

A CONVERSATION WITH MIKE BREEN¹

Interview carried out by Elizabeth Rodríguez²
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The Process Syllabus, (Breen 1989) as its name suggests, is a 'process plan' that tries to serve the joint creation and implementation of a syllabus by providing a framework for planning and action that should emerge from decisions jointly made by teachers and learners during the classroom learning experience. Due to its nature, it goes beyond a "propositional" syllabus like the ones known as *Functional* or *Task-based*. Therefore, the *Process Syllabus*, providing a plan and a bank of resources, and requiring regular reflective and formative evaluation, facilitates the learners' creation of their own syllabus in an on-going and adaptive way.



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within English language education. In addition to contributing to a number of edited collections, he has published in *Applied Linguistics*, *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* and several overseas journals. His current interests are the psychology of language learning, the process of interpretation, and the development of courses in English Language.

ELIZABETH RODRÍGUEZ: Mike, could you please, give the reasons why a teacher might consider adopting a *Process Syllabus*?

MICHAEL PETER BREEN: I think there are four main ones. The first one is that I am assuming the teacher is a teacher of language and therefore, language is the subject matter. One of its key characteristics is the negotiation of meaning and one of the objectives that most language teachers will have is to enable students to communicate and therefore, negotiate and create meaning with other people.

The question is: How, in the methodology in the classroom and how people work together in the classroom, can the negotiation of meaning and genuine communication be encouraged? One way I see this happening is that people communicate together, initially maybe in the mother tongue, but certainly as the work progresses more and more in the language being learnt, they negotiate about how the work should be done and who should do the work and so on and so forth. That is, they negotiate and communicate over the decisions that have to be made in order for the work to proceed in that classroom group. The

¹ Note from the director: Given the importance of *Process Syllabus* in Curriculum Development, it was decided to include the complete text of the interview. It is hoped that it will contribute to our enlightenment and understanding of process as a means to improve our teaching practices.

² This interview was carried out at the University of Lancaster in 1989.

kinds of decisions that identify a framework. That's one reason, negotiation of domain ; therefore, why not also define the means of achieving the work in the classroom ?. Secondly, what happens to a normal syllabus ... an external syllabus? Either one that is presented to teachers by the institution or a syllabus hidden within a textbook. No class follows the syllabus. And no class does everything the syllabus asks it to do. Why? Because the teacher reinterprets the syllabus for her or his group of learners and the learners in turn reinterpret the syllabus against their own personal agendas, their own personal syllabuses. So a second reason would be that people working from any syllabus, a content syllabus, are going to reinterpret that syllabus in terms of their own learning preferences, their own learning stages and so on and so forth. So, all syllabuses are reinterpreted. Sometimes, privately, but sometimes, also, in a public discussion in the classroom. So, an external content syllabus,

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a syllabus about aims and a syllabus about content, is made redundant, it is reworded and turned into the working syllabus of the classroom group and this is often done by accident, often in an unconscious and unpredictable way. I feel there is a need for the classroom group to be explicit and to go through the process of designing in public, their syllabus rather than struggling through an externally imposed syllabus that they are going to change in any case. Then, The Process

Syllabus is, therefore, one means for enabling teachers and learners together, to negotiate and construct together as they go along, their external syllabus or to use an external syllabus as a starting point to negotiate themselves through that syllabus. So, that's the second reason: learners and teachers reinterpret any syllabus and the PS ³ is a way for them to do that in a more public and confident way. The third reason is the sort of problems teachers face in the classroom. I have worked with lots of teachers over the years, and one of the major issues that they see as a professional concern is

the management of the classroom group, and the kinds of problems they have when looking after classroom groups. And so, I see the PS as one solution to a whole range of classroom management problems the teachers typically have in their lives. And in essence, what the PS does is to say: *'Look, classroom management is not just my responsibility as a teacher, it is our responsibility as a classroom group, and we*

have equal responsibilities to make sure things work well' ⁴. So, a PS is a way of sharing classroom management with the learners, for whom the classroom exists after all. So, decisions about who should do what? What should be done? and so on and so forth, instead of becoming just the teacher's problem, becomes the whole group's problem. That's the third reason: managing the classroom and the kind of problems the teacher has. My questions are: Why should the

