Chapter IV
A Survey of Teachers' Concerns

4.1. Introduction

In the last chapter we have talked about the methods that we had used in data-collection and data-analysis. We have used multiple sources of evidence, viz. questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, "narratives of experience", both in spoken and in written form. We have observed these teachers at their places of work, and have had discussions with them using the "stimulated-recall" technique based on audio-recording and "field-notes". This has helped us identify teachers' decisions in their classrooms, their "reflections-in-action" and "reflections-on-action".

In the last chapter, we have also mentioned that we are charting the process of growth of seven in-service teacher-trainees, through longitudinal case studies. Our 'extended contact' and 'sustained interactivity' is one of the variables. The 'principle of sustained flexibility and interactivity' (Day 1997) is used while discussing these case-studies. We have followed the paradigm for a comparative study in Chapter V. Following the framework of Connelly, Clandinin and He (1997) we have:

- Examined and established the case of Teacher A
- Examined and established the case of Teacher B

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• Compared these teachers’ beliefs and perceptions by using image, metaphor, philosophy, cycles, rhythms and narrative unity (Connelly, Clandinin and He, 1997) as my research tools.

• Discussed some of the significant issues regarding their “personal practical knowledge”

One of the criteria that we had used in selecting the teacher-trainees was that we had they would represent different regions and different levels. Second, they would have feasibility and access and would be able to maintain contact with us. Third, the “collaborative action-research projects” that we would do with them would be relevant in their contexts, that would help in the process of solving their own problems.

We got in touch with numerous teacher-trainees in the field and by consulting our records for admission to PGCTE (1995-96 batch, 1996-97 batch and 1997-98 batch). Those sources were used to suggest candidates that fit the selection criteria, resulting in a list of 60 teacher-trainees. We started our contacts with these 60 volunteers both by writing, and by phone. 36 of them provided information, based on our initial questionnaires IA and IB. We have analysed the data emerging from these first two questionnaires both quantitatively and qualitatively. One sample of a reply to questionnaire IB is given in Appendix IV.
In order to find an answer to the main question, "What are teachers' concerns?" a survey of teachers' concerns was done by sending questionnaires IA and IB by post. (Please see Appendix IA and IB). The questions in Questionnaire IA are based on their personal details, their present work place, and their "narratives of experience as a teacher". Questionnaire IB has a list of teachers' concerns that had emerged from my semi-structured open-ended interviews based on IA (please see Chapter 3). This list of teachers' concerns is also open-ended, and the participants were requested to add issues which were relevant in their context. It was only after negotiating with some teacher-trainees regarding their "order of priority" that we decided on investigating seven concerns for our collaborative action research projects, following "case-study design" (Yin, 1993).

Therefore this study is organised in the format of:

Phase I : A Review of the Literature.

Phase II : A survey of Teachers' concerns.

Phase III : Case-Studies based on collaborative action-research projects.

Phase IV : Teachers' Beliefs as emerging from their "Narratives". (this emerges from phase III)

Chapter I had introduced all the phases of the project and discussed their relevance, Chapter II had given a comprehensive review of the
literature, Chapter III had discussed the methods that had been used in data collection and analysis. This chapter reports the findings from the survey.

In the next chapter, we would discuss four out of seven case-studies, based on collaborative action-research projects. It is the local reference that is important in each of the case studies, so generalizability to other contexts may not be a major issue. But the ways in which these teachers use the resources, the type of help they seek, our intervention strategies, and the implications of these in their professional growth and in teacher education courses are of relevance and they would be picked up in Chapter VI.

4.2. A Survey of Teachers’ Concerns

This survey provides a broad array of evidence of teachers’ concerns. The final study would therefore contain information on a large number of cases, as well as intensive information on a smaller number.

We have collected preliminary information on Teachers’ Concerns by the following question.
Here are some questions to which the greater community of teachers have no right answers. Please do the following:

For the issues listed, tick the column on the right that you feel is relevant to you:

**Key:**

Column headings on the right represent the following:

1. This *was* an active concern, but I have solved it.
2. This has been, and is *an active concern now*.
3. This is less important, but I feel it can be solved.
4. This is less important, but I would like to tackle it in the future.
5. This is not one of my concerns

Select from the complete list the *five* concerns that are most important in your opinion, and write them down in order of priority in Item 17.

When interpreting the responses to this item the following scheme is used in which 1 & 2 *together* represent areas of high concern. 1 represents a historical fact relating to success in dealing with the concern.

