

O’Cuinneagain, Seosamh, 2000, *The 1995 Revised German Syllabus for the Irish Leaving Certificate: A Critical Evaluation.*

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the 1995 Revised Leaving Certificate German Syllabus (*RLCGS*) which was implemented five years ago in Ireland, and also to examine the rationale for change and its practical application on classroom methodology. Modern language teaching has undergone successive transformations in recent times.

The instrumental value of language learning has risen in line with the need to learn languages for political and economic reasons. There has been, as a result, a concomitant evolution in the character of modern languages syllabi. The 1985 Leaving Certificate German syllabus content, aims, methodology and assessment, outlined in the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) Teacher Guidelines, are analysed and evaluated against the background of changing perceptions of language teaching and learning. This provided the context for the syllabus revision of modern languages in 1995. The prime features of the 1995 revised syllabus, which advocates an integrated and balanced approach to language learning and teaching, were implemented in second level schools with special emphasis on Basic Communicative Proficiency, Language Awareness and Cultural Awareness.

The 1995 revised Leaving Certificate German syllabus (*RLCGS*) assessment and weighting of marks will explain in detail the implications involved for teachers and students. The learner-centred approach to the design of the syllabus takes cognisance of recent developments in linguistic theory. A survey has been conducted among teachers of German by way of a questionnaire, regarding their perceptions of the 1995 revised Leaving Certificate German syllabus (*RLCGS*), the results of which have been outlined in chapter 5. The teachers surveyed are very clear in their minds as to the changes in their roles and in student activity with regard to the implementation of the revised syllabus.

Finally, chapter 6 concludes with recommendations to strengthen the educational value of the 1995 revised Leaving Certificate German syllabus (*RLCGS*).