³ My Abreviation

⁴ My italics and quotaions to refer to possible interactions between the interviewee and language teachers and learners.

teacher be the only person who has an opinion on this problem? Why should the teacher be the only person who tries to solve it? I think it's humanly impossible that teachers on their own can do this. So, why not share it? And the fourth and final justification, I think, for the PS, is the whole notion of learner responsibility. One of the major things that teachers keep saying to me is: '*We have unmotivated learners*' or '*Our learners don't participate as much as we'd like them to*' or '*Our learners are rather immature and haven't approached their learning of the language*' '*They don't take responsibility*'. So, you need a means whereby sharing responsibility becomes more public so that learners will take on more overt responsibilities for themselves and, very important this, for the group of people around them. They are not only responsible in their classroom for their own learning but, also, for seeing themselves as responsible for the success of the learning of the other people in the classroom group. So, the fourth reason would be to encourage and to mobilize learners' responsibility.

E. R.: Mike, I remember during a forum that you said the PS was not exactly a syllabus, that it was not even an approach. How, in essence, would you define it?

M.P.B.: In essence, it's a framework for decision-making in the classroom. So, in a way, it's a kind of plan for methodology. I use the word Syllabus because syllabuses are something that people have a lot of interest in and people understand a syllabus to mean a plan for what has to be done in joint teaching and learning. So I adopted the word Process Syllabus because a PS is a plan for what has to

be done in teaching and learning but not in terms of content, not in terms of what has to be achieved, in terms of the language or whatever, not in terms of what subject matter we should work on but in terms of procedure, ways of working: Who will do what? When and on what? Why should they do it? Those kinds of decisions are made covertly by the teacher quite often in a lesson plan or as they go along in a lesson. So, **Syllabus** is a useful word because it comes with the notion of a plan for what is to be done in joint teaching and learning. But the PS focuses much more on action and on decision-making. So, in a way, I suppose a more accurate description would be a kind of '**Decision-making Framework**'⁵. But, within a PS, of course, we will have sets of activities and sets of tasks, a bank of activities and tasks which will be partly pre-planned; there may be sets of textbooks that people would use as one resource, the usual sorts of materials would be in that classroom; not just one set but several sets, there would be dictionaries and grammars and tapes and that sort of thing. But, I think the important thing is that these activities and tasks should be selected and chosen, as things progress, by learners, either in small groups or learners in the whole class sometimes, or learners individually at other times. That is, the activities and tasks and the materials that are there, the decision as to **Who should use them . When they should use them. How long they should spend working on them. What they seek to get out of it**⁶. That's what the PS is about. So, it's a plan for decision-making. It's a framework in which teachers and learners can jointly negotiate and decide on what they are doing and what they are achieving or what sort of difficulties they have, as the diagram suggests⁷.

⁵ My emphasis.

⁶ My emphasis.