*These 36 participants*, who responded to this questionnaire (please see questionnaire 1B in Appendix 1B) responded in the following manner.
Table 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. ISSUES CONCERNING LEARNERS</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Not Ticked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heterogeneity and presence of students below the assumed level</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tackling the problems of weak learners</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing individual attention</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tackling different learning strategies</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of passive learners</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of silent learners</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of dominance</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distractions</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Add issues concerning learners which are relevant to your context:

From Table 4.1, we can deduce the following:

- 29 out of 36 teachers are concerned about the problems of weak learners. Some of the teachers have given it the top most priority even in Q.17, and have chosen it for collaborative action research project.

- 25 out of 36 teachers are concerned about the problems due to heterogeneity and presence of students below the assumed level.

- 23 out of 36 teachers would like to explore different learning strategies.

- 22 out of 36 are interested in providing individual attention.

They have responded enthusiastically, and added a lot of issues concerning learners that are relevant in their context:
1. Tackling indifferent / overconfident learners.
2. Total inability to express anything in English. / No interaction. / Feeling inhibited to talk in English.
3. Learner apathy to lessons
4. Irregular attendance
5. Individual differences
6. Absence of proper motivation
7. Absence of a sense of purpose
8. Attitude of the learners.

Their concerns for students overlap with the next issue:

Table 4.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. ISSUES RELATED TO CLASSROOM PROCESSES</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Not Ticked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The need to lecture extensively</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making decisions on-the-spot in the classroom</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The need for task-based group activities</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concluding lessons effectively (dictating a summary / review)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing time for students' answers when questions are being raised</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 4.2, it is evident that these in-service teachers are concerned about the following issues related to classroom processes.

- 19 out of 36 teachers are concerned about the need for task-based group activities.
- 16 out of 36 teachers would like to provide more time for students' answers when questions are being raised.
• 15 out of 36 teachers question the need to lecture extensively.

• 11 out of 36 teachers find it difficult to make decisions on-the-spot in the classroom.

Compared to the issues concerning learners, as in Table 4.1, this table indicates that for more teachers two of the concerns were “active concerns” in the past but they have solved them, viz.

• Making decisions on the spot in the classroom (12 teachers feel they have solved the problem).

• The need for task-based group activities (13 teacher feel they have solved it).

The issues that they have added on their own concerning classroom processes that are relevant in their context are greater in number compared to issues concerning learners:

1. Breaks in lesson continuity (due to frequency of strikes, holidays, unexpected breaks in schedule due to exam conducted in the college premises e.g. university exams)

2. Lack of scope for any activity

3. The need for explanation in mother tongue constantly

4. (One of the participants, who has not ticked any column for ‘concluding lessons effectively e.g. dictating a summary has written) : “Dictating! I don't do this!”

   (Yet, when I had observed her class in her own context, she had dictated a summary at the end of the class)

5. Furniture/seating arrangements are very prohibitive.
6. The compulsions of completing the syllabus on time force me to adopt a lecture mode as an easy way out (This participant had marked the 4th column - that is she would like to tackle this concern in future)

7. How to use new techniques and innovative methods in the classroom?

8. Providing more scope for student—student interaction

9. Providing students with a direct experience of the language (English)

10. Developing a habit in the learner of note-taking / note-making

11. Using the blackboard/aids/media

12. Involving the learners in framing tasks

13. (A participant has marked everything in the 2nd column, i.e. these are active concerns now; and yet she has added):

   The issues mentioned in this part of the questionnaire are more theoretical than practical. If a teacher is engaged in classroom activities most of the time, there is little time for covering the course!

14. Tackling the interests/whims of students regarding what to teach, when and what not to teach on one particular day

15. Some students request for a class/some others for a free period.

16. Deciding on a way to motivate the students for a topic

This issue that is mentioned last, overlap with the next concern:
Table 4.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. ISSUES RELATED TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF SUBJECT MATTER</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Not Ticked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Handling technical terminology in the area of criticism</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordering of topics in the curriculum</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coverage</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving their awareness regarding content (English literature/Prose/Poetry etc.)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving their proficiency in English language</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 4.3, it transpires that nearly all these in-service teachers are concerned about improving their students' proficiency in English language. 31 out of 36 teachers have marked it as an active concern. In corroboration some of these teachers have given it the top most priority i.e. Q.17, and it is one of collaborative action-research projects to be discussed in the next chapter. 4 teachers had solved the problem; and 1 teacher feels it can be solved. The other three issues, related to the knowledge of subject-matter, that are of importance are:

- 20 out of 36 teachers are interested in improving their awareness regarding content (English Literature / Prose / Poetry etc.).

- 15 out of 36 teachers are interested in ordering of topics in the curriculum.

