + hotel = motel), clipping (*prefab* from prefabricated building) and conversion, "whereby the new term is coined by changing the grammatical category of the word".

This can be followed by a brief discussion that new terms may not be readily accepted, especially when embedded in a more comprehensive language policy that fails to take complex attitudinal, political and socioeconomic factors into account. Moreover, terms may be rejected either because of a lack of standardisation or because of forced standardisation, i.e. when standardisation is politically enforced against the will of those speaking the language.

Translation strategies is another module that has a component added in model 3. The module is now divided into *Translation strategies I* and *Translation strategies II*. While the former deals with the content of the existing *Translation strategies* module (see Chapter 3, par. 3.2.2), the latter introduces strategies used to obtain textual equivalence and pragmatic equivalence at a very basic level. Especially since ALTFC candidates tend to get bogged down at word level they should be more exposed to how texts work and what makes a text a text.

Largely based on Baker (1992: 111-254), ALTFC candidates can first be familiarised with the concept of text. House's (1977: 29) definition of text as "any stretch of language in which the individual components all relate to one another and form a cohesive whole (...) A text is thus a linkage of sentences into a larger unit" can, for example, be compared to Brown and Yule's pragmatic definition. According to Brown and Yule (Baker 1992: 111), a text is "the verbal record of a communicative event; it is an instance of language in use rather than language as an abstract system of meaning and relations".

Both definitions suggest that a text is more than a random collection of sentences. Accordingly, a text would distinguish itself from a non-text by being cohesive (House's definition) and coherent (Brown and Yule's definition). A third feature of text should be added, namely the way the topic is developed and maintained throughout the text. The way an author processes information and organises messages is an important aspect of controlling the information flow. The same applies, of course, to the translated text.

There are two main approaches to analysing the flow of information. The one is based on Halliday's research and distinguishes between thematic and information structures and the other is based on the Prague school and known as *functional sentence perspective*. For the purposes of the ALTFC, candidates will be broadly familiarised with the thematic and information structures. Aspects of functional sentence perspective will be not dealt with since functional sentence perspective is highly theoretical and, unlike English, more suitable for languages with a relatively free word order.

The thematic structure suggests that a clause can be divided into two segments, i.e. the theme and rheme

(Baker 1992: 121-122). The theme indicates the speaker/writer's point of departure and signals the topic of the message or, put differently, what the clause is about. It is normally the first segment of a clause. The rheme, in turn, indicates what is said about the theme and is the objective of discourse. For example, as a means of organising and developing discourse, an author may repeatedly use the rheme of a sentence as the theme of the following sentence or use the same theme with different rhemes to supply more information on the subject. The reason why a passage reads disjointedly often has less to do with grammatical incorrectness but more often with thematic inconsistency because themes may not be linked properly or there may be no obvious connection between a rheme and the following theme.

While the theme/rheme distinction is speaker-oriented since it concentrates on the speaker's point of departure, the information structure is hearer-oriented because it is based on what is known and new to the hearer. According to the information structure, the segment that is given will come before the segment that is new. This order seems to make it easier to comprehend and remember a text. Moreover, the distinction shows that what is given and what is new will depend on the hearer's knowledge in the communication process. Another interesting aspect in this respect is for how long a piece of information can be considered as given, i.e. for how long a hearer can be expected to remember certain information, before it has to be reintroduced as new.

It is believed that the broad outlines above will suffice to sensitise ALTFC candidates to the fact that in order to produce a text the flow of the information must be logic. In order to analyse how the information is presented in a certain text, or why a text does not read smoothly for that matter, the thematic and information structure can be used.

At this point it will also be mentioned that the way information is presented differs across languages and that the thematic organisation of the ST cannot always be maintained in the TT because of syntactic and semantic considerations. However, the important thing is that the target text has a thematic organisation of its own, reads naturally and does not distort the information structure of the ST (Baker 1992: 172).