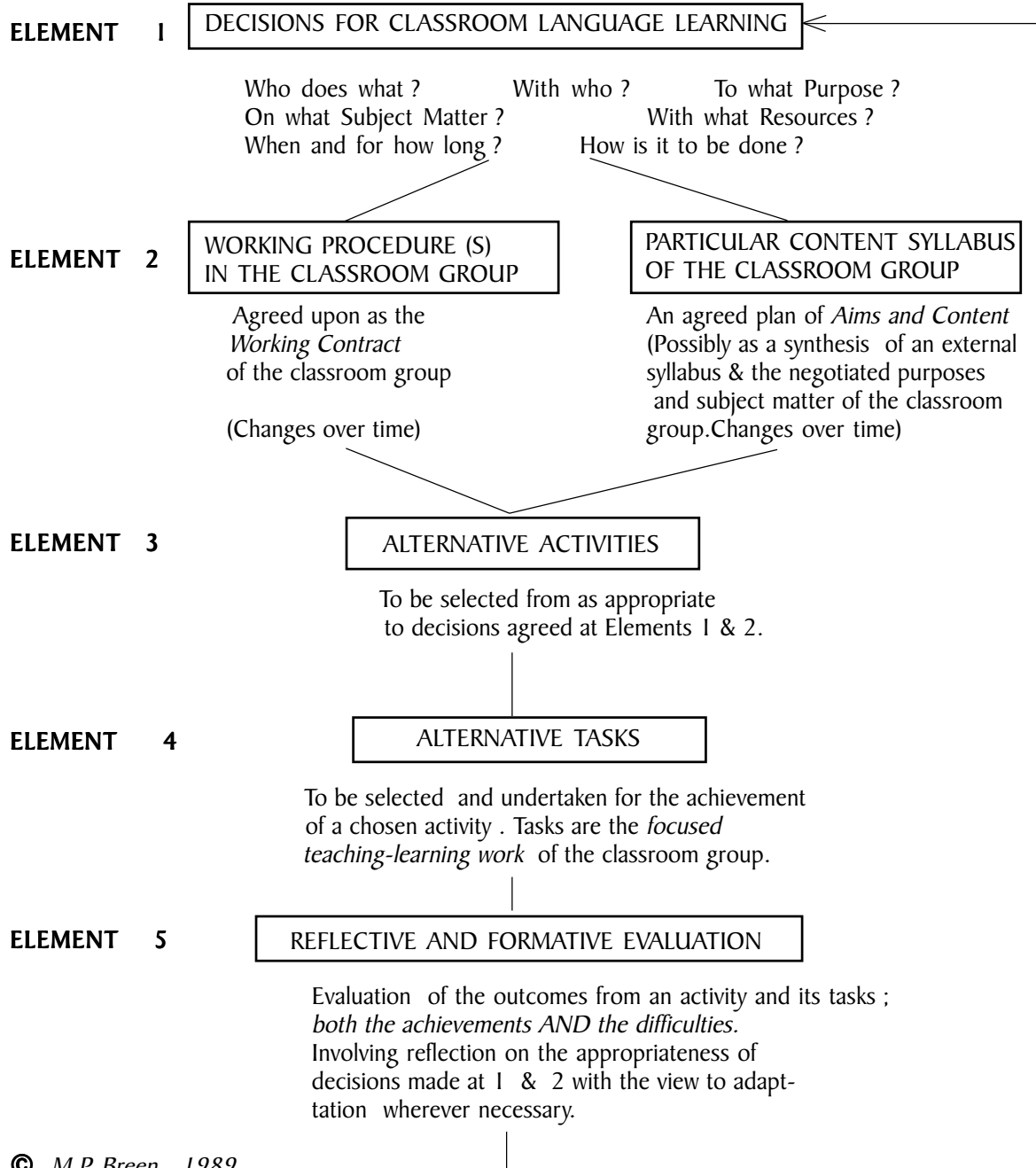
⁷ See diagram: "The Element of a Process Syllabus"

THE ELEMENTS OF A PROCESS SYLLABUS

Key Characteristics
 A framework for *planning and action* during classroom language learning.
 A Process Syllabus emerges from decisions jointly made by teacher and learners.

Involves the on-going compilation of a bank of activities and (entailed) tasks to be selected from on the basis of decisions made.

Each element relates to the others ; element 1 shaping the actual nature of those below it. A Process Syllabus requires *regular reflective and formative evaluation*. This enables a crucial cycle of refinement from element 5 back to 1 and through to 5 again.



E. R.: Mike, considering that a process can be more important than a product, could you please explain how this framework evolved? What are its origins?

M.P.B.: For me, it began as a good idea when working with a group of teachers in Europe over quite a long period of time. When we first began Teacher Training we intended to train people very much through providing them with theory and evidence

from research and getting them to evaluate designed materials; what I would call the traditional ways of training teachers. And over a period of time, thanks primarily to their feedback and their feedback on their classrooms, we decided that the key thing worth trying was to bring the classroom much more into the training, to get the teachers to bring their experiences back from their classroom, to do research in their own classrooms and to report back to us in the teacher training workshops. From that process, which took about a good few years

working with different groups of teachers in a particular European country, from that process, we felt that (and they did too!) a lot of their classroom management problems and a lot of the kinds of research they wanted to do needed some sort of framework within which they could work, within which they could do research, within which they could help their learners, advise them or help to sort out certain problems.

And so, what came out of that was: Why don't we have the kind of syllabus that enabled on-going reflection, research, investigation to occur and the on-going decision and giving of responsibility by learners to be brought to the surface in classroom life in some way. And so, came out the idea of the PS, that teachers might work from a PS primary, to get their learners more engaged in their learning but also to free the teacher to do more investigative work and to get closer to their learners.