- 13 out of 36 teachers feel 'coverage' is an active concern.
They have added the following issues:

1. *Deciding on how much to explore on a topic.*
2. *Enriching the content by comparing and contrasting with the other texts of the author.*
3. *Whether there is any need to dictate answers for examination purposes.*
4. *Including various activities to arouse their interest.*
5. *Improving their awareness regarding context through a study of subject-matter.*
6. *Our understanding of English Language, as distinguished from our understanding of what to teach and how to teach the language.*
7. *Choice of topics from a linguistic point of view.*

One of the participants has marked all the issues in the first column, and has then written “partially”. That is, these are all “active concerns”, and she has “partially” solved them.

While reading their responses and comments we wondered whether there was a flaw or ambiguity in some of the questions! One participant has not ticked any column regarding the next issue. ‘Issues related to Teaching Strategies’, and she has added “Not clear what is expected of me as answers.”
Table 4.4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. ISSUES RELATED TO TEACHING STRATEGIES</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Not Ticked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coping with own rhetorical question</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading aloud from one's notes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing one's teaching techniques</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing one's attitude towards teaching</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While interpreting this table, Table 4.4, we are in a dilemma. For 13 out of 36 participants, “reading aloud from one’s notes” is *not* one of the major concerns. They have ticked in the fifth column and 7 participants have not ticked it at all. Yet during my field-visits, two of the participants who have ticked column 5, were “reading from their notes”. While despatching the questionnaires, we had assumed “mutual trust and faith” and hoped that they would be truthful to the best of their knowledge and belief. It was not feasible for us to observe all the thirty-six teachers in their work places, and cross-check whether their beliefs and attitudes matched with what was actively happening in the classroom. But we often discovered this mis-match. The *beliefs, attitudes* and *experiential knowledge* of teachers and learners are important considerations in this study. 7 participants have not ticked anything, and kept a discreet silence.

Therefore, we see a gleam of hope when we find:

21 out of 36 teachers are concerned about changing their teaching techniques.
15 out of 36 teachers would like to change their attitudes towards teaching.

10 out of 36 teachers had already dealt with this concern, and have changed in the process.

Our list of issues for each of the categories was not an exhaustive list. We had given them as examples, as stimulus to trigger their thinking. That they are concerned about teaching strategies', in general, is obvious from the issues that they have added based on their experience:

1. Reading about what's going on elsewhere in the world of teaching and improvising along with.
2. Encouraging student involvement.
4. Looking for scope/variety in techniques.
5. Looking for new teaching techniques.
6. Scaling priorities.
7. Focussing on efficacy.
8. Matching method with learner-ability and potential of material.
10. Using the blackboard and other aids at the right moment for due length of time.

Some of the issues related to teaching strategy mentioned in this list, have been given topmost priority by some teachers, and they have chosen these particular issues for their collaborative action-research projects:
• Realising learner-potential and aptitude
• Changing one's attitude towards teaching
• Assessing one's own performance

It is worth reiterating that 'realising learner-potential and aptitude' and 'assessing one's own performance' are issues that have emerged from the teachers themselves. They themselves have felt strongly about these issues and they had had implications in their professional growth, as would be evident from the next table:

The issue that has highlighted matching method with potential of material looks forward to our next table.

Table 4.5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. ISSUES CONCERNING MATERIALS / SYLLABUS</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Not Ticked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The situation when students do not bring their text books</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of resources (cyclostyling / xeroxing facilities)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procuring supplementary materials and tasks for the development of skills (listening / speaking / reading / writing)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional materials and other resources to help the weak students</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 4.5, it is evident that these in-service teachers are concerned about the following issue related to materials / syllabus
• 24 out of 36 teachers are concerned about procuring *supplementary materials and tasks* for the development of skills (listening / speaking / reading / writing). For 8 participants it had been a concern but they have solved it. In one of the collaborative projects, some participants tried out some tasks on listening to develop the skills of listening to develop the skills of listening for class IX students, and found that it was very difficult to pitch the tasks at the right level. This issue has received a top priority as is evident from their responses to Q.17.

• 23 out of 36 teachers are concerned about additional materials to help the weak students.

• 16 out of 36 teachers are worried about lack of resources (cyclostyled / xeroxed facilities)

• 7 out of 36 teachers face the situation when students do not bring their text books to the class. 11 teachers have solved this problem and 12 feel it can be solved. For 6 teachers, it is of no concern.

