

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIVE SERVICES /
ADULT MIGRANT EDUCATION SERVICE



INTERIM REPORT

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1. INTRODUCTION

If this project has a broad aim it is to ensure ultimately that each individual gaol education facility is able to meet the needs of as wide a range of migrant learners (of English) as possible.

It is impossible to predict with any real accuracy the type of migrant learner the system will have to deal with. Statistical breakdown by country of birth of the migrant inmate population gives only marginally useful information as to which ethnic groups are at all likely to be residing in gaol in the future.

The National Prison Census taken on the 30th June 1982 found that the nationality with the highest representation in the system (excluding those of Anglo-Saxon origin) was the New Zealanders with 4% of the male prison population at 144 persons and 14 females representing 10.2% of the female prison population. The census then gave 'other European' nationalities as the next highest percentage with 115 males (3.2%) and 5 females (3.7%) and followed on with 89 males of Middle Eastern background, 75 Yugoslavians, 57 Italians, 34 Asians, 15 Greeks, 12 Africans, 11 from Oceania, 10 of unknown origin, 5 from Vietnam and 3 from Papua New Guinea.

Stephanie Claire's initial study focussed on 33 inmates from a variety of institutions and found the largest first language group to be Arabic followed by Yugoslav, Thai and Turkish. My own observations have generally confirmed these findings, particularly with respect to the prevalence of Arabic and Turkish natives. Part of the significance of the country of birth statistics, especially when related to type of crime, is that it does indicate that for some Southern Europeans a disproportionate number have been charged with serious offences (murder, attempted murder, manslaughter and drug offences) and are thus likely to be residing in the prison system for quite some time.

A number of studies of migrants of non-English speaking background (known in the literature as non-Anglos) have been carried out by staff from the Research Branch, DCS. Those studies were specifically concerned with the following:

- (a) the high incidence of non-Anglos on remand, serving life sentences and being held at Governor's Pleasure.
- (b) the possible relationship between specific ethnic groups and certain types of crime.
- (c) the likelihood that language and cultural difficulties may delay release.

- (d) migrant offenders' use of interpreters during court proceedings - degree of satisfaction with interpreter services.
- (e) migrants' knowledge of the Australian legal system..⁽¹⁾

From the 1983 study:

'Significantly over half of the non-English speaking background migrants in N.S.W. were born in one of the three countries: Yugoslavia (23%) Lebanon (19%) or Italy (15%).

People born in Lebanon and Yugoslavia particularly seem to be over-represented in the N.S.W. prison system. Furthermore, almost half of the non-English speaking background inmates had been charged with murder, attempted murder or manslaughter (26%) or drug-related offences (17%).'

Very little information is otherwise available on the life of migrants within the prison system. There are studies of migrant crime patterns in Australia ⁽²⁾ but very little which addresses itself to the particular situation of this sub-group of the inmate population.

In the near future the Aboriginal and Ethnic Affairs Co-ordinator for DCS will be undertaking a project aimed at collection a variety of information on the lives of migrants within the system. This information is important to the development of a migrant profile that goes beyond mere data-gathering on country of birth and the like. While this project is currently only concerned with the provision of an ESL education service I have found it necessary to seek as much information as I could on those people who will be the clients of that service.

During informal discussions with prison psychologists I have been enlightened as to some of the things that can happen to non-English speaking inmates, or those with minimal English ability.

In every prison there is, or there soon develops, a natural 'pecking order' of seniority and authority among inmates. The new inmate has to 'suss out' who is at the top and who is at the bottom. There are codes of behaviour, inmate ethics and rules to be adhered to, areas of influence to be respected, and serious and swift retribution for the unwary transgressor. Very often an inmate at the bottom of the pecking order will befriend the new migrant inmate and (ostensibly) look after him, helping him in any way he can. This assistance might be somewhat genuine in part but its prime function is to create obligation from the migrant inmate who now owes his benefactor a few favours in return.

1. DCS Research Bulletins, Nos: 2, 5 and 7.
2. Francis, G., Migrant Crime in Australia.

The 'benefactor' then has someone who looks up to him, he is no longer on the bottom of the heap.

Individuals vary greatly in their ability to comprehend the internal order of the prison, considering also that much of that order is traditional and unspoken. Non-verbal communication, subtle gestures and signs speak far more significantly than words. It is believed that, in many cases, the non-English speaking inmate will 'go it alone' and refuse offers of assistance, seeing such offers for what they really are.