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So, it came out of, I think, a long period of experience working with teachers who were always looking for answers to classroom management problems and for ways of getting action research in their classrooms going. So, that's where it came from. I think, in terms of philosophy or educational ideology, it clearly comes from the view of the learner as an active participant in shaping their own learning, and that teaching and learning is essentially a joint activity, a cooperative activity, especially if you are with a large group of people in a classroom and that the responsibility for oneself and

for the others' learning, both as a teacher and as a learner, is a very important element. All of this comes, I think, from humanistic approaches to education rather than behaviorist or classical approaches to learning and teaching.

E. R.: In the framework you propose, there is a total recognition for learners' rights, learners' autonomy. Who, in the end, makes the decisions?

M.P.B.: The classroom group makes decisions. The main decisions are made by the group. I don't believe in learner-centered curricula and I don't believe in autonomy. I mean, in the sense that I don't believe a learner who is in a classroom can be genuinely autonomous. It's a contradiction in terms. The learner is working with a group of people and that group of people includes the teacher. So, they are in a collective environment, they are in an environment where cooperation and mutual help is actually essential if anything is to happen at all. Normally, the relationship is between the teacher as an individual and the learners as a group. So, I suppose I would replace this idea by the notion of **collective responsibility**⁸. But, respecting the individual within that, so, just as the learner can work with the group in a cooperative way to contribute to their opinion on what decisions should be made, contribute the kind of problems, difficulties and achievements they are having, as feedback, to the group. So, the group, each member of the classroom, should come to realize that their own work will benefit if they also see themselves as a part responsible for the good running of the group, and that the teacher is an equal member of this. Clearly the teacher has, if you like, a guiding-coordinating responsibility and the teacher has greater wisdom in terms of the language and in terms of the experience of running a classroom. But, I see the teacher, put very simply, as a facilitator of this collective responsibility, of this cooperative endeavor. So, I'm not so sure about individual, I mean, I think, individual autonomy, fair enough; but, I think, the primary thing about the teacher is that I am working with groups of people and so, I am much more concerned with collective responsibility and cooperation. So, how can I get these things mobilized and then working for me. That's the key question, and without, of

course, allowing the group to dictate to the individual and similarly, without the individual dictating to the group, and that applies to the teacher just as much as anybody else. So, the basic answer to your question, "**Who makes the decisions**"?, I think, for me, it's very obvious that the decisions are made together by teachers and learners.

E. R.: **Can activities such as grammar activities, or those typical of notional, functional or task-based syllabuses, be contained or developed within a PS ?**

M.P.B.: Certainly. There is a big misunderstanding about this. People have interpreted the PS to be seen as a challenge to, or something quite opposite to other kinds of syllabuses—grammatical, functional, task-based or whatever. Those are syllabuses of content, they are the sorts of syllabuses that are about what should be achieved in terms of the target language, what we should work on, what aspects of the language and what types of skills we should focus on, and so on and so forth . A PS will contain within it activities and tasks which themselves will be, maybe, structural, they may be functional, they may be task-oriented or skill-oriented or whatever. There will be a range of very traditional sorts of things that learners might work on: grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation. There will be a range of communication activities and so on and so forth. In some sense, it doesn't really matter what aspects of the language are focused on and what skills are selected in terms of the actual tasks that people do. They can be structural or functional or communicative or whatever. What **does** matter is who chooses these, why they choose them and how long they work on them. That's what matters and it's those sorts of decisions that are usually made

⁸ My emphasis

quite outside the classroom or by textbook writers and they are not actually considered and they are not actually worked on. So, what I am interested in is providing a framework where an individual learner in the classroom can work on either grammar or vocabulary or functions or a role play or a reading text or a communicative activity or a massive project with other people, with other learners, sometimes with the teacher in small groups or on their own. But, having chosen to do that, mainly on the basis of: (i) what that learner feels is most urgent to him/her in terms of the immediate learning needs on the way to achieving long term needs and (ii) what kinds of problems that learner has had, in working just before ; what sort of problems has the learner had in working with a text or in some kind of oral activity ? But that learner's identified or other people in the group will help that learner to be identified. So, the kinds of content that people work on will depend on learner need, as I made clear, through negotiation of what the learner himself or herself identified the need as being the teacher advising on the basis of learner problems. So, the choice of what other kind of content syllabus, if you can choose on the way, is not a problem for me at all. It's not a problem for me if, in fact, the teacher is working within a syllabus that is being externally imposed and the teacher has to complete that syllabus, say, the teacher has to complete the syllabus designed by the Ministry of Education or somebody and that syllabus is very structural or it is very functional or whatever. That doesn't seem to me a problem either because, obviously, one of the first things you do with that syllabus is to negotiate it ; that is, you present it to the learners and say, *'Right, these are the things we have to achieve. What order should we take them in? What do we already know ? What would be the best way of achieving this?'* and so on and so forth. In