The problems expressed by college teachers were different from the problems expressed by school teachers, as far as this general matter is concerned.
Specially, those college-teachers, who are dealing with the Functional English / Vocational Communicative English Course (recently introduced by U.G.C. at the B.A. level) have articulated the following problems:

1. Lack of materials and resources for topics which need expertise.
2. Uncertainty about exact requirements of the topic (e.g. what should be taught under such specifications in the syllabus-outline: style and register?).
3. How to balance theoretical and practical demands? (For example in a subject like Phonetics).
4. Lack of flexibility in syllabus.
5. How do we cope with lack of resources? "I do it at my own / students’ costs, added one teacher.

Some of the school-teachers have mentioned these issues:

1. Substandard books without any pattern in grading or emphasis on skills. Content-based questions and mechanical exercises.
2. No scope or time to use additional material.
3. Explore scope for creativity, modification, learner ability versus complexity of the materials.
4. Content-value vs communication-value.
5. Procuring materials to enhance both learners' and teachers’ competence.
Those who have mentioned this last issue feel that materials should be used as a "tool" to enhance teachers' professional growth. Similarly some teachers feel "tests" could be used to measure both students and teachers' performance.

Table 4.6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6. ISSUES CONCERNING ASSESSMENT</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Not Ticked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deciding what to assess</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deciding how to assess</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deciding when to assess</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where continuous assessment is feasible, deciding how to spread assessment</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deciding about the totality of assessment at the end of the course</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 4.6, it is evident that these in-service teachers are concerned about the following issues concerning assessment:

- 20 out of 36 participants need help in deciding what to assess. 10 participants have solved the problem. But they have added that it is "still their active concern".

- 20 out of 36 participants are concerned about "how to assess".

- 16 out of 36 participants find it problematic in deciding "when to assess".

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• 20 out of 36 participants do not know how to “spread” internal assessment.

• 15 participants cannot decide about the totality of assessment at the end of the course.

It is an intriguing finding that for 8 participants this last issue is of no concern! Probably they feel that the responsibility lies with Board of Secondary Examination, or Higher Education Council and it is of no consequence to them! Similarly 5 participants feel that teachers should not be concerned about when to assess, and how to spread assessment.

In reality, higher authorities, university-examiners, members of the Board or Council take these decisions, and teachers have no say in the matter. They are bound to follow what is handed down in this system of education in a “top-down” manner.

They have added, the following problems regarding assessment:

1. No internal assessment is done in our college. They are given traditional exams, which requires written answers on subject-matter. No record of progress is sent to the parents.

2. Deciding whether internal assessment should be included in the final grade.

3. Using assessment as a tool for diagnosis and remediation.

4. Determining how pertinent assessment is in the teaching / learning process.
5. Making comprehensive yet discreet scrutiny of students' and teachers' performance.

6. Deciding whether assessment procedures should be controlled by administrators or academics

7. Lack of standardization in assessment

8. Lack of information / consensus about levels of assessment

As these words indicate, these teachers feel that assessment has a key role to play in the whole teaching-learning process, and teachers, should be allowed to take crucial decisions in every aspect of that role.

Table 4.7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7. ISSUES CONCERNING STUDENTS' PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Not Ticked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing attention on their listening skills</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing attention on their speaking skills</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing attention on their reading skills</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing attention on their writing skills</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing attention on their critical ability</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 4.7, it is evident that these in-service teachers are currently concerned about their students' proficiency in English. All the issues mentioned in this table are their active-concerns now. Only two participants have not ticked any column.

- 22 out of 36 participants would like to draw the attention of their students on their listening skills.
• 21 out of 36 participants would like to draw the attention of their students on their speaking skills.

• 22 out of 36 participants would like to draw their attention on their reading skills.

• 27 out of 36 participants would like to draw their attention on their writing skills.

• 19 out of 36 participants would like to draw their attention on their critical ability.

Three of these issues are being dealt in greater depth in the discussion of collaborative action research projects in the next chapter. We have already mentioned that some participants have given their first priority to 'improving the students’ proficiency in English through tasks on listening. Secondly, regarding one of the issues concerning learners, namely, ‘tackling the problem of weak learners’, we have explored their reading strategies through verbal reports. In another collaborative project, we have used verbal reports in identifying their strategies in writing, and identified the strategies that teachers use while providing feedback on writing. So these issues overlap with issues discussed in the next Table 4.8, ‘Issues Concerning Feedback’, particularly Providing written feedback on students’ writing, and Getting students to take feedback seriously.

The field of research methods has supplied us with suggested approaches for looking at these strategies. One means is through observation of what the students do while they are reading or writing.
In one incident, we observed class VI students in *not reading* the text as instructed, but simply looking immediately for the answers to the given reading-comprehension questions. Here, the strategies constituted short-cuts to arriving at answers. Another approach is through the use of “verbal reports” through ‘think aloud techniques’ either while the students are reading, and trying to answer comprehension questions, or just afterwards, or some time later on. As we had mentioned in Chapter 3, “verbal report techniques” have constituted a major tool in the gathering of data for our case-studies (to be illustrated in Chapter 5).