Having dealt with the thematic and information structure as one way of organising text, *cohesion* as another feature that distinguishes text from non-text will be introduced to ALTFC candidates. According to Baker (1992: 180), cohesion refers to "the network of lexical, grammatical, and other relations which provide links between various parts of a text". It is a surface relation since it links actual words and phrases. Based on the work of Halliday and Hasan, Baker (1992: 180-212) lists *reference*, *substitution*, *ellipsis*, *conjunction* and *lexical cohesion* as the main text-structuring devices in English.

Reference as a cohesive device occurs "when the reader has to retrieve the identity of what is being talked about by referring to another expression in the immediate context" (Baker 1992: 181). It seems that pronouns are the most common reference items in most languages (e.g. *language practitioner* and

she). In addition to pronouns, reference can also include repetition, synonyms, superordinates and more general words (e.g. the boy, the lad, the child, the idiot). Reference can also be used to point back (anaphora: the above-mentioned, the foregoing) or forward (cataphora: *thus*, *as follows*).

In contrast to reference, which is of a semantic nature, *substitution* and *ellipses* are purely grammatical relationships. Both are devices to avoid repetition. In substitution, one item is replaced by another (usually shorter one), whereas ellipsis means that an item is left out completely but still understood as if it were there. The following are examples of substitution and ellipsis, respectively:

> John drives a scooter. So *does* Jim.
> Have you been reading?   Yes, I have. (*been reading* is ellipted)

Another important cohesive device is *conjunction*, which "involves the use of formal markers to relate sentences clauses and paragraphs to each other" and "signals the way the writer wants the reader to relate what is about to be said to what has been said before" (Baker 1992: 190). Conjunctions reflect the rhetoric of a text and are instrumental to its interpretation. A translator can alter the line of argumentation or even the content by adapting conjunctions in translation. Baker (1992: 191) distinguishes the following five conjunctions:

(1) additive:	and, or, in addition, furthermore, besides, similarly, likewise, by contrast, for instance;
(2) adversative:	but, yet, however, instead, on the other hand, nevertheless, at any rate, as a matter of fact;
(3) causal:	so, consequently, it follows, for, because, under the circumstances, for this reason;
(4) temporal:	then, next, after that, on another occasion, in conclusion, an hour later, finally, at last;
(5) continuatives:	now, of course, well, anyway, surely, after all.

Although candidates probably will not remember the type of conjunctions, they might remember some of the examples given under the various types. Exposure to such a list of conjunctions seems important in the light that ALTFC candidates tend to be notoriously limited to *and* or *but*.

The last cohesive device to be dealt with is lexical cohesion. It "covers any instance in which the use of a lexical item recalls the sense of an earlier one" (Baker 1992: 203). Like *reference* it can include repetition, synonyms, superordinates and more general words. However, unlike in *reference repetition* in lexical cohesion does not have to refer to the same identity (e.g. The *boy* is going to fall from the tree. *Boys* can be so silly.). Lexical cohesion thus tends to work more through lexical chains where the occurrence of one word reminds the reader of others (e.g. socialism, communist, Iron Curtain, East, West, etc.). Despite the lexical and grammatical problems translators may encounter, they must always

make sure that their TT is lexically cohesive. If lexical items do not combine into lexical chains the text will be disjointed and not make sense.

Having familiarised ALTFC candidates with the above cohesive devices, it must be pointed out that even despite the presence of cohesive markers in a text, the text may still not be coherent and communication will break down. While cohesion is a linguistic device since it refers to the surface relations that link phrases and expressions into a text coherence is a notion pertaining to the field of pragmatics, which is the study of language in use as candidates will already know from Chapter 3 (par. 3.2.1.2). Coherence goes deeper than the surface relations and refers to "the network of conceptual relations which underlie the surface text" (Baker 1992: 218). It can be considered as the readers' own input, i.e. as their ability to interpret underlying semantic relations, and thus depends on the readers' knowledge and experience of the world. Factors influencing the coherence of a text include race, age, sex, nationality, etc. At text can therefore be coherent for one reader but completely incoherent for another.