fact, an external syllabus document would be a very good starting point for the process of negotiation. So, in essence, it is not process or structure, or function. The Process is a framework within which the choice of whatever other syllabus, appropriate to learner need and learner problem, is actually made. So, I don't see that there is any necessary conflict here. I have personal views about what the more useful or more helpful or more interesting content syllabus is but that, I think, is quite independent to the notion of the PS. It does not replace this. It provides a frame in which the best of this can be chosen by learners and teachers together.



E. R. If we understand teaching as a researching activity, it leads to the assumption that teachers should be learners, that teachers research as they teach and learn. Is it, then, possible that the PS, defined as a framework for planning and action—as shown in your diagram—could be applicable not only to language learning but also to teacher development ?

M.P.B.: Yes, absolutely. I think you're being idealistic if you think that teachers see themselves as researchers, they may well see themselves as learners. I think you'd have to argue, to convince teachers, that they should be doing research or be researched, because people have different views of what they mean by research. If you mean by research that teachers diagnose learner problems, get feedback from learners in terms of the learners' strategies, explore with their learners their conceptualization of learning, identify decision-making problems in their classroom, alternative ways of working, involvement in finding out which materials (with their learners) are best to work on, what sort of materials are most useful, evaluating progress; all these sorts of things which teachers do in a class in an indirect way quite often. If you say that's research, it seems to me that it is almost synonymous with teaching, because, in essence, what I am doing is finding out, investigating as I work and exploring as I seek the best ways of helping learners to learn. If that's research, I'm sure I agree with you. But, if on the other hand, you think that teachers should do action research with learners in their classroom in order to develop personally, I am not sure, I don't know. I mean, I know teachers who **do** do action research as part of their application of the process ; the sort of work that we've been talking about. But, if you are asking me, could a teacher training course be based on a framework of shared decision-making? I mean a PS, then, of course, I see no reason why no. In fact, I see lots of good reasons why it should be.

Change happens through actions of what I do as well as what I think

E. R.: What reasons might you give for adopting a PS framework for teacher training?

M.P.B.: The basic reason is, instead of saying to people, *'Don't do as I do, do as I say'*. You are saying to people implicitly by adopting a PS with them, *'Look, this is how I work with you. Might it be possible for you to consider working like this with your learners? I am working with you in a way that engages your responsibility, that asks you to participate in the cooperative work of the group. I am asking you to take responsibility on your learning and for the learning of others in this group and I'm asking you to engage in shared decision-making to select activities, to share your problems'* and so on and so forth. I have worked with teachers like that. It is just a chance. They would also say, *'Yes, this is the way I can engage learners' responsibility and this is the way I can begin to implement shared decision- making in my classroom'*.

In fact, there's far more of a chance of that happening rather than if I stand up and give lectures about the PS to a group of teachers and tell them about it. If I actually work in this way myself as a teacher trainer, then, it ceases

to be an ideal thing and becomes a possible thing, and by example, I am enabling them to see an alternative way of working; by example, not just because I am telling them but because this is the way I work with these people. So, that for me is the major reason I would have for adopting a PS for Teacher Training, and for the very same reasons, you know, the rationale for Teacher