They have *added* the following issues, as relevant in their context. Some of our teacher-trainees deal with both literature classes and communicative English classes at the B.A. level. They feel:

- In a communicative English class, the first four issues are the most important in the provided order (given in Table 4.7). But in the English (Honours) class, the last three are the ones we concentrate on.

Those who teach in Army-schools have a different experience:

- Speaking skills are never encouraged in the Army. Very often, an officer is annoyed when a non-officer talks to him in English.

These are the issues that school teachers are concerned about:

- Developing discernment from a very early stage

- Insisting on regular contact with the language
• Considering proficiency in the mother-tongue as an aid, not a hindrance.

• In our situation, our only concern is to teach the prescribed books, by explaining the content, no question of paying attention to any skills, no time or scope to provide any attention to learners. They learn by listening to the lectures, reading books or from private tutor.”

• Providing attention to their communicative competence, integrating all the skills, instead of any one skill.

Table 4.8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUES CONCERNING FEEDBACK</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Not Ticked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing oral feedback in the classroom</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing written feedback on students' writing</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting students to take feedback seriously</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving reasonable attention to inaudible responses</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to build on students' answers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As in the last table, all the issues mentioned in this table are their active concerns now.

• 28 out of 36 participants find it problematic to get students to take feedback seriously. Only 2 students have been able to achieve it.

• 19 out of 36 participants would like to build on students answers.

• 16 out of 36 participants are concerned about the ways of providing written feedback on students writing.
16 out of 36 participants would like to give reasonable attention to inaudible responses.

19 out of 36 teachers have explored ways of providing oral feedback in the classroom. For 11 participants, it is an active concern now.

Since in the distance mode, some of us are discussing issues and making a conscious effort to give positive constructive written feedback to our participants, it could have had a "boomerang effect" on them. By "loop-input" strategy (Woodward, 1988), they tried giving constructive written feedback to their students, thereby helping them in their learning strategies. When they had reported on the implications of our written feedback on their own informally, we thought of documenting it in one of the collaborative action research projects. (Please see Section 5.3 in Chapter V entitled 'Providing written feedback on students' writing to enable them to take feedback seriously'.)

They have added these issues on feedback:

1. Making them conscious of their own mistakes and helping them work on them independently.

2. There is hardly any scope for giving feedback to students even on their writing. Correction is done only inside the classroom on the spot, while they speak and write.

3. How to involve the introvert and shy students in daily classes.

4. Making feedback effective.
5. Providing feedback within the time-frame.

6. Pondering on feedback and getting schooled.

7. Analysing the feedback and bringing in the necessary changes in teaching strategies, methodologies etc.

8. How to give feedback in large classes?

This last issue overlaps with the issues in the next table, issues concerning large classes:

Table 4.9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9. ISSUES CONCERNING LARGE CLASSES</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Not Ticked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coping with large classes</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining discipline</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing contact</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaching out to all</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using pair work / group work</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If we informally ask any school or college teacher "What is your problem?" the common answer is "large class". This is corroborated in this questionnaire

- 15 out of 36 teachers face problems in coping with large classes.
- 19 out of 36 teachers find it problematic to establish contact and reach out to all.
• 14 out of 36 teachers have devised ways of tackling with pair work and group work; but 14 teachers still need support in using pair work and group work.

They have added the following constraints:

1. Distraction: noise of other students
2. Physical limitations: voice / mood of the teacher within the class.
3. Correcting all assignments, from a large class, meticulously.
4. Involving students in the correction procedure.
5. Indifference of the back-benchers.
6. Involving all students and maintaining tempo and interest.
7. Heterogeneity of students.
8. Difficult to provide individual attention.
9. How to provide extra time for weak students?

Most of the weak students have this tendency to use L1 or mother-tongue in the classroom. What are these teachers views regarding L1? Should it be used as a “resource”, or should it be banned in an English class?
Table 4.10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10. ISSUES CONCERNING THE LANGUAGE TO BE USED IN THE CLASSROOM</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Not Ticked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using L1 as a resource</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using both English and L1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is a lot of debate regarding this issue. These are the views for the use of L1:

- **14 out of 36 want to use L1 as a resource.**
  1. *L1 should be used as a resource.*
  2. *L1 should be used as “means” (specially in group-work) and English as an “end”.*

- **16 out of 36 teachers would prefer using both L1 and English.**

Those who are for the use of English and L1:

1. *L1 should be used only when absolutely essential*
2. *L1 is used as a resource. But the learners have another dialect! All the learners do not understand it! They have to cope with three languages, and if they have Hindi, there four languages at the same time!
3. *I don’t allow the students to use L1, but I use it sometimes if I have to explain something.*
4. *L1 is helpful at times. But one should guard against its over use.*

Some are against the use of L1:

1. (A participant who has not ticked any of these issues has written): “We don’t use L1”.