At this point, ALTFC candidates can be referred back to *The communication model and the translator* (Chapter 3, par. 3.2.1.1) where the role of the translator as a communicator was stressed who makes the reader understand the message. In order to make the reader understand, translators will have to assess how much they can expect their readers to know. However, Baker (1992: 252) warns translators against supplying too much information because that will leave readers without anything to do and thus bored.

It is not expected that the material presented in *Translation strategies II,* as discussed above, will have an immediate effect and induce ALTFC candidates to produce perfect texts. It is rather intended to make ALTFC candidates aware that there are certain dynamics to a text and that the text dynamics can be influenced positively or negatively by using or neglecting certain strategies. This particularly applies to translation where a cohesive and coherent TT must be produced that presents the message of the ST as undistorted as possible. Moreover, ALTFC candidates will learn that good texts do not happen automatically. There are tools to be used and strategies to be followed that will with some practice produce the desired result, which is, in this case, a good text.

Having dealt with the content of *Translation strategies II* in some detail, some other changes still have to be mentioned with regard to model 3. In spite of reinstating the *Translation aids* module, *Compiling word lists* was left with *Workshops II* because it was felt that the texts used during the workshops could at the same time be used for terminological exercises (see 4.3.2 above). This seems more practical, especially in view of the shortage of suitable texts. Moreover, the number of workshops is almost doubled compared with model 1. This is important since during the workshops all the practical work is done and the theory applied. Moreover, it is in line with the demand for more practical exercises.

Despite the additional components and time added to the various modules, model 3 is still largely based on the current ALTFC. Although not as yet feasible, a model centred around comparative reading exercises would probably look differently since it would approach translation from a different angle. This option will be explored in the next section.

4.4.4 Model 4: A contrastive approach to African language translation facilitation

UNIT	CONTENT		PERIOD
Introduction to translation	– S S S S	Language Policy of the DOD The communication model and the translator Some thoughts on translation (quotes) Text types and translation methods *Skopos* theory and text analysis	10
Text 1	S S S S S S S	Targeting the text Specifying the text-type (interlingual) Specifying the text-type (contrastive) Acquiring subject expertise Translating the text Oral discussion of the TT Feedback on the TT	15
Text 2	S S S S S S S	Targeting the text Specifying the text type (interlingual) Specifying the text type (contrastive) Acquiring subject expertise Translating the text Oral discussion of the TT Feedback on the TT	15
Text 3	S S S S S S S	Targeting the text Specifying the text type (interlingual) Specifying the text type (contrastive) Acquiring subject expertise Translating the text Oral discussion of the TT Feedback on the TT	15

Loosely based on the skills-led approach by Critchley et al. (1996; see Chapter 2, par. 2.3.3), a model for the contrastive approach to African language translation facilitation could look like the above. Since this approach to translation is a more holistic one it is difficult to facilitate the above processes in separate modules since the various steps are interdependent and practised as one progresses with the text(s). It was therefore decided to divide the course according to texts. However, the *Introduction to translation module* was retained in its current form because its various components put translation into

perspective. Moreover, Nord's model of translation-oriented text analysis is relevant when targeting the text, i.e. when the translator identifies the intended use of the TT and its prospective users, as well as their background and expectations, on the one hand and decides what type of knowledge will be necessary to perform the task, on the other hand. The latter will be addressed in *Acquiring subject expertise*.

In the next step, candidates will be issued with a text that is to be translated as well as two or three other texts in the SL on the same topic. Candidates will then be asked to read the texts and find similarities that identify the texts as being of the same text type. This can be done in groups or by the class as a whole with some guidance from the facilitator. Once the text-type specific characteristics of the SL texts have been identified, the exercise will be repeated with TT texts of the same text type and topic as the SL texts. The two sets of text-type specific characteristics will then be compared and the candidates will see where changes have to be effected to fulfil the text-type-specific requirements of the TL, for example with regard to syntax, modality, information structure, terminology, etc.

When comparing the texts, candidates can also be asked to pay special attention to the technical terminology of the texts and compile terminology lists. This exercise need not be limited to the terminology occurring in the respective texts but could be extended to a more comprehensive study of the field. Research in this respect would then also include dictionaries, encyclopaedias, journals, experts, etc. Bearing in mind the profile of ALTFC candidates (see par. 4.2.2. above), most components of the current *Translation aids* module could be used in *Acquiring subject expertise*, including the popular outings to the libraries.