Training would be just the same: the notion of cooperative work, responsibility, problems in me as a trainer, my own classroom management and sharing them with you. Obviously, one of the themes of Teacher Training may not be the language, so I am not so much concerned with helping develop people's negotiation of

meaning or being better communicators, but I might be, I might be. It may well be that teacher training or workshops that I've run are also seen, by the teachers, as an ideal opportunity to work in the target that they are supposed to be teaching with fellow teachers and it may be one of the very rare opportunities they have. So, it may well be. If I run a workshop in English, I am helping the teachers to become more refined communicators and helping them to negotiate their meanings about classroom life and so on and so forth. It is also a good reason for adopting a PS because they have to talk about their experience and they have to negotiate what the best ways of solving their problems are. So, I think there are very good reasons for adopting a PS for teacher training, specially when you compare with how most teacher training is carried out in most parts of the world, basically, where you have situations in which the experts very rarely work inside an actual classroom. The experts tell the professionals what they should be doing without actually knowing what those professionals are doing in their classrooms and they assume that if they pass their expertise on, somehow things will be changed. Changes very rarely happen that way. Changes only happen when the individuals relate possible, meaningful alternatives to their own life experiences. So, change happens through actions of what I do as well as what I think. And therefore, a PS which enables active-taking responsibility and sharing decisions, doing things together, of a central nature, I think, is going to be more beneficial for people in terms of their professional development than merely listening to what experts think.

E. R.: So, based on what you have just explained, can I say that teacher training leading to teacher development, could be seen as a problem-solving situation or activity requiring shared decision-making?

M.P.B.: Yes, of course. Most teachers, specially experienced teachers, if you have a workshop with experienced teachers and you ask them to decide the content - any time I've done this and I've done it quite a lot of times they define the content in terms of their problems in the classroom. So, that's a very good place to start because their problems in the classroom are the things they sort of worry about. But those problems may be the tip of an iceberg. There may be lots of things under the surface that those problems express, but if you start with the teachers' problems in their classroom management then share these in a trusting way, that should be the content of your work. From that you are going to say: '*O.K. I may be running a workshop but I don't know, I have similar kinds of problems myself*'. So, how can we, then, decide how we should work on things and who should work on them because you are not going to have the same problems. What sort of things we can do both in the classroom and in the workshop? So, already you are locked into the PS. So, yes, I think it can be problem solving; the content should be solving problems.

E. R.: And when does evaluation take place?

M.P.B.: All the time. Evaluation is a very, very important element. By evaluation I don't mean testing progress. By evaluation I mean, at a certain point, if I was working on a workshop, say, a two-day teacher training workshop, at the end of each day at least. But if I was working over a long period of time, at the end of a class, at the end of a large activity, three lessons, at the end of the week or at the end of a period of work, but certainly very regularly. The evaluation would take two forms, or would answer three questions really: '*What have we achieved? What have we done?. Have we progressed? What have we gained so far?. What*

have we learned ? and actually sharing those things and taking a good long time sharing them because we tend to emphasize the negative things; and equally spending a good long time looking at, *'What are the problems? What are the difficulties? What still needs to be done? What are we achieving? What are we getting? What should be on our agenda? What should we focus on from now?'* So, that is the second question. The third question would be: *'How can we improve the way we are working? Are we satisfied with the way we are working? Are there more efficient ways of doing things?'* So, there'd be achievements, problems and ways of working and that...as much time has to be spent on that, I think, as spent on planning and deciding, *'What are we going to do?'* It must be regular and it must be, again, a shared activity. It's quite often the sort of thing the teacher does when s/he goes home and mark assignments and worries about this and then think O.K. what, ah, The teacher very often is taking those decisions on herself or himself and that seems to be, again, an unnecessary burden. So, yes, evaluation is absolutely central, because the evaluation stage shapes the whole of the rest of the PS. Evaluation is the way in which you construct your own group's PS together.

aspects are still unachieved ?' So, yes, it's both formative and summative, but fundamentally formative, formative in the sense of planning ahead, improving the way we are working together.

E. R.: Mike, why don't we speak on a delicate issue ? Does the PS, as a framework either for language learning or teacher development, have limitations?