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Some are against the use of L1:

1. (A participant who has not ticked any of these issues has written): “We don’t use L1”.

2. How to use English both as means and as an end?

3. Thinking in English should be encouraged.

4. Making the most of the opportunities of the use of the target language.

5. Devising ways of generating English in the class.

Often colleagues share their views in the staff rooms and help each other, but at some places there is evidence of lack of support. Rat-race and competition may vitiate the atmosphere in such a manner, that “showing mutual respect” among colleagues becomes a major issue. This issue concerning the role of colleagues is corroborated in the literature on teachers’ concerns as well. “Complaints about a lack of positive contacts with colleagues for discussing problems, and about a bad atmosphere between colleagues, seem to dominate in the situation description of category 320 in all years of experience, T1-T6”. (Gerris et al, 1984: 192-193)
Table 4.11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9. ISSUES CONCERNING THE ROLE OF COLLEAGUES</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Not Ticked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing problems with each other</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing unconditional support</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being sensitive towards each other</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showing mutual respect</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team-teaching</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open attitude</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling concerned about the lack of support from colleagues (e.g., “They can make or break you”)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competing with each other instead of collaborating</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold War</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From this chart, Table 4.11, it is evident, that these in-service teachers are concerned about the following issue concerning the role of colleagues.

- 18 out of 36 teachers would like more collaboration.
- 19 out of 36 teachers are concerned about involvement.
- 17 out of 36 teachers would like to share problems with each other.
- 13 out of 36 teachers would like to provide unconditional support.
- 14 out of 36 teachers would like to explore various ways of being sensitive towards each other.
• 15 out of 36 teachers would like an environment in the workplace that nurtures an open attitude in all.

Only 6 out of 36 have frankly stated that they are concerned about the lack of support from their colleagues. This does not corroborate our findings from “semi-structure interviews” and “narratives”, where ‘orally’ teachers have expressed their concerns about lack of support from colleagues. 11 out of 36 teachers feel it is not their concern and 5 out of 36 have not ticked this item at all.

When we had tried out these questionnaires on one of our colleagues, she came up with all these issues as her “active concerns”, and ticked the second column for all of them. We had assumed that in most colleagues “competition” among colleagues and “cold war” were imminent. Her narrative (Narrative 1) also illustrates this problem. But in the case of these 36 teachers, only 5 have ticked “Competing with each other instead of collaborating” as an active concern now. For 12 out of 36 teachers it is of no concern, and 5 have not ticked this item at all.

In 4 cases, they have experienced “cold war” among colleagues, and would like to solve the problem. For 19 teachers it is of no concern, 5 have not ticked at all.

A participant who has not ticked at all, has added:
• Luckily, the department where I work as a congenial atmosphere. We show mutual respect, and provide unconditional support. This creates a very peaceful atmosphere to work in!

• Sharing work-load equally

Others have worded their problems in the following manner:

1. In the staff room, there is hardly any discussion on classroom teaching, or any peer observation or assistance. Each one thinks s/he is the best!

2. The Head of the Institute is trying to obstruct departmental activities. This has a demoralising effect on the teachers.

3. The only problem is convincing our colleagues on the need to change our teaching methodologies.

4. Some show negative attitude towards functional English / Communicative English and dissuades others from fully participating!

5. Professional socialization between colleagues and parents.

6. Collaboration and cooperation is not a problem in my context. But each of us has to work towards it.

For an institution to function well, it is important for the staff to have a rapport among themselves. This issue concerning the role of colleagues overlaps with the role of the teacher:

Table 4.12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12. ISSUES CONCERNING THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Not Ticked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establishing rapport</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being a friend</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being an authority-figure</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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• For 20 out of 36 participants, “establishing rapport” was an active concern. But they have solved it. For 8 out of 36, it is “an active concern now”.

• For 15 out of 36 participants “being a friend” was an active concern, but they have solved it.

• For 9 out of 36 it is an active concern now.

• For 15 participants, “being an authority figure” is not their concern.

They have added:

1. *Establishing rapport is the most important thing. To win their faith, one has to break all barriers.* I don’t believe much in “being a friend”, but I want to be a “sympathetic teacher, and a coordinator”.