One inmate (a young Philipino who has served five years of a life sentence) has confirmed much of this during our occasional conversations. He has few trusted friends in prison and is constantly wary of people who want to do him any favours.

There will always be inmates whose cultural predispositions will make it difficult for them to adjust to the learning situation in this country, let alone in a prison. At Berrima a Croatian inmate found it 'degrading' to have to learn from a teacher;⁽³⁾ he was provided with a course of private study utilising one of the television language programmes (Channel 0-28, 'FOLLOW ME'). Similarly, cultural/religious problems have arisen with Islamic inmates and female teachers.

The more a teacher can be aware of the major cultural differences between an inmate's culture and his/her own, the smoother will be the development of the teacher/learner relationship. In the absence of detailed cultural information I believe many teachers tend to develop a greater awareness of the migrant inmate's psychological needs.

Much of the shared information on migrants in prisons is anecdotal and quite varied but there is almost unequivocal agreement amongst teachers and some Education Officers that the isolated migrant inmate will often come to the teacher for far more than English language instruction. I believe many teachers instinctively respond to this situation and the comments of two groups of migrants regarding their former teachers would tend to bear this out. (Migrant inmates interviewed at Bathurst and Cessnock.)

3. This situation was probably caused more by individual personality than by cultural predisposition.

Alternatively where the teacher simply does not have the time to devote to a particular migrant inmate, that inmate might simply not bother to come to class anymore:

One Turkish-born inmate commented:

"I never went much, 'e was alwez too busy, y'know, all de blokes dere was different, de teacher was wid one for a while den anudder an dey was all doin different tings, so I just started talking to de blokes in de yard."

This inmate wanted far more of the teacher's time than the teacher was able to spare him. On the other hand it is clear that this chap was unusually talented in his ability to 'pick up' the language of the blokes in the yard, and that activity on its own may have contributed greatly to his adaptability to the system. A number of teachers and education officers have endorsed the viewpoint that the prison environment is a fertile place in which to learn English, although clearly it can depend largely on how much the individual is able to use inherent skills.

To the extent that the non-English speaking inmate can communicate with his peers in gaol at some functional level then the prison may present quite a good learning environment; however, many also believe that language gains (being motivated primarily by survival needs) will only reach a certain basic level - a survival level - if unassisted by instruction in the language.

At the Metropolitan Remand Prison I met one elderly inmate who was apparently quite satisfied with his command of the language, about twenty words of English, quite enough to get by.

The generally-held belief is that having learnt enough English to cope, to survive, to express day-to-day needs, to respond to the (predictable) utterances of custodial officers and peers, then language acquiring (rather than learning) will cease and the inmate's language will fossilize at that level.

2. The Prison as Learning Environment/Parklea Prison

The notion of the prison as learning environment has been a prominent part of the on-going development of the ESL resource base at Parklea Prison. The education staff (Bill Cullen, Senior E.O., Howard Cook, E.O. and Bob Beacham, part-time teacher) and I have discussed the feasibility of examining the daily life of the prison with a view to exploiting it as much as possible through related learning materials. This may involve the preparation of materials specifically designed for use in the prison, involving language content related to life in a maximum security goal. The question of such materials is quite complex, however, it is a matter that deserves thorough exploration.

Parklea is a maximum security industrial institution housing inmates with substantial sentences, e.g.; life and lesser terms (though not exclusively). In future it is expected that the average inmate will not be under 25 years of age. Naturally the teacher can expect to have his students for some time, as opposed to other institutions, particularly the afforestation camps, where turnover of inmates can be extremely high.

In the normal course of events the long-term inmate is unlikely to be released directly into the community from Parklea. In the nature of the system an inmate will attend a review committee and depending on a number of variables he may be re-classified to lower security classification and subsequently transferred to an appropriate goal of lower classification. This transferring procedure may continue until the inmate has reached a low enough classification to be allowed to leave the institution for day release for work or study. In the case of Parklea however, the goal is going to be home for some time and this would necessitate a range of educational materials able to sustain learning over a fairly lengthy period.

To reflect that long-term orientation it has been agreed that there should be a number of ESL programmes or courses available, primarily selected from those commercially available publications which constitute more-or-less complete courses of study. In addition there will be a wide range of additional material from a variety of sources which will allow the teacher to supplement those basic programmes. This will allow for the effective individualisation of each inmate's learning programme.