M.P.B.: Well, a framework is always a limited thing. A framework is, in some sense, a piece of paper, with sort of areas of decision-making identified on it. So, as it stands as a document or as a set of proposals for teacher and learner action, it is ideal. I don't believe there is one PS. I believe that if teachers adopt a PS framework, there will be as many PSES as there are teachers and classrooms that adopt them. *'Why would it be rejected?'* I think, is another way of looking at it. And I think, there are lots of answers to that. There are probably as many if not more answers, more reasons that people might offer to reject it than could be offered to support it. And, you know, I can think of several. A teacher reason might be, and this is just to have an example, a teacher main reason might

E. R.: In other words, a sort of summative-formative evaluation.

M.P.B.: Yes, if you say, by a certain point, *'We 'have done this and have done that and have done the other',* there is an element of summative evaluation. Because you are saying, *'What have we achieved? This is what we set out to do. Have we achieved it? Which aspects did we set out to achieve and did so, which*

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be , *'There is a fear here that I would loose a very strong element of control on what happens in my classroom, that I quite like to be the conductor of the orchestra or the main controller of activities and routes we take'.* And that's a genuine fear and it requires a confident teacher who's willing to take risks, because I think the PS does involve the teacher in taking risks and having different kinds of responsibilities as a guide, as a facilitator, as a coordinator, as an evaluator and not just as a

transmitter of knowledge. So one teacher worry would be *'Can I take on the new responsibilities that the PS demands of me?'* And one of the risks is taking on these responsibilities.

'I'm giving up familiar control that I used to have in my lessons'. And I think, that's a genuine concern. I think, the answer I would give is, *'Well, what do you consider your main responsibility to be as a teacher?'* I would want to give that teacher back that question. The second objection might be from the learners. *'O.K.'* the learners might say, *'Look, you are asking me to make decisions that, I think, I see you as the teacher responsible for*

making'. And that's a tricky one. What that learner is essentially doing is giving up or surrendering his/her autonomy and responsibility actually as a learner for their own learning back to the teacher, being teacher-dependent. There may be very good reasons for this because, of course, learning a language is a rather threatening and a highly affective experience. But, I'm not just interested in what learners do in my classes. I am interested in how to help learners become good language learners and to carry on learning outside the class, and after they leave the class, and the only way that's going to come about is if the learner recognizes the extent to which s/he exercises their responsibilities in good learning experiences in the past and, thus, realize that they are, in fact, responsible for their own learning and when they've learnt something they have taken the major role. Secondly, to

give them space to take responsibility for their learning and the best way of doing that is to make far fewer decisions on their behalf myself. And thirdly, to get them to become more and more independent of me as a source of the language but to use me as one possible thing to rely on because the pressure that that puts on me, as a teacher, is almost inhuman and rather hard to bear because I cannot meet the particular needs of a group of learners. It's Humanly impossible, because these needs are so diverse. So the learners may say, *'You are getting paid to make decisions, please, make decisions'* My response to that would be, *'What are the things that really help you to*

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learn?' And if you think of good learning experiences in your past life, right through your past life, *'What was your role in those experiences?'* And *'How much did you have to depend on other people, including the teacher?'* And I think if learners can track that question, they'd realize that they are far more responsible for their own learning than they had assumed. Finally, I think external bodies such as heads of departments, ministries, institutions might want certain aims achieved and certain content covered and that's fair enough. I mean, teachers obviously have to, in some sense, achieve certain objectives and they may see the PS as something which has got nothing to do with this. It's threatening to the established syllabus, or threatening to the established aims. I don't see that. I think, that's a shiver, that's a false fear. But, they may see the PS,

the whole notion of sharing decisions with learners—the teacher sharing responsibility—as not the business of a language teacher; that the language teacher is there to achieve the objectives of the course and to get students through the next or to a certain level. And my answer to that one is, *'What do you see as the main of the professional teacher ?'* If you see it as the transmission of knowledge, fair enough. But, people may disagree that that's the main function of the teacher. I think I'd be very surprised if people would not accept the view that one of the main functions of a professional teacher is to facilitate successful learning in the learning groups, and if they are working in the classroom, to facilitate that classroom process, and that's exactly why I feel there is a need for a PS, to not put all the weight on the

teacher's shoulders to make sure things work well, but also to help things be more efficient and successful. But, sharing that load. Because if you share it, it's likely that you'll actually have more efficiency because you'll be meeting a wider range of people's needs and expectations and preferred ways of working and the need to be committed. I am not denying that there may be conflicts and that there may be different priorities, but therein lies negotiation, there you get the opportunities to transform problems together.

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E. R.: Thank you Mike. Your research and contributions to language education will be an invaluable help for all of us.

M.P.B.: I hope so. Thank you.