In this module, translation is still included as a separate step because due to the inexperience of ALTFC candidates with regard to translation it cannot be expected that translation will automatically fall into place. Once the above exercises have been completed, candidates will be asked to translate the ST in terms of the translation brief. After all the preparatory steps, this should be far easier for candidates than in the other models since they have been immersed in the subject and the text type for some time. This should be reflected in the quality of the text produced, i.e. the TT. Like in the other models, the translations will then be discussed in class, with individual feedback being provided as discussed above (see par. 4.3.1).

The first ALTFC held according to this model would, of course, be highly experimental since it is difficult to predict how candidates will adapt to this kind of exercises. Model 4 departs from the typical classroom situation and includes a lot of independent work either in class or in the form of homework. Moreover, the time needed for the various texts is very difficult to predict at this point since this may depend on the respective candidates, the text type and the topic. This model would also require an ALTFC facilitator in the respective African languages in class since candidates would need considerable

guidance in the beginning, especially with regard to analysing the African language texts and establishing text-type-specific characteristics.

However, despite the above problems model 4 promises the best results when compared with the other models discussed in this chapter because it specifically addresses the problems of language and textual competence. This view is not only supported by the findings of the scholars adhering to the skills-led approach to translation teaching (see Chapter 3, par. 2.3.3) but also by the personal experience of the ALTFC facilitators. Although the most difficult to implement, model 4 is the model most strongly recommended to replace the existing course model.

4.5   Conclusion

The detailed analysis of the data obtained by means of the *Survey for the revision of the ALTFC at D Lang* revealed that even though the ALTFC was very well received by ALTFC candidates there were four main problem areas. These four problem areas were quantified under feedback on practical work, the time factor, the candidates' English proficiency and teacher enthusiasm.

The discussion of the four problem areas resulted in possible solutions to overcome these problems on a short-, medium- and long-term basis. Short-term measures, for example, include introducing homework, discarding *Translation aids* but moving relevant components to other modules, adopting the English assessment test as a selection criterion for nominating ALTFC candidates or carrying out contextualised brainstorming exercises at the beginning of translation tasks.

In the medium-term, the possibility of involving the English teachers at D Lang's English section to alleviate the problem of the candidates English proficiency as well as teacher enthusiasm can be considered. Moreover, using the language practitioners for the African languages at the GSBs to assess the texts translated by the ALTFC candidates also falls into the medium-term category. In order to make a uniform evaluation of the translations possible and provide guidelines to language practitioners without any formal translation background, an evaluation systems was developed on the basis of the one used by Unisa.

The long-term solution with regard to the international trends in translator training, as well as the candidates' lack of English proficiency, would lie in the compilation of a comparative reading corpus for English and the African languages. Such an undertaking will greatly depend on the cooperation of all language practitioners in the DOD and involve numerous logistical challenges. However, it would not just benefit ALTFC candidates but all the language practitioners in the DOD who could consult such a corpus when encountering varied problems during a translation task.

On the basis of the findings in Chapter 2, the results of the questionnaires and the discussion of the four problem areas, four models were developed that retain the components that are in line with international developments in translator training but incorporate the solutions suggested to overcome the problem areas. While models 1 and 2 reflect the *quick-fix* solutions, model 3 would only be feasible in the medium- to long-term since it would be longer, thus adding logistic problems, and have two new components. In order to teach these new components, teaching material would first have to be researched and compiled. Model 4, in contrast, would mean a radical departure from the current ALTFC model and necessitate a new approach to translator training, with the emphasis being not just on TT production but text production in general.

From the current perspective, it seems most likely that models 1 or 2 will be introduced in the short-term since they do not include any additional logistical requirements and are not really dependent on any cooperation from outside D Lang. Obviously, models 3 and four are the more exciting options, with model 4 being the favourite, and will have to be further explored at fora such as the DOD language practitioners' work sessions and the D Lang management meetings.