Parklea is an industrial prison housing a number of light and heavy industries. Sewing - garment assembly, Printing Shop, Sheet-metal fabrication, Welding, Fitting and Turning and Cabinet-Making/wood-machining. A large percentage of the ultimate inmate population of around 200 inmates will be involved in some industry or another until around 2.00 p.m. each day.

About fifty inmates will be involved in grounds and general maintenance and a small number will work in the prison laundry. Some inmates will work as cooks in the wings.

TAFE (Granville Tech.) has so far supplied instructors for welding courses and sheet-metalwork courses, fitting and turning courses will begin at a later date.

The Education Officer responsible for migrants (and others) in the education unit (Howard Cook) has had considerable experience teaching migrant workers in industrial language classes conducted by AMES Courses-in-Industry Programmes Section. Given that industry has such a high profile in the gaol it has been agreed that industrial language materials could form a useful part of the overall range of materials selected/developed for Parklea, on the assumption that it is reasonable to have educational materials which reflect some of the most important aspects of daily life in a maximum security institution.

This also is part of the notion of viewing each gaol as a separate and somewhat distinct unit, and examining it for what it offers its inmates. For the long-term prisoner who has to spend some time each day working, then the language of the work-place may be an additional factor to incorporate into his learning programme. It may also be of some help to an inmate when he leaves the gaol and this accords with the broad aim of helping inmates transfer skills learned in gaol to life outside. Again considering the likely length of stay for an inmate at Parklea it has been suggested that a basic sight vocabulary of industrial and general prison terminology might be worth exploring, time permitting.

There are also a number of administrative matters concerning inmate's daily lives which might lend themselves to being developed further as educational resources. Almost all inmates will encounter, sooner or later, a numbered blue form.

All requests must proceed on this form, e.g. getting items from the property office, requests to move from one wing to another, changing work location and matters to do with re-classification. Howard Cook and I are exploring ways in which such common everyday matters requiring language might be also incorporated into language-learning materials which have particular relevance to life in gaol.

Parklea is of priority concern at present due to it being very new and without a large range of teaching/learning materials. The education unit conducts classes in English language on three evenings per week and it is encouraging to note that of the five students currently attending (very regularly) four are non-English speaking background, one Malay, one Thai, one German and one Philipino. Instruction is proceeding on an individual basis with periods of group work when the class as a whole focusses on some common area.

It must be remembered also that unlike many other gaols there will be no full-time students at Parklea.

Being rather new the work areas at Parklea are a little bare and in response to this I have obtained a range of Industrial Safety Posters from the Safety Education Unit of the State Ind. Relations Dept. All posters available in foreign languages were obtained in multiple copies, i.e.; Spanish, Serbo-Croatian, Arabic and Greek.

Industrial handbooks displaying tools of trade will be adapted for individual study along lines already successfully exploited by AMES Industry teachers, Helen Joyce and Arnawaz Merchant. The Australian Government Publishing Service has produced a handbook on Accident Prevention in industry, an excellent resource for teaching purposes, in 9 languages. The work lends itself well to development for use on items like the language master, one of which has been ordered for Parklea. I have advised the E.O. of the need to ensure adequate listening resources for migrants and a heavy duty tape recorder has been ordered.

Along with existing AMES Trade and Technical English kits and the material destined for the gaols via the CLUMP project it should not be too long before Parklea has the capacity to deal with a wide variety of migrant learning needs, as well as the needs of its English-speaking clients.

In order to publicize more adequately the service provided by the Education unit the following notice has been forwarded to the Ethnic Affairs Commission for translation into several languages:

ENGLISH LANGUAGE FOR MIGRANTS

Do you want to improve your English?
The Education staff can assist you in your efforts to improve your English language skills in Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. From beginners to advanced levels. Speak to an Education Officer today.

3. Materials

A comprehensive social sight reading kit encouraging reading for meaning across a wide range of topic areas has been included in materials to be evaluated in a number of gaols. Developed by AMES (M. Rista) for use in AMES centres, this kit may require some re-organisation to make it more applicable to the prison situation. Placed at Cessnock, Bathurst and Maitland. Also from AMES are a set of kits on trade language designed for migrants who have some trade experience or qualifications but with low English proficiency levels. These kits have met with wide acceptance and seem to fill a specific need for 'kit' styles of material which are (a) comprehensive (b) designed specifically for adult migrants and (c) allow for sustained individual progress through the material. These kits also have an advantage in that they require very little familiarisation time by the teacher, a matter of some importance for casual teaching staff. The trade kits have been placed at Long Bay (for evaluation) and Parklea.