2. *Acting as a bond between the learner and the language (English)*

3. *Being of help to every individual learner.*

4. *Conscious manipulation of events in the class.*

5. *Assuring you availability and willingness to help at all times.*


7. *Providing proper guidance.*

8. *Bringing out the inherent talent in the students.*

9. *Teacher is still the “authority” in many schools and colleges. Classes are teacher centred.*
10. Students enjoy the status of a teacher as a "Guru", and disrespect those who become friendly.


12. Being able to promote interest and motivate students especially towards second language.

Another role of the teacher is to deal with the whims of the parents, and cope with the pressure of parents expectations. This issue overlaps with the issues in the next table, issues concerning outside-class factors.

Table 4.13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>13. ISSUES CONCERNING OUTSIDE-CLASS FACTORS</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Not Ticked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drop-outs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rowdyism in educational institutions</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying the problems of students who fare badly in on-campus interviews</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Probably these problems are faced more by college and university teachers rather than school teachers.

- For 9 out of 36 teachers "drop-out" is an active concern now. For 16 teachers, it is not one of their concerns.

- For 9 out of 36 teachers, "rowdyism in educational institutions" is an active concern now. For 17 teachers, it is not one of their concerns.

- For 15 out of 36 teachers, "identifying the problems of students who fare badly in on-campus interview" is an active concern now. For 16 participants, it is not one of their concerns.
They have added the following:

1. *Socio-cultural setting.*

2. *Difference in the social-status of families.*

3. *Influence of students studying in other sectors, for example vocational courses.*

4. *No exposure to English at home.*


7. *Examining parent’s attitudes, their whims and expectations.*

8. *Distractions due to traffic, noise and other attractions.*

9. *How to help the students outside the classroom?*

How to provide exposure to English outside the class is a common “active concern”, and that has been given high priority by all the teachers. It is one of the collaborative action - research projects that they have done with me.

Infact I myself have shared my experiences in a project in which I tried to provide exposure to English to foreign students, by organizing cultural programmes on classical Dances, and guiding them in a project on “Indian Dances” (please see Section 6.6 in Chapter VI)
Table 4.14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>14. ISSUES CONCERNING EXPOSURE TO ENGLISH OUTSIDE CLASS</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Not Ticked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of reading habit</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of writing habit</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of opportunity for communication in English</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence of Media / Video / TV</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 4.14, it is evident that these inservice teachers are concerned about the following issues:

- 26 out of 36 teachers are concerned about their lack of reading habit.
- 27 out of 36 teachers are concerned about their lack of writing habit.
- 30 out of 36 teachers are concerned about their lack of opportunity for communication in English.
- 26 out of 36 teachers would like to explore the influence of media / video / TV. “Media, I think has done a lot of good. But they have lost the habit of reading because of T.V.” voiced one teacher. They have added the following constraints:

1. **Lack of time may be one of the reasons for their lack of exposure to English outside the classroom. They are over-burdened with homework.**
2. **Motivating students to speak in English outside the class.**
3. **Teacher intervention regarding the quality of English.**

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4. The teacher can guide the students in “selective reading” from local libraries: organize availability of reading materials.

5. Exploiting entertainment aspect.

6. The teacher should help the students outside the classroom too.

Among the regional medium students, the Learner Profile (see Appendix IIib) indicates that only 5% of students read English newspaper or magazine. The rest read only their “textbooks” in English. Among the languages, they are most comfortable with are Bengali / Telugu / Oriya / their mother tongue. On the T.V. too they mostly watch Hindi / or programmes in regional language. So hardly there is any exposure to English. Some students’ have confided “I do not watch English programmes”. They talk in their mother tongue to their friends and relatives. They have no opportunity to speak in English.

The attitudes of students or teachers towards English is often influenced by the policy of the State Governments towards English. The movement towards eradicating English in one of the states, Tamilnadu, is supported by many scholars. (see Appendix IIA). In West Bengal too, that the Government is still groping in the dark about its “language-policy”, and whether it should give prominence to English or should be complacent about Bengali is evident from this news items in India Today dated 27 March 2000:
Therefore issues concerning the status of English in the State / Country have been of “active concern” in recent years. But we have not been able to evolve any solution yet “with proper professionalism, and better perceptions, an indigenous approach to English teaching in India should be evolved”. (Sriraman, 1989: 22)

What do these teachers feel about the status of English in the State / Country?
Table 4.15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>15. ISSUES CONCERNING THE STATUS OF ENGLISH IN THE STATE / COUNTRY</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Not Ticked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deciding on the level at which English should be introduced in the state</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuading local policy-makers about the need for action</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examining trends and attitudes towards English in the history of the community</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 20 out of 36 participants feel strongly about the level at which English should be introduced in the state. 6 teachers feel it is not their concern, probably because they do not have any "say" in the matter.