Areas covered: Automotive - Electrical Trades - Fitting and Machining - Carpentry and Joinery.

There is also a further kit comprising 10 modules on Practical Technical English. This kit is in use at Cessnock and will be evaluated at Parklea, Bathurst and Long Bay gaols.

CHAMES The AMEs now has a central clearing house on migrant education materials, based in Adelaide. In January/February the holdings of the clearing house were surveyed to identify those materials which may be of use within the prison system. The staff of the Individual Studies Centre (Caltex House) have made their facilities available to me in order to evaluate what might be of use in the gaols. Their stocks of language master cards will provide useful models for developing similar resources in the prisons.

The Language Laboratory also, at Caltex House, holds a variety of materials which could be successfully adapted for use in the prisons. Mr. Brett Morgan and I visited the Individual Studies Centre earlier this year for the purpose of exploring the development of similar centres in the prisons.

In particular I have been concerned to identify those materials which might cater to a wide range of proficiency levels. Materials which include a listening component have been given high priority.

English for Mathematics⁽⁴⁾ is one further kit which will be placed for trialling and evaluation, with ten listening tapes it covers a wide range of mathematical operations with a well-planned progression from very simple to quite complex maths. A popular story in two versions (Mario and The Wrong Radio) has met with wide acceptance amongst AMES teachers and will be placed in a number of gaols. As an adult reader it fulfills general requirements and adds topicality, romance and adventure. In addition it contains an extremely comprehensive set of notes for teaching staff, allowing the stories to be used in a wide variety of ways and for a range of levels.

Co-operation from the Resource Centre at Caltex House has been excellent considering the demands of preparing this material. Provided that orders are placed gradually the major desirable items available through AMES could be placed in the appropriate gaols by August 1984. The bulk of the cost to Corrective Services is that of between 800 - 850 mastering cassettes.

Of the materials listed in the ESL Materials list (S. Claire '82) a further 50 items (multiple copies) have been selected for inclusion in a book order compiled by Brett Morgan (Education Officer, Programmes Div.) Mr. Morgan and I have spent quite a considerable amount of time evaluating and selecting materials at a variety of locations: Bridge Bookshop, Ashton Scholastic and Dominic Educational Suppliers.

Some on-going concern with the appropriateness of material for the adult learner is often evident. The 1978 Report of the Royal Commission into N.S.W. Prisons did comment on the poor quality of remedial education in some gaols. The present standard of education has made those comments only of passing historical interest now.

There remains nonetheless some sensitivity that materials acquired for use in the prisons by adult inmates be materials specifically designed for adults. Appropriateness of materials for the adult migrant in prison is still a hazy area to define in absolute terms. The relationship between the material an AMES teacher may use in the community, and the material a DCS teacher may use in a gaol is a matter of continuing concern; and the more we know about how migrant learners cope with learning a second language in gaol, the easier it will be to specify materials with confidence. The constraints on both teaching and learning in gaol have been dealt with in previous reports and have formed a significant part of the general criteria for materials selection.

4. English Through Mathematics, Meryl Thompson, S.A.
Chames 83/072 AMES

In selecting material for migrant inmates an extremely wide range of material has been inspected and ordered. Much of that material has been from commercial suppliers and will form part of the CLUMP Project, Phase ONE of which is now in operation, the trialling cum evaluation phase in which material recently acquired is catalogued and distributed to all prisons. A certain amount of this material will form a resource centre to be housed in the Mackay Library.

Background material on a number of cultures is available from the Language Teaching Branch, Comm. Dept. of Education and Youth Affairs. In addition, material currently in preparation from AMES very thoroughly explores the cultural background of a number of Asian nationalities in considerably more depth than the previously mentioned material.

Cultural Background material should form part of the teacher reference material of each gaol. I have been concerned to focus on this due to the relatively large number of non-ESL trained teachers in the system and the relatively high turnover of teachers. A series of publications dealing with the likely areas of difficulty in learning English and focussing on a number of Asian nationalities will be acquired in due course, (Asian nationalities will be acquired in due course, (Asian Language Notes - A Guide for ESL Teachers).

The U.S. Information Service has also very kindly agreed to supply all gaols with copies of the publication FORUM, a leading quarterly journal for teachers of English as a Second Language. This publication is concerned solely with teaching techniques for ESL/EFL, eighteen gaols have so far received copies. All Senior Education Officers have been urged to have their gaol subscribe to the TESOL journal, subscription forms have been sent to all gaols along with a number of back issues supplied by the publisher, Language Teaching Branch, Comm. Dept. of Education and Youth Affairs.

The Language Teaching Branch is responsible for the production and distribution of a range of teaching materials, mostly designed for migrant children up to secondary levels. Bearing in mind our broad concerns regarding adult material it is nonetheless evident that some of the material from the L.T.B. is applicable in both form and content to late adolescent learners. Much of this material (the Transit series, Origins) is currently available and used in AMES centres. I am exploring the feasibility of having certain items supplied for trialling in the prisons.

All Senior Education Officers have been supplied with a kit specifying order numbers, costs and availability of a number of hardware items considered necessary, if not vital, in the provision of ESL opportunities, notably a range of tape recorders/players for individual and group use and items such as the language master.

Generally the aim has been to provide education staff with the broadest range of ESL teaching materials and professional support materials. The aim has also been to integrate more fully the prison teaching situation with the situation outside, to bring the prison ESL teacher into a more equal position with his/her 'external' colleagues. This in no way alters the fact that teaching in the prison environment is a specific professional area that deserves a particular focus of its own, of which more will be said at a later stage.

I have been asked by one teacher to provide information and advice on the use of first-language materials for inmates. This was in connection with a Croatian inmate with very low English levels. Teachers are often concerned at how little time is sometimes available to spend in individualised instruction, the kind of attention that is desperately needed by some non-English speaking inmates. This is not the case in all gaols, in some the education unit is open five days a week morning and afternoon, in others it may only be one day a week or a few evenings. The objective is to use what time is available as effectively as possible and first-language materials may help to achieve this somewhat.

(The use of first-language materials is currently under investigation by an AMES Project Team and their findings may be of some help in this matter.)

In the case of the Croatian student the teacher provided a range of activities to help him develop reading and writing skills and it evidently proved to be meeting his educational needs for some time as he was a regular attender and made some progress. Ultimately however, the isolation from any other speakers of his own language proved to be more than he could stand and he became uncontrollable.

We could say that gaols are unpleasant and boring if there is nothing to create curiosity and involvement. Intrinsic motivation is assumed to be weak - except for getting out. Whatever motivation for learning has been built up will quickly dissipate unless the experience of learning is itself satisfying, so learning had better be an enjoyable thing to do. Even adults like to enjoy what they're doing and even adults need individual attention, or they won't bother to come along.

The tragedy of the inmate in question was one of isolation, nil communication with his peers. The teacher could only do so much and still feels deeply about this particular case. Material in his native language might have provided some of the stimulus to keep a person like him going. It is an issue definitely worth exploring in cases where particular migrant inmates are unable to communicate in any satisfying way.

While only available in a small number of community languages the correspondence course available from AMES may help in cases such as this. The first few lessons have explanatory sections in a number of languages which help to develop in the learner a better understanding of what he is trying to achieve. This course has been available in some gaols in the past, remnants of it are to be found in a variety of gaols.

Regardless of its status as a correspondence course and notwithstanding the fact that it will of course continue to be available as such, I believe there is a case for having the course available for 'hands-on' teaching in the gaols. It has been agreed from AMES that in the next re-printing of this course a number of copies will be earmarked for the prisons.

A number of 'courses' not usually found in teaching institutions are occasionally encountered when visiting migrant inmates. At Bathurst I spoke to a Turkish-born inmate who seems to be making quite substantial progress using a Linguaphone course in Intermediate English. (It should be remembered also that Linguaphone courses also provide instruction booklets in a variety of languages, with course content in English). This student's English is, according to the teacher, noticeable improved over the last three months and he is quite a diligent student. The course is highly structured in a unit-by-unit fashion. The individual units are supplemented by the teacher with extra exercises which expand on what the student has covered. The student's syntax is still somewhat fragmented but he has grasped a number of basic structures with good intonation patterns and pretty fair pronunciation, considering the interference from his native language. Unfortunately the course content is utterly British and a more Australia-oriented course would have been preferable, however this particular inmate doesn't mind as he is going to be deported anyway.

At the time there were four Turkish-born inmates at Bathurst and they spent quite a lot of time together, alternating between Turkish and English. One of them grew up in Australia and speaks no Turkish, the other three are attempting to impart some spoken Turkish to him.

Here we have a novel situation, a variant on the prisoner-tutor scheme of earlier days. The Turkish-born inmate referred to has a course which he says he likes because it gives him a plan to follow, and anything he wants to discuss or expand on, the teacher can supplement his activities from a reasonable well-stocked facility. He also has companionship and the opportunity to express himself fully with his companions.

Unfortunately he is a rare case.

4. An ESL "Common Core"

I have raised the matter of a universal ESL syllabus throughout the system with a number of people and, with obvious reservations, the suggestion usually meets with favourable response.

'Courses' are often derided and for sensible reasons, if they meet the needs of one or two students they may not meet the needs of a dozen others. Current trends in ESL are definitely away from any one course (or methodology) and have been for some time. By far the majority of ESL teachers endorse an eclectic approach to course design, utilising a variety of resources, methods and materials in order to develop instruction based on a fairly concise evaluation of student needs. Student input to the development of the learning process is encouraged widely. Prescriptive courses which dominate the learner's efforts are generally eschewed and rarely form anything other than a contributing element in the modern ESL/EFL classroom. So-called 'courses' published in complete packages containing texts, teacher's books, student workbooks, cassettes, etc., rarely form the sole guiding factor in the class. Often such materials provide a general resource from which the most suitable lessons, ideas and exercises are drawn in relation to the individual student's (or the class') needs. Rarely does the unfolding sequence of language development (as determined by a course book) appear to be anything other than an arbitrary ordering of items. There is no universally agreed-upon order as to which language structures should follow which, and to prescribe such an order is only justifiable in cases where an individual programme has been developed to meet the needs of a particular individual.

The notion of an ESL core syllabus for the gaol should not be taken to indicate that a move away from individualised learning is being suggested.

The overall thrust of this project is definitely integration with the major trends in ESL as it is currently constituted outside the walls of each prison. The notion of a core of ESL material continuous throughout the prison system should not be construed as a return to a lock-step approach to learning.

As long as one bears in mind that any structured approach to ESL can be altered or modified at will according to a student's needs then a structured approach becomes merely an aid to learning and not the determiner of progress.

In Stephanie Claire's (initial) October 1982 report the point was made that inmates very much like to feel that they have attained a certain level of proficiency - a comment made in particular reference to the structuring of ESL lessons. The idea of providing certificates to show that migrant inmates have completed a certain number of hours of English language study was also seen as an important incentive.

Providing it is adequately supplemented and varied with additional material (and that material is rapidly becoming a part of each gaol's resources via the CLUMP project) a progressive ESL core would then be as individualised a programme of study as anything that is achievable in the community, though at probably a slightly slower rate given the (a) hours available (b) often irregular attendance, and (c) the interruptions to study from transfers and industrial action which may terminate teacher/learner interaction altogether. At least one S.E.O. has raised the issue of teacher access to gaols during strikes and hopefully this will be discussed further to achieve some means of overcoming the consequences of closing education facilities altogether during periods of industrial action, or as the Minister has put it, during 'certified intervals'.

To date a lot of support for a core of material that will cover the entire system has been noted and, notwithstanding the difficulties inherent, the proposal is that there be a composite core of ESL studies available across the entire prison system.

A discussion paper on the subject is in progress and will be included in a questionnaire on the professional needs of part-time teachers in prisons.

The following points have been raised as I have moved around the system:

- (1) Continuity of learning - when an inmate moves from one gaol to another (an activity endemic to the system) the inmate ought to be able to pick up where he left off.
- (2) Educational records are often slow in following the inmate - learning should not be contingent upon any administrative paperwork following the inmate.
- (3) There is a need to identify ESL learning more concretely and definitively within the overall range of educational opportunities within the system. Particularly in relation to the growing number of courses being offered by other external agencies.

- (4) Migrant inmates often have very conventional expectations about language learning, often based on their own scholastic experiences, and will often express a need for grammar and structure; but are at the same time often reluctant to commit themselves to a lengthy programme of study. They often identify specific weaknesses in their skills, such as spelling.
- (5) A core of ESL studies would make the job of the non-ESL-trained teachers much easier, given that additional professional advice (inservicing) would be an on-going feature of the long-term AMES/DCS association.
- (6) Regardless of the differences between institutions it would be of great assistance to education staff to know that the migrant inmate would be able to embark on a programme of study that could be continued at any point in the system and adapted for that inmate at any point in his learning.

Given the need for some definite continuity in ESL programmes throughout the system there is, at the same time, a trend towards viewing each institution as a separate unit and examining what it can offer its inmates. This is in keeping with the moves towards decentralisation of Programmes Division which began in 1983. There has been a move away from a standard syllabus for pre-release programmes. These programmes are now devised locally according to the community resources available. Pre-release programmes operate at Grafton, Glen Innes, Cessnock, Silverwater, Berrima, Goulburn, Cooma and Mannus.

It is eminently practical to continue viewing each institution as a distinct unit in the system, this has been the case totally at Parklea in our efforts to establish ESL resources at that gaol. The notion of a basic core of ESL is not at all in conflict with this viewpoint, a basic core would enhance programme delivery by providing a common core of studies at each gaol. It would then be up to the Education Officer and the teacher to examine the inmate's individual requirements and to supplement his core studies.

5. ASLPR

The Australian Second Language Proficiency Rating Scale was issued to all teaching staff in 1983. In response to comments received in the early part of 1984 I have revised the presentation of the material and have included the marking sheets for the dictation sections. Opinions are still a little unclear as to the usefulness of this testing material. The strongest feeling so far is that inmates should be tested once only at an early point in their stay in prison. The resulting information should become part of the inmate's educational file.

Where and when to apply the test is still without universal agreement. The Metropolitan Remand Centre and the Central Industrial Prison seem to be the most logical places as the bulk of inmates will pass through these gaols.

It may be a worthwhile goal to attempt to ensure that at least all long-term prisoners (over 12 months sentence) passing through the Malabar Complex are given the ASLPR rating. After reception, these inmates are likely to spend at least another five to six weeks in one of the Long Bay gaols before attending the Full Classification Committee Meeting, thus there is ample time to give these inmates a rating before they are sent to their gaol of classification. In the case of the short-term inmates (under 12 months) they are classified at reception and are sent to a gaol of classification as soon as a transport is available. In conjunction with Mr. Tom Power, (R.E.O., Adviser Classification) I attended a full classification meeting late in 1983 and a number of procedures for more clearly identifying migrant inmates were instituted. Among these was a letter notifying the S.E.O. of the relevant gaol that a short-term prisoner had been classified to that gaol and had not undergone any educational assessment. The S.E.O. was advised to contact the Project Officer regarding any questions of programme development for that inmate. As I have not received any queries on short-term inmates dispersed from Long Bay during the past months I can only assume that no real problems arose with those short-term inmates.

The relationship between the scale and ESL materials is also of definite importance. Currently only those materials in the ESL list compiled by Stephanie Claire are related by ASLPR classification. Material acquired through the CHAMES network is also related as are most locally-produced AMES materials. To relate all ESL materials currently being acquired through the CLUMP Project to the scale would be rather time-consuming, however it would possibly be an added incentive to use the rating scale.

It is agreed that the major importance of the scale is that it gives all education staff the same language when discussing a migrant learner's progress. The scale is an estimate of proficiency inside broad bands delimited by characteristics of interview performance. Although it is not a diagnostic test it is positively-oriented in that it states in operational terms what the person can do in the second language.

AMES uses the scale primarily as a test of overall proficiency for the placement of students in the most appropriate class for their needs and levels of English. Given that TAFE use the scale as well there is ample justification to ensure that this tool is used as part of the overall co-ordination of migrant services in the goals.

6. Computers

Knowing where migrant prisoners are at any time is an information problem, given the constant activity in moving people around the system. No doubt the computerisation of inmate records and the placing of terminals in the major gaols will ultimately make it far easier to keep track of people.

It is envisaged that there will ultimately be a central reception unit at Long Bay which will receive and process all inmates entering the system. At this point information will be gathered on a two-part form, parts A and B. The following information has been so far determined for collection:-

Ethnic Information

Place of Birth
First Language
Interpreter Requires Yes/No
Age English Learned
First language mostly used Yes/No
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
Date arrived Australia
Naturalised Yes/No

Literacy Information

Age left school
Education level attained
Post school studies
Employment status on arrest
Normal occupation

This system will be installed initially at Long Bay and ultimately at the reception gaols - Parramatta, Maitland, Grafton, Goulburn and Bathurst. The smaller gaols and camps will have access via telephone hook-up.

All Probation and Parole Offices will eventually be attached to the system.

Considering that the system in use is using fourth generation computer languages I have been assured that modifying the data-gathering process is relatively uncomplicated.

7. Teacher Inservicing

With regard to future inservicing opportunities for DSC teaching staff I shall continue to keep R.E.O.'s advised of sessions as and when they arise, it will be up to these officers to make the appropriate arrangements to release staff interested in attending.

While we are concerned to integrate where possible the teaching of migrants in and out of prison, the fact remains that teaching in a prison deserves to be considered as a separate professional area of its own. This accords with the view of regarding prisons as unique institutions or environments in their own right.

There is no question of the value of short information sessions of an inservice nature conducted by AMES and others, however, I am inclined to suggest that it be made easier for staff in each region to gather to discuss their experience and priorities.

Comments from the last major inservice conducted by AMES did endorse wholeheartedly the value of the exercise but went on to stress the need for teachers to meet to hammer our particular issues, with both migrants and native speakers.

The notion of pooling resources was raised at the last inservice. An annual workshop on teaching strategies was also suggested, however I feel that in a constantly changing environment with a generally high turnover of staff, annual events are too far apart, they invariably suffer from lack of follow-up.

A regular (.e.g. bi-monthly) series of seminars with topics decided on by the teaching staff (teachers, E.O.'s and S.E.O.'s) and co-ordinated at regional level would probably be much better able to reduce isolation and spread ideas around the service more effectively.

A questionnaire on this matter is in preparation.

8. Civil Rehabilitation Committee (CRC)

I have maintained close contact with staff from the CRC office in Surry Hills, attending a number of meetings and speaking at training sessions. The idea of training CRC volunteers to work as home tutors specifically with migrant inmates released from gaol is enthusiastically received whenever discussed, however, finding volunteers has so far proved difficult.

This has largely been a question of the difficulty of working with volunteer groups who have experienced their own problems in establishing themselves efficiently. My original contacts were via the Language Services Group, a body of volunteers aiming to co-ordinate the services of a large supply of bi-lingual and multi-lingual volunteers. This group has experienced some problems in its internal organisation and has been unable to implement my requests for possible volunteers.

At the last meeting I attended it was suggested that I work directly through the regional offices of the individual CRC groups rather than through the co-ordinating body. This will involve attending a number of evening meetings at which I will outline the plan and call for volunteers for training by the AMES Home Tutor Training Staff.

9. Summary - proposed activities to October 1984

A number of priority areas will continue to dominate the remainder of this project, due to terminate 10th October 1984.

1. The Project Officer's involvement with CLUMP will continue with emphasis on ensuring continuity of material in all prisons.
2. The question of a core syllabus needs full discussion, opinions of all education staff should be sought. A detailed questionnaire may be a practical way of achieving this.
3. A questionnaire-cum-discussion paper is to be prepared on the professional needs of DCS part-time teachers, with special reference to on-going inservice requirements.
4. Transfer of relevant AMES produced materials to continue. Additional resources may be inspected at AMES centres, e.g. Fairfield and the resource centre at ACDEP (Air Conditioning Depot, State Rail Authority) has been suggested as being worthy of inspection.
5. Opinions on materials placed for evaluation to be actively sought.
6. Correspondence course to be placed (when available) in all gaols, beginning with the major reception gaols.
7. All Government and AMEP publications relevant to ESL to be acquired and placed in gaols by October 1984.
8. The Project Officer to explore the suggestion that AMES teaching centres be made available to part-time DCS teachers and Education Officers for observation of classes and access to resources.
9. The Project Officer to explore the accessibility of inmates to day and evening classes conducted by AMES.

10. The uniform application of the ASLPR scale is a priority area and it is suggested that particular attention be given to its use at the major reception gaols.

11. Liaison with CRC to continue until a significant positive response has been achieved. This will be limited to Project Officer's attendance at monthly regional meetings of CRC groups.