- 18 out of 36 teachers feel the need to persuade local policy makers about the need for action. Again, 11 participants feel that it is not their responsibility and therefore not one of their concerns.

- 16 out of 36 teachers would like to examine the trends and attitudes towards English in the history of the community. 9 teachers feel it is not one of their concerns.

They have added the following concerns:

1. The policy decisions ultimately affect the attitude of learners. It changes the academic scenario especially in case of regional medium students.

2. English should be introduced at the level of class III in the state and country.

3. Developing a bias-free attitude towards the language.

4. Getting the learners relish the beauty of the language.
5. English still occupies a position of prestige both in social and educational circles. But because of political interference, English is creating controversies in the states.

6. Politics on language policy.

7. Exploring the requirements of the student community.

8. Arousing public awareness towards the importance of English.

9. Monitoring the developments taking place in the areas of teaching and learning.

In their answer to Q.16, where we had requested them to list any other concern, some teachers have added:

- What are the reactions of teachers to students' responses?
- How do teachers feel about students' attitudes towards them?
- How do we change the attitudes of the professional teachers, who do not believe in communicative skills?
- How to improve the linguistic and communicative skills of second language learners when there is predominance of L1, i.e. the Vernacular?
- The abominable standards of students in English.
- The discrepancy between the English medium and the Regional medium students, their knowledge and skills in English.
It is very difficult to generalize from their responses to the last question:

Q.17 Select the five most important concerns from the complete list, and put them down in order of priority:

Each participant has responded to this question according to his / her specific context. Here are some examples of responses given by college teachers:

1. Presence of students below the assumed level.
2. Tackling the problems of weak learners.
3. Learners’ lack of reading habit.
4. Learners’ lack of writing habit.
5. Lack of involvement of my colleagues.

1. Learner apathy
2. Changing classroom processes from the prescriptive lecture mode to more learner friendly modes.
3. Bringing about a change in the role of colleagues.
4. Issues concerning the role of teacher.
5. Issues concerning lack of exposure.
1. Improving their proficiency in English Language.
2. Issues concerning exposure to English outside the class
   [Reading, Writing, Communicating].
3. Issues related to teaching strategies.
4. Getting students to take feedback seriously.
5. Assessment.

Some of the school teachers have given the following orders of priority:

1. Tackling the problems of weak learners.
2. Providing individual attention.
3. Lack of writing habit.
4. Lack of reading habit.
5. Lack of opportunity for communication in English.

1. Issues concerning large classes.
2. Issues concerning learners.
3. Issues concerning exposure to English outside the class.
4. Issues concerning the status of English in the country.
5. Issues concerning their proficiency in English.
4.3. Conclusion : Prioritising Teachers’ Concerns

From this survey, we have been able to prioritise teachers’ concerns.

We made a chart of all the concerns, and did tallies according to order of priority. For example :

Prioritising Teachers’ Concerns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers Concerns</th>
<th>One of five</th>
<th>1st priority</th>
<th>2nd priority</th>
<th>3rd priority</th>
<th>4th priority</th>
<th>5th priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Issues concerning learners*</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Proficiency in English</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Issues concerning feedback</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Issues related to Teaching strategies</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Issues concerning Materials/Syllabus</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Issues concerning exposure to English</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Issues related to knowledge of subject matters</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Issues concerning large classes</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Issues related to classroom processes</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Issues concerning the role of colleagues</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Issues concerning Assessment</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Issues concerning the role of the teachers</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Issues concerning the language to be used in the classroom</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Issues concerning the status of English in the State/Country</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Issues concerning outside class factors</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
18 participants have given 1st priority to “issues concerning proficiency in English,
3 have given 2nd priority to this issue,
9 have given 3rd priority to it, and
3 have given 4th priority to it.
3 have given 5th priority to it.

As part of this longitudinal research project on understanding teachers’ concerns, and teachers’ professional growth through the articulation of their “personal practical knowledge”, and as a personal quest to make my own work as a teacher educator more supportive, besides this ‘survey’ of teachers’ concerns, I had organized an ongoing correspondence and whenever feasible, ongoing conversation with these teachers. From these social, collaborative and non-evaluative correspondences and conversations, personally and contextually relevant “narratives of experience” emerged, as did the processes of identifying and understanding them. In the next chapter, teachers’ “personal philosophy” and beliefs as emerging from a cross-section of “narratives” would be discussed, while analysing the case studies that we did through collaborative action